

farthest, would terminate the existence of the gentlest and purest of human beings.

"It would be cruel to deceive you, Mr. Moncton," he said, as he announced the startling truth—for the dreadful communication had quite unmanned me. "Let this comfort you in your affliction, that I have anticipated this for years—that our dear patient has carried about with her the seeds of this fatal malady from infancy—that it is better that she should thus fall in the budding season of youth, than leave hereafter a family of children to bewail their irreparable loss. I sorrow for her father and you, Mr. Geoffrey, more than for her. Death has few terrors to a sincere Christian, and such from childhood Margaret Moncton has been. A friend to the friendless—a sister of mercy to the poor and destitute."

Oh, reader! if you have ever known what it is to see your fondest hopes annihilated at the very moment of their apparent fulfillment, you can form some idea of my mental anguish whilst watching the decay of that delicate flower.

Margaret was now fully aware of her danger, a most uncommon circumstance in the victims of that insidious disease, on whom Death advances so softly that he always comes suddenly at last. She prepared herself to meet the mighty conqueror with a cheerful submission to the will of God, that surprised us all.

One thing she earnestly entreated, that the marriage of Catherine and George might not be postponed on account of her illness.

"I not only wish to witness their happiness before I go hence, but to share in it," she said to us, a few days before the one that had been appointed for the ceremony, as we were all sitting round the sofa on which she was reclining.

"And you, dearest Geoffrey, must give me a lawful claim to the tender care I receive from you. Though I can only be your