

"Not so, dear Kate!" returned Sir Henry; "I am sure it will gratify you to know that you can repay a debt to a valued friend, one which you would never have been made acquainted with, but for this reasonable supply."

He then informed her of the noble generosity of Captain Beauchamp, who, without the slightest expectation of ever being remunerated, had devoted four hundred pounds to the payment of her husband's debts. Katherine was struck with admiration and astonishment.

"May God reward him abundantly for his goodness!" she exclaimed, bowing her head over her clasped hands. "Yes, I am thankful I can repay the debt—the act never."

As time wore away, the friends of Katherine were flattered into the belief that she was gradually reconciled to her loss—that she was supported under it. And perfectly resigned; she was indeed; for largely had she drunk from the "well of living water." Constant were her supplications at the throne of grace for help; abundantly had she received it. The promise, "Draw near to God, and he will draw near to thee," was, in her, amply fulfilled, and expressed in her lovely serene countenance and calm demeanor. Mr. and Mrs. Atherton were the only visitors admitted to her privacy. From their Christian society she always derived comfort; indeed, who could dwell for months under the roof of Lady Woodford without imbibing a portion of that peace, which must exist, where the presence of the Saviour is sought for and found, and so much cherished.

Soon after Katherine had taken up her abode at the Abbey, reports were spread abroad among the gossips of the neighbourhood, that Sir Henry Woodford had made her proposals of marriage. Fortunately she could not hear them, but they reached his ears: and when he was rallied on the subject, he indignantly repelled the charge.

"Could I presume to outrage the sacredness of Mrs. Warburton's feelings so far," he replied, "I should deserve the contempt of all well-thinking persons. Oh, no! behold her as she is, and you would call her a holy thing dedicated to Heaven—earth will never bind her again."

So spoke and so thought Sir Henry then; but the time came when feelings of deeper tenderness arose within his manly breast, which at first he strove to conquer, till they became too powerful to be resisted. Quick was she in discovering the state of his mind, and grieved it made her to do so. As a friend and brother he was very dear to her, but as he had himself said, she felt that her heart could never open to another attach-

ment, and she would not seem to understand him.

Katherine was indeed a most loveable and interesting object at this time, and none could behold her without admiration. Retiring and modest, humbly pious, and possessing the warmest affections, she was a creature calculated to form the earthly happiness of any man capable of appreciating her; her very trials had opened and produced beauties in her character, which, had her life been prosperous, might never have expanded, early educated for this world alone. God mercifully snatched the lovely flower from the hands of Ignorance and Folly, and prepared and cherished it for Paradise.

Winter now drew on apace, and the ground became covered with snow. Lady Woodford had looked forward to this bracing season to renovate the health of her loved charge; but, to her sorrow, a cold caught at its commencement, drew forth the incipient seeds of consumption, inherited from her poor mother, and the life of the gentle Katherine became threatened. All that friendship could do was tried, yet still the distressing cough clung to her, and the hectic cheek and sparkling eye too truly told their tale of coming sorrow; yet, strange to say, as strength declined, her spirits rose, and she became the consoler instead of the consoled.

Raised by the bounty of her father from the grinding poverty she had so long endured, she could now indulge her naturally benevolent disposition, which proved a source of inexpressible gratification to her. Clara had many objects among the poor of the neighbourhood, who were peculiarly her charge, and at the request of Katherine, she became the almoner of her little charities, and the ready assistant of all her plans for their comfort. Sir Henry would sometimes smilingly caution her not to be too generous, and say:

"We may not find your father in so magnificent a mood again—you had better be careful how you give all away."

But her answer ever was:

"Let me work while I may; I shall have enough until the spring."

Twice she had seen Captain Beauchamp since his first visit to her at the Abbey. In repaying her debt to him, she expressed herself so touchingly that he was melted even to tears.

"I have seen that sweet creature for the last time," he murmured, on taking leave of her; "Heaven is stamped on her brow; she belongs no more to earth."

When Katherine found her health failing her so entirely as to confine her to the house, she