

her voice, and a heightened colour. Mrs. Somerville would sometimes beg admission into this sanctuary, but she had become so great a favourite with Lady Blondville, that her mornings were generally spent in her society. Dear Arthur continued the pet of all; the strong affection he had evinced for Amy from the first, had not in the slightest degree diminished, but as he now attended the Reverend Mr. Graham, whose residence was within a mile of the Falcon's Nest, and where he was preparing for the ordeal of a public school, she saw much less of him. It formed part of an amiable plan of Lady Blondville's, to introduce Amy gradually into society. She felt that the mode of life Mrs. Somerville had been obliged to adopt with her charge, had been in some respects prejudicial to one of her rank,—that the total separation from those of her own age and station, might have given her false notions of her acquirements or abilities, or at least have prevented her learning that most humbling of all lessons, the knowledge of self.

"That I would preserve the dear child from the taint of gay and frivolous society, with its thousand evils, you cannot for a moment doubt," she would say, "but I firmly believe that the most unamiable passions of our nature may be cherished and indulged as easily in the cell of an anchorite, as in the world—hours for meditation are necessary and proper for all, when we reflect how responsible we are for every action, at the highest tribunal, and I cannot conceive any madness greater in rational beings than that constant whirl of dissipation, which destroys health, renders our devotions cold and languid, and are so directly opposed to every characteristic of a true Christian."

Mrs. Somerville perfectly coincided in these opinions, and felt much rejoiced that her beloved Amy would be presented to so select a circle as composed Lady Blondville's acquaintance—under such favourable auspices, she could not forbear feeling a degree of pride, when she beheld the sensation this beautiful girl called forth wherever she appeared. She was noticed and admired by all for her simply graceful manner, so devoid of affectation, and she soon made many valuable friends by her gentle unobtrusive piety, which was discovered more in her actions, than by her words, for she seldom expressed her sentiments on this momentous subject, except to those with whom she was familiarly associated, lest she might be led into saying more than she really felt, and thereby deceiving both herself and others. She had now ample means of doing good, and in the course of her rides and walks, she frequently became the almoner of Lady Emily, and had thus an opportunity of discovering objects worthy of her bounty. She could never prevail on Lady Matilda to enter with her the abodes of the poor, as she feared the contagion of disease, from their impure air—but with Mrs. Somerville she en-

joyed the happy privilege of soothing, by her kindness, many a bed of suffering, or affording consolation to many a sorrowing heart. She had become much endeared to Lady Emily; occasionally the amiable invalid was confined to her room, when Amy would remain her companion, to read to her, or render those little attentions so grateful and so soothing in such seasons. She took an active part in her school, and watched over her plants and flowers, which flourished under her fostering hand. All that depression and unnatural nervous alarm which had at first pained Lord Blondville, were entirely removed, and she could now join in dear Arthur's merry laugh, (no longer a strange sound to her,) and thrill the heart of Mrs. Somerville and that of the faithful Ursula, as they listened to her innocent gaiety.

Time passed—the summer was gone, autumn had shed her leaves, and already had November crept in—in one more month Lord Blondville and Mr. Martyn were expected at the Falcon's Nest. What happiness in the idea—Amy strove that it should not engross too much of her thoughts, but she found the task difficult.

"Alas, dearest mamma," she would say to Mrs. Somerville, who was the repository of every thought, of every feeling, "can I be the same as in those days when my bible was my sole pleasure, and when no image would steal into my thoughts, in hours sacred to higher duties; you know not how it pains me."

"Yes, my child, you are indeed the same," replied Mrs. Somerville, tenderly embracing her, "had you remained until now secluded, there would have been no temptation to resist, and consequently you might have imagined yourself stronger than you are, but happily this was not permitted, and you are now assured that your strength is from God alone, that of yourself you cannot even think a good thought, or perform one duty aright without His all sufficient grace. You know *where* to obtain this, and that it is never denied when asked in sincerity of heart; yet let me affectionately warn you, my precious Amy, that the happiness which flows from human sources, ever carries in its stream pain and disappointment, and that *none* are pure, *none* are perfect, save that well of living water which springeth up unto everlasting life."

One morning, ere the party had separated after breakfast, during which Lady Matilda had been studying the contents of a newspaper; she suddenly uttered an exclamation, at the same time saying:

"I find Harold is staying at Sir Charles Courteney's, and the Morning Post announces that it is confidently reported in the fashionable circles, that the talented young Earl of Blondville has it in contemplation to lead shortly to the hymeneal altar the accomplished sister of Sir Charles Courteney, at whose residence, the Rook's Nest, the noble Earl is at