

and turned away to mingle her tears with those of Grace. He received the cold clay of her he had so truly loved upon his bosom; and, as he laid that beautiful head back upon the pillow, whence it had so recently arisen in life, he sank upon his knees beside it, and, with eyes dimmed by fast gathering tears, he gazed long and silently upon the tender beauty of that face, on whose lineaments even in death the light of the pure and heavenly spirit seemed lovingly to linger.

And, as he gazed, many thoughts thronged upon his soul—thoughts that ever fill it in that hour, when Death lays his mysterious touch upon the form which has been the light and joy of our hearts. How we long then to penetrate the dread secrets of the invisible—to pass the “slight impalpable bound” that severs being from death, and know and share the destiny of the departed. One thought haunted him—was that love, which would have blessed his life, had she been granted to his prayers—was it still an unquenchable emotion of her pure and enfranchised spirit? Yes, it must be so—it was a deathless sentiment, and he drew comfort from the thought that even in Heaven it lived with her—aye, even there, but “purified from dust!”

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Days and weeks passed on in sad unvarying succession, at Hazeldell, after the death of Cecilia. Her pure and gentle influence still pervaded the home of her early love; but her visible presence no longer dwelt there, and the painful void left by her absence, rendered it impossible for Arthur to find there the peace and submission, which, in accordance with her spirit, he earnestly desired to make his own. Instead thereof, a deep melancholy brooded on his mind, and so materially affected his health, that Dr. Thornley, desirous to remove him from scenes that fed his disorder, recommended him to pass the winter in a warmer and more congenial climate. Most willingly he availed himself of any plea to escape from his native shores, and, bidding adieu to his grandmother, who, soothed by the companionship and affection of Grace, had settled down to the customary routine of her tranquil life,—he sailed for Italy, in which country he purposed to remain till the ensuing spring.

Grace received his farewell with a sadness she could ill conceal. But had she known the silent homage he rendered to her virtues, the reverence with which he regarded her efforts after excellence, the gratitude with which her devotion to his aged and bereaved relative inspired him, she would have felt that she had already won a dear reward for her well-doing, and, in many subse-

quent moments of sadness, would have looked forward with the fond hope of meeting his approving smile when he returned. One circumstance there was, which, when he left her, filled her young heart with glad surprise, though it was merely a request, as Mrs. Howard seldom wrote, that she would permit him to maintain a regular correspondence with her.

How could she refuse? Joyfully indeed she acceded to his wish; and thus, during the many months of his absence, he had an opportunity to mark the gradual unfolding of her mind into a loveliness that soon furnished him with a delightful study, and touched and interested him more than he was himself aware of. It was the constant aim of Grace to form herself upon the model of Cecilia's character, and insensibly she learned to cultivate the same spirit, and to be actuated by the same elevated motives and principles, which she had thought so worthy of imitation in her friend. Nor was Arthur slow to detect the constantly increasing similarity between the mind of Grace, as developed to him in her sweet and unstudied letters, and that of her's whom he had loved with a devotion and a fervor, which he felt he could never again bestow upon another.

And so the winter passed away, but still saddened by the remembrance of the past. Arthur prolonged his stay in Europe, travelling, with a restless desire of change, from place to place, till the summer also had well nigh drawn to a close, when a letter from Grace, written in a tone of unusual pensiveness, and alluding with much feeling to Mrs. Howard's evidently declining health, roused him to the unworthiness of the morbid feeling in which he had so long and selfishly indulged, and determined him instantly to return home. To resolve, was in most cases to act, with him, and the next vessel which sailed from Leghorn, conveyed the long absent wanderer to his native shores.

Immediately on his landing, he repaired to Hazeldell, where he arrived to find his grandmother in the last stages of life's decay, given over by her physicians, and passively awaiting the moment of her final release from earth. But as if the sight of one she so loved, restored the vital functions of her heart, she revived and lingered on for many days after his return. Grace was still with her, a ministering spirit of love and consolation, and when Arthur again beheld her, he was struck with the change which had been effected during his absence, not only in her person, which had ripened into fuller and more matured beauty, but likewise in her manner, and her conversation, the former of which was replete with sweet and gentle dignity, the latter with