

memory that one hateful recollection!" and he struck his hand violently against his forehead, as though to punish himself for what he now so bitterly lamented. Eleanor arose, and taking his hand in silence, pressed it tenderly to her heart.

"Arthur, I now know all, and I acquit you of all blame—neither must you thus accuse yourself—young and inexperienced as you were, you would have been more than man to have escaped *Scot-free* from her fascinations—and Arthur!" she added, while her voice was insensibly lowered and subdued, you must cease to speak of Margaret Morton, since you cannot speak of her with praise—for she is now numbered with the dead. Let us then cover her faults with the mantle of charity, and when we think of her let it be with pity!"

"How mean you, Eleanor?—Mary, what have you heard?—Is she, then, dead?"

"Alas! it is even so, my brother!" replied Mary, with tearful eyes—"she is, indeed, no more, and you must pardon me these tears. I cannot, now, take her crimes into account—I can only remember her, as I once and earliest knew her."

"Dear, dear Mary!" exclaimed Arthur warmly, those tears are worthy of your high and noble nature. Would that I could imitate such exalted generosity—but unfortunately I cannot—in vain do I try to lament the fate of that unhappy girl. No! not even death—the great effacer of all—can erase from my mind the remembrance of her crimes. I know the amount of misery—ay! misery—she has caused to those I most love—nay, Mary! do not look so surprised. Surely you cannot suppose me ignorant of what concerned the happiness of those so dear—it were now vain to conceal that Horatio loved you—can I then ever forgive her who blighted my fondest hope—that of seeing you the wife of one so every way worthy of you? But for her, he might be now living, and you, my best Mary! might be his happy wife. No! ask me not to forgive her!" and his whole frame trembled with passion. Mary eagerly caught at one part of his remarks, for the purpose of creating a diversion in his mind.

"So, he is dead, too, Arthur!—how long have you known this?"

"Alas! my sister!" and Arthur, as he spoke, approached his sister and pressed her hand in tender sympathy, "it is now five years since I learned from a newspaper report that my early friend had fallen on the field of *honor*—not of *fame*," he added, with some bitterness; "for the subaltern there is no record in the book of fame, unless, indeed, he has displayed more than Spartan heroism, or performed some more than Herculean

exploit. Yes, Mary! he died far from those who loved him. Talavera's blood-stained field was his death-bed! His fate would have been to me a mystery had I not chanced to see his name—our Horatio's name—amongst the officers killed in that memorable engagement."

Mary was silent—no word escaped her lips, but as Eleanor looked upon her, she saw that those lips were colourless and moving in earnest prayer, while from her half-closed eye-lids trickled the heavy tear. Sorrow was impressed so legibly on every feature, that Eleanor could not restrain her own tears.

"Alas!" she mentally exclaimed, "how could I have so mistaken her character? Poor Mary! I wonder not that your demeanor is sometimes cold and reserved—how can you ever assume cheerfulness, you whose fondest hopes have been so early and so cruelly blighted!"

She was aroused from her reverie by the voice of Mary.

"Then he fell at Talavera, you say?" Poor Mary! she dared not trust her voice to say more.

"Yes, Mary! that noble, generous heart, gave up its last sigh on a foreign soil—he who so loved the few to whom he attached himself—he whose soul was the seat of every finer feeling, had not one friend near to close his eyes in death!"

The picture was too much for Mary, and evidently unwilling to exhibit the full extent of her grief, she made a hasty retreat. Arthur looked after her as she quitted the room.

"Poor, dear Mary! how severely has your affectionate heart been tried!"

He looked up—Eleanor was standing leaning against the mantel-piece, and her tearful eyes attested the deep interest she took in Mary's sorrow.

"Eleanor, my love!" and as he thus spoke, he approached and encircled her slight form with his arm, "you must not give way to melancholy; now of all times, I wish you to exert your good sense. Business of an urgent nature calls me to town this week, and as I may be several days absent, you must endeavour to support Mary's spirits as well as your own. Will you promise, dear one! that you will not dwell, during my absence, on any train of thought that may produce dejection?"

Eleanor heeded not the latter question.

"Why, Arthur!" she exclaimed, surprised and alarmed, she knew not wherefore; "what business can you have just now in Dublin? Surely a letter will answer all the purpose of a visit from you?"

"Nay, Eleanor! I can assure you that I regard the journey (short though it be,) with anything