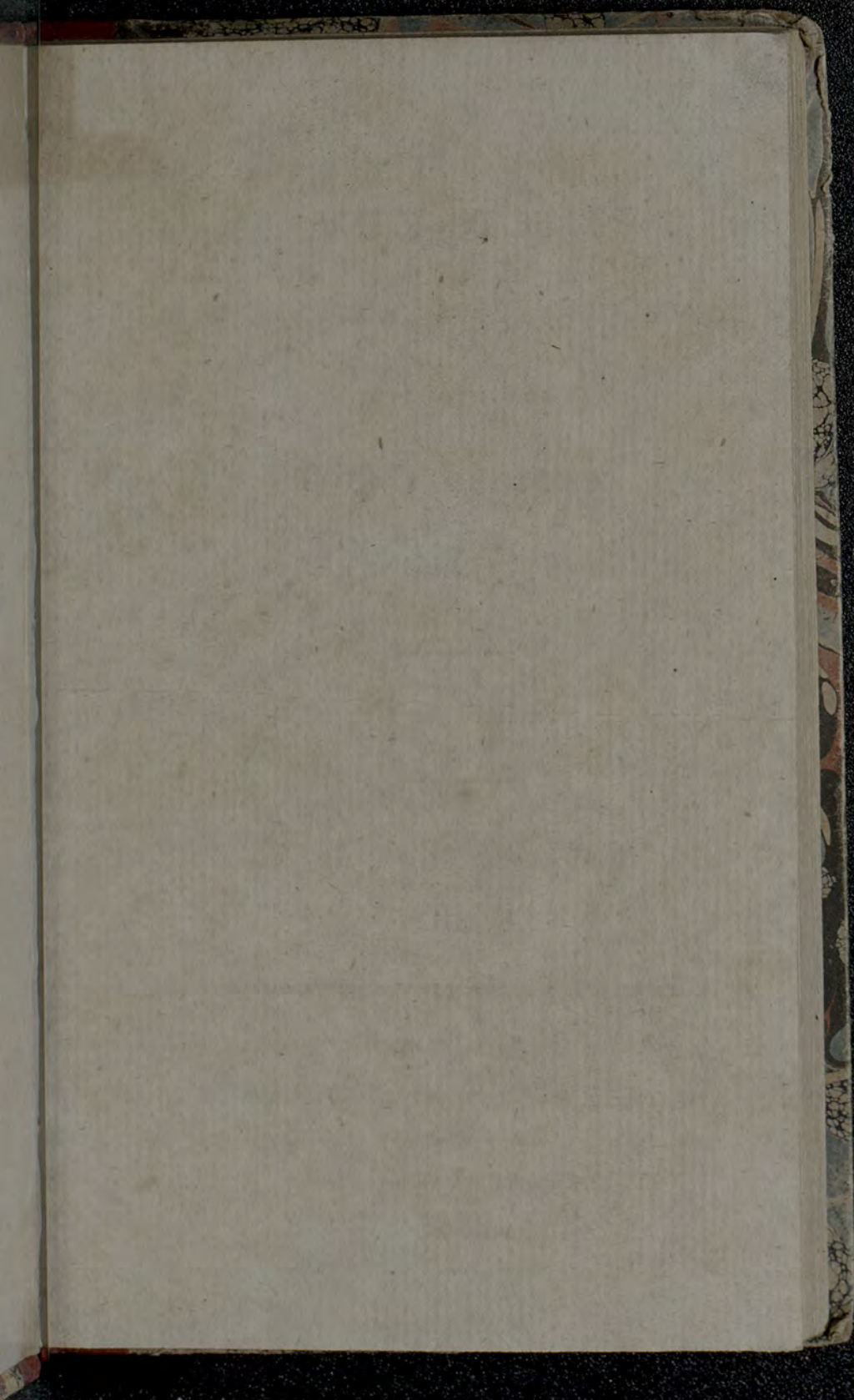


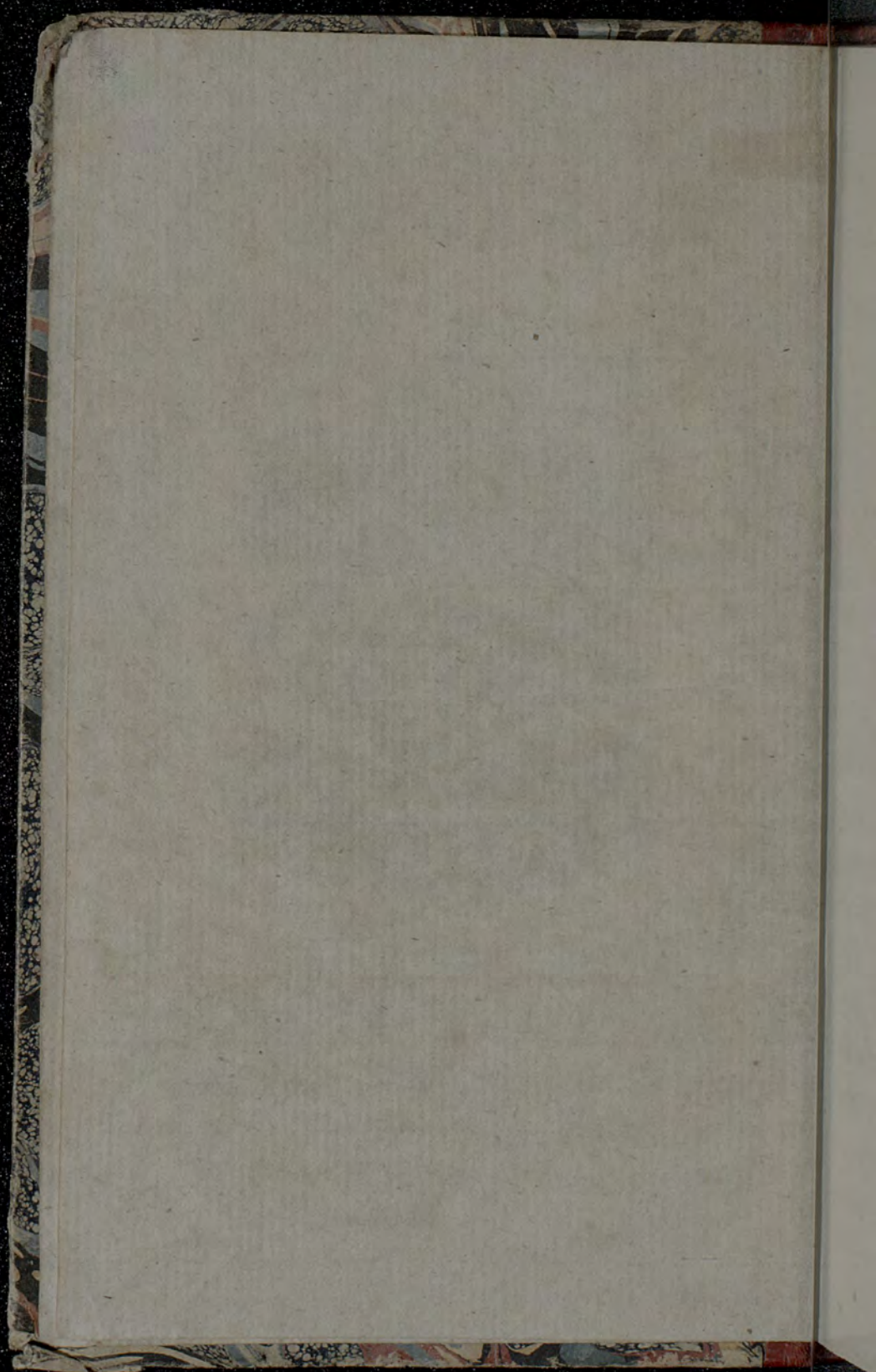
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FAMILY STORIES ;

Or, EVENINGS AT MY GREAT AUNT'S ;

INTENDED FOR

YOUNG PERSONS

OF TEN YEARS OLD.

BY A LADY.

IN TWO VOLUMES.

VOL. II.

LONDON :

Printed for B. Tabart, 157, New Bond-street,

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Exton, Great Portland-street.

1802.

THE HISTORY OF THE
LIFE OF
JOHN THOMSON
OF TEN YEARS OLD.

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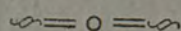
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FAMILY STORIES;

OR,

Evenings at my Great Aunt's, &c.



EVENING the FOURTH.

THIS evening, my aunt was speaking in a kind manner, respecting our situation and little fortunes; she said, with a confidence which marked the goodness of her heart; “It was very unfortunate, my dears, that death so early deprived you of your parents; but particularly so, that your father had not been spared a little longer, to enable him to re-

gulate his affairs ; had this been the case, you would have been much better off than you are at present ; for though you have each of you a genteel patrimony, it is not sufficient to enable you to live, without your endeavouring to add by industry to your little fortune ; there is besides a house and farm near here, and another small estate---” “ that will be very difficult,” interrupted Adolphus, “ to divide among so many ; we had better sell it all, and part the money between us.” “ That is a bad method, my dear ; but I hope before it is necessary to do any thing in this affair, your uncle Belville will be returned, because he must have your interest at heart, and is a man fully competent to the regulation of your

affairs; but if I were to advise, it would be to preserve as long as possible in the family, that property which had been your father's; to behold the walls that he inhabited, and in which yourselves were born; to walk in the little garden, his hand had embellished: but this reminds me of a very interesting story on the subject, and above all, of an excellent moral, which I will now repeat.

Story the Fourth.

THE THREE MILLS.

THERE was an old miller, who accumulated a comfortable sufficiency, but feeling himself approaching his end, he called his three sons

to his bedside, "My children," said he, with feeble voice, "you have had the misfortune to lose your mother near four years; this blow was sensibly felt by your affectionate hearts, but it must have given you courage to support the one which is soon to overtake you; I am about to quit my children, and the reflection that you are all grown up, and able to conduct yourselves in the world, makes me leave you with less regret; as for you, William, who are now five-and-twenty, I entertain no uneasiness. Thomas will be twenty-three the ensuing January; he is honest and laborious, and doubtless will prosper in the world. Charles, who has accomplished his twentieth year, is wise, regular, economical, and I doubt not

will be happy; and this it is which makes me die with resignation and composure. But it is just a father should transmit to his sons the inheritance, which has lineally descended to himself, together with a little augmentation his savings and industry may have made; I mean to tell you now what each will possess after my death.

“ In order to remove the embarrassment and intricacies of a division, I inform you then, that as soon as my eyes are closed, a broker will take all my goods and effects of every kind, which I have disposed of for six hundred pounds: this man will give each of you two hundred pounds, besides which, I bequeath to each, one of the three mills you know I possess,

but the choice of them I leave to yourselves to distribute : follow your own taste and wishes, though I warn you that in one of them is hid a treasure, the discovery of which is hazardous and difficult, but will render you rich for ever ; take care, and remember what I again repeat, that in one of my mills a treasure is deposited. I have my reasons for not declaring in which it is secreted ; but twenty years from this period, and not before, you must go to the house of my lawyer, and if either of you have discovered the treasure, inform him of it. Adieu, my children, I wish you health and happiness, but above all, a due submission to the wishes of your dying father."

The miller ceased, and as his sons were supplicating him to discover the spot in which the treasure was deposited, he fell into an eternal sleep; and soon after, the broker he had mentioned, presented himself. "Which are the three children of Mr. Meddows?" "You see them now before you." "I bring you six hundred pounds, and have your late father's authority, as I suppose you know, to take away the effects of every kind from this house." "We know that to have been his intentions." The man then counted to each brother two hundred pounds, and removed all the furniture and effects he could find, not only from that, but from the other two mills likewise, in which nothing remained

but the implements which were absolutely necessary to the business.

The three brothers looked at each other, uncertain how to proceed, when the eldest addressed himself to his brothers as follows:---
“ However unaccountable the arrangement our poor father has made of his affairs may appear, yet it is our duty to respect and submit to it, convinced however, as we are, that the mystery of this hidden treasure is more likely to cause embarrassment, than to save us from perplexity; for my part, I believe it is secreted in the mill by the Marsh, for he went oftener there than to any other.” “ No,” said Thomas, “ it is more like to be that on the Common, where he used to shut him-

self up alone." "Not at all," interrupted Charles, "For my part, I believe the treasure is in the very mill we now inhabit; for have you not remarked, that my father has often remained here for whole days together, in order to be more at liberty, without doubt, to count his money."

"What a strange fancy!" cried William. "It is inconceivable," said Thomas, "why he should leave us in this state of uncertainty." "It is true," replied Charles, "that it would have been better had he spared us this inquietude, for I know not how we can make choice of these mills." "Nothing is more easy," replied William; "put their names in a hat, and we will each draw one." "That is true enough," said Charles, "but

it will not tell us in which the treasure is." "Certainly not, but he that is fortunate enough to possess it cannot excite the jealousy of his brothers, since fate alone will have decided for us." They all agreed to the justice of this division. Behold the three brothers now drawing their lot from the hat in which they had deposited tickets bearing the name of each of those places in which the hidden treasure was deposited ; each heart beat high with the expectation of being the fortunate person, and the result was, that the mill in the marshes belonged to William, the one on the common to Thomas, and that in which they lived to the youngest (Charles,) who was enchanted at finding himself the pos-

essor of a spot to which his father had given the preference, and in which he had breathed his last. Judging, from this circumstance, that the treasure was more likely to be in it, he had the generosity to propose, in a delicate and disinterested manner, that they should all vow to each other that he who was fortunate enough to make the discovery, should immediately inform the others, and make an equal division of it. "But," said William, "that will not do;" for he entertained a happy presentiment of his own being the fortunate ticket, "for by following this plan, we should not be acting agreeably to the will of our poor father, who, had he intended his riches to be divided, would certainly not have

acted in the manner he has done.”
“Without doubt,” interrupted Thomas, who flattered himself that the mill on the common was the lucky spot, “but we will agree to disclose it as soon as either of us have made the fortunate discovery.” You see, my children, that interest alone caused William and Thomas to object to the proposal of dividing whatever they might find. It is ever thus with mankind, who have more confidence in fortune, than fear of her caprices, and the idea of sharing an advantage with another, is as unpleasant an image, as the certainty of not obtaining it themselves. The three brothers vowed an everlasting affection and confidence, on taking leave of each other prior to their removal

to the inheritance left them by their father. We will separately follow them, and observe which it was who discovered the object of their most anxious solicitude.

Scarcely had William been installed within his new habitation, when he began to look about, but having found nothing, he called in workmen and demolished it altogether, under the idea that his mill could be of no use to him, unless he found the money; besides, he had a hope that it might be some where hid between the walls, which were now destroyed to the very foundation, without his being able to discover the treasure.

William now with sorrow began to reflect on the folly he had been guilty of, to throw away the little he really

possessed, in pursuit of what it was a chance he should ever find; and not having a sufficient sum of money to rebuild his mill, he began to weep, and lament his unfortunate destiny; "My brothers are more happy than me," said he, "having at least preserved their little stock of money, whilst I have squandered a considerable portion of mine, and have now only a heap of stones to shew for it; it is impossible I can now remedy my folly, neither will I blush at the recollection of it before my brothers; one of whom has certainly ere now been made happy, by the discovery of that wealth I have ruined myself in pursuit of; they will laugh at me, and to avoid this, I will go and seek my fortune." On saying this, he immediately

set off for London, in the hope of gaining a maintenance.

Thomas acted a little like his brother, he having at first began to destroy all in pursuit of riches; but more prudent at last, he took the precaution to pursue his search with so much care, that though not a part escaped unsearched, the mechanism was not in the least damaged; and Thomas on not finding any thing, applauded himself for not having impaired his inheritance: but one day his wish of gain again seized upon him, and caused him to commit the most extravagant folly; "These old men," said he, "are so avaricious, that they suspect the probability of their money being taken from them, for which reason they conceal it in odd holes

and corners, where they suppose it the least likely to be discovered ; but however, I am determined to search in every possible place." Thomas, wise till then, began to demolish the walls, to see if they were not the receptacles of gold ; and in short, acted by his mill on the common, exactly as his brother had done ; so that if he meant to re-establish his business, it was necessary he should build another. When he had looked in vain, and was convinced that he was not the possessor of the treasure, he flew into the greatest rage ; " My brothers are more fortunate," said he, " but why do I say my brothers, when it is Charles only who is so ? for poor William is as bad off as myself ; but I am determined not be despised, as poor

and unfortunate by our rich relations; for which reason, I will erect a pretty little country house instead of a mill; my land is well situated for such a design, and I can let it to some person for a good price when it is finished; besides I can work at it myself, and with a small additional sum, the old materials will serve to erect my new structure, which cannot fail to be infinitely more beneficial to me than the mill." Thomas was very silly to undertake so wild a plan, on which however, he immediately proceeded, and in a very few months a very pretty house and charming garden was completed, which for some time he was obliged to inhabit himself, as the house did not let according to his expectations, and he was besides

in considerable arrears to his work people; to satisfy whose demands it was necessary the house should be disposed of, when he had the mortification to find it scarcely produced a sufficiency to pay his debts. Thomas now found himself totally ruined, and obliged to seek employment from a neighbouring miller; too proud to ask assistance from his brother Charles, of whom he was jealous, because he supposed him in possession of the treasure. Charles, however, was not more enlightened than his brothers respecting this singular mystery: on coming to his fortune, he certainly felt as they did—a curiosity to seek—but too prudent to destroy: he repaired with care the few encroachments he

had made, saying, " If I were certain that the treasure was in some corner of this building, I would most assuredly pull it down, but as it is perhaps buried within one of the other mills, I have no need to ruin myself by pulling it down. I will not do as my brothers have, by losing a substance to follow a shadow; I will preserve mine, and if the treasure does not appear well and good; I must, by my activity and industry, render its possession not altogether necessary to my comfort, and then, ought I not to respect this residence, which was the cradle of my father? These walls recal his venerable features; each object retraces some event of my infancy; in that room I was born; on that

chair my mother nursed me ; and in this very corner my father used to take his afternoon's nap ; the garden was planted by his laborious hand ; and the spot in which I drew my first breath, shall be that in which I will resign my last. Yes, my father, I love this retreat ; I will honour your memory, and exercise your trade with a zeal and honesty which shall draw upon me the esteem of the worthy." Thus reasoned Charles, my children, and renounced the useless search for that treasure he saw it would be so difficult to discover. He worked ; he embellished his residence ; and felt an indescribable pleasure in the recollection that his father had inhabited it. He was so laborious, so honest, and so generally

beloved, that his fortune became considerably improved. He then married, and became the happy father of a lovely and promising family, and nothing impeded his perfect felicity, but the total astrangement of affection his brother's conduct evinced.

William and Thomas were persuaded, by the style of comfort in which they saw he lived, that he must have discovered the treasure; and this idea made them regard him with redoubled hatred.

The twenty years which their father had named as the termination of the mysterious treasure, having expired, the three brothers went separately to the house of their father's lawyer, who, though very much advanced in years, was still alive. It

was here they met, for the first time since their separation. "I am unfortunate," said William to the lawyer, "and obliged to gain my bread in the best manner I can, owing to my not being fortunate enough to find the money." "And I," interrupted Thomas, "am a journeyman to a miller, when I should have had my own mills, but for my folly in pulling them down, in the hope that I should find money concealed in the walls." "For my part," said Charles, in his turn, "I was inclined to work, by which means I have made the most of my little property, and providence has so far blessed my endeavours, that I am now happy enough to find I can offer my brothers a comfortable maintenance,

without the least inconvenience to myself; but I protest that I have not found any treasure; the only thing which has enriched me, has been my active industry." "That is very singular," cried William and Thomas, "and you would have us believe that father has imposed upon us by an untruth; no no, it is plain you are fortune's favourite, though you have not the gratitude to acknowledge her benefits." "I am ready to take any oath you may think proper to require." "Do not trouble yourself to swear, since even then you would find us incredulous."

The three brothers now began to dispute in very warm terms, which the lawyer to put an end to, addressed them in the following words;

“ Neither of you are to blame, my friends; it is me only who can explain the enigma, which must be done by reading a letter of your father’s, which I have preserved with care; look at it, and you will see it is addressed to myself.” ‘ My dear and old friend, for a long time convinced that the true source of happiness and fortune, is honesty and labour, I am very fearful, that after my death my family will fall into indigence, by thoughtlessly dissipating the little I have amassed by the sweat of my brow; my eldest son is idle and ambitious, faults which promise destruction; the second is vain, dissipated and prodigal, so that I tremble for him in future: of my youngest, I acknowledge that I know of very few

faults of which he is guilty, but I fear his youth, and above all, the excess of kindness and liberality which he possesses may lead him into inconvenience ; in consequence of which, I intend to make them believe, I have hid a treasure in one of my three mills, by which means I hope to induce them to live at their homes, and to become attentive and industrious at their trade ; the fact is, as you may suppose, I have hid nothing ; yet will he who is the most industrious and enterprizing, in truth find a treasure, an inexhaustible source of happiness and of wealth : when I am gone, you will judge, my friend, which of my three sons are the most amiable ; and I trust you will publish my singular will for the instruction

of mankind; for the rest, you know what I have sent, and will dispose of it with your usual wisdom. William Meddows.' "You see, my friends," continued the lawyer, "what your father meant by a hidden treasure; it appears to me, that Charles is the only person who has discovered it, by keeping possession, and improving, by his own industry, the little fortune left him by his father, while his brothers, having demolished their habitations, are now in possession of nothing which can procure them a maintenance. I am sorry for this lesson, so terrible to you, and so striking to the human race. To preserve our property, and to increase it by honest industry, is the true treasure of the wise."

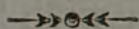
You may suppose, my children, the feelings of Thomas and William, at this explanation, they were ashamed at their conduct, and enraged at finding themselves plunged for the remainder of their lives into indigence and poverty: they were retiring hastily, when the lawyer desired them to give him their further attention for a few moments; “Your father,” continued he, “suspected your ruin might possibly arrive through the very circumstance he intended as a future blessing to you, but too affectionate to cause distress without the power of remedying it, he has left in my hands the sum of six thousand pounds, the fruit of a life of labour and industrious savings, which he left to me, to divide among you at

the end of the twenty years he had destined as a trial of your different dispositions." William and Thomas who already accused in their own mind the memory of their father, approached the table on which the lawyer had now deposited the money, their eyes sparkling with joy at the sight, and their only regret being, that they were obliged to share any part with their brother Charles; but he, generous and delicate, guessed at their interested motives; "Sir," said he, to the lawyer, "the distresses of my brothers will render this sum more useful to them than to myself, for which reason I request you to divide it equally between them, which will enable them, I trust, to pass their future days in easy independence; for

my part, I will willingly relinquish all further claims on my father's bounty, and shall think myself richly repaid for so trifling a sacrifice, if they will restore me their friendship and affection, which an error, pardonable in itself, has for a number of years alienated from me." William and Thomas were penetrated at this trait of disinterested regard, and embraced their brother in the kindest manner; and having purchased wisdom by experience, they formed a second establishment with far greater prudence than they had done their first: thus was cleared up the mystery of the treasure; and the three brothers lived in habits of the greatest intimacy and fraternal affection. It would be needless, my nephews, for me to point

out the moral of this history, which without doubt, you fully comprehend, and are more than ever persuaded, that he who preserves his inheritance, is more wise and happy than those who destroy and often reduce themselves to poverty through false speculations.

EVENING THE FIFTH.



“WHAT has occasioned Henry and John to fall out, I wonder,” said my good aunt, “these two brothers were inseparable, and now they are quarrelling and sulking with each other?” “Because, my dear aunt,” replied John, “Henry is so inconstant and fickle, and professes the same violent friendship successively for each of us; first of all, he attached himself to Adolphus, then to Thomas, whom he quitted without any reason whatever; he then became as fond of Robert, whom at length he quitted for me; and it is now little

Francis's turn to become the favourite: and then I do not know, what he will do, or which of us he will again favour with his confidence."

"I am sorry, my dear, to hear such a character of you; you ought to know you should bestow your affections equally amongst your brothers, who should be all dear to you, but if you will select one friend in particular, to him you should be constant, and not changing, as you do every moment; this variation announces coldness and indecision; for he who is thus uncertain, and changes his friend as he would do his dress, will not be more faithful to his wife, when he has one; and this disposition will lead to disgust, apathy, and wretchedness: I will tell you two little stories

on this subject, the first of which in particular bears a striking similarity to the fault of Henry.

Story the Fifth.

THE FALSE DECLARATION.

DESMOND had from infancy, announced a marked inconstancy in character and habits; he loved and he disliked, and would one minute have that which he had before refused: nothing amused, nothing occupied him seriously; descended from rich parents, he was at twenty-five left the uncontrouled master of a splendid fortune; he now for some time enjoyed his liberty, but tired with it,

he soon determined to marry, and having seen Emily Melville at the opera, he became passionately attached to her; who on her side did not behold with indifference a young man, who when he chose, could render himself every thing that was amiable and prepossessing; this mutual inclination was speedily crowned by hymen, and the first year of their marriage was passed happily; but it was impossible for Desmond long to be constant to any person or thing whatever; and he insensibly began to view her with indifference, which speedily terminated in rendering her insupportable to him. Emily was a lovely woman, possessed of many accomplishments, an amiable disposition, and an unvariable sweetness of

temper, which scarcely any circumstance had the power to ruffle; she perceived the visible alteration in the manner of her beloved husband, and feeling it had not been occasioned from any misconduct of her own, she bitterly wept the decline of that tenderness, which had till then constituted her felicity; but her griefs were restrained in the presence of that cold-hearted man, who caused them. Things were in this situation, when the restless Desmond, fatigued by the dissipation of a town life, determined to go to a beautiful country house which he possessed in Hampshire; she did not make the least objection to a plan, which, had she been happy in the possession of her husband's heart, would have been ac-

ceded to with rapture ; but now the scene was changed, and she felt she was about to quit her parents, her relations and friends, to lament at a distance, the coldness of the man she loved. She, however, attended him with assumed cheerfulness, and when arrived at Belmont park, Desmond would pass entire days in the occupation and amusements the country afforded, and in the evening return to his wretched Emily, fatigued, indifferent, and out of humour. She one day, in the agony of her heart, ventured a gentle remonstrance on his conduct, recalling to his remembrance the promises and vows he had made of an everlasting attachment ; and having painted in the glowing colours of affection, the happi-

ness they had both experienced, while blessed with the confidence and tenderness of each other. She ended her gentle reproach, by shedding a torrent of tears. Desmond, far from being affected by her evident distress, treated her with much cruelty; he spoke with the most profound contempt of women in general; and, above all, of his amiable wife; and ended by proposing a separation as the most likely means to be productive of happiness to both. "A separation!" exclaimed the agitated Emily, "and can you, indeed, my dearest husband, have the cruelty to utter such a proposition, and wish to cast me from you, as you would a culprit or an abandoned woman." "Since you have thought proper to complain,

Madam, of the distresses you say I make you suffer, it would be far better, by a separation, to break those ties, which are equally unpleasant to both." "Of what, my Desmond, do you accuse your Emily?" "Your eternal discontent, Madam, for tho' I do not, it is true, witness your ridiculous sorrow, I am well convinced, the moment my back is turned, you are always weeping over your fancied distresses: had I known what an eternal clog a wife is, never would I have consented to fetter myself; however, I am determined, in a degree, to break my chains." On saying these words, he hastily quitted the room, and left his unhappy wife stifled by her sobs and tears. "How miserable I am," exclaimed she, "and for what?"

I married a young man of blameless morals and good conduct; I have only to reproach him with an inconstancy of character, which now renders me wretched; and this variable disposition I have been long acquainted with. It is visible in every action, and in his life he is never happy long together in the same place: he goes, he comes, and changes twenty times his houses, his carriages, and all which belongs to him. Am I then not to blame, to suppose he could always regard his wife with the same passionate tenderness, as he did during the first happy months of our union? perhaps I have been too hasty in my conduct, and shall drive him from me by my own imprudence. Ah! if he should yet love me! but too surely

do I perceive, he no longer views me with the same eyes, as in the days of my past felicity."

She now rose, and as she passed the door of the library, she heard her husband speaking in a loud tone, and being certain he was alone, the sound of her own name made her listen to what he said. "No," exclaimed Desmond, "I have nothing to reproach her with; she has virtue, talents, and, above all, loves and obeys me; but there is such a sameness, such a provoking calmness about her, that she tires and fatigues me. She is certainly very handsome, young, and amiable, but her large blue eyes are so soft and so inexpressive, her figure so stiff and formal, that it fails to interest me; and her

accomplishments, when she plays and sings or paints, it is always the same. In short, there is no novelty, no animation in her manners. I feel this to be the cause of my coldness, and that it is impossible to restore her to my heart: but the separation! I wonder what could induce me to propose a step, the execution of which would cost me my life." It appeared to Emily that her husband now shed tears, and charmed at the discovery she had made of yet being dear to him, by the expression he had let fall respecting their separation, she instantly formed a very singular plan, by which she meant to endeavour to restore herself to his heart.

On the next day, Mr. Desmond had intended to give a ball to his

neighbours, and Emily busily occupied herself in preparations to render it uncommonly elegant, delighted that this plan differed a little from the lately acquired misanthropy of her husband, and the day passed tolerably. Emily did the honours of her ball, to a numerous company, with a degree of spirit and ease which astonished Desmond, who on this occasion, as on every other, conducted himself with the most rigid indifference towards her. On the next morning, while her husband was gone to hunt, she called a youth to her dressing room, who was the ward of her husband, and had lately returned from Eton, and to whom Mrs. Desmond, since her marriage, had shewn the greatest kindness. “ My

dear Francis," said she, "can you keep a secret which will restore the lost happiness of your friend?"---
"Most certainly, my dear Madam, I would sacrifice my life to secure it." "You are very kind; sit down by me, and write as I shall dictate." Francis prepared to obey, and Emily caused him to write a fine flourishing letter, as though from a young gentleman, expressive of the greatest admiration of her virtues, her mental and personal accomplishments, and concluding with an offer of his hand, in case the report which he had heard of a separation between her and her husband should take place; and requesting she would honour him with an answer, which would be safely conveyed to him by a faithful

messenger, which he should send for the purpose at eight o'clock in the evening. Francis paused with his pen on the paper, waiting for more, but Emily informed him he had done. The unsuspecting lad instantly signed his name at the bottom in fine flourishing characters, and gallantly presented the paper to her, saying at the same time, "There is not one word in it true; for though I reverence and respect you, and would even lay down my life in your service, I must acknowledge I have no wish to marry you." "You great goose," replied Emily, laughing heartily at the *naïveté* of the boy, "do you suppose I meant you to write such a letter to me? no, and for the trouble you have taken, in signing your name, I shall

indulge you, by permitting you to write the whole over again, and omit it : do you not guess what is my project ?” “ Not I, truly,” said her frank-hearted confident ; “ but it seems a mighty comical one.”

Emily then informed him of her present situation with her husband, and the desire she had of re-animating his expiring affection, by the method she was now pursuing. She left it, as if by accident, in her work-box, which was open on the table. Desmond returned from hunting, and without knowing what he did, took up the letter addressed to his wife. What became of him on beholding a declaration of such violent affection ! he read the letter twenty times, and then thinking it possible

he might gain some information from Francis, he summoned him to the library; "My boy," said he, in a tone of much inquietude, "has any body been here since I went out?" "I believe not," said he, "but I saw a servant, who brought a letter for Mrs. Desmond." "Was it this which I now hold in my hand?" "Yes, I believe it was the very same." "Do you know the servant?" "Not at all; he will come back to-morrow." "I have a particular reason for desiring you to watch for him; give him what gold he demands, but at all events, I charge you to procure from him the answer my wife sends to this." Francis promised to do what was in his power, and Desmond passed the evening and night in the most

cruel state of agitation. 'The next morning, Francis entered his room; "Here," said he, "I have been lucky enough to get the letter from the man, by means of a little bribery; but if Mrs. Desmond was to know what I have done, she would never forgive me, I am sure." "She never shall, you may depend upon that." Desmond took the letter, which was short, but to the purpose---full of dignity and offended virtue, and forbid him ever writing to her again on the subject.

Desmond was penetrated with admiration at the delicacy of his wife's conduct, and blushed at the conviction of so little meriting the eulogiums she had made on him in her letter; he again read both the reply

and the letter which had occasioned it. During the time he was thus occupied, his wife had seated herself at the piano-forte in the next room. Desmond approached the door to listen to her harmonious sounds, which for a long time he had ceased to derive pleasure from, but now, he thought he heard her perform in a very masterly style, and even intended, in the height of his admiration, to enter the apartment in which she sat; but at the moment he was about to do so, she quitted the room by another door. Desmond, disappointed, went into the garden, and reflected on the injuries he had been guilty of towards this woman, who was, truly a model of perfection. This was a fortunate beginning

for her little plan, and she now thought of another, not less useful to her projects. She called Francis to her, praised him for the address with which he had conducted himself between Mr. Desmond and herself, and then seating him at her writing table, engaged him to pen the following billet :---“ How unfortunate for me, that a friend of mine introduced me the other evening at your ball. Alas! since that moment I have lost my repose. There was much company at your house, but I saw only yourself: I was enchanted at the elegance of your manners, and I confess that the sensibility which glistened in your eyes, captivated me. Desmond, I am a widow, very rich, and yet in the bloom of youth: is it possible

you can love that little insignificant wife of your's, who appears so awkward and prim? it is impossible she should be worthy of the affections of her charming husband, with those small inexpressive eyes, baby features, and rough voice, to which is added plenty of self-conceit. I really pity you for being tied to such a doll, though the rumour of the evening was, you were about to separate from her: it is a very meritorious design, and I highly applaud your intention; and as I doubt not numberless charming women will become your captives, I take the liberty, thus early, of offering a heart entirely devoted to you: they may say what they will respecting the delicacy of conduct necessary to be observed by

my sex, but I am superior to such vulgar prejudices, and cannot consent to barter happiness for that consideration; I therefore entreat you will immediately reply, and address your letter to Mrs.---but I was going to add my name without being certain of your discretion! no, that must not be until you are at liberty to return my affection."

Emily was sure of the good principles of her husband, and well knew that nothing was more disagreeable to him than impropriety and indecency in the conduct of a woman; and it was this conviction which made her entertain the idea that he would be disgusted, rather than flattered, by this false declaration. The letter was accordingly sent, and Desmond

searched in his own mind for the fool who could have written it, and misjudged a poor unhappy woman, who, on the eventful evening of the ball, chance had constantly thrown in his way. She was tall, thin, and not in the least calculated to have inspired any tender sensations.

He smiled with pity and pique at the picture she had drawn of his wife, no part of which was in the smallest degree applicable to the lovely Emily. Some days after, Francis entered the library with a very mysterious air. "Oh!" said he, "I am glad Mrs. Desmond is not with you, for I have got a packet from the man who brought the letter the other day!" "Give it me this moment," said Desmond, greatly agitated: he found

it contained a miniature and a billet; the latter he tore open, and learnt from it, that the writer concluded, from his never receiving any answer to his former letter, that the report he had heard of a separation about to take place between Mr. and Mrs. Desmond, was either unfounded, or that the proposition he had been induced to make was not agreeable; and that therefore he deemed it dishonourable to keep a miniature by him, which his regard for the object had tempted him to make a poor effort to trace. But he begged of her to keep at least in remembrance the respect with which he should ever think of her.

Desmond then took up the miniature, and beheld the exact resem-

blance of his lovely Emily, of whom he had never till then possessed the likeness, and gazed upon it with rapture, until he became seriously enamoured with his wife.

At this moment Emily entered the room with assumed calmness: she said, "Since your intention of a separation is, without doubt, the same as when you first hinted your wishes, in that respect, I have now to request you will allow me to return to the bosom of that family, which I quitted to follow the man who, I had no doubt, would make me happy; and dear as it will cost me, I will tear myself from you, and wait the result of your arrangements: I think it a duty not to torment you longer with the sight of an object, who is so mi-

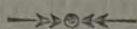
serable as to become odious to you :
Adieu, my ever beloved Desmond,
whatever injuries I may have been
guilty of, I trust you will impute to
their sole cause--my eagerness to pre-
serve the tenderness of him, who will
never cease to be the object of ado-
ration to the heart of an affectionate
wife; but hope is now ended ; I can
flatter myself no longer, and must
hasten to cast myself---" " Into my
arms," interrupted Desmond, " most
virtuous and amiable of women; if
you can pardon the conduct of a pe-
nitent husband, who will adore you to
the last moment of your existence."
" But, my love," returned she,
sweetly smiling through her tears,
are we not then to separate?" " Men-
tion not that dreadful project, which

had I been mad enough to put into execution, would have undoubtedly occasioned my death: you speak, my angelic Emily, of injuries, every one of which has been on my own part; it was me, who, inconstant and unkind, occasioned distress to my incomparable wife, from not justly appreciating the treasure in my possession: Oh! Emily, I was blind, ungrateful, and cruel to myself, when I spoke of quitting you; but it is impossible, that even your sweetness should extend so far as to forgive the injuries I have heaped upon you.”

“Mention them not, my dearest husband, you restore me to your heart, and this is the most fortunate day of my existence; but will you not again relapse into that cruel in-

difference so insupportable to your Emily, and must she not again dread" ---"Dread nothing, my angel, for I now discover, that my existence is inseparable from your's; and never shall I forget the happy moment, which a second time unites us for life." Desmond from that time, became affectionate and indulgent, as he had been impenetrable and cold, his wife in future enjoyed a state of uninterrupted happiness; but never did she discover the means she had recourse to, in order to reinstate herself in his heart. Desmond had need of such a stimulative to correct his errors, and to prevent his falling into similar offences; and a lovely family added inexpressible charms to their future days.

EVENING THE SIXTH.



You have doubtlessly observed, my nephews, in the preceding history, how much an inconstant and uncertain disposition breaks in upon the happiness of all who are connected with it: you will likewise see in the history I am now about to give, a new proof of the dangers to which those who possess such a failing, are exposed, when they fall into the hands of the interested and unprincipled.

Story the Sixth.

THE CLOCK.

FITZALLEN was young, when he had the misfortune to lose his parents, who not having in their power to bequeath him a fortune sufficient to support him in independence, he had recourse to those talents, which a good education had improved; and being handsome, amiable, and accomplished, he was not long without occupation in that line to which his genius pointed; it was music, and his good character made him esteemed by those circles into whose society the brilliancy of his talents could not fail to introduce him. He attended a young person at the house

of her aunt, whose situation was similar to his own; she being intended for a governess, when her qualifications would entitle her to undertake so important a charge. He soon distinguished the interesting Pauline, who did not behold him with indifference, though timidity prevented the open avowal of their reciprocal affection: this reserve lasted till the death of the old lady; when her heir, who had ever been displeased at the old lady's kindness to her amiable niece, gave her to understand, she must immediately look out for some situation, by which she could maintain herself; Pauline felt the cruelty of this conduct, and at the moment her eyes were bathed in tears, Fitzallen entered: after his inquiries, she

informed him of her embarrassment, and the fear she entertained that extreme youth would prevent her being received into any family, in the capacity to which her good aunt had afforded the means of qualifying herself; but in the mean time, she determined to gain support by the exercise of those accomplishments she had acquired, until the time should arrive, when she might be fortunate enough to procure an establishment which she had been educated to fill. Fitzallen sought to console the unfortunate girl, requesting she would accept any services in his power to render.

Pauline removed to a small, but respectable lodging, where she worked without ceasing, never going out,

or scarcely ever receiving any person. Fitzallen called sometimes, and after considering the prudent and commendable conduct she pursued, offered her his hand; at the same time informing her, that he had no other fortune to offer than what his talents procured, which, he conceived, with her assistance, would be sufficient to make them contented and happy.

After a few days consideration, Pauline consented to his proposition, and they were married. Fitzallen, who had till now occupied the apartments of a batchelor, hired a more commodious and comfortable residence, which he soon furnished in a very pretty manner, from the savings his economy had enabled him to

make. Pauline, gentle, sensible, and affectionate, presided over their comfortable establishment, while her husband followed his profession; and nothing interrupted the happiness of this charming couple, because they were contented with a little.

At the end of the year, Pauline presented her husband with a little girl, and this gift of nature considerably added to the joy of the happy parents, who wanted nothing but a little more money to complete their felicity. Fitzallen had a number of scholars, but the gain of professional men is uncertain. Sometimes he had more than he could attend to, at others, not enough to employ his leisure; and then again bad debts would be a considerable drawback on

his little purse. He had furnished his modest mansion with every necessary ; but one object of luxury was wanting ; it was a clock, and this he ardently desired to possess. “ My dear,” he would often say to Pauline, “ you will think me very childish, but I confess a clock on that chimney piece, would afford me the liveliest satisfaction ; it is so useful a piece of furniture, and so ornamental ; but I fear I never shall be able to gratify my wish with this indulgence.”

This way would he frequently express himself to his gentle wife, respecting a trifle their contracted circumstances would not allow them to purchase.

One morning, that Pauline had gone out on some little family com-

missions, Fitzallen having nothing particular to engage him, remained at home to compose a piece of new music; about half past nine, he beheld his wife enter, joy sparkling in her eyes, but on observing him seated by the fire; "what are you not gone out, my love?" said she. "No Pauline," returned he, "are you sorry at being troubled with my company for one morning, that you seem so much embarrassed?" "I really am so; for not expecting to find you here, I had intended a little surprize, which I hoped would have been an agreeable one, on your return to dinner, but as it is, you must even be let into the secret at present; come in, Sir," Pauline uttered these words to a person, who

had remained on the staircase, who entered, bringing a very pretty clock with him, which he placed on the chimney, and then retired. "What does this mean?" said the astonished husband. "Do you not know," said she, smiling, "that you have been long wishing for a clock, and here is one for you." "But how have you procured it, my dear Pauline?" "How disagreeable, that you must have every thing so clearly explained to you; know then, that, determined to make you this little present, I have employed myself in executing some work, which has paid me so well, as to enable me to procure the gratification of buying this little trifle for you; do not be angry at my having thus deceived you; it was the hope

of giving you an agreeable surprize, that I have endeavoured to procure this trifle for my dear husband; and which will be valuable to him, since it is the gift of his Pauline." "Most charming creature, how much does this proof of your attention endear you to my heart; but when could you find time to complete your work; for I never saw you occupy it but with your child, or in family concerns." "Truly, I made use of every moment, during which you were absent, and when I heard your well known knock, hid my work, that you might not expect what I was resolved to surprize you with; indeed, I felt as if guilty of a fault, and had you examined me at those times with attention, you might

have observed my blushes and confusion."

"Dearest Pauline, how divine is a married life to those who are attached like us; I wish every couple were as happy as we are, they would enjoy a like pleasure in striving to obtain the applauses and the blessings of their helpmates." "But now examine your clock, and tell me how you like it." "It is very pretty, how much did it cost?" "Ten guineas." "How long must you have been working to accumulate this money?" "About six months; but you know not the delight I took in my employ." "But, my Pauline, does it strike?" "Certainly, you will hear it strike presently, for look it wants only five minutes to ten."

The inhabitants of the world, my nephews, those persons who enjoy in profusion all the elegancies of life, can have no conception of the feelings of Fitzallen, as he stood before his clock, watching, with impatience, the moment of its striking; it is natural to the simple and frank-hearted when, for the first time, they possess any trifle they have been so long wishing for: behold Fitzallen, his elbows placed on the chimney, watching with anxiety the expiration of the five minutes, and when the hand had reached the last, he exclaimed with childish eagerness, "it is going to strike;" it did so, and Pauline with a smile, exclaimed, "It was exactly at this hour, and on this very day, two years, that our little girl was

born; what fortunate chance, I wonder, made me recollect this happy event?"

"Ah, Pauline," interrupted he, "this hour was then pointed out by nature, as it now is by love, as the most fortunate of my life; for never can I forget the gratitude I owe my wife; and if ever misfortune or death should separate us from each other, this hour will recal your virtues, your beauty, and the moments of felicity your tenderness has procured me." "But why talk of death or misfortune? suffer not your heart to dwell at this time, on so melancholy a subject." "My Pauline, it is the dread I entertain of being deprived of my present happiness, which gave rise to my remark: let us, however, banish

sorrow at present; be grateful for our numerous blessings; and love each other to the latest moment of our lives. Should I, my Pauline, be ever forgetful of your virtues, or by my conduct occasion the least sorrow to your gentle mind, the striking of this hour will recal me to my duty and affection."

"You have no need, Fitzallen, to make these promises, I can never be dissatisfied with your conduct." They were now joined by their little girl, who was pressed to the heart of both her parents, and nature added an additional charm to the fire of love. What a picture of felicity did this family present; they were not rich, but they idolized each other, and the smallest attention shewn, increased

their store of comfort. Ah, why am I forced to reverse the scene, and trace the misfortunes which the arts of an unworthy woman brought upon them : but to proceed.---During the first day Fitzallen possessed his clock, his eyes were scarcely ever turned from it, and each time the silver tone struck on his ear, his heart vibrated to it ; but at length, as he became more habituated, it lost its value, in a great degree, and became of almost as little consequence as any other piece of furniture belonging to him.

As the house which they occupied was larger than was necessary for their little family, Pauline proposed letting their first floor, which would be the means of removing a part of the expence of house rent : after a

little difficulty, she gained permission of her husband to do so, and shortly after announced to him that she had been fortunate enough to let her apartments to a rich widow, of the name of Dormer. A natural curiosity made him anxious to see this new inmate, who his wife mentioned as being very handsome; and he had soon an opportunity of forming his own opinion, as they met frequently on the stairs. He perfectly coincided with his wife, in judging of her personal accomplishments.

Mrs. Dormer was charmed with the sounds of melody which proceeded from the apartments of Fitzallen, whose manner and figure had already engaged her attention. "Sir," said she, as he was one morn-

ning passing her on the stairs, "I am passionately fond of music, and feel myself particularly happy in having an opportunity of profiting by the instructions of so excellent a master." He replied, he should think himself highly honoured by having her for a scholar. She then requested him to walk into her drawing-room, that he might be enabled to judge of her talents, and tune her harp, which was at present greatly out of repair. Fitzallen did as he was desired, and overwhelmed her with the most extravagant compliments; their interview concluded by her requesting to receive a lesson every day, though her master assured her, she was much better qualified to give than to receive instruction.

Pauline heard with sorrow of an arrangement which would necessarily occasion so great an intimacy with her lodger; for she possessed sufficient penetration to discover that, though it was her interest to be civil to Mrs. Dormer, she was a woman she would by no means endeavour to cultivate the friendship of: for which reason, it was her wish to prevent any acquaintance being formed between them. On her hinting this, she was accused of suspicion and jealousy: Pauline thus finding her unhappiness commencing, determined to be silent.

Some months elapsed, and Fitzallen had become more and more enraptured with this artful woman, who drew around her a circle of men and

women, whose characters and morals were of a similar description with her own. This infatuated man was now launched into the dangerous society which constantly assembled in the apartments of Mrs. Dormer. He still loved his Pauline, but generally returned pensive, thoughtful, and out of humour: the social comforts of his own limited arrangement formed a striking contrast with the splendour and gaiety of those with whom he passed the greater part of his time: his character changed so completely, that Pauline grieved in secret, and purposed, if possible, to break the spell which bound him, by pretending her health required a more airy residence than the one he at present inhabited. "Why," said he,

“do I see such capricious conduct in you ? it is only because I have a good scholar in this house that you wish to go from it, without thinking of the fatigue I encounter in flying about the different quarters of the town ; and I desire you will never more plague me by such ungenerous suspicions, as I plainly perceive you have formed an unfavourable opinion of an amiable woman, in whose society I find much pleasure, and from whose patronage and recommendation I am enabled to procure that money which you are not sorry to receive.” Pauline was again silent, and shed many tears in private.

Mrs. Dormer had tried many arts to undermine the morals of Fitzallen, who still loved his wife too tenderly

to become her dupe, nor did he even suspect her intentions. Having discovered this, she determined to change her manner of proceeding, and remove, if possible, the only obstacle to her wishes, against whose happiness she had formed the most diabolical plans. In consequence of this determination, she one day, in a laughing manner, exclaimed, "Tell me, is it the brother of your wife, my good neighbour, who visits her so often, for there appears to me a striking resemblance between them."

"What young man, I know of none?" "I mean him who generally stays during the whole of your absence; if he loves music, you must introduce him here, to augment the charms of our evening parties." "I

do not understand you ; my wife sees no one, and I cannot conceive what you mean, or what you allude to."

" Ah ! very well, I begin to see I have committed an indiscretion, but we will now change the subject." She then began to speak of other matters. On the return of Fitzallen, he questioned, with much earnestness, his wife, respecting the visitor she had had during his absence. Pauline replied that she had seen no one since he had left her in the morning. Fitzallen seemed satisfied, but though certain of the virtue of his wife, he felt that the seeds of jealousy had been sown in his heart.

One evening as he was returning, he met a person at the door, who answered the description given by Mrs.

Dormer of the secret visitor of his wife; and on his seeing Pauline, he questioned her who it was that had just left the house. "No one, my dear; but it is so odd you always ask me the same question?" "Did my eyes then deceive me, and could it be fancy alone, which represented the form of a young man leaving the house, the moment I entered it." "Oh! I understand, it is a visitor of Mrs. Dormer's you mean; he often opens the door of our sitting room, mistaking it for her apartment." "That is very singular, since I know all the society who are in the habits of visiting here; and I declare, I never have seen the young man in the house." "That is very likely; but why appear so agitated on a sub-

ject, which cannot in the smallest degree concern us?" He did not reply, but continued to walk about the room without addressing a single word to his wife; who could not in the smallest degree comprehend from what cause the agitation of his mind could originate.

Some days after, Mrs. Dormer asked Fitzallen, if his wife had not the day before given a dinner to her friends, during the time he had been absent on a little excursion with her to the house of a relation, who lived a short distance from town, and to whom she had introduced him. "No, Madam, why did you suppose it?" "Because my servants informed me there was much mirth and singing going on, while we were away, be-

sides, she knows very well how to amuse herself: and I should be very glad, if you would introduce the young man, who sung so charmingly in your parlour this morning." In a phrenzy of passion, he flew to Pauline, and upbraided her with screening from him the visits of some young man, who came to the house, during his absence." Pauline protested her innocence, and seeing from whence the blow proceeded, declared, she must be under the necessity of quitting him for ever, unless he altered the line of conduct his pernicious society had made him adopt: he continued with warmth to insist on the amiability of Mrs. Dormer. This quarrel lasted till the next day, when Fitzallen again met the destroyer of

his happiness; "My friend," said she, "I hear that you and your pretty little wife had a misunderstanding last evening, but such handsome women have their caprices, and ill-humour; indeed, I think I never beheld a more lovely figure than she made on going out in that rose-coloured hat." "You mistake, Madam, my wife has not any hat of the kind you mention." "You cannot persuade me to that, my good friend; but I suppose it is a point of gallantry in you, to hide the presents you make your wife." She continued her conversation in this artful manner for some time; and at last began to talk on indifferent subjects: but when the deceived husband returned to his own apartment, he could not

but gratify his curiosity, by searching among his Pauline's wardrobe for the hat so artfully brought forward. Much was he astonished and mortified, on perceiving the very ornament described: "Who could have procured you this?" said he, "shewing it to the innocent Pauline." "My dear," returned she, "did you not yourself send it to me, yesterday; but you was in so bad a humour, when you came in, that I could not find a moment to thank you for so gratifying a mark of your attention." "What! say you Madam that it was a gift of mine?" "Most certainly, a milliner brought it to me, saying you had purchased, and ordered it immediately to be sent home." "A very pretty story you have made

of a present which you received from the young man, who visits you so often." "What can you possibly allude respecting a young man? I am sure, I know of none that ever comes to this house." The matter now became serious, and the frantic Fitzallen gave such an unbounded loose to his passions, as to make himself heard by his vile lodger, who now entered in the light of an officious friend, to arrange this disagreement between them: "My good friends," said she, "I am extremely concerned at hearing such high words pass between you; I am sure, Mrs. Fitzallen, you are blessed with one of the best tempered men in the world, and this ought to make you give up to him in all his little whims, which I am

confident are never of an unreasonable kind. The sight of this woman, augmented the sorrow of the weeping Pauline, who could no longer refrain from declaring, she believed her to be the disturber of their family happiness, and requested she would prepare to quit her house: the enraged husband conjured her not to regard the reproaches of his wife, and she quitted the room, exclaiming, "My dear friend, how I pity you, for being united to such a woman." He followed Mrs. Dormer to the drawing-room, where she, by every artful means, contrived to irritate and inflame their present misunderstanding. Pauline remained wretched and alone during the remainder of the day.

In the evening, Fitzallen, on going out, saw on the stairs a billet di-

rected to his wife, and which contained the following words:

“ My Pauline, fly from a husband, who sooner or later, must discover our connection ; and come to a lover, who regards you with the same sentiments of affection which you entertain for him ; to-morrow at six in the evening, a carriage shall be at your door, in which you will find the man, who adores you ; together we will hasten from the abode of jealousy and envy.

“ P. S. I beg you will wear the hat you did me the honour to accept, as it will screen you from all observation :---adieu, you will not again behold me, till the moment when we shall be united for ever.”

During the time employed in reading this wicked letter, Fitzallen could scarcely believe he was awake. At this moment a person knocked at the door, and not seeming to notice Fitzallen, told a servant of Mrs. Dormer's, that he feared he had dropped a paper from his pocket." "It is, without doubt, the letter I now hold," said the furious husband of the gentle and amiable Pauline, "which you have dropped, and its loss shall cost you your life; know you not who I am?" "Yes, you are the master of this house." "I am, and expect instant satisfaction for the injuries you have done me." The young man immediately broke from him, and ran with incredible swiftness from the house, followed by Fitzallen, who

could not overtake him. Enraged at this, he immediately returned to the apartment of Mrs. Dormer, pale, trembling, and almost deprived of sense. "Read, my kind friend," said he, "this infamous billet." She pretended to peruse it with astonishment, and in a tone of horror, exclaimed, "can a wife and a mother be indeed so great a wretch!" Fitzallen determined not to return to the apartments occupied by his wife, and wrote the following lines to his innocent and injured Pauline: "Woman, unworthy of my name, by the deceit and vices you have been led to commit; know, that I have proofs of your guilt, and that we never meet again; for which reason, it is necessary one of us should quit this house;

do you decide, and till you have done so, I shall remain in the apartments of my friend Mrs. Dormer." What tears of agony did the perusal of this note cost the unfortunate wife ! could she consent to justify herself before the wretch who had succeeded in alienating the heart of her, till then, adoring husband, and with whom he had determined to remain, whilst endeavouring to break the sacred ties which bound him to her ? She determined to quit his house, and leave the manifestation of her innocence to time and that Power who never, ultimately, forsakes the injured and oppressed ; but she resolved to carry with her their lovely child, the living image of her beauty and sweetness, in the hope the father and husband

would soon be sensible of the injustice of his conduct, and again restore them to his heart. These were the reflections which occupied the mind of Pauline, previous to her putting in execution the commands which had so cruelly been transmitted to her: taking her little girl in her arms, she bid her servant inform Mr. Fitzallen, that she had quitted him according to the directions she had received, and that she asked nothing of him, but the company of her child, to soothe her sorrows: "Tell him," added she, shedding tears of the bitterest grief, "that he will one day repent the injustice he has been guilty of to me, and that I shall pray for his happiness, if he can receive any, after having rendered

his innocent Pauline miserable for life."

She accordingly quitted the house, and the wicked Mrs. Dormer triumphed: she sought every opportunity of stifling that tender affection, which yet spoke to the heart of Fitzallen, in favour of his unfortunate wife: she for two days, by her arts, kept him near her, but at the end of that period, she had the mortification to observe, it was not in her power to vanquish his regrets, or to soothe his melancholy. He now returned to that part of the house, once occupied by his happy family; but how striking, how frightful the contrast, which there presented itself to his view; before embellished by all the charms of reciprocal affection,

unbounded confidence, and the inexpressible charm of infantine endearments; it was now become a perfect desert, and he regarded with horror every known object that met his eyes, which in vain searched round for his once adored Pauline.

Mrs. Dormer followed him, and with all the eloquence, art and passion were capable of inspiring, endeavoured to remove every thought from his heart, but those which were calculated to keep up his resentment against the innocent victim, her manœuvres had doomed to the most heart-rending conflicts; but he heard her with a sort of listless indifference, while his eyes remained immoveably fixed on the clock, which had been the gift of his Pauline, as if he had

never till then beheld it : at this moment it struck ten ; “ Oh ! ” exclaimed he, starting from his seat, “ this is the hour of our infant’s birth, Ah ! my child, my wife ! yes, it was at this precise moment, that I vowed to be ever faithful and tender to her : fatal clock, your voice reproaches me for the barbarity I have been guilty of, for now do I begin to hope, that it was not possible for my Pauline to be culpable ; Oh ! return, my love,” cried he, in a tone of agony, “ and forgive me the misery I have brought upon you.” He now rushed from the house, leaving the vile Dormer, piqued and disappointed, at the time she had lost in endeavouring to gain a heart every tie had made the sole property of another.

Fitzallen flew through the streets, without knowing whither to bend his steps, but all the time reflecting on the injustice of his suspicions respecting his wife, to which the subsequent conduct of his infamous friend had in a degree opened his eyes : and as he was thus occupied by his own melancholy ideas, his feet had involuntary conducted him to some retired fields, in the neighbourhood of Islington. His pensive ruminations were interrupted by the groans of some person near, and on searching from whence they could proceed, he saw a man under a hedge, wounded and bleeding; "Heavens!" exclaimed Fitzallen, all his old suspicions returning at the moment, "Do I not behold the author of my disgrace, and the

seducer of my wife's honour." "Can it be Fitzallen?" interrupted the young man, opening his dying eyes; who has so fortunately discovered my deplorable situation, before it was out of my power to do him justice; I am the victim to my own dissolute conduct, have been wounded in a duel; but before I expire, let me have the consolation of undeceiving you, respecting your wife, who is not in the smallest degree culpable; no, it is the infamous Dormer, who engaged me to act the part I have done; your wife has never seen me, but by accident, when I was thrown purposely in her way: the hat, which you know nothing of, had been by the same contrivance, artfully conveyed to her during the preceding day: and

the letter which you read, was dropt only with the intention of your picking it up." "Wretch, I cannot refuse you my pardon, since you thus voluntary make all the restitution now in your power to do." "Ah! Sir, I am unworthy of such humanity; but shall die less miserable for having thus rendered justice to the interesting Pauline, the most estimable, and the most unfortunate of women." Fitzallen caused the young man to be removed in a coach to his own residence, and in despair sought every place in which he thought it likely for his wife and child to have found an asylum, when they were driven from home.

One evening as he was walking in the Park, a poor looking old wo-

man accosted him; "What a pity it is, Sir, you should thus separate yourself from your good and beautiful wife." "Ah!" interrupted he, "tell me but the spot in which she has secreted herself, and you will restore me from the very depth of despair, to the summit of earthly felicity." "Indeed, Sir, I am happy enough to have it in my power to inform you where she is; you cannot know me, but I have often been employed as a washerwoman at your house; and in the moment of her distress, she applied to me, to procure her a lodging: I immediately offered her a room in my own house, which she condescended to accept, and has continued in it ever since the day she left your roof." "My good woman,

conduct me, this moment, to the abode of my suffering Pauline."

They now proceeded to a retired street in Westminster, and in a back room, on a second story, Fitzallen beheld the once lovely Pauline, pale, bathed in tears, and stretched on a miserable bed, holding her infant in her arms: "Oh! Pauline, my own Pauline," cried he, "acknowledge once more your barbarous, but repentant husband, who will die at your feet, if you do not forgive the injuries he has heaped upon you." "What is it you ask?" returned she, in a tone of extreme weakness, "can I credit a return of affection, equally unexpected as was my dismissal from your heart and house? I am dying, leave me the victim of your unjust

suspensions." "They are removed, every thing has been explained; Mrs. Dormer has been the sole contriver of this scene of wickedness; I know your virtue and innocence; and on my knees supplicate to be restored to that affection, I have so foolishly thrown from me." "Can this happiness be real, and is it not an illusion of an unexpected bliss? if you are, my beloved husband, convinced of the wrongs which have been done me, I can no longer remember them; and entreat you to think no more on what has passed; but let us again be restored to that felicity we had so nearly forfeited for ever."

The happy pair were again united by the silken bonds of affection, and the old woman, who had been the

fortunate agent in this happy event, wept with joy, at the transport she had occasioned. They immediately returned to their own house, from which the despicable author of their wretchedness had taken herself on the first discovery of her guilt. In a little time, she received a punishment for all her crimes, by an accident which occasioned the total destruction of that beauty, on the foundation of which she had built all her plans. Pauline and her husband were again reinstated in all their former happiness; and grown wise by experience, he could scarcely ever pardon the injuries he had committed towards this excellent woman, and he strove by every act of tenderness, to erase from her mind the sor-

rows she had undergone. Looking at his clock, he would exclaim, "Ah! my beloved Pauline, it was this precious gift which made me recollect my vows, my crimes, and to which I am ultimately indebted for my happiness!"

EVENING THE SEVENTH.

“WELL, what’s the matter now?” said my aunt, as she came into the room, “always quarreling; John’s voice louder than any body’s; he is continually having some dispute with his brothers.” “My dear aunt,” said John, “it is not my fault to-day, indeed it is not; I am sure Francis has done wrong.” “What has he done?” “I will tell you, aunt, and you will see whether I have not reason to be angry with him. Last week, he bought a kite, and gave nine-pence for it; I took a liking for it a day or two ago, and he let me

have it, on paying the same price. To-day I wanted to buy a book that I saw, and not having money enough, asked him to take the kite again; he took it, and then would not give me more than three-pence for it; now is that just? The kite is quite new; I only played with it a quarter of an hour, yesterday; he was with me all the time. I shall lose six-pence by it; is not that a shame, aunt?" "The kite is torn," cried Francis. "That is not true, Sir," replied John, "we shall see it is not." "I tell you it is entirely spoiled."

My aunt took both the children by the hand; "My dears," said she, "it is very wrong of you to dispute about such trifles; however, I will put an end to the quarrel, by giving John

the same price that he paid you for it, Francis. I am very sorry to see you so unjust and covetous ; should brothers bargain like those people who will not allow any one to gain but themselves ? But this puts me in mind of a tradesman, whose story will serve as a lecture on the *important* subject that has occasioned your disagreement."

Story the Seventh.

BENEVOLENCE AND HONESTY
REWARDED.

Mrs. HARMAR was a woman of forty or five and forty years old ; the widow of a very rich man, who had

left her in possession of nearly ten thousand pounds a year. In consequence of a violent cold, Mrs. Harmar had for several years been almost deprived of the use of her limbs, and entirely confined to her chamber. She had a son, who was just of age ; a youth possessing every charm of mind and person.

Young Harmar was the most affectionate of sons ; he passed the greatest part of his time with his sick mother, in conversing with her, and reading all the books that he thought would suit her taste. The conduct of this parent and child exhibited the most interesting scene of maternal and filial tenderness.

The mother, mild, sensible, and chearful, was ever desirous that her

son should enjoy the innocent amusements suitable to his age. She gave him a liberal allowance of money, and promoted his having agreeable parties, although she could not be present at them.

The son, respectful, tender, prudent, and ingenuous, could scarcely be persuaded to partake of any enjoyments which would keep him long from the society of his beloved mother; and although he sacrificed what most young people consider the greatest pleasures, there was not a young man in the world happier than himself.

Prudent, beyond his years, he never left his mother's affairs to the care of stewards; he inspected her estates, received her rents, super-

intended the buildings, and other improvements that were necessary, and conducted every thing with the greatest order and dispatch. His mother was fully sensible of his merits, and could not bear the idea of ever parting with a son, whose attention and goodness made her more than amends for the pain and confinement to which she was obliged constantly to submit.

That she might not lose her amiable companion, when his heart should have found another object to share its tenderness, she hoped he would meet with a worthy young woman, without a great fortune or high connections, such a one, in short, as would reside with her, and behave with the tenderness of a daughter.

This was the plan which Mrs. Harmar hoped one day would be carried into effect, but it did not seem likely to take place very soon. Harmar was but just one and twenty; his affections were yet disengaged, and he often declared to Mrs. Harmar that whilst he had such a mother, he should think it a sacrifice to give up her society for that of a wife. This however was the promise of a young man, who had never yet felt the power of love, and Mrs. Harmar knew better than to place much dependance on it.

Next door to Mrs. Harmar lived a jeweller and goldsmith, who had a very magnificent shop. Mr. Williamson had a wife, whose mind was perfectly stored with worldly wis-

dom: their daughter, a very beautiful girl, about eighteen, had acquired such an education as, joined to her personal attractions, was likely to procure a splendid settlement.

Harmar had frequently occasion to visit this shop: Amelia was often playing on her piano in a parlour adjoining; Mr. Williamson generally invited him in, on pretence of shewing him some valuable things which were kept there. The young man could not but admire the accomplishments and beauty of this fair damsel: he lent her music, accompanied her piano with the flute, and soon became a frequent visitor to his neighbour.

They were all delighted with the idea that he would not be able to

resist the charms of Amelia. Mr. and Mrs. Williamson had never seen the mother of Harmar, but they knew she was excessively rich. Their politeness to the young gentleman was unbounded. They instructed their daughter in the part she was to act, desiring her to keep up a great deal of reserve in her conduct to Harmar, but at the same time to study every art that might awaken his love.

Amelia was cunning and ambitious; she was charmed with the elegant manners of her visitor, but much more with his immense fortune; and consequently obeyed the commands of her father and mother, as much with a view of gratifying her own inclination, as of obliging them. Since

Mr. and Mrs. Williamson had cast their eyes on young Harmar, they had spared no expence in procuring such clothes for Amelia, as would shew her beauty to the greatest advantage. The young lady was delighted with this change, and neglected no art which she thought likely to secure the affections of her rich neighbour. Harmar observed the assiduity of the whole family, but was far from suspecting the selfish motives which prompted them; gratitude increased his friendship for them all, especially for the fascinating Amelia.

The ingenuous youth had no confidant but his mother; to her he frequently expressed his admiration of the talents and sweetness of Miss

Williamson, with the enthusiasm which excellence of every kind invariably produced in his feelings. Mrs. Harmar believed her son was in love with Amelia, and the suspicion made her very unhappy. Several persons who knew them, had told her they were upstarts, whose resources were inadequate to their expensive way of living; it appeared that they had failed in the country, and afterwards opened their superb shop with the money secreted from their creditors.

Mrs. Harmar was a true philosopher; she was regardless of the appearance and fortune of the woman, her son should marry; but was resolved to prevent his forming a connection with a family, however rich, whose principles were not respecta-

ble. She took every possible method to obtain every information relating to Mr. Williamson's conduct: from the answers she received to several letters, written to persons who lived at the place from which he came, she learnt, that Williamson was the son of a clergyman in Derbyshire, whose slender income made him gladly accept the offer of a relation, who having no children, wished to take the young man into his business: with this gentleman Williamson remained three years; during that time his patron observed so many instances of selfishness and ingratitude in his intended heir, that he sent him away with a few hundred pounds, and desired he might never see him again.

Williamson immediately went into the army, hoping by his red coat and handsome face, to procure a fortune equal to what he had missed. His expectations were soon realized: being quartered in a country town, he got introduced to the family of an heiress, with whom he had danced at an assembly; this girl was extremely young, her fond parents had gratified her in every wish; having been from her birth surrounded by flatterers, she did not find any mental acquirement necessary to procure admiration; and left to her own inclinations as she was, we cannot wonder, that her only reading was such as would dissipate the *ennui* of an ignorant, idle mind, when no other frivolous amusement could be found. The senti-

mental Miss immediately supposed our gay officer one of those faultless heroes of whom she was accustomed to read; her friends soon perceived the attachment, and remonstrated with her, on suffering her affections to be engaged by a perfect stranger, a man who might be destitute of every virtue.

The lady's *studies* had furnished her numerous examples of fair sufferers, who magnanimously braved the persecution of cruel parents; and Miss Araminta's love was but confirmed, by the dissuasion of her indulgent father and mother: pensiveness, tears, hysterics, all were assistants to her foolish passion; she told her parents, that they would soon follow her to the grave, if they would not con-

sent to her union with the most interesting of his sex: they began to be apprehensive for their daughter's health, and at last yielded to her wishes. The moment in which the young lady gave her hand to Williamson was, she believed, but the commencement of felicity; alas! she was soon undeceived: Araminta's family did not think it prudent to entrust too much to their new relation; they therefore only allowed him quarterly, what was sufficient for a genteel maintenance. Williamson, disappointed at not receiving a large fortune with his wife at their marriage, in a short time resented *their* prudence, by treating *her* with neglect and moroseness.

This conduct did not fail to produce hatred in a mind embittered by ingratitude for the most extravagant fondness; and Mr. and Mrs. Williamson's only wish was now to render each other as miserable as they could. Araminta, however, was too much ashamed of her precipitation and folly, to make known her unhappiness to the friends, who had taken so much pains to prevent it; supposing, therefore, that the trial they had given their son-in-law, had lasted long enough, they put them in possession of a very large fortune on the birth of Amelia. Both husband and wife were fond of splendor; Mr. and Mrs. Williamson very soon dissipated all their riches: just at the time they began to be in want, Araminta's fa-

ther, and soon after her mother died: and all the wealth they possessed, immediately became the property of the young couple. Prudence did not increase with their riches; all their money was gone in less than two years. They had now no other friends who would assist them; and Williamson was obliged to assume his business: he therefore opened a shop in the town, from whence Mrs. Harmar received all this information.

Mrs. Williamson, finding the insufficiency of what she called *love* to produce happiness, took every means of teaching her daughter to consider marriage merely as an opportunity of acquiring an advantageous settlement. Williamson and his wife could not yet prevail on themselves to limit

their expences, and the profits of their business (although they were not satisfied with such as were strictly just) were consequently not large enough to support them; they failed, and as I before told you, opened a shop near Mrs. Harmar, with the money and goods of which they had defrauded their creditors.

One morning, about the time Mrs. Harmar received this intelligence, her son went to take a solitary walk in Kensington Gardens. Here the young man loved to wander, far from the bustle and amusements of the gay world; sometimes he entertained himself with a favourite author, sometimes he gave himself up to the effusions of a grateful mind; feeling the goodness of a Deity from the beauty

of his works, and the varied and boundless happiness bestowed on his creatures.

He had walked some time, lost in one of these interesting reveries, when he was interrupted by the heavy sighs of a person at a little distance; he turned round, and saw a young female in great emotion, leaning against a tree, with a handkerchief held to her eyes; her dress, though neat, indicated poverty: she continued to sigh and weep in the most heart-felt manner. Harmar looked at her for some time, wishing to offer his assistance and consolation, but was prevented by delicacy from intruding abruptly on the stranger: she presently exclaimed, "Ah me! what hard times, and what hard hearts!" "No, no,"

cried Harmar, "all are not hard, mine is not; tell me what afflicts you, my poor girl."

The young creature was so absorbed in grief, that she neither saw nor heard the compassionate Harmar: finding she gave no answer, he ventured to approach nearer to her, and bowing respectfully, he said, "Tell me unfortunate---" Before he could finish the sentence, she perceived him, blushed, and ran away in terror. He was too much interested by her sorrow, and the amiable expression of her countenance, to suffer her to leave him without endeavouring to remove the cause of her grief: he followed her, saying; "Do not be afraid of me, I am compassionate and rich; if I can serve you---" At

the word rich, the timid girl stopt, but at some distance from him: "Sir," said she, "do not follow me." "Indeed I am not---I am not what you suppose me." "I know that men don't offer to serve one with a disinterested view. Pray, Sir, do not hinder me from going home to my father." The poor girl again burst into tears, and was going to leave him.

He went up to her, and assured her his only wish was to soften her affliction: "Come," said he, "let me know the cause of those tears; tell me your troubles, and depend on my assisting you, if it be in my power." "If it be in your power, Sir? you said you were rich." "I am, and compassionate; the interest I feel for your unhappiness convinces me that I am

so." "Then you are very unlike my father's persecutor!" "Who has the barbarity to distress him?"--"Our landlord, Sir---my father has a shop and a room or two, for which he pays twenty pounds a year; we owe him half that sum, and the wicked man is going to sell our furniture; the shop and goods he has seized already; and to-day the sale is to be: a wretch! ---I had nothing valuable but this ring, which I have always kept with the greatest care;---I took it all over the town this morning, in hopes of selling it."---"Well."---"None of the jewellers would have it, Sir; some of them said money was too scarce, they could not afford to take it: others offered me so little."---"How much?" "But fifty shillings,

Sir; I am sure it is worth ten guineas."---"Knave---let me look at it: 'tis a very beautiful ring, and is worth a great deal; will you let me have it for forty guineas?" "Oh! Sir, that is too much."---"No, not at all, I assure you, it is not."---"But, Sir,---" "Take this purse, my good girl, and fly to your father." "Ah, my dear father!--generous man, you have done away the bad opinion I had begun to form of the world."

She made a hasty courtesy, and darted away. Harmar saw a little boy, whose grandmother he had the day before relieved from poverty; he called the child, and desired him to follow the young woman, and find out where she lived; he put half-a-crown into the boy's hand, and said,

“Run, my little man, and come to my house with the information as soon as you can.”

Away ran the boy, proud of being employed by the gentleman who had been so kind to his grandmother. Harmar returned home, with his thoughts entirely occupied by the amiable girl. It was not beauty that made him think of her so much; her face derived its greatest charm from the sensibility and goodness of her heart; her features were plain, her complexion pale, her figure far from beautiful; but there was a modest ease, an unaffected sweetness in her manners, that gave her a very interesting appearance. Harmar wished to be acquainted with her, that he might be of further use to her fa-

mily ; and he likewise wished it, for the pleasure he believed her society would afford him. How delightful, thought he, will it be to introduce her to Amelia ; surely my friend Amelia will not think it a condescension to be acquainted with so virtuous a young woman ; although the sweet girl is poor, I am certain she must have been well educated. Harmar's reflections were so agreeable all the way, that he was astonished to find himself so soon at home. He ran up to his mother ; " My dear Madam, I have a present for you ; give me your hand ; there, it will fit that finger, as if it were made on purpose.

He put the ring on his mother's finger, and having too much delicacy

to boast of a good action, merely told her he had bought it that morning. Mrs. Harmar said she had already more rings than she ever wore, but as that was her dear son's present, she would wear it in preference to any other.

Harmar was called out of the room; the little boy was come to give an account of his success. "I have followed her home, Sir; her name is Sophy; Mr. Hilton, her father, is a brazier, in the next street. When she got in, there was a great bustle in the shop; some men were taking down all the goods, and putting every thing in confusion. Sophy threw herself into her father's arms, and giving him a purse, said, 'My dear father, you are saved from ruin!

take this money ; a pitying angel gave it to me.' Her father looked alarmed ; ' Who is this angel, my child ?' said he, ' how did you come by the money ?' ' I have sold my ring, father.' ' Your ring ! the ring you valued so highly, Sophy ; and without letting me know ?' ' Father, send these unfeeling men away, and then I will tell you every thing.'

" Mr. Hilton sent for the landlord, and paid his debt ; the men that were taking the things away were dismissed ; I was then obliged to go from the door, for as all the crowd was dispersed, it would have looked particular if I had stayed alone."

Harmar was extremely pleased with the clever little boy ; he praised his ability, and inquired with great

kindness after his old pensioner. "Oh, Sir," replied the child, whilst a tear of rapture stole down his rosy cheek, "she has been in a very comfortable lodging, since you were so good to her; and the woman of the house is very kind, and does a great many things for her; you know, Sir, my grandmother is very old, and it soon tires her when she moves about." "Then I suppose she could do without you, could she not, Benjamin?" "Yes, Sir, but who would take me for a servant? I can scarcely do any thing but go on errands." "I will take you, Benjamin; go and tell your grandmother that if she can spare you, you shall come and be my little footman." The benevolent Harmar received a new pleasure

from the joy with which Benjamin left him to carry the good news to his grandmother.

Harmar did not for a moment forget the virtuous Sophy ; anxious to make his friend acquainted with her amiable character, he went early the next morning to call on Amelia ; but recollecting how little he had seen of Sophy, he thought it better not to mention her till he could give a more particular account. His visit was shorter than usual ; Amelia did not appear so interesting as he had been accustomed to think her : her features were a thousand times handsomer than Sophy's ; but he thought there was more simplicity in Sophy's manners. All these reflections at first occurred to the young man ; but he

reproached himself afterwards : “ It is only a difference in manner,” said he to himself ; if Miss Williamson were in Sophy’s situation, she would doubtless do as much for her father ; yes, they are both equally worthy, they must be friends.”

As this soliloquy ended, Harmar reached the house at which Mr. Hilton lived : Sophy was sitting in the shop with her father ; she saw Harmar, and cried out, “ Oh, Sir, there is our benefactor !” He went in ; in a moment the father and daughter were on their knees, expressing the warmest gratitude ; he raised them, and with tears in his eyes, entreated them to be less enthusiastic in their acknowledgements. “ Ah, Sir,” said the grateful father, “ can

any words be strong enough to express our feelings? My daughter has told me of all your kindness; and we have since found that her ring was not worth more than fifteen guineas, therefore you will allow me to pay the rest."

"Let's talk of that another time."

"Oh, Sir, you must not refuse to take it, indeed." "Well, well—You are a widower, I suppose, Mr. Hilton?" "Yes, Sir, ever since I became a father; (he sighed) my poor wife was so reduced by sorrow, that she died the day after my Sophy's birth, although we all thought she was doing very well. Ah, Sir, we have had our share of misfortune."

"If it will not appear impertinent, may I inquire the cause?" "I can

tell it you without shame," replied the worthy man, "since it did not proceed from my own misconduct. When I was three and twenty, my father established me as a merchant. I married the daughter of a rich country gentleman; he died soon after, and left us all he had. In a few years from my wife's inheritance, and the fortune I acquired in commerce, our riches were immense, and we had resolved to retire and live in the country. Just after I had come to this determination, my partner disappeared, and took almost the whole of the property away with him: I paid every creditor, and had not above twenty pounds left. My wife endeavoured to inspire me with cheerfulness, whilst her own heart

was secretly torn with anguish for me, and for the poor baby whom she soon expected to bring into the world. Ah, Sir, she was an excellent Christian; her efforts to strengthen my fortitude never ceased; an hour before her death she pressed my hand with a look of tender resignation, and said, ‘ Fear not my friend, he who hears *the young ravens which cry*, will never leave our babe to perish.”

Mr. Hilton stopped; the lovely Sophy threw her arms round his neck; their tears fell together. In a few moments he apologized to his visitor, (who was nearly as much affected as they) and then continued his story.

“ I was unable to take care of so young a child ; a lady, who had been a friend of my father’s, offered to bring her up. She was twelve years with this amiable woman, who educated her in the most liberal manner, and promised to give her a handsome fortune ; but she died without a will, and all her property went to distant relations, who were extremely rich. My daughter came home to me, and has been my housekeeper ever since. By the assistance of the same lady, I began the business I am now in : we succeeded extremely well, till a few months ago, when I lent a large sum to a poor man who had met with very heavy losses ; after that time he was still more unfortunate, and in short I lost all my

money by his failure, which has reduced us to our present distress ; my landlord heard of my misfortune, and insisted on being paid the half year's rent, which was but just due. I intreated him to wait a few weeks, by which time I hoped my affairs would be in a better situation ; the unfeeling man was inexorable, and Sophy was obliged to part with the ring she preserved so many years in remembrance of her benefactress, by whom it was given her." " Amiable creature ! she shall have it again, Mr. Hilton ; I am certain my mother will restore it with the greatest pleasure." ---" No, no, Sir, we cannot think of that."

Harmer staid a good while with Mr. Hilton and Sophy : he re-

turned charmed with their virtues and mutual affection, and longed to raise them to a situation more suitable to their birth and education; but Mr. Hilton's delicacy prevented him from offering pecuniary assistance. The amiable young man went immediately to his mother, related to her his adventure in Kensington Gardens, and extolled the virtues of Sophy and her father: he told her likewise of Sophy's regret at being forced to dispose of her ring, and Mrs. Harmar willingly returned it.

Harmar flew to Mr. Hilton's, and obliged Sophy to take it again. Mr. Hilton insisted on giving him a promissory note for the forty guineas; he did not refuse, although he tore it in pieces the moment he left the house.

Harmer talked to his mother incessantly of Sophy, but fearing to do an injustice to his first friend, never omitted to say something in praise of Amelia at the same time. His visits to Sophy were frequent. Her poverty could not diminish his admiration; no, his veneration increased whenever he found her employed in menial offices, which most young women would blush to perform, but which she submitted to with cheerfulness and grace. Every body in the neighbourhood spoke of her with respect: the name of Miss Hilton was never mentioned but with commendation.

The next time Harmer called at Mr. Williamson's he pronounced the highest eulogium on Sophy. Amelia,

in spite of all her endeavours, could not entirely conceal her jealousy. From this time, although his visits were less frequent, the Williamsons were more assiduous, and even servile in their behaviour than before, and he saw plainly that they were envious of his regard for Sophy.

Harmar was disgusted at their conduct; his mother was surprized that he never mentioned Amelia: she was at a loss to account for this change; sometimes she imagined her son's reserve proceeded from a consciousness of a passion for Amelia; of which till then he was not aware: At other times, she believed that love for Sophy had diminished his friendship for Miss Williamson. 'This conjecture gave her no uneasiness: "Why,"

thought she, "if my son be not mistaken in the character of Mr. Hilton and his daughter, should I object to his union with her? Their poverty is the consequence of integrity; had this virtuous man acted with the same injustice that Williamson had done, he might have been living in splendor. What is the opinion of the world? Such a girl as Sophy would be to me an affectionate daughter; to my son a tender and dutiful wife; and she would willingly consent to live in my house after they were married.---But I have seen neither of these young women; I am uncertain to which of them my son is attached; I will visit them both, form my opinion of their dispositions, and then attempt to discover his inclina-

tions." A curious project came into Mrs. Harmar's mind.

For the first time during six years, she ordered her carriage to be got ready, and while her son was out, she was helped into it, and went without leaving word where she was going. She proceeded to the house of a friend, who accompanied her to Mr. Williamson. She was almost carried from her coach into the parlour, where Mr. Williamson and family were sitting. She chose some elegant candlesticks and an expensive pair of bracelets. Mrs. Harmar was confirmed in her opinion of all the family. The father and mother were ready to take every mean advantage, whilst professing to serve her on the lowest terms. Amelia's art and va-

nity were apparent to Mrs. Harmar, notwithstanding the affected ingenuousness and modesty, which might easily impose on a person of less experience.

When Mrs. Harmar had fixed on the things, she intended to purchase, Mrs. Williamson said, "I assure you, Madam, although I sell you those candlesticks for only twenty guineas, I would take them again at any time, and give you sixteen for them." "Will you promise that?" said Mrs. Harmar.---"Yes, upon my honour; and the bracelets I would give exactly the same price for that I ask."

Mrs. Harmar paid for the things, and took them in her carriage; then returned to her friend's house, and

after dressing herself like a very poor woman, went to Mr. Hilton's; she got out of the coach before she had reached his door, and walked in, leaning on little Benjamin. Notwithstanding her ragged clothes, the moment she entered the shop, Sophy ran to fetch her a chair; "My good woman," said she, "you seem to have fatigued yourself too much." "My dear young lady, I have had a paralytic stroke; if I had not this little boy to lean on I could never stir out of doors; but (*turning to Mr. Hilton*) let me tell you what I am come for, Sir; I have four little boys, this is the eldest; the little rogues break all my saucepans to pieces, and that puts me to a great expence: can you sell me a good

strong one that will last a long while ?”

“ Here is one that will just suit you, I met with it by chance, and can let you have it cheap.” “ Ah, that is well, for I have very little money to spend ; how much must I give you ?” “ To any body else I should sell it for seven shillings ; you shall have it for five.” “ Five shillings is a great deal for me, Sir, and yet I should be sorry not to buy the saucepan, for it is just the thing I wanted.” “ I dare say,” said Sophy, “ my father will let you have it lower if he can :”---she added in a low voice, “ she seems a good kind of woman, father.” Hilton smiled affectionately on his daughter, and then said ; “ Well, my good woman, you shall have it for the cost price ; take it for four shillings, and

---“ Well, I’ll take them, but it must be at a low price.”---“ A low price! you promised to give me sixteen guineas for the candlesticks, and for the bracelets the same money that you sold them for.”

Some customers coming into the shop, Williamson took Mrs. Harmar into the parlour, lest their conversation should be overheard. She repeated the last sentence as she went in. “ True,” said Mrs. Williamson, “ and when my husband told you that, Ma’am, he thought he should have been able to do it, but trade is not so good now---money is scarce; and besides, these things are spoiled.” “ I assure you, they have not been once used.”---“ Oh! I should have them melted down immediately,” replied

Williamson: "I should much rather you would keep them." "Ah! Sir, I am in great want!---(she affected to weep)---my husband is arrested, and must go to prison to-day, unless I can get some money; I have four small children, who are actually in want of bread."---"I am sorry for it, Ma'am."---"Sir, I entreat you to take the things; you shall have them at your own price." "Well---let's see---I can afford---I'll give you four guineas for the candlesticks, and three for the bracelets, that is all the money I can spare; and I only take them for the sake of obliging you, for I assure you, I shall lose by them.

"Upon my word, papa," said Amelia, "that is a fine way of doing business---but however, we must have

some pity for the unfortunate." "Is this your last offer, Sir?" said Mrs. Harmar with indignation. "Yes, indeed it is; if I were often to make such bargains, I should soon be ruined; you know, I must remember that my daughter will want a fortune soon; she is old enough to be married."--- "Certainly," replied Amelia, with a smile. "Certainly," said Mrs. Harmar likewise; "but Madam, my son shall never be your husband." "How! what do you mean?"---"I mean, that I am Mrs. Harmar; I had heard of your evident attempts to procure an alliance with my son: I had heard too, that your honesty was not undoubted: I affected this distress to try you, Mr. and Mrs. Williamson, and you, indelicate and

unfeeling girl ; I wish you all a good morning." Mrs. Harmar cast a look of angry contempt on the unworthy family, and returned home with her candlesticks and bracelets.

The next day, she again put on her wretched garments, and taking little Benjamin, paid another visit to Mr. Hilton. Sophy recollected her, and behaved in the kindest manner ; " What are you come for to-day, my good woman ? " " Where is your father, Miss ? " --- " He is up stairs, I believe, I'll call him. " --- Mr. Hilton came in as Sophy was running to fetch him. " Ah ! Sir," said Mrs. Harmar, " you see me in great distress ; I can't keep the saucepan : I am so much in want of money, that I must beg of you to take it back ; I have used it

once ; how much must I lose by it ?”
“ I promised to give you the four shillings again, if you wished to part with it.” “ You are very good, Sir, but as I told you, I have used it once, and besides that, my little boys let it fall, and it has got a bruise on one side.” “ Never mind, we can set that to rights.” “ Respectable---” Mrs. Harmar stopt, she was afraid of betraying her secret: her eyes filled with tears of admiration at this generosity. Sophy then spoke, “ Did you think, Madam, that my father would not fulfil his promise? If you are in great want, I am sure you will be welcome to the saucepan and the money too: I know how hard it is to part with any thing one wishes to keep (she sighed).”---“ From your

generosity," said Mrs. Harmar, "I suppose you are rich." "No, indeed we are not, but with care, one may generally have enough for one's own use, and be able to give something away too : Ah ! we have known what it is to want ; if we had not had assistance, neither I nor my father would have been here !"

Sophy then repeated to Mrs. Harmar all the circumstances of her son's goodness. You will imagine how much the affectionate mother felt at hearing this action represented in the most glowing colours, by the grateful Sophy.

After the young lady had finished speaking, Mrs. Harmar said, "He must be a very charming young man, I suppose he comes to see you some-

times." (Sophy blushed) "Yes."
"He is in love with you, perhaps."
"Oh, no, there is no probability of that; there is too great a difference in our situations." "He must be very interesting in your eyes." "Certainly, I think him very good." "I understand---Do you think he has observed your partiality?" "What a question! should I be worthy of my father's tenderness, of my own respect, if I were to express, or even encourage a passion for a young man of his fortune and rank?" "Charming girl! How happy you must be, Sir, in having such a daughter.---Heaven bless you both! Farewell---I shall see you to-morrow."

Mrs. Harmar left them. She was transported with admiration at

the conduct of Sophy and her generous father. "This good girl," thought she, "must be my daughter-in-law: she is worthy to become the wife of the best of men."

Harmar was astonished to find his mother had been out, and still more so at her requesting him to accompany her the next day, on some business that would again call her from home. The next morning he got into the coach with his mother, joyfully congratulating her on her recovering so much strength. They went round several streets, and stopped at last at Mr. Hilton's door. Harmar, with astonishment, exclaimed, "What are you going to do, mother?" "You will see, my dear son---let us go in."

They both went into the house; Mr. Hilton looked surprized, and his daughter confused. "Good morning," said Mrs. Harmar, in a lively accent, "do you remember me?" "Is it possible?" cried Sophy, "Look father, how much the lady resembles the poor woman, who promised to come to you again this morning." "She is come, charming Sophy; no longer as the poor woman who could not afford to buy a saucepan, but as the mother of this young man, for whom (if you love him, as I am sure he deserves to be loved, and if his affections be not otherwise engaged) I shall solicit your hand---" "My dear Madam!" cried Harmar. "Let me tell you all, my son."

Mrs. Harmar then related the behaviour of the Williamsons, and that of Sophy and her father, on the trial she had made of their integrity and compassion; and then desired her son to tell her ingenuously, whether he had any attachment to either. "Not to Amelia, my dear mother," replied the happy young man, "since I have known the interesting Sophy, I have learnt too well to discriminate between real and assumed merit, to feel the friendship I once had for Miss Williamson; my regard never went beyond friendship for her; nor was I conscious, till this hour, that my affection for this amiable creature exceeded the admiration and respect which every one must feel who had beheld such perfections;---I

never meant to conceal one feeling of my heart from the best of mothers."

"No, my dear son," said Mrs. Harmar, with a smile of ineffable goodness; "young folk are sometimes at first not so well acquainted with the nature of their own attachments as their more experienced friends." Harmar and his beloved Sophy threw themselves at Mrs. Harmar's feet; she blessed them with tears of rapture.

Mr. Hilton and his daughter immediately went to Mrs. Harmar's house; and the young people were married a few weeks afterwards, to the great mortification of the Williamsons.

Sophy made her Harmar the happiest of husbands: and Mrs. Harmar

found her attentions as unremitting and affectionate as those of her beloved son.

Williamson's extravagance continued, and he was soon after a bankrupt for the second time. His former dishonourable conduct became public, and he was exposed to poverty and contempt. His daughter had ensnared the affections of a fashionable young man, to whom she was married just before her father's failure. Her husband had been promised a large fortune with Miss Williamson; he was so enraged at finding himself thus deceived, that he went to the Indies, and never saw her after.

Such was the end of this unjust and contemptible family; whilst the

honourable Hilton and his amiable Sophy were enjoying all the blessings of affluence and friendship.

FINIS.

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