

you love me, that what you do is done for the best, but the voice of conscience will be heard above your voice. I hunger and thirst to hear the words of life, and cannot die in peace, unsatisfied. Read, madam. For the love of Christ, read a few words of comfort to a dying sinner?"

Here the mother again interposed.

"My good woman," I said, gently putting her back, "you hear your son's earnest request. If you really love him you will offer no useless opposition to his wishes. It is not a question of creeds which is here to be determined, as to which is the best, yours or mine. I trust that all the faithful followers of Christ, however named, hold the same faith. I shall make no comment upon what I read to your son. The Bible is its own interpreter. The Spirit of God by whom it was dictated will make it clear to his comprehension. Michael, shall I commence now?" "Yes! with the blessing of God."

After putting up a short prayer for the aid of the Holy Spirit, I commenced reading and continued to do so until night, taking care to select those portions of Scripture most applicable to his case. Never did human creature drink in with more eagerness the words of life. Often he repeated whole texts after me, clasping his hands together in a sort of ecstasy, while tears streamed from his eyes. The old mother, glared upon me from a far corner, and muttered over her beads, as if they were a spell to secure her against some diabolical art. When I could no longer see to read, Michael took my hand and pressed it between his own.

"May God bless you, madam," he said, "you have made me very happy. It is all clear to me now. In Christ I shall obtain mercy and forgiveness for my sins. It is his righteousness, and not any good works of my own that will save me. Death no longer appears dreadful to me. I can now depart in peace."

"You believe that God will forgive your sins for Christ's sake; and have you, Michael, forgiven all your enemies?" I said this to try him, for I knew that he had entertained hard thoughts against his uncle. He covered his face with his thin, wasted hands, and did not answer for some minutes; at length he looked up with a sweet smile upon his lips, and said, "Yes, I have forgiven all, even him."

Oh how much was contained in the stress laid so strongly and sadly upon that last little word, *Him*. How I longed to hear the story of his wrongs from his own lips, but he was too weak and exhausted to urge such a request. Just then Dr. Morris came in, and after standing for some

minutes at the bed side, regarding his patient with fixed attention, he felt his pulse, spoke a few kind words, gave some trifling order to his mother and Mrs. Edwards, and left the room. Struck by the solemnity of his manner I followed him into the outer room.

"Excuse the liberty I am taking, Dr. Morris, but I feel deeply interested in your patient. Is he better or worse?"

"He is dying. I did not wish to disturb him in his last moments. I can be of no further use to him. Poor lad, it is a pity, he is really a fine young fellow."

I knew from Michael's appearance that he had not long to live, but I felt inexpressibly shocked to find his end so near. On returning to the sick room, Michael eagerly asked me, what the doctor said of him. I did not answer. I could not. "I see," he said, "that I must die. I will prepare myself for it. If I live until the morning, will you madam, come and read to me again?"

I promised him that I would, or during the night, if he wished it.

"I feel very sleepy," he said, "and I am almost entirely free from pain, I have not slept for many nights. God is very merciful to grant me this respite." His mother and I adjusted his pillows, and in a few minutes he was slumbering as calmly and sweetly as a young child.

The feelings of the poor woman seemed softened towards me: and for the first time, she shed some tears. I asked her the age of her son, and she told me that he was two and twenty. She wrung my hand hard as I left the room, and thanked me for my kindness to her poor boy.

It was late that night, when my husband returned from the country, and we sat for several hours talking over our affairs and discussing the soil and situation of the various farms he had visited during the day.

It was past twelve when we retired to rest, but my sleep was soon disturbed by some one coughing violently, and my thoughts instantly reverted to Michael Macbride, as the hoarse, sepulchral sounds echoed through the large empty room beyond which he slept. The coughing continued for some minutes, and I was so much overcome by fatigue and the excitement of the evening, that I fell asleep and did not awake until six o'clock the following morning.

Anxious to hear how the poor invalid had passed the night, I dressed myself and hurried to his chamber.

On entering the ball room, I found the doors and windows all open; as well as the one that led to the sick man's chamber. My foot was ar-