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WHO, AND WHAT, HAS NOT FAILED.

By Miss C. M. Sedgwick.

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To the Editors of the Metropolitan:

GENTLEMEN:—I was, a few evenings since, at a friend's house, Mr. J's. He is one of the severe sufferers by these disastrous times. Some few weeks ago he believed himself worth half a million. Loss has accumulated upon loss here, and, last week, the return of his bills upon a bankrupt house in England completed the wreck of his fortune. At the time of his failure his daughter, my lovely friend Helen, was on the point of marriage with a young lawyer, who by dint of talent and industry, has earned an education, and who during the last year, the first of his professional career, has been in the receipt of some ten or twelve hundred dollars. This, of course, was a very inadequate income for a lady accustomed to an establishment scarcely surpassed in luxury by any in our city.

But this mattered not to Helen, or Helen's father. He "chose" he said, "that his daughter should marry poor men, he had enough for them all." And he was actually in treaty for a fine house for Helen, and had decided on the amount of a most liberal portion to be settled on her, when the blow came which deprived him of the ability to give her a shilling. Circumstances added mortification to disappointment. Miss J. had left her "at home" cards at the houses of her friends. The wedding dresses and the wedding presents were made. The bridal veil and wedding ring were bought, and the wedding cake was actually in the house. At this crisis it was that I had gone, my face full of condolence, if it did any justice to my heart, which was full of sympathy, to pass the evening at her father's. I did not find Helen at home but there were several persons there, casual visitors, friends of the family, like myself. Apprehension, sadness, or dismay sat on every countenance. The conversation naturally turned upon the all absorbing topic of the day. Each one had his melancholy tale to relate, for each one had had his hopes. One told of one failure, and one of another—one gave a list of disasters abroad, and another produced an actual record of bankruptcies at home. It was prophesied that all who had not failed would fail.

"There is nothing left to fail," exclaimed Mr. J. striking his hands with vehement impatience, "the banks have failed, and the government has failed—every body, and every thing has failed!" "Not every thing, my dear father," exclaimed Helen, who just then entered with her lover, her face radiant with an expression that indicated that her happiness was secured from failure by *bond and mortgage*, "not everything, sir—the moon has not failed!" This happy turn of my friend gave an impulse to my mind, and set me to observing who and what had *not failed*. I give you the result of my observations in the hope that it may lead others to look beyond the shadow of this eclipse. While

returning home I echoed my friends words, "indeed the moon has not failed!" She, with her glorious train of stars, was looking down serenely on our troubled city, bearing a message of love to the disquieted spirit, an assurance that there is a better joy awaiting those "who have ceased to rejoice because their wealth is great, and because their hand has gotten much."—On my way I met a friend returning from the theatre—"Did Ellen Tree succeed?" I asked. "Did Ellen Tree ever fail," he replied. "No—all the world may fail; but Ellen Tree, sweet Ellen Tree, cannot fail!"

I entered my home, my old deaf friend Mrs. S., was sitting alone reading so intently, that she did not observe me. Her book touched the fountains of feeling. She wiped her spectacles, and once or twice laughed aloud. Ah! thought I, books have *not failed*. These exhaustless magazines of happiness, these silent ministers to the soul, these welcome and successful missionaries to all parts of the civilized world, have not, and *cannot fail!*"

As I went to my room I met our faithful nurse, going her accustomed round to take a last look of the sleeping children. "Kindness and fidelity in domestic service have *not failed*," thought I, as I looked at their impersonation in this excellent woman; "nor has their sweetest reward failed," I farther thought, when one of the little girls, her slumbers for a moment broken, murmured, kissing her nurse, "Oh is it *you*, Mammy," and then she fell into the arms of sleep, the "sweet restorer," who never fails to innocent healthful children.

Morning, and the sun, who always meets his engagements, came, and clouds, which, in this spring-time seldom fail, appeared, and poured down their nourishing stores threatening to disappoint my project of a stroll to Hoboken with a party of children who were watching the Heavens, as nothing else is now watched but the money market.—The morning passed, dinner came, and the desert and the *baby*, the youngest of the six, and the pet of them all.—She looked as bright as Guido's Aurora, as she made her grand entree into her brother's arms, attended by her train of sisters. At sight of her the clouds of care, that in these careful times accumulate, vanished from her father's brow. Her mother greeted her with the chorus of a favorite nursery song, to which she replied by clapping her feet, and then amidst the acclamations of her loving audience, she played her part—"almost standing alone," "almost saying mama"—sitting in the centre of the table, and rolling an orange to each, and replying to the caresses of all with a grace and significance never in the world seen—except from the youngest of every happy home. "Riches may take to themselves wings," thought I, "and fly away, but the love of parents, of brothers and sisters, the beauty and joy of infancy, the riches which Heaven has ordained and watches over, *never fail*."

The clouds passed off and we went to Hoboken. The grass, freshened by the recent shower, seemed greening under our feet. The birds were on the wing singing a *te Deum* for the return of spring. The buds were bursting into leaves, the dog-wood was just unfolding its white blossoms, and the violet opening its blue eye. "Nature has *not failed*," thought I. "Oh that the worn, disappointed, heart-sick denizens of yon city would come

forth, and enjoy a possession common to all, which wealth cannot buy, nor poverty sell, chartered by Heaven, and independent of this bank-note world!"

On our return I met in the boat my friends Mr. and Mrs. F. They have shared the disasters of the times, without having provoked them by speculation or extravagance, and now were about to leave their beautiful house in Square for an humble country lodging. They were both cheerful, she rather more so than usual; and when I remarked this she said, "I have reason for it. I now know what we can and what we can't lose; and the balance is, beyond estimation, in our favor. This is no place or time for sentiment," she glanced her eyes fondly from her husband to her little boy who held her hand, "or I would tell you what of most precious I have *not* lost; but even here I may say, that though my husband's business has failed, his integrity, ability, industry, and enterprise have not failed." "Neither," thought I, "does the fidelity of a true-hearted wife, her tenderness, fortitude, and elevatedness, put her to what trial you will, ever fail!"

The next day was Sunday. In the evening, our pastor preached upon the times, and from the text "who shall separate us from the love of God;" and I believe not an individual left the church without a sense of the littleness of those temporal possessions that are liable to fail, and a deep gratitude for those eternal and illimitable riches that are offered to our grasp. When I came home I found the following note from Helen J.

"My dear friend, my father has at last consented that I shall not participate the general bankruptcy, so, pray come to-morrow, the day originally appointed for my wedding, and witness my *non-failure*.—Thanks to my mother I have been so instructed in domestic economy, that I may indulge in the luxury of marrying the man I love, though he have not above a thousand dollars a year; and as I hold true love, capacity, industry, and frugality to be a sufficient security, I do fear that we shall fail in our conjugal partnership."

A Parisian belle, during the cholera panic painted over her door, "no cholera to be spoken of here !" I would go a little farther, and during the panic, not only proscribe the agitating topic; but suggest others which, if duly considered, would relieve the pressure to which even the good and manly are too passively yielding.

New-York, May, 1837.