

He was there, too ill to move, the hand of death visibly upon him, and yet with no friend who knew of his condition, or could render sympathy and aid when he most required them. He was left thus to die alone; the Captain and other officers of the ship were either ill or too much occupied to attend to him; and at the very moment when his wife was anxiously expecting his return, in the full vigour of life and health, a telegraphic message informed her that her husband lay dying in the vessel that had brought him from California. The sudden reaction from hope to the bitterest of earthly disappointments, was more than the stricken woman could bear, and sickness ensued which prostrated and rendered her incapable of thought or exertion. A near relative of her own left in the earliest conveyance for New York, and arrived there in time to witness the last hours of the dying man. But disease had done its worst work, and left both mind and body prostrate beneath its influence. He only survived one day after his friend's arrival, and during that interval was unable to do more than express his consciousness of his presence, and send a last message to the dearest loved. Thus on the very threshold of home, with independence in his grasp, and all the imagined comforts and blessings of life and friendship in prospect, poor Hamilton passed away from the dream and enjoyment of all. In the prime of manhood, with others depending solely on his protection and support, far from the voices that would have cheered him, and the affection that would have sustained him, the adventurous and courageous spirit of the young man yielded up its earthly power—leaving mourning and tears to those who looked in vain for his coming,—one more assurance of the uncertainty of life and its pursuits, another attestation to the truth of the wise man's injunction, when he tells the denizen of earth, 'Boast not thyself of to-morrow, for thou knowest not what a day may bring forth.'

His severe illness, and quickly succeeding death, left no time for any adjustment of his property. Full of life and hope, he trusted to dispose of it himself for the benefit of his family, and consequently left no will whereby they might secure it.

Notwithstanding many efforts on the part of the friends of Mrs. Hamilton, his money never became hers, but passed away to others, who it appeared had nearer legal claims. And thus the very object of his toil and labour was defeated, as she for whom he worked with such ceaseless energy, never reaped the fruit of unselfish affection. He gave up all that makes life dear and precious, sentencing himself to exile and suffering, to further the happiness of one he had promised to cherish, and by that step deprived her of all. His care, his labour, and dearer still the protection and interest of a husband's affection, were all lost. Years of absence and loneliness had been borne, cheered only by the hope of his ultimate return, and now death had taken away the last light, and those who mourned him were made to feel that absence and death began together.