

wishing for Alice, and wondering what could keep her so long.

Not that she stood in need of any little service she might render, for a servant in an adjoining apartment was within sound of the hand-bell placed beside her; but her daughter was the delight of her eyes, the one object of solicitude and affection, and her absence, to her idolizing mother, was as the sudden withdrawal of sunshine; her presence, the chief earthly blessing to one whose days were evidently drawing to a close.

There were painful thoughts connected with the future, that now somewhat disturbed her mind, for well the lady knew, that soon she must sleep the sleep of death; slowly but surely, her system was succumbing to the effects of an inward disease, which physicians might alleviate, but could never cure, and the one pang connected with her departure, was the remembrance that she must leave her orphan daughter comparatively alone, to tread the thorny path of life, to encounter its tempests of care and sorrow, uncheered it might be, by human sympathy, and unassisted by human affection.

"But this is wrong," she murmured; "the Helper of him that hath no help, will watch over and guide her; and it may be permitted to me, though unseen, to hover around her, to whisper words of counsel and encouragement, thus performing the hallowed mission of one of those bright intelligencies, sent forth to minister to the heirs of salvation."