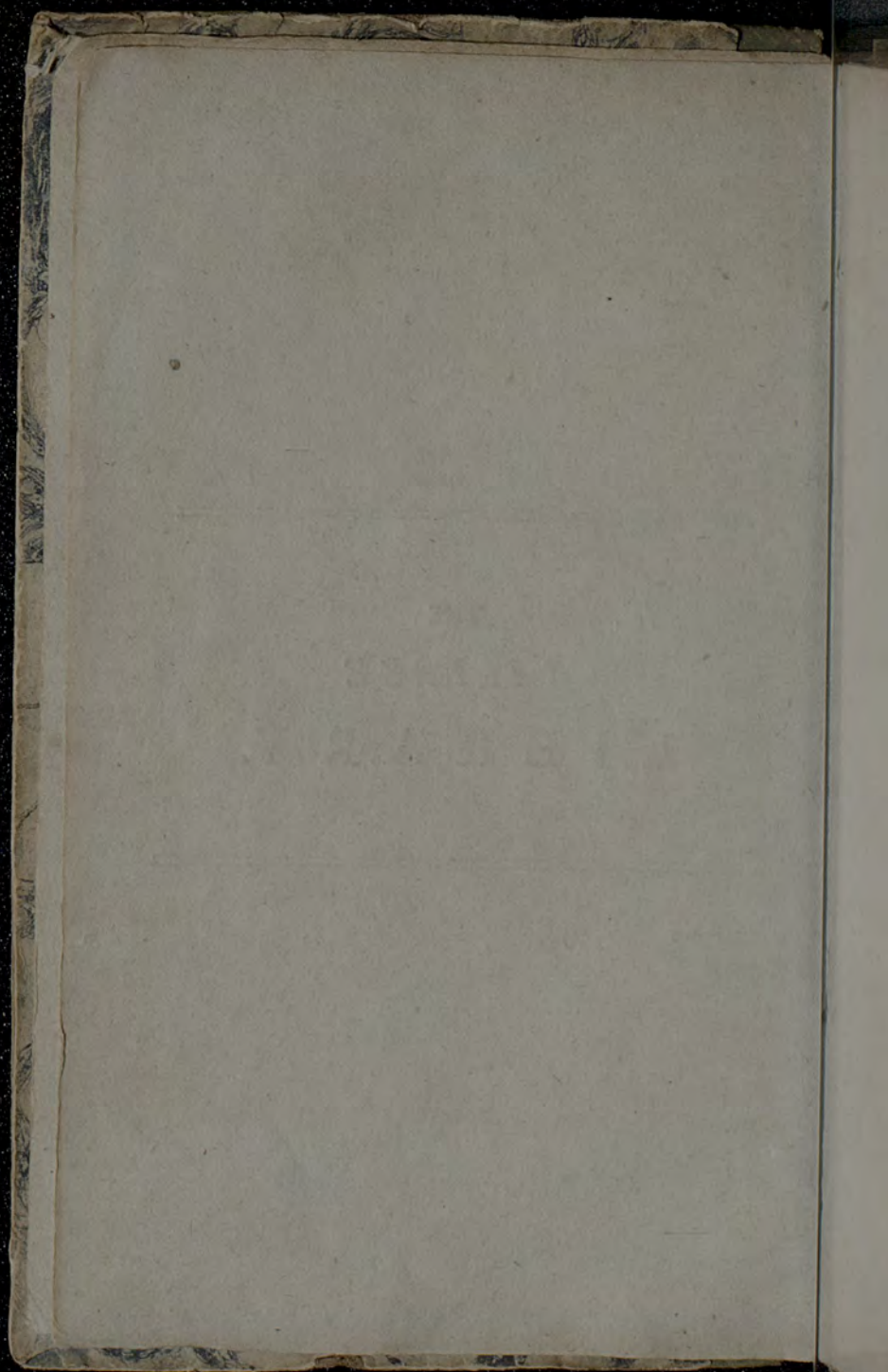
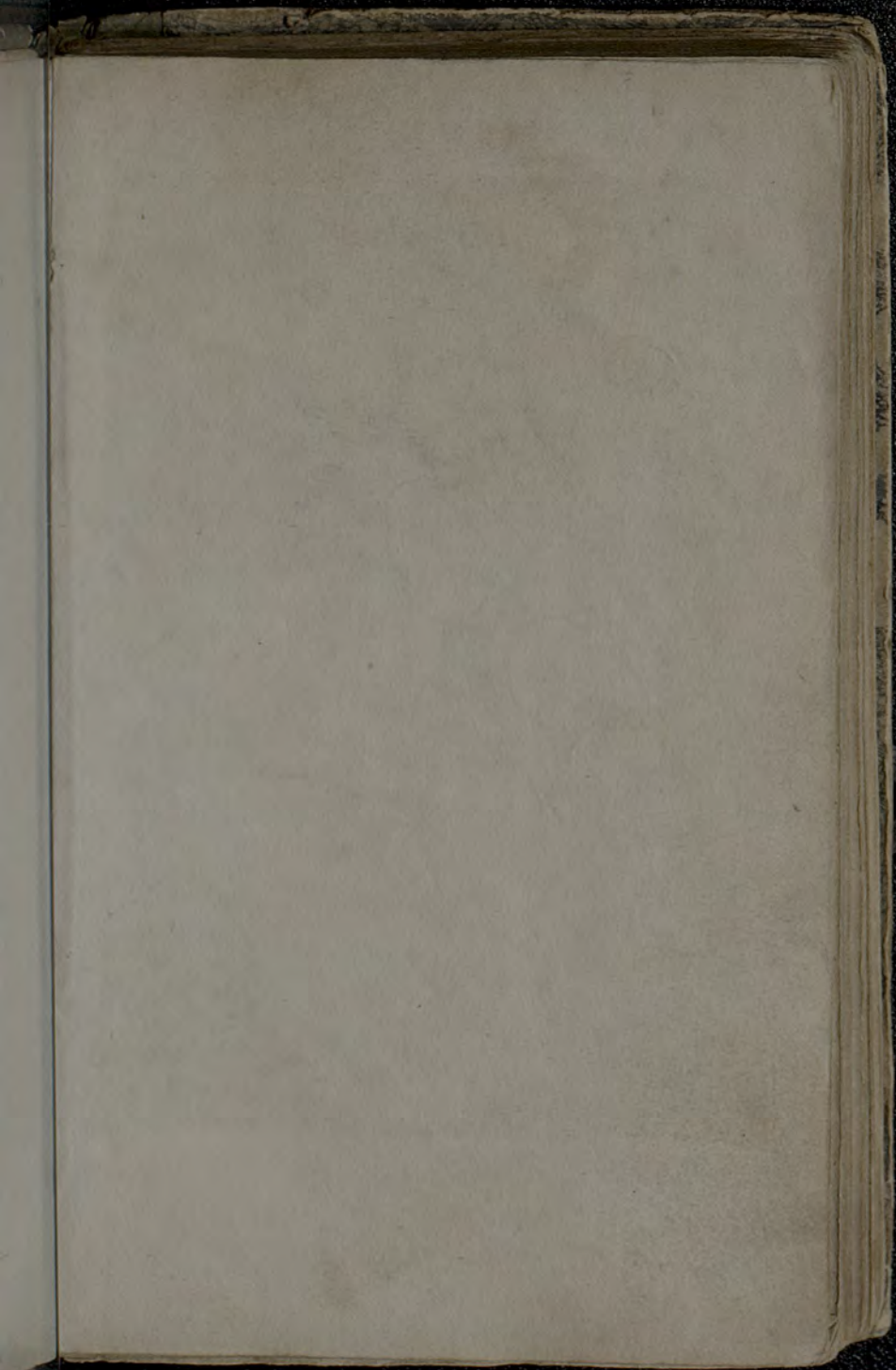


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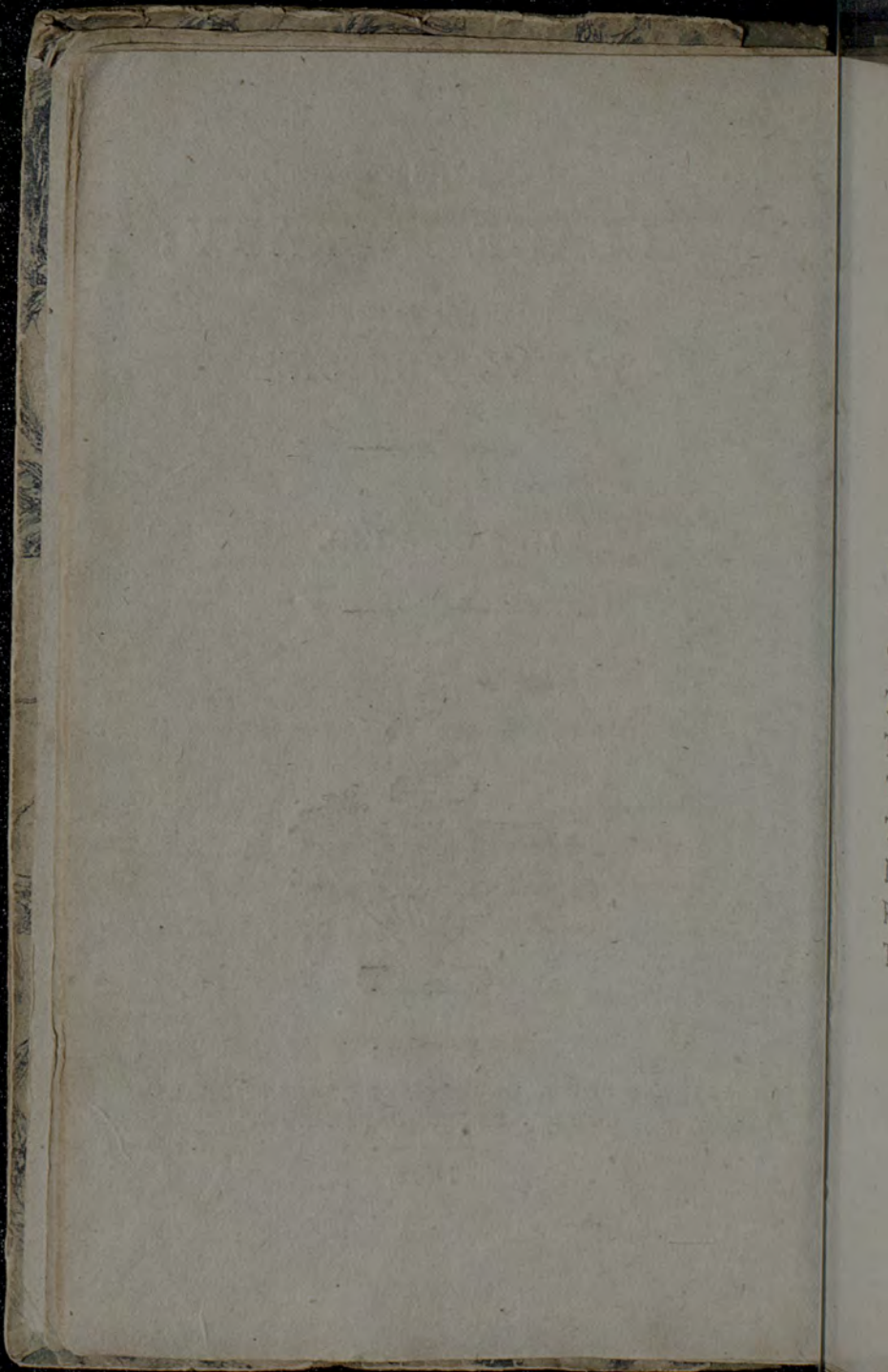
Intended for the use of
YOUNG PERSONS.

BY
MISS GUNNING.



London :
PRINTED FOR B. CROSEY AND CO. STATIONERS -
COURT, PATERNOSTER-ROW.

1802.



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A HAPPY FAMILY.

A YOUNG family settled in a village, composed of parents and their children. The father and mother are the rulers of this little society: it is *their* duty to preserve good order, because they are the oldest, the most experienced, and the most interested in the welfare of all the others.

In this well regulated family the parents command with affection and

B

gentle-

gentleness, and the children obey with pleasure, for they are never desired to do any thing without being shewn its use and propriety. In early childhood they begin to assist their father and mother in their daily labours. Surely it is right for them to give this proof of gratitude for the tender care that has been taken of them, ever since they were born. They all beg to be set about what will be most useful; the eldest boys go with their father to the plough; the girls take care of their little brothers and sisters; they lead them about by the hand till they can walk alone; they feed, dress and undress them, to save their good mother the trouble; then they teach the dear
little

little creatures to say their letters, and spell some easy words, that they may soon be fit to go to school. The oldest of the sons instructs the others in the use of the pruning knife and the rake. The eldest daughter shews her little sisters how to spin, to sew, to knit, and do the household work. All the children love each other with the warmest affection; the fond mother observes their friendship with delight, encourages them by her caresses, and the good account she gives of them to her husband when he goes home in the evening. The worthy pair rejoice together in the infant virtues of their little family, every one of whom is equally dear to them; the youngest, indeed, always

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seems

seems to be the favourite, but it is only because its weakness and tender age requires more constant attention than it is needful to pay to those who are older.

These prudent parents, notwithstanding their affection, never encourage the whims of their children; whilst they take delight in the good qualities of their offspring, they are not blind to their defects, which they endeavour to correct with mildness and perseverance. The young people receive the instructions of their kind parents, with grateful respect, and grow every day wiser in listening to their good advice. They never allow themselves to believe these affectionate teachers can be in the
wrong,

wrong, they never, for a moment, think of them without the greatest respect. The parents undoubtedly are not perfect, but how should children, who have so little knowledge and experience, venture to blame them? the example of a good father or mother should be the hourly study of a child.

The respectable husband and wife, with all their own industry, and the assistance of their children, are sometimes obliged to have servants to help them in the labours of the field and the dairy; *they* are treated with so much kindness that they consider themselves a part of the family, and feel the same respect for their master and mistress that they have been

accustomed to cherish for their parents.

A family conducted in this manner resembles the human body. The parents are the head, the children and servants the members. The various parts of our frame have all their proper place, and particular use; some are of greater utility than others, but each is given to be of service to the rest; neither can hurt the others without injuring itself; 'tis alone by the union and agreement of every part that the body maintains its strength and usefulness. In the same manner the happiness and order of a family is kept up by the good conduct of all its members, or interrupted by the errors of any one of them.

them. The parents are careful to keep all in their duty; the example of their moderation is a check to the violence of some; their animation and industry, a stimulus to the activity of others who may be of an indolent disposition. They give to each a task suited to his strength and abilities, and happily unite toil and pleasure by providing every innocent enjoyment as a reward for industry. They find means to excite emulation without jealousy; and distribute reproof and commendation with tenderness and impartiality. Nothing can escape their notice, the enjoyments or sufferings of any of the family immediately become their own; all have a share in their affections; their servants are
faithful

faithful and affectionate in return for the care this good master and mistress take of their health, happiness, and morals. The same respect that is shewn to the worthy pair in their own house is willingly paid them by all the neighbours. Their honesty, industry, and obliging behaviour are at once rewarded, and brought to greater perfection by the applause they meet with. Their good character is the subject of general commendation. At market, people buy of *them* in preference to others, because their fruit is always of the best quality; in short, every body is glad to have dealings with them, as their reputation for probity and generosity is well established. All the neighbours

hours of such parents as these are desirous of having a son or daughter in law out of their family. A servant who, after faithfully serving this good master for some years, begins business for himself, is sure to succeed; his character is undoubted when he has lived in a house where nothing but examples and precepts of virtue have been given him. Every body is ready to sell him a piece of ground, or let him a little farm, knowing that he has been frugal and saved great part of the wages which were punctually paid him; instead of being in want of a situation, he is at a loss on which to decide out of the number that are offered to him, but his choice at last cannot be improper, as he is favoured

favoured with the opinion of his master before he determines.

How full of enjoyment must be the life of the amiable pair I have been describing; blest with competency, with the dutiful affection of their children, the fidelity and attachment of their servants, the gratitude of the poor and afflicted whom they console, and the esteem of every virtuous person, what could augment their happiness? The more their family encreases, the more they experience of the goodness of providence in giving success to their undertakings. Their example produces the happiest effects all around them; they have a double pleasure in the good actions performed by themselves,

selves, and those which are done by others who are formed on their model. Their virtues are communicated to the whole village, and strangers who wish to live in a scene of peace and affection are attracted to it. In all the little rural feasts this worthy couple are treated with peculiar respect; their gentleness, their affability preserve them from exciting the envy which is often raised by superior merit, and even were any one jealous of the attentions they received, the dread of exposing himself to universal contempt would prevent him from letting it appear. The innocence and calmness of their minds, the constant activity which keeps their cheerfulness unimpaired, and their unvarying temperance,

temperance, all banish sickness, and conspire to prolong their happy life.

These good people, however, must at last, grow old; they wish, before their death, to see all their children comfortably settled. The eldest son first calls for their attention; he has always been accustomed to industry; his work is a pleasure to him, and he is well acquainted with every part of his business. When he begins house-keeping, a companion is necessary, he feels the importance of making a prudent choice, he knows the value of a good wife, from being a witness of his father's happiness, and he resolves to be as good a husband as his mother is blest with. His kind parents watch his behaviour to the
young

young women in the neighbourhood, they observe that he is more attentive to one of them than the rest. Her virtues have engaged his esteem, and in a little while he feels the warmest affection. He is not attracted merely by her beauty, *that* may be destroyed by sickness: she will not be always young and handsome, but he ought always to love her, he therefore distinguishes this young woman, because her good humour and cheerfulness will be a source of continual enjoyment, when he can no longer admire the charms of her person; she is sensible and active; her love of economy and neatness will make her house the abode of comfort; her husband will have nothing to fear

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from

from her disagreement with the neighbours, for she is humble, generous, and a hater of scandal.

Nothing is wanting to make these young people fit for each other; the parents encourage their attachment, and the lovers talk with delight of the prospect that is before them. The wedding day arrives, all their friends accompany the young pair to church. The good clergyman reads the solemn service, which instructs them in the important duties they will have to perform, and the happiness they will be enabled mutually to confer. They promise, in the presence of the Almighty, to love each other with constancy, to partake of each other's pleasures and pains, and to be companions
and

and friends throughout their lives. Thus they are united with the consent of their relations, and the benediction of heaven; whilst all their friends are fervently praying for their prosperity and happiness. They return home, where a little feast is prepared; this entertainment is so conducted as to avoid a mean frugality, without being attended with great expence or needless profusion, which is so ruinous to many young people. The company are chearful, without senseless mirth; every thing is done with propriety and order. The repast is followed by a little dance; the young man and his bride are at the top, and the rest of the villagers place themselves after them; they all dance

with gaiety, but no confusion is to be seen in the assembly. The poor are not excluded from this happy scene, and their grateful prayers ascend to the author of every good gift for the generous pair. At night the guests retire, after renewing their wishes for the happiness of their young friends.

The new married couple take possession of their cottage; the parents of one have given them a few acres of land, those of the other, a little fortune in money. Both the young people are diligent and laborious, and with this provision they consider themselves rich. Their mutual affection and the good opinion of their friends increases every day. Content with what they possess, and grateful for
the

the goodness of heaven, they submit cheerfully to the unavoidable evils of life, and rejoice in the good-providence of God, continually watching over them and making even their afflictions beneficial.

Both the young man and his wife are as respectful to their father and mother-in-law as to their own parents—the leisure moments which they can spare from their various employments are devoted to the old people; they are proud of governing their conduct by the advice of friends, whose principles have procured for themselves so much happiness and respectability. They carry their little children to amuse them; assist in establishing their younger brothers

and sisters, and do every thing in their power to make the latter days of their venerable parents happy and free from anxiety: as the age and infirmities of the old people encrease, the attentions of their amiable children redouble. They bear with patience and good humour the fretfulness which declining health sometimes produces in their parents, and think they shall never be able to repay the kindness which has always been shewn to *them*. In this manner they sooth the pains of their dearest friends, and when the moment of separation comes, receive their dying blessing; and after a few sorrowing tears console themselves with the joyful

joyful hope of meeting them in a world of eternal happiness.

This representation of a virtuous family is not chimerical: we may often find it realized in countries blest like ours with liberty and good laws. There are few people who have not an opportunity of being instructed in their duties, and surely a very little reflection will convince us how much the performance of them contributes to the happiness of ourselves, and of all with whom we are connected.

We see in the family I have been describing, how great a gainer every one was by acting virtuously. The father and mother enjoyed every felicity this world could afford, and
added

added to the number of their enjoyments by enabling their children and dependents to possess the same pleasures, who by their obedience and active virtues had rendered themselves worthy of the reward they received. We can easily imagine how much it would have diminished the happiness of his family if any of the persons who composed it had pursued a different mode of conduct, I need not bring forward any examples to prove this, unfortunately our observation must continually remind us of the truth of this remark. It is astonishing that every one is not sufficiently convinced of the advantages of goodness to act as their consciences direct!

After

After having said so much of the happiness of a family united by virtue and affection, it may not be amiss to give an instance which I heard of the other day, an instance which perfectly exemplifies all that I wish to inculcate.

THE GOOD FARMER.

MR. Hollis, tired of the noisy insipidity of a town life, bought a little country house, in which he intended to pass his time in delightful tranquillity, devoting all his hours to study and to the performance of benevolent actions. His disposition, naturally
of

of a pensive cast, made him fond of walking alone in the most retired place; in a short time, he had visited all the environs of his dwelling. He one day prolonged his ramble till he found himself in a beautiful valley which appeared as if formed to inspire the most enchanting reveries. Surrounded with high mountains whose fertile sides presented a rich variety of vineyards, cottages, gardens, and groves, it seemed the abode of peace and rural felicity.

Mr. Hollis found a still greater charm in this situation than its natural beauties. Throughout the valley were several newly built cottages, with cultivated fields, a flower garden, and an orchard to each. These little
farms

farms were separated by a row of gooseberry bushes, which shewed the mutual confidence of the inhabitants, and the good use they made of their land. Mr. Hollis was rejoiced to see that one man had not engrossed this delightful plain; he dwelt with rapture on the idea of the number of families who were enjoying all the blessings of peace and abundance. Lost in these pleasing reflections, it was a considerable time before he perceived the heavy clouds that were gathering over his head. A violent shower, accompanied by several flashes of lightning, obliged him to seek for shelter; he ran and knocked at the door of the first house he could reach: a venerable looking, elderly
1 woman

woman opened it; she received him with kindness and hospitality. "I am delighted," said she, "that our cottage happened to be the nearest to you, tho' I am sure you would have met with a friendly reception from any of our children. As the storm overtook you in the middle of the valley, you could not have gone to any of these houses without finding some of our family.—But you are out of breath with running, sir; do take this chair, and recover yourself—I'll make up a good fire to dry your clothes."

Whilst she was lighting the wood, Mr. Hollis looked attentively at every thing in the room; he was charmed with the good order and air of com-
fort

fort which appeared in it. He was informed, by what the good woman said at his entrance, that great part of the valley was inhabited by her children; desirous of knowing more about them, he was just going to ask her some questions, when a voice from the next room said, "wife, are you taking care of the traveller?"—"Yes, yes, my friend, make yourself easy, I'll take care of him."

Mr. Hollis said, "that is your husband, then, that is speaking?"

"Yes, sir, he is in that room."

"Will you allow me to pay him a visit?"

"Certainly, sir, I don't think you will be sorry to know each other—pray go in."

D

Mr.

Mr. Hollis followed her into the next apartment where an old man was lying on a bed, the counterpane of which was beautifully clean and white. The good man's hair was like snow. His physiognomy, notwithstanding the great age he had lived to, expressed a serene and virtuous mind. A benignant smile played on his lips, and his eyes still retained their animation. Mr. Hollis, delighted with his appearance, approached the bed, and thus addressed the venerable man :

“ What is the matter my good friend—are you ill ? ”

“ No, sir, thank God, I am not ill ; but when a man is eighty years old, he can't be very strong, even with
tolerable

tolerable health ; however it is not long since I left off working ; and I should try to do a little more, if it would not afflict my children—but they say it is time for me to have done.”

“ They are in the right—after so many years of labor you ought to have some rest.”

“ Without boasting, I think I have been as active as most men ; I have filled many a sheaf, and gathered the fruit of many a tree—yes, sir, I have worked hard all my life, but in the midst of my labours I had always a cheerful countenance and a joyful heart, and I hope I shall continue as happy during the few days more I have to live.”

“ But after such an active life, how can you spend a whole day in bed, without being tired of having nothing to do ?”

“ Tired! oh there’s no fear of that; my body is still, to be sure, but my head is as busy as ever—I have enough to think of with nine children, and three and thirty grand children; I don’t find the day too long whilst I have so many persons to attend to. I enquire into the wants of the family, the affairs of each, and then I help or advise them. I have always one to set up in business, another to marry, and so on; all *that* makes plenty of work for me, as I consider every thing well before I undertake it; I have not established
one

one of them without being occupied with the affair a twelvemonth before hand. I have two grandsons and one of their sisters just going to be married now, and I hope they will be as happy as their parents."

"All your family turns out well, then?"

"Ah, sir! it does me good to talk of my dear children. Come, dame, give us a little of our old ale, it will give me strength to chatter about them."

"Have you many of them with you?"

"Only two grand-daughters; I can't lodge a whole army, but they all live very near me: providence has enabled me to settle them all in

a little farm without reducing myself to poverty. A good deal of land about us was to be sold; I got it pretty cheap; I set my children to cultivate it, and then divided it amongst them; they have all found it very productive."

"You have never had any trouble with so many children?"

"Sometimes, when they were ill; but I always restored them very soon by moderate diet and the use of a few medicinal herbs; those are the only occasions on which they have caused me any sorrow, for they have always been dutiful and affectionate.

"You have undoubtedly given them good examples."

"Why,

“ Why, in my youth I was as giddy as many other young folks, I liked amusement better than any thing else ; but when I had pronounced the sacred vow at the altar, I had done with all my follies. My wife was virtuous, gentle and handsome, I was always happy in her society. Then came our children--I was not rich, and had I been so myself I should have wished all my family to be so too ; I therefore accustomed my children to be industrious ; I took my boys to work with me in my grounds as soon as they could walk, sometimes the little fellows pulled up a few weeds and sometimes they only ran about whilst I was at work ; but they soon acquired a taste for rustic employ-

employments. My girls cheered me with their songs whilst they were busy with their distaffs, and all my children learnt to work hard, and enjoy the fruit of their labours."

"Do you often see them?"

"Oh yes, sir; when I was a little more nimble than I am now, I used to pay them all a visit once a week, and see how every thing was going on: now, as I don't go out, it is their turn to come to me; I see some of them every day, but on Sunday, after divine service is over, they come together, and bring their children with them. Ah! you would be pleased to see all my daughters about me, drest in white, and looking as beautiful as angels. Sometimes they are
half

half ready to quarrel for the old man's caresses, but it is easy to see they are never coquettish but with *me*. All their dear little brats are so charming too! I always have a dozen of them round me, some in my arms, some climbing up my chair, and making such a noise, it would stun you, but to me it is delightful music."

"I can believe it; you must indeed be very happy."

"Yes, and I flatter myself they are equally so; I love to see every body rejoice. I have a grass-plat behind my cottage on purpose for them to dance on. They often come when the evening is fine, and have some of the old-fashioned country dances that were admired when I was young;
I always

I always begin the entertainment by embracing my wife, and then the young folks crowd around us and after tenderly caressing their old father and mother, begin their healthful exercise ; sometimes I am ready to jump up and dance with them ; for joy makes me full as light as ever I was."

" Have you any violins in this part of the country."

" We have no need to hire musicians, some of my sons play the flute, and my grandson Alexis, the flagelet ; the little rogue is but twelve years old, and he plays so well that it is enough to make all the village dance to hear him.—Oh ! I wish you could see him, sir, he is the finest boy you

ever saw ; he is quite my little Benjamin, I assure you—I can say so to you, as you are a stranger, but I would not have any of the other children know that I had a favorite among them.”

“ The time must pass slowly when some of them are not with you.”

“ Not at all, I have many pleasures besides their company—I have been all my life in this part of the world ; I am as well acquainted with all the country for some miles round, as I am with my own farm, and I am intimate with all the inhabitants ; I remember many of them in their cradles ; they come to consult me about all their affairs ; when they are at a loss to know how their land should be cultivated,

vated, they bring me a basket full of the mould; I examine it, and tell them what it will produce best—if they are poor people I let them have some seeds, which they return me at harvest time. When they have too much to do, I engage one of the neighbours, who wishes to repay me for any little services, to give him a day's work, and by that means, make the gratitude of any body that I have obliged useful to my poor friends. I have known the time when none of the villagers would help each other, they were all trying to enrich themselves without scrupling to ruin their neighbours, if it would be to their own advantage; I have at last convinced them that the more prosperous they

they all are, the richer will each individual be; that their stock will sell better if buyers can be attracted to our valley by the abundance of each inhabitant, and therefore it is their interest to see others successful as well as themselves. According to the dryness of the season, or the quantity of rain, the productions of the low grounds are more advanced, or backwarder than those of the hills. I have persuaded them all to assist in getting in the harvest that is first ripe, and receive the help of their neighbours when their own is ready. This plan succeeds wonderfully; our corn and fruits are always preferred in the market, many people will even come to bespeak them before they are ready

for sale, whereas if there be but a small quantity of bad productions in a parish, it often prejudices people against all the rest."

"Your reflections are very natural, tho' few villagers adopt them, what led you first to think in this way?"

"Observation and experience; and besides, I have been well seconded by our curate, who is a sensible, good man; we talked over all my projects together, he approved them, and took every opportunity of giving weight to my advice. Mr. Rockliffe, your neighbour, adopted all my schemes of improvement, and his estate was soon very much altered for the better. He and the curate always

con-

consulted me when they read any thing on agriculture; if a new experiment were proposed I immediately set about it; when it succeeded I let my neighbours know how it was to be done; they would never have thought any discovery worth attending to, because it was mentioned in a book, but when I had tried a new plan, they readily came into it, and by following my directions, improved their land. My instructions to my young friends are contained in few words:—*work hard, and love your neighbours.*”

“ I suppose your influence has not been very serviceable to the lawyers.”

“ No, sir; I believe I have often prevented a law-suit. I might be as

rich as any counsellor, if I had but a shilling for every visit I have paid to give advice. There are frequently little disputes in a village about some trifle or other. If two of the inhabitants disagree when a piece of ground is to be divided between them, they ask my opinion; one of the parties sometimes has a son, the other, a daughter, who are on better terms than their fathers, when that is the case, I terminate the dispute by procuring the consent of the latter to unite the young people, and give them the land in question. When a proposal of that sort is rejected and neither will yield, I am carried to the place. I have it measured, and after examining the quality of every part,

endea-

endeavour to divide it to the satisfaction of each; if they don't appear contented with my arrangement, I invite them to come and dine with me the next day, and I give them some of my good ale, it is such a cordial that it is enough to warm their hearts and make them friends again. After our chearful meal, I represent to the disputants that a lawsuit would cost ten times as much as the land is worth for which they are contesting; that it would deprive them of their money, their time, their peace of mind, and of the happiness of loving each other. I point out the misfortunes of those who, instead of taking my advice, have brought themselves to poverty by enriching the lawyers.

By the time my first jug of ale is drank, they are willing to listen to my advice, and before another is half gone they are the best friends in the world. Thus, at the expence of a little trouble, and a dinner, I reconcile my neighbours, and make them happy."

"You are quite the monarch of the country."

"Why, to be sure I govern as absolutely on my bed as some kings do on their thrones; for I am feared as well as loved; look at this wall; do you see the names and dates that I have written with the point of my knife? When any of our neighbours deserve great commendation, I write their names strait, and when their
conduct

conduct has been very reprehensible I put the letters across. As Mr. Rockliffe and the curate sometimes pay me a visit, and all the country people resort to my room, this list is considered a public register; a name put crossways is such a disgrace, that the person is shunned even by the children; he must either alter his conduct, or lose all his associates; if he reform, I efface the mark of infamy, and he is enabled to regain his character. I have never had occasion to place more than twenty aslant, and out of that number only three remain, which will long be thought of as dreadful examples. On the contrary when the name is strait it is considered

ed an honor, which no sacrifice would be too great to retain."

" I dare say this method, simple as it appears, is very efficacious: and I admire the good use you make of your ale; in most villages it is a disturber of the public tranquility, but by your management it becomes a reconciler of enemies."

" It merits that honor for the services it has rendered me in my old age; for some years past whenever I have found myself weak or fatigued, a little of my ale has been my restorative; when I was young, I never drank any thing but water, and therefore a small quantity of any liquor that is stronger, does me the more

good now ; half a glass is sufficient to make me feel young again. I don't know whether you have grown thirsty with hearing me, but I have with talking, I think some of it would be very seasonable, and I should drink your health with pleasure. What can have got my poor wife, that she is so long in bringing it? Ah! sir, seventy-five years are heavier to carry than a mug of ale—but hush, I hear her coming.”

“ Yes, my good man, said the wife, here I am.”

THE OLD MAN, *raising himself.*
“ Come, Nancy ; pour us out a glass, my dear Nancy. You smile, Sir ; I like to call my good old wife by the name I used to give her when we
were

were young folks, and I went every summer's evening to meet the blooming girl under the great oak.—Your health, Nancy; and yours, sir.—Well, how do you like it?"

"It is very excellent, I prefer it to costly wines."

"Ah sir, it is like our hearts, warm and friendly—come wife, why don't you drink some: don't be afraid of its going too fast, I dare say it will last longer than we shall. Drink some, my Nancy, and let's see if it won't make you as gay as you were twenty years ago. My dear old woman, I love you as much as I did when we were courting.—If you are not married, sir, you undoubtedly mean to be.—Believe me, it is the wisest way
to

to behave so well to your wife that every day may make her as happy as your wedding-day: that is the way to avoid all the afflictions of age. Speak, dame, do you ever think with pleasure of the time when that ring was first put on your finger? I remember it well, I pressed your hand, and you gave me such a look, it went to my heart; ah! I can feel it there yet: to be sure, it was but sixty little years ago."

"They have passed very quickly," said the wife, "our best days are over, my friend."

"Well, we won't complain, Nancy; we are very happy; we have peace and plenty, and as much health as we can expect at our age. What
can

can we desire more? we have had all the enjoyments a long life could afford; when it closes we shall bid adieu to the world with serenity and resignation."

"Why," said Mr. Hollis, "should such melancholy thoughts intrude at a moment like this?"

"Oh! sir, death is not an object of terror to me; I have lived a long while, but not long enough to forget that I am mortal.

"Few people have so many comforts to leave as you, and yet death is not in general a welcome messenger; I should quit the present life with much more regret if I had employed it unworthily—if I had been idle and thoughtless—if I had neglected to do good when it was in my power—if I

were likely, in consequence of a faulty inattention, to leave my numerous family in vice and misery : instead of all these afflicting thoughts, I can enjoy the recollection of eighty years spent in useful labor, and in services which providence has enabled me to render to all around me. I see my children and grandchildren honest, industrious, and affectionate, beloved and respected by all the country. I shall leave my farm to my eldest son—he will be my representative when I am gone, and make his family and neighbours happy, as I have done. How consolatory are such reflections !”

“ But you will see the anguish of your children—the separation from them will be very painful !”

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“ They

“ They will certainly feel a great deal at losing me, but I hope I shall know how to console them. A countryman is better acquainted with the laws of nature than other people; every day he sees the old trees decay, and young ones grow up in their stead. Every year he witnesses the death of the vegetable creation beneath the icy hand of winter. When my children assemble round me I shall employ my last moments in presenting these ideas to their minds. I shall tell them that after giving me a long and happy life, the almighty shews his mercy in ending it before it is become burdensome by pain and sickness: that I am taken from them by a tender father who has prepared
for

for me, and for them, a scene of endless enjoyment. These considerations cannot fail to moderate their grief; they will be reconciled to my death when they find that I consider it a blessing."

"Courageous old man, how have you acquired so much resolution?"

"From the hopes of superior happiness in the world to which I am going."

"Then you have no dread of futurity?"

"Before I had studied the character of my heavenly father, I was afraid of him, but now his mercies inspire only confidence and love. Is not his goodness visible in every thing? He has even given his son to redeem us

from sin, and to promise us eternal happiness.—Oh, God of compassion! after so many mercies that thou hast bestowed on me, permit me still to supplicate for more; consider the dear companion who has been the partner of all my joys and sorrows; we have lived together, and, oh! grant that we may die together. How disconsolate would be my last days without the friend, who for sixty years has been my constant helper? Or how could her trembling steps follow me to the tomb? When she ceased to hear my feeble voice, all would be joyless solitude. Oh, my father! let not death separate us. May this only mercy which we can now ask, be granted. We wish not
to

to prolong our days, we are ready to resign our lives at thy command, but suffer us both, at the same moment to bless the hand which has guided us thro' this world, and together removes us to wait the glorious morn, when the resurrection of the just shall open a brighter scene before our eyes !”

The old man had raised himself up to address these words to his creator ; as he concluded them his head dropt on the pillow with weakness and fatigue. Mr. Hollis alarmed, called the wife to his assistance. From the beginning of her husband's prayer she had been kneeling in a corner of the room with her hands lifted up towards heaven. Mr. Hollis led her

to the bedside of the good old man, who in a few moments, banished their fears by opening his eyes, and giving a hand to each with a cheerful smile. The visitor thought it would be proper to leave him, that he might repose himself after this emotion. He expressed his gratitude to the hospitable pair, and went away, thanking God for giving him an opportunity of witnessing so much virtue.

THE HAPPINESS OF A PEASANT'S LIFE.

MR. RANCY AND MATTHEW.

“WELL, Matthew, how do you do? How do things go with you?”

“Ah! sir, you need not ask; people

ple in my situation can't expect much happiness."

"Who can expect it, then?"

"Can rich gentlemen, who live in town, make that enquiry?"

"Do you think we are happier than you?"

"I wish you would try our way of life for a little while; you would soon determine the question."

"I have been a great deal in the country, I know what a peasant's life is: I have likewise inhabited the town a long while, and therefore I can compare the different situations. I assure you, my dear Matthew, a countryman who like you, is above want, need not envy any class of men."

"I'll

“ I’ll wager the finest cow I have, that nothing would convince me of that.”

“ Take care, Matthew, or I shall have a chance of seeing it in my meadow.”

“ I should not think I was paying too dearly for an opinion which would give me so much pleasure.”

“ Well, let us talk the matter over; but first of all you must promise to answer my questions honestly; I will engage to reply to yours with equal frankness. I shall endeavour to convince you by fair argument and not by fine words.”

“ That is what I wish for; for I shall not yield to any thing but reason.”

“ You

“ You are very right, my friend. Now let me ask you in the first place, whether the idea you have of the superior happiness of the rich inhabitants of a town does not prevent you from enjoying as much comfort as you otherwise might.”

“ There may be something in that, I confess.”

“ As you cannot deny this weakness, it may not be improper to point out the unseasonableness of it. By inducing you to overcome it, I hope I shall be able to reconcile you to your condition, and even to convince you that the country affords greater pleasures than the town.”

“ I don't know how you will manage to do that.”

“ I can

“ I can prove that you have the advantage from your infancy.”

“ In what instances?”

“ In a great many instances the childhood of a peasant is happier than that of a prince.”

“ Point them out, if you please.”

“ With all my heart. Your mother was hardy and robust; she had found the benefit of exercise and of being exposed to the air in all seasons, and therefore accustomed you, from your birth, to run about in the fields and acquire health and gaiety: on the contrary, the ladies in a town are afraid of a breath of air, they destroy their own comfort by a foolish delicacy, and being equally tender of their unfortunate babes, confine them

them in close apartments when they ought to be playing in the open air ; this improper management weakens their bodies and depresses their minds."

" There is some truth in that, but they have other pleasures that make amends for the want of free exercise."

" I have never observed any, but tell me what you think they are."

" What ! is not a child happy, who has servants to wait on it, to sing it to sleep, to take it in their arms the moment it wakes, and to sooth all its little sorrows ?"

" All this is intended to make the child happy, altho' it is a method that never succeeds. You must own that an infant who is always lulled to sleep

sleep by the singing of his nurse, who cries if she is not ready to take him as soon as he awakes, and is caressed and fondled by every body when he is in an ill humour, will be miserable whenever he is deprived of these useless attentions; he will be unhappy if all his servant's time be not devoted to his whims; and in short, he will most likely grow up haughty, selfish, and fretful; all which will make him wretched without any other afflictions."

" You are right there; we are not in danger of acquiring these bad habits."

" Assuredly not; and whilst you are deprived of hurtful indulgence, you have every real want supplied by
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the care of an affectionate mother. Look into the meanest cottage, if there be a child, is he not the joy of his parents, and the object of their tenderest cares! when the family encreases none are neglected, they are all equally beloved and happy: instead of being left all day with servants, who, perhaps have no affection for them, the little cottagers are continually under the care of their tender parents; when summer calls forth the industrious pair to work in the fields, they behold with rapture, their blooming children, sporting in the shade. Can you then deny that the little rustics are happier than the rich man's children?"

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"No,

“ No, but at that age they are not capable of making the comparison and feeling their happiness.”

“ They can certainly feel it, tho’ they may not be aware that others do not enjoy the same pleasures, but you may see their felicity in the liveliness and joy that sparkles in their eyes, and the healthful colour that animates their rosy cheeks.”

“ You have argued well so far, but let us consider what our condition is, when we are grown up.”

“ Fair and softly, my friend, we have not yet examined the pleasures of youth. You have employments which give you health and spirits, and when your work is done, you can
without

without restraint, enjoy a thousand innocent amusements; whereas the children of the rich are frequently, after passing the first few years of their life in perfect idleness, and without suffering the least contradiction, obliged to spend the day in studies; the use of which is not properly explained to them, and which their indolence renders an intolerable burden; and to make themselves amends, they sigh after unseasonable pleasures which ought not to be allowed them."

" I can imagine that a country lad is as happy in working with his father in the fields all day, and playing on his pipe or dancing on the green, in the evening, as a gentleman's son who is discontented with his situation."

“ Then, Matthew, I have overcome your prejudices against your own state during childhood and youth?”

“ Yes, I cannot object to your reasoning hitherto. If you could as easily prove that a poor *man* may be happy!”

“ I don't think that more difficult. Let us imagine the cottager old enough to think of a wife; surely the country is much more delightful to lovers than the town, since the poets of every nation represent them as inhabitants of rural scenes; rambling in flowery meadows and reposing in shady groves. But, without attending to these poetic descriptions, consider how often the rich are unhappy
in

in their marriages. The young man takes a wife because his parents have found a person for him who is as wealthy as himself; or because he has seen her two or three times in a large company, and is charmed with her beauty without considering her disposition; and in this manner people come together who are very unsuitable, after a slight acquaintance."

"We don't do so in the country."

"And therefore you are more likely to love each other when you are married. Here the young people of the same village are intimate all their lives. As soon as they begin to think of each other for a husband and wife, they ask their parents advice; if their consent be given, the young

man and woman make known their mutual affection, and from that time study one another's temper, and learn to accommodate their own to it. If they have occasionally any little quarrel, it makes them more careful afterwards to avoid giving offence. In this manner the villagers are prepared to spend their lives together in comfort. The husband will return after the labours of the day to a home, made delightful by the presence of an affectionate wife, and the wife will impatiently count the hours till her beloved companion comes to enliven the evening with his conversation. The birth of children will afford them new employments and pleasures, and ever encrease their mutual love."

" I be-

“ I begin to be of your opinion. I have often felt what you have been describing, tho’ I could not have explained my feelings so well as you have done.”

“ You must likewise acknowledge that if the scene I have described would make you happy, a peasant enjoys more constant felicity than the inhabitant of a town.”

“ How so ?”

“ In a village the occupations are simple and regular, the husband and wife need not be long separated, whereas in town the variety of employments sometimes prevents them from enjoying each other’s society for weeks and months together.”

“ That must be very painful.”

“ Parental

“ Parental affection may be equally strong in each of the characters we are comparing, but the countryman has more ties to unite him to his children than the other; almost from their infancy, they can make themselves useful to him, by sharing the lighter parts of his labour. As they grow up they can all find work without the necessity of being scattered abroad to learn different professions or trades; when their father is old they support him by their industry, and give a charm to his latter years by their filial piety.”

“ You fill my mind with delightful hopes by this charming representation.”

“ It

“ It depends on yourself to realize it, my friend ; with all these blessings before you, nothing but contentment is wanting to make you truly happy.”

“ But still, sir, there are some things that I can't help wishing for, which are enjoyed in a town life.”

“ What are they, Matthew ?”

“ Is it not distressing to be obliged to work hard, when the rich are passing their time in feasting and amusements ; to see them dwelling in superb houses, beautifully ornamented, when we are living in miserable huts that they would hardly think good enough for their dogs ?”

“ You talk of the feasts and amusements of the town, but you don't consider that the persons who
continually

continually partake of those amusements are tired of themselves, or unhappy in their families."

"That may be the case: however, you will allow that it is more agreeable to live in their elegant houses than in our wretched cottages."

"Neatness and order will always make your houses comfortable, and besides, you are out of doors the greatest part of the day, and you certainly have the advantage then: the beauties of creation are a thousand times more enchanting than all the ornaments of their dwellings."

"Country scenes are undoubtedly beautiful, but from seeing them every day, they have lost a great part of their charms."

"I ex-

“ I expected you to say that, Matthew. If the majestic beauties of creation so soon lose their power, do you think that fine furniture, and splendid apartments would continue to give you pleasure ? No, my friend, the only exclusive enjoyment of a rich man is that of assisting the needy ; but the poor man can do good, tho’ not in the same way ; you can offer your distressed neighbour the consolations of friendship ; if you cannot relieve all his wants, you can sooth his aching heart with a pitying tear.--Be contented, my good friend, with the situation in which providence has placed you, and recollect that an humble sphere, whilst it deprives you of some pleasures, keeps you from innumera-

innumerable anxieties and temptations."

"Ah! sir, I am very glad I met you, tho' the dispute has cost me something. When shall I bring the forfeited cow?"

"No, no, my friend, keep it in your own meadow, and whenever you look at it, think of the motives you have to be grateful and happy."

THE INCREASE OF FAMILY.

THOMAS, the miller, went to pay a visit to his sister, who had been married three years, and lived about ten miles off. In the evening he was sitting with her and her husband before the
door,

door, and talking of different things, when a little ragged child, four or five years old, passed by them. Thomas observed the wretchedness of her appearance, and said to his sister, " what a pitiable condition that poor girl is in, she has scarcely any clothes to cover her ! it is a disgrace to the village for her to go about in such miserable rags ; her father and mother must be very idle and unfeeling."

" Alas ! replied his sister, she has neither father nor mother living. There are two more children in the same state ; for three months past they have done nothing but wander about without having any body to take care of them. At night they sleep under a tree or get into some

barn. When they are half famished they go and sit down before the door of one of the cottages; if a bit of bread be given them, they eat it with avidity, but they never ask for it; their father, a respectable man, who was brought to poverty by several long illnesses, just before his death, made them promise never to beg."

The good Thomas was extremely affected with this account. "It is shocking," said he, "for the poor little creatures to be left in such misery; I'll take them home, as nobody here has pity on them."

His sister and brother-in-law used every argument that would be likely to make him alter his intention; they
told

told him that he had children enough of his own; that he did not know the dispositions of these orphans, who had for some time led a life of idleness, in which they had probably learnt such bad habits as would never be overcome. They added, "consider, brother, how much trouble it would give your wife to have such an addition to the family."

Thomas was not one of those half-generous people who are deterred from a good action by a few difficulties; he neither gave himself the trouble to listen to, nor answer their objections.

He left them, and retired to bed. His compassion, and the project he was forming to relieve the children,

did not allow him much sleep, and his eyes were yet filled with tears of benevolence, when they were at last closed by a gentle slumber.

As soon as he was risen, the next morning he sent for the eldest girl, who was twelve years old.

“ I yesterday heard,” said he, “ that your father and mother were dead ; and I see by your clothes that they had not much to leave you.”

“ No sir, indeed we are miserably poor.”

“ Have you no relations who could take care of you ?”

“ We have some, but they are as poor as ourselves.”

“ Well, will you go with me, and be my little girl ?”

“ Oh !

“ Oh ! sir, how good you are.”

“ We are agreed then ; but I am going home on horseback, so that I can't take you all now ; as I saw your little sister the first I shall begin with her, bring her to me that I may become acquainted with her.”

The youngest child arrived in a few minutes. She appeared so gentle, and shewed so much gratitude to Thomas, that he immediately considered her his adopted child.

He took her on his horse, and went directly to the mill.

“ Whose little girl is that,” said his wife.”

“ Your's, Marjery,” he replied.

He then told her of his first seeing the child, and of the destitute situa-

tion she was in; of his compassion for her sufferings, and in short of his intention to bring her up amongst his own children.

All the while Thomas was giving his wife this account, the little girl clung about him, crying most piteously.

Marjery, who was as benevolent as Thomas, took the child on her knee, wiped away her tears, and endeavoured to console her—"come, my dear," said she, "don't cry any more; my husband has promised to be your father, and I will be your mother."

"But, Marjery," said the worthy miller, "this little one has a brother and sister, who are as much in want of our kindness."

"Ah!

“ Ah! my dear Thomas, I see what you are thinking of, well, go and fetch them.”

The next day the good man put the horse to his little cart, and went for the other two.

His wife, embracing him said, “ go, my friend ; the good providence which has given us these children to take care of, will not let us want bread to feed them with.”

Mr. Sackville, to whom the village belonged in which the poor little orphans lived, had heard of their good fortune. The cruel wretch sent one of his servants to the place : the man came up at the moment Thomas was putting the little girl and her brother into the cart, and taking
hold

hold of the bridle he cried out, "you shall not take these children away, their father died in debt, he owed Mr. Sackville ten pounds, they must remain here and work till they can pay it."

"Keep them, then, said Thomas, indignantly, but it shall only be till to-morrow; if I can have them for ten pounds, I will return immediately and fetch that sum. Poor little creatures, I love them the better for having to make this sacrifice."

He went home directly; brought the money the next morning, paid the debt, and took the children away.

I dare say, my readers, you will wish to hear what happened to them afterwards—fortunately I can give you

you the desired information, from the particulars of a conversation between Thomas and a person who was travelling that way some years after this adoption.

All the young folks were dancing one evening before the mill ; Thomas was sitting at the door. A traveller passing by stopt to look at the cheerful group, and said to the miller :—

“ Do all these children belong to you ? ”

“ Yes, sir ; I have ten living ; seven of them I had for nothing, and the other three I bought.”

“ Bought ! ”

“ Yes, sir, I had three for ten pounds.”

He

He told the gentleman the whole history; and concluded by saying, "thank God, neither my wife nor I ever repented; it was the best bargain we ever made in our lives."

"How do you maintain such a large family?"

"I don't wonder at your asking that question; for most people who have fewer children, earn little enough; but we find that many things can be done which seemed impossible before we made the trial. My industry may be owing to the necessity of getting a good deal. I have always been able by sobriety and hard working to help the poor a little."

"Are

“ Are not your children jealous of these strangers ?”

“ Strangers ! sir, there are none here : no distinction are made in the family—they all love one another most affectionately. Look at them, and try if you can guess which are my own ; I sometimes hardly know, myself—there, don't those two appear like the brother and sister of the others.”

“ Where is the eldest girl ?”

“ She has something else to do than to be amusing herself with the rest ; she must attend to her family.”

“ Is she married then ?”

“ Yes, to be sure, she is ; a young carpenter has taken her away : with what I gave them to begin house-keeping,

keeping, and with his wages they live very comfortably."

"Did you give her a fortune, then?"

"Certainly one can't let a daughter marry without doing something for her."

"But she was only an adopted child."

"What does that signify? she has procured me a pleasure which none of the others are old enough to give me: her little daughter already calls me grandpapa; you can't think how droll it seems."

Thomas then told the gentleman how well the other little orphans had turned out. The girl, said he, is now old enough to help Marjery in
the

the household business; her brother is the cleverest little shepherd in the county. Oh! if you knew how affectionate they are, and how I love them!"

The good man's eyes overflowed with tears as he finished his story. "Ah! Mr. Sackville," exclaimed he, with a smile of joy; "you might have had all this pleasure, and you sold it me for ten pounds—Silly man!"

THE PUNISHMENT OF PRIDE.

ROGER, the son of an honest countryman, had all his life shewn a strong desire to be a soldier. He was always strutting about with a

I

stick

stick over his shoulder; and he had made acquaintance with all the sportsmen in the country to have an opportunity of handling their guns.

When Roger was eighteen, a recruiting party went to his village, and he immediately enlisted. As his father had taken great pains to teach him to write and cypher well, he became so useful to the officers, that in less than two years he was made corporal, and afterwards sergeant.

A war broke out shortly after; in a little time he was promoted to a lieutenancy. He behaved so well on every occasion, that he was always chosen for any dangerous enterprize, in which he never failed to acquit himself

himself with equal prudence and bravery. It was remarked that he had so much influence over the soldiers, that none of them whom he had commanded, were ever known to give way in an engagement.

The general, having frequently observed his courage, gave him the command of a company, to excite the emulation of the other soldiers. By his good fortune, he performed several spirited actions in a battle, in which many of the officers had been vanquished, in consequence of which he obtained the rank of major.

His gallantry was often celebrated in the newspapers, and whenever the village curate saw his name, he ran to read the paragraph to the bro-

thers of Roger. It is not difficult to imagine how proud they were of being so nearly related to him: they never talked of him but with tears of joy; they almost thought *themselves* ennobled by his bravery and were continually thinking of the happy moment in which they should again see the beloved brother who did so much honor to the family.

Notwithstanding his good qualities, Roger had a detestable vice—he was intolerably proud. To hear him talk, one might have imagined nobody in the world was so brave as himself; he represented his own actions as a flatterer would have done those of a prince, whose favor he was seeking; he took to himself
all

all the glory of every engagement, and spoke with contempt of other officers who had as much merit as he.

After the war, his regiment was ordered to retire to a garrison town. In the way, Roger was obliged to go very near his native village; as soon as his brothers were told of this, they hastened, accompanied by all their friends, to meet him. They came up first as his soldiers were going to do their exercise.

“ Oh, my dear Roger! said the eldest, if our father were alive now, how happy he would be! I have sighed many a time for this day; heaven be praised, it is come at last!” So saying, he held out his arms and was going to embrace him.

The major, provoked that a peasant should presume to call himself his brother, repulsed him with contempt; saying, "you are very insolent to take these liberties with me."

"What!" cried the other, "don't you remember me? I am your brother William. You loved me once; 'twas you who taught me to plough when I was a boy!"

The major foamed with rage, and threatened to have his brothers taken up for impostors, if they did not go away.

The two amiable young men after having expected so much pleasure from the interview, returned home overwhelmed with grief, that a brother

ther whom they had loved so tenderly should profess not to know them.

The soldiers durst not tell the major how much they detested his conduct, but amongst themselves they talked very freely about it. "Surely," said they, "a man must have a very bad disposition, to be ashamed of his honest relations. Is our major unwilling to acknowledge that he has been a poor man like one of us? He ought rather to be proud of having risen by his merit, than of being supposed to have been always a great man."

Roger had not sense enough to be of their opinion. Instead of thinking with pleasure of the time when he had been a common soldier, he imagined

gined that his haughty behaviour would even make his men forget it. He treated them with the greatest contempt; but, instead of acquiring respect by this conduct, he only made himself an object of ridicule. His advancement, which had formerly given them pleasure, they now considered a mortification; they obeyed him unwillingly, and would very gladly have changed their officer.

One day when he was reviewing them before the general, the latter made some observation on his mode of commanding, which Roger resented in the most insolent manner. His pride had already disgusted several of the superior officers, and this inroad on military subordination was punished

punished with great severity. His insolence before the court-martial rendered his disgrace inevitable. He was degraded from his command, and turned out of the army without having any resource.

In this unhappy situation, obliged to starve, or to work for his bread, he returned to the parish in which he was born.

The country people, having heard of the manner in which he had treated his brothers, despised him; and as he thought it beneath a man of his consequence to take any pains in cultivating the friendship of clowns, nobody would take notice of him; and thus by his pride, he lost the
only

only comfort that could have made him forget his disgrace and poverty.

He had no hope left but from the generosity of the brothers he had used so ill. You will perhaps expect that they were glad of an opportunity to be revenged; we certainly could hardly have pitied him if they had returned his unkindness; but these worthy young men were too noble to take advantage of his misfortunes; they were incapable of any revenge but that of loading him with benefits. Roger had long since received his share of their father's property; his brothers were so generous as to give him a large part of their land. This he was obliged to cultivate for his
liveliness;

livelihood; whenever he was engaged in this work which he had formerly despised, he thought with the deepest regret of the high station he might still have occupied, if he had not forfeited it by his insolence. How severely did he suffer in being supported by the persons he might then have enriched. "Cursed pride!" he exclaimed, "how hast thou degraded me!"

All his happiness was destroyed by these humbling reflections; and he died soon after in the most dejected state of mind.

May his fatal example be a warning to every one who feels tempted to indulge so dangerous a vice!

THE DEATH BED.

WELFORD, a poor bricklayer in the country, had been a widower some months. The expences attending his wife's long illness, together with the loss of his work during the wet season, had reduced him to great poverty. He looked with anguish on his children half naked and almost famished, and poor old Susan, his mother, lying in the corner of the room on a little straw, in the agonies of death.

Distressed beyond measure, he sat down on a broken chair and dried
his

his flowing tears, by putting both his hands before his face.

His mother called him; "my dear son," said she, "have you nothing you can cover me with? I am dreadfully cold."

"I'll put my coat over you, mother."

"No, no, my son I won't have it indeed; if you take cold and are ill, what will become of the poor children? Lay a little straw over the blanket, *that* will make me warmer—but have not you some wood to make up a fire, for these shivering babes? You cannot go into the forest now, you are always attending me. Alas! my life is very long, I am only a burden to you!"

K

"Pray,

“ Pray, do not say that, mother. Ah ! could I but restore you ! but you are suffering from cold and hunger, and I have no means of relieving you.”

“ Do not be afflicted, my dear friend, my pain, I thank God, is not violent : it will soon be over, and my blessing and prayers will be the reward of all that you have done for me.”

“ My dear mother ! you could always supply my wants in my infancy ; and now I must behold your old age a prey to misery ; oh ! it makes my heart bleed !”

“ It is not from any fault in you, Welford ; and now my days are nearly ended, I want very little. My
heavenly

heavenly father will give me all that is needful. I thank you, my son, for your affection, it supports my resolution in my dying hours."

"What, my dear mother, have you no expectation of recovering?"

"No, I am convinced this illness will be my last."

"Oh! how you afflict me."

"Be comforted, I shall live in a better world by-and-by. My son, you have been the joy of my younger years, and now you are my comfort in my last moments. I shall soon be released from my sufferings, and when we meet again we shall have done with sorrow and pain; think of that when I am gone, and trust to the mercy of our creator."

“ Oh ! my mother, I will try to be resigned to my afflictions.”

“ There is but one thing that makes me miserable.”

“ What is it, mother ?”

“ I will tell you, Welford ; I must tell you, for it afflicts me very much. Yesterday, Francis hid himself behind me, and took some apples out of his pocket : he gave some to his sisters who likewise ate them secretly. The apples were certainly not ours, or Francis would have thrown them on the table and called the others to partake of them. He would have brought some to me too ; I remember how often he has run and thrown himself into my arms when any thing had been given him, and
said,

said, " come, grandmamma, eat some with me." Oh! Welford, if your child should be a thief! the thought has made my heart ache all day. Where is he? bring him to me."

Welford instantly fetched the child and put him down by Susan. The poor woman raised herself with difficulty, and taking hold of his hands, she leaned her head on his shoulder.

" Grandmamma," said he, " what is the matter; you have not called me to see you die?"

" My dear Francis, I must die very soon."

" No, not yet, grandmother, don't die till I am grown up; I must go out to work then, and I shan't miss you so much."

Susan's head fell back, Welford and his little son looked at each other and burst into tears; then each of them took one of her hands.

She revived a little and said, "I am better now I lie down."

"Then you won't die, grandmother?"

"Be comforted my dear, I am not afraid to die. I have a tender father, in heaven; he will take me to live with him, and I shall be always happy."

"I wish I could die when you do."

"No, no, my dear Francis, you must not wish to die when I do. If it be the will of God you will live a long while, I hope you will be a good man, and when your father is as old
as

as I, you'll be his comfort and support, won't you, Francis? Always obey, and be desirous of pleasing him. You see how attentive he is to me; will you promise to be so to him?"

"Yes, that I will, grandmother."

"Remember your promise, my child; God, who rules in heaven and earth sees all our actions, do you know that?"

"Yes, you have often told me so."

"Then how could you think it was possible to hide yourself from him when you went behind me yesterday to eat the apples you had stolen?"

"Forgive me, my dear grandmother, I will never do so again all my life, indeed I never will."

"It

“ It is true, then, that you stole those apples?”

“ Yes,” replied Francis, sobbing.

“ Who did you take them from?”

“ Our neighbour, Leonard.”

“ You must go to him, Francis, and entreat him to forgive you.”

“ Oh! Grandmother, pray don't send me, I dare not go.”

“ Indeed, my dear boy, you must, if it be only to prevent you from doing such a dreadful thing again. For goodness sake, my child, never take any thing that is not your own, even when you are in the greatest want. God will never forsake you if you pray to him and trust to his goodness.”

“ Ah!

Ah! Grandmamma, I will never steal again, I promise you. I will rather die of hunger."

"May God bless you, my love, and make you a good child."

(Susan embraced her little grandson with tears). "You must go to Leonard and ask his forgiveness. Tell him that I beg he will pardon you; Welford, go with him, say that we are very sorry we cannot make restitution for what the child has taken; tell him we will pray to the Almighty to make him and his family happy. Alas! they are almost as poor as we are, and if Hannah did not spend the whole day and great part of the night in working, they could not get victuals for such a number of children.

dren. My dear son you will work for them a day or two, as we cannot pay for the apples."

"That I will do with all my heart."

Just as Welford said this, somebody knocked at the door; it was the steward of Mr. Johnson, a gentleman who had a house in the neighbourhood. Welford went to speak to him, and returned to his mother with a joyful countenance.

Susan enquired what had happened.

"Ah! my dear mother," said he, "how happy I am to tell you. I rejoice more for your sake than my own. It is the most providential circumstance, in this bad season."

"Are

“ Are you saying what is true, my son, or do you only wish to make me happy ?”

“ I assure you, mother, I have said nothing but the truth. Our good neighbour, Mr. Johnson, who has not been here these three years, is just come: he heard how wretched we were at this part of the country; he intends to give us employment enough to maintain our families: he is going to build a new house, and the steward came to engage me for one of the workmen; I shall get two shillings a day !”

“ Is it possible !

“ It is true, indeed; we shall have work for more than six months; we are to begin on Monday.”

“ Well,

“ Well, I shall die happy, now you have bread for yourself and the children! death has no longer any terror.—Oh God! thy tender mercies are over all thy works, continue to bless my dear children—my son, you now believe what I have always said; that the more we are afflicted, the nearer is divine help and consolation.”

“ Yes, my dear mother, I shall never doubt it again—you seem a little better, I will leave you a moment, and fetch some straw to put over you.”

“ No, I am warmer now: run to Leonard with Francis; that is the first thing to be done, pray don't defer it, Welford.”

Welford took Francis by the hand, and in going out, beckoned to Jenny.

“ Take care of your grandmother,” said he, “ if she should be worse, send Betsey to fetch me.”

Leonard was out at work, Hannah, his wife was alone in the house.” She remarked that Welford and his son had tears in their eyes.

“ What is the matter neighbour? you are weeping; and you too, Francis.”

“ Hannah, I am very unhappy! This child, who was almost starved, took some of your apples out of the loft yesterday; my mother saw him eating them—my mother, on her death-bed, entreats you to pardon him; I cannot, at present, pay you for
L them,

them, but I will as soon as I begin to work."

"Oh! it is a trifle, Welford, don't mention it; and you, my little friend, promise me never to take any thing again that is not your own. Come, give me your hand, I hope I shall see you as good a man as your father some day."

"Forgive me, Hannah, I'll promise never to steal any more."

"That's a good boy! You did not consider, my dear, what a crime you were guilty of. When you are hungry come to me, and whilst I have a morsel you shall share it with me."

Welford. "Thank God, I hope we shall not want again: I shall have
several

several months work at Mr. Johnson's house."

"So I have heard; I am very glad of it."

"I am less rejoiced for myself than for my poor mother; she will at least have some consolation before she dies.—Tell Leonard I shall work joyfully to repay what the child has taken."

"Oh, don't say any more about it, I am sure my husband will not grudge the apples. We have hardly any thing to do neither; I hope Leonard will have some of the carpenter's work.—And so Susan is very bad—I will go and see if I can be of any use to her."

Hannah fetched some apples and pears that she had dried in the sun, filled little Francis' pockets with them, and then went with him to Susan. She gave her hand to her sick friend, and turned her face away. Susan observing her emotion, said :

“ Hannah, you are shedding tears !”

“ I am grieved to see you so ill.”

“ Ah! my good friend, it is we who should be grieved ; will you forgive us? it is the first time such a thing has happened in our family.”

“ In a child it is very excusable.”

“ But if it should grow into a habit !”

“ No, no, I'll answer for him, he will be a good boy. After the pains
you

you have taken to bring up your family virtuously, it is impossible any of them should turn out ill.—Tell me freely if you are in want of any thing that I can give you; every thing in our house is at your service.”

“ Ah! grandmamma, see what Hannah has given me; do try to eat a little.”

“ No, thank you, my child I can't eat. All my strength is gone; my eyes grow dim. Welford, come to me, and let me bid you farewell.”

Welford, in an agony of grief, threw himself on his knees by his mother's side, and pressing her hand, with his eyes raised towards heaven, he attempted to speak, but his words were lost in sobs.

“ Do not be so distressed, my son, we shall soon meet in a better world. We shall meet, never to part again.”

Welford was consoled by these words. “ Give me your blessing, my dear mother,” said he ; “ I will be resigned to the will of our creator, and endeavour to fill up your place by imitating your good example.”

Susan opened her dying eyes and pronounced these words:

“ Hear my prayer, heavenly Father, and grant thy blessing to my dear son, the only one thou hast left me, the object of my tenderest love. —Welford, may the Almighty preserve you ! May your children make your old age as happy as mine has been rendered by you !—Listen my son,

son, to my last advice; teach your children to love truth; accustom them to a life of industry, that if they are poor, they may not be helpless and give way to despair. Instruct them in the ways of holiness, and inspire them with confidence in God. Teach them to love one another, and be firmly united, that they may comfort each other in the afflictions of life."

(Susan stopt a moment to recover her breath, and then continued:)

"My son, give me the bible out of that box. (*She pressed it to her heart.*) This is the only treasure I have to leave.—Now bring the children to me."

Welford fetched them from a corner of the room where they were leaning

leaning on each other and crying. They kneeled down by their grandmother; she feebly raised herself to look at them, and said :

“ My dear children, I am grieved to leave you poor and motherless. Think of me when I am gone, my loves. I have nothing to give you but this book : take it then ;—it has been my consolation ; let it be yours. Read a little of it every evening to your father ; it will teach you your duty to God, and to your neighbours. Farewell ; my children, love one another, and be dutiful to your dear father ; and then you will always be happy. I have nothing to give you, my son, to keep me in your remembrance,

brance, but it is not needful, I am sure you will never forget me."

"Hannah, you have promised to forgive our Francis—may I ask another favor of you? It is to look after these children a little when I am dead; poor babes! they have no mother. Let me ask your kindness, especially for my poor little Jenny, the youngest of the dear children—where is she?—I cannot see her—my sight fails. (*She raised her arm*) guide my hand to her—Oh my children!"

Susan breathed a gentle sigh, and expired.

After a moment's silence, Welford thinking she had fallen asleep, said to the children:

"Get

“ Get up softly, don't make any noise, lest you should disturb her; Oh! if my mother should recover!”

Hannah saw that her life was gone, and undeceived the affectionate son.—What was the distress of all the family! they wept, they clasped their hands; and embraced the corps of their beloved friend!

Hannah did all she could to comfort them. She repeated to Welford the pious words of his mother, and entreated him to bear his affliction with christian fortitude.

The kind Hannah fulfilled her promise, she took the children every day to be with her own; they were attentive to her and their father's instructions, and in a little while became
examples

examples to the whole village. Francis, who never forgot his first error, was particularly careful all the rest of his life to distinguish himself by the strictest integrity.

THE LITIGIOUS BROTHERS.

A FARMER, named Basil, left two sons, Stephen and Joseph. At his death they inherited an estate which made them tolerably rich. They were in want of nothing, and might have been very happy, if they had continued to cherish the friendship, intended by nature to be the support and happiness of every family.

Amongst

Amongst other possessions that devolved to them, was a very fine garden; their father had been all his life improving it by planting trees of the most delicious fruit. Both the brothers knew the excellence and productiveness of these plantations, and neither of them would give up the garden to the other.

This selfish obstinacy gave rise to a mutual jealousy and hatred. From this time they never met without quarrelling. "You are a bad man," said Stephen, "you don't deserve such a garden." Joseph would answer in a rage, "what do you mean, you worthless fellow? has not your drunkenness always been an affliction to my father? What would become
of

of these trees in your idle hands? In two or three years they would bear nothing but leaves!"

The village curate was informed of this dispute, he went directly to the brothers, and endeavoured to reconcile them: "Why, my friends, do you quarrel in this manner?" said he, "what should prevent your living together? Must this garden separate, instead of uniting you? Can you not cultivate it together, and share the fruit between you?"

"That is not my plan," answered Stephen, "I chuse to have it all to myself."—"And *I* chuse to have it all to myself," repeated Joseph.

"Let the most reasonable yield," said the curate, "and he will soon
M make

make up the loss by working hard at the rest of his grounds."

"I won't give it up," cried one; "I have the greatest right to it, for I am the eldest."

"I don't care for your age," replied the other, "I have set my heart upon it."

"You may set it off again, for you shall never have it."

"Since you are both so obstinate, you had better decide by drawing lots."

"I will not trust to chance."

"Nor I, neither."

The curate advised them to sell the garden and divide the money they got for it—this proposal was likewise rejected."

"I see,"

“ I see,” said their worthy pastor, “ that nothing can overcome your selfishness. You will soon find of how many miseries ill-will is the source, amongst persons who ought to love, and make each other happy.”

The brothers were not alarmed at the prediction, each of them chose a lawyer, whom he considered the most clever at quibbling.—Such was the beginning of a law-suit, which one should suppose would have been easily decided, but which, by the artifices of the lawyers, lasted two whole years. If one made an estimate of the ground, the other protested he had not given the real value. Every month some fresh difficulty arose to protract the business; the

M 2 garden

garden was of course neglected during this time; as the brothers never could agree on the manner of cultivating it; if one wished to plant an apple-tree, the other wanted to put a gooseberry bush in the same place—the discordancy of their minds made every thing go to decay. The trees that had formerly been so fruitful, scarcely yielded half their usual produce; and the little they got by that, instead of supporting their families, was all devoted to the lawsuit.”

Both of these litigious brothers had a lovely wife and several children, whose society would have made them completely happy, had their minds been tranquil and virtuous.

Their

Their amiable wives would frequently embrace them with tenderness, and say, “ why, my dear friend, do you make yourself so unhappy? we have every thing that heart can wish. You are robust, my health is not bad—we have the best children in the world—we have some good land, and in a little while, if they were properly cultivated, we might be rich; why *will* you be miserable?”

“ How can I be otherwise,” they would reply, “ whilst I have such a wretch of a brother? I shall die with vexation.”

When their pretty children were running up to them, they used to cry out, “ what do you want? Leave me to myself; I am too angry to be

amused with your prattle." If the poor little creatures tried to soften them by their innocent playfulness, the cruel fathers repulsed them with frowns, and sometimes with blows.

At their meals nothing suited their appetite; at night they were kept awake by their irritation, and desire to injure each other.

This was not all. The unnatural brothers said every thing they could think of to give their neighbours a bad opinion of each other's character.

When Joseph was with the other countrymen, he endeavoured to make them believe that his brother was a quarrelsome man, who only wanted to ruin him, and get his fortune, that he might be able to oppress them.

As Stephen did not fail to speak of Joseph in the same manner, their neighbours thought them equally guilty. Every body shunned them as dangerous men, and not one of their former acquaintances but would now have rejoiced to have sent them out of the county.

After two years spent in this foolish quarrel the brothers were sentenced to sell their garden, and pay the remaining expences of the law-suit with the money.

I leave you to imagine their confusion when this sentence was pronounced: they stood looking at each other with open mouths, unable to express their astonishment.

At

At length Joseph exclaimed, "Well! we have deserved this misfortune; it was our own fault that we did not avoid it. We might still have had our garden and our money too; instead of all the anxiety we have caused each other, we might have given happiness to our whole families, and enjoyed the esteem of all our neighbours."

"True," replied Stephen, "we have lost all that by our folly—Ah! if we could undo what we have done!"

"We will be wiser in future," said Joseph, "come, brother, give me your hand and let us be friends."

"With all my heart," answered the other, throwing his arms round
Joseph's

Joseph's neck.—They embraced each other, wept together, and felt all their former tenderness.

They lived together, from this time very harmoniously; but felt, for a long while, the bad effects of their misconduct. Their garden was flourishing in the hands of strangers, whilst their own grounds, from having been so long neglected, were very much decreased in value. They were continually mortified by the raillery which was pointed at them, and they did not find it easy to recover the confidence and esteem of their neighbours. The avarice of their lawyers had emptied their purses; fatigue and anxiety had worn out their health; their children accustomed to unkind treatment,

ment, had lost their charming gaiety, and their wives found it impossible to respect the voluntary authors of so much misery, so much as they had done before this unfortunate law-suit.

THE DREADFUL EFFECTS OF REVENGE.

TWO neighbours, Barton and Dolland, lived, during several years, in the most intimate friendship. If one of them wanted seeds or tools, or even money, the other was glad of an opportunity to lend him some. When Dolland was in a hurry to get any of his business done, Barton's hands were always at his service. If Barton had occasion to send to the town, Dolland

Dolland was always ready to undertake the journey. Neither of them ever had any enjoyment unless his friend partook of his pleasures. They were continually together, and in short, their affection was admired by every body.

One evening as they were returning from market, being overcome with fatigue and thirst, they went into a public house, which happened to be in their way home. I never could find out what it was about, but Barton, who had drank rather too freely, rallied his friend Dolland, and made every one present laugh at his expence. Enraged at Barton's jokes, Dolland left the house and continued his journey alone.

When

- When Barton came to himself he felt how improperly he had acted.
- He could not get an hour's sleep all night, and before the sun was risen he went to Dolland's house, asked his forgiveness, and promised to be more cautious in future. Dolland was still so angry that he would not listen to his friend's apologies, and he drove him out of the house, after the bitterest reproaches.

His resentment would probably soon have been over, if he had not been still more irritated, by the falsities of some of the neighbours, who interfered in the quarrel. When Barton found that was the case, he gave over all hope of reconciliation. Dolland's hatred became so strong, that

that he was as anxious to injure Barton as he had before been to serve him. He was sometimes so overdone with work, that it was hardly possible to get through it, and altho' by a single word he could have procured the cheerful assistance of Barton, he could never conquer his obstinate resentment sufficiently to request it; he rather chose to let his plantations be hurt for want of culture, and his health injured by excessive labor. His repasts were now solitary and joyless, for his friend no longer partook them. The most pleasing objects had lost their charms, since he had ceased to enjoy them with Barton. He spent the long winter evenings in lonely discontent; formerly

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they

they were too short for the delightful conversations of the two intimates. Dolland's heart used to beat with rapture when he heard his friend approach; after the quarrel he always ran from the window, lest he should see him.

Having conceived such a violent dislike to Barton, he imagined that Barton equally detested him; and whenever any damage was done to his orchard or garden, immediately imputed it to him; and every day his aversion became more rooted.

One night, just as Dolland had fallen asleep, his window was broken. The noise did not awake him; but when he rose the next morning, and saw what had happened, he felt convinced

vinced that Barton had done the mischief; he walked about his room like a madman, uttering a thousand curses, and declaring he would be revenged. At that moment Barton by chance passed the door. Dolland, transported with rage, flew out, seized him by the collar, and cried, "villain! you have broken my window; you shall pay dearly for it."

Barton justly incensed at this treatment, answered him with warmth, which increased Dolland's passion to such a degree that he abused him in the most violent manner, and gave him several blows.

All the villagers gathered round the disputants, they were indignant to see the furious behaviour of Dolland,

land, and some of them fetched a constable to take him up.

When he was in confinement, he began a prosecution against Barton for attempting to assassinate him—in the indictment he accused him of breaking open his window, with a design to murder him in his bed; which had only been prevented by some noise which frightened him away. The affair was taken up seriously, and the officers of justice were going to put Barton in prison, when fortunately they discovered that the window had been broken by a drunken man. Some country people from a neighbouring hamlet who were going through the village at the time, saw the man fall against Dolland's house,

house, and afterwards took him home, and gave his wife an account of the accident. Dolland was extremely sorry to make this discovery. At first he would have given every thing he was worth, if he could have convicted Barton, but at last, after a violent struggle in his feelings, he exclaimed, "Ah! whither has this dreadful fury led me! my dear Barton; my good old friend, how infamously I have treated you—I have accused you of being an assassin—I have attempted to bring you to an ignominious death!"

Overwhelmed with shame and remorse, he sent one of the gaoler's children to entreat the injured man to visit him. Barton went immediately

diately to his prison, and Dolland fell at his feet, supplicating his forgiveness in the most humble manner.

Barton was affected with his repentance, and freely pardoned him. Their friendship was renewed, and Dolland hoped he should again taste of happiness ; but in his ungovernable rage, the morning after the window was broken, he had given his friend a blow on the stomach, which, tho' at first it did not give him much pain, was in a short time the cause of his death.

Dolland from that time never enjoyed an hour's felicity. He became a prey to heart-rending sorrow and remorse.

Law-suit between Neighbours.

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FARMER ROBIN, AND MARTHA, HIS WIFE.

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(Robin entering the room.)

“ NO, I shall never rest on my pillow till I am revenged.”

“ What is the matter, my dear friend? I have never seen you in such a passion before !”

“ You wonder at my anger, because you are a woman. I am a man—I ought to have spirit.”

“ But what are you so provoked about? has any body injured you?”

“ Leave me alone! I am not going to tell the case to you, but to a lawyer,

lawyer; if it should cost me fifty pounds, I swear to get my rights."

"I can't tell what you mean, Robin, pray explain yourself."

"The rogue! to steal my fruit in full daylight!"

"You should be very certain before you accuse people of such a thing."

"As if I did not see his wife take her apron full!"

"After all, will you tell me whom you are talking of?"

"Be kind to people, and this is the way they reward you for it!"

"What! can it be——."

"Yes, those two wretches to whom we have done so many services."

"Our poor neighbour William, and his wife?"

"It

“ It becomes you to pity them, to be sure !”

“ What, did you find them in our orchard taking the fruit ?”

“ No ; I did not say that ; I was speaking of the fruit that is on those trees by the hedge, that separates his bit of ground from our orchard ; the wind has shaken off some of the apples on their side, and they have the assurance to take them.”

“ Is that all ?”

“ All ! what would you have more ?”

“ We are rich, my friend, they are very poor.”

“ And so because we are rich, we are to let people rob us !”

“ Would you distress the good people for such a trifle ?”

“ Very

“ Very good people, to take my fruit !”

“ They did not think they were doing wrong ; they could not suppose it a crime to pick up what fell in their own garden.”

“ Do not the trees belong to me ?”

“ Certainly.”

“ Can any other man in the world pretend that they belong to him ?”

“ Undoubtedly not.”

“ Well, then, what do you mean by talking such nonsense ?”

(Martha, *embracing him.*) “ If you would listen to me a moment, without being so angry ——.”

“ No no, I shall not listen to your prating ; the law shall determine for us ; the thieves will soon hear more
of

of this affair. If I don't see the lawyer in an hour ——."

" You don't mean what you say, Robin."

" I do mean it ; I can think of nothing else."

" Let me entreat you to stop till to-morrow, you will then see things in a different light."

" I see it very clearly—we have two or three London lawyers here now ; the first I meet with shall undertake the business."

(He opens the door and looks out.)

" Ah ! here is one coming. Now you'll see whether I can't go on with any thing I take in hand."

" My dear husband, be careful, I
beg

beg of you before you begin a law-suit, consult some honest man."

"Do you think nobody but a rogue would undertake my cause? I am much obliged to you."

He goes out at the door, and presently returns with a lawyer.

ROBIN. "Step in a minute, Mr. Ingram, I want very much to consult you."

"It is an affair of great consequence, then?"

"There is no time to be lost; I must begin my law-suit directly. I was just going in search of some attorney, when fortunately, you came up. I am very glad you were the first I saw."

"I am

“ I am much obliged to you, for your good opinion.”

“ Now, Sir, I'll tell you what the business is, that I want you to assist me in.”

“ Let me hear, I shall be glad if I can be of any use to you.”

“ Martha, go and fetch us a bottle of that wine that stands on the right hand side of the cellar.”

“ No, don't go,” said Mr. Ingram, “ it is quite unnecessary.”

“ Do as I bid you, Martha—Mr. Ingram it will give us spirits for our work. Will you eat something too?”

“ I am very much obliged to you, but I am neither hungry nor thirsty.”

“ What, do you refuse a bit of good ham?”

o

“ Yes,

“ Yes, I would rather be excused. Tell me how I can serve you.”

“ It is to conduct a lawsuit for me.”

“ A lawsuit! you surprize me, Mr. Robin! you have the reputation of being such a peaceable man.”

“ So I am, sir; but I won't be imposed upon for all that.”

“ No, there is no occasion for that.”

“ I am glad to see you favorably inclined. You shall not repent of having undertaken my cause.”

(He slips a guinea into Mr. Ingram's hand.)

“ What do you mean by that, Sir?” said Mr. Ingram, gravely; “ take your money back, or I have nothing to do with you; if your cause be good, you will pay me when I have done the business;

business; if it be otherwise, you will have nothing to pay me, for I will give you no assistance."

"It is good, I assure you.—For three months past I have been in possession of that little estate that my uncle left me."

"Yes, I know it."

"I have several fruit-trees in my garden, some of which grow in the hedge. I keep the hedge in repair, consequently it is mine, and every thing it produces."

"Oh, I understand, your neighbours dispute your right to the hedge."

"No they are more artful; they leave me in possession of the trees, and take away the fruit."

“ You don't explain it properly, Robin,” said Martha.

“ Hold your tongue. Who spoke to you? Mind your own business; women have nothing to do with things of this kind.”

“ But you don't represent it fairly. —(*Turning to Mr. Ingram;*) Sir, our poor neighbours only pick up the fruit that falls into their garden.”

“ Do you think I could not have told Mr. Ingram, as well as you?”

“ Is that all you have to complain of?” said the lawyer.

“ It is quite enough, I think. Is not it a robbery to take away my apples? We'll see how William can get out of the scrape; I am resolved he shall be punished as a thief.”

“ Instead

“ Instead of a thief, your neighbour must be a very honest man, to content himself with the fruit that falls, for he has a right to consider all the branches that hang over his garden, as his own property.”

“ Did you understand me, sir? the hedge is mine; all the trees are mine, and of course the fruit must belong to me.”

“ All that hangs on your side belongs to you; but the branches that extend over your neighbour's garden, are his.”

“ The roots are in my ground, I ought to have all the produce.”

“ The branches are on his, and consequently would prevent him from planting any trees at that part.”

“ Why should he have the fruit of my labors ? ”

“ Why should his trees be prevented from growing by yours ? ”

“ We shall see what the law says. ”

“ It is against you, depend upon it. It allows William to gather all that is on his ground ; and if he please to take it, you will find it impossible to hinder him, unless persuasion will do it. ”

(Robin puts his arms a-kimbo.)

“ Persuasion ! Sir, Persuasion ! You don't know *me*, I perceive. ”

“ Indeed I very much mistook your character ; I always thought you a friendly, peaceable man ; but I find, on the contrary, that you are oppressive and quarrelsome. ”

“ Sir ! ”

“ Sir! Do you mean to say ——.”

“ I only say what truth, and a regard to your interest, oblige me to say. Are you not ashamed, you who have such abundance, to deal so hardly with your poor neighbours? Does not your religion teach you that *with what measure ye mete, it shall be measured to you again?*”

“ Very fine! Sir; I did not call you in to teach me religion.”

“ I should think myself unworthy to be called a *man*, if I did not tell you that it is disgraceful to undertake any thing which is opposed to law, humanity, and religion. After giving you this opinion, I suppose my presence is unnecessary, so I shall take my leave.”

Robin

Robin suffered him to go, without making any reply.

“After a moment’s silence, his wife said, “well, my friend, you hear his opinion.”

“Be quiet, you are nothing but a woman, nor he neither. Mr. Drue is a very different lawyer from this simpleton. I’ll speak to him.”

“Ah Robin! if you have any regard for me, don’t put yourself into the power of that wicked man. If you want advice go to our minister: you know his opinions are always just.”

“I suppose you think I ought to be guided by your’s. What has a parson to do with the law? I don’t
want

want to hear a sermon. Mr. Drue is the man I shall go to."

Martha attempted in vain to keep her husband in the house; he pushed her away in a passion, and went out.

The most certain method of finding Mr. Drue, was not to seek for him at his own house. Robin, who knew where he was generally to be seen, went from one public house to another, till he found him. These were the places in which he usually transacted business. He was seldom out of them, especially on the market-days, when the country people for several miles round, met there. He got amongst them, tempted them to drink, and when the liquor began to affect

affect their temper and produce disagreements, he found means to turn them into serious quarrels, which ended in a job for him. Sometimes he persuaded a buyer that he had given too much for what he had purchased. Sometimes he made the seller believe that he had parted with his goods at too low a price, and advised him to demand more. He frequently excited jealousies between brothers and sisters; fomented quarrels between husbands and wives, and parents and their children. He induced servants to be unfaithful to their masters, and creditors to pursue their debtors with rigor. In every family he had endeavoured to give rise to disputes; and when all was confusion
and

and discord, he would support the worst side. A good cause was too simple for him, he preferred one that required chicanery, by which he was enabled to protract the law-suit and rob his client of the more money.

He had frequently been forbidden to act in his profession ; but whenever that was the case, he changed his name, and removed to another part of the country. His reputation was so bad, that the judges were inclined to condemn every cause he undertook, before they heard it. They were obliged to examine every thing he did with more than common attention, lest what appeared the most simple, should be conducted with concealed artifice.

Such

Such were the hands into which Robin was imprudent enough to trust himself. You will suppose that Drue did not, like Mr. Ingram, dissuade him from beginning a lawsuit; he, on the contrary, encouraged him to proceed. After examining the will of his uncle, Drue told him the apples that his neighbour had taken were of little consequence; that he had a right to William's garden, and he found sufficient documents in the papers to assure him of success in claiming it.

He excited Robin's avarice by representing the increased value of the estate, when he should have added his poor neighbour's ground to it; and immediately set about altering
the

the papers and changing the dates, that he might appear to have some grounds for this iniquitous demand.

Poor William, who had never forgotten Robin's former kindness, would not defend himself; he offered to give up every thing that was demanded of him; but that would not have suited Mr. Drue, he alarmed the pride of his client by telling him that he ought not to receive as a gift what he could claim as his right; and he added, that William, whenever he chose, might be troublesome; that he could never be safe in the possession of the land, till the affair had been determined by law; and, in short, that he would even do wrong in shewing compassion in this instance, as it would encourage

the rest of his neighbours to injure him.

Notwithstanding the offers of William; the entreaties of Martha; the remonstrances of the curate, and all his friends, Robin gave ear to the bad advice of his lawyer, and let the trial come on; but he had reason to repent his folly; the indignation of the whole court predicted his sentence. He was nonsuited, and obliged to pay all the expences.

Poor Martha, who had been kept awake all night, by the rage and murmurings of her husband, went the next morning to consult her worthy pastor on some plan that might prevent Robin from appealing to another tribunal, as he intended to do.

After a little reflection, the good man told her of a project which he thought would succeed; and he proposed to execute it the same day.

The person who was commissioned to inform him of his ill success was a worthy man, Martha and the curate told him of their intention, and begged he would assist them. In the afternoon he went to Robin's house. Martha was alone when he arrived. "Ah! Sir," said she, "pray support me in our plan."

"Don't fear, I shall act as we agreed this morning. Are the little beggars come?"

"Yes, I have hid them in the garret with my children. I will fetch

them at the proper time, to bring Robin the curate's letter."

"Now you may call your husband."

(Martha goes to the garden door.)

"Robin, Robin, here is a gentleman wants to speak to you."

"I am coming."

"My husband is coming. Oh! Sir, how my heart beats!"

MR. BARRY, "Sir, I am come to acquaint you with the issue of your trial."

"Sir, you need not have troubled yourself, I know it already."

"But sir, I have likewise to tell you that you must pay the costs, which amount to sixty pounds."

"Sixty pounds, Sir!"

"Yes,

“ Yes, here is the account, you may examine it.”

Robin looked over the paper, and then threw it angrily on the table.

“ I will sooner have sixty pounds of melted lead poured on me, than pay it you.”

“ Pray don't use such language, it cannot do any good.”

“ No,” said Martha, sighing.

(Robin, laying hold of her arm with violence.)

“ What must you talk for? Go along to your spinning-wheel.—Sixty pounds!”

“ All that I am surprised at,” said Mr. Barry, “ is, that it has not cost you still more. Such an affair as this

has often ruined the person who had engaged in it. Do you remember farmer Willis? He was once as rich as you, but an unsuccessful lawsuit reduced him to poverty, and this winter, he died in prison in misery and despair, leaving a widow and three children without any thing to support them. You should not have began this lawsuit, indeed, sir."

"No, to be sure, I ought to have let them rob me, without taking any notice of it."

(He strikes his forehead violently.)

"But it shall not end here; I'll appeal to all the courts of justice in the world; I don't care if I spend all I have upon it."

Martha

Martha goes out weeping, and saying, "merciful heaven have pity on us!" (*Aside*) "I see it is time to try our project."

"It is my interest," said Mr. Barry, "that a great many causes should come before the court, but I would willingly give up all that I shall get by this unhappy affair, for you not to have engaged in it. We were all astonished that you could be so unjust; and especially that you should go on with the trial after the offers your neighbours made you. It has given all the village a bad opinion of you."

"What do I care for all the village? Come, come, don't say any more to me;

me ; I shall see what can be done at some other court."

" Gently, my good sir, don't be in haste ; there is time enough for this new piece of extravagance."

" Sir ! do you know that you are in my house ?"

" You will soon be without a house, if you go on at this rate. Willis, you know, did not die in his."

" Why do you talk about that man ?"

" Because I cannot forget seeing him in prison, stretched out on a little straw. When he was dying, he cried out, *I can never hope for the mercy of God. I am dying in prison : dying in debt ; leaving my wife and children*

dren without bread! You have a wife and children too, Mr. Robin!"

They were both silent for some time, Robin appeared very thoughtful, and started at the voice of his children who went into the room with three little ragged girls. Martha followed them.

"Father," said his daughter, "here are three poor little children."

"They have brought you a letter from the curate," said his little boy.

The children advanced, and gave Robin the letter. He turned from them, saying:—

"My head aches, I cannot read it now."

"It

“ It is open,” said Mr. Barry, “ I will read it to you.”

“ *My dear Robin,*

You have always been a benevolent man; let me entreat your compassion for the unfortunate little girls by whom I send this letter. You will recollect that their father died in the most miserable situation, in consequence of a lawsuit, which ruined him. I have found a place for his widow, but the children are too young for service; and besides, the name of Willis is become so odious from his injustice, that nobody would chuse to take them in. I am convinced you will not refuse to assist these innocent children; I have on
many

many occasions witnessed your charitable disposition. You will unite with me, in attempting to make them happy, and to prevent their loading the memory of their father with curses."

Your affectionate friend,
SAMUEL BRENT."

"Well," said Mr. Barry, "shall I answer this letter for you?"

(Robin conceals his face.)

"Take the children away, I will see them another time."

"But, father, they will be starved, they are so hungry;" replied Margaret.

"Take them away, I tell you!"

"No,

“ No, no,” said Mr. Barry, “ let them stay, they will be of service to you ; they can perhaps direct you to the court in which you may make your appeal.”

“ Mr. Barry !”

“ They can describe, better than I, the death of a litigious man.”

“ Once more, Sir —— !”

“ They can tell, you how they feel in looking at the prison where their father died.”

“ How dare you talk in this way sir, before my children? (*To Martha*) Take out Margaret and Lubin till I have spoken to them.”

“ Ah ! my dear husband, why should I take them away, they may
1 learn

learn of the others how to beg their bread."

(Robin, starting up.)

" Oh ! what have you said ! It is too much ; I cannot resist any longer ; I will not plunge my family into distress. No—my children shall not curse me. I am at last convinced of my folly. I will ask my neighbour's pardon for all the trouble I have given him. I will do so much, in future, to serve him, that he shall forget my shameful conduct."

Martha threw her arms round his neck.

" Now, my dear Robin, you are yourself again. You are the good man that has always made me so
Q happy.

happy. I don't know how I shall be able to love you enough."

"You feel, at this moment," said Mr. Barry, "how much pleasure there is in acting well."

Robin gave one hand to Mr. Barry, the other to his wife.

"Ah! Mr. Barry, if all the gentlemen of your profession were as good as you!—And if every man who was disposed to quarrel with his neighbours had such a wife as mine!—Come, I'll fetch you the sixty pounds; tho' your visit costs me something, I am heartily rejoiced that you made it.

REFLEC-

REFLECTIONS

ON THE THREE PRECEDING STORIES.



IN the three stories you have just read, my dear young friends, you have seen the dreadful effects of a quarrelsome and obstinate disposition. Did you ever meet with greater folly than these persons shewed, whose conduct we have been viewing? "Undoubtedly not," you will reply, "and had we been in their situations we should have acted very differently," I dare say you think so,

Q 2

now

now you are considering the matter calmly; but can you be sure that if you had the trial you should be wiser than they? The two first were brothers, and had been brought up together from their infancy. The second were intimate friends for several years, and equally united by interest and affection. The last had perhaps even stronger ties, to render their friendship durable, since one of them had endeared himself by conferring benefits, the other by his gratitude for those benefits. How many motives had they to suppress their unreasonable resentment! And yet we find them giving way to the most violent and unjust feelings. How greatly
should

should these examples lead you to distrust yourselves! Allow me, my readers to warn you against three of your most dangerous enemies—A foolish obstinacy, which prevents you from listening to any thing that opposes a resolution you have made, however unjust it may be.—A mean jealousy, which makes you envious of the prosperity of your equals, and ready to embrace every opportunity of injuring those whose talents, or hereditary successions have made more wealthy than yourselves.—And lastly, a despicable selfishness, which would induce you to yield to the slightest temptations whenever you had the hope of gaining any thing.

The last of these vices is the most to be dreaded, because it has a tendency to stifle the natural sentiments of justice which the Almighty has implanted in our hearts. Read the following story, and ask yourselves whether you should have behaved as nobly as the little boy, who is the subject of it.

THE

THE LITTLE BOY AND THE EGGS.

GILBERT was indebted to his neighbour Lucas for several days work. Money was scarce in that part of the country, and particularly so at his house ; so poor Gilbert had not enough to pay his friend. However as he was unwilling to prevent Lucas from enjoying the fruit of his industry, he offered to give him four hens, the whole of his stock, instead of money. Lucas willingly accepted the proposal, as the hens were worth what his neighbour owed him, and
he

he had no fowls of his own. The hens, therefore, were immediately sent; but not being confined, they went back the next day, to lay their eggs in the place where they had usually been kept, at Gilbert's. Harry, the little boy, who was but seven years old, was alone in the house at the time. He heard his dear hens chucking, and guessed what they were come back for. He ran to the hen-roost, felt in the straw, and found several eggs. "Ha," said he, to himself, "here are some nice new-laid eggs, that I am so fond of! my mother will be very glad to find them when she returns. She will boil them for our dinner." After a moment's

ment's reflection, he added; "but ought we to keep them? they certainly belong to our neighbour Lucas. The poor hens are not ours now, and of course the eggs can't be our property. My school-master told me the other day, that we ought to find out to whom any thing belongs that we have found, and restore it to the owner. Well, I won't stop till my father and mother come home, I'll take the eggs to Lucas directly."

He ran with them and knocked at his neighbour's door. "Here," said he, as he entered, "I have brought you some eggs that your hens have been laying in our barn."

"Who

“ Who told you to bring them ? ”
said Lucas.

“ Nobody—they are all out, at our house.”

“ What ! you have brought them without being desired ? ”

“ Yes, my father and mother I knew would have sent me if they had been at home.”

“ How was it you did not wait till they returned ? ”

“ Because they won't be back till twelve o'clock, and if you had missed the hens, and the eggs had not been brought to you before that time, you might have thought ill of my parents.”

Lucas was charmed with the little boy, he desired him to take the eggs
home

home again, and let his mother dress them for his dinner.

Say, my dear little friends, do you not very much admire the conduct of this child? You see, from this instance, that as soon as we begin to reason, our conscience directs us to act with honor and integrity, and that whenever we do wrong we must offer violence to our natural sentiments.

It is particularly necessary to consult the dictates of our conscience, when we are desirous of commencing a lawsuit, in which we may perhaps suffer both in our character and fortune. A trifling disagreement, the effect of mere thoughtlessness, has sometimes been the foundation of a
trial

trial which has emptied the pocket, soured the temper, and corrupted the heart.

When you are really injured, consider how much more noble it is to forgive, than to hurt the offender. How exquisite the enjoyment of the person who can say, "I would rather suffer this inconvenience myself, than bring a greater affliction on my neighbour." This is the only way to engage the esteem of your fellow creatures; and to claim with confidence, if you should one day become unfortunate, the compassion you have ever been ready to shew to those who through unkindness or misfortune have caused you vexation or loss.

Surely

Surely if you are unwilling to forgive the faults of your friends you cannot dare to pray that the allseeing God will pardon yours. Could I but enforce with sufficient energy, the indispensable duty, as well as the unspeakable delight of forgiving an injury! But, no, my friends, it is not for me to persuade you—listen to a voice infinitely more authoritative and convincing. Suffer me to conclude this address by quoting the words of our divine instructor:—

“ Therefore is the kingdom of heaven likened unto a certain king which would take account of his servants.

R

“ And

“ And when he had begun to reckon, one was brought unto him who owed him ten thousand talents.

“ But forasmuch as he had not to pay, his lord commanded him to be sold, and his wife and children, and all that he had, and payment to be made.

“ The servant therefore fell down, and worshipped him, saying, Lord have patience with me, and I will pay thee all.

“ Then the lord of that servant was moved with compassion, and loosed him, and forgave him the debt.

“ But the same servant went out, and found one of his fellow-servants who owed him an hundred pence; and

and he laid hands on him, and took him by the throat, saying, pay me that thou owest.

“ And his fellow-servant fell down at his feet, and besought him, saying, have patience with me, and I will pay the all.

“ And he would not, but went and cast him into prison till he should pay the debt.

“ So when his fellow-servants saw what was done, they were very sorry, and came and told unto their lord all that was done.

“ Then his lord, after that he had called him, said unto him, oh ! thou wicked servant, I forgave thee all that debt because thou desiredst me.

“ Shouldst

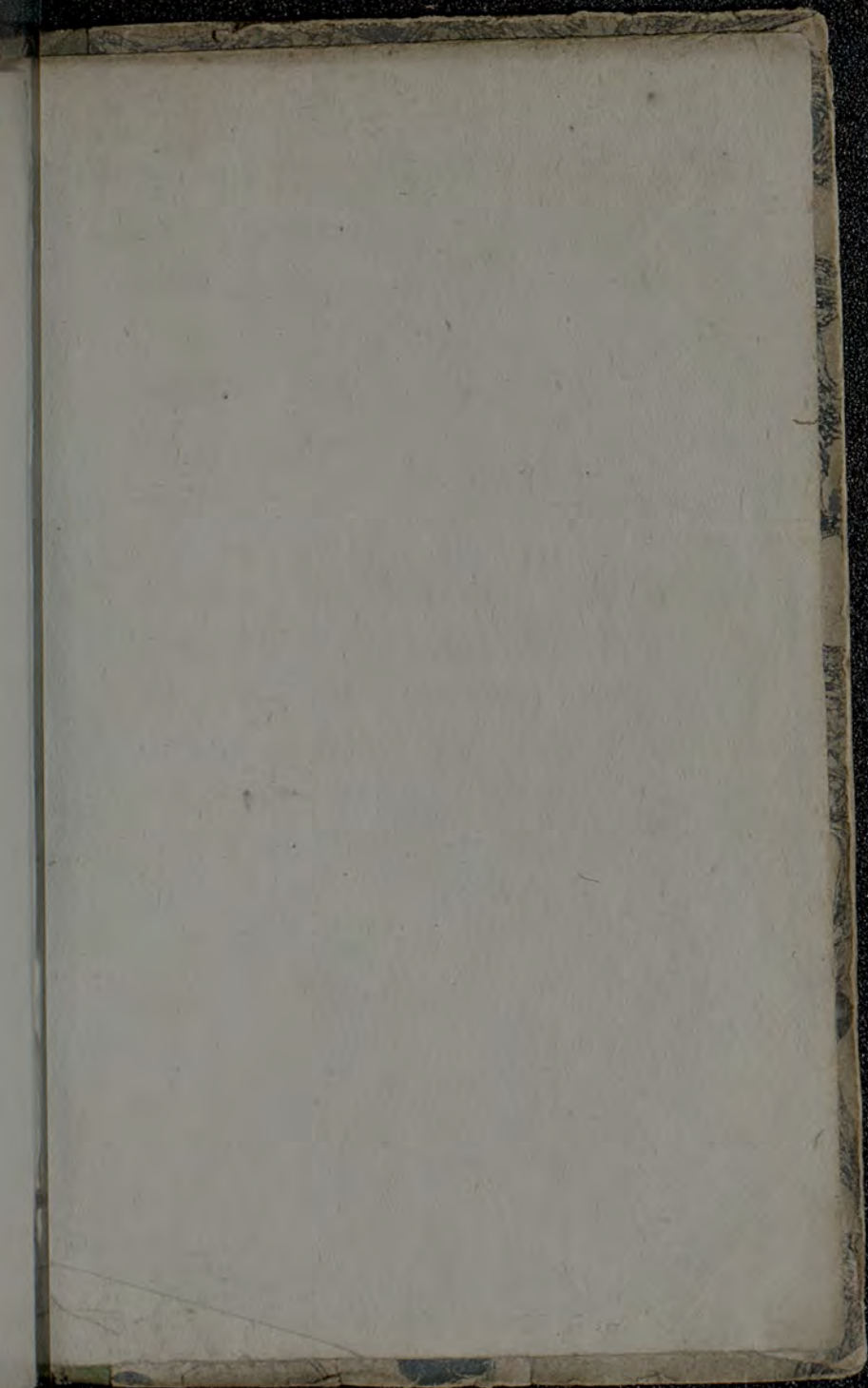
“Shouldst not thou also have compassion on thy fellow-servant, even as I had pity on thee?”

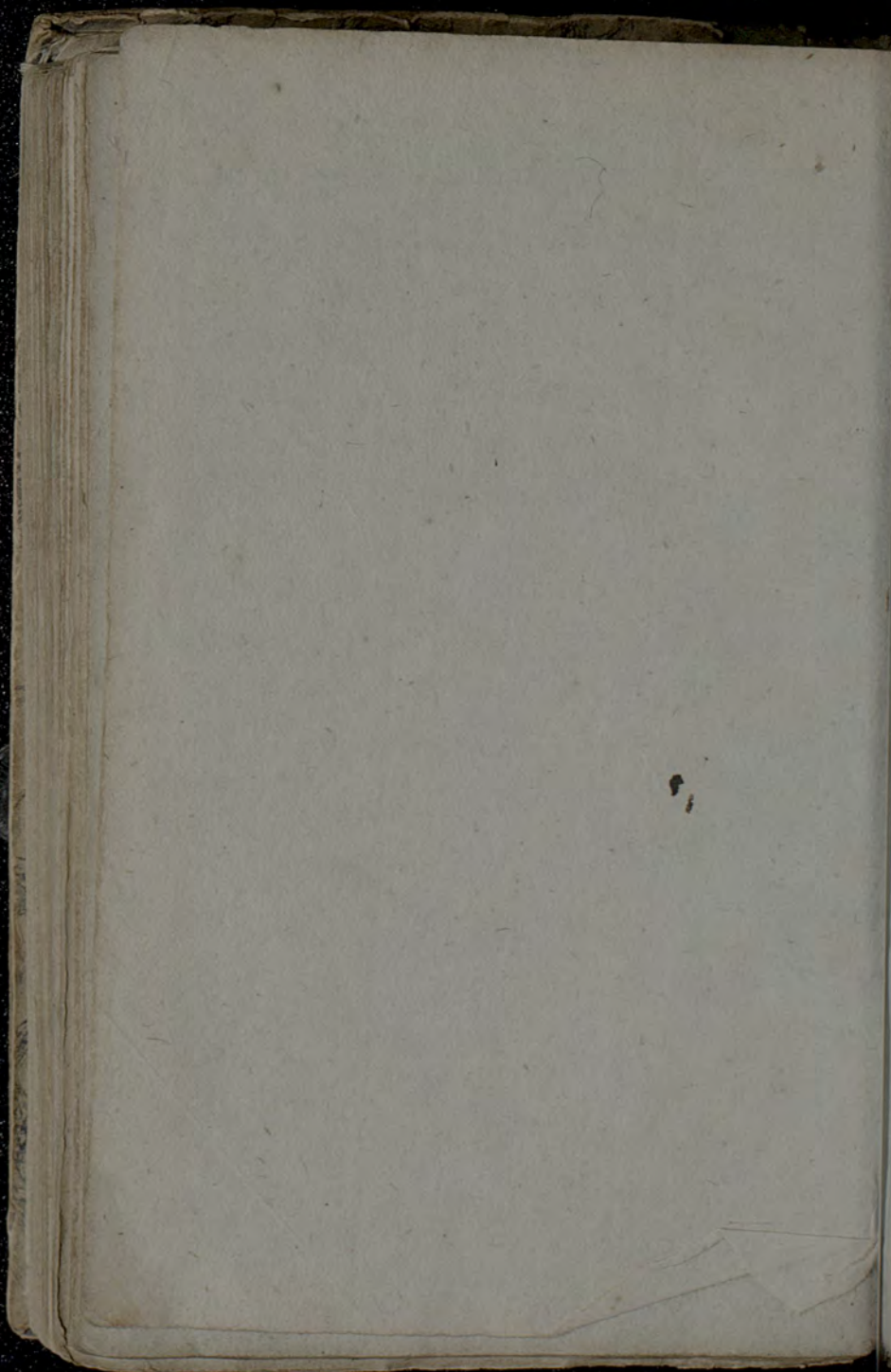
“And his lord was wrath, and delivered him to the tormentors, till he should pay all that was due unto him.

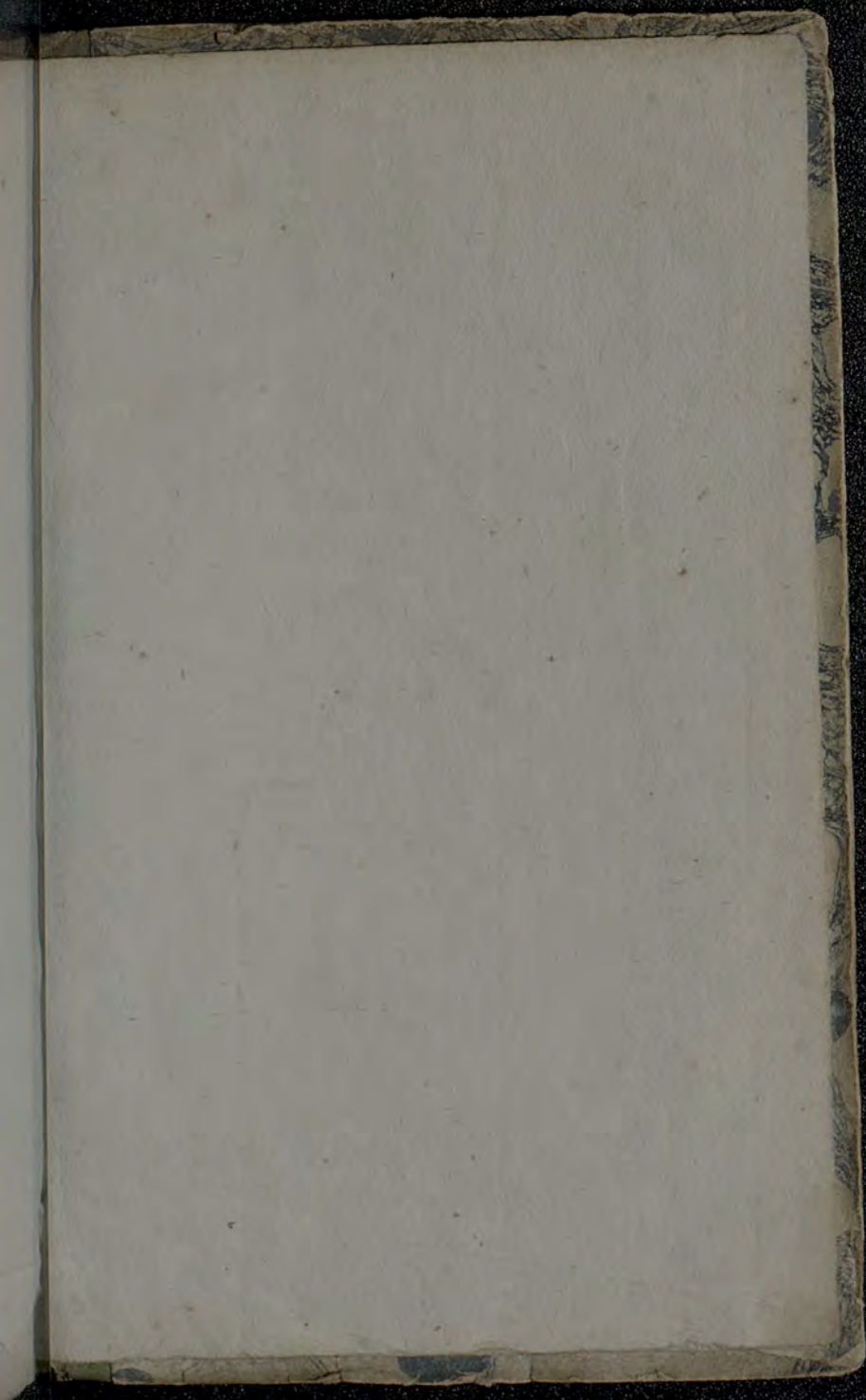
“So likewise shall my heavenly father do also unto you, if ye from your hearts, forgive not every one his brother’s trespasses.”

THE END.

J. CUNDEE, PRINTER,
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