

open brow. I may not speak of the love she hath kindled in my soul, thou wouldst call it ephemeral and weak—I only, know its depth and power, yet shall it henceforth remain unuttered, if its expression threatens to involve her happiness and peace."

"It doth, undoubtedly," said the countess, with an effort, recovering her self-possession, "therefore, I charge thee, let it rest in silence. Ianthé is the plighted bride of another, who will, ere long, claim her hand. It was promised with a free and willing heart, and but for thy whispered words, no cloud would have dimmed the brightness of her marriage day. The evil which thou hast wrought, must be atoned for by thy absence, and when she sees that thou dost voluntarily forsake, and leave her to fulfil her destiny, she will return to her duty, nor find its performance a hard or cruel task. Then ——;" she paused and hesitated.

"Then, madam, what is to be the issue to myself, of the course which thou dost prescribe?" asked Guiseppe, in a tone of calm and measured firmness, that showed him prepared, if need be, to act with stern resolve.

"Then," she said, in a voice whose tender accents grated harshly on his ear; "then shalt thou learn how devotedly thou art loved by one who hath drank at many springs of joy, yet turned from all dissatisfied till now. Guiseppe!" she said, with almost frenzied passion, "thou standest calm and cold before me, while I lay bare the hidden secret of my heart, and own to thee my love—such love as she thou dost prefer, has never known—such as her less impassioned soul can never know or feel. Wealth, rank and power, are mine to give, and these I offer thee—thee, the embodied dream of my whole life! None can oppose my choice, or bar thy freedom of acceptance, and yet thou dost not speak! Oh! answer quick, nor rack me by thy silence. Thy peril and my love have led me to forego the modesty of woman, and I would learn if I have stooped so low for naught—if yet Ianthé reigns, or Bertha is to dwell enthroned in that heart."

She had spoken with the wild and rapid vehemence of desperate passion, and as he listened, contempt and indignation swelled high within him, sweeping, as they rose, all other emotions from his breast; and when she ceased, and gazed with fond and eager expectation in his face, she recoiled in terror and surprise, as with startling emphasis he exclaimed:

"Never! never! shall the image of earthly woman, supplant that of the adored Ianthé in my soul!"

"This, then, is thy final answer?" said the

countess, her ready pride rising to her aid in this moment of shame and disappointment.

"It is," he said; "my gratitude is thine, lady, for a preference so ill deserved, but may heaven so aid me, as I remain unshaken in my devotion to her, whom only I have ever loved."

"Persist in this resolve," said the countess, haughtily, "and thy ruin is inevitable. Already it hath commenced, and thou hast yet to learn, if thou knowest it not already, that a woman's revenge is not less sure than it is sweet," and with these menacing words, she gathered her mantle around her and swept away, disappearing quickly in the obscurity which the deepening shades of twilight had shed over the landscape.

[TO BE CONCLUDED.]

CLOUDS OF THE HEART.

BY VALENTINE SLYBOOTS.

Dream on, young hearts! amid the sunny hopes,
The visions gladdening of airy foms,
Of smiles of love, and glances bright with joy,
That fancy feeds upon! for happy he
Who, like an evergreen beneath autumnal skies,
Feels not the blast whose breath can chill the heart,
And turns with laughing eye away from aught!
That wears the garb of care!

Why falls the shroud of gloom on youth's gay thoughts
Hast seen the sun ride gloriously along
A summer sky, and mark'd how suddenly
From out the far horizon spring the dark
Brown clouds, and the full brightness of his strength
Beneath their mantle wrap? Say, canst thou tell
Why or from whence they came? So swiftly rise
The clouds that dim the brightness of the heart,
That tinge with sombre hues the seat of thought,
And blight the bloom of Life!

I've stood within the halls of light and joy
Where Beauty's charms pre-eminently shone,
But of that festive hour the jocund mirth
Was soul-less all to me—and 'mid the throng
The heart was lonelier far than in the depth
Of the still night, when revelling alone
Amidst its own imaginings!

I too have loved; yet in the gladdest hour
When the eye resteth on one form alone,
And the ear hears but one familiar voice,
There falleth often on the heart, a sense
Of gloom unspeakable, foreboding much,
And steeping in the bitter cup of felt
Unworthiness and silent self-distrust,
The flowers of future hope!

"Who to the mind diseased can minister?"
Who lift the veil that clouds the feeling heart?
Who turn to smiles the sighs that chill full oft
The current of the soul?