

and tenderly kissed the pale cheek, saying in a low, earnest tone, "God has been very good to you, my dear, in giving you such a noble husband, but you need a mother's love and care and it shall be yours."

After a few more words had been exchanged with the rest of the company, Lady Courtney led the trembling Alice to her own apartments for rest and quiet, while the squire and his friends mingled for a time with the tenantry.

After Mrs. Courtney had taken some hours repose and quiet, she began to realize what a new and important position she had to fill.

Ernest accompanied her to enjoy the beauties of the surrounding scenery and to witness the pleasure of the happy tenants. The large crowd of juveniles were almost wild with delight, for the ladies and gentlemen took part in their innocent amusements. The older people were sitting or reclining on the soft, green carpet, which nature had provided, beneath the shadow of the trees, chatting merrily.

From among the laurels came frequent peals of merry laughter as the young men and maidens stood in groups or paired off into some pleasant walk.

From another part of the grounds, concealed by luxuriant evergreens, came the sweet sounds of music, to the evident astonishment of the numerous song birds who ceased their own melody and turned their heads to listen.

Later on Ernest led his wife to a lovely grotto