

the stiff rigidity of death ; her cheeks and lips were colorless ; and though the blaze seemed to dance and flicker on her half-closed eyes, they served no longer to intimate to the departing spirit the existence of external things.

“ Ah, my Lillias ! ” exclaimed Thomson, as he bent over her, his heart swelling with an intense agony. “ Alas ! has it come to this ! ”

His well-known voice served to recall her as from the precincts of another world. A faint melancholy smile passed over her features, and she held out her hand.

“ I was afraid, ” she said, in a voice sweet and gentle as ever, though scarcely audible, through extreme weakness, — “ I was afraid that I was never to see you more. Draw nearer ; there is a darkness coming over me, and I hear but imperfectly. I may now say with a propriety which no one will challenge, what I durst not have said before. Need I tell you that you were the dearest of all my friends, the only man I have ever loved, the man whose lot, however low and unprosperous, I would have deemed it a happiness to be invited to share ? I do not, however, I cannot reproach you. I depart, and forever ; but oh ! let not a single thought of me render you unhappy. My few years of life have not been without their pleasures, and I go to a better and brighter world. I am weak, and cannot say more ; but let me hear you speak. Read to me the eighth chapter of Romans. ”

Thomson, with a voice tremulous and faltering through emotion, read the chapter. Ere he had made an end, the maiden had again sunk into the state of apparent insensibility out of which she had been so lately awakened ; though occasionally a faint pressure of his hand, which she still retained, showed him that she was not unconscious of his presence. At length, however, there was a total relaxation