

Every word that reached my ear, strengthened my belief that those melodious tones were accents well known and loved, and I was in a fever of anxiety to catch sight of the speaker. At length the congregation knelt; the green satin bonnet sank its lofty crest, and my view of the reading-desk and its occupant was unimpeded. One glance resolved every lingering doubt; it was certainly my old college chum, Eardley Temple, whom I had believed to be in Italy. Now that I could no longer doubt his identity, wonder and conjecture ran wild. Eardley Temple—the witty, the gay, the wild Eardley Temple—transformed into the curate of an obscure country church! How different from the delicate lachrymose conceited youth, the pet of foolish old ladies—the idol of sentimental young ones—my landlady's praises had prepared me to see. When we parted, Eardley had been engaged to accompany a young man of rank abroad; and it was understood, that on their return, his pupils friends were to use their influence to get Eardley into Parliament, where, all who knew him believed, he was certain to distinguish himself. Well might my hostess talk of his learning and eloquence—pearls, I could not help thinking, thrown before swine indeed; well might the petty aristocracy of the neighbourhood flock to listen to one whose flashes of oratory had so often enchanted the under graduates of Cambridge, as well as the wits and men of taste about town; and strangely out of character with the low, narrow foreheads and unintellectual faces around me, his noble head and glance of power seemed to me that morning.

Eardley Temple was now about six and twenty—tall, strong, graceful; his form moulded without a fault. His head and features were as perfectly shaped as a Greek statue; and his large and lofty forehead had that statue-like breadth between the temples so rarely seen, its massive dignity somewhat softened by glossy waves of bright brown hair; his eyes were a dark and brilliant blue, possessing a mingled fire and softness which I have never beheld in any other orbs. In fact he was superlatively handsome; and the power, energy and vigour, the fire, determination and spirit in every word and look, made him, in my eyes, the most perfect representation of an Athenian orator my imagination could conceive.

During the Litany and communion service, he seemed calm and quiet, and his voice, though clear and harmonious as ever, was, I fancied, somewhat subdued and restrained; but when he ascended the pulpit, I saw the daring, ardent spirit rising within him, and asserting its empire over the trammels in which it had been held; it flashed in his eye, it thrilled in his voice, it commanded in his attitude; and as he looked around with a glance, which had in it more of the hero and poet than the priest, I asked myself, "Does he deem himself standing in some tribune, about to