

"No ; but youth and strength cannot last for ever."

"Mamma ! you are not old ; you are not much more than forty yet."

"Forty-two in years ; but there are some years that might count for ten."

"It is this horrible pressure upon you ; you are being tortured to death !"

"Hush, my child. What I suffer is but the just and natural consequence of what I did. Be patient, both for me and for yourself. By-and-by we shall see that all is right."

Hard doctrine ! and only to be learnt by long endurance. Lucia rebelled against it, but she could not argue with her mother's pale face and faintly spoken words to oppose her. She busied herself softly in such little offices as her anxiety suggested, and they spoke no more that night of the subjects nearest to their hearts.

But when Mrs. Costello was alone, she began to think of Maurice. She felt, even before she began to think, that something which had been a stay and prop to her hitherto had suddenly been snatched away, and she had now to realize that this support was her confidence in him. For a long time she