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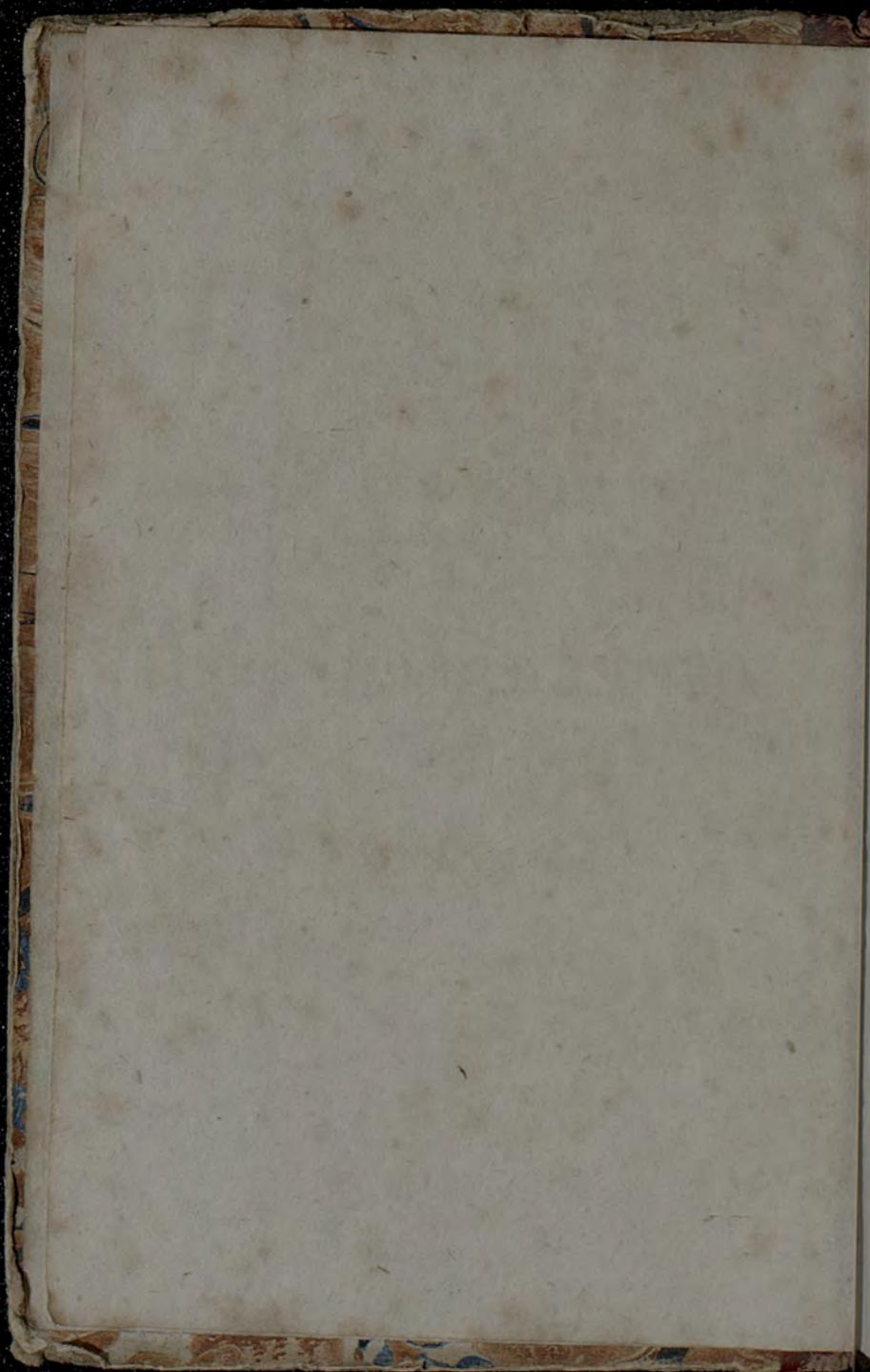
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HISTORY
OF AN
OFFICER'S WIDOW,
AND HER
YOUNG FAMILY.

H. Bryer, Printer, Bridge-Street, Blackfriars, London.

L. S.

London

1750

Frontispiece.



Was she not my fellow creature?

Page

Published Aug. 1 1814, by J. Harris, corner of S.^t Paul's Church Yard.

THE
HISTORY
OF AN
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AND HER
YOUNG FAMILY.

THIRD EDITION.

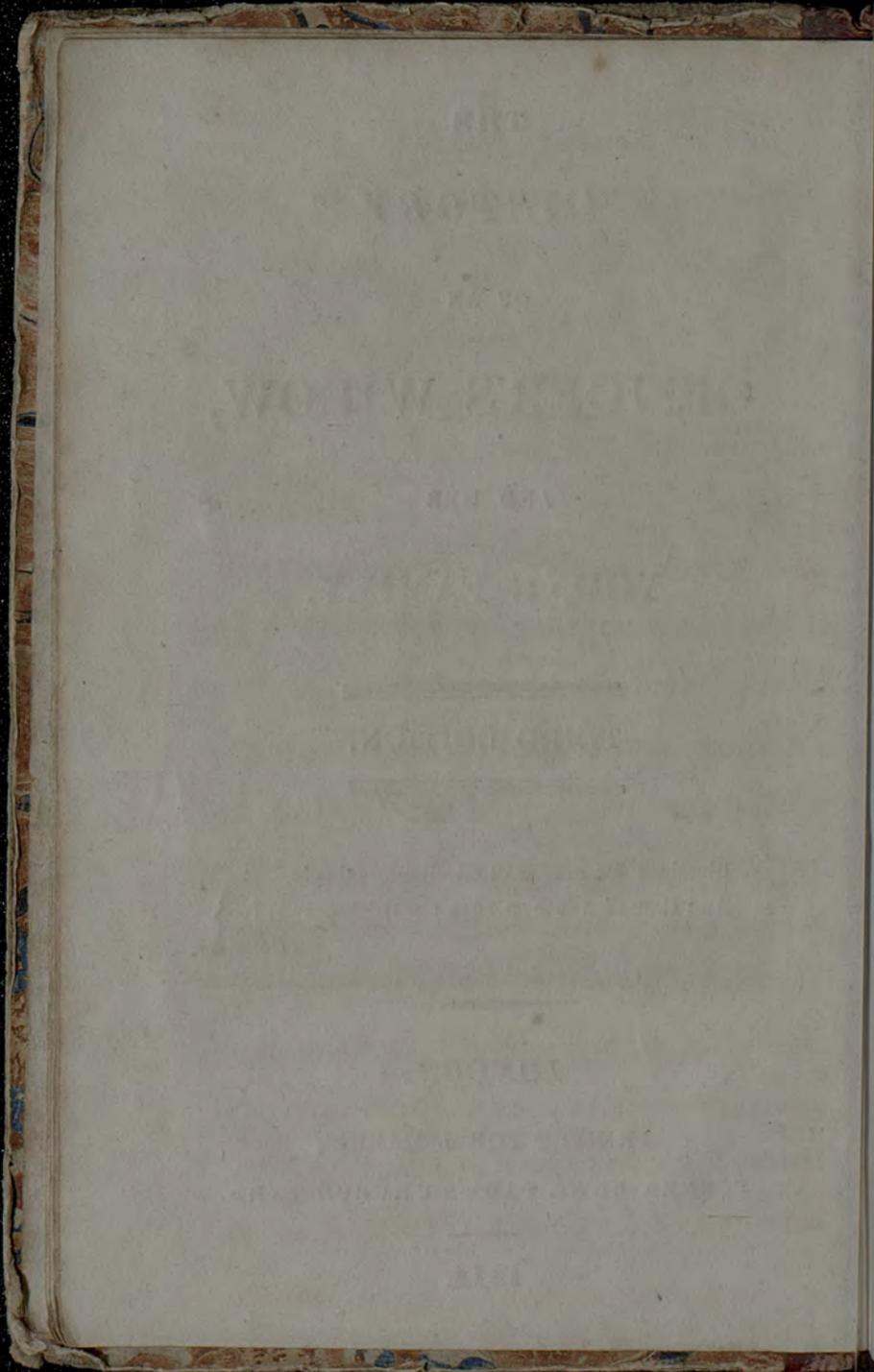
Blessings for ever wait on virtuous deeds,
And though a late, a sure reward succeeds !

Congreve.

LONDON :

PRINTED FOR J. HARRIS,
CORNER OF ST. PAUL'S CHURCH-YARD.

1814.



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PREFACE.

IN addressing the following History of a worthy family to young readers, it may be thought, by some, that I have presented pictures of too gloomy a nature, and scenes of too affecting a kind for their season of life ; but I am persuaded, that children themselves will not accuse me of lessening their pleasure, by withdrawing them for a few hours from noisy sports and frivolous occupations, to trace with me the various joys and sorrows of boys like themselves. I

have often drawn a little circle around, and related such incidents as memory or imagination furnished, which were likely to produce in their young hearts sentiments of piety and virtue; and never found a child forego the pleasure of listening to my tale, on account of the tears it might sometimes induce him to shed. I am fully persuaded, that as inculcating a false sensibility is destructive to happiness, and subversive of virtue, so awakening a proper sense of feeling, must conduce to the interests of both; and as we are commanded to "rejoice with those that do rejoice," and likewise to "weep with those that weep," I conclude it a just-

fiable thing, when a good purpose is intended, to awaken sympathy when the heart is capable of feeling it in its utmost purity, and to stamp lessons of virtue and religion in those moments when they are likely to make the most lasting impressions.

The Public reception of this little work, having been much greater than either the Author or Publisher expected, the latter is induced to present them this new edition, with an engraved Frontispiece, and at Sixpence less than the former.

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THE
HISTORY

OF AN

Officer's Widow and her young Family.

CHAP. I.

MISS MARIA ATKINSON, was the only daughter of a respectable clergyman, who resided on a small living in the west riding of Yorkshire; who, notwithstanding the narrowness of his income, had bestowed on his darling child the best education, in every respect, a female can receive. She was not less an accomplished than a domestic young woman; for the cares of a tender and judicious mother, were added to those of her good father, and equally contributed to make her all which they could possibly desire in a daughter.

During the time of Maria's infancy, Mr. Atkinson had undertaken, for a few

years, the education of a fine boy, the son of an officer, whose father was then with his regiment in the West Indies. The youth had resided with his mother, in a town not far from Mr. Atkinson's residence: she was a very amiable woman, and had been, for some time, very intimate at the parsonage; when, in consequence of a severe cold, added to the anxiety which a wife so situated must necessarily feel, she fell into a weak and sickly state of health, which appeared, for some time, rather encroaching than alarming; but, in the course of a few months, became, to the grief of those who loved her, a decided consumption.

Though the parsonage-house was very small, and its circle of pecuniary enjoyments very bounded, yet the benevolent owners could not see Mrs. Belfield want country air, without offering her every accommodation in their power. Their kindness was accepted with the same frankness with which it was offered; and, for above a year, the interesting

patient, and her sweet boy, experienced the most affectionate attentions which their situations called for; but neither the kindness, nor the good nursing, of Mrs. Atkinson, could delay the inevitable stroke: the dying mother, day by day, and hour by hour, sat gazing on her boy, as if the few moments she had left in this life, were too precious for any other employment; and the dear little fellow, though scarcely seven years old, appeared so sensible of his approaching loss, and so doatingly fond of his departing parent, that it was impossible for the most indifferent observer to behold either of them, without feeling sentiments of the most tender compassion, excited by their appearance and situation. No wonder then that the friendly hearts of Mr. and Mrs. Atkinson were penetrated with poignant anguish; which, however, they endeavoured to hide in the presence of Mrs. Belfield; and, by every soothing attention, and consolatory conversation, sought to wean her from dwelling too

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much on the painful subject which occupied all her thoughts: but Mrs. Belfield was a woman of strong mind; and, what is still better, she was a religious woman; and though it was not possible for her to cease thinking of her husband and her son, yet she was resigned to the will of God, and her mind became more composed as she approached the period of her sufferings, which Mr. Atkinson observing, he no longer tried to divert her mind from contemplating the awful change she must so soon experience, but rather led her, by repeating the divine promises, and inculcating the comforts of devotion to the dying Christian, to speak freely of her situation, and express her hopes and fears without reserve. These confidential communications operated as a cordial to her wearied spirits; her soul appeared to arise from them as a banquet that had refreshed, and fitted it for its immortal flight; and in one of these seasons of renewed energy, she took courage to make the request

which she had long meditated, that after her decease Mr. Atkinson would continue to keep her son in his own house, till the time of his father's return to England; and, on no consideration, trust him out of his own sight, into any other hands. The agitation (which even her strongest efforts could not subdue) that accompanied this earnest request, showed Mr. and Mrs Atkinson how long, and how deeply, this thorn had rankled in her bosom; and though they saw at once how difficult it might be to keep a promise which included so awful a charge, yet their hearts were too warm to admit a moment's delay or consultation. "Why, my dear, dear friend, did you delay satisfying yourself so long?" they both exclaimed at once: we will take him certainly; we will do all in our power for him." "Ah!" interrupted the invalid, "but if his father should never return! Oh! my dear, my generous friends, how could I ask you before? how can I ask you even now? consider the dan-

gers of his father's profession ; even now, perhaps, he is laid in the grave before me,—what will you do with Charles if his father does not return?" The good clergyman, overcome with his emotions, replied only by raising the sobbing boy from the bedside, where he was kneeling, and clasping him fast in his paternal arms ; but Mrs. Atkinson, by a violent effort, wiped away her tears ; and, kissing the cheek of the expiring mother, said, "Then, my dear friend, *then*, he shall eat of our bread, and drink of our cup, and be unto us as our own son ; we will never leave him nor forsake him, nor cease to do him good, while either of us lives."—To this fervent promise Mr. Atkinson gave his full consent, saying thus, "May God prosper me and mine as I fulfil my promise to this boy," giving his hand at the same time to poor Mrs. Belfield, who collected all her remaining strength to press it : then turning her eyes to heaven, she earnestly prayed, "Oh God, my Father, receive the last

petition of thy child; bless these thy servants in their own offspring, and grant that my son, and his sons after him, may add blessings to their grey hairs, and shed the tears of love and gratitude upon their graves." The exertion she made in audibly pronouncing these words, exhausted her, and she fell back upon her pillow, nearly lifeless; but her countenance was sweetly placid, and she looked on her son with more serenity and resignation than she had ever done before. Poor Charles was affected beyond expression, and Mrs. Atkinson wished to take him out of the room, but he seemed unwilling to quit it for a moment. As soon as his mother was able to speak, she said, "Give me a kiss, my love, and go with your best friend; remember, my darling, that your mother bids you not cry so much for her; she is going to be happy,—and Charles, my love, be as good a boy to your dear father as you have been to me." She stopped; nature was exhausted; the child, in

agonies, was carried from the room; the eyes of his mother followed while their sense remained; but, in a few moments, it was seen that the hand of death was upon them; and after a few short breathings of inarticulate prayer, she breathed her last, in the arms of Mrs. Atkinson.

The grief of poor Charles Belfield, for this loss, was not only of that violent kind, common to children of warm feelings at his age, but so deep and lasting as to affect his kind friends at the parsonage exceedingly; as they were afraid it might injure his health, and, perhaps, subject him to his poor mother's complaint: his whole mind had been so taken up with his mother ever since his arrival amongst them, that he had not played or run about as he ought to have done, and they wished to introduce him to some boys of his own age, and found that was the most effectual way they had yet tried to wean him from his melancholy reflections; but nothing contributed to do him so much good as the

company of little Maria, now about five years old : he took great delight in teaching her to read, and communicating to her all his own scanty stock of knowledge ; and she in return led him to all the places in the village, where the prettiest flowers grew, took him with her to feed the pigeons, shewed him how to dress a doll, and sung all her little songs, to amuse him. When he talked of his mother and shed tears, she wiped them away with her pinafore, or kissed them off his cheek, called the grey-hound to come and gambol with him, or led him into the fields to look at the lambs running races. Thus, by degrees, Charles regained his spirits, recovered his good looks, and became as much an object of admiration as he already was of love. In the mean time Mr. Atkinson, after paying the last duties to the deceased, had written to lieutenant Belfield an account of his severe loss, and the present situation of his lovely boy, reiterating his professions of regard, and mention-

ing the promises he had made. This letter dispatched, and a sufficient consideration made for the feelings of this little charge, Mr. Atkinson commenced the important business of educating both the children, and had the happiness of reaping an abundant reward for his trouble, as their docility, attention, and quickness, rendered instruction as pleasant to him as it was beneficial to them.

A year had nearly passed away when they received a most affecting and grateful letter, from Mr. Belfield, inclosing as large a remittance as could be expected from his narrow income: he lamented tenderly the bitter loss both himself and child had sustained, and thanked Mr. and Mrs. Atkinson for their kindness to his dearest connections, in terms suited to his feelings, at the same time expressing a hope of thanking them, in person, in the course of another year. This hope was, it appears, wrong founded, as his military engagement prevented him from returning for nearly eight years,

and the last three of these he was so situated as never to be able to convey a letter to his friends at the parsonage; who, of course, began to think that the fears of poor Mrs. Belfield were realized, and that poor Charles was become indeed an orphan.

CHAP. II.

DURING the two last years of the time we have mentioned, Mr. Atkinson had applied himself with more than ordinary assiduity to the cultivation of Charles's mind. Ignorant of his future destination, and conscious that in case of his father's death he could do little else for him, he determined to give him an education which should fit him for any of the learned professions, though he saw in the boy a decided inclination for that of his father. He was now about fifteen, and was returning from the house of an

acquaintance, at some distance, whither he had been to escort Maria, who was gone to stay a month, when he was accosted by a gentleman on horseback, who asked if he could shew him the way to one Mr. Atkinson's, who, he believed, lived in the neighbourhood?

"I am going there, Sir," said Charles, "and if you will ride slowly, I shall have great pleasure in shewing you into the house myself."

The gentleman instantly dismounted, and giving his horse to his servant, put his arm into that of Charles, at the same time walking with a quick and hurried step, and an air of deep thought, and great agitation.

Who can this be, thought Charles; he is a fine looking man, though he is so brown: I never saw such a man at our house: if he was dressed in regimentals now?

"Pray, young gentleman, are you intimate with Mr. Atkinson?" said the stranger: "do you know any thing of a

youth, called Belfield, who lived with him a few years ago?"

"Know him," interrupted Charles, "yes, Sir, I, I, am Charles Belfield: pray who, *who*, are you?"

"Oh! my boy! my only boy! have I then found thee?" cried the delighted father, falling on his neck, and pressing him for the first time, after an absence of twelve years, to his beating bosom.

It is impossible to describe the lively emotions of joy with which Charles opened the little garden gate, and led in his father, to his astonished friends, who received him as the husband of a woman whose memory they had fondly cherished, and the father of a son they loved as if he were their own. The house of the good pastor could not furnish a fatted calf, on this joyful occasion, but all it could afford was placed before the welcome guest, in such a manner as convinced him of the worth of its inhabitants, and made him breathe a silent thanksgiving to that Providence who had given such

faithful friends to close the eyes of his beloved partner, and raise up the infant steps of his promising son. After he had sat a short time with the master and mistress of the house, and accounted for the long silence he had been obliged to observe, which included a detail of many sorrows, he arose^d and desired his son to take a short walk with him, adding, "I grieve to tell you, Mr. Atkinson, that I can stay only one night with you, and that to-morrow morning Charles too must, for the present, bid you farewell."

The good couple were so struck with the last words he uttered, as was Charles likewise, that a general pause ensued, and he led the way out of the house in painful silence.

After walking some time straight forwards, he checked his steps: "My dear boy," said he, "you must lead me: I am persuaded your own heart tells you where your father ought to pay a sad but tender visit."

Much as Charles was occupied by the

wonderful change which one short hour had produced in his situation, he read in a moment the feelings of his new found parent; he turned directly over a little stile, and led the way to the church-yard, where, in a little piece of ground set apart by the rector for his own burying-ground, was deposited the remains of Mrs. Belfield: it was in a corner, and surrounded by a slight railing: Charles led towards it with a slow and faltering step; he opened the door by the latch, and held it for his father, who, advancing with solemnity, took off his hat. Charles saw the tears streaming down his sun-burnt cheek; he felt, much as he was affected, that even his presence was a restraint on his father, and softly closing the door, he retired behind the church, and sitting down at the foot of an old yew tree, endeavoured to compose his agitated heart, and acquire that temper of mind which should enable him to prove to his father, all which he owed to his inestimable friend.

In about half an hour he heard his father call, "Charles!" and immediately obeyed the summons. On his return captain Belfield appeared more composed, and after sitting with the good family another half hour, he acquainted them with his present situation, and his views with regard to his son, which, of course, interested them exceedingly.

He informed them, that immediately on landing, he had been presented with a company, and likewise the promise of an ensigncy for his son, but that he was under the necessity of claiming it immediately, or he would run the risk of having him placed in a different regiment, which would be a great trouble to him, as well as a loss to Charles; he said every thing which gratitude and esteem could suggest in praise of their great kindness to his son, declaring that he could not love himself, if he ever forgot the duty he owed to them, as the instructors and supporters of his youth. He then opened his pocket book, and

taking out bills to the amount of two hundred pounds, he offered them to Mr. Atkinson, not as payment for debts he considered of too high a nature to admit of such recompence, but as a proof that he had never neglected, by the most scrupulous economy, to provide for his son, when circumstances allowed him to make the necessary remittances. This sum, which appeared immense to the good man to whom it was offered, was strenuously refused for a long time, but at length accepted, only on condition that Charles might ever find a home in the parsonage when he should find one necessary.

These matters arranged, it was settled that Charles must leave his dear home at five in the morning. "At five!" exclaimed he, "but surely I may just go over and say farewell to Maria; how astonished she will be, poor girl, at all this! I certainly must go and tell her, you know," said Charles, appealing to Mrs. Atkinson.

“To be sure the poor child will be sadly grieved,” said her kind mother, wiping her eyes “but you know the thing is impossible, so we must break it to her as well as we can; and then you know she is paying a visit, and will think less of it perhaps on that account; I am sure I do not know what any of us will do just now without you.”

Charles answered not, for his heart was too full; he went to bed, but not to sleep: the gay dreams of glory which had often delighted him, while he read of heroes of old, and longed to join those of his own country, in search of fame and honour, now, for the first time, lost their wonted power; he thought only of his peaceful home, his lovely play-fellow, and her grief at his abrupt departure; “she will be lost when I am gone,” said he. At length the thoughts of writing to her occurred to him, and soothed his sorrows; the visions of fancy again glowed bright on his imagination; to a lad of fifteen, a red coat and a pair

of colours, are generally irresistible, they were so to Charles; and, after a restless night, he arose at least satisfied, though not refreshed by his cogitations.

Breakfast was soon dispatched, for it was a sad and silent meal; Charles rode the horse used for his father's servant, who was left to take care of his few valuables, and follow in the stage-coach. Captain Belfield repeatedly told Mrs. Atkinson that his son's first leisure should be spent in a visit at the parsonage; but his assurances awakened only a faint smile, for her heart was very heavy. The horses were soon at the gate; she took a fond but hasty kiss of her darling, and the travellers were soon out of sight; while those who remained seemed ready to ask each other if the whole transaction was any thing more than an uneasy dream.

For some time the letters of Charles were very punctual, and breathed so much of tenderness and goodness of heart, that his friends concluded the world into

which he had entered had not corrupted him; at length one arrived, which informed them he was about to set sail for the East Indies, and was exceedingly disappointed at not being able to visit them before his departure: this letter was accompanied with little presents to each of the family, indicative of the same amiable disposition which had ever distinguished this son and brother of their warmest affections.

CHAP. III.

FROM this period, with the exception of three letters written from different places in the Indies, the family of the Atkinsons saw nothing of Charles for six years. During this time Maria had become a fine young woman, the delight, and the blessing of her parents, who nevertheless continued to feel a strong interest in the fate of their adopted son, and took,

for his sake, a more than common anxiety, in the military news of the day. About this time, they had the pleasure of seeing him promoted to the rank of first lieutenant, but the pleasure this gave them, was damped by seeing in the newspaper following, that his father, captain Belfield, immediately after being raised to a majority, died of the honourable wounds which had procured him that elevation.

A short time after, they saw an account of the regiment to which he belonged having returned to England; but as they received no letter, and were unwilling to believe that their Charles (now all their own) could have forgotten them, they began to think that he had exchanged into another regiment, and that they had no longer a chance for seeing him; but one evening as they sat down to tea, busied with their usual conjectures, their rough honest Yorkshire girl broke in, exclaiming, "Pray go, master, just to the gate, for there's a fine gentleman dressed like a soldier, axes for you, and I dout hee's got

his poor arm broken, for hee's summut black tied round it." The girl might finish her description at her leisure, for the parlour was soon left without one hearer. Charles? is it you, Charles? Yes, it is, it is indeed your own Charles; was instantly heard, and the long lost youth, amongst tears and caresses, was almost carried into the house, and soon found himself in his old seat by the friendly fire-side, where his happiest hours had been spent. The Atkinsons began now to look at him more narrowly, and convince themselves that the tall elegant young man before them was indeed little Charles. He too looked at Maria, and could scarcely believe he beheld in that beautiful young lady, the little girl whom he had carried on his back through all the dirty places in the village, and who used to be proud when she mended his kite, or hemmed his pocket handkerchief; her voice however was the same it had ever been, and he remembered how often it had soothed his first, his deepest sorrows.

I presume there is no need of the gift of prophecy to foresee that Charles and Maria were naturally pleased with each other, and that though it cost their parents much pain to give their only daughter to a gentleman whose profession renders it extremely difficult to make his wife comfortable; yet they could not refuse one whom they esteemed so highly, and who advanced every day in the good opinion they had formed of him. In short, they were married and they were as happy as people could be whose income was very narrow, whose prospects were confined, and whose family increased: every year brought with it new cares, but happily it did not destroy old comforts, for Charles continued the best of husbands, and the fondest of fathers.

In the course of the following ten years lieutenant Belfield became the father of five children. He was three times called out to fight the battles of his country, but happily escaped without injury; and the third time was advanced to

the rank of captain. During his first absence Maria remained with her parents : she had then two sons, the eldest of which, called after his father, was taken by her's to be, as he said, the plaything and solace of his old age. The other periods of her husband's absence being expected to be shorter, were spent by her on the sea coast, where her opportunities of seeing and hearing from her dear Charles might be facilitated. On his safe return and his promotion, they both agreed to go down into Yorkshire for a few weeks ; but while this scheme was in agitation, and the good old couple were impatiently waiting for the sweet tidings of their children's arrival, captain Belfield and his regiment were ordered to join the ill-fated expedition to Holland.

Though this was of course a great disappointment to all parties, yet Maria felt less fear than she had done under similar circumstances before : she had now had the satisfaction of receiving him safe three times from a much greater distance,

and, as she thought, more hazardous employment; and she flattered herself with the hope, that as preferment had once reached him, future honours awaited him: she therefore parted from him with rather more than common fortitude, promising herself his speedy and happy return.

It is needless to say how soon she was undeceived with respect to the general fortune of the expedition; and with what dreadful solicitude she waited, from day to day, for the confirmation of fears which almost distracted her. At last she received from her father the dreadful news that poor Charles was indeed arrived with a few wretched companions of his toils, in a coasting vessel at Whitby; whence he had been, by slow degrees, removed to his house; that she must lose no time in coming to his assistance, for he was weak and impatient to see her.

Now, indeed, poor Maria began to feel those miseries which a soldier's wife is heir to; but her presence of mind did not

forsake her ; in less than an hour she had settled all her business, and with one baby at her breast, and three other little ones by her side, she was in a post chaise, on the road to her afflicted husband.

It was three long days before poor Maria reached her native village. Alas ! what did she find on her arrival ? a husband broken down by sufferings so excessive, that already had death stamped every feature of his manly countenance. Having been wounded early in the engagement, and fainted through loss of blood, his wounds had been wholly overlooked, and he had lain for many hours on the sea sands, exposed to the heat of the mid-day sun, and afterwards to the chilling sea breeze : he had afterwards crawled to a cottage, where he was denied even a drop of water to allay the feverish thirst which preyed upon him, or a rag to defend his smarting wounds from the midnight air : at length his wearied limbs lost their power of motion, and he fell on the ground in the forlorn

hope of soon terminating his sufferings by death: in this state he was found by a poor woman, who perceiving some signs of life in him, raised him up, poured a little water into his parched lips, tore her own ragged clothes to staunch his wounds, and by degrees led him to her cottage; where, in despite of her own poverty, and the malice of her neighbours, she continued to take care of him, till he found the means of escape; but here again misfortune pursued; he was tempest tost, and obliged, notwithstanding his exhausted state, to work so hard upon the water, that his strength was entirely exhausted, and all that remained of hope was, to see his wife and die.

If the most unremitting assiduity, if the fondest care, could have restored the sufferer to his family and the world, poor Belfield would have lived to bless them; but help arrived too late, and in something less than a month he slept in peace by the ashes of his lamented mother.

To attempt describing the grief, the

bitter grief of Maria, is altogether impossible: some of my young readers are themselves the children of widows, they may have seen their mammas weep when no one was by, and have seen them smile through their tears at *their* innocent means of relieving sorrows, of which their little hearts knew not the cause. They may perhaps form a faint idea of Maria's sufferings, but I hope many of my young friends enjoy a happy ignorance of such misery as was felt by all this amiable family, who for a long time, were unable to attend to any thing but the recollection of this excellent young man, though they endeavoured with the fortitude of Christians, to resign him into the hands of his merciful Redeemer.

CHAP. IV.

As soon as poor Mrs. Belfield became capable of attending to the advice of her

father, she began to consult with him on the means of providing for her family: she was sensible, that she ought not to stay any longer with so large a family at the parsonage, which was a very small house, and where so many little children must be very troublesome to her good parents, who were now at a time of life when stillness is absolutely necessary to comfort. Charles, her eldest, had always resided with them, and it was her intention to leave him, as he was very like his dear father, and seemed to be the greatest comfort the old people had now left in the world, except herself. This part of the country was by no means so cheap to live in as some others, and this was a consideration it was indeed very necessary to attend to, as they were now reduced almost to beggary. As soon as Mr. Atkinson saw his dear daughter using every means which a wise and good woman could suggest, for calming her own mind, and fulfilling the awful duties

of her widowed situation, he addressed her in the following manner:—

“ My dear Maria, you are sensible that I have but one wish on this side the grave, that of making up to you, as far as is in my power, the invaluable friend you have lost: I have considered, in every possible way, what it will be the best for you to do; and I think, if you was to take a cottage in Lincolnshire, where you can live a great deal cheaper than with us, and which will be within an easy journey of us, it will be the best thing you can do. I have, without saying any thing to you, my love, secured to you the pension allowed by government; I have likewise, my love, given you every shilling I have in the world; it is vested in your name in the funds: but I must request, my love, that you will solemnly promise me not to spend the principal; even if it should be wanted for your boys on the most promising prospect. Remember, that if I am taken first, your mother has no other fund to look to, and that

though you might be willing to give up your own claims, you have no right to subject your aged mother to want the support she so highly merits. Alas! all I have to give you, is so little, that even with your pension, it will produce less than sixty pounds a year. But I will charge myself with the education of Charles; I mean to bring him up to the church: I hope to be able to send him to the university, and doubt not but he will do exceeding well."

Mrs. Belfield could make no reply but with tears of affectionate gratitude. The scheme of the good old man was soon put in practice; a neat cottage, between Barton and Winterringham, in Lincolnshire, was found suited to her circumstances, and thither the still young and beautiful Maria retired with her four younger children, whose talents, pursuits, and history, form the principal subject of this little volume.

Charles, the eldest, was now eleven years old: he was in his person remarkably

elegant, and of a disposition and manners so mild and conciliating, that he appeared by nature calculated for the pious employment, for which his good grandfather had always designed him. Henry, the next boy, was of a very different description; generous, open, and courageous, but violent, impetuous, and headstrong; he was seldom in a medium; always very good, or very naughty: he was praised and scolded ten times a day; but his high spirits were so bounded by the tenderness he felt towards his mother, and the precepts of obedience with which his good father had wisely imbued his infant mind, that a grave look from her would at any time correct his exuberant mirth, or calm his rising passions.

Anna and Maria were two sweet little girls, one seven, the other five years old; the youngest was a boy called Edward, who was just beginning to prattle, and was the darling of them all: when Charles parted with *him*, he seemed to suffer more than in leaving all the rest: his mother

expressed some surprise at this, saying, "My dear Charles, why are you so grieved at parting with such a very little boy; you know he is no company for you."—"Ah, mother," replied the sensible child, "I cry because he is such a very little boy, for I feel somehow as if I ought to be his father." It is unnecessary to say what Mrs. Belfield felt at parting with such a child as this, and such parents as she left behind; happily for her she had a great many lesser things, which still greatly occupied her mind. Henry too, was all life and spirits; with him the tear was indeed "forgot as soon as shed," and in spite of all her sorrows, the prattling rogue drew his mother now and then into a little chat, that beguiled the tedious way.

After they became tolerably settled in their new habitation, Mrs. Belfield applied herself to teaching her little girls to read and sew: Henry went to a free grammar school, about two miles off, where he soon became the delight or the terror of

the school boys: whoever was aggrieved, Henry undertook their cause, and so completely was he considered the champion of the oppressed, that all the little ones looked up to him as their regular protector, and would say to any of the great ones who insulted them, "if you do so and so, Henry Belfield shall knock you down." In consequence of this pre-eminence, it was but too common to see poor Henry with a black eye or a bloody nose, though it was allowed on all hands that a better tempered boy never existed; his mother, on these occasions, would often point out to him in the strongest terms, the impropriety of his conduct, and Henry always listened to her suggestions with the profoundest attention, generally kissed her with tears in his eyes, and promised that he would quarrel with no boys if they did not use some of his friends ill, but that was a thing he could never get over; and, as in every community, there are some spirits which nothing less than the arm of justice can

teach obedience, Henry in spite of his mother's lectures, and his own resolutions, was still subject to the same honours of war, till his prowess became acknowledged, and no one was hardy enough to dispute his rights of arbitration.

During the first winter of their abode in this neighbourhood, as Henry was trudging to school one morning after a night of violent rain, by which the stream he was crossing was prodigiously swelled; he looked over the bridge and saw a little ragged girl endeavouring to fill her kit with water: the wind was high, and the child held the vessel in such a manner, that it filled with the wind, and being too strong for her, as she durst not let go, not being aware of her own danger, it took her from her feet, and she was taken away by the current: Henry instantly ran to her assistance, and succeeded in seizing her petticoats, and enabling her to gain the shore; but when the child, still fearful of her treasure, cried out, "Oh the

kit, the kit, my mammy must have her kit!" Henry laid hold of the ill-fated kit, and was borne away as the girl had been before, by the rapid current. The grateful girl then besought him to let it go, which he did, but was too much exhausted to recover the shore: the girl, who screamed and ran on every side, almost distracted, luckily attracted two gentlemen who were riding over the bridge: one of them instantly galloped towards the place, and directed by the little girl, threw the lash of his whip directly to Henry, who was just able to avail himself of such welcome assistance: the other gentleman arriving at the same moment, they succeeded in extricating him from his perilous situation, and began to enquire how he got into it, a question eagerly answered by the little girl, who told her tale of thankful gratitude in terms of unbounded applause. When Henry was able to speak, he too was eloquent in thanks for his rescue: the gentleman who arrived first, said he

was heartily glad he had come in time to save such a noble lad ; “ but (said the other) how happened you to jump into the stream to save this girl and her kit ; could you not see your danger ; did you know any thing of the girl ? ”

“ Was she not my fellow-creature ? was she not a Christian child ? ” said Henry, looking with surprise and indignation at his interrogator. The first gentleman gave him an approving smile, and said, “ Where shall I take you to, my dear ? you shall mount my horse, and I will lead you home ? ”

“ Not for the world, Sir ? ” said Henry, shaking himself, “ I would not have my mamma see me for the world ! she would think of nothing but drowning all night ; I know an old woman who will let me lie down in her bed, and dry all my clothes for me, and then poor mamma will know nothing of the matter. ”

“ Then take this half-crown and buy yourself some ginger-bread with it : you

are certainly the most extraordinary boy I ever met with."

"Half-a-crown!" exclaimed Henry, eyeing the money with transport; "Oh, sir, I am so much obliged! Here my girl! here! take this to your mammy to buy a new kit. Yes, sir," said he "turning again to the gentleman, you are very good; I am sure I shall never forget you the longest day I have to live. And I would," said he, hesitating, "I *would* ask you to go to our house, for mamma to thank you, but I am so very, very much afraid of making her unhappy."

"My charming little fellow, you need say no more," said the gentleman; "go and get your clothes off; some time or other I will see you again. Your mother is the richest woman in all England."

Henry thought the gentleman very much mistaken, but he only thanked him once more, and trudged off to Sally Simpson's, an old woman, who, like the little school boys, considered herself under great obligations to Henry, for keeping

unlucky lads from her little orchard, and likewise for rescuing her fine old cock from destruction about a week before: she instantly set about stripping poor Henry, and gave him a little hot milk to keep him warm, and by her care he sustained no other injury than a slight cold, while his mother happily remained a stranger to the whole transaction.

In the mean time the gentleman had learnt from the little girl as much as she knew of the history of Henry and his mother, and had rode away conversing more on the character of the boy, than the circumstance which had led them to the knowledge of it.

Time passed away for four years in this quiet abode, without any remarkable occurrence; the children improved under the excellent tuition of their only parent, both in body and mind. Little Edmund was become a fine boy, and once a year Mrs. Belfield had received or visited her inestimable parents, who both continued in pretty good health; and Mr. Atkinson

attended with the most anxious diligence to the studies of his grandson, who on his part evinced such a taste for literature, and such a solicitude to profit by the instructions he received, that his delighted grandsire seemed to live his days over again in the darling youth, and to forget he had ever known the pain of parting with his father.

Such was the situation of the respective families, when Mrs. Belfield received a letter from the apothecary of her father's village, intreating her to lose no time in coming to the parsonage, as Mr. Atkinson was taken suddenly ill. Sensible that the danger must have been very great, which could render both her mother and son incapable of writing, she lost no time in setting out, not sending even for Henry to accompany her; but her expedition availed not, for she was denied the comfort of seeing the venerable man alive; he had been seized the morning before with an apoplexy, from which he never recovered either his

voice or senses ; but after laying twelve hours in a state of stupor, departed without a single groan. The widow of this excellent man was now obliged to receive from her daughter all the consolation she was capable, on her part of bestowing ; but both were for a time nearly overwhelmed with the stroke, for which, from the general good state of his health, neither were prepared. Poor Charles, too, suffered little less than they did : possessing thoughtfulness beyond his years, he saw himself not only deprived of a tender parent, for whom he had ever felt the utmost reverence and affection ; but all his hopes in life blasted, and himself thrown a burden upon a mother, already overloaded : he thought, too, on his good grandmother, and concluded that it was impossible for them all to live on the scanty income which had barely sufficed for the family, to whom it had been hitherto appropriated. He felt his own insufficiency to gain a livelihood by any of the ordinary means of exertion, and,

with inward anguish, exclaimed, " I cannot dig, and to beg I am ashamed."

That pressing necessity, always so very distressing to the widows of clergymen, soon obliged them to wave every consideration but that of removal; and, after disposing of the furniture and paying the few debts which belonged to the parsonage, Mrs. Belfield, with her only parent, and her son, returned to Lincolnshire: they were received by the young family with such an ardent affection, as made them, for some hours at least, comparatively happy. Mrs. Atkinson was delighted with her girls, who were much grown since she saw them; little Edmund was now capable of amusing, without fatiguing her, and Henry, though he generally made more noise in the house than all the rest put together, was mild and gentle as a lamb: he watched every look of his grandmother, anticipated her wishes, and seemed so to reverence the sacred form of sorrow in her person, that he could hardly allow himself to smile in

her presence. Many a time did the good woman recollect the prayer of her departed friend, that her son, and his sons after him, might be blessings to her; and acknowledged, with humble gratitude to the all-wise Disposer of events, that in a great measure the blessing was now descending on her head.

Although Mrs. Belfield took the utmost care to prevent either her mother or her son from witnessing her increased anxiety respecting the present maintenance and future provision of her family, yet it was impossible for Charles not to observe it, and the thought cut him to the heart: at length he gained sufficient courage to speak to her on the subject, and intreat her to instruct him in what way it would be possible to provide for his own wants, if he could not contribute to relieve those of his family. His mother said every thing she could to sooth his uneasiness, and even to induce him to believe that he might by some means pursue those studies, to which his mind

had been already bent : she told him that she had written to Colonel Montgomery, who had been his god-father, and entreated his advice ; as she had been informed that there were a class of young men admitted into the universities, on terms so easy, that perhaps even her bounded means might be equal to them.

Soothed and re-assured by his mother's consolatory information, poor Charles began to resume his studies, and find his old pleasures return, with his old companions in the library ; not but he was fond of instructing his sisters, and walking with them when they had finished their school exercises : one evening, as they came through their little garden, he observed a single rose which had survived all the flowers of the neighbourhood, and dwelt almost on a leafless bush ; on going into the house he addressed the following lines to his sisters :—

Mark, my dear girls, that beauteous rose,
Wet with the drops of many a shower,
Amid October's storms it blows,
A sweet but solitary flower.

No partners of its summer's day,
Remain to share the wintry hour,
It dwells alone upon the spray,
A widow'd solitary flower.

No little buds in vernal bloom,
Their dewy fragrance round it pour,
Struck by the blast, it mourns their doom,
A childless solitary flower.

Yet still it blossoms firm, tho' meek,
Nor shrinks beneath the tempest's power,
Turns to the breeze its blushing cheek,
A patient solitary flower.

Thus, my dear girls, the Christian's breast,
When storms of sorrow round him lours,
Admits one bright celestial guest,
One fair, tho' solitary flower.

Religion, she, whose power divine,
Can sooth affliction's bitterest hour,
And in the heaven-taught bosom shine,
A bright, a consecrated flower.

These lines were of course handed to his mother, who had just finished reading them, and was just expressing her approbation of the sentiments they contain-

ed, when one of the neighbours brought her a letter from the Barton post-office, which, he observed, was the "biggest thing of that kind he ever saw;" and as it appeared to all the young ones of an extraordinary size, they crowded about their mother whilst she opened it, and looked at her with great earnestness, whilst she perused, with marks of evident astonishment, the following lines.

CHAP. VI.

DEAR MADAM,

I WAS much pained by the contents of your last favour, and especially as it was quite out of my power to help your son in the way you wish; I have, however, done my best, as you will see by the enclosed, which is a commission for him as an Ensign in my own regiment: I beg you will allow me to furnish him with all that is necessary for the appointment:

this I owe him, both as my godson, and the eldest branch of a man I shall never cease to remember with unalterable affection.—I am obliged to inform you, that in three days your son must join me at Great Marlow, whence I will take charge of him myself, as he goes out under my own immediate care: I hope you will make yourself easy in committing him to the charge of an old soldier, and a most sincere friend.—Your's, &c.

FRANCIS MONTGOMERY.

It is impossible to describe justly the mingled emotions which affected Mrs. Belfield, while she put the letter and the commission together into Charles's hand; nor to say how her heart sunk within her as she perceived the deadly paleness which overspread his countenance as he perused a letter, which, in one moment, dashed to the ground all the fabric of that happiness he had for years been building in his own mind.—Every object of his pursuit, every attainment of his mind, every

subject of his thoughts seemed blasted as by lightning, and new prospects presented to him with which he had not a single feeling in unison.—The retirement in which he had lived; the station he had been destined to fill from his very birth; the natural stillness of his manners; and even the strictly religious sentiments which had been strongly inculcated in his mind, all seemed to rise before him and oppose themselves to a military life. He felt astonished and confounded; and unable to speak to his mother, who, in distressing silence, watched every turn of his countenance, till he precipitately retired to his bed-chamber.

All night long did poor Charles alternately meditate on this important affair, and pray to God to direct him how to act: the result of this was, that he saw clearly it was his duty not only to accept with gratitude a means of honourable existence, but to accede to the measure with such a degree of cheerfulness as might free his mother's aching heart from

the despondency which he saw had already seized upon it; he thought too, on his good grandmother, and considered, that by remaining where he was, he must necessarily curtail her scanty comforts, and even impose on her new privations.—This thought brought with it again those dear images so long pictured on his mind, as the great objects of desire, a comfortable living, a respectable congregation, a convenient house, where his mother might enjoy the evening of life, and her venerable parent go down to the grave in peace. “Oh!” said Charles, bursting into an agony of tears, “must I never, never, enjoy this happiness?” He was interrupted by his poor mother, who, restless and unhappy, had wandered about the house during the whole night, and had listened with pangs a mother only can feel, to the virtuous, but painful struggles of her generous and noble-minded son. Conscious that his mother must have heard him, Charles threw himself on the pillow, and covered his face with his hands, ashamed

of having betrayed his feelings. Mrs. Belfield took his hand with infinite tenderness, and assured him, that so far was she from attaching the least blame to him, that if he really found it was not possible for him to conquer his disgust, she would return the commission immediately to their kind friend, and declare it was totally out of their power to accept it.—“No! no! my dear mother,” cried Charles, throwing his arms about her neck, “that will never do; I have, you know, no other prospect, and should I give up the army now, and be left without any resource, how bitterly should I repent offending my godfather, by a rejection of his great goodness to me at this time: no, cost what it will, I will thankfully accept it. ’Tis true,” said he, smiling through his tears, “I am not so valiant as my brother Henry, I have no taste for ‘seeking the bubble reputation e’ven in the cannon’s mouth,’ but I trust I shall be able to do my duty; and, as my dear grandfather used to say, if I

do that, it is no matter whether I wear a red coat or a black one."

Mrs. Belfield could only reply by pressing him in her arms; her emotions were too great for utterance: she retired; and poor Charles satisfied with having in part obtained a victory over himself endeavoured to obtain a little repose.

In the morning when the family assembled at breakfast, Henry was the only person capable of breaking silence, which he did by begging earnestly that Charles would get this good Colonel to procure him a commission likewise. "I could not sleep for thinking of it," said he. "I have done nothing all night but tease poor Edmund with talking about it. I really believe that I wished to be a soldier ever since I was born. When I read the Grecian History, I would rather have been Leonidas slain, than the greatest king that ever existed. Oh! I should love to go to battle. Like Norval, 'I long to follow to the field some warlike lord.' Why, dear me, Charles, you

den't say a word, man; does your joy overcome you so that you can't speak?"

Poor Charles could not refuse a smile to this appeal; he told Henry that it was certainly a very fine thing for him, but as their taste was different, he must not wonder, if a boy, long designed for the church, was not in raptures when he thought of such a different occupation: "and besides my dear Henry," said he, "I am not at all glad to hear you declare such a positive intention of going into the army: I think my mother would be happier if you was nearer: I wish you could settle in trade."—"In trade!" exclaimed Henry—"in trade! no that I never will consent to; I despise it, I hate it, and I never will be forced into it: I can be a common soldier, and I *will* too," said he, bouncing out of the room, in great indignation.

Charles followed him with his eyes; "Poor fellow," said he, "I wish he was taller; I am sure I would write in the most thankful manner to my god-father, and beg of him to transfer the commission

to my brother, if such things can be done:" he looked earnestly at his mother.

"In the present case, my love," said she, "such a thing appears impossible; no time you see, can be lost, and the colonel's present of equipment, at any rate, is to you only: besides, Henry, though stout, is you know, little of his age; he is only beginning to grow this summer; in a couple of years, I dare say, he will be a tall young fellow like you; and if ever you are enabled to mention his desires to Colonel Montgomery, or any other officer, in such a manner as to procure him a similar appointment with your own, I shall be very thankful, for I know Henry will never be so happy in any other situation."

Henry, whose little pets were only the flash of a moment, had returned into the parlour, and heard the conclusion of his mother's speech. Penetrated with gratitude to her, and affection for his brother, he pressed between them, and taking a hand of each, "pray, pray," said he,

“forgive me; indeed, Charles, I admire you exceedingly, and I ought to have considered your feelings were not like mine. When you are gone, I will endeavour to make up your loss to my mother, and to be your boy too,” added he, turning to the old lady, who perhaps felt more the loss she would have of her own child (for so she always denominated Charles,) than any one.

A hearty shake of the hand concluded the reconciliation of the brothers: Mrs. Belfield struggled to suppress her feelings in the bustle of preparation. As they were at some distance from the main road, it was necessary that Charles should set out that afternoon; so that no time was to be lost. He went himself to choose out a few books; his sisters inspected his linen; and his grandmother would have mended his stockings, if the water in her eyes would have permitted. As these things were but a slender stock, and always kept in strict order, they hardly served to consume the time,

which was at once too short for consolation, and too long for amusement. After an early and hasty dinner, the man who had undertaken to conduct him on horseback to York, appeared at the door. His portmanteau was carried out, and buckled on with tedious minuteness by Henry, who would at this moment have given the world that he had never suffered himself to speak one hasty word to a brother he loved so fondly. It was a moment so bitter, that Mrs. Belfield felt the necessity of shortening it. Alas! this was not the first time she had parted with her heart's treasure on the same awful errand. Her fortitude gave way; but she remembered what she owed to the feelings of her child; and she mustered courage enough to urge his departure, to press him fondly to her bosom, and say, "Farewell, my child, farewell!"

Charles was soon out of sight, but not soon forgotten. Mrs. Belfield had retired to her own room, to indulge the

tears she found it impossible to restrain. The rest remained in the parlour, and in silence lamented the removal of a brother they could not help loving with unusual tenderness. At length Henry ventured to ask at his mother's door, if he might be admitted; and his mother saw in that question, that it was her duty to summon up her fortitude, and remember the rest of her dear family. She opened the door to Henry, who, falling on her neck, said every thing the most duteous affection could suggest, to soothe her feelings, while he expressed his own ardent admiration of his brother's conduct. Mrs. Belfield would not let this opportunity slip of improving his heart, and directing his views. She pointed out to him the value of that sacrifice his brother had made, in thus entering, for her sake and that of his family, into a line of life discordant with his feelings: she expatiated on the satisfaction with which he must ever view his own conduct on this important occasion; and said, that

even allowing the pain he might experience to be greater than she hoped it would prove, yet it could not equal that which he must inevitably have experienced had he staid at home, impressed as he must be with the idea, that he was leading an useless life, and preying on the parent whom he would rather have supported. "But," added she, "how different has been his conduct! how noble his exertions! Charles is indeed a hero; for he has achieved a victory already, greater than many of the proudest names in the list of glory could ever boast—he has conquered his own desires."

The praise of his mother, always given with caution, but delivered with sensibility, warmed the heart of Henry; and he felt anxious to deserve such praise as this: but his mind still lingered with delight on the idea of a commission being procured for him; and he never contemplated future fame, fortune, and happiness, but in the character of a soldier.

Mrs. Belfield had soon the pleasure of receiving a letter from her eldest son describing the reception he had met with from his good colonel as highly flattering; but what was to her still better news, he said that peace was announced, and instead of leaving the kingdom, as he expected, he hoped early in the spring to pay a visit to his dear friends in Lincolnshire.

The winter was rendered a very cheerless one to the Belfield family by the illness of Mrs. Atkinson, with whom it was too evident the low country she now inhabited never would agree. Knowing, however, the necessity of continuing there, to her daughter she endeavoured to hide her sufferings, and impute them to any other cause.

The following spring they were made happy by a visit from Charles, who was in high health, and improved in his personal appearance. His mother too observed with delight, that though his character still preserved its leading fea-

tures, yet she had the satisfaction to see that he was in a great measure reconciled to his profession; and seemed to look forwards with hope, and backwards with little regret.—Poor Henry was so dazzled with his brother's uniform; so charmed with every thing he said or did, that the military mania seemed to have seized all his faculties, and stamped him for a soldier; but Charles could not encourage him to hope much. Colonel Montgomery was very poorly, and considered in great danger: of the other friends of his father, some were dead, others in distant countries, and the remainder in a situation that called on them to provide for their own wants rather than those of others; and, as the nation was in a state of peace, and many regiments broken, it appeared to him very improbable that he could procure him any situation in the army.—After staying about six weeks, Charles took leave of his dear family, and was followed by the blessings and good wishes of them all.

Nothing material followed during the summer; the young family improved, and Henry was, in his own opinion, tall enough for a grenadier: his mother was extremely anxious for his future fate; he was now near fifteen, and she had no prospect for him of any kind. What added to her distress at this time was the death of Colonel Montgomery, which not only deprived her of all hope for Henry, which his interest might have procured, but likewise lost Charles his best, and almost only friend. This circumstance added greatly to her despondency and perplexity: she could scarcely look on Henry without her eyes filling with tears, and giving a deep sigh; which the good boy never observed without trying to divert her from the painful subject of her meditations.

One evening in October, a rap at the cottage door announced a visitant; and a gentlemanly-looking person entered, who said his name was Corbett; that he was acquainted with Master Henry, and

would be glad to speak with him. Mrs. Belfield politely offered him a chair, and Edmund ran to fetch his brother. When Henry entered, Mr. Corbett looked at him with great earnestness, and said—
“ Pray, young man, look at me, and tell me if you recollect me ?”

Henry blushed deeply, but, presenting his hand most cordially to the stranger, said,—“ I should be a very ungrateful fellow if I did not remember you, sir.— You saved my life, undoubtedly.”

Mrs. Belfield, astonished and affected, rose in confusion, and intreated information on an affair which had so deeply concerned her, though she was in utter ignorance of it; and Mr. Corbett, in a short time, informed her of the whole transaction, adding, that though it was now six years ago that very day, he had never wholly lost sight of Henry since, as he had a relation in the neighbouring town of Barton, who at his request had from time to time, made inquiries concerning him. He had even heard of his

predilection for the army, and had for the last twelvemonth, kept aloof, he said under the idea, that if the young gentleman could get a commission, it might be more agreeable than the offer he was about to make him; but that, as he thought in the present crisis, nothing was to be expected, and that it was high time such a great boy was put in some way of doing for himself, he had taken the liberty of calling upon her to say, that he was in want of an apprentice at that time, and would, if agreeable, take Henry any day. He was a linen-draper in Hull, and he believed his name was well known in that part of the country.

“ Yes, sir, your name and character are well known to me: in your extensive business, I presume, many young men are employed, and you can, doubtless, command considerable fees with apprentices.”

“ Why, ma'm,” said Mr. Corbett, “ I never was anxious to take much money with my young men, being more soli-

citous to secure well-educated youths ; for, as they constantly associate with my own sons, and are treated in every respect, like them, of course I am particular who I take into my house ; and one hundred guineas is all that any of my present set of young men have given me."

" That is not too much for you to receive ; but sir, it is more than I could give, even if my son had an inclination for your business, which I am afraid he has not."

" Excuse me, ma'am," said Mr. Corbett, rising with a respectful air, " when I seek an apprentice I do not want a fee with him ; I have plenty who offer themselves to me in that case. I love your son—I will take him with pleasure without a shilling ; nor would I have mentioned the fee, but for the purpose of his knowing the terms were not so great as from the appearance and manners of some of my young men he might have been led to suppose ; and he might therefore have felt pain at the idea of having

received more than he really did: between us there is no money matters, but I hope there will be a great deal of friendship and esteem. My wife is, I think, the very woman with whom you dare trust your son. I have four children—three sons and a daughter—all prepared to love your Henry with enthusiasm; and I really think if he was to come amongst us, and could get these drums and standards out of his head, he might be very happy.”

“But my dear, dear sir,” cried Henry, with great emotion, “that is impossible! though I thank you—God knows how heartily I thank you, yet I feel that I never can be a tradesman. I would rather be a common soldier a great deal than stand behind a counter all day folding muslins and ribbons. My father and my grandfather were in the army, and I am certain that if I am not, I shall never be good for any thing else.”

Mr. Corbett shook his head, but not in despair. “You shall have a month

to consider of it, my dear; I cannot take an answer given without thought; besides, you have not even heard your mother's opinion."

His mother said, "Mrs. Belfield has to lament, that only *one* of her sons is capable of the heroism of self-denial; she will, however, never forget to thank you for preserving the life of this dear, though stubborn boy, and for your generous endeavours to make that life useful to her, and happy to himself."

Henry was stung to the quick at his mother's allusion to his brother's superior resolution. He remembered how often she had told him that the mildest manners were consistent with the firmest mind, and that stubbornness was no proof of either courage or fortitude: he left the room overwhelmed with sorrow and vexation; while Mr. Corbett took leave of Mrs. Belfield, promising to come over again in a month's time, provided he did not hear from her in the interim.

Day after day passed on, and Henry, in grief and silence took his meals, afraid to look in his mother's face, shocked at himself for having planted new thorns in her rugged path, and yet unable to conquer the repugnance he felt at relinquishing the brilliant career of military glory, which a vivid imagination had drawn out for him. There were at this time, some rumours of war breaking out again, which furnished him with a pretext for new hopes, though a letter from his brother, about the same time, entirely crushed all his rising expectations, and painted the uncertainty of gaining an ensigncy, and the narrowness of the income when gained, in such a manner, as placed Mr. Corbett's offer in the most advantageous point of view imaginable; and as poor Mrs. Belfield saw her mother again attacked with the complaint which had afflicted her all the last winter, and which called for many comforts she could with difficulty procure, her anxiety be-

came every day more distressing, and preyed equally on her health and spirits.

Henry saw this change in her, and could not help imputing it to himself; though his sisters, who loved him tenderly, assured him that it was a cold caught by waiting on their grandmother in the night. He now recollected what his mother had said at his brother's departure; and began to feel that he was, indeed, a burthen to his mother—the thought was distraction. “I will go and enlist for a soldier, at once,” said he: “I am big enough, and old enough, and then my mother will be rid of me.— If I cannot obey her wishes, I can save her from supporting an undutiful child.”

The evening on which he had formed this wild goose scheme, Mrs. Belfield was uncommonly poorly, and her mother though ill able, endeavoured to nurse her, while the sweet girls left no means in their power untried to attend and amuse them both: Henry felt conscious of his own system as one that would sink them all

still lower than they were; and add fuel to the fire which consumed them: he fancied that his mother penetrated the secret of his heart, and in her languid glances, he read reproach for his unkindness. Unable to bear these reflections, he left the parlour, and finding the kitchen empty, sat down by the fire: in a few minutes the maid, who had been to fetch the milk, came in; her eyes were red with crying, and she gave a long sigh as she sat down her pitcher.—“What is the matter, Betty, have you heard any bad news?” said Henry.

“Bad enough for me,” said Betty; “why, it only wants a week you know till I go.”

“You go! go where? I know nothing about it.”

“What,” said Betty, “don’t you know, that the very day after that gentleman came here at night that mistress came into the kitchen and said to me, ‘Betty, my good girl,’ says she, ‘I would have you look out for a place, as I must do without

you this winter ;' and so, you see, I was main sorry, and I axed if I had done any thing in the versal world to offend her, and she said ' no, child, no ; but quite the contrary, and I don't doubt but you will soon get a great deal better place ; but I cannot afford to keep any servant, is the reason I part with you, Betty ; besides, my girls are getting great ones now, and can wait on me ;—and so I said, but how can old madam do, if her rheumatics comes again, for somebody to help her ? being, as how, you know, I am the stoutest body in the house : and then your mamma said, as how you would help her, and so you see the upshot of all is, that I must go, tho' I told mistress, so I did, that I would be very glad to bate all my wages, if I might but live in her service."

Henry heard no more : overcome with an agony too violent to be borne, he flew into his own chamber, and throwing himself on his knees by the bed-side, and hiding his face in the bed-clothes, he

sobbed in a transport of grief, such as he had never felt:—as his feelings subsided, he endeavoured to vent them in words, and in an incoherent, but heartfelt prayer, he besought his Almighty Father to guide and support him in the path of duty, and to accept his resolution of dedicating all his future days to a mother so justly worthy of his unbounded love. By degrees he became more calm, and his heart felt lightened of a heavy burthen: he sat down by the bed, and endeavoured to reason on the other side of the question, and persuade himself he could be happy with Mr. Corbett; but, alas! his pride, his vanity, the desire of being distinguished, the love of fame, all passions natural to the heart of man, and particularly in his youth; all arose in his mind, and forbade the hopes of happiness: but his resolution was taken, and though he felt as if he had resigned all hopes of happiness for himself, yet there was a satisfaction still

lurking in his heart, which told him he was deserving of his mother's approbation.

His sister, Maria, now called him to supper. When he entered the parlour, his wild and pallid looks, on which the traces of recent sufferings were strongly depicted, instantly alarmed his mother.—“My Henry!” said she, holding out her hand to him, “what has been the matter with you?—I must not have you fret in this manner, my love; depend upon it, I will never ask you—never hint at your leaving me again: we will wait for better times.”

“Oh, my mother! My dear good mother!” cried Henry, dropping on his knees before her, “only forgive me, and I shall be happy, quite happy to go with Mr. Corbett; but pray forgive me; and keep poor Betty. I will go! I will do my best when I am there to improve; that I may be able to keep a shop myself, and help you: only forgive me for the sorrow I have already caused you!”

The impassioned tones, the tender

anxiety of Henry, quite overcame his mother, who was nearly fainting: Henry flew to give her air: he was ready to reproach himself every moment, as the sole cause of her suffering; but his grandmother desired him to be silent, and only do what she told him. In a short time Mrs. Belfield began to speak, and to praise the duty and affection of her son; at the same time assuring him, that if, when he was of age, he still retained his former predilection for the army, she would not oppose his wishes; as perhaps during that time some friend might be found to forward his views. She assured him not only of her entire forgiveness, but her warmest approbation, saying, as his passions were stronger, and of course his attachments, it might be said he had done more than even his excellent brother.

Oh, how sweet was the bread and milk which Henry ate for his supper, when he saw smiles on his mother's pale face, and heard such praises from a tongue

which never flattered! with what rapture did he go into the kitchen, and tell Betty she must stay with his mother; and with what heartfelt exultation did he give his grandmother his arm, as she went to bed calling him her noble, generous lad, and telling him that some time she did not doubt but he would provide for them all!

A night of rest was necessary for the restoration of all their agitated spirits. On coming together in the morning, Henry still looked pale and languid. Conscious that it was impossible that his mind should all at once recover its tone, Mrs. Belfield determined to keep him as much employed as she possibly could, during the remainder of his stay; so she sent him that day to Barton, to purchase a few necessaries; the next two were spent with his school-fellows; the following, in looking over his accompts, &c.; so that when Mr. Corbett arrived, according to promise, he had the satisfaction of being met by Henry with a smiling countenance (though a heavy

heart might be seen through it) and told that he was ready to attend him.

“And you really intend to go with me, and settle to your employment, like a steady, industrious, young man?”

“Indeed, sir, I do,” said Henry, “to the best of my abilities, provided nobody insults me!”

“You are the finest fellow in England,” said Mr. Corbett, clapping him on the back; “I thought you was born for a hero, when I dragged you out of the water.”

Hero was rather an unlucky word, for in the idea of poor Henry it was always connected with military glory; it rather deranged the severe system he had imposed on his own mind, of never thinking on such subjects: but in a few minutes he recovered his composure, and bade farewell to his dear family in a manner that did not disgrace his fortitude, while it did honour to his sensibility.

For some time after his departure the

house felt exceedingly dull: he had never left his mother before in his life, and his gaiety, nonsense, and good humour, even his very faults, had kept her from many an hour of wearisome sameness, in a country which afforded few objects of amusement, and denied almost all intercourse among neighbours. It was however a great satisfaction to hear almost every week of his health, and they had the pleasure to observe in his letters a gradual return to his former cheerfulness. One day they received from him a little packet directed to his sisters, which contained several little elegant toys, such as fancy pin-cushions, needle-cases, thread-boxes, together with a small assortment of fancy, gilt, and drawing-paper. The accompanying letter informed them, that these articles were lent to him by Miss Corbett, as patterns for them, and that if they could make up a box of such things and send them to him, he could dispose of them at the Lincoln repository, and it would be a

pretty way of getting them a little pocket money.

As Mrs. Belfield possessed a very good taste for drawing, she readily fell in with this scheme for the improvement of her daughters, not supposing the profit from such trifles could pay any thing worth notice for the time employed. They were, however, got up with great neatness and expedition, and sent to Henry, with a letter, desiring, that when he got any money for them, he would lay it out in such things as he knew would be useful for them; at the same time, as the days were now lengthening, it was hinted that they should be very happy to see him at the cottage.

A few weeks after, on the evening preceding Good Friday, who should come bolting in at supper-time but Henry, carrying a small hamper, which he set down with great care, and then flew into his mother's arms, with all his school-boy impetuosity. He then kissed his grandmother and sisters; flew up stairs to see

Edmund, who was in bed; then into the kitchen, to shake hands with Betty; every where followed by Maria and Anne, who could never admire and caress him sufficiently. At length his mother prevailed on him to sit down and eat some supper, as she found he had been some hours on the water, and had carried his baggage six miles.

As soon as he had finished, the sisters became very impatient to know the contents of the hamper; and Henry, with great importance, began to unpack it, in the first place informing them, that it was the purchases made with the two guineas which their little things had sold for at the repository.

“Two guineas!” exclaimed mamma and her daughters; “did you really get *two* guineas for them?”

“Yes, indeed; and you shall see my purchases.”

Mrs. Belfield felt as if she had realised an addition to her income; and she at-

tended with delight to Henry's exhibition from the hamper.

"In the first place," said he, "I have bought, you see a gallon of sherry for grandmother, because the doctor said, you know, that it was the best thing to keep off that nasty ague ;—then I have bought this cotton gown for mother ; is it not a pretty pattern ?—this half of a shawl is for Betty ;—and this History of the Seven Champions of England is for little Edmund : and this is all, my dear sisters, that I could get, you may be sure, for two guineas."

"Oh, how good you are ;" said Maria, "how well you have managed it !"

"What !" said Mrs. Atkinson, "and he has brought neither of you the least thing for y^rselves."

"That is just what he ought to have done," said Anne : "I never was so pleased in my life."

"There is another parcel," said Henry. "It is patterns of muslin, which Mrs.

Corbett lent me for you to work by; and a piece of muslin which she sends you, for a present, to learn by; and when you have worked them, they, too, must be sent to the repository, and you will get a deal of money for them."

It is unnecessary to say, how much joy the presence of Henry diffused among this little circle; and it was the more welcome at this time, as rumours were spread of another war, and Charles was in daily expectation of being ordered abroad. Mrs. Belfield had almost suffered the three days, which was the length of Henry's visit, to expire, before she durst venture to inquire into the state of his mind respecting its old and favourite pursuits: he assured her, that he was very near as fond of a military life as ever he had been:—"But you see, mamma," said he, "I have not time to think, nor to fret about them, we are always so busy; and, even on a Sunday, when I wish to recollect all those things which used to fill my head, either

we are going to church, or reading, or walking, or I am writing to you or Charles; so that, one way or other, I have no time to be uneasy in, or I think I should be just as anxious about it as ever I was."

His mother could not help smiling at poor Henry being distressed for want of time to fret. She now saw clearly, that unless some circumstance happened to renew his old bias, with a more than ordinary stimulus, he might get through life in a very comfortable manner, without the aid of the *ear-piercing fife, or spirit stirring drum*; and she rejoiced in the happy circumstance of his gaining a share in the affections of his worthy master, who, she found had, with all his family, treated Henry with so much real friendship, as almost to have subdued his aversion to counters and mus-lins, and she bade him good bye, at this time, with very different sensations from those she had experienced on his first quitting the maternal roof.

Soon after this, war was proclaimed, and Charles was ordered, with his regiment, to Malta. He wrote to his mother on this most important era of his life, with all that genuine tenderness, and true resignation, which had ever marked his character; and, by the same post, she received a letter from his colonel, expressive of the sincerest regard for her son, as a young man of the highest promise he was personally acquainted with; and assuring her, that he should never be negligent of his interest or his welfare.

Though these testimonies of his worth were, of course, very dear to the heart of his fond mother, yet they could not allay her fears, or cloud her recollection; she felt with an acuter pang, that she was a widow, and the mother of a soldier, whose private worth afforded no security from public misfortune; and her whole mind was absorbed in melancholy presages; still she felt a comfort in thinking that Henry was left at home, and

that he was not unhappy; for, every week, she continued to hear the most satisfactory accounts of him.

In the course of the summer, numbers of young men enrolled themselves to serve as volunteers; and as invasion was talked of with confidence, those in the sea-port towns especially, thought it particularly necessary to step forth on this occasion;—the eldest son of Mr. Corbett, and two other young men in his shop, were among the number. Nothing now was talked or thought of, but battles, uniforms, field days, and manœuvres; and Henry had the satisfaction of seeing that he had not been the only enthusiast in the world. He was now a tall and handsome young man, calculated to excite more admiration than any one in the house, and it surprised Mr. Corbett a good deal to hear him say nothing on the subject. Knowing, however, the very confined state of his finances, he called him one day into the counting-house, and told him, that if he wished

to join the volunteers, he would allow him time to learn the manual exercise, and furnish him likewise with the same clothes he was then providing for his own sons. Henry thanked him with the gratitude his kindness merited, but declined joining the volunteers altogether; though he said he should like very well to learn the exercise, as a piece of knowledge that, in case of actual invasion, might be useful.

“It seems very strange that you, who were so very anxious to be a soldier, should not embrace this opportunity of devoting yourself in part, at least, to the service of your country,” said Mr. Corbett, “especially as I know you have courage enough for any thing.”

“When I wished to be a soldier, sir,” said Henry reddening, “it was not for the sake of a red coat. I fancied myself capable of great enterprises, and wonderful achievements; I have, in a great measure, curbed my enthusiasm, as inconsistent with my duties; but if I was

to enter into any thing like a military life at all, I know it would quite unfit me for any thing else, and, therefore, I wish to drop it entirely; unless, by merely being master of the manual exercise, I might, in case the French should attempt a landing, lift my arm with more effect against the invaders of my country.—Farther, therefore, than the time necessary for that, I must decline your generous proposal.”

“You are an extraordinary young man,” said Mr. Corbett: “the best morning’s work I ever did, was taking you out of the water.”

“You forget, my dear sir, the morning you got married,” said Henry, smiling.

This speech of Henry’s was not the effusion of gallantry, but of sincere esteem for Mrs. Corbett, who was a most valuable woman, and had treated Henry with the tenderness of a mother ever since he entered her house. She was the only daughter of an amiable mother, who re-

sided at a little distance, on the banks of the Humber. She generally dined with Mr. Corbett's family on a Sunday, and as she put Henry much in mind of his own grandmother, though a little older, and much more troubled with the rheumatism, he had always treated with such uncommon attention and respect as in return won her affection, and that of her whole family; so that he was now, in every sense, become so domesticated, there appeared little probability of their separation, even when Henry should have served his full time.

If it had not been for these circumstances, which shewed to every individual of the family the light in which Henry was held, he would have had nearly the same work to go through amongst the young men which he had formerly to do with his school-fellows. Henry was the poorest person in the house decidedly, except the menial servants; his dress was the plainest—in some instances the shabbiest;—though

all his relations he had ever heard mentioned, had been, according to his ideas, gentlemen—yet they were none of them, rich; and, therefore, the little proud were sure to ridicule what they had not the sense or feeling to respect. It was impossible for persons not to see that “Henry was no vulgar boy;” and he often excited among the customers, a degree of attention and civility, even in his coarse jacket, which the sons of rich tradesmen, trained out in all the fopperies of the day, were not able to procure:—this of course awakened their envy, and would have been, in one way or other, the source of great uneasiness to him, if the kind attentions of Mrs. Corbett had not guarded him from the stings of malice and deceit.

Miss Corbett was the youngest child of her parents; and, being in herself, a most amiable girl, and the only one they had, was loved by them, with uncommon tenderness:—She was just the age of Henry's eldest sister, and he found an

uncommon pleasure in talking with her of his sisters, and gaining from her the means of enabling Maria and Anne to continue their little business with the repository. Miss Corbett never appeared so happy as when she could contribute to his pleasure by these benevolent communications; and she generally added some of her own work to every parcel which she sent on their account to the repository; while the whole profits were regularly sent to the cottage, a mode of silent generosity, consistent with the goodness of the heart which dictated it.

In the course of two months, Mrs. Belfield received a letter from Charles, which contained only a short account of his general health and prospects; but, in a few weeks after, another was conveyed to her, by a private hand, in which she read, with great satisfaction, the following ingenuous account of his engagements:—

CHAP. VII.

MY DEAR MOTHER,

HAVING an opportunity of writing to you by a person who assures me he will take care of my little parcel, I sit down to give you some idea of our proceedings since we left England, and I begin to find myself a soldier *indeed*. In the first place, we encountered a brisk gale, in the Bay of Biscay, which called for all my philosophy, I assure you; for I had not formed an idea in my own mind of any thing so terrible as the mighty ocean in a storm. We outrode the storm, however, with so little damage, that our seamen made quite light of the matter: in four days after, we arrived at Gibraltar, which you may be certain I felt a great desire to visit: it is indeed a most wonderful place, defended by a wall of rock which appears impregnable, and which is excavated for the pur-

pose of containing ammunition and warlike stores; and in many places bored quite through, for the purpose of throwing red-hot balls upon the assailants. No wonder that so many poor Spaniards fell before it.—Ah, my dear mother, war is a terrible thing, when the best is made of it:—but I forget my journal.

The day after we left Gibraltar, we fell in with a French privateer and two brigs. Though a single vessel, and not carrying many guns, our sailors prepared for the engagement with as much alacrity as a parcel of hungry ploughmen would fly to their diinner.—Much as I had heard of their courage, I really could not have formed an idea of fighting being made so pleasant a thing. I will now confess to you, my dear mother, what was the most distressing circumstance to me, in my own mind, when I was presented at first with my commission; I thought that in the day of battle I should prove a coward; I distrusted myself, and felt afraid of being a dis-

grace to my father's name; but I have the pleasure of assuring you, that when the conflict actually took place, neither my fears nor my feelings prevented me from doing my duty; and I have had the satisfaction of receiving the warmest praises for my conduct, from my superior officers.—I ought to add, that we beat the Frenchman, who sheered off; we took one brig, and left the other little better than a hull on the water.—Soon after, we arrived at Malta, from whence we are in daily expectation of being ordered into Italy, to encounter the French, who are every where opposed by the inhabitants; I mean in the most southern parts, for every where else, the tyrant of our times has fixed his standard in this garden of the world, almost without resistance.—During the time of my residence here, I have had an opportunity of making an excursion to Sicily, and seen the celebrated Mount Etna, which far exceeded my expectations, though the reading of Brydon's elegant description of it, had

raised them very high indeed. I visited too the ancient Agrigentum, and Palermo, and it is impossible to tell you what rapture I felt in thus treading on classic ground, and viewing, with my own eyes, the magnificent ruins of palaces and temples, of which I had so often read with my dear grandfather. I thanked God, at that moment, that I had been made a traveller by any means; and as my enthusiasm was awakened, and my emulation roused by the objects of fame before me, I thanked him too that I was a soldier. Cease to fear for me then, my dear mother; if my profession has some evils from which my secluded situation once led me to shrink, it has some pleasures which I am perhaps peculiarly calculated to enjoy: my thirst for knowledge was, you know, always ardent; I had been led to look for its gratification only in books. The great book of nature, the sure proofs of history, lie before me now, and I read these charming lessons with an avidity those only

can feel who have found a treasure, where they expected a misfortune. I find an advantage in having acquired this taste, greater than I could have believed possible to a man of my profession. While some of my brother officers are yawning away their time, cursing the weather, or abusing the natives and others, heating themselves and injuring their property at the billiard table, myself and two others, of similar tastes, are pursuing some object of natural history, inspecting some interesting antiquity, or furnishing our minds with some necessary information respecting the countries we may expect to visit. Something is whispered here respecting an expedition to Turkey and Egypt. You may be sure I feel anxious to be included in it: be assured, my dear mother, I shall not fail to write to you when I am able; but should you not hear from me very soon, do not be uneasy: be assured that my heart will never be changed. Give my love to my dear sisters, and my precious

Edmund. I have sent them a few curious shells. Tell my dear grandmother the little snuff-box is a remembrance from her *own* boy, a distinction I would not resign in favour of any body. When you see Henry, tell him he shall hear from me soon; that he has my esteem as well as my love, for his excellent conduct; he will be a blessing to us all; he is so now. Adieu! my friend now waits for this long letter, and begins to grow impatient. Believe me your truly affectionate son,
CHARLES BELFIELD."
"Malta, May 26, 1804."

It is unnecessary to say with what pleasure and satisfaction this letter was read, and read again. Hope once more shone in the eyes of the fond mother, and her heart dilated in contemplation of that future from which it had long shrunk in fearful forebodings. During the whole of the following year, they heard from time to time of the health of Charles, but he had the misfortune of being, according

to his wishes, amongst the number of those who were in the unlucky expedition to the Dardanelles; of course, he did not advance as rapidly as those who loved him could have wished; but his curiosity was amply gratified; and during a short stay in Egypt, he made such good use of his time, as to be able to collect materials for the following letter to his brother Henry:

“MY DEAR HARRY,

“The life of a soldier is not all sunshine, I assure you: the expedition, on which we had founded so many hopes, has failed, through stress of weather; and after suffering much toil, and of course mortification, we are glad to rest a while in Alexandria to refit. You may be sure my mind was not unemployed while navigating those seas, and steering by those islands so famous in ancient history. I felt more vexed at being defeated even by the elements in these seas, than in any other. The days

of old, when Xerxes led his immense army across these straits, to conquer the sons of freedom, and trample on the works of art, were often present to my mind. I thought of the proud monarch sitting on the shores, and seeing his numerous fleet, routed, dispersed, and taken by the band of hardy Greeks, whom he had so lately consigned to destruction. How did I wish to be made an humble instrument of help, in the glorious work of tearing from the Greeks, those bonds with which Turkey has long enthralled them, and restoring them to a place among surrounding nations. But I am forgetting all that I meant to have told you, which was, not to think of things as they were, but as they are.

“Alexandria, once the emporium of the world, is now a strange mixture of magnificence and beggary. You see in one place the ruins of splendid buildings, which prove the power of their kings, and the boundless wealth and population

of their kingdoms; and in another the most disgusting proofs of poverty and wretchedness. Mud rats lurk under the walls of palaces: and remains of proud edifices mingle with the filthy abodes of the squalid inhabitants, who are, of all I have ever seen, the most ugly and disagreeable. Their women wear a piece of cloth tied round the lower part of the face, and have two holes cut for the eyes to peep through: a considerable part of the rest of the body is bare, and you can form no idea of the hideous figure they cut. But I must leave them, to tell you that I have seen the pyramids, and ascended one of the highest. The base of the largest covers eleven acres of ground, and its perpendicular height is 500 feet: but if you was to measure it from the ground, it is 700 feet. I went into one of them, which was a work of great danger and fatigue, and did not, I think, repay me for either; they were, I think, undoubtedly built for repositories of the dead, and seem, even under that idea,

to have been the work of some king, or succession of kings, who having conquered all the neighbouring states, set his soldiers to work in a way that had never been seen before, or probably ever will again to the end of time. It used to be thought these pyramids were the work of the children of Israel during their Egyptian captivity; but learned writers of the present day are of a different opinion. The stones of which they are built seem to prove this; as we are told expressly in the scriptures, that the Jews were employed in making bricks. There are many other remains of antiquity deserving the greatest attention, particularly the mummy-pits, where dead bodies have been kept for more than 3000 years. Cleopatra's needle, near Alexandria, is a building remarkable for the beauty of its sculpture; the pillar erected to the memory of Pompey has been much injured during the last war; indeed great part of it is now in England, I believe: the remainder, however,

brought to my mind all his history, and his untimely death, and made me feel more reconciled to the unfortunate circumstance which brought me here.

“I saw yesterday two crocodiles, and thought them so tremendous and detestable, that all the riches of the Nile could scarcely atone for his production of such monsters; they were near twenty feet long, and opened such prodigious mouths, as made me shudder, though I viewed them from a place of the greatest security. I have seen too, numbers of ostriches of prodigious strength and swiftness. This country abounds with curious animals, but not any of them deserves notice so much as the ichneumon, a species of small rat, which breaks the eggs of the crocodile, if we except the ibis, which resembles a duck, and is equally famous for destroying serpents, scorpions, and other venomous creatures. The general poverty of the people, the wretched appearance of the soldiery, if such ragamuffins are worthy

the name, and the whole situation of political matters in Egypt, form altogether the most dreadful contrast to its former grandeur, opulence, and power, that is perhaps to be found on the face of the whole earth; yet I must own, if circumstances had permitted, I should have liked to penetrate into the country as far as Grand Cairo, and the ruins of Memphis. I would have gone even to seek the site of Babylon; and in her awful fate have confirmed my faith in those holy writings which pronounced her destruction at the proudest period of her power. I would also have visited Jerusalem, though it would have cost me some sighs. I could have wished to see the ground once trod by my Redeemer, and the mount where he suffered; together with the many places which must interest every Christian. One of the officers here, with whom I am well acquainted, made the whole tour of the ancient Canaan, at the conclusion of the last war, and has amused me much by

his descriptions of particular places, and sketches he took of them; but, he says, the whole face of the country is that of abject wretchedness and barrenness, as if cursed for the wickedness of its inhabitants. It has ceased to be 'a land flowing with milk and honey,' but is rather 'a den of thieves, and a cage for every unclean thing.'

"I have some reason to think, that, in the course of a few months, I shall visit my own dear country; but whether the chances of war will allow me to see all I hold dear in it, I cannot possibly foresee. To you, my dear Henry, is committed the care of all best beloved by us both: your anxiety is, I am sure, equal to mine: may you prove more successful in your endeavours to assist them! I had hoped, fondly hoped, that if our wishes had been crowned with success, in this late attack, that I should have been perhaps a little advanced, and by that means, I might have been enabled to assist our excellent mother. I am anxious,

likewise about little Edmund, and could wish him to have a good education; but, alas! the pay of an ensign is so very, very small, that it is only by the most rigid economy I can maintain myself.— I want shirts sadly, but know not how to ask my mother for them; but, as I hope I shall be able to pay her on my arrival, you may as well set the dear girls to work, for I know they will do that with pleasure for me. Give my love to them all: I never forget them and you in my prayers, and I doubt not I am remembered by you all. Farewell, my dear Hal. Believe me your truly affectionate brother,

“CHARLES BELFIELD.

“Alexandria, Sept. 14.”

The good sisters were not a little proud on the reception of this letter to think that they had already provided their absent brother, not only with shirts of their own making but their own purchasing likewise, from the profit of their muslin work; which was now sometimes sent to

the repository, and sometimes sold by Henry in Mr. Corbett's shop. Every day made this young man more valuable to his worthy master, from his attention, quickness, and steadiness; but an accident, which happened in the course of the following winter, rendered him of more importance than he had ever hoped to make himself, to a family he would have done every thing to serve that lay in his power. Henry was one night awakened by a cry of fire in the street, and instantly jumping out of bed, and slipping on part of his clothes, he threw up the sash, and letting himself down on the pent-house, he thence got into the street in almost an instant. At the same time he called another young man to shut the window, and rouse the rest; for as several were volunteers, it was a duty in them to follow him instantly, even if humanity did not compel them. Following the sound which appeared as yet to have drawn little assistance, he ran on several streets, before he was sensible of

his error; at length he overtook a man, who was going to fetch the engines, and whose voice had alarmed him first: this man told him that he was running exactly the wrong way in following him; "it is poor Mrs. Lloyd's house, sir," said the man. Mrs. Lloyd was the mother of Mrs. Corbett; she had been spending the day with her daughter, and Miss Corbett had accompanied her home, to stay a week with her, which she frequently did.

Henry flew like an arrow from a bow. He found the house in flames, and a crowd of people gathered around, rather to deplore its fate, than to check its progress. The first voice he heard was Miss Corbett, crying out, "bring a ladder, good people; for God's sake, bring a ladder." Several men ran different ways to fetch one; but she continued to scream; and the fire made a rapid progress. "Oh, what can I do!" exclaimed Henry, running from door to window, but finding entrance impossible. "Jump into my

arms, you will be safe, Miss Corbett," cried he. "Oh! I dare not jump; I shall be killed."—"Thou wilt not be killed," said an elderly Quaker, pressing through the crowd, and pulling off his great coat, which he gave one side of for Henry to hold. "Jump into this without fear." The affrighted girl sprung out, and was received without injury: the good man wrapped his coat about her, and carried her into a neighbour's house. The only word she could articulate was "O my poor grandmother!" Henry left her with the Quaker, and returning to the house, called, with all his power to Mrs. Lloyd, who came to the window, which was already taking fire. Her maid stood by her, wringing her hands in agony. Some of the neighbours had by this time brought several beds, and laid them on the ground, and encouraged the sufferers to jump out. The maid did so, and escaped with a slight bruise; but the rheumatism of poor Mrs. Lloyd would not allow her to try. No ladder was

found: her fate was inevitable; there was not a moment to be lost.

“Let me make a ladder of you,” said Henry to the Quaker. “Prythee, make any thing of me,” said he, standing up to the house side. Henry got on to his shoulders; from thence making a spring, he seized hold of the bottom of the window, and struggled to get into the room. At that instant the chimnies and roof fell in with a terrible crash to the room where Mrs. Lloyd was standing. She was no longer visible; clouds of smoke and flame rolled around her: engines and ladders were now brought, but too late. “Save yourself! save yourself!” were poured into Henry’s ears, by a thousand voices. The old Quaker seized the first ladder, and placing it under his feet, cried out aloud, “Young man, save thyself! thy friend is no more!” Henry availed himself of the ladder, sprung into the burning house, and disappeared. A dreadful shriek burst from the astonished crowd: in an instant he appeared again; he had

seen Mrs. Lloyd, and seizing her with a strong arm, drew her to the window. She was wrapped in a blanket and by that means escaped being burnt; but the shirt sleeve of Henry, who in his hurry had left his coat, took fire from the window frame: no matter; he saw not, he felt not for himself. Saying every thing he could to re-assure and excite exertion in Mrs. Lloyd, he drew her close to the window, and begged her to get upon his back, as he stood upon the ladder; but her trembling limbs refused their office. He then clasped her in his arms, and began to descend the ladder; which being, as he had feared, unable to sustain the weight, began to crack, and within two yards broke, and they fell together. The right arm of Henry, which sustained principally the weight of Mrs. Lloyd, came in contact with one of the buckets of the firemen, and was broken just below the elbow. The same good man who had assisted in rescuing Miss Corbett, wrapped his great coat about Henry, and in-

stantly extinguished the flames; but not till his arm and shoulder had been sadly scorched. The good lady was stunned, but not injured by the fall. She was carried away in the arms of two of her grandsons; but Mr. Corbett himself, who had arrived at the very moment when Henry was hanging at the window, and had witnessed his amazing intrepidity and resolution in astonishment, stayed himself to give every possible assistance to a youth so justly worthy of his care. "My dear sir," said Henry, "never mind me; break open the dining-room door; save the goods and plate. But where is poor Sally; I have neither seen nor heard her. For God's sake go round the house, and see if Sally is in the back rooms!"

Henry's orders were obeyed: but no Sally was to be found. The engines now were well supplied: and the dining-room furniture, which was in the opposite side of the house to that in which Mrs. Lloyd slept, and where the fire raged most, was nearly all saved. Henry moved not from

the place till every thing was done, that was possible, for the preservation of what was left: encouraging some, reproving others, he seemed the guiding genius of the crowd, who lent their aid on this occasion; with one hand he pointed, or assisted, those around him; the other his good friend the Quaker had tied in a sling made of his own silk handkerchief.

At length the flames were got under, but the house remained little more than a shell. Henry now gladly accepted the kindness of his friends, and returned home, where a medical gentleman had been waiting for him half an hour: on examining his arm, it was found to be only what is called a simple fracture; but it was much swelled by the exercise he had taken since it was done, and of course there was great pain and difficulty in reducing it; and, after dressing the wounds, which had been occasioned not only by the fire, but the bruises he had received in taking care of the goods, the

surgeon desired that he might be put carefully to bed, and taken great care of, as he apprehended a fever might be the consequence of his pain and his exertion.

For two days Henry suffered a good deal, but it was not thought necessary to send for his mother, who it was known could not at this time be well spared from his grandmother who always was much an invalid during the winter months: Mr. Corbett wrote her however a particular account of the noble conduct of Henry, and how highly they all felt themselves obliged to him. On the third day he began to be able to converse a little with his friends; and Mrs. Lloyd, hearing that he would have pleasure in seeing her, instantly took up her cane, and, with her daughter's assistance, went into his room.

“Here I am, my dear Mr. Henry,” said she, “and have to thank you that I am in the world at all; while you have nothing to thank me for but a broken arm, and a great deal of sorrow.”

“Indeed, my dear ma’am, you are very much mistaken, for I owe you, at this moment, the greatest pleasure I ever experienced—that of preserving a life so dear to my friends, and your friends, and of paying Mr. Corbett the debt I have so long owed him of saving me from drowning.”

“That is very prettily spoken, young gentleman,” said Mr. Corbett, smiling, “but it won’t go down with me:—there was no comparison between the exertion of throwing out a whiplash to a drowning child, and encountering all the horrors of a fire, at a time when hundreds were calling out to you to save yourself. No! no! we know we are your debtors, and we are determined to remain so; but by the by, are you able to see Mr. Pendleton? he has been to enquire after you a great many times.

“Pray who is Mr. Pendleton?”

“He is a wholesale linen-draper; a very good man with whom I have done business a great many years; he is a Quaker, and seems to have been among

the first persons who got to the fire; he had come in by the mail coach, and was not gone to bed, when the alarm was given. My daughter says, she thinks the person who assisted her was a Quaker, but she fainted away, and lost her recollection."

"Oh!" interrupted Henry, "I beg to see him by all means; without him I could have done nothing; it was him that held the coat for Lucy to jump into; it was from his back that I mounted into the window; he placed the ladder for me to descend from; he extinguished the flames, when I got to the bottom, and tied my broken arm in his handkerchief; he was every thing to me; and I would go fifty miles to thank him any day."

"Well, don't talk so fast, and bring on your fever, and you shall see him soon; but if you do, we must all leave you," said Mrs. Lloyd.

"I won't say another word if you will sit by me, and tell me how all this affair happened."

“You must know,” said Mrs. Lloyd, “that on account of my being so bad of the rheumatism, my maid, Betty, always slept in a little bed in my room, that she might be at hand to assist me; this circumstance, unhappily, left Sally at liberty to indulge herself in her favourite amusement, that of reading novels in bed. We have warned her many times against this practice, and I was nearly turning her away, about a month since, on account of it; but she promised she would leave it off: there is, however, no doubt but she had done it again, as the fire began in her room.”

“Poor creature!” exclaimed Henry, “then she was burnt to death!”

“I think not,” said the old lady, “for there has not been any bones found. I rather think she got out of her window, on to the back kitchen slates, and escaped that way; but, being conscious of her own folly being the cause of so much mischief, is now concealed with her friends. As no bones have been found,

and as the back window was seen by one of the neighbours open, just when the fire was first perceived, we have every reason to think so, and most sincerely shall I rejoice to find that is the case."

"How did you first perceive the fire?"

"I was awakened by a strong smell of burning, and called to Betty, who did not soon awake; when she did, she opened the door, and found the passage full of smoke, which instantly burst into flames. The room where Sally slept was exactly at the back of mine, and as soon as her door had caught fire the staircase became impassable. My grand-daughter, who slept, you know, to the front over the dining-room, hearing us scream, threw up her window, and called fire as loud as she could. In a short time the flames reached my room; I then wrapt myself in a blanket, and went to the window, where I had the satisfaction of hearing the greatest object of my concern, my dear Lucy, was taken care of. Some how the sound of your voice gave

me a little courage and recollection. I fervently recommended my soul to my Maker, then going to my bureau, I took out my will, and some bonds, likewise a pocket-book which contained my ready money. I put them in my bosom, and wrapped myself in a blanket, which I had but just time to take from my bed, before it too began to burn; I then went again to the window, and would have followed poor Betty's example, but my limbs entirely failed me, and my heart sunk within me: then, you know, the chimnies fell in; all was raging, roaring fire. In a few moments I felt your hand—I heard your voice—never shall I forget your voice! its tones still vibrate in my ear.—‘Put your trust in God ma'am! do not forsake yourself,’ those were your words, as you drew me towards you: never shall I hear such words again, unless, through the merits of my Redeemer, I am at the last day included among those, to whom he shall say, “Come, ye blessed of my father.”—As

the good old lady uttered these words she stooped over the bed, and as she kissed Henry's glowing cheek, shed the tears of grateful affection on his pillow. All the little party were exceedingly moved, and Mrs. Corbett wept aloud. Her husband, fearful that this scene, though dear to the feelings, might be injurious to the health of Henry, took Mrs. Lloyd's arm, and gently led her out of the room, while the rest followed, and left him to regain composure.

The next day he was well enough to go into the parlour, and there found the worthy Quaker to whom he was eager to pay his respects.—Mr. Pendleton seemed as much pleased when he conversed with Henry, as he had been struck with him when he witnessed his anxiety and resolution on the awful occasion which had brought them together; and the high character which Mr. Corbett had given him for zeal and industry in a business to which he had owned he once felt a decided aversion, but which he had em-

braced for his mother's sake, raised him still higher in his opinion; and as he was a man who had not only the power to discern, but the heart to reward merit, Mr. Corbett saw with pleasure the progress Henry had made in his affections. After sitting about an hour, he bade the company farewell, saying he was about to leave Hull immediately, as his business was concluded two days before, and he had only remained for the pleasure of seeing a little more of the young man before his departure. Henry thanked him in the best manner he was able, and offered him his silk handkerchief, which had remained with him since the night of the fire.—“I pray thee, keep it, young friend,” said the old man! “it will sometimes remind thee of Peter Pendleton: he carrieth in his heart a memorial of thee, which will not be soon forgotten.” So saying, he departed.

As soon as it was known that he was come down stairs, visits, praises, and congratulations were so poured upon

Henry, that had he been the successful general of a victorious army, he could hardly have received higher proofs of popular admiration. He was compared to every great man who had braved death; to every good man, who had ventured his own life for another, in the annals of history; and he saw now the possibility of proving valour without the pale of the army, and of enjoying fame in the shape of a shop keeper. But a kind letter from his mother, thanking him for his good conduct, and telling him, that the good news had made his grandmother forget all her ailments; was the sweetest cordial his mind had ever tasted, and he felt how true it is, that—

Oneself-approving hour whole years outweighs,
Of stupid starers, and of loud huzzas.

“There is nothing but letters for you to-day,” said Mr. Corbett, bringing in another. “Here is one, which I fancy comes from your brother; I see it comes from the Isle of Wight.”

“Thank God!” said Henry; “Then our dear Charles is returned. I must trouble you to open it.”

“Most willingly; and answer it too, should it be found necessary.”

Henry took the letter with delight; but Mr. Corbett soon perceived his face assume a thoughtful, and even mournful aspect, as he perused the following lines:—

“MY DEAR HENRY,

“I HAVE the pleasure of telling you, that after going through a great many difficulties of all kinds, of which more when we meet, I am at length safely arrived at the Isle of Wight; of which I have written more at large to my mother, as you must not shew her this letter. It is the first and last secret I hope ever to have with her; and my reasons for it will explain themselves. You must know, my dear Henry, that I have an opportunity of selling out, and of purchasing a lieutenantancy in another regiment, for two

hundred pounds more than my commission will sell for. It is a very good bargain, and would improve my income so much, that I am sure I could then send my mother twenty pounds a-year: besides, I should escape being sent to the West Indies, which I know is a very great object with her. Do you think she is so situated as to advance me the money? I dread asking her, lest my premature death should lose the money to her and the girls entirely: and yet, Heaven knows, it is for their sakes, more than my own, that I desire it. I have only twenty-one days given me to provide it in; therefore you will see the necessity of answering me immediately in one case, or of applying to my mother in the other; but if you know she cannot do it, consistent with her comforts, by which I mean her duties, do not distress her with the question. Act as for yourself, and I am sure you will act right to your ever affectionate brother,

“CHARLES BELFIELD.”

“It is a letter, Sir,” said Henry, after a long pause; “a letter that must be answered; and the sooner the better.”

“Then I will answer it for you to-night, if you will tell me what to say.”

“I must first beg your attention to it, before I know what you ought to say,” said Henry, blushing as he put the letter into Mr. Corbett’s hand, at the recollection of exposing the wants of his family even to a friend.

When Mr. Corbett had read the letter, he returned it, saying, that he had no doubt but his mother would advance the money with pleasure to so deserving a son.

Henry then informed Mr. Corbett of the promise his mother had made to his grandfather, and his knowledge of her utter inability to part with such a portion of her income, in case of poor Charles’s death; adding, that Charles himself was ignorant of his mother’s situation in that respect, she having only communicated it to him at his last visit.

—He added, with a deep sigh, “Oh that I had been a few years older! I should then have had wages—I should have been——”

“Just as rich as you are now, perhaps; but, never fear, something will be done. I am now going to Bell’s auction-room. My mother has sent those things you saved from the flames to be disposed of there, except the plate; she has consented to live, the rest of her life, with us, as Mrs. Corbett could never be happy without having her under her own eye, after what has happened.”

“It will be the best,” said Henry, with a deep sigh; for all his thoughts were on his poor brother, whose disappointment and loss he felt severely, and whose situation he no longer thought enviable in the least.

He saw no more of Mr. Corbett till the evening, when he came into the parlour and asked him to go with him to Mrs. Lloyd’s room, who wished him to pick a lobster with her.

Though little in spirits, Henry immediately rose and accompanied him up stairs. Mrs. Corbett was sitting with her mother, and Lucy was reading to them.

"How happy they are!" said Henry to himself, "they have all money enough to buy commissions, or any thing else, they may happen to want."

"Come, my young friend," said Mrs. Lloyd, with great cheerfulness, "before we sit down to supper, let you and I, tradesmen-like, settle our accounts, to mend our appetites."

"I really don't know of any accounts there are between us, my dear ma'am."

"Then I will tell you, if you will have the same patience in hearing an old woman that you had resolution in preserving her. You must know, that as soon as I came to myself that terrible night, I determined that all the money I had about me, and all that was saved for me, should be given to you as soon as I could see about it; not as a reward for saving my life, for I wish to consider

myself always in your debt, but as a memorial of my gratitude to you. Now hear me patiently: In this pocket-book is eighty pounds, which I saved for you. It appears that my goods, which you saved, have been sold this day for one hundred and ten pounds; and my wine Mr. Corbett has given me thirty pounds for—which, altogether, is two hundred and twenty pounds;—here it lies—don't stand staring in that way, but count it, and see that I have not cheated you."

"Oh, sir," said Henry, looking at Mr. Corbett, "you have betrayed me!"

"Indeed I have not, Henry.—It is all just as my mother tells you; it was her intention to have settled the matter sooner, but she waited for the auction."

"What shall I say to you, madam?" said he, turning to Mrs. Lloyd. "I am overcome with your goodness."

"If you say a single word of that kind, Henry, I shall consider it as a reproach for having done so little;—let us now eat our suppers; but I must add,

that my plate is gone to be melted down and made into a handsome cup, as a present for your mother, and a lasting memento of what I owe to her son."

"I beg leave just to say," said Mr. Corbett, "that I will, if you please, give you a draft on my banker for two hundred pounds of that money, and put it in this letter:—I think I shall feel easier if I save the post with it to-night." As he said so, he put the following letter into Henry's hand:—

Mr. BELFIELD,

"DEAR SIR,

"As your brother has had the misfortune to break his arm, I hold the pen for him. In answer to your's received this day, he has to say, that your good mother is, to his knowledge, so situated, that she could not advance the money in question, but that as he is, by a singular circumstance, become in possession of the very sum you need, he has the pleasure of sending it to you the very hour

in which he received it. This circumstance, so interesting to you both, in few words was this;—he rescued a young woman from great danger, and snatched an old woman from absolute destruction; for which he has got a burnt shoulder, a broken arm, and the power of promoting a beloved brother.

“You will please to acknowledge the receipt of this by return of post; and conclude me, though a stranger, your sincere friend,

F. C. CORBETT.

“Hull, Feb. 21, 1806.”

With what a light heart did Henry now eat his supper!—with what delight did he contemplate the surprise and pleasure with which Charles would receive the letter and unfold the draft! Pleasure deprived him of sleep, and he lay contemplating his mother’s joy, when she heard of her son’s promotion—the increased comforts she would receive from Charles’s addition to her income; and

even the pleasure with which Charles would convey his first present to his dear parent, was taken into his list of enjoyments. He now blessed the day that brought him to Hull—the hour in which he had promised to become a tradesman; and he looked forward with joyful expectation to some period when his industry should procure the means of supporting—perhaps, enriching—his family: all that he wished rose before him in bright succession, and he felt that the laurels of peace had yet power to confer solid, if not shining, happiness.

In a few days after, he paid a visit to his mother, till such time as he found his arm able to bear the fatigues of business: he was received with transport by the family, who were much affected when they saw the marks of his recent sufferings. In a few days after his arrival, his brother's acknowledgment of the draft was forwarded to him from Hull, and afforded new matter of congratulation and delight to the inhabitants of

the cottage; but their hopes of seeing Charles were damped by the information, that the new regiment into which he had purchased, was ordered to join Sir John Sinclair, at Messina, in a few weeks; it was, however, a pleasant destination for Charles, who had found that climate agree with his constitution, and was pleased with a neighbourhood which abounded in the most sublime and beautiful scenery to be found in the whole world.

After spending a few most happy days with his dear family, Charles returned with avidity to the employment he had left; and nothing very material occurred till the beginning of October, when Mr. Corbett, calling Henry into his counting-house, addressed him thus:—

“My dear sir, I am going to make you a present which most young men would think very valuable; and, as it costs me a great deal, I hope you will think it valuable too.—It is, sir, a present of your liberty.”

“ My liberty, sir ;” said Henry, starting, “ Surely—surely—sir, you are not going to send me away !”

“ Not without your own consent, my dear fellow,” said Mr. Corbett, drawing his hand across his eyes, “ we shall have a great—a very great loss of you, Henry ; but if I give you liberty, you will have an opportunity of doing better for yourself than it is in my power to do for you. I have a letter from Mr. Pendleton, who offers to take you into his counting-house, whenever I will resign you :—he will permit you to reside in his house, and that is a great matter in London, I assure you.”

“ But, my dear sir,” said Henry, “ I should not like to live in the house with a Quaker, though he may be, and I am sure he is, a good man ; but those people are so formal, so precise, and altogether so unlike all that I have been used to, that I think I should be very unhappy ; and I beg you will keep me here, at least the remainder of my time—I

know I must do something then ; but that is only a year you know, and I ought to serve you all my time, for you took me for nothing."

"I pleased myself in doing that," said Mr. Corbett, "so you owe me nothing on that score, but I am much in your debt on my dear Lucy's account, and I wish to prove how much I thank you by doing you a piece of service which may be essential. Mr. Pendleton has no son, and he may, one day, give you a share in his business, which is vastly superior to mine:—Now I have three sons, you know, and I can promise nothing ; besides his offer is so liberal, it is a duty you owe to yourself, not to refuse it—you are to board with his family, and receive a hundred a year besides : remember how this will help your sisters and put Edmund forward in his education. Remember, too, your grandmother's sufferings in winter, and the many alleviations you may now procure for her : besides, Mr. Pendleton intends you

to take journies for him, and we shall have you with us twice a year, for some days, at least."

Henry's countenance brightened at this piece of information, and he owned, but not without a sigh, that it was his duty to accept both his time and his engagement with gratitude: the affair was, of course, soon concluded; and, after communicating the good news to his mother, and bidding them an affectionate farewell, he went through the same painful scene at Mr. Corbett's. The old lady, in bidding him good-bye, slipped a purse with ten guineas into his hand; and Miss Corbett begged his acceptance of a dozen new shirts and cravats. Thus equipped, he took his leave of a family who followed him with tears and blessings.

Henry was received by the good Quaker and his family, which consisted of a wife and two daughters, with so much frankness and cordiality, that in a few days he found himself perfectly at home. The house was very large and

commodious; there were many servants, and the whole style of living was far superior to any thing Henry had met with before. There were no young men to look down upon him because he was poor, or to pass reflections upon pride and poverty. The business though very extensive, was (being wholesale) conducted by few hands: one respectable man about forty years of age, was the only person set over him; and Henry found that he was particularly anxious to instruct him in his business, with the idea of resigning his place to him as soon as he should be capable of holding it, as he had himself a prospect of entering into a lucrative concern, when he could leave his good master with propriety.

As this person, Mr. Goodwin, was of the established church, Henry always accompanied him to public worship; which seemed to be approved of, rather than discountenanced by the family; and as the business of the warehouse was ge-

nerally concluded before dinner, he had frequent opportunities of accompanying Mr. Goodwin to see every thing worth notice in the metropolis: nor were amusements forbidden to him; whenever he went in company with this gentleman, he was received on his return with a smile; and Henry soon ceased to perceive that he had any shackles but such as he would have imposed upon himself.

Mr. Pendleton had an extensive library, to which Henry had free access; and, after taking a general survey of London, and paying a few visits to the theatres, he sought for his amusement at leisure hours in reading. But after Christmas, business required all his attention; and neither books nor pleasure could draw him from his duty.

He had formed a few acquaintance, and was much attached to a young man, whose father was a respectable merchant, of the name of Crosby, and who had paid great attention to Henry, at the recommendation of Mr. Pendleton. His

son, Frederick, was a youth of amiable disposition and pleasing manners. Like Henry, he was warm, open, generous, and impetuous; but he had not, like Henry, been nurtured in the school of adversity. He was fond of pleasure to excess; and as his purse was but too well supplied by his indulgent father, he was ever in the pursuit of amusement; and his generosity would have made Henry the companion, and the partaker of all his enjoyments. But this the delicacy, the independence of his mind would by no means submit to; and as his little store was now growing very low, he rather avoided occasions of meeting with Frederick, who had always something to propose, some place to see, or some party to meet, which, in one shape or other, was productive of expence.

“I thought thou didst very wrong,” said Mrs. Pendleton to her husband, “when thou broughtest our Henry and Frederick Crosby together: he will mislead him, and do him more mischief than

if he had been introduced to a young man that was downright wicked. From such an one the pure mind of Henry would have started with disgust; but Frederick is amiable, is insinuating; his faults, in many instances, proceed from his natural sweetness of temper, and unbounded generosity: in him the soil is good, but it produces many weeds along with its flowers. Truly, I fear much that he will greatly injure our Henry."

"I trust our Henry will rather do him good, than receive evil from him. But thou knowest London is a furnace, in which youth must be tried; if it come out pure gold, it will be so much the more valuable, thou knowest."

As the spring advanced, business again allowed him more leisure; and the public gardens, and various places of new amusement, pressed on his attention. Frederick was ever at his elbow, soliciting his company, and painting, in the most fascinating colours, the pleasures that awaited him. Mr. Goodwin was on

a journey; Mr. Pendleton was engaged entirely with arranging papers, previous to the meeting of the Friends in London; and Henry was left solely to his own discretion. This circumstance, which might have been ruin to a weak mind, was preservation to a strong one. He felt the responsibility of his situation, and resisted every importunity to leave home for a single evening.—“If I am not wanted,” he would say, “yet it is my duty to stay, and see that those below me remain, and do their duty; in short, I am determined to stay: you may teaze me, but you cannot tempt me.”

Though Henry had no money at this time, yet as his half-year's salary would, he knew, be paid in the course of a few weeks, this was no longer a motive with him, as he could have borrowed a few guineas either of Frederick, or several others. But he now saw himself in Mr. Goodwin's situation, without the benefit of his established character; and though he was naturally gay, fond of

pleasure, and liked to cut a little dash among others, yet being sensible that his situation demanded all his care, and that there were some in the warehouse who could not be watched too narrowly, he would not allow his thoughts to wander, much less his steps; but finding himself continually assailed by importunities it was painful to resist, from one he could not help loving, he at last wrote the following letter, and sent the porter with it to Frederick:—

“DEAR SIR,

“We have been some time acquaintance—but by no means friends. If you are inclined to take, in good part, the confidential information and advice I am about to offer you, we will become friends; if not, we had better cease to be acquaintance. Know then, that I am one of five children: my father was an officer, and the son of an officer, who was a younger brother, and had no fortune but his sword; of course he could bequeath none. My mother was the

daughter of a clergyman, who with great care was enabled to save about a thousand pounds: on the interest, of this and her pension, my mother, grandmother, two sisters, now young women, and a little brother, now live in Lincolnshire. Their situation is lonely, comfortless, and unhealthy; but its cheapness induces them to remain there. Have you a heart, Frederick? Ask *it* if I have a shilling to spare for foolish purposes, for trifling gratifications?

“Again, I know nothing of Mr. Pendleton, but to receive kindness from him. He has taken me into his house in my twentieth year: he gives me a great salary; he even intends to put me into Mr. Goodwin’s place; he treats me with unbounded confidence and sincere affection. Can I abuse that confidence? can I lose that affection? May God forbid!—So much for my information! now for my advice. Endeavour, I beseech you, to apply your own mind, and your time, to more worthy purposes than the

continual pursuit of pleasure; you cannot but find in yourself, that a life of dissipation defeats its own purposes, and leaves you always craving, never satisfied. Be manly enough to break through the chains that bind you; assist your father in his business; associate more with your mother and sisters; cultivate your mind by an acquaintance with the best authors; and depend upon it, in a short time you will wonder you ever sighed after Vauxhall, and grieved that the theatres were shut. Your conduct, not your words, will shew me truly, whether you have really loved me, as I have flattered myself you did. I have a warm heart, Frederick, and have given you a place next to my brother there, but it is only by observing my rules, that I can allow myself to say I am your sincere friend,

“HENRY BELFIELD.”

This letter was read by Frederick with the warmest emotion of regard; he saw

the full value of the heart that could dictate it, and he resolved, as far as he could, to observe the advice it gave him; he even in the fullness of his feelings laid it before his parents, and entreated their forgiveness for having been hitherto so different a son to the one he had chosen for his friend. They were delighted to observe this happy change in their son, and thankful to the valuable youth who had effected such a happy change in his sentiments. Frederick on his part, could not rest till he had flown to Henry, and thanked him for his confidence, assured him of his regard, and promised to place himself entirely under his direction.

A few days after this affair, Mr. Pendleton called Henry into his counting-house; and after praising him for his good conduct during the absence of Mr. Goodwin, counted out fifty guineas, and paid them as his half year's salary; at the same time saying, "I have been a little surprised at thy not asking me for

money; I fear thou hast put thy mother to inconvenience, for thou art always very decently clothed: how hast thou managed? I hope thou art not much in debt?"

Henry coloured a little, and said he owed Mr. Crosby five pounds, but that was all he owed in the world.

Mr. Pendleton looked very grave: "Thou meanest Frederick Crosby, I doubt; surely thou dost not owe it him for play; I thought he had been free from that sin, I must own, or I would never had introduced him to thee on any consideration?"

Henry, with great warmth, took up the cause of his friend, assuring Mr. Pendleton that both Frederick and himself detested the vice of gambling. "Indeed, sir," added he, "it is Mr. Crosby to whom I owe the five pounds, for a carpet, which I bought in his warehouse."

"And what couldst thou do with a carpet?"

“Why, Sir, you know Lincolnshire is a damp flat place; and, unfortunately, my mother’s sitting room is a stone floor, which they are obliged to cover with matting, or my poor grandmother would suffer more with the rheumatism than she does: now, sir, I know it was wrong in me to buy the carpet when I had no money to pay for it; but it was a Turkey one, warm and thick, and exceeding cheap, so I could not resist buying it; I knew it would contribute so very much to their comfort at home. As to taking from my mother any thing for clothes, it is quite out of the question. I had fifteen pounds when I left her, which was the remains of Mrs. Lloyd’s gift; she added to it ten guineas, and out of these sums I have paid for my journey, and bought myself necessaries, and have still a few shillings left.”

“Thou hast done more, Henry! for thou sentest two cotton gowns to thy sisters, and I know thou gavest a crown to thy washer-woman, when her child

was sick; and allowed eighteen pence a week, for the space of three months, to the muffin-woman, when she was struck with the palsy. Thy good deeds which thou doest in secret, it is my duty to reward openly. I would have thee come now into the counting-house, and take upon thee friend Goodwin's place, who will rejoice in resigning it to thee. From next October thy income will be doubled, and before next winter is over, I trust thou wilt be enabled to place thy family in a better situation. In the course of the summer thou shalt see them. Nay; I prythee give me no thanks (seeing Henry about to speak); I will have no words from thee on this subject; but I must tell thee a secret which troubleth me much."

He then proceeded to inform Henry, that he was convinced there was somebody in the warehouse who had stolen property from him, to a considerable amount; and, since Mr. Goodwin's absence, having not been able from Henry's

never leaving the warehouse to make their regular depredations there, had tried to force the desk and iron chest of the counting-house: he therefore committed the keys of these places to Henry, with a strict charge to watch them with more than double diligence, till he could take them again into his own hands.

Soon after this transaction, Mr. Goodwin returned, and having settled all his accounts, gave them up into Henry's hands; but at the same time informed him, that he would stay three weeks longer, to enable him to visit his friends. This permission, with Mr. Pendleton's concurrence, he thankfully accepted, and began to prepare for his journey, by making up a little assortment of every thing that he thought would be most acceptable to his dear mother, and the rest of the family. We forgot to mention, that the day after he received his wages, he called to pay for the carpet at Mr. Crosby's, but instead of taking the

money, the old gentleman, with tears in his eyes, held the letter which Henry had written to his son, in his hand, and cried out—"Ah, sir! here is a receipt for many carpets; do not I beseech you, grieve me by refusing such a trifling proof of the esteem I shall ever feel for you; but, if you are determined to pay me, let it be by introducing my son some time or other to your worthy family."

This conversation occurred of course to Henry while preparing for his journey; he felt that he ought to ask Frederick to accompany him, but a kind of false shame made him hesitate; he thought how poor a place must the cottage look to a rich merchant's son, used to all the elegance of the metropolis; but he thought again, if the house is poor, the inhabitants are such as a palace might be proud of. What a superior woman is my mother! what fine girls are my sisters! and he set out immediately to beg his friend would accompany him. The business was soon

concluded, and they set out the next morning in a gig, as Frederick piqued himself on being a capital driver, and was determined to be at all the expence of the journey.

Mrs. Belfield was just reading an account of the battle of Maida, and rejoicing in the safety of her eldest son, who was mentioned as slightly wounded in the arm, when her attention was arrested by a gig before her window. She immediately went out, and saw Henry and a stranger; she uttered a scream of joy, which brought out the rest of the family; and Henry, jumping out, found himself in a moment encompassed by fond arms, which twined around him in every direction. So much were they all surprised, and delighted, that Frederick was entirely forgotten amongst them, and sat in the gig witnessing a scene the most tender and happy he had ever beheld, it was not lost upon him.—“Would that I were as good as Henry! I, too, should

be as warmly loved," said he to himself, Maria at last looked up, and saw the stranger; with a deep blush, but in the manners of a gentlewoman, she desired him to alight, and excuse their want of attention, imputing it to surprise. Mrs. Belfield then welcomed him with a grace that struck him with astonishment: she introduced him to her mother, who was still hanging round Henry's neck. The good old lady gave him her hand with a cordiality that delighted him. "You are Henry's friend," said she, "and must be the darling of us all."

"Bless my life," thought Frederick, "what women these are! who thought of finding so much elegance of form, and so much finished politeness, down in the fens of Lincolnshire? and yet, how could one expect any thing less in Henry's relations?"

In less than a week, Mr. Corbett and his sweet daughter came over to see Henry, and to press him and his friend to pay them a visit at Hull. He thought

Lucy more engaging than ever, and she considered him as much improved, as, indeed thought all his own family : and his sisters could not help feeling an ardent desire to see a place which had been the means of adding so much to the happiness of their mother ; and seemed to be, in all probability, the place, where Henry must spend his days. Even Mrs. Atkinson herself declared she could like very well to live in London, or its neighbourhood, for the sake of being near her beloved grandson ; and Mrs. Beifield said, “in another year or two, she should seriously think of removing thither.”—With respect to money matters, her only difficulty with her son was, obliging him to keep such a portion for himself as she knew was necessary for him. After much consultation, she at length accepted half of his salary ; and as dear Charles had lately sent her a twenty-pound bank bill, she was now enabled to add many comforts to her house, and dress her daughters in that plain but

genteel manner to which her wishes aspired; while she pleased herself with the intention of sending Edmund to a good school the next vacation, as he was now eleven years old, and was a remarkable clever child for his age.

In a few days, Henry and Frederick, accompanied by Mrs. Belfield and Anne, her youngest daughter, went over to Hull, and were received by Mrs. Corbett and her family with the warmest welcome. Mrs. Lloyd shed tears of joy, as she shook Henry's hand, and with the warmest expressions of praise congratulated Mrs. Belfield on having such a son. She then opened a cupboard, and taking out a very elegant silver cup, on which was engraved a memorial of her gratitude to Henry, she gave it to his mother, saying she was sure it would be pleasant to the sight of a parent. The whole of the time spent at Hull was made as pleasant as possible by their friends, but Henry observed that Frederick neither appeared pleased with himself, nor any body else,

till the moment when they entered into the boat to return; and as soon as they arrived at the cottage he was as gay as a lark, and the happiest person in the party.

A fortnight was soon gone, and so anxious was Henry to be true to his time, that he determined to be at home one day sooner than the allotted time. As his mother approved of his punctuality she did not oppose his determination; but Frederick argued against it, with all his power: Henry gently reminded him of his promise to be governed by him, and Frederick at last reluctantly consented.

As parting was a very painful business on both sides, the travellers were little inclined to break silence the first day of their journey, but the second Henry made several efforts at conversation, but they all failed on Frederick's side, who continued all day in profound meditation, which he at length broke, by asking Henry how long he thought it would be before he should become as wise and good as he ought to be? "In short,"

said he, "how long will it be before I may presume to think myself worthy of your sister Maria?"

Henry in great surprise said, "Pray how long will it be before my sister Maria will have such a fortune as your father will think worthy of you?" "She has it now," cried Frederick, with eagerness, "for my father has wished a hundred times you had been a girl, and would have married me;" he said, "you would make me all I should be!"

Henry's heart bounded with joy, for he was justly proud of his sister, and knew the goodness of her heart, and the accomplishments of her mind, would do honour to the station Mr. Crosby would place her in; but he repressed the ardour of his feeling, and said coolly to Frederick, "Pray how old are you?"

"I shall be twenty-two at Christmas, and my father will then take me into partnership with him: he would have done it when I came of age, but I was so thoughtless. Oh what a fool I have

been! and how much worse should I have been but for you!" "Do not reproach yourself so much," said Henry; "you will be all you ought, I have no doubt, and in about two years time, perhaps, you may be trusted to marry, or at least to prepare for marriage, I mean if your father does *indeed* consent." "Two years! two ages! you don't know any thing about my feelings, I am sure."

Henry answered only by a deep sigh, and they continued their journey.

When arrived at home Mr. Pendleton seemed particularly pleased with Henry's punctuality, as Mr. Goodwin had been obliged to leave him a week before, and a relation of Mrs. Pendleton's was dead at Exeter, and had left her a large estate, it was necessary they should immediately take possession of; so that even the single day he had given them by returning sooner, was of consequence.

Tired with travelling and sensible that the morrow would be a very busy day, Henry went to bed as soon as he

could, and soon fell into a profound slumber; from which in a few hours, he was awaked by a person pulling him by the arm; and he heard Mrs Pendleton's voice, in great distress, crying, "Henry! Henry!"

"What is the matter, my dear ma'am? what can I do?" said he, jumping out of bed.

"My husband heard voices below," said she, "and is gone down, and he returneth not; I pray thee seek him, for my mind misgives me; I would have followed, but I fell, and have hurt my knee."

Henry felt his way down stairs, but all was quiet; he passed through the dining-room, crossed a passage, and caught a glimpse of light in the counting-house; but what was his horròr to see Mr. Pendleton laid on his back, on the floor; a stout man whom he instantly knew to be the portèr, pressing his knee on his stomach, and assisting another wretch in pulling a handkerchief round

his neck in such a manner as to strangle him. The good man had a poker in his hand, but that hand was forced down by the porter, who, intent upon his horrid work, did not see Henry, though he was exactly facing the door: the other wretch had his back to it: he was the footman of the house. Not a moment could be lost. Henry darted forward like lightening, and giving the porter a violent blow on the eye, he laid him on the ground; then snatching the poker from the hand of Mr. Pendleton, he gave him a second blow with it, which completely stunned him. In this moment the footman took up a case-knife, and aimed a stab at Henry's side; but happily it only scratched the fleshy part of his arm, while he gave the rascal such a blow on his shoulder, as disabled him from doing any further mischief. Stung with the pain, and seeing all was lost, he made a precipitate escape; running against poor Mrs. Pendleton, who, at that instant, entered the counting-house

door. Henry's arm bled profusely, and he was just stooping to raise her husband, whose shirt was covered with his blood. At this dreadful sight she gave such a piercing scream, as brought to her assistance her two daughters and the cook-maid, they were all so alarmed that they could not help Henry, who at length got Mrs. Pendleton to assist in restoring her husband. The porter, in this time, rose, and made an effort to get the case-knife; but one of the young ladies, who had by this time recovered her presence of mind, snatched it up, and ran away with it:—the wretch, swearing an horrid oath, ran after her; Henry laid hold of him, and, with great difficulty, kept him from pursuing her, for he was a very strong man, and was struggling for his life. At length Henry succeeded in throwing him on the ground; but could not have kept him there if Miss Pendleton had not returned with the coachman, who lay in a cock-loft, on the top of the house, and had heard no disturbance:

with his assistance Henry succeeded in keeping him down; while the cook alarmed the watch, who soon brought assistance, and took the porter into custody; while the coachman, with the knife in his hand with which Miss Pendleton had armed him, made a diligent search for the footman; but they found he had completely escaped. Mr. Pendleton now breathed freely, and thanked his Almighty Protector for sending him help in the moment of need: in this pious act his family devoutly joined. He then perceived that the blood which discoloured him was Henry's, and pointing to it, Miss Pendleton ran for some tincture and a bandage, as Henry declared it was a mere scratch. While she was applying it they desired to know how Mr. Pendleton came to be in this dreadful situation.

“As soon as I came down stairs,” said the old gentleman, “I perceived a light in this place; and, on coming into it, saw Richard and the porter trying to

force the lock: their instruments, I suppose were not good, for they tried several, and, in looking for something that fell on the ground, they saw me both at once. Richard said, 'What shall we do?' To which the other said, 'There is but one way: but be silent.' They then sprung on me in a moment. I seized hold of the poker, and set my back against the wall; but the porter dragged me down by the feet, and knelt upon my breast. The footman drew a handkerchief from his pocket, and got it round my neck. I then repented that I had not screamed, but it was too late; I suffered violent pain; I lost my sight; and I knew no more till I heard Henry's voice, and felt drops fall on my face; they were either the tears of my wife, or the blood of my preserver; no matter which, they revived me, and injured not them; so they are equally dear to me."

It was now found that poor Mrs. Pendleton had suffered more than any one, having injured her knee considerably, and

suffered so much from the fright, that she kept her bed for some days. As soon as she was able to travel, she determined to set out for Exeter; and declared that, if she could help it, she would never live in that house again; as she could never forget the dreadful spectacle her husband had presented on that eventful night. She parted from Henry with great tenderness, saying, "I will never forget thy labour of love, neither me nor my house after me." And her daughters made the like assurance.

As Mr. Pendleton pressed Henry's hand at parting, he said, "In October I will be with thee; and I would have thee, in the mean time, take the stock, and regulate all the books. Thou wert God's instrument to save me from a cruel death; may he so deal with me, as I shall deal with thee, my son Henry!"

At this time Mr. Pendleton was exceedingly dear to Henry; he had long esteemed and revered his character; for he knew so many instances of his benevo-

lence, uprightness and piety, that it was impossible not to feel a great regard for him. But, since he saved him, he felt that he loved him; and as he pressed his hand at parting, the tears rolled down his cheeks, his voice was choaked, and he could scarcely say farewell.

Henry now applied to business with double diligence, in those hours when it was necessary: his leisure time was generally spent with Frederick, who was now attentive to all his duties, and anxious to improve his mind, and delighted with the idea of becoming one day the brother of a friend he so highly valued. The accounts received from Charles were good, and there was reason to believe that he would return before the winter set in; but this was, of course, uncertain.

Time passed pleasantly to Henry till the time of Mr. Poodleton's return. He met him with more than his usual affection; "Well, Henry," said he, "this is the last time I mean to say to thee 'Wel-

come, thou good and faithful servant, for thou shalt be my servant no more for ever." "What are you going to do with me, sir?" said the young man, with an air of surprise.

"I am going to make thee my partner, and the master of this house; nay, thou art already made, for here are the deeds, which wait only for thy signature. As to the furniture of this house, my wife presents thee with it; it is her gift to thee; the books in it my daughters desire thine acceptance of; from this moment all is thine, and I am thy visitor, and shall be often so to thee, not for convenience so much as love."

Henry's heart was too full to answer; he could only exclaim, "It is too much! it is too much!"

"Then thou thinkest me of less value than the women of my house, for they cry with one voice, it is too little."

Henry pressed his hand respectfully to his lips, and withdrew to his own room, and sat down to arrange his ideas, and

ask himself if it was not all a dream. "What," said he, "have I so soon realized what my hopes when most sanguine, painted only as the recompence of a long life of labour?—Have I a home in which I can receive all my family? and an income to support them in affluence? and this too the reward of those exertions, which, had I been a soldier, would have been passed by as mere matters of course, lost in the obscurity of common occurrences. Oh, my mother, my dear mother! how much do I owe you, and I am sure how fondly I shall endeavour to repay you in the delightful visions of future life!" Each of his dear family passed in review before him, and even Betty was not forgot. "She has lived with us many years; she shall live always here," said he. In these delightful reflections time passed away unperceived; and, before he recovered from them, a servant came to tell him that supper was ready, and the ladies were waiting. "Ladies! I did not know our ladies were in

town;" but judge what was his surprise, on going into the dining room, to see all the ladies of his own family. "My mother, my good grandmother, my sister, even Edmund here! how is all this! I am, however, awake, and yet I see you all: how is this, tell me, I beseech you?"

"Then thou must know, friend Henry, this is a trick of mine, done for amusement: why should not a Quaker have a fine scene in his own way? he has as much taste for happy faces as another man; and is very glad to see those of the present company, I assure thee," said Mr. Pendleton.

After many mutual congratulations, mixed with tears of gratitude and joy, had passed, at length he reminded Henry that the travellers were hungry; at the same time he handed Mrs. Belfield to the head of the table, and sat down at her left hand. "Surely, sir, you will come to your own seat," said Henry. "I will

never come to thy seat in thy house, thou mayest depend upon it; I have carved for thee; thou shalt carve for me, I assure thee, and I hope often to sit by thy mother in this place when my occasions call me to London; but, mayhap, in a few years thou mayest get friend Corbett's daughter, to save her the trouble of sitting here."

Poor Henry blushed like fire at an insinuation which astonished him; and, to spare his evident confusion, his mother began to speak of her journey, and the good accounts she had lately had from Charles. The Quaker interrupted her with saying, "thy news of that young man has not been so good as mine, I dare venture to say; for I have a letter concerning him, which will I think, rejoice thy heart exceedingly." He then opened his pocket-book, and opening a letter, which he took out of it, read as follows:—

MR. PENDLETON.

“ SIR,

“ I HAVE the misfortune to be one of those fathers who have to lament the loss of their sons in the late engagements at Calabria. My poor boy survived the day of battle, to die a lingering death by his wounds, and departed this life about three months ago at Messina. During his stay at that place, the providence of God, which can bring good out of evil, brought him into an intimate acquaintance with Lieutenant Belfield, who, from motives of pure compassion, paid him the kindest attentions during his long confinement; and procured him every comfort and relief in his power, often foregoing his own indulgences, that he might the better assist the declining invalid. But these, though services of magnitude, were the least of those I owe to him on my son's account. Unhappily, my poor boy had fallen into com-

pany with those who, in order to decoy him into the practice of vice, had undermined his religious principles, and destroyed in his mind that source of hope and ground-work of repentance, which could alone support his mind at this awful period, when the things of this world were fading from his eyes, and an awful blank, without hope or comfort, succeeded in its stead; Belfield, by every argument that a well-informed mind could furnish, and every intreaty that the tenderest friendship could suggest, drew out his mind to the contemplation of divine things, and succeeded in awaking him to a deep sense of his error, and an abhorrence of his guilt. From this time he paid him redoubled attention: he soothed, consoled, and directed him; often reading to him passages from Holy Writ, frequently praying with him; and, in short, was, under the Divine guidance, the happy means of enabling him to breathe his last, in joyful hope of a blessed resurrection.—A few days before his

death, he sent for his colonel, and two officers who had always been much attached to him, and desired them to be witnesses to me of his last request; which was, that I would present to this worthy young man the sum of five hundred pounds, which had been bequeathed to my poor boy by his godmother since he left England.

“ In communicating this intelligence to me, the gentlemen have each spoken in such a manner of the extraordinary merit of this person, as a gallant officer and a good man, that I mean to double my son’s bequest; and my reason for troubling you with this affair is, that you will, through the medium of his brother, acquaint his mother (whose place of residence I am ignorant of), that my banker has orders to answer her draft for a thousand pounds, whenever she chooses to draw; and, that when she may happen to want a friend, she will look to Sir John Domville, as a man who can know no higher pleasure than

that of serving her. May the rest of her family prove as great blessings to her, as the eldest will ever be. The knowledge I have of your character spares me the trouble of apologizing to you for this long letter, and the liberty I take with you; while it enables me to say, I am, with every sentiment of esteem, yours,

“JOHN DOMVILLE.”

Tears, delightful tears, were all the comment Mrs. Belfield could make on this interesting letter. While she contemplated the goodness of her children, and how singularly their filial obedience had been rewarded even in this world, her heart dilated with joy, and overflowed with gratitude to the Almighty Disposer of events; and she retired early to her room, that she might freely vent her feelings in the language of devout adoration and thanksgiving.

As Mr. Pendleton could not, agreeably to the rules of his religion, swear against those wretches who had injured

his property and attempted his life, the porter, as well as the footman, had been, during this time, let loose upon society; but about this time they were both seized in the act of housebreaking, and suffered the fate they so justly merited.—It appeared, from their confessions, that Henry having always been an object of fear to them, they had fixed on that night, as the last of his absence, for making a bold push to secure as much property as would enable them to leave the kingdom; and, as their plans were arranged, they could not resign them, even when he *did* return, and happily defeated their wicked intentions, and saved the life of his benefactor.

During the Christmas vacation, this happy family had the pleasure of adding Charles to their party. They had not seen him for six years, and he was so altered that his mother did not know him; but the old lady, the moment he spoke, cried out, "That is my own Charles!" He darted into her arms.—Oh, how did

they caress him! how much had they all to tell, and to hear! how delighted, how happy were they all! they could not separate the whole night.

The next day he called on Sir John Domville, who had the pleasure of informing him, that he had just heard at the War office that a company would be given to Lieutenant Belfield, as the reward of his great merit and extraordinary exertions. He likewise gave into his own hands a bill for a thousand pounds, which his mother had declined accepting till her son's return.

With this bill in his hand, Charles drew his family around him, and addressing his mother, said thus:

"I hope you will have the goodness, my dear mother, to take this bill as a deposit for the education of our dear Edmund. Hitherto Henry has been every thing to us all; and I rejoice in his pleasure, for he merits that sweetest of all enjoyments, the power of blessing those we love; to him I still commit the girls;

and you, my dear mother. But I must insist on educating this dear child myself; and likewise, when my new commission is made out, of sending my dear grandmother fifty pounds a-year, which she can call her own."

"So you shall, my good fellow," said Henry, shaking his hand: "you are the pride, the glory of us all, and we will give you the pleasure of obliging us. But Edmund, what do you say, you dear rogue? what profession must your brother's money make you?"

"I have not concluded what profession I shall like; but I wish to go to college, and be a very learned man."

"Then you shall go," said Charles; "and I doubt not you will do very well, and get forward, as you will follow the bent of nature and your own inclinations."

"For my part," said Mrs. Belfield, smiling, "I shall be very well content if he does as well as those have done

who opposed the bent of nature and their own inclinations, at the call of duty."

"Yet, my dear mother, it is worthy of remark, that Henry is indebted for his present situation to the exertion of those qualities which induced him to wish for a commission in the army; and that I owe this noble bequest to the exercise of that desire implanted in me, to call 'sinners to repentance.'"

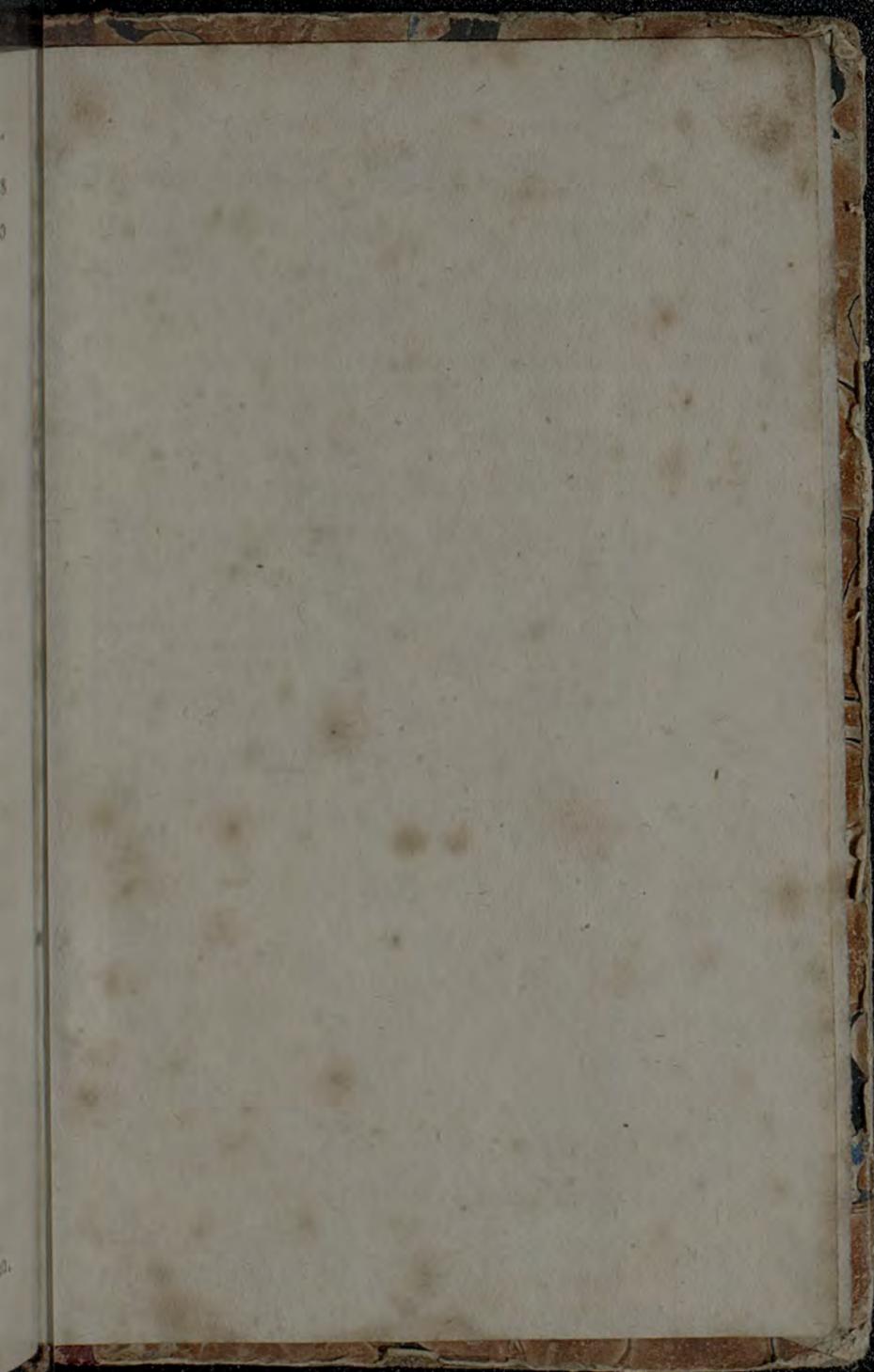
"True, my dear," said Mrs. Belfield; "and where parents have it in their power to choose for their children, it will be generally found a good thing to consult their inclinations: but when, like me, they are so situated as to be obliged to place their children in different situations, they have no need to lament that circumstance. Neither ought those children to aggravate their parents' grief, by complaining of it; since you are both proofs, that in every situation of life, a man may find occasions to display those virtues he does possess, and acquire those in which he is deficient; and in the very act of

obedience and tenderness to his parents, he has every reason to believe he will be blessed by his Heavenly Father, who will make rough places plain, and crooked paths straight, before those who put their trust in him, and walk according to his holy word."

We will now take leave of the Officer's Widow and her Children, observing only, that this summer Mrs. Belfield and her mother have removed to a pretty house on Clapham Common, as it is expected that Henry will be married to Miss Corbett, and that Maria Belfield is to be united to Mr. Frederick Crosby at the same time. Charles Belfield is at present in England, and has a prospect of staying some time. Miss Anne Belfield is at present keeping her brother Henry's house; and Mr. and Mrs. Pendleton are paying him a visit. Poor Betty is still with her good mistress; and all the parties are in a state of as much health and happiness as can be expected in this world,

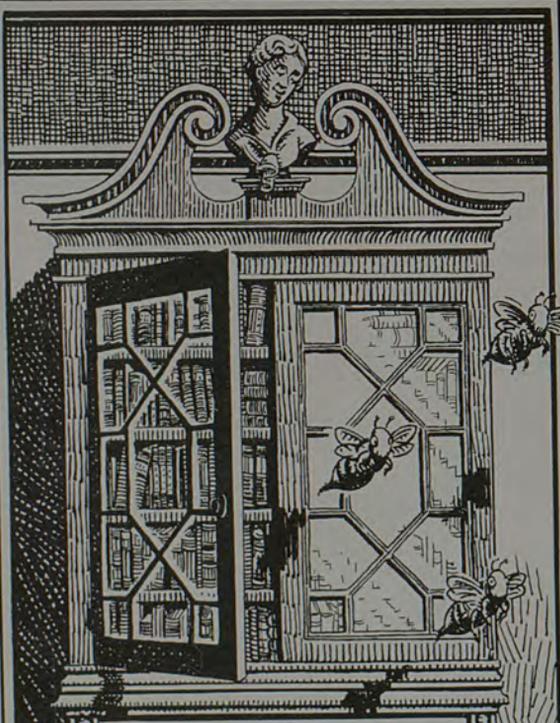
172 HISTORY OF AN OFFICER'S WIDOW, &c.
having the promise of the good things
of this life, and of that which is to
come.

THE END.



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