

of remorse when it is too late. Do not, my dear George, for my sake, judge him too harshly; do not, I beseech you, suppose that in the slightest degree, I repent at this moment what was then my own free choice. On the contrary, what would wealth and honor have been to me without you. Rather," added she, taking his hand in hers, and looking into his face, a heavenly smile lighting up her emaciated features; "rather let us rejoice, that whatever may have befallen us, never for an instant has a cloud interposed between our mutual affection—and for this, it were nothing to resign every thing else on earth."

He bent down over the sufferer, and her cheek was moistened by the tear, which even in the presence of a comparative stranger, he could not help shedding. She soon after said:

"I have found means to write at intervals, this packet to my father. It will reach him when I am no more, and perhaps it may dispose him to be just to my dear family, for whose sake alone I at this moment feel any solicitude. It will convey to him his daughter's forgiveness and blessing. God knows, that although I have often prayed that his affection might be again turned towards me, I have never for a single instant regretted my choice, nor do I yet, now that I feel myself drawing near to the grave."

Her husband was about to reply, but she stopped him, saying:

"I have but little more to do on earth—will you not, my dear George, see this packet despatched to my father. It will be a consolation to me to think I have done my duty to my children."

"Most cheerfully, will I see it done," replied the husband; "any thing, every thing that I can do, I will gladly do. Nay, I will stoop and kneel at his feet, and again as a suppliant implore justice and compassion."

"I ask not this, my dear husband; only let it be forwarded, and leave the result to God, who has the hearts of all in his hands. There is but one thing else which I would fain mention, it is painful for me to do so; it is not perhaps proper now, but the Doctor is not a stranger, and to night may be the only moment when I shall have it in my power. It is for the sake of my dear children, for your own sake, my dearest husband, for my own peace. Will you not forgive me if I mention it now?"

"Nay," replied he; "what have I to forgive, what can I refuse?—would that it were in my power, by any sacrifice, any penance of mine, to relieve you from an instant's uneasiness. Speak then, dearest, and doubt not but I will do or bear any thing, listen to anything. It is no time for reserve now, nor will the Doctor's presence be in the least painful; on the contrary, it was my folly and pride that has hitherto prevented me from knowing him

better, and thanking you, Doctor, as I do now from my soul, for your kindness."

He again offered me his hand, and warmly grasping mine, he began to thank me, but I of course prevented anything of the kind, for I had merely discharged a professional duty, and could not listen to apologies at such a moment.

"Raise me a little, my dear George," said the patient; "put your arm around me, for I feel weak, and would have you near me, as my dearest earthly stay."

It was done, and over her pale and worn countenance there flitted a gleam of satisfaction, the emblem of undiminished affection, which rejoiced in the presence of its beloved and cherished object, forgetting all pain, all anxiety of mind, nay, even death itself, content while he was nigh, happy in his support. The attendants, and even Margaret, had left the room, and we were alone—if indeed there were no ministering angels hovering about the dying couch, and ministering strength and support to the sufferer, as her hour of trial came.

She looked at me for an instant, with the same smile still irradiating her face, and said:

"I know not how it is, Doctor, but I feel a strange serenity at this moment—pain has left me, and the dizzy confusion which has vexed me of late, has disappeared. I look forward without apprehension to the future, and backwards to the past without regret. Is there not mercy in this, my dear husband, that now when I am to be taken away, I can leave you with composure, and with thankfulness? It is but as yesterday, I remember it as if it had indeed been yesterday, when we were united, and my girlish wishes and dreams more than realized in the happiness of the few years that succeeded—and passed away—oh, how swiftly—before you went abroad. It was too bright a picture not to be shaded in some degree, but thanks to Heaven, if your absence occasioned regret, I was not without comfort in our dear children, nor without ties to bind us to each other, and to this earth which love can make so beautiful. Had you been happy on your return from abroad, I should never have had a wish to be gratified. But I felt no reluctance to leave England, except in so far as our children were concerned, whose education, I feared, might be interrupted, and perhaps their tender health affected by a severe climate. Fortunately their health has been improved, and for some time at least your mind seemed at ease, and all was happiness. It was but natural, that here, in a wild country, with but few acquaintance, and little or none of the social intercourse and society to which we were accustomed, that you should often spend your evenings with the few fellow countrymen who are in the neighbourhood, who are, unfortunately, but bad specimens of Englishmen. Pardon me, my dearest George, if I say that the