

to bend the boy's knee, "kneel to your liege lady, and vow eternal fealty."

"I would rather kiss her," replied Arthur, springing into her arms. "Dear, dear Amy, you must stay here always, and never, never leave us." Amy blushing stooped to caress the child while Mr. Martyn remarked smiling:

"Arthur's homage springs from the heart, it were well if more subjects were like him—how peacefully would our world then be governed. Here we are only four persons on this little island, and yet without the restraining grace of God, how soon would disunion spread amongst us—were we left here even for one year to combat with our evil natures alone, this sweet solitude would become a scene of feud and discontent. You shake your head doubtingly, Harold, but believe my words to be true—religion only can bind the strong man; we may sweep and garnish the house—yet soon will the evil spirits return to take up their abode, and render it a dwelling of misery—how then can we expect large provinces to remain in tranquillity unless this be made the basis of all our words and actions, unless the meek and holy example of our blessed Saviour becomes the star to guide us through this lower vale."

Amy drew to the side of her guardian as he uttered this—there was something so winning, so mild in his manner, and the tone of his voice was so deep and solemn, that every word he spoke made a lasting impression—while, from circumstances trivial in themselves, he often culled a precept which was remembered in after years with profit.

In this charming retreat they remained some time, their ears regaled by the music from the water, while a small collation of fruits and cakes was spread on the soft grass by Gasper, who was in attendance.

"How I should like to spend hours here with my book, or my work," said Amy; "it seems a spot so calculated for meditation—is it not a favourite with the Ladies Clarendon?"

"No, they seldom come hither," replied the Earl, "Matilda is not one of the meditative, and poor Emily, from health, is rather a prisoner; she is fond of having her chair carried to the water's edge, under a particular elm tree. I think *her* society would suit you better than Matilda's, who possesses much vivacity, accompanied by a slight vein for satire, which has occasionally made her disliked."

"Oh, I cannot fancy a sister of yours, being disliked," returned Amy, warmly; "I am sure I should love her."

"And if she did not love you," said the Earl gazing delightedly on her eloquent face, "she would be cold and insensible indeed."

Mr. Martyn now called his young charge to look at an inner chamber, or cell, which was merely lighted by a small fissure in the rocky wall; it was

arranged as the abode of an anchorite, with one small table and chair. "This is even better adapted for meditation than the one we have left," said he; "would you like to dwell here, Amy?"

"Oh, no, no," she replied, shuddering, as her thoughts flew back to Father Anselm, "solitude to be beneficial, must produce holy, calm, peaceful thoughts; here all would be gloom, and austerity," and she hastened from its darkness into the cheerful light. *Was it instinct which made her dread that cell?*

The approach of night warned this happy little group, that it was time to retire.

"We will give up our island now, to Titania and her fairy train," said Lord Blondville, as he handed Amy once more into the boat; "it is a fitting place for their moonlight revels until the beautiful morning star again returns to resume her sovereignty."

Most delightful was the journey homeward, for the night shone forth in splendour, as they cut swiftly through the water. Mr. Martyn seemed absorbed in thought, with his eyes intently fixed on the spangled heavens, while dear Arthur, from very weariness, laid his head down on Amy's knee, and was soon in a profound sleep. They had proceeded some way, when Amy, on turning her eyes accidentally on one of the boatmen, perceived his gaze rivetted on herself, and there was something so sinister, so unpleasant in his countenance, that she felt a cold chill creep through her. The moment he saw that he was noticed, he looked another way, and plied his oar with agility—but Amy's momentary happiness had fled. Lord Blondville, who was looking at her, observed the change, and on their landing, said, he was "fearful that she was fatigued."

"No, indeed," she replied, faintly.

"Then you are not well," he continued, still more anxiously.

"Quite well, it is nothing, I can assure you; do not waken dear Arthur."

The Earl lifted the child from the boat, and carried him in his arms, while Mr. Martyn assisted Amy. On entering the castle, she retired at once to her own apartments, when she mentioned to Ursula the circumstance which had alarmed her.

"My dear lady, you are wrong, depend, and have allowed your fancy to overcome reason," replied her attendant; "remember the words of Mrs. Somerville, 'do not anticipate evil, but place your trust in God.'"

"I will pray for the power to do so, dear Ursula," returned Amy, "but ask Gasper the names of the men; I do not like to mention my fears to the Earl, as it would seem to cast a doubt on the fidelity of his people."

"I will, my child, so rest in peace; your rank is only known to Gasper and Mrs. Bennet, to all the others you are Miss Somerville."