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A SKETCH.

(Continued from page 155.)

It was a beautiful evening, in the beginning of Autumn, and the departing sun had arrayed the whole western sky in robes of unnumbered gorgeous dyes. Nature seemed hushed into a calm, and no voice of living thing, save that of the startled sea bird, broke upon the ear of the unfortunate, as with slow and pensive step he ascended the raven's cliff, an eminence about a mile from his home, which commanded an extensive view of the ocean. Arrived on its summit, he proceeded seaward to where, far below, the subdued waves murmuring, threw their silver foam at the foot of a black, rugged, and almost precipitous rock, like a band of lovely captives, who in sorrow successively bear their unwilling offerings to the footstool of some dark, unbending power. Here he stood, and shot his keen eye down the shattered side, with a wild and maddening stare, as if wowed by a Syren spell, to plunge from his lofty elevation to embrace a proffered good. "I come at last," he exclaimed, "God has forgotten to be gracious," and advancing a step, he was about to spring forward, when suddenly starting, in a shrill, short, and fearful voice, he ejaculated, "Who asks how I shall answer this at the tribunal of Heaven?" He paused—trembled violently—and striking his clenched hands on his brow, resumed—"I am mad! I am mad! I am mad!" Insanity reigned but a moment. Casting himself on the ground, he prayed fervently that God would preserve his reason from erring, and give him surety of his goodness in

the mysterious dealings of his providence. He rose, and rose refreshed; the sun had sunk beneath the waters, and the glowing adornment of the clouds was gradually becoming dim. He looked on the expiring glory, and his thought was borne back into his own breast. "Bright clouds," he said, "ye are fitting emblems of my dream of life; it was fair, as ye were, displaying a thousand beauties in the sunshine of hope; but as hope withdrew, it became dark, and more dark as ye do now; and, alas! that it is gone, Earth to me is written Ichabod, as to you splendour must speedily be. But I thank the Lord that I shall not long be chained to dust and time, but through the mediation of his son Jesus, may seek to rise above all clouds to the habitations of light—the mansions of pure and undying beatitude."

He retraced his steps homeward, but from that day forward his strength rapidly declined; and a few weeks after, he was laid upon his bed—his soul speeding hastily from worldly scenes—his shrinking frame bound in the gripe of a double paced consumption. But in the desolation of the body, the mind was restored to more than its former energy, as if catching inspiration from a something beyond the tomb.

There was weeping and loud lamentation in the widow's cottage, as the affectionate relatives bent imploringly over his pillow, and heard the good surgeon say he was seriously ill. But there was no gloom now on the cheek of him who occupied that lowly couch, for except when nature failed, surveying the affection of his friends, his hectic cheek was lighted up with smiles, and his eye irradiated with joy. He told them he knew, and was glad his hours were numbered, for he would soon be happy. He desired them not to weep for him, or fear