

breast, he gazed upon the murder of his child; but he heaved not a sigh, he shed not a tear. A momentary triumph seemed to irradiate his pallid features, when he saw the blow struck that annihilated his enemy; but it was again instantly shaded by an expression of the most profound despair.

"It is done, gentlemen," he at length remarked. "The tragedy is closed. the curse of Ellen Halloway is fulfilled, and I am—childless!—Blackwater," he pursued, endeavoring to stifle the emotion produced by the last reflection. "pay every attention to the security of the garrison, see that the drawbridge is again properly chained up, and direct that the duties of the troops be prosecuted in every way as heretofore."

Leaving his officers to wonder at and pity that apathy of mind that could mingle the mere forms of duty with the most heart-rendering associations, Colonel de Haldimar now quitted the rampart; and, with a head that was remarked for the first time to droop over his chest, paced his way musing to his apartments.

CHAPTER XXXV.

NIGHT had long since drawn her circling mantle over the western hemisphere; and deeper, far deeper than the gloom of that night was the despair which filled every bosom of the devoted garrison, whose fortunes it has fallen to our lot to record. A silence, profound as that of death, pervaded the ramparts and exterior defences of the fortress, interrupted only, at long intervals, by the customary "All's well!" of the several sentinels; which, after the awful events of the day, seemed to many who now heard it as if uttered in mockery of their hopelessness of sorrow. The lights within the barracks of the men had long since extinguished; and, consigned to a mere repose of limb, in which the eye and heart shared not, the inferior soldiery pressed their rude couches with spirits worn out by a succession of painful excitements, and frames debilitated by much abstinence and watching. It was an hour at which sleep was wont to afford them the blessing of a temporary forgetfulness of endurances that weighed the more heavily as they were believed to be endless and without fruit; but sleep had now apparently been banished from all; for the low and confused murmur that met the ear from the several block-houses was continuous and general, betraying at times, and in a louder key; words that bore reference to the tragic occurrences of the day.

The only lights visible in the fort proceeded from the guard-house and a room adjoining that of the ill-fated Charles de Haldimar. Within the latter were collected, with the exception of the governor, and grouped around a bed on which lay one of their companions in a nearly expiring state, the officers of the garrison, reduced nearly one third in number since we first offered them to the notice of our readers. The dying man was Sir Everard Valletort, who, supported by pillows, was concluding a narrative that had chained the earnest attention of his auditory, even amid the deep and heartfelt sympathy perceptible in each for the forlorn and hopeless condition of the narrator. At the side of the unhappy baronet, and enveloped in a dressing gown, as if recently