

heavy sigh was the first intimation of his presence. Starting, for the sound proceeded from some one close to me, and, looking up, I met his mournful glance. Placing the picture on the table, I apologized, as well as I could, for the liberty I had taken in examining that which was evidently not intended for a stranger's gaze. My curiosity was roused, and inquiries came "tripping to my tongue," seeking egress,—but a glance at Mr. Worthington's countenance was sufficient to deter me from remarks which might be the occasion of pain, and, as he made no allusion to it, the subject was not referred to. I now, for the first time, saw that Frederick was strangely altered, and his appearance indicated a rapid decline. A bright spot of crimson on his cheeks, which were becoming hollow and sunken,—an unnatural clearness in the eyes, and an occasional cough, slight but painfully ominous, warned of the insidious approach of a fatal disease. I could see that some inward grief, repressed outwardly, but struggling fiercely within, controlled by a master hand, but nevertheless taking sad vengeance by preying on the vitals, draining the strength, robbing food of its relish, and sleep of its enjoyment, was fanning into fierce flame the latent spark of consumption in a slight frame and delicate constitution. Impatience and irritability there was none; a delight at sacrificing his own pleasure to promote that of others—a continued effort to remain calm and composed, to enjoy the present, characterized him, but an effort it evidently was. From his lips no past incident of his life escaped, and the future seemed to occupy but little of his thoughts. What cloud of misfortune could have cast so sombre a gloom over a life scarcely arrived at maturity I knew not—but certain it was that beneath some crushing weight of grief earthly hope appeared to be buried, and when I have observed his evident attempts to rouse himself—to shake off the incubus—to speak cheerfully, lightly, gaily, my heart has ached at the failure which I well knew must follow, and I have turned away to conceal emotion which I dared not display.

A fortnight elapsed, and my fellow traveller having become convalescent, I was seated with him one lovely afternoon, enjoying the balmy breeze, which, laden with the odour of fragrant flowers, came gently through the open casement, when a servant

entered with a message from Frederick, whom a slight indisposition had detained as prisoner in his room for a few days, earnestly requesting to speak to me if I was at leisure. I immediately obeyed the summons, and directed my steps to the room. The contrast between the lighted hall and the darkened apartment—for the glare of sunshine was not congenial to the invalid's spirits—prevented me, at first, from distinctly discerning him, but as I became accustomed to the darkness, I beheld him reclining on a couch with clasped hands, closed eyes and face, so marble, so death-like in its repose, that a cold shudder ran through my frame. "Surely the spirit has not fled," was my inward ejaculation, but the sound of his voice reassured me, as, in a tone of peculiar pathos, he bade me welcome. "Will you not sit down," he said, pointing to a chair that stood by the bedside. "I have much to say to you, but I fear exhausting your patience."

Eagerly I assured him of my willingness to listen—of my ardent desire to do anything in my power to contribute to his comfort. Thanking me, he referred to the circumstances which led to our acquaintance, and subsequent friendship, and then added, "The kindness which you have shown towards a total stranger, and the interest you have manifested in my welfare, prompts me to a narrative of the incidents of my life; they may, perhaps, be interesting to you,—and, far from home and friends, I would fain awaken a chord of sympathy in one human heart, before earthly ties are dissolved by the hand of death!"

"Death!" said I, starting abruptly at the word. "Do not mention it, I beseech you. You are very young, and your constitution will soon triumph over this slight disease, and, indeed, the physician informed me this morning that there was not the slightest symptom of danger."

A mournful smile passed over his countenance, as in a tone that went to my heart, so touching was its cadence, he exclaimed:

"Say, can he minister to a mind diseased;
Or pluck, from memory's roots, a barbed sorrow?"

"Yes, my friend," he continued, after a pause, for my heart was too full to permit me to answer, "I feel that I must die: I have struggled long against my feelings, I have borne up till now,—but I can bear up no longer. My native hill shall again be