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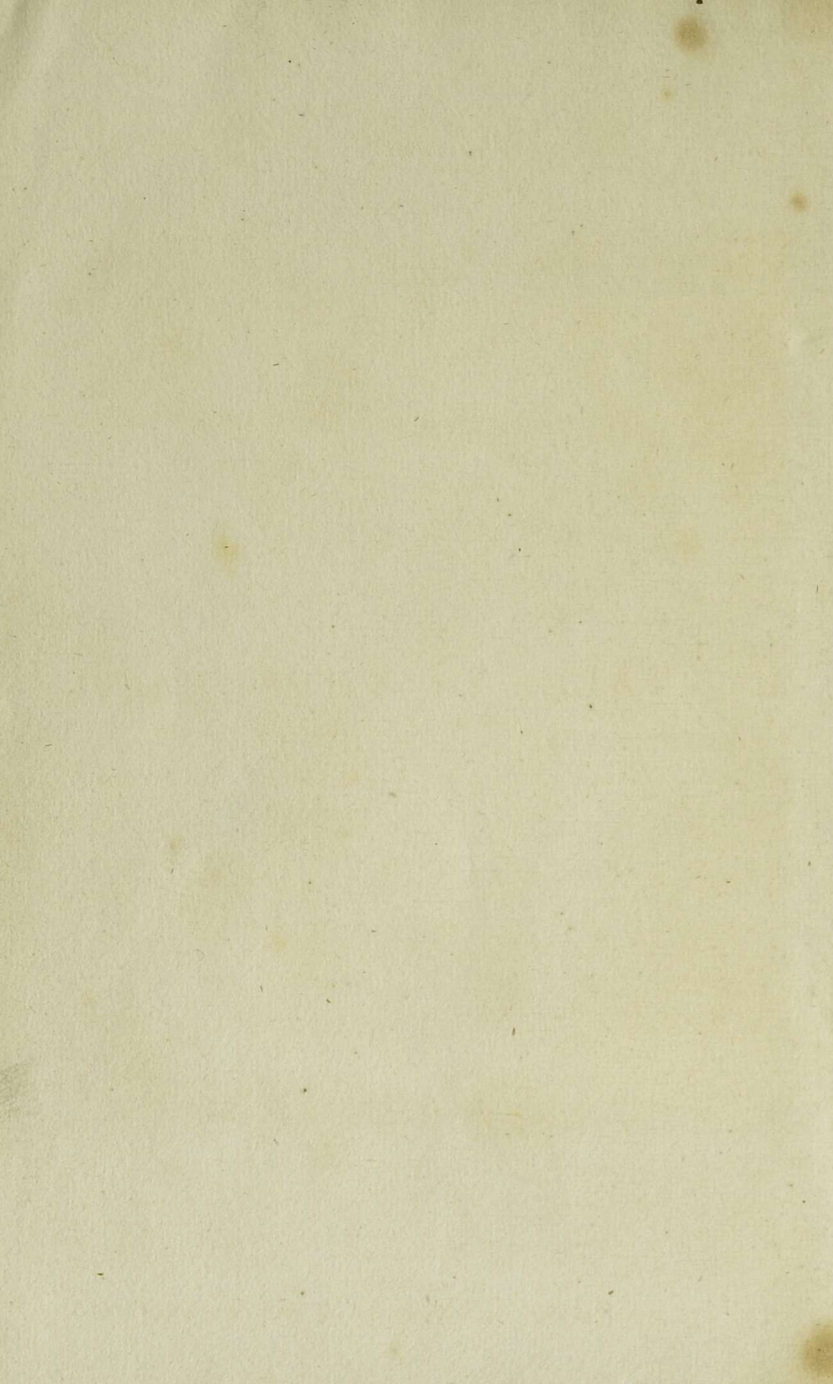
Robert Washington Gates

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TALES OF THE
HEATH.-
1825



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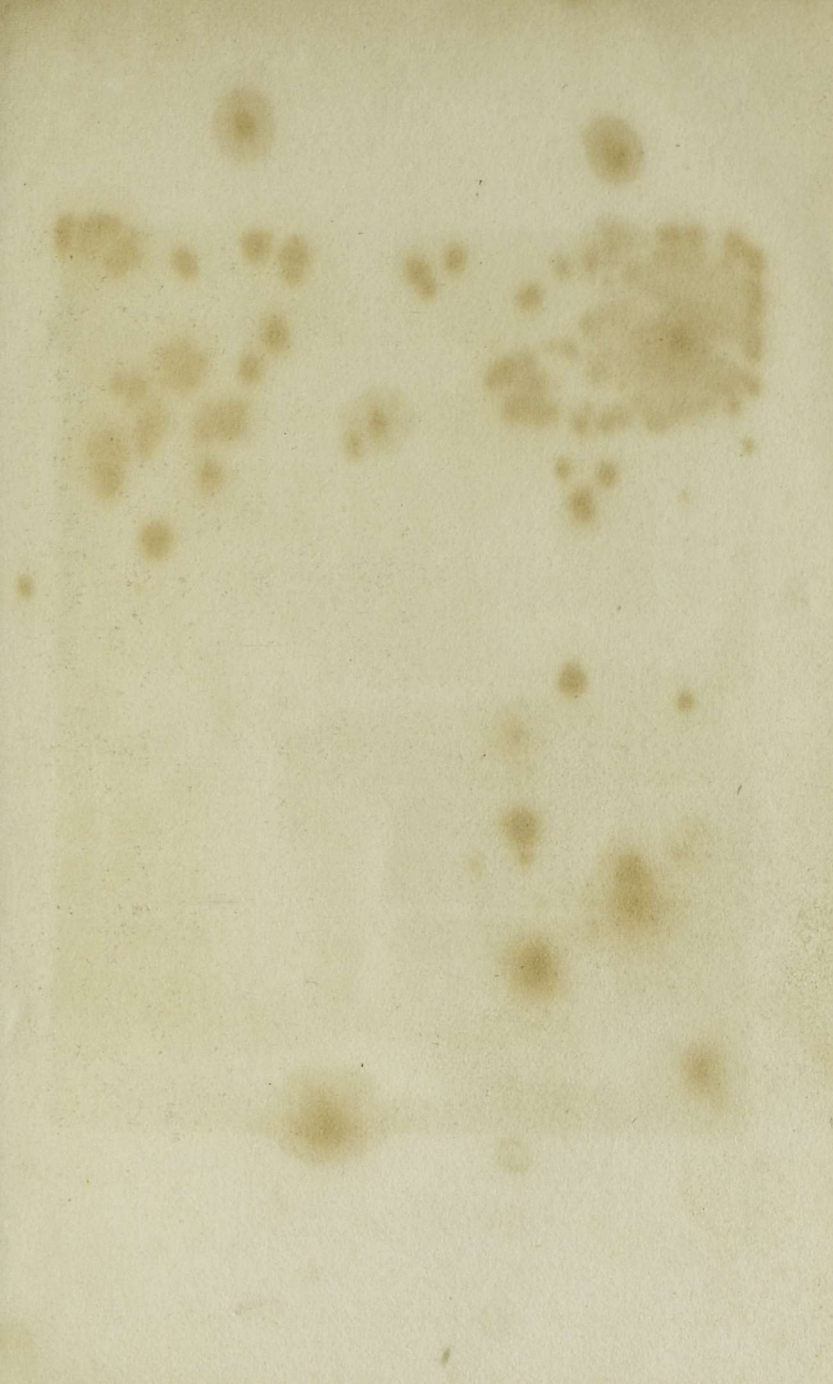
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Anne Elizabeth Collins.
14th Decr 1830.

TALES OF THE HEATH.

LONDON :
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Tales of the Heath



see Page 3.

The Birth-day.

Published Sep^r 1. 1825. by J. Harris. corner of S^t Pauls.

TALES OF THE HEATH,

FOR THE

IMPROVEMENT OF THE MIND.

BY

MRS. H. BAYLEY,

AUTHOR OF "EMPLOYMENT," A TALE.

Retirement, rural quiet, friendship, books,
Ease and alternate labour, useful life,
Progressive virtue, and approving heaven;
These are the matchless joys of virtuous love,
And thus their moments pass.

LONDON :

JOHN HARRIS,

CORNER OF ST. PAUL'S CHURCH-YARD.

1825.

PREFACE.

THE following pages are written by a mother, tenderly interested in the morals and happiness of her children, whose education she personally superintends. She is persuaded that the most pleasing method of conveying instruction to the young mind, is by interesting anecdote; and the principal object of the following series of tales, is to mark the tendency of vice to misery, and to prove the happy results of a virtuous course of life. At the same time, it has been the author's first study to paint nature as it really is, without giving too high a colouring to the picture; a practice, it is to be feared,

which is often productive of disappointment, and not unfrequently of positive woe. The author is so little conversant with general opinion, that, she fears, it may be deemed presumption in offering to the public a work which was at first destined exclusively for her own family; but she depends on a generous public to receive the intention, and pardon the errors.

H. BAYLEY,

Bushey Heath.

THE BIRTH-DAY;

OR,

THE GENEROUS WARD.

2

THE HOLIDAY

THE GENEROUS WARD

THE BIRTH-DAY.

THE first beams of an autumnal sun were darting through the casements of a humble cottage, and the little Henry had repeatedly called "Are you awake, mamma?—How long—how very long, you sleep!"—These words, though uttered with a feeble voice, forcibly struck the ears of Evelina, as she passed the threshold of the cottage. She paused, and insensibly waited, expecting the answer—yet all was silent. She proceeded on her walk, but had only taken a few paces, when she felt an irresistible inclination to return. Under the influence of a curiosity, unusual in her character, to know who were the inmates of this little retired abode, she again passed and repassed—

still all was silent. The cottage contained not more than four rooms; the front was entirely covered with jessamine and roses: except to the lower apartment, which still remained unclosed, there were no shutters; and from the elegant neatness of the drapery and curtains, which were visible through the upper casement, Evelina was convinced that the inmates were of a class superior to those who are generally found in so sequestered and humble a dwelling. Besides, there was a peculiar innocent sweetness in the voice which she had heard: "Are you awake, mamma? How long—how very long, you sleep!" These words she repeated, and felt conscious they had proceeded from a child of very tender age. Evelina again paused; she felt an instinctive inclination not to leave the spot until she had seen some inhabitant in the cottage, or had gained some information respecting it; but of the latter she quite despaired, as there was no habitation within half a mile of the place,

and she was an entire stranger in the neighbourhood.

It was the first time she had ever walked out alone; and, unconscious of the path, fate seemed to have directed her steps to this interesting spot. "But I must linger no longer here," said Evelina, "there may be letters waiting for me; or, should my guardian be returned, he would be displeased, or, perhaps, alarmed at my absence." Again wistfully looking towards the cottage, she saw the small casement open, from whence the sound had proceeded, which first attracted her attention, and the delicate arm of a female was extended, to fasten back the window with a hook. But as the rest of the person was completely shaded by the drapery of the curtain, the hand and arm were all that Evelina could discern; and these she could perceive were not only beautifully white, but elegantly formed.

"There is a mystery in this," said Evelina,

“which has excited in me the greatest interest. Perhaps it is the abode of some amiable virtuous wife, who, in the society of her child, and in this sweet retirement, seeks the only consolation she can find in the absence of her beloved husband: or, it may be, to this secluded spot the hapless widow has flown with her darling babe to mourn in silence, and unceasingly to lament her irreparable loss.”

With such conjectures on her mind, Evelina reached the house of her guardian, from which the beauty of the morning, and the richness of the scenery, had induced her to walk at so early an hour unattended. She returned just as the family had risen, and retired unperceived to her chamber.

Evelina was the daughter and only child of Lieutenant Darnley, who, early in life, had the misfortune, or rather folly, to offend his father, by marrying the orphan of a naval

officer; a girl possessing every endowment of mind, and every personal accomplishment, that can perfect the excellence of woman. But as money was the darling object of this mercenary parent, in wanting this, the amiable Julia Montmorency was, in his eyes, deficient in every requisite.

The elder Mr. Darnley peremptorily forbade the union, under a threat of disinheriting his son if he married a girl without a fortune. The noble soul of Edward Darnley revolted at the idea: the lovely Julia he adored; and he knew that he possessed her heart. In this conviction could he act so dishonourably? Could he resign all that was amiable, all that was excellent, all that he held most dear, to gratify the caprice of a parent, whose life had been an example of sordid avarice? Besides, Julia was beautiful, and without a protector. Heaven had deprived her of her parents, which circumstance rendered

her doubly interesting to the generous soul of Darnley. They were married; and retired, on the half-pay of a Lieutenant, to a small cottage in the west of England. Darnley's father possessed immense funded property, besides large estates in the West Indies; but not one guinea would he advance to promote the comfort and happiness of an only son and his amiable wife. Every day strengthened in the mind of Darnley the worth of this excellent woman. He found in her not only the accomplished wife, but the sincere friend; the sensible adviser, on whom he rested his happiness with implicit confidence. She possessed that true sensibility, which is the characteristic of a benevolent heart; with unaffected sweetness of manners, which universally gained her the esteem and admiration of the good. When speaking of his father, Darnley frequently saw with anguish the tear glisten in her eye; probably from the circumstance of knowing that she was innocently the cause of their variance. But

these were the only dejected moments she ever betrayed; her first wish being, by every demonstration of tender affection, to promote the happiness of her beloved husband, and to remove, as much as possible, the difficulties consequent on their scanty means. Twelve months after her marriage, Julia presented her Darnley with a lovely little girl, the counterpart of herself. He received the innocent into his arms, saying, "This is a boon, my love, which perfects my happiness. The restoration of your health is all I am now anxious for." Some few weeks confirmed this wish; and Darnley had the unspeakable bliss of seeing his wife recovered, and his child daily improving according to his most sanguine desires. But this state of felicity was of too tranquil a nature for a soldier long to retain undisturbed. Two years had passed away, when Darnley received official orders to hold himself in readiness to embark with his regiment for the Spanish penin-

sula! To Julia, this was a heart-rending trial. She could not accompany him; and a separation was insupportable. She had never shewn a want of firmness; but she had never felt pangs like the present. Her husband was every thing to her, and she thought it impossible to exist but in his presence. As the time for his departure approached, her mind became so agitated, so enervated, that she gradually sank into a nervous fever; and Darnley had the anguish of separation considerably augmented by leaving his beloved wife on a sick bed.

He had left her only three days, when she received from him a most affectionate letter, imploring her, for his, and for his dear little Evelina's sake, to preserve her health by every attention, as on that his future happiness was pending. "A temporary separation," said he, "from you, my beloved Julia, and our little darling, is no small sacrifice; but it is what the imperative

duty of a soldier enforces; and as a soldier I submit. But to lose you would be a trial, before which, I fear, all my firmness and courage would shrink. Yes, my beloved wife, while assured that you are well, I shall feel protected by your guardian angel, and meet every difficulty and danger without a sigh. As a soldier, I know not fear. The same protecting power, which, I trust, will restore my love to perfect health, will in the fight shield her Darnley, and enable him to return, with unsullied honour, to the best of wives, and to the scene of bliss he has so lately left. This is the reward I look for, my Julia, and it will exceed all other human happiness."

This letter afforded more consolation to the amiable Mrs. Darnley than can be imagined. From the moment she received it, she appeared to resuscitate. Implicit obedience to her husband's wishes had ever been her first study; and

to perfect this she anxiously endeavoured to recover her spirits and recruit her health.

Her little Evelina now became her sole delight, and occupied her whole attention. To this lovely babe she frequently would say: "I have more than an ordinary duty to perform towards you, my child, in the absence of your dear father; for him I must act, as well as for myself."--And never did an infant repay more spontaneously a mother's fondness and care than Evelina. In person she daily improved, and in manner, as a child, she was peculiarly engaging. Although so young, she manifested, in her gentle and kind acts, that her disposition partook of that of her mother.

While this excellent woman was so devotedly performing every virtuous duty at home, her noble-minded Darnley was distinguishing himself by deeds of bravery, magnanimity, and nobleness, abroad: by his brother officers, he was generally esteemed, and by his soldiers re-

vered. He had received repeated letters, assuring him of the convalescent state of his beloved wife, and of the progress of his little Evelina. Military duty was now pressing upon him ; but, in his moments of relaxation, he had great feasts of bliss, in reading over these letters, and in recalling the moments of tranquil happiness which he had enjoyed with his Julia and her lovely child. Separate from his professional duties, this was his only pleasure ; and, in his fond imagination, he would picture the heartfelt delight he should experience, in returning to his native land, and in watching the opening mind and increasing virtues of his daughter. But, alas ! that pleasure existed only in anticipation.

In several successive battles in the peninsula, Darnley so distinguished himself as to be particularly noticed by the Commander-in-chief ; and his promotion certainly would have followed ; but, unfortunately, in the battle of Thoulouse,

while defending his post with all the true courage and bravery of a soldier,—he fell! Thus gloriously and honourably terminated the life of the noble-minded Darnley. But who can imagine the pangs of his fond Julia, when, in reading over the list of the killed and wounded, she beheld the name of her beloved husband! With an agony that may be felt, but can never be described, did this amiable woman receive the melancholy news.

She pressed her darling child to her heart,—to that heart which so lately had beat in fond expectation of seeing her Darnley return, but which now felt itself bereft of its best hope:—and every ray of future joy was to her for ever darkened.

The elder Mr. Darnley, immediately after the marriage of his son, in anxious expectation of another child, as the future inheritor of his property, had formed an alliance with the widow of a ship-brcker; who, from her former husband,

enjoyed a property of eight hundred per annum ; but she had three children, to whom her portion would descend at her decease. This portion had been gained by the persevering industry of their father, the deceased Mr. Steerwell. Mr. Darnley too soon found that he had not formed the most prudent choice ; the extravagance of his wife made him shudder for the result ; although that was one of the least of her failings. Her temper was violent in the extreme ; frequently, in her paroxysms of rage, the old gentleman tremblingly left the room, loudly lamenting, and too late regretting, the sordid motive which had induced him to take a *Wapping* wife ! The poor lady generally finished the scene with hysterics ; which so exhausted her spirits, that she was obliged to have recourse to “ drops of brandy,” as the most effectual remedy for the disease :—a remedy of which she was so fond, that she would frequently declare it afforded her more comfort than all the medicines in the world. No wonder, therefore, if

she often recurred to it. Thus situated, and disappointed in his hope of another heir, Mr. Darnley began to feel remorse for his conduct towards his noble-minded son; and had just determined to alter his will in his favour, when he read the melancholy account of his death. The full force of fond parental feeling immediately rushed upon his mind: and joyfully would he have sacrificed all he possessed, to recal, had it been possible, the severity, which he now saw had been cruel and unjust.

He determined, immediately, to go to the amiable widow of his injured son, to express his contrition for the past, and to contribute, as far as money could extend, to her future ease and comfort.

“But, I will first,” said he, “send for my attorney, and perform that justice towards my grand-daughter which was due to her father.” He did so; and settled the whole of his property, amounting to fifty thousand pounds, upon

the young Evelina. Mr. Darnley soon felt the innate happiness of doing right :—his mind was relieved of a burthen, which had long been insupportable, and which probably shortened his life; for, upon the eve of the day appointed for visiting his daughter-in-law, he was seized with a fit of apoplexy, and expired.

Julia sincerely lamented his sudden death; as she had fondly hoped that her beloved child would ultimately find a protector in her grandfather: for the declining state of her own health impressed upon her a conviction that her dear girl would soon be left an orphan. This impression was but too soon realized, for the widowed Julia survived her father-in-law only six weeks. She had, however, the satisfaction, before her death, of knowing the amount of the provision which Mr. Darnley had made for her daughter, and that her beloved child, and her property, were left under the guardianship of a man of excellent character, a Captain Stanmore,

who had been well known and highly esteemed by her late husband.

This gentleman was married to a lady of high rank, by whom he had one son and a daughter; they were some years older than Evelina, and had been educated under the immediate eye of their accomplished mother; from whom they inherited every personal endowment, and possessed truly amiable dispositions.

With this family, Evelina had resided twelve years, when circumstances induced her guardian to leave London, and to take a temporary lodging in a small village in Hertfordshire. In this retreat, they had only been a few days, when the beauty of a fine autumnal morning and the richness of the surrounding scenery, induced Evelina to walk out unattended, and led her, unconsciously, to the spot where the innocent voice of a child forcibly struck her ear:—"Are you awake, mamma? How long—how very long, you sleep!"

After she had reached her home, these sounds took such possession of her mind, that she could not forget them ; and her anxiety to know who were the inmates of the little cottage hourly increased. “But it is a curiosity,” said Evelina, “that I have no right to indulge : yet it may be the abode of affliction, and I might have it in my power to condole with, or be able to offer some salutary relief ; yet, should my inquiries be considered as proceeding only from wanton inquisitiveness, I should indeed be unhappy. I had better give up the speculation.” While she was thus deliberating, her door suddenly opened, and the amiable wife of her guardian entered, in her travelling dress, and apparently in the greatest agitation of mind. Evelina rose to meet her, and, affectionately embracing her, said, “What, dearest madam, has brought you so early from town ? Captain Stanmore, I hope, is not ill ?” “No, dear Evelina,” she replied, “my husband is not suffering from ill health ; but from an act

of imprudence.—He has involved himself in dire calamity; and, I fear, his mind is at this moment on the rack of torture. He is arrested for a debt of honour, which it is impossible we can pay.”—“My fortune,” said Evelina, “is at his service: I hope that will be adequate to the demand.”—“Dear, amiable girl!” replied the lady, “that must not be. No, my Evelina, you must not, you shall not, be a participator in sufferings brought on only by folly.”—“Indeed, my fortune would be of no value to me while my beloved friends were unhappy,” said Evelina; “and I must entreat of you instantly to convey my earnest wishes to Captain Stanmore: but do tell me with whom he has thus unhappily involved himself?”—“Dearest Evelina,” replied the lady, “to you, who are so well acquainted with the disposition of my husband, it is unnecessary to make any comment. He is not addicted to play; but since the unfortunate elopement of our daughter, which brought with

it so much disappointment and distress, he has sometimes indulged in follies, which I never before knew him guilty of. Unfortunately, such was the case two nights ago. In the *Morning Post* of that day, he met with a paragraph, which stated, that 'Lieutenant L——, who, three years since, eloped with the beautiful and accomplished daughter of Captain St——re, had proceeded to Portsmouth, to join his ship, which was ordered on a secret expedition; and that his amiable wife was living with her infant in retirement in the country.' This had such an effect on his mind and temper, that reason seemed to forsake him; he went out, and unhappily met with Colonel C——, who, you have heard, is devoted to the gaming-table. He accompanied him to Pall-Mall, where, in a few hours, he lost twenty thousand pounds, and also our house, furniture, and plate, in town. Yesterday morning, his person was seized for the money; and, in a few hours afterwards, my house was taken pos-

session of by the bailiffs. Thus, my dear Evelina, you see what a state of misery we are involved in; and a similar fate, I fear, is too frequently the result, when, to drown unpleasant thought, persons fly to acts of desperation, but which serve only to render their misery complete."—"As my fortune," said Evelina, "is more than double the sum you have named, I must beg, my dearest madam, that it may instantly be paid; and, as we all love the country, the loss of the house in town will be but a trifling sacrifice, provided we have our dear Captain Stanmore with us."—"Amiable girl! I will communicate your generous intentions to my husband," replied Mrs. Stanmore; "although I am sure he will not be prevailed upon to admit you also to become a sufferer."—"You must not lose a moment," said Evelina; "but instantly write. I can only be a sufferer by seeing my dear friends unhappy."

This noble-minded generous girl was no sooner

alone, than she inwardly ejaculated—"Thank God, I have gained my point! But as it is possible the offer may be rejected by my guardian, I will instantly write to Colonel C——, stating that in two days I shall be of age, and tendering him my promise at that time to pay the amount of the debt, if he will immediately liberate my friend: and not my friend only—but the friend—the revered friend—of my beloved father, whose memory is so sacredly dear to me!" She hastily wrote the letter, then wiped away the tear, which had fallen on the paper, and despatched a messenger with it to Colonel C——'s residence, in town. She then proceeded to join Mrs. Stanmore in the drawing-room, and endeavoured to divert her mind as much as possible from reflection on the melancholy state of her affairs, not once reverting to the subject. She longed to speak of her morning's walk, and the little cottage; but as they conveyed to her mind something gloomy, she would not name the cir-

cumstance, although it occupied much of her thoughts.

After some indifferent conversation, Mrs. Stanmore said : “ My dear Evelina, I have long loved you as my child, but you have this day taught me to revere you as my friend—my bosom friend, in whom I can confide every secret of my soul ; and, I trust, Evelina, you will in me repose the same implicit confidence. Do tell me, my dear girl, the reason why you refused the offer made you by Sir William ? He appears devoted to you ; he is young—of a good family, and good fortune. From the very secluded manner in which, from choice, you have been living, I cannot conceive that you have any other engagement.” — “ Certainly, I have not,” said Evelina ; “ and very sensibly do I feel the honour conferred upon me by Sir William’s offer, and very truly do I appreciate his numerous amiable qualities ; but, as I could not give him my heart, I resign his hand and virtues to one, who

can act more justly by them.”—“ You certainly surprise me, Evelina; and if I did not well know the steadiness of your disposition, I should suspect you of a little capricious opposition in this affair; but, knowing you to be incapable of either, I am the more astonished. In your friend Frederick, there is also a great inconsistency: he refuses to marry Lady W——, although he allows her to be perfectly beautiful, and elegantly accomplished, with the possession of every virtue that can perfect conjugal happiness. The alliance has long been the mutual wish of each family. And Lady W—— evidently gives proof of her attachment, by the anxious solicitude she expresses for his welfare, and in her very marked attention to me. In short, the Marquis decidedly told Captain Stanmore, that his attachment to Frederick was very great, and that he should be proud to receive him as his son-in-law; at the same time, he stated, that his daughter had declined several noble offers, from

the great prepossession she felt in favour of Frederick. But the foolish fellow, instead of rejoicing in his good fortune, begs his father to allow him to leave the country; alleging that he could not solicit the hand of a lady, to whom he could not give his heart; and, as a proof of gratitude for this indulgence, he promises never to marry without his parents' consent."—"And do you think he does wrong?" said the blushing Evelina.—"If he had any other attachment, my love," answered Mrs. Stanmore, "I would not for the world, have my boy sacrifice his happiness. *But* I am convinced that he has a romantic idea, that the lady selected by his friends, however perfect, is not so calculated to make him happy, as one whom chance may throw in his way."—"I beg to differ from you in opinion," said Evelina; "Frederick is too generous to marry from interest.—He justly values and esteems Lady W—— for her virtues and accomplishments; but he would only wish to secure for himself *that* heart, for

which in return he could bestow his own.”—“ You are certainly a powerful advocate in his cause, dear Evelina,” said Mrs. Stanmore; “ and as ingratitude is not to be numbered in his failings, I am sure he will feel much obliged to you.— Here is a post-chaise! Who can it be?” Evelina tremblingly replied, “ I think it is Captain Stanmore.”—“ Impossible!” was the answer: but in a moment the door opened, and this gentleman entered. They ran to meet him. Affectionately embracing them by turns, he remained some moments without the power of utterance. Then, yielding to tears, he caught Evelina’s hand, saying, “ Generous, amiable girl. How can I meet you, knowing the sacrifice you have made? And for me too, who by an unpardonable act of folly had immersed my family and self in one direful ruin! But it must not be, Evelina! I cannot allow the sacrifice!”—“ Do not, pray do not, speak of sacrifice,” replied this amiable girl; “ it is but a very trifling return, dear Sir, for the

very affectionate kindness I have so many years experienced under your hospitable roof; and I think you have always taught me, that the true value of riches is to be estimated by the good we are able to perform with them. I am afraid there is a little selfishness also in my present conduct; for, I assure you, all the riches in the world would not make me happy, if I knew that friends so dear to me as you and Mrs. Stanmore are, were otherwise.”—“You are indeed an example of excellence, Evelina,” said Mrs. Stanmore, “which every day will teach us to prize more highly; but there is an enigma in this, which I do not exactly understand.”—“Well,” replied Evelina, “since we are all quite happy again, I will leave Captain Stanmore to unravel the mystery, and prepare myself for a walk.”—“Wait a few moments, my dear girl,” said his guardian, “and we will accompany you.”—“I beg you will not, dear Sir; you are already fa-

tigued ; and, I assure you, it is quite safe to walk here alone."

With this remark, Evelina hastened from the drawing-room, and was very soon on her way to the cottage, which had occupied so much of her thoughts : as she approached it, she saw an elegant female, in a neat white morning dress, and covered with a veil, enter, followed by an elderly woman, bearing the appearance of a superior servant, who was carrying a small basket in one hand, and with the other leading a remarkably interesting little child, of about two years of age. Evelina, sighing, said, " Doubtless that is the sweet babe, whose voice I so distinctly heard, the sound of which I can never forget :— ' Are you awake, mamma? How long—how very long, you sleep.' These words are very simple ; but they have given an impression to my mind, which time cannot eradicate." With such reflections, she hastened her steps, hoping to gain a

view of the child's countenance before it entered. At this moment, the interesting little fellow caught sight of a butterfly; and, hastily turning, exclaimed: "Oh! nurse, what a beauty! Indeed, I must have that butterfly!"—"Pray, Master Henry, do come in," was the reply; "your poor mamma is so fatigued and ill, I must immediately attend her."—"So I will, good nurse," said the child; "I should like the butterfly, but I love dear mamma a great deal better."—"You have an exceedingly good little boy there," observed Evelina, as she approached the nurse. "Yes, madam, he is very affectionate, and a very fine child too of his age."—"His mamma is not ill, I hope?" said Evelina. "She is weakly, madam; and, I fear, will be the worse for her disappointment to-day; for we have walked a long way to the post-office, expecting letters from my master, but there are not any arrived: and I am sure my poor dear mistress will not cease grieving until she receives one."

Evelina longed to make some inquiries of this communicative nurse, respecting the interesting elegant female she had seen enter the cottage; but, fearful of being suspected of curiosity, she wished her a good morning, and, kissing the little Henry, proceeded on her walk.

As the child entered the cottage, he exclaimed: "Dear mamma, we have seen such a good lady!—such a very kind lady!—who kissed me, and said, she hoped you were not ill."—"That was very kind indeed," answered his mamma. "Pray, nurse, do you know who the lady is?"—"No, madam, I never saw her before; but I am sure she is *quite* a lady—and very amiable, by her manner of speaking."

Evelina, while pondering on the mysteries of the cottage, and other equally interesting circumstances, had unconsciously wandered farther than she intended, and was nearly overtaken by a thunder-storm before she perceived its approach.

As she returned, the rain fell rapidly, and she determined to solicit shelter in the cottage till the shower should abate. Entering, therefore, the little garden, she gently tapped at the door, which was immediately opened by the old nurse. "Will you grant me shelter for a few moments?" said Evelina, at the same time apologizing for the intrusion. "Certainly, Miss; will you please to walk into the parlour, and I will acquaint my mistress."—"Oh, pray do not disturb your mistress," said Evelina, "the shower will soon be over." She then entered an elegantly neat little parlour. "There is something unusually impressive in this cottage, and the scenery around it," thought she. "A harp, and piano too! But what do I see? It is the portrait of my guardian! Oh, no; it cannot be!—But the resemblance is very striking." At this moment the nurse entered, saying, her lady was so very unwell, that she begged to apologize for not coming down; but had sent some books, if the

young lady pleased to amuse herself with them. Evelina sensibly felt this mark of polite attention, and, expressing her acknowledgments, opened a volume, when, on the first leaf, she recognised the hand-writing and beloved name of Emily Stanmore! She now became so agitated, as scarcely to be able to support herself; she knew not what to do,—in a moment she would have flown to that dear friend, from whom she had been long separated,—such was her first impulse. But she feared the result of so sudden a meeting, as her friend was in a delicate state of health. Her cheek became pale and flush at the same moment, and she sat involved in reverie for some time on a sofa, when the rays of a watery sun reminded her that the storm was over, and that a succession of showers was likely to follow. She pulled the bell, which was immediately answered by the old servant, to whom she presented a trifle, and requested that she would offer her best acknowledgments to her lady, for the po-

liteness and amusement she had received. As she was leaving the parlour, little Henry came jumping up, exclaiming: "O pray do not go yet! I was coming to play with you, and to shew you dear grandpapa's picture.—I do not know my grandpapa; but I *love* him very much—and you will love him too, will you not?"—"You are a charming little fellow!" said Evelina, and the tear started in her fine expressive eyes, while she pressed him to her. "I am sure, I shall love *you*; and hope we shall have many games together." She then hastily left the cottage, and with a quick step hastened towards home.

The nurse lost not a moment in communicating to her mistress what had passed; adding, she was lost in wonder to conceive who so beautiful and generous a young lady could be. "Indeed, I cannot inform you, nurse," answered her mistress, "being myself quite a stranger in this neighbourhood. It is certainly no one that knows me; but probably some very amiable girl, re-

siding in the vicinity.”—“I hope she will come again,” said little Henry ; “ for I think her prettier than any body, *except mamma.*” A smile of pleasure for a moment brightened the countenance of his fond mother, while she pressed her lips on his little rosy cheeks.

Evelina reached home with a heart oppressed with the most painful reflections. She had, for many years, been tenderly attached to Emily Stanmore, and had unceasingly lamented that the views of Captain and Mrs. Stanmore had been so much disappointed by her elopement, and secret marriage with a young naval officer, without fortune, that they had peremptorily forbidden the mention of her name in their presence ; declaring, that she had voluntarily withdrawn every claim upon them, by her unpardonable breach of duty.

“I will not,” said Evelina, “for the present, breathe a hint of what I have discovered : but if it be possible to bring about a reconciliation, I

shall indeed be happy. Alas! poor dear Emily! Her husband is absent, and she is separated from all who can afford her consolation. What heart-felt joy would it afford her, to see her darling boy upon the knee of her beloved father: she is incapable of a diminution in filial affection, although she has once so fatally deviated from the wishes of her parents; and, since it has become necessary that Captain Stanmore should adopt a country life, what a source of inexhaustible amusement and delight would it afford him, to superintend the education of his grandson! But the subject must not be named to-day; yet the opportunity shall not be lost: to-morrow will be my birth-day; and I will solicit a boon of my guardian, which will, I trust, perfect my most sanguine wishes."

On the following morning, Evelina rose much earlier than usual. "This is a memorable day in my life," said she; "and I have many duties to fulfil. The most important is, gratefully to

acknowledge the numberless favours I enjoy, and to implore the blessing of Heaven on my anxious endeavours to restore happiness to this amiable family. My first step shall be to enclose to Colonel C—— a power to receive from my banker the amount of the unfortunate debt. Oh! how do I wish it were possible that I could redeem the town-house, the plate, &c. ; but, alas ! I fear that is beyond my ability : I will, however, write to the lucky winner, who, I understand, is a rich Indian Nabob, just arrived from Calcutta ; probably he may not require an establishment, and will let it go for less than its real value. This is a happy thought," said she, " which shall not escape me, although I dare not be sanguine of its success."

Evelina immediately addressed a letter to the gentleman, and despatched it to the post-office. " So far good," said she : " having performed these duties, I will now repair to the breakfast-room, and receive the congratulations of my dear

friends." As she entered, Captain and Mrs. Stanmore rose to salute her. "Receive our best wishes, dearest girl," they exclaimed, "on this happy occasion! May you, most amiable Evelina, long undisturbedly enjoy that supreme bliss which your virtues so richly deserve."—"I resign cheerfully my power," continued her guardian; "but I hope my charming Ward will never conceal a wish from me, that can promote her happiness; for it is impossible she could ask a favour I would not readily grant."—"My heart tells me, I shall never be ungrateful for your kindness, dear sir," was the reply: "I assure you, I shall soon, very soon, claim your promise: you can this day grant me a favour, which will considerably add to my happiness for the remainder of my life; it will ensure the execution of a task, which I have promised myself the performance of without delay; and, from its accomplishment, I am confident, you and Mrs. Stanmore will also derive unspeakable pleasure."—"It is already granted,

dear Evelina," said the Captain; "and now pray inform us what is your wish."—"A thousand thousand thanks!" ejaculated this amiable girl; "I am now indeed happy; but am privileged on my birth-day to keep you a little longer in suspense.—Hey-day! here is the *Morning Post*; let me have a peep into the *Mirror of Fashion*. Grand parties innumerable!—and a marriage in high life, too!!—'At the noble mansion of her father, in Grosvenor-square, was married, last evening, by special licence, the Right Honourable Lady W—— to Sir Charles D——. Immediately after the ceremony, the happy bride and bridegroom left town, to pass the honey-moon at the noble Earl's seat, in Hampshire.'

Evelina read the above paragraph with peculiar emphasis; but never did her countenance appear more beautifully animated, or express greater pleasure. The contrast was very striking in Captain Stanmore, who sternly said, "Frederick has been a foolish fellow! He might have had Lady

W—— himself.”—“ I dare say he will benefit by his experience, dear Sir,” said Evelina, smiling; “ and if you will recal him to England, I will venture to predict, he will not refuse to marry the next lady you may propose, or rather approve.”—“ Frederick is happy in having so powerful and interesting an advocate in his cause,” said Mrs. Stanmore; “ I am disposed to think he has made you, Evelina, his confidante.”—“ And I am inclined to become traitor on this eventful day. In this little packet, you will discover all the secrets of your son’s heart; and, in the hope that they will meet your approbation, I will leave you, *tête-à-tête*, to their perusal.” Evelina playfully embracing them, then left the apartment.

Captain Stanmore impatiently opened the packet, and perused, with the most heartfelt delight, a correspondence between his beloved son and his amiable Ward; in which the former declared his unalterable attachment, which had begun in infancy, and been matured with his ripened years.

He lamented his father's wish to see him married to Lady W——, whose virtues he admired and esteemed, but could never love. "Dearest Evelina, I will," he said, "remain abroad until that amiable lady has formed another alliance: I will then return and solicit from my father the hand of the only woman that can render me happy."—"He shall *have her*, by all that is good!" said the Captain, while the big tear of joy rolled down his manly cheek; "I will write to him instantly." Evelina entered. "You have made us more than happy, my dear girl," said Mrs. Stanmore; "but why have you concealed so long from us an attachment so congenial to our wishes?"—"It is the work of magic," exclaimed the Captain, "purposely to complete the birth-day's joy!"—"Excuse me, my dear Sir," said Evelina, "the fulfilment of this morning's promise can alone perfect the happiness of this day."—"Then let it be instantly done, my charming girl," said her guardian; "I would not for the world have a cloud

darken the sunshine of this memorable morn.”—
“And then we shall indeed be happy!” exclaimed
Evelina. “But I have first a very interesting
anecdote to give you.” She then related the
narrative of the cottage incident, and the impres-
sion she had received from the sound of little
Henry’s voice, when he exclaimed, “Are you
awake, mamma? How long—how very long, you
sleep!”—These words she repeated in so pathetic
a manner, that tears of affection suffused the
eyes of Captain and Mrs. Stanmore. “Dear
excellent girl!” said the former, after many in-
effectual endeavours to suppress his inward emo-
tion; “how effectually do you work upon my
feelings. In vain I struggle! I can no longer
hold out against your unaffected and ardent soli-
citations, and the natural workings of my own
bosom! I will instantly go to my poor Emily,
restore her, and receive her babe to my paternal
love.”—“Oh! my dear Sir,” said Evelina, “what
excess of happiness do you give me! One day

of joy like this, would repay an age of misery! But I must entreat your farther indulgence: we must not forget that our dear Emily is in delicate health; and it is impossible to say what the effect of an event, so unexpected and so happy, might be. If you will allow me to be the messenger of happiness, I will walk to the cottage, and by degrees communicate the joyful tidings. In two hours, we shall be ready to return; and I shall feel obliged, if you will send the carriage for our conveyance."—"That I will cheerfully do," said her guardian; and Evelina, after tenderly embracing them, hastened to prepare for her walk. In a short time, she found herself at the cottage; where, for the present, we will leave her, and pass over the affecting scene between herself and Emily, which may be more easily conceived than described.

When the carriage drew up, they were, with little Henry, quite ready to enter it; and Emily soon, very soon, received the affectionate blessing

of those dear parents, from whom, by an act of folly and imprudence, she had been long estranged, and whose displeasure had given her many bitter moments, and innumerable reflections of severe anguish. It is impossible to say, which were the more happy, little Henry or grand-papa; they were so mutually pleased with each other, that it was difficult to keep their joy within bounds; and it was unanimously agreed, that never birth-day was more pregnant with auspicious events, or passed more happily. Captain and Mrs. Stanmore could not part with their beloved daughter and little grandson that evening; and it was farther arranged, that an immediate disposal of the cottage should take place, and that in future they should form but one family.

On the following morning, when assembled at breakfast, Evelina inquired of Emily, what had given rise to the very impressive sentence, which she had first heard from her dear little boy—

“Are you awake, mamma? How long—how very long, you sleep!” Emily explained, that she had then been only two days parted from her beloved husband; an event so afflicting, as totally to deprive her of sleep; that on the morning so propitious to her happiness, overpowered with fatigue of body and anguish of mind, she had fallen into a stupor, in which she continued for several hours, until awakened by the cries of her child; and, doubtless, at that moment it was that Evelina passed the window.

In the midst of this conversation, they were astonished to see a most splendid equipage enter the avenue leading to the house, from which an elderly gentleman alighted, and, approaching the door, inquired of the servant if Miss Darnley resided there? Being answered in the affirmative, and shewn into a parlour, he gave his card, at the same time requesting, with his compliments, a few moments’ conversation with the young lady. Evelina immediately recognized in the card of

Mr. Hardewicke the name of the Indian Nabob, to whom she had, the morning previous, written; and she became a little agitated. But upon Captain Stanmore desiring the gentleman might be shewn into the breakfast-room, she gaily exclaimed, "Oh! no, indeed! I must be allowed a *tête-à-tête*; but I promise to tell you all my secrets." She then hastened to the apartment, where Mr. Hardewicke was waiting. They were mutually astonished and pleased with each other: the gentleman thought he had never seen a form and countenance so perfectly beautiful, with manners so fascinating and amiable. In consequence of Evelina's letter, he had come prepossessed in her favour; but he could not anticipate the meeting with so much excellence. And Evelina was equally amazed to see, in an appearance so venerable, and manners so gentlemanly and mild, the person of a gamester;—a character, which, in her imagination, combined all that was desperate and unfeeling. But she had

mistaken Mr. Hardewicke: he was not a gamester. That unfortunate evening, which had proved so fatal to Captain Stanmore, was the first time this gentleman had ever entered a gambling-house. He had arrived only a few days before in London, when, accidentally falling into the society of a man of fashionable notoriety, he was incautiously led into one of those illfated houses in Pall-Mall, where, in a game at hazard, in a few seconds, he won from Captain Stanmore his elegant house, furniture, and plate, which the Captain, grown desperate from the loss of his fortune, hazarded in previous throws, had now staked in the hope of retrieving his affairs. Instead, however, of rejoicing in his good fortune, Mr. Hardewicke had not ceased to lament an event, which, although it might not prove ruinous, he knew must be attended at least with considerable inconvenience and distress to the losing party; and, however improbable it may appear, he had absolutely derived more pleasure in re-

ceiving Evelina's letter, than in what might be esteemed his previous good luck; from a conviction, that he had it now in his power to restore, through the delicate medium of Miss Darnley, that property, which he had so unlawfully become possessed of; and for this purpose he now visited Hertfordshire. Evelina was delighted with his conversation; and a short explanation convinced her how erroneously she had judged of his character, which she had now the unexpected happiness to find was truly generous and elevated in sentiment. Mr. Hardewicke was not less delighted with his fair companion. He had been, at the first introduction, dazzled with the beauty of her person and the sweetness of her manner; but, upon farther conversation, he became enchanted with the nobleness of her mind. He had come prepared with a deed, making over the house, furniture, and plate, to Evelina; but this she would not allow, delicately declining it, as an obligation she could not admit from a

stranger; at the same time, she proposed to purchase the property at a fair valuation, provided it came within the means of her fortune. "That is a proposal which will require some little consideration," said the gentleman; "I will therefore leave you for the present; but you shall shortly hear from me again." Evelina gracefully expressed her acknowledgments; they parted; and this amiable girl returned to the drawing-room, evidently disappointed that the affair had not been fully settled.

The anxiety of the party may easily be imagined, to know the purport of this visit, the particulars of which they had not the smallest idea of; Evelina declared it was a secret that must not be divulged for some days, assuring them that as soon as she was at liberty to inform them, they should know all that had passed. They were, however, not long kept in suspense; for, in a few hours, a messenger arrived, with a letter to Captain Stanmore, stating the particulars of Mr.

Hardewicke's morning visit, and declaring that the disinterested amiable conduct of his lovely Ward had so strongly impressed his mind in her favour, that he begged to make her an offer of his heart and hand, with a jointure of three thousand a-year. This letter was accompanied with one to Evelina, expressing the most honourable sentiments of admiration and regard. As these proposals required not a moment's consideration, Evelina immediately acknowledged them; expressing her gratitude for the honour intended her, but at the same time stating that her heart had been long previously engaged to the son of her guardian; and that their nuptials would be celebrated immediately upon his return to England. Mr. Hardewicke, doubtless, was much disappointed; but his future conduct proved the magnanimity and nobleness of his soul. He called on Captain Stanmore, and begged to be received as a friend into the family; and, in spite of every objection, insisted upon presenting Mrs.

Stanmore with the boon which Evelina had so delicately declined.

Frederick very soon arrived in England ; and arrangements for the marriage were immediately commenced : Mr. Hardewicke requested, that he might be allowed to give the lovely Evelina away, an offer that afforded much pleasure to the whole party. And, to complete the invaluable donation, he, on the morning of the marriage, presented to Frederick with the amiable bride, a bond for twenty thousand pounds, in order to compensate, as he was pleased to express it, the sacrifice which he had learned Evelina had made in reference to the transaction, which had produced their acquaintance.

Soon after this happy event, Emily's husband returned to England. Having greatly distinguished himself in an engagement with the enemy, he was sent home with despatches, and strongly recommended by his Admiral for promotion. He was with rapturous gladness re-

ceived by his affectionate wife ; and he was overjoyed to find her, with his little boy, so happily situated in the bosom of her family. Captain and Mrs. Stanmore generously greeted their son-in-law with lively pleasure ; and upon a more intimate acquaintance, found they had sufficient reason to love and esteem him. The engaging little Henry daily became a greater *pet* in the family circle ; and, through the interest of Mr. Hardwicke, Captain Stanmore procured a post of considerable honour and emolument, which he continues to fill with the greatest credit to himself, and advantage to his country.

It would be difficult to discover a more united and happy family : but thrice happy must be the truly amiable Evelina, with the refreshing reflection, that to her liberality, constancy, and decision, they will ever feel indebted for their present bliss.

THE FOUNDLING.

THE FOUNDLING.

“EMILY has been soliciting, with great earnestness, my protection for the little foundling, who was so miraculously saved from the wreck this morning,” said Lady Lumley affectionately to Sir William, as he entered the drawing-room. “It must not be!” was the reply. “We are already sufficiently hampered with your *protégées*, as you call them; and, I insist upon it, that no more be added to the list. Besides, I positively cannot afford it. The workhouse is the proper place for such bantlings! How do you know whose brat you are harbouring? No, no, I tell you, I’ll have no more of them.”—“But, my dear Sir William,” said her Ladyship, “the

expense will be a mere trifle to us, who have so large a fortune ; and it is very shocking to allow the poor little innocent to be sent to the work-house ! Certainly, your observation is very just ; we know not whose child it is, nor is it likely we shall ever ascertain the fact ; for I understand that every person on board the vessel perished, except this poor little unfortunate child, so miraculously saved by the fidelity of the Newfoundland dog, which swam to shore with it in his teeth. But it is probable, that the child may be a descendant of some good Indian family, who were sending it, or bringing it, to England, for its education ; and I am told by Martin, who has seen it, that it is a beautiful little boy, and exceedingly well dressed.”—“ Well, well, if we were sure it was a gentleman’s child, I would not so decidedly oppose your noticing it. You know, I hate mean brats. But you were speaking of the dog ; I shall not object to taking *that*, if you can get it. The dog is better worth my

protection than the child ; besides, it would just please my Edward, who has been teasing me to buy him a Newfoundland dog.”—“ Certainly, my love,” replied Lady Lumley, “ I will immediately inquire about it ; I hear it is a very fine animal, and so faithfully attached to the child, that it has not left him for a moment since it came on shore. I really feel obliged to you, for allowing me to patronize the little infant.”—“ Remember, Lady Lumley, it is only conditionally,” said Sir William ; “ I am not to be plagued with it ; nor will I allow it to come into the house.”

With this remark, the haughty baronet left the room, and Lady Lumley prepared herself and Emily for a walk to the fisherman’s cottage, to see the little foundling. They were astonished to find a fine and beautiful child, apparently between two and three years of age, of a fair complexion, with a fine expressive countenance. With its dark eyes, it wistfully regarded Lady Lumley for a few moments, and then ran up to

her, exclaiming, "You are my own dear mamma, are you not? Not poor nursesey mamma, but my own dear mamma, what cry when I leave her,—so bad,—so very bad!"—and the poor little fellow burst into tears. Lady Lumley took him on her knee, and affectionately embracing him, said, "No, my dear little boy, I am not your mamma; but I will be your friend, your very good friend. And now, pray tell me what was your mamma's name?"—"Only dear mamma," said the little innocent. "And what is your name, little boy?" said Emily; "Alfred," was the answer; "but nursesey and George call me massa Alfred. I would rather go back to my mamma, for you will not love me so much as mamma did."—"If you are a good little boy, I will love you very much," said her Ladyship. Then addressing Dame Hughes, the fisherman's wife, she inquired if any thing had been saved from the wreck, besides the little fellow, and the clothes he had on? "No, my lady," answered the woman,

“only a necklace of plaited hair, which he had round his neck, with a very small locket suspended from it.” Lady Lumley desired to look at it; and found that it was the miniature of a lady, doubtless the mother of the child; and the back of the locket was neatly set with hair, with the initials F. G. The little Alfred eagerly grasped it, saying, “It is mine; my dear mamma gave me this.” Lady Lumley placed it round his neck, giving at the same time particular orders to the woman to be careful that it might not be lost. On examining the child’s clothes, which were of an elegant description, they were found all to be marked with the letters A. G. “My good woman,” said her Ladyship, “it is my intention to take this little foundling under my protection; but as it will be some days before I can procure for him a proper nurse, I shall leave him for the present with you; and I hope you will treat him with every possible attention. Here is a guinea, to procure for him

immediate necessaries; and I will take care that you be amply compensated for your hospitality in receiving the child." With this consolatory observation to the poor woman, and again affectionately embracing the little Alfred, her ladyship quitted the cottage.

She had proceeded but a few paces, when, recollecting the injunction of Sir William respecting the Newfoundland dog, she quickly turned about and desired Dame Hughes would send her husband to the priory with it, in the evening. As they were proceeding towards home, Emily observed: "Dear mamma, how sorry I am, that papa will not allow Alfred to live with us! He is such a pretty little fellow! I should like him very much for a companion. Brother Edward says, he is too old to be amused with me; besides, he is constantly playing me tricks, and destroying my toys."—"Your papa is very indulgent, my dear girl, to allow us to patronize the little boy at all," said her ladyship; "there-

fore we must not complain that he will not admit him into the house. You know papa always acts with great judgment; and has good reasons for every thing he does."—"Oh, certainly, mamma; I only thought that I should love the little boy very much to be with us. But, pray, who shall you get to nurse him?"—"I have been thinking of soliciting Mrs. Wingfield to take him," answered Lady Lumley; "she is an excellent good woman, and well calculated for the charge; and, having so recently lost her only child, it is probable she may think it a source of amusement, and we shall then have frequent opportunities of seeing him. I cannot walk so far as her cottage to-day, but will immediately go home and write her a note."

Sir William Lumley had been born and educated at the family mansion in Yorkshire; he was an only son; and it had been his father's ambition rather to make a sportsman of him than a gentleman. As far as the merits of hunting and

shooting go, he certainly had succeeded:—few men were accounted better shots, and perhaps very few could leap a bar with greater skill; but Sir William was far from possessing those characteristic feelings, which convey at once to the mind the hospitable character of the English gentleman-sportsman. He was austere, proud, and mercenary. Charity was a virtue to which he was totally a stranger; and, being himself very rich, he considered poverty as the stamp of degradation. His favourite topic of conversation was his horses and dogs; in short, it was the only one in which he did not find himself very deficient. He had moved very little in society, except with fox-hunters, and such gentlemen as found more pleasure in their bottle than in any other enjoyment; so that his notions of politeness were extremely limited: but for this deficiency, he endeavoured to compensate by an ample stock of assumed consequence and self-

importance. At the death of this gentleman's father, he became a baronet, and at the same time succeeded to the possession of immense property. The young Baronet and his riches were the general subject of tea-table conversation throughout the county; and there never were known such a succession of balls and routs in Yorkshire, as at that period; each neighbour endeavouring to outvie the other in splendour and magnificence; while, at the same time, parents were too visibly evincing their anxious solicitude that their daughters might be the favoured choice of this *incomparable* young man. Nor were the young ladies less anxious to gain the prize; and, among them, there appeared but one decided opinion, "that he was certainly the most handsome fascinating creature in the universe,"—so powerful is the influence of a title and riches! Without such attractions, this *adorable* baronet would, doubtless, have been

thought a boorish clown; and scarcely a common farmer's daughter would have condescended to notice him.

While in the zenith of his popularity, a gentleman came to reside in the neighbourhood, who was guardian to a young lady, possessing great property, and no ordinary share of beauty. Perhaps, two more opposite characters than Emily Sherwood and Sir William Lumley could not exist. She possessed great talent, an exalted mind, and a most amiable disposition. The young Baronet paid his first visit, and was very cordially received by the ambitious guardian, who, having no child of his own, was desirous to see his ward married to a title and large fortune; and it was rumoured, that he had had an eye to the wealthy Baronet, when he fixed his residence in Yorkshire. If that were really the case, he could not have formed a more successful plan; for Sir William was no sooner introduced to the lovely Emily Sherwood, than, for the first

time in his life, he became desperately in love ; and as he had never been accustomed to restrain for a moment any inclination or passion, he did not delay declaring himself to the young lady, and proposed an immediate marriage. Poor Emily was very young, and had not even thought on the subject ; she was extremely diffident, and had been accustomed to consider her guardian's will as an indisputable law, which she dared not oppose. He no sooner heard of the proposal, than, delighted that his scheme had so well succeeded, he told his ward it was an offer she could not possibly reject ; that if she did not then love Sir William, her duty would teach her to do so when she was married ; and that the sooner the ceremony was performed, the greater would be the advantage. Thus situated, did the amiable girl consent to become the wife of Sir William Lumley, although conscious that she was not acting in unison with her feelings. A greater sacrifice to sordid ambition was perhaps

never made. But Lady Lumley soon felt the duties incumbent on her as a wife and mother, and most faithfully did she fulfil them. She was select in her associates ; and by the chosen few she was much beloved and esteemed. By her dependents she was revered ; to them she was the same tender affectionate being—

“ As she the general mother were of all.”

Sir William was enchanted with his lovely bride ; at least, as much so as it was in his nature to be. He did not devote quite so much of his time to his horses and dogs ; but condescended to pass a few hours every day with his wife. These attentions continued till the hunting season commenced, when she seldom saw him from the dawn of morning until seven o'clock, the dinner-hour ; and after dinner, overcome with fatigue, he generally fell asleep in his chair, where he remained dozing the whole

evening. This demeanour continued during the sporting season; on its close, Lady Lumley prevailed on her husband to leave their Yorkshire residence, and remove to town, where they engaged a house in one of the principal squares. They were, soon after this, blessed with a son, which was to the Baronet a source of great happiness, as he had very anxiously wished for an heir:—and two years after the birth of this child, Lady Lumley also presented her husband with a daughter. But the boy was the father's darling, being the exact resemblance of himself; and, as he grew up, his mind and disposition were precisely the same; while the little Emily, partaking of the natural goodness of her mother, was as perfect as human nature could possibly be. This interesting little girl had just attained her sixth year, when Sir William sold his estate in Yorkshire, and purchased a villa, called the Priory, on the Kentish coast, where the family

were residing at the time that little Alfred was so miraculously saved, and thrown on the humane protection of Lady Lumley.

Mrs. Wingfield, the person with whom her Ladyship proposed placing this little boy, had formerly been governess in a nobleman's family, with whom Lady Lumley in her infancy had been particularly intimate; she had married the curate of the parish, who died a few years after their union, leaving but scanty means of support for herself and child. Under these afflicting circumstances, she was remembered by the amiable Lady Lumley, who placed her in a comfortable cottage, affording her the means of opening a genteel day-school for young ladies, in which establishment she had been very successful. It had pleased Heaven, by sudden death, to deprive this amiable woman of her only child, which was a source of great affliction; and it occurred to Lady Lumley, that, under the circumstances, it might not be objec-

tionable to her to undertake the care of little Alfred. Her Ladyship lost no time in making the proposal, which was joyfully accepted; and, on the following day, the foundling was removed to Mrs. Wingfield's cottage. This gave great pleasure to Emily, as she had frequent opportunities of seeing him; particularly as her papa was at this time very much engaged.

Sir William had offered himself as a candidate for the representation in parliament of the ancient and honourable city of C——; but being considered not a very able politician, he was generally unpopular, and consequently not likely to prove successful. This was the received opinion; but Sir William thought otherwise; his consequence and money, he imagined, would give him a seat in Parliament without opposition: but after an immensity of trouble, much perseverance, and infinite expense, he found himself thrown out, and the old member returned: a gentleman possessing only a small fortune,

but with a highly esteemed character, and deservedly popular as a zealous politician, and an able and unbiassed man. This disappointment and mortification Sir William could with difficulty brook. He had set his heart on becoming a member; and it was the first time in his life that he had ever been thwarted. He became discontented and irritable; in short, every person in his family suffered from his irascible temper. Very shortly after the election, he determined on remaining no longer in a county where his views had been so completely disappointed; and he finally decided on taking his family to the Continent. This plan was highly approved by Lady Lumley, who fondly hoped, that, in travelling, her husband would find rational enjoyment, and that it would be productive of much benefit to her children, particularly to her son, whose education and pursuits were very opposite to her wishes; but as they were entirely regulated by Sir William, she was

ever reluctant in giving her opinion. Before leaving the Priory, Lady Lumley gave full directions to Mrs. Wingfield respecting her little charge; desiring that she would frequently, by letter, inform her of his progress. She kindly observed: "I am satisfied, my dear friend, of the very great advantages this little orphan will enjoy under your maternal instruction; his mind will be early formed to virtue, not by precept only, but by example; and I am so well convinced that first principles are never eradicated, that I trust he will live to repay with gratitude the invaluable benefits that will accrue to him under your roof. As he increases in years, you will be pleased to let me know what you think of his abilities; and his education shall be directed accordingly.

The parting scene between little Alfred and Emily was really affecting: they had frequently played together; and had perhaps derived more amusement from each other's company, than

they had ever before experienced. While affectionately embracing, tears rolled down their little rosy cheeks; and as Emily was the oldest, it was some days before she could reconcile to her mind a total separation from her little companion. Frequently, when only with her mother, she would say, "I shall be glad when we return, dear Mamma, to see again poor little Alfred: he is such a very good little boy."—"He is, my dear," said her Ladyship; "but we have great pleasure in knowing, that we leave him with so kind a friend, who will spare no pains to make him a clever, as well as a good boy."

Sir William and Lady Lumley made some stay in Paris, and from thence proceeded to Florence, where the Baronet found himself so well amused, that they engaged a large mansion, with an intention of making it their permanent residence. Here Emily had the advantage of the best masters, and pursued her studies

with great alacrity, excited by a desire of being as clever as little Alfred, whose absence she regretted; for she thought the pursuit of the same avocations under the same tuition, would have been delightful. But she had much happiness in frequently hearing of him, as a very close correspondence was kept up between Lady Lumley and Mrs. Wingfield; the latter had become so much attached to her charge, that she never failed to speak most rapturously, in her voluminous epistles to her Ladyship, of his amiable disposition and astonishing abilities.

A material change, to the great benefit of Alfred, had taken place since the Lumley family had proceeded to the Continent. The Rev. Mr. Wood, rector of the parish in which Mrs. Wingfield resided, had for some years observed and justly appreciated the conduct of that excellent lady. He had long seen with much pleasure the beneficial consequences of her example in the neighbourhood, and now made her an offer of

marriage, which was gratefully accepted; for a more humane and better character could not exist. Mr. Wood was a well-known classical scholar, and also possessed a most exalted mind; and with justice was it universally asserted, that he was truly "the father of his flock." An union so desirable and mutually advantageous to her friend and *protégé*, gave vast pleasure to Lady Lumley, who foresaw the benefit that must ensue from such an event to both parties. Alfred's amiable manners and disposition also deeply interested Mr. Wood in his favour; and, pleased with his application and abilities, the reverend gentleman had for some time undertaken the superintendence of his education: nor was this attention thrown away; he very soon had the heartfelt pleasure of seeing his pupil daily improve, to his most sanguine wishes. Alfred did not, as is too frequently the case with young people, devote his hours of relaxation to trifling pursuits; but he very early betrayed

great talent for drawing, and in this useful accomplishment he found the most pleasing resource. Fortunately, an Italian artist of known merit resided in the vicinity:—Alfred was allowed to receive lessons of him, and soon became a very great favourite. Signor Lutti frequently observed, that in England he had never before met with such genuine talent.

In the most praiseworthy pursuits did this amiable youth pass some years, while his benefactress and her family were still on the Continent; but he had not ceased to remember with affection the beautiful smiling countenance of his friend Emily, who he now fondly imagined must be enchanting; as Lady Lumley, in her letters to Mrs. Wood, had spoken highly of her daughter's great improvement and progress in every elegant accomplishment. She, however, lamented that her health was delicate; and, thinking a change to her native air might be more beneficial to her than a continuance abroad, ex-

pressed, with much anxiety, her hopes, that she should be able to prevail on Sir William to return to the Priory. This was news that afforded delight to Alfred, who sighed for an opportunity to throw himself at the feet of his benefactress, and pour forth the grateful feelings of his heart—feelings that constantly prompted him to invoke heavenly blessings on this inestimable friend and her family.

Lady Lumley had not yet prevailed on Sir William to leave Florence, when an English family, recently arrived from India, engaged a very beautiful estate in the vicinity of Sir William's. The magnificence and splendour of this Nabob's establishment was soon known to the proud Baronet, who lost no time in paying his first visit, expressing the extreme happiness he felt in having so valuable a neighbour; and remarking that, although he was enchanted with the beautiful scenery of Italy, he certainly preferred English society; and hoped that his

acquaintance with General and Mrs. Glenville would be succeeded by a friendship, which would render their meetings frequent and mutually desirable. So polite an overture from a rich English baronet could not fail of being received with great cordiality, and the wished-for intimacy succeeded.

Lady Lumley had not met with any society since she had left her native country, that pleased her so much as Mrs. Glenville's. She found her extremely accomplished and intelligent; possessing an amiable disposition, and sentiments most congenial with her own. It was evident she had been a very beautiful woman, but the climate of India had proved unfavourable to her; and, although she was never heard to complain, there was a degree of melancholy depicted on her countenance, that created the greatest interest, at the same time that it astonished every observer; for, apparently, Mrs. Glenville was surrounded by every enjoyment that could sweeten

life. It was true, she had not the blessing of any children; but then she was spared the solicitude and anxiety that every parent must necessarily feel. Her husband held the highest rank in the army; a rank, which he filled with distinguished bravery and honour. He was rich in property; excelled in every noble and manly virtue; and perhaps a greater instance of conjugal love than had been enjoyed by General and Mrs. Glenville could not exist: yet there was frequently a very melancholy gloom, too visibly seen in the countenance of both, which proved that a secret sorrow, perhaps too sacred to be publicly known, was consuming their inward peace. Lady Lumley soon became very tenderly attached to her amiable friend, and considerable confidence early existed between them; yet Mrs. Glenville never made the smallest allusion to her sorrow, and her Ladyship was too careful of giving pain to attempt the most indirect inquiry;—the mystery,

as it certainly did appear to be, remained, consequently, a secret.

After four years' uninterrupted friendship between the families, it became necessary that the General should, upon some important concerns, visit England. Lady Lumley eagerly seized this opportunity, which she thought favourable, of suggesting to Sir William that the two families should return together; and that the General and Mrs. Glenville should be invited to join them, and remain their visitors at the Priory, till they could meet with a house to suit them. The Baronet had already become a little tired of the Continent; and perhaps the only objection he had to the plan of again permanently settling in his own country was, that it had not been first suggested by himself: he therefore thought proper to oppose it, though with less violence than he generally opposed any thing that did not meet his wishes; however, with a great deal of coaxing from Emily, and persuasion from his

Lady, Sir William, at last, condescended, with an appearance of reluctance to do what, in reality, he most wished. This consent gained, every arrangement was made for its speedy execution. Emily was almost frantic with joy; for, although she had been so long absent, she had not ceased to remember, with great affection, the little Alfred, whom she will be surprised to find, on her return, standing nearly six feet in height. She was, besides, much attached to Mrs. Wood, and many other friends whom she longed to see. She had also a strong prepossession in favour of her country, which made her anxiously wish to return to it.

From observing a peculiar depression in Mrs. Glenville, when speaking of children, Lady Lumley had avoided mentioning the circumstance of the little foundling to her, and had also cautioned Emily on the subject. With regard to Sir William and his son Edward, all precaution was unnecessary: for it was a matter of doubt,

if Alfred were not entirely forgotten by both ; at any rate, neither of them had ever thought of making the least inquiry concerning him.

Every arrangement for their departure being made, Lady Lumley wrote to Mrs. Wood, stating their proceedings and intentions, and intimating, that in a few days she anticipated the great pleasure of seeing her, her excellent husband, and her *protégé*, at the Priory. The news was received with an ecstasy of joy by this amiable woman and the benevolent Rector ; but to Alfred it conveyed sensations he had never before experienced. A few days then would present him to the benefactress, to whose benevolence he was indebted for all he now possessed : — his education, his accomplishments, and every noble sentiment of his mind, he had derived through her bounty ; and, but for that bounty, he must have perished ; or, if saved, have been exposed to the difficulties and trials of a mean and humble station. Such reflections produced

overwhelming sensations of gratitude, and a flood of tears only gave power of utterance to feelings too exquisite to be detailed. Alfred also felt sensibly alive to his personal situation;—he knew not to whom he owed his existence, nor whether he ought to lament his parents dead, or to apprehend that they might be living in a distant land, unceasingly bewailing, what they had reason to imagine, his untimely death. The miniature and plait of hair were still suspended from his neck; and he could not doubt but it had been first placed there by a parent's hand, as the features bore a striking resemblance to his own. He had also but little doubt that the miniature portrayed the likeness of a mother; and, consequently, it was a relic which he held most dear; and, though he despaired of ever seeing the original, yet would he unceasingly offer his prayers to Heaven for her happiness. At the eventful moment of Lady Lumley's return, Alfred, more deeply than ever, reflected on his peculiar situation; and as it

was observed by Mrs. Wood and the good Rector, that a pensive melancholy clouded his fine features, in proportion as they tenderly loved him, they saw the change with regret and sorrow. They took occasion, however, to remind him of the great happiness that awaited him, by the arrival of Lady Lumley and his former favourite and companion, Emily. Upon the mention of her name, Alfred burst into tears. "My dear friends," he exclaimed, "do not think me ungrateful; but the peculiar circumstances under which I am placed, give rise to reflections the most agonizing and painful to support. I hope, I have never been unmindful of the immensity of my obligation to the amiable Lady Lumley; and if the devoting of the remainder of my life to her service would prove my gratitude, most cheerfully would I do it. I have also great pleasure in saying, that, although separated so early, I have never ceased to cherish a fond remembrance of the lovely Emily; but can I, an orphan, depending only on

bounty, presume to intrude on her presence? Oh, no! my beloved friends; I can only prostrate myself at the feet of her Ladyship, express the grateful feelings which now, even now, overpower me, and implore permission to enter life, depending in future upon my own exertions.”—

“My son,” said the good Rector, “the sentiments you express, which are the genuine dictates of your heart, are worthy of you; but I implore you, by the love you bear us, to banish the idea of quitting your present abode. We have taught you to love us, not to forsake us in our old age; but by your endearing attentions to sweeten the decline of life. Yes, my child, it is the reward we look for; and my Alfred, my generous Alfred, will not, by an act of precipitancy, destroy our best hopes!” Alfred was overpowered. He, with ardour, pressed the hand of the good Rector to his lips, and retired to his chamber, where, prostrate before the throne of Heaven, he sought that relief to his tortured

mind which he felt no earthly being could bestow. The following morning, while at breakfast, they were aroused by the ringing of bells. "Ah!" said Alfred, "they are arrived!" He became pale and agitated. "My poor dog, too,—my faithful Carlo,—my preserver,—we must part; but the heart of thy master will never forget, my poor fellow, that to thee he owes his life!" Carlo was lying at his master's feet: he wagged his tail, and looked sagaciously in the face of Alfred, as if to inquire what he meant. At the time that the Lumleys left the Priory for the Continent, Mrs. Wingfield had petitioned to have Carlo as a guard to her cottage during their absence, and the faithful dog had grown old in her service; it was, therefore, a source of mutual regret to them all to part with him; but more particularly to Alfred, who sensibly knew the obligation he owed him: but he had been given to the Baronet's son, who, no doubt, would claim him as soon as he arrived.

They now saw a train of carriages approach the avenue leading to the Priory; and Alfred placed himself in a situation whence he could observe them without being noticed. Most inquisitively did he look into each carriage, as it passed, hoping he should be able to discover the lovely Emily; but, from the excessive cloud of dust, and the rapidity with which they proceeded, he was not able to distinguish any one; and having fallen into a train of reflection, he continued his walk for some hours. His faithful dog, Carlo, was his companion; and, probably from the impression that it might be their last walk together, Alfred felt reluctant to return: frequently, during their ramble, he patted his dog, while the tear of affection rolled down his face; and poor Carlo, as if conscious that some ill awaited him, kept close by his master, constantly licking his hand, as the greatest proof of endearment he could give. On his return, he found the good Rector and Mrs. Wood, who had

been paying their respects at the Priory ; they stated their regret that he had not been with them, observing, that Lady Lumley and Emily had, in the kindest manner, expressed mutual disappointment at not seeing him. They then proceeded to pass high encomiums on the lovely Miss Lumley, whose beauty and elegance of manners exceeded their highest expectations. “ You must visit them to-morrow, my dear Alfred,” said Mrs. Wood ; “ they will be very well pleased to see you.”—“ Certainly, I will do so,” answered the amiable youth, but with a degree of melancholy, plainly proving that he did not anticipate much happiness from the event.

Sir William and his son Edward were absent when the Rector and Mrs. Wood made their call, consequently they had not seen them ; but, when they came in, Emily stated who had been their visitants, saying, “ Dear Papa ! you cannot imagine what an excellent character Alfred bears, and how handsomely the Rector speaks of him !”

—“ And, pray, who is Alfred ?” inquired the Baronet. Lady Lumley then recalled to his memory the circumstance of the little foundling. “ Oh ! I had quite forgotten him,” resumed Sir William ; “ but I hope you have not been keeping him in idleness all this time.”—“ Indeed he has not been idle,” said Emily ; “ for the Rector assured mamma, that he is exceedingly clever and accomplished, being a good classic scholar, and deeply read in the best of our modern authors ; he also draws inimitably.”—“ Well done !” replied the Baronet : “ All very fine ! But, pray, who is to pay for all this ?” Before Lady Lumley had time to reply, the General and Mrs. Glenville entered ; consequently, the conversation ceased, and the Baronet very soon afterwards left the room. When gone, Emily said to Mrs. Glenville, “ I will shew you a beautiful present, which I have received this morning, of some drawings ; they are done by a *protégé* of mamma’s.” Opening a very neat portfolio, she pre-

sented a pair of landscapes, that would have done honour to a first-rate artist. The General was a great connoisseur in painting: he regarded them minutely, observing, that they were indeed fine. "I never saw greater judgment and taste displayed; doubtless your friend is an Italian?"—"No, he is English, I believe," said her Ladyship; "but he has been receiving instruction from an Italian artist."—"And does him infinite credit," replied the General; "I have some fine Italian paintings, that are a little defaced; perhaps I can make interest with him to touch them up; or copy them for me?"—"Oh, that he will do with pleasure, I am sure," exclaimed Emily; "for Mr. Wood, his preceptor, assured mamma, that nothing but his exceeding amiable disposition and generous mind could exceed his general talent."—"That is speaking very handsomely of him," said Mrs. Glenville: "do you know if he understands miniature painting?"—"I am told that he does," replied Lady Lumley; "and I

mean to employ him in taking portraits of the family."—"I have an invaluable treasure," said Mrs. Glenville, "that has suffered a little from time, and being constantly worn in my bosom; if I imagined that, without destroying the effect of a single feature, he could renovate it, I should be very happy to have him here for the purpose; but I could not part with it for a moment."—"My dear friend," said Lady Lumley, "I would advise you not to trust to his talent any thing so precious; although, from the specimens before us, I am disposed to think him very clever. We will see his first essay on Emily's countenance. I have desired that he may call on us to-morrow; and shall be happy to introduce him to you for your future commands."

Edward just then came in, exclaiming, "How very late you dine to-day, Madam; I am positively starved!"—"It is not later than usual, I believe, my love!" said her Ladyship. "But I want to sail in my new boat, after dinner," con-

tinued Edward. "I never saw any thing look so beautiful as she does in the water: if you, ladies, feel disposed for an aquatic excursion, now is the time."—"I should like it exceedingly," said Emily, "if mamma or Mrs. Glenville were to be of the party."—"I have, my love," said her Ladyship, "recently suffered too much from the effects of salt-water, to be tempted by the beauty of Edward's boat, to venture on any aquatic amusement at present."—"Then I must be your *chaperon*, my dear Emily," said Mrs. Glenville; "I suppose Sir William will be our escort."—"And the General and I will take our little promenade, *tête-à-tête*," replied her Ladyship, smiling. The gentlemen were quite happy in acceding to the proposal made by the ladies; and, accordingly, soon after dinner, Sir William, Edward, Mrs. Glenville, and Emily, proceeded to the boat, which, as had been previously described by Edward, was looking very beautiful: she was a complete yacht in miniature, quite new; and, her

sails being swelled with a fine breeze, nothing could exceed the elegance of her appearance, or the rapturous delight with which Edward viewed his vessel. They had a very pleasant sail for nearly two hours, when Mrs. Glenville proposed returning home.

Within a short distance of the shore, an unfortunate accident occurred, which threatened to prove fatal. By some mismanagement of the rigging, the boat was nearly upset, and Emily fell into the water! The terror of the party may be imagined:—neither Sir William nor his son could swim, but their screams were terrific; while Mrs. Glenville lay senseless at the bottom of the boat. Alfred had been some time seated near the spot, taking a sketch of the surrounding landscape, which he had a few days previously begun, and which he was now completing, with the intention of presenting it to Lady Lumley. He heard the screams, and, turning round, saw the distressing situation of the boat, and the peril

of the party. Unconscious who they were, he immediately threw off his coat and plunged into the water, happily arriving in time to save the beautiful Emily, as she was the third time sinking. With little difficulty, he brought her safe on shore; and, placing her with tenderness on the grass, he returned to assist in righting the boat, which neither Sir William nor his son were now, from excessive fear, capable of managing: but, by this timely aid, they had the happiness of finding themselves very soon safely landed. The Baronet despatched his son for the carriage; at the same time giving strict injunctions that the accident might be concealed from Lady Lumley till they arrived at home. The most painful apprehensions were felt by Sir William and Alfred for the recovery of Mrs. Glenville and Emily. The latter, from struggling in the water, had so exhausted her strength, that, although the faculty of speech had returned, she was unable to stand. Sir William, supporting her on

his knee, had wrapped Alfred's dry coat round her, while Alfred, with every possible tenderness, administered restoratives to poor Mrs. Glenville, who certainly appeared the greater sufferer. In her reticule they found a box of aromatic vinegar, the application of which, and bathing her temples with water, assisted in restoring her to a state of animation, just as the carriage drew up; but she was unable to speak. As Alfred supported her to the carriage, she pressed the hand of her deliverer, and, with streaming eyes, expressed her thanks. Sir William placed his lovely daughter by her side, and requested Alfred would accompany them to the Priory, which they reached in a few minutes. Here this amiable youth again assisted Mrs. Glenville to a sofa, and, delicately feeling that he could be no longer useful, in the distressing confusion of the moment, left the Priory, and hastened towards home; while Sir William was conveying the helpless Emily to her chamber.

Lady Lumley had not returned from her walk; and was therefore spared a knowledge of the afflicting circumstance, till both Mrs. Glenville and Emily were recovering. But she could not reflect on the danger to which her beloved daughter had been exposed without horror; and deeply lamented, that she did not know to whom she owed her present safety; which was indeed a subject of regret to the whole party, all of whom were equally warm in their encomiums on the conduct of their preserver. Sir William stated it as his opinion, that they would probably all have been drowned, but for the timely assistance and resolution of that excellent young man; and certainly Emily's fate was inevitable! As the Baronet tenderly loved his daughter, these reflections called forth every grateful sentiment; and he determined, if possible, to ascertain to whom he was so much indebted; saying that, although he never could repay the obligation, he

would at least have the pleasure of proving that he was not insensible of it.

With overwhelming and indescribable sensations, Alfred had reached the cottage, and related the whole affair to the good Rector and Mrs. Wood: they were naturally deeply concerned for the sufferers; but rejoiced that their young friend and favourite had so happily rescued them from danger. "It will have the effect, my dear boy," said the reverend gentleman, "of advantageously displaying your real character to Sir William, whose natural disposition is not so amiable as his lady's; but I do not think he will be insensible to the good offices you have so fortunately been able, at the risk of your own life, to render him; and an introduction to him, under auspices so favourable, must tend to your advantage."—"I am supremely happy, my dear Sir," said Alfred, "that I have been able to render assistance to Sir William Lumley and his charming daughter; had the risk been tenfold greater, I should only

have felt additional pleasure in doing so ; but, for the greatest stranger, in so critical a situation, I should at the moment have felt equal anxiety. Sir William has, therefore, very little to thank me for ; while, I feel, I am indebted to him for all I enjoy ; and I trust I shall never forget my obligation." Soon after this conversation, Alfred retired to bed—not to rest ; there was now a disquietude and uneasiness in his mind, which before had been totally unknown to him ; and which deprived him of sleep. He had never seen any thing so interestingly beautiful, as Emily had appeared to him ; nor could he forget the inexpressible happiness he had felt, when he first saw her, through his exertions, shew symptoms of returning life ;—but there was, he knew not why, a feeling excited towards Mrs. Glenville, which occupied the first place in his mind. She was not young, nor beautiful ; nor did he know who she was ; yet her features were strongly impressed on his mind, and he felt an

anxious solicitude for her recovery : so that Emily, lovely as she was, appeared only, and he knew not why, a secondary consideration with him.

On the following morning, Mrs. Wood proposed paying an early visit to the Priory, being very anxious to see her favourite Emily ; and perhaps also equally anxious to make known to whom she owed her deliverance. The family were at breakfast ; and, as usual, received her with great pleasure. She immediately expressed sincere happiness in seeing Mrs. Glenville and Emily in the happy circle. "Oh," said Sir William, laughingly, "you have then, I suppose, heard of our wonderful escape ? We have, I assure you, to thank the intrepidity of some generous unknown for our present being ; which certainly was procured at the risk of his own life."—"And had he been sure, that the forfeit of his life would have been the result of his exertions," said Mrs. Wood, with some

apparent warmth, "I am certain they would have been equally devoted to you."—"Are you then acquainted with our preserver?" inquired Mrs. Grenville. "With pride, I acknowledge the acquaintance," said Mrs. Wood: "and a more amiable character than my Alfred does not exist."—"And is it to Alfred I owe my existence?" said the blushing Emily.—"What pleasure shall I have in thanking him!"—"What pleasure shall we all have in thanking him!" re-echoed the General. "Is that young man the foundling, of whom you were speaking so highly yesterday?" inquired Sir William. "I am glad to find, he is grateful for our bounty; and I will see what can be done for him."—"He has the strongest possible claims on us all," rejoined Mrs. Grenville; "independently of which, his great merit and abilities deserve our universal esteem."—"And that he will undoubtedly possess," said the General.—"Pray, my dear madam, when shall we have the pleasure of

seeing him?"—"This morning, he will do himself the honour of calling on Sir William and Lady Lumley," answered Mrs. Wood. "I shall be out," said the Baronet, with a haughty countenance; "but tell him, I am pleased with his exertions yesterday, and will see him another time." With this remark Sir William left the room, followed with an indignant look from both the General and Mrs. Glenville, who were too noble-minded to despise a favour, because conferred by the hand of dependence. Edward soon followed his father, observing to his sister:—"I say, Emily, take care that this prodigy, whom nobody knows, does not run away with your heart." Emily, blushing, said, "Brother, you are very illiberal."—"He is very volatile and thoughtless," said Lady Lumley; "but you must forgive him, Emily."

It had been arranged, that Alfred should call at the Priory, and escort Mrs. Wood home. This lady was much wounded by the remarks, made by the Baronet and his son, on her friend

and favourite; but she was too delicately situated to suggest an observation, and she inwardly rejoiced that they were gone out before he arrived. Alfred was soon announced; he entered with a modest but dignified air, which commanded immediate respect. Lady Lumley, affectionately taking him by the hand, assured him of the very great pleasure she felt in seeing him, and introduced him to her friends, who greeted him with much warmth and kindness, particularly the General, who expressed the desire that an introduction, under such favourable auspices, might be productive of long-continued friendship. Alfred bowed, and “looked the gratitude he felt.” Lady Lumley saw his agitated feelings, and endeavoured to divert him from the subject, by saying, “We are so enchanted with your drawings, Alfred, that we all wish to profit by them; and engage you to pass some hours every day with us.”—“You do me great honour, madam,” answered Alfred; “and if my

poor talent can be employed in your Ladyship's service, it will be to me of infinitely more value than it has ever yet been, and will certainly afford me great happiness." Mrs. Glenville had not spoken since Alfred came in; but she appeared greatly agitated, and continued looking very earnestly at him, then at the General, till her nerves became affected, and she let fall from her hand a book which she had been looking at before Alfred entered. With his usual attention, this amiable youth rose to recover it, when, in stooping, the plait of hair with the locket suspended, (and which had for so many years been his bosom companion,) found its way through his waistcoat; and, although he endeavoured to conceal it, the observant eye of Mrs. Glenville had already seen and recognised her own miniature! She, with electrical impulse, caught his hand convulsively, exclaiming, "My child! My child!" and fainted.

Alfred supported her in his arms. "Gracious

heaven!" said the agitated General, "what does this mean?" Every eye regarded the pale trembling countenance of Alfred—then reverted to the General's, between which it was very easy to trace a very marked resemblance. In a few seconds, Mrs. Glenville revived; and, observing she was supported by her husband and Alfred, she pressed their hands in her's, and again convulsively sobbed, "My husband! My Alfred! My child!—Yes—yes—it is—it must be my darling boy!" The General steadfastly regarded Alfred; and, in his fond imagination, could have pressed him to his heart; but he thought it impossible that his beloved child, whose supposed death he had so long lamented, could still be living; and anxiously inquired of Mrs. Glenville what had caused her excessive agitation? "Oh, my boy!" she said, "it is my Alfred; my beloved child! I cannot be mistaken!" and, putting her hand in his waistcoat, she drew from his bosom the well-known miniature! The ve-

nerable General recognised it, and, in a tremulous voice, exclaimed—"Young man, where, where did you obtain this?" Alfred was unable to reply, but fell senseless on the sofa. Lady Lumley then, as well as she was able, related the circumstance of the shipwreck, and the miraculous escape of little Alfred through the fidelity of the dog. "The miniature," said her Ladyship, "he had round his neck, when he was found; he has constantly worn it, and in his most childish days preserved it with fondness, as an invaluable treasure."—"And so it has proved," ejaculated the General, while the big tear rolled down his fine venerable countenance; and, pressing Alfred to his heart, he said, "You are indeed my boy! Heaven be praised! my sufferings have been great; but joy like this is more difficult to support than any thing I have before experienced." The pressure of paternal love, which Alfred now felt, and the vigour of youth, recalled him to a state of ani-

mation; but it was difficult to believe the reality of the scene. By turns he fondly embraced his beloved parents, and on the bosom of his mother wept aloud. It is impossible by description to do justice to their mutual feelings. Mrs. Wood and Emily had been so affected as to be obliged to leave the room. "Have you a mark of fruit on your wrist, my darling Alfred?" inquired Mrs. Glenville. "I have, dearest Madam," answered the youth, opening his sleeve, and shewing the mark of a ripe peach. Mrs. Glenville, turning to Lady Lumley, observed: "My dear friend, through your benevolence, I have restored to me all that was wanting to perfect my happiness; and my Alfred is indebted to you for the restoration of his parents, who for the last eighteen years have unceasingly lamented his supposed death."—"I must beg you, also, my dear Mrs. Glenville," said her Ladyship, "to remember, that to your excellent son I owe the preservation of my Emily, and probably

also that of my husband and son; but we will not damp our present joy by any unpleasant retrospection."

When Sir William and Edward entered, Alfred was presented to them by the General, as his son. The Baronet had some difficulty at first to understand the matter; but, after a full explanation, he shook Alfred cordially by the hand, saying, that he sincerely entered into his feelings of happiness, and invited him to remain an inmate in his family.

In his extreme joy, Alfred did not forget how much he owed the good Rector and Mrs. Wood: he, therefore, requested that he might be allowed to remain with them a short time; remarking that it would be unnecessary to say that the principal part of his time should be devoted to the Priory. Sir William suggested sending the carriage for the reverend gentleman, that the joyful day might be celebrated *en famille*; while Edward despatched a messenger to communicate

the happy intelligence to the village, which was answered by a merry peal of bells.

The General desired that his friend Carlo might not be forgotten : he had formerly been a favourite with him, and certainly was now entitled to his best attentions. Mrs. Glenville remarked to Lady Lumley :—“ I parted with my dear boy at so early an age, in consequence of a malignant fever, which had been brought into my family by a servant, and which proved fatal to many. From his being a delicate child, it was the opinion of our physician, that, if he caught the fever, he could not possibly survive ; and as it would have been necessary that I should send him to England for his education, we were induced to take the advantage of the ship Sarah, then ready to sail ; and, with a heart almost broken at the thought of separation, I entrusted my beloved child, with two faithful servants, on the passage to England ; and consigned him to the care of a very dear friend, who was then re-

siding in London. The first tidings we received, after the ship had sailed, was, that in a dreadful gale she had foundered off the Kentish coast, and that every person on board had perished! An event so disastrous and melancholy produced the most serious effect on my health; and for some years I was not able either to visit or receive any one, but unceasingly felt anxious to return to England. Happily, the General at length obtained permission to leave India; and we took our passage on board a ship bound to Florence, where we so fortunately, as the result has proved, became acquainted with you."

The recital was here interrupted by the entrance of Mr. Wood, followed by Carlo, who had pushed his way into the drawing-room; and he no sooner saw the General and Mrs. Glenville than he laid down at their feet, evincing every demonstration of joy at seeing them! We will pass over the affecting scene between the party and the good Rector, whose happiness on

the occasion was exceedingly great; yet he could not help shedding tears at the idea of a separation from his young friend, which he naturally judged would be the result: but in this he was mistaken; for, in a few months, to the inexpressible delight of all parties, Alfred led to the hymeneal altar the lovely Emily; and, as the Priory was very extensive, they formed but one family, till a mansion suited to their establishment could be erected in the neighbourhood. Thus had the whole party, to the end of their days, reason to rejoice that the benevolence of Lady Lumley had in the first instance patronized the little foundling. The poor fisherman and his wife, who were now far advanced in life, were not forgotten. The General placed them in a comfortable cottage, and settled on them a pension of fifty pounds per annum.

THE AFRICAN PRINCE.

THE AFRICAN PRINCE.

It happened, some years since, that an English merchant's vessel was wrecked on the coast of Guinea, on a part where the natives are considered to be desperately treacherous. As there were several passengers on board the vessel, and some of them ladies, the greatest consternation arose, from an apprehension of the most melancholy results; they could only anticipate death, procrastinated by tortures inhuman and cruel. They were two days on shore, without seeing any of the natives; but, on the third morning, the howling and shouts of a formidable tribe of Koromantyn negroes renewed their most dreadful apprehensions. Yet, as they approached,

their fears greatly subsided; for, instead of shewing signs of hostility, the actions and gestures of the negroes portrayed pleasure and kindness; and a few presents, given to them by the captain of the vessel, appeared to seal the bond of amity between them. They soon produced a sort of palanquin, in which they conveyed the ladies; and the men, following on foot, walked some distance into the country, where they were presented to a negro king, who had some thousands of men surrounding him, and by whom they were received with every mark of kindness. His demeanour and countenance exhibited a disposition that would have done honour to a Christian. He was about fifty years of age; and there was a degree of native elegance in his person, perfectly in unison with the dignity of his station. His family consisted of a wife, some few years younger than himself, and who, among the tribe, was esteemed a great beauty; and an only son, a fine youth of eighteen. The

mild manners and excellent disposition of this amiable young man had rendered him the object of his parents' love ; and by the negroes he was esteemed and venerated. They regarded him as their future king ; and, as such, paid him every respect. He had derived advantages which, perhaps, few in his situation had ever enjoyed. Nature had been bountiful in her gifts to him ; and his mind had been better cultivated than could be imagined to be the case in an uncivilized nation.

It had happened that, when he was about four years of age, a ship had been wrecked off the same coast ; and an English gentleman, who was leaving his country in consequence of some unpleasant events, was at the time a passenger on board. He was so much gratified with the generous character and hospitable reception of the negro king, that he determined on ending his days in that country, and to devote his time to the education of the young prince. Mr. Sy-

monds, for such was the name of this gentleman, was truly a moral and religious character, well calculated for the task he had undertaken, and eventually it did him infinite credit.

Soon after he settled there, he formed an alliance with one of the natives, whose mind he also took great pains to cultivate, and by whom he had one daughter. This little girl shared with the young prince her father's constant care; and, with their improvement, their affection for each other daily increased. This state of happiness, however, was but of few years' continuance: Mr. Symonds was taken suddenly ill, and died; from which period his widow and daughter formed part of the king's family. The most ardent affection subsisted between Prince Koroman and his beautiful Zulima; and, with the mutual wishes of their parents, they were betrothed to each other.

By this amiable family, the passengers and crew of the foundered vessel were received, and

treated with greater kindness than is frequently met with in Christian countries. Zulima, with constant watchfulness and assiduity, paid every possible attention to the ladies, whom she appeared to idolize, as being of her father's country; while Koroman spared no endeavours to amuse the male part of his Christian visitors, taking them into the interior of the country, and engaging with them in different entertaining pursuits. Koroman and Zulima had, in the course of their education under Mr. Symonds, acquired some knowledge of the English language, and were able to speak it a little; consequently, the facility of communication was greatly increased.

By the ingenuity and extreme exertion of the negroes, assisted by the sailors, the ship and part of the cargo were saved; though the vessel was so materially damaged as to require a length of time in refitting; and which possibly could not ultimately have been performed, had they not fortunately had in the crew a good carpenter,

rigger, and shipwright, who luckily had saved their chests of tools. The master of the vessel was an American, of fascinating manners and pleasing address ; he had been very particular in his attentions to the negro sovereign, and had gained his implicit confidence. He had frequently expressed his admiration of the young prince ; and observed, that, if he could have the advantage of about two years' residence in England, to acquire a knowledge of the arts and sciences, he would be an absolute prodigy of nature ; and doubtless would, at a future period, vastly improve the state. The last argument particularly influenced the good king, who did not think any sacrifice too great to benefit his people. Yet a separation of two years from his beloved son appeared to him an age of sorrow ; —and it was not till the vessel was nearly ready for sea, that this fond parent could summon resolution to suggest a voyage to England to his beloved child.

Koroman no sooner heard the suggestion, than, in an ecstasy of joy, he threw himself into the arms of his father, exclaiming, "Blessed parent, it is, of all things, what I most desire; but the apprehension of giving you, my dear mother, and Zulima, pain, prevented me from making the request."—"Ah, my son," said the tender parent, "your mother and Zulima, I fear, will indeed be great sufferers; and it is only by convincing them that it is for the general good, that they will, in any degree, be reconciled to the separation. I will take upon me to prepare them for the distressing event; while you, my dear son, will make the necessary preparations for your departure, for I understand the ship will be ready to sail in a few days."

As the period approached, a visible depression appeared in the countenance of Koroman. This was observed by the master of the vessel, who spared no pains to rally his spirits, and point out to him the great advantage that would be derived

from the execution of his plan. At length the day arrived, and, in all the majestic beauty of full sail, the ship appeared that was to convey from fond parental love the generous, the affectionate Koroman to a distant land, and, by a vast extent of sea, separate him from his beloved Zulima. To do justice to the feeling exhibited in the parting scene would be impossible: imagination may picture what language can never describe. His anxious parents and promised bride, with the greater part of their tribe, accompanied him to the vessel, from whence Zulima could only be taken by force. With what parental tenderness did the fond father consign his only son to the care of the captain, who unhappily, by perfidious pretensions, had gained his confidence, treacherously to betray it! Perhaps so flagrant an instance of ingratitude seldom or never before existed; for, hardly had this monster got the young prince into his power, than he basely sold him as a slave to the master

of a ship freighted wholly with slaves for Jamaica.

This horrible treason was no sooner known to the crew, than they abandoned the vessel, declaring they would rather die than sail under the command of such an officer. A gentleman, who had been a passenger on board the vessel, wrote a correct account of the transaction to the British government—minutely describing the hospitable treatment they had received from the negro monarch, and detailing the treacherous conduct of the master, who doubtless would have met his reward on his return home, had not death anticipated the hand of justice. A malignant fever was brought on board his ship by one of his new crew, which he caught, and died on his passage.

The cruel captain of the slave-ship had enticed poor Koroman on board his vessel, under pretence of a visit; but he had no sooner stepped on deck, than he was pushed into the hold, among many more unfortunate sufferers, and a

heavy chain was attached to his legs. Here were wives torn from their beloved husbands—husbands from their fond wives—parents from their children—and children weeping for their parents;—all huddled together, and dreading their future fate. In this miserable situation did the generous prince remain till the ship arrived in Jamaica; when he was taken from the hold, and dragged to a public auction, to be purchased, for aught he knew, by some hardened planter, or perhaps to be sent to conclude his existence in the mines of Mexico, without a ray of hope that he should ever again behold his beloved parents and faithful Zulima.

But Providence, in mercy, ordained for the generous Koroman a sentence less severe. When exposed for sale in the public market, his fine manly countenance, which portrayed the true character of the Koromantyns, as frank, fearless, martial, and heroic, and at the same time evidently betraying a pensive melancholy,

expressive of the finest feelings, attracted the particular attention of Mr. Usher, a planter residing at Annatta Bay. This gentleman treated his slaves with every possible kindness and philanthropy, ameliorating their state of slavery as much as possible. He frequently wished that such a state had never existed; but, looking at the circumstances as they stood, he was convinced, as well from observation as from the sentiments of those who have the best means of acquiring information on the subject, that the sudden deliverance of the negroes from slavery would increase, rather than diminish, their unhappiness. He rewarded them according to their exertions; and allowed them, after the performance of their regular duties, a certain portion of time every day to employ to their own advantage or amusement. With such consideration for his slaves, it is no wonder that Mr. Usher was loved and revered by them; and it is generally supposed that he had more work done than almost any other

planter on the island ; for his kindness operated most powerfully upon his negroes. Animated by encouragement, they performed what appeared impossibilities to those who were under the depressing influence of fear ;—but still they were slaves.

Happily, it fell to the lot of Koroman to be purchased by Mr. Usher.

This excellent person was early pleased with the particular assiduity of his new negro, and his faithful discharge of his duty ; and he never failed to reward his merit, although he did not inquire into his history. Koroman was silent on the subject ; he knew it was not in the power of any associate to afford him consolation, and he felt more comfort in secretly brooding over his misfortunes ; and frequently he rejoiced when the sound of the bell summoned him to daily labour, that he might relieve the agonies of his soul by bodily exertion.

He had been in the possession of Mr. Usher

about four months, when an accident occurred, which claimed the particular attention of that gentleman. Mr. Usher had an only son, a fine youth of eighteen years of age, recently arrived from England, with the son of the Governor, a promising young man, of the same age. These friends had received their education at Westminster school; and, having finished their studies, now returned together to Jamaica. The strict friendship that existed between them afforded mutual pleasure to their families. Frederick Usher possessed great talent, and an exceedingly amiable disposition; which induced the Governor to desire to cement the existing friendship, by allowing the young men to associate as much as possible; and when his son was on a visit at Mr. Usher's, they frequently amused themselves by swimming in the bay. In one of these excursions, the Governor's son was seized with the cramp, and was near sinking, when Frederick, seeing the danger of his friend, endeavoured to reach

him; this he did, but not till his strength was so far exhausted, as to render him incapable of affording the least assistance; and they would probably both have perished, but for the intrepidity of Koroman, who, perceiving their danger, at the hazard of his own life rushed into the bay, and happily conveyed them both on shore, yet in a state of great exhaustion, as well from the quantity of water they had swallowed, as from their great exertions. Proper restoratives were immediately administered, which soon had the desired effect, and animation returned to gladden the heart of the half-frantic parent; for Mr. Usher had from a distance been a spectator of the accident. The strongest sensibility of feeling was expressed by this humane gentleman towards his faithful slave, whom he now regarded as the preserver of his son. Mr. Usher immediately received Koroman as a part of his family, and he resided in the house of his excellent master, who was surprised to find in so young a man, and a negro

too, so exalted and noble a mind. By request, Koroman modestly but faithfully related his history. When speaking of his beloved parents and fond Zulima, the big tear rolled down his fine expressive countenance, and grief deprived him of the power of utterance. Mr. Usher was so affected by the recital, that he immediately wrote to the Governor, stating every particular, and naming also the happy escape of their sons through the intrepidity of this young man. The Governor was passionately fond of his son, and consequently was so thankful for his preservation, that he instantly sent for Koroman to Kingston, and loaded him with acknowledgments, desiring him to point out in what way he could best recompense him.

The faithful slave threw himself at the feet of the Governor, imploring that he might be sent to his native country. This was immediately promised, with a suggestion, that, if he wished first to visit England, an early passage should be pro-

cured for him. Koroman, almost frantic with joy, exclaimed, "Ah, me so happy, so very happy now! Me see my father, my mother, my country, my poor Zulima! Ah! me die with joy! and me accomplish de great object of my voyage also!"

The Governor was greatly affected: he desired Koroman to consider himself no longer a slave, but as his visitor, till a passage for England could be procured. This soon presented itself; and, within two months of the time, he arrived safe in London, bringing with him letters of introduction from the Governor to several families of distinction, by whom he was received with great respect, and treated with the kindest possible attention.

The English monarch, having previously had his history, with an account of his sufferings, was pleased to desire that he might be presented at Court, where he received him most graciously, and conversed with him for some time. Nothing

could exceed the rapturous gratitude with which Prince Koroman acknowledged his reception, and the pleasure he expressed at the public amusements.

But he could not reconcile his mind to remain long in England: he sighed to revisit his native land. With the poet, he would say—

There is a spot of earth supremely blest,

A dearer, sweeter spot than all the rest,—

That land our country, and that spot our home.

With unspeakable happiness he anticipated the time when he should again behold his beloved parents and promised bride.

Upon a representation of his wishes being made to the proper authorities, a ship was ordered to be in readiness to convey him to his own country, where, in due time, he safely arrived. His return was gladly hailed by the whole tribe.—The overwhelming feelings of his anxious parents and the fond Zulima can be better imagined than described; they had received no

account of him in his absence ; therefore, they had been spared the agonizing pangs of knowing his sufferings. But frequently during their recital, his father, bathed in tears, would loudly exclaim, “ that the English were the most generous nation in the world ;” and he rejoiced that the treacherous captain had not been a native of that country.

Koroman and Zulima were soon united. Upon which occasion the old king resigned the sovereignty to his son, who reigned many years in the hearts of his subjects, universally their friend and patron.

ENTHUSIASM AND INDOLENCE;

OR,

THE CONTRAST.

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CHARLES MANDEVILLE was the third son of an English baronet, whose greatest ambition was, that his children should hold the same rank in the army which he had formerly filled. His fortune being far from considerable, he could not afford to send them to public schools; and therefore he engaged a private tutor, to educate them at the family mansion, in Shropshire. The two eldest were already disposed of in the Guards; and Charles now occupied the first consideration. He had just entered his seventeenth year, and was a fine manly youth, a stranger to

vice, and possessing those traits of a noble mind which indicate a future great character: but Charles was romantic and enthusiastic to a fault—full of ardour and anxiety to enter life. At this period, fortunately, his father was able to procure for him a cornetcy for India; and never did a youth leave England with more sanguine ideas of success—with more romantic notions of future honour and happiness. No doubt, he had many pangs at parting from his family; particularly at leaving the fond mother, to whom he was, in a great measure, indebted for the fine feelings he possessed, and to whom he was most tenderly attached. During his passage out, he could not recover his wonted spirits; but, on his arrival in India, he was so handsomely received by the Commander-in-chief, and other persons of distinction, to whom he had strong letters of recommendation; that, in a short time, his mind was again fully occupied with enthusiastic notions of future honours, and romantic prospects of

future happiness. He was no sooner known than esteemed by his brother-officers: he carefully avoided altercations; and his military, as well as his private conduct, was irreproachable. Like the generality of truly brave men, he was kind, conciliating, and humane to his soldiers; and he was beloved by them with enthusiasm, although a rigid observer of discipline. The Colonel of his regiment was an excellent man. From the first introduction of Mandeville, he had particularly noticed his gentlemanly deportment and uniformly good conduct; and he had shewn him great attention, by giving him a general invitation to his table. The Colonel's family consisted of a wife and daughter; the latter a very beautiful and only child, of whom the mother was so doatingly fond, that no persuasion could induce her to send her to England for her education. The mother had passed the greater part of her own life in almost total inactivity, mental and bodily; and was therefore ill

calculated to form the mind of her lovely little Laura. This was strongly and tenderly suggested to her by her affectionate husband; but all his entreaties could not prevail on this fond mother to part from her darling:—at any rate, the separation was deferred, from year to year, till it became too late; for the Colonel was thrown from his horse and received a fracture in the skull, which caused his instant death. He left but little property for his widow and orphan; and to poor Laura, who had severely suffered from the too great indulgence of her indolent mother, the loss was irreparable. She had never been accustomed to the least exertion, and was now incapable of it: her disposition was amiable, and her capacity naturally vivid; but, as she had been improperly indulged in every whim, she had neglected to acquire that information and those engaging manners, which are indispensably necessary. Reading was her only amusement; but it was only that kind of read-

ing, which tends to vitiate the taste and mislead the imagination. Novels and romances were her delight, because they did not require the trouble of reflection; and in this frivolous pursuit she would pass every moment of her time, totally unmindful of the future.

Mandeville had frequently dined with Laura, and had greatly admired the beauty of her fine form and the pleasing contour of her countenance; but he had not found opportunities of inquiring much into the state of her mind. His fortune was small; and, aware of his incapacity to support an establishment, he had not, for an instant, thought of Laura farther than as the daughter of his friend. After the death of her father, however, he paid her a visit of condolence; and, for the first time, felt the full power of her charms. In all the allurements of dress, gaiety, and beauty, she never appeared half so interesting to Mandeville, as when he saw her involved in grief and bathed in tears; it was a

situation which forcibly struck his romantic imagination; and, in a moment, he fancied himself destined to be the husband and protector of the daughter of his late esteemed and still lamented friend. With such enthusiastic feelings, he soon made overtures to Laura; and her heart was too susceptible long to remain insensible to his passion. She had for some time regarded him as the most interesting young man of her acquaintance; and his declaration, in the moment of her distress, did not fail to produce the most powerful effect. She looked up to him as her deliverer; and, as she had no fortune, she forcibly felt the true value of his disinterested offer. With the consent of her surviving parent, she accepted it; and in a few months she became the happy bride of the noble-minded Mandeville. For some months, nothing could exceed the rapturous bliss of this newly married pair. The young soldier considered his wife as an emblem of perfection:—she was beautiful in per-

son; her manners were mild, and her disposition affectionate and kind. They remained several weeks in retirement, during which period Laura spared no pains to secure, by every endearing attention, the affections of her Mandeville, who daily proved, by every trait of character, the nobleness of his soul. At length, the time arrived when it became necessary for Mandeville to resume his military duties, and return to the society of his brother-officers, to whom he felt particularly anxious to introduce his lovely bride. As Laura possessed a considerable share of vanity, she was for some time infatuated with the adulation paid to her beauty, and the attentions she every where received; for, though she was thought by many an insipid beauty, yet, so universally beloved was her husband, that, from regard to him, his friends felt great pleasure in shewing her their marked attention. At length, the novelty of the scene abated; and poor Laura found the exertion of dressing, to pay and

receive visits, extremely irksome. When drawn into society, she became languid, and frequently remiss in the ordinary attentions which are indispensable to good breeding. Often, when solicited by her husband to walk, she would plead indisposition, or form frivolous excuses, to be left at home, rather than take the trouble of dressing for the occasion. This gave him pain and disappointment; and, as Mandeville became more accustomed to the form and features of his Laura, his raptures gradually abated, and should have been succeeded by a sentiment more durable though less romantic. He now hoped to find in his Laura not only a wife, but a companion and friend; who would superintend the domestic duties of her family, study to render herself pleasing in society, and be ever solicitous to secure the esteem of his friends by her attentions and endeavours to amuse them. But of this last duty poor Laura was quite incapable; she had no power of exertion without the sti-

mulus of self-gratification ; and, as she had cultivated no talent for conversation, she had not the least desire to mix in society:—not that this proceeded from a disrelish for company, but from a total want of mental energy, which extended its baleful influence over her physical powers.

This became every day more visible to Mandeville : he anticipated the consequences that must result from such conduct, and he trembled when he reflected on the precipice on which he stood. He now with anguish found that his fond imagination had given his wife a cultivated mind, which she really did not possess, and which was indispensable to his happiness. “ But I will not repine,” he would say ; “ my Laura loves me, and will, I am sure, accede to any thing I wish. When I affectionately point out to her the absolute necessity of an immediate change in her conduct, she will see how much our future happiness must depend on herself, and will then

think no exertion too much." Generous-minded Mandeville! How little did you reflect on the difficulty of destroying the fatal growth of indolence, when, by length of sufferance, it has entwined itself round our best energies! How little did you consider that, when the mind is suffered to remain in a state of inaction, all its powers decay! To the indolent and slothful Laura, who had never known activity, he was about to propose a task she had not strength of mind to perform. But he repaired to her room, where he found her, as usual, reclining on a sofa, with a trifling novel in her hand, which she occasionally turned over and looked into. Mandeville, seating himself by her, said—"Dearest Laura, I intreat of you to lay aside this trash, which occupies so much of your time to no effect; and devote your leisure moments to such authors as will afford you instruction, and lead you to rouse yourself from the lethargy of indolence, which at present threatens your misery, and, I assure

you, gives me many painful apprehensions for our mutual happiness." In this manner he affectionately counselled and reasoned, with all the manly energy of virtue. Laura listened attentively, and felt a momentary horror at the justness of her husband's complaints. Bathed in tears, she threw herself into his arms, confessed her error, and promised—as she then thought, *faithfully* promised—to be all he wished. But, alas! those praiseworthy, amiable resolutions were feeble, compared to the rooted power which inactivity and indolence had obtained over her weak mind.

Mandeville, however, loved her most affectionately, and placed implicit confidence in these promises. She never had appeared to him more lovely, than when, bathed in tears, she declared her future determination to be all he wished; and he left her, as he thought, secure in his happiness, and repaired to head-quarters, where some military duties awaited him.

Laura, who loved her husband with the tenderest affection, no sooner found herself alone, than she reflected on her Mandeville's magnanimity and elevation of soul; and bitterly lamented ever having given him a pang. She instantly threw aside her novels, and to herself made fresh protestations of future exertion. He was expected home to dinner; and for the first time for some months did Laura finish her toilet in time to receive him. As these attentions were continued for some days, Mandeville again thought himself the happiest man alive.

At this crisis, Sir Charles Mandeville, the father of our hero, arrived in India. He had heard of his son's marriage; and went out expressly to visit him and his bride; knowing it would be impossible for them to return to England for some length of time. At his period of life, for he was nearly eighty years of age, a voyage to India was a hazardous undertaking; but Charles, his youngest and darling son, had,

from his amiable manners and noble disposition, taken such full possession of his paternal affections, that the good old gentleman's anxiety to see him, after an absence of three years, was so great, that he determined on the voyage, rather than relinquish the hope of ever again embracing him.

Sir Charles was an exalted and exemplary character; he had served with distinguished honour many years in the army; and, from his knowledge of the world, was well calculated to form a just estimate of mankind. He had known and enjoyed domestic happiness in its rarest excellence: Lady Mandeville having been, as a wife and a parent, the most exemplary of her sex.

All this Mandeville knew; and he could not help fearing that his father would discover the contrast in his Laura. He, therefore, resolved to put her on her guard; and intreated her, as she loved him, to shew his dear parent every possible attention, and doubly to exert herself

during his stay. To this request Laura gave a tacit consent.

Sir Charles arrived, and was received by Mandeville in the most affectionate and endearing manner. In an ecstasy of delight, he introduced his wife, and she was tenderly acknowledged by Sir Charles. He saw and admired the beauty of her face and form; but to him these were only a secondary consideration: it was the mind that he valued; and in this his penetration soon told him Laura was deficient. Yet he was disposed to think her amiable; and the inactivity and indolence, which were but too visibly seen in her deportment, he was generously inclined to attribute to the climate. There was, however, an irregularity and mismanagement in their domestic regulations, for which he could form no excuse; and an appearance of extravagance, for which he trembled, knowing that his son's small fortune and pay as a subaltern could not support it. On this subject he delicately spoke to Mandeville, in the presence of

Laura, entreating them to take warning by the many fatal examples that had gone before them. "My children," he said, "it is a remark which, as a parent, I hope I may be excused making. I cannot say whether one or both be in fault; but you have, perhaps imperceptibly, admitted into your domestic concerns a principle of disorder, mismanagement, and extravagance, which will defeat all your plans through life, and perplex and entangle all your arrangements. Be assured, while confusion reigns over your affairs, prodigality is destroying your property:—they are concomitant evils. Precipices are the boundary of your ill-chosen path, from which I entreat you to recede. Industry and frugality are the essential supports of every personal and private virtue. However insignificant these qualities may appear, they are the ground work on which liberty, independence, and true honour must be raised."

Sir Charles was unable to proceed: his heart

overflowed with paternal affection, and he was filled with apprehension for the future happiness of his darling son. To conceal the contending emotions, he hastily quitted the room.

Mandeville fully entered into all his father's feelings, and with agony felt the justness of his remarks; although he knew himself innocent of the charge. But his heart was too generous—too nobly generous—to reproach his beloved Laura, who sat bathed in tears, conscious that she alone deserved to be admonished.

Mandeville, affectionately taking her hand, said, “My adored Laura, you see how anxiously watchful is our beloved parent over our present and future happiness. We will by every means endeavour to remove his solicitude, by adhering to the precepts he has this day so wisely laid down. I am convinced, my Laura will rejoice that we have escaped the dangers which threatened us: for, I confess, our happiness must have been destroyed, had you continued to indulge in

that inactivity and indolence, which has been operating like the vampire on your mind, destroying its energies, and almost depriving it of its very existence. But it is not too late, my Laura ; I have implicit confidence in your endeavours, and your future exertions will be the cement to our continued and undisturbed bliss."

Laura possessed too susceptible a heart not to feel keenly the magnanimity and kindness with which her beloved husband had offered reproof ; on a subject, too, which seemed to constitute the bitterest pang of his life. "Yes ! dearest Mandeville," she anxiously exclaimed, "I will, indeed, reform : do not—pray do not—name the hated subject to me more ; and your Laura—your fond Laura—will prove, by every effort, how devotedly she values your happiness. I am ashamed and mortified at my weakness ;—but indeed, indeed, I never will again relax !"

The energy with which she uttered this last sentence, at once convinced the too sanguine

Mandeville that all his hopes were complete, and that he had nothing more to fear. With ardour he pressed her to his fond heart, saying—"Then, dearest Laura, we shall indeed be happy! But it will be selfish in us to remain in this perfect bliss, while our beloved parent is in grief, brooding over what he considers the prospect of our future ruin. We will hasten to him, my love, and teach him to share our happiness; we will thank him for the tender interest he has this morning expressed for our welfare; and for the lesson he has given us, which we will never forget."

Within a week after this conversation, Sir Charles was seized with indisposition, attended with intermittent fever; and, for some time, he was considered in imminent danger. During this period, Mandeville, with an attention and anxiety indescribable, attended the sick bed of his beloved parent; never leaving him for a moment, nor suffering any but his own hand to

administer his medicine. In justice to Laura, be it said, that she was also affectionately attentive, seldom leaving the room; and when she did, it was only to attend to some domestic concern, which she had formerly never thought of. All this was observed and cherished in the mind of Mandeville; who, though overwhelmed with solicitude and anxiety for the fate of his parent, yet shed tears of joy at what he considered his beloved wife's emancipation from a state of sluggish indolence. But, alas! it was not in the power of a mind enervated by a life of inactivity, as poor Laura's had been, to call forth energy for any length of time; although there was certainly some praise due for present exertion. Happy had it been for the noble-minded, exemplary Mandeville, had those exertions been continued!

At this time, the commanding officer of the corps to which our hero was attached, had been falsely accused of some flagrant breach of mi-

litary discipline, and he demanded a court martial. Mandeville knew that the accusation proceeded from malignancy, of which he was able to give most unequivocal testimony; and he was called to attend the trial, which at any other season he would have been most happy in doing; feeling certain that the result would clear away every imputation from his noble commander, and cover with shame the base accuser. But he was now miserable at the idea of leaving for three days his beloved father in his uncertain state; and, as he had many miles to travel, it was considered that he could not be a shorter time absent. His anxiety was, however, somewhat abated by the physician pronouncing, on the morning previous to his leaving home, that he considered his father in a state of convalescence; which was to Mandeville the most happy intelligence he could receive, since, from the malignancy of the complaint, he had dreaded and anticipated the worst. He reiterated his thanks to

Heaven, with a truly grateful heart, in the most affecting and impressive manner ; and again, to a great degree, resumed his wonted spirits. Approaching his wife, he said—"Dearest Laura, I now leave you for three days ; if possible, I will return to you sooner. Nothing but the imperious call of justice would induce me, at this crisis, to quit you ; but, on the strength of your affections, my love, I resign to your special care and attention, my blessed father. Do not leave him, my Laura ; do not—pray *do not* suffer any but your own hand to administer his medicine ! This, my fond Laura, is the parting request of your doting husband ; who will, if possible, love you the more for your affectionate and kind attentions to his poor suffering parent." The tender, the noble-minded Mandeville could no longer resist the impulse of feeling, which relieved itself by a flood of tears. Recovering in a few moments, he continued :—"There is an appearance of weakness in this conduct, my Laura,

which I would rather conceal; perhaps, it is partly the effect of the mental suffering and anxiety I have undergone for the last ten days. But, I thank God, my father is better! Knowing that he had encountered the perils of a long voyage, and the dangers of a hot climate, from pure affection only to me, I trembled when I feared that his affection might be the cause of his premature death. But the physician assures me he is now in a state of convalescence. Good nursing and attention is all he requires, which we shall have so much pleasure in giving. Time is flying, my love; I must away. Remember your sacred charge:—above all, do not trust to any one to give the draughts, but yourself. Adieu! my best beloved; your Mandeville will not sleep until he returns to bless you for your watchful attentions to the best of parents.”

Laura immediately repaired to the poor invalid; took her seat by his bed, intending not to quit it till her husband's return. But, alas! how

transient, how merely transient, are such resolutions! Mandeville had only left her six hours, when she received a note from a lady, accompanied with some fashionable novels, just arrived from England. This to poor Laura was an irresistible temptation; she could not read them in the room with Sir Charles, as he not only disapproved but condemned all works of the kind; and she was certain he was too scrutinizing not to observe them. She, therefore, sat watching him for some minutes; and, when he appeared to doze, she quietly left the chamber, hastened to her closet, and opened the packet with an eager avidity, which proved too truly the natural bent of her inclination. At first she only looked hastily through the novels, then closed and deposited them on the sofa. "I will return to my charge," said she. She did so, and found him still sleeping. She looked, anxiously looked, on his still, placid countenance a few moments—hesitated—decided. "Sir Charles is still sleep-

ing," she inwardly exclaimed, "and cannot miss me; I will return to my closet, and indulge in my darling pursuit five minutes—only five minutes." She did so; but had not read ten pages, before her whole soul was absorbed in romance, and poor Sir Charles was entirely forgotten. Here she continued for three hours; when her maid entered, and informed her that Sir Charles had rung his bell, and desired to have his draught. Laura looked at her watch. "Good heavens!" she exclaimed, "it is twelve o'clock! what shall I do? It should have been administered two hours since!—But I have only two pages more of the volume to finish. Hasten, Martin: on the toilet, you will find a small bottle; pour the contents into a glass, and give it to Sir Charles. But, stay!—say I have only just left the room, and will return to him in a moment." Ill-fated, infatuated Mandeville! How would your noble soul have been rent, if you had supposed that your beloved, suffering parent had

remained for several hours unattended, and parched with intolerable thirst, the consequent attendant on a burning fever? And how would you have shuddered, if you had supposed that your Laura, in whom your exalted and high enthusiastic feelings had reposed implicit confidence, could have so soon, so very soon, have betrayed that confidence, and, in the short space of a few hours only, forfeited her engagement, and neglected the sacred charge committed to her care? But with what anguish, what double anguish, would those pangs have been felt, had you supposed that Laura could degrade herself by falsehood to palliate the offence? Yet, such was the case!

Martin obeyed the commands of her mistress; hastened to Sir Charles's chamber, and gave the fatal draught; for, alas! so it proved. For some particular purpose, the physician had sent a small bottle of laudanum, which was to be administered by single drops, according to his di-

rection, and to which a label was attached, stating particulars. This was on the toilet; and Martin, not being able to read, unfortunately gave the laudanum by mistake. Laura soon entered the apartment, and discovered the error; but it was too late! Sir Charles had swooned; and very little hope could be entertained that he would ever wake again! What could be done? The physician was immediately sent for; but all was over. "Life," he said, "was not extinct; but, if Sir Charles should return to a state of sensibility, it would only be to the most painful and agonizing convulsions. Laura was paralyzed. The inward tortures of her mind bereft her of all power of action. In vain she attempted to speak; her tongue refused its office. With a frantic stare, she wildly cast her eyes on the physician, and again reverted to the bed; then gave a convulsive shriek, and fainted. She was conveyed to her chamber, where she remained in a delirious state for some hours. It was now

deemed important that an immediate messenger should be despatched for Mandeville; but the reason of his absence, and whither he was gone, were not generally known; and Laura was incapable of giving directions. Whilst this point was under discussion, a palanquin arrived; Mandeville alighted, and, without uttering a sentence, hastened to the chamber of his dear father, anticipating that he should there find both his beloved Laura and his convalescent parent. He had returned nearly two days sooner than was expected; his commanding-officer being honourably acquitted of every charge, and his insidious accuser dismissed the service, with a severe reprimand from the Commander-in-chief. Mandeville's impatience to return was so great, that he had not waited even for refreshment; but, on the wings of love and anxiety, flew to his darling home.

Gracious Heaven! what a scene ensued! What language can adequately describe the agonizing, the

distracting pangs, that harassed the mind, and rent the heart, of Mandeville, when he observed on the bed of death, that excellent and exemplary parent, who, from parental love—for him, too,—had, at an advanced age, torn himself from a beloved home, and from a wife, his beloved partner of forty years; who was endeared to him by every tender and affectionate tie—had braved the dangers of the sea, and met the consequences that might be expected from a change of climate. And for what? cruel and painful reflection!—to fall a sacrifice to the most unparalleled indolence,—the most irremissible neglect! Mandeville inquired, anxiously inquired, of the physician the cause of this sudden change; and, with every possible palliation, the facts were related. He became frantic: approaching the bed-side of his beloved parent, he convulsively ejaculated, “My father! my father!” There was no answer: the breathings of sleep were no longer heard—the vibration of the pulse had ceased—the forehead, which he press-

ed, was icy cold; and the hand, which so often had expressed a warmth of heart, was now insensible to the touch, and fell lifeless upon the bed. The hour of anguish, of unutterable anguish, had arrived; and it fell as terrible, as if it had arrived in the midst of health. It was more awful, tenfold more awful, as the result of such a cause. But Heaven, in mercy, gave temporary insensibility, and thus preserved the wretched Mandeville from becoming the frenetic maniac. Laura, though sensible, remained in a state of extreme agitation. She arose from her bed; but dared not approach the chamber where her beloved Mandeville was confined. That energetic, manly countenance, which she had so often gazed upon with rapturous delight, she dared not now encounter; and she dreaded to hear the sound of that voice, which had paid—dearly paid—such adulation to her beauty and affection.

Unfortunate, misguided Laura! What pity that a form endowed with Nature's best gifts, and a

mind naturally possessing every virtue, should have fallen—thus miserably fallen—the victim of indolence, inactivity, and frivolity! How cheerfully would thy aching heart now cease to beat, could such a sacrifice recal what is past, and turn the tide of affliction, which thy negligence has occasioned! A burst of grief rent the heart of poor Laura: she rushed from her chamber, and flew to the apartment of Mandeville; but, alas! he was not sensible of her presence.

Who shall bound the powers of human suffering? or say to sorrow, “So far shalt thou go, but no farther.” The mind may become impaired, but hearts break not by the excess of sorrow; yet the slow consuming hand of grief may, assisted by disease, lead us through a lingering death to an early tomb! Laura, with the most vigilant attention, sat at the bedside of her beloved husband, anxiously watching every change of his countenance. This continued during three lingering days and wearisome nights, measuring a

dreadful season of sorrow and suspense; while the unhappy Mandeville continued a stranger to all around him. At length the violence of his delirium abated; but he fell into a profound melancholy, and the energies of nature appeared to be sinking into complete inanition. He now gazed on his pale trembling wife with a softened expression, but without appearing to recognise her. Thankful for the change, Laura exercised her power over him, and prevailed upon him to take whatever his physician prescribed, even though it appeared most loathsome to him.

This was the crisis of his fate: the fever occasioned by the sudden shock was considerably abated; but nature sank beneath the ravages it inflicted; and life hung upon a thread so fine, that the very breath of affection seemed capable of destroying it. For nearly forty-eight hours, Laura was fearful lest the reason she so fondly watched should suddenly return, and, in the moment of beholding and forgiving her, he should

expire. Happily, a long and tranquil slumber was the prelude to this affecting restoration; and Mandeville resumed his intellectual powers and the hopes of life.

At this eventful moment, Laura withdrew from his presence, fearing that the sight of her might recal those painful recollections, which his weakened frame could ill sustain. How amply was she paid for this self-denial, on learning that his first inquiries were for her. "He still loves me!" she ejaculated. "Assured of that, and his forgiveness, I shall die happy.—I will fly to him, throw myself at his feet, and implore—oh no! he cannot pardon me!—and I cannot survive." Her distracted feelings overcame her feeble tottering frame, and she sank lifeless on the floor. Having been conveyed to her bed, the physician, who at that time was attending her husband, was called in; but, sad to relate, he was of opinion that her symptoms were likely to prove fatal. After some hours of severe suffer-

ing, the unhappy Laura gave birth to the infant, on whom herself and Mandeville had placed their future hopes. In the purest moments of supreme bliss, what happiness had they both anticipated at the birth of this child, which Mandeville had often said would be the summit of his wishes!—for he flattered himself that parental affection would renovate every virtuous feeling in the mind of his Laura, and call forth those energies, which had so long lain dormant. But, alas! all was past. Every joy was flown. From a continued state of inactivity and indolence, Laura's constitution had become enfeebled, and incapable of sustaining these complicated trials. All assistance was vain.

Mandeville was informed of her danger. Forgetting every other suffering, he arose from the bed of sickness; and, hastening to her chamber, he pressed, fondly pressed, her hand to his heart, and piously ejaculated a prayer to Heaven that his beloved, his adored wife, might be spared. The

fond eyes of Laura, with true tenderness, gazed upon him for a moment; then, in a voice scarcely audible, she said, "Mandeville, dear Mandeville, can you forgive me?"—"Oh! my love," he replied, "I forgive you every thing; and all I ask of Heaven is the restoration of your health." She attempted to speak, but was unable. Pressing therefore his hand to her trembling lips, she raised her eyes with grateful emotion, which expressed what her tongue could not utter.

The silence of death now reigned in the chamber; except when it was interrupted by the bursts of grief, resulting from the excess of sorrow which overcharged the breast of the truly good and noble-minded Mandeville.

Laura! unfortunate Laura! how miserably hast thou fallen! So young a victim immolated to indolence, which so insidiously entwined itself around thy amiable disposition, and dimmed the lustre of every virtue! But, in the abode of death, charity bids us draw the veil of oblivion over the indivi-

dual; and while we brand the vice with every mark of severest censure, let the consequences, which have been pourtrayed, serve as a beacon to direct us from those rocks on which we must inevitably be stranded. Oh! let us avoid, with scrupulous care, the least inducement to indolence; and pursue that path only in which our active exertions may render us useful as Christians, and improve the advantages and benefits with which Providence has blessed us! Let some subsidiary occupation employ those leisure moments, which are but too frequently immeasurably dedicated to corrupting pleasures, or listless inactivity, from which pain and misery alone can result.

Mandeville felt the keen anguish of accumulated suffering: to paroxysms of despair succeeded a pale and fixed melancholy. Yet, there appeared a degree of religious resignation, which doubtless conveyed to his mind the greatest comfort. He was frequently heard to exclaim,

“Father, thy will be done!” His friends strenuously recommended that he should exchange into a regiment then in England; considering that a variation of scene afforded the only chance of his recovery. This he did not object to—having still one important duty to fulfil, the sense of which, perhaps, operated beneficially, in tending to rouse his mind to its wonted exertion. He had one sorrowing parent, who, to the full extent, shared in his grief. To that bosom he in duty owed all the consolation and comfort he could impart; and he hoped, in the participation of her griefs, partly to alleviate his own. To England, therefore, he repaired; and the remainder of his life was passed in a strict fulfilment of his military and private duties. He was compassionate, humane, and charitable; accustomed to relieve the wants of his fellow-creatures; and, from having himself drunk deeply of the “cup of sorrow,” he found most of his happiness to arise from the exercise of true benevolence; yet it was

accompanied by discretion, which teaches us to afford relief to the distressed, and to contribute to the comfort of the afflicted. The enthusiastic ardour of his imagination was not extinct; but, being tempered by experience, it no longer led him into those delusions which had proved so fatal to his happiness, and destructive to his hopes.

Painful retrospections would, however, frequently cause a relapse into melancholy, from which his mind was in a great degree fortunately diverted, by his regiment being ordered to join the army in the Peninsula, where it was distinguished in the successively glorious campaigns of that period. There the soldier's feelings soon roused him to engage in the various toils of duty and hardships of service. Gifted by nature with a constitution capable of enduring privation and fatigue, with a mind fitted for the most active scenes, which demanded a combination of coolness and intrepidity—that vast field of

service did not fail to afford him frequent opportunities of distinguishing himself among the many laurelled heroes of those brilliant days. Promotion had rapidly rewarded his earthly exertions, when death claimed him from the hands of victory, to meet his reward in a more happy world.

DANGEROUS CONNECTIONS.

DANGEROUS CONNECTIONS.

CHAPTER I.

“AGAIN in tears, dearest Agnes?” said Emma Fitzherbert, as she entered the drawing-room. “Think of what mamma often tells us: it is selfish to weep for a loss that is our dear papa’s eternal gain, and was the will of our Heavenly Father.”

“It is so,” replied Agnes, drying her tears; “but I fear it will be long, Emma, ere I shall be as good as mamma and you; or learn to yield, without murmuring, to such heart-rending griefs.”

“True, my sister, we are the children of no common sorrow: and one only reflection enables us to support such an accumulation of woes—they are the work of an unerring Providence: and to them we owe the consoling hope of everlasting bliss, when this turbulent scene shall have ended. Nor should we, in our affliction, cease to remember, with grateful emotion, the inestimable blessing we still possess in our very dear and excellent mother: we must not forget, that we owe her all the consolation we can possibly bestow. It is also our duty to alleviate, by every endearing endeavour, the excess of anxiety she feels on our brother Edmund’s account.”

“Alas, it is so, dear Emma; and I fear it will be difficult to convince our poor misguided Edmund of his error, and the danger of his erroneous principles.”

“They are, indeed, principles so recently adopted, my dear Agnes, and so very opposite to those that were first instilled into his mind

by our ever-to-be-lamented father, that I do not despair of his reform. With a fine manly person, nature has given him an affectionate, but volatile and headstrong disposition; a generous, open, passionate temper—and an active, inquiring, ardent mind, easily dazzled by appearances, but I hope, readily convinced by calm, dispassionate argument; and as, I know, he is tenderly attached to our dear mother, I anticipate every thing for him from her precepts and example, under the impression, that the first principles of education are never eradicated, although they may for a time be perverted.”

“ You afford me great consolation, my dear Emma; for I very tenderly love Edmund, although I despise the principles he has recently adopted. He is a determined free-thinker, dissipated and extravagant; and, I fear, has been too long under the influence of bad example to be easily recalled to a sense of duty. But if it be possible to effect it, our united endeavours

shall be exerted for him; and our prayers to Heaven be unceasing for his reformation."

At this moment Edmund entered, exclaiming, "Dear girls! how do ye do? What are you at here? Why you are both looking half dead with *ennui*?—positively half dead!—And well you may: for, in my life, I never saw so dull and stupid a place; and no society worth a second thought—*c'est d'une tristesse à faire mourir.*"

"Indeed, dear brother, we do not find it so," said Emma. "It is the place of our own choice; and the quietness we find here is far more congenial to our present feelings, than any scene of gaiety could be; and in our dear mother we have the best society."

"All very fine, Emma! A very romantic dutiful little girl, *en vérité*," said Edmund, at the same time adjusting his cravat, and, on tip-toe, taking a full view of his person in a mirror opposite. "And you, my *charmante Agnes*, what say

you to this sweet retirement? Should you not be happy to change it for some of our London parties *al fresco*, masquerades, *déjeûnés*, *petits soupers*, *soirées*, and *conversaziones*, with all the brilliant operas, theatres, and innumerable other amusements? *Tel est le monde, ma petite!*"

"But not the world I wish for," replied Agnes; "I only wish that this charming little retired spot afforded the same attractions to our dear brother, that it gives us; we then might hope to see him a little oftener. It is now a long week since we last saw you."

"A week, *ma belle!*" exclaimed, Edmund, "Faith! I did not know how long it was; but you live at such a wretched distance from the centre of all happiness, that I positively cannot find time to come to you oftener."

"It is a loss, regretted, not only by us, my dear brother, but also by our invaluable mother, whose happiness, I am sure, would be greatly

promoted by having you with her. Come, let us join her now, in her dressing-room; she must know you are here, and will be impatient to see you."

As they entered, Mrs. Fitzherbert's apartment, they found her in an attitude of devotion; probably, at that moment imploring heavenly benedictions on her beloved children, and soliciting the guidance of a Supreme Power over the mind and future pursuits of her darling son. "Ah, my Edmund!" she exclaimed, "I rejoice to see you. Heaven, in mercy, has sent you at this moment, to convey a ray of comfort to the afflicted mind of your doating mother."

"Indeed, I am happy to see you, my dear madam," replied Edmund, assuming an affected air of gaiety. "But, I assure you, I have all the merit myself—I came quite of my own free-will. It is a dreadful long ride; and so dusty too! I am hardly fit to be seen!"—At the same time, with a degree of agitation, beating his boots with

his whip, and sometimes looking at himself in the glass on his mother's toilet.

“I hope, my dear Edmund,” said Mrs. Fitzherbert, “the wishes of your sisters and myself are realised; and that you are come to remain some time with us.”

“Oh impossible—absolutely impossible, dear madam! Remain in this dull place! I should have the blue devils in three hours. No, no, I must positively be in town this evening, to Lady Dunlop's masquerade, that's *poz*? It is to be quite the thing. Such an assemblage of beauty and fashion! Besides, I have engaged to introduce my friend M'Carthy to *la belle veuve*: he is a fine dashing fellow, quite the rage now. By the by, he has half persuaded me to bring him on a visit to you, in your sweet retirement.”

“I must beg to decline the honour he intends me,” replied Mrs. Fitzherbert: “and most sincerely do I wish, I could prevail on you, my dear son, to retreat from such society.”

“Retreat! that would be impossible,” cried Edmund; “for M’Carthy is the most agreeable fellow in town. And Lady Dunlop’s the most delightful house. Let me tell you, good dinners, and good society, pleasing conversation, and charming music, form altogether a delightful thing, which I should be exceedingly sorry to relinquish.”

“I dare say at present you think so, my love,” meekly answered Mrs. Fitzherbert; “but we are often obliged to relinquish even more than you have named, for the sake of acting right, with consistency and honour. It is frequently necessary that we sacrifice the less to the greater good; and it is on these occasions, my son, that we betray weakness or strength of mind.”

“You are perfectly right, my dear madam,” answered Edmund, with affected *nonchalance*; “and I hope I have too much strength of mind to relinquish the society of my friends, merely because it is my mamma’s whim that I should do so.”

“Ah, my Edmund, how sincerely do I wish they were worthy to be called *your friends*. But, alas, I fear, fatal experience will prove to you, what you are now unwilling to receive through the anxious solicitude of your mother.”

Edmund looked confused, and hastily paced the room. He grew ashamed of being kept in awe by his mamma, from being ridiculed by his companions; and he had not strength of mind to withstand their raillery. He now thought it incumbent upon him to prove, that he was no longer under mamma's government. From false shame, he often repressed even the tenderness he felt for his mother; and forbore to pay her those endearing attentions, to which, from her maternal care of him, she was justly intitled. After some moments' hesitation, he with warmth exclaimed,—“You do not mean to say, my dear madam, that M'Carthy is not generally well received; and is a most agreeable companion? And every body, you know, visits Lady Dunlop.”

“Not every body, my love,” replied Mrs. Fitzherbert; “but certainly great numbers do, probably, from the very circumstance you have before named; because her Ladyship gives good dinners, good wine, and good music, and, no doubt, much cheerful conversation; but, I am afraid, even those who honour her ladyship by partaking of her good things, neither respect nor esteem her. The weakness of this lady’s understanding, and the frivolity of her character, are proverbial. So insatiable is her passion for admiration, that she is never happy for half-an-hour together in any party or public amusement, unless she fix the gaze of the *ton*. She has spent exorbitant sums on her person; and devoted all her days, or rather all her nights, to dissipation. Such is but a faint outline of her conduct as a widow:—as a wife, I fear, it was even more flagrantly censurable.”

“Well, well; say no more about her ladyship, I beg, dear madam,” peevishly answered Ed-

mund. "Spare me all farther lecturing and morality upon this subject; and pray have some mercy on poor Lady Dunlop, who, I assure you, is a very different character from what you have represented. My visits to her ladyship are perfectly consistent with the character of a man of fashion; and, as I before said, are justified by the example of hundreds of the *beau monde* every day: I should be condemned as an *ingrate*, if I broke off my intimacy with her, merely because my mamma thinks her ladyship a little too gay."

Although Edmund had thus hastily and improperly answered his mother, he had spoken against his own conviction: he knew Lady Dunlop's character had been faithfully described, and with great lenity. But it was not in accordance with his new principles to attend to the precepts of his mother.

"If my solicitude and anxiety were less earnest for you, my beloved Edmund," said Mrs. Fitzherbert, "I would not trouble you with opinions

which you evidently so little regard ; but I cannot see my darling boy on the verge of a precipice, without warning him of his danger. M'Carthy, whom you style ' the most agreeable companion in town,' you must know, is a profligate in every sense of the word, fashionably and politically. Having ruined his fortune by unbounded extravagance, he lives—nobody knows how ! He possesses engaging manners, and sufficient genius to make the worst appear the better reason ; it is his grand art to represent good sense as wanting sensibility, and virtue as dissimulation :—the latter is the only vice which he openly condemns, and of which he pronounces himself free ; and this he turns to his own account ; for whilst he offends against the rules of society, there appears a genuine frankness in his manner of throwing aside all deception ; and at the same time, he assumes an air of superior liberality, in avowing himself to be governed by that absolute self-love, which men generally endeavour to conceal even from their

own hearts. By such conduct, he leads his associates to believe that he will prove even superior to his professions. When M'Carthy thinks it expedient to render himself agreeable, it is almost impossible for an unsuspecting character, like your's, my beloved Edmund, to escape the power and fascination of his manners. It is true, he has a party—but no friend; he has succeeded, there is no doubt, in flattering many, but he cannot attach his fellow-creatures; with this, however, he is perfectly satisfied, as he does not value men for their hearts, but for what he can make of them. It is policy to enlist young men of fortune under his banners; and knowing the high expectations you have, my Edmund, when of age, he has spread his net:—Heaven grant you may escape it!”

To these remarks Edmund found himself unequal to offer an answer: he knew their truth; and, as he could not oppose them, he became so angry, that he was incapable of attending farther

to reason, or to the best advice, even from a fond mother, whom, in reality, he tenderly loved. From that spirit of opposition, so often seen in weak characters, Edmund hastily took leave of his mother and sisters, and proceeded to town, to dress for Lady Dunlop's masquerade.

CHAPTER II.

“ Who has not felt exulting raptures glow
For England’s triumph o’er her haughty foe ?
Who has not wept for gallant England’s train,
That fought and died for Liberty and Spain ?”

MRS. FITZHERBERT was the second daughter of a captain in the navy. With the full consent of her parents, early in life, the amiable Maria Melville became the wife of Major Fitzherbert, an officer of distinguished character as a soldier and a gentleman. Previous to this marriage, he had one son by a former wife, who was called, after his father, Edmund ; and to this son was the present amiable Mrs. Fitzherbert very tenderly attached. Her union with his father had taken place when Edmund was so very young, that several years elapsed before he knew that he had

been deprived of his natural parent. A year after her marriage, Mrs. Fitzherbert presented her husband with a daughter; which blessing was repeated the following year.

A more exalted idea of domestic happiness cannot be conceived, than was demonstrated in this charming family. Major Fitzherbert had not been captivated by his wife's beauty, but by the intrinsic worth of her mind; from, perhaps, one of the most exemplary and best of mothers, she had received an education founded on the basis of religion and morality, strengthened alike by precept and example. With a well-formed, enlightened mind, Mrs. Fitzherbert possessed every accomplishment that could add grace to her person, or increase her value as a companion. The Major was a sensible, well-informed man, and justly estimated the treasure he possessed: he also felt sensibly alive to the maternal tenderness which his dear Maria had unceasingly shewn to his little Edmund, to whose education, as he

advanced in years, he also devoted much of his own time, hoping to lay such a foundation for virtue and morality, as future temptations would not easily erase. In a similar praiseworthy manner, Mrs. Fitzherbert was forming the minds of her girls, Agnes and Emma, who daily improved to her most sanguine wishes. It was difficult to say, which of the two was the more beautiful child. In Agnes, there was much softness; a nobleness and simplicity in her countenance, and a penetration in her eye, which denoted imagination and intellect. Emma was not less handsome: she was exceedingly graceful and accomplished: and possessed no small share of sensibility.

In the pursuit of all that was amiable and excellent, did this estimable family pass several years, when the Major was called into active service, and ordered with his regiment to proceed to the Peninsula. This was a heart-rending circumstance to his wife and daughters: poor Mrs.

Fitzherbert was almost incapable of supporting the trial of separation: she loved her husband with the tenderest affection, and would have endured any hardship in order to accompany him. But this was impossible: her duty to her children imperatively forbade even a thought of it.

At this juncture, Sir William Monckton, father of the late Mrs. Fitzherbert, solicited that his grandson Edmund might, during the absence of his father, remain with him in town; an offer that was accepted by the Major, under the impression that his son would, with Sir William, derive the advantage of masters, which he could not procure in the country, where Mrs. Fitzherbert had decided on remaining till her husband's return. He had also discovered that Edmund's disposition was not so mild as his sisters', and that he required more than maternal restriction to keep him within bounds. From the sincere attachment that Mrs. Fitzherbert felt for the little Edmund, she exceedingly regretted a

separation, particularly at the moment that his father was also about to leave her; but she waved all selfish considerations, and, perfectly coinciding with her husband, that the proposal promised great advantage to their son, consented to his removal to town.

All the charms of novelty and change of scene, powerfully operated on the youthful mind of Edmund, and he hailed the morn with gladness, that was to convey him to the noble mansion of Sir William Monckton, in the neighbourhood of Portman-square. The Baronet received his grandson with joy: in his fine countenance he fancied that he traced the features of his beloved and still lamented daughter; for in the death of Edmund's mother, he had been bereft of his last child; and he now felt happy that he could transfer to her offspring, with his large fortune, his best affections.

Edmund was too volatile, and perhaps too young, to be deeply affected by his father's

departure for the Peninsula; but not so his amiable mother and sisters: unceasingly did they lament the imperative duty, which called their protector from them. With pious resignation to the will of Heaven, did the amiable Mrs. Fitzherbert meet the moment of her husband's departure. She did not indulge in violent paroxysms of grief—but her eyes bespoke the language of her agonised soul,—a language that conveyed volumes to the mind of her adoring husband. With anguish he pressed her to his heart, and with all the manly energy of his character, strenuously endeavoured to offer consolation. But vain was the attempt.

Affection swelled his manly heart with sorrow, which deprived him of utterance! For some moments they remained locked in each other's arms, till, the stern call of duty operating on the mind of the soldier, his energy returned, and, with one dreadful effort, he tore himself from his weeping Maria, and peaceful home—

threw himself into his carriage, and hastened on his route to the Peninsula, where, in a succession of glorious battles he greatly distinguished himself. His person and disposition were such as to attract notice, while his open-heartedness and gallantry commanded esteem. In the battle of Vittoria, he had his leg and part of his thigh carried off; he survived the wound only a few days, and was buried near the scene of his latest glory and of his death.

Mrs. Fitzherbert received the melancholy news with the most Christian fortitude. Her mind had been partly prepared, by a pious resignation to the commands of an all-wise Providence, for the awful event. The loss, she knew, was irreparable. She also knew, that she was the greatest sufferer; and believed, as she often told her little girls, "that it was selfish to weep for a loss that was their dear father's eternal gain."

Her daughters being very young, this amiable woman secluded herself as much as possible

from society ; and, in the sweet retirement of her cottage, lived without interruption in perfect unison with her feelings. Here, she experienced tranquil happiness in educating her lovely girls, and giving them in herself the most perfect example of a Christian, a mother, and a friend.

Religiously resigned to her sad loss, her greatest care was now for Edmund, the son of her beloved husband : with indescribable pain she heard of the scenes of dissipation in which he was often engaged ; and, with no less anxiety, she learned that his associates were of the most dangerous character. So far from being what his anxious father had fondly anticipated, Edmund had become a determined free-thinker, dissipated, self-willed, and extravagant. This reflection was a constant source of anxiety and regret to the amiable Mrs. Fitzherbert, who fancied she saw her son on the brink of destruction. With what anxious solicitude did she endeavour to save him ; but, alas, every day's ex-

perience too fatally proved that the seeds of dissipation, once sown, are not easily eradicated.

With his vices, Edmund assumed the reigning follies of the day ; he became a consummate coxcomb ; vain, conceited, and presuming. It was therefore not likely that Mrs. Fitzherbert's maternal advice would produce any beneficial effect upon him ; particularly as she was not seconded in her efforts by Sir William Monckton. This gentleman's great pleasure consisted in what he erroneously imagined the promotion of his grandson's happiness, by allowing him large funds, and indulging him in every whim and caprice.

In the vicinity of Mrs. Fitzherbert's cottage resided a widow lady, of the name of Sydney, whose rank in life and amiable manners had secured to her the respect and esteem of the neighbourhood. This lady had been early tutored in the severe school of affliction ; and though the luxuriance and playfulness of youth were gone, their places were filled by a mild submission and

placid cheerfulness. With true humility, she lightly appreciated her own acquirements, while she highly valued the fancied superiority of another. In the fulfilment of her several duties, Mrs. Sydney was truly exemplary.

Her family had consisted of two sons and three daughters; the two elder daughters were already married, and the youngest, a very lovely girl, resided with her mother. The sons were both disposed of in the army; one holding the rank of General, the other that of Lieutenant-Colonel. These two officers had greatly distinguished themselves in a succession of campaigns under the Duke of Wellington; but in one of his most gallant conflicts, the colonel was mortally wounded. He was carried off the field, and soon expired, after expressing his satisfaction at having sacrificed his life in a good and noble cause. He was an excellent son, an agreeable companion, and a kind friend. As an officer, he was devoted to his profession, and had given

striking instances of his bravery whenever an opportunity offered. By his poor mother, his loss was severely felt; and, although her eldest son, the General, had escaped all dangers, and was crowned with laurels, for which she constantly expressed her gratitude, yet she could not be persuaded again to enter the gay circles of life. She purchased a beautiful small villa, very near to Mrs. Fitzherbert's cottage, where she constantly resided, and was delighted to find, in a neighbour, a lady whose mind and disposition were so perfectly in unison with her own.

It was not on Mrs. Sydney and Mrs. Fitzherbert alone that so much felicity was conferred; but to the younger branches of each family it was an increasing source of happiness. Between Emma, Agnes, and Miss Sydney, a reciprocity of friendship soon existed; they passed some hours every day happily together, pursuing the most cheerful and innocent amusements, such as a well selected library, good

music, and the beauties of nature, could afford. They were all well acquainted with natural history; and botany had long been a favourite study with Miss Sydney. With such unceasing resources, these amiable girls were constantly happy and amused; while their excellent mothers rejoiced that the bonds of friendship were cementing between them.

It had happened, that during the campaigns in the Peninsula, General Sydney and Major Fitzherbert had become acquainted; and, without the smallest idea of the coincidence that afterwards brought about an intimacy between their families, the soldiers had formed a friendship for each other; and perhaps, in the field of battle, none more sincerely lamented the loss of the gallant Major than his friend, General Sydney, who had witnessed his fall, and, in the moment of death, had heard his blessing piously ejaculated for his beloved wife and family! He had also committed to his charge some few relics,

which he had promised personally to deliver to Mrs. Fitzherbert. The General's return to England was therefore anticipated with no common anxiety by the disconsolate widow, as well as by his mother: and at length the joyful day arrived, but without having afforded an opportunity for any previous announcement. The whole party were assembled at the villa, unconscious of the impending happiness, when a carriage and four was observed rapidly approaching the avenue. From the dusty appearance of the postilions and horses, it was evident they had travelled from some distance. As they drew nearer, the well-known countenance of her son caught the eye of Mrs. Sydney; she flew to the door, and in an ecstasy of joy found herself in a few moments in his arms. A scene so truly affecting ensued, that language is inadequate to describe it. While the affectionate parent, with all maternal tenderness, pressed to her heart her remaining son, the fond remembrance of the trea-

sure she had lost overpowered her feelings, and she could not support the conflict; the violent emotions she had sustained, the wild extremes of feeling she had suffered, plunged her into a temporary stupor.—One image only swam before her eyes:—in her imagination, she saw the benign countenance, the manly form, of that beloved son, who had fallen a sacrifice to his country.

Mrs. Fitzherbert witnessed these emotions, and very justly might be said to participate in them. The loss of that husband, who had so long held the most intimate communion with her heart—of that sympathy, which entered into every feeling, every emotion of her soul—that irreparable loss appeared now a privation insupportable, impossible to relinquish in idea, and dreadful to dwell on in reflection. Her lovely daughters, with heart-rending pangs, beheld the sufferings of their beloved mother, and by every endearment endeavoured to compose and soothe

her. At length they succeeded in prevailing on her to return home, and defer the interview with the General till the following morning, hoping that her mind would then be prepared to meet him with greater firmness.

The affectionate soldier had supported his mother to her chamber ; and, consequently, had not been introduced to Mrs. Fitzherbert or her daughters.

CHAPTER III.

“ Slow as the year’s dull circle seems to run

When the brisk minor pants for twenty-one.”

ALAS! how very different were Edmund’s pursuits to those of his excellent parent and sisters. Sir William Monckton too late perceived the error of his ill-judged indulgence; and bitterly lamented his having so early resigned the reins of government to his untoward grandson.

Edmund, though still a minor, was proceeding step by step in the path of vice and dissipation. By his friend M’Carthy, he had been introduced to the gaming table, where he had already mortgaged great part of his fortune. His infamous associates were panting for his coming of age, when, by right, he would become

possessed of his mother's dowry, to the amount of fifteen thousand pounds, which, in their own minds, they had already disposed of for him. Nor was Edmund less anxious for the time when he vainly fancied his happiness would be complete; he had determined that, at the expiration of his minorship, he would no longer brook restraint from Sir William, nor receive lectures on morality from Mrs. Fitzherbert, whom he now seldom saw; and less frequently did he notice the affectionate epistolary advice which she frequently gave him.

He continued a constant attendant on all Lady Dunlop's fashionable parties; and, in short, his mornings, as well as evenings, were too usually devoted to this trifling, arrogant, vain woman, whose hours were insensibly passed in frivolity and intrigue. From her unbounded extravagance, her Ladyship found it difficult to meet her expenses, and discharge such bills as she could not possibly escape, although it was very

generally her maxim to pay her tradespeople in words—an art in which she was generally a successful adept.

For some seasons this lady had been insidiously spreading her allurements in the gay world to entrap a man of fortune; but she had been more successful in obtaining votaries for her good dinners, than attachments towards her person. She soon discovered the weakness of Edmund's character; and on this she built her hopes. By her attentions, she flattered his vanity, and persuaded him that his presence was indispensably necessary to her happiness; while she was watching his every action, and trembling lest he should discover her real character before she had possession of his fortune.

So infatuated was Edmund with this unprincipled woman, that he was on the point of falling a sacrifice to her artifice; and their marriage was to be celebrated immediately after his coming of age, of which he only wanted a few

months. She had persuaded him too unremittingly, that for the *first time* in her life, love had really taken possession of her soul, and that she could not exist without the object of her adoration!—Edmund was perfectly willing to give full credence to what was so flattering to his vanity. He invariably had a good opinion of *himself*, which was considerably heightened since the beautiful Lady Dunlop had been subdued by what he imagined his irresistible charms.

The dashing widow and her young beau (for her ladyship had certainly the advantage of twenty-five years) became a general topic of fashionable chit-chat. Some pitied, others condemned, while the majority laughed at the credulity and folly of the young man; yet no one had the generosity and kindness to warn him of the precipice on which he stood!

At length the papers publicly announced the approaching nuptials; and through their medium, the news reached the ears of Mrs. Fitz-

herbert. She immediately despatched a long letter of expostulation, pointing out, in the most forcible language, the inevitable results of such an union.

This amiable woman entreated, implored her son, in the name of his departed father—for the love she bore him—for the sake of his family—for himself—and for the good of society, immediately to renounce so disgraceful, so unpardonable a connection! But her intreaties were of no avail: unfortunately, Edmund received the letter while sitting by Lady Dunlop, who, ever alive to suspicion, watched the countenance of her lover, and saw his agitation. She also became *nervous*; but, recovering herself, tenderly said, “she hoped the letter was not a messenger of ill news,”—at the same moment, artfully laying her head on his shoulder, she perused the contents. Her eye had only glanced over a few lines, when, convulsed with rage, she sobbed aloud. Edmund became alarmed: he

pressed her to his heart, and soothed her with assurances and protestations of his affection; with a declaration, that no power should prevent him from being her's. The scene concluded by the lady requesting that the letter should be immediately consigned to the flames, which Edmund did not object to, as he was quite willing to part with a subject which opposed his wishes.

Lady Dunlop soon resumed her former gaiety; and for some days matters went on as delightfully as ever, till the evening prior to Edmund's entering his twenty-first year, when, accompanied by M'Carthy, he, in the course of his gay rounds, entered a celebrated gambling-house, and absolutely lost every remaining guinea of the fortune, which, on the following morning, he would become entitled to. His situation was desperate! He had offended Sir William Monckton, by persisting in his marriage with Lady Dunlop; for, although the Baronet was not of rigid principles, he was sufficiently scrupulous

to condemn so dishonourable an union; and Mrs. Fitzherbert, he knew, had it not in her power to assist him materially with funds; besides, he could not possibly apply to that excellent woman, whose admonitions he had so contemptuously abused, and whose maternal care he had so ill requited.

He knew but of one alternative, which was, to fly to his beloved Lady Dunlop, explain his desperate situation, and rely on her generosity. But this was unnecessary; his friend M'Carthy had anticipated his design, and made the communication to her Ladyship;—for, although he had professed a warmth of friendship for Edmund, he had literally felt only the highest contempt for his weakness and delusion, which he now rather exulted in proving, regardless of shewing to the world, in himself, one of the most dastardly, dishonourable characters.

It was M'Carthy himself who had robbed Edmund, through the medium of a second per-

son, equally infamous with himself. The plan of plunder had been previously suggested to Lady Dunlop, who had acceded to its completion; and it had been arranged that in the event of its success, they should retire to the Continent on the fruits of their nefarious gain. Her Ladyship received the intelligence with an appearance of satisfaction, accompanied with a loud hysterical laugh, that was truly disgusting even to the depraved mind of M'Carthy.

The ill-fated Edmund left the gambling-house in a state of mind bordering on frantic despair! For some hours, he paced the streets, undecided how he should proceed; at length, with a desperate effort, he rushed forward to the house of Lady Dunlop. The servant informed him, her Ladyship had retired to rest, and had left her commands, that he should inform Mr. Fitzherbert, that Lady Dunlop would leave town on the following morning; and requested he would not call in Harley-street again.

“Heavens!” exclaimed Edmund, “what does this mean? Can you inform me where her Ladyship is going?” But, instead of giving him any reply, the servant violently shut the door in his face. This mortifying insult was aggravated by a loud coarse laugh, which he distinctly heard from within.

With heated impetuosity he left the hateful spot:—conviction, for the first time, darting on his mind. “Fallen wretch, that I am!” he vehemently exclaimed, as he beat his tortured breast, and with frenzied irregular steps hastened, unconscious of their direction, towards Hyde Park. As he turned the corner of Cumberland-place, he was suddenly stopped by a gentleman who had been at a ball in Portman-square, and, happening to leave the house at the moment that Edmund was passing, had heard his wild ejaculations, and observed his conduct, which he conceived could be only the effects of insanity. With real commiseration,

he marked the pallid countenance and distorted features of the agonized Edmund; his extreme youth, his elegant form, and gentlemanly appearance, exceedingly interested the humane Mr. Owen. As he had not the smallest doubt of his being a maniac, he felt it an incumbent duty to prevent him from committing any act of violence. As therefore he approached his own door, he stepped up to him, and, kindly apologizing for the intrusion, inquired, if he could in any way be useful in relieving the agitation of mind under which he appeared at that moment to be labouring? Fitzherbert started from his feverish and melancholy reverie! He wildly gazed on the gentleman for some moments, and then exclaimed—"If you are really prompted by humanity, and a wish to serve me, I present you my card; and I beg you will allow me shelter in your house for a few hours, that I may connect my ideas, and decide, in my state of desperation, how to proceed." To this re-

quest, Mr. Owen readily agreed; and, without troubling Edmund with questions, which he conceived it might be painful to answer, he took his arm, and conducted him to an elegantly furnished bedroom. After requesting he would ring for any thing he might require, he wished him good night, and retired:—placing, however, with much solicitude and care, a servant in the anti-chamber, with instructions to observe Edmund's conduct and actions.

Fitzherbert for some time paced the room in wild despair; but, recollecting that he was in the house of a stranger, he threw himself on the bed, wholly exhausted by agony of mind and feelings insupportable! At length, he yielded to the influence of Nature—and slept:—but it was a broken and fatiguing slumber, which dreams of terror darkened and distracted. Roused by the slightest noise, after a few hours' feverish repose, a footstep awoke him; and he

uttered a faint exclamation, for he was feeble and exhausted. The servant entered his apartment, and inquired if he wished his attendance? "Bring me pen and ink," said Edmund; "and present my compliments to your master, and say I request to speak with him."

As Mr. Owen entered his chamber, Fitzherbert caught his hand, pressed it to his burning forehead, saying, "Your humanity, Sir, this night has prolonged the life of the most deluded, unfortunate man in existence!"

"I am extremely happy that I have been serviceable to you," answered his kind host; "and as you are no longer insensible to the delusion which has given you so much distress, I trust it is not too late to recede: the heat of your imagination may probably over-rate your misfortune. I entreat of you to be composed; you may command my farther services, but it is a Superior Power only that can afford relief to a

wounded mind. In that supreme All-merciful Power confidently repose your sufferings, and your petition will not be fruitless."

"Ah!" said Edmund with a convulsive sigh, "it is long since I have attended to such doctrine; yet the principles have existed,—and do, I trust, still exist in my heart, although they have lain dormant. From the first moment I assumed an affectation of character, contrary to nature—to common sense—to reason and morality, I may date my progress to ruin."

"I congratulate you on your present feelings, my young friend," replied Mr. Owen, while the tear of compassion started in his eye, and plainly told the feelings of his benevolent soul; "and I trust yet to have the satisfaction of seeing you in that road, which alone can bring you to contentment in this life, and happiness in a future one. Do not delay telling me in which way I can serve you; we will repair to our breakfast,

and over that social meal I will listen to your wishes."

Edmund could no longer suppress the emotion of his overwhelmed feelings; but, pressing the hand which had rested upon his, burst into tears.

CHAPTER IV.

Led by simplicity divine,
She pleased, and never tried to shine ;
She gave to chance each unschool'd feature,
And left her cause to sense and nature.

ON the morning after the General's arrival at the villa, he and Mrs. Sydney made a visit to the cottage. Mrs. Fitzherbert had prepared her mind for the trying occasion, and she met the General with a dignified composure, though her countenance betrayed the perturbation of her soul. The General was also deeply affected; he pressed her hand with the warmth of friendship, and for some moments neither of them had power of utterance. At length, Mrs. Fitzherbert resumed her self-possession, and gave the soldier an example of firmness which excited his admi-

ration. General Sydney had visited Mrs. Fitzherbert under the most favourable impressions received from his excellent mother, who, since his arrival, had unceasingly bestowed the highest encomiums on the amiable widow and her daughters. He had expected excellence; but was not prepared for such exquisite loveliness.

The truly mild, unaffected, yet dignified manner of Mrs. Fitzherbert, called forth every feeling of esteem; while the native elegance and extreme beauty of her daughters, created in the bosom of the soldier, sentiments of a more tender nature. He had never witnessed so sweet a combination of all that was lovely, worthy, and pleasing: he admired the fine form and unassuming manner of Emma; but the *naïveté* which diffused itself over the countenance of Agnes excited in him an interest the most sublime! "If," said he, "the expression of that countenance be a faithful index of her mind, she is indeed a paragon of perfection! And in

this sweet retirement I have found the treasure which my enthusiastic feelings have long portrayed, as the only allurements worthy of my affections. It is not mere beauty that will fix me; it is taste, sentiment; a something that would keep my entranced mind in a perpetual succession of happiness, fill my soul, and make me constantly feel sensible of a new life of bliss and rapture;—this is what I want, and what I must be sure to possess, before I bestow my heart, and resign my liberty.”

Such were the reflections of the soldier, as he sat listening to a beautiful air which Agnes, at the solicitation of Mrs. Sydney, was playing on her harp. “Are you musical, Sir?” inquired Agnes.—“I am passionately fond of it,” replied the General; “and the little air you have been playing is among the number of my great favourites.” Agnes looked at him with a smile, and felt the pleasure of a mutual sentiment, even in a matter of taste.

The General left the cottage with feelings very different from those with which he had entered it: his fond imagination constantly dwelt on the enchanting Agnes; and as he had frequent opportunities of seeing the nobleness and excellence of her mind and heart, he was not long in discovering that she was essentially necessary to his happiness.

Agnes believed that the very high estimation in which she held the noble Sydney, proceeded from an impulse of gratitude; with pleasure she remembered that he had been the friend of her beloved father, and a participator in his glories; that he had attended him in his latest moments; that he had caught the parting sigh, and had received the dying blessing, in which she was so tenderly concerned. Fondly did she imagine that to these reflections she owed the endearing interest, which her heart had for some time told her she felt for General Sydney.—But at last a declaration of the gallant soldier's sentiments,

accompanied by an offer of marriage, convinced the amiable Agnes, that a passion more imperatively tender than gratitude had governed her feelings.

The sacred tie of union between the two families, which was shortly to be solemnized, formed a source of mutual happiness to Mrs. Fitzherbert and Mrs. Sydney, each parent justly estimating and approving the choice of their child. One circumstance only appeared to damp their joy;—it was the fate of poor Edmund. Mrs. Fitzherbert had not received a line from him since her letter of expostulation, which had been delivered to him in the presence of Lady Dunlop. Neither had she heard a word of the unfortunate affair at the gambling-house; yet, with all maternal tenderness did she unceasingly lament the course, which, she feared, he was pursuing.

Agnes and Emma had, one morning, walked

to the villa, and Mrs. Fitzherbert was alone inditing a letter to her son, when she observed a gentleman approach the cottage. He dismounted, gave his horse to his servant, and inquired if Mrs. Fitzherbert was at home? Being answered in the affirmative, he desired the servant to give his card, present his compliments, and say that he had business of importance to communicate. Mrs. Fitzherbert received him with her usual urbanity; and soon learned from Mr. Owen the purport of his visit. The amiable woman was dreadfully shocked upon hearing how unworthily Edmund had lost his property, and destroyed his future prospects. But, when Mr. Owen informed her, that a short adversity had done more in the work of reformation than probably years of counsel, in affluence, would have effected, she shed tears of tenderness, saying, "If that be the case, we have, indeed, more to be thankful for than to lament; and, if

my dear boy will return to the path of virtue and morality, the arms of his affectionate parent are open to receive him."

Mr. Owen was greatly affected: "Ah! dear madam," he exclaimed, "what an exalted example do you give, not to your children only, but to parents generally! How many would annually escape the path of infamy, too frequently followed by an ignominious death, the unavoidable result of a relentless parent's cruelty, in banishing, rather than in endeavouring to reclaim, their offending child!" Mr. Owen then observed, that he had called on Sir William Monckton, who at first refused hearing any thing in favour of his grandson; but, after a great deal of intercession on the part of Mr. Owen, he at last consented to observe the same rule of conduct towards him that Mrs. Fitzherbert might adopt.

"Tell my repenting child," said his excellent parent, "that I have not a feeling of anger; and that his happiness is dearer to me, tenfold dearer

to me, than his fortune could ever have been valuable ; and although he has paid a high price for his experience, it is not too much, if it lead to his eternal happiness. But, dear Sir, it is to your humanity, through the hand of Providence, I owe the preservation of my son ; and I hope his future good conduct, and the gratitude of his mother, will eventually afford you the refreshing reflection, that your exertions in the cause of humanity have not been unworthily bestowed."

Mr. Owen, in pressing the hand of Mrs. Fitzherbert with the warmth of friendship, plainly indicated the feelings of his soul ; and he arose, and prepared to go.

"You must not leave me thus," said the amiable widow. "I intreat that you pass the day with me."

"It would afford me infinite pleasure, dear madam," replied Mr. Owen, "if it depended on my own will ; but it is urgent that I immediately return to town. I will, however, engage that

Edmund shall be with you in a day or two; and, as I have been so happy in my first introduction, I will, with your permission, accompany him."

"If any thing will increase the happiness of seeing my dear Edmund, it will certainly be the receiving of his preserver with him," answered the lady. Mr. Owen expressed his acknowledgments, and left the cottage.

Agnes and Emma were delighted to hear, on their return, the good account of Edmund; although they very sincerely lamented that his folly had so far exceeded the bounds of prudence, and that his fortune had been sacrificed to his base unprincipled associates. "Mr. Owen must be an exceedingly worthy character," said Emma; "I quite long to be acquainted with him: pray, mamma, do tell us what sort of a man he is?"

"Mr. Owen appears about thirty-five years of age: his countenance bespeaks much innate goodness: his manners are particularly mild and

interesting; and, from his conversation, I should judge that his mind is noble and generous. This is the best description, I think, my Emma, that I can give you; but as we shall very soon, I hope, have the pleasure of seeing him, you will perhaps form a more correct opinion yourself."

"I am disposed to think, my dear madam," said General Sydney, "from your observations, that the excellent character you have delineated was a very dear friend of my boyish days: we were at Westminster together. At that time our dispositions and pursuits were in unison; but, early in life, fortune disposed of us very differently. I have been seeking honours in the field, while my friend Owen has, in quietness at home, devoted himself and his immense property to the benefit of his fellow creatures. He has been frequently the companion of my thoughts, although I have not seen him for some years; and I can hardly attribute to chance the extraordinary circumstance of our meeting at this

interesting moment. He is positively, my beloved Agnes, the friend, of all others, from whose hand I should wish to receive my enchanting bride."

Agnes looked at the General, and by her smile expressed the happiness she felt. "I hope you will be here to-morrow, to receive Mr. Owen," said Emma; "it will be delightful to witness the pleasure of your meeting."

"Depend on my punctuality," replied the General; "but I must now attend an engagement I have made for this morning to escort my mother in her carriage. *Adieu, jusqu'au soir.*"

On the following day, a carriage was observed approaching the cottage; and Mrs. Fitzherbert recognised the livery of Mr. Owen. "It is our friends," said she: and they all hastened to the door to meet them. At the sight of his excellent mother, Edmund was greatly affected; but the warmth and tenderness with which he was received, removed every unpleasant feeling; and he very soon discovered, that infinitely more

happiness is to be found in virtuous retirement, than in the gayer circles of dissipation.

The General had intended to remain in ambush for some time after the arrival of Mr. Owen, thinking, that his presence, as a stranger, would be painful to Edmund, till the first emotions were past; but he no sooner discovered the identical friend of his youth, than he burst from his hiding place, and clapping Mr. Owen on the shoulder, exclaimed, "Ah! my dear friend, what real happiness does it give me to meet you in this scene of bliss!"

The mutual joy that was expressed, and felt, by both parties, is indescribable. Mr. Owen said, "Well, my dear Sydney, this is certainly a compensation for many anxious moments I have had on your account. I have watched your progress, and rejoiced to see your name in the list of laurelled heroes; it is only three days since that I learnt, at your club, that you had arrived in England."

“And you immediately hastened, on the wings of friendship, to present me with a treasure that secures my future happiness.”

This was an enigma, which Mr. Owen did not immediately comprehend. But the General soon explained the whole affair, and concluded by saying, “Now, my friend, you must walk with me in the garden, and I will introduce you to the whole of our happy circle.”

Mrs. Sydney was much pleased to see Mr. Owen, whom she perfectly recollected as a child; and Agnes and Emma were equally delighted with the friend of their brother.

Edmund soon recovered his wonted spirits; and, as he was sensible of his error, and truly penitent, it was the constant study of the whole party to banish the remembrance of it, and to endeavour to make him perfectly happy. In General Sydney he found an invaluable friend, whose cheerful disposition and amiable manners contributed much to restore him to himself.

Mr. Owen was prevailed upon to make a much longer stay than he had intended at the cottage and the villa ; but he soon discovered that it was not friendship alone that influenced him. The beauty, excellence, and amiable manners of Emma Fitzherbert, had created feelings of a more tender nature ; and he soon had the happiness of discovering that the attachment was mutual. An offer so congenial to the wishes of all the party was gratefully accepted ; and their nuptials were celebrated on the same day with those of General Sydney and his lovely Agnes. As each of the bridegrooms were very rich, they insisted on transferring their wives' fortunes to the brother.

In a few months, to the great joy of the circle, Edmund led to the hymeneal altar the amiable Miss Sydney ; and Sir William Monckton was so perfectly pleased with the reformed conduct of his grandson, that at his demise, he settled on him the whole of his immense property.

To escape the hands of justice, Lady Dunlop and M'Carthy had retired to the Continent; but had only been there a few days, when the latter was challenged by a French officer, whom he had insulted. In the first fire, he was shot through the heart, and instantly expired. Lady Dunlop lived in a state of dissipation for some time, but at length died in extreme wretchedness, unpitied and unlamented.

THE END.

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