

and good for nothing. It seemed to her that her whole life had been a wretched cheat, and that she had ill repaid the devotion of her husband. At first these thoughts only made her bitter and angry; and she contended against them. But, as she sank from day to day, and grew weaker and weaker, she grew more gentle; and a better spirit seemed to enter into her.

On this evening that we speak of, she had made up her mind that he would try and tell her husband some of the things that were passing in her mind.

"Tell John I want to see him," she said to her mother. "I wish he would come and sit with me."

This was a summons for which John invariably left every thing. He laid down his book as the word was brought to him, and soon was treading noiselessly at her bedside.

"Well, Lillie, dear," he said, "how are you?"

She put out her little wasted hand; "John, dear," she said, "sit down; I have something that I want to say to you. I have been thinking, John, that this can't last much longer."

"What can't last, Lillie?" said John, trying to speak cheerfully.

"I mean, John, that I am going to leave you soon, for good and all; and I should not think you would be sorry either."

"Oh, come, come, my girl, it won't do to talk so!" said John, patting her hand. "You must not be blue."

"And so, John," said Lillie, going on without noticing this interruption, "I wanted just to tell you, before I got any weaker, that I know and feel just how patient and noble and good you have always been to me."

"O Lillie darling!" said John, "why shouldn't I be? Poor little girl, how much you have suffered!"

"Well, now, John, I know perfectly well that I have never been the wife that I ought to be to you. You know it too; so don't try to say anything about it. I was never the woman to have made you happy; and it was not fair in me to marry you. I have lived a dreadfully worldly, selfish life. And now, John, I have come to the end. You dear good man, your trials with me are almost over; but I want you to know that you really have succeeded. John, I do love you now with all my heart, though I did not love you when I married you. And, John, I do feel that God will take pity on me, poor and good for nothing as I am, just because I see how patient and kind you have always been to me when I have been so very provoking. You see it has made me think how good God must be,—because, dear, we know that he is better than the best of us."

"O Lillie, Lillie!" said John, leaning over her, and taking her in his arms, "do live, I want you to live. Don't leave me now, now that you really love me!"

"Oh, no, John! it is best as it is,—I think I should not have strength to be *very* good, if I were to get well; and you would still