

Do come, sister." Emily smiled,—and replacing the work which she had prepared, hastily fastened on her bonnet and shawl, and after locking the school-room door, took the hand of her brother, and directed her steps homeward. As they crossed the threshold, a bright ray of sunshine dispersed the clouds which had obscured the day,—and ere they advanced many steps, Emily's attention was attracted by a magnificent rainbow, whose bright colours stood out in bold relief to the heavy clouds, which were now seen rolling rapidly away in the distance. The child, whose large and beautiful eyes resembled his sister's, catching her expressive glance, turned his in the same direction,—and releasing his hands from her gentle clasp, clapped them together with boyish delight, exclaiming, "Oh, sister, what pretty colours are those?" The street, in which they were walking, was one of the principal in the town of L., but somewhat removed from the more business part,—and occupied, principally, by handsome dwelling-houses, inhabited by persons of wealth, it was comparatively secluded,—and Emily, without attracting observation from passers-by, could turn her admiring gaze again and again on the rainbow. Never perhaps before had she felt more in need of a comforter,—never before had Nature spoken to her in such soothing, such encouraging language. The former part of the day had been one of unusual gloom,—one which, though in genial summer time, seemed laden with unwholesome influence; dense mist, and now and then heavy rain, had obscured the face of nature,—and this, no doubt, contributed to depress the orphan's spirits,—while memory, at times so strangely vivid, deepened the gloom, by bringing recollections of the past,—of tones long silent, and forms over which the grave had closed, but not for ever. In pursuing her usual routine of duty, Emily tried to shake off remembrances,—but she strove for some time, vainly to chain the attention, to call back the wandering thoughts,—and though at last she partially succeeded, her spirits failed to recover their wonted composure, and she hailed, with more than usual pleasure, the hour that allowed her thoughts for a time to wander free. To Emily's ardent and imaginative mind, the ray of sunshine, forming such a contrast to the preceding gloomy hours, had been hail-

ed with a delight known only to those whose joys are "few and far between,"—an omen of happier days it seemed to her,—and when arching the heavens like a vision of beauty, the rainbow gladdened her sight, emotions, to which she had long been a stranger, lent fresh lustre to her eyes, and imparted renewed activity to the light step that had lost somewhat of its youthful buoyancy. The little boy, seeming weary at his sister's slow progress, by his childish epithets of impatience recalled her wandering gaze: the beautiful but airy dreams of fancy vanished,—and with a quickened step she hastened homeward, utterly unconscious that another, equally alive to the beauties of Nature, had observed her, or that she had awakened curiosity and interest in a stranger's heart.

But it was scarcely courtesy on our part, gentle reader, to withdraw so abruptly from the occupants of the drawing-room, the light of our presence,—and, if you have no objection, to them we shall return.

Mr. Percy, in agreeable conversation, entertained the young ladies, who laughed gaily, not loudly, who would be guilty of such vulgarity? and half-languishingly, half-sentimentally, gave utterance to hackneyed and common-place thoughts. At last, slightly wearied, though he might not willingly have acknowledged it, Mr. Percy requested some music, and Ellen, who was an excellent performer, rose to comply. The piano was opened, the note books arranged, and the fair musician seated. What shall I play? was the question.

Any thing that *you* can select, cannot fail to please, gallantly replied Mr. Percy.—Piece after piece was played, until, at last, Ellen, wearied withdrew from the piano,—but not without receiving some thanks and that expressive silence of applause which more than the most highly finished compliment, speaks of its effect on the heart. At this moment, the bright ray of sunshine that had cheered the lonely heart of the orphan girl, at the threshold of the schoolroom door, threw its bright beams into the apartment.

"We may congratulate ourselves that the rain is over and gone, young ladies," said the gentleman with a smile, as he pointed to the sunshine,—and, advancing to the window, beheld the beautiful symbol of mercy dipped in the gorgeous colouring of Heaven, as bright as when the eyes of Noah and his