

emaciated, and helpless as an infant. By the side of his couch sat his young wife, with eyes melancholy and anxious as they looked upon his altered features. Day by day she sat there watching the sufferer, and striving to calm him, when in the phrenzy of fever, he uttered strange, confused words. In vain the medical attendants had tried to dissuade her from undergoing a fatigue which was too great for her already exhausted strength. She was deaf to their remonstrances, and while the fever was raging at its height, she would not suffer another to tend him.

But now the crisis had arrived, and with pallid cheek and anxious eye she watched over him; the intensity of her suspense almost amounting to agony. But gradually the wild expression faded from the face, the voice was pushed, the burning eye-lids closed, and Charles O'Donnel sank into a peaceful slumber. The physician shortly entered the chamber, and while Constance made a sign for him to step warily lest he should disturb the slumberer, he smiled, and whispered to her that her prayers were at length answered, and that her husband would live.

"He will sleep for several hours," added he, "and I will now watch by him. You must retire to rest, for he will be conscious when he awakes, and he must not see you looking so ill and careworn. Be prevailed upon to seek repose for a few hours, Mrs. O'Donnel, or I predict that you will be my next patient."

Another look at the wasted but calm countenance of her husband, another inaudible prayer for his recovery, and Constance stole off with a joyful heart to seek that rest which her aching temples and tottering limbs told her was absolutely necessary.

A sweet sleep stole over the wearied senses of Constance, and for many hours she slumbered. At length she awoke greatly refreshed. A messenger whom she had despatched to make inquiries, returned and informed her that O'Donnel still slept, and performing a hasty toilet and partaking of some refreshment, she again repaired to the sick chamber. The face of the physician wore an auspicious smile as he complimented her upon the improvement a few hours' rest had effected upon her appearance, and willingly consented that she should share his vigils.

At length the sufferer awoke, slowly as if from a dream, and looking up, requested something to moisten his parched mouth. The hands of Constance trembled as she held the cup to his lips, and supported his head, and her heart bounded with a joy to which it had long been a stranger,

as he returned her a look of gratitude for the simple service she had rendered him.

The physician felt his pulse and gave an approving nod to Constance, while he said:

"Mr. O'Donnel, you must now take care of yourself, and you will soon be perfectly well. You may be grateful to your gentle nurse for her attendance upon you. Mrs. O'Donnel has become almost as much an invalid as yourself through anxiety for your recovery."

This was the first time that Charles had heard Constance called by her wedded name, and his face wore an expression of surprise as he looked at the physician. But a sudden recollection seemed to strike him, and averting his head, an expression of deep, of hopeless agony, stole over his wasted features. But a moment after he again turned towards his wife, and taking her hand, pressed it gratefully to his lips.

"This will never do," said the doctor. "Mr. O'Donnel, you must again compose yourself to sleep. Mrs. O'Donnel, you will be obliged to enforce silence till he becomes stronger. I will now leave you for an hour or two, as I have a few calls to make in the neighbourhood."

Then giving some directions to Constance about a draught which he had prepared for the patient, the physician again took his departure.

Day by day O'Donnel now became stronger, till at length he was able to leave his chamber, and, leaning for support upon the arm of his fair young wife, he was permitted to wander forth and to breathe the pure air of heaven. Though health revisited his colourless cheek and emaciated form, Constance saw with sorrow, that his mental did not keep pace with his bodily improvement. To her watchful eye he appeared at times laboring under the deepest dejection, and sometimes, forgetful of her presence, he became absent and thoughtful, while the contracted brow, the compressed lip, and frequently the expression of agony which his face wore, told her that the subject which thus moved him must be one of deep pain. Though Constance forbore to question him when thus agitated, she yet endeavoured, by every means in her power, to beguile him from this unknown grief. Whenever she saw the dark cloud steal over his brow, she exerted all her powers to entertain him, and she was amply rewarded by the gratitude with which he appeared to appreciate her delicate kindness. After these fits of absence and depression, the manner of Charles was, if possible, more affectionate towards Constance than usual; and he sought as it were to remove any doubt from her mind to which they might have given rise. Though Constance appeared not to observe this gloomy train of thought