

her grace and softness, combined with a share of her father's English principles, and strong, faithful heart. Altogether, however, she was more like a daughter of the South than a native-born Englishwoman. I am one of those who believe that a proportion of the maladies that affect humanity may be traced to mental causes; and to watch for the signs of these, and remove them if possible, is part of my system: and as I have been rather more than usually fortunate, I still think my views are correct. In this case, I could not divest myself of the impression that the fair lady's disease owed a little to fancy; and, promising myself to investigate it very carefully on the morrow, I retired to rest.

Eleven o'clock on the following day found me at Colonel Delaware's door; and, taking the privilege of an old friend and doctor, I proceeded unannounced to her boudoir.—The first glance showed me there was real cause for anxiety; indeed, I could scarcely believe the attenuated form before me was that of one who, but a few short weeks before, had been so blooming a young woman. She was lying on a sofa; her magnificent Spanish eyes were slightly sunken, and surrounded by a dark circle, sure indication of extreme languor; she had lost that rich, deep colour, so beautiful when it mantles on the cheek of a dark-eyed beauty; her cheek was now perfectly pale, of a wan ivory paleness; her hands, through the fine skin of which the blue veins were fearfully apparent, hung listlessly, and seemed almost transparent; the roundness and *embonpoint* which had made her figure one of the most perfect that can be imagined, had quite disappeared; yet she was, as usual, elegantly, almost artistically dressed, and every possible effort had been made to conceal the ravages illness had made upon her beauty.—Even her beautiful long curls were so arranged as to hide as much as possible the extreme emaciation of her throat and neck. I recognised in all this a moral determination to resist increasing illness, which I had often found to be a bad sign; indeed, altogether, I was painfully surprised at her appearance.

As I am now arrived at that age which (too matter-of-fact to appreciate a graceful and flowery style) thinks the easiest and simplest manner the best, I will relate our

conversation as they do the dialogues in children's school-books, thereby avoiding the insufferable monotony of "I observed," "she replied," "I rejoined," etc., etc. Assuming a cheerfulness I was far from feeling, I seated myself in a chair by her sofa, and silently taking possession of her wrist, appeared to consult the beatings of her pulse. Raising her eyelids, the lashes of which were so long and silky they were a marvel, in a composed voice she deliberately broke the silence that had reigned until then.

Mrs. Delaware.—"What brings you here, doctor? Do you come at my husband's request?"

Doctor.—"That is a very unkind question. I have not seen you for two months. I do not think I have been so long without seeing you since you came into this world; now you ask me why I come. Do not be alarmed—I do not intend to score this visit against you, though I really think you greatly need my care."

Mrs. Delaware.—"Why so? you see I am quite well."

Doctor.—"Yes, I see that you have got on a very beautiful dress. Nothing can be more coquettish than that little Frenchified cap. All that is very false, and you are very false, too, and are trying now to deceive me."

Mrs. Delaware.—"Indeed I am suffering no pain anywhere."

Doctor.—"Would you really wish to persuade me that you are in good health? Why, if I could be mistaken in the expression of your countenance, the sound of your voice, your painful respiration, uneven pulse, the pallor of your face, and your emaciation, speak to me in language not to be refuted. Now, I will venture to assert, that for a month you have scarcely ate or slept."

Mrs. Delaware.—"Oh, no, doctor, three weeks at the outside."

Doctor.—"There, now, you have fairly avowed and confessed yourself to be ill."

Mrs. Delaware.—"But it is possible to lose both sleep and appetite without being ill; one can suffer, too, generally, without having any decided complaint."

Doctor.—"Do you know that you distress me extremely? but, thank God, I still feel confident that I shall be able to restore you to health and happiness. I have not so blind a confidence in the drugs and remedies of