

to ———. We sat watching the heavy morning, and had even laid aside our out-door habiliments, thinking that the next day would equally answer for our visit. But at length the rain not actually descending as we expected, we proceeded, and reached her door fully an hour and a half after we had arranged with her to be at her house. Our friend had, consequently, nearly relinquished the expectation of seeing us, and had retired to her little writing-room to finish a letter. We sent up her faithful servant to beg her not to disturb herself till she had finished. He brought down her kindly message of love, that as her letter was for that day's post she would stay and close it, and come to us in the drawing-room in a few minutes. During these few waiting moments, the eye naturally wandered round the exquisitely furnished room, resting upon various articles of taste and elegance, and particularly upon two table vases of beautiful fresh flowers, which her own hands had arranged in all the glory of their rich and varied hues. How little did we dream that we sat in the chamber prepared for death, and that even the delicate life of these beautiful flowers would survive that of the hand which had just placed them there! But a few moments elapsed when our friend entered, and, affectionately embracing us, offered many apologies for the little delay. She inquired after all the members of our family-circle; and then said she was feeling much her loss, and, with everything around her conducive to her comfort, felt depressed and sad, she feared almost ungratefully so to Him who had supplied her with so much consolation in the circumstances of her bereavement, which had taken place three months previous. There was an exquisite naturalness peculiar to her character, which rendered this unrestrained expression of her feelings most touching.

M—— and I were much moved; and as her tears fell fast, M—— asked if, before conversing farther together, we should unite in expressing our sympathies and sorrows before Him whose eternal friendship bound our hearts, and who could best sympathize with and comfort her. She cordially assented, expressing the comfort she felt in seeing us, and we knelt down. The true Christian will believe that it was a simple and grateful exercise to spread the need of that sorrowing and bereaved spirit in a few earnest, unaffected supplications before our God and Father. In such moments there is no relief like that which the believer finds in the expression of deeply-felt necessity, breathed out, not in words of studied human language, but as it were in the very accents of the soul, to the God who has met all our wants with innumerable promises of hearing and answering prayer. To God those wants and necessities are previously known; but He, who has so wonderfully adapted his salvation to all our constitution as the creatures of His hand, well knows that our realization of His character as our Father and our Friend needs to be continually exercised by coming to Him as children come for supply to their earthly parent. He has therefore invited us with the most unlimited encouragement to individual and united prayer, with the promise of His peculiar blessing on such engagements. It surely marks no healthful state of our social intercourse as Christians, when it is unsanctified by seasons of such holy communion as these; and when friends meet and separate without remembering the example of their blessed Master, who, surrounded by His band of disciples and friends at the last supper, lifted up His eyes to heaven, and bound their listening hearts together with His parting prayer, "Father, the hour is come!" That such exercises formed the constant habit of the church in apostolic days, a reference to