

white robe on the dark velvet of her low chair. Gasp by gasp she had studied this in the hospitals of her own Paris, but she is nearer reality now than she dreamed then, and each words bears a cruel truth and terrible premonition. Could she feel it? Dared she realize it, and life so precious now? See her gasp, and grow whiter, as she leans on the cushioned velvet—hear her cough, not violent, but deep and hollow and sepulchral! Watch the death-shadows creep and darken—aye, the scene is before us, the tones are sounding now, though blood and battle stand between the present and that December evening.

“Maurice!” A whole lifetime of love concentrates in that eager, impulsive welcome. Then, hold your heart, as you bend forward breathless to catch each word that is barely whispered, not loudly spoken; but from parquet to tier no syllable is lost, and the hush grows intenser, the silence more profound, as she continues:

“Ah! what sufferings . . . it is no longer my head, it is my breast, that burns . . . it is here like a live coal . . . like a devouring fire which consumes me.

“Ah! the pain grows worse . . . I do not want to die . . . at present I do not want to die.

“O God! hear me! . . . O God, permit me to live! . . . a few days longer . . . I am so young and life was opening before me so beautiful!

“Life! . . . life! . . . vain struggles! . . . vain prayer! . . . my days are numbered. I feel my strength and my very being passing away!”

Who can forget her “Adieu!” in which all of life’s passion merged into the agony of the long parting?

Thus the scene passed from us; and to the *tragédienne*, her own life furnished a drama too sadly real to allow assumed feeling; therefore, despite the murmurs of the Havaneros, among whom she afterward sojourned, she was utterly incapable of appearing again on the stage.

The company then disbanded, and on the 28th of January, 1856, she returned to France.

How strenuously she fought death, those who watched her can testify. for she yearned for life with a craving that would not be subdued.