

often proves in the end the most subtle enemy. While I paused a few minutes, pondering in my own mind which course to pursue, whether to return by the park, or boldly to proceed on my way, I received a severe blow upon the back of my neck; and was forced, in self-defence, to grapple with my powerful adversary. My calls for help were fortunately answered in the most effectual manner, by the honest basket-maker, who happened to be returning from the town. Upon his bringing his staff into play, the ruffians made off. I was so much overcome by the severe blows I had received, that I was forced to rest for some time in the good man's cottage. When I was able to proceed he brought me hither with his torch. How grateful I am," he continued, gazing tenderly upon his beloved family, "that I am with you once more! God is very good to his unworthy servant."

In a few minutes Brandon was helped to his own bed, and his faithful wife and sister watched all night beside his restless pillow.

From that hour Richard Brandon never left his bed. The severe blows which he had received, only hastened by a few weeks, or months, the progress of the fatal disease which had already fastened upon him. It was some days before Monica could believe that their brief season of love must so soon end; that she was called upon to part with all, save her babe, that was dearest to her upon earth. For days after the physicians had confided to her the reality of Brandon's situation, and that recovery was hopeless, she appeared like one stupified. She would glance from her boy to the sick bed of her husband, and her whole soul would dissolve in floods of tears.

"What shall I do when he is gone?" she would murmur. "How shall I bear his loss! Oh, dear! oh, dear! My poor heart! how will you bear this cruel agony! My love! my life! Would to God, I could die in your stead!"

And there was one, whom she often fancied sleeping, because he bore his infirmities so patiently, to whom those half-uttered complaints were far worse to bear than nature's weakness. Often, when she thought him unconscious of suffering, he was breathing fervent prayers to heaven, that she, the beloved, might be supported in the hour of trial. Poor Brandon! it was hard to part from that young, fond creature—from that smiling babe—but the heart of the Christian, though severely wrung, was stayed upon his God. Much sad and holy communion he held with Monica, upon the awful change that awaited him; and he seemed so full of hope and faith, so resigned to the will of his Maker, so truly fit to die, that vain human lore, frantic

for the loss of its cherished idol, could alone have wished and prayed for its detention on earth.

"We have lived but a short time together, Monica," he said, one evening to her, as she held his hand in hers, and her arm supported his drooping head upon her breast. "To me, it has been very short; for we have been very happy. Should we not be grateful to God, dearest, who has allowed us to enjoy so much of heaven upon earth?"

Monica only replied by her tears.

"I go from you, my heart's best treasure," he continued, "and my body must moulder into dust; but the soul lives, and will be once more united to thine before the throne of God. Do not weep thus, Monica. Let your Richard still survive to you in his son. For my sake, live to cherish my dear babe."

"Oh! that I could die with you!" sobbed Monica.

"Nay, my love! God wills it not. You have your part still to perform upon earth, and God will give you strength to bear your affliction." He paused for some minutes, then said in a lively tone: "I have one request to make, Monica, yet it appears to me selfish, when I consider that you are still so young and fair."

"Name it, my Richard, and if it is in my power to grant it, your request shall be religiously obeyed."

"Promise me, Monica, my own Monica, not to divide that heart with another, which is now entirely mine own. As we have been one on earth, so let us be one in heaven."

"You need not have asked this of me, Richard," said Monica, reproachfully, kissing the cold, pale hand, which grew colder and colder in her clasp. "I shall remain thine, only thine, for ever!"

As she pronounced these words with a solemn emphasis, a serene smile lighted up the rigid features of the dying man, and remained upon his lips long after his heart grew cold.

[TO BE CONTINUED.]

LINES.

SENT TO A LADY WITH A NOSEGAT OF VIOLETS.

DEAR object of my late and early prayer!
Source of my joy and solace of my care!
Whose gentle friendship such a charm can give,
As makes me wish, and tells me how to live:
To thee the Muse, with grateful hand, would bring
These first fair children of the doubtful Spring.
O may they, fearless of a varying sky,
Bloom on thy breast, and smile beneath thine eye!
In fairer lights their vivid blue display,
And sweeter breathe their little lives away!