

“Well,” he said, “I must tell you plainly that I am afraid it cannot have any good effect, but at any rate it cannot have any bad effect, and she is only wearing herself out more quickly as it is.”—“Yes,” he continued more kindly, noticing for the first time how young she was, and how terribly in earnest, “read it to her by all means. It will do *you* good, and it cannot do her harm.”

She thanked him with tears in her eyes, and they both went back into the sick-chamber together.

She had brought the book with her, so, turning at once to the place, she began to read in a low, soft tone, with slow and measured accents, well-suited to the subject and the measure as well as the purpose she had in view.

At first it produced no visible effect, but she gradually became quieter as Minnie proceeded and the hopes of the watchers rose. She did not attempt to follow it at all till the line Minnie had caught so distinctly was reached, and then she repeated it after her in the same tone as before, and with the same triumphant emphasis on the words, “Single, Echoless.”

Then she went on with the lines following along with Minnie, her voice growing gradually weaker and weaker as she proceeded:—

“It went up from the holy lips amid His lost creation

That of the lost no one should use those words of desolation—

That earth worst frenzies, marring hope, might mar not hope’s fruition.”

Here her voice died away, and she lay back with a long sigh of content.