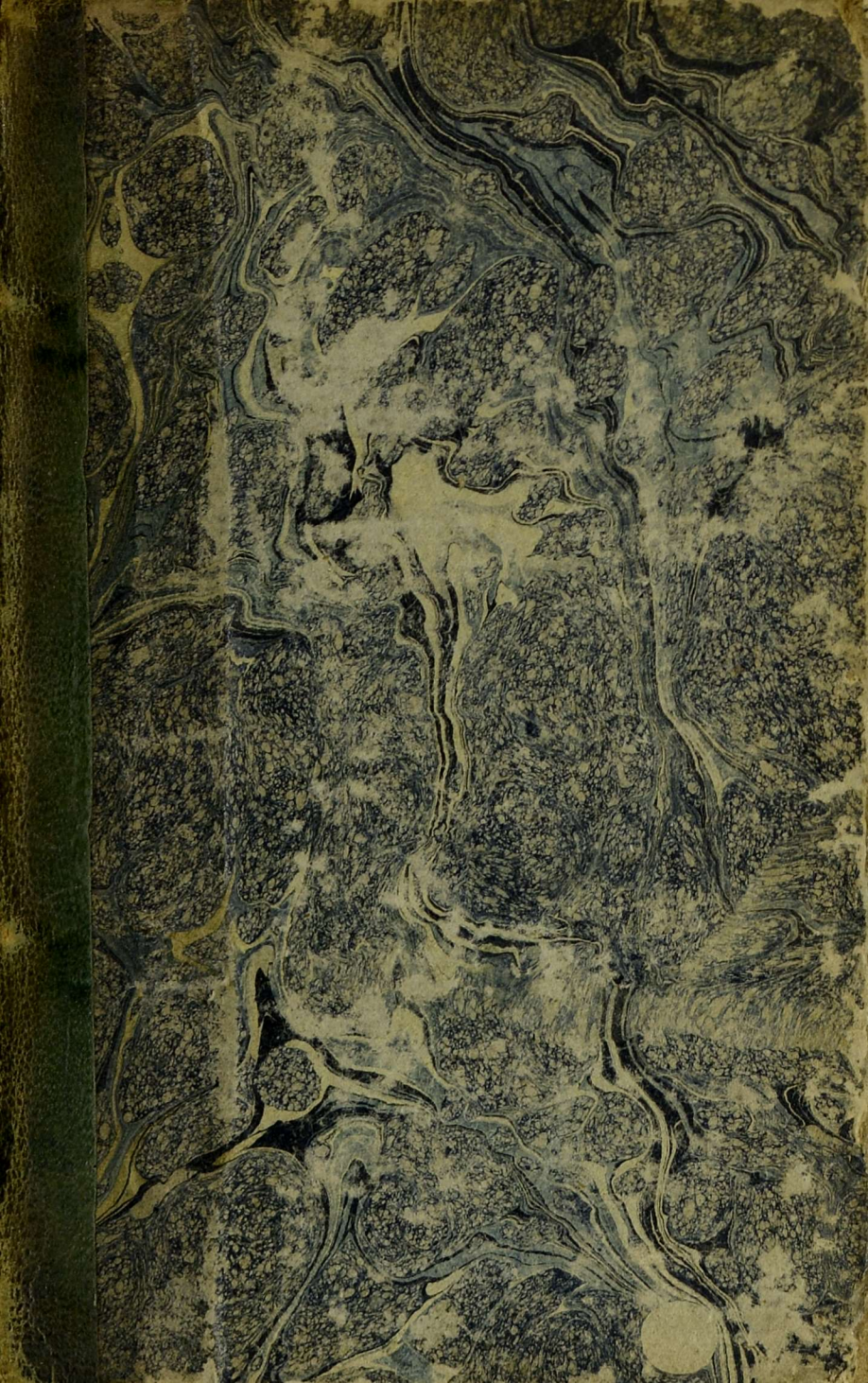
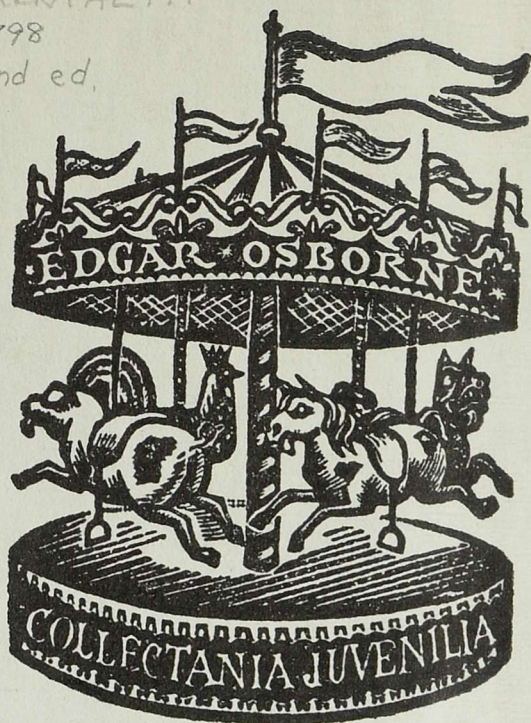




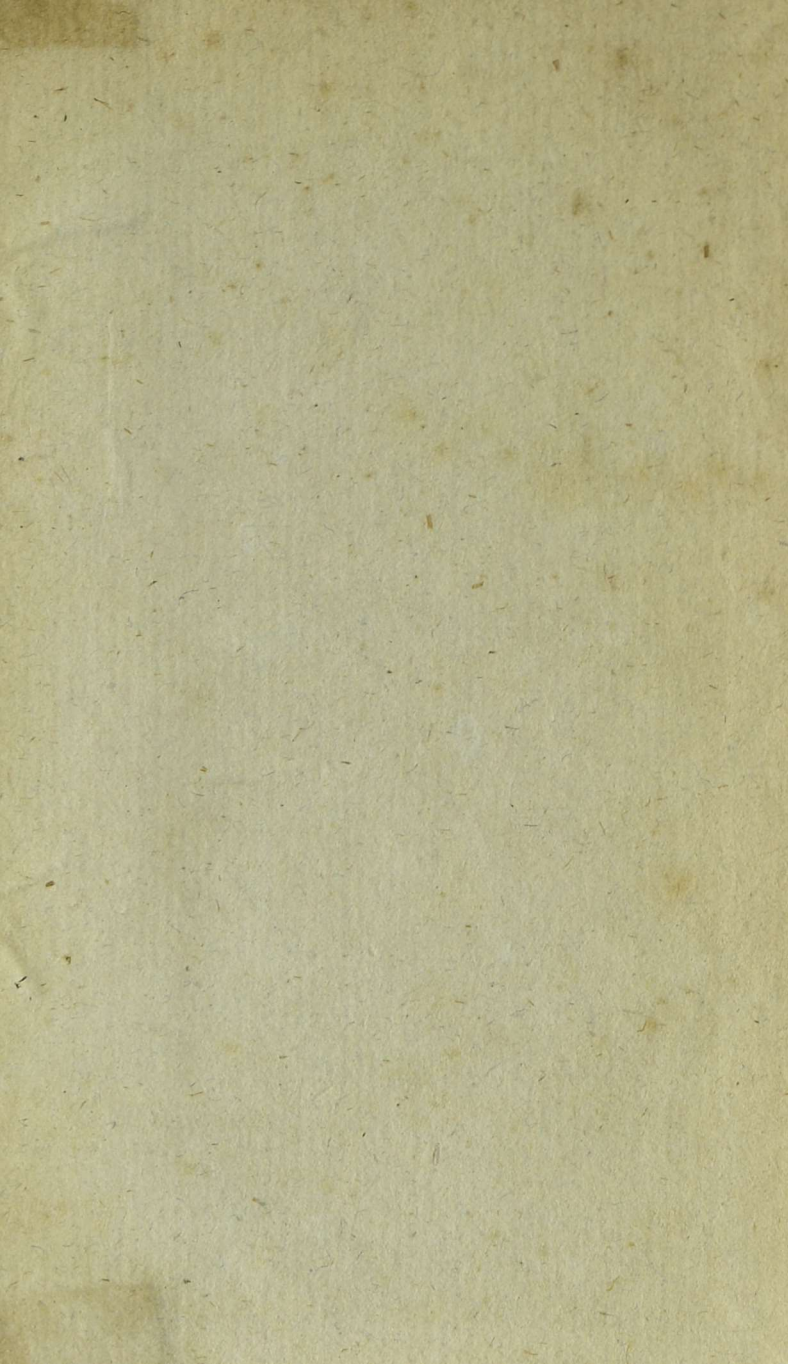
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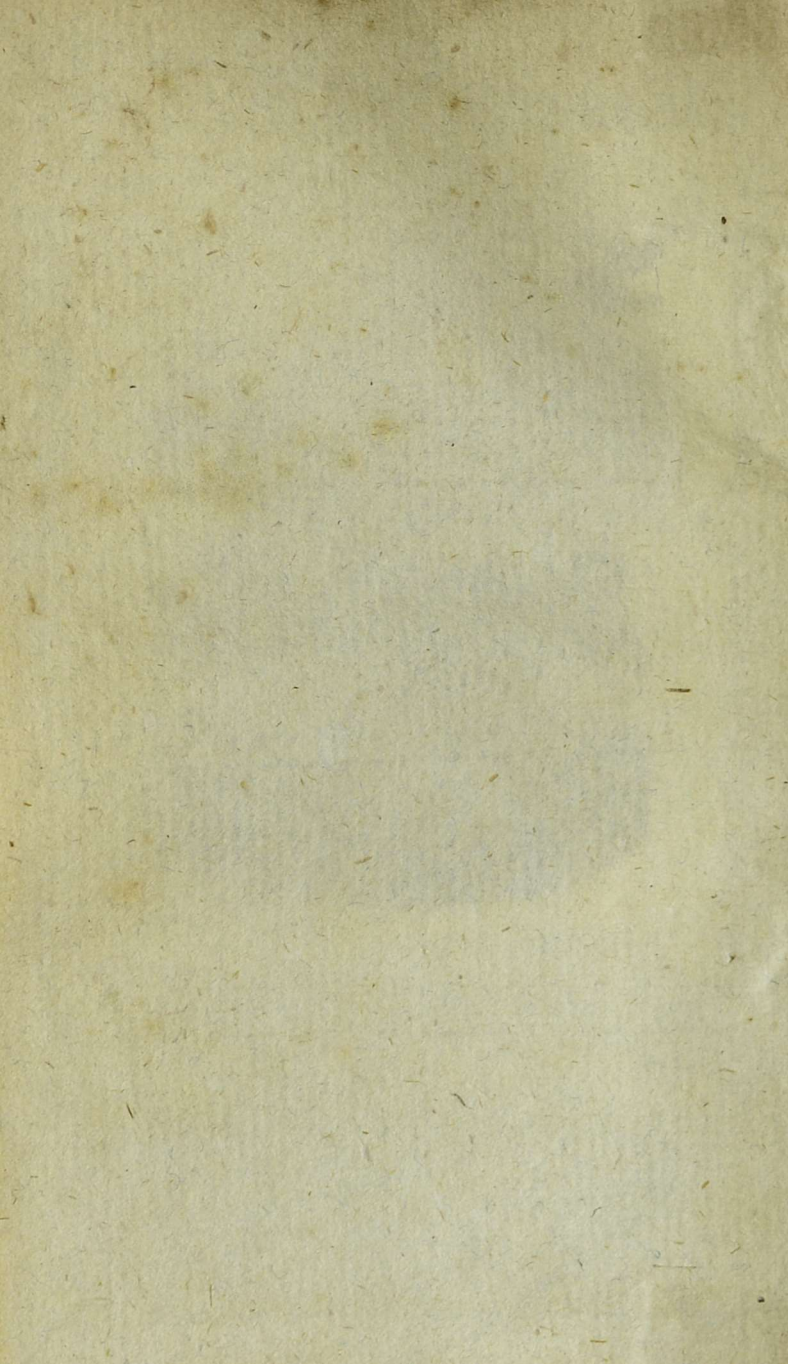
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Glory Crowning the Arts and Sciences.

MENTAL AMUSEMENT;

OR, THE

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CONSISTING OF

MORAL ESSAYS, ALLEGORIES,

AND

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“ Every just idea communicated to a pupil, every virtue
“ impressed upon a young heart, are so many benefits dif-
“ fused over our country.” MAD. DE SILLERY.

SECOND EDITION, REVISED.

L O N D O N :

Printed for G. SAEI, No. 192, STRAND; and sold by
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1798.

MENTAL AMUSEMENT

OF THE

JUVENILE MORALES

CONSTITUTION OF

MORAL ASSAYS, ALLIGORIES

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P R E F A C E.



THE present Volume of Essays, Tales, Apologues, &c. is now offered to the Public. Its contents have been chiefly contributed by the Publisher's literary friends, in order to form an additional series of lessons for the service of families and schools. Moral instruction has been the Editor's chief aim in this, as in his former publications; and variety has
A 2 been

been his vehicle for the communication of it. For the laudable and liberal contributions of those who have aided his design, he desires to express his sensible obligations; and he submits them with a respectful confidence to those instructors who have, in so indulgent a manner, patronised his previous efforts to lighten the labour of tuition. He requests at the same time to add, that, should the candour he has before experienced suggest any hints for farther improvement, in the event of another edition,

edition, such hints will be thankfully
attended to by the Public's

Much obliged, and
Grateful servant,

Strand,
March, 1798.

G. S.

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MENTAL AMUSEMENT;

OR,

THE JUVENILE MORALIST.



CHAP. I.

Education and Ignorance.

AN ALLEGORY.

“ Phocylides, a Greek poet, compared Educa-
“ tion to a sickle and a hand, because, if
“ there was any vice in the soul, it would
“ weed it out; and if there was no virtue, it
“ would plant some in.”

“ If *good* we plant not, *vice* will fill the mind,
“ And weeds despoil the place for flow’rs de-
sign’d.”

HANNAH MORE.

EDUCATION and IGNORANCE had
long lived opposite to each other in

B

a coun-

a country town. It was the constant business of the former to improve his mind, and to promote the good of his fellow-creatures; while the latter was loitering at his door, and finding fault with those who were better employed than himself. EDUCATION one day met IGNORANCE, on his way to the village bowling-green, and thus addressed him: “Pr’ythee, neighbour IGNORANCE, what can possibly entice you so often to that scene of indolence and tumult? you know what continual quarrels ensue from it, and what troubles they involve you in: how much more comfort might your own little

“cot-

“cottage afford; and what far happier effects would result from careful industry, or studious application!”—“Perhaps they might,” said IGNORANCE; “but I had no taste for such matters in my younger days, and it is too late now to profit by your advice.”—“It never can be too late,” returned EDUCATION, “to profit by advice, which is kindly intended and candidly received. From this moment let *me* become your adviser: I will teach you to adopt new plans, and to acquire new habits, which will make you despise your former course of life. Take me for your conductor, and

4 *Education and Ignorance.*

“ I will lead you to the mount of
“ Knowledge, where you may gather
“ fadeless flowers, and look down
“ with contempt on those worthless
“ weeds which before could gratify
“ your senses. For the fruits of idleness (you already know) are shame,
“ penury, remorse ; and those of industry (as I can witness) are comfort, independence, and fame.”—

IGNORANCE listened with attention to this friendly offer, and the dulness of his character no longer seemed visible on his countenance. He grasped the hand of EDUCATION with respectful ardour, promised to become his daily visitor, and, instead of living *opposite*,
Hiv 1
very

very soon took up his abode on the same side of the way. REFORMATION, his first cousin, died a few years after, and leaving him heir to a handsome fortune, IGNORANCE took his NAME.



CHAP. II.

On the Employment of Time.

“ A wise man counts his minutes ; he lets no
 “ time slip ; for time is life, which he makes
 “ long by the good husbandry of a right use
 “ and application of it.” RULE OF LIFE.

THE best way of ordering time is to lay down a plan of our own, adapted to the pursuits we are engaged in : this will leave us leisure for every pursuit, and prevent our appearing in a hurry on every trifling occasion.

Order is the first law of nature ; the moon, stars, and tides, vary not
 from

from their settled courses, and “ the
“ sun knoweth the hour of his going
“ down.”

When many things press upon us,
and we are doubtful what to do first,
how many minutes do we lose for
want of order; and how painful is
the reflection, that those minutes
never can return !

Useful employment is the main
spring of our being; without it we
should soon grow languid or fretful,
and probably become a burden to
ourselves. The noble works achieved
by assiduity, history has recorded :
thence too we learn, that the greatest
men, in every age and nation, have
owed

owed their greatness to the wise disposal of their time. Cæsar had never conquered, or written the history of his conquests, had he not possessed, in a high degree, the power of turning every moment to some account; Newton had never explored the true movement of the heavenly bodies, had he loitered away his youth in personal ease or indulgence; Locke had never searched into the recesses of human intellect, had his mind been less active, or less vigilant in its application of the passing hour; nor had Thomson, the sweet poet of nature, ever sung to us “the Seasons
“as they changed,” if he had all his
life

life indulged, “falsely luxurious,” on the bed of sloth; for, as he kindly questions us,

“Is there aught in sleep can charm the wise?

“To lie in dead oblivion, losing half

“The fleeting moments of too short a life?”

By a habit of early rising, the scantiest life may be extended, and the longest made much longer: in what proportion will appear from the following statement. In the course of forty years, the difference between rising every morning at six or eight o'clock, amounts to three years and nearly four months; which would supply twelve hours a day for almost
seven

seven years: Whence it may be considered as so long a term added to our existence. Let this reflection rouse the sluggard from his pillow; and let him profit by the following example. Alfred the Great, one of the wisest monarchs that ever swayed the British sceptre, assigned to every hour of his life its peculiar business: he divided the day and night into three parts; eight hours he allotted to eat and sleep in, eight were devoted to business and recreation, and eight to study and prayer.

“First worship GOD!—he that forgets to pray,
“Bids not himself *good morrow*, or *good day*!”

CH A P. III.

*Economy inculcated; or, The Bee and
the Blue-Bottle.*

A FABLE.

“ The regard one shows Economy is like that
 “ we show a distant relation who is to leave
 “ us something at last.” SHENSTONE.

“ Economy is the parent of Integrity, of Li-
 “ berty, and of Ease, and the beauteous sister
 “ of Temperance, of Cheerfulness, and
 “ Health.” HAWKESWORTH.

A LARGE blue fly, who was buz-
 zing every morning about the door
 of a grocer's shop, had fattened him-
 self on the fides of a sugar-cask, till
 he

he was scarcely able at night to fly home to his hole in a garden wall. A bee, who belonged to a hive within the garden, and was hourly culling sweets from every flower, to load his little thighs with honey for the cell, had observed this lazy drone, and cautioned him against indulging in such excess of luxury. “This, neighbour,” said the bee, “is indeed a fine sunny season, but it will not last many months; nor will the sugar-cask, where you pass whole days in gorging yourself, supply you with food for the winter, if you feast so greedily now. Adopt my practice, and lay by, for future
“sup-

“ support, what you do not require
“ for present subsistence.” The blue-bottle thanked the bee for his friendly hint, paid many compliments to his wisdom, and applauded his worldly prudence; but returned again next morning to the luscious delights of the sugar-cask. At length, November came: the winds blew very sharp, and the rain fell very heavy; the poor blue-bottle was not able to get to the grocer’s, and at home he had made no provision against bad weather. The bee peeped out of his hive, and pitied his foolish neighbour; but the cares of his own family prevented him from doing more.

MORAL.

Temperance, not abstinence, is man's true bliss,
And being so, is therefore Heaven's command:

The wretch who riots, thanks his God amiss;
Who starves, rejects the bounties of his hand.



CHAP. IV.

The Uses of Reading.

“ Each pleasing art lends softness to the mind;
 “ And, with our studies, are our lives refin’d.”

THERE is not, perhaps, any better resource for improving our minds than READING, provided the books we read are properly selected, and the temper in which they are perused accords with the subject. Reading not only brings a fund of employment to the memory, but fits us for various duties, and makes us capable of conversing upon a variety of subjects.

Uneducated persons, who cannot enjoy this privilege, are often a fatigue to themselves, or are driven to amusements totally unworthy of a rational being. By storing the mind with useful ideas, we feel ourselves intelligent creatures; and, living under this impulse, are fitted for the exercise of those duties which call for our exertions in every sphere of life. If a fellow-creature is oppressed by want or sickness, nature and religion prompt us to minister the cordial of relief, or the balm of sympathy. If we have the means to lessen another's sufferings, conscience will secretly recompense us for all the attentions
which

CHAP. V.

Address to the Deity.

ETERNAL Pow'r! who spread'st o'er all
 Thy mild parental care :
 Assist a mortal's feeble call,
 Accept his lowly prayer !

Oft, when my failings I deplore,
 Thy mercy stoops to bless ;
 Nor, while I feel that mercy more,
 Let others own it less.

But as to *me* thy comforts flow,
 Oh! let them so extend,
 That nature ne'er may find a foe,
 Where frailty needs a friend.

Far rather give the angel-power
 To sooth another's pain ;
 To gild affliction's lonely hour,
 And link the social chain.

So may *my* heart, when pierc'd by grief,
The better bear distress;
And, when thy goodness brings relief,
With warmer ardour bless.

Relying on an all-wise will,
Be my dependence this—
To think that every seeming ill
Contains a real bliss:

And for the good thy gifts reveal,
Be grateful praises given;
So shall each earthly joy I feel,
Exalt my thoughts to Heaven!

T. P.

which charity demanded at our hands; and we shall be thankful to HIM who “went about doing good,” for every occasion afforded us of proving ourselves his followers; for after all our reasoning, the logic of the gospel must be founded in our own hearts. The most pressing arguments in favour of the distressed, will never touch *him*, who can see his fellow-creatures suffer without being moved. An unfeeling mind is like an ill-tuned instrument, from which it is impossible to draw forth pleasing sounds. Let us not forget, therefore, that “Christianity has but two capital features—love to God, evinced

“ in acts of piety—and good-will
“ towards man, exemplified in all
“ the possibilities of doing good.”



CHAP. VI.

Moral Retribution.

A TALE.

“ It rarely happens that punishment, though
 “ flow in its progress, has failed to overtake
 “ a villain.” HORACE.

NEAR to a village in the west of England there dwelt an honest but homely pair, who earned their bread by the sweat of their brow, and enjoyed in humble peace the fruits of their mutual industry. William, at his cottage on the waste, was always met with smiles by his helpmate Ellen, who

who gladly set aside her work to cheer her William with a welcome meal. Thus, in rustic quiet, did many years pass on, till their only son, young Alleyne, was grown a sturdy boy. One evening, after waiting longer than usual for the return of William from the market, Alleyne took his mother by the hand, and asked her to go and meet his father. They strolled away together over the common, and along the foot-path by the wood-side, till they approached the village; but William met them not. Ellen fancied he must have gone home some other way, and hastened back to their cottage, lest he should arrive before them.

them. But the cottage was lonely as she left it. Terrors, till now unknown, crowded into her mind. It grew quite dark, and William was to have returned at least two hours before. Ellen saw her son to bed, and hurried again to the village to collect some tidings of him; but no one had seen William since sun-set. Half distracted, she again ran back to her cottage, and passed in stifled moanings a night of sleepless woe. On the morrow William came not, nor did she ever see him more! Not the smallest whisper reached her of what could have befallen him.—In sad, though patient affliction, she
la-

lamented her hapless fate, and reared up her youthful Alleyne in solitude and tears. Alleyne repaid her tenderness with dutiful regard. He soon supplied his father's office of providing for her daily wants, grew beloved by all the country, and, when he came to manhood, married the only daughter of a rich grazier, who put the young couple in possession of a snug farm. Thither he removed his mother; who gradually lost the sense of her own sorrows in beholding her son's prosperity.

It happened one day that Alleyne passed the village-green while some rustics were pitching the bar; and,

as he was famed for strength, they begged him to take a fling. Alleyne complied, and put out all his force; but, by some strange mischance, the bar flew from his hand in a random direction, struck the stomach of one Rustan, a gambling cock-fighter, and brought him bleeding to the ground. The blow was pronounced to be mortal; and Alleyne, when he heard it, became almost insane. Rustan was conveyed, as he directed, to the porch of the vicarage, whither Alleyne went also, by his desire; and, as life was ebbing fast, he called the clergyman to witness that his fate was truly just. “In *me*,” said Rustan,

“ you behold a guilty wretch, who
“ *slew* the father of Alleyne, for the
“ sake of his weekly earnings, which
“ I lost next day at the cock-pit,
“ and have lived a life of torment
“ ever since. The deadly wound
“ which now exhausts me was given
“ me by Heaven, and not the hand
“ of Alleyne; and with my parting
“ breath I declare the justice of Pro-
“ vidence, in making an innocent
“ son the avenger of his murdered
“ father.”

CHAP. VII.

The Advantages of Knowledge.

“ Knowledge is not only an ornament, but a
 “ solace in the moments of leisure and soli-
 “ tude.” DR. REES,

TO be able to enjoy the pleasures of retirement, requires a mind furnished with internal resources. When men talk with rapture of retreating from the world, we may give them credit for all the visions they have formed of pure felicity; but the mind will still require support, and cannot feed upon mere indolence; which, per-

28 *The Advantages of Knowledge.*

haps, is all that leisure can supply. The end proposed by the busy is various; but in the labour itself is the enjoyment: and when this labour is at an end, chagrin will probably fill the place of ideal happiness. For, generally speaking, we never see those persons content with solitude in advanced life, who have not stored their minds with domestic wisdom and useful knowledge.—“Knowledge,” as a noble writer remarked, “is a comfortable and necessary shelter for us in age; but if we do not plant it while young, it will give us no shade when we grow old.” And for

for such planting, it may be added, the occasion is frequently lost.

A reputable tradesman in the city of Westminster, who retired from business to a villa he had purchased near the sea, after an absence of some months, found an inactive life so irksome, that he entreated again to have a share in the partnership which he had lately given up. This was unkindly refused him; and he then desired to become an assistant in the shop, and to serve, without reward, behind the counter.

This instance, among others, evinces the necessity there is for mental cultivation, whatever may be our em-

ploy. But this must be effected in early years, or there is little likelihood of its being effected at all. The seeds of knowledge then sown in the mind are sure to spring up with advantage in later periods, and will yield fruits of increase proportioned to our culture, and the fertile nature of the soil.

C H A P. VIII.

On Filial Love and Obedience.

“ Honour thy father and thy mother.”

FIFTH COMMANDMENT.

A STEADY and rooted affection from children to their parents is one of the most natural, as well as engaging sentiments which can be cherished in the bosom of youth. It is an instinctive feeling, and cannot therefore be given up without a previous departure from all that is amiable or virtuous. This is finely shown in one of Shakespeare's tragedies, of which Garrick said—

“ Ingra-

32 *On Filial Love and Obedience.*

- “ Ingratitude would drop the tear,
“ Cold-blooded age take fire,
“ To see the thankless children of old LEAR
“ Spurn at their king and fire !”

Odious must ever appear the undutiful child, while filial regard is sure to obtain admiration. A pleasing instance of its powerful effects is recorded in the Roman history. While Octavius Cæsar was at Samos, after the battle of Actium, he held a council to examine the prisoners which had been engaged in the party of his adversary. Among the rest, there was brought before him an old man, named Metellus, disfigured by a long beard, a neglected head of hair, and very ragged apparel. The son of this

Me-

Metellus was one of the judges, but he had great difficulty to discover his father in this deplorable condition. At length, however, having recollected his features, instead of being ashamed to own him, he ran eagerly into his arms, and shed a torrent of tears upon his neck. Then turning to the tribunal, "Cæsar," said he, "my father has been your enemy, "and I your officer: he deserves to "be punished, and I to be rewarded. "The favour I desire of you is, either "to save him on my account, or to "order me to be put to death with "him." All the judges were touched with compassion at this affecting scene.

scene. Octavius himself relented, and granted to old Metellus his life and liberty.

There is an inward delight arising from the discharge of filial duty, which always furnishes a full reward for any restraints it may impose: while disobedience or contempt is sure to breed a canker-worm within the heart, and sometimes brings with it an immediate punishment. This is prettily shown in the ensuing tale, written by a gentleman on a shooting party, and sent to his god-daughter.

CHAP. IX.

The Young Partridge.

A TALE.

“ FROM plains o’erspread with bell-cups
blue,

“ And crow-foot flow’rs of yellow hue,

“ From fens where pithy rushes grow,

“ And shallow streams with pomp creep flow,

“ To little Lucy, young and fair,

“ Whom mystic vows have made my care,

“ Oh! wing thy way, my gentle dove,

“ And chant the praise of filial love.

“ For still to sooth a mother’s cares,

“ To nurse her hopes, or calm her fears,

“ And cheer her path through life’s rough way,

“ Be your first pleasure—to obey!

“ Or Heaven, averting friendship’s prayer,

“ Instead of peace will send despair.

“ An-

“ Ancient bards, and tales of old,

“ In song this moral oft have told ;

“ And well I know the precept true,

“ For late I learn’d this moral too.

“ One misty morn, when dewdrops shone

“ By the faintly-glimmering moon,

“ I to the hazel coppice hied,

“ With trusty Sancho by my side ;

“ Lur’d by the eager quest of game,

“ With fav’rite fowling-piece I came.—

“ Soon as the sun with tepid ray

“ Chas’d the thick mist and dew away,

“ The whirring covey leave the wood,

“ And gain the fields in quest of food,

“ Spread their bright plumes, and gladsome play

“ Beneath the strength’ning beams of day.

“ One little wanton, pert and vain,

“ Contemns her mother’s sober reign,

“ Rejects advice with haughty air,

“ And wanders o’er the stubble far :

“ Till keen-nos’d Sancho ranging by,

“ Stands,—and foretels a partridge nigh.

“ Now, by the treacherous gale betray’d,

“ Wishing, in vain, maternal aid,

“ She

- “ She ponders o’er her follies past,
“ And, sinner-like, repents at last :
“ With fated flash the thunder flies ;
“ The bird, without a chirrup, dies.”

J. F.



CHAP. X.

Thoughts on Nature and Providence.

“ NATURE is but a name for an effect

“ Whose cause is GOD!” COWPER.

TO trace the beauties of Nature and the bounties of Providence, has ever filled the thinking mind with gratitude and delight. To remark with what majesty and order the sun pursues his course, ripening into use the vegetable world, and cheering the whole creation with his splendour; to see “ the moon take up the wondrous tale” of her divine origin, and

and announce herself “ the lesser
“ light to rule the night ;” to observe
the planets pursue their courses
through infinite space, each in its
several orbit ; to behold the starry
host, mingling their milder radiance
through the same vast void ; is a
sight to elevate the soul, and kindle
our devotion at the skies !

Turning our eyes from the heavens to the earth, whereon we dwell, what a scene of wonders again engages our view ! How does the structure of every being fill us with surprise ! and what a triumph over the boasted powers of man does his great Creator maintain ; when even

the smallest insect that crawls upon this globe, not a whole nation of artificers have skill enough to frame. —If we roam into the fields in summer, what a picture presents itself before our senses! What delightful colours does Nature paint with! How grateful to the eye is the blue canopy that hangs above our heads, and the green carpet which spreads itself beneath our feet! Flowers scent the gale with health, and rise before us in beautiful variety, at every step we tread. Some herbs have medicinal properties, while others supply food to the herds and flocks that graze upon the surface of the ground. The
ocean

ocean has its shoals of living creatures, and abounds with every species of the scaly tribe, from the huge whale to the shrimp that sports upon the ebbing wave. The air is peopled also with its gay tenants, some of whom delight us by their plumage, and others by their charms of song. The ALMIGHTY has displayed his wisdom and goodness in all the works of creation, by endowing every creature with powers suitable to the purposes of its existence. But to his creature *man*, He has given an understanding, whereby he is capable of knowing, loving, and serving his MAKER!

- “ Happy who walks with HIM! whom what he
finds
“ Of flavour or of scent in fruit or flower,
“ Or what he sees of beautiful or grand
“ In nature, from the broad majestic oak
“ To the green blade that trembles in the sun,
“ Prompts with remembrance of a present
GOD!
“ Who gives its lustre to an insect’s wing,
“ And wheels his throne upon the rolling
worlds.”



CH A P. XI.

The Folly of Pride.

“ To be proud of knowledge, is to be blind in
 “ the light ; to be proud of virtue, is to poi-
 “ son yourself with the antidote ; to be proud
 “ of authority, is to make your rise your
 “ downfall.” MORAL SENTIMENTS.

THERE appears to be no passion more decried, nor any more prevalent, than that of pride. It takes so many shapes, that it sometimes deceives even the possessor himself. It assumes a pompous deportment, from being the heir to a founding name. It boasts of possessions, which have
 not

not always been honourably obtained; and too often makes exterior show supply the want of intrinsic virtue. In short, it aims at distinction by means which cannot properly confer it.

A certain cavalier, hearing that an old friend of his was suddenly advanced to be a cardinal, went to congratulate him upon his new dignity. “Pray, Sir,” said the cardinal, with great formality, “may I crave
“the favour of your name, and of
“your business?”—“I am come,” replied the cavalier, after a short pause, “to *condole* with your eminence, and to tell you how heartily
“I pity

“ I pity those persons whose brains
“ are so turned with the pride of pre-
“ ferment, that they can neither see,
“ nor hear, nor understand, like other
“ men ; since it makes them as en-
“ tirely forget an old acquaintance,
“ as if they had never seen him before
“ in the course of their lives.”

Some of the ancients treated this failing with just severity ; and we have an instance transmitted by history of very seasonable reproof. One day when Alcibiades was boasting of his wealth and great estates, Socrates carried him to a map, and requested him to find Attica.—It was so minute as scarcely to be discernible. He
found

found it, however, though with difficulty. But upon being desired to point out his own estate there, “It is too small,” he answered, “to be distinguished.”—“See, then,” returned Socrates, “how much reason you have to be bloated up with self-importance about a viewless point of land.” This reasoning might have been pursued still farther. For what was Attica compared to all Greece, Greece to all Europe, Europe to the whole world, or the world itself to the multitude of orbs which surround it? What an atom is the most powerful prince upon earth, in the midst of this grand assemblage;

semblage; and what a spot in the creation does he occupy! Well, therefore, may the Holy Scriptures teach us—

“PRIDE was not made for *man*.”



CHAP. XII.

On Truth.

“ Truth, like Virtue, to be loved needs only
 “ to be seen.” BEATTIE.

THE youth who takes Truth for his guide, who regulates his actions by the laws of conscience, and makes his passions submit to reason, is not very likely to err in his progress through life. Truth, indeed, is the best policy as well as the soundest wisdom; for whatever convenience may seem to be gained by falsehood, it is soon over; but the disadvantage

is

is perpetual, because it brings a person under constant suspicion.

ROBERT and JAMES had been playmates from their earliest childhood, and, in consequence of a long intimacy which had subsisted between their parents, were sent to the same school. In the breast of ROBERT, Truth was a fixed principle, and extended itself throughout his conduct. With JAMES, Truth, on pressing occasions, was often sacrificed to selfish fear. A complaint was one day lodged against the two friends by a neighbouring miller, on account of some she-afles, big with foal, which they had taken from grafs, and gallopped

F

lopped up and down a lane near the village for a whole afternoon. The master took the boys apart, and demanded from each a true statement of the affair. ROBERT, with an open frankness, related the event as it really happened, with sincere concern for having committed an act of barbarity, of which he was not sufficiently aware : and after many blushes at his own thoughtless folly, he generously took upon him to represent the less active share which his playmate had taken in the transaction.—JAMES, on being examined, denied the facts alleged by the miller ; but finding this would not answer his purpose, he

he endeavoured to throw the blame of the whole matter upon ROBERT. The different behaviour of the two boys on this occasion, gave the master a full insight into their opposite characters, and he resolved to impress their effects upon the minds of the whole school. To the father of JAMES he sent word, that a proper compensation must be made to the miller for the misdeeds of his son; and when this was effected, he punished the offender severely for his perfidy to ROBERT, in the face of all their play-fellows; and *Jemmy* became a by-word in the school ever after for such as were caught in a lie. ROBERT, on

the contrary, was not only freely pardoned, but held up as a model of truth and candour. The master undertook to settle terms for him with the miller, and in memory of his conduct, used to grant a yearly holyday to all the scholars, who entitled it ROBERT'S *festival*.

Some of the ancient moralists looked upon Truth as no less necessary than virtue, to qualify a human soul for the enjoyment of a happier state. And, "certainly" (says the learned Lord Bacon), it is heaven upon earth "to have a man's mind move in "Charity, rest in Providence, and "turn upon the poles of *Truth*."

CHAP. XIII.

The Captive Lark.

A TALE.

“ The love of liberty with life is given,
 “ And life itself’s the inferior gift of Heaven !”

IN taking a walk across the fields near town, on a fine summer evening, I was delighted with the cheerful appearance which the season displayed ; and frequently paused to mark the changes which the setting sun produced, or to hear the birds chant their carols to the departing day. A lark which had risen near me, took

his flight into the pure expanse above my head, still singing as he soared, and poising himself amid the blue ether, as far as the eye could reach. On a sudden he dropt from his height, like a body deprived of motion, and descended into an adjoining field. I hastily stepped forward to mark the spot where he alighted, and, lo! when I peeped over the hedge, I perceived my poor lark fluttering among the toils of a bird-catcher, who had decoyed him into his snares. “Ill-fated songster!” said I to myself, “what a sad exchange is this! “From having lived on the bosom of “the air, thou art now to be pent
“ up

“ up in some close garret, in a cage
“ no bigger than a mouse-trap, or
“ exposed to the cruelties of any idle
“ boy who may be rich enough to
“ buy thee for a play-thing. No: I
“ will rescue thee from such hard
“ bondage, and restore thee to thy
“ absent mate.” The bird-catcher,
taking advantage of my ardour, seemed
unwilling to part with his prize; but
at length we made our bargain, and
having committed the trembling cap-
tive to his native region, methought
every object which presented itself on
my way home afforded an unusual
cheerfulness. “ And if this,” said I,
“ is the result of having released a
“ poor

“ poor bird only, what nobler trans-
“ ports might Europeans derive from
“ procuring freedom for their sable
“ brethren in Africa !

“ Natives of Europe, wherefore boast
“ The fair complexion of a skin ?
“ 'Tis not how climates act without,
“ But how great NATURE works within.

“ The beauteous tint which she displays,
“ Engages Wisdom's sober eye,
“ Beyond the fairest outward form
“ That blooms beneath our lenient sky.”

CHAP. XIV.

*Prudence and Prodigality; or, The
Mountain of Money.*

A TALE.

———“ To the wife

“ And good, in public or in private life,

“ Wealth is the means of virtue, and best serves

“ The noblest purposes; but in the use,

“ Not in the bare possession, lies the merit.”

GILBERT WEST.

AN elderly gentleman, who had retired with a fortune gained by trade, was far more respected in the village where he dwelt for his worth and charity, than for the wealth he was known

known

known to be possessed of. During a long confinement to a sick-bed, from which his physician gave him little hope of recovery, his attorney brought word, that two poor kinsmen of his were found to be living on the borders of Wales, who had a family claim upon his services.—“ If such is the case,” said the old gentleman, “ they shall find a friend in me ; and “ if they are deserving young men, “ I lament they should hitherto have “ been unknown. Let a codicil instantly be added to my will.” In this codicil he bequeathed to each of his kinsmen 300*l*. His death followed soon after, and notice of his bequests

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was sent to the legatees. The joy of the two brothers on hearing of their good fortune may be better conceived than related. Both set forward by the next stage to wait on the executors, and the legacies were paid into their own hands. The elder brother took a neat house in a neighbouring market-town, expended 50*l.* in furniture, 100*l.* in articles of trade, and put out the remaining 150*l.* at interest, on good security. This interest was nearly equal to the yearly rent of his house, and the principal was at his command whenever it might be prudent to increase his stock, and embark on a larger scale. By such manage-

management he found himself, in a few years, possessed of a sufficiency to insure comfort, and lived to be regarded by all as a valuable neighbour and useful member of society.

The younger brother, on receiving his legacy, acted like the servant in the parable, who neglected to improve his talent. Three hundred pounds he looked up to as *a mountain of money* which never could be exhausted, and conceived himself, in consequence, a gentleman for life. He threw up his place of clerk in a counting-house, purchased a smart whiskey, made a summer tour to several places of public resort, and, regardless

gardless of the interest which his money might procure, placed the bulk of it at a banker's, and drew for such sums as occasion required. Idleness, "the root of all evil," led him into the company of many gay young men, who had fortunes more ample than his own; and at the end of two years, he found his mountain of money had dwindled into less than a mole-hill. The story of the returning prodigal now shot across his memory, and he entreated his former master to restore him to his employment. But his place had long been filled up; and his habits of living were grown so irregular, that even a

recommendation was refused him: his last resource, therefore, was to enter himself as a common sailor before the mast.

Let the contrast of prudence and misconduct here shown, serve as a beacon to all young persons; and let them remember, that all excesses of pleasure must expect an after-reckoning: a man will be sure to pay for them in repentance, or in something worse.

CHAP. XV.

Rhapsody on Man.

BY MR. PARK.

MAN, thou most discordant creature,
 Germ of contrariety !

All the wayward seeds of nature,
 All shoot up and bloom in thee.

Fraught with passions wild and torrid,
 Form'd with reason those to guide :
 Yet, by one or other hurried,
 Reason's pow'r is soon denied.

Now to Virtue's path inclining,
 Yet too heedless of the way ;
 Vice, with many a lure designing,
 Oft misleads her easy prey.

Then on Pleasure's wings elated,
Pleasure oft in thought carest;
Yet, if thought has over-rated,
Pleasure loses all her zest.

Sometimes, with ecstatic madness,
Prudence wholly he resigns:
Then in mood of fullen sadness,
Still as lost to prudence, pines.

Man's a constant variation,
Warring mass of good and ill,
Chaos of concatenation,
Link'd by sense, confus'd by will:

Fool'd by Spleen's deceptive mirror,
Or his more fallacious eyes;
Reas'ning in a mist of error,
Erring when he most seems wise.

CHAP. XVI.

Address to Woman.

A Poetic Rhapsody from the Italian.

BY MISS SEWARD.

DESIGN'D for peace, and soft delight,
 For tender love, and pity mild,
 O seek not THOU the craggy height,
 The howling main, the desert wild!

Stay in the shelter'd vale below,
 Where calmly blows the fragrant air,
 But shun the mountain's stormy brow,
 For darken'd winds are whistling there!

The ruffian, MAN, endures the strife
 Of tempests fierce, and raging seas;
 But brave not thou the storms of life,
 WOMAN, thou rosy child of ease!

Ah! surely on thy natal day
Great Nature smil'd in kindliest mood,
Suspended held the bloody fray,
And hush'd the wind, and smooth'd the flood!

While MAN, that lives a life of pain,
Was with a foul vindictive born,
Loud winds blew round him, and the rain
Beat furious on his wintry morn.

But THOU, beneath a kinder sky,
What distant tempest wakes thy fears?
Why does that mild, that trembling eye,
Gleam through a crystal film of tears?

Stay in the vale!—no wild affright
Shall cross thy path, nor sullen care;
But go not to the craggy height—
The darken'd storm is raging there.

CHAP. XVII.

Misfortune Alleviated.

“ Ah, think what cares must ache within his breast,

“ Who loaths the lingering road, yet has no home of rest.”

SOUTHEY.

MR. Jones was walking out with his dog Silvy on a winter's afternoon, and enjoying the blessings of competence and health; when approaching near to a stile by the road-side, a voice of apparent distress caught his attention. He stopped to listen. In a few moments it was feebly heard again. Silvy pricked up her ears, and thrunk

shrunk behind her master, as he advanced towards the spot from whence the sound proceeded, and where, to his concern, he beheld a feeble old man leaning on a sod-bank, with a wicker basket beside him, in which were a few apples, cakes, and nuts. He kindly inquired of the stranger concerning his welfare and condition. "Sir," said the aged figure, lifting his eyes to Heaven, swollen in tears, "I am faint with weariness and affliction; but my heart is too full to recount its sorrows, and it would be painful for you to hear them." Silvy all this time stood looking at the old man, and more than once
licked

licked his hand, then the toe of his foot, which had made its way through the shoe he had on. "Be assured," replied Mr. Jones, "I have a better motive than mere curiosity for wishing to know more of you." Thus encouraged, the old man took out of his pocket a torn piece of linen, which supplied the place of a handkerchief, and wiping the tears from his eyes, thus proceeded:—"My life, Sir, passed on with little change till I arrived at manhood. I then began the world for myself, in a small town in the west of England. My trade of shoe-making for some years prospered, and gave earnest
" of

“ of comfort in later life for my
“ youthful diligence and care. At
“ the age of thirty I married ; and
“ for several years lived very happily.
“ I sometimes used to think it was a
“ state too happy to last long—and
“ so, alas ! it turned out ; for my
“ business was ruined by a man of
“ more capital who underfold me ;
“ and bad debts contracted withal,
“ soon brought my creditors about
“ me, who took possession of all my
“ effects. Thus suddenly left desti-
“ tute, I scarce knew what course to
“ pursue ; and while I was contriving
“ how to act for the best, the partner
“ of my cares, through anguish and
“ dis-

“distress of mind, was taken from
“me.”—Here he paused; while the
big tears ran down his woe-worn
cheek. Mr. Jones, after waiting
some minutes to let his grief subside,
requested to hear the remainder of
his story. “From that time,” re-
sumed the old man, “I determined
“to try my chance in London. I
“set out on foot, and reached it after
“three days journey. I soon got into
“pretty good employment, and be-
“gan to think less of the troubles
“which lately afflicted me.—There I
“continued several years, decently
“providing for myself, until the in-
“firmities of age came upon me, and
“my

“ my sight failing, I was hindered
“ from following my trade. I then
“ took to felling fruit and ginger-
“ bread in the little way you see; and
“ this morning expended my *last*
“ *shilling*, to procure a supply for the
“ young gentlemen at Dr. Busby’s
“ school; but being poorly in body,
“ and very low in mind, I had re-
“ posed myself on this sod of earth,
“ in humble expectation that the
“ FATHER OF MERCY would call me
“ from this world of woe to reunite
“ me with my long-lost spouse.” Mr.
Jones, whose heart had all the time
beat in sympathy with that of the
poor shoe-maker, kindly raised him
up,

up, and gave him his arm to lean on till he reached the next village. He there took him to an inn, and desired the landlady would give him such nourishing food as he needed. On the following day he called again; found his strength much restored; made a present to the landlady for her care, and slipped a guinea into the hand of her guest.

Mr. Jones then set forward in search of some small shop, where the old man might sell his fruit and gingerbread without the labour of carrying them from place to place. This he soon effected; and in less than a week his pensioner took possession of

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the little tenement. His civility and fair dealing procured him success; and daily did he implore the God of Heaven to reward that goodness which had raised him from despair and poverty to a state of comfort and satisfaction.



CHAP. XVIII.

On Education and Books.

A DIALOGUE.

“ Accomplishments by Heav’n were first design’d

“ Less to adorn than to amend the mind ;

“ Each should contribute to the general end,

“ And all to Virtue, as their centre, tend.”

HANNAH MORE.

MRS. Day, a widow lady, having invited a small party to spend an evening with her, the following conversation took place between two female friends.

Mrs. Aikin. — Though I know

Mrs. Danby's partiality for ancient modes, I cannot help preferring our modern plan of tuition, and the studies now followed at school. The books put into the hands of young persons are written in an easy style, and furnish a pleasing mode of moral instruction.

Mrs. Danby.—I am sorry, my dear Madam, that I cannot so warmly as yourself applaud the prevailing systems of the present day; religious truths are almost frittered away by modish refinement; and I suspect, upon a general survey, that the rising race do not promise to become better or wiser, except in their own eyes,
than

than the race which went before them. The moral culture of the mind is certainly of moment; but science and morals must yield to the importance of religious knowledge.

Mrs. Aikin.—Doubtless what you prefer, Mrs. Danby, was that uniform method of teaching from the Bible, piously adopted by our forefathers in every private family and public school. This divine storehouse of instruction I would by no means have neglected (as I am given to understand it is not); but it appears to me, that its purposes may even be assisted by those productions, which convey the spirit, though not

the letter, of the sacred volume itself, since novelty often has charms to render that an agreeable employment, which would otherwise appear a task.

Mrs. Danby.—Your arguments, my friend, still fail to impress me with conviction. The Scriptures, I am persuaded, contain a treasure of learning. They teach all we need to know for the practice of every Christian duty; and they teach it in a better manner than any other book.—But pray, *Mrs. Aikin*, what do you think of our *romances* and *novels*, which now make as regular a course of study in female circles, as theology

or logic can do at Oxford or Cambridge?

Mrs. Aikin.—That they have such an influence I much lament; for to them we owe much ideal, and more real misery. They fill the young mind with visions that cannot be realized, and dazzle it with splendours which cannot be possessed. But the mischief most to be dreaded is, from their being read too early in life, when the heart embraces fictions as reality, and in time loses its sympathy for real objects of distress, when they are not tricked out in the trappings of sentiment. Modern novels neither afford wholesome food nor satisfy

satisfy the appetite which can digest them. They too strongly resemble the dish we call A TRIFLE, which may please the eye and the palate, but cannot appease real hunger.

Mrs. Danby.—Alack-a-day! what would my parents have said, had I been suffered to indulge even once a year upon such frothy diet?—No; our whole family library, which had been formed in the reign of Queen Anne, consisted of two large Bibles and three small ones—The Whole Duty of Man—The Complete Housewife—and our only romance was Bunyan's Pilgrim's Progress.

Mrs. Aikin.—This, good Madam,

was

was rather a confined collection, though the judgment with which they were selected at the time deserves to be commended. Since then, however, you are well aware that vast improvements have been made in every branch of study; and that we are many steps nearer to perfection in the arts and sciences, than we were at the beginning of the present century.

Mrs. Danby.—But with all our new lights, Mrs. Aikin, I am afraid we do not grow more virtuous or more happy. More self-sufficient we are certainly become; Master plumes himself upon being more knowing
than

than papa, and Miss gives herself airs, on being more polite than mamma. But where is the reverence due to parental dictates, and where is the respect which ought to wait on experience?

Mrs. Aikin.—That any want of these is imputable to a diffusion of knowledge, is much to be regretted; yet this may sometimes proceed from casual causes; for as knowledge leads to a higher pursuit in our employments, and taste to a purer choice in our pleasures, I am unwilling to think that their extension can be of general disservice. It is from the influence of the grosser
 pas-

passions, I apprehend, we have more to dread.

Mrs. Danby.—I will not contend longer with you on the subject, my good friend; though I am firmly of opinion, that modish manners put our young people of both sexes much too forward; and in particular draw us females from that retirement for which Nature certainly designed us, and which one of our brightest monitors has sweetly pourtrayed.

“ As some fair violet, loveliest of the glade,
“ Sheds its mild fragrance on the lonely shade,
“ Withdraws its modest head from public sight,
“ Nor courts the sun, nor seeks the glare of
light;

“ Should

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“ Should some rude hand profanely dare intrude,

“ And bear its beauties from its native wood;

“ Expos’d abroad its languid colours fly,

“ Its form decays, and all its odours die:

“ So *woman*, born to dignify retreat,

“ Unknown to flourish, and unseen be great;

“ To give domestic life its sweetest charm,

“ With softness polish, and with virtue warm,

“ Fearful of fame, unwilling to be known,

“ Should seek but Heaven’s applauses and her
own.”

MISS MORE.

CHAP. XIX.

Erastus and Harriet.

A DIALOGUE.

——“ Mountains interpos'd

“ Make enemies of nations, who had else,

“ Like kindred drops, been mingled into one.”

COWPER.

“ W HENCE is that sigh, my Har-
“ riet ?” said Erastus to his daughter, as she was entering the breakfast-room, with a newspaper in her hand.

Harriet.—“ Alas ! my father, I
“ dread to hear the particulars of

“ this engagement, in which Henry
“ must have had an active share.
“ Victory, indeed, has crowned the
“ sons of Britain with her laurels;
“ but if the object of my tenderest
“ care has fallen a sacrifice to patriot
“ ardour, I shall have to celebrate
“ our national conquest in a widow’s
“ weeds.”

Erastus.—“ Too often, my Har-
“ riet, has society had cause to lament
“ that ‘ the paths of military honour
“ ‘ are cut through the bowels of hu-
“ ‘ manity ;’—but in the present in-
“ stance I rejoice to tell you, that
“ our hero has been shielded by his
“ guardian angel, and that few even
“ of

“ of his fellow-soldiers have suffered
“ in the conflict. A skilful ma-
“ nœuvre prevented bloodshed, by
“ making resistance fruitless; and I
“ have to present you with a hasty
“ billet from Henry himself, in which
“ he assures us of his personal safety
“ and unshaken regard.”

Harriet.--“ Then Heaven be praised
“ for its protecting goodness! and
“ soon, very soon, may our gallant
“ soldier return to his native coun-
“ try, with the olive wreath of peace
“ for his reward! My dear father
“ must now indulge me with listening
“ to a new canzonet; the words of
“ which

“ which were composed by the love-
“ lieft votarefs of fancy’s choir.”

BALLAD TO HOPE.

BY MISS SEWARD.

THOU fun of the fpirit ! difperfing each cloud,
When the fad fenfe of danger my bofom would
 fhroud,
Not Spring, as ſhe chafes the winter’s loud
 ftorm,
Ever blefs’d the chill’d earth with a luſtre fo
 warm ;
Oh ! how had I borne the dire thought of the
 fray,
When war’s cruel voice call’d my Henry away,
Hadſt not thou, gentle HOPE, veil’d the battle’s
 increase,
And bent thy foft beams on the harbour of
 peace !

To cheer and irradiate a bofom like mine,
Can the ſplendour of glory be potent as thine ?

It

It plays on the crest of the warrior, but shows
Red traces of danger through legions of foes ;
It gilds e'en destruction, I know, to the brave,
But to Love what can brighten the gloom of
the grave ?

Then do thou draw a veil o'er the battle's fierce
gleams,
And on safety's dear harbour, O ! bend thy soft
beams !

And now, gentle HOPE, art thou faithful as
kind,

Not false were thy fires when they shone on my
mind ;

My hero returns !—the dread danger is o'er,
And, crown'd with new laurels, he speeds to
the shore !

Yet to light the dim FUTURE, sweet Hope, do
not cease ;

Through life let thy torch be the guard of my
peace ;

That still it may gild the warm day-spring of
youth,

As it shone on his SAFETY, now shine on his
truth !

CHAP. XX.

The Ocean contemplated.

“ They that go down to the sea in ships, and
 “ occupy their business in great waters; these
 “ men see the works of the Lord, and his
 “ wonders in the deep.” PSALM cvii.

INDULGING myself the other evening in a walk by the sea-shore, I could not but admire the lovely stillness of Nature;—the sun, which had run his course through our hemisphere, was just withdrawn below the horizon, still faintly tinged by his parting beams. On the vast body of water Tranquillity seemed to repose.

Not

Not a wave dazzled the eye with its motion. The moon arose in placid brightness, and threw a silver train of light across the gray expanse. I could long have gratified myself with looking at this picture of serenity, had not a column of clouds collected itself amid the twilight, which threatened a quick-approaching storm. The moon, that a few minutes before had beamed with unsullied lustre, now was shaded from my sight. The water became agitated, the waves heaved from their bed, burst over the rocks, and lashed the side of the cliffs with their white foam. Fishing-vessels were torn from their anchors, and whirled

whirled amid the abyfs without a pilot. They first climb the liquid mountain, then plough the furling ridge; anon plunge into the yawning gulf, and are loft to the eye of the obferver. Alarmed at the dreary fpectacle, I ran to a hovel for fhelter, while the torrents of a thunder-fhower fpread a deluge all around. “Awful,” faid I, “is this change! for it proceedeth from the hand of the Most HIGH, who maketh the clouds his chariot, and walketh upon the wings of the wind: the voice of whose thunder is heard round about; whose lightnings fhine upon the earth, till the earth is moved with-
“ al.

“ al. Yet in our trouble will we
“ call upon the Lord. We will rely
“ on the mercy of the Most HIGHEST!
“ for God is our refuge and strength;
“ a very present help in trouble.
“ Therefore will we not fear, though
“ the earth be moved, and though
“ the hills be carried into the midst
“ of the sea.”

After comforting myself with these words of the Psalmist, I peeped from my place of shelter, and the horrors of the tempest had subsided. I therefore hastened home, reflecting all the way on the uncertainty of our enjoyments, and suitably impressed with the following *Thoughts*.

CHAP. XXI.

Thoughts on a Thunder Storm.

BY THE REV. MR. WILLIAMS.

WHILE others with delight survey
 The clear unclouded skies,
 The full meridian blaze of day,
 And Nature's gaudy dyes;

 With rapture hear the linnet's song,
 Or zephyr's gentle breeze;
 And pass their lazy hours among
 Cool grots and spreading trees;

 Let me this awful scene enjoy!
 Be clouds and darkness mine!
 While borne on tempests through the sky,
 I trace the Pow'r divine.

Tremendous God of Nature ! lo,
I tremble at thy voice !
Before thy glorious presence bow,
And 'midst thy storms rejoice.

For 'tis not guilty fear that shakes
My frame, but holy dread ;
While lightning gleams and thunder breaks
Incessant o'er my head.

Such solemn sounds, and scenes sublime,
The pious heart can raise
Beyond the bounds of space and time,
In its Creator's praise.

His praise let earth, let heav'n resound,
Let man and angels sing ;
And all the airy regions round
With hallelujahs ring !

CHAP. XXII.

*Good Temper necessary to produce
Happiness.*

- “ Oh, Happiness! our being’s end and aim,
 “ Good, Pleasure, Ease, Content, whate’er thy
 name :
 “ Plant of celestial seed, if dropt below,
 “ Say, in what mortal soil thou deign’st to
 grow ?”

POPE.

THE surest way we can aim to attain happiness, is to put ourselves at all times in a capacity for the reception of it. From pursuing this conduct, Mrs. Aurelia Forester gives such a strong proof of her good sense, that

Hap-

Happiness seems to hold his levee in her little parlour, which is often crowded with visitors. She is formed alike to receive or to impart the pleasures of social intercourse, and her company is more sought after than all the gaieties of the town; with this different effect, that her society stamps a sensible impression on the heart and memory, while the phantoms of mere amusement

“Leave not a trace behind.”

Miss Letitia Lappet, on the contrary, is shunned by those who know her character, as much as Aurelia is courted. Endowed by nature with a

wayward spirit, habit has served to increase its wrong bias. Dissatisfied with all around her, she makes all around her dissatisfied. Her looks are sullen, and her talk is peevish. If the day is warm, it melts her; if cool, it puts her in an ague. If her friends take the trouble to call upon her, their visits appear irksome; if they omit to do so, it is called a gross neglect, or a breach of common politeness. If you discommmend a new fashion, she applauds it beyond measure; but if you happen to approve it, she pronounces it odious. In short, her unhappy temper acts as a poison to her peace.

She

She was asked, not long since, to a private ball, and the day on which it took place was consumed in debates about what she should wear. Her wardrobe was tossed over and over, but not an article seemed suited to the occasion. This thing was tawdry, and that was tasteless. She altered her choice a thousand times; till, fatigued by her own fickleness, she desired her maid to choose for her. This was no sooner done, than, in mere perverseness, she put on a different dress, the least becoming she could have selected. Her maid now became piqued, and took care to whisper this anecdote among her

mistress's female friends, who published it throughout the assembly before the lady herself arrived there. The male part of the company took the hint, and agreed to mortify her *folly* by never asking her to dance. After dangling about, therefore, near an hour, she bounced out of the room in an angry fit; and a loud titter from all the gentlemen, which echoed down the stair-case, made her resolve never again to mix with a set of Hot-tentots.

These two characters will form a comment upon themselves, and enable the reader to decide upon which is most likely to produce Happiness.

CHAP. XXIII.

History of Mr. Belfield.

“Contentment is the true temperate climate
 “fitted for us by Nature, and in which every
 “man would wish to live.” STERNE.

AT a village in the west of England resided Mr. Belfield, whose benevolence made him respected and revered. His desire to seclude himself from the busy world arose from the loss of an amiable wife, whose memory he revered, and whose virtues it was his delight to number over. Mrs. Belfield left two daughters, Sophia and

K 3

Frances;

Frances; the elder about seven, and the younger five years of age. The attention bestowed on Sophia by her mother, even at that early period of life, had strongly impressed her mind with virtuous feeling; and often would the memory of maternal goodness cause the tear to trickle down her cheek. Frances, who was two years younger, had but few traces remaining of a mother's fondness. In their retirement, it became the chief care of Mr. Belfield to educate his daughters; and in a few years, he had the felicity to find his concern for their welfare repaid by a filial tenderness, which sometimes made him

him reflect on the shock he had sustained with a composure he never expected.

Besides directing the studies of his daughters, Mr. Belfield had employed himself in improving a paternal estate, part of which was converted into a garden and pleasure-ground; and part was cultivated as a farm. These he took the chief management of himself, and frequently consulted his daughters on improvements in the grounds, or joined their morning parties, while they read the works of his favourite poet Thomson, in an arbour they had assisted to plant, and

and by turns took up the pencil, the needle, or the guitar. Thus did the fleeting hours glide on in innocence and peace; delighted with home, and with each other, care, envy, and ambition, found no place in such society: while, to improve the condition of the labourer, to promote brotherly love and mutual good offices in the village over which he presided, was the constant endeavour of Mr. Belfield; and often did the widow and the orphan's heart overflow with blessings for their generous benefactor. Oh! let not sordid avarice or selfish pride disdain attention to
the

the charities of humanity : let there be more *Belfields*, and there will be more contentment in the cottaged vale of life.



CHAP. XXIV.

Ode from the Italian.

BY MISS SEWARD.

O'ER him, by health and fortune crown'd,
 Time steals with foot so light,
 Scarce is his faint impression found
 On the gay brow's unwrinkled bound,
 Or shining orb of sight:

Smooth as the young Camilla, borne
 With printless step and fleet,
 O'er plenteous fields of ripen'd corn,
 Whose bending stalks the gales of morn.
 Bow on the passing feet.

But o'er the dim form, press'd by woes,
 He treads with heavy pace,
 Sweeps his broad scythe, and, as he goes,
 Down falls the summer-pride, and shows
 Worn Nature's furrow'd face.

CHAP.

CHAP. XXV.

On Cruelty to Animals.

———“ The spring-time of our years
 “ Is soon dishonour'd, and defil'd in most
 “ By budding ills, that ask a prudent hand
 “ To check them. But, alas! none sooner shoots,
 “ If unrestrain'd, into luxuriant growth,
 “ Than Cruelty, most devilish of them all.”

COWPER.

CRUELTY is so contrary to human nature, that it is called by the scandalous name of inhumanity. “ Man does not feel for man,” says the worthy author of our motto; and can he then be expected to feel for inferior creatures? Yet we are not
 hastily

hastily to conclude, that cruelty is a property of human nature. No; it is only the offspring of a depraved heart. But as cruelty, like all vices, is contagious, we should avoid the company of callous and unfeeling persons, as we would shun those who might convey an incurable disorder. Children, for this reason, ought not to be allowed to see the brute creation put to death, nor suffered to sport with animals or insects. For if man's health or safety does not interfere, even the meanest reptiles that have life, are all as free to live and to enjoy their existence—

“ As

“As God was free to form them at the first,
“Who, in his sovereign wisdom, made them all.”

There is a wanton, and there is a vicious cruelty. The one may proceed from a thoughtless temper, but the other must have its source in a badness of heart. An anecdote of the former kind shall be related: too many instances of the latter occur among the butchers and bullock-drivers at every country fair.

Through the streets of Calcutta, an elephant of the tamest species was taken to water twice a day; and had passed along the same track, for several months, unoffending and unoffended. One sultry afternoon, as he

L

passed

passed by a taylor's work-shop, he gently raised his trunk towards a window where several of the cross-legged brethren sat at work, and one of them, in a frolic, gave the animal a prick with a needle, near the end of its snout. The whole party set up a loud grin at the joke, while the elephant marched on, with silent dignity, and seeming unconcern. The driver attended him as usual, and when his thirst was satisfied, returned by the same route home. But, on repassing the taylor's shop-board, the animal again lifted his trunk to the window, and, with the force of a water-spout, discharged a volley of mud

mud and slime full into the face of his offender. Poor Snip was almost stifled. The garment he had been at work upon was entirely spoiled; and, as he wiped the mud from his sable visage, his laughing comrades advised him to take care how he ventured to bleed an elephant again with the point of a needle.

CHAP. XXVI.

On Hunting.

“ Poor is the triumph o’er the timid hare.”

THOMSON.

POOR, indeed, is every triumph of man over the harmless and unresisting. But it is painful also, to a reflecting mind, to see a regiment of horsemen assemble to hunt down a trembling victim, that flies from the very whispers of the wind. The amusement of hunting has been called a remnant of Gothic barbarity *. “ If

* ——— Detested sport!

That owes its pleasures to another’s pain.

“ we

“ we kill an animal for our provision,” says Plutarch, “ let us do it with all the meltings of compassion, and without tormenting it.” But ancient Plutarch and modern sportsmen have few feelings, perhaps, in common with each other. Bodily exercise is less painful than mental exertion; and the diversion of the field, therefore, is still followed. Its effects, however, are to be deplored, since it leads to trespasses which laws cannot redress; and the farmer suffers in his property, and in his domestic peace, from the ravages of a giddy crew, who commit mischief out of sport, and outrage out of bravado.

The rational powers of a professed sportsman are too apt also to be sunk in the sensual; and he who leads a life of thoughtless frenzy all the morning, usually absorbs the remainder of the day in follies of every kind.

Sir Giles Handicap, the only son of a Yorkshire baronet, had but a slender capacity from his infancy; and as his tutor could make nothing of him during a course of private studies, at the age of thirteen he was sent to a public school. There he soon found that every urchin in the lowest forms could parse and construe better than himself; but as he was
with-

without shame, and had plenty of money allowed him, he kept a constant s^{er}vant to write his exercises, and assist him in all his tasks. At sixteen he was taken away, with about as much learning as he brought; and young master having too good a fortune to make the confinement of a college thought necessary, he was sent abroad with a splendid allowance, in order to pass a couple of years at Paris and Rome. Before the term of this tour was completed his father died; and having returned home to take possession of his paternal estate, he soon distinguished himself from his neighbours, by having the fleetest
horses

horses and choicest dogs in the county. Before he came of age he purchased a pack of harriers, and had got together a fine set of jolly fellows, who suited his taste to a hair, and did the young baronet the honour of living upon him. At the age of twenty-three he fell in love with his game-keeper's daughter; and having always professed to hate every female of rank or fashion, he married Jenny Fungus without delay. After this hopeful match he resided wholly in the country; built a new kennel, bought twenty brace of staunch fox-hounds, enlarged his stud, and taught his new-married lady to sit a leap
over

over a five-bar gate without winking. He was now as happy as drunken mirth and senseless company could make him. But his career was checked by an accident he little foresaw; and which speedily proved *mortal*, from the inflamed condition of his blood. The curate of an adjoining hamlet, who had beheld his conduct with contempt, composed the following memorial for his tomb :—

Within this vault are deposited
The remains of Sir Giles Handicap, Baronet,
The last male heir of an ancient family.
He was famed for a mighty hunter;
And having followed the pursuits of Nimrod
With the fury of an Arab Tartar,
Was festered into futurity by the bite of a
cub-fox,

Which,

Which he was trying to rescue from his hounds,
That it might show him another day's sport.

Dignified by rank,

And elevated by fortune,

He regarded not these as the means

Of preserving a respect

Which his ancestors had studied to make
hereditary.

But after fluttering away a few months

In the circles of foreign dissipation,

He returned home without one valuable
acquirement;

And to screen himself from the nothingness of
his own character,

Withdrew (amid grooms and horse-jockeys)

To the retreat of his family mansion;

Where a stable became the senate of his councils,

And a dog-kennel the register of his
achievements.

Sam Stentor, the huntsman,

Who had long been a confidential favourite,

Was, in his will, left principal executor.

C H A P. XXVII.

Humility and Contentment recommended.

“ To be wise, we must be humble; in the
 “ sensibility of our weakness, we become
 “ strong.” ROUSSEAU.

THE greatest defect in human conduct, even in that which has only virtue for its object, is a too great self-confidence, which makes us judge by the present of the future, and of our whole lives from the experience of a few years. This rashness betrays us into many hazards. It is offensive to others, it is hurtful to ourselves,
 I and

and is sure to meet with general dis-
esteem; while a proper humility is
amiable, and always likely to procure
us friends. Humility, indeed, should
be the corner-stone on which Con-
tentment builds her dwelling: for
then the gusts of envy, and the storms
of evil fortune, are likely to blow
over it, without doing any material
injury. Vain are all worldly gifts
without contentment and humility;
and tasteless is the cup of happiness,
unless these give it relish. He who,
though rich as Cræsus, sighs after
any ideal want which his wealth can-
not obtain, is poorer than the pea-
sant who earns his pittance under
him,

him, and enjoys the scanty comforts of his lot without repining. Wealth, though it promises to satisfy, creates fancied wants and real cares. But this our worldly desires prevent us from perceiving; else should we more frequently join in the wish of Agur — “Give me neither poverty nor riches: feed me with food convenient for me.”

Should Riches, with her giddy throng,
E'er drive her rambling car along
To my obscure abode;
I'd entertain her as a friend,
My barns and coffers I would lend,
But keep my heart for God!

Should Poverty throw ope my doors,
And whisper—"Fetch thy neighbour's stores,
"It never can be known;"
I'd stoop to no such base demands,—
I've treasure in my FATHER's hands,
Though nothing in my own.

G. L.



CHAP. XXVIII.

A Visit to London.

" The opera, park, assembly, mask, and play,
 " Those dear destroyers of the tedious day;
 " That wheel of fops, that faunter of the Town,
 " Call it *diversion*, and the pill goes down."

YOUNG.

MR. Thomas Trusty had, for many years, lived steward with a worthy gentleman in Bedfordshire, and from his fidelity and good sense was highly regarded and esteemed. His master having a daughter, an only child, who had just left school, it was agreed

that she should make a visit to her aunt Dillon, who resided in London, and that Trusty should conduct her. The day of departure being fixed, Miss Lucinda exclaimed to her maid —“ Oh ! Jenny, how happy I shall “ be to see London ! what wonders “ we shall have to tell of at our “ return !” Her parents, from the tender love they bore her, suffered much when the parting hour arrived, and Lucinda, though elated with the idea of her journey, felt a pang on quitting the abode of her early years. While Jenny sprung into the chaise, Lucinda took a last view of the park, and sighed an adieu to her surround-
ing

ing relatives. Mr. Trusty, who had read and travelled a good deal, contrived to make the journey agreeable; from his descriptions of the numerous seats they passed, and of the several owners, with reflections on the state of cultivation the country appeared in. “Cultivation of the ground,” said Trusty to his young lady, “may be considered as bearing a pretty close analogy to that of the mind. Docks or thistles will spring up in the former, where the hand of industry is not employed to weed them; and bad or idle habits will grow up in the latter, where good ones are not implanted.”—“True;

“ Mr. Trusty,” said Lucinda ; “ our
“ governess used to make use of the
“ same simile ; and I wish there were
“ more Sunday schools, that poor
“ people might profit by instruction
“ as well as the rich.”—“ I wish it
“ too, Miss Lucinda, very sincerely,”
said Trusty ; “ for I pity the condi-
“ tion of the uninformed ; and it is
“ a mistaken notion, in my humble
“ opinion, to suppose that a mind
“ enlarged renders the heart discon-
“ tented. For my own part, I con-
“ ceive that knowledge forms a source
“ of real comfort, by filling the mind
“ with every good principle that
“ hereafter can ripen into action.”

From

From these and similar remarks, the journey and its fatigues were scarcely thought of when the travellers reached Highgate, where having alighted, and taken some refreshment, as the afternoon was fine and clear, they fauntered on towards the summit of the hill, to take a distant glance at London and Westminster. On approaching the point from which both cities break at once upon the sight, Lucinda felt a mixture of surprise and delight that for some minutes rivetted her feet to the spot on which she stood. At length she softly uttered—"It does, indeed, surpass my utmost expectations!—Do not let us lose

" more

“ more time, Mr. Trusty ; I long to
“ be in the midst of such a scene.”
—“ It looks like a new world,” said
Jenny. The chaise now took them
up, and they descended the hill near
Caen Wood, the seat of Lord Mans-
field. Hampstead presented itself on
the right, and the vale of Hornsey
on the left. After passing through
the pleasant street called Kentish
Town, Lucinda soon reached the
house of her expecting aunt in Fitz-
roy Square ; where the travellers re-
tired at an early hour to repose them-
selves after their journey.

CHAP. XXIX.

Continuation of a Visit to London.

MRS. Dillon was extremely pleased with her niece Lucinda, and promised, during her visit, that she should enjoy as large a share as possible of town amusements. Both playhouses were visited, and the performers in each had their just share of praise. But although the splendour of these scenes surprised Lucinda, she could not help contrasting their gaiety with the want and misery which met her eye in almost every

every street. A great part of the poor community appeared to be overlooked, or their condition not made so easy as in the village she had left. Her aunt assured her she was mistaken: "We have many follies, "and more vices to answer for, my "dear," said Mrs. Dillon, "in this "great city; but the want of public "charity has no place, in the present "day, among our catalogue of "crimes."

Lucinda bent forward, with a sweet and respectful smile, as much as to say she stood corrected by the better judgment of her aunt. The next evening Mrs. Dillon proposed going to

to the Opera; and as her niece had the advantage of having been taught Italian, it was expected she would be highly entertained: but in this her aunt was mistaken. Lucinda thought she perceived, both in singers and dancers, something that appeared to “overstep the modesty of nature,” and the limits of real grace. With the music she was much gratified, and with the house itself, which displayed elegance, symmetry, and taste. —St. Paul’s Cathedral and Westminster Abbey were next visited. Here, indeed, was a striking change of scenery, from the lively and voluptuous, to monuments of departed genius,

genius, or grandeur mouldering in the dust. Though St. Paul's had more to strike the eye, it was the latter that touched the feelings of Lucinda. It was here she saw the tomb of a Newton, whom a Thomson had taught her to revere; a Chatham, whom the history of her country made her respect; and an André, whom the muse of a *Seward* had instructed her to deplore. Here also did she drop a passing tear

“ On names once fam'd, now dubious, or forgot,

“ And buried 'midst the wreck of things which
were.”

On

On the following Sunday Mrs. Dillon took her young visitor through Hyde Park to Kensington Gardens: there she saw the young and the old, the citizen and the nobleman, all met together, to see and be seen. The concourse of carriages and horsemen that composed the moving scene appeared to excite no other idea in Lucinda but that of a race-ground. In this view, she said it exceeded any thing she had ever seen in the north; but what most created surprise, was, that this parade took place on a Sunday. "I cannot think, my dear aunt," said Lucinda, "but the ex-
N "amples

“ amples of the rich and powerful
“ influence others in a high degree.
“ If *they* were to find a fitter place
“ to spend their Sundays in, do you
“ think that Hyde Park would be so
“ much resorted to by their inferiors ?”

Mrs. Dillon scarcely knew what reply to make to reflections which at once displayed the goodness of her niece's heart, and did honour to the guardians of her education.

In short, London, with all its gaieties, had little serious attraction for the heart of Lucinda: so, after thanking her aunt with grateful warmth for all the kindness experienced

rienced during her stay in Fitzroy Square, she returned, at the end of two months, to her friends in the north, more gratified by parental caresses, and the honest friendship of Trusty, than with all the luxuries of a town life; and she repeated with strong emphasis the following lines, as she mixed in the family circle round her own fire-side :

“ O, friendly to the best pursuits of mind,
“ Friendly to thought, to virtue, and to peace,
“ DOMESTIC LIFE in rural leisure pass'd !
“ To guide the pencil, turn the tuneful page ;
“ To lend new flavour to the fruitful year,
“ And heighten Nature's dainties ;
“ Well-order'd HOME our best delight to
make ;

“ And

- “ And by submissive wisdom, modest skill,
- “ With ev’ry gentle, care-eluding art,
- “ To raise the virtues, animate the bliss,
- “ And sweeten all the toils of human life :
- “ This be the *female* dignity, and praise.”

F I N I S

