

event she saw steadily approaching ; to the younger children giving such advice as best suited their tender age, and impressing upon them the necessity of looking upon Margaret as their mother, and of obeying her implicitly in all things. To Charles she had much advice to give ; and a more difficult task to perform, in alluding to his duty towards his father, and the care of the rest of the children, which might soon devolve upon him. Margaret had never given up hope, and always clung to the idea that spring would bring with it a restorative for her mother's shattered constitution. To show the fallacy of this hope, had been the aim of the patient, especially for the last week or two ; and as yet it was difficult to determine whether she had succeeded, for it is hard to convince us of that which we wish not to credit.

The conduct of Captain Lindsay had been kind and attentive to an extent far greater than at the commencement of her illness. He would sit by her bed side, and minister with so much kindness to her wants, at the same time shewing such a disregard to his former associates, that his wife began to hope that all danger of a relapse into his former habits was at an end. She even fancied that the affliction she endured was wisely intended by Providence as the means of his thorough reformation. This hope had served her instead of soothing medicine, and would throw a cheerfulness and sunshine upon her fine, although wasted features,—a sort of angelic serenity that was even more touching than the gaiety of heart which beams upon the face of a youthful and hopeful girl. It was a hope sent to her in mercy, doubtless, lest she should have been burdened with overmuch sorrow, as she approached the final termination of all her many sufferings. I cannot account for it, but so it was, that I had not even in the course of my frequent calls once spoken to her husband ; nor had I happened to find him in the patient's room when I called.

One evening, on return from a visit to a distant patient, (for I had by this time several,) I found a message requesting that I would go down to Captain Lindsay's as soon as I could, the patient being worse and desirous of seeing me. After a hasty refreshment, I immediately set off, and reached the house about nine in the evening. It was a cold, blustering night, the wind blowing with unusual violence and the snow beating against my face had almost blinded me, as I breasted the storm. I was at once admitted into the sick chamber, and here all was peace and tranquillity, the patient having apparently dropped into a dozing state, half between sleeping and waking. Two women were in the room, sitting by the stove, conversing in whispers,—Margaret standing by the bed-side, watching the unconscious sufferer. On my entry, the daughter came forward, telling me, in a low tone of voice, that for the greater part of the evening her mother had been engaged in again

giving advice to the younger children, before she had dropped asleep. As she spoke, I perceived that a sad change had taken place in her appearance, occasioned by her long watchings and fatigues. Her brow, always calm, and white as alabaster, was now of an ashy paleness ; her cheek almost haggard with the revulsion of feeling and anxiety which the last few days had occasioned, as she observed the gradual decay of her mother's strength, and her preparations for the hour which should set her free. Her eye had an almost unearthly brightness, and a restlessness which denotes intense mental excitement, although no appearance of outward distress was at the time observable.

I took a chair, intending to wait her awakening, if she were really asleep, but it was only a moment after that the patient opened her eyes, and observing me, stretching out her hand, saying, in a feeble tone :

"This is very kind of you, Doctor ; I was afraid I should not have seen you, to express my deep gratitude for your attention. And my dear husband"—She glanced her eye quickly round the room, and not perceiving him, seemed disturbed ; but at that instant he entered, and as he advanced towards the bed-side she added :

"My dear George, it is time you were better acquainted with Dr. L., to whom we are so heavily indebted."

He offered his hand with a frankness which was natural to his character, and at the same time added, as I shook it cordially :

"Can you forgive me, Doctor, for my unworthy assault ? But I was violent and mad——."

"Nay, do not mention it, sir : it has all been forgotten ; but, alas ! that we should meet here tonight under so melancholy circumstances."

He glanced at his wife, whose eyes were again closed, and replied, with a voice of deep earnestness and self-reproach :

"It is my fault that she is here ; it is my crime that has killed her ! I seduced her from a happier and brighter lot, alienated her father's affections, and removed her from the station which was her natural right, to link her to my desperate fortunes. It was I that brought her away from all help, and from under the eyes of her friends,—to be her destroyer here. Curses be upon my guilty head ; nay," added he, more vehemently : "have I not felt the curse withering my spirit for months back ? Do I not feel it now as I look upon her wasted form, and remember the hour when I stole her from her father—unfeeling wretch that he is ! May Heaven——."

"George, I beseech you," interposed the patient, speaking suddenly, and with more energy than I thought was possible ; "do not utter any rash imprecation against my father. This is not the time for an unforgiving spirit, and most heartily and sincerely do I pray, that he may never feel the pangs