

would be hers, as the proud Mr. Clinton's wife, she rejected them with terror, for they seemed unnatural; and well she knew they might foster in her heart a weakness it had never known before, that of worldly pride. There were other dreams though, in which she freely indulged—dreams of the good she might effect, the misery she might alleviate, and as she recalled the memory of the many children of sorrow, whose petitions her own limited means had compelled her to refuse, her heart swelled with gratitude at the thought that soon they would no longer petition in vain.

We will return now to the ball-room and to Florence, who had been a powerful, though involuntary agent, in hastening her happiness. The night was waning fast, still^d lord St. Albans came not near her. It was in vain she watched for an opportunity of saying some gentle or conciliating word, for the tardy truth had at length dawned upon her, that she was pursuing the wrong course with her lover. Apparently absorbed by his duties as host, in reality bent on avoiding her, had her life depended on it she could not have caught his glance. Compelled to disguise the uneasiness gnawing at her heart, from Miss Westover, who failed not to jest her unmercifully concerning her terror of *Bluebeard*, for so she had styled the earl—further incited by the polished, though vexatious insinuations of her brother,—Florence affected a brilliant gaiety she was far from feeling. Once after she had danced with Sir Edward Westover, she had thrown herself on a couch beside his sister, her partner standing behind her, when the earl passed with a lady on his arm. He bent but one short passing glance upon her, and that glance sent the warm blood from her cheek. He had caught her in another act of open daring disobedience. Universal and intoxicating was the homage paid to the young and beautiful bride elect of the noble host. Her hand was sought and contended for by nearly all, yet that flattery brought no gladness to her heart; and more than once, unable further to endure or disguise her misery, she glided from the room, to hide herself in solitude, though the hope of yet obtaining a favorable opportunity to make her peace with her incensed lover, ever brought her back. At length her wishes seemed on the point of fulfillment; whilst she was standing near one of the windows, gazing sadly from it, the earl unexpectedly approached. Ere she had time however to speak or collect her thoughts, he passed a slip of paper into her hand, and was gone. Trembling with mingled joy and fear, she eagerly glanced over it. It contained but these simple

words, traced with pencil: "Meet me in the picture gallery when the guests are gone." "What can he want with me?" she gasped, sinking in a seat, her face pale as marble. It was some time ere she could recover in any degree, her self-possession, but when she did so, dreading Miss Westover approaching and discovering an agitation she could no longer conceal or control, she instantly rose, and succeeded in leaving the room unobserved. On entering her apartment she found Nina preparing for rest. Irritated by being denied the entire solitude her wretchedness sought, and perfectly free from any compunction for her cruel mockery of her during the early part of the evening, she approached the window, and seated herself moodily beside it. Nina, as usual forgiving and forgetful, exclaimed with her customary quiet friendliness,

"You look greatly fatigued, Florence; had you not better undress?"

"No!" was the abrupt reply, "I am in no need of rest."

Discouraged by her harshness, and in no lack of pleasant topics for meditation, Nina imitated her example, and became as taciturn as herself. Notwithstanding the many bright and varied hopes and thoughts that crowded upon her, exhausted with joy and emotion, she was soon buried in profound sleep, her last waking vision being a curious blending of Percival Clinton's words of devotion and the strange beautiful figure, clad in her festal robes, sitting so still and cold in the white moonlight.

(To be continued.)

ENDURANCE.

To struggle when hope is banished;

To live when life's salt is gone;

To dwell in a dream that's vanished;

To endure and go calmly on;

To know and to doubt the knowledge;

The past to undo in thought;

To study in Misery's college

The woes that can there be taught;

Oh! what but despair can finish

A task such as that for man?

His strength will each hour diminish

While pressed by so heavy a ban.

But, no! the heart steeped in sorrow

Still points to a distant goal,

And whispers "There comes a morrow,

With peace to the steadfast soul!"

A peace that is based on duty,

The will and the power to think,

Can carry, unscathed in beauty,

The brave, where the feeble sink.

At need, then, is help the highest:

Where the storm is fiercest, there

The courage must still be the highest,

To act—to resist—to bear.