

lie. Now the air bore not the perfume of the tender blossoms of the vine, but the wild grapes hung dark, though not yet ripe, from under their broad leaves, and Gay could put up her hand and touch them.

One morning the two were sitting together on a rustic bench on the lawn. Gay held a book in her lap, on the blank leaf of which she was making a sketch, not from nature, but from her imagination. Arthur, one arm on the back of the seat, watched with ardent interest the rapid growth of the drawing. They were in the shade, but all the air was full of light. Gay was very lovely that day. She wore a morning gown of pale blue, the front generously draped with white soft-hanging lace which ran away in graceful lines into the folds which lay about her feet. The wide brim of her hat was lined beneath with light blue silk, which threw a subduing influence upon the golden tints which always seemed ready to break out in the masses of hair beneath it, and extended its shade over the fair face, now slightly bent towards the drawing. Upon the crown and broad straw brim of this hat were clusters of apple-blossoms, which lay as naturally as if it had been spring-time and they had just dropped there from some tree.

Mrs. Justin and Stratford were standing upon the piazza looking at the young people on the lawn. It was a charming picture and well worthy their contemplation.

"Now, sir," said the lady, "there we see the full fruition of your work. Are you satisfied with it?"

"I am," he answered. "It was good work. And are you yet fully content?"

"Yes," said Mrs. Justin, "I believe I am. You know it was hard for me to be content, but I am beginning to see that events, as you controlled them, have resulted in great good."

Stratford made no answer. If he had spoken from the depths of his heart he must have said that great good indeed had resulted from what he had done; great good to Gay, great good to Arthur, and even good to that first lover, Crisman; good to every one, except himself. For in the fight he had fought he had been hurt—he had conquered, but he had been hurt.

The essence of Mrs. Justin's nature was loyalty, loyalty to past affection, loyalty to present friendships, and it was the ardent earnestness of this sentiment which threw into her friendship a sensitive and perceptive sympathy. Stratford said nothing; but she saw in his face something of what he thought.

"My friend," said she, laying her hand upon his arm, "could you have loved that girl?"

"Yes," said Stratford, "I could have loved her."

Mrs. Justin looked at him intently for a moment, and then she said: "Horace Stratford, I believe that you, yourself, are the hundredth man you have been looking for."

An expression of surprise came into the face of Stratford, and then he smiled, but the smile did not last long. "If you think so," he said, "I accept your decision, and my search is ended."

Frank R. Stockton.

THE END.

HIS ARGUMENT.

AD HOMINEM.

"**B**UT if a fellow in the castle there
Keeps doing nothing for a thousand years,
And then has — Everything! (That isn't fair
But it's — what has to be. The milk-boy hears
The talk they have about it everywhere.)

"Then, if the man there in the hut, you know,
With water you could swim in on the floor,
(And it's the ground. The place is pretty, though,
With gold flowers on the roof and half a door!)
Works — and can get no work and nothing more.

"What I will do is — nothing! Don't you see?
Then I'll have everything, my whole life through.
But if I work, why I might always be
Living in huts with gold flowers on them too —
And half a door. And that won't do for me."

QUEENSTOWN, IRELAND.

Sarah M. B. Piatt.

AZALIA.

By the author of "Uncle Remus," "Little Compton," etc.

VI.



SUMMONS was sent for Uncle Prince, and the old man soon made his appearance. He stood in a seriously expectant attitude.

"Prince," said General Garwood, "these ladies are from the North. They have asked me about the dead Union soldier you brought home during the war. I want you to tell the whole story."

"Tell 'bout de what, Marse Peyton?" Both astonishment and distress were depicted on the old negro's face as he asked the question. He seemed to be sure that he had not heard aright.

"About the Union soldier you brought home with your young master from Virginia."

"Whar Miss Hallie, Marse Peyton? Dat her in dar wid de peanner?"

"Yes, she's in there."

"I 'lowed she uz some'r's, kaze I know 'tain't gwine never do fer ter git dat chile riled up 'bout dem ole times; en it'll be a mighty wonder ef she don't ketch col' in dar whar she is."

"No," said General Garwood; "the room is warm. There has been a fire in there all day."

"Yasser, I know I builted one in dar dis mo'nin', but I take notice dat de draffs dese times look like dey come bofe ways."

The old man stood near the tall mantel, facing the group. There was nothing servile in his attitude; on the contrary, his manner, when addressing the gentleman who had once been his master, suggested easy, not to say affectionate, familiarity. The firelight, shining on his face, revealed a countenance at once rugged and friendly. It was a face in which humor had many a tough struggle with dignity. In looks and tone, in word and gesture, there was unmistakable evidence of that peculiar form of urbanity that cannot be dissociated from gentility. These things were more apparent, perhaps, to Helen and her aunt than to those who, from long association, had become accustomed to Uncle Prince's peculiarities.

"Dem times ain't never got clean out'n my

min'," said the old negro, "but it bin so long sence I runn'd over um, dat I dunner wharabouts ter begin skacely."

"You can tell it all in your own way," said General Garwood.

"Yasser, dat's so, but I fear'd it's a mighty po' way. Bless yo' soul, honey," Uncle Prince went on, "dey was rough times, en it look like ter me dat ef dey wuz ter come 'roun' ag'in hit 'u'd take a mighty rank runner fer ter ketch one nigger man w'at I'm got some 'quaintance wid. Dey wuz rough times, but dey wa'n't rough 'long at fust. Shoo! no! dey wuz dat slick dat dey ease we-all right down 'mong's de wuss kind er tribbylation, en we ain't none un us know it twel we er done dar.

"I know dis," the old man continued, addressing himself exclusively to Miss Eustis and her aunt; "I knows dat we-all wuz a-gittin' 'long mighty well, w'en one day Marse Peyton dar, he tuck 'n' jinded wid de army; en den 'twa'n't long 'fo' word come dat my young marster w'at gwine ter college in Ferginny, done gone en jinded wid um. I ax myse'f, I say, w'at de name er goodness does dey want wid boy like dat? Hit's de Lord's trufe, ma'am, dat ar chile wa'n't mo' dan gwine on sixteen ef he wuz dat, en I up 'n' ax myse'f, I did, w'at does de war want wid baby like dat? Min' you, ma'am, I ain't fin' out den w'at war wuz — I ain't know w'at a great big maw she got."

"My son Ethel," said Mrs. Garwood, the soft tone of her voice chiming with the notes of the piano, "was attending the University of Virginia at Charlottesville. He was just sixteen."

"Yassum," said Uncle Prince, rubbing his hands together gently, and gazing into the glowing embers, as if searching there for some clew that would aid him in recalling the past. "Yassum, my young marster wuz des gone by sixteen year, kaze 'twa'n't so mighty long 'fo' dat, dat we-all sont 'im a great big box er fix-in's en doin's fer ter git dar on he's birfday; en I sot up mighty nigh twel day tryin' ter make some 'lasses candy fer ter put in dar wid de yuther doin's."

Here Uncle Prince smiled broadly at the fire.

"Ef dey wuz sumpin' w'at dat chile like, hit wuz 'lasses candy; en I say ter my ole 'oman, I did, 'Mandy Jane, I'll make de candy,