

As we now slowly approached the cottage, through a deep snow drift, which the distress within had prevented the household from removing, we saw peeping out from the door, brothers and sisters of our little guide, who quickly disappeared, and then their mother showed herself in their stead, expressing, by her raised eyes, and arms folded across her breast, how thankful she was to see, at last, the Pastor beloved in joy and trusted in trouble.

Soon as the venerable old man dismounted from his horse, our active little guide led it away into the humble stable, and we entered the cottage. Not a sound was heard but the ticking of the clock. The matron, who had silently welcomed us at the door, led us, with suppressed sighs, and face stained with weeping, into her father's sick-room, which, even in that time of sore distress, was as orderly as if health had blessed the house. I could not help remarking some old china ornaments on the chimney-piece—and in the window was an ever-blowing rose-tree, that almost touched the lowly roof, and brightened that end of the apartment with its blossoms. There was something tasteful in the simple furniture; and it seemed as if grief could not deprive the hand of that matron of its careful elegance.—Sickness, almost hopeless-sickness, lay there, surrounded with the same cheerful and beautiful objects which health hath loved; and she, who had arranged and adorned the apartment in her happiness, still kept it from disorder and decay in her sorrow.

With a gentle hand she drew the curtain of the bed, and there, supported by pillows as white as the snow that lay without, reposed the dying Elder. It was plain that the hand of God was upon him, and that his days on the earth were numbered.

He greeted his Minister with a faint smile, and a light inclination of the head—for his daughter had so raised him on the pillows, that he was almost sitting up in his bed. It was easy to see that he knew himself to be dying, and that his soul was prepared for the great change; yet, along with the solemn resignation of a Christian who had made his peace with God and his Saviour, there was blended on his white and sunk countenance, an expression of habitual reverence for the minister of his faith, and I saw that he could not have died in peace without that comforter to pray by his death-bed.

A few words sufficed to tell who was the stranger—and