

LAST DAY OF EVE.

It approached the evening twilight. The mother of mankind was placed by her descendants in front of her tent, reclining on a rude couch. The western wind fanned her pale cheek and played amidst her grey locks. Near her sat her husband. Eve turned her eye upon him with a look of sadness, yet of deep affection, and as she saw his wrinkled brow, bent form, and head of snowy whiteness, seemed to call to mind other days.

Inwardly she reproached herself.—“Ah, not thus was it I saw him, when first given to him by our God. Where has vanished that manly form—where is the elastic step—where the eye that beamed with brightness—where now the rich and mellow voice? Alas, how changed! And it was I, who tempted, who destroyed him—I the wife—the cherished companion; I bade him eat, and now what is *he*, who but for *me* had known neither pain, nor sorrow, nor age.

“And what remains of her on whose beauty he then gazed with unsated delight? A trembling, wrinkled form, just sinking into the grave.

“Where is now that paradise with its fruits—that balmy air which brought on every breath a tribute to each happy sense—those rays which warmed but never scorched? And sadder, sadder still, where now is that blissful intercourse with Him, who made us rich in the happiness of living? His voice is no longer in our ears—driven from bliss—from scenes so lovely—the earth cursed—sin, sorrow, and death, the inheritance of our children.”

Our mother was overcome by the rush of recollections. Her eyes, long dry, found new fountains, and her aged form shook with deep emotion.

It may be that Adam had been indulging in musings not unlike to those, for he was startled as if from a reverie by the emotions of his wife. The old man placed himself beside her. She laid her head on the bosom which had so often soothed its throbbings.

“What moves thee, Eve?”

“Oh, my husband, how canst thou show kindness to her who has done all this? Thou wast young and knew only happiness, and all around was formed to delight our very sense; and I, who should have strengthened thy virtue, fell, and dragged thee with me, the partner of my sin, to this depth of ruin. And after a few years of toil and anxiety, we are about to lay these worn out frames in the dust.

“But for sin we had lived in perpetual youth, and feared no change.—The threatened death has worked slowly but surely, and now with us his work is nearly done.

“The first to sin, it was meet that I should first return to dust. Had the guilt and the curse been only mine, I might endure it. But I see thee now, and I compare thee with what thou wast, as it seems to me but yesterday.

“A few days will lay thee low. Let our children place us side by side in the cold earth. I know not why it is, yet it seems to me there will be comfort in our bodies dissolving together, as if there were something of consciousness in the lifeless dust.

“Little of comfort as is now left in life, yet I cannot endure the thought I shall utterly cease to be!

“Adam, thou hast often given me words of consolation. Is there aught that can cheer me, now I am to bid thee farewell?

“Thou seest yonder sun—*thou* wilt again see him rise and set, he is bidding *me* a last adieu. Sense shall soon cease for ever, and no light shall again enter these eyes.”

The old man wiped the tears which fell on the wrinkled brow of his partner. A sudden light was on his countenance as if a new lamp had been lit up in his soul. Eve saw it, and it brought to her a gleam of hope; she gazed on his face as if death had lent new powers to her faded vision.

“First of women,” said Adam, “claim no pre-eminence in guilt—together we sinned—together we have borne the punishment.