

not worthy to breathe the same air. I see I have given you only fresh pain by allowing my feelings to get the better of me. I hope I have not, by confessing my love, lost your friendship."

"No, I shall be pleased to regard you as a true, unselfish friend, who forgot himself once, but only once." After a few moments' hesitation, Mrs. Pierce continued, "I am going to show you that I consider you as worthy of trust and confidence by asking a great favor from you."

"What is it?" was the eager question.

"I feel that my days are numbered. Now, you doubtless have guessed the favor for which I am going to ask you. It is that I may leave my worse than orphaned children in your care."

"Indeed you may, but why talk of dying? You may survive me, you are much younger than I am."

"Younger in years, but older in suffering. I am sure that I am not mistaken, and your promise has relieved me from a load of care."

That night Mrs. Pierce enjoyed a better rest than any she had had before the blow came.

But Mr. Hastings was not the only true friend she found in her trouble. Many who had at first looked at her askance now discovered their mistake; and, believing her to be a noble but badly treated wife, vied in showing her their friendship. Pleased and comforted as she was to see this change of front, she could not regard those who had doubted her innocence with the same feeling as that which she felt towards Miss Todd, whose confidence and loyalty had never faltered for a moment. Her friendship did not consist in words only, but in deeds. It was