

Belinda, smiling; "yet answer me this one question—would you not encounter many things evil in themselves, for one you loved?"

"I cannot answer you until experience teaches me," replied Marion, laughing; "at present my love has never passed the sensible boundary of a handsome house, with carriages, horses and pinmoney; nor do I think it will ever leap the line. What say you to my resolve, Mrs. Mary."

"That I sincerely trust you may keep it," I replied; "since I do not conceive you formed to buffet with the storms of life."

"You think Belinda has more heroism than I have?"

"I think, my dear, that Belinda, having built her house on a rock, will be better able to resist the waves than you, who have founded yours upon the sands."

"Ah, you like to speak in metaphor; but to answer you in the same, believe me, dear Mrs. Mary, I have placed my house on solid gold, and imagination has enriched it with every costly material."

"Which time will destroy. Better garner up your treasure, 'where no moth or rust can corrupt, or thieves break through and steal,'" I returned smiling.

"So, good old granny used to tell me; but do, dear Belinda, give me some more coffee; I am determined I will never tell you any news before breakfast again, it makes you so inattentive. Captain Blanchard asked if the pretty nun of St. Margerets was as serious as ever."

"My name was then mentioned," said Belinda, with hesitation.

"Oh, yes, many times, but I quite forget all he said. Indeed, I felt so angry with Mrs. Fortescue for running away with my handsome partner, to dance with her, that I did not heed some message with which he intrusted me for you. What right have married ladies to dance, or at least, if they do, surely they ought to content themselves with the *caro sposo*, of another; but, *au contraire*, these worthies always select us unhappy belles. Only conceive, last night, a subdued looking man, who seemed as if he had been a benedict for at least twenty years, adorned, with a pair of green spectacles, being led up to me by that little mischievous Mrs. Lucas. Imagine, Mrs. Mary, a creature in green spectacles and odious paste buckles in his shoes. I killed him with a look."

"Marion dear," said Belinda laughing; "finish your breakfast and release me, for I cannot afford to lose my time in listening to you."

"I beg you ten thousand pardons, my pretty nun; I had quite forgotten the duties of your cloister."

It was the custom of Belinda to spend one hour each morning quite alone, and to devote that time to the perusal of her bible, and the works of other well

selected pious authors, which she had found to be a most beneficial practice, as it strengthened her for the duties or the trials of each day. None can fully understand the many blessings, the mine of happiness, discovered in a habit like this, save those who have followed it, and we can only say that if but one should be tempted to try the experiment, their reward would be more than commensurate to what they might at first consider arksome. We address not those whose hearts are devoted to the gaities and frivolities of the age, since they must be entirely indisposed for meditation; we pity them, as responsible beings, and we pray for them; but our advice is given to the awakened christian who has felt the importance of those words: "what must I do to be saved?" and, God be praised, many fair young blossoms may be now numbered among these over whom our hearts yearn with tenderness and holy love; may more be added to the vineyard. When again Belinda joined me, I beheld on her countenance that calm serenity which told me how she had been occupied. "Dearest Belinda," I said, "you do not look as if you had so lately received agitating intelligence."

"Ah, my dear Mrs. Mary," she replied, "I have indeed need to renew my strength, for the trial of tomorrow; I long, yet dread to behold Harvey; I fear, from my sister's sketch, that he is the same light creature as ever; and if so, how much will my fortitude be required, for I feel that he is still too dear to me."

I embraced the dear girl affectionately, for I deeply sympathised in all her feelings, while I grieved for the sorrows which I foresaw would be hers. "And yet none will overshadow her," I mentally said; "save those sent in mercy; for is it not promised that 'all things shall work together for good to those who love God?' We sat down together at our work table, conversing pleasantly and cheerfully until the hour struck which we had fixed on to visit the poor woman at the cliff. When we sallied forth, the day was fine with bright sunshine and we felt, as we proceeded, that elasticity and buoyancy of spirit which a fresh autumnal day usually produces.

"How much my sister loses by her late hours," said Belinda, the rich healthful bloom of exercise mantling on her cheek; "who would exchange this delicious air, this fine open prospect, for the heated atmosphere of a ball-room? How thankful I feel that the pleasures my dear grandmamma led me to prefer are so simple; how independent they have made me of all fictitious amusements."

"You have, indeed, cause to be grateful, my child, since yours increase and improve religious impressions, while those to which your sister is devoted, weaken and eventually destroy them, rendering the mind listless, discontented and unsettled; it then requires constant fresh excitement to rouse it