

never met," said Lord Blondville, in a tone of astonishment—"how can you account for it?"

"Indeed, I know not," replied Amy; I have seen you several times—but not your young brother. Surely you must often run into the woods?" looking at Lord Arthur, who stood near them.

"Not very often; I prefer the open fields, or rowing in the boat. Are you fond of the water?"

"I think I should be fond of anything with you," replied Amy, laying her hand on his shoulder.

"I hope that kind answer is not confined to Arthur only?" said the Earl, smiling.

"Not only," was Amy's reply, and her voice faltered, for she thought of Mrs. Somerville. The Earl remarked the passing shade of sadness on her face, and immediately strove to divert it.

"You sing Italian, of course," he asked.

"I have cultivated it, for mamma's sake—who is fond of it?"

"Might I ask for one air?"

"Oh, yes, and you shall hear my favourite; my dear, dear song."

With exquisite taste, she then sang that beautiful one of Bellini's, "*Vi ravviso*." At the close of which she rose, saying: "And now you have heard enough. Lord Arthur's gay laugh is a far greater treat to me, and I see I have made him look grave."

"Stay yet for me," said Mr. Martyn, again approaching her, and gently reseating her at the instrument, "there is one song, I used to hear in former days, a simple Scotch ballad, perhaps you may not know it unless Mrs. Somerville has told you what a favourite it was of hers—of your mother's—'I'm wearing awa.'"

"Ah, that little melancholy air—yes, I know it, and love it for its sweet pathetic words."

And most sweetly, most pathetically did she sing it, as Arthur said, when she ceased:

"I feared to see the angels, indeed, come to beckon her away, for she looked like one herself."

The rest of the evening was spent in conversation, until a bell was rung, it being Mr. Martyn's custom to assemble the household to prayer; they all met in his private study, and Amy marked, with interest, many respectable domestics, who had grown grey in the service of their lord's noble family. Gasper was amongst the group, and on their retiring, when Mr. Martyn closed his book, she approached him, holding out her hand, which he received with a profound obeisance, having previously learnt her arrival from Ursula.

"And now good night, and take my blessing, dear child of my adoption," said Mr. Martyn, impressively, laying his hands on her head, as she bent low before him, "may your footsteps ever follow in the paths of pleasantness and peace."

"Good night, beautiful Amy," repeated Arthur, throwing his arms round her neck; "I will show

you many things about the castle tomorrow, which I am sure will please you."

Amy returned the child's affectionate embrace, and then looked at the Earl with timidity, and more reserve. He perceived the charge, as he said:

"Youth and age enjoy happy privileges—I may but say good night—yet believe me, that comprised in those words, are many good, many kind wishes—may Heaven realise them."

Amy's eyes spoke her thanks, as she hastened from the room, and attended by Ursula, sought her own.

"What a lovely creature," said Lord Blondville, on the door being closed; "how shall we ever part with her again?"

"Harold," replied Mr. Martyn, in a tone of deep gravity, "beware of making an idol; I once knelt at an earthly shrine, and it crumbled into dust—trust not in man, or in any child of man—nor set your affections on things of clay."

Lord Blondville warmly wrung the hand held forth to him, for he saw that the feelings of his friend were unusually moved—he then retired with his young brother for the night, when silence soon after reigned throughout the castle.

When Mr. Martyn met Amy on the following morning, he was calm and perfectly composed; early associations from seeing her, had been recalled the preceding evening, but he was too innately pious for these to retain any hold over his strong mind—he invited her to his study, where he conversed with her upon religious subjects—anxious to elicit the true state of her feelings, which, as a Christian minister, he was delighted to find were all that he could wish in one so young.

"You must come to me daily at this hour, Amy," said he, "and we will read and converse together."

Most gratefully did she assent, and Lord Arthur, who also studied with Mr. Martyn, said that "even his Latin lessons would be an amusement, if she would only stay in the room while he learnt them."

The various avocations of the Earl, employed him for some hours during the early part of each day, and Amy was thus considered as one of the family, and allowed to feel herself indeed at home, as she was no restraint on the movements of others. On leaving Mr. Martyn, she adjourned to her delightful boudoir, where she employed herself in some embroidery, assisted by the faithful Ursula, whose tongue was never tired praising and admiring all she had seen and heard in the castle. Lord Arthur soon followed his new favourite to her retreat.

"May I come in, Amy?" he asked, as he gently opened the door.

"Surely yes, dear boy, and you shall help to wind my silks."

But Arthur soon got tired of this—"I want to shew you the grounds," he said, "and a great