

she has never been there since——” He could not finish the sentence.

“Then you go to hear all about her, which is much the same: why go there at all?”

“Because you drive me from your presence,—because you make me miserable,” replied Lord Avon, abruptly leaving her.

Only religion could, indeed, have supported him at this most trying period of his existence. In all his sorrows and vexations this bore him up from sinking, and made him look forward with hope to the end. He had always possessed a desire for study, and now that his mind had expanded to the glorious truths of the Gospel, he had joys with which the stranger could not intermeddle, or the world take away. Again the sea shore became his favourite haunt, particularly that one little spot between the cliffs, endeared to his remembrance. He was sitting one morning on the broken crag intently reading; his dog, a descendant of our old friend Blouse, lying crouched at his feet, when he was startled by a voice saying near him:

“I see misery is no respecter of persons; she finds her way into the houses of the great, as well as into the hovels of the indigent. I am sorry to see you looking so ill, my Lord.”

Lord Avon looked up, and perceived a very old man, bent double with years and infirmity, leaning on his staff, his white hairs streaming in the wind.

“Ha! old Humphrey, is that you?” said Lord Avon, recognizing him as an acquaintance made in the same spot, during a former visit at Traverscourt.

“How has the world gone with you since last we met?”

“But badly, my Lord,” replied the old man, “my eldest son is sinking fast into his grave, and it is a sore trial to my old woman and me, to look on his motherless babes, and remember how soon we must follow.”

“It must indeed, Humphrey, and I am grieved to hear it,” replied Lord Avon, feelingly; “yet do not forget that there is one who hath said, ‘leave thy fatherless children to me.’”

The old man started, and drawing nearer, said with eagerness: “And is it from your Lordship that I hear the blessed words of the Gospel? Who brought the message of peace and hope to your heart?”

“Affliction, Humphrey,—that unwelcome yet valuable friend,” replied Lord Avon with a sigh; “but your son is ill, you say—have you proper advice for him?”

“Not so good as we could wish, and this it is that grieves me the more,” returned the old man, passing the rough sleeve of his coat across his eyes; “ah! if she had been still at Dovecot, we should have wanted for nothing. Do you know, my Lord, young Miss Milman, who used to come like an angel amongst us?”

“Yes, well,” returned Lord Avon, with emotion; “she is far from this now, Humphrey, but if I can supply her place you may command me; would it disturb your son to see me?”

“Bless you! no, my Lord, but it is such a poor place for the like of you to enter, I should be ashamed to take you there.”

“Where the Spirit of God has entered, surely it is an honor to follow,” replied Lord Avon, rising. “Lead on, old man.”

Humphrey ejaculated a blessing, and then led the way towards the low range of cabins inhabited by the fishermen. There was something peculiarly interesting in the appearance of them both, as they walked together along the sands, the tall and handsome young nobleman forming a fine contrast to the old decrepit man. The scenery was also grand and sublime—the vast expanse of ocean on the one hand, and on the other the bold cliffs on whose summit stood a ruined tower, which now served as a sea mark. The beach presented a busy scene as they approached the cabins, many of the fishermen being employed in mending their boats, or repairing their nets.

“Ah,” said Humphrey, as they passed them, “never shall I see my Jem so employed again; well, well, the Lord’s will must be met with patience; He knows best, but it is hard to bear—hard to bear: and he is so good and dutiful to his old parents.”

He conducted Lord Avon to the little hovel occupied by himself, his wife, their son, and his four children. The place seemed so dark on first entering, that for several moments Lord Avon could not see the objects before him; not a ray of the blessed sun he had left, shining into the window, but as the mist cleared from before his eyes, he perceived a young man lying on a miserable pallet, his face emaciated and worn, from illness and his long confinement. His old mother sat beside him, gazing anxiously upon him, while the eldest girl appeared busily engaged in stirring some broth upon the fire; the other children were absent. The room, though clean and in perfect order, presented the appearance of great poverty.

“Here is my young Lord from Traverscourt come to see you, Jem,” said Humphrey; “and may the blessing of Almighty God reward him for his goodness.”

The cheek of the young man flushed on perceiving his distinguished visitor. He tried to raise himself up, but was too weak.

“I am very sorry to find you so ill, my friend,” observed Lord Avon, accepting the chair which Mrs. Humphrey had offered to him, with a profound courtesy.

“Yes, my Lord,” replied the young man, in a low hoarse tone; “it is a heavy trial to us all, particularly as our bread depended upon my exertions;