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HOPE.

I saw the sun withdraw his light,
While sinking down the beauteous west,
And the shadows of the coming night
On all the lovely landscape rest,
But when the sun had sunk away,
And darkness told that night was near,
There peeped a star, with trembling ray,
Far, far beyond the clouded sphere.
And as the deepening shades of night
Around their sable mantle flung,
And lesser grew the day's rosy light,
And darker gloom the sky o'erhung;
Oh! lovelier still, appeared in view,
From this benighted orb afar,
And with a milder bright er hue,
Shone forth that little silvery star.
Thus, when the glow of joy departs,
And pleasure's golden sun hath set;
When sorrows broods o'er saddened hearts,
And they are filled with sad regret,
With magic ray a star appears,
Bright glancing through the darkness shade.
The star of hope to quell their fears,
Pointing to the joys too bright to fade.
And when by darker clouds o'ercast,
Our little sky is hung in black—
When sorrows crowd and thicken fast,
And dark seems life's unbroken track,
Immortal Hope still brighter beams,
And with undimmed, un fading ray,
It points beyond the land of dreams,
To an un fading, endless day.

HER OWN WAY.

Estella Richmond was a beautiful woman. We read of such in novels, but seldom see one in real life; but if you ever saw her, you said at once: 'Here is a truly beautiful woman!' And then you added: 'And she is the oddest woman I ever met—in fact, as unlike all other women as it is possible for any human being to be who live in amiable companionship with other human beings.'
Estella was the youngest of a very large family—a real old-fashioned family, numbering sixteen.
When her life began they were all on earth, to pet and spoil her, but as she grew up, one by one, they passed on until there was left but Rebecca, one of the oldest, and her young, ill-tempered and undisciplined self.
How lovely she was! Straight, tall and beautifully rounded, with a head aglow with shining auburn hair, that—twist, braid, confine as you would—was sure to break forth into a thousand crinkling, obelinate waves, and cing, like soft fingers, around the snowy forehead and around the throat. Then she had eyes like no one else—not over large or deep, but clear, brown, innocent, beautiful things, that shot quick glances upward to your face, and then flashed downward at a pretty, break-neck speed that went straight into your heart.
It was perfectly natural for all men to fall in love with Estella Richmond. First, they went into raptures over her face; then, when they came to know her, she held them with the charm of her unaffected manners, and plain, sensible and sometimes saucy talk.
'I never could teach her real politeness,' said the sister, with the sweet old Jewish name. 'Estella could not be polite, to save her life, and yet—here she would pause, looking at the young face with the beautiful brown eyes, and full, saucy mouth 'you could hardly expect her to mind conventionalities.'
And as no one did, Estella grew up to a happy unaffected womanhood.
In the meantime, she never fell in love. Here was another odd occurrence—she always had lovers on hand, to whom her lightest wish was law, but either their abundance made her hold them cheap, or their extreme humbleness made them uncompanionable. At all events, she never was in love.
And right in the midst of all I first saw her. She came to visit us that winter, with Rebecca, who was my school friend.
We were an odd family, consisting only of myself and my crippled cousin Reginald, who sat dimly all day in one corner of the library, reading or looking out at the hale, hearty passers in the street, with a discontent in his face that was a misery to behold.
It had been an act worthy of his manhood which had made him thus.
There had been a fire in the city, a year before, which swept through the populated portion of our streets. Upon one house it came so soon and unexpectedly that it was unrounded before the wretched inmates knew of its approach. Some of them died right in its midst, but Reginald—one of the few who dared enter the fire-encircled building—brought forth the gray-haired owner in his strong young arms, and saved his life. Then he turned to go back again, and when he passed in at the window, there came a crash, and the great timber awayed and fell, burying him from sight.
They brought him home alive, but crushed and broken into a cripple for life.
His reward was the fortune of the gray-haired man whose life he saved. He died six months later, leaving not a relative on earth, and every dollar of his immense wealth to my cousin Reginald.
We two made up the family into which Rebecca Richmond and her sister were coming.
When I read the letter to Reginald, announcing their coming, he said:
'It will be dull here, Mary, to this Estella. Why don't you send for Harry?' (Harry was my nephew, and a gay young fellow, in his early twenties.) 'She will find it unendurable. Send for Harry, and perhaps they will get up a love affair, or something equally interesting, I'd like it.'
So I sent for Harry, and he came in season to help me greet Rebecca and her beautiful sister.
I have never forgotten the expressive tableau we had in the library that November night—the open grate (for Reginald taboored the furnace heat) shedding its warm light all over the room, and helping the gas out wonderfully, the clear glass of the book-cases reflecting us, and the warm, bright furniture standing in prim elegance as a neat filling-in of the living picture.
First there was Rebecca, in her high, close-fitting black dress, standing—a tall, slim, genteel figure—with her arm on the mantel, beaming graciously upon us. I was beside her, a smiling listener; Reginald was in his chair, his fair pale face and dark hair showing in pitiful contrast against the crimson velvet; Harry, strong and handsome as a prince, was beside him; and Estella, upon whom we all were gazing, was sitting carelessly on the mat before the grate, her hands clasped over one knee, her eyes shining, and her tongue rattling out a lively description of her journey.
'How nice it is here!' she said, in conclusion. 'I'm sure I shall be so contented that I shall want to outstay our invitations. I am always doing that sort of thing—wearing out my welcome.'
There seemed very little danger of doing that, for I was delighted, Reginald declared that hitherto we had but vegetated, and Harry decided that it was the jolliest winter he had spent since he left college.
Indeed, why should it not be jolly, since everything on earth that could be done was done for the happiness of our guests?
'Do you think they will fall in love?' Reginald frequently asked, indicating Harry and Estella.
'I hope so, I invariably said; for nothing on earth at that time seemed more probable or sensible.'
'I do!' he would say. 'It would be nice to have her always here.'

Harry and Estella were at first always together, and we in our own minds had them married and settled.
Meanwhile, Reginald got unmanageable. He shut his door against the young people, and hatched out a perfect belief that he was ill; and after a few days of his manoeuvring, became pale and depressed, to such an extent that I got alarmed and proposed sending for his physician.
'Don't do anything of the kind, Mary. It is my temper.'
I did not question him, knowing how he hated to be questioned; but I racked my brain, for the next three days, to find a solution to this odd declaration from one who never before gave the slightest evidence of having a temper.
One night, Harry and Estella were going to a party, and after Estella was dressed, I went to the library and Reginald. For nearly a week, Estella had kept out of Reginald's sight, but now, just as I was comfortably seated, in she danced.
She was in a blue velvet, oddity dress, with bands of white fur around the skirt, the sleeves and low corsage, and in her bright hair was an aigrette of blue and white feathers.
'Are you really sick, Mr. Cramp-ton?' she asked, pausing just inside the door.
'No, not really.'
'Then I may come in. Don't I look nice?'
'Perfect!' said he, quietly.
She came close to his chair, and leaned over the arm.
'Harry brought me this bouquet. It is lovely, but I don't like to carry flowers with a dress like this. Won't you keep them?'
She held out the great cluster of rare flowers toward his hand.
'Yes; but—Harry'
'Oh, he don't care! He has me, and that is enough.'
'Yes!—Reginald looked into the beautiful face—it ought to be of course. Now may I come to-morrow and tell you all about the party?'
'Yes, by all means!'
No, in the face of all my efforts, and Reginald's temper, Estella found her way again into the library, and became confidential and chatty, and my patient was himself again.
I used to watch the trio a great deal after that—for Harry, of course, followed Estella—and wonder at Reginald's patience.
He had been, was a handsome fellow, and but for his awful misfortune, as straight and strong as Harry, who was ever showing his strength and grace in every movement of his lithe, athletic body; and it seemed a miracle almost that Reginald should patiently bear the constant reminders of his own weakness. But he did, and was even happy in the midst of it all.
It ended, Ah, what an odd ending it had! I must tell you, for I was there.
One night there was a lecture, and somebody sent tickets, and as I had a cold and Estella would not go, Harry took Rebecca, and thus left us—Reginald, Estella and me—in the library.
'This is the nicest thing that has happened yet,' Estella said. 'I've wanted for a long time to tell you something, and couldn't, for fear of an interruption. New listen.'
She put her chair back, brought a hassock over to Reginald's feet, and sat down. For a moment she was silent; then she went over to the gas and lowered it.
'It is too light for what I have to say,' she said, and then came back to her seat.
She was wonderfully sweet and womanly just then, and I knew that, somehow, I was seeing her in a different mood from any in which I had ever beheld her.
'Now—putting up her hand—just hear. What would you do, Mary, if you loved somebody bet-

ter than anybody else in the world and that somebody loved you—because I know he does—and didn't dare to tell you?'
'I'm sure I don't know,' I said, wondering if Harry was so stupid.
'What if you had done everything in the world that you could to make them speak out, and then they wouldn't, what would you do?'
'I'm sure I don't know,' I said again.
'Now suppose, for instance, that this somebody was not quite strong, and couldn't travel all over like a pack-horse, and bounce about as I do, and was making that the reason of his silence, when he knew, if he knew anything, that you loved him like—everything, what would you do?'
Her face showed pale in the dim light, but her eyes were bright and her lips smiling.
'It can't be Harry,' whispered Reginald.
'No, it's not Harry, stupid!' she said, without turning her head.
'It's not—'
'It's nobody!' she cried, bursting into tears, and standing up, very hot and angry. 'You've made me make a great big fool of myself—so there!'
But Reginald put out his arms.
'I did not dare, beautiful darling!' he cried.
And to my astonishment she was at his feet again, her bright young head nestling on his shoulder.
'You might have known,' she said.
'I did not dare to move, for fear it was a dream, or some mechanical arrangement of which I was a part, and might thereby put it out of joint; so I sat still as a mouse until my turn came.'
'I know it is shocking, Harry; but what could we do?'
'I'm sure I don't know,' I said for the third time. 'But what is to become of Harry?'
'Oh, he is all right. He don't care for me at all,' she said.
'But what will folks say,' said Reginald. 'They will say I am a wretch to bind your strong young life to my broken one!'
'No, dear! They'll say I married you for money. Don't you see?'
And the beautiful face was upturned to his, and the clear, sweet voice ringing merrily through the dull old room.
'You must take her, Reginald,' said Rebecca when she came; 'for she has always had her own way. You are the first man she ever loved, or I dare say she would have proposed before. Do take her, and not subject us to a repetition of the scene.'
So Estella had her own way, and I, who have had an eye always upon her, have learned what a patient, loving way it is, and how thoroughly it has blessed and beautified the life of my cousin Reginald.

A Slight Misunderstanding.
The drug store was closed, and he rang the bell vigorously. The ruggist at once put his head out of an upper window and inquired sleepily: 'Who's there?'
'Mr. Carr,' responded the gentleman at the bell. 'Missed a car? Well, what's that to me, confound you! Stop ringing that bell and go about your business, man!' Down went the window and the druggist was lost to sight.
The disappointed Mr. Carr was lost in amazement for a time, but finally seized the bell and rang it again frantically. The druggist's head appeared at the window again. He was wide awake this time. 'Who's there now?' 'Mr. Carr, I tell you. Why, d—n your impudence! Who cares if you have? Get out of that, quick. If you're drunk and have missed a car it's your own lookout. Don't you touch that bell again.' 'But, I tell you, you idiot, I'm Mr. Carr.'
'Oh, Lord! Why didn't you say so before?'
For an intelligible and comprehensive view of what is before us during the approaching campaign, we ask our reader's attention to the following from the *Wilmington Journal*:
The Coming Storm—The Gathering of the Political Elements.
Sounds of political warfare are beginning to be heard in the land. The two opposing armies are well-nigh ready to leave their camps and take position in battle array against each other. Busy preparation for the great inevitable conflict is everywhere going on. The leaders are in earnest council and with watchful eyes scan the scene of what they know must be the most eventful campaign ever witnessed in this country. Everything indicates that the struggle for the possession of the executive branch of the Federal Government just now beginning will, ere its close, call into requisition every resource of each party. Nor if we would, could we escape the conflict. The fight must be fought. Nor can there be any drawn battle. One side or the other must sleep in victory on the field. The time has come when an appeal to the people, the sovereign people, must be made; the time has come when public servants must give an account of their stewardship to us who are their masters. And in view of their extravagance, their frauds, their ignorance, their incompetency, their oft-repeated outrages upon the most cherished rights of citizens, the order through which the men now in the public Federal service have to go, is a terrible one; but for all that it cannot be avoided nor even delayed. Before the idea of November shall have ended the battle will have been lost and won. Here and there along the line skirmishers are already being deployed in the broad light of day, for it is an open fight in which the whole world knows the very time and place when and where the first gun will be fired and may be spectators of its oft changing currents. The first preliminary skirmish will take place amid ice and snow in the State of New Hampshire ere the March moon shall have waned; for the election in Texas Tuesday next will bear mainly on home issues. But though the fight will be fought on a frozen field it promises a hot time to those immediately engaged, for the New Hampshire election has every prospect of being interesting as well as close. Both parties, it is said, have put excellent men in the field. The Hon. Daniel Marcy, the Democratic nominee for Governor, must be a rare man, for the most partisan journals find it impossible to say anything worse against him than that he was a piece Democrat during the war. They say frankly that his moral character is without blemish, and that he will call out the full strength of our party through his great popularity.
In 1875 the Radical candidate for Governor received 2,007 votes more than his Democratic opponent. In 1874 the Democratic candidate received 1,465 votes more than his Radical opponent. In 1875 the Radical candidate received 172 votes more than his Democratic opponent. In addition to this, the law of New Hampshire requires that to be elected, a candidate must receive a majority of all the votes cast. The existence of a body of temperance reformers who vote a thousand to two thousand strong, first on one side and then on the other, renders doubtful, beyond all calculation, the result in that State.
But scarce will the fight have ceased in New Hampshire when, after a few scattering shots in Rhode Island, it will be renewed in Connecticut in the showery month of April. But there the

result is not doubtful, for the parties are unequally matched. The Democrats having carried the State over all opposition in 1873 by a majority of 3,363, in 1874 by a majority of 1,823 and in 1875 by a majority of 6,543.
The next gun will be heard from the shores of Pacific in the month of June. In Oregon the Democratic candidate for Governor was elected in 1872 by a majority of 631 and in 1874 by a majority of 550. In 1873, however, Grant carried it by majority of 4,089.
Kentucky next, that dark and bloody ground of a former day, will step to the front, but it will be in the dog days and when the sun is at meridian height and with overwhelming odds; with a democratic majority of over 35,000, the radicals stand no chance in Kentucky on the first Monday in August next.
With the coming of September the firing begins to grow brisker and to become more general. California, Maine and Vermont become engaged. In Vermont the die is already cast, and against us. In Maine there is a possibility of success, but a strong probability of defeat. The result in California, no man can tell.
In October the combat thickens until there is fighting at so many points and in such great numbers that it could be called the battle were it not for the greater and grander conflict so soon to follow. Georgia, with her sixty thousand majority, and West Virginia wheel into line on our side, and Indiana, too, while Iowa and Nebraska, with its small squad, will take position against us.
But it is in Ohio that the heaviest fighting in this combat will take place—an engagement that in any ordinary campaign would of itself, considering the number of the combatants, the hotness of the contest and the importance of the result, be called a grand battle. But in a State with over 600,000 voters, in which a candidate is elected one year by a majority of 817 votes and defeated another year by a majority of 5,544 votes, who is wise enough to foresee the result? How slight and how many the causes that may make a loss or gain of 10,000 votes in a poll of 600,000! Beauregard's direction to his troops was to go to the heaviest firing, and as the same principle applies in political warfare, we may expect to see men and money pour into Ohio where there will be the biggest of big guns and the heaviest of heavy firing. Great will be the contest in Ohio.
And then with the idea of November will come the inevitable hour when every gale that comes, whether it sweeps to or from the North or the South, or the East or the West, will bring to the eager ears of anxious men the clash of resounding arms in the grand political fray. And then when the bright sun comes out next morning—and the smoke shall have cleared away and the strife and din of battle shall be hushed and all nature shall have put on that look of innocent, peaceful, serene calmness she so delights to exhibit after some great convulsion—we trust it will shine upon a country no longer discordant, disordered and belligerent, but upon one into whose every wound a Democratic administration shall stand ready to pour the wholesome balm of good government, of just and wise laws honestly and faithfully executed.

Would that please you dear little one pick up strings of pearls, ostrich-plum and diamonds, as you pass over the street? It would make you happy, I know, to do so. And you may do it, just you do it now. I will tell you, by some means or words, kind actions, and pleasant smiles you may do. These are true pearls and precious stones. Speak to the poor orphan child; see the diamond drop from her cheek. Take the hand of the friendless boy; bright pearls flash from his eyes. Smiles on the sad and wearying; by softness the cheek, more brilliant than the most precious gems.—*Wm. S. Hooper.*