

you, man, *my capacities for love and happiness are dead within me.* Even as they who delve the mine lose their physical vigor and become old ere they reach their prime, so have my feelings become blighted and blasted by the poisonous atmosphere of gold. My locks are still unbleached, but *my heart is grey.* The necessity of loving no longer exists;—I am past all enjoyment of heart and mind. The excitement of money-making, like that of gambling, unfits the mind for quiet pleasures; my books, to which I thought I should return with new zest, are utterly distasteful to me,—I can never again be the abstracted and imaginative student. My early love, which in all my wanderings was like the star of hope, now gleams dimly and faintly through the mists of years,—I can be the kind husband but never again the passionate lover. To exhibit my wealth to admiring and envious eyes,—to live amid luxuries which I despise, although habit has made them necessary to my comfort,—to watch with regretful tenderness over the fading away of the only creature who loves me, while remorse is ever in my heart, because of my own inert affections,—such is my future destiny. You pity me, Frank,—oh! may you never know the pang of *self pity*,—the compassion for one's own self, which now stirs within my bosom when I behold around me so many means of enjoyment, and feel myself so incapable of appreciating them. I have made gold my idol, and verily I have my reward."

"You judge too hastily of yourself, Harry; had you remained at home the same changes might have occurred in Helen, and the same length of time might have elapsed ere you could marry."

"No, no, Frank, I cannot deceive myself with any such sophistry. Had I been here to watch over her failing health, to guide her gentle mind, to develop her latent qualities, to assimilate her to myself,—we should now be happy, for I should never then have learned how unsuited were our characters. Do you remember the story of the blind man who had been accustomed to consider his wife beautiful, because her voice was one of extreme sweetness, and who, when restored to sight felt more grief at the loss of that dear delusion, than joy at the acquisition of all the other blessings of light? Such is my fate; my love has been like the lamp enclosed in an antique sepulchre, burning clear and undimmed while shut up within my own bosom, but dying out into a feeble glimmer beneath the glare of open day."

Rarely do the predictions of sorrow fall. Helen became the bride of the wealthy and honoured merchant, while not one shadow distrust rested upon the pure current of her faithful affection. Throned like an idol amid the countless luxuries which a lavish tenderness gathered around her, she was happy in her undoubting faith, happy in her husband's gentle care, happy in the realization of her lifelong dream of hope. Yet the forebodings of Eustace were fulfilled. Consumption had set its mark upon her, and gradually did she fade from the sight of those who loved her. She lived long enough to awaken a degree of pitying tenderness in the bosom of her husband which was in fact love, but love with all its griefs and none of its delights. And then,—when his very watchfulness over her welfare had become a necessity to the morbid and disappointed Eustace,—she closed her blameless life in quiet happiness.

"She has left me," he wrote to his friend Hargrave,—*"she has left me; I am now a lonely and unloved being,—solitary amid my fellows, without either joy or hope in the world. My wealth is a positive curse to me, since it removes from me the necessity of exertion which could alone divert my incurable melancholy. We are like the brothers in the beautiful Eastern Apologue, Frank; I have wasted the best years of my life in a vain search after the phantom Peace, while you have found the gentle goddess seated at your threshold. Grant that she may ever abide with you."*

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