

the ground since her confinement, she rose from her bed, crept to the window, raised the sash, and thrusting her head out, gazed up and down the street as if her look could bring the desired object. But he came not, and she shrank shivering back to bed, and finally, towards morning, she sunk to sleep, faintly hoping that possibly, for one moment, she had lost herself, and during that moment, that her husband had come in, and with his usual, but now most ill-timed considerateness, had gone noiselessly to his own apartment. She started with the first ray of light, and waking the nurse, begged her to go instantly and see if Mr. Gretton were in his room. He was not; there was no sign of him there; "but," the nurse added, after having given this dismaying intelligence, "I dare say, after all, Patrick turned the bolt of the street door when he came in last night. What a goose I was I did not think of that before." Mrs. Gretton said she had given him express orders not to touch it, but bade her go instantly and see. She did so, and returned, looking, herself, pale and frightened. We know not how, in our weakness, we lean even on the weakest reeds. The nurse's alarm now redoubled her mistress's. She sprang out of bed and rang the bell violently and repeatedly, while the nurse was exclaiming, "Gracious me, ma'am, are you crazy! You'll get your death of cold; you'll bring back your old complaints worse than ever. I never, never!—Ma'am, I can't be answerable for the consequences." But not one word did Mary Gretton heed. "He does not hear," she cried; "call him!" "Patrick—no, Stanley, Stanley! Stanley! he'll go quicker. Oh, here is Patrick! Go, Patrick, for my brother—for Mr. Wilton Harvey; tell him my husband is—no, tell him to come to me—go, for God's sake, go!"—The household were now all astir, and all thoroughly alarmed. Mrs. Gretton rushed into her boy's apartment, adjoining hers, and terrifying him almost out of his senses with the apparition of his mother, out of bed, wild and haggard, with her hair streaming over her shoulders, she communicated the cause of her distress. The boy, thus suddenly awakened, caught his mother's panic, and expressed his terror in cries and shrieks; but he soon recovered a most characteristic self-possession, that calmness which comes from inward power and devotion to others, and which sometimes manifests itself in early childhood. "Dear mother," he said, "don't be so frightened; nothing has happened; I hope father was kept out late, and went to my Uncle Wilton's to

sleep. Dear mother, how you are shaking; get back into bed; thank you, mother, now you will lie quiet while I am gone." Thus entreating and soothing, he calmed her in some degree, and bidding the nurse do everything to warm and compose her, he was dressed and out of the house in half a minute. But warm or quiet she could not be made, and her brother found her out of bed, and walking the room like a maniac. Other friends came, and everything was said and done that the kindest zeal could suggest or execute. The most thorough search was instituted. A thousand conjectures were made, and the next hour proved them fallacious. Placards were issued, and advertisements sent to the evening papers.—Mr. Gretton's clerks were examined, and his office-papers ransacked for some clue to the person to whom he had gone to do business. Stanley remembered he had spoken of Cherry-street, but no reference among his papers could be found to that street. The head-clerk recalled the ill-looking fellow who had so sturdily insisted on seeing Mr. Gretton, but he had never been seen at the office before or since; and there was no reason but his ill-omened visage for fixing suspicion on him. Mr. Gretton was not known to have an enemy, or a controversy with any one. Day passed after day, week after week, and month after month, and no tidings came of the good citizen, the devoted husband, the fond father, who went forth full of projects and hopes, well-earned honour, and well-founded assurance of a holiday afternoon in a well-ordered city to do some ordinary business. That he had suffered by violent hands none at the time doubted. Subsequently, when the speculation in which he had taken part utterly failed, when his whole fortune was wrecked in it, and the reputation of some of the parties concerned was implicated, it was suggested that Mr. Gretton had foreseen this, and not having courage to face the issue, he had voluntarily withdrawn from life. None who knew him well cast this shadow on his memory, but to few can a man be so intimately known as to defy suspicion.—Mr. Gretton had mixed himself up with men of lax morality. These men had corruptly speculated on the covetousness and credulity of the public at a time of feverish pecuniary excitement, and a man who had adventured simply with the hope of doing good, and blessing others by the acquisition of money he did not want, had lost a competency earned by honourable labour, had left an impoverished family, and a blemished memory. This, with