

pestilence which worketh only what the word performs, and what chivalry requires as a sacrifice to the madness of woman's folly? But whither would you flee to escape it? Be it south or north, it is there; and east or west, it is there also. If ye flee from the pestilence, would ye flee also from the eye of Him who sends it?"

Again they urged her to leave the city; and again she endeavoured to smile; but it died languidly on her lip—the rose on her cheek vanished, and her mild eyes in a moment became dim. She sank her head upon the bosom of her lover, and her hand rested on the shoulder of her brother. The contagion had entered her heart. A darkening spot gathered upon her fair cheek—it was the shadow of the finger of death—the sea of eternity!

"My Madeline!" cried Sir William—"merciful Heaven!—spare her!"

"Oh, my sister!" exclaimed her brother—"have I hastened to my native land, but to behold thee die?"

She feebly pressed their hands in hers—"Leave me—leave me, loved ones!—my William!—my brother! flee from me!—there is death in the touch of your Madeline!—We shall meet again!"

The plague-spot darkened on her cheek; and, in a few hours, Madeline Aubrey was numbered with its victims.

THE SEEKER.

Amongst the many thousand readers of these tales, there are, perhaps, few who have not observed that the object of the writer is frequently of a higher kind than that of merely contributing to their amusement.—He would wish "to point a moral," while he endeavours to "adorn a tale." It is with this view that he now lays before them the history of a Seeker. The first time he remembers hearing, or rather of noticing the term, was in conversation with a living author, respecting the merits of a popular poet, when his religious opinions being adverted to, it was mentioned that in a letter to a brother poet of equal celebrity, he described himself as a Seeker. I was struck with the word and its application. I had never met with the fool who saith in his heart that there is no God; and, though I had known many deniers of Revelation, yet a Seeker,

in the sense in which the word was applied, appeared a new character. But, on reflection, I found it an epithet applicable to thousands, and adopted it as a title to our present story.

Richard Storie was the eldest son of a dissenting minister, who had the pastoral charge of a small congregation a few miles from Hawick. His father was not what the world calls a man of talent, but he possessed what is far beyond talents—piety and humility. In his own heart he felt his Bible to be true—its words were as a lamp within him, and from his heart he poured forth its doctrines, its hopes, and consolations, to others with a fervour and an earnestness which Faith only can inspire. It is not the thunder of declamation, the pomp of eloquence, the majesty of rhetoric, the rounded period, the glow of imagery, which can chain the listening soul, and melt down the heart of the unbeliever, as metals yield to the heat of the furnace. Shew me the hoary-headed preacher, who carries sincerity in his countenance and in his very tones, who is animated because faith inspires him, and out of the fullness of his own heart his mouth speaketh, and there is the man from whose tongue truth floweth as from the lips of an apostle, and the small still voice of conscience echoes to his words, while hope burns and the judgment becomes convinced. Where faith is not in the preacher, none will be produced in the hearer. Such a man was the father of Richard Storie. He had fulfilled his duty, and prayed with and for his children. He had set before them the example of a Christian parent, and he rejoiced to perceive that the example was not lost upon them.

We pass over the earlier years of Richard Storie, as during that period he had not become a Seeker, nor did he differ from other children of his age. There was, indeed, a thoughtfulfulness and sensibility about his character; but these were by no means so remarkable as to require particular notice. They did not mark his boyhood in a peculiar degree. The truths which from his childhood he had been accustomed to hear from his father's lips, he had never doubted; but he felt their truth as he felt his father's love, both had been imparted to him together. He had fixed upon the profession of a physician, and, at the age of eighteen, he went to Edinburgh to attend the classes. He was a zealous student, and his progress realized the fondest wishes and anticipations.