

"The wealth that was his, where is it? Can it avail him in the land of spirits? But oh! had he gone with Christ, how blessed would have been his lot to all eternity."

Katherine said this with such sweet seriousness, that the levity of her husband was checked. He moved towards the window, where he stood musing, while she mentally breathed a prayer, that a gracious God would remove the veil from his sight, and bring him out of his present state of darkness and unbelief.

"Will this prove a happy evening?" thought our heroine, as she prepared her simple dress for Lady Marley's party. "Am I not by my compliance, resisting those words, 'come out from amongst them and be ye separate'? What was my motive when I yielded my consent? I wished to rival Lady Marley in the eyes of my husband,—to let him see that I too could be admired. How unworthy of my Christian profession, and how inconsistent he must think me. Dear Mrs. Bruce! what will you say to me? Condemn me for my folly; I am convinced."

As these reflections crossed her mind, she took from her mother's casket, a few of her ornaments, with the intention of wearing them, but such a rush of tender recollections overpowered her on beholding them, that she was forced to lay them aside. At the appointed hour, Sir James Marley very kindly sent his carriage, to convey her and Captain Warburton to Marley Vale, the name of his place. Having first seen her child safely in bed, and given innumerable charges to her servant, in whom she had no confidence, that she must not leave the little creature for a moment, she descended the stairs, and with a throbbing heart and many compunctions, she entered it with her husband, and drove off. A quarter of an hour brought them to the gate of the mansion, which was handsome, though of modern structure. As the carriage dashed up to the front entrance, Katherine beheld lights streaming from all the windows. Nervous and unused to gaiety, how did she wish herself back in her own humble home; but it was now too late, and she was ushered into the hall and up stairs into a dressing room, where a pert, flippant, and very dressy maid, appeared to take her shawl.

"Will there be a large party?" inquired Katherine, in some trepidation.

"Very large, ma'am," replied the maid, running her eyes over the graceful form of the stranger. "The ball room is to be thrown open in the evening."

"I have no right to be here," thought Katherine, as she took her husband's arm and entered the saloon, where Lady Marley, sparkling in jewels, and rustling in satin, advanced to meet her,

with a diminutive elderly gentleman, who she introduced as Sir James Marley. He instantly led the trembling girl to a seat, very kindly standing by her side and talking to her, until the door again opened, and other guests were announced.

Katherine had not been in so large a circle since the days of her girlhood, when, with Madame by her side, and the support of her mother, she felt no awkwardness. Now she was alone, and, as a married woman, holding a certain position in society. For a few moments she felt abashed, but recovering her self-possession by degrees, she ventured to look around her on the gay assembly, all strangers to her, except a few of the officers belonging to the same regiment with her husband. Mr. Stanhope, Mr. Fitzarthur, Mr. Sinclair, and the red-nosed paymaster, Mr. Brand. Little as she was known amongst them, still was she admired and beloved, and perhaps pitied; and with one accord they came forward to address her in words of friendly kindness.

From leading so secluded a life, Katherine had a very humble opinion of herself, strengthened, doubtless, by the neglect of her husband; it was with surprise, therefore, that she now encountered the admiring eyes of nearly the whole room fixed upon her, and heard the whispered remarks made upon her beauty. It would be untrue to say that she did not feel pleasurable emotions on the occasion, especially as Captain Warburton was present. Her appearance did indeed form a contrast to that of most of the other ladies, dressed as she was in a simple white muslin robe, without a single ornament, her long fair ringlets shading a face of extreme sweetness, rendered even beautiful by the large, deep blue eyes, that rarely lost an expression of seriousness amounting at times to melancholy.

A brother of Lady Marley, a Mr. Wilkins, was particularly struck with her, and learnt with some surprise who she was. He was rather a good-looking young man, but free to vulgarity in his manners, and conceited of his person. He sought to improve this by wearing an enormous pair of moustaches, which, in a country apothecary, were certainly a little *outré*; but Mr. Wilkins belonged to the militia, and in his red coat, considered himself, (to use the school boy phrase) "*no end of a fellow*." A large gold chain, and sundry studs and pins, completed, he thought, his distinguished appearance; and running his hand through his hair with a peculiar grace, he walked up to our heroine, saying:

"A beautiful evening, ma'am, I never saw the sun set so brilliantly before; but possibly you are not such an admirer of nature as I am; with me it is a passion."

"I admire everything good and beautiful," re-