ness at the close of the draught. The oil and the balm had flowed plentifully for every wound, and his spirit was not only unbroken, but composed, happy, cheerful, " with sober cheer." The afflictions that had been sent to him had kept him calm ; and all men said, that he was an humble, but none that he was a dejected, Christian. What the secret errors of his spirit might have been, it is not for us to guess. But he was destined to undergo severer chastenings; and who shall doubt that there was cause enough for the uplifting of the rod of love ?

After the death of the last of these three infants, Mrs Blair dried her tears, and endeavoured to attend as usual to all the duties of her household. But the serenity of her temper had been tinged with a shade of grief which she could not dispel ; and although she smiled upon her husband, it was with pale lips and melancholy eyes that she did so. If there were moments in which all her sorrows were forgotten, these were few and transitory. Her husband subdued himself that he might constrain her; he talked with her in a tone that was manly as well as tender ; he talked like a Christian as well as a father; he caressed his remaining child, and twined the fingers of the mother's hand among her flowing ringlets ; he hoped the best ; he hoped oven to the last. But if it be true that love often lends keenness to the eye, it is not less true that the sight of affection is sometimes the slowest and the dimmest of all ; and he had kept striving to nourish his hopes, and striving successfully too, for many months after it had been once a common remark among the kind-hearted people of Cross-Meikle, that " the Minister's wife, poor body, would never hold up her head again."

And, in truth, it was as they said. It may be, the seated disease of the mind, by slow but sure degrees, communicated its poison to the body ; at all events, the frame, like the inhabiting spirit, soon exhibited all the features of decay. The long melancholy summer passed away, and the songs of the harvest reapers were heard in