

acquainted with every tree on the road by this time."

"He has very interesting business there, I can assure you," her husband replied; "he goes to visit a lady who is to become Mrs. Maitland as soon as his health is fully restored, which will be soon, I think. I thought I had mentioned that to you before."

When Alice was leaving the room a few moments after, as she turned to pass through the door, I saw that her face was pale as the lily on her bosom. That glance revealed to me the nature of her new *friendship*. Poor Alice! when with a smile she placed that flower on its pure resting-place, the hopes within were bright and fair as its yet unfaded beauties—now, alas! those hopes were withered and dead, and the frail flower bloomed above their sepulchre, as if mocking the vanity of human anticipations.

Alice did not return to the parlour that afternoon, and when summoned to tea, sent word that she had a slight head-ache and thought she would be better for sleep; and, in consequence, her mother did not disturb her further. I returned home with a heavy heart, though as comment or warning were now alike needless. I did not pain Mrs. Graham, by disclosing my melancholy conviction. Alice rose next morning "perfectly well," as she said with a smile, though she looked very pale, and her mother at first supposed it to be a slight temporary indisposition; as, however, she continued to look pale several days after, and was much quieter than usual even with Mr. Maitland, her mother became uneasy, and talked of medical treatment—but Alice laughed at the idea with so much apparent merriment that, for the time, Mrs. Graham was silenced. And now Mr. Maitland, who resided about twenty miles from S—, and whose health was fully restored, bade farewell to his friends at M—, and returned to his home—exchanging with them sincere expressions of regret at parting, and promises of punctual correspondence. Mrs. Graham afterwards told Alice that she seemed rather indifferent at parting with so valued a friend as Mr. Maitland. Poor girl! she controlled her feelings so far as to reply calmly to a charge, which she felt to be so unjust—but as she spoke I caught a brief glance at her quickly averted face, and was startled at its ghastly and agonized expression.

About a fortnight after Mr. M.'s departure, we were lingering over the tea-table at Dr. Graham's, when the papers were brought in—they were quickly distributed, and soon after Alice retreated with hers to a corner where a light burned on a small table, to avoid being interrupted by a discussion which had arisen in regard to a paragraph her father had read aloud. I was gazing with

admiration upon her exquisite features, which looked pale and placid as if chiselled from marble, when suddenly the paper fell at her feet, and after burying her face in her hands for a moment, she rose and left the apartment. Her parents being still occupied with their newspaper argument, did not observe her departure; and without making any comment, I picked up the paper she had been reading, and on looking at it, almost the first line which met my eye was the announcement of Mr. Maitland's marriage. I read it aloud, and after waiting nearly an hour for Alice's return, Mrs. Graham went in search of her, to communicate to her the news. She soon returned, saying that Alice was in her room very sick, having severe headache accompanied by violent fever—and bitterly reproached herself for having, while her better judgment told her that her daughter had long needed attention, "neglected her," until, as she feared, dangerously ill. How little do we know of the secret springs of human suffering, and how often is medical skill unwittingly and unavailingly employed "to minister unto minds diseased."

Alice was long and dangerously ill, and, ere she recovered, Mr. Maitland and his bride had gone to Europe, with the intention of permanently residing there, Mr. M.'s letters, announcing his marriage and departure from America, remaining unanswered, in consequence of the confusion and distress of mind, caused by Alice's alarming situation. They never heard from him after.

Alice gradually recovered her former health, but to her wasted cheeks the bloom never fully returned again. She mingled with the happy and the gay, only when the solicitations of her friends rendered denial impossible. She sat in her chamber, alone, brooding over the unhappy thoughts which the necessity of concealment rendered doubly sorrowful. Her books, her music, her flowers, were there. But, the book lay on her lap unheeded—the strings of the harp no longer gave utterance to her joyous thoughts. Even the flowers drooped, lacking the care formerly lavished on them. But, a gentler, more cheerful, and more universally beloved old maid (for such she now is) does not exist. She guarded her secret well. No ear heard it, and to one eye only, (save His, to whom the secrets of all hearts are open) was it ever even unconsciously betrayed.

#### HYPOCRISY.

Who by kindness and smooth attention can insinuate a hearty welcome to an unwelcome guest, is a hypocrite superior to a thousand plain dealers.  
—*Lavater's Aphorisms.*