

to Mr. Dorival's sleeping apartment, when he felt his arm grasped by his companion, who, with an impressive gesture of silence, pointed to a door through which streamed the only ray of light that relieved the deep gloom in which they sheltered themselves while watching with intense interest the scene that was passing within the chamber of the dying.

It was true, indeed, that the wretched slave of mammon was at length about to resign the treasures which he had toiled and laboured to amass, and appear naked and defenceless in the presence of that God whose gracious gifts he had despised, to answer for the neglect and abuse of the talents committed to his trust. Ever since the day of Madelaine's first call at Mrs. Dunmore's, he had seemed to be failing, and the change struck those around him at once, for he had been a man of iron constitution, enduring hunger, and thirst, the extremes of heat and cold, and the absence of all that may conduce to bodily comfort, without a sign of suffering, scarcely of consciousness. Absorbed as he was by one engrossing passion, whatever, in any shape ministered to it was endured by him without a murmur,—or, as one would have judged, who noted him, the endurance of a pang. But age had overtaken him, and the strong man was forced to bend beneath its load of ills. At the moment when, like the rich man of the parable, he was saying with boastful confidence, "I will pull down my barns and build greater, and there will I bestow all my fruits and my goods," there sounded in his ear a fearful voice, uttering those startling words, that have often roused the worldly and the thoughtless from a dream of idle wealth, or pleasure as illusive: "Thou fool, this night thy soul shall be required of thee, and then whose will those things be which thou hast provided?"

It was this thought, this bitter conviction, that he must leave his golden hoards to be squandered by, he knew not whom, rather than the natural dread of a terrible futurity, that preyed upon the spirit of the wretched miser, and aided the progress of the wasting decay that was rapidly sapping the fountain of his life. Day by day his strength failed, his eye waxed dimmer, and his hand more tremulous, and yet he refused all medical aid, and turned with rude ungraciousness from every offered kindness: "They should not poison him yet," he said, "though if they did, they would find his money was beyond their reach," and thus muttering he would crawl away to his miserable bed, bidding them all begone and trouble him no more.

Yet in the morning, when the tender-hearted Madelaine stole into his room, with a fragrant cup of balm of her own preparing, or of hyson, filched from the small store appropriated to her mother's use, he would not often refuse it, but it was never gratefully accepted, for directly he would reproach her

wastefulness for using tea so costly, and repulse her sternly from his sight. Yet still she hovered round him, ministering as often as he would permit her, to the comfort of his suffering body, and striving with the earnestness and sincerity of a humble and holy heart, that had drawn its own support and strength from the well-spring of eternal life, to bedew his grovelling spirit with the blessed waters of that fount, and lead his earth-bound thoughts to fix themselves on the momentous concerns of that eternity which was about to be unfolded to his view.

But her touching words fell upon a heart of stone, though still hoping that some might spring up and bear fruit, she lost no opportunity of letting them distill gently as the dew of Hermon from her lips. Yet all in vain; he heeded her not, but turning from her entreating looks, and earnest words, would murmur incoherently, to himself, or break forth into rapid utterance, talking of bonds, and rents, and annuities, till exhausted by the effort, he would sink into a deep sleep, that sometimes lasted for hours.

Engrossed by these duties, Madelaine found scarcely a moment for the occupations which had so long been to her a source of pecuniary profit, and she regretted it the more, as her finances were nearly exhausted, and she knew not in what manner she could replenish the little stock of invalid comforts, most of which her mother had consumed, and with the fretfulness of a sick child, constantly petitioned to have renewed. She had not a suspicion, that so constantly as Madelaine had been employed in earning money, her purse could now be exhausted, for she never thought of her own long and expensive illness, and the many extravagant desires, that her dutiful child had toiled late and early for the means of gratifying—nor was it, till by her cruel insinuations, that her daughter neglected her wants, to lavish her time and care on one, who had never shewn either of them a kindness, she so deeply wounded the harassed girl, as to wring from her a confession of the poverty which she would fain have spared her ungrateful parent the pain of knowing.

Shocked by the information, Mrs. Dorival lamented with tears her injustice, and entreated Madelaine to spare herself the incessant fatigue, which she incurred by attendance on her grandfather, and devote herself to her lighter and more agreeable employments, the avails of which they particularly required now, leaving the care of him to Phebe, who was accustomed to his peculiarities, and best knew how to soothe his ill-humour. But Madelaine was not selfish enough to profit by this counsel, and was besides far too tender-hearted and conscientious, to impose on poor old Phebe the hard and ungrateful task, of attending unaided, on the sick bed of her master. She had moreover observed within a day or two, that he seemed soothed by her presence, and it gave strength to the hope she nurtured, of still being successful in winning his thoughts from the