

And how did she bear this sudden change in the aspect of her affairs—to be transported at once from the quiet and primitive mode of life she had hitherto led, to one of luxury and splendour—to gaze around her and find herself the first object of attraction—the admired, the beloved of all; surely it was enough to dazzle and confuse her. But no, her danger lay not here; she cared for none of these things—but to be under the same roof with the man she loved, to listen to his expressions of endearment, to believe that he lived for her alone,—these were the snares; yet beautifully she strove that her holy feelings should not become weakened, or her religious duties neglected—hoping that the constant flutter at her heart, her wandering thoughts and the absence of that placidity so peculiarly her own, were owing to the surprise and pleasure of seeing Lord Avon, and of being brought to his sister's home,—that when more accustomed to her new found happiness she would feel calm and collected as before. Alas, poor Emmeline!

We have mentioned that Lady Frances had two children—the one weakly and deformed—the other lovely and engaging. Our heroine soon discovered that the unfortunate boy was not a favourite: he called forth no pride, he afforded no amusement—consequently, he received little notice, and frequently was sent out of the sight of visitors, while his brother would be called in to see them. She watched the effect all this produced, and marked the looks of disappointment, the saddened countenance he would exhibit on such occasions. Again, when sitting on his little chair, he beheld young Norman scampering merrily on the green lawn, his joyous laugh thrilling on every heart, he would look wistfully after him, as if mourning his own inability to join in his sports—but if he saw him clasped with doating pride in his mother's arms, this was too much, and he would sigh deeply, laying his gentle head down upon his hands. Alas! such tenderness was not for him; he seemed excluded from all that made others happy, to have no interest in the bright things of life. Like a wounded bird, left bleeding on the ground and forsaken by its companions, hearing the notes of joy, but unable to echo them, so was he—forgotten and disregarded. To this child Emmeline attached herself at once, and not even to ride or walk with Lord Avon and Lady Frances, would she leave him when she found she was succeeding in engaging his attention towards those subjects which she knew could alone fill the aching void in his young heart. All smiled at what they termed her enthusiasm, while they loved her the more for it—but when after a while they perceived the change that took place in the poor child, heard him call her his own sweet Lily, as he would clasp her round the neck in devoted love, they were astonished, for till now they had considered him rather imbecile and

wanting in feeling, because they had not taken the trouble to study his character. It was evident that Emmeline had touched a chord unknown before in his breast, and from that moment he seemed a new creature, his countenance animated and beaming with an expression almost heavenly. She delighted to read to him the most interesting stories from the Bible, simplifying them to his capacity. And to teach him all her own favourite hymns, and it was surprising with what avidity he learned them. By degrees, under Providence, whose help she sought in fervent prayer, she brought him to a knowledge of the Saviour, and then indeed her happiness was complete; she could now look upon his little deformed body without regret, knowing that it enshrined a soul redeemed, and precious in the sight of God. And on her knees she offered thanks and praises that her prayers had received an answer so full of hope and mercy.

Lady Frances Lumley was, in many respects, a very amiable sweet creature, but a little too fond of pleasure, a fault which had in a measure been checked by Sir John, who, at his age, preferred a more retired life; and she had the sense to yield her own wishes to his. The absence of all gaiety at Fairy Hall (London being the vortex of dissipation at this season), suited Lord Avon particularly well, as he could devote his whole attention to the beloved Emmeline: and whenever his sister proposed a party, he always voted against it, saying:

“For Heaven's sake, Fanny, do not let the world in to disturb our peace,—these are my halcyon days, fleeting and short enough; I cannot afford to lose one.”

It had been one of his great amusements, since the arrival of Emmeline, to teach her to ride, an exercise in which she soon took delight; and many a green lane and shady dingle became hallowed in the remembrance of each, from the conversations they held together, as they allowed their horses to saunter along, or even stop to crop the hedges as they passed.

“Emmeline, will you ever forget this?” said Lord Avon to her one day, as he dismounted, on ascending a hill, and they paused together at the summit, to admire the unrivalled loveliness of the prospect spread beneath their feet. “Were you ever so happy before, dear, dear girl?” She bent low her face, till her ringlets touched his shoulder.

“Never,” she softly murmured; “but it is a happiness I fear —.”

“Fear, why so love?”

“Ah, it is too great—too tumultuous, it cannot last,—if it did, I should be lost; for earth would then become my Paradise.”

Lord Avon gazed on her with inexpressible tenderness.

“You are right, beloved one, it cannot last,” he