

Edward Hargrave was well-bred, well-informed, and elegant in person, but he was not quite the man of Miss Winthrop's choice. Young, lovely and amiable, she was skilled in those accomplishments common to young ladies of her rank, and well-read in works of science—but she had early learned to seek for higher excellence, and her hopes aspired to angels for companions. She felt that to live without God in the world was to be indeed dead to real enjoyment, and while Edward felt not this aspiration after holiness, she dared not accept him as her guide and companion through life.

Attended by Tilly, who was allowed to occupy an inside seat in the coach, the little party left Augusta at the dawn of the following day, and travelled until the excessive heat compelled them to give rest to their panting horses. The diversified scenery of the "upper country," was new and interesting to Emily. She gazed with admiration on the fields of cotton just bursting the bole, resembling plantations of white roses, which adorned one side of their road, while the other was gay with various kinds of grain that waved in the breeze. Now they traversed a road perfectly level, exposed to the scorching sun-beams; now plunged into a forest of majestic pines, whose fragrance enriched the atmosphere, while their lofty tops excluding the sun, furnished a cool and reviving shade. Their drive through these "piny woods," as they are termed, formed the most delightful part of their journey. The small "branches," made by the overflowing of the numerous springs, were here allowed to wander on their sparkling course, undiminished by the power of the sun, and they repaid this indulgence by giving variety and beauty to the shrubs and foliage; flowers of the most lovely hues and delicate structure, marked the course of each tiny stream. Emerging from this pleasant spot, the country became broken into hill and valley; but, excepting the few country towns through which they passed, it appeared to be uninhabited; no cheerful farm house stood by the road side filled with life and comfort, and almost surrounded by its social-looking out-houses; no lively white headed urchins arranged themselves in file, to salute them with their best school-taught bow; neither was there any comfortable-looking inn, to swing its noisy sign, as if inviting the weary traveller to refreshment and repose. The only indication of inhabitants was the curling smoke from some dwelling, erected far from the highway, in the most convenient situation to enable the proprietor to overlook the business of the plantation.

In the afternoon of the second day, Emily suddenly exclaimed: "Look, Mr. Hargrave! is there not a pic-nic party, assembled under the trees at the foot of yonder hill?—quite near the road."

"I see them," he replied; "there are two ladies, and the same number of gentlemen, seated under

that fine chesnut. This is one of our country customs;" he added, laughing; "these are equestrians, you perceive their horses tied under the shade of one of those beautiful trees. The riders have probably dismounted to refresh themselves with a draught from the cool spring at the foot of the hill; if they are travellers, they will produce their basket of stores, for a luncheon; but I can see nothing of the kind."

"Nor can I: but see they have observed the coach and are preparing to depart."

At this time, in consequence of the skilful chariotting of the noble Cæsar, the carriage had advanced sufficiently near for the party within to discern the persons who composed the group, and an exclamation of pleasure burst from the lips of Emily, as she recognized, in one of the ladies, her friend Frances Hargrave. "It is my sister and my cousin, Miss Anson," said Edward; "they are here to meet us." Cæsar, who was in the secret, had for some time been quickening the speed of his horses, far beyond their usual sedate movements; but now whip and reins and voice were in requisition to urge them to still greater exertions: and he had soon the pleasure of opening the door to admit his mistress to the arms of her friend. "Dear Frances! Dear Emily! were the first exclamations that burst from the lips of the delighted girls, and it was not until several questions were asked and answered, that Frances remembered that Miss Anson was waiting to be presented to Emily. "Dear me! how thoughtless I am! Here is cousin Mary, patient as a lamb, waiting to be introduced to your sweet self. Come in coz, and sit by me, and Tilly you may seat yourself outside—behind the carriage. Now Cæsar, drive on."

"My dear Frances," cried Emily, "have you not both beaux and horses here? you cannot leave them so uncereemoniously."

"That's true! what shall I do with them, Mary; for I am determined to keep my present seat?"

"I cannot advise you," answered Miss Anson—"I, at least, must return as I came."

"Of course you must," replied Frances, looking archly at the young lady, "as Mr. Watkyns is one of the party—but Edward, that's a dear brother, do apologize to the men for me, and ride my horse home."

"And your saddle too, sister?"

"What difference will it make? I cannot ask them to lead two horses you know, and if you will ride one, you can lead the other."

"Thank you, my dear, for your pleasant arrangement," said the laughing Edward, "but I really have no inclination to act the part of groom, especially as Mary wishes to return on horseback."

"Really, you are excessively disobliging—but I will manage it, in spite of you"—then putting her head out of the window, she addressed a gentleman who was standing near the coach. "Major, you know