

any thing like love in the wife? Lillie was not naturally rich in emotion. Under the best education and development, she would have been rather wanting in the loving power; and the whole course of her education had been directed to suppress what little she had, and to concentrate all her feelings upon herself.

The factitious and unnatural life she had lived so many years had seriously undermined the stamina of her constitution; and, after the birth of her third child, her health failed altogether. Lillie thus became in time a chronic invalid, exacting, querulous, full of troubles and wants which tasked the patience of all around her. During all these trying years, her husband's faithfulness never faltered. As he gradually retrieved his circumstances, she was first in every calculation. Because he knew that here lay his greatest temptation, here he most rigidly performed his duty. Nothing that money could give to soften the weariness of sickness was withheld; and John was for hours and hours, whenever he could spare the time, himself a personal, assiduous, unwearied attendant in the sick-room.

## CHAPTER XXIX.

### *THE NEW LILLIE.*

WE have but one scene more before our story closes. It is night now in Lillie's sick-room; and her mother is anxiously arranging the drapery, to keep the firelight from her eyes, stepping noiselessly about the room. She lies there behind the curtains, on her pillow,—the wreck and remnant only of what was once so beautiful. During all these years, when the interests and pleasures of life have been slowly dropping, leaf by leaf, and passing away like fading flowers, Lillie has learned to do much thinking. It sometimes seems to take a stab, a thrust, a wound, to open in some hearts the capacity of deep feeling and deep thought. There are things taught by suffering that can be taught in no other way. By suffering sometimes is wrought out in a person the power of loving, and of appreciating love. During the first year, Lillie had often seemed to herself in a sort of wild, chaotic state. The coming in of a strange new spiritual life was something so inexplicable to her that it agitated and distressed her; and sometimes, when she appeared more petulant and fretful than usual, it was only the stir and vibration on her weak nerves of new feelings, which she wanted the power to express. These emotions at first were painful to her. She felt weak, miserable,