

fever. For days he raved incessantly of his ruin, cursing the wretches by whom he was plundered. Nine days had passed, and now the crisis was at hand.

The clock struck twelve. As sound after sound rung out on the stillness and died away in echoes, reverberating through the house, the sick man moved in his sleep, until, when the last stroke was given, he opened his eyes and looked languidly and vacantly around. His gaze almost instantly met the face of his wife. For a moment his recollection could be seen struggling in his countenance, and at length an expression of deep mental suffering settled in his face. His wife had by this time risen and was now at the bedside.—She saw that the crisis was past, and as she laid her hand on his, and felt the moisture of the skin, she knew that he would recover. Tears of joy gushed from her eyes and dropping on the sick man's face.

"Heavenly Father, I thank thee!" she murmured at length when her emotions suffered her to speak while the tears streamed faster and faster down her cheek, 'he is safe. He will recover,' and though she ceased speaking, her lips still moved in silent prayer.

The sick man felt the tears on his face, he saw his wife's grateful emotion, he knew that she was even now praying for him, and as he recalled the wrongs which he had inflicted on that uncomplaining woman, his heart was melted within him.—There is no chastener like sickness, the most stony bosom softens beneath it. He thought of the long days and nights during which he must have been ill, and when his insulted and abused wife had watched anxiously at his bedside. Oh! how he had crushed that noble heart; and now this was t' > return! She prayed for him who had wronged her. She shed tears of joy because her erring husband had been restored, as it were, to life. These things rushed through his bosom and the strong man's eyes filled with tears.

"Emily—dear Emily," he said, "I have been a villain, and can you forgive me? I deserve it not at your hands, but can you, will you forgive a wretch like me?"

"Oh! can I forgive you?" sobbed the grateful wife, "yes! yes! but too gladly. But it is not against me you have sinned, it is against a good and righteous God."

"I know it—I know it" said the repentant husband, and to His mercy I look. I cannot pray for myself, but oh! Emily pray for me. He has saved me from the jaws of death. Pray for me, dear Emily."

The wife knelt at the bedside, and while the husband exhausted by his agitation, sunk back with closed eyes on the pillow, she read the noble petition for the sick, from the book of common Prayer. At times the sobs of Emily would almost choke her utterance, but the holy words she read had at length a soothing effect both on her mind and that of her husband. When the prayer was over, she remained for several minutes kneeling, while her husband murmured at intervals his heart-felt responses. At length she arose from the bedside. Her husband would again have spoken, to beseech once more her forgiveness. But with a glad feeling at heart—a feeling such as she had not had for years—she enjoined silence on him, and sat down by his bedside to watch. At length he fell again into a calm slumber, while the now happy wife watched at his bedside until morning, breathing thanksgivings for her husband's recovery, and shedding tears of joy the while.

When the sick man awoke at daybreak, he was a changed being. He was now convalescent, he was more, he was a repentant man. He wept on the bosom of his wife, and made resolutions of reformation which, after his recovery, through the blessing of God, he was enabled to fulfil.

The fortune of Walpole was mostly gone, but sufficient remained from its wrecks to allow him the comforts, though not the luxuries of life. He soon settled his affairs and removed from his splendid mansion to a quiet cottage in a neighboring village. The only pang he felt was at leaving the home which, for so many years, had been the dwelling of the head of his family—and which had been lost only through his own folly.

Neither Walpole nor his wife ever regretted their loss of fortune; for both looked upon it as the means used by an over-ruling Providence to bring the husband back to the path of rectitude: and they referred to it therefore rather with feelings of gratitude than of repining. In their quiet cottage, on the wreck of their wealth, they enjoyed a happiness to which they had been strangers in the days of their opulence. A family of lovely children sprung up around them, and it was the daily task of the parents to educate these young minds in the path of duty and rectitude. Oh! the happy hours which they enjoyed in that white, vine-embowered cottage, with their children smiling around them, and the consciousness of a well regulated life, filling their hearts with peace.