

by our lawgivers, prophets and holy ones." Stretching forth his hands over her, he pursued: "Comfort, O Lord God! the mourners of Zion, and the mourners of Jerusalem! Blessed art thou, O Lord! the comforter of Zion, and the builder of Jerusalem!"

"I have no comfort," said Lydia.

"Perhaps to sing with thee may comfort thee—pray!—pray while we sing," said the Rabbi.

And in low, mournful, but rapid notes, he and the other Jews sang one of the sacred chants most dear to Israel. It is one of their very loveliest; while the music, grand, yet plaintive, has a sweet effect upon the listener.

Her brother stood over her, weeping

"You will remember to see that the Kaddish\* is said for me." †

"Be sure I will."

"Are you ready to depart into the elements?" asked the Rabbi.

"I wish to be left alone!" replied Lydia, rather quickly, and unmistakably expressing her desire that he should speak to her no more.

"It's Satan!" he said, coolly. "It's Satan has entered into her."

"Nothing of that kind, indeed!" her brother dared to say.

"I tell you it is," returned the Rabbi. "The Evil One has power over her! We must conquer him."

"Mother," said her brother, "with all due reverence for our Rabbis, I declare this cannot be. I do not believe in what he says. It is no way to increase Lydia's peace. She is more nervous, than in danger about her soul—that is my belief."

The Rabbi was a learned Cabbalist; he replied:—

"Son! you know nothing of the mysteries of spirit, nor the influences to be dissolved before we fully attain the eternal concentrated elements of Life and Intellect. Evil spirits exist everywhere, and have a power which only learning and piety can withstand. Peace!"

He began making various mystic signs, and calling to different invisible spirits by name; seemingly about to commence the occult invocation in the dialect of the Cabbala. Lydia could endure the outrage no longer.

"Mamma!" she exclaimed, "I command this to cease: or I protest I will, at any hazard, be led from the room. I wish to be alone!"

"Very well; I think it best; you shall," answered her mother.

Whereupon the Rabbi and the rest were, as civilly as possible, bowed out.

Lydia was dying—dying fast.

"Is my precious one quite happy now?" asked her mother.

"Dear mamma!" she said, smilingly, and moving her hand as though she fain would embrace her once more. For if Lydia's heart felt desolate, it still beat quick with love and hope for those dear to her. She paused a little, and then proceeded in a low, sad voice; "The dove can find its ark, the lamb its fold. I, that have immortality, can find no place of rest."

"You will be in Paradise soon, Lydia. I know it. Else God is not God, nor true!" said her mother, vehemently.

"Hush, dear! We must not murmur, but submit. O God, my Father! Thou makest me now to pass into eternity before thy presence. I have served thee as well as I knew. Oh! be merciful to me!"

Her eyes closed as they had been before, and she lay quite still, and breathing soft and low.

"Oh! if she is not taken to heaven, I will never go there!" sobbed her mother, passionately, to one of the family in an adjoining room.

Lydia was now losing hold of all earthly things. She lay almost motionless; her breathing became fainter; with a gradually lengthening pause between each respiration. Her father took up a book, and began reading the prayers for the dying. Lydia lay perfectly silent—life was ebbing in one last out-welling gush to the ocean of eternity. In the midst of the prayers she moved her lips—her mother thought it was to request something.

"What do you want, my dear?" she said.

"Nothing but heaven," replied Lydia, clearly and softly, and without opening her eyes.

They saw she was just passing from death unto life. Her father ceased. There was a dead silence, except a stifled sobbing. Then this was hushed for the solemn stillness of that chamber where time is dissolving into eternity.

A spasm convulsed her features. Her eyes rolled, opened a little, then closed, and remained fixed. A bright crimson flooded her face and neck. The convul-

\* A Jewish prayer for the dead.