

THE EIGHTEENTH DAY.

“Touches so soft still conquer chastity.”
Passionate Pilgrim.

SHE grew most fearful, starting at slight noise ;
As knowing that the sting of shame was hers
Worse than a guilty love administers,
Since our pure shame unworthily destroys
The love of all she had, her girls and boys,
Her home, their lives : and yet my whisper stirs
Into live flame her passion, and deters
Her fear from spurning all the day's due joys.

She had not dared to speak one word, to tell
How deep and pure a fountain sunward leapt
In her life's garden : but to-night she lay
In my intense embraces : so the spell
Moved her : “I love you,” said she. So we kept,
Remurmuring that one phrase until the day.