

led them round his small neat garden, and loaded their young hands with all that their eyes coveted, and seemed to feel his own youth return in ministering to the happiness of those gay and guileless beings. But the day was wearing on, and as they were to dine in a beautiful wood of tall beech trees, that formed a verdant point in the river, they bade farewell to their kind entertainers, and repaired to the place of encampment.

The servants had already conveyed thither the various contents of the carriages—hampers, and baskets, and boxes innumerable—dolls and toys, and bows and arrows, and guitars and flutes, and books, ay, even books, that nothing might be wanting, as Mrs. Hsley said, for comfort, pleasure or improvement—and so, as if they had indeed come hither for study, a score or more of volumes lay strewn upon the turf. Each one, in selecting them, had suited their own taste, or aimed to please that of another, and to say nothing of Mother Hubbard, and Cock Robin, and Peter Parley, there were rival reviewers lying in friendly neighbourhood, and rival poets amicably reposing side by side. Clara had brought only a volume of Miss Mitford's "Village," which she loved for its simplicity, and fidelity to nature. "Childe Harold" was Miss Morley's choice, and as for Charles Castleton, like a true sailor, as he was, he drew forth a volume of Cooper and of Marryatt, and laid them on the grass, with old Isaac Walton in the middle, to keep them, as he said, from quarrelling. And there they all lay undisturbed, for little was read throughout that lawless day, excepting what was conned from the human heart, and from the wide spread and ever glorious book of nature. It was a picturesque scene which that old wood presented on this happy holiday—all strayed or sat at will among its shades, and the joyous children roved in every direction, and came bounding through the trees, laden with wild flowers, and stained with wood strawberries—their glad shouts waking the silent echoes, and their flying feet chasing the nimble squirrel, that looked down as if in triumph, from the top of a swinging bough, on the noisy group whom he had baffled.

Clara gave zest to their enjoyment, by the gaiety with which she shared their sports, and she was just giving them a lesson in archery, while they all gathered round to witness and imitate her skill, except little Kate, who sat upon the turf nursing her doll—when Charles Castleton, with Grace hanging on his arm, approached the spot and begged to join in the diversion. They had been absent for a long time, walking apart by themselves, and Clara, who was in the act of shooting, felt her hand tremble as they drew near. But she conquered her emotion, and the arrow sprang from the relaxed string and pierced the distant mark at which she aimed. Every little voice shouted applause, as casting down her bow, she turned, with a heightened colour, to greet her cousin

and Miss Morley. But the glow left her cheek, when she marked the rose that on the preceding evening had graced Miss Morley's hair, fading on Charles' breast. 'Was it then so cherished because she had worn it?' thought Clara—and where was the bud that had been her gift, and which he had plead so earnestly to obtain!' Charles marked her changing colour, and the direction of her eye, and he felt his cheek burn at the silent reproach that look unintentionally conveyed to his heart. But at that instant Miss Morley took up the bow to try her skill, and Clara's wounded feelings were forgotten in his eagerness to watch the gestures of her rival.

Conscious, as she was, of her surpassing beauty, Grace stood long, slowly adjusting her arrow, and taking deliberate aim, in an attitude well calculated to exhibit to their utmost advantage, her personal superiority over her less brilliant but more lovely friend. Clara saw through the studied purpose of Grace, but she was a stranger to envy, and she gazed with unqualified admiration upon her beautiful and graceful figure. Charles however dreamed not that there was any art in this display—the fabled spells of Circe, never more completely changed the outward form, than had the wit, the beauty, the evident devotion of this modern enchantress, wrought upon, and for the time, transformed the mind, and blinded the perceptions of Castleton. He had been startled on the preceding evening by her brief display of an unamiable temper—but during this day of close companionship, she had expressed sentiments so beautiful, and discovered tastes and inclinations so perfectly in unison with his own, that every unpleasant impression was effaced, and he yielded to her fascinations, to the almost total neglect of one, whose loveliness of person and mind had hitherto gratified alike his pride and his affection. Whether, had Miss Morley in reality possessed that purity of heart, and those endearing traits of character, which Charles loved in Clara, the transient admiration which she had awakened, would have ripened into a warmer sentiment, it is impossible to say—but as it was, she could not long maintain over a mind like his, the influence she had struggled so hard to obtain. It was an unusual thing for a day to pass without some developement of her real disposition, and, guarded as she had now been, circumstances surprised her into a display, which rent the flimsy veil her art had cast over the eyes of Charles, by the force of contrast and enhanced in his estimation the loveliness of Clara, and firmly reestablished her dominion over his affections.

Several minutes elapsed before Miss Morley affected to be satisfied with the correctness of her aim—aware that the gaze of Castleton was upon her, she stood drawing out and then relaxing the silken string of her bow, till even his patience was almost exhausted by her delay. The children gathered around her, each bright eye intently watching for