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THE FIRST AND LAST ERROR.

"One lovely bush of the pale virgin thorn,
Bent o'er a little heap of lowly turf,
Is all the sad memorial of her worth—
All that remains to mark where she is laid."

It was a lovely evening in the early part of August, 1827, when a brilliant sun was sinking in the horizon, and tinging all around with golden beams, that a travelling carriage and four was seen rapidly descending a hill to the north road. In the carriage supported on pillows, reclined a young man, on whose high brow and noble countenance disease had stamped its seal in fearful characters, though the natural beauty of the sufferer still shone forth triumphantly over the ravages of illness. His languid head rested on the shoulder of a young and beautiful girl, and his upturned eyes were fixed with an expression of utterable love on hers. The last rosy rays of sunset, falling on the pale brow of the young man, shewed like a red cloud passing over snow, and contrasted sadly with its marble hue.

"Mary, my blessed love," said the invalid, "pull the check-string, and order Sainville to urge the postilions to advance still quicker."

"Be composed, dearest Henry," replied the young lady; "observe you not that the velocity with which we advance has increased the difficulty of your breathing? You will destroy yourself by this exertion?"

"Mary, you know not how essential it is to my peace of mind that we should reach Greta Green most rapidly; every moment is precious, and the anxiety that preys on me is even more fatal to my frame than the velocity of our pace. Tell Sainville, then, dearest, to urge the postilions."

Mary pulled the check-strings, and Sainville soon stopped the carriage and stood by the whip. The change that the last hour had produced on the countenance of his master struck

the servant with dismay; and he almost feared he should see him expire, as, gasping for breath, he turned his eager eyes on those of Sainville, and laying his hand on the arm of the alarmed servant, said, "Remember, Sainville, that my life, nay, more than life, depends on my reaching Greta Green in a few hours. Give the postilions gold—promise them all, everything, if they will advance with all possible speed."

The postilions urged their steeds, and the carriage whirled along with fearful rapidity, while the invalid pressed with a nervous grasp the small trembling hand that rested within his.

Who were this young and interesting pair, at whose dreams of love and happiness the gaunt fiend Death smiled in mockery, while he held his dart suspended over them? To tell who they were, it is necessary to return to the village of Dawlish, in Devonshire, where dwelt Mrs. Lester, the widow of a field officer, who was killed at the battle of Waterloo, and who left his still young and beautiful wife, with an infant daughter, a scanty provision, and little else save the distinguished reputation that his well-known bravery had gained in a life devoted to the service of his country, and sealed by his blood. Colonel Lester's had been a love-marriage; but unlike the generality of such unions, the love had increased with the years that had united them; and they felt so happy as nearly to forget that their marriage had deprived them of the affection and countenance of their mutual relatives, who had declined all intercourse with two poor and wilful persons, as they considered them, who were determined to marry from pure affection, contrary to the advice of all their friends. It was not until death had snatched her husband from her, that Mrs. Lester felt the consequences of her imprudent marriage. Left alone and unprotected, with an infant daughter, how did