

till to-morrow; but then I am so very curious, and I want so much to see what is in them."

"But, if you put off the pleasure, it will be greater," said her mother. "Mrs. Egerton will be with you, and will tell you all you want to know, and you say *that* increases the pleasure; I think you said you should not have half the pleasure without her."

"Half! No, not a quarter, I am sure," said Rosamond.

"Then, Rosamond, the question is," said her mother, "whether you choose a little pleasure now, or a great pleasure to-morrow?"

Rosamond took hold of one of the doors of the black cabinet, as her mother spoke, as if she was going to shut it.

"Four times the pleasure, if you put it off till to-morrow, Rosamond."

Rosamond shut one door, but paused, and hesitated, and held the other open.

"Mamma, in that drawer, which is not quite closed, I see some beautiful little branches of red sealing-wax. Might I open one drawer *now*?"

"No, no, you must make your choice, and be content."

"But, perhaps——" said Rosamond.

"Finish your sentence, my dear, or shall I finish it for you—perhaps to-morrow will never come."

"No, no, mamma, I am not so foolish."

"Perhaps, then, you mean to say, that you cannot look forward so far as to-morrow."

"Mamma, you know that two summers ago, I learned to look forward about the blowing of my rosebud; and, last year, I looked forward a whole twelvemonth about my hyacinths. Oh, mamma!"

"You were very prudent about the hyacinths; and were

you not rewarded for it by having more pleasure than you would have had, if you had not been prudent and patient?"

"Yes, mamma—but that was worth while; but, I think, it is not worth while to be prudent and patient, or to make such wise judgments and decisions, about every little trifle, mamma."

"I think, on the contrary, that it is very well worth while to be patient and prudent, and to make wise judgments and decisions even about trifles, because then we shall probably acquire the habit of being patient and prudent; and, when we come to judge and choose about matters of consequence, *we* shall judge and choose well."

Rosamond shut the other door of the cabinet, and, turning the key in the lock slowly, repeated,

"'Four times as much pleasure to-morrow.' It is worth while, certainly; but, mamma, though I see that it is worth while, you know it requires some resolution to do it."

"That is true, my dear Rosamond. And the having or the not having resolution to submit to self-denials, and to do what is known to be best, makes the chief difference between foolish and wise people; and not only between the foolish and the wise, but between the bad and the good."

"Between the bad and the good, mamma! How can that be?"

"Yes, my dear. It is seldom for want of knowing what is right, but for want of having resolution to do it, that people become bad; for want of being able to resist some little present temptation, for want of being able steadily to prefer a great future to a little present pleasure."

Rosamond turned the key decidedly, "I shall always have resolution enough, I hope," said she, "to prefer a great future to a little present pleasure."

“Do so in trifles, my dear daughter,” said her mother, kissing her, “and you will do so in matters of consequence, and you will become wise and good; and you will be the joy and pride of your mother’s heart.”

“And of my father’s, mamma.”

Well pleased with herself, Rosamond presented the key of the India cabinet to Mrs. Egerton, who desired her to keep it herself.

The next morning, at the appointed time, Mrs. Egerton was in her dressing-room, and Rosamond’s mother was there also; and Rosamond opened the India cabinet, and fully enjoyed all the pleasure she had expected, and all the advantage of Mrs. Egerton’s instruction.

The first drawer she opened was that in which she had seen a glimpse of what she called *little trees of red sealing-wax*. They were each about a foot high, somewhat in the shape of branches of trees, without leaves, and having the appearance and colour of red sealing-wax. When Rosamond took up one of these branches, she was surprised to feel its weight; for it was much heavier than sealing-wax, or than a wooden branch of the same size would have been.

“Is it a vegetable? is it a stone? or is it made by men? and what is it made of?” said she; “or where does it come from? and what is it called, ma’am?”

Mrs. Egerton could not answer all these questions at once, but she began with the easiest, and answered that it was called *coral*. Rosamond immediately recollected *the coral* which she had seen hanging round the neck of one of her little cousins, who was an infant. Then she repeated, “But what is it? or how is it made?”

Mrs. Egerton told her, that people are not yet quite certain what it is: that it is found under the sea, generally fastened

to rocks, that for many hundred years people believed it was a vegetable, but that within this last hundred years they believe it to be an animal substance—a substance made by little animals: it has been discovered that there are innumerable small cells in coral, which are inhabited by these animals; and it is supposed that the animals make these cells.



“It is supposed!” repeated Rosamond; “only *supposed*.”

Rosamond was rather impatient of the doubtful manner in which Mrs. Egerton spoke; she wondered that people had been so many years believing wrong, and wished that somebody would decide. Rosamond, as she spoke, looked from Mrs. Egerton to her mother, and from her mother to Mrs. Egerton, but neither of them would decide. Mrs. Egerton said she did not know facts sufficient; and Rosamond’s