

from the power of evil ; but that no one had been able to discover such a method. Does not the Saviour completely answer to this necessity ?”

“ Perhaps so—but among the Jews, their Messiah is to be one who will restore their ruined power, and renew their lost dignity as a nation ; and certainly Jesus Christ has not answered that expectation.”

“ Alas ! their own fearful curse is still blinding their eyes, and withholding the accomplishment of their wishes. His blood rests upon them and their children. You know that, at the time of the Saviour’s birth, a general expectation prevailed that some extraordinary person was to appear, and if at that precise period, Jesus was born ; if he professed to have come from heaven, to teach men that method of salvation so long unknown, of redemption from sin, and if he had many followers who were called Christians, and if Jews and Pagans, friends and enemies, sacred and profane history, all acknowledge these circumstances, they form a mass of testimony, which, in any other case, would be irresistible.”

Edward paused, as if weighing the testimony thus rapidly given—at length he said : “ There appears so much truth in what you have advanced, and I am led to view the subject in a light so entirely new to me, that I must take time for examination and reflection.”

“ Our good Mr. Thompson,” said the gratified Clara, “ will assist your researches ; his learning and piety will supply my deficiencies on the subject.”

“ I might possibly have found a more learned teacher than Miss Allen, but scarcely one more agreeable,” returned he, bowing. “ But will not Anne see me today ?”

“ Undoubtedly ; I do not know what detains her, but will enquire,” and she left the room in pursuit of Anne. Of course she found her not, but was much grieved to find her aunt in tears. The affectionate sympathy of this amiable girl made its way to the overcharged heart of Mrs. Courtland, and she related to her the strange conduct of her daughter.

“ I cannot imagine any cause for her behaviour, my dear Clara ; has she ever given you reason to suppose that her affection for Edward is lessened ?”

“ Never ; on the contrary I believe she is devotedly attached to him.”

“ Why then such conduct towards him ?” He must have offended her.”

“ Not that I know of.”

“ I wish you would question her upon the subject ; you have great influence over her.”

“ I *had*, you should have said, my dear aunt, but I fear it is gone. We must not, however, keep Mr. Richmond in suspense ; I will excuse her absence to him.”

She informed Edward that Anne was out, and directing him to those places in which he would be most likely to meet with her, sportively bade him

depart, and in the true spirit of knight-errantry, return not, until he had discovered and released his mistress from the giant powers that detained her. But the gaitly Clara had assumed, deserted her on the departure of Edward ; she thought much and long on the conduct of her cousin, without being able to assign any reason for it—her gentle heart had felt deeply her coolness and altered manner, but no suspicion had ever seriously entered her mind of the real cause, and she resolved to take the earliest opportunity to inquire.

CHAPTER IV.

“ You see, Miss Allen, I have ventured to disobey your commands, by returning before I have discovered my truant mistress,” cried Edward the next morning, as he entered the room where Mrs. Courtland and Clara were occupied with their needles, while Anne was practising at the piano, for the purpose of avoiding conversation ; “ but in fact, I am now engaged in the same pursuit, having been wholly unsuccessful last evening ; and behold the reward of perseverance,” and he advanced to take the hand of Miss Courtland. As if not aware of his intention, she hastily arose and offered him a seat next Clara. “ You are very kind,” he cried, as he seized her hand and placed her in a chair on the other side of him, “ thus to favour me—guarded by two such lovely damsels, I need fear no evil ;—and now will you condescend to tell your faithful knight what enchanter caught you in his toils, and how you were released from durance vile ?” A flush of gratified pride crossed the beautiful face of Anne, as she replied : “ To answer you in your own style, the enchanted Castle to which I was conveyed in the evening was the Theatre, and my captor was,—but I shall not tell you who he was.”

“ Well, I will not insist upon knowing ; but may I not ask where you spent the day ?”

“ Certainly ; I desire no concealment—it was at my Uncle Davenport’s.”

“ Oh ! then,” cried her lover good-humouredly, “ there is no difficulty in divining what enchanter ran away with you.”

“ An equivocal expression of countenance was Anne’s only reply to this remark, but, as if to change the subject, she inquired :

“ Have you and Cousin Clara finished your religious discussion yet ?”

“ Not quite ; I called upon your friend Mr. Thompson, Miss Allen, but he was not at home—therefore I must still take the liberty to ask you a few more questions on the old topic.”

“ As many as you please, provided you do not make my inability to satisfy you, a reason for supposing them unanswerable.”

“ I would know then, what proof can be brought that the Gospels were really written by the persons to whom they were attributed.”