

incurable, now comparatively easy of removal. The surgeon perceived at once by the condition of the eyes, that, by the abstraction of the injured lens, he could restore sight to the afflicted widow.

Unwilling, however, to excite her hopes too suddenly or prematurely, he began by asking her whether, for a chance of recovering the use of her eyes, she would submit to a little pain?

The poor widow replied, 'that if he thought he could once more enable her to behold her child and his children, she would be content to undergo any pain which would not endanger her existence.'

'Then,' replied her visitor, 'I may inform you that I have the strongest reasons to believe that I can restore you to sight, provided you agree to place yourself at my disposal for a few days. I will provide you with an apartment in my house, and your family shall know nothing of it until the cure is effected.'

The widow consented, and on that very evening the operation was performed. The pain was slight, and was endured by the patient without a murmur. For a few days after the surgeon insisted on her wearing a covering over her eyes, until the wounds which he had found necessary to inflict, had been perfectly healed.

One morning, after he had felt her pulse and made the necessary inquiries, he said, while he held the hand of the widow—

'I think we may now venture with safety to remove the covering. Compose yourself now, my good old friend, and suppress all emotion. Prepare your heart for the reception of a great happiness.'

The poor woman clasped her hand firmly together, and moved her lips as if in prayer. At the same moment the covering fell from her brow, and the light burst in a joyous flood upon her soul. She sat for an instant bewildered and incapable of viewing an object with distinctness. The first on which her eyes reposed was the figure of a young man bending his gaze with an intense and ecstatic fondness

upon hers, and with his arms outstretched as if to anticipate the recognition. The face, though changed and sunken since she had known it, was still familiar to her. She started from her seat with a wild cry of joy, and cast herself upon the bosom of her son.

She embraced him repeatedly, then removed him to a distance, that she might have the opportunity of viewing him with greater distinctness—and again, with a burst of tears, flung herself upon his neck. Other voices, too, mingled with theirs. She embraced them all, returning from each to each, and perusing their faces and persons as if she would never drink deep enough of the cup of rapture which her recovered sense afforded her. The beauty of the younger mother—the fresh and rosy colour of the children—the glossy brightness of their hair—their smiles—their movement of joy—all afforded subjects for delight and admiration, such as she might never have experienced. Had she never considered them in the light of blessings lost for life. The surgeon who thought that the consciousness of a stranger's presence might impose a restraint upon the feelings of the patient and her friends, retired into a distant corner, where he beheld, not without tears, the scene of happiness which he had been made instrumental in conferring.

'Richard,' said the widow, as she laid her hand upon her son's shoulder and looked into his eyes, 'did I not judge aright, when I said that even when we thought ourselves the most miserable, the Almighty might have been preparing for us some hidden blessing? Were we in the right to murmur?'

The young man withdrew his arms from his mother, clasped them before him, and bowed down his head in silence.

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The poet should cull from the garden of nature only those flowers that diffuse a healthful fragrance. No poisonous weed, however brilliant its hue, however delicious its perfume, should mingle in the wreath he wears.

PROVERB. — Of much speaking cometh repentance, but in silence there is safety.