

dark and shining locks ; these were her only ornaments. Some delay had been caused in the marriage by the unusual absence of Edward, Agnes's eldest brother, who had been dispatched, in the early part of the day, on some errand to the town, having promised to return by dinner-time, and long before the ceremony was to take place ; but hour after hour had passed, and at last his place as groomsman was given to his cousin, Frederick Lacy. A vague misgiving that some untoward accident had caused the delay, had at times glanced over the minds of more than one of the party, though no one gave utterance to their fears, lest they should cast a gloom over the minds of the young couple ; and the solemn service commenced. Just as the ring was being placed on the fingers of the bride, a sudden bustle was heard in the entrance, and Edward Denham hurried into the room, his cloak and cap covered with snow, for it had been snowing heavily for some time. The clergyman raised his finger as he entered, to enjoin silence, and with more than usual gravity, pronounced the last prayer and benediction. It was over, and then came a buzz and whispering murmur, with sudden exclamations of dismay and terror from the females, of excitement from the men, as they gathered about Edward to hear the news he had to communicate.

Agnes had been so naturally engrossed by her own feelings, and the peculiarity of her situation, that she had hardly noticed her brother's return, till she suddenly found herself deserted by all her companions, and became conscious that she stood alone in the centre of the room ; even George had left her side. And now she perceived that looks of sadness and interest were directed towards her by several of the group, and a sense of some dreadful calamity, in which she or some one dearer to her than herself, was somehow involved, came over her.

"What can it be ? Oh do tell me what has happened !" she exclaimed at last, casting her eyes imploringly upon her father's face.

"Only, my child, that George must leave you this very night, this very hour, were it possible."

She clung speechless with terror to her father's arm.

"Listen to your brother, Agnes ; that paper will explain all. It is the Governor's proclamation."

"But George ! O how can he be concerned in it ?" gasped out the trembling bride.