

CHAPTER XLV.

NOT THE END.

"Requiem aeternam dona eis, Domine, et lux perpetua luceat eis."

—Ps. cxiv.

When Chrysler came to this sad close of the story, he woke from his absorption in the manuscript and became conscious of the surroundings. The late hour, the strange place, even the silent-burning candles, and above all the shock of grief for Chamilly at his great bereavement, oppressed him into deep loneliness. The wind dashed gusts of rain against the casement and shook it savagely. He thought of the storm and blackness without—how the tempest must be hounding the black waves—the wolfish ferocity of their onward rushes—the dread battle any mortal would fight who found himself among them on a night like this.

Is Chamilly safe at home again ?

Of course, at this hour.

What an unusual fellow. How strange to enjoy such beating rain, such blinding darkness and fierce contest of strength with nature! How fearless! How few like him in this or any virtue! Did there in fact exist another his equal ?

No ; Haviland stood alone—the climax of a race.

As Chrysler pondered, dull sounds reached him, breaking in on these meditations. A door opened below, and heavy feet tramped in. Voices, and then cries of alarm, and then lamentations of all the household startled him. Steps sounded coming up the stairs, and a man's sob, and then a gentle knock.