

## FRANKNESS.

There is one kind of frankness, which is the result of perfect unsuspectingness, and which requires a measure of ignorance of the world and of life: this kind appeals to our generosity and tenderness. There is another, which is the frankness of a strong but pure mind, acquainted with life, clear in its discrimination and upright in its intention, yet above disguise or concealment: this kind excites respect. The first seems to proceed simply from impulse, the second from impulse and reflection united; the first proceeds, in a measure, from ignorance, the second from knowledge; the first is born from an undoubting confidence in others, the second from a virtuous and well-grounded reliance on one's self.

Now, if you suppose that this is the beginning of a sermon or of a fourth of July oration, you are very much mistaken, though, I must confess, it hath rather an uncertain sound. I merely prefaced it to a little sketch of character, which you may look at if you please, though I am not sure you will like it.

It was said of Alice H. that she had the mind of a man, the heart of a woman, and the face of an angel--a combination that all my readers will think peculiarly happy.

There never was a woman who was so unlike the mass of society in her

modes of thinking and acting, yet so generally popular. But the most remarkable thing about her was her proud superiority to all disguise, in thought, word, and deed. She pleased you; for she spoke out a hundred things that you would conceal, and spoke them with a dignified assurance that made you wonder that you had ever hesitated to say them yourself. Nor did this unreserve appear like the weakness of one who could not conceal, or like a determination to make war on the forms of society. It was rather a calm, well-guided integrity, regulated by a just sense of propriety; knowing when to be silent, but speaking the truth when it spoke at all.

Her extraordinary frankness often beguiled superficial observers into supposing themselves fully acquainted with her long before they were so, as the beautiful transparency of some lakes is said to deceive the eye as to their depth; yet the longer you knew her, the more variety and compass of character appeared through the same transparent medium. But you may just visit Miss Alice for half an hour to-night, and judge for yourselves. You may walk into this little parlor. There sits Miss Alice on that sofa, sewing a pair of lace sleeves into a satin dress, in which peculiarly angelic employment she may persevere till we have finished another sketch.

Do you see that pretty little lady, with sparkling eyes, elastic form, and beautiful hand and foot, sitting opposite to her? She is a belle: the character is written in her face--it sparkles from her eye--it dimples in her smile, and pervades the whole woman.

But there--Alice has risen, and is gone to the mirror, and is arranging the finest auburn hair in the world in the most tasteful manner. The little lady watches every motion as comically as a kitten watches a pin-ball.

"It is all in vain to deny it, Alice--you are really anxious to look pretty this evening," said she.

"I certainly am," said Alice, quietly.

"Ay, and you hope you shall please Mr. A. and Mr. B.," said the little accusing angel.

"Certainly I do," said Alice, as she twisted her fingers in a beautiful curl.

"Well, I would not tell of it, Alice, if I did."

"Then you should not ask me," said Alice.

"I declare! Alice!"

"And what do you declare?"

"I never saw such a girl as you are!"

"Very likely," said Alice, stooping to pick up a pin.

"Well, for my part," said the little lady, "I never would take any pains to make any body like me--particularly a gentleman."

"I would," said Alice, "if they would not like me without."

"Why, Alice! I should not think you were so fond of admiration."

"I like to be admired very much," said Alice, returning to the sofa, "and I suppose every body else does."

"I don't care about admiration," said the little lady. "I would be as well satisfied that people shouldn't like me as that they should."

"Then, cousin, I think it's a pity we all like you so well," said Alice, with a good-humored smile. If Miss Alice had penetration, she never made a severe use of it.

"But really, cousin," said the little lady, "I should not think such a girl as you would think any thing about dress, or admiration, and all that."

"I don't know what sort of a girl you think I am," said Alice, "but, for my own part, I only pretend to be a common human being, and am not

ashamed of common human feelings. If God has made us so that we love admiration, why should we not honestly say so. I love it--you love it--every body loves it; and why should not every body say it?"

"Why, yes," said the little lady, "I suppose every body has a--has a--a general love for admiration. I am willing to acknowledge that I have; but----"

"But you have no love for it in particular," said Alice, "I suppose you mean to say; that is just the way the matter is commonly disposed of. Every body is willing to acknowledge a general wish for the good opinion of others, but half the world are ashamed to own it when it comes to a particular case. Now I have made up my mind, that if it is correct in general, it is correct in particular; and I mean to own it both ways."

"But, somehow, it seems mean," said the little lady.

"It is mean to live for it, to be selfishly engrossed in it, but not mean to enjoy it when it comes, or even to seek it, if we neglect no higher interest in doing so. All that God made us to feel is dignified and pure, unless we pervert it."

"But, Alice, I never heard any person speak out so frankly as you do."

"Almost all that is innocent and natural may be spoken out; and as for that which is not innocent and natural, it ought not even to be

thought."

"But can every thing be spoken that may be thought?" said the lady.

"No; we have an instinct which teaches us to be silent sometimes: but, if we speak at all, let it be in simplicity and sincerity."

"Now, for instance, Alice," said the lady, "it is very innocent and natural, as you say, to think this, that, and the other nice thing of yourself, especially when every body is telling you of it; now would you speak the truth if any one asked you on this point?"

"If it were a person who had a right to ask, and if it were a proper time and place, I would," said Alice.

"Well, then," said the bright lady, "I ask you, Alice, in this very proper time and place, do you think that you are handsome?"

"Now, I suppose you expect me to make a courtesy to every chair in the room before I answer," said Alice; "but, dispensing with that ceremony, I will tell you fairly, I think I am."

"Do you think that you are good?"

"Not entirely," said Alice.

"Well, but don't you think you are better than most people?"

"As far as I can tell, I think I am better than some people; but really, cousin, I don't trust my own judgment in this matter," said Alice.

"Well, Alice, one more question. Do you think James Martyrs likes you or me best?"

"I do not know," said Alice.

"I did not ask you what you knew, but what you thought," said the lady; "you must have some thought about it."

"Well, then, I think he likes me best," said Alice.

Just then the door opened, and in walked the identical James Martyrs. Alice blushed, looked a little comical, and went on with her sewing, while the little lady began,--

"Really, Mr. James, I wish you had come a minute sooner, to hear Alice's confessions."

"What has she confessed?" said James.

"Why, that she is handsomer and better than most folks."

"That's nothing to be ashamed of," said James.

"O, that's not all; she wants to look pretty, and loves to be admired, and all----"

"It sounds very much like her," said James, looking at Alice.

"O, but, besides that," said the lady, "she has been preaching a discourse in justification of vanity and self-love----"

"And next time you shall take notes when I preach," said Alice, "for I don't think your memory is remarkably happy."

"You see, James," said the lady, "that Alice makes it a point to say exactly the truth when she speaks at all, and I've been puzzling her with questions. I really wish you would ask her some, and see what she will say. But, mercy! there is Uncle C. come to take me to ride. I must run." And off flew the little humming bird, leaving James and Alice tête-à-tête.

"There really is one question----" said James, clearing his voice.

Alice looked up.

"There is one question, Alice, which I wish you would answer."

Alice did not inquire what the question was, but began to look very solemn; and just then the door was shut--and so I never knew what the question was--only I observed that James Martyns seemed in some seventh heaven for a week afterwards, and--and--you can finish for yourself, lady.