

authority, and curse the hand that smote him, to hate where he had once loved with a fond idolatry.

The good mother listened attentively, and weighed every circumstance. The frankness of his unreserved confession convinced her of its truth, and when all the sad tale was told, she took him in her pitying arms and told him that though all the world should pronounce him guilty, she believed him innocent from her very soul.

"God bless you, dearest, best mother," sobbed the poor lad, covering her hand with kisses. "I will never give you cause to be ashamed of me. But my father—it seems unnatural, monstrous, that he should condemn me at once. I shall never get over it. It crushes my heart, it presses out my life. If I could only prove to him my innocence, I could die in peace."

"Don't talk of dying, George. Leave your cause to God. He will bring to light the hidden things of darkness, and make the black shadow that now envelopes you, clear as the noon day. Let me go to your father; I think I could convince him that you are innocent, that he has acted hastily."

Exhausted as he was, George grasped his mother's hands and held her fast, "Stay with me, mother, I could not see him again, while this conflict is going on in my mind, while he considers me a felon, a disgrace to his name and family. The brand must be removed from my brow, before I can meet him face to face. I want to love him as I once loved him. I feel as if I never could love him again. Let us lift up our hearts to God, my mother. Pray with me—pray for me, that I may bear this cross with christian fortitude, and be taught to forgive my enemies. Yes, as He forgave them," he continued, reverently folding his hands together, "and gave his life for sinners like me—and died the just for the unjust."

They prayed long and earnestly, that sorrowful mother and son. A light broke over the pallid face of the youth, he raised his head slowly from her supporting arms, and gazed into her tearful eyes with a look of unutterable love—"Mother, the agony is over. I feel calm and happy now. Our prayers are accepted. That divine peace which Christ bestowed upon His disciples—His last best gift is filling my heart. The anger I felt towards my poor father is lost in love and pity. My sorrows are over—his, alas! are to come. To you, dearest mother, I leave the task of reconciliation. You will vindicate my memory, and teach him to respect me in death. And that miserable old man—tell him to deal kindly with him for my sake. Tell him I forgive him, that he must forgive him also, and lead the sinner back to God." A shade passed over the noble face of the youth; an universal tremor ran through his