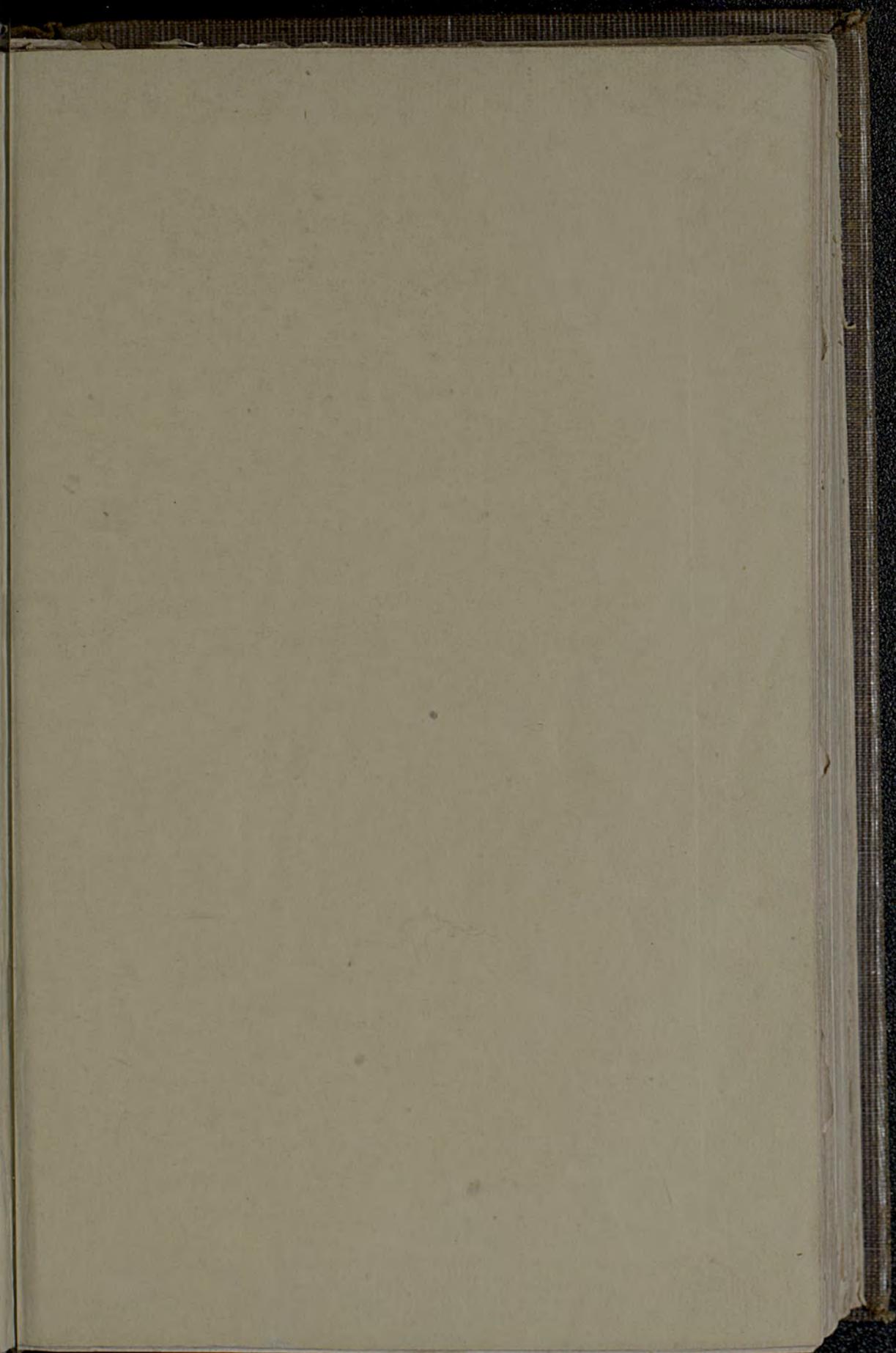


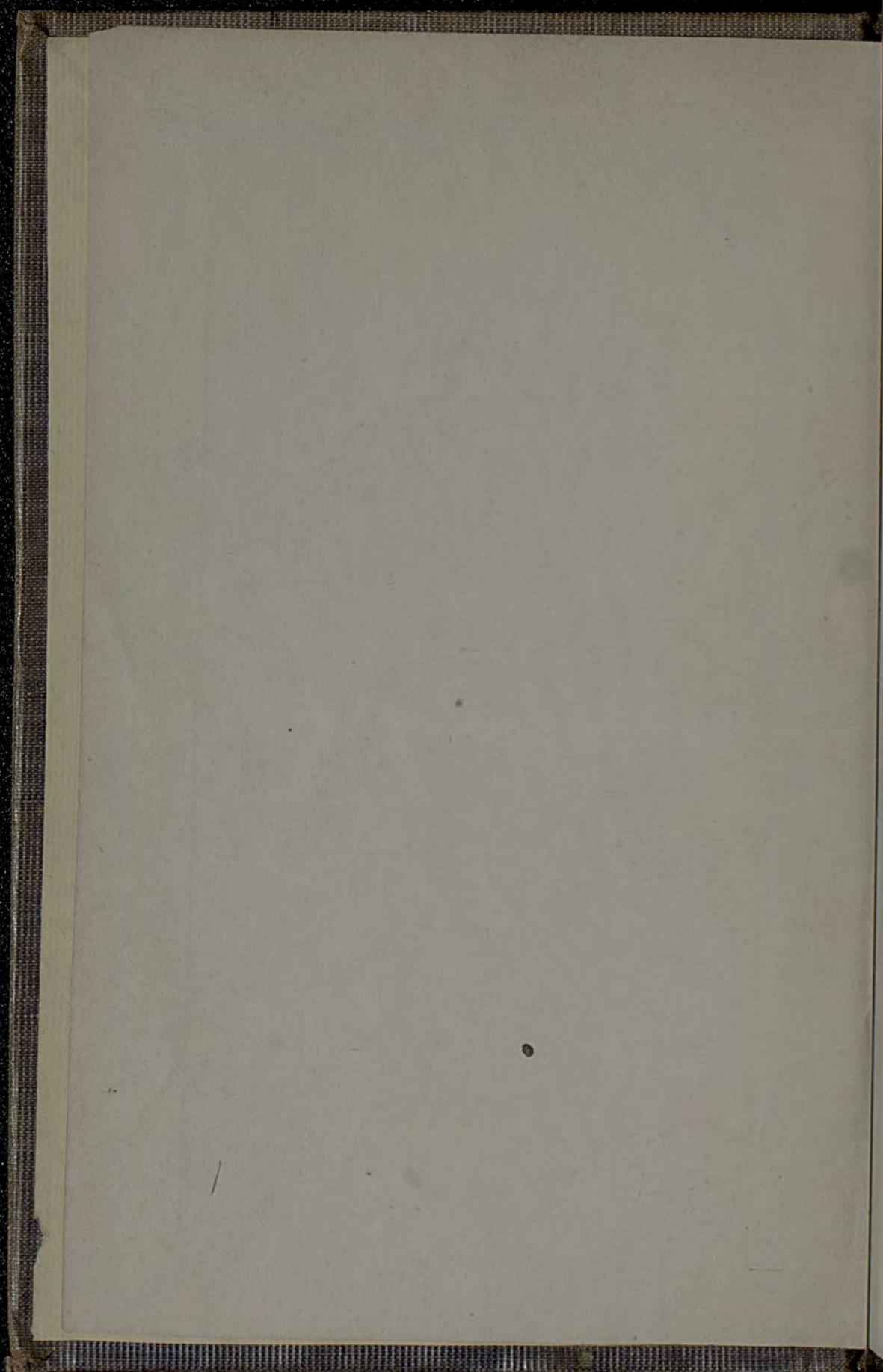
50



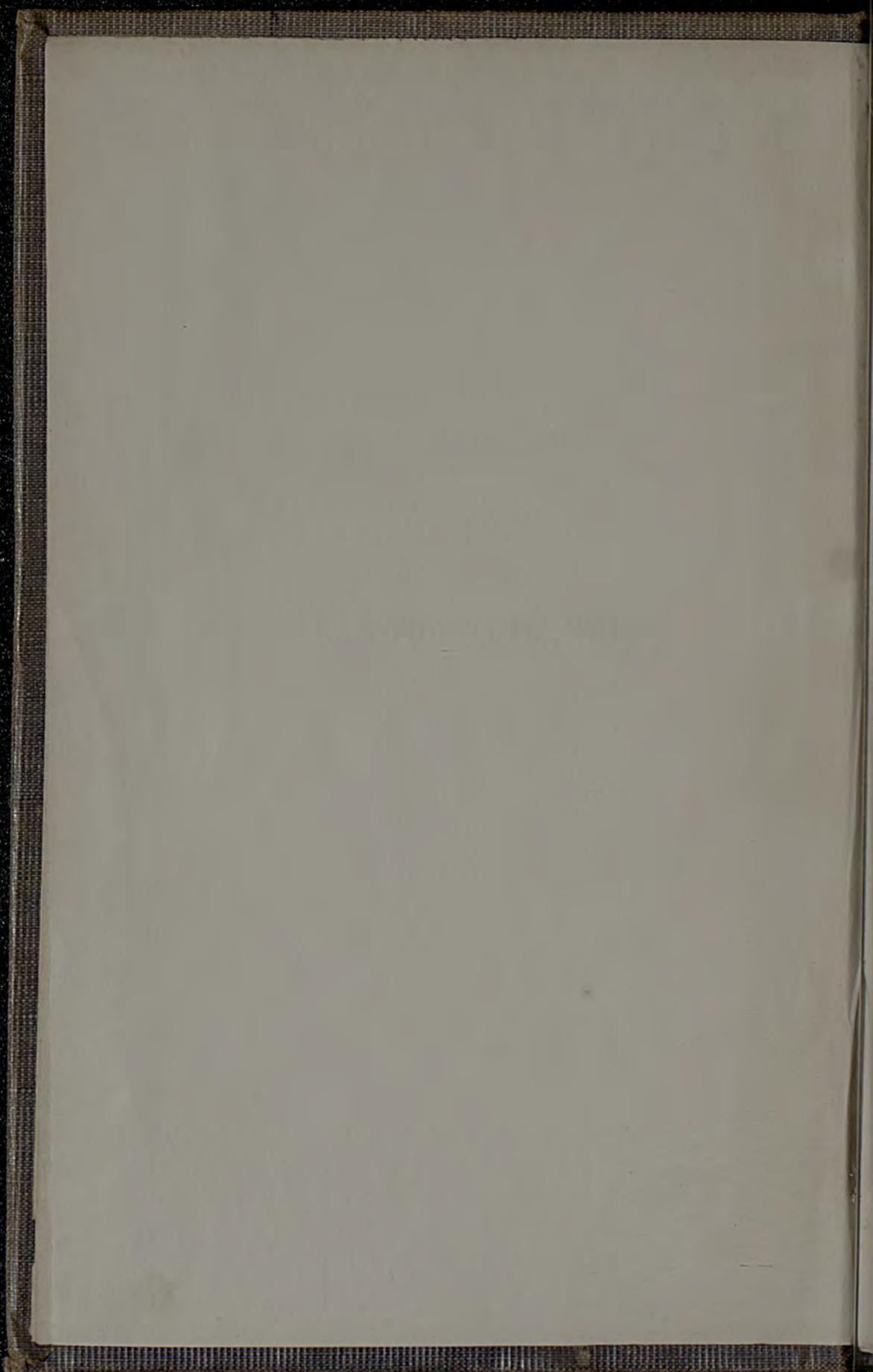
ℓ

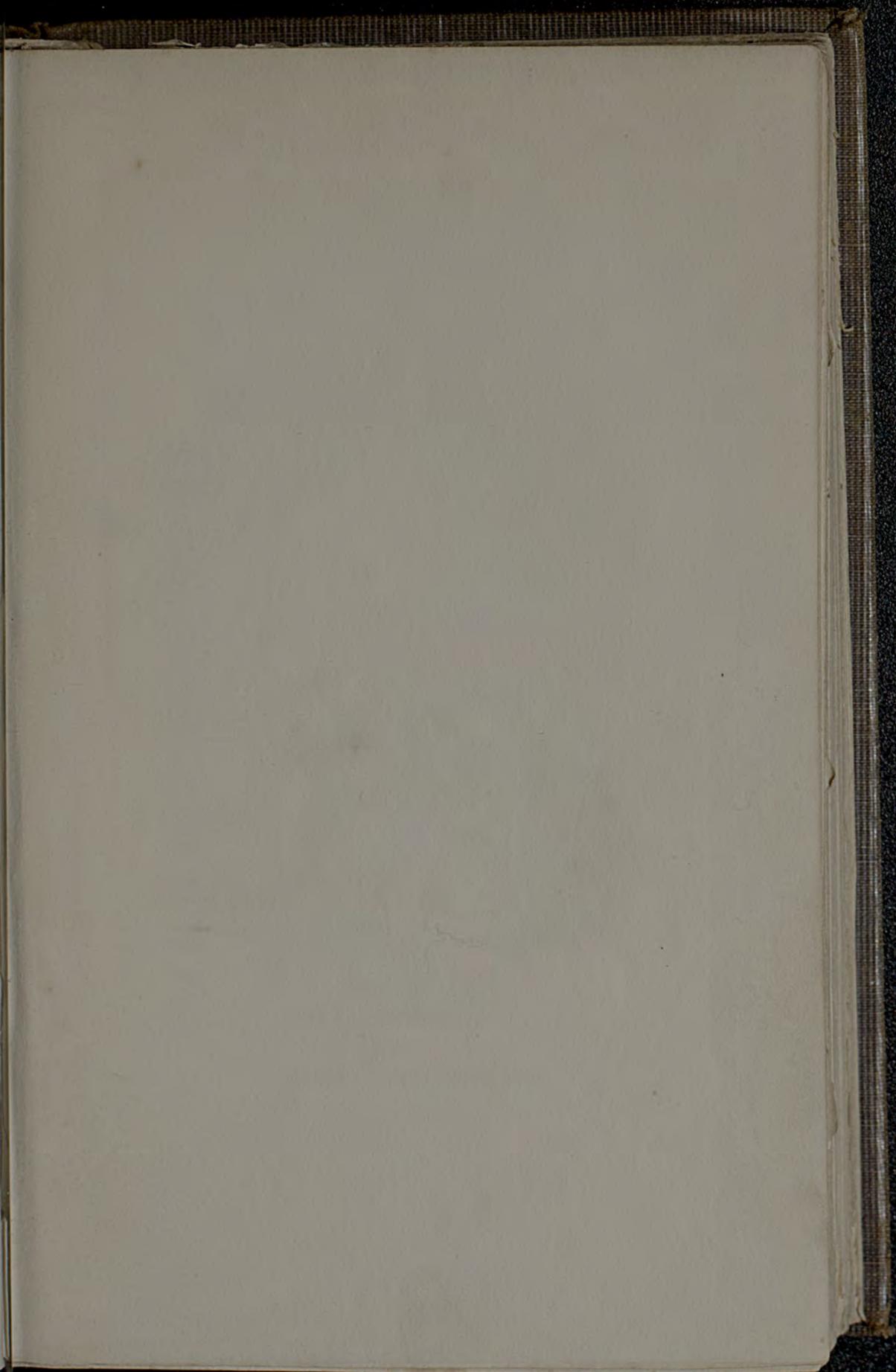
II 918





THE FAIRY BOWER.







THE FAIRY BOWER.

THE
FAIRY BOWER,
OR
THE HISTORY OF A MONTH.

A TALE FOR YOUNG PEOPLE.

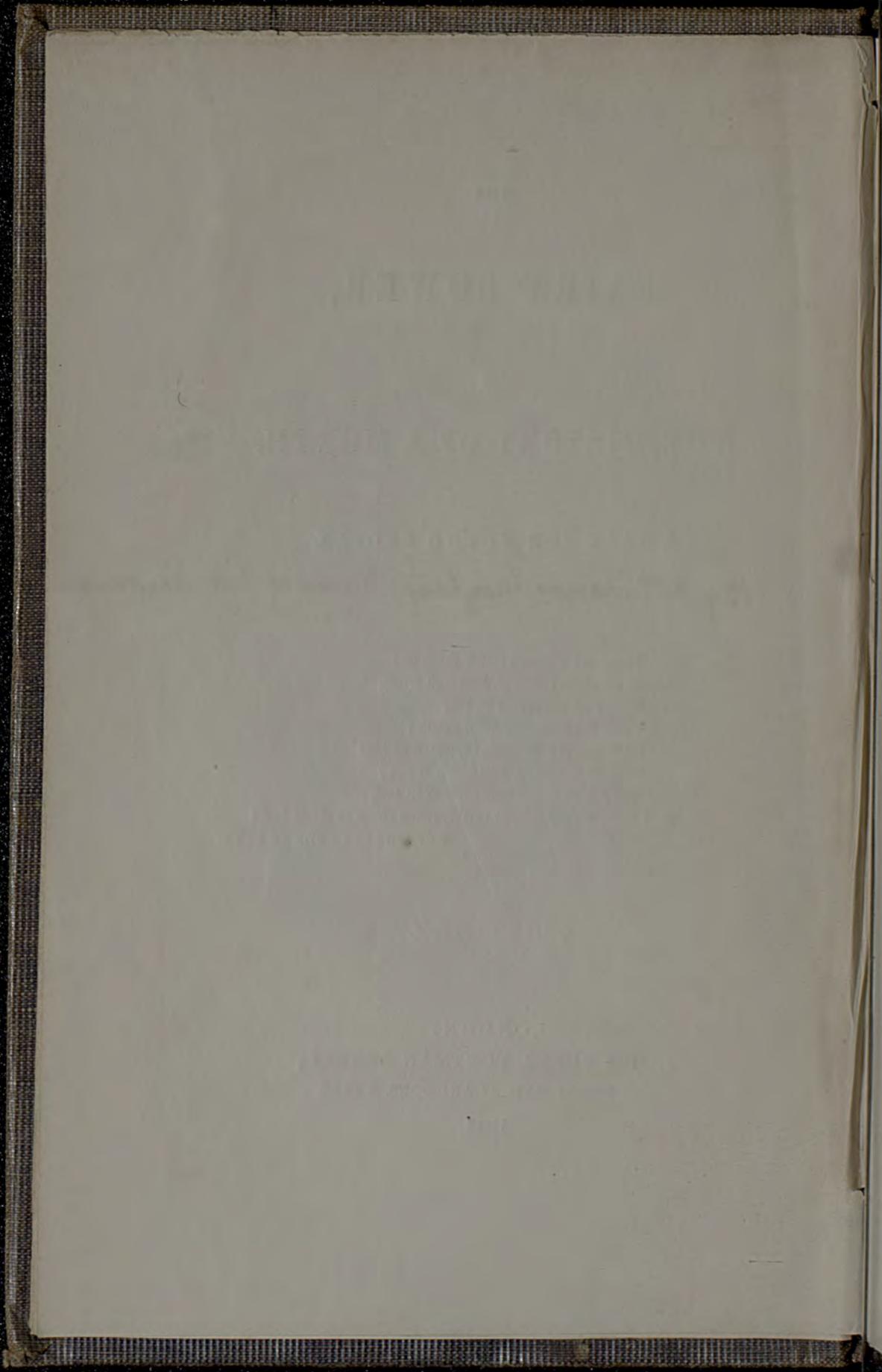
By Mrs Thomas Mozley. Sister of J. H. Newman

There are who ask not if thine eye
Be on them ; who in love and truth,
Where no misgiving is, rely
Upon the genial sense of youth :
Glad hearts ! without reproach or blot
Who do thy work, and know it not :
May joy be theirs while life shall last,
And thou, if they should totter, teach them to stand fast !
WORDSWORTH'S ODE TO DUTY.

THIRD EDITION.

LONDON:
JAMES BURNS, PORTMAN STREET;
AND HENRY MOZLEY AND SONS, DERBY.

1843.



ADVERTISEMENT

TO THE FIRST EDITION.

It is hoped that the following little Tale may be looked upon as an attempt rather to represent characters as they really are, than to exhibit moral portraitures for unreserved imitation or avoidance.

In this respect it may perhaps differ from most publications of the same class, and though it may not possess their poetical beauty, it may perhaps have the advantage over them, that it introduces young persons to those scenes and situations of life, which are their actual sphere and trial.

Should this little story meet with encouragement, a further history of the youthful actors may perhaps appear, presenting them in a more confirmed and developed stage of character.

THE HISTORY OF

THE CITY OF

It is not only the history of the city but also the history of the people who have lived in it. The city has been a center of commerce and industry since the days of the Romans. It has been a center of learning and culture since the days of the Middle Ages. It has been a center of power and influence since the days of the Renaissance. It has been a center of progress and innovation since the days of the Industrial Revolution. It has been a center of art and architecture since the days of the Baroque and Rococo periods. It has been a center of science and technology since the days of the Enlightenment and the Scientific Revolution. It has been a center of politics and government since the days of the French Revolution and the Napoleonic Wars. It has been a center of religion and spirituality since the days of the Reformation and the Counter-Reformation. It has been a center of music and drama since the days of the Baroque and the Enlightenment. It has been a center of literature and poetry since the days of the Romanticism and the Victorian Era. It has been a center of philosophy and thought since the days of the Enlightenment and the Romanticism. It has been a center of science and discovery since the days of the Industrial Revolution and the Scientific Revolution. It has been a center of art and architecture since the days of the Baroque and the Rococo periods. It has been a center of music and drama since the days of the Baroque and the Enlightenment. It has been a center of literature and poetry since the days of the Romanticism and the Victorian Era. It has been a center of philosophy and thought since the days of the Enlightenment and the Romanticism. It has been a center of science and discovery since the days of the Industrial Revolution and the Scientific Revolution.

The city has been a center of commerce and industry since the days of the Romans. It has been a center of learning and culture since the days of the Middle Ages. It has been a center of power and influence since the days of the Renaissance. It has been a center of progress and innovation since the days of the Industrial Revolution. It has been a center of art and architecture since the days of the Baroque and Rococo periods. It has been a center of science and technology since the days of the Enlightenment and the Scientific Revolution. It has been a center of politics and government since the days of the French Revolution and the Napoleonic Wars. It has been a center of religion and spirituality since the days of the Reformation and the Counter-Reformation. It has been a center of music and drama since the days of the Baroque and the Enlightenment. It has been a center of literature and poetry since the days of the Romanticism and the Victorian Era. It has been a center of philosophy and thought since the days of the Enlightenment and the Romanticism. It has been a center of science and discovery since the days of the Industrial Revolution and the Scientific Revolution.

The city has been a center of commerce and industry since the days of the Romans. It has been a center of learning and culture since the days of the Middle Ages. It has been a center of power and influence since the days of the Renaissance. It has been a center of progress and innovation since the days of the Industrial Revolution. It has been a center of art and architecture since the days of the Baroque and Rococo periods. It has been a center of science and technology since the days of the Enlightenment and the Scientific Revolution. It has been a center of politics and government since the days of the French Revolution and the Napoleonic Wars. It has been a center of religion and spirituality since the days of the Reformation and the Counter-Reformation. It has been a center of music and drama since the days of the Baroque and the Enlightenment. It has been a center of literature and poetry since the days of the Romanticism and the Victorian Era. It has been a center of philosophy and thought since the days of the Enlightenment and the Romanticism. It has been a center of science and discovery since the days of the Industrial Revolution and the Scientific Revolution.

THE
FAIRY BOWER,
OR THE HISTORY OF A MONTH.

CHAPTER I.

...little body with a mighty heart.

Shakspeare.

“My dear!” said Mr. Ward, putting in just his head at the breakfast-room door, prepared as he was for his cold winter’s drive to London,—“my dear! you may as well write that note to Mrs. Leslie, to-day.”

“To-day, George,” exclaimed his lady, “why it is only the 29th, and the children’s party is not till the 6th!”

“But now all the cousins are coming on New Year’s day,” answered Mr. Ward, “you may as well give Grace the opportunity of joining them, and getting a little acquainted with the rest before Ellen comes; you know Grace is younger than them all, and a quiet timid little girl seemingly.”

“Certainly,” returned Mrs. Ward, “it is rather formidable for her, coming among so many strangers, poor child! and such high-spirited creatures as George and Emily!”

“Then you’ll write, my dear?” continued the gentleman; “and then, will you to-morrow, when you get Mrs. Leslie’s answer, send out the dinner invitations, for the 8th; it is very short notice, but as it is, I doubt if we

catch the Freemantles in London—Good bye to ye, my dear !”

“ I say !” added Mr. Ward, re-opening the door, “ you understand ! I sleep in Grosvenor Square to-night !—but I shall dine at home to-morrow, and perhaps drive Everard down,” and he finally left the room.

“ Mr. Everard will be a willing guest of ours now,” thought Mrs. Ward, as she prepared to write her note to Mrs. Leslie, “ he is little Grace’s godfather.”

Mr. Ward was in business in London, but he resided entirely in its neighbourhood, and usually went up every morning and returned to dinner. He was a brother of Lord Musgrove, who had been lately raised to the Peerage. Mr. and Mrs. Ward had a family of several children ; they were hospitable people, and their house was constantly full of company. Mrs. Ward was always much engaged with visitors either at home or abroad, and sometimes she had bad health, so that neither herself nor their papa saw a great deal of the children. George was the eldest living ; he was at this time about thirteen, and was at home for his holidays. Emily, the next, was about a year his junior ; she also went to school. Ellen, the third, was at her grandmamma’s, where she was almost domesticated. There were besides some little ones under the age of eight, who need not be more particularly mentioned. These young people had a large family of cousins of the name of Duff, with whom they were very intimate ; Mrs. Duff was Mrs. Ward’s sister. The two eldest of these, Mary Anne and Campbell, were now spending a week or two with their young friends at Fulham ; and Mrs. Ward was writing to ask Mrs. Leslie, an old friend of Mr. Ward’s, and her little daughter Grace, to join the party.

Mrs. Leslie had been left a young widow, with this one little girl ; she had never mixed much in the world since the death of her husband. Major Leslie was a rising

young officer, who fell very honourably in leading on a forlorn hope, in one of the first engagements in the dreadful Nepal war. His early and unexpected death left his widow but moderately provided for, and this, together with the grief his loss had occasioned, had made her live in much retirement. She would willingly have continued to do so, but she had often thought her little Grace was injured by being so much secluded; she therefore, without hesitation, accepted Mrs. Ward's invitation, though she was aware it would be the means of leading herself again into society.

We will now take a view of Mrs. Leslie's drawing-room, just after she has written her answer to Mrs. Ward's invitation. Grace had been amusing herself with reading, while her mamma was engaged with her note. As Mrs. Leslie folded it up, she called upon Grace to bring her the taper. Grace was so intent on her book that she was not roused, till again her mamma called, "Grace, my dear, did you not hear me?"

"Oh, yes, dear mamma,—the taper!" cried the little girl, running for it. "I beg your pardon, the words did not reach me; really this story of Mrs. Leicester's is so very interesting; I think it is the prettiest of all—it is almost as good as being with the party themselves!"

"Well, my dear child," answered Mrs. Leslie, "if you think it good to be among such a party, you will be pleased with what I have to tell you. This note is to accept an invitation for you."

"For *me*, mamma!" exclaimed the little girl, her eyes glistening, and the bright colour rushing into her cheeks, "you know I never had an invitation in my life!"

"Perhaps you never had what you call a regular invitation in your life, but you have paid visits, you know."

Grace looked puzzled, and after a moment's thought, said, "Oh, mamma, you mean at aunt Williams's. Yes,

I have often been there, but then *they are only my cousins*, and my aunt just says, 'Will you come to-morrow or next day?' that is not like a real invitation."

"It is true, my love," said her mamma, "this is a more *formal* invitation than any you have hitherto received; yet I remember one you had more *particular* in some respects than this, because that was to *yourself* alone, without me."

"Oh, mamma," said Grace, colouring, and looking down with an uneasy movement, "I know when you mean; it was Mrs. Marsden's; that was a year ago last Michaelmas. What a little girl I was then—only eight years old. I wonder I was not afraid to go among strangers, and such clever little girls as the Miss Marsdens are; you know that beautiful ottoman they worked in tapestry, and Ellen Marsden's drawings, and their governess, Miss Cook, who was so clever, and spoke I don't know how many languages! I wished very much to see Miss Cook, I had then never seen a governess."

"Why, Grace," said her mother, rather surprised at her mode of noticing an event that had passed away in half an hour's conversation, and had never again been alluded to, "you speak as if you had really gone there."

"Oh, I know I did not go," replied Grace, "I never saw the little Marsdens, or Miss Cook, and only Mrs. Marsden that once, you know, when she called to ask me. She was to come some day the next week; did not she say so, mamma," added Grace, timidly, "and to take me home, and I was to have stayed several days?"

"Something of the kind was talked of, my dear," answered Mrs. Leslie, "but Mrs. Marsden wished to have taken you back with her that very day, only your dear aunt, you remember, was with us just before her marriage, and I did not like you to go from home till she left."

"I did not wish to go away while aunt was here that

last time, but I did wish, though, mamma, *very much indeed*, to go to Richmond, and I listened every day all the next week to every carriage that drove past," replied Grace, rather ashamed of herself. She then added, "Do you think, mamma, she forgot it? Was it a *promise*, mamma?" then after a pause, in which Mrs. Leslie felt perplexed to answer, and also surprised at what seemed a new mood in her child, Grace rejoined, "but people never forget *promises*, do they, mamma?"

"I should be very sorry indeed," said Mrs. Leslie, gravely, "that my little girl should ever forget a promise; as to Mrs. Marsden, you must not think about it; mistakes are often made by word of mouth, and either we did not understand one another, or something occurred to prevent Mrs. Marsden from coming, which was a satisfactory reason to herself."

"Well but, mamma, I *will* ask one thing," said Grace, with an air of resolution, the colour mounting to her very forehead; then hesitating, she was silent.

Mrs. Leslie, thinking she had best perhaps not be made to put her thought into words, only added seriously, "Always remember, Grace, grown people have a right to judge for themselves." After a slight pause, Mrs. Leslie rejoined, "Now, Grace, my dear, ring the bell for this note to go to the post; you seem to have forgotten all about the invitation."

"Oh, no! I have not, mamma; but when is it? I know *you* are going too, by what you said just now."

"Yes, I am; and we are to stay a fortnight; it is at Mr. Ward's, at Fulham; you have seen Mr. and Mrs. Ward, Grace: the little Wards have two of their cousins—the Duffs—staying with them, and there may be some other young people, so you will be a large party."

"When are we to go, mamma?"

"I have appointed Thursday, which you know is New

Year's Day ; so you will begin the year with quite a new scene. But now, my dear child," said Mrs. Leslie, "go and finish your favourite story ; I am going to be busy. You must not let this pleasure in store unsettle you, Grace, we must go on to-morrow as usual."

Away ran Grace to her book, and finished her story with composure and interest : we do not say that there was not a consciousness of something exciting in her mind, and that when at leisure it turned to the new prospect before her with curiosity and high expectation. But the steady uninterrupted routine of daily lessons, which her mamma pursued with her, had already accustomed her mind to do with ease, what many older cannot do with difficulty ;—to concentrate her small powers upon the subject she had in hand, and not to be diverted from her task by outward objects. Mrs. Leslie had not studied the subject of education, like some mothers, and did not feel capable of forming any original plans. She only had a strong idea of the value of regular daily lessons ; she had no plans about it ; she did not talk about it ; but she practised it. *Nothing*, we may say, interfered with the morning business. A mother differently circumstanced, could not herself have undertaken the office of instructress, with such unrelenting regularity. But Mrs. Leslie had only to do with her own circumstances, and was not of a disposition to interfere with the plans or opinions of any one else.

Since Grace speaks very little for herself, and has no young companions, like the rest of our party, to draw her out, it may be necessary occasionally to give her thoughts. During the active portions of the day, she had not much time for speculation and wonderment ; at least in her little life, unvaried by events, or much society, to call out her thoughts, she had not occasion as yet, to pause, and become bewildered with the multitude of thoughts within her. But there were two especial seasons when she gave

full range to her reflections; the one we may call for speculations *retrospective*; the other for speculations *prospective*. She was accustomed to go to bed early, and she soon slept—the light, but not the sound, sleep of childhood; she invariably woke early, and in the summer part of the year especially, used to lie for hours before she was allowed to rise, watching the dawning day, or the full burst of sunshine about the room, or pursuing the path of the clouds across the sky: with such thoughts and reveries on her past and present being; the existence and character of God; the true meaning of that, to her, most awful word—Eternity; the fearful sense of the doctrine of eternal punishment; the difficulty of reconciling it with the love of the Almighty Creator of the world; and numberless topics of the same nature, as, with her respective comments and imaginings, would prove that there is the germ of philosophic yearning, and heretical wanderings in the mind, as soon as it is capable of embracing a thought, or receiving any revealed doctrine. After a time, these speculations gave way in a great measure, on a somewhat maturer understanding of the Great Truths, which are calculated to subdue them. The other season, in which she indulged less abstract fancies, was after the age of six, when she began music. Her hour of practice was also an hour of eager wonderment and anticipation; over all the words she heard that seemed to introduce her to the world without; over all the little incidents of the day, and the pleasures either of occupation or amusement that were in store for her. But her dearest and fondest theme was the love of her mother—on this she could dwell under every sort of form. It entered into all her wild religious and metaphysical speculations, from her earliest years. She would think, “What a small creature I am! but what great things I can think, and nobody knows my thoughts! Yes, I suppose God knows them. I am sure He does,

though I cannot think how ; and besides, I think mamma knows them ; I think all mothers must have the power of knowing their children's thoughts. She does not say so, but I think mamma knows all mine." Then she would get bewildered in the mazes of metaphysics. At the time of her father's death she felt more perplexity than sorrow. She had never known him, nor had she been led to expect his return, or to dwell upon the thought of seeing him some day. "What is the difference to me?" she would think ; "Why is papa dead? Why is he more dead to me to-day than last week or last month? Besides he has been dead now five months, though we have but just heard of it. He was quite dead to me before. What is the difference to him, I wonder?" Then she would go on till the tears fell fast, thinking of her mamma's dear face of sorrow, and the sigh that haunted her beyond all the rest. "There must be some difference," she thought, "because mamma thinks so."

It may be necessary to state a few facts, to account for the different nature of Grace's feeling towards her parents. Captain Leslie embarked for India when his little girl was two years old, and it is not to be expected she could have a personal remembrance of him. Her mother parted with him, under a melancholy foreboding that she should never see him again ; and the more her own thoughts were absorbed by his memory, the less she could bring herself to cherish it in the mind of her child, by any cheerful mention of his name. Indeed, it is very doubtful if she ever recalled him as one likely to be seen again, so that her allusions to him, before and after his death, were of the same character, and were always tinged with the solemnity, which is apt to accompany the mention of a lost parent, to a child. The death of Major Leslie made no difference in their mode of living. They continued in the same place and the same house. The only outward signs

Grace perceived, was the garb of mourning themselves and their household were made to assume. It was hardly clear to those about her, if she associated her mother's more serious face and the frequent sigh, which never failed to catch her ear, as she amused herself about the room, with the event that clothed them in black.

CHAPTER II.

Alas ! what kind of grief should thy years know ?

Beaumont and Fletcher.

If it will not detain the kind reader too long from our young friends at Fulham, we would in this place transcribe a conversation that passed between Grace's aunt, Mrs. Leslie's sister, and another lady, which may serve to throw a light on the child's feelings and character.

Miss Winton was of a more lively, energetic nature than her sister, and her spirit had not been in the same way oppressed by early anxieties of her own, and subdued by solitude. It seemed as if she penetrated and understood the character of her little niece better than her own mother. But it not unfrequently happens with children, as with their seniors, that traits of character, and qualities for good and evil, discover themselves often to a stranger or a visitor, when they remain for years hidden to the eyes of relatives, who are in daily and hourly intercourse ;— so it might be in this instance. Be that as it may, Miss Winton had a stronger and more decided view of Grace's heart and mind than her sister, though she was not in the habit of disclosing her opinion. Mrs. Bell was a lady in the neighbourhood ; she had several children, but only one

girl, about the age of Grace, and she was often in the habit of comparing them.

The following conversation between these two ladies, took place a few months after the death of Major Leslie. After some preliminary discourse, Mrs. Bell asked, "if little Grace had latterly shown more feeling on her papa's death?"

"She is a reserved child at all times," answered Miss Winton, "but I really hardly know what are her feelings on the subject, or whether she at all comprehends the loss she has had."

"But, my dear Miss Winton," said Mrs. Bell, "why do you not question her? You might bring out her feelings, and that would be such a great thing for her, poor child."

"As far as I can judge," returned Miss Winton, "I should say her affection at present is almost entirely exercised on her mamma."

"Affection for her mamma! my dear Miss Winton, how can you say so? I never in my life saw a little creature so perfectly insensible to her mamma's feelings. Why, the other day, when I was calling there, I had an instance. I had been some time talking to Mrs. Leslie, and telling her the high compliment his brother officers paid to the Major's honourable conduct in India, and how he was loved and respected by all who came near him; poor Mrs. Leslie's eyes filled with tears, and at last she gave a deep sigh. Grace, who was close by with my little girl, suddenly looked up, and I am sure she saw her mamma was in distress, yet, would you believe it? the little insensible thing, immediately began talking as fast as she could, even going on to laugh quite loud, tossing her doll about,—(which, by the bye, she is such an odd child she never plays with,—it was only brought down to show my Anna) and talking to it in a strange wild way; I assure you I felt

so shocked I did not know what I was saying, and I got up and left as soon as I could. Well, and further to show you this was no accident, but a real want of heart, I can tell you another anecdote; once before, when I was calling, poor Mrs. Wilson came in—you know it was just after her husband had had that disappointment about a place in the Treasury, which would quite have set them up again; Mrs. Wilson, poor thing was quite overpowered, and at last burst into tears. Grace observed it, I saw she did; immediately she ran, or rather skipped all across the room to me—and you know she is such an unaccountable child, she never speaks to one of herself;—well, she ran to me with her book in her hand, to show me a picture, and ask if Anna had it, ‘it was such a pretty book,’ and a great deal more, chattering away in a way that would have been quite pleasant at any other time, while she stood in the rudest manner—quite unnecessary, with her back to Mrs. Wilson, as if she was determined to show what a little hard heart she had got. I never could bear that child; I am sure it would break my heart if my dear Anna showed so little sensibility. Why she cries at the least appearance of distress; do you know, one day she came in sobbing as if her little heart would break, because she was afraid she had hurt a ‘poor, poor butterfly,’ she had been in vain trying to catch; and if she thinks me unhappy, or even displeased, I am sometimes afraid she will go into fits. But then she has a very tender heart, and such wonderfully refined feelings for a child of her age.”

“I do not know much of your little girl,” said Miss Winton, “but you must let me say one word for our poor Grace, which may perhaps convince you she is not quite so devoid of feeling as you imagine, and that she *has* affection of some sort for her mamma. In the first place, at the time the news of her papa’s death reached us, I observed that Grace was unusually serious for some days.

One may say, you know, she had *never* seen him, so one could not expect the sorrow that even at such early years, a child is capable of feeling; but from that time she has been alive in an extraordinary degree, to any show of sadness in her mamma; I have seen her watch her face, when she seemed all the time intent on her book or her work; and when she thought nobody perceived it, she would creep round and stand by her, and begin to read or talk, or do any thing that she saw did not annoy her. But it is her mamma's sigh that seems most to attract her; my sister has often said to me, that both before and after her husband's death, little Grace's soft low whisper of 'don't sigh, mamma,' has done more to fortify her and recall her to herself, than any human help she ever received."

"Well," said Mrs. Bell, "that is rather different from my notion of her, but I have heard others think as I do; and one lady told me she thought Grace was quite as incapable of religious feeling as she was of human."

"You must look with some indulgence, my dear madam, on a child of her tender years, and....."

"She is *six* years old," interrupted Mrs. Bell, "and *my* little Anna showed a deep sense of religion at four;—the lady I spoke of said she should be miserable if her children could not talk with some readiness of their spiritual state, and religious frames, at six or seven. Why you know little Miss Barker wrote, or rather talked, for she could not write, a whole book full of such things before she was five years old; and I have heard very sensible people say, not quite of Dr. Barker's way of thinking, that the language and sentiments were really surprising;—but she was a little saint, and a prodigy besides, certainly—no wonder she did not live. Now I don't expect Grace, or even Anna, to do any thing of that kind, but I think at six years old a child ought to have some feeling about religion."

"Well, I should be sorry that you should think our

dear Grace a little heathen, and so I will tell you an anecdote that I never mentioned to any creature, not even to her own mother," replied Miss Winton; "I was staying with my poor sister when the news of her husband's death arrived, and we had two or three friends passing the afternoon with us. My dear sister read a letter that was brought her, and put it aside; she joined a word or two in the conversation, I thought with an altered tone, and that she looked pale: presently she rose, as to leave the room; before she reached the door the effort was too great, and she fell down in a swoon; in a moment she had quite fainted away. Of course we were in great confusion, and presently all the servants came in; nobody thought of little Grace, who was present. After other remedies failed, I ran up stairs for the hartshorn. The medicine chest was in my sister's dressing-room, which was also then Grace's room. I burst in, and there I found little Grace by her bed-side, upon her knees, with her face buried in her hands; she was sobbing, and so intent, that I don't think she heard me. I found no hartshorn in the chest, and I ran down asking where it was. One of the servants persisted it was there; another said she saw Miss Grace standing about with a bottle when her mistress first fainted, and on looking we found it close by. She had, it seems, run up immediately her mamma fell, I suppose having remembered hartshorn was proper in fainting; but finding us all engaged with other remedies, she had left it, and silently retired. I can never think otherwise than with great hope of a child whose affectionate feeling first prompted her with presence of mind to active measures, and which afterwards, when she found herself of no use, sent her on her knees alone to her chamber. I think, my dear madam, you would have been satisfied with such a trait in your Anna."

"Oh, *my* dear child is such a peculiar disposition, she

would never do a thing of that kind," said the other lady, "poor dear love! once when I was on the point of fainting, she clung about me and screamed so frightfully that every body was obliged to leave me and see to her, in another room. I came to myself all alone, and had nearly fainted again when I found the state she was in; she was in strong hysterics; we were quite alarmed for her; we sent for Mr. Coleman, and she was in bed for a week. Her feelings are too much for her, poor little thing! and ever since that I have been very careful to keep her out of the way of all excitement. But to return to your little niece: I am glad to hear any thing that shows something like feeling; but what was the reason of her distress?"

"Indeed, I can only guess: she had heard of her father's death, for one of the servants had told her that it was the cause of her mamma's fainting. Myself I feel sure her distress arose simply from the situation she saw her mother in."

"But, my dear Miss Winton, do you really mean to say you never questioned her?"

"No, I did not."

"Is it possible that you could let pass such an opportunity of cherishing a feeling that appeared once, and was then past for ever?"

"I do not mean to say I did right," said Miss Winton; "I know many would have done differently; but I could not bring myself to break in upon the sacredness of the sorrow of that sweet child, whom I saw on her knees. Mine was an accidental intrusion; I have never mentioned it or noticed it, and I fear I shall regret having done so now."

"Indeed, my dear Miss Winton, I feel all amazement; you talk as if your niece were more than a grown person, instead of a weak child committed to your hands for instruction and guidance."

“In my youth,” answered Miss Winton, “I was a much harder and more obstinate little thing than ever poor Grace has been, and if I did not respect the sanctuary of a child’s heart, I should find a warning in the memory of my irritated and wounded feelings when I thought any body had intruded upon them in an unauthorized manner.”

“Unauthorized! you amaze me! you are her aunt!”

“Well, my dear madam, I do not say I was right; I don’t know if I should have done otherwise if it had come into my head, and I am not at all clear that it did. I never wished to recall that painful scene to my dear sister’s memory, so I have never mentioned the circumstance even to her.”

“Well, I repeat,” said Mrs. Bell, “I am better satisfied with Grace, and I will, if I can, forget her cold manner.”

“Oh, Mrs. Bell!” exclaimed Miss Winton, and she was going to assure her poor Grace’s manner was not cold to those who knew her; but she had a notion that there was a mutual estrangement between the parties, and she could not be surprised, for Mrs. Bell exercised a surveillance over Grace, which a child like her would feel, though not understand; and the misconceptions that ensued were easily accounted for.

CHAPTER III.

Gay hope is theirs, by Fancy led.

* * * * *

Wild wit! Invention ever new.

Gray.

It is high time to take a peep at our young party at Fulham, and we find them assembled together in the library, which room was appropriated to their use.

"There is two o'clock striking," cried George; "they were to be here between two and three; but I wish there were more coming than this Grace; and besides she is such a little girl!"

"Yes," said his cousin Mary Anne Duff, "younger than any of us; she is only ten years old."

"But," said Emily, "papa, who knows most about her, says she is a very nice child, and old of her age, and that she is like what her aunt was when she was young, and we all have heard what a clever woman Mrs. Stanley is."

"Yes, and good-natured too," cried Campbell, in his honest hearty tone. "I don't care for your clever people, and clever women particularly, I think them all very great bores."

"Oh, oh!" exclaimed the whole party, and George especially; "oh, oh! let the honourable gentleman be called to order!—explain! explain!"

"Well, I will explain," said Campbell, "I do think your clever men and women, with their politics, and arts and sciences, and rates and taxes".....Here they all burst out laughing, and cried, "What do you mean, Campbell?"

"Well, I mean rents and tithes," blundered on Campbell, "and all their jargon of high pressure, and low pressure, which I'm sure some of them don't understand themselves, very tiresome, and I think there's a great deal of humbug in it, and I'm glad when they're gone; and I like a good-natured pleasant lady like Mrs. Stanley, who smiles and nods, and does not look a bit clever, ten times as well, and all I can say is, that if Grace is like her aunt, I shall like her very much and she shall be my wife."

"Ha, ha, capital! well done, Campbell!" shouted George.

"But, Campbell," said Emily, "you don't know what you're talking about. Have you never heard that Mrs. Stanley is a very clever woman indeed? I believe she un-

derstands Latin, but I *know* she knows," counting on her fingers, "French, Italian, Spanish, German—oh, I know there are some more—six languages there should be, and then she understands several things I don't know the names of....."

"Lots of 'ologies,' I dare say, like Miss Newmarsh," interposed George.

"No, not *ologies*, harder names than those," continued Emily, "and you know how well she sings and draws; besides she has written a book, a real book, which has been printed and sold."

"Well, master Campbell, what have you to say to all this?" asked George.

"Why I say that I never heard a word of all this cleverness, and I need not believe it except I choose, and that if it is true I don't care, and shall like her just as well. I don't mind people being clever, if nobody knows any thing about it, and they have not got that nasty clever face and way with them."

"Oh, Campbell, how strange you are!" said his sister Mary Anne, "and how oddly you express yourself! Now there's Mrs. Lenham....."

"Oh, no! no!" interrupted Campbell, "I won't talk of your Mrs. This and Mrs. That; I know what I mean; I like some people, and I don't like others, and I know the reason I *like* people; it is because they are good-natured, and if they're good-natured, I don't care whether they're clever or not; and as to some cleverness, why it's all botheration and humbug!"

"Campbell, really you are so queer there's no talking with you," again said Mary Anne; "and Campbell you're a funny fellow," said his cousin Emily, when the door opened, and brought a summons to the young party to assemble in the drawing-room, in order to receive their expected companion.

“What a bore to go into the drawing-room, and play the *good!*” said George, making his queer face, and drawing a deep sigh; “but there’s one good thing, there’ll be plenty of company to quiz! perhaps Mrs. Musprat will be there, and her bonnet—that will be rich!”

“Oh, George,” said Mary Anne, “how naughty you are! how often have I told you, you ought to quiz nobody!”

“Yes, I know you have, my pretty cousin,” said he, “come along!” and drawing her arm within his, he led the way, marching her along in an absurd manner, chanting,

“Oh, this pace
Is all for this Grace!
And this chase
For her grace,
For in very short space
This famous Grace
Is a coming to this place!”

The young people were so convulsed with laughter at this witticism, that they were obliged to stop in the passage and recover themselves, before they proceeded to the drawing-room.

“Oh, George, you’ll kill me!” screamed Mary Anne, throwing herself against the wall.

“That would be base!”

returned George in his chant.

“George!” gasped his sister, panting for breath, “we really shall behave so bad in the drawing-room!”

“What a disgrace!”

still chanted George.

“Do please let us recover!” added she.

“Then your nerves you must brace!”

continued the inexorable George, bringing his chant to a close.

Here Campbell, who had been laughing as heartily as any of them, interfered. By degrees the party composed themselves, and they entered the drawing-room with tolerable sobriety.

CHAPTER IV.

Confused and quick my introduction passed.

Crabbe.

THERE was a room full of company; several visitors were making morning calls, and some staying in the house. The children were all noticed and spoken to. “Oh, you have got your cousins with you!” said one lady to Emily; “how d’ye do, my dear? I hope your papa and mamma are well! Upon my word, Miss Mary Anne is growing a fine young lady!” added she, turning to Mrs. Ward. “Master Campbell, come and shake hands, you have not spoken to me! How do you go on at school? have you got another prize this half year? and how is your friend, that pleasant boy, young Freeman? have you had another battle with him? or can you go on liking him now without? What strange boys those are, Mrs. Ward! do you know.....”

By this time Campbell had escaped rather unceremoniously into the back ground,—the door opened, and Mrs. Leslie was announced. For some time there was the confusion of greeting and introduction; and Grace, the ex-

pected of the children, was quite lost in the crowd. At length every body was seated again, and the elder ladies and gentlemen began talking. Grace stood by her mamma's side. The group of children had withdrawn themselves into one of the windows.

"How small she is!" said Mary Anne. "But how very pretty!" Emily. "She looks very shy, I'm afraid she's stupid," George. At this moment Grace raised her eyes and looked steadily across the room at their party, and Campbell completed the remarks by, "I don't know *that*."

Mrs. Ward here called to the young folks, who came forward. She mentioned to Grace each of their names and their relationship, adding, "but I dare say you will soon find each other out in the other room." She then went on talking to her elder guests. The children all stared at each other, and had not a word to say before "company," till George very politely placed a chair for Grace, and requested her to sit down. He then began: "Miss Leslie, don't you think that's a very pretty bonnet?" pointing out a lady on the other side of the room.

Grace looked at him, and he repeated his question, with a queer wink at the bonnet. She then answered readily, "No, not very pretty, but very warm and comfortable this cold weather."

"So's a chimney-pot, but one would not go about in it!"

"But a chimney-pot's *red*," said Grace.

"No, a chimney pot's black."

"It's black and smoky *inside*."

"And it's black and rusty outside, and so's that bonnet, *Q. E. D.*" said George. "Miss Leslie shall have all she likes *here*; so Emily," added he, in a whisper, "please send for the bricklayer directly, and let him bring down one of the chimney-pots, Miss Leslie wants it for a Sunday bonnet!"

This set all the young people giggling, and Grace, who had not been too amazed for amusement, now laughed audibly. Mrs. Ward turned to them, and said good-naturedly, "Do, young folks, run away to your room; it's a shame to keep you here smothering your laugh; run away and enjoy yourselves!" and away they went.

"Miss Leslie," said George, when they had reached the library, "pray how d'ye mean to trim your new bonnet?"

"With French ribbon, *vapeur couleur* and *flamme de ponche*, I suppose," returned Grace, rather ashamed of her wit.

"Oh, none of your French;" cried George, "construe! construe!"

"Fashionable French ribbons," cried Emily, "smoke and flame coloured; you know they are all the rage in Paris just now."

"Very good indeed, very suitable!" cried George, "with a couple of pokers for feathers, and a sheet of lead for a veil! What a swell Miss Leslie will be! and what an improving on this dull thing!" pointing to her simple bonnet.

"By the bye, talking of bonnets," said Emily, "Miss Leslie, will you not take off yours for the present? we need not go up stairs yet;" and she assisted Grace in removing her out-door apparel, while the latter said, "Please don't call me Miss Leslie; call me by my name."

"What! *Grace*?" said George, with a certain look that reminded the rest of his late poetic effusion. She assented. They then requested her to do the same by them, and so this matter was satisfactorily settled. George however went on, "Well, *Grace*, you are not like Isabella Ward; do you know, though she's our cousin, she doesn't like us to call her 'Isabella,' but wants us to say Miss Ward."

"What stuff it is!" cried Campbell.

"Why," added his sister, "you must remember her

papa is a Lord, and she is the *Honorable* Miss Ward, and that makes a difference."

"A difference! why should it make a difference?" asked Emily; "her papa is Lord Musgrove, it is true, but he has not been raised to the peerage above two years, and then she was plain Belle to us always."

"Yes, and broad Belle, and bold Belle, and bouncing Belle, and every thing but bonny Belle," cried George.

"But," persisted Mary Anne, "now she's an 'honorable' it would not do to call her any of those names, or Bella, or even Isabella, I think."

"Nonsense!" exclaimed her brother, "why you know it's all the same thing, especially when people are cousins."

"Besides," pursued George, "it's all a chance; *we* might just as well have been '*Honorable*' as Isabella and James and the rest of them. If my uncle had only been papa's father instead of his brother, *he* would have been '*Honorable*,' and that's very near *us*. How well it would have sounded, 'The Honorable Mr. George Ward!'"

"The Honorable *Mr.* Ward, or the Honorable George Ward," interposed Mary Anne, in a tone of correction.

"Well, the Honorable Mr. Ward, let it be," cried George, and in a moment he was out of the room, flung open the door, announced in a thundering voice, "The Honorable Mr. Ward," disappeared and entered again, bowing and shrugging, going up to Grace, and mincing in an affected manner, "My dear Madam, I hope I have the felicity of seeing you quite well. The governor and my mother, Lord and Lady Musgrove, regret they cannot have the honour of waiting upon you, but Lord Musgrove is laid up with a slight pain in the little finger, and Lady Musgrove's favourite lap-dog is under Dr. Sickamore's care—I fear dangerously indisposed; her Ladyship felt

quite unfit to encounter a party under such peculiar and distressing circumstances!"

This sally was received, as may be imagined, with peals of laughter, which continued for some time. Grace had scarcely recovered herself, when George asked her, in his natural tone, if he should not make a capital "Honorable."

"Why," answered Grace, laughing, "I never saw any noble-man or honorable-man in a room, but if they are all like *that*, they are more amusing than any people I have yet met any where."

George bowed very low indeed, and looked really pleased. Emily exclaimed, "There, George! what a compliment! Did you ever receive such a one before?"

Poor Grace felt inexpressibly confused; she saw she had said something she did not intend, but could not recall the sense of her words; so at once she asked, "What have I said?"

"Oh, don't be frightened," answered Emily, "only something exceedingly kind and pretty; you paid George a very fine compliment indeed."

"I am sure I am very sorry," said Grace, with great *naïveté*, "but really I did not mean it."

This occasioned another laugh; Emily exclaimed, "So much the better," and Campbell, "that's a kiss on one cheek and a blow on the other, George!" whilst George, in a theatrical manner, entreated the gracious Grace not to repent of her graciousness. "By the bye," added he, "we had a choriambic to celebrate your arrival just before you came, and as I had the honour of its composition, I hope I may consider this graceful graciousness of the gracious Grace, as an especial reward for my choriambic!"

"*What* do you call it?" asked Mary Anne.

"A choriambic, my learned cousin, from two Greek words, which I dare say I need not explain to Miss

Leslie—I beg your pardon—to Grace, I mean—no doubt you understand Greek?”

Grace laughed at the idea, but did not think it worth while to deny, till he repeated his question.

“No? indeed!” said he, “I thought all young ladies educated at home were classical scholars now-a-days. Here is this cousin of mine has begun *Latin*, at any rate: come, Mary Anne, hic, hæc, hoc, hujus—come?” giving her a jog, “what comes next?”

“Oh, George, how tiresome you are!” said Mary Anne, “I wish you’d *not*.”

“Ah, you don’t know!” cried George, “that comes of the *no-flogging* system: when young ladies meddle with boys’ learning, they ought not to object to boys’ punishments: no Latin was ever learned without being well *beat* in, and either you have been beat or you don’t know!”

“But I do, though,” replied Mary Anne, rather provoked.

“If you knew, you’d say,” retorted George; “come, hic, hæc, hoc, hujus...”

“Huic, hunc, hanc, hoc,” continued Mary Anne.

“Well! there’s a good girl, she shan’t be flogged! Do you know, Grace,” continued he, “their governess does not approve of punishments; she says that she teaches ‘*all by love*;’ so when they’re naughty and won’t say their ‘as in presenti,’ or their French verbs, or any of their ‘ologies,’ instead of the old-fashioned corner, or a fool’s cap, or bed, which naughty good girls used to have once upon a time, what do you think she does?”

“Really, I cannot guess,” replied Grace, finding he waited for an answer, and not at all able to find out if he was in jest or earnest.

“No! nor any one else, I’ll answer for it!” said George. “Why, she has three modes of punishment: if they are simply naughty, or obstinate, she helps them at dinner to

all the tit bits, and gives them more sweets and cake than all the rest put together. I believe she keeps a box called the 'naughty box,' full of barley-sugar and lollypops, for the bad children. If they are *very* naughty, she makes them a present of very pretty picture-books, with gilt edges; and if they are very naughty indeed, and deserve a rare flogging, she goes to Mrs. Sell's and chooses the prettiest toy in the whole shop, and gives it to this naughty naughty girl or boy, with a smile and a kiss."

"Oh, George!" cried Mary Anne, "how can you be so ridiculous!"

"I don't say it is not ridiculous," said George, "but I do say it is true—now is it not? Is not Fanny the worst among you, and has she not a library full of these little books? and is not Charlotte the best among you, and has she not—not got one?"

"Charlotte has got none, but I do not know that she is the best among us, only you always choose to say so," replied his cousin.

"Well," said George, "I'll tell you what we'll do: we'll have a trial about it when we are all together to-night."

"I'll tell you what," said Campbell, "I think you are all very unfair about Miss Newmarsh; I'm sure if you would only do as she bids you, you'd be all very good girls."

"Yes, that's all true enough, I dare say," said George, "but you see they *won't*; and then they get rewarded for being disobedient. We must have the trial; that's poz! and then we can decide once for all. Reginald Freemantle shall be judge, and the rest jury; and I'll be the barrister, and examine my witnesses. You'll see it will be capital fun!"

Here the dressing-bell rang, and broke up the conference.

CHAPTER V.

Il est vrai qu'elle est plus formée qu'on ne l'est ordinairement à son âge . . . Par exemple, sa facilité à contrefaire tout le monde, est une chose que je n'ai vue qu'à elle.

Madame de Genlis.

THE young people dispersed, in order to be ready for dinner. Emily conducted Grace up stairs; she showed her the room meant for her, and after a little talk, took her to her mamma's room where she left her. In a few minutes, Mrs. Leslie came in.

"Oh, mamma, I am so glad you have come!" cried Grace, "I thought I should hardly have time to speak to you; but first, Emily says, if you approve it, she and I are to have the same room;—have you any objection?"

"No, my dear; you are old enough, Grace, to act for yourself, and I can trust you not to lie awake, talking *too* long," said her mamma, smiling, "and not to gossip."

"Thank you, dear mamma," answered Grace. Mrs. Leslie then enquired how she had got on with her new friends; "Oh, I have been thinking it all over before you came in," said Grace, "you can't think, mamma, how clever and amusing they are! it is just like reading a story to sit by and listen—and George, he is the drollest boy I ever saw! I have been laughing loud by myself, thinking of his odd faces and ways; and Emily, too, I see can be very amusing; but George is quite the head when they are all together."

"Well, and the cousins?" asked her mamma.

"Oh, I should think they are very clever too, but quite in a different way: do you know, mamma, Mary Anne

Duff learns Latin! But George told such odd stories, I hardly know whether to believe them or not."

"Well, and how did you get on with them," asked Mrs. Leslie, "did you talk at all?"

"Oh, no, not at all!" answered the little girl; "I could not talk as they do; it is just like a book, and when I did speak, I made such blunders that they were all quite amused; I said just the wrong thing, and then made bad worse,—I was so glad, mamma, that you were not by."

"Why, my dear?" asked Mrs. Leslie.

"Why, mamma, I should never mind *telling* you of my mistakes," said Grace, rather abashed, "but I could not bear you to see them, I should feel so much more ashamed of them."

Here the maid answered the bell, and after a few necessary arrangements, Grace followed her and her wardrobe, and proceeded to take possession of her new apartment. We trust the good reader will allow us to take a peep at the young ladies at their toilet, as their conversation will spare us some tedious narrative, and serve to introduce the expected party. After some little talk, on the house and such topics, Emily turned to Grace, who was making an orderly arrangement of her little wardrobe, and warned her not to put on her 'best frock,' as this was not their grandest party. "We are to have *our* grand party on Twelfth Day," said she.

"And who is coming to-day," asked Grace; "what sort of party is it—big or little?"

"Oh," replied Emily, "it's big and little, large and small; it's nothing and every thing. It's neither all big people for papa and mamma, nor all little people for us; but it's a little of both: mamma said it was an accident, and could not be helped, and that two parties had got into one day. So we are all to dine down stairs with company; we have never done such a thing before. I don't like it much,

—particularly *to-day*, for there's a gentleman, a very clever man indeed, to be there;—by the bye he knows your mamma very well, and papa says he wanted to marry her once. He wears spectacles, and has such a voice when he chooses; we are all so frightened at him;—sometimes he takes no notice of us, and at other times he will turn suddenly upon one of us—generally me, because I am the eldest, and ask some puzzling question, or say something in a terrible voice; his words are not so cross,—indeed Mary Anne says, he pays very great compliments; but I am always too frightened to hear what he says. Do you know, he is the only person in the world I am afraid of; I can take off everybody else, but not him. Now," continued she, "I'll show you another of the company," and she jumped up, put on a face, bowed as though accosting somebody, repeating the words, "Very well? very well? Mrs. Ward? the children? quite well? that's well, that's well;" she then planted herself before the fire, and contrived, with the help of her dressing-gown, to look more like a rather large gentleman, than any one could well imagine who has not seen a little girl possessed of this power. Then resuming her own manner, she said, "Now you will see that gentleman to-night,—I won't tell you his name,—and then you'll be sure I could take off Mr. Everard as well; but I could not for the world, I am so afraid of him."

"Mr. Everard!" said Grace, "Mr. Everard is my godpapa, I wonder if it is the same."

"Oh, I have no doubt it is," replied Emily, "and I am so glad, because now he will take notice of you, and not of us."

After a time, the conversation on the evening was continued, and Grace asked if there were to be any young people. "Oh, yes, several," said Emily, "there are all the Duffs; oh, by the bye, their governess, Miss New-

marsh, is to come with them ; you know George told you of her just now ; I would show you her in a minute, only I'm afraid we shall be late," and as she spoke, she drew her face for one moment into a new expression, in a manner that seemed quite magical to Grace. "Well," continued she, "there are the Duffs—you must learn them—Constantia, Fanny, Charlotte, and the little ones, who don't signify ; Constance and Fanny are twins ; well, then there's Newton Gray, his mamma comes with him ; he is older than any of us, above fourteen ; but I won't tell you about him, for I should like to see what you think of him ;—is it not odd, his name is Newton Newton Gray ?—besides these, there are the Wards, Isabella and James Ward, our cousins."

"What a number there seems !" said Grace.

"Oh, I have forgotten one," continued Emily, "Reginald Freemantle ; he is a sort of betweenity, for he is seventeen or eighteen, but he always comes to *us* ; he is a very nice fellow indeed ; so witty and clever ; he and George together sometimes make us die with laughing. But I was going to count them—not the little ones—only ourselves ; three Duffs, two Wards, Newton Gray, Reginald Freemantle, and our five selves : yes, twelve," concluded she, assenting to Grace's reckoning, "not so many you see."

"Yes, but then there's all the company beside," said Grace.

"Oh, never mind them, it is *our* party properly, and mamma said we should have the back drawing-room all to ourselves." Grace inquired if these Wards were those of whom they were talking down stairs ; "Oh, yes, the same ; *the Honorable Miss Ward*," replied Emily, in a comic tone, which set Grace laughing, "or bouncing B, as George sometimes will call her."

"And what is she like, really ?" asked Grace.

"Oh, she's very good-natured, and cannot ever be really

angry, though she tries: she's silly sometimes, and very affected, and then we laugh her into good humour again. But do you know, though she's hardly older than I, she's quite a little woman, and often gets treated as if she was *out*; but then she dresses just like a woman, and gives herself such airs that people don't know she's not one. But you won't see her in her glory now, because, you know, we cannot wear coloured dresses: she has been quite angry with the mourning, and says she will dress this holidays like us '*children*,'—in white, with black ribands. I dare say she will have white crape on to-night."

"Is she clever?" asked Grace.

"No—yes—a little," said Emily. "Oh! I'll tell you what she does very well, she plays beautifully, and that makes her seem old; for she sits down and plays waltzes and quadrilles without end—all without book; but then, you know, she goes to such a grand school: her papa pays three or four hundred pounds a-year for her. Oh, I could tell you such a good story!" continued she, presently, "but really we shall be late;" and she went on to plait her hair very fast. Then, after a minute, she cried, "Grace, look here!"

Grace turned, and started with surprise; she could not for some seconds be sure it was Emily. She had stuck up her hair, and tucked up her gown behind, and looked regularly French. She then walked a few steps, with her toes outward, and said with a true French air, "Mais, fi donc, Mademoiselle!—There!" continued she, pulling down her hair again, "that is Isabella's French teacher; I wish you could see her."

"Oh!" cried Grace, "please don't make me laugh so, I shall never be dressed!"

"Why, you *are* dressed," answered Emily, "I have been wondering at you all the time; I never saw any thing like you; some of our girls are very quick, but not like

you! I cannot think how you can tie your own frock and sash in that way; I wish I could; how did you learn it?"

"By getting up early, you know, I'm obliged," replied Grace.

"Obliged! how?"

"Why, when I get up before the servants and mamma, there's nobody to help me, and I must dress myself."

"But why are you obliged to get up?"

"I am not *obliged*," answered Grace, "but when I have got any thing to do, I *must*, you know."

"Why, my dear Grace, what do you mean?" said Emily, laughing; "you are obliged, and you *must*, and you are not obliged, at the same time; does your mamma order you in this way?"

"I am not obliged to get up early," said Grace, seeing the puzzle, "but I *am* obliged to fasten my frock myself if I do."

"But do you mean to say you get up before you are made?" asked Emily.

"To be sure I do," answered Grace, "particularly in summer. When I was a very little girl mamma did not wish it; but when I began music, she said I was old enough to do as I pleased in that respect."

"But what can you do?—all alone, too!"

"Oh, I never can get through half I have to do, and am so sorry when the clock strikes seven, and I must go and practise."

"What! are you up before seven? why it is worse than being at school; we only get up at seven."

"But do you not practise before breakfast, at home?" asked Grace.

"Oh, I never do lessons at home," said Emily; "and at school we have to scramble through our tasks before breakfast. I'm never very long at that: some of the girls learn their lessons in bed, and some get up when they are

called ; but I open my books when I am plaiting my hair, and gabble them over a little ; that does well enough for me."

"But," said Grace, "you cannot know them well in that way."

"I say them better than half the girls," replied Emily, "and am oftener than any, even than Selina Carey, at the top of the classes, and last half year I got the prize for being at the top."

Grace said nothing, but stood at her dressing-table, musing over Emily's cleverness, which altogether seemed to her more amazing than any thing she ever heard of. Emily roused her by calling out, "Oh, Grace, dear ! please come and fasten my frock ; it's a great deal past the half hour, but the second bell never rings when there's company ; and people will not be here yet. But I'm rather in a fuss, for I have got to find my gloves, and tie my sandals, and one, I know, is off."

"Let me sew on your sandal," said Grace, at her little box in a moment ; "see, how fortunate ! here's black silk ready threaded ; you look for your gloves, and I will sew your sandal in a minute."

But Emily had found her gloves and tied her sandal before Grace had completed her task ; and hearing several steps on the stairs, Emily caught the shoe from her, broke off the thread, put in a pin, and said, "Law ! it doesn't signify ; there now I'm ready." Then, springing up and running for her handkerchief, she added,

" ' A pin in need
Is a friend indeed,'

as we often say at school."

Grace followed her in silence : she thought of the old adage, "A stitch in time saves nine :" but she did not feel inclined to say it.

CHAPTER VI.

Vociferated logic kills me quite,
A noisy man is always in the right.

Cowper.

THE party expected in the evening, was, as Emily had explained, of a heterogeneous character. Mrs. Ward had failed in finding the Freemantles able to meet Mrs. Leslie on the 8th. This family had formerly been neighbours of Mrs. Leslie, and knew her before her marriage. Sir Richard Freemantle was in a well known banking-house in the city, but he had a family seat in the country, where he usually resided: they had all come up to London for a month before Christmas-day, and intended to have returned to Lacklands several days before Mrs. Ward's proposed dinner party. Lady Freemantle had therefore requested Mrs. Ward to allow them to see Mrs. Leslie the very first day of her arrival, and they settled to put off their journey till the day after. This caused a great change in Mrs. Ward's arrangements; she was obliged to get together a few dinner guests in haste; she also asked a few elder young people for the evening. There was the children's New Year's day party previously arranged, to be added to this. The young people also always dined with their parents on that day, and were promised not to be disappointed. There are only three other dinner guests necessary to be noticed: the Mr. Everard of whom Emily spoke with so much alarm was one. He was something of a "terrible Turk" to children, but, if we may be allowed

the expression, "his bark was worse than his bite." He had always a sly liking for little folks, especially if he saw any thing either good or clever in them ; but he could be severe on those who did not please him. Mr. and Mrs. Russell completed the dinner guests. Mr. Russell was a man well known in the literary and political world : he had till latterly been for many years the editor of a Whig periodical : he was a very pleasant man, and an acceptable guest at most tables.

Having introduced the reader so far to his new acquaintance, we must proceed to give a slight sketch of the plan of the house, which may serve to facilitate the understanding, both of this complicated party and of future scenes. Mr. Ward's house, or rather cottage, for it was built on that model, was large and very commodious. It had been in the possession of several occupants before Mr. Ward ; each of whom had added to it ; and, except lofty rooms, it had all the advantages of size, without the appearance of it. All the sitting-rooms were on the ground-floor ; the entrance was behind, which led into a square saloon, usually called the hall ; in this were five doors, which led respectively to the staircase on the right hand, the dining-room on the left, the two drawing-rooms opposite, and one communicating with a passage which led to the library and one or two small rooms. The windows of the drawing-rooms opened into the garden, and looked down upon a sloping lawn, which reached to the borders of the river Thames. These two rooms also had folding doors between them, and though they were both on a line, the smaller one had got distinguished by the children by the name of the "back-drawing-room," on account of their having been accustomed to this term in the house where they formerly resided in London. There was also a small ante-room connected with the last by an arch which led to a long conservatory.

Having despatched these necessary, though tedious details, we will proceed to the front drawing-rooms, where we find the ladies of the house already seated. They were soon joined by Mr. Ward, who had driven Mr. Everard from London. The children were talking and laughing in the back drawing-room, and though seen, and occasionally heard, through the doors, which were open, they were far enough removed to feel quite at their ease. Emily, however, was anxious that Grace should see the entrance of the gentleman she had taken off, and had therefore moved her to the most conspicuous place, so as to command a full view of the front drawing-room. Here they sat and chatted in a low voice, and we shall take no notice of them for the present, only feeling sure that Grace was watching for the terrific Mr. Everard, and often looking at the door. Before long it opened, and Mr. Everard made his appearance; he walked up to Mrs. Ward, bowed and greeted her, and said in a sonorous tone, "Madam, your servant and your slave;" he then turned to Mrs. Leslie, bowed lower, waved his hand, placed it on his heart, and said, "Fair lady of our reverence, we greet you well." Mrs. Ward then addressed him, and feared they had had a very cold drive from London; to which Mr. Everard replied, "Cold was the drive, but warm the welcome awaiting us," and he hummed in an indifferent manner the first lines of a ballad then fashionable, expressive of a similar sentiment. He then began fingering the ornaments on the mantel-piece, holding them very close to his eyes, and presently admired a beautiful bouquet of flowers, asking leave, "like Beauty's beast to steal a rose;" he then repeated the hackneyed lines of Romeo's, of "a rose by any other name," in such a manner as to make them sound new to every body;—such is the charm of a voice. This was his usual style of conversation, if such it could be called; a sort of soliloquy,

addressed to any thing, or any body at hand ; he seldom joined in a general conversation, but would argue with one person sometimes with great force, or he would put in a pithy remark, either of assent or dissent, on subjects that were being discussed, sometimes with great point or wit. His present audible musings however were disturbed by the entrance of Sir Richard, Lady, and Miss Freemantle, and though Grace had quite forgotten Emily's representation, and was absorbed by Mr. Everard's voice, she in a moment recognized this gentleman as its original. Mr. and Mrs. Russell followed soon after, and Mr. Ward rang the bell for dinner. Immediately these last entered, Mr. Everard turned to Mrs. Leslie, and asked after her "little maiden," his god-daughter, remarking, he had seen her but once. Hearing she was with the rest of the children, in the next room, he would not allow Mrs. Leslie to stir, but said he would go and make acquaintance with her himself, adding, "the maiden's name is Grace, I know." The children felt considerable alarm at his approach, not unlike that of a flock of sheep at the casual appearance of a strange dog amongst them, only our little party felt the more certain assurance that their enemy was advancing for their actual annoyance, and there was no means of escape in their power. Emily's late feeling of triumph, at reading in Grace's face the acknowledgement of her successful power of mimicry, sunk before the dreaded presence of her foe. But to her great relief, he approached Grace, whom she had seated in the most conspicuous place, as we have before explained. He placed himself before her, and addressed her with suitable action as follows:—

"Fair Grace ! the sweetest Grace of earthly sphere,
If of our earth thou art—I prithee tell,
Child of great Jove, which of the sisters three
May claim the honour of a name from thee ?
'Thalia, 'Glaia, or Euphrosyne ?"

Poor Grace was much more alarmed than became her godlike extraction ; luckily, however, it did not appear, and more luckily, there came a line to her assistance, which she simply rehearsed, and was never more relieved than when she had got to the end of it ; she replied :—

“Thalia I ! a grace and muse at once.”

“Then,” returned her tormentor,

“Then graceful Grace and Muse—scarcely of *Comedy*,
Thalia ! take this rose,—thy humble votary’s gift,”

and he presented the rose. Poor Grace had no friendly line rise to her lips this time ; she saw too that the “company” in the other room were silently looking in at the scene, and feeling very foolish and very awkward, she merely took the rose, and placed it in her sash. Poor Grace ! her annoyance was not at an end.

“Better than words, thy deeds, intent
On kindly thoughts, sweet Grace, in silence eloquent,”

continued her tormentor. How glad was Grace when the door opened and dinner was announced ! but what was her dismay when, regardless of Mrs. Ward’s summons to him, Mr. Everard declared himself, “Thalia’s votary,” and insisted on “attending her winged steps.” He took her hand, and Grace was compelled to be conducted in form to dinner by this formidable gentleman ; and before she had well recovered, she found herself seated between him and Miss Freemantle. George was disappointed, for he thought he should sit next her, and wanted to make her laugh at some of the company, especially Sir Richard Freemantle. But “grown people” themselves are constrained frequently to submit to equally bitter disappointments of

the same sort, and with a better grace than George, who certainly looked rather black on the occasion. He, however, sat next to his cousin Mary Anne; this, which would have quite satisfied him, had not the novelty of a new acquaintance interfered, he considered better than being placed between two seniors. The children of course did not enjoy the party as if there had been no strangers, but it was a great novelty to them. George was ready to amuse himself with the peculiarities of any or all of the company. Emily congratulated herself that she was not in Grace's situation, at whom she now and then tried to get a peep, to see how she got on; ; Campbell made himself contented and satisfied, as he usually did, wherever he went; while Grace by degrees forgot her embarrassment, since her terrible neighbour did not continue to address her in his heroic strain, only now and then in a few words of the same character, he offered to supply her wants from the dishes before them; however there was a great deal of talking going on, and nobody was looking at or thinking of her, so she did not care. But, alas! she was not destined to escape so easily. During a remove, and in the midst of a dead pause in the conversation, Mr. Everard turned upon her, and in a hollow sepulchral voice, that made many start, he let drop slowly from his lips, the words:—

“Wilt thou the gay Thalia's part forget,
And pledge with me a cup like dire Melpomene?”

Fortune once more favoured Grace, for a slight movement among the servants, created a diversion in her favour, and something like a line seemed to spring up within her. In a tone, rather in contrast to that of her persecutor, she made answer:—

“I am no Janus, double-faced.”

“Then, wittiest Grace of Graces, pledge with me
A simple cup of love and amity,”

returned Mr. Everard, pouring out some wine. Now poor Grace had never taken a glass of wine with any body in her life, and at any other time it would have been formidable to her; but now it seemed quite a deliverance, and she did not care for all Mr. Everard's gesticulations, so long as he did not address her. But soon after she was relieved from his notice, at the expense of the rest of the party; nobody knew how the dispute began, but suddenly Mr. Everard answered Mr. Russell, who sat opposite to him, in his most sonorous tone, “Sir, I say he is a blot on the escutcheon of his country, a reproach to the face of his King, a dishonour to himself, and a pest to society.”

There was a pause for a short space, when Mr. Russell replied with much temper and ease, “If so, sir, I am sure you are very right in not becoming a Whig.”

“Sir,” almost vociferated Mr. Everard, “a Whig does not know himself, he wears a mask, though not Thalia's,” added he, in a changed tone, turning to his small neighbour, then, in his startling voice, again he went on:—“I say, sir, he is bringing ruin and destruction on his country, and pulling down the gigantic fabrics, raised by the *wisdom of our forefathers*, about our ears;” then muttering between his teeth, but quite distinct enough to be heard all over the room, he repeated the line:—

“Come woe, destruction, ruin, loss decay!”

when he made a pause, which no one seemed disposed to break, and he completed the couplet thus:—

“The cat will mew; the dog will have his day.”

His tone was quite altered, but no one could tell whether

he was in jest or earnest, and an uncomfortable silence ensued till this singular man turned to his little companion, and gave a sudden sharp bark, so like that of a dog that the whole company were startled. The children, however, most quickly recovered, and with George at their head, they received the sally, which seemed especially directed to them, with acclamations of merriment. A great relief it was to the whole party, for no one knew what to expect next. This took place after dinner, and Mr. Everard ceased to torment Grace by long speeches, only occasionally with devoted actions he offered "his Lady Grace" fruits and cakes of all sorts, which at first she was afraid to decline. But she had now a new series of persecutions to endure. Miss Freemantle, who had been till the late outbreak incessantly chatting with her other neighbour, now began to take notice of Grace, and "her admirer," as she called Mr. Everard; she kept whispering to her continually, "There! Grace, don't you see he wants you to thank him for the rose? Now thank him, there's a good girl; it is very unkind to receive his gifts so coldly;—I dare say he wants a kiss," whispered she very low. "Don't you know he is your *admirer*? he wants you to be his wife; you must marry him now, you know, that you have accepted his rose, that was a trial; and then just now he said 'love' to you, and you did not say 'no,' so you must have him now."

Grace looked dreadfully frightened, though she did not believe a word; and this teasing young lady went on to say, "Oh, you cannot draw back now, you have promised, Grace."

"Oh, no! I have not promised indeed," cried Grace, in her momentary alarm hurried out of all considerations; then she thought how foolish she had been, for she knew quite well this young lady was only in jest. Poor little girl! she thought she had never been so glad as when

dinner was announced; but now she heard with ten-fold pleasure, Mrs. Ward propose moving into the drawing-room, which she did rather early, on account of the young people who would shortly arrive. The seniors and juniors took respective possession of the two rooms, and soon were in full conversation.

CHAPTER VII.

“He will remove most certainly from evil,” said the Prince, “who shall devote himself to that solitude which you have recommended by your example.”

Rasselas.

“WHAT a strange man that Mr. Everard is!” exclaimed Mrs. Ward, as she stirred the fire, while the other ladies stood before it; “he certainly does imitate Dr. Johnson, as people say, but I think I never saw him so rude before.”

“It is a great pity indeed,” said Mrs. Leslie, “that he allows himself in such eccentricities; he would not deliberately be rude, I am sure.”

This was said on Mrs. Russell’s account. Mrs. Ward smiled: she might have rallied Mrs. Leslie on her defence, but she was always a little afraid of that lady, though she was not likely to think so; she therefore said nothing.

“Oh, he is an odious man!” cried Miss Freemantle; “I declare I was frightened out of my wits; I am sure, Mrs. Leslie your little girl must have wonderful nerves to stand his attacks as she did. He was teasing her all dinner time.”

“Most children I know would have cried,” remarked one lady, who sat opposite at dinner.

“But not Grace a bit,” returned the young lady. “I sat near her, and heard all, which no one else could. I can assure you she answered very well indeed, in a way that a grown-up girl would not be ashamed of. And really,” she added, laughing, “she seems quite at home among all the gods and goddesses; I had to brush up my old lessons to keep pace at all with her.”

Mrs. Leslie smiled, and replied she was glad her little girl remembered her *Catechism* of Mythology, when it was required.

“I can assure you,” replied Miss Freemantle, “she has it all at her fingers’ ends. It was the same before dinner: I sat near the door and heard all that passed. I am sure that horrid man and his tremendous voice was enough to frighten away all her senses; but she looked as quiet as possible, and acknowledged her relationship to the Graces and Muses, as if she had been born and bred among them. For my part, I don’t know a Grace from a Muse, nor remember their hard long names, though I learned it all at school; but then I hated it with all my heart.”

“I am rather surprised,” answered Mrs. Leslie, “at what you tell me of Grace, for she had a great dislike to her Mythology lesson at first, and never seems to take to it as she does to some others.”

“It surprises me, Mrs. Leslie,” said Mrs. Ward, “how you can undertake that child all by yourself. Certainly,” she added, “if you had assistance it would not be much better: a home education must be a nuisance any way; there is no end to the troubles with the children; we tried it once, but Mr. Ward did not like it, and it did not answer at all. Emily is so high-spirited, school is the only place for her; and the rest were so young.—So when we found Ellen was so constantly with her grandmamma, and when we left London, we gave up the home plan, and mean to send all to school as soon as they are old enough. I found it an

amazing relief: with my health, it really was too much for me, and I was in a constant fever. My sister, Mrs. Duff, however, thinks very differently; she would not let a girl of hers go to school for the world: but, you know, she's very peculiar in her notions of education, and has got a governess who carries out her plans to her heart's content, I should think." "Do you know," continued she, "I'm almost surprised they let the children come at all to see their cousins. At one time I really thought we must give it up, but we have compounded now, and it is settled that the little Duffs *may* come to us, provided I do not allow them to dance, or to play at cards, or to have dice."

"Why how can you amuse children night after night," asked Miss Freemantle, "without such helps? Poor little things! I quite pity them."

"Oh!" said Mrs. Ward, laughing, "you need not do *that*; George and Emily, you know, are very clever and amusing, and can keep them in a roar from morning to night. I have given them the library, for they used to disturb the whole house when they were in any of these rooms; and then, you know, they *may* play at *some* games, and have forfeits and amusements of that kind."

"But I thought Miss Newmarsh did not quite approve of games, of any sort," said one of the ladies.

"Why, no, she does not, but my sister has rather too much sense to consent to *that*. Miss Newmarsh has tried very hard to confine the exercise of the girls to their 'Calisthenic movements,' and their amusements to the 'Bible riddles,' 'New Testament puzzles,' and other entertainments of the same sort."

"What are these riddles and puzzles?" said Lady Freemantle, "I never heard of them."

"Why they are all manner of riddles and cross readings, and curious questions in the Bible. I have never seen them, but I hear the children talk of them sometimes;

George laughs at them, and Emily can hardly help it; but Ellen one day nearly cried, when they were explaining them to her: then they 'cap' in the Bible, and make crambo verses out of it, and play at forfeits with texts: it's a very good thing in one respect, for those children know the Bible nearly by heart; yet I don't know if it does them any good after all."

Here they were disturbed by the arrival of guests, till the whole party had assembled. Of course the seniors and juniors allotted themselves into the two rooms respectively. There were, however, two dubious cases: the first was Reginald Freemantle; but he very soon settled the matter by joining the young people. The other was a more delicate case—"Miss Ward." She did not choose to do more than ask "where the *children* were," look in, and nod good-naturedly; but finding nothing but dull conversation going on for some time among the elder people, she longed to adjourn to the young party; and this she effected with a good grace on the entrance of Mr. Everard, who seldom waited for the rest of the gentlemen. The moment he appeared, she protested she could not "stay in the same place with that unaccountable being," and withdrew into the next room. Here we will leave her for the present, and take up the conversation in the drawing-room, where Mr. Everard found it on his entrance. Mrs. Leslie was saying, "It is at any rate only an experiment as yet; we cannot fairly pronounce a judgment either way."

Mr. Everard asked, "What, fair lady, may this experiment be on which you speak with your wonted wisdom and caution?"

Mrs. Leslie explained that in a boys' school at Halston, a new plan had just been adopted, principally affecting the play hours. "But," added she, "I have only just heard of it, and cannot well explain it: this lady, who understands all about it, can do justice to it better than I."

Mr. Everard very politely applied to Miss Newmarsh for explanation.

“The plan is very simple,” said that lady, “and easily explained. Dr. Barker has had great experience of boys, and he found they got a great deal more harm by themselves in play hours than at any other time. He heard of a plan, and was immediately resolved to engraft the principle into his system, and being a man of great grasp of mind, he has effected his purpose in a very able manner. His object was to prevent two boys from speaking together without the presence of a master. As he had above a hundred boys, this seemed almost impossible; but by adding some new ushers to his establishment, and himself and his eldest son, who is in the school, taking their part in the watchings, they have attained their end. He has by this means ten or twelve masters in the house.”

“That must be a very expensive plan,” interrupted a gentleman standing by; “I wonder how it can answer his purpose, with a hundred boys.”

“His terms are high,” returned Miss Newmarsh, “and his extra masters, such as French, music, and drawing, having been first-rate, were very expensive. He now has engaged *accomplished* men, but not *professors*. These reside in the house, and with the assistance of himself, his son, and all the masters, they do very well.”

“But what are these watchings?” asked some one.

“Why he divides the school into decades,” answered Miss Newmarsh; “to every decade there is a Decadian, which is one of the masters, whose business it is *to be sure* that those ten boys never speak together out of his hearing, and are never left together for one moment. Besides this, they are never allowed to speak any thing but Latin. He hopes to effect modern languages in time. He tried French at first, but found it did not do; only a boy here and there

knew any thing of French, and many of the masters themselves did not speak it."

"But," said the same objector, "some of the masters of drawing, music, &c. cannot speak Latin, I suppose."

"He endeavours to obtain such as do, and wishes them to learn, if they do not; but for the present he puts such over the little classes who cannot yet speak Latin. Besides his object is to discourage talking *entirely* among the boys, and to make them feel instead a confidence and love towards their teachers, who are constantly with them, and as ready to sympathize in all their little pleasures, as they are to lead them to profitable discourse, when they are inclined for it; and at such times the Decadian has the power of dispensing with Latin; indeed that is his prerogative. Dr. Barker is exceedingly strong, on giving to his masters most full discretionary powers; without which nothing can be done in education."

"Well, but at night they may chatter away, and make up for the day's constraint."

"Oh, my dear sir," replied Miss Newmarsh, smiling, "Dr. Barker understands young people too well, not to be aware of the dangers that may arise on that point; and he has made provision to meet them, supposing such an emergency should occur. The beds are already placed in decades; five on each side, and a Decadian's bed could be inserted at the feet of the two ranges of beds; at right angles, between each row; besides, the heads of the boys' beds are set alternately head and feet against the wall;—do you understand?"

"Oh, perfectly," replied the gentleman, "like so many pairs of soles."

"By this means," continued Miss Newmarsh, "the boys could not speak to each other in a whisper or low voice, and the Decadian would have as full command over them by night as by day."

“But,” persisted her invincible objector, “suppose the poor Decadian, wearied by his hard day’s labour, at any time should sleep so soundly, and snore so roundly, that the one should wake the boys and the other give them the liberty of talking?”

“Dr. Barker has made provision for that, too,” answered Miss Newmarsh. “In each dormitory are four decades, and when the nocturnal watchings are put in practice, to each of these dormitories four Decadians would be attached. His rule then would be, that if one Decadian snored, another should rise and wake him, and see what was going on in that part of the gallery.”

“But how could they tell a Decadian’s snore from a boy’s snore?” asked the gentleman.

“Oh,” replied Miss Newmarsh, “they could easily distinguish a boy’s snore from a man’s snore.”

“I am not so sure of that,” said the gentleman; “besides every body does not snore, and suppose a Decadian sleep soundly without.”

“Dr. Barker justly observes,” replied the lady, “that when a man’s heart is in his business or profession, there is no fear of his failing in his duty. The soldier wakes at the first sound of the drum; the peasant is at his work before the dawn, without any summons at all, then why should not his masters be in the same way alive to the claims of duty? he studies besides even now, to assist them in the habit of light sleeping, by diligently attending to the subject of dieting, in which he greatly excels. However Dr. Barker does not anticipate difficulties in this part of his arrangements, and he says if they arise, (he spares no expense) he would hire three watchmen for the three dormitories.”

“Three watchmen?” exclaimed the gentleman, in a tone of doubt.

“Not real *Watchmen*,” answered Miss Newmarsh, “that

would only be their title, they must of course be trustworthy and superior people, whose business would be to give an alarm at a snore among the Decadians, or any talking among the boys."

"Then the poor Decadians would not be released?"

"Oh, by no means," returned Miss Newmarsh, "I consider the nocturnal watchings the most important point in the system, and long for their adoption: you think it hard upon the Decadians, I suppose? but Dr. Barker has thought of *that*, and has arranged so that each of the Decadians would have one night out of seven to himself; he calls this night their 'Sabbakin,' and the room that he is building for their use the 'Sabbatarium;' and rather than that they should any of them lose their Sabbakin, he himself would take share in the nocturnal watchings."

"I am very troublesome," said the gentleman, "but may I ask why Dr. Barker does not call his masters *Deans*, rather than *Decadians*?"

"I am quite aware," replied Miss Newmarsh, "that *Dean* is the proper title, but he had that office already in his establishment, and he could not re-appropriate it."

"I see that Dr. Barker is armed at all points," remarked the gentleman, "pray how long has he tried his plan?"

"Three-quarters of a year; he began last Easter," replied Miss Newmarsh, "and it has answered beyond our most sanguine hopes, for before he came the school had got into a dreadful state of insubordination among the individuals; in less than a month the reformation was most signal, and now the boys are in the quietest state possible, and many of them in a very interesting frame of mind."

"But what do the boys say to it?" asked the same gentleman; "how they must hate it!"

"Indeed, my dear Sir," replied Miss Newmarsh, "you are very much mistaken; the boys like it better than their masters even."

“Why they are obliged to say so, of course, or they’d be flogged!” said the gentleman.

“Flogged!” repeated Miss Newmarsh, “Dr. Barker *never* flogs! But you’re mistaken again; I know that many of the boys have said the same at home, and have remarked that *now* they never cheat, nor quarrel, nor fight, nor get into any troubles or punishments, and that they are quite happy, and don’t want the old system back again. I know one sweet little fellow said to his mamma, ‘Dear mamma, I’m so happy and good now at school; and I always do right—there’s no harm in my saying I always do right, because, you know, I could not do wrong if I wished it ever so much.’ Another clever fellow remarked, it was exactly like walking in a narrow path with a high wall on each side.”

“*Well, then*, all I can say is, that boys must be different now from what they were in my day,” said the gentleman, as though giving up the question.

“Oh, no, not different, dear Sir, only they have been led to better ways by kindness and reasonable treatment, and not frightened and beaten into deceit and disobedience.” She then appealed to Mr. Everard, and asked what was his opinion.

“Madam,” said he, in his decided tone, “when your boys come out of your school they’ll be fit for the gallows!”

Miss Newmarsh, nothing daunted, asked, “Why?”

To this he replied, “What happens to a kettle when you stop up its apertures?”

“It bursts,” answered Miss Newmarsh.

“So will these boys, madam,” said he, “they will burst with pent up folly and evil; and it will not be Dr. Barker’s fault, I say, if they are not fit for the gallows.”

“Well, I suppose they will not all be hung!” remarked the same gentleman that had before spoken.

“I did not say they would all *come* to the gallows,”

said Mr. Everard, "I said they would be fit for the gallows."

"Well," returned the other, "you know Hamlet says, 'Use every man after his desert, and who shall 'scape whipping?'"

"Whipping's not hanging," replied Mr. Everard, "I said nothing against whipping."

"But do you not think, Sir," pursued Miss Newmarsh, "human nature is so prone to evil that if we can keep the seeds of evil from springing up we are doing great things?"

"How do weeds grow in a garden?"

"They come up."

"Of themselves?"

"Yes."

"How do you get rid of them?"

"By pulling them up."

"If you shut up earth in a box, will weeds spring up?"

"I suppose not."

"And *I* suppose not, madam, but open that box to the air, and weeds *will* spring up, as readily as—aye, perhaps more readily, than in the open field; so with the hearts of these young people: bring them in contact with the world and the world's temptations, evils will spring up, and they will have less root in themselves, than many, who, on *the old system*, have been tried in their own little world, and have, weed by weed, plucked out each as it appeared."

"But how few have done that!" remarked Miss Newmarsh.

"None ever can on your system, madam, because you will not give them the opportunity."

"But do you not think, Sir," continued Miss Newmarsh, "if we can keep boys from the evil example of others, we are bound to do so?"

"Madam," cried Mr. Everard, in rather an elevated tone, "you talk like a foolish mother."

“Which I am *not*,” said the lady.

“Madam,” continued Mr. Everard, “I did not say that you *were* a foolish mother, I said you talked like one.” He then took a seat next Mrs. Leslie, and hoped the fair Grace was not to be brought up under any *new* systems; adding, he need scarcely ask, since she had not a foolish mother to fight against common sense and the established maxims of wisdom. Mrs. Leslie laughed, and said her little girl was indebted to having a mother not clever enough to devise or follow any new or original plans. The conversation now became less general.

CHAPTER VIII.

Within her gilded cage,
I saw a dazzling Belle,
A parrot of that famous kind
Whose name was Nonpareil.

Wordsworth.

WE must now take a view of what has been going on in the other room since dinner-time. The young people had scarcely discussed the scenes that passed at dinner, before their expected guests began to arrive. The Duffs were first. Grace thought the twins so alike, and so like Mary Anne, that she should never know any of them apart; they all had very dark smooth hair, which was braided close to the face, and though all so young, their hair behind was tied up. Still they looked like children; they had good complexions, with a rather high colour, and were everywhere called “very fine young ladies.” The twins were much slighter than Mary Anne, and in this respect

they became less alike every day. When they came to be known, Fanny was certainly the prettiest and most delicate of the three. Mary Anne, if she had not been under control, with, on her own part, a great fear of displeasing, would have been thought rather bold. Charlotte looked more than only one year younger than her two sisters. There was a family likeness, but her effect was very different; her hair was two shades lighter, and from an invincible propensity to curl, the attempt of dressing it like the others was at length given up, very much against Miss Newmarsh's wishes. It always looked so rough and untidy next theirs, that her mamma said she could bear it no longer. It was, therefore, cut short again, and allowed to take its own course. James Edward, as he was always called, because his papa's name was James, was quite young, and he took his place among the small ones, who had bricks and other amusements in one corner of the room. The conversation continued in the same strain, as soon as the new guests had got settled.

"Oh," cried George to his cousins, "how I wish you had dined with us—we had such fun!" and he began to take off several of the company—their bows, their ways, their tone of voice; especially Mrs. Russell, who, he said, could not say "bo to a goose." He called her a "poor body," and some other names. Grace felt more and more uncomfortable as he went on, particularly when he took off her courtesy. She found she could not laugh, though it was all very like, and she had always laughed before; she felt very uneasy. George then began upon Sir Richard Freemantle, whom he called "the Alderman," though he was not one; he seized his sister's fan, and a paper-cutter on the inkstand, drew a china card-basket before him, and showed how Sir Richard ate and drank. Grace still could not join in the laugh. Emily remarked it this

time, and said that Mr. Everard had frightened Grace out of her wits, and she did not wonder at it.

"Oh, no!" said Grace, "I had quite forgotten Mr. Everard."

"Then what's the matter?"

Grace was silent, felt very awkward, and stared in Emily's face. "Now, what's the matter?" repeated George, "what makes you look so? you *shall* tell, for you look almost as stupid as Constance," said he, looking towards his cousin, who was still arranging the little ones in the corner of the room. "What were you thinking of? we *will* know!"

Grace replied, with a feeling that her thought might be very silly, "I was thinking perhaps Sir Richard Freemantle might be very kind."

"Very kind!" cried George, "well I dare say he is, but what then?"

"I thought perhaps as kind as Mrs. Russell," said Grace.

"What do you know of Mrs. Russell?" asked Emily.

"I never saw her before," replied Grace, "but going down stairs I trod on her dress, and she turned to me and smiled, and spoke so kindly, and I thought she looked for a moment like my aunt Stanley."

"Well, but what has all this to do with Sir Richard Freemantle and his dinner?" said George, "you disturbed him—he had not half finished." He attempted to go on, but the young party had received a damp, and only a faint laugh ensued. George threw up his knife and fork, and said, very much provoked, "What flats you all are! and as for you, Grace, you have become almost as sanctimonious as Constance; I think the sight of her has bewitched you," added he, as Constance drew near.

"How you have been laughing!" cried she, "I can't think, George, how you always can go on so."

"Why we meet to laugh, don't we?" asked he.

"No," said she, disdainfully.

"Well, what do we meet for, then? you won't let us dance, or play at cards, and now you won't let us laugh!"

"Oh, no," said she, "I wouldn't prevent your laughing, but we don't *meet* to laugh."

"Well, what *do* we meet for, my sage cousin?"

"Why,—every body knows that," replied she, hesitating a little.

"No, *I* don't," said George.

"Oh, George," cried several, "I'm sure you do."

"I know what *I* think we meet for," said George, "but not what *she* thinks; but I must examine;" then assuming a grave look, and pretending to settle his spectacles, he asked, "my sapient young lady, do we meet for business?"

"No."

"Do we meet for pleasure?"

"No;—yes, *you* do, I suppose."

"Well, but *yourself*?" persisted George.

"Oh, *I* don't care about it."

"Well, then," said George, "to come to the point at once, what do *you* think we ought to meet for?"

"Why for edification," replied Constance, gravely.

"Wheugh," cried George, with a whistle, "there!" motioning to Grace and Constance, "you *two* may go together, you will suit very well, I fancy—*we* meet for pleasure, you *sanctimonious* young ladies, for '*edification*,'" and he drew his face down to a prodigious length, and made all laugh but Constance, who remained quite silent and still. George was satisfied, having raised a laugh again.

"Here comes Reginald Freemantle," cried Emily; "I am so glad you have come to us, I have been watching you some time."

"Well, youngsters," said he, shaking hands and greet-

ing them all, while the small ones left their corner, "what can I do for you?"

"Oh, any thing *you* like will do—any thing you like," cried several voices, while George took him aside, and proposed a trial on Miss Newmarsh's reward system.

"No! no!" said Reginald, good-naturedly, "I'll have nothing to do with *that*."

"But why not?" asked George, "it will be such fun! why not?"

"Because I don't choose, my good fellow," said Reginald. He then mixed with the rest, and all were soon deeply engaged settling the preliminaries of a new amusement he was teaching them. It was a French game, called "Mufti." Reginald was to be Mufti, and when he said, "*Mufti, fait comme ci*," all the rest were to do as he did. When he said, "*Mufti, fait comme ça*," they were to do nothing, and stand still. Those who failed were put aside, and he called them "dead men." Just as they were practising, Isabella Ward entered their room, and walked slowly towards the merry group. "Here's bouncing B.," cried George, "she shall play! Come, Belle, here's a famous new game, come, you must play."

"George, you're very rude; I shall *not*."

"Oh, it's the best fun in the world; if *he* says, 'Mufti fait commi ci,' and hops, we must all hop; and if he hops all round the room, we *must* all follow; and if he wags his fingers or head, we must do the same; it's the best fun in the world, we've been trying it."

"Well, I'll look at you, children, but I shall not play," answered his cousin.

Here Reginald came forward, and explained the game. He said that *he* was Mufti, and that he was used to the office, and had had the honour of leading many young ladies; that he would promise her he would not make her jump over the moon, or do any impossibilities. But Miss

Ward was not persuaded by the persuasive Reginald's handsome face; she wished it all the time, and if the folding doors had been shut, perhaps it would have been different;—so much does dignity cost.

“Well,” said George, maliciously, “certainly your satins, and pearls, and flummery, don't look very fit for a game of romps.”

“Oh,” said one of the Duffs, “that is a reproach for our dress.”

“*You* all do very well, and are fit either for a game of romps or a dance,” replied George.

They then began, and a laughable game it was to look at. Reginald made a capital ‘mufti,’ and very wisely managed his resources; he kept it easy for some time for the little ones, or any unapt, and then got harder and more complicated. Fanny Duff was out first of all, then some of the little ones, then Mary Anne, then Newton Grey, then Emily, from laughing and fatigue, and the rest one by one; the two last that remained were Constance and Grace; and for some time it seemed as if neither would miss; but at last Grace did, and Constance, as Reginald said, proved herself worthy her name; not that Grace had not done the same. The young people sat down to rest themselves, and by degrees recovered their breath and comparative gravity. But there was plenty of talking; George was teasing Belle, and saying she looked yellow from jealousy, and that her white satin set off her complexion, and that she would have given her ears, not to speak of her fine pearl ear-rings, to have been in the game; and that if she had, she would have been the very first out; because first, she was bouncing B., and second, clumsy Cousin.

“George, you're very rude indeed; I wonder you're not ashamed of yourself,” said Miss Ward, and she turned away, and walked in a grand manner towards a

sofa, where were Emily, Grace, and two or three more. Grace was rested by this time, but had lost the animated colour she had just now in the game, and from the fatigue looked rather paler than usual; she *did*, however, always look very different at rest, and in talking or exercise, and Miss Ward did not know her as the little girl she had just now wondered at.

“And who’s this little dear?” asked she of Emily, in a patronizing tone;—Emily told her.—“What a darling! oh, you must let me take you in my lap,” said she, raising her and kissing her, “what a love! who curls these pretty curls, my dear child? and what a lovely chain, and a miniature, I protest,” said she, drawing a locket from poor Grace’s band, which had lain quite unperceived; “an officer! what a handsome man! oh, you sly.....”

“Please don’t take it;—please don’t talk of it,” cried Grace, in a tone so earnest and distrest, that even Isabella was checked, and silenced in her intended raillery; she let Grace take the picture, and replace it as before. Both were silent, and the Honourable Miss Ward never found herself in a more awkward situation in her life. There was something in Grace’s tone and manner, so out of keeping with the style in which she had been addressing her, and with the situation she had made her assume, that even Isabella, who was not very quick in such matters, felt she had made a false step; but the question was, how to get her off her lap. The *little* girl seemed to grow heavier every moment, and older too, and she wondered how she had ever dreamed of placing her there; this put a happy thought into the young lady’s head; “how old is she?” asked she of Emily; for she felt some repugnance in addressing Grace herself.

“Between ten and eleven, I believe,” said Emily, who all along had marvelled at her cousin’s want of tact.

“Is it possible?” cried Isabella, “I should have taken

her for five or six. How young she looks of her age!" and Grace very willingly slid off her lap, both being mutually pleased to part. There was now a group of the elder girls on the sofa, who began talking together. Emily asked Isabella, if she went back to school after the holidays.

"Yes; I think I shall go for one more term," replied her cousin.

"Ah! it's always one more and one more," remarked Emily; "I thought you'd go back."

"Why, I thought I had better give one more term to my music and dancing; else, I had made up my mind to leave."

"But do you settle it all for yourself?" asked Constance.

"Lady Musgrove ostensibly decides it, but she always applies to me for my opinion, and does as I wish," replied Isabella, carelessly.

"Don't believe her!" said Emily, "she's a better girl than *that*, she does as her papa and mamma *wish*."

"Emily, you are very.....," Isabella began, but finding herself in a scrape, and knowing she was not at all a match for Emily, she made a dead stop. Emily continued, "people don't know themselves, and I can tell you she has always been a good child;—comes when she's called; does as she's bid; and shuts the door after her."

"Emily," said her cousin, "I am surprised how you can be so vulgar; you are always repeating proverbs, and those vulgar sayings. Mrs. Jenkinson would not take a young lady who would bring such ways into her house."

"Well," returned her cousin, "I really don't want to come."

"I can't believe *that*, when you know in what different style *we* have things from your *school*," said Isabella, disdainfully. "It is almost the same as being at home."

"I can never think school the same as home," answered Emily.

"But Mrs. Jenkinson's is *not* a school," said Isabella.

"What is it then? an Establishment?" asked Constance.

"No, she does not like *that*," replied Isabella.

"She calls it nothing; she says it is her *house*."

"I am sure you must be often put to for a name," said Emily.

"There again! my dear Emily!" exclaimed Isabella, "put to"—what a vulgar expression! Now I am only doing what Mrs. Jenkinson does with us; it was quite *ennuyant* at first; she is so very particular."

"Yes, I know," replied Emily, "she made you speak all your 'a's' in the way you do now, and gave you that languishing drawl. You know how George used to quiz you at first."

"*Quiz!* again, my dear child," said Isabella, "it would be daggers to me, if you talked in that way in our coterie."

"Is that your new name for your schoolfellows?" asked Emily, "by the bye, have you any new girls?"

"Schoolfellows! girls!" cried her cousin, as much shocked as Emily could wish; "it is no use teaching you better ways! Emily, you would exasperate Mrs. Jenkinson to the verge of madness!"

"Well," replied Emily, in precisely her cousin's tone, drawl, and manner, "since, my dear Isabella, it affects your nerves so distressingly, I will imitate your better way, to the best of my capacity. I cannot then fail of giving you satisfaction. I protest," cried she, changing her tone to Isabella's lively air, "you have got on your new set of pearls, and I have not noticed them! how *etourdie!* how *barbare* you must think me! what loves! what dainty loves! Excuse my raptures, but they are positively *bijoux* of darlings!"

Awe kept the Duff part of the audience from laughter; politeness, Grace; and of course, anger, Isabella; yet she dared not show it, because she felt she had brought this

upon herself, and she dreaded Emily's powers. So she forced a sort of laugh, and turned upon Fanny, who was the nearest to her. "How beautifully you all dress your hair!" she cried; "I have been admiring it this hour past, but I think yours is the smoothest," stroking it with her hand. "My maid cannot dress mine after that mode; she has spent hours and hours trying."

"Do you waste hours so unworthily?" asked Constance; "but, perhaps," she added, "you are not particular, for just now you said, 'this hour past,' when we have not been sitting together one quarter of that space."

Mary Anne seemed uneasy, and fidgetted; Fanny touched her sister, and whispered in a shocked tone, "Oh, Constance," and Isabella answered:—

"I see you are what Mrs. Jenkinson calls, 'a matter of fact' young lady; she says such are not fit for the world, and is always labouring to teach them better ways, and she invariably effects her purpose; she says she likes to give an enthusiastic spirit, where Nature has denied it."

Mary Anne, fearing this would lead to a regular dispute between her sister and Isabella, and seeing Emily had disappeared, now ventured on her first speech, and enquired, carefully wording her sentence, "How many young ladies there were at Mrs. Jenkinson's?"

"Our society consists of eight," replied Isabella.

"It must be quite a family party," remarked the other, "have you any friends among them?"

"Oh," replied Isabella, carelessly, "I am only acquainted with three. I do just know the others by sight; but mere bowing acquaintances."

"What *can* you mean?" asked Constance; and the young lady explained as follows:—

"Mrs. Jenkinson does not approve of a numerous society; she therefore divides her establishment; different suites of rooms are appropriated to each society, and we

never see each other ; the other night, at a party at Lord Polestone's, I was introduced to a young lady, who I found had been three years at Mrs. Jenkinson's ; and last summer, I discovered that Lady Emily Fainton, a very particular friend of mine, had been there a long time, and we had never known it, although Lord and Lady Musgrove are most intimate friends of the Faintons: it was '*penible*' to the last degree ! Indeed there are many things I do not approve of in Mrs. Jenkinson's arrangement ; but when one is under a lady's roof, one cannot be so rude as to interfere with her domestic appointments."

"But," enquired Grace, who had been intently listening, "do you really never see your friend, Lady Emily, at all?"

"Occasionally, I send her in an invitation ; but it interferes so much with my plans, that I cannot indulge myself much in the pleasure of her society. It is so different from being in the same coterie."

"Certainly," observed Grace, thoughtfully, "Mrs. Jenkinson is very right in not calling it a school, for it is quite different from any I ever heard of ;—how do you learn ? have you masters ?"

"Our studies are regulated by our own convenience and inclination ; we each have our library and piano in our study, and masters attend every day ; my maid brings me in their cards, and if I am inclined to see any of them, I admit them ; if my engagements have been such as not to allow of my preparing for them, I do not. But to speak candidly, my genius has so decidedly declared itself for music and dancing, that I think it hardly fair to tax the patience of any professors, but of those accomplishments."

"Do you take your lessons in private?" asked Mary Anne.

"*Most certainly.*"

“But your dancing lessons?” said Grace, “surely you do not each dance alone.”

What Isabella’s answer would have been, cannot be determined, since the conversation received a turn. Fanny had taken a seat on a low stool by her side, immediately after the patronizing stroke of the hand, and by degrees, had become more and more bold—receiving many gracious notices of encouragement; after a long examination of the hand, adorned with rings, which hung down carelessly, she at length ventured to touch it, and gently say, “How beautiful!” this apostrophe coinciding with Grace’s question, and being perhaps pleasanter, as well as easier to answer, obtained the favourable notice of Miss Ward.

“Which?” said she, smiling graciously, “the rings or the hand?”

“Both,” replied Fanny, gently.

“That, I suppose,” said Isabella, “is a return for my compliment on the lovely hair; and in this strain the conversation went on;—Fanny, in short space, lovingly reclining against Isabella’s soft satin, and Isabella’s beautiful hand and rings, pressed against her new friend’s lovely hair. So, we must leave them. But it may be proper to say a few words as to Miss Ward’s personal appearance, else it is difficult, as Emily observed, to believe she is not a woman. The fact was, she looked more so among grown persons, than among those of her own age. Her manners were more than *womanly*; and so anxious was she for her dignity, that with children, they appeared little less than a piece of acting. The presence of Emily or George alone subdued her a little on such occasions. Well bred people readily accord the deference that is claimed of them, and the Honourable Miss Ward was not backward or sparing in her demands. She generally obtained the observation she desired, when alone among strangers, but not at her aunt Ward’s, who resolutely persisted in classing her with

the children, and whose treatment in this respect she avoided, at the risk of encountering instead, her cousins' raillery. She was not particularly tall of her age, but of a plump round figure, and if a stranger were told, at a little distance, she was not *near* twenty *years* of age, he might be at a loss whether to class her with matrons or children. It was therefore her manners, her dress, and her music—not to speak of the distinction attached to her name, which Mary Anne so fully appreciated, to which she was indebted for the success she occasionally met with. *At school*, (she must pardon us) however, it was very different. We will just add, she promised to be a fine showy girl, fair and bright, but not very delicate-looking, or lady-like; and that she had really a pretty white hand, which some day would be too plump for the rings which so ornamentally graced it.

CHAPTER IX.

Who shall decide when Doctors disagree?

Pope.

WE will now pass to the other room and take a view of what is passing there. The younger part of the company had gathered round the piano, where music and talk went on pretty nearly incessantly; else, certainly the folding doors would have been closed during the performance of Mufti. The graver part of the company sat about the fire where we left them.—Lady Freemantle enjoying the vicinity of her formerly “young friend” Mrs. Leslie, whom she much esteemed, and Mr. Everard still in the seat he took after the argument with Miss Newmarsh.

But it seemed as though some malicious fate were ever at hand to bring these two opposite spirits into collision. Several times had they clashed, and though Miss Newmarsh only seemed to give her opponent a new opportunity of emitting, as it were, sparks of fire, and extinguishing by his more effective style of argument her less dazzling blaze, she still continued to dare the contact; Lady Freemantle was telling Mrs. Leslie of the pleasant society they continued to have about them at Lacklands, how glad her old friends would be to see her again, and new comers to make her acquaintance. Mrs. Leslie remarked, it was no new habit of Lady Freemantle's to find pleasant neighbours wherever she went.

"Well, I do think we are uncommonly fortunate," answered that lady; "I hear complaints in other neighbourhoods of want of pleasant society, but we have never found it."

"You must indeed be fortunate," remarked Miss Newmarsh, "I am sure my experience has been far otherwise, and Mrs. Duff makes the same complaint every day. But she is very particular; especially now her children are getting of an age to be considered."

"I am sure she is very right to be particular," returned Lady Freemantle, "and in, or near London, one can in a measure choose one's society, but in the country one must take what comes; and if one's neighbours are respectable, must be content with whatever we can get beside."

"People affix such different meanings to the word '*respectable*,'" remarked Miss Newmarsh.

"I mean, I suppose," replied Lady Freemantle, "such as are correct in their religious and social duties."

"That would not satisfy me," said Miss Newmarsh, "I could never enter into society of a worldly character or of an unprofitable nature."

"I wish we had Mrs. Ward here," said Lady Free-

mantle, "she would be able to argue the matter with you at length, which I will not pretend to do." Seeing Miss Newmarsh looked perplexed towards their hostess, she added, "Mrs. General Ward of Langham, I mean."

"You do not approve then of mixing in society," asked Mr. Everard.

"Not indiscriminately," said Miss Newmarsh.

"I suppose not," returned the gentleman, "you would not, for instance, visit an unbeliever."

"Except to do him good," said Miss Newmarsh.

"Madam, you ought not to visit him to do him good," said Mr. Everard.

"Surely, sir, you cannot be in earnest," remarked the lady.

"Evil communications, madam, corrupt good manners," returned Mr. Everard, "he might do you harm, but you would never do him good."

Miss Newmarsh, who took this rather personally, asked if Mr. Everard thought there was not any use in discussions with such persons.

"No, madam, not in the way of visiting; a guest is not only on a par with, but beneath his host. A christian should never voluntarily place himself either on a par with, or beneath an unbeliever."

"But, my dear sir, the christian slaves formerly."

"They did not place *themselves*, madam, but that is not to the purpose, those are matters of necessity and duty, *we* talk of choice and pleasure."

"Excuse me," returned Miss Newmarsh, "*I* talk of duty."

"Then, madam, you hold it a matter of duty to exchange hospitalities with an infidel or a reprobate, but to refuse the same towards those of more religious and orderly habits; I am happy, madam, to hear you complain of the want of

society you have felt in all the neighbourhoods you are acquainted with."

Miss Newmarsh had allowed herself to be pushed farther than she meant, or was perhaps aware of, and explained her meaning to be, "that society should be conducted on the basis of mutual edification, or profit to one party or other."

"Very true," said Mr. Everard, "I grant you, madam; and these ends are attained by cultivating kindly feelings among neighbours—you know I have made my exclusions."

"But my exclusions are greater than yours," said the lady; "I exclude the world."

"Remember, madam, yourself is one of the world."

"I may be *in* the world, but not *of* the world," replied Miss Newmarsh.

"There, madam, you have me!" cried Mr. Everard, apparently rather pleased than otherwise, "but the truth of the matter is, our terms are undefined. Combatants of all sorts should measure their weapons before they come into the field."

Miss Newmarsh expressed her willingness to recommence on any terms he chose to propose.

"No, madam," said he, "I consider it *unprofitable*, according to your rule; *I shall do you no good.*"

"But, sir," replied the lady, "you should *try.*"

"Well, madam, to please you I will try," said Mr. Everard, courteously, "and I will do, what in some cases I fancy you would approve—I will give you a sermon, instead of an argument. Madam, I honour your conscientiousness, but you aim more at doing good, than doing right; I respect, madam, your zeal, but you have done with your practice what papists and heretics have with their doctrines; you have allowed one side of your duties to grow out. Let us be content, madam, with doing our

duty *in* our station, rather than seeking for ways of doing it *out* of it."

Surprising as it may seem, Mr. Everard could throw so much politeness into his manner, that unlike the dinner scene, not only were the audience at ease and unannoyed, but Miss Newmarsh herself felt no uneasiness, and seemed to take the piece of advice as rather a compliment than otherwise: any further discussion, however, was put aside by a sudden disturbance in the next room, which had been particularly quiet for some time. First, voices were raised as in anger, and presently a scuffle; it increased so much that some of the gentlemen went in to ascertain the cause. One soon returned to quiet the alarm of one or two ladies, especially Mrs. Newton Grey, who anxiously enquired what was the matter.

"Only two of the young fellows sparring in play," said he, "nothing of consequence."

Presently the disturbance was stilled, and the other gentlemen one by one returned.

"Do not be alarmed," said one, seeing Mrs. Newton Grey's anxiety, "no harm! only a little sparring between your boy and young Duff."

"Upon my word," said another, "he's a fine fellow! how he laid into him! and not half his size!"

"What was it about? who struck the first blow?" asked Mrs. Newton Grey, "that Campbell Duff is such a rude fellow! those public schools are the ruin of boys."

One of the gentlemen had stepped in to satisfy her, and returned, saying, young Duff had struck the first blow.

"Ah," said the lady, "I was certain of it! I was sure my dear boy would never do such a thing!" and here the affair ended. There were a good many young people present, and before this interruption, some one had proposed getting up a quadrille. The room required some arranging for this purpose, since no dance had been pre-

viously designed. After some delay all were in their places. The sight, however, made a greater sensation in Miss Newmarsh's mind, than the late misdemeanour of Campbell, for she did not feel responsible for him as for her own pupils. She walked rapidly across the room to Mrs. Ward, and expostulated with her for breaking thus the conditions of the treaty. Mrs. Ward replied that the dancing was among the grown young people and in another room—the children would have nothing to do with it. After a good deal of talk on the subject, Miss Newmarsh walked into the other room, sat down, took a book from the table, and began reading. But finding the music and dancing distract her, she rose, and with some difficulty closed the folding doors. The young people had all been thickly congregated together at one corner of the room, apparently intently absorbed in something that was going on. After a time, Miss Newmarsh's anxiety was excited, and she called and beckoned to Constance, who was outermost, and enquired what it was.

“A conjuror,” said Constance.

“A conjuror!” repeated Miss Newmarsh, rising and going towards the scene, “you do not mean so!”

“It is, indeed,” exclaimed she, turning away, “and I do declare, a pack of cards! my dear child, come here with me!” and she carried her pupil into the small ante-room. “I really do wonder,” continued she, when they were seated, “that your mamma allows you to go to these parties! but, indeed, it is not her fault; for the conditions are broken! dancing in one room, and cards in another!”

“They are not *playing*,” said Constance, “and they have only a few cards.”

“But, my dear child, conjurors are very wrong, and nobody should encourage such people; what has he been doing?”

“Some curious tricks with the cards, and other things.”

“Well, it is very wrong; you know how unhappy I always am to think that any of you have only seen a card.”

Constance, who thought she should discover how the tricks were done, and was rather disappointed at being carried away, took the conjuror's part rather more than she might have done under any other circumstances, and said, “it was all in jest, and that some of them said it was Reginald Freemantle, since he and Emily had disappeared for some time, only he was so well dressed up nobody could be sure.”

At this moment, Emily, who had eyes for everything, and had seen and understood all Miss Newmarsh's movements, ran in and whispered a few words in that lady's ear; they did not seem satisfactory, for she merely shook her head and remained unmoved. Emily hastened back again to her young friends. The conjuror had done several curious, and sometimes astonishing, tricks;—cards, shillings, and handkerchiefs, seemed to be endued with life and invisibility, and many a young spectator was startled and provoked at being discovered to be the repository of the missing article. One after another persisted, he or she would not become a victim, but the more positive they were, the more certain seemed their fate—Miss Ward was among the most vehement of the protesters, and indeed it did seem as though she would escape, for time after time passed and she continued unmarked; at last the conjuror declared a handkerchief that had disappeared would be found in some white satin reticule; no one else had such a thing, and as hers hung upon her arm, she triumphantly opened it, and to her utter amazement, drew out the handkerchief; the next was a shilling, and that was found in the same young lady's band; the next was a precious ancient small coin, belonging to one of the young guests; it had suddenly disappeared, so the ear told, out of a long-necked china vessel; the question was, “where is

it?" The conjuror confessed himself ashamed to trouble again the same young lady, but as the coin was very precious, he must announce where it was to be found. Isabella was quite sure it had not been transported to her this time; the conjuror persisted, and said it was within the left satin slipper. Most certainly there she found it, and very indignant she was. She considered the whole affair as a great liberty, and with offended step she walked away from the party, to the other end of the room. She found the folding doors closed, and heard music and dancing. She would have been glad to enter, but did not choose to run the risk of standing a mere spectator, and she knew her aunt would not promote her interest in the way of a partner. She therefore turned away and felt lonely. Presently she caught sight of Miss Newmarsh and Constance in the ante-room. At any other time she would have disdained both or either; Constance had offended her, and Miss Newmarsh was not a person of fashion. But her present feeling of desertion prompted her to seek protection, and her love of patronage and desire of esteem of some kind or other, enabled her to enter the ante-room and accost them with a graciousness that ensured her welcome. Fanny, who had been watching the steps of her patronizing friend, immediately followed her, and presently took her seat by her side.

CHAPTER X.

... Strong affection

Contends with all things and overcometh all things.

Will I not live with thee? will I not cheer thee?

Wouldst thou be lonely then? wouldst thou be sad?

Joanna Baillie.

"OH!" cried Isabella as she entered, "how happy and delightful you look in your lovely retirement! I hope I may

come and partake your peaceful retreat," and she threw herself at length on a settee.

"It is indeed a sweet little room," answered Miss Newmarsh, "here we may sit, withdrawn from worldly scenes :

‘The world forgetting, by the world forgot.’ ”

"What a charming line!" cried Isabella, "what a delicious sentiment, and how sweetly repeated; I never heard it before, but I shall never forget it—The world forgetting—by the world forgot:’ I shall adopt it for my motto. How pleasant it is to sit here! how wise you two have been! I wish I had known of your retreat earlier; did you come away on purpose?"

"Yes," replied Miss Newmarsh, "while there was dancing in one room, and folly in another, Constance and myself thought we were better employed here—engaged in a little quiet discourse."

"Oh, how true that is," said Isabella, "how much better than all the nonsense we have been engaged in! How I should like a sweet little cottage on the top of one of the mountains in Wales, and there live as you say;—

‘The world forgetting, by the world forgot;’

Should not you, dear?" she asked of Fanny, who was again reclining upon her.

"Not quite at the top of a mountain," replied her new friend, gently, "but nicely sheltered from the winds, and surrounded by trees, full of birds singing all day, and owls hooting all night; and a stream with a waterfall on one side, and nothing to be seen but cows and sheep all about, and one old woman in a red cloak, picking up sticks."

"Oh, how exactly our tastes agree!" cried the young lady, with enthusiasm, "*you* shall choose our cottage and

the spot, and we will go and live together; will you come?"

"Oh, yes," answered Fanny, "I will go and live and die there!"

"Not die quite yet," interposed Constance.

"No, but some day," said Fanny, softly.

"Well, but how can we find a cottage?"

"Oh," answered Fanny, "there are plenty everywhere in the country—very small and rather old; very low roof and ceilings, all thatch and moss-grown, and the rain sometimes coming in."

"Oh, no," objected Miss Ward, "not the rain coming in; I should not like that, I think."

"Well, then, we can have that mended," replied her friend, "but it must *look* very old, and be covered with roses and jessamine; and there shall be flowers of all sorts in the garden; but they must all be scented."

"Except lilies," said Isabella, "lilies and roses you know always go together—we must have lilies."

"Well, we'll have lilies, and they *do* smell a little too," returned Fanny.

"But do you two mean to live together?" asked Constance; "you are so young, and what will you do for servants?"

"Oh, we can get the old woman in the red cloak to do all we want," said Fanny, "you know we shall never want any dinner or things of that sort."

"But we can't do without dinner," said Isabella, "we must eat, you know."

"Yes, we must eat, I know," replied her friend, who seemed to have bestowed some thought upon the subject, "we must eat, but not dinner; I mean no meat, or any thing that requires cooking; there are no butchers or people of that kind," added she, with a look of disgust, "in places of that kind! you know Edwin says,

‘No flocks that range the mountains free
To slaughter I condemn.’

We shall eat nothing but roots and fruits, and drink nothing but milk, though, you know *Edwin* says again,

‘A scrip with herbs and roots supplied,
And *water* from the spring.’

But I think I should like *milk*, because then we must have a cow.”

“Well, I was going to ask you where you would get your milk,” said her sister; “but who would take care of your cow?”

“Oh, Constance!” said Fanny, “what a silly question! a cow lives in a field, and does not want any body to take care of her. Cows go grazing about, you know, and give no trouble to any body.”

“Well, but your cow must be milked!”

“Yes, to be sure,” said Fanny, “that’s the best part; I don’t care for the milk, only the milking. I would have such a nice little stool, and such a pretty pair of milk-pails with a yoke; and then I would make the butter with a churn,—not one of the churns people use now, but one of those nice high churns, such as you see in old-fashioned picture books, like *Jemima Placid’s*. And then, you know, we should have poor people, who have lost their way, cold and hungry, come for food and lodging. *Edwin* says,

‘Here to the houseless child of want
My door is open still;
And though my portion is but scant,
I give it with good will!’

And again in the Traveller,

‘And haply too some pilgrim thither led,
With many a tale repays the nightly bed.’

And you know the country parson, which is just the same as we should be :

‘ *His house was known to all the vagrant train.*’

And,

‘ *The long remembered beggar was his guest,
Whose beard descending swept his aged breast.*’

And ‘ *the ruined spendthrift*’ and ‘ *the broken soldier*’ the same. You know they all

‘ *Sat by his fire and talked the night away.*’

So it would not be dull, we should have plenty of amusement.”

“ Well, all that is very well in poetry and long ago,” said Constance, “ but it would not do now to have beggars and people of that sort, who may be thieves and robbers, come and sit with one and sleep in the house.”

“ Oh,” said Isabella, who before Constance spoke was inclined to take her view of the matter, “ you know beggars in the country are very different from our beggars in London.”

“ To be sure ” said Fanny ; “ the men are all good old people with long white beards, and the women have clean plaitings to their caps, with aprons white as the driven snow, and their cloaks, though tattered, are quite bright and red. You know they have all been unfortunate, and chased out of their cottages by

‘ *Men of wealth and pride,*’

like those

‘ *Poor exiles ! every pleasure past,*’

from sweet Auburn. Or else they are brave old soldiers on their way to their children, covered with wounds and

scars, with broken arms and legs, and crutches.—It says, you know,

‘Shouldered his *crutch* and showed how fields were won!’”

“Fanny, you are very inconsiderate,” said Constance, “you never could go on living in that way.—I am sure,” she added, addressing Isabella, “*you* would want your carriage, and your maid, and your satins, and all the things you have been used to.”

“Oh, you do not know me!” cried Isabella, piqued; “it’s all very well when these things come, but I can do just the same without them. Now, I will give you a proof!” added she, rising; and going to a mirror, she took off all her ornaments one by one,—earrings, necklace, aigrette, and even rings. “There, now!” said she, triumphantly, “I shall not put on one of them again the rest of the evening!”

Miss Newmarsh praised her resolution, and said it was a good beginning towards indifference on such matters. The conversation now took a more serious turn, and Miss Newmarsh bore the principal share in it. It was broken up by supper being announced, and all the party assembled in the supper room. We shall here leave our young friends, having no doubt, that as nothing has reached us to the contrary, the rest of the evening went off undisturbed, though with less to relate than the hours that preceded it.

CHAPTER XI.

Who comprehends his trust ; and to the same
Keeps faithful with a singleness of aim.

Wordsworth.

GRACE accompanied her mamma to her room that night, and as soon as they had reached it, Mrs. Leslie said, "Well, Grace, I am sure this has been a new day for you."

"Indeed, mamma," said the little girl, almost sighing with its weight, "it has been a wonderful day."

"But I hope you have enjoyed it, my dear child."

"O yes, mamma, very much indeed ; every thing has been so new and so pleasant—every thing," she added, "but one or two things."

"By the bye," asked her mamma, "what was that sad disturbance after tea? I am afraid Campbell Duff is a strange quarrelsome fellow."

"Oh, mamma," said Grace, warmly, "it was not Campbell's fault, I admire his conduct very much!"

"Then he did *not* strike the first blow? they told me he did," said Mrs. Leslie.

"Yes, mamma, he did,—he *did* strike the first blow ; I forgot that," said Grace, sorrowfully.

"I am surprised then at you admiring his conduct, Grace ; how is that?"

"He was *very much* provoked *indeed*," said Grace, with emphasis.

"But, my dear, he should be able to control his temper better than that—with the help of his sisters and all you young ladies standing round—in the drawing-room too!"

“Oh, mamma, *that* made it worse I think! *better* I mean for poor Campbell; *better* that he should have struck the first blow!”

“Well, my dear, I am a little surprised that *you*, who do not like even to read of battles and violence, should admire any thing of this kind; can you tell me how it all happened?”

“Oh, mamma,” said Grace alarmed, “I don’t think I can!”

“Well, my dear, you shall not if you do not wish,” replied Mrs. Leslie, “and I am sure it is too late to talk over these things to-night; I am afraid you will be quite knocked up to-morrow with these late hours.—Good night, my dear. I would advise you, Grace, not to sit up long talking to-night, but to get to bed and to sleep in good time. Good night my, dear girl,” she repeated, stooping and kissing her child, “God bless you!”

Grace walked to her new room with a very thoughtful step. She had a great deal to think of, but Campbell’s affair now quite put aside every thing else. “How sorry I should be if he was wrong!” thought she; “oh, I hope he was not wrong!” She found Emily waiting very impatiently for her to come and take possession of the day nursery, which was next her room, and where a fire had been kept up for them by Mrs. Ward’s desire. Grace found this was a treat to Emily as well as herself. She learned several little pieces of domestic news, interesting to her. Ellen was to come home on Saturday; Emily said *she* did not care for her sister’s being so much at her grand-mamma’s, because she herself was at school, and this was the first time Ellen had not been with them the whole of the holidays. Hanson, her nurse, had not been well, and could not come up with her before. Hanson was a nurse who had formerly lived with them, but when they left

London she followed Ellen, and went to Mrs. Ward, at Langham. Grace asked Emily if Ellen was like *her*.

"Oh, not in the least," said Emily, "neither in face nor any thing else. Ellen is quite fair and has light hair, and she is as quiet and slow as I am the contrary: yet she is very odd sometimes, and so droll, but one cannot at all tell if she means to be so or not; mamma says she does not, but I am sure she does sometimes."

Grace found that Mary Anne and Campbell were only to stay a week longer; they were to leave on the night of the grand party. At a convenient pause, Grace rose and said now she must go.

"Go! where?" cried Emily.

"To bed and to sleep," said Grace, "why, how late it is!"

"But we have only just come," said Emily, "and look at the fire! brighter than ever, and I have a hundred things to say!"

"So have I," said Grace, "but mamma wishes me not to sit up."

"Not generally; but to-night," returned Emily, "she did not desire you to go away so soon, did she?"

"Not exactly, but she advised me to get to bed in good time," answered Grace.

"But will she be angry with you if you sit up a little?"

"Oh, no," said Grace, "not angry, mamma is never angry with me."

"Well, then, there can be no harm," replied Emily, "I would not ask you if your mamma would be angry."

"But indeed," said Grace, "I had rather do as mamma advises me."

"But I have so many things to say," returned Emily, "and this is the best time; I wanted to talk a great deal about the party, and that disagreeable boy Newton Grey,

and Campbell; oh, Grace, you must do me a favour, and stay a little longer!"

Poor Grace, what could she do? it seemed unkind to refuse, when she knew her mamma did not care for five or ten minutes, but she also knew if once they began talking again there would be no opportunity of making off, and all this would come over again. "Oh," thought she, "if there was but a watch in the room!" and she immediately hit upon a substitute. "Well, I will stay a little longer," said she, "I will stay till that coal falls down upon the hearth."

Emily was amused and quite satisfied at the contract, for the coal looked pretty secure for the present, and she thanked Grace, saying she was afraid she was going to be as obstinate as Constance. "You know," she proceeded, "if Constance once says a thing, if it is ever so absurd, she will do it, and it is quite impossible to laugh her out of any thing."

"I think that quite right," answered Grace, "do not you? and what I have seen of Constance I admire so very much!"

There was a pause. "And do you like Isabella?" said Emily.

"Oh, she is so very different, I cannot think of them together," said Grace.

"Well, do you like Miss Newmarsh?"

Grace looked surprised, and said, "Why she is grown up!"

"Well, what then?" said Emily laughing, "you may like her, I suppose."

"Yes, but quite differently, you know, from ourselves;—and besides she is so clever!"

"But still you may like her, may you not?"

"Yes, of course, I do like her, and should like her,"

replied Grace, "but you know I have nothing to do with her, she is not my governess."

"No, nor mine, thank goodness," said Emily.

Presently Emily introduced the subject of the fight, and they were beginning upon it, Grace eagerly desirous of hearing an opinion that might clear Campbell from all blame, when—down came the signal coal. Again Emily entreated with the same arguments; but Grace said, "You promised, you know, to let me go," and rose and retired to her room. Emily was soon tired of being alone, and presently followed her.

CHAPTER XII.

Make not too rash a trial of him,
He's gentle and not fearful.

Shakspeare.

Would you your son should be a sot, or dunce,
* * * * *
Train him in public, with a mob of boys,
* * * * *
Thou wouldst not, deaf to nature's tenderest plea,
Turn him adrift upon a rolling sea,
Nor say—Go thither—conscious that there lay
A brood of asps, or quicksands in the way.
Then governed only by the self-same rule
Of natural pity—send him not to school.

Cowper.

OUR little friend Grace had never been in a situation where her usual morning lessons were systematically omitted; and before leaving home she had many doubts about it, as it seemed to her a thing impossible. At last she ventured

to ask her mamma, and was told there would be so much to do and to see, that it should be quite a holiday to her, as it was to the rest, except—supposing it could be managed without disturbing any arrangement in the family—her hour's practice. "And of course, Grace," her mamma added, "you and I shall read the psalms and lessons together as usual."

When they parted at night Mrs. Leslie had told her little girl to come to her room about ten o'clock for this purpose; and at that hour, which was not long after breakfast, Grace's gentle tap was heard at the door.

"Well, Grace," said her mamma, "I am really glad of this opportunity of a little quiet for you; for many days together like yesterday would quite unsettle you."

"Oh, I hope not, mamma," said Grace quite alarmed, "I would not get unsettled for all the world!"

"Well, I hope not too," said her mamma, "and I think coming to me every morning and having a little quiet, besides our reading, will be a means of keeping you steady, though our usual habits are broken into. I think, however, Grace, we must give up the hour's practice, because I do not see how you can manage it, and it may make you seem *particular* to your young friends—you know I never wish that."

"But, mamma, if you have no objection, I think I can manage it," said Grace.

"I have no objection, my dear, but as I shall have you every morning a little, perhaps your young friends may think you absent from them too long."

Grace answered, that she could practise before breakfast as she did at home; that she had seen the night before a piano in the day nursery which was seldom used; that Emily had assured her she would disturb nobody; therefore she *had* practised her hour that morning before Emily was up; that she got to bed and to sleep soon, and that

breakfast was so late here that she could always do so. "And then, mamma," she added, "it will all be over before any body is up, and I shall have the whole day to myself afterwards."

Her mamma consented to this plan, but told her she might do as she pleased any morning. She then enquired if she had made acquaintance with any of the young visitors the night before.

"Not much acquaintance, mamma, but I know one from the other; and though Constance and Fanny are so much alike, I knew them apart before the end of the evening."

"And who do you think you shall like best?"

"Why I can't tell yet," said Grace, "but," she added, almost reverentially, "I do admire Constance so very much—she is so very good, mamma."

"How have you found it out so soon, my dear, and what do you admire her so particularly for?"

"Because, mamma, she is so very bold."

"Bold! my dear Grace, what has come to you?" said her mamma, almost alarmed, "last night you admired a young gentleman because he was violent and rude, and to-day a young lady because she is bold!"

"I am glad," said Grace, "I can defend Constance better than I did poor Campbell: I don't mean *bold*—forward—but she's not afraid to speak, and says exactly what she thinks to every body."

"I think that seems much the same thing," returned her mamma, "but you had better give me an instance, if you can remember one."

Grace remembered several, but none pleasant to repeat, because she must have seemed to find fault with some others; and except in Newton's case, of which it gave her a thrill of horror to think, she was not sure it was right to do so. She therefore said, "Why, mamma, if she saw

me do any thing wrong she would tell me of it directly, and so seriously that I must mind her."

Mrs. Leslie here spoke of Mr. Everard, laughed about his compliments! and asked Grace how she liked them.

"Compliments! mamma," repeated Grace, "were they compliments? they did not sound to me like compliments, and that is what Emily said, I remember."

"Why you know, my dear, it was a *compliment* to compare you to Graces and Muses and such fine people," said Mrs. Leslie, smiling, "and then his talking so much to a little girl like you, and handing you down stairs, was a favour."

"To be sure, mamma, I did not think of that; but then, you know, it was not a very pleasant favour to me, because it made every body look at me, and it only came from my name happening to be 'Grace.'"

"Very true," replied Mrs. Leslie, "I was glad, however, that you found something to answer him, and were not quite silent and awkward."

"Did you see me or hear me, mamma?" asked Grace, alarmed.

"I saw you a little, and I heard that you showed you understood Mr. Everard, and that you were not too frightened to bring your mythology to your assistance."

"If you had been near, though, mamma, you would have seen how frightened and awkward I was—it was all chance what I said."

"Well, what *did* you say?"

"Why Mr. Everard asked me what Grace I was; so I said Thalia. I have always wished to be Thalia, you know, because that is the name of a Grace and a Muse, and it is a prettier name and easier to say than the others: then he talked of a mask and two faces; so that put me in mind of Janus, who was 'double-faced,' as my Catechism

says;—it was very lucky he just asked me the only two questions I could answer.”

“ Well,” said her mamma, “ I am glad you had presence of mind enough to find the answers in time: it is so much better to answer a little properly on such occasions, than to laugh like some little girls, or cry like others.”

“ Well, mamma,” said Grace, “ do you know, I really think I might have cried, if you had not told me long ago to get rid of what you called that foolish propensity.”

“ Did Mr. Everard distress you so very much, my poor child?” said Mrs. Leslie, half compassionately, half laughing.

“ Oh, not Mr. Everard, mamma,” said Grace, “ though I was very much afraid any one should look at me,—but Miss Freemantle,—she teased me a great deal more, and I was so glad when dinner was over.”

Mrs. Leslie told her little girl she must not mind such things too much; and after a little more talk, she proposed reading, and Grace immediately brought the books. As Grace is in the habit of giving accounts of passing events to her mamma, and seems to continue to be pretty honest towards herself, and not unkind towards others, it may not be out of place here to introduce, by way of contrast, Newton Grey's behaviour and conversation with his mother on the late unfortunate occasion; and in order to do so, it will be necessary to relate the affair of the evening before with Campbell Duff, which Grace was so unwilling to mention or allude to. It was as follows. The young party had been talking and amusing themselves in groups, till by degrees they were attracted to be mere listeners of Campbell and Newton, who had got into a conversation, the tone of which seemed rather doubtful. Campbell went to a public school, and Newton had been asking him about many of his schoolfellows, who were friends of his. Several were in Campbell's form. To all the enquiries an

answer to the same effect followed: "I don't know him much, he's no friend of mine."

"Why you seem to know nobody," said Newton.

"No wonder," replied Campbell, "when you ask me after the worst fellows in the school!"

"Worst! what do you mean?" returned the other, "these are all *good boys*, or have plenty of money!"

"But that does not make them my friends," said Campbell.

"Well! who are your friends? I don't believe you have any! The fact is," continued he, in a provoking tone, "the grapes are sour! these '*bad boys*' don't like *you*! if you *have* any friends, who are they?"

"I have some," said Campbell, coolly.

"I don't believe it," answered Newton, contemptuously, "tell me *one*!"

"Spencer Freeman," replied Campbell.

"Oh! Spencer Freeman," cried Newton, laughing rudely, "I see your set! *I've* heard of him—he's a flat! besides, who is he? the son of a poor country parson!"

Thus the dispute went on. At last Newton, in an insulting manner, called Campbell and his friends "flats and saints."

Constance here spoke, to the surprise of some of the young ladies, and asked Newton what was the meaning of those words.

Newton laughed most provokingly, and said, "Flats were not sharps, and saints were fellows who were bullies and cowards, and dared not fight, and had no spirit for any thing."

In this reply he made use of some expressions too bad to be written down. Many of the by-standers were very much shocked, and there was a pause. Constance broke it by rebuking Newton for the impropriety of his language. He very angrily turned upon her and said something

worse; adding, that girls could say any thing, because they knew nobody would fight them. He then repeated his offence, and turning to Campbell, he called him the same as a girl, and a saint, adding much more which we shall omit. Campbell had had for some time the greatest difficulty in restraining his spirit; his indignation seemed at its height at the insult offered to his sister, and he could bear no more. He now cried, "Is that like a girl?" and gave him a blow so unexpected and violent that the recipient well nigh reeled underneath it, though nearly twice his size.

Newton had not the slightest expectation of such an attack; he really believed what he said; that is, he believed that for some reason or other "flats and saints" would never fight, much less strike the first blow, and Campbell's coolness continued to assure him. He could scarcely recover the balance of body or mind. He essayed two or three blows, which fell rather awkwardly and inefficiently, and no one was more satisfied than Newton when the gentlemen interfered and parted the combatants.

Mrs. Newton Grey was a very kind and a very anxious mother. She had been left a widow early with only this one boy, and she was in all respects his sole guardian. He was some day to have a comfortable, but not a large fortune. She had decided to educate him for the law, both for the purpose of giving him a profession, and also in the hope that he would thereby increase his worldly means. She had most anxiously debated within herself whether or not to send him to a public school or to a school at all. Some of her friends urged school strongly, but they were not of such strict religious principles as herself, and she did not think herself justified to take their advice on so important a subject. She therefore, by letter, consulted a clergyman, whom she greatly respected, who had himself been at a public school, and had also taken pupils, many of them

from schools of different sorts. He sent her his own opinion, and that of several of his friends. Only one was in favour of a public education. This gentleman had several sons, and had sent them all to Eton. One had just passed through his career at College, and had not only distinguished himself, (which Mrs. Newton Grey did not care for comparatively) but had escaped—even blame,—and had gained the good opinion both of his tutors and companions. Another seemed following his brother's steps, and was intended for the Church. But this instance Mrs. Newton Grey did not think a fair one, since, she said, these youths came of a family who were almost without exception steady, and did not seem to possess the lively disposition of most boys. She therefore decided on a strictly private education, and immediately set about enquiring after a tutor to reside in the house. After much trouble she met with one exactly suited to her purpose—a very grave and very kind man—not young. He had not, however, been used to so young a boy. Newton was at this time six, and in his turn was not used to be managed by a gentleman. It did not answer, and after a year Mrs. Newton Grey was glad that Mr. Finch decided to quit. After this she got a younger man, accustomed to the Pestalozzi system, and they went on very comfortably; but after a time Newton became so unmanageable and impertinent, that nothing could be done with him, and his mamma, after expostulating in vain with her refractory boy, thought it advisable to part with the tutor, since she saw it was impossible any good could be done. Newton made a joke of all his lessons; made puns upon them, instead of saying them; made rhymes of every thing, and even went on to take the same liberties with his tutor's name, to his face. His mother saw his sense of the absurd was too great for the Pestalozzi plans; so gave up that and got another tutor, who was most highly recommended

in all respects. But this gentleman was too resolved on his own plans, and the trio were mutually satisfied to part. The next she got answered better than all; but she was told he was a very poor scholar, and indeed by what she saw, Newton made as little progress under him in his classical as in other studies. So Mrs. Newton Grey, quite tired with changes, gave up this plan, and removed into a new neighbourhood, in order to be near a clergyman she knew and respected, who would see Newton every day, and entirely superintend his education, but not reside in the house. This plan had been going on steadily the last three years, and she considered her boy in every respect improving. Her ideas of *private education* had never interfered with his mixing with other children, or—now with youths. She did not dread their contact in their home circles; it was only the mixed multitude at schools which excited her fears. Newton had therefore many friends of his own age, whom he constantly saw both at home and abroad. Mrs. Newton Grey hitherto had liked herself to accompany him on his visits, not to be a spy upon him, but merely for the satisfaction of being near at hand. But she did not make a point of this. She was aware of the objections to private education for boys, and was anxious to avoid its errors. She especially wished him not to become what is vulgarly called a “milk-sop,” or a “mamma’s darling,” and was always on the watch to instil manly habits. His dress accordingly was always on the advance of his companions, and also from his very early years, she had unwillingly, though resolutely, given up his calling her *mamma*.

Having thus given an account of the position of the mother and son with respect to each other, we will relate the conversation which took place between them after they got home on the night of the fracas between Newton and Campbell. She began to question him upon it according

to her custom on such occasions. "My dear Newton," said she, "what was your dispute about with Campbell Duff?"

"Oh, mother," replied he, "we had some words about some of his schoolfellows,—Lord Henry, James Jenkins, and the rest of them."

"Well, but why should you fight about them?"

"I did not fight, mother."

"Well, what did he fight for? I am afraid you provoked him in some way, my dear boy: now tell me, Newton, exactly," she added, seriously.

"Well, mother, I will," replied he, frankly, "I *did* provoke him, certainly, because I laughed in return at his friend Spencer Freeman, that *poor* fellow, you know, Lord Henry and young Forbes told us all about! Campbell was very angry, and told me my friends were the worst fellows in the school; this made *me* angry, and I defended them, and then I called his set 'flats,' or something of the kind, I can't remember all my words, for Campbell flew upon me and gave me a blow that nearly stunned me, I feel it now."

"Did you return it?" asked his mother.

"Yes, I defended myself, and would have put into him well, only he is such a small fellow, I did not like, and there was not much time, for the gentlemen came and parted us."

"Now, Newton, you are sure you have told me all that passed?" enquired his mother.

"Oh, no, dear mother, not all the *words*, but this is the principal part—one of his sisters interfered—she had no business—she asked me what a flat was."

"And what did you answer?"

"Oh, I believe I laughed and said a flat was not a sharp."

"Well, and what then?"

“Why I think it was just about then that Campbell gave me the blow.”

“Newton,” said his mother, “I fear you must have been very provoking in your manner, or Campbell would never have behaved so ill.”

“I dare say I was, mother,” said Newton, “one cannot judge of one’s own manner, but I am sure Campbell was provoking enough to *me*, and I could not help his striking me.”

“Well, my dear boy,” answered his mother, “you must take particular care in future not to vex or provoke your companions. Remember you must bear and forbear.”

After a pause she added, “And now, my dear boy, you must think it all over to-night before you go to bed, be sorry for what you have done wrong, and avoid it in future. Also you must not bear malice against Campbell Duff; remember he has a right to his feelings about his friends as well as you.” She then wished him good night, and enquired into the bruises he had received.

We will just beg our young readers to compare Newton’s account of this affair with what actually happened. It will be found correctly true, to the letter—and even more. But there are omissions which entirely alter the character of the actions of all parties. Again, Grace constantly makes omissions in her relations of things to her mamma. Grace’s omissions are from tenderness to others, Newton’s from tenderness to himself.

CHAPTER XIII.

Let other Bards of Angels sing,
Bright Suns without a spot ;
But thou art no such fearful thing,
Rejoice that thou art not !

Wordsworth.

WE must now return to our young friends at Fulham, and will enter the library with Grace after she had left her mamma's room. "Oh, Grace," cried Emily, "I thought you would never come! what a time you have been! Do you do lessons with your mamma now?"

Grace said, "No, but her mamma wanted her," and asked what they were going to do.

She was told the boys were tired of waiting for her, and had gone out for a little skating, and that if she liked it, they were to go and look on.

This was agreed to, and the three young ladies were soon ready and at the spot. George skated well, and Campbell very fairly: they cut some very pretty figures together, while the young ladies looked on. Grace hardly observed it was cold, till Emily cried out, "Law! how cold it is! I can't bear this!" and she ran and began jumping backwards and forwards over a low gate, that led from the garden to the small piece of water, by the side of which they stood.

Grace looked at her instead of the skaters, and was admiring the ease with which she did it. Emily then called to Mary Anne and Grace to come and do the same. "How foolish you are!" said she, "I am warm already! are you not cold?"

Poor Grace was very cold: she knew she could very well leap a gate like that, for she had often done greater feats at home and with her cousins. She would have liked to do it,—she wished to do it; but she felt rather strange here, and she was not sure it was quite *the thing*. While she was thinking about it and wondering what Mary Anne would do, George took off his skates, and joined them. He began asking Mary Anne to leap and join his sister—said she would do it so well, and that they would look like two beautiful greyhounds. To all of which Mary Anne answered, “Nonsense, George, I wish you would not tease so.”

Again and again George tried with the same success, and Grace thought, “How lucky it was *I* did not go; if Mary Anne does not like it, how much worse it would be in me—a stranger.

Now George altered his tone, and said he knew very well her reason, that she *could* not—and no wonder—she was twice as heavy as Emily; he’d take any bet that she could not do it.

“Oh, George,” said Mary Anne, “it is not right to bet, you should not say so.”

“Ah,” said he, “all that’s very fine, but you are afraid of losing your money, because you know you could not leap that gate.”

Mary Anne said she could, but she did not choose.

“What nonsense!” cried George, “what reason can you have, except that,” added he, laughing provokingly and drolly, “except that you can’t?”

Again Mary Anne said she could, she had often leapt higher.

“Then why not now? *I say*,” cried George, emphatically, “Mary Anne could not jump that gate three times, or if she could she’d do it.”

Mary Anne immediately ran and leapt it pretty well the

three times, though not so lightly as Emily. Grace was utterly amazed. This was the second time Mary Anne had been teased into doing a thing. She could not understand why she was first unwilling, and then consented because George dared her. While she was pondering over it, George's compliments to his cousin on her feat were ended; and he turned to Grace and wished her to do the same. "Then," said he, "we'll all leap, and it will be capital fun, like the men over the horses at Astley's."

Grace was still wondering whether it was over particular of her to refuse,—Emily and Mary Anne had both consented. "But then," thought she, "they are sisters and cousins, and they all know each other very well." Again, she remembered her mamma always said she did not wish her to seem "particular," and this might be an instance; then she remembered how she disliked what she called rude or forward little girls, whenever she had seen them, and that she had rather be any thing than that. She felt very confused and uncomfortable.—Poor Grace! what will she do in the end?

George meanwhile had not hurried her. He waited patiently while he thought she was debating; he did not laugh and tease her aloud, as he had his cousin; he spoke only to *her*. At length he said he had only asked Mary Anne for the sake of persuading *her*, because he knew she was as light as a bird, and could fly if she pleased. Now George was a young gentleman who, like many much older than himself, believed he was clever enough to persuade *any* body to do any thing he chose, especially any young lady; and he often boasted if he could not gain his end by one means he could by another. He thought now he had tried one mode long enough with Grace, and gave it up;—the fact was, his last speech had a little checked Grace in her wish of pleasing him—she did not like it, though she hardly knew why. He misunderstood Grace's

character. He changed his tone, and though not so boisterous as he was to his cousin, he treated her in the same way; he *dared* her to it. And now Grace felt her task quite easy. To George's surprise she exclaimed, "Oh, no, now you have dared me to it! I can't!"

"Can't!" cried he, "why not?" To which she only answered, she never could. He tried all the means in his power, but quite in vain. He persisted she could not. He called her sulky, which made her laugh; and he almost laughed too at his charge, so animated and good humoured was she looking all the time. She then ran to her two friends, and proposed a good fast walk to get warm; but George still persecuted her, and she was obliged to say more gravely, "You know I have *said* I can't."

"You mean *won't*," said George, very much displeased, and turning away to leave them, added, "she's as obstinate as a mule."

Poor Grace did not quite like this, and felt all the time as if she had been doing wrong. Campbell ran for a new dog they had, and was very anxious that Grace should lead him by his chain. She was glad to do so, and more glad of a little run round the garden. The four young people and the dog Pincher had a pleasant race, and this somewhat restored the spirits of the party, especially of Grace and Emily, who was fond of her brother, and sorry he should be vexed. Grace however still felt as the offender, and rather dreaded seeing George. After some time it was proposed to go in-doors again, and for that purpose they walked towards the house more slowly. Emily suddenly asked Campbell how he was after his blows last night, and if he felt them. Campbell scarcely answered, but released Grace from the care of Pincher, and ran away to chain him up again. The three girls entered the house, and retired to the library. "How strange it is of Campbell,"

said Emily, "he can't bear to have last night's business alluded to."

Grace thought it not at all strange, but said nothing. Mary Anne said that if Campbell was ashamed, Newton Grey should be more so.

"Oh," said Emily, "we all know what Newton is; he is a shocking fellow, and so mean, we all hate him, and I was so glad that he got two or three good blows from Campbell; I am sure they must have hurt him."

"Now, Emily," said Mary Anne, "you have said a great many wrong things. You know we should not hate any body, nor be glad when they are hurt, and we cannot say it was right of Campbell to fight."

"Do you mean to say," asked Emily, quickly, "that I am not to hate a boy that used such language as Newton, and insulted Constance as he did? and am I not to be glad when he gets well beaten for it? I am sure if no one else had done it, I should like to have given him a cuff myself!" cried Emily, with action suited to the words, that almost made Grace smile in spite of her serious feelings at the beginning of Emily's speech.

"Oh, Emily, for shame!" said her cousin, "how you talk!"

"Well, now, Grace," said Emily, "you shall be judge; what did you think about it?"

"Oh, please don't ask me," cried poor Grace, quite frightened, "I really don't know what is right."

"Nonsense!" said Emily, "you can tell quite well enough. Now don't you think Newton deserved a good pummelling?"

"I think he deserved a very severe punishment," replied Grace, in a low serious tone.

"Punishment! yes!" returned Emily, "but how was he to get it there? do you mean he should be flogged? you know he is educated at home, and there's no one there

to flog him, and I believe his mamma never has him flogged; besides none of us would go tell!"

"How glad I am," thought Grace to herself, "that I did not tell mamma; I did not think it would be telling tales."

"Well, Grace," continued Emily, after waiting, "what do you think? do you agree with Mary Anne that it is wrong to be glad when bad people are punished?"

"Oh, no," cried Grace, quickly, "at least, I don't know if I am right, but I am sure I am very glad sometimes; you know how glad one is in stories and history when very wicked people indeed and tyrants are punished or dethroned, and it most be the same sort of thing, I suppose."

"To be sure," said Emily, "why it's the beauty of fairy tales and all those stories; I could sometimes clap my hands for joy when I come to those wicked enchanters being destroyed, and all the beautiful princesses they have shut up being released; and then, you know, how one admires the knight who has done it all alone by his bravery and courage!"

"Yes," said Mary Anne, "but all that is a story, and it is not Christian."

"Ah!" said Emily, "now we're got to the 'no-punishment system' again, and we want George here to set things right. Now, Grace," continued she, "do you think it right that naughty boys and girls should never be punished?"

"Oh, no, of course," replied Grace, "who thinks so?"

"Why," answered Emily, "did you not hear yesterday that Miss Newmarsh never punishes the Duffs?"

Grace said she thought it all in jest.

Emily assured her it was quite true, and Mary Anne did not contradict it.

"I suppose they are all very good, and do not deserve

being punished," said Grace, "you know they cannot do very wrong at home."

"Indeed you are mistaken, they are not so good," returned Emily, "and what do you mean by 'can't do very wrong at home?' you know children can be naughty any where."

"No, not at home, I think," said Grace, "one can't help being good—I mean—not being very bad at home."

"Why, then, are you never naughty? or does your mamma never punish you?"

"Mamma never punishes me," said Grace, rather ashamed of never being punished.

"There!" cried Mary Anne, triumphantly, "you see your mamma does just the same as Miss Newmarsh!"

"Then I can understand it very well," said Grace.

"But do you really mean to say, Grace," said Emily, "*upon your word*, that your mamma never punished you in her life?"

Grace looked very serious, and after some time said, "I can only remember once."

"And when was that?"

"One day," said Grace, colouring very much, "that she would not let me go with her to see my cousins."

"And what had you done?"

"I had not attended to my music."

"Was that all?"

"I had been careless the day before, and mamma said if I did not do better the next day, she should leave me behind."

"And you were really left behind?"

Grace assented.

"And were you not very angry?"

"No, not angry," said Grace, "I could not be angry, because I knew I deserved it."

"Then you were sorry, I suppose."

“Yes,” replied Grace, hesitating, “but

“But what?”

“But not so sorry as I might have been.”

“Now do go on, Grace, please, without so much ‘pumping,’” said Emily, “because why?”

“Because,” said Grace, “mamma was so very kind as to *promise* me she would not tell my aunt.”

“But then,” said Emily, “after all it was not much of a punishment—only just for once not seeing your cousins.”

“Oh, yes,” said Grace, “but it was; for they were all going to the Tower to see the wild beasts, and the king’s crown, and every thing else, and I have never been there yet.”

“But why did you not say that that was the punishment at first?” asked Mary Anne, surprised.

“I did not remember it,” said Grace, “till Emily reminded me: at the time I thought of nothing but my aunt hearing of it.”

The tears had been in poor Grace’s eyes almost ever since she spoke of her mamma’s kindness; and now that her young friends ceased to question her, she drew a long breath, and seemed quite relieved to be allowed to be silent. Soon after, the boys came in, for it was near dinner time. George was in a very good humour, and Grace had answered him several times, and laughed at his droll ways, before she remembered she had been dreading to see him again. His kindness made her a great deal more sorry for what she had done, and she resolved to please him whenever she could, to make up for her offence. The rest of the day went on in the same way—no company—and the young people went into the dining-room and drawing-room; also they enjoyed the time they had together in the library, and Grace found no drawbacks. She and Emily had a pleasant talk together at night; the fire was kept up for them, and Grace was not in such a hurry as the night

before. They talked again of Ellen, who was coming the next day ; and Emily gave some amusing accounts of her schoolfellows. Grace also discovered that Emily went to school at Richmond, and that she knew the Miss Marsdens, —that they came every week to dance ; and according to Emily's report they were the most disagreeable girls in the world ; that they spoke to *her*, because, " you know," said she, " my uncle is Lord Musgrove ; but they turn their backs on some of the girls, and are so rude, you don't know ! but then their papa and mamma are just the same ; and since they had that large fortune left them, they have cut all their old friends. How I do hate such stuff !"

Grace was pondering over the new and wonderful things that she heard every minute, and Emily asked what she was thinking of.

" I was only wondering at all you have been telling me," said Grace, " but I want to ask you what you meant just now by saying that Selina Carey was a favourite at school, *though* she is so good : I should have thought you meant *because* instead of *though*."

" Oh, you know," replied Emily, " some good girls are so tiresome and fidgetty, they won't let one do or say any thing, and are always telling tales."

After a pause, Emily introduced quite another subject, and in due time the little friends again sought their room. Grace did not get to sleep so soon this night ; she thought a good deal about Campbell's affair, and their talk about it ; also the garden scene and Emily's words just now made her quite uneasy. " I wonder," thought she, " if I should be one of those disagreeable girls that every body dislikes if I was at school." Then she thought, how glad she was not to be at school and disliked by all the girls ; then again, that it was all the same thing if she was that sort of character, and here became lost, as usual, in the depths of metaphysics. At length she considered it was

foolish to spend her thoughts and make herself uneasy about what she *might* be under any other circumstances, but resolved to try and do as well as she could under those in which she was placed; and thus she came home, as it were, to her dear mamma, and thought over the pieces of advice she gave her, in such a kind and useful way. "Now," thought she, "if mamma every day were to tell me the same good things one after another, all at once, I never should remember half, and should be quite confused; but she says *now and then* a very few easy words, as things occur, and that shows me exactly what she means, and I can keep it in my head for another time when the same sort of thing happens, just as that day a long time ago, when Anna and Edward Bell were so tiresome and changeable in choosing their orange, mamma said to me afterwards, 'Grace, always have a choice, even in small matters;' that gave me a rule for a long time, and helped me to say *Thalia* the other day to Mr. Everard. How right and safe mamma always is!" and she fell asleep thinking over many such little anecdotes of her dear mamma's wisdom.

CHAPTER XIV.

George was a boy with spirit strong and high,
With handsome face, and penetrating eye.

Crabbe.

NEXT morning at ten, Grace went to her mamma's room, but found her not yet there. After about a quarter of an hour, Mrs. Leslie came in. "Oh, my dear Grace," said she, "I knew you would be here, and I was sorry to keep

you, but Mrs. Ward was talking to me on particular business, and I could not leave her ; I am glad, however, you have not been waiting doing nothing ;”—for Grace’s little fingers were fast at work at a chain she was making.

“ Oh, mamma,” said she, “ it has not seemed long, and I want you, please, to do me a favour.”

In answer to her mamma’s enquiries, Grace explained that she wished to finish this chain, and that she should like to bring it and work at it a little for a day or two after they had read together, for that she wished to finish it for George, and not to let it be seen till done.

“ For George !” said her mamma, “ why yesterday Campbell seemed your favourite !”

Grace was puzzled for the moment at this view of the case ; she certainly had seen much more to like according to her understanding of the word in Campbell than George, but she soon remembered how it came to pass. “ Why, mamma,” said she, “ I have twice vexed George, and I was afraid he would think me very ill-natured.”

“ I am sorry,” said her mamma, “ that you should vex any of your companions, how did that happen ?”

Grace had not at all expected this question, and hardly knew how to answer it. She said, however, that she did not mean to vex him, but it was an accident.

“ Well, my dear Grace,” said her mamma, “ if you think it right and fair to tell me, I should like to know how it was you vexed George *one* of the times you allude to—would it be unfair ?”

Poor Grace was quite perplexed. “ Really, mamma, I don’t know, I wish you could tell me,” said she ; then she thought perhaps her mamma would think it was something much worse than it was, so after a little thought she chose her first offence, and answered, “ Why, mamma, you know George is very clever and can take off any body, and after the dinner party he took off some of the company ; I did

not like it just after we had seen them and been dining with them, and I could not laugh as I had done before; George observed it and seemed very much vexed."

"And I suppose," said her mamma, "the other time was the same sort of thing—I don't wish to hear it."

"Yes, something of the same sort, I think," answered Grace.

"Well, my dear Grace," said her mamma, "you are old enough to know how to behave; never let high spirits make you forget yourself."

"Mamma," said the little girl, timidly, "would you be so very kind as to tell me if you think I did right?"

"My dear child," answered Mrs. Leslie, "I cannot quite tell without having been present; young people together are apt to become rude or forget themselves, and if one can put a little check upon the rest without being tiresome, it is very right and proper."

"Ah, mamma," said Grace, despondingly, "there is the difficulty—'without being tiresome!'"

"It is a difficulty, my dear girl," said her mamma, "and you must not be discouraged when I say you must be *tiresome* sometimes, especially at first; but in the *long run*, Grace, they will understand you, because I think my little girl would always have a good and a kind reason for what she does."

Mrs. Leslie here proposed reading, and Grace remarked it was the third day of the month. "How is it you know the day of the month so much better than the day of the week, my dear?" asked Mrs. Leslie, alluding to something that passed at breakfast.

"Because," said Grace, rather more slowly, "it begins with my favourite psalm, and I have been thinking of it all the time we were talking."

Mrs. Leslie found that this psalm had become her favourite from one verse it contained, and Grace placed

her finger on the fifth as that verse. She said she had observed it ever since they began reading the psalms together, and that she always was glad when she awoke on the morning of the third day of the month, because of that verse.

Mrs. Leslie said she wondered Grace had never happened to mention it, and Grace told her mamma she very nearly had done so, when they were talking the other day about people keeping promises.

Mrs. Leslie then said, "There is one more remark I will make before we begin, and that is, Grace, that people who admire this psalm should be very particular in observing the verse before your favourite one—of course you know the meaning of 'setteth not by himself?'"

"I used to be so puzzled, mamma, about that verse," said Grace, "I used to think it ought to be *sitteth*, and that it meant *sitting* alone in the same way that the Pharisee *stood* alone and looked down on the Publican, but I suppose it means the same sort of thing—not setting himself up above others—is that right?"

"Yes, my dear, quite right, I believe, and now let us read."

Mrs. Leslie felt rather surprised at her little girl's silent observation, but made no further remark. After they had read, Grace found she had not explained her wish about the chain fully to her mamma, and accordingly did so. She said that George yesterday brought his chain to his sister and asked her to make him a new one, for that his was quite worn out. Emily said she would at school, but that she had no time in the holidays. George was very droll indeed about her having no time in the holidays, and Grace remembered this chain of her's already begun, which her mamma had advised her to bring, in case she wanted a little idle work of that kind. She had worked half an hour at it, besides her practice, that morning, and if she might secure an hour or so besides for the two re-

maining days, she thought she could get it finished by Tuesday, the day of the party, for George had been pretending to cry because his chain was so shabby for "company." Mrs. Leslie made no objection to Grace's wish, and all was settled to her satisfaction. She had a nice long talk with her mamma, and while this is going on, it may be as well to relate part of the conversation which passed in the library among the cousins meanwhile. George had gone out, and said he should return by the time "the face of a Grace" made its appearance. In about an hour he came in, and a great racket he made at not finding her yet down stairs. Emily remarked that not one of them yet had given any opinion about Grace, and asked what they thought of her. Mary Anne answered, that for her part she saw nothing at all in her, and thought her like any other little girl.

"Well, I can't say *that*," said Emily, "I know a great many little girls, both at school and at home, and I have been thinking that there is not one I can compare her to;" and Emily spoke in favour of her: she told them of her getting up in the morning and practising all in the cold and dark almost.

"Well," said Mary Anne, "that's only what we do at home; we do not practise, but we are always at our lessons or something of that sort."

"But then why are you not so here?" asked George.

"Oh, because I have no lessons, and am not obliged."

"Well, and Grace is not obliged," said Emily, "and yet she does it."

"But I suppose her mamma tells her," said Mary Anne.

"She need not practise unless she likes," said Emily.

"That's a good one!" cried George, "you may depend upon it her mamma would flog her if she did not!"

"It's no such thing, George," said Emily, quickly,

“besides, if she chose not to practise, how would her mamma or any body else know?”

“Why, of course,” said George, “her mamma asks her every morning—‘Grace, have you practised an hour?’ and if she said ‘No,’ she would punish her.”

“She might practise a little, and make that do, if she chose to do so,” said Emily.

“Oh, no,” returned her brother, “Grace is a good girl, and would not tell a fib; she is a regular prude, in every thing, you may be sure.”

Emily defended her against the charge of prudery.

George persisted, “But I say she is a prude, and she shows it every minute.”

“Ah,” said Emily, “that is all because you could not make her do as you pleased yesterday in the garden.”

George rather warmly replied, that he could easily have made her, but the fact was, she could not leap, so it was no use trying; that in other things he had seen she was a prude; at dinner, the first day, he sat opposite her and tried all he could to make her laugh at the company, but she would not. At first he thought she was stupid, then that she was shy, but that since he saw she was neither of these, so he was quite sure she was a prude.

Emily laughed at her brother for his inconsistency in being in such a fidget for Grace to come all the morning, and at the same time disliking her so much.

“Well,” said George, “that’s the very reason; I mean to have some fun with her, and I’m determined to cure her of her prudish ways.”

Emily again laughed at him; said he was very inconsistent—that just now he had confessed he could not make Grace do as he pleased, and that now he seemed to think he could have it all his own way.

“And so I can,” said George, “do you think I can’t make any girl do as I please? and especially such a little

girl as Grace? Why, here's Mary Anne, who is so religious, and much older than Grace, yet she always does just as I choose."

Mary Anne burst out into a defence of her independence, and reminded him of her constant habit of correcting him and telling him when he was doing wrong.

"Ha, ha! my pretty cousin," cried George, "you tell me when I'm wrong! I know you do—make signs at me! frown! shake your head when I'm quizzing!—why all that makes me do it more, because I know it pleases you."

"For shame, George," cried Mary Anne, "you know it makes me very angry."

"Then why do you laugh and look at me?"

"I can't help laughing sometimes, you are so ridiculous," said Mary Anne; "mamma says that is the most remarkable point about me—my sense of the ridiculous is so very strong!"

"Then you should not look at me," said George, "if you don't like it and can't help laughing."

"I look at you," returned his cousin, "to stop you and correct you, for it is very wrong to be laughing at people's oddities; we ought to pity them and....."

"Ha, ha!" cried George, "to stop me!—why I tell you it makes me worse: if you want to stop me, you should do as Grace does, for she does not let me catch her eye. I know she has seen me twenty times, and I have made all the faces I could."

"Well, and does she keep her countenance at your odd faces?" asked Mary Anne.

"No, she sometimes quite laughs at them, but I want to make her laugh at the company, and I'm determined I will—she's only shy at first: you were very 'prettily behaved' at first, Mary Anne, but are no prude now, certainly."

Mary Anne was displeased at this, and almost pleaded guilty of prudery.

"No, no, my pretty cousin," cried George, looking very good-natured, and giving her an encouraging tap under the chin, "I know you better and I like *you* better than your words: believe me, you were never made for a prude, and as to Grace she's a regular little old maid."

Campbell here interfered and objected to George's expression. George laughed, and said, "Well, Campbell, you know you need not be offended, for Grace will never be really an old maid, because we all know she is to be your wife."

This raised a good laugh, and quite silenced poor Campbell. George, elated with his victory, repeated in a louder and more decided tone, "I say she's a little old maid, and a tiresome squeamish prude."

While he said this, the door opened, and Grace entered. She came in with almost a laugh on her face, saying, "How you have been laughing as I came along the passage!"

There was a little pause; but Emily, who had a safe conscience, had readiness enough to reply, "Yes, we were laughing at Campbell."

Grace turned to Campbell, who certainly looked rather foolish. She had observed they were apt to laugh at him, generally on account of his bluntness and honesty, and she had no doubt it was so in this instance; so she said, very good-naturedly, "Well, Campbell, we shall find some opportunity to laugh at them some day."

There was another little pause, rather awkward; for George was more stunned by Grace's sudden appearance and unsuspecting manner, than he could have believed beforehand. In the meanwhile the words Grace had *heard* but not observed on her entrance, came to her ear; and she too felt

uncomfortable, hardly knowing why. However she was the first to speak, and she asked what they were going to do.

“Why,” said Emily, “you must ask George; he has been pining after you ever so long, and I suppose had something in his head.”

George felt a little angry and awkward, and began a reply, not however with his usual readiness. Just then small quick steps were heard in the passage, the door opened, and in came the three little Duffs.

CHAPTER XV.

....Not only....“See how these Christians love one another,” but the still nobler commendation, “See how these Christians love all the world.”

Rev. J. W. Cunningham.

THE pleasure of this visit was unexpected, and at this moment the cousins were received with a double welcome; the spirit of the party was restored, and talking recommenced with animation. Mrs. Duff was coming to see her sister, and had put the little girls into the carriage. Fanny said Miss Newmarsh did not like giving them a holiday, since they were having so many just now; but they had left her on their way at her friend Dr. Barker's, and were to call for her on their return; “which you know,” she added, “always pacifies her.”

Constance rebuked her sister for her mode of speaking of Miss Newmarsh, and Fanny said if she was as great a favourite as Constance, perhaps she would speak differently.

“Well, Fanny,” said George, “I am sure you've no

right to complain ; you've got a good library of books and all manner of pretty toys from Miss Newmarsh."

"Yes," said Fanny, "but that's not like being the favourite ; there's Constance always closeted up with Miss Newmarsh, and I do believe she tells her all her secrets—I don't like it at all—it is not fair to have Constance always against us."

"Does Constance tell?" asked George.

"What is there to tell?" said Mary Anne, "I am sure I don't know."

"Nothing particular to *tell*," answered Fanny, "only you know we sometimes speak of Miss Newmarsh as I did just now, and if she knew it she would be very cross."

"Well, but," said George, "she would not punish you, would she?"

"Yes, sometimes she gives us verses to learn."

"Oh, then, she does punish after all!"

"Only for impertinence," said Constance, "and nobody gets impositions but Fanny."

"And does Fanny go on getting more rewards than any of you for being naughty?" asked George.

Fanny said she had not had any thing lately.

George said he was glad to hear it, and hoped she'd grow a better girl ; and then, to Grace's great satisfaction, he continued, "Well, now you're all together, will you tell the history of the books and the skipping-rope?—but first, Mary Anne, putting yourself out of the question, who's the best among you?"

She answered, "Charlotte."

"And putting yourself out of the question, who's the worst among you?"

She answered, "Fanny."

He then asked Constance the same questions, and got the same answers. Then he continued to Mary Anne, "Who has the most pretty books with gilt edges?"

She answered, "Fanny."

"And who the fewest?"

"Charlotte."

He then asked Fanny what sort of books, and got her to say they were pretty story books, full of amusing tales,—some were graver, but she never read them—they were given her after she had been naughty—she once had a story called "Temper" given her after she had been cross to Charlotte, and another time "Industry and Idleness," when she had been lying on the lawn under a tree, instead of preparing her realization lesson—that the skipping-rope was some time ago, soon after Miss Newmarsh came. Constance took up the story here, and said it ought to be explained, on Miss Newmarsh's account—that Fanny had been very naughty, and that Miss Newmarsh said, on the old system she would have been flogged, so she gave her a *cord*, such as people used to flog themselves with, and she thought Fanny could never use her skipping-rope without remembering how naughty she had been and avoiding her fault in future.

George then asked if Charlotte had any thing at all.

They said, "Yes, a few little books given her by her mamma."

"Ah," said George, "she's always the best of you, and she gets neither praise nor blame."

After this they talked of the party the other night, and of Newton Grey. Campbell was fidgetty here. The rest agreed to dislike him. Even Constance, who was always ready to take the unpopular side, spoke unfavourably of him. George remarked that Grace was the only one silent, and said he really believed Grace liked Newton Grey.

"I!" exclaimed Grace, "what can make you think so?"

"Because, perhaps, you think it is wrong to find fault with any body;—but don't you like him?"

Grace coloured, as she said deliberately, "I can't bear

him, and if he was in the room, I don't think I could speak to him."}

George looked surprised, and all seemed a little struck. Constance broke the pause by saying, "Well, I don't think that is christian; it is not right to be as unforgiving as that."

Grace looked very serious, and Constance continued, "Now he has offended *me* more than any of you, but I would not only speak to him, but do any thing kind for him."

After a little thought, Grace said, "Yes, but you know he has not offended me!"

"Well done!" cried George, "capital!" thinking it a repartee on Grace's part, for which she did not mean it. It however made a turn in the conversation, and presently they got upon "Miss Ward." Fanny admired her—thought her such a delightful creature—had thought of nothing else ever since; and Constance praised her, though not so warmly, yet highly. Emily opened her eyes with surprise; "Why, Constance!" said she, "do you really like Isabella? I thought you would hate her!"

"Hate!" exclaimed Constance, shocked, "I never hate any body! much less your cousin, who seems to have so much that is promising about her!"

"What *do* you mean?" asked Emily, "her dress, for instance! how hard you always are on the Newtons and many others for their dress, and they are not half so smart! and how often you have laughed at little girls wearing rings and ornaments!"

"Oh, Emily," said Constance, "you are unreasonable! you don't consider!—your cousin is not a little girl, and her rank gives her a right to dress differently from other people; besides, she sits quite loose to all these things—you can't think," said she, smiling at the scene, "how sweetly she got up and took off all her ornaments!"

“Well,” said Emily, “I wondered what that whim was for! I saw she had got them off at supper, but could not get at her to ask why.”

“It was to prove to me,” said Constance, “that she did not care about such things, and when I came with her for her ornaments before she left, she took my hand, and in the sweetest manner asked me if I was satisfied.”

“Ho, ho!” exclaimed George, “I thought you were going to say, asked you to accept of them!”

“Oh, George,” said Emily, “you could never expect Belle would do such a thing!”

“Why, I was surprised, but after all that passed, I really expected it.”

“What a foolish thought!” said Constance, “I should never be so ridiculous as to wear such things.”

“The grapes are sour, as Newton said,” cried George, “you must wait till you have them, before you despise them; you’d be as fine as Belle if you could!”

Emily rebuked her brother, and said, that certainly Constance was not fond of dress, and that she never spent any of her money in ornaments of any kind.

“Well, better that she should,” answered the unreasonable George, “Why does she not do like others?”

“How unfair you are,” said Grace, “nothing seems to please you!”

He then turned upon Grace, and asked how she spent her money.

She really could not tell; and the more she tried to think, the less she could remember.

Constance asked gravely, “Don’t you spend your money on principle?”

George suggested that Grace perhaps had none to spend, while Emily said she was sure *she* could not answer the same question if asked.

“Well,” continued George, “Belle could, well enough,

for, though her papa and mamma are always giving her real jewels, and things of that sort, she spends all she can get in gimcracks besides."

"I should think," remarked Constance, "that school she goes to is a bad thing for her, and I dare say the young ladies there dress very much."

"Oh, no such thing!" said Emily, "though she's the youngest there, she dresses more than any of them. Mrs. Jenkinson does not like the young ladies to dress, and will not let Belle wear any of her fine things there,—but Belle will put them on whenever she can. Mrs. Jenkinson is a very elegant woman, and very sensible, I have heard mamma say so often; and besides, she is in some things very much of Miss Newmarsh's way of thinking. She used to go to Congreve chapel, but when Mr. Temple went away and Mr. Allan came, she left, and now she always goes to Park Street chapel, to hear Mr. De Lisle, though it is so far from her house; and there is a clergyman comes once a fortnight to read and.....oh! what do you call it, Constance? you know Mr. Bishop is always doing it."

"Do you mean *expound*?" said Constance, doubtfully.

"Yes, to read and expound to the girls."

"Indeed!" cried Constance, "Miss Ward's account seemed quite different."

"Oh!" said Emily, "you must not mind what she says!"

"Do you mean to say," said Constance, remembering her first impression of Isabella, "that she does not speak truth?"

"Not exactly that," returned Emily, "but she rhodomontades at a famous rate, and thinks it all very fine; but what stuff has she been telling you?"

"Oh, she gave a very grand account of Mrs. Jenkinson's school and house and servants."

“Well,” said Emily, “it is rather grand for a school, but tell me all she said.”

“Why,” said Constance, “she said there were eight young ladies, and that Mrs. Jenkinson kept two regular sets of rooms and servants for them; she had two carriages, and two pair of horses, two coachmen, several footmen in livery, and eight lady’s maids for the young ladies; that there were also sixteen rooms, besides the four dining and drawing rooms; for that each young lady had a bedroom and study, with a piano in it, and that they took their lessons all separate.”

Mary Anne interrupted her sister several times in this relation; first, at the two carriages and several footmen, saying she did not hear Miss Ward say so. Constance proved it from her saying they got into the *wrong carriage*: the same with the eight lady’s maids, (to which Mary Anne also objected;) because Isabella said, “*My maid.*”

Emily waited till the end of this account, and then said, “And really Belle told you all this stuff! that was because I was away; she’d no more dare to say such things before George or me, than she’d give you her fine pearls. Now, I’ll just tell you how it is: Mrs. Jenkinson has a large house, and she keeps a footman; she also has a carriage, and she takes the young ladies to dance at D’Egville’s, and also to the church I just now spoke of; the girls are all together, just like any other school, but they have drawing and practising rooms, which put the eight studies into her head.”

“But,” said Constance, “how could she say they lived separate by four and four?”

“Because they have two tables at tea and breakfast, where they sit four and four, and I have often heard mamma laugh about it: she says Mrs. Jenkinson always manages that the girls of the highest rank should sit together; and they are in all ways more favoured. Some

half years she classes them according to age, and others to merit, but generally speaking it is so contrived. Now it happens that Isabella is the youngest of the whole set, and so excessively idle and stupid, except in music, that if Mrs. Jenkinson wished it ever so much, she could not displace Miss Corrie, who is three years older than Isabella, and very clever. Miss Corrie is the daughter of a baronet, and the only one at the highest table beneath Belle in rank. All at Belle's table are only the daughters of gentlemen; two are sisters, and very nice girls; the other thinks of nothing but her studies, and despises Belle for her indolence. Belle is always longing to be at the high table, and what she meant by never seeing or knowing them, was that they scarcely ever spoke to her, and she had very little to do with them."

"So it was a sort of a fable!" exclaimed Fanny, in admiration, "what imagination she must have! I shall like her better than ever!"

"Oh, how can you say that!" said Grace, "you know if she did so in every thing, one could not tell whether to believe her or not!"

Constance remarked, that Grace was offended with Miss Ward because she took her for such a little girl, and so of course would not like her. This silenced Grace, whilst Emily reminded Constance *she* did not like Isabella at first.

Constance allowed this, but said she had since seen so much that was interesting in Miss Ward, that she saw good reason for changing her opinion, and especially since now she found Mrs. Jenkinson was such a religious woman.

The young people had more talk on Ellen's expected arrival, which seemed to rejoice Charlotte the most. They also discussed the party for the next Tuesday, and after all dining together, Mrs. Duff was ready to go, and the three little sisters departed.

In the evening Ellen arrived, escorted by Hanson, who had formerly been nurse at the Wards. Grace had always heard her spoken of with great affection by the children, as old nurse Hanson, or old nurse; she had fancied she must be like Jemima Placid's old nurse, and was therefore surprised at finding her not at all an old woman, and very quiet and respectful in her manners, though she seemed very glad to see every one of them again. Ellen was certainly very different from her sister. She had great simplicity of character, and yet, when she chose it, a drollery and quaintness, in its way quite as amusing as her brother's or sister's. She was always a singular child, and very few persons understood her—so much so, that most thought her, "a very odd child;" many had "no patience with her;" and some even hinted that "she was wanting." Her mamma was inclined to the two first opinions, and always wondered, though she was pleased, at Mrs. General Ward's preference for Ellen. She was her godmamma as well as her grandmamma, and had very early taken a fancy to the little girl. When the Wards moved from London, and Emily went to school, this lady made a more formal matter of Ellen's constant visits to Langham, and it was generally understood that she would become an adopted child. Mrs. Ward was General Ward's second wife, and now a widow; she was therefore no relation whatever of any of the family.

Having now introduced the reader to a new acquaintance, we shall leave the meeting between the parties to be imagined—how pleased all were—how all laughed and talked at once—how surprised every body was at Ellen's growth, and how in turn she was surprised at the same in her brothers and sisters—how Grace stood in the background and was interested in the scene, and how, after a time, she was remembered and brought forward; and then the little check the appearance of a stranger gave for a

short time to Ellen's ease and freedom, and her recovery of the same. Then came tea, all together, and Ellen fell into her more usual way. She asked some questions that made them all laugh, and George began to make fun of her. Her mamma cried, "Oh, Ellen, always the same! when will that child cease to be a baby!" while Emily exclaimed, "What an odd girl you are, Ellen!" However they all seemed very happy together, and Grace had quite a new sort of evening, almost pleasanter than what had gone before. But at last the evening came to an end, and nurse Hanson insisted on Miss Ellen not sitting up that night with Miss Emily, since she had had a long day's fatigue, and to-morrow was Sunday, and she must not get knocked up and tired; so she waited while Ellen wished Emily and Grace good night and said a few words, and then took her off to her room.

"How tiresome old nurse always is!" said Emily, "she will have her own way, and I know it's no use speaking to her."

Grace agreed it was disappointing, but reminded Emily that Ellen was going to stay a long time. "It is not as if we had only one day—then it would be tiresome indeed."

"Oh, Grace," cried Emily, "you are always full of reasons for every thing being right; and really," she added, "if I were much with you I think I should grow quite a good girl."

CHAPTER XVI.

On Sunday Heaven's Gate stands ope,
Blessings are plentiful and rife,
More plentiful than Hope.

George Herbert.

THE next morning was Sunday, and a very fine day. After breakfast the young party retired as usual to the

library, and it was proposed to go out in the garden. Grace, however, found it was half-past nine, and said she could not accompany them, since she must go to her mamma.

“Why, to-day’s Sunday!” said George, “what *can* your mamma want you for? you don’t do lessons on Sunday, do you?”

“No,” said Grace, “not lessons, but mamma told me to come at half-past nine, and it is just that time now.”

George teased to know what for; and added, “It is very wrong, you know, to do any thing on Sunday, and if you do, Grace, Mary Anne will not speak to you.”

Mary Anne corrected him here, and said, “she wished George would take care to say what was true, for she should do no such thing.”

“Well, then,” said George, “you would not cut her, but you would say behind her back that she was a *very wicked little girl*, and Constance would tell her so to her face.”

A few more sentences were exchanged between the young people on this subject; meanwhile Grace had slipped out of the room; Ellen found she was gone, and overtook her in the hall—“Grace, Grace,” she called softly, “will you please to tell me, if you’ve no objection, what you are going to do with your mamma?” Seeing Grace hesitate, she added, in her slow mysterious tone, “Do tell me, for I have a very particular *reason* for wanting to know!”

Grace told her she was going to say the Catechism, and then went up stairs to her mamma’s room.

Ellen ran back to the dining-room door. Here she found her mamma with Mrs. Leslie. She jumped on a stool, and whispered something in her mamma’s ear. Mrs. Ward answered her aloud, “Yes, my dear, if Mrs. Leslie has no objection.”

It was then explained to that lady that Ellen wished to say her Catechism with Grace. The request was granted, and Ellen was desired to go up to Grace.

“What a strange child that is!” said Mrs. Ward, as the little girl closed the door; “do you know, she takes as much delight in reading and saying the Catechism, and things of that sort, as if it was all her own choice. She is quite different from the rest of my children—then she’s not of their lively turn.”

“I suppose she has been used to such things at her grandmamma’s,” remarked Mrs. Leslie.

“Yes, but before that she used always to be teasing me to hear them the Catechism on Sundays, as her aunt Duff was accustomed to do. Only think,” added Mrs. Ward, laughing, “the idea of my hearing George and the rest of them the Catechism! and reading the Bible with them!”

Mrs. Leslie remarked that it was the custom in many families.

“I do not mean that it should not be done,” said Mrs. Ward, “their governess, of course, used to attend to those things, and now I send them to school—only *I* could not do it. It is all very well, if people are as religious as my sister, Mrs. Duff—and their children are not so lively as mine; but you know George would almost make me laugh; and besides, how could I, with my quick temper, hear and teach them their duty to their neighbour, and all the rest? oh, no! I’m not so bad as that; I know my own faults too well, and could never set myself up as a pattern to my children, as some mothers I know do—no better than myself after all!”

“Indeed,” said Mrs. Leslie, rather perplexed for an answer, “indeed I think you mistake the thing altogether—I have never looked upon it in that light.”

“Oh,” said Mrs. Ward, “*you* cannot judge in this case; you have one quiet little girl, who gives you no

trouble at all, and you have a placid temper by nature; just think of the difference—here was I with two wild boys, when poor Edward was alive at the head of the rest, and Emily nearly as bad; how could I, with my health, too, call them all together, and hear them the Catechism, and make them read the Bible?—why, you know, I know no more of it than they do; I am no divine, and I was not brought up under the religious system of the present day: besides, I was never made for a teacher—I have not the patience—it would drive me wild; and then, what an example for the children!”

“But have you an objection to Ellen reading with Grace to-day?”

“Oh, none in the world; I should not *choose* such ways for her, but her grandmamma likes them, and will be delighted to hear that she keeps them up. Mrs. General Ward entirely undertakes Ellen, and has every right to prescribe her education; I should be sorry that Emily should take such a turn, but as for Ellen, some day she will be able to afford to do as she pleases, so it does not matter. But now you must be going to your little pupils.”

Mrs. Leslie here rose and proceeded to her room, where she found the two little girls, who seemed to have been in very earnest conversation. They read with her till church time. The children dined between services. After dinner George went to Campbell in the garden, and proposed a good long walk. Campbell remarked, it was just church time.

“Why,” said George, “we *have* been to church to-day.”

His cousin reminded him of afternoon service.

“Oh,” said George, “we never go to that; nobody ever goes to afternoon service!”

“How can you tell that,” said Campbell, “if you are never there?”

“Because every body says so; why, what’s the use of going twice, it’s all the same thing over again?”

“It is not all the same thing over again,” said Campbell; “it is much shorter, and there are prayers instead of the litany, and the lessons and psalms are quite different—only a small part is the same: besides, the sermon is never the same.”

“Well,” said George, “what good does the sermon and all the rest do you? can you attend to all the prayers and understand the sermon?”

“No, not to all,” replied his cousin.

“Then what’s the use of it all?” said George, “you’ll be just as good if you come and walk with me and enjoy this beautiful day out of doors, as if you go and shut yourself up in a church with nobody but servants and shopkeepers.”

“No,” said Campbell, “I must go to church.”

“Why,” cried George, “you *are* a complete *saint*, as Newton said, and as bad as Constance; I thought that now you had been at Eton so long, you’d be cured of those home, girl’s ways.”

“Whatever ways they are,” said Campbell, “they are right ways, and I don’t want to be cured of them.”

“Well,” replied his cousin, “I know you are so obstinate, that when once you’ve got a thing into your head there’s no beating it out, so good-bye, I must go by myself;” and he walked out of the garden. He thought perhaps Campbell would follow him, but was mistaken. The rest went to church with Mrs. Leslie. Emily was not accustomed to do so, but could do as she pleased in such matters; so she went with them. After they returned, Grace and Ellen continued together some time up stairs, having got into some talk that interested them both. The rest came down stairs, and George soon returned from his walk. He boasted of the pleasant time he

had had. He had been on the road seeing all the coaches and carriages pass to and from London, and afterwards had been looking at people from London skating—such fun, he said, so many tumbles, such roars of laughter, and a famous crowd and bustle.

Mary Anne said that George was very wrong to go, and they were very wicked people.

“Ah,” cried George, “I said you would call Grace a wicked little girl behind her back, as you do these people; and I suppose you call me wicked for not going to church twice. Now, Mary Anne,” continued he, “tell me if I am wicked for not going twice, what am I for not going at all?”

“Why, it’s just the same,” said Mary Anne.

“No, no,” said Campbell, “it’s much worse not to go at all.”

“Why so?” asked George, “and why do you go at all?”

“Because,” said Campbell, “all good people do; and the prayer-book has two services, one for morning and the other for evening.”

“If you went by the prayer-book,” said George, “you’d go *twice every day*.”

“What nonsense you talk!” cried Mary Anne, “I never heard of such a thing! At some churches there is morning service on Wednesdays and Fridays—I believe there is at our old church—I know there is in Lent, because we always go to the lecture, but I never heard of church every day.”

“Well, there ought to be, if you go by the prayer-book,” persisted George.

“What do you mean, George?” said Emily.

George took up a prayer-book from the table, pointed to one of the rubrics, and desired them to read it.

"That is not in my prayer-book," said Mary Anne; and she began looking.

"It's in every prayer-book, I can tell you," said George, "and there are also lessons and psalms for every day in the year; I know it all well enough; so you see, Mary Anne, with all your religion, I know more about the prayer-book than you do."

"I never observed it before," said Emily, "how came you to know it, George?"

"Oh," said George, "I know all about those things in the prayer-book: I have read those pieces of small print through and through, out of a very large prayer-book in our pew at school; while Mr. Markwell goes on preaching his one sermon Sunday after Sunday."

Mary Anne rebuked her cousin for this, and he replied, that he had profited more by his way, than she had by all the sermons she had listened to, since he had been able to teach her something.

Mary Anne persisted he ought to listen to the sermon; and he in turn asked what was the use, when he could not understand a word, and there was nothing in it.

There seemed likely to be no end to the argument—but Grace and Ellen came in, and George appealed to the former to settle it, explaining the matter, and concluding, "Now is it not better to attend to what you *can* understand, than try to make out a sermon you can't, or stare about and think of every thing around you?"

"Well, George," said Emily, "I don't know what you do at school, but I am sure you do that at home."

"That has nothing to do with it, I am asking Grace a question—now, Grace!"

"Well," answered Grace, "I have been thinking about it. Mr. Fuller, our clergyman, preaches such very easy sermons that I cannot well judge—for there is no reason to attend to any thing else."

“ Well then,” said Ellen, “ suppose the sermon was in Latin, what would you do ?”

“ No, that is not fair,” said Grace, “ you ought to say, suppose it were some parts in Latin and some in English ;— Why, then, I think,” continued she, “ I should watch for the English pieces, and try to understand them.”

“ Well, George,” cried Emily, “ there is an answer for you, you should watch for the easy parts, and profit by them.”

“ But suppose there are no easy, or rather, no useful parts ?”

“ Oh, George,” said Ellen, “ all sermons are good !”

“ How can you say so ?” said Mary Anne, “ why there’s Dr. Gosset in our parish church, who every body says is a mere stick !”

“ Well, then,” said Ellen, very gravely, “ it is just what he ought to be, and I should like to see him rise up and beat you, for talking in that way of your clergyman.”

No one could smile, for Ellen spoke seriously.

“ Ah,” said Mary Anne, “ that is the way *you* talk, who live in the country, and have only a church to go to !”

“ What do you mean ?” asked Ellen.

“ Why you know we have an old church, and a new church, and two chapels, all close by ; so we can choose, and one likes one preacher, and one another, but there’s only one good for any thing, Mr. Taylor, and we go to him.”

“ Mary Anne,” returned Ellen, “ I am quite ashamed of you ; I never heard any one talk in such a way.”

“ No,” said Mary Anne, “ I dare say not ; I know in the country all clergymen are old and dull, like the Vicar of Wakefield, or Dr. Syntax, and all the people who live there call them your reverence, and bow before them almost as the Catholics do before *their priests*, and the squire of the village pays them the same respect, just like

Sir Roger de Coverly, so that every body thinks all they do and say quite right, and nobody dare speak of them as we do of our preachers."

"Mary Anne," said Ellen, "you really know nothing about it, you know you have never been in the country."

But I have read, and heard people talk who have been there, and I know all about it just as well," returned her cousin; "I know that country parsons are old-fashioned ignoramuses; they sit with the squire drinking wine after dinner, or play at backgammon night after night, and their wives are fat and vulgar, and their daughters do all the work of the house, and try to look smart."

"Mary Anne," cried Campbell, "what stuff you are talking! why, don't you know that Spencer Freeman is the son of a country clergyman? and what can be more different from his father, mother, and sisters, than what you have been saying?"

"Yes," said Ellen, "and all round about us at Langham; it makes me laugh to think of Mr. Bradshaw being old and ignorant, or Mrs. Palmer being fat and vulgar."

"Well, Mary Anne," said George, "what have you to say to this?"

"Why, that Mr. Freeman is quite an exception; he was not born and brought up in the country like other country clergymen, and I dare say those that Ellen mentions are the same."

"But what do you mean," said Ellen, "by being born and brought up in the country? don't you know that all clergyman must go to college; and if they choose they can get very clever and learned there?"

"Yes, but then the clever ones become good preachers, and come in or near London, and the dull stupid ones go into the country; I *know* it is so, for I have often heard people say, that except a very few clergymen, like Mr. Taylor, of Appletree—that every body knows—and a few

more of the same kind, there is not a sermon fit to be heard preached in any parish church in the country, all through England."

"Really, Mary Anne," said Ellen, "you talk very great nonsense; I know grandmamma thinks many of the clergymen about us very good preachers, and there are two not far from us she often asks to lend her their sermons."

"Yes," said Mary Anne, "but then, is your grandmamma religious?"

"Religious!" cried Ellen, looking much amazed, "why to be sure she is!"

"But just now," replied her cousin, "you said all sermons were good, and perhaps you think in the same way all grandmammams are religious."

"I know *my* grandmamma is religious," said Ellen, "and very particular too—a great deal more particular in some things with me than your governess is with you."

"Well, what does she do?" asked Mary Anne, "beat you when you are naughty, as I know they do at all charity schools in the country."

"Well," said George, "and a good thing too. I should like to have you beat for laughing at grandmamma; I know she's very kind to all of us, and never comes here without giving me half a guinea, and she sends me cake and fruit and good things twice a year to school, and that is being quite religious enough for me. Your Miss Newmarsh would never do such a thing—except," added he, correcting himself, "I had been very naughty."

"Now, George," said Ellen, "you have been wrong in turn, you have no business to speak in that way of Miss Newmarsh, when you were correcting Mary Anne for the very same thing."

"Well," said George, "when Miss Newmarsh gives me half a guinea and sends me good things to school, I

will speak well of her, and not allow any body else to find fault with her."

This sort of conversation went on some time. At last Mary Anne called it unprofitable, and proposed some of her Bible questions, &c. George said they would be good fun. Ellen objected strongly, and Emily said she would not play if George was in the room, for he always made her laugh. Mary Anne objected to Emily's word "*play*," and Emily asked what else to call it.

We shall leave the young people to settle the matter at their leisure, and to conclude their evening, having given the above as a specimen of their Sunday's conversation.

CHAPTER XVII.

Order is Heaven's first law !

Pope.

THE next day was much given up to preparations for the grand twelfth-night party. Emily had the characters to cut and fold up, and a great many little affairs of that sort to arrange: besides, she had a plan in her head for the evening, about which she sought George early after breakfast to propose it. It was to make a list of suitable games for the evening, and arrange their entertainments so that there should be no confusion. She applied to George for his assistance and memory. George laughed at her plan, called it nonsense, and a great bore to think of things beforehand, and asked why now more than ever before, when they had always done very well.

"Why, George," said his sister, "you don't consider,

we are to have no dancing and cards to-night, and we must amuse them all with games of different sorts, and this is a very large party for that. Besides, the Harrises, and Thompsons, and that Newton, are always ready for mischief, and if they begin as they do at other houses, what shall we do?"

"Well, trust to me," said George, "I could keep them amused for more than one night—trust to me!"

"I will trust to you afterwards," replied his sister, "only help me to make out this list; you cannot keep fifty or sixty amused all night, but if we make a plan, and divide them into rooms, we can do it very well among us. See, I have got pen and ink all ready, and it won't take you a quarter of an hour. I talked it all over with Grace on Saturday night, and she advised me to set about it the first thing this morning."

"Well," said George, "I wondered where you got such a tiresome notion from—it's just like Grace and her prudish ways."

"Nonsense, George," said his sister, "it's a very good way, and you'll be glad of it when the time comes."

George objected that any plan made beforehand would spoil the spirit of the evening, and Emily said Grace had answered that objection by saying they need not keep exactly to the list, but it would be a guide for them, and would help her to provide every thing necessary, and the same in the forfeits. "For you know," added she, "if Reginald Freemantle is here he thinks of such queer forfeits, and then we should have every thing at hand."

"Well, then," said George, "if it must be, why do you come to *me*? why does not Grace come to help you? it's all her plan."

"It's her idea, but my plan," said Emily, "and she will help me all she can afterwards; but she's now with her mamma, and I want *you* to help me with the list, and then

we will arrange every thing afterwards. Now, George, there's a dear boy! tell me, what shall I write down first?"

"Well," replied her brother, "oranges and lemons."

"No, no," said Emily, "that will not do; it will make the boys so rude, we shan't know what to do with them the rest of the evening."

"Now, you see," replied George, "you ask me, and then object to what I propose."

Emily explained to her brother that their party would be too large for such a game, and it would end just as one she reminded him of at a neighbour's last Christmas.—

"And you did not forget that for a week," said she.

After this George gave the plan a little thought, and soon entered into it very cleverly and good-naturedly. He made several alterations and suggestions, and then advised Emily to write it out afresh in proper order, and that he should like a copy of it, for he confessed he should be sorry that their party got into such confusion as the Thompsons or the Duffs; and he reminded Emily of their large party last year, the only one they had had without dancing, which was all confusion and dispute as to what they should do and what should come next.

Emily said it was talking over that party which made Grace propose this plan to her.

"Well," said George, "I think it was a clever thought for such a little girl, but after all it's a regular prudish idea, as I said at first: I am sure you would never have thought of such a thing."

"I don't think I should," said Emily, "but I can do it when it is put in my head, and I shall remember it for another time."

Grace meanwhile was up stairs with her mamma, and after their reading she set hard to work at her chain. "I do hope, mamma," said she, "to get it finished by break-

fast time to-morrow, but I must work very hard, and Emily wants me as soon as I can come; she has a great many proposals to make for to-morrow."

Grace was rather in trouble about her chain; she wanted a clasp fastened on, which she had by her, and she had heard of a man in the place who could do such a thing, but she had no time to go, even if her mamma would be so kind as to go with her. She had, however, a great many plans, which she proposed. Mrs. Leslie advised her to have no clasp, but to sew up her chain and put a ring and slide. Grace knew how to make a slide, and her mamma said she would let her have her steel ring from her chain, and Grace should some day repay it with another. Also she gave her leave to sit up with her that night and finish her chain, and the slide could be done to-morrow morning, before breakfast. Grace was delighted at these arrangements, wondered she had forgotten her favourite slide, and exclaimed, "What good thoughts you always have for every thing, mamma! it is always the best way to consult you, though I sometimes like to surprise you, too! but I do not quite like to take your handsome cut ring—suppose I cannot get one like it?"

Mrs. Leslie assured Grace that she could, and told her the price, which Grace was quite satisfied with.

Soon after this she joined her young friends in the library, and was very busy helping Emily and Ellen. George talked and amused them. Mary Anne did not do much, but every now and then had scruples on the unprofitableness of their occupations.

"What stuff!" said Emily; "why, you know, if you ask people, you must find something to amuse them. Now I should like to know how you would like to come to a party and find nothing to eat, for instance?"

"Oh, I should not care at all," said Mary Anne.

Here George gave a great whistle, and said Mary Anne

liked plum-cake as well as any one, and eat quite as much ; he would back her against all her sisters.

Mary Anne said she took it when it came ; it would be rude to refuse when such things were provided, and indeed she thought it was very unkind not to take them.

“ Yes, to be sure,” said George, “ you ought to stuff as hard as ever you can, and as fast as you can, and never say ‘ thank you,’ for it’s all for kindness ! I know who taught you that—it is just one of Miss.....”

“ Now, George, hold your tongue,” said Emily, interrupting him, “ you see you prevent Mary Anne from helping us, for she cannot talk and work as we can—just look at Grace ! she folded all that heap just now while she was talking to you and laughing.”

Mary Anne said she could if she chose, but that she was not quite sure it was a profitable employment, so she did not like to do it.

“ I declare, Mary Anne,” cried Emily, “ you are enough to try the patience of Job ! you have no objection to join in all our games and be amused, but you will give every body else the trouble of preparing for them. Constance is better than you, though it’s more disagreeable ; she will not help at the time, and pretends not to enjoy afterwards.”

“ Well,” said Mary Anne, “ it is all very unprofitable, and I think all these parties are very wrong ; you know we have quite given them up. Mamma said she would never have another after ours last Christmas.”

“ And I don’t wonder at it,” said Emily, “ I never saw such a scene ! and perhaps it would have been prevented if you had prepared amusements, as we are doing now.”

“ I never saw such a bear-garden in my life !” said George.

“ I am sure,” said Ellen, “ I sat down and cried ; I

could not help it ; the little Davises and many others were as if they were mad !”

“ Well, they were tipsy,” said George.

“ Yes, but that was after supper,” said Mary Anne.

“ Ay, but they were pretty fresh before,” returned George.

“ What do you mean ?” asked Grace, exceedingly amazed, “ do you mean they were really tipsy ?”

“ To be sure I do,” said George, “ why you know it’s only following up Mary Anne’s plan of eating and drinking as much as one can—it was only ‘ kindness’ to the Duffs, and the Davises are very religious children indeed, so of course they were the kindest, that is, they got the tipsiest.”

“ I am ashamed of you, George,” said his cousin.

“ Well, now, I ask you all,” said George, “ were not the little Davises the tipsiest of the party ?”

“ Oh, nobody else was tipsy, George,” said Emily.

“ Well, and are not their papa and mamma very religious people ?—they never go to parties themselves.”

“ Well, and no wonder,” said Ellen, “ if all parties were like that one ; I am sure if they knew of their children’s behaviour it would be enough to break their hearts.”

“ Mrs. Davis did know it,” said Mary Anne, “ for Miss Newmarsh thought it quite right to inform her.”

“ And what did she say ?” asked Grace, anxiously.

“ She said that one could not expect children to be as grave as judges, and that we could not put old heads on young shoulders.”

“ But Emily—Ellen—not George—for he only laughs,” said Grace, “ do you mean they were *really* tipsy ?”

“ Yes, *really*,” said Emily, “ there were three boys, and they got at a bottle of wine on a side table, and emptied it in no time : then their sister behaved ill too, and they stamped, and kicked, and thumped the table for cake and sweets ; and the boys fell to snatching at every thing, and

made some of the rest as bad as themselves, till the dishes were quite emptied, and almost all the glasses and plates broken to pieces; and such a noise! no wonder poor Ellen sat and cried, for it frightened all of us nearly out of our wits."

"And did their mamma know all this?" asked Grace.

"Yes," said Mary Anne, "and a great deal more, for when Miss Newmarsh found she did not care, she told her every thing; and the beginning of the evening the Davises objected to every thing we proposed, and emptied the trays of negus and cake before the servants could get into the room: they upset a tray, and broke a great many of mamma's best tea service."

"But did she know they were really tipsy?" persisted Grace.

"Yes, yes, yes!" replied George, "why you know it's very easy to get tipsy at a party; you could get tipsy to-morrow evening if you please!"

Grace hardly knew whether to laugh or be shocked at the idea, and George continued, "Why, Grace, I thought you expected some of us to get tipsy to-morrow."

"I!" exclaimed Grace, "why?"

"Why!" said George, "because you burned the tipsy man just now in the characters, and would not let us fold him up with the others."

"But how did that show I expected you to be tipsy?" asked Grace.

"Why, I supposed you thought the sight of a tipsy man, hopping about as he was, with a red nose and a pot in his hand, would hurt our feelings if we were any of us tipsy."

Grace laughed.

"Well, then, what was the reason? you seemed quite serious about it, and burned the poor man with a great deal of pleasure."

"Yes," said Grace, "because I was much obliged to you all for letting me do so."

"Then why did you burn him?" asked George.

"Because," answered Grace, "I did not like to make a joke of what is so very wrong."

"Ah, you've no sense of the ridiculous," said Mary Anne, decidedly.

This sort of conversation went on with a good deal of amusement between whiles all the day, and the young ladies were all busily employed helping Emily one way or other. In the evening they were all for a time with the elder part of the family in the drawing-room. Grace and Mary Anne, who seldom had been alone together, were on a sofa. Mary Anne was talking of their home doings, and describing her sisters, and what they did. Grace was amazed at their cleverness, especially Constance, who seemed quite a prodigy. She also was astonished to hear that Fanny wrote verses—such beautiful verses, Mary Anne said, that a gentleman they knew, wanted to have them printed.

"How very clever she must be!" exclaimed Grace, "can you remember any of her verses?"

"Yes," said Mary Anne, "I know one poem."

"Oh, do say it, please!" cried Grace.

Mary Anne said it was to a Bird, and repeated the following lines:—

Dear little Bird, I love you so,
I'd rather be with thee,
And to the farthest corners go
Of utmost Araby.

I'd rather go away with you
And travel like a dove,
And live with nought but sky in view,
On solitude and love.

Yes, I would leave my halls of state,
And live in bowers with thee,
And link with thee my desolate fate,
In far-off Araby.

“How very pretty!” exclaimed Grace, “how very clever Fanny must be! is it all her own?”

“Yes, all,” replied Mary Anne.

“It sounds very pretty!” again said Grace.

“Yes,” returned the other, “but the sentiment too is very sweet!”

Grace said she should like to hear it again, and Mary Anne again repeated it. Grace again admired it, but remarked on the word “desolate,” and asked why Fanny used it.

“Oh, you know all poets are gloomy and desolate,” said Mary Anne, “you could not be a poet without—it is not true, you know.”

“But I suppose Fanny meant really that she liked a free happy life,” said Grace, “and that a bird’s life must be a very pleasant one,—and so it must: you know how swift they fly and how joyfully they sing. I often watch them and listen to them, and I always think they seem to have more real happiness than any other creatures in the world. I always fancy they could fly away from any trouble, and that they never can have much—singing all day long as they do; they seem like the Angels of Animals.”

“Yes, that is just what Fanny meant,” said Mary Anne.

“Then she did mean it for herself?” asked Grace.

“Yes, to be sure.”

“Then how could she be desolate with all of you, and her papa and mamma and brothers? is she unhappy?”

“Oh, no,” replied Mary Anne, “why will you think so?”

“Because she says ‘desolate,’” returned Grace.

“You cannot understand any thing about poetry if you

talk in that way," said Mary Anne, decidedly; "you seem to think it is all true; you know you must pretend to be wretched and miserable, or else you can never be a poet."

Here was a pause, which Grace broke, by saying, "Do you know, it was very curious, but before you repeated those lines, and we talked of birds, I was thinking what a pretty sort of cage the ante-room could be made. If I was Emily I would fit it up for to-morrow, and bring in her beautiful paroquet, and I would call it 'the Fairy Bower.'"

"How would you do it?" asked Mary Anne.

"I would bring in, if I might, a good many of the plants from the conservatory," answered Grace, "and get evergreens from the garden, to hide the walls. Then I would get as many real flowers as I could to mix with them, and make flowers from paper to help them out....."

"Flowers from paper!" interrupted Mary Anne, "what are those?"

"Have you never seen them?" said Grace, "they are cut out of coloured papers and tied up with wire, and they look very well indeed at a little distance, and by candle-light. Well, I would make festoons of roses all across the arch, to confine Madge in her cage, and prevent any body from teasing her, and the arch would look very pretty indeed with drooping flowers all round it." And she rose to explain her idea more fully; "that is not all," continued she, "I would put lights behind in different parts, which would complete it. And Madge on her pole would look so well, she is so pleased with light, and likes to be looked at; then, I say, I would call it the Fairy Bower."

"And then," said Mary Anne, "if they got tired of her they could easily put her away into the conservatory, and the room would be a pretty one for ourselves."

Grace remarked, they could not do that, because the door would be covered with branches and flowers, and they must not injure the plants. Presently they spoke of something else.

CHAPTER XVIII.

When thou dost purpose aught within thy power
Be sure to do it, though it is but small.

George Herbert.

AFTER a time, Emily joined them and proposed some amusement, as usual, in the Library. Mrs. Leslie called to Grace as she was leaving the room, and advised her privately to go up stairs and finish her chain, as it was getting late and she did not wish her to sit up long. Grace therefore excused herself from accompanying her young friends, and went to her mamma's room. Her chain was completed when her mamma came up, and according to her advice, she went immediately to her own room. She found Emily in bed and asleep; she woke up for a moment, and complained of Grace being so long, and told her she had something to talk to her about, but now she could not she was so sleepy. Grace was sorry to have disappointed her friend, but hoped it would do to-morrow morning; and though she had a great many things she wished to lie awake thinking of, she tried to get to sleep as quickly as she could, that she might be up as soon as day-light, and finish the slide on which she had set her heart, so as not to take her away from her young friends, who might want her to assist them. Poor Grace! she got up before the sun rose, and was dressed, but still it was so dark she was obliged to practise, for there was not light enough for any thing else: however, at the first gleam of day she sat down to her task, and to her joy got it finished just at breakfast time.

“Why, Grace,” said Mrs. Ward, as she entered, “you are late to-day, I suppose you have been resting for to-night; Emily has been up and at work this hour past.”

“ Ah,” said Emily, “ I am up early for a wonder to-day, but Grace is early every morning.”

“ Well,” said her mamma, “ it’s a pity Grace did not know you were busy, for she would have been up this morning to help you.”

Poor Grace felt very uncomfortable; she felt what she called her childish propensity coming on, and thought she should have cried; first, at what she felt was Emily’s kindness, and second, at Mrs. Ward’s manner, which was more severe than her words; however she managed to keep down her tears, and only looked very much ashamed; she could not have spoken if she had wished it ever so much, and her heart beat very fast, but she knew nobody could see these things, and before long they went off. Still, however, she felt very uncomfortable; Grace had too keen a sense of injustice, and without constant watchfulness and self-controul, it would become her snare and her torment as she came into the world, and grew to be a woman. This was almost the first trial of the kind she had experienced. Instead of the pleasure she had anticipated, she carried her chain to her mamma with a very heavy heart. Mrs. Leslie did not perceive Grace’s dulness; she had observed what passed at breakfast, but did not take it seriously: many mammas would have been vexed, and would have comforted their little girl, and told her not to mind being misunderstood if she did right, but Mrs. Leslie was of a different character, and considering Grace’s disposition, this was happy for her.

“ Well, Grace,” said her mamma, cheerfully, “ so you’ve really finished your chain. I give you joy.—By the bye,” added she, “ I suppose you were hard at work at it instead of helping Emily this morning. I wondered why you did not give up your practice.”

“ I did not know Emily was up,” said Grace, rather downcast.

“ Well,” said her mamma, smiling, “ you see you got

a little *hit*. We must pay for our pleasures, Grace," she added, rather more gravely, "we seldom have a pleasure without pain of some kind."

Mrs. Leslie now gave Grace the ring, and the chain looked very nice and complete. "Now, my dear child," said she, "this is your pleasure at present, so you must enjoy it, and I hope George deserves it, for it is a pretty present, and has cost a good deal of kind labour."

Grace's desire for tears was now quite dispelled by her mamma's manner; first by her smiling at what Grace thought Mrs. Ward's unkindness; second, by her telling her that pleasure was seldom without pain, and she would have been quite ashamed that her mamma should have thought she had nearly been so silly; she now, therefore, could receive her mamma's kind kiss with a stout and happy heart.

"Now," thought she, "if mamma had kissed me, and spoken of *that* at breakfast, when I first came into the room, I could not have helped bursting out crying, and I dare say I should have gone on till now."

Grace only staid to-day for their reading, since Mrs. Leslie said her young companions might want her. Grace kept her chain very snug, and ran down to the Library. As she reached the passage she remembered she had to present it, and she did not know *how*; however she found the library door open and nobody there. Mrs. Ward was alone in the dining-room; poor Grace felt a little uncomfortable at speaking to her. To-day was not the first time Mrs. Ward had spoken what Grace thought "unkindly;" one day when Grace was laughing and playing with the rest, Mrs. Ward came in, and after looking at them, she turned to leave, and said to a lady with her, of Grace, "It's quite a treat to see that child laugh, or look like other children;" this and some other things, made Grace believe that Mrs. Ward disliked her, and she fancied now

she spoke angry to her, when she told her that Emily and the rest were in the drawing-room. When Grace entered, what was her surprise! she found the four cousins in the ante-room, which was being prepared just as she had suggested the evening before! Grace stood quite still, and they all laughed.

“Ah,” said Emily, “I thought you’d be surprised; I was so angry with you for not coming last night till I was asleep, and then I thought I would do it and surprise you; but you are earlier than usual, and we thought it would be finished before you came down. Is it not pretty? It is all Mary Anne’s thought; we are to have my paroquet here, and lights behind; was it not a good thought of Mary Anne’s.”

There was a little pause, and Mary Anne said,

“You know I told you that Grace and I talked it over together.”

Emily told Grace that directly Mary Anne suggested it, she asked her mamma, and got leave to remove certain plants and flowers into the ante-room, and that Thomas had been helping them, but that there was a great deal to be done yet, and they had a great many difficulties.

“Well now, Mary Anne,” cried George, “for your lights, how are they to be placed?”

Mary Anne suggested a plan, which George called very awkward, and Ellen reminded her they must not put in any nails. Mary Anne said it could not be done without nails—it was impossible.

“Oh,” said Emily, “how soon you give up things; there are a hundred ways besides nails;—you might tie the lights behind the branches of the trees, or—or

“Or festoon them with strings from the rods and the bell-wires,” said Grace, while Emily was hesitating.

Emily said that was the best possible plan, and produced a fine ball of string she had sent for the first thing in the

morning. But presently they were stopped for lights,—should they be lamps or candles? where could they get them? Grace asked if they had sockets, or what is called save-alls, in the house. George remembered there were once many such used in London at an illumination, and made interest with nurse Hanson, who in a short time let him have several, which were joyfully received by the young company; they also coaxed her to tell Thomas to bring up the steps, and herself to come and put candles into the sockets. There was some difference of opinion among the young people as to the mode of lighting up. Grace had suggested a mode of concentrating the light from the sides of the entrance door of the ante-room. Mary Anne's notion was to disperse the light about behind the branches and flowers. It probably arose from her having misunderstood the application of Grace's word, "behind," the evening before. Mary Anne's plan was the most popular, but Grace succeeded so far as to be allowed also to place as many sockets as she pleased in her favourite spot, opposite the conservatory door. After this they appealed to Mary Anne for her festoons of flowers, and how to make them of paper. She had no more resources than on the lights. Emily began cutting from coloured paper, leaves like a rose, and tied them up with cotton; it looked something like, but made them all laugh.

"Is this what you mean?" said she, showing it to Mary Anne.

"Oh, I never made one," said Mary Anne, "but they look more like real than that."

Emily said, "Oh, they must be real artificial flowers, which nobody can make; have you ever seen them, Grace?"

Grace said she had helped her cousins to make a great many, and they looked very well by candlelight.

Emily now appealed to Grace for instruction, and found it required many little things;—different paper from the

common sort, wire, gum, green cotton, &c. Grace said the paper was called flower paper, and made on purpose. Ellen gave news of a great deal of that thin coloured paper in a certain portfolio; she used to hear it called *flower* paper, and she always thought it was *flour* paper, like rice paper. They got permission to use this; the other materials were got together, and all the young ladies set to work, while Campbell and George were changing and arranging the ante-room, and making improvements according to their fancy. Grace was called in to consult on some point, and presently she found a good opportunity of giving George the chain. In a rather hurried, and certainly not very graceful manner, she pushed it towards him, and said, "George, there's a chain for you."

George looked exceedingly surprised, and poor Grace thought he did not like it.

"Do you mean this for me?" said he, "have you really bought this for me?"

"No," said Grace, "I did not buy it, I made it."

"And did you make it for me?"

"Most of it," said Grace, "but it was begun before I came here; you said you wanted a new one for to-day, so I finished it."

"Well, really," said George, "I am very much obliged to you; how well you have done it, it is just like a bought one." Then recovering his usual air, he came forward and said, "I'll tell you what, Grace is the best girl I ever knew."

"What's the matter, now?" said Emily, while Mary Anne coloured like scarlet. Grace saw it, and fancied she knew the reason. George hid his hands behind him, and asked them to guess what he had there. Grace wished to relieve Mary Anne's embarrassment, so she said, "Oh, it's only something I have been making George," and George produced the chain with a great air.

“Did you really make this?” said Emily, “it’s a great deal better done, and much prettier than any that the girls do at school; it looks like a bought one; how did you make the slide?”

“Oh, she must have bought the slide,” said Mary Anne, quite forgetting her late panic, and obligation to Grace, “you might as well ask if she made the ring!”

“Yes, what a handsome ring!” said Emily, while all were examining it, “but did you buy the slide?”

“No, I made the slide; it is not at all hard to do it like that,” said Grace, “I could teach you in a minute, as mamma taught me; you see it is not well done when you look close at it, but I was rather in a hurry this morning.”

“Well, then,” said Emily, “I suppose that is the reason you have not practised these two mornings. You see, Mary Anne,” added she, turning to her cousin, “you were *not* right about Grace this time.”

Campbell meanwhile examined it very carefully, and as he put it aside, said mournfully, “I have no watch.”

“Well, Campbell,” said Grace, “I promise you that when you have a watch, I will, if I can, make you a chain for it.”

“Thank you, Grace,” said Campbell, as if he had actually got it, “for I know you will not forget it.”

“You know, I say *if I can*,” said Grace.

“Well,” said George, “it is mine, give it to me; I am very proud of it;” and he fastened his watch to it, making Grace a very low bow; he then tossed his old chain to his sister, saying, “there, Emily, take your nasty old thing.”

“Oh,” said Grace, “it was not always nasty and old; and I dare say, you were as pleased with it at first as you are with mine now, and some day you will toss mine away in the same way.”

“No, no!” said George, “that I never shall; why you know it’s a great honour for *you* to make it for me; because you are not my sister, or even my cousin; I should

not care half so much for one that Mary Anne made me, because she's my cousin ; but there's no fear of that ; for she's not clever enough to make such a thing as yours, and she's too fond of her money."

Mary Anne, whose conscience was in an irritated state, and whose temper therefore had been disturbed several times, replied sharply to this affront. George laughed, called her his "pretty cousin in a pet," and gave her his usual tap under the chin. Seeing she was still offended, he called to Campbell to take their walk, and left the room.

"How disagreeable George is, I'm sure I wish he'd not!" said Mary Anne, "he's always teasing every body."

"No, not every body," said Emily, "only you."

"Well, then, I wish he'd not," repeated Mary Anne.

"If you don't like it," said Grace, "why do you let him?"

"Let him!" said Mary Anne, "how can I help it—he will—though I'm always telling him I can't bear it."

"Oh," said Grace, "I'm sure you could prevent him if you chose."

"Why, how can I help it?"

"Oh, I don't know how exactly," said Grace, "but you can *show* you don't like it, and no boys are rude then."

"But George is not rude," said Mary Anne.

"Why, Mary Anne, how you change," said Ellen, "just now you complained of him."

"Yes, but not because he was rude—he is so tiresome, I don't like it."

"Well," pursued Ellen, "and Grace was saying you could prevent it if you wished, and so you can."

"I cannot," said Mary Anne, "it's all very well for Grace to talk ; she thinks because he don't tease her so, that I could prevent it, but she don't remember that I'm his cousin, and he is not so fond of her as he is of me."

"Then," persisted Ellen, "you think people are disagreeable and tiresome when they are fond of you."

“Oh, nonsense,” cried Emily, “how can you go on, Ellen, don’t you know that Mary Anne likes George to tease her in that way, and would be very much vexed if he was to leave off—I think you’re all stupid. Now, Mary Anne, don’t say another word, for it’s all stuff and nonsense, and we had better talk of something else.”

She then began consulting with Grace about the first wreath of flowers and evergreens, which was completed, and they retired into the ante-room, to hang it up and admire it.

CHAPTER XIX.

A sweet behaviour and a solid mind.

Dryden.

WE must now pass to the dining-room, where the two mammas were seated at work. Emily had just run in to ask leave about the flower paper and other things; when she left, Mrs. Ward said, “I’m sure I would not have to do all that Emily has for something! she has fifty children to amuse to-night, and without dancing and cards. I quite dread it, for they get so unruly sometimes; but George and Emily have such spirit, they seem able to do any thing. Is your little girl clever at such times, Mrs. Leslie?”

“Yes, pretty well,” said Mrs. Leslie, “she’s very handy, and exceedingly thoughtful beforehand; but you know she has not had the practice of your children; only now and then a party at her cousins’. They always beg and

pray for her to come and help them, so I suppose she assists."

"She seems so very quiet that I cannot fancy her being very fond of such things," remarked Mrs. Ward.

"She's not quite so quiet as she looks *here*," said Mrs. Leslie, smiling, "you know you always see her before company."

"Well, I was surprised to see her one day in the Library," said Mrs. Ward; "but she is too grave for a child, though Emily tells me she is fond of fun and very clever; and Emily, though such a girl, is a good judge generally." This conversation was disturbed by the door opening, and Mrs. Newton Grey being announced, much to the surprise of Mrs. Ward, for it was early, and she expected her and her boy in the evening. Mrs. Newton Grey looked agitated and wearied, as if she had passed a sleepless night, which was very true. Mrs. Ward felt alarmed, and exclaimed, "What's the matter?—I hope nothing is the matter—is Newton with you?—has he gone to the children?"

By this time Mrs. Newton Grey had recovered herself, and she said, smiling faintly, "Oh, nothing particular is the matter; but I think we are not coming to-night, so I thought I would call and explain." "But," said she, "I think the best way would be, for you to read this letter I had yesterday from Miss Newmarsh"—"a very kind and candid letter, indeed," added Mrs. Newton Grey, "and Mrs. Leslie, I shall ask you to be so kind as to read it too, as I am about to ask your assistance in a rather painful business." Mrs. Ward took the letter and began to read. It was as follows:—

My dear Madam,

Though I have not the pleasure of much personal acquaintance with you, yet, from the character you

bear, and from the free interchange of sentiment I enjoyed with you last week, I venture to address you, assured that the subject I have to bring before you, however painful, will be received as it is offered—in a Christian spirit.— Believe me, my dear Madam, my present task is to me no pleasant one. A mother's feelings demand the highest respect and tenderness, and nothing but a deep sense of duty and Christian faithfulness could prompt me to such a line of action. I will make no farther apology, but proceed to the subject of my letter. I must still, however, trespass on your patience, as a little previous explanation is necessary. It is always my custom to require my pupils every night before going to bed, to write an account of the events, or rather the feelings, of the day; with a view of leading them to amend what has been contrary to the life of a Christian. This diary is shown to me and to their mamma every Saturday, and furnishes a subject for improvement for the Sunday following. By this means I have become acquainted with some part of the behaviour of your son, on that unfortunate night of the party at Fulham, and I feel bound to acquaint you with it. If you are already aware of it, I shall have discharged my conscience without inflicting a new wound upon you; if not, I am sure you will agree that it is a mistake of kind but misguided friends to keep you in ignorance of such a circumstance. Constance, who has the most sensitive conscience of all my dear pupils, thus alludes to the incident in her diary:—"After I left the party I could think of nothing but Newton Grey's sin. I sat up long, and prayed that he might be brought to a sense of it. I felt thankful that I was not afraid to rebuke him before so many.—I hope I was not proud of it. I believe I should not have done so for his bad language alone; but I felt strengthened when he scoffed at religion, and called us and others 'saints, &c.'" Fanny does not notice the incident, and

Charlotte seems to feel nothing but distress at "dear C's fight with N. G.," and says "the disturbance quite spoilt the pleasure of the evening." Mary Anne is still at Fulham. Now, my dear Madam, I am sure you will acquiesce in the propriety of noticing any thing so deserving of rebuke as this in the conduct of your son. That he should have acquired habits of bad language is sufficiently to be lamented, but it can indeed be nothing but the evil of an unrenewed nature that can lead him to scoff at the Saviour, as reflected in the persons of the little ones of his flock.

As I believe you agree pretty much with me on the subject of punishment, I feel the less scruple in speaking openly, since I subject your poor boy to no pain, and do not run the risk of his being ruined and hardened by severe treatment. But I am confident, dear Madam, that you will consider the trait of character thus brought to light worthy of your most serious attention and anxious watchfulness. With my most sincere prayers for your comfort in the future well-doing of your dear boy, allow me to subscribe myself,

Dear Madam,

Your's respectfully and faithfully,

M. A. NEWMARSH.

Jan. 5, Winterton.

While Mrs. Ward read this letter, the other two ladies carried on a discourse somewhat apart. Mrs. Newton Grey shortly explained the charge against Newton: she said at the first moment she was very miserable, and was about to speak to him directly, but on consideration she thought she would come first to Fulham, and ascertain the *truth* of the story; for her boy was of a very lively disposition, and the little Duffs did not at all understand such ways. Then, as to Constance, she did not think she knew

what bad language was ; that she was so particular in every thing, and that if Newton called any body "a double X flat," or "a rapsallion of a donkey," or any other of his queer expressions, she would think it the same as the worst language. She said she was most distressed about Newton allowing himself to speak slightly of religious people, and was shocked to think of his using the word "saint" as a term of reproach. At the same time, she said she should like to ascertain the circumstances of his doing so ;—"and now, my dear Mrs. Leslie," she added, "it is here I wish to ask your assistance. Before I speak to Newton, I wish to be *sure* of all that passed, and I thought perhaps your little girl might have told you all about it."

Mrs. Leslie assured her that Grace had scarcely alluded to the circumstances she had just mentioned, and had not given her the least idea of what took place.

"And do you not think," said Mrs. Newton Grey, "that is a sure proof that nothing so bad went on ; a nice well-behaved little girl like yours, never away from you, would, of course, be sure to mention such a thing to you, do you not think so?"

"Not *sure*, I think," answered Mrs. Leslie, remembering Grace's disgust.

"Well, but I do wish you would be so kind," said Mrs. Newton Grey, "as to question your little girl about it, for I could trust to *her*, but I could not trust to the other children ; the Duffs are brought up *very* strictly, and cannot understand Newton's high spirits ; and then, poor dear boy ! he was so unfortunate once as to offend the Wards, and they have never forgotten it ; so, you see, I can look to no one but your little girl for a correct report."

By this time Mrs. Ward had finished the letter, and handed it to Mrs. Leslie.

"What do you think of it?" asked Mrs. Newton Grey.

“Why, you know,” answered Mrs. Ward, “some parents would think nothing at all of it, but though I am not so particular as others, I do not like my boys to use bad language, it is a disgraceful shocking habit, and if he was my boy, I would have him corrected—flogged—I suppose they always flog boys, don’t they, when they do wrong?”

“Oh,” said poor Mrs. Newton Grey, dreadfully shocked, “Newton has never been flogged—that would never do—I never thought of such a thing for a moment; and besides, I think the bad language may be quite exaggerated. Newton has no habit of that sort—it is the other charge that I think most of.”

“What is that?” asked Mrs. Ward.

“Why, laughing at the Duffs, and calling them ‘saints.’”

“Do you really mean so?” said Mrs. Ward, “I scarcely observed it. Why, you know, all boys at school, and grown people too, do that; and as for Constance, she’s such a provoking little puss, that I don’t wonder at a boy being irritated by her tiresome ways. I often wonder George puts up with her, but he is so good-humoured, he laughs it off.”

“Well, I thought Constance very likely might have teased poor Newton; he’s of an open frank disposition, and cannot controul himself always as he ought,” replied Mrs. Newton Grey, “and though I mean to talk very seriously to him, I do confess I think Miss Newmarsh rather hard upon him; she does not say a word about the furious attack of Campbell upon him. I can assure you I was quite alarmed at the blow; there was a place as large as the palm of my hand, and frightfully black. You know, poor fellow, he is all alone, and has no brothers and sisters, like the rest, to stand by him.”

"I am sure I have always wondered you did not send him to school," said Mrs. Ward.

"Oh, I have such a horror of schools, I could not have answered it to myself," replied Mrs. Newton Grey.

"Well, I could not have undertaken such a charge at home," remarked Mrs. Ward, "with no gentlemen, too, to superintend."

"I have seen so much of schools, I know what they are too well," said Mrs. Newton Grey; "two brothers of my husband's and one of my own, and some cousins of mine, were all ruined by being sent to public schools, and I saw such specimens of school-boys in my childish days, that when I grew up I resolved no boy of mine should ever be thrown into such a world of wickedness."—Seeing that Mrs. Leslie had finished the letter, Mrs. Newton Grey went on to ask her what she would have done if Grace had been a boy; "so careful as you are, you would never have sent a boy to school, would you?"

"Indeed," replied Mrs. Leslie, "it is a serious charge, and I have often felt thankful my little Grace was a girl; it is a great trial and a risk, but I think I should have sent a boy to school."

"Do you really think so?" said the other lady.

"I have not the mind or the energy of many mothers," returned Mrs. Leslie, "and I never could have undertaken the responsibility of a boy's education at home, I think."

"But, you know, I never pretend to interfere," said Mrs. Newton Grey, "and I do not, like you, consider school a *risk*, but *certain* ruin."

"I cannot quite feel that," said Mrs. Leslie, "I had four brothers all at school, and they all turned out well; and as a girl, I used to see a good deal of their companions, and cannot find the faults you do."

"Well," said Mrs. Newton Grey, "I wish I had your experience. But," added she, reverting to her first subject,

“what do you say to Miss Newmarsh’s letter? what would you advise me to do, Mrs. Leslie? what would *you* do? now, will you be so good as to put yourself in my place and tell me?—remember, Newton is not a *schoolboy*.”

“Indeed,” said Mrs. Leslie, “it is so impossible to judge for another person, and really I do not understand boys.”

“Oh, but you could try to think,” said Mrs. Newton Grey, beseechingly, “for I really am quite at a loss.”

“You have a tutor, for your boy, have you not?” asked Mrs. Leslie.

“Yes, certainly—not in the house—Mr. Taylor, the clergyman of our chapel,” replied Mrs. Newton Grey.

“Well, I think I should talk to Newton myself first, and see what sort of a frame he was in, and then hand him over to his tutor, begging him to judge, and inflict as severe a punishment as he thought necessary: it should not be passed over and forgotten in a moment, especially if Newton has got into such a shocking habit.”

“Then you would believe it all at once, and make no enquiries?” asked Mrs. Newton Grey.

“I think I *should*, but I say I should question Newton; of course you can trust to him, even against himself.”

“Oh, most entirely,” said the other lady, “he has the simplest frankest heart in the world; he told me he was wrong in the matter, and very provoking the other day, quite of his own accord.”

“But did he tell you of his bad language?” asked Mrs. Ward.

“No, he did not; but you know a boy in a passion does not know what he says, and if he *did* remember it, I could not expect he would tell me without being questioned.—Well, Mrs. Leslie, I will abide by your advice, and I am greatly obliged to you; I should not have done exactly so myself, but I am quite satisfied; I will talk to Newton,

and according to what passes, I will refer him over to his tutor, though hitherto Mr. Taylor has had nothing to do with any thing that passes out of lecture time."

Mrs. Leslie entreated Mrs. Newton Grey not to follow her counsel—it was quite forced from her.

The other lady said she saw her unwillingness to bring her little girl forward in the matter, and she had no other means of judging.

Mrs. Leslie did not offer to sacrifice her little Grace, and so it ended. Mrs. Newton Grey took her leave; after which Mrs. Ward exclaimed with some impatience of her mismanagement of her son, "Why is *he* more precious than other boys, and why not send him to school? he is the plague and the pest of every body! my children will shout for joy when they hear he is not coming to-night."

"He is a nice looking boy, and not at all shy or spoiled, seemingly," remarked Mrs. Leslie.

"Oh! do you think so? I can't bear the boy," said the other lady; "he has fine dark eyes, and a bright complexion, and handsome black hair, certainly," continued she, "but then you don't know him as I do; he's the meanest wretch in the whole world, and thinks nothing at all of a lie; I was quite angry with myself afterwards for taking his part against even that disagreeable little puss Constance. And really," added she, very much provoked, "I could hardly contain myself when you and she were comparing notes about your brothers—her brothers and yours! it is really too absurd. Her brothers and her husband's were the veriest raffs in the schools they went to; and as to one of the cousins she alluded to, he went to the same school as your brothers. I dare say they would scarcely speak to such a fellow, though they would know his name well enough; do you ever remember hearing them mention the name of Walter Johnson?"

"Walter Johnson—to be sure," said Mrs. Leslie, "I

know the name better than my own ; poor boy ! he used to be my model for every thing shocking and wicked ; I have often wondered if it was mere school-boy talk, though my brothers never gossiped much, and I was their eldest sister, and they could trust to me."

"He was a shocking fellow, and turned out worse.— Well, this cousin and her brother used to bring home from different schools a set just like themselves ; and then she judges all schools and all school-boys by these disgraceful fellows, that no decent boy would associate with ; you know, I'm not over particular ; I don't want George to be too precise, he'll never get on in the world if he is, but it's quite as bad to be intimate with the very bad set, as the very strict ones (the "saints," as they call them.) I have no patience with people judging of schools in this way, while all the time their own boys, just like Newton, are worse than the worst set in a school ; and do you know, this Newton picks up the worst boys he falls in with every where, and they visit him, and he them. He is a clever fellow, and keeps on decent terms before his mamma ; and, as you say, his manner can look very well. She has had such a fear of his being a milksop, that she let him go out into all companies very early, and she has taken him to watering places, and encouraged him to make all the connexions he can, in order to make him manly. But I have always observed he chooses the worst companions he can get hold of ; indeed no respectable boy will remain long his friend."

Just at this point Miss Newmarsh entered. The young folks had joined their cousins. She said she met Mrs. Newton Grey in the hall, and they had had a talk about Newton's sad affair. "I have been doing all I could to persuade dear Mrs. Newton Grey to send her boy to Dr. Barker," added Miss Newmarsh, "it would be the making of him, and the only thing to be done."

“Poor Mrs. Newton Grey,” said Mrs. Ward, laughing, “every body is advising her! and I am sure I would beg her by no means to send him *there*, for flogging is the only thing for that boy, you may depend upon it, and he ought to be flogged every day within an inch of his life!”

“Oh, Mrs. Ward,” cried Miss Newmarsh, quite shocked, “who could suppose you were a mother!”

“Perhaps,” said Mrs. Ward, “if you had been a mother, and plagued as I have been by unruly boys, you would think with less horror of flogging. If boys are good without, I don’t want them flogged; but every body knows what a good-for-nothing fellow that Newton is. Now, there’s Reginald Freemantle, I don’t believe he was ever flogged once the whole time he was at school. You know he has always been a regularly good boy, though lively, and is a pride and an honour to his family and masters.”

Miss Newmarsh sighed, and said, “Flogging will not change the heart.”

“But, you know, the old proverb says, ‘Spare the rod and spoil the child,’ and the Bible says something of the same kind, somewhere,” answered Mrs. Ward, quickly.

“You mean, ‘a rod for a fool’s back,’ I suppose,” said Miss Newmarsh, “but I consider that figurative, and it is under the old dispensation.—‘Train up a child in the way he should go’ is more agreeable to the spirit of the Gospel.”

“Oh, I can’t fight you with texts,” said Mrs. Ward, “I know you are a walking Concordance.”—And here the conversation turned upon other matters.

CHAPTER XX.

Words followed words, from question answer flowed,
And talk of various kind deceived the road.

Parnell.

WE will now visit our young friends in the back drawing-room, towards the afternoon. The Duffs, and Isabella and James Ward, had arrived according to the previous arrangement. The boys were gone out skating, and the young ladies were all more or less busy in completing the decoration of the ante-room, which began to look so pretty as to interest them exceedingly. The Wards arrived first, and were surprised and charmed. Isabella said it was very like a boudoir at Lord Polstone's, at a party one night when she was there.

Emily said she was glad she liked it, and told her it was Mary Anne's idea.

"Well, Miss Duff," said Isabella, "I give you infinite credit. It is really designed with surprising taste," added the young lady, receding, and taking up her glass; "the effect is most pleasing, but I suppose you have a Chinese lamp for the centre."

The rest of the plan was explained to her, and she expostulated with Mary Anne on the Chinese lamp. Mary Anne entered into the new plan at once; said it was much prettier, and proposed to take down the sockets.

"Oh, pray do," cried Isabella, "and I will send the coachman to Dodd and Robson's for one of their splendid

Chinese lamps. There's plenty of time to send to London," added she, looking at her watch.

"It shall not be done," said Emily, decidedly, "George has put up the sockets, and he will be very angry with us if we touch them."

"What do I care for George?" said Mary Anne, "he is not my master."

"No, but he has helped us," returned Emily, "and we must not change the plan without consulting him. And I'll tell you what," continued she, turning to Isabella, "if you interfere with his arrangements, George will find some way of revenging himself this evening."

This representation had the effect of arresting Isabella in her progress towards the bell. "Well," said she, turning, and again taking up her glass, "on a second view, I see it is too small for those lamps. Lady Polstone's boudoir was three or four times as large." She then suggested other improvements, which Emily opposed, and Mary Anne approved of.

"It is very strange, Emily," said Isabella, "that you will not adopt ideas that Miss Duff approves of, when she is the original designer of the whole: she must know best what will do justice to her own idea."

"But this is not her first idea; I have adopted that, and we all liked it, but we don't want coloured lamps and transparencies, it would not do here; and besides, we have no time to get them."

"Oh, I would manage all that," said Isabella, and again she appealed to Mary Anne, and got her approval of the coloured lamps and farther changes. Then she urged Mary Anne's authority: she said her idea was most tasteful, and it ought to be fully carried out.

"We all liked the idea, but I must say Mary Anne has not been so clever in helping in the execution," said Emily; "Grace Leslie has been at the head of all that."

Grace has suggested every plan." "I am sure, Mary Anne," added she, laughing, "you have been so stupid in this part, and Grace so clever, that I should think the idea was hers rather than yours."

This was neither the first, nor will it be the last time that the old proverb, "there's many a true word spoken in jest," is fulfilled; and it made two individuals very uncomfortable; indeed it is doubtful which felt the most so, the innocent or the guilty. Grace had associated her feelings on the subject all through the morning with the idea of guilt, and her whole thoughts were bent on warding off a discovery of the truth. She almost fancied she had said to Mary Anne, "Don't be afraid, I will take care nobody finds it out," and she watched Mary Anne anxiously, lest she should betray her secret. This threw poor Grace into a most uneasy state of conscience, and we are not sure if an exposure had taken place whether Grace would not have experienced the sensations of shame at a detected fraud. She saw that Mary Anne coloured furiously at Emily's remark, and was rejoiced that a diversion was made by the entrance of the Duffs. They burst in with joyful news—"Do you know," said they, "Newton Grey is not coming to-night!"

"You don't mean so!" said Emily, "how do you know?"

"Why," said Charlotte, "we met Mrs. Newton Grey, and she told us."

"He's afraid of another of Campbell's blows," said Emily, "and I am sure, if so, we are very much obliged to Campbell."

Isabella was here perceived and properly greeted. With Fanny she was especially affectionate, and turned her by the hand she still held, towards the ante-room, claiming her approbation. Fanny was in raptures, and it even met

with Constance's approbation ; she said it was so simple and lovely.

"Yes," said Fanny, softly, to Isabella, "it is just like the talk we had in that dear room ; I wanted something to distinguish it, though I should never forget it without ;" and she pressed the pretty be-ringed hand, still held in hers.

"You darling *mignonne!*" whispered her friend.

"I am glad you like our bower, Constance," said Emily, "I was afraid you might not."

"Not!—why?" said Constance.

"Oh, I thought you would think it silly."

"Silly! how little you understand me," returned the other, "silly to make a graceful use of the beauties of nature!"

"Yes, but then, you know, that some of these flowers are paper, not real, and I thought you would call that waste of time and unprofitable."

"I did not know they were not real," said Constance ; "certainly it is an unprofitable use of money—why, it must have cost several pounds."

"Several pence," said Emily, "and some hours ; we have three or four dozen sheets of paper, and some yards of ribbon-wire."

"Did you make them yourselves?" cried all at once.

"Yes, did you not understand that?" said Emily ; "look, here is our table and materials ; we have not finished yet, and we want all of you to come and help us."

They said they were willing—only some thought it too hard.

"Oh, no," said Emily, "George, and Campbell, and Mary Anne, have been cutting out for us three, and you can do the same if you like ; we shall not make up faster than you cut out, for Grace has to leave off to give patterns

of different flowers ; she understands it better than Mary Anne, though it's all Mary Anne's plan."

"Mary Anne's plan!" cried the sisters, "did you, Mary Anne, really invent this?"

Mary Anne was not only covered with confusion, but totally at a loss for an answer. What she would have said if Grace had not been present cannot be told—that is, whether she was prepared to assert a downright falsehood ; but the more forbearing Grace was, the less she understood her ; she could not believe she meant to keep the secret, and she might only be waiting to expose her more fully. Once or twice she thought Grace really forgot that the idea was her own, or that she did not care about it ; but now that it got so much admired, she thought Grace would claim it, and perhaps contradict her ; she stooped down to hide her face, and picked up her scissors, which she had dropped ; she wished it had been a needle, that she could have called the rest to help—to such shifts are the deceitful exposed. But before an answer was absolutely necessary, Grace had relieved her from her embarrassment. Grace felt more uneasy every moment at Mary Anne's falsehood—perhaps the admiration all the strangers had expressed might increase her sense of it. She thought Mary Anne must feel the same, and would be glad of any opportunity of disclaiming the idea.—But how could she do so now, publicly ? If there was a chance of speaking to her alone, Grace thought something might be done ; meanwhile she would shield her as well as she could.—At this point she said, "Invent ! no, Mary Anne did not invent them ; I have often made them, but I did not invent them."—Now, thought she, surely Mary Anne will take this opportunity of saying something like the truth.

Poor Grace ! she did not calculate on what her quixotic generosity might bring upon her.

“ But did Mary Anne plan ornamenting the ante-room in this way ?” said Constance.

What could Grace answer ? she could not say what was absolutely not true, to serve any one ; and to say what was true seemed equally impossible. She stared in Constance’s face without saying a word, while she thought for something she dared to say, and the words, “ Emily told me so,” came to her lips almost mechanically ; while Mary Anne forgot her fright and her obligation to Grace, in satisfaction at it having passed off so well.

Constance and the other sisters turned to express surprise and admiration at Mary Anne’s great taste, and asked her where she had seen, and learned to make these flowers.

She said she had never made them before, but she had heard of them. Emily here called to them all, and told them that herself and Ellen had placed all their seats and planned their tasks, and they must come and set hard to work. Isabella took the seat nearest the fire, and made a change in the arrangements. Fanny sat next her, and they declared they would only work at the same flower. Emily objected, because Grace must then cut out two patterns of every flower ; but Grace said she could easily arrange it, if they would be so kind as to undertake all the roses of different colours.—“ You know we can never have too many roses ; and I dare say,” she added, with a good-natured smile, “ you and Fanny had rather weave a wreath of roses together than any thing else.”

“ Oh, delightful !” exclaimed Fanny, “ dear, dear roses ! don’t you love them ?”

Grace actually kept these two at work by her lively skill, in spite of the interruption of their loving ways, and somewhat indolent habits. She began making up moss rose-buds, and as she finished them, placed them in order before the two leaf cutters, so that they really seemed to imagine it was all their own doing ; then she got them to

have patience, and let her begin upon roses ; and at last to help her to wreath them into a festoon with evergreens, and hang them up. They bent over it with delight, and talked of it as the work of their own hands.—The trio were equally satisfied. Meanwhile the following conversation went on, interrupted with occasional breaks of enquiries of the experienced, and calls for assistance at different points of the occupation. Constance was particularly eager in assisting, and insisted in making up the flowers, saying, any body could cut the leaves ; and some one of the three were constantly teaching her the secrets of the art. She was not so neat handed as either of Grace's morning pupils, Emily or Ellen, but did pretty well. Emily remarked again, she was glad that Constance took so much to the art—she expected she would refuse to assist, as she always had done before.

“Why,” returned her cousin, “you never before had any employment so rational and useful—how little you know of me ! I love sweet flowers, and admire even their lovely shadows—these are their shadows !”

“Rational it may be,” replied Emily, “but I cannot see how it is *useful* in your sense.”

“I do not usually make use of words without meaning,” answered Constance—“I mean *useful*. Do you think I am taking such pains to learn, merely for that pretty toy-room, which will fade to-morrow ?—No, I hope I have rather more consistency than that !”

“What are you driving at ?” asked Emily, coolly.

“Why, I am quite amazed at Mary Anne,” answered Constance, “for not mentioning this art before. Mary Anne, how could you forget it for Bodstock last month ?”

“I did not know it then,” said Mary Anne.

“When did you hear of it ?”

“Only since I have been here,” said Mary Anne.

“Oh, Mary Anne,” cried Ellen, “just look ! you have

blown away my whole heap of leaves that I had just arranged for my beautiful striped carnations."

"Oh, I beg your pardon," cried Mary Anne, "it was this sheet of paper; let me help you to pick them up, and arrange them again for you."

"Well," said Ellen, "I can't scold you, you are so kind and good-natured."

Perhaps Mary Anne was quite as much obliged to the opportune waft of air, as Ellen was for Mary Anne's good-nature.

"But, Constance," said Emily, "you were going to tell me the great usefulness of this new art."

"Why," said Constance, "I consider it quite a discovery for missionary purposes."

"For missionary purposes!" exclaimed Isabella, "what can you mean?"

"Don't you know the meaning of missionary purposes?" asked Constance, with something of a tone of superiority.

"No, not in the least, I protest," said Isabella; "missionaries, I know, are sent abroad to convert the heathen; I know Mrs. Jenkinson has a box for our forfeits, with blackamoors and texts upon it, but I can't think what artificial flowers can have to do with converting the heathen."

"Is it possible!" exclaimed Constance, "I thought Mrs. Jenkinson was very religious; does she never make you work for missionary purposes?"

"No, never," replied Isabella, "I protest I am quite in the dark."

"In the dark, indeed!" exclaimed Constance, "and cannot you guess?"

"No," replied the young lady,— "except," she added, more doubtingly than in jest, "you send them over roses to crown the new made converts with."

Emily, who had some time been very much tickled at

the manner of the parties, now burst into a scarcely restrained laugh, which was less visibly echoed by one or two of the others. Miss Ward had not the tact to join it, and it might have become a serious affair—"How can you be so absurd!" cried Emily, half stifled.

"Who's absurd?" asked Isabella.

"Why, all of you," answered her cousin, still laughing, "you've no idea how absurd you've been the last quarter of an hour."

"I am really quite ashamed of you, Emily," said Constance, who had kept her countenance immovable during the whole scene; "what can you find to laugh at in our discourse?"

"I am not laughing at the missionaries," said Emily,—"I know you think I am—but at your words and faces, and Isabella's idea of crowning them with flowers!—oh, dear!" cried she, stifled with laughter, and holding up a festoon, "just think of sending this wreath all the way to India to put on the head of a poor black!"

"For shame, Emily," cried Constance, with the most unmoved countenance, while all the rest, even Isabella and Fanny, were infected by Emily's hearty merriment.

Presently Emily added, as she recovered, "Well, I'm sure I don't wonder at Isabella, who could ever guess what paper roses had to do with preaching to the heathen?"

She got through this pretty composedly, but was constantly bursting into little repressed laughs as they went on talking.

"Really," said Constance, "I see nothing so ridiculous in sending over presents to the new converts; if you discovered brothers and sisters in a distant land, would you not like to show your affection for them?"

"Yes," replied Emily, "but think of these paper roses! and their black faces!—oh, dear! Constance, how can you be so silly!"

The more Emily laughed the graver Constance became, and she now said with earnestness, "Well, I declare I had rather work for those dear negroes than for all the fine ladies and gentlemen in the land!"

"Oh, yes," cried Fanny, who had followed Isabella's lead, and was now grave, "the dear, dear negroes! do you not love them?"

"Love them!" cried Miss Ward, "what, love their horrid black faces! what do you mean, *mignonne*?"

"I mean," said Fanny, "that I love them so much I should like to go and preach to them; I had rather do that, than even live in our cottage in Wales. Oh, should you not like to go over and convert them all? you know we should only want plenty of bibles and little tracts, and we should dress quite plain, and only just talk to them, for they are so simple and affectionate, they don't want being preached to like other heathens, but they say, 'Yes, massa,' and believe in a minute. Would you not like to go?"

"You darling, *mignonne*," cried Isabella, kissing her, "I should like to go any where with you; you are positively a little enthusiast."

"Fanny," said Constance, "you speak like a child; you don't consider the cost of a missionary's life when you talk in that way."

"Besides," said Ellen, "*you* could not convert them; you can't convert the heathen without a clergyman."

"What can you mean?" said Constance, "could not Fanny teach the way of salvation to the perishing heathen just as well as the wisest man?"

"Why, she could help a very little by reading, because they cannot read," said Ellen, "but I mean there must be a clergyman to baptize them and teach them afterwards." After a pause, she continued, "But will you, Constance,

please say what you meant just now by 'missionary purposes?'"

"I do not wonder," said Constance, "that *you* should not know, because you are shut up in the country, and that is always a hundred years behind London; but I am surprised that Mrs. Jenkinson should not have introduced to her young ladies an invention which is the honour of the age we live in."

"Well, but what is it?" asked Ellen.

"It is, that ladies, instead of using their accomplishments for purposes of vanity and folly, turn them to account in works of a more lasting description, and send the money to the missionary and bible societies, and others of the same kind."

"Well, I don't understand you now," said Ellen.

"I'll explain," said Emily; "a party of ladies join together for what they call a 'Fancy Fair;'—they make pincushions, housewives, and pretty things of that sort, and sell them for these purposes. Some have a stall always in their drawing-room; whoever calls they make buy something or other, and if they can, make every body promise to work for them too; and you know Constance is delighted with these flowers because it is a new idea for these Fairs."

"Well," said Isabella, "I think it a very good idea; I am sure we ought to do something sometimes for those poor starving negroes."

"I am delighted to hear you say so," cried Constance, "perhaps you will do us the honour of adding to our stores—we are just beginning a drawing-room table."

"I shall be most happy," replied the young lady, "but I am really such a useless creature; I never made a pincushion in my life."

"Oh, but a drawing, or any thing, as *yours*, would be most valuable."

“Do dear, sweet *amie*,” whispered Fanny, softly, “do use this pretty white hand in our service,” and she raised the white hand and kissed it.

“You darling enthusiast,” cried Isabella, “I cannot refuse *you*.—Well, I’ll tell you what I can do, I will cut out one of those shades of Buonaparte’s face.”

“Oh, delightful!” cried the Duffs.—“And,” said Constance, “I shall not sell it, but I shall keep it hid, and show it *as yours* to every body, at so much per head; it will bring us in a regular income. We have hardly set about asking any body yet, but, Emily, I was thinking these flowers will be of no use to you after to-night, so we may as well have them; you’ll take care they’re not hurt, please.”

Emily said she could not part with them, since her mamma wished for them if they were at all nicely done for a similar occasion.

Constance pressed it, and said she would ask her aunt about it herself, and the three Duffs and Isabella took part against Emily.

Emily said she could ask, but she did not think her mamma would agree;—“particularly,” added she, “after mamma has seen the ante-room, for I am sure she’ll be very much surprised; it has never been ornamented any thing like so tastefully, and I know she will like to keep them for some of her own parties.”

“Well, then,” said Constance, rising, “I will go this moment and ask before she has seen it.”

“Well, go,” said Emily, laughing, “I know the answer you will get.”

“I am not often refused,” remarked Constance, gravely, “when once I make up my mind to ask a favour.”

“Well, go,” repeated Emily, “why don’t you go?”

“Why, on second thoughts,” said she, resuming her seat, “I do not think it would be quite fair before my

aunt has seen it ; you know she might wish to change her mind."

"What a discovery !" cried Emily, "a happy thought, just in time, was it not, Grace?"

"I was very glad Constance remembered it," replied Grace, "for it did not seem right."

"Then why did you not tell me so?" asked Constance.

"I thought you would not do it," replied Grace.

"And why did you think so?"

"Because," said Grace, hesitating, "because you seem always so....."

"Well, so what?" said Constance, coolly.

"So determined to do what is right," said poor Grace, in some confusion, she hardly knew why.

"Grace does not say you always do right, but you are always determined to do right," remarked Emily.

"But," pursued Constance, without noticing her cousin's remark, "why do you think me so very good? you know very little of me."

"I have heard you talk a good deal, you know," replied Grace, afraid every thing she said was wrong.

"You must have a great deal of observation," remarked Constance.

"Why, to be sure she has," cried Emily, "don't you know Grace is cleverer than all of you put together?"

"How do you know that?" said Mary Anne, "nobody is cleverer than Constance."

"I can tell you a person, Mary Anne, that Grace is both cleverer and better than," said Emily, in a tone that alarmed two of the party; then catching Grace's eye, she turned it into a laugh, and exclaimed, "Grace, you are the oddest girl I ever saw in my life."

"What are you talking of, Emily?" said Ellen, "who do you mean?"

"Oh, Law! never mind," cried Emily, "only Grace is a regular goose!"

"And yet she's cleverer than all of us!" said Constance.

"Well, she's both, and a gaby into the bargain, I have no patience with her!" continued Emily. After which there was a little pause.

"Really, Emily" said Isabella, "I do wish you would cure yourself of those vulgar words and expressions; it is no use talking to you, I have been quite ashamed of you all the morning, and now you have used four all at once."

"Well, what are they?" said her cousin.

"You said, '*Oh, Law!*'—'*goose!*'—'*gaby!*'—and '*into the bargain!*' it is really quite shocking."

"Indeed it is, as you justly remark," said Constance; "I have told Emily, I am sure, almost every time I see her, of her breaking the third commandment in the way she constantly does."

"I don't break the third commandment," said Emily, "I only say '*Law,*'—that is not breaking the third commandment."

"It is," said Constance, "and I have told you over and over again, but it's no use."

"If it is of no use, why do you go on?" said Emily; "I can't help it, and every body does it."

"No, nobody does it," said Isabella; "Mrs. Jenkinson will not allow any of the young ladies to make use of such an expression; she says it is not at all genteel, and that no well-bred people do so."

"Then why are you always saying, '*good gracious!*' and '*my goodness!*'" said Emily.

"I do not," replied the other, indignantly, "I may say '*gracious me!*' sometimes, Mrs. Jenkinson does not object to that, but she says the others are quite vulgar."

"I dare say," cried Emily, "the girls say them all be-

hind her back as much as I do ; I don't think we say any thing of the sort before the Miss Carters."

" I hope you don't mean to compare your school to Mrs. Jenkinson's."

" Yes, to be sure I do," said Emily " all schools may be compared together."

" Well, then," said Isabella, " I will compare yours to a charity school."

" Well, do," returned the other, " and what will you say of them?"

" Why, I'll say," returned the young lady, " that they are just alike, and that you are all an odious vulgar set."

" Very likely," replied Emily, not more provoking than provoked, " but remember you are cousin to one of the set."

The Duffs were ready to exclaim at Emily's rudeness, when the door opened, and the boys came in. This made an interruption, for some of the party had to greet—the two Jameses having stopped by the way and joined the skating party. Then came admiration of the ante-room, and the festoons being pretty nearly completed, the boys assisted to finish the work. Madge was brought in and installed in her place of honour, of which she seemed very proud, marching and sliding up and down her perch, and talking and looking round as if she approved of the labour of her young friends. In about half an hour, just at dusk, it was finished, and all stood round much satisfied. Emily unfolded a cloth she had prepared to conceal their handywork till the evening, when the candles would be lit and all exhibited to perfection. She then despatched all, to be ready for dinner, as they were to dine all together at five to day, and herself stayed behind with Hanson to gather together their numerous materials, and clear the room for the evening.

CHAPTER XXI.

What matter? if the waymarks sure
On every side are round us set,
Soon overleaped, but not obscure,
'Tis ours to mark them or forget.

The Christian Year.

ELLEN took Grace to her own room, since they had not to dress before dinner. "Only look at my hands," said she, "they are covered with gum, and as black as tinkers', are not yours?"

"Not very bad," said Grace.

"Why, I declare they are as clean as if you had washed them; how did you manage that, Grace?"

Grace said she was used to handle gum, and Ellen would do the same with a little practice.

By this time they had reached Ellen's room, and when they were ready for dinner, Ellen, after a silence, said, in her mysterious tone, "Grace, I want to ask you something."

"Well," said Grace, "what is it?"

"You'll not be angry, will you?"

"No," said Grace.

"Well, it's about what they were talking of just now—the third commandment, you know—do you think it right to use those expressions? I hope you're not angry with me, Grace, dear, but I really want to know what you think."

"Why, I don't know," said Grace, "I never heard any body say."

“Yes, but what do you think? I have never heard you use them, do you ever?”

“No,” said Grace, “I do not.”

“Then why do you not? have you never heard them?”

“I have often heard them,” said Grace, “a great many little girls I have met use them.”

“Then why do not you? is it, as Mrs. Jenkinson says, because they are vulgar?”

“No, I never thought of that,” said Grace, “I did not know they were vulgar.”

“Then, why?”

“I always thought it did not seem quite right; I don’t know the meaning of some of them, but I was always afraid to use them.”

“Well,” said Ellen, “that is just what I used to feel; I am so glad!—But I should like to tell you what made me think *seriously* about it first;—I must tell you I was very silly indeed three or four years ago; it was when Emily first went to school, and I was with her for a few days: it was all so new, I liked it very much indeed, and the girls were so kind to me, because, you know, I was not there as a pupil—so they made me their plaything; all they did and said seemed so grand to me—and this is where I was so silly—I wished to do the same; among other things I thought it would be so fine to say, ‘Oh, Law,’ and ‘good gracious,’ and ‘bless me,’ as some of them did, at every thing. Emily caught it in a minute, and I tried to do it very often, but somehow or other I could not; one day I was running in the garden, and my frock caught in a bush; I cried out, ‘Good gracious! Emma, I have torn my frock!’ I found it much easier to say than I thought it would be, but I felt so ashamed that I never said it again. In a few days Hanson came for me—you know nurse Hanson—and we three were in the room while my bonnet and handkerchief were being put on. Emily was

in a great hurry, and she said, 'Law, Ellen, what a time you are.' Hanson said, 'Miss Emily, you should not make use of that expression, you know what it is.' Emily said just the same as she did just now down stairs. I felt so much obliged to Hanson—I did not tell her so, but I have always liked her since; I am sure it prevented me ever again wishing to use any of those words. Are you tired of my talking, Grace?"

"Oh, no," said Grace, "not at all."

"Well, then," added she, "there are two or three other things about it very curious indeed, which I should like to tell you, for I never mentioned them to any body. The next Sunday, the second morning lesson was those words of our Saviour, 'Let your yea be yea,'—you know them, I dare say. I never understood them before, and I thought very much of 'whatsoever is more than these cometh of evil;' do you think it means such expressions as these?"

"I always think *perhaps* it does, and that it is better not to use them."

"Well, I thought so too; but then, Grace, there was another curious coincidence: the next day I went to grand-mamma's, where, you know, I live now much more than I do at home, and two or three days after she took me to a neighbour's,—I know them now very well; the little girls took me into their school-room, and I took down some of their books: they told me that was their Sunday shelf, and I presently opened a little volume, which was Sermons for Children, twenty-two, I think, by a Lady. There was a sermon on each of the Commandments, and I opened at the third: it said just the same as Hanson, and just what I had been thinking of,—I cannot remember the words, for every body was talking to me all the time, and I was in a hurry, but I have never forgotten the sense,—now don't you think these things all coming together were very curious?"

"Yes," said Grace, "but I think they are always happening. Mamma often says things that are of use to me, sometimes the very next minute; I quite expect it, and keep her words in my head."

"I had another thing to say, Grace, but I hope you won't think it very wrong, and that is, that so many people use those words; what do you say to that?"

"Why," said Grace, "you know we cannot help what other people do; we must take care to do right ourselves; don't you think so?"

"Yes, certainly," replied Ellen, in an unsatisfied tone.

"Why, you know, we might become every thing that is bad if we went by that rule," continued Grace, "because there are some very wicked people in the world."

"Yes, but what I mean," said Ellen, "is that I do not like to see people do what I think it wrong to do myself; do you, Grace?"

"No," said Grace, "not at all."

"And what do you do? do you tell them?"

"I! oh, no," said Grace, "I could not do so for all the world!"

"Well, but I do sometimes," said Ellen, "do you think it is wrong?"

"Oh, not wrong! it can't be wrong; I do wonder at Constance, and admire her every minute; I wish I could do as she does—how very good she is!"

"Yes," said Ellen, "but I can't do as she does at all; it is only some people I can speak to—children, I mean, like myself; and then it's all by chance—you know I could not do it if I thought of it beforehand, I should not be able to open my lips, and should feel quite choked. But, Grace, I want to say one more thing to you, will you let me?"

"Yes, certainly."

"Do you think it right to object to those expressions

because they are vulgar?" asked Ellen, "or to use one and not another?"

"You mean what your cousin said of Mrs. Jenkinson," remarked Grace; "I thought perhaps she had not mentioned all her governess said to her."

"Then you did think *that* not a right reason, did you?" asked the determined Ellen.

"I think it cannot be," replied Grace, "because, you know if a thing is wrong, it cannot signify if it is vulgar or not, for it must not be done."

"But then there are some things," said Ellen, "not exactly wrong, that 'vulgar' would do to correct,—such as speaking loud or being boisterous, or any thing of that kind, don't you think so?"

"Yes, I suppose so," said Grace, "but you know people might do all such very small things, because they are *right*, if they pleased, either because their mamma told them not, or because they saw they hurt or offended some of their friends."

"I don't think I ever thought of that reason for such little things before," said Ellen, "yet I never like to hear people say, 'Do not do so and so, because it is vulgar,' or 'do so and so, because it is genteel,' do you?"

"Mamma never says so to me," replied Grace, "and I do not think I ever heard it said till to-day. Mamma sometimes says to me such a thing is rude, it might hurt people's feelings—or such a thing was forward, and I understand these words much better than the others,—but I always understand mamma."

Here the bell rang for dinner, and the young friends hastened down.

We ought not perhaps to pass over the drawing-room conversation between the young ladies without a few remarks. It was not like young ladies, and what is far worse, it was not like young Christians. Mary

Anne shows constantly a very bad spirit and wrong temper, not to speak at present of her grand piece of falsehood; she does not seem to check the beginnings of evil, but yields to temptation in a moment. Isabella is silly and affected, and what is worse, suffers these follies to lead her into exaggeration and almost downright falsehood; she talks in such a random manner, that when she is wishing to exhibit her own importance, she scarcely knows truth from falsehood; there was a first beginning to all this—alas! why did she allow it? Fanny lets foolish thoughts and feelings take hold of her, so that she is ready to be satisfied with such a one for a friend as Isabella, without waiting to see if she is likely to be worthy of her regard; their friendship has begun in flattery, so it is very likely there is not much sincerity in it; such characters as Fanny's very often end in discontent and suspicion of every body, because they place their affections on unworthy and unstable characters, and will not believe the opinion of persons who have the means of knowing the truth better than themselves. Emily has a great many good qualities, but she has not yet brought them into order; and besides, she has some faults—she is provoking, and she tries her cousin's temper too much,—then she confesses she allows herself in a wrong habit, “because she cannot help it.” If she cannot correct herself, even outwardly, she is not fit to correct others at present. Ellen felt very sorry after she had made use of an expression she heard from others—she found it easy to do so, but felt ashamed—she left it off, and never did so again; every day proofs occurred of her judgment being right—she joyfully acquiesced in them and kept to her resolution. Emily and Ellen were sisters; they had had much the same training; the same circumstances in this instance occurred to both; both witnessed the same scenes for a fortnight; both had the same temptations; both had the same warning from Hanson; both

heard the same chapter read on the next Sunday ; but both did not make the same use of these kind providences—one resisted the bad habit, the other yielded, and now makes for excuse, “ she cannot help it ;” alas ! why did she ever begin ?

CHAPTER XXII.

Ce n'est que le premier pas qui coute.

French Proverb.

MR. EVERARD came down to dinner, but it was quickly despatched, and the young people dispersed to their toilets. Grace had thought before dinner of trying to speak to Mary Anne herself, but it was quite impossible to do so without all being aware of it, since the Duffs dressed together in the same room, and Mary Anne not having seen her sisters so long, kept particularly close to them. Grace was in her room first, and she was deeply musing on her late conversation with Ellen, when Emily came into the room. The moment she entered she ran up to Grace and seized her by both her hands, saying, “ you naughty, deceitful child—Grace, I am quite ashamed of you !”

Grace did not know whether she was in jest or earnest, and looked distressed.

“ Why you know you are,” continued Emily, “ but I know all about it, you can't deceive me !”

“ What do you mean ?” said Grace.

“ Why, you know well enough ; what does your conscience tell you ?”

“ Indeed I don't know,” said Grace, whose memory kept running over her late conversation with Ellen.

“ Well, I believe you, Grace, though you have been deceiving us all the morning ; I really don't know which is worse, Mary Anne or you.”

“ Oh, Emily !” cried poor Grace, colouring crimson, and covering her face with her disengaged hands.

“ Well, I'm glad you are ashamed at last,” said Emily.

Emily did not understand Grace's feelings, and was now amazed and concerned to see Grace was in much distress. She believed Emily thought she had been acting very deceitfully, and was afraid it was true, yet she could not say a word of any sort because of betraying Mary Anne ; she therefore turned away silently and supported herself by the bed-post. Emily went to her and said, “ Oh, Grace, dear Grace, are you really distressed ? don't you know I'm only in jest ? Grace, do speak to me ; why you are trembling so, you can hardly stand ;” and she ran for a chair— “ What can be the matter, Grace ? do answer me ; is it what I have said ?”

“ What did you mean ?” said Grace, recovering herself as well as she could, and speaking very calmly, though some little girls under her feelings, would have burst into a passion of tears, and almost gone into hysterics.

“ Why I mean,” said Emily, deceived by Grace's self-command, and returning to her usual high spirits, “ I mean that I know as well as if I had heard it, that the ante-room was all your idea, and that Mary Anne has stolen the credit of it from you.”

“ Oh, Emily !” exclaiming Grace again.

“ It is no use your pretending it is not so ; I found it out of myself ; I wondered at Mary Anne's taste, for she has none in the world, but I never doubted the truth till by chance I said that about its being your idea instead of hers ; she coloured so much and looked so odd, I could not help remarking it ; and some time after, when she upset the flowers, I was sure. Then I tried you both, and

it was only your imploring look that prevented my exposing her ; I should never have understood your look, you are such a strange girl, only you did just the same by Isabella the other day, in making me promise not to expose her folly and exaggerations.

“ I did not know I looked at you,” said Grace.

“ But you did though, and I could have laughed, only you seemed so uneasy—more uneasy than Mary Anne, I think. But now, Grace,” continued she, in a more serious tone, “ you *must* confess it is as I say ;” and on Grace giving no answer, she added, “ You may as well, for if you do not I will tell all the company in the middle of the evening, just as Mary Anne has got all the credit, for I know the ante-room will be greatly admired. Now, was it not your idea ?”

“ Oh, Emily,” cried poor Grace, “ you are very cruel !”

“ Confess !” said Emily, “ who proposed the plan ? did she ?—only yes or no !”

“ No,” sighed Grace.

“ Did you ?—I certainly will tell to-night,” added Emily, seeing Grace’s hesitation—“ yes or no !”

“ Yes,” said Grace. “ Now, Emily,” she continued, recovering her spirit, “ you have forced it from me unfairly, and you are bound to promise me to say nothing about it one way or other.”

“ I don’t see that at all,” said Emily ; “ do you think I can bear to see that shabby Mary Anne take all the credit ?—she shall not.”

“ Well, then, you will destroy all the pleasure of my evening, and I do not think I shall ever be able to look Mary Anne in the face again.”

“ Why, Grace, are you crazy ?” said Emily, “ you speak as if Mary Anne and you had changed places.”

“ Oh, no !”—think how poor Mary Anne will feel when it has all gone so far ; and you know if I had meant to

tell, I ought to have done it at first, and not let it go so long; you know Mary Anne never *said* it was her idea, every body would have it so, and I think I was as bad as she, for you know I told very nearly a story about it.— Oh, Emily, do have a little pity upon me! I do not think I can begin dressing till you promise me.”

“But,” said Emily, “it is worse and worse to go on; you know there is no end to it.”

Grace had not thought of this, and she added to herself, “Yes, and Mary Anne is made more and more wrong.” “Oh,” said she, aloud, “what a shocking thing it is to take the first wrong step!”

“Yes, but now you can prevent Mary Anne from taking a third and fourth.”

“I did not mean Mary Anne,” said Grace.

“Then, who?”

“Myself,” replied Grace.

“You silly girl!” cried Emily, “what nonsense you are talking! why, how could you help it?”

“I don’t know,” said Grace, despondingly, “but you see I am in such a situation that I cannot do right.”

“What a strange girl you are, Grace,” said Emily, “and how you seem to puzzle yourself about things; I never heard any body talk so much about right and wrong as you do.”

“Do you think I puzzle myself?” asked Grace, with some hope, “do you see what ought to be done?”

“Why,” said Emily, “I never think of making such a fuss about such things as you do; you know at school this sort of thing happens constantly.”

“And what do you do?” asked Grace.

“Oh, *then* I don’t tell, because the girls would hate me and call me tell-tale; but if this happened among ourselves, as now, I should not think about it, but feel that Mary Anne had behaved shabbily, and deserved to be ex-

posed, so I should expose her; besides, you know, she will take all the credit from you."

"But, Emily, only think—just suppose for a moment; suppose you had done something of the same kind—you must fancy so just for a moment; well, now, suppose in the middle of a large party I were to expose you just as you wish me to do Mary Anne,—just think how shocking—should you like it?"

"But," said Emily, "I don't think I ever should do such a thing as Mary Anne."

"I did not mean that you would, but you must try to fancy that you had; now, would you not think me very unkind, and a great deal worse, when I had said nothing all the morning, and not even spoken to yourself?"

"Well," said Emily, "I do see now that it would not be quite fair."

"Then you will say nothing?" exclaimed Grace, joyfully.

"No, I will not promise, I will not have her carry away all the credit from you."

"Oh, Emily, I wish you would not talk of credit, it is quite nonsense; you know it was only a thought—quite passed in a moment; if there is any credit for such a small thing it belongs to those who have worked at it afterwards.—I am sure," added she, sorrowfully, "I wish I could give what you call the credit all away to Mary Anne. Oh, how I wish she had thought of it first."

Emily had become almost as perplexed as poor Grace, and a pause ensued—Emily wondering at Grace's strange feelings, yet every moment finding something more reasonable in them than at first she could have thought possible. Grace remained on the chair, leaning her head against the friendly bed-post. Emily was making progress in her dressing. Presently Grace burst out with, "Well, Emily, will you do this? you know you discovered it all quite by

yourself, so you have as much right to speak to Mary Anne as you had to me; will you speak to her all alone, before people come, and I dare say she will be as glad as I am to give up what you call the credit; why should we speak of the *idea*? we have all worked at it together, and that is the principal part; do you think there would be any thing wrong in doing so?"

"Oh, certainly not," said Emily, "and it would be very easy if we had begun so, but, you know, all down stairs think it is Mary Anne's, and Constance and Fanny never neglect to puff off their sister, and it will be all over the room in a minute; you know nothing else was talked of all dinner time, and papa is quite anxious to see it."

"Well but, Emily, if Mary Anne chose, you know, she could manage to put off a great deal upon the rest, and by degrees it could come to very nearly the truth indeed; at any rate, you know, it would be a great relief to her to get such a weight off her mind, and what would be better than all, she would not be going farther wrong; will you promise to speak to her?—but alone, Emily, and not in the drawing-room,—up in her room, or some room alone, please, will you?"

"Well," said Emily, "I promise I will *if I can*."

"Thank you, dear Emily, how good you are!" said Grace, quite relieved; and she got up and walked to the fire, where Emily was standing nearly dressed, for they had one in their room to-day.

"It is not *I* that am good," said Emily, more seriously than she had ever spoken to Grace, "I am sure it's a shame that so silly a girl as Mary Anne should give you so much trouble," and she took Grace's hand and kissed her, almost immediately exclaiming, "Why, Grace, you are as cold as ice, and how you tremble! I never felt any thing like you! what is the matter? you must be very ill."

"Oh, no, not ill," said Grace, now smiling and quite at

her ease, "I was very uncomfortable just now, but now I know what to do I shall soon be as usual again."

"But just feel," said Emily, placing her hand on Grace's temples and neck, "it is not trembling now, I see—it is throbbing, all over you—you must be very ill—do let me go and tell your mamma."

"Oh, no, Emily, pray come back—indeed I am not ill; I know very well what it is, I am often the same—indeed mamma can do nothing, and I shall be quite as usual presently."

"Well but you must have something."

"No, indeed," said Grace, "I know what it is, and I could have cured it before, only we went on talking so long. But I believe," added she presently, "now I must just lie down a little; luckily I have very little dressing, and ten minutes lying down will take this off; it is only a beating of the heart, and I know exactly all about it."

Emily helped her to lie down on her bed, and warmed a shawl and threw over her.

"Oh, thank you," said Grace, "that is better than all the rest."

Grace lay very still for a few minutes, when presently Emily turned round, looking very much alarmed. "Why Grace," said she, going towards her, "is it possible!—is that your heart beating? why I hear it here."

"Yes, it is," said Grace, "but Emily, please don't look so frightened, you will make me laugh, your eyes look quite terrified; I am so used to it, I think nothing about it."

Emily again begged Grace to let her fetch her mamma, and proposed some hartshorn and water—did she never take any thing?

Oh, never, she said, only once her mamma gave her sal volatile and water, but she had rather not, and she should be quite well after tea.

Emily said that would be a long time to wait, and then remembered most likely coffee was made, and she said she would go down and get Hanson to give her a cup of coffee.

Grace was so fearful of a report being raised that she was not well, and so little used to take any thing, that she opposed it, but Emily ran out of the room, while Grace said, "Please do not say I am ill."

"Oh," thought Grace, when she was left alone, "what a sad thing deception is! I am afraid of saying a word, lest all should be discovered." And then she began to think of Mary Anne's part. "I dare say," thought she, "Mary Anne did not mean to deceive at first, but was led into it by Emily's praise, and so she has gone on, finding it each moment harder and harder; how careful we should be about the beginnings." Then she remembered that she herself had, as it were, helped on the falsehood, and feared she had done almost as wrong as Mary Anne; but she knew there was a difference. "She put me in a difficulty certainly," thought she, "what could I have said when they told me it was Mary Anne's? I could never have said, 'Oh, no, it is mine!' Besides, it never came into my head till now; then every instant it has got worse and worse. But I do hope Emily will speak to Mary Anne, and that things will be better than I expect; mamma said one day we should not 'meet troubles,' and that is the same, I suppose, as those words of our Saviour's, 'Sufficient unto the day is the evil thereof.'"

It may be mentioned here that Grace's surmise as to the mode in which Mary Anne had suffered herself to be tempted, was pretty nearly correct. Mary Anne did not find thoughts come into her head so readily as others, and instead of taking pains to improve in this respect, she gave way to indolence, and so from year to year became worse instead of better. She was often called dull and stupid,

and awkward, because she would exert neither body nor mind ; she therefore grew listless in both ; yet she wished very much to appear good and clever, and was always trying short cuts to each. She took as much pains sometimes to do this as would have served *really* to improve herself. She would take advantage of her sister's exercises, and avail herself of opportunities which certainly were not quite right. By these and other means she was becoming a weak, useless character, and was ready to give way to almost any temptation that fell in with her peculiar failings. As they were going up to bed on the Monday night, Mary Anne had said to Emily, casually, as they passed through the hall, "What would you say to ornamenting the ante-room with flowers and evergreens for tomorrow, Emily?"

Emily said they sometimes did so, but not in winter, it took so many flowers, and so few were blown.

"But I meant to *make* flowers out of paper, and mix them, and put festoons and lights behind, and then I would bring in your paroquet."

Emily took very much to the idea, if they could make flowers, and Mary Anne made very light of this part. Emily praised Mary Anne's idea much more than she would have done any one's else, because she was surprised at her thinking of such a plan. This emboldened the other, and she talked more freely about it, saying once, rather faintly, that she and Grace had been talking it over. Emily longed for Grace that evening, but as she did not come, she took the steps we have already related.

CHAPTER XXIII.

Hoddy Doddy sat on a wall,
Hoddy Doddy had a great fall,
Not all the King's horses and all the King's men,
Could set Hoddy Doddy up again.

Ancient Riddle.

GRACE was disturbed in her reflections by a tap at the door; she thought Emily had returned for something, but found it was Hanson. "Miss Emily," cried she, as she entered, looking round, "I thought you answered me."

"It was I," said a soft little voice, proceeding apparently from nowhere.—"Here, Hanson," said Grace, raising herself a little.

"Oh, Miss Leslie! are you there? Dear! dear!" cried Hanson, "are you ill?"

"Oh, no, Hanson," said Grace, "I am not ill, only I promised to lie here till Emily came back."

"Not ill! my dear young lady," said Hanson, feeling her pulse, and seeing how all her pulses throbbed, "what can be the matter?" and she seemed quite alarmed, examined her as to what she had had for dinner, and wanted to get her some specifics of her own; but Grace told her she would lie still and have a cup of coffee, and Hanson then recommended her to lie quiet as long as she could, and promised to come up in time to dress her, the very last thing. Grace undertook to remain quite still upon the bed till some of them came to her. Hanson asked where Miss Emily was, and found she must just have missed her, as Emily went out to seek her to get dressed, before she

got the coffee. The coffee was not quite ready, but Hanson said Grace should have a cup as soon as possible. Grace was then left some time alone, and from the entire rest and cessation from talking, her ailments greatly abated, and by the time Emily returned the palpitation was nearly gone.

"I have been very long," said Emily, "but I had to wait, and George called me in about the lights; we want you sadly, Grace, to advise us, but you cannot come down yet. Now, drink this cup of coffee. Hanson will come and dress you, and then you shall come in and see all is right, before we let papa and mamma and the rest see our *Fairy Bower*, for now I understand the meaning of the title, I do want you so to come."

This revived a little poor Grace's painful remembrances, and she was wondering if Emily had spoken to Mary Anne, when Emily continued, "I said nothing about your being ill, Grace, though Ellen and the rest wondered you could not fasten my frock.—"I don't know how it is, but I cannot help doing as you wish; I never minded any body so much before."

"I am sure you are very kind," said Grace, "and you have made me quite well with that cup of coffee—now kiss me, Emily!—how nice you look! Hanson finished you, I suppose?"

"Yes, she would tie my sash all over again," replied Emily; "by the bye she told me I must look at my hair, for it was not quite right, and no one can do that but myself.—Now give me your cup." And Emily went to the glass.

"I never saw any one with hair dressed like yours," said Grace.

"It is foreign," replied Emily, "my aunt brought it from the Continent, and tried to dress Isabella's so, but

nobody liked it, and every body likes mine, because mine was always out of curl."

"I am sure it always looks nice now," said Grace, "and is no trouble at all." Presently she added, "Emily, dear, I wish you would move the cup and saucer a little, I am afraid you will whisk them off that stand."

"Yes, I will directly," said Emily, "I must just tie this bow afresh."

Grace watched the cup anxiously, for it was very beautiful china, and looked very jealously at Emily's quick and not very guarded movements. She had placed the cup on a toilette stand. Grace longed to speak again; she would gladly have risen and moved it, but she thought that would be troublesome. Emily however had moved a little, and Grace was more satisfied, when in a moment down came stand and all on the floor, and of course the cup and saucer were broken to pieces.

"Oh, dear," cried poor Emily, "how I wish I had moved it as you told me! but yet I did not whisk it off—I don't know how it was."

"I see," said Grace, "it was your chain round the foot of the stand."

"Yes," said Emily, "I was just putting on my chain, and caught it up in a hurry; but do you know, it is the best china, and it cannot be matched. It was all that tiresome Hannah—Hanson would not have given me the best china.—I know mamma will be so angry about it."

"Well," said Grace, "it is all my fault; you could not help it."

"Why *I* broke it," said Emily.

"Yes, but it would not have been there, except for me," said Grace.

"I cannot replace it, that is the worst! Oh, how I wish I had minded you, Grace!" said Emily.

"I dare say," returned the other, "you were hurrying to mind me, and that was the cause of the accident."

"Yes, but if I had moved it at once," sighed poor Emily, "it would not have been broken."

"Well, it *is* better, certainly, as you say," answered Grace, "to do a thing at once; but it cannot be helped now, and if it teaches us that lesson for our whole lives—I mean, to do a thing at once, it will be a good accident after all; I have learned some things so already."

"Grace, you always make every thing right," said Emily, "I wish I was like you!"

"Oh, pray don't say that!" cried poor Grace, thinking of some of her great defects.

Emily gathered together the unfortunate remains of the beautiful cup, and laid them on the toilette stand; she then prepared to leave the room, and herself told Grace she should try and speak to Mary Anne, before it was quite impossible. She added, "It is a very great bore indeed, and I would do it for nobody but you, Grace."

Her friend thanked her warmly, and once more she was left alone.

After a time Hanson came in, and was very glad to find Grace seeming well again. She had recovered her colour, which was a very pretty one, and her eyes looked bright and laughing. Hanson said she thought the cup of coffee had done great things.

"Oh, Hanson," said Grace, "that is the worst part! a great deal worse than my palpitation, for we have broken that beautiful cup and saucer!"

"Dear! dear! I am very sorry indeed; what a pity!" cried Hanson; "I declare here it is, all to pieces! How did you do it, Miss Grace?"

But for the morning's experience, Grace might have let it pass as her personal accident, but that had given her a shock, and she said, "I did not do it myself exactly, but

it was my fault, it was brought up for me.—I am afraid,” added she, “Mrs. Ward will be very much vexed; what do you think I could do, Hanson?—you know best about such things; do you think you could get a cup at all like it for me?”

“Well, I don’t know, but I might,” said Hanson, examining it, “it is Spode’s china, I see, and I have a friend in the works—if it is to be had, he could get it for me.”

Grace’s joy was excessive: she told Hanson that Emily had said it could not be matched.

Hanson said it was very true, but that her friend was good-natured and clever, and had managed to match several breakages for her very well.

This was joyful news to Grace, and made her forget all her other troubles. We have seen Grace was a little afraid of Mrs. Ward, and she really thought every thing was going to be unfortunate for her, for Mrs. Ward might very properly be angry that a little girl like Grace should take the liberty of getting a cup of coffee in the best china. Grace asked when Hanson thought she could know about this cup and saucer, and if she could give a guess as to the price.

Hanson said in a few days,—but she could not tell about the price.

Poor Grace asked if it would be more than two guineas.

Hanson assured her not near so much, and promised she would not forget it.

Grace had never been so regularly *drest* since she was quite a little girl, as now, by Hanson, who was very particular indeed. Though Grace’s frock and slip were simple enough, yet she was a long time fastening them and setting the bow of the sash. Grace felt terribly impatient, for she wished to get down stairs; but she considered, it was very good of Hanson to take such pains to make her look proper. She longed to jump away and say, “Oh, that

will do, I can fasten it myself in a minute," but she repressed her impatience, and thanked Hanson before she left the room.

"What a dear little lamb that is!" thought Hanson, as she folded the broken pieces carefully in a piece of paper; "I was really ashamed I was so long, but this finger of mine makes me very awkward—yet there she stood, as gentle as a dove—not a pull, or a twist, or an impatient word, like some young ladies! Miss Ellen, though she's a darling, would not have been as good as that, and Miss Emily would have been off like a shot long ago—why, I could hardly keep her for a quarter of the time just now!"

CHAPTER XXIV.

Nor sullen lip, nor taunting eye,
Deforms the scene where thou art by.

Akenside.

GRACE was recalled to the remembrance of her grand trouble by finding her mamma had left her room. She did not, however, avoid seeing her mamma by going into the back drawing-room: she went straight to the other room, and as she expected, Mrs. Leslie remarked on her not coming to her as usual, and asked why she had been so long.—Mrs. Ward said, "Grace is unfortunate to-day; it is the second time that Emily has been hard at work before her." Grace was rather a favourite of Mr. Ward's, because he fancied her like her mamma and her aunt Stanley; so he said, "Well, I dare say Grace could give

a good reason for it—why look at all these folds,” said he, taking hold of Grace’s white muslin frock, “this must have taken an age to put on !”

Grace was obliged to both Mr. and Mrs. Ward for speaking, for it spared her accounting to her mamma for her absence ; and in a few minutes she was dismissed to her young friends, and charged not to go through the folding doors,—for Mr. Ward said they were going to have a great surprise in this wonderful device of Mary Anne’s, and that he was told Mary Anne would be very angry indeed if they caught a glimpse before the proper time. Mrs. Ward began saying she was quite glad to find Mary Anne had some taste, and was appealing to Miss Newmarsh about it as Grace closed the door.

When Grace entered the other room she was herself surprised.—The blaze of light, the bank of evergreens, the brilliant bird raised high on her perch, and especially the festoons of roses, which seemed to confine her in her bower, with the pendant bright flowers, hanging around the arch of the ante-room, together with the group of snowy thin dresses, had a most striking effect, and Grace forgot all drawbacks in the pleasure of admiration. Grace was warmly greeted on her entrance, and she could hardly satisfy them with her praises—“You cannot think,” said she, “how nice you all looked standing round ! the thin white dresses, and your cousin’s grey satin set it off so very well, and the black dresses help too.”

“But what do you think of the lights ?” said George, “are they right ?”

“Yes, pretty well, I think,” said Grace,—but presently she found it was not quite to her taste, and she proposed to Emily to extinguish all the lights on that side of the room. Emily did it, and a general exclamation of disappointment ensued. Emily said they were trying a new

effect ; and Constance replied that she ought to consult Mary Anne before they made any changes.

“ Mary Anne has not helped a bit in the lighting,” said George, “ and we have been waiting for Grace’s opinion.”

Isabella was quite against the “ new effect,” and Mary Anne very strong the same way. Grace remarked to the first, if she would come to the end of the room she thought she would approve of it, and added, “ You know we can light all again directly if you do not like it. You see it is quite a blaze here, and the light falls so well on the dresses.” She then went to George and asked him to be so good as to light the lights again for his cousin to see, and begged the rest to come and see the difference.

It was a *fact* that the grand point in the scene, namely, the ante-room, showed far more brilliantly under Grace’s “ new effect ;” and the manner in which Grace had consulted every body’s feelings as well as taste, gained the day. Isabella protested it was a great improvement, at this end of the room ; the rest followed, and Mary Anne was not disposed to contend the point with such odds against her. It was therefore voted unanimously that the lights should be again extinguished, and a deputation was forthwith formally despatched to acquaint the Grandees that the “ Fairy Bower” was ready for public inspection. Meanwhile Grace and Emily were grouping the parts for the first general view. The doors were thrown open, and the surprise and admiration of the seniors, equalled the highest expectation of the juvenile *artistes*. Mr. Ward said he had never seen any thing more elegantly devised at the very best houses. Mrs. Ward said she should not have known her own room. Miss Newmarsh remarked it was a most graceful imitation of the beauties of nature ; whilst Mr. Everard asked for the “ fair architect,” addressed Mary Anne by the title of “ Bright Flora,” saying

that she had "with rosy fingers made their winter spring." All agreed that it was a most happy idea, executed with the greatest taste and promptitude. After a time Mr. Everard observed that Mrs. Leslie had not joined in the praises, and asked her if she did not approve the fairy design.

"It is," said she, "remarkably pretty."

Mr. Everard here rallied her on her cool praise, and she answered, it was really simple surprise, for it was so like in style and execution the little devices of her nephews and nieces, at their cottage at Hampstead, that she was amazed at the coincidence of thought—"but," she added, "Grace must have helped in it, because she is used to make such flowers as those with her cousins, and I recognize a great many little devices as her own."

Mr. Everard was much surprised to hear that the flowers were artificial, much more that they were the work of the young people, and he stepped onwards to examine them. When he came back, Mrs. Leslie hoped the disclosure had not lost the young people his approbation—she knew he was so fond of real flowers.

He assured her not at all, just the contrary; he admired their cleverness and industry greatly.—"Better let your little girl do such things than addle her brain and lose her health, poring all day long over the arts and sciences."—"But," added he, "of one thing I am tolerably sure, from my examination of yon pretty Bower, and that is, that it is all one idea; no one at this time of year, without a real fairy bed of roses, or a fairy purse, or the fancy flowers, would have thought of such a thing; so, my good friend, I would have you keep an eye, and if your fair Grace is the sole proprietor of the patent, she may prove Flora as well as Thalia, and be double-faced in two or three senses, in spite of her disclaiming the attribute, as she did to me

the other day. Do not trust to what I say, but do not forget it. *Verbum sapienti.*"

Mr. Everard was a quick discerner; he did not speak from mere guess; something had passed at dinner that struck him, and Mrs. Leslie's surprise and remark had brought it again to his remembrance. Soon after this the young party began to assemble: there was a mixture of elder persons among them—the papas and mammas, or grown-up members of some of the family. Of course the Fairy Bower was the grand object of attraction on the entrance of each party; the young people flocked round to admire it and talk to Madge. Emily found it a wonderful relief to her; for the younger children, who usually were troublesome to amuse while the party were assembling, and often got to romping, were ready to stand and converse with Madge and feed her all night. She, too, was highly pleased, and favoured the company with all her speeches, some of which were highly complimentary: one had been taught her formerly by Hanson,—“You are a pretty little lady;” and some by the boys came in amusingly, though not so amiably. After a time Emily and George began to make their arrangements, as settled beforehand. The *quite* young folks were conducted into the hall, or the saloon, as it was called at parties, when it was usually used for dancing. Clara,—who was the eldest of the younger portion of the Ward family, and a quick child, something like her sister Emily,—had been instructed, and had joyfully undertaken the generalship of this small band; and Hanson and some of the steady servants, had been requested to be at hand, and keep order if necessary. The tea was therefore poured out in this room, and a very merry and orderly little troop filled it. Nothing at all occurred to occasion an uncomfortable remembrance; one game or amusement went on after another, and every body seemed wonderfully disposed to obey. By this arrange-

ment Emily despatched above twenty of her guests, and had only occasionally to look in upon them, in turn with Ellen and Grace, who were appointed to this office. Mary Anne, Emily had relieved from her share, not very unwillingly, since it had been agreed in the morning that she had done her part in designing the Fairy Bower. On the whole every thing went off in the other two rooms most successfully. There were a few difficulties now and then with the formidable Thompsons and Davises, but the absence of Newton Grey was Emily's grand support. She found her task easy when there was no big bold boy to fan every spark into a flame.—Besides, she discovered a mode in which to quiet any rising discontents or tumults. She observed how easily Grace seemed to manage and persuade their own party about the lights, and it struck her she must have a skill that way which herself did not possess; so whenever any unpleasantness seemed ready to arise, she got Grace to come and smooth matters for her. Grace was very successful in her attempts this evening—indeed she generally was, for she set about such things the right way. She always entered into people's feelings very quickly, and was ready to please them and accommodate them as nearly as possible in their own way. She did not do this in a patronizing way, or in a formal way, or in a cunning way, or in a clever way, but in a simple way, thinking very little about it, but trying to satisfy them, and giving up her own preferences, if they were only preferences. Another thing that helped Grace was her appearance, though she was not nearly so handsomely dressed as some of the young ladies: but face and manner has a great deal to do with every body's appearance, though dress has also considerable weight in affairs such as Grace undertook this evening; for instance, if Isabella had set her authority against Grace's, we would not give much, generally speaking, for Grace's chance of success.

But fortunately Grace had gained Miss Ward's favour for the moment by consulting her about the lights, and by two or three more acts of essential service she had been able to do her in the course of the evening. Still Grace was no favourite of Miss Ward's, nor likely to become such. Grace's most arduous task was the following,—Emily came to her in much distress, and summoned her to assist in the next room, for a party of boys had assembled together, and declared they would have a good game. They only laughed at her, and if George interfered it would be a regular dispute she was sure; she had left them debating what game it should be, and entreated Grace to go and do as well as she could—she said John Thompson was at the head of all. Grace found a party of young gentlemen gathered round, having cleared a space before them. They were standing in attitudes most suspiciously approaching to a game of leap-frog, but had not yet begun. It happened fortunately that in the beginning of the evening, one of these boys in the press towards the Fairy Bower, had by some means or other pushed against Grace, trodden not very lightly upon her foot, and torn her dress to an extent that looked very alarming. This was not the first accident of the sort he had ever met with, for he was a careless, and therefore a clumsy boy; and it had so happened that each time before he had got very black looks and some angry words. On this occasion, however, just as he was about to laugh—more from awkwardness and not knowing how to apologize, than from actual ill-nature—Grace turned round, looked very good-natured, and assured him he had not hurt her any thing to speak of. This checked him, but he had not manners enough to say any thing. Presently she spoke to him again, and said she wished he would try and prevent those behind pressing and pushing so violently, for some of the little ones near her were quite frightened. This prevented himself from

pushing, and protected Grace in some degree; and also he spoke to others, rather roughly certainly, "*to be quiet*," but they attended to him. Some little time after this he was standing still, and he heard George say to Grace, "Why, what's the matter, Grace? you have been going about limping like a lame duck."

"Yes," said Grace, laughing, "I know I limp."

"But how did it happen?" said George, "have you been, like the cow, jumping over the moon? you know you would not jump in the garden the other day!"

"Somebody trod on my foot in the press," said Grace, "but it is nearly well now."

Grace did not know any one overheard this little discourse. On her joining the leap-frog group, she asked what they were going to do. Her manner was such that the answer was given rather in a foolish tone, as if they knew they were about an unsuitable action. She then spoke a little aside to this young Thompson, and so persuasive were her representations, that after about three minutes' conversation, he turned to the rest, and said, "I say, this will be flat work here; we shall break our heads against the chairs and all these gimcracks, and shall set all the girls screaming; come away, there's some fun going on in the other room."

Emily said afterwards to Grace, "You are a wonderful girl, Grace, I watched your face all the time, and you did nothing but laugh and smile, and yet that uncouth boy minded all you said in a moment."

"Why," said Grace, "very luckily he tore my frock in the beginning of the evening, and I know he remembered it by something he said."

"Why, I'm sure," said Emily, "he did not say much."

"No, not much, but it was to the purpose. But we must not stay here, for I promised him, as you gave me leave, the new game of mufti, and George and Reginald

Freemantle are already preparing and teaching them in the hall."

This game had been under debate between George and Emily the day before. Emily was against it, because they had it the other evening. George was for it, because so few of the same party were present, and because it was quite a new game ; so it was settled that if Reginald Freemantle came they would have mufti, and that it should come just before supper ; that the whole party, little and big, should play, and that it should take place in the hall, as being the freest space. A game they had, and a very comic one it was. The elder part of the company were spectators, and seemed as much entertained as the rest. It is a game which in description, and at the onset, seems poor, but in action, and with a judicious mufti, is one of the most amusing of such entertainments. Emily's list was of the greatest use ; indeed the idea of the leap-frog crept in, while George and Emily were by an accident absent together, and there was no one to take the lead in a proposition. Every other time they had taken care to be at hand, and had two or three proposals ready, the most popular of which was immediately adopted. We must now relate the most important scene of the evening, though we have been forestalling it by others far less so.

CHAPTER XXV.

The trumpets sound ; stand close, the Queen is coming !

Shakspeare.

THE Fairy Bower had abundantly attracted the notice of the elder part of the company. Every body was full of admiration : it was visited and inspected, the flowers ex-

amined, and the whole pronounced elegantly devised and executed. A party of the seniors were talking it over in the drawing-room the beginning of the evening, and it was mentioned as entirely the work of the young people—the idea only suggested the night before. It did indeed seem incredible; but a dozen pair of hands, more or less willing, can sometimes effect wonders. Lord and Lady Musgrove were especially pleased, and the latter asked if it was Emily's notion. She was told, No—her cousin, Mary Anne Duff's, who was staying in the house.

“Oh,” said Lady Musgrove, “I have been looking at the Duffs; they are fine girls, and our Isabella has taken a great fancy to one—is that Mary Anne?”

Miss Newmarsh said she rather thought not; she believed Constance was her favourite.

Lady Musgrove said she should like to speak to them some time in the evening, especially to the young designer.

“Well,” said one of the gentlemen, “it really is a most tasteful plan, and I think the fair *artiste* should receive some honour at our hands—what do you say,” said he, “to crowning her with her own flowers?”

It was thought a very pretty idea, and some of the party walked into the next room to arrange it. It was near the end of some game, and these gentlemen had a slight conference with Reginald Freemantle. He took to the idea immediately, and undertook the whole management. At a proper moment he stepped forward and made a loud flourish of trumpets, which was an art he excelled in, and having obtained silence, he made a proclamation, demanding in the name of the aristocracy of the other room, that Mary Anne, the fair *artiste* of the Fairy Bower, should be forthwith consigned to his hands; for it was the will and pleasure of the higher powers that more than the praise of words, should be awarded to one so accomplished, and that he was the happy herald commissioned to proclaim, that she

was to be crowned "Queen of the Fairy Bower," in the sight of the assembled multitude. He then summoned all, high and low, to witness the coronation of the Queen of the Fairy Bower, and ended by again demanding the fair Mary Anne to be brought forward.—He then closed with his military flourish. Reginald's proclamation was sufficiently clear, yet no one stirred. Emily, Grace, and George were standing near together, as they were on the point of proposing some new arrangement.—"Oh, Emily!" cried Grace, in a low voice, "then you did not speak to Mary Anne!"

"No," said Emily, "she was gone down stairs, and I found them all waiting for me here."

"Well," thought Grace, "then it cannot be helped; we tried to do something—that is a comfort."

Again came a flourish, and the herald called upon Emily, the lady of the revels, and her lady-in-waiting, the fair Grace, forthwith to conduct Mary Anne, the Queen of the Fairy Bower, to his presence.

There was again a pause.—"Oh, Emily," whispered Grace, in great agitation, "what can we do? we must go!"

"Grace," said Emily, decidedly, "*I will not*, whatever are the consequences."

Poor Grace! all fell upon her—what could she do! After waiting due time, the herald repeated his summons. It was really a very solemn scene, and to the three individuals in question must have been, from different causes, a most exciting one. The consequences rushed across Grace's mind; she saw the whole transaction exposed, and Mary Anne publicly degraded, and without another thought she turned to George and asked him to take an answer from them, any thing he chose to say, and to ask permission to depute himself and Campbell to the office proposed for herself and Emily.

George stepped forward, and in due form announced

that he had the honour of bearing a message from the ladies Emily and Grace—that they begged to assure the herald it was no disrespect to the higher powers, that they had not immediately hastened to perform their commands; but that their feelings were so excited on the occasion of the unexampled honour, proposed to be conferred on their amiable friend, that they entreated to be allowed to name his unworthy self and his cousin Campbell, as deputies in their place. The herald highly commended the feelings of the young ladies, and assured them they would be equally appreciated by his illustrious employers. Here came another flourish of trumpets, and George withdrew in due form. He sought Campbell, and they conducted Mary Anne between them, across the room, before the herald.—“Fair maiden,” said he, “the trumpet of Fame has announced to the puissant powers of the other room, that yon brilliant bower, commonly designated ‘The Fairy Bower,’ boasts its origin from the elegant stores of your mind, and is the child of your genius; say, fair maiden, does Fame speak truly?”

Mary Anne said nothing; she hung her head and looked what is called foolish, but her manner and appearance was not any thing unusual, and excited no remark among either friends or strangers. Finding he got no answer, the herald continued, “Fair maiden, be assured we all respect your modesty and humility, nor shall they be disturbed by the rudeness of forms and of courts. Your maidenly silence shall be accepted as it is meant, and proclamation shall be issued accordingly.” He then in due form announced that the fair Mary Anne, now before them, “is the true and sole architect of the Fairy Bower, and it is the sovereign will and pleasure of the puissant powers of the other room, that she shall forthwith be crowned Queen of the same: I therefore hereby cite the ladies before mentioned, Emily and Grace, and in the

name of my illustrious employers command them, to prepare from the fairest of the wreaths of yon bower, a chaplet for the fair brows of the new Queen."—And here came another flourish.

Grace again whispered to Emily, and Emily again refused to assist,—“Oh, Emily!” cried Grace, much distressed, “is it kind to me?”

“I don’t know,” replied the other, “but don’t make me go, I shall throw the chaplet at her head; I cannot go, and so it’s no use asking me.”

Grace moved mechanically towards the Bower, and asked one of the young gentlemen to cut her down a certain festoon, which was all white roses and buds. She then approached the group at the other end of the room.—“Obedient maiden,” said the herald, “in the name of my puissant employers, I greet you! and command you to weave the purest of chaplets, for the fair brows of the Queen of the Fairy Bower.”

Poor Grace with rather trembling, but not at all ungraceful hands, began to arrange the wreath she held into a suitable garland for the head, having possessed herself of the knife, which her knight, young Thompson, used in her service. As she began, the following words in a fine sonorous tone, dropped slowly from a voice which every one at once recognized as Mr. Everard’s:—

Weave a chaplet, maiden mine,
 Fit for Queen of Fairy line,
 Soft as dew, and pure as snow,
 Let it grace the rightful brow.
 Many a crown is fraught with thorns
 For the brow that it adorns;
 But no thorn, while Grace has power,
 E’er shall mar her roseate dower.
 What high nature should she be,
 Candidate for Queen’s degree;

Not a breath of pride or art
 In her bosom must find part ;
 Gracious, courteous, gentle, bland,
 Beyond all daughters in the land :
 Yet her steps attended aye,
 By wisdom meek and dignity.
 Weave a chaplet, maiden fair,
 For a royal Fairy's hair ;
 Keep the loveliest blossoms, Grace,
 Cast away the mean and base !
 Let the fairy chaplet be,
 Emblem, Grace, befitting thee :
 Pure and simple, firmly blent,
 Modest, sweet, and elegant !
 Fame at best is poor and vain,
 Man's decoy and woman's bane.
 Fame beside is blind and dull,
 Mammon's slave and Error's fool,
 Scarcely right and often wrong,
 Gives what does not all belong :
 Rightful goods she takes away,
 Maidens, watch, lest she betray !
 The woof is wove, the web is spun,
 Herald, see the work is done !

This prompt and apt effusion had a most admirable, and to two of the party, a most startling effect. Grace was so amazed at almost every line, that she did not dare look up. She thought the whole transaction was betrayed to every creature,—how Mr. Everard became acquainted with the history, was however to her a profound mystery. He must have known it some time she felt sure, for so many appropriate lines could never, she thought, have been unpremeditated—what was to come next was now her perplexity. With an outwardly composed demeanour, however, she placed her elegant little garland in the hands of the herald. During the ode, Mary Anne stood where she had been placed, and continued pretty still—only

fidgitting now and then with her hands, in a way not quite befitting the candidate for a crown ; but this was her usual manner. We have remarked she had not control of either body or mind in any great extent ; and indeed, as is usual with those whose thoughts are very much on themselves, she felt most especially awkward when brought into more notice than usual, however much she desired, or as we may unhappily say with truth, *coveted* that sort of distinction. It is the most humble, generally speaking, who are the most self-possessed, and on whom distinction seems to fall naturally without puffing them up. It is doubtful if the unhappy circumstances of Mary Anne's present distinction, at all affected her outward manner, or if at this moment they much even affected her mind. She was pleased, and in her sad way satisfied, at being publicly honoured. So blunted were her feelings by self, that she did not even perceive the drift of Mr. Everard's verses, which Grace thought so plain, that no one could mistake. Her mind was confused by vanity and the novelty of her situation ; she thought all eyes were upon her, admiring her ; and she took Mr. Everard's lines as entirely complimentary to herself ; she did not perceive that herself was barely alluded to, and Grace was made much more prominent ; nor did she guess, that every eye was fixed on Grace and the chaplet she was dexterously weaving, and that herself was quite secondary in the scene.

Emily was the other individual to whom we alluded, as being amazed at the hints contained in Mr. Everard's effusion. No one else in the room observed them, which is not to be wondered at, as to the uninitiated they contain no more than a moral maxim clothed in poetical language. Many observed he made Grace more the heroine of the scene than Mary Anne : some thought it not fair—others did not wonder. We must however recall the reader to the spectacle, for such it was really becoming.—The

herald has the crown in his hand ; again he sounds his trumpet, and issues a proclamation for the coronation of the queen of the Fairy Bower ; adding, that in the name of his puissant employers, he appointed the fair Grace to the office of placing the crown on the royal head. Grace was bewildered beyond expression at this announcement. She found all was *not* discovered, as at first she supposed ; she wished she could hear those verses again, and ended by thinking that she had as Emily said, puzzled herself so that she turned every thing into a meaning of her own. Whatever might be the cause, however, she felt greatly relieved, and proceeded to discharge the office imposed on her without hesitation. Grace had felt no awkwardness in doing any thing that had fallen to her lot. If she had been told beforehand that she would be called on to do such things, she would have felt uncomfortable and anxious—just as she did on a less public occasion in the morning, when she thought of giving George his chain ; but her present offices had come upon her naturally and suddenly, and all were things she could easily do. She was bid to do them, and she did them without thinking about it. Before placing the crown, the herald withdrew and cleared a circle before the folding doors ; where stood the range of the elders, who had witnessed the whole scene. A cushion was placed, on which the half-created Queen was desired to kneel : she did, upon both knees,—Grace, we think, would have been content with one,—and meanwhile the following coronation chorus, fell from the ready lips of the inexhaustible Bard, while Grace had the good sense to wait for the proper moment, according to the verses, for placing the crown on the royal head.

Gentlest of Graces, and meekest of maids,
Weaver of garlands whose freshness ne'er fades,
Thine 'tis to place on the brow of the Queen
Thine own fairy garland of white and of green.

Sure if a crown is a hand's worthy prey,
Fitly that hand may bestow it away !
Diamonds are brilliant, gold too is rare,
But crowns of such texture are weighty with care :
Blossoms are lovely, and lighter than gems,
But quickly they wither and fall from their stems.
Grace bears a coronet, wrought by her skill,
Precious as diamonds, lovelier still ;
Hers is no crown to embarrass with woe,
Goodness its virtue, kindness its show ;
No sad emotion weighs the head down,
Heavy and sleepless, that carries her crown.
Yet—if a bosom is tainted with art,
'Tis not this crown could clear the soiled heart :
No ! let us keep the heart safely within,
Then never fear where we end or begin :
All have a friend while their conscience is clear,
Conscience, the monarch of Queen and of Peer.
Gentlest of Graces, and meekest of friends,
Raise now the Crown as the Fairy Queen bends ;
Set on her head the pure chaplet of snow,
Let not its honours encumber her brow ;
Crowned by a Grace, with leaf and with flower,
Hail her now Queen of the bright Fairy Bower !

It was a very pretty group ; the two young gentlemen duly supported the Queen and the attendant, and Grace exactly suited her actions to the words of the ode. It was the same in the former address,—at the line, “ Cast away the mean and base !” she took care to follow the lead, and the action was followed by plaudits, which, after this burst agreeably interrupted the recital at fitting times. At the conclusion of the whole, the herald blew his trumpet, the multitude cheered, and the ladies waved their handkerchiefs. Many voices were loud in Mary Anne's praises. One lady, a Mrs. Mason, the same that had admired her in a morning call one day, exclaimed, “ A fine young lady

indeed Miss Mary Anne is ! and how prettily she did her part ! just like a little queen !”

“ The Grace would have borne such honours more meekly, if not more worthily,” muttered Mr. Everard in reply.

“ That little girl is a vast favourite of yours, Mr. Everard,” returned this lady, “ but surely you must think Miss Mary Anne a much finer girl !”

“ Not one of my sort,” replied Mr. Everard ; “ fine and smooth—smooth and false,” added he, in an almost inaudible tone, as he walked away.

After the acclamations had somewhat subsided, the herald stepped forward and conducted the young Queen into the presence of the elders, especially introducing her to Lord and Lady Musgrove, and saying her Ladyship had expressed a wish to have an audience of the new Queen.

“ Indeed,” said Lord Musgrove, “ we are highly honoured by her Majesty’s condescension, and we hope the Queen of the Fairy Bower will to-night enjoy the honour she has so richly deserved.”

A few such sentences passed, which Mary Anne received but awkwardly ; not that she need have replied much, but her mode of receiving them was any thing but simple—as Grace’s would have been, or clever, as Emily’s. However she presently fell more into herself, and as she went on, her *manner* rather improved. The reader must judge for himself as to the more important part. Lady Musgrove admired her taste and her skill displayed in the Fairy Bower very much, and asked her how the idea first came into her head,—had she been used to such decorations ?

Mary Anne answered only, “ No,” and looked sheepish, for she had never before been spoken to by a Lord or a Lady, and she thought it a very great honour ; and so it was, but not exactly as Mary Anne felt it.

“How did you plan it, my dear?” said Lady Musgrove, “by yourself, or did you talk it over with Emily?”

“Emily and I talked of it afterwards,” answered Mary Anne.

“But,” pursued Lady Musgrove, “was it quite your own idea, or had you ever seen any thing of the sort before?”

“I had never seen any thing of the sort before,” replied Mary Anne, who was beginning to be very much on her guard, or what in her case may be called by the unpleasant word *cunning*.

“Did you,” continued her Ladyship, “think of the bower for the bird, or the bird for the bower?”

“The bower for the bird,” said Mary Anne, obliged to answer, and remembering it rose in that way with Grace.

“Well, that was a very pretty idea,” returned Lady Musgrove, “and really has a good deal of genius in it; and did any thing put it in your head?”

“I think,” said Mary Anne, getting bolder, and thinking now she could afford a little of her fame to her family, “I think it might be some poetry of my sister Fanny’s.”

“Does your sister write poetry?” asked Lady Musgrove, surprised, “I thought you were the eldest.”

“Yes, I am,” said Mary Anne, proud to recommend her sister, “Fanny is younger than me.”

“Is it Fanny that Isabella has taken a fancy to?”

“Yes,” returned Mary Anne, “I believe so.”

Miss Newmarsh felt very much disappointed.

“Well, can you repeat your sister’s lines, or say what they were about?”

“They were about a bird—wishing to be like a bird.”

“But was there any thing about a bower?” asked this inquisitive lady.

“Yes, one line,” replied Mary Anne,—

“And live in bowers with thee.”

“ Well, it is a very pretty line ; and that put it into your head, I suppose ? ”

“ I think so, ” said Mary Anne, getting quite hardened.

“ Then what made you call it a ‘ fairy bower, ’ and not a bird’s bower ? ” again asked the lady.

“ It was not I invented that name, ” said Mary Anne, candidly, “ it was done by the rest when the room was finished, and the lights were lit. I had nothing to do with the lighting, Emily and George managed all that—Emily is so very clever. ”

Mary Anne now thought she had established her character for taste and genius, she might try at goodness, and introduce her cousin, as she had her sister.

“ Oh, yes, ” said Lady Musgrove, “ I know Emily is very clever, but she would not have planned such a bower as that ; I dare say, however, she helped you in the execution. ”

“ Oh, yes, ” cried Mary Anne, quite in her own manner, “ she and all the rest helped in the flowers, and did a great deal more than I did. ”

“ Well, ” said Lady Musgrove, “ you have passed a very good examination, and have shown that you can be good as well as clever.—True genius has no envy. Now, my dear, I will not keep you from your companions ; here is Ellen waiting quite impatiently till I have done with you. ”

Mary Anne did not know Ellen or any of the young people were within hearing, and she started to find she was close at her elbow. She could not be sure she had not said some dangerous things before Ellen. She had rather it should have been Grace than Ellen ; for though she could not understand Grace, she felt now sure she did not mean to betray her ; and as long as Grace kept it all to herself, she did not care for the rest. What a shocking state of mind she must have been in ! But Mary Anne’s examinations were not at an end : as Ellen was leading her off,

Miss Newmarsh stopped them, and said, "Mary Anne, I am amazed at you for not thinking of these flowers for our Bodstock fair."

"Oh," said Mary Anne, "I did not hear of them till long afterwards."

"Why, when did you hear of them?"

"Since I have been here," replied the young lady.

"And who told you?"

Mary Anne all along had the craft or conscience to avoid Grace's name entirely, and if now she announced it, she knew the whole affair was likely to be discovered. She remembered she had in the morning, before Ellen, said simply she heard of them "since she had been here." She therefore answered warily, that she could not tell who told her.

"Why, that is very strange," said her governess, "you have been here little more than a week, and have been out very little; cannot you remember when it was, or where?"

"It must have been when I first came," said Mary Anne, thinking it best to put off the time before Grace's arrival, as well as Ellen's.

"When you first came!" said Miss Newmarsh, "I wonder you did not mention it to your sisters, when they came to see you; you know we are all very busy now upon the drawing-room table stall, and I charged you to look about for any new ideas. But cannot you at all remember who told you? because it is very important to know from what quarter it comes, that we may not be forestalled."

"It must have been somewhere that I called with Emily," said Mary Anne, alarmed at committing herself to times and places, for she well knew she had only been to two houses before Grace came,—"or it might be," added she, "somebody calling here."

"Cannot you tell what room it was in, or whether it

was a lady or a child that told you, or any thing at all about it?" pursued her governess.

"No, really I cannot," said Mary Anne, "it all passed in a moment."

"Well," said Miss Newmarsh, "it is very unaccountable, Mary Anne, and very unfortunate; but go, my dear child, I am sorry to have kept you, but it is an important subject, and I wish to know whence the idea came."

The two cousins then returned to the back drawing-room, and mingled in the sports. The Queen was hailed as she joined the young band, and her spirits now rose to an unrestrained height. Every body but Emily and Grace paid her a sort of homage, addressing her by her title, and consulting her with a deference, which, though avowedly mock, was very agreeable to her; and she was the liveliest—perhaps we ought to say the most boisterous—among the throng. Emily, even, wondered at her, though she had seen the same sort of thing at school; but poor Grace was quite aghast; she began to think she was in a dream—she must have made a mistake—that Mary Anne really devised the Fairy Bower—and she ended with believing as a betweenity, that Mary Anne had either persuaded herself that she had, or that she thought so from the very first. This idea restored Grace to herself while it lasted, and accounted for every thing. How else could Mary Anne have gone through all she had that evening? How else stood Mr. Everard's appalling voice, exerted with solemn effect, especially at the word "conscience," and the awful pause he made after those two lines? several times it had thrilled herself to her very heart, and that poor little heart at the same time bled for Mary Anne. "But," thought she, "if Mary Anne believes herself the designer, of course she would not notice these things." Without this persuasion, and the necessity Grace was under of being in constant activity, she would have sat still in a corner, and

gazed with surprise all the evening at Mary Anne—full of enjoyment and laughter as she was, her face highly excited with pleasure and notice.

Different amusements filled up the rest of the time, and after the highly popular game of “mufti,” the whole party adjourned to the supper room.

CHAPTER XXVI.

“ We do not always find visible happiness in proportion to visible virtue.”
Rasselas.

THE Queen was conducted to her seat in due form ; there was a flourish of trumpets preceding her, and a procession of her more immediate court. The supper tables were a very pretty sight as the party entered. They were placed in the form of a T, and in the centre, conspicuously raised, stood one of Birch’s best twelfth cakes—the kind Christmas present of grandmamma Ward. The supper went off as well as the rest of the evening. Emily thought that Grace happening to sit next John Thompson was a fortunate circumstance ; she felt quite sure that Grace kept him in good order ; how she managed it she could not imagine, for if Emily ever attempted to interfere with any of his ways, his usual answer was something like, “ What’s that to you ? ” “ I wish you’d mind your own business ! ” but we are happy to say, neither such as these nor any other uncomfortable incidents, disturbed the outward serenity of the evening, and every body seemed happy and pleased. The internal disquiets are better

known to the reader than to any of the guests, and of this portion of the history we are about to speak.

In the course of the supper, the propriety of drinking the health of the Queen of the Fairy Bower, was discussed among some of the good-natured gentlemen, and Reginald Freemantle was deputed to manage the affair. He rose and proposed it. The idea was received with great approbation ; some of the gentlemen were so kind as to enter into the amusement, for so it must be called, and one by one they rose to second the resolution. Several very ingenious and entertaining speeches were made ; the Fairy Bower was dissected and discussed in all its bearings, but all turned into a compliment to the Queen. Several very pretty allusions were made to her crown being formed from her own works. Another said her genius in its loveliness disdained fairy tiaras or costly gems, and took the form most appropriate to its simplicity and modesty. Another again compared her to Flora, and talked of her carpeting the earth with flowers, for wherever she stepped bright flowers sprang up. At length it was observed that Mr. Everard had not spoken, and every one knew that speaking on any subject, was an art he peculiarly excelled in. An intimation of the popular wishes on the subject was therefore given him. He excused himself, saying he had done his part in the pageant, by discharging the office of poet laureate. But the public would not be content, and he was called on by general acclamation. He rose and said he could not refuse such a flattering appeal, but he had thought he had sufficiently trespassed on the patience of the company, by his two coronation odes ; and besides, he felt he could not add any thing worthy the notice of such a company, after the able speakers who had preceded him ; truly indeed might they have been said to have exhausted the mine. However it must be confessed that to courtiers the praises of majesty, and to poets the

praises of beauty and nature, were mines *inexhaustible*; and though he neither wished nor dared to account himself on the one hand a courtier, nor on the other a poet, he should be ashamed to be found without loyalty to the line of sovereigns, or without admiration of the forms of beauty. He would therefore with willing lips second the proposition. He would also propose that congratulations should be presented to her youthful Majesty, on her elevation to so high an office; for he confessed he considered the honours she had attained, however merited by genius and taste, a distinction and a dignity which might assist to direct her destinies through life “I cannot look upon that white coronet of fair flowers,” continued the orator, “without myself being reminded of the purity of Truth and the loveliness of Virtue! What is purer than snow? What is lovelier than flowers? Has not this coronet been chosen to grace the brows of the Queen of the Fairy Bower? And has not her present Majesty been selected to her high post of honour by the voice of those who had the right, as well as the will, to distinguish her? Am I then unduly pressing a conclusion when I say, that the bearer of such a crown ought to be mindful in every action of her coming life, to be the representative of the Grace of Truth and the Grace of Virtue? To use the words of a poet, no doubt familiar to her Majesty’s ear,—

‘Princes and Peers may flourish and may fade,
A breath may make them as a breath hath made.’

“But, I would add,

‘But bright unsullied Truth, our noblest pride,
When once destroyed can never be supplied.’

“Let us then with dutiful loyalty beg to lay these observations at the feet of youthful Majesty; and the trifling incident of an evening dedicated to lighter amusement,

may become to the sovereign of an hour and her juvenile court, a monitor for the employments, whether light or serious, of a coming life."

This address was received with murmurs of approbation. They however quickly subsided on its being perceived, that the orator continued on his legs. He continued, "I have but one word to add, and that is, to propose the health of the person, whether young lady or gentleman, who suggested the title of 'The Fairy Bower;' and I humbly recommend that immediate measures may be taken, to ascertain the individual to whom we are indebted, for such a suitable and elegant designation."

Some one rose to second the motion, but proposed that the Queen's health should be first drunk.

This was accordingly done, with great enthusiasm. The plaudits and cheers continued for a considerable space. It was afterwards signified to Mary Anne, that she must return an address of thanks; but that she might depute a champion to the office. She accordingly chose Reginald Freemantle, who sat next her. After a slight conference with her, he rose. He said he had the honour of being selected by her Majesty, to convey to the company her Majesty's sense of the distinction just received; he felt how unequal he was to the task, and he felt how difficult it was to do justice to the modesty of her Majesty's sentiments, without expressing himself in a manner that might seem unsuitable to her high office. "But rather," continued he, "would I suffer in your estimation, however painful such a result would be to my feelings, than that the humility of her Majesty's sentiments should not meet a just interpreter. I will therefore venture to say in her name, that her sense of the unexampled condescension of the aristocracy, who appointed her to the high office she now bears, and of the gratifying loyalty of her assembled subjects, in the late enthusiastic expression of their senti-

ments, will not quickly pass away from her remembrance, but will recall this evening to her as one of the most agreeable of her life. She would confess freely that she feels these honours, the mere abundance of your kindness, showered down upon her for a very small service on her part; indeed she would say, as far as any thing she had done to merit them, they were totally undeserved; but at the same time she accepts these your flattering marks of approbation for her poor doings, with the profoundest respect and the deepest gratitude." He then begged to say he was commissioned by her Majesty to state, that the *name* of the Fairy Bower did *not* originate with herself. In conclusion, he hoped he was not stepping out of his office, if he said, in the name of himself and the young court, that the eloquent and able address of an honourable and learned gentleman who had preceded him, should not pass disregarded. He hoped that none would recall this evening to memory—untainted, as it was, by a single pain—without remembering the lesson then so ably enforced. Crowns, indeed, without Truth and Virtue, are honours undeserved, and crumble to dust; whilst Virtues flourish and abide, and are themselves the brightest coronet, that can sit upon the brow of either Queen or Peasant.

Before Reginald began this speech, he had some talk with Mary Anne. He told her what he should say, and was rather puzzled at a sort of hesitation in her manner when he said he should talk of the honours being "undeserved." "Why should I say so!" said he, in answer to her,—“why not?—you do not think the Fairy Bower called for all this, I suppose.” Mary Anne saw every word she spoke was dangerous, but she felt more anxiety at that part of Reginald's speech than any thing that had happened. One reason was, she attended to what was so nearly connected with herself; whereas she carelessly listened to the rest, only turning every thing she could to her

own honour and praise. Reginald also thought she ought to disclaim giving the title of the Fairy Bower ; if she did not it would be supposed she had ; and now he asked her if she had named it or not, for she must state the fact publicly through him. Mary Anne was thrown into consternation by this announcement. She could not feel sure she had not committed herself. She knew she had told Lady Musgrove, and that many besides heard, that she had not invented the name. She knew also that Ellen heard ; but she could not remember if she had reported her invention to Emily, by that name on the night of Monday. She thought she had *not*, or that if she had, Emily had forgotten it. It was never mentioned by that name the whole morning ; they called it simply the ante-room ; and the "Fairy Bower" sprung up as quite a new title among a group she joined after the lighting was finally settled. How it began she knew not, and her conscience prevented her then asking a word or making a remark, because she could not be sure whether or not she had made that name an original part of her communication with Emily. The fact was, she could not realize the effect of the lights, so the title had quite gone out of her head, till she heard every body calling it the Fairy Bower, and then she saw the appropriateness of the name, especially after the extinguishing the rival lights. What was she to do when Reginald asked her this simple question ?—to hesitate was most dangerous ; to say she did not know, or could not remember, fatal ; to say "yes," equally fatal, as far as regarded Lady Musgrove and the elders ; and to say "no," might be so as regarded all the rest. Besides, Ellen might be able to light the whole train. One device struck her : she said to Reginald, "Why say any thing about it?" He looked rather surprised, and answered, "Why not? it is much more proper that you should notice it ; just tell me yes or no." She was obliged to say "No," as that word contained

less of certain destruction than the other.—Who can guard all the endless points of falsehood? Till this moment Mary Anne had suffered herself to enjoy the triumphs of her situation unbroken, except with just an uneasy thought or two after the discovery of Ellen at her side. Her present uneasiness may be imagined; but we believe we may safely say her greatest suffering of the evening, did not equal a small part of Grace's. Virtue is not always its own reward, as some pretend. Virtue, or right action and feeling, sometimes endures sufferings of mind, similar to those of actual guilt. Grace had felt this in a degree all day; and now she seemed to partake and deserve those, which properly belonged to Mary Anne.

Meanwhile the question was whispered about among the young people, "Who invented the title of the Fairy Bower?"—"Did you?"—"Did you?"—"I thought it was Mary Anne."—Nobody knew. Every body said every body was using it suddenly, just after the lighting, and of course all thought it was Mary Anne's name. One of the gentlemen now made the enquiry, and the result of these whispers was reported—"Nobody knew."

Mary Anne gathered hope. Again and again enquiry was made, and it began to look very mysterious.

Mr. Everard suggested it must have been a real fairy, stepped in among the young folks for a few minutes. "Possibly," added he, "the same artifice employed by Oberon.—The likeness of our bower to his must strike every one—and though his fame was great in fairy land, he may well be unknown here—Let us call to mind an account of him and one of his works." Here he repeated the following lines from the Flower and the Leaf:—

“Rich sycamores with eglantine were spread,
A hedge about the sides, a covering over head;
And so the fragrant briar was wove between,
The sycamore and flowers were mixed with green.

That Nature seemed to vary the delight,
 And satisfied at once the smell and sight :
 The master workman of the bower was known
 Thro' fairy-lands and built for Oberon."

"Who knows," continued he, "that if we search for our *incognita* as carefully as the same poet searched his bower for his Nightingale, we may be as successful"—he says presently,

"At length I waked, and looking round the bower,
 Searched every tree and pryed in every flower,
 If any where by chance I might espy
 The rural poet of the melody ;
 For still methought she sung not far away,
 At last I found her on a laurel spray,
 Close by my side she sat, and fair in sight,
 Full in a line against her opposite."

Mr. Everard pronounced these lines with great emphasis. Grace felt amazed and miserable, for she sat next, though not close to the reciter, and opposite Mary Anne. Mr. Everard's powers of invention and adaptation seemed to her the most fairy-like events of the evening.

Meanwhile Mary Anne's hopes strengthened ; she thought these effusions of Mr. Everard's would make a diversion ; but Mr. Everard intended no such thing—and soon revived the enquiry, "who invented the title of the Fairy Bower?" which indeed had still been going on in the quarters most interested. After a considerable time, a murmur of small whispers, carried up something promising from the farthest end of the table, and it was reported that little Clara said she knew "*who.*"

"Is it true," asked one of the gentlemen, in a loud voice, "that the little Clara can clear this mystery?—let her send up word!"

In a short space an answer travelled up again. Clara said "*it was Emily.*"

"Emily!" said her papa, "did you give that name to the Bower?"

"No, papa," said Emily, in a very determined voice, "it was Grace Leslie."

Poor Grace! she felt as if she was shot quite through. She felt a thrill all over her, and though she did not know it, she turned exceedingly pale. "Now," thought she, "all *is* discovered! Oh, Emily!"

"Grace!" said Mr. Ward, gently—he always spoke so to her—"did you devise that pretty name?"

Grace gathered up her breath, and answered in a tone, mournful to those who were near enough to hear her, "I believe I thought of it first."

"Does she say, 'yes?'" said Mr. Ward; and her answer was reported to him, and handed down and all round the table.

"Then it is Grace, after all, who is our Fairy!" said the other gentleman; "that is greater than a Queen." While the young people began whispering, "Was it Grace? was it Grace?—I thought it was Mary Anne, did not you?"

"Why," said Constance, "you make as much fuss as if Grace had invented the *Bower*, instead of only the name; did you not hear that Mary Anne just now told Reginald Freemantle to say she had *not* invented the name?"

"Well," said Ellen, "and were you not surprised?—I am sure I was; I thought the name went with the Bower, and that Mary Anne invented both."

"Well," returned Constance, "you see she did *not*, and she says so; why will you not let Grace have the merit of the name?—not that there's much in it, it is not like the Bower."

The elder part of the company also expressed surprise at the manner in which this little fact had come out. Lady Musgrove and others praised Mary Anne highly. Several

of them had heard her disclaim the title of her own accord; and her conduct seemed very "pretty," as the lady observed, with whom Mary Anne was always a favourite,—“Very pretty, indeed,” she said, “Miss Mary Anne has a very fine spirit.”

“It is more,” said Mrs. Ward, in a low tone, “than I would say of Grace Leslie; I do not like that sly way for children, of keeping such things secret—why could she not confess at once?—and why did not every body know it was her name? it is very unnatural for a child to be so close.”

“Well, I don’t know,” said Lady Musgrove, “it was rather modest of her to keep silence, and not to trumpet her own praises.”

“And you know,” said Mr. Ward, “if you blame her, you must blame Emily; for it seems she knew all the time.—By the bye, I wonder she did not speak at once; Emily is very fond of Grace, I know; and Emily is a warm hearted girl. I certainly do wonder, my dear,” said he to his wife, “that Emily did not speak without so much pumping.”

“Oh,” said Lady Musgrove, “it is easily accounted for; you could not expect a young girl like Emily, to be able to speak like any of you gentlemen, before a large party like this.”

“Very true,” replied Mr. Ward, “but Emily has a good spirit of her own, and spoke boldly enough when she did speak.”

“But you remember,” said Lady Musgrove, “she was afraid to come forward and crown the Queen, and let that little Grace do it all by herself; I am sure I wondered at her more than I did at Emily: it was very formidable.”

Such remarks were interrupted by Mr. Everard rising, and proposing the health of Grace Leslie. He gave the reason for so doing, and made a short simple speech.

Grace felt very glad it was so soon over. She now was uneasy at feeling the eyes of every body turned upon her ; for she really had the feeling of taking something that did not belong to her ; and her thoughts altogether began to be so confused, that she hardly knew whether the next step would not be the discovery of the rest of the deception. She could not understand Emily's declaration, or how the name could be separated from the rest of the invention ; however she found the company could do so, and she gladly acquiesced. Her health was drunk, and according to the form, she had to return thanks. She deputed George as her champion ; that seemed to her the most proper thing, since he was, as it were, her host ; and she asked him to say as little as possible—only that she was very much surprised.

George represented he must say 'pleased and gratified.'

"Well, so I am, I suppose," said Grace, "but I had a great deal rather it should not have been, though you know I think it very kind indeed."

George was a much better hand at a droll speech than a grave one ; to make the latter in public would rather have frightened him—the former he could do with ease ; and this was a tempting opportunity. He told the company that he rose in obedience to his friend Grace Leslie, who had done him the favour to appoint him her champion. He assured them from herself, she felt deeply the honour she had just received at their hands, or rather at their glasses ; but so amazed was she at their unexpected kindness, that she had not time or power to ascertain her own feelings.—She supposed, however, she was both pleased and gratified. He was quite sure the company would understand his fair friend's sentiments, especially when he added, she would have much rather it had never happened ; yet at the same time her gratitude was inexpressible, and therefore he would cease attempting to express it,

only hoping, in her name, that some day each individual of the company present, might enjoy such honours as were now showered down upon her.

George was a great favourite, and his manner was very amusing; his speech was therefore very favourably received. When he sat down, Grace whispered to him, "Oh, George, how could you do so? I felt so very much ashamed!"

"Well," answered George, "shall I say so? you know I only said just what you told me."

Grace could not deny this.

The rest of the supper went off without any thing worth relating. All seemed to enjoy themselves. Mary Anne again recovered her thoughtlessness, now she saw all had passed so safely, and she congratulated herself on her wariness and skill.

CHAPTER XXVII.

Ann Boleyn.—I swear again, I would not be a Queen
For all the world.

Shakspeare.

ALL suppers must however come to an end, and so at length did this. By degrees the room was thinned. Party after party departed, and the more domestic circle alone remained. This was the three sets of cousins. All the young ladies went up together to put on cloaks and shawls, &c., and as usual at such times, some of the events of the past evening were discussed. Isabella said she was

sure Mary Anne had had honours enough, and compliments without end.

"Indeed," said Mary Anne, "it is very disagreeable; I can't bear compliments; I wonder people can like them!"

"Particularly if they don't deserve them!" observed Emily, as coolly as she could.

Grace looked at her.

"Well, but Mary Anne did deserve all that happened to-night," said Constance.

"You don't mean to say, I suppose," said Ellen, "that every body who has a pretty idea come into her head, deserves to be crowned a Queen; though certainly Mary Anne does deserve very great praise for the plan of the Bower. I suppose, Mary Anne, you mean, that you feel as Grace did, according to George's droll way of expressing it."

"Yes," said Mary Anne, "but it is so ridiculous to dress you up, and call you a Queen, and be paying such compliments to you; how ridiculous it was of Mr. May to talk of my genius, taste, and modesty! and of Mr. Parry to compare me to Flora! and all the rest who spoke of my fair face and lovely brow!—such stuff, you know; and then Mr. Everard worse than all,—he talked of my beauty and loveliness, and went on more than any body, calling me 'her Majesty!' it's so very disagreeable—when every body's looking at you, too!"

"Well, Mary Anne," said Emily, restraining her indignation for Grace's sake, "you need not complain of Mr. Everard, for I am sure he did not pay *you* any very great compliments."

"But I am sure he did though!" said Mary Anne, "and you would have thought so, if they had been to you."

"Well," returned her cousin, "I had rather you should have had such than I."

“Ah,” said Mary Anne, “that’s nothing but spite, I know well enough; for you have not once treated me like the rest, or called me ‘your Majesty,’ the whole evening.”

“Why, Mary Anne,” remarked Ellen, in her dry quiet way, “you are very unreasonable; first you blame every body for calling you Queen, and paying you that amusing mock sort of honour, and now you blame Emily for not doing so; now what do you *really* wish?”

“Oh, I only wish people would not be so ridiculous!” said Mary Anne, feeling she had made herself silly, and hoping to get out of the scrape.

“Yes, but, about *Emily*,” persisted Ellen,—“why then do you blame Emily?”

“Because,” said Mary Anne, “I know she was vexed, and wanted some share in the praise about the Bower; she would not come and help to crown me—I observed it all; and I know Emily has been grudging me my honours all the evening, because she thought more praise should be given to her for her part in the execution. I tried that it should be so, for I told Lady Musgrove that the others had done more than I had; but Lady Musgrove did not think so, for she said Emily could never have thought of any thing as pretty as the Bower—did she not, Ellen?”

“Yes,” said Ellen, “but she said she was sure Emily helped you a great deal in the execution; and so she did, and I am sure Emily has been quite the life of every thing to-night,—and Grace too,” added she, “only Grace is so quiet, one never observes what she does, only sees the effect. She is just like our river at Langham; it is a beautiful clear quiet stream, running silently underneath tall reeds; we can hardly see a glimpse of the water, only where the sun shines upon a few little open spots now and then, but the meadows on each side are beautifully green and bright. This little stream too supplies the whole

village with water, making no show at all, but springing out between the stones.—Now is not that just like Grace?”

Grace had not spirits to answer her kind friend as she might have done another time. The rest of the Duffs and Isabella were not disposed to join in the praise of Grace, for different reasons; and Emily was still burning with indignation at Mary Anne's late consummate impudence and affectation. At last Charlotte Duff, who never interfered in any thing scarcely, said, “What a pretty idea that is of Ellen's! it would make a subject for Fanny to write verses upon.”

“It may be pretty or not,” said Ellen, “I do not care for that; but I want you to say it is true of Grace.”

“To be sure it is true of Grace!” cried Emily at last, “and the only reason they don't say so is because it is *too* true.”

Charlotte meanwhile had stolen quite close to Grace, and ventured to take her hand.—“Well,” thought poor Grace, “I ought to care for nothing, when I have three such dear kind friends—how can I ever make them understand how much I love them? how much better this honour of Ellen's is, than the honour they paid me down stairs.”—Yet she felt ashamed that others heard it, because she knew it was Ellen's and Emily's kind exaggeration, which others would not understand, though it was delightful to herself in proving their affection for her.

Nothing else particular passed, except at the immediate parting, which took place in the dining-room. The reader will remember, that Mary Anne's and Campbell's visit to their cousins was at an end, and they were to return home to-night with their brothers and sisters. Glad enough was Mary Anne that it was so: she thought she should escape any unacceptable examination on the Fairy Bower, and it would die away naturally. Had she not been leaving, she might not have been so bold. But just before going, she

remembered she must take leave of Grace, and should be expected to kiss her. She could hardly tell why she felt it so entirely impossible to do this; yet to go without would be so very remarkable. The same difficulty had struck Grace, some time before, and she thought she should see by it what Mary Anne really thought. All had taken leave—Mary Anne was in hurry and confusion—she had lost one of her gloves—every body looked for it—it was found, and she was running after some of her party who had gone,—when Mr. Everard called her back, and reminded her she had not taken leave of the fair Grace, who had so dexterously woven her crown for her.

Mary Anne was forced to check her steps and return. With a hurried movement she approached Grace, took her hand, and quickly kissed her. “Good bye, Grace,” said she.

Grace coloured crimson in a moment—Mary Anne, scarlet; and she ran as fast as she could into the hall, to join her party. Grace felt very uneasy at finding the eyes of Mr. Everard and Mrs. Ward fixed steadily upon her. She knew she looked very remarkable, and was much relieved to withdraw from their gaze as soon as possible. Grace attended her mamma to her room, and Mrs. Leslie began talking to her. Presently she said, to Grace’s surprise, “Grace, my dear, I hope you have had a pleasant evening; has any thing happened? you seemed enjoying yourself very much.”

“Yes, I did, mamma, very much,” answered Grace.

“But then, my dear, why are you so dull now?” asked her mamma.

Poor Grace said she did not know that she was dull.

Her mamma then very kindly asked if she was well.

Grace answered, “Yes, quite well.”

Mrs. Leslie then told her she must be quite tired and excited by all her dissipation, and advised her to go to bed,

and not to sit up talking at all with Emily, though they must have a great deal to say. "Else, my dear child," added she, "I shall have you quite ill; or perhaps one of those sad palpitations will come on; so good night, my dear little girl," and she gave her a kiss.

Poor Grace! her mamma's words recalled *all* her troubles; how she wished she might tell her all! but that she knew was more impossible than any thing. She knew her mamma never encouraged her to tell any thing unfavourable of her companions, yet she thought she could never feel easy with such a great bar between herself and her mamma. "It is not," thought she, "like George's quizzing people, or any thing else that has ever happened before to me: this is such a *great* thing, and so many other events are tangled together in it—my palpitation, and the broken cup; and then Hanson is connected, besides Emily's part; then those strange words of Mr. Everard's, and I cannot think why he would find out the person who invented the name of the Fairy Bower!"

"By this time Grace had reached her room, where was Emily. Emily had not begun undressing, but was walking up and down the room. There was a strange contrast between the appearance of the two young friends. Emily was highly excited, and looked quite fresh and ready to begin the evening again. Grace's motives for exertion had ceased; namely, the pleasure of assisting to entertain others, and the desire of not betraying that any thing was wrong by her manner; and now that she was alone with the only person who knew the secret, she no longer struggled against the sad feelings that oppressed her. She looked very worn and sorrowful. "Oh, Grace!" cried Emily, "I have been so impatient for you! who could ever have supposed such things would have happened? I am really nearly wild with anger; and I am angry too with you, for it was all your fault. It was all for your

sake I was silent ; and up-stairs, too, I was just going to tell all, only you looked at me so imploringly."

"Indeed," said Grace, "I know it is all my fault, and I am very sorry indeed that you are angry with me."

Emily now scolded Grace for her simplicity, and told her there was nobody to blame but "that mean and false Mary Anne." "I had no idea," said she, "Mary Anne was so bad, though I knew she was silly and vain ; besides I really did not think she was clever enough for such a deception."

Emily did not remember that much of Mary Anne's cleverness, was owing to her own and Grace's silence. Mary Anne had not been *clever* enough to deceive Emily, who had a great deal of observation ; besides, indolent people, who seem to have no wit or cleverness, and are thought very dull, or even stupid, have sometimes cleverness, or cunning, enough to deceive others a great deal wiser, better, and cleverer than themselves. A very little cleverness goes a great way in a fraud, because good sort of people are not suspicious ; they think others like themselves, till they find out any person false. And again, this sort of cleverness is soon learned, and is less trouble to acquire than any other. Mary Anne had gained all she had in less than twenty-four hours ! but then she had prepared her mind for it *silently* for many years ; as we before said, she availed herself of her sisters' talents and labours ; she chose to learn duets, that she might play and be praised with less trouble before company ; and she had at times done sly things, which nobody knew, to get admired. All these practices, and the habit of mind she had thereby acquired, prepared her for this almost incredible piece of falsehood. Step by step she had led herself into it ; and even when in the midst, she felt very little pain of conscience ; she felt pain and fear a very few times, but it was *lest all should be discovered*. The sin in the sight of

God,—the wrong to her neighbour,—the injury she was doing her own soul, never distressed her; though she was every day hearing all these things, and had been doing so all her life, with her mamma and her governess, Miss Newmarsh. She had been blunting her conscience; even Mr. Everard's words, startling as they might be thought to one under her circumstances, scarcely touched her: she was thinking of herself and her situation. Part of his addresses she did not even hear,—part she did not understand,—other parts she mistook, and turned to compliments to herself, as may be seen by the remarks she made to her young companions afterwards. In what a different state was Grace's conscience! She therefore could not understand any thing at all about Mary Anne; it quite frightened her to allow her mind to dwell upon her conduct or feelings, and she turned away to any other point in the transaction as a relief. If she could not *think* of Mary Anne's conduct, much less could she speak of it; and she could find no reply to Emily's last remark.

Emily went on observing and lamenting Grace's dulness, and saying she was wishing to have a long talk, for she was not tired at all.

Grace said *she* was not tired, but that her mamma desired her to go to bed, because perhaps she would be ill.

Emily remembered how ill poor Grace seemed before the party began, and then wondered how she had gone through every thing as well as she had. Very kindly and properly she gave up her wish for sitting up, and before long the young friends sought their beds.

CHAPTER XXVIII.

Oh, that our lives, which flee so fast,
In purity were such,
That not an image of the past,
Should fear that pencil's touch!

Wordsworth's Memory.

THE departure of the two cousins made a change in the proceedings of those left behind. The three girls were much more in the drawing-room, with their two mammas, and George sometimes went out for skating, or amusing himself with some young gentlemen in the neighbourhood. They usually however passed their evenings together in the study. There was another change; namely, that invitations were accepted to some houses for the children.—While Mary Anne and Campbell were with them, they could go no where, where there was dancing or cards,—several such parties were now in prospect. This morning Grace was with her mamma about ten o'clock, as usual. Grace had not her own lively, easy manner, but her mamma made no remark, thinking she was tired after yesterday's excitement and fatigue. They read the psalms and lessons, as usual, together. Grace was exceedingly amazed at many passages in both, especially in the psalms; they seemed so applicable to what went on yesterday. Yet she shrank from allowing it, even to herself. The first words that struck her were, "*They imagine deceitful words, &c.*" The idea of Mary Anne came painfully into her head as she read that verse, for it came to her turn,

and she wished she could get rid of it. But the beginning five verses of the following psalm, were very much more striking to her, and she almost wished they had not come to-day. Also she seemed never before to have noted so particularly the evening psalm, which is a peculiarly beautiful one; the thirty-eighth verse she thought she should now never forget. "But then," thought she, "have I 'kept innocency' in this case?—oh! I am afraid not; though I have tried to take heed unto the thing that is right." One of the lessons was about Abraham not saying Sarah was his wife. She thought this very remarkable to come to-day; it seemed so like what she had done. "Ah!" thought she, "I must not blame Mary Anne, I see, for I have done the same!—no, not *quite* the same," added she, in thought, "I know my fault is not quite the same, but still I am afraid it is very bad." Grace found something more of comfort for herself in the second morning lesson; it was part of the Sermon on the mount, and though she knew it very well, (it was a very favourite chapter of hers, and contained the very verse Ellen had spoken of to her the day before) she now thought these words of our Saviour's more beautiful than ever; and as she read, "Blessed are they that mourn, for they shall be comforted," the tears filled her eyes, so that she was afraid she could not have gone on: but she got over it, and went through above half the chapter, when her mamma stopped her, as she sometimes did, and said she would finish reading, for she saw Grace was tired.

Grace thought she had never before observed so much the meaning of the psalms and lessons which she read. "How good," thought she, "it is of mamma to read these with me every day!—ah, if Mary Anne's mamma did so with her!—especially the psalms, I am sure she could never have done such a thing; the psalms speak so much

against deceit and falsehood, and indeed against every thing wrong."

Mrs. Leslie talked to her little girl on the yesterday's proceedings. There was a great deal Grace could talk freely about; but she felt very uncomfortable at the constant watchfulness she was obliged to keep up, lest she should say any thing that should betray Mary Anne. "This cannot be right," thought she.

Once her mamma said, "So I find Fanny Duff writes verses! have you seen any, Grace?"

Grace was almost afraid what her answer might lead to, but she replied she had—they were about a bird.

"Ah," said her mamma, "that is what I heard of; and it was from one line that Mary Anne got her pretty idea of the Bower—do you remember that line, Grace?"—

'And live in *bowers* with thee.'

"Yes, mamma, very well," said Grace.—"Ah!" thought she, "that line was the beginning of all my troubles; for if I had not heard it perhaps I should never have mentioned my idea of the unfortunate Fairy Bower."

Mrs. Leslie then remarked, "How like Mary Anne's Bower is to the plans of your cousins at Hampstead; but I suppose, Grace, you *did* help a good deal: in the flowers, I know you did, because of that fine long tendril, which you remember every body was so amused about."

This danger had never before struck Grace,—that her mamma would recognize her style of workmanship. She now wondered her mamma did not suspect, since it was well known that the decorations at Hampstead originated with Grace; and ever since she first showed her skill that way, her cousins were very anxious she should come and assist in the preparations. But every thing was at present surprising to Grace: she answered her mamma's question

as truly and simply as she could, and some other subject was introduced.

Mrs. Leslie was in some respects like her daughter Grace ; or rather, the daughter inherited some of the mother's excellencies : one was a great simplicity of mind, and a heart perfectly unsuspecting,—not that Mrs. Leslie was wanting in sense ; she had common sense to a most uncommon degree,—but she had not that quality usually called *knowledge of the world*, which quickly discovers evil and low motives in every action. Like the genius of our country's law, she believed every body innocent, till proved guilty ; and though often rallied on her simplicity, she never yet had lost it. Many other mammas would have put Mr. Everard's remark, the discovery of the originator of the name of the Fairy Bower, and her own surprise, together, and would have got a notion of the truth. Had such an idea of so young a girl as Mary Anne—so strictly brought up, too—come into her head, she would have almost discarded it again. She did not *forget* Mr. Everard's remark, but as yet it had made no impression.

This week the dinner party took place, which was intended to greet Mrs. Leslie. It was a large party, and several guests joined it in the evening. The children had very little to do with it, but were for some time in the room. Grace was more noticed by old and new friends of her mamma, than she ever had been before. There was a good deal of music, and Mrs. Leslie sang. Grace was delighted at this, for she thought no one but her aunt Stanley, and one celebrated public singer she once heard, sung like her mamma. Grace, though such a child, and a fond daughter, was not quite wrong in her judgment. Mrs. Leslie *was* a very beautiful singer, and the whole room was perfectly charmed. Afterwards she was warmly thanked, and congratulated on not having given up her singing.

Mrs. Leslie said she did not mean to do that, and she had kept it up more than any thing, for the sake of her little girl, who she thought some day would sing.

Some one asked if Grace had begun yet.

“Not regularly,” said Mrs. Leslie, “but she likes to sit and hear me, and she shows a taste for it.”

A gentleman present shrugged his shoulders, and asked if it was possible that Mrs. Leslie could waste such a voice and such science on a child.

“I do not call it *waste*,” replied Mrs. Leslie, smiling, “but then, you know, I am a fond mamma.”

The gentleman answered that a hurdy-gurdy, or a ballad singer, would please a child equally; and that it was distressing to think of such powers as hers being so spent.

Mrs. Leslie laughed, and assured him her little girl was a better judge than that, and showed a decided taste for music of all sorts, and especially for singing. “I can assure you,” she added, “she knows as well as I do when I am out of practice; and when it is so, often prepares the piano and opens my books of a morning, as a sort of hint. I dare say she will have observed I have a cold to-night.”

“Well,” said the gentleman, politely, “she must be a greater critic than any one here, for no one else could have discovered it.”

Mrs. Leslie was made to sing more than once again; and in one song, an English ballad, a great favourite of Grace's, the little girl crept round the company, and at last got close to her mamma's side. After it was finished, little Grace whispered, “Mamma, I am afraid you have a cold.”

Mrs. Leslie saw the gentleman heard this whisper, and did not wish it to be brought into general talk, so answered, “Yes, my dear, I have a little cold,” and began playing an air.

CHAPTER XXIX.

Remember when the judgment's weak
The prejudice is strong.

Song.

MEANWHILE a conversation was going on at a sofa, between Mrs. Ward and Mrs. Mason, the lady who had always spoken in praise of Mary Anne Duff. They began talking of Mrs. Leslie's singing, and Mrs. Ward said she was glad to hear it again, and to find that Mrs. Leslie had lost nothing.—“She really gives up so much to her little girl, that I was quite afraid she would neglect it, though she told me she did not mean to lose her singing, for Grace's sake.”

“That child is very little of her age, and not a very fine looking girl,” remarked Mrs. Mason.

“Not at all *fine*, I should say delicate,” returned Mrs. Ward; “yet she can be animated too, and sometimes her eyes are very expressive when she looks full at you; but I do not admire them in a child, it is too much like a grown person to be pleasant.”

“You make me laugh,” said the other lady, “to call that little girl like a grown person; I can hardly fancy her ever grown up. Now your Emily, in manner, or Mary Anne Duff, in person, are much more like young women: Mary Anne is a fine promising girl.”

“Yes, but her manners are not what I like,” said Mrs. Ward, “she is as much deficient in self-possession as Grace is overburdened with it.”

“Do you call that little girl womanly and self-possessed?” exclaimed this lady.

“To be sure I do,” returned her hostess; “why, only think how she went through that scene of the coronation! a very formidable scene, for a child! with every eye fixed upon her, and Mr. Everard paying her every compliment he could think of. She seemed to mind it no more than if she was alone in the room; while Mary Anne looked so silly and sheepish, I was quite ashamed of her.—You see,” said she, laughing, “I am rather unreasonable, but I do believe Emily would just hit the right medium, only she would have been much cleverer—more theatrical than Grace.”

“Certainly she did go through all that very well,” said Mrs. Mason, “but you would not compare Emily and that little Grace; there must be several years difference between them.”

“About two, I think,” said Mrs. Ward.

The lady was much surprised, and began to think of Grace with a little more respect. Yet she said she could not admire her as much as Emily or her cousins, the Duffs.—“But,” she added, “they are all fine girls, and so very clever.”

“Grace is clever, certainly,” said Mrs. Ward, “but I don’t quite know what to make of her. I think her mamma is deceived in her, though she is so much with her. I think Grace rather a close character, and not quite to be trusted. Her mamma has the most implicit confidence in her: she tells me, and she *believes*, that Grace practises now every morning an hour, before breakfast; but I have my reasons for thinking it is not the case: Mary Anne found out something of the kind by questioning Emily one morning. I did not choose to tell her mamma. Besides, I don’t know what *you* thought the other night, but *I* was not at all satisfied with that busi-

ness about the Fairy Bower ; there was something very odd about it, and I cannot help thinking Grace got more credit about it than she deserved ; she turned so pale when she said she invented the name, that I could not help noticing it ; and when she took leave of Mary Anne that night, the colour rushed into her cheeks, and she looked as guilty as possible, and could not at all bear my eye. Besides, the children were so exceedingly amazed—they were so sure before that it was Mary Anne's own naming. It was *not* hers, because you know she said so before us all in the drawing-room ; but I cannot believe it is Grace's, some how or other, and I am sure there is some mystery about it."

Mrs. Mason agreed that the long silence about it at supper was very strange, and reminded Mrs. Ward of her husband's remark at the time, about Emily's behaviour.

"It was *that* remark," replied Mrs. Ward, "that first put these notions into my head, though I noticed Grace's turning so pale before that. Emily is very fond of her new friend, and if Grace had hinted the name was her own idea, Emily might wish to give her the chance of the distinction. Emily is a generous girl to those she loves."

"Well, really," said Mrs. Mason, "what you say seems very likely ; what a shabby little thing she must be ! I never liked her looks much, as you might see."

"I do not say it *is* so," answered Mrs. Ward, "but I shall keep a watch. Oh !" added she, "one other incident I forgot : the morning after the party, the three girls were sitting at work with us, and talking over the evening, when Ellen, who you know is as simple as an infant, asked how it was that *Grace* had invented the name of the Fairy Bower ; and she reminded Emily of '*what she said*' (I don't know what it was) on the Monday night. Emily was silent, though I saw she tried to answer once or twice. Ellen again pressed the subject, and Emily said, in some

confusion, 'Whatever I said then, was a mistake; for Grace *did* invent the name.' Ellen persisted in her enquiries, and said, 'Then I suppose, Grace, you and Mary Anne talked it over together, and you then suggested *that* name for it,—was it so?' Grace answered, 'Something of that kind,' and seemed very much annoyed, especially as I had all the time fixed my eyes upon her. Ellen then remarked, that it was very clever of Grace, for that nobody could have guessed by day-light it would be such an appropriate name; for though it looked very pretty, there was nothing *Fairy* in it, till the lights were lit, and she appealed to me. I could with truth agree; for next morning, when the bird was gone, and all the real flowers dead or withered, and the ends of candle and sockets appearing here and there, with a good deal of grease about, it did look really deplorable; I could hardly believe it was that elegant little device we had so much admired.—I cannot understand this affair, I say, but I am sure all is not as it should be."

Mrs. Mason agreed in this opinion, and some other subject was started.

CHAPTER XXX.

Give unto me made lowly wise,
The spirit of self-sacrifice.

Wordsworth.

THE morning after the juvenile party, Emily and Grace had a long talk together, on their unfortunate secret. Emily's wish for revealing it was a good deal abated—the *eclat* she had anticipated, and which in the event had so

greatly surpassed her anticipation, had passed away; nothing could restore it to Grace; and Mary Anne too was gone,—her exposure must now be private. Yet Emily did wish the truth should be known, though she was not so pressing for it as yesterday. There was another reason that had some weight with her—the broken cup and saucer. Grace had told her, her hopes about Hanson's undertaking. Hanson was going that day to visit among her friends, and had promised to go to John Edwards, the workman at Spode's, the very first thing. She had taken the broken pieces with her, to match. Grace, as well as Emily, had had a private conference with her just before she left. Grace had been some time talking to Emily, to persuade her to let them mention the accident to her mamma. Emily was against this, because she said if Hanson got a new cup, it would be so much better to tell the accident, and give the cup all at once.—“Why should we vex mamma and make her angry with us, when we can do without?” said she; “mamma will not care for it, and will be very much pleased when she sees the cup.”

Grace had thought of this too, but it seemed to her more proper to mention the accident. She could not make her friend think so; she therefore tried another way, more like Emily's own arguments, and said, “But suppose Hanson cannot match the china after all; how much worse it will be to have to tell it then than now.—And besides, it may be very long perhaps after I have gone,” added she, quite alarmed at the thought.

“Well,” said Emily, “you need not look so frightened, suppose it is! you know you would only escape a scolding, and it would all come upon me,—if I am not gone to school first.”

Grace next represented, that it might be discovered meanwhile, for the servants must know.

Emily said nobody knew but Hanson, and that she said

she had told nobody, and did not mean to do so ; that she was gone, and had taken the broken pieces away. She likewise reminded Grace that the mention of this accident, would very likely lead to a discovery of the affair of the Fairy Bower, since Mrs. Leslie would hear of Grace not being well, and would find every thing out by her questions. She also remarked that Grace was fond of interfering with other people,—that if she had not, the affair of the Fairy Bower would have come out long ago, through herself ; and that now it was the same about the cup. She said it was very unkind of Grace to refuse her request, when she had so faithfully kept *her* secret ; that she should also remember that it was much more her business than Grace's, for she had broken the cup ; and that the fault was towards her own mamma, not Grace's.

All this was true, and some of it reasonable. Grace felt the last representations as a little rebuke ; she was much ashamed of having urged the motives above-mentioned for telling of the accident, since her arguments had not been successful ; she therefore said nothing, and acquiesced. She however felt more doubt and pain about it than any thing else she had done. She was herself a little afraid of Mrs. Ward : she would have preferred not telling her, on that account : it would, as Emily said, be *pleasanter* to have a cup to replace the broken one with. Again, she was aware of the danger of a discovery of the whole secret, and she shrank from nothing so much as being the means of this,—from *nothing* so much, except herself telling a falsehood, or doing any thing she knew to be wrong. To do Grace justice, however, in spite of these two motives, she had much rather have told Mrs. Ward ; she would gladly have gone that moment and told it herself, if Emily would have let her ; and it was this strong wish she felt, that rather satisfied Grace she was not doing quite wrong in consenting to act by her friend's wishes, rather than her

own. Emily, too, was afraid of her mamma; and this it was that induced her, as it were, to make a compact with Grace, that the one secret should be set against the other. Emily did not mean any deceit; she thought her meaning and feeling very fair and natural. It was natural, and it *might* be fair, but it was not quite right, if she thought her mamma expected to be told of such accidents; and Grace's judgment concerning it was a much safer one. It is right to be prudent, and to look forward as to the consequences of our actions. Our Lord bids us be "wise as serpents." It is right also *not* to be prudent, and not to look forward to the consequences of our actions. Our Lord also says the children of this world, are in their generation *wiser* than the children of light. He would not have us wise in this sense. God has given us *sense* to discover when we are to do the one or when the other; and he has promised us His Holy Spirit, to enlighten our natural sense, and to enable us to bear consequences, whatever they may be. He also who can still the raging wind and tempest, can, in one moment, turn away from us consequences, however unavoidable and dreadful they may seem to us; so that we need never fear, if we are, as Grace said, "keeping innocence, and taking heed unto the thing that is right." This temper is called forth much more in small trials, such as the one before us, than in great ones; because great actions and trials are usually more public; indeed that makes them called *great*. Just so, large and coarse paintings have much more effect to a greater number of spectators, than small delicate ones. The broad strokes *tell* more, and look much bolder and brighter; they may also have cost much less labour. This actually was the case with Mary Anne and Grace. Mary Anne's conduct and manner, even though not very good, *told* well. Lady Musgrove, Mrs. Mason, and others in the room, praised her very much indeed. She contrived to patch up, as it were,

enough goodness for that one public night. But *her* goodness would not stand the test of every day's small trials. The observant reader will have noticed this in her sad envy of Grace—before this grand piece of wickedness,—in her desire of her cousin George's attention, and in very many pieces of folly she allowed herself to indulge in. People who go through daily trials well, will go through great trials well—of that we may be sure. There is an old proverb, "Take care of the pence; the shillings and pounds will take care of themselves." Nothing is more true than this sentiment, as applied to matters of conduct. It certainly would have been safer if Emily had done as her friend wished, and not deferred telling her mamma. Grace perhaps could press it no farther.

CHAPTER XXXI.

New scenes arise.....

Thomson.

THIS week was one of the children's parties at a neighbour's house. Grace of course accompanied them, and we had best hear her account of it to her mamma, when she returned. They had had such a very pleasant evening! every thing was right. Mrs. Wallis and her grown-up daughter were so kind and good, and arranged every thing so nicely. They had dancing and cards, and Grace had both danced and played at cards.

Mrs. Leslie asked her little girl if they played for money, and if she had any with her.

"We did not play for money, mamma," said Grace, "Mrs. and Miss Wallis came and arranged it all; and in one game they set up a pretty glass ship for the winner, and a nice little girl, the youngest among us, got it, which pleased them all very much, for she could hardly play at all, and some one or other was obliged to tell her. Then the dancing was quite as pleasant; we had some quadrilles, and then country dances: some were very odd; there was one half a slow tune, and half quick, very funny indeed, and very pretty; but I did not dance in that."

"Who played for you?" asked her mamma.

"Miss Wallis, all the time, but once," answered Grace, "and then she was tired: and mamma, you will be almost frightened to hear what I did, *I* played that one tune for them."

The next week another party of the same kind occurred, and Grace was full of anticipation. It was to be in London, and she was sorry to hear she should see none of those who were at the last party, and very few who were at the Wards. The young people came in from this party full of disgust. The three Wards were very open in expressing it. George said he would not go there again, there was such cheating at cards. Emily said that it was as bad in the dancing, and that she was black and blue with being shoved and pushed about; while Ellen dwelt upon the scenes at supper time.

Mr. Ward remarked upon Grace having said nothing, and asked whether she looked grave because she was shocked at the party, or at his children's accounts of it?

Grace felt confused at being thus publicly called on, and said it was not such a nice party as that at Mrs. Wallis's; she had never been at such a noisy one before.

"And I suppose," said Mr. Ward, "you will be as dis-

pleased with it as the others, when you talk it over alone with them."

Grace certainly felt displeased enough, and told her mamma a good deal of what went on; she felt it much easier to do so than if she had known the young people there. Of some she did not even know the names, though the names of the leaders of mischief, at such parties, usually transpire and are bandied about. "Oh, mamma," said Grace, "I have quite changed my mind since the other day; then, I wondered why Mrs. Duff and Miss Newmarsh could object to cards and dancing, and now I quite agree with them; I do not wish ever to see cards or dancing again.—You cannot think how shocking it was! At first I thought it was because they played for money, and then I remembered the other night they played for a ship, and might have been violent and unfair if they had liked. Then I thought the faults in the dancing was because we had only country dances, but we had them too last week."

Mrs. Leslie asked what was so very bad; and Grace said, "It was nothing but a romp at first, and a fight at last: some of the young ladies would be always at the top, and danced up and down in a sad boisterous way; and after a great deal of pushing and shoving, some of the boys got to fighting. Then the cards were as bad; what George said, mamma, was really true; they *did* cheat,—I saw them; but I think it was in fun at first. Then when it was discovered, they began to quarrel and were so violent that *we* got out of the way. I am sure I hope there will be no more parties while I am here."

Mrs. Leslie reminded her little girl, that there were two ways of doing all things that were proper—a right way and a wrong way. "But you know, my dear Grace," added she, "that I am always afraid of too much dissipation for

you." She then told her little girl it was time for her to go to bed.

There was one remark of Emily's, in their conversation on the morning after the grand party at home, which had made a great impression on Grace. This was her saying that Grace was fond of interfering with other people's actions. She thought over the whole transaction of the Bower, and she found that was the case; but then, in excuse for herself, she remembered that Emily had not only spoken of it to her, but forced the secret from her. "Ah!" thought she, "if Emily had taken it all upon herself, I should not only *not* have prevented it, but should have been really glad, on *some* accounts;" meaning her present reserve towards her dear mamma. Emily's remark however led her to reflect on several things; and one was the difference between what should be her *own* part and feelings, and Emily's. She then tried to put herself in Emily's place, when she first suspected the deceit. She saw in a moment that she should not have been able to rest, till she had made it certain one way or other. What a dreadful injury to Mary Anne, though only in thought. She next saw that the means Emily took to ascertain the fact, were the readiest and most natural in her power. It was much more unpleasant to find out the truth through Mary Anne, even if Emily could get at her alone, than through herself; and looking on it so, Emily's conduct seemed much more fair to her now than it did at the time. She thought how angry she should be if any one took away Emily's *credit* in any thing; and though at the time, and even now, she thought the *credit* nothing worth speaking of, still Emily was right in wishing it to come upon the proper owner. When she thus distinguished her own feelings and line of conduct from Emily's, she saw she might have been very wrong in compelling Emily, as she did, to act according to her own views.

“How much *thought*,” said she to herself, “it requires to act right! Now several days have passed, and I have only just discovered this! yet I wanted it at a moment’s warning. I hope, I am sure, it will be a lesson to me, as mamma always says, and that I shall remember it all the rest of my life, not to interfere with other people’s actions. I see now it was right for Emily to wish Mary Anne exposed, and to try and see the matter set right, and it was right of me to wish to shelter Mary Anne.”

Grace got a little comfort by this discovery: she thought her small piece of deceit *might* be, perhaps, more than excused,—it might be right. But the comfort she might gain on one sight, she lost, poor little girl, on the other; for there was now a new point doubtful in her conduct,—her having unduly interfered. She was not, however, of that weak cast of heart, which would make herself more guilty than she was; nor did she brood over such things. Hers was a healthy habit of mind, that turned her failings, her pains, and her pleasures even, to some good account, present or future. She therefore rose relieved by these reflections; especially after reading that morning with her mamma;—for she found a verse in the Psalms, which seemed to show, it might be right at one time to “hold the tongue,” and at some other time (or as she interpreted it, some other person would be right) to reprove and set their evil ways before those who had erred.

It was this morning that Mrs. Leslie said to her little girl, that she hoped in all this dissipation, she did not forget her prayers, night and morning.

Grace said she did not, and she added, “I think, mamma, dissipation, as you call it, must make people remember them more than ever.”

Mrs. Leslie was rather surprised at her child’s remark, for it was not exactly one herself would have made. It had been trouble and trial with her that had led her to

think more and more seriously ; perhaps had she known all her little daughter's present feelings and experience, she would have found it was not *quite* so different from her own ; there *was* pain of some kind in both. Mrs. Leslie said, " I am glad, my dear Grace, that you think so ; I asked you because I did not quite know about Emily."

" Oh, mamma," cried Grace, warmly, " I can assure you Emily is much more particular in that respect than I am.—And," she added, in a lower tone, " do you know, she has four lines taken from that verse in the psalms, ' I will lay me down in peace and take my rest ; for it is Thou, Lord, only that makest me to dwell in safety.' She says she could not go to sleep she is sure without saying these lines. I wish I could have learnt them, but I did not like to ask her to say them over again."

Mrs. Leslie said she was glad to hear all this of Emily ; and added, that Grace had no temptation in that respect.

" No, indeed, mamma, I have not," said Grace, " and I admire Emily so very much about it ; you cannot think how right and proper she has always been ; I am sure Constance could not have been more so."

" Then, my dear, you still retain your admiration of Constance."

" Yes, indeed, mamma, I do ; I think she is quite wonderful, though only a little girl."—Then there came suddenly into Grace's head a thought how shocked Constance would be if she knew of her sister's conduct—if it should ever come out ! She paused, and something like a sigh escaped her.

Her mamma asked her what she was thinking of.

She said she was thinking how shocked Constance would be at any body about her doing any thing wrong.

Her mamma said, " That was an odd thought, Grace ;

for in such a large family the little ones must often be naughty, and Fanny, I hear, is not always very good."

"I meant, mamma," said Grace, "any thing *very* bad."

"My dear child," said Mrs. Leslie, "what could put such an idea into your head? why do you think it likely any of the little Duffs should do any thing *very* bad?"

Poor Grace found how dangerous the most common conversation could become, under any circumstances of mystery. This reflection turned her mind on her own misdoings, and she thought how wrong Constance would think she had been, and that herself would never have got into such a situation. She however answered, "I was only thinking, mamma, if they *did*, how shocked Constance would be."

"Well, my dear," said Mrs. Leslie, half smiling, "I think you have rather odd thoughts just now."

Grace was afraid of saying another word.

CHAPTER XXXII.

Little again!—nothing but low and little!

Shakspeare.

WE have forestalled some of the events of the next week, and must now continue them. Grace accompanied her young friends to another party close by; it was a small and a quiet one,—no cards and no dancing; there were puzzles and quiet games. George found out that Grace could play at chess, and played with her. She was a better player than he expected, and she beat him the two first games: the first he thought accident, but the second he

was provoked about, and determined to take more pains. Grace was very anxious about this third game, certainly, for George had been rather provoking and contemptuous. At first he wanted to take off his queen, and then to give her the move. She thought this only good-natured; but after being beaten the first game, he talked of its being "all chance, as if he could not beat any *little girl!*" Grace *was* a little girl, and she did not care for being thought so; but she did not like to be called so by George before strangers. George made such a racket about it, that a good many of the company were attracted, and two or three gentlemen came and looked over. Grace was very glad to beat, but said nothing. One of the gentlemen was very much pleased, and said, "Why don't you crow? why don't you clap your wings, little bird? if I were you I should stand upon the table and crow!"

Grace laughed, but she *was* very much pleased.

George would have another game, and a very tough one it was. Grace lost her queen, and George triumphed in rather an unmanly manner. Soon after, Grace forked George's queen with her knight. It was neatly done, and the gentlemen were delighted. After this the game became tiresome, and some gave over looking on. It was a drawn game. Grace was more than satisfied: she did not expect to win, for she saw George was a better player than she was. The gentlemen however made a good deal of her play. Grace had good sense; she was not persuaded to believe she played a bit better than she thought before. As they put away the men, for they were very handsome, and there was a box for them, Grace said to George, he must beat *her* some other time.

"Ah, you think I can't," said George, "but I can, and you'll see!"

Grace said she did not think so—that she knew he

would beat in the end, for he played a better game than she did.

George neither believed her sincerity nor her judgment. He did not think her *good* enough for the one, nor *clever* enough for the other. He did her wrong. Grace saw it, and it made her smile to herself.

This evening also the elders of the family dined out ; and Mrs. Leslie told Grace that some old friends of hers wished to see her little girl, and she must take her some day. Grace wondered very much why people should like to see children, and said she was sure they only said so from kindness.—“ I am sure, mamma,” continued she, “ I know some ladies, who had rather I was not in the room to be spoken to, and yet they talk to me, and to you of me.”

Mrs. Leslie told her little girl she had better not say things of that kind, nor think them,—but speak when she was spoken to, try never to be in the way, and be obliged to any body who was kind to her.

“ But, mamma,” said Grace, “ I really cannot help liking some people, even if they are grown up, better than others. I hope that is not wrong. Now I am sure I should like aunt William and aunt Stanley, if they were not my aunts ; and I should like you, if you were not my mamma :” and the tears started into poor Grace’s eyes at the supposition.—“ And then,” continued she, “ I am sure there are other people I should not like much if they were my aunts ; is this wrong, mamma ?”

“ It depends on your reasons, my dear child ; but you know you have not much now to do with grown people, so you need not think about it.”

After a pause of consideration, Grace said, “ What a good remark, mamma, that is of yours, for now I think of it, I always can tell my reasons for not liking any body of my own sort of age, but I never can find out exactly why I don’t like grown up people. Of course it is as you say,

and I need not think about it. Do you think I shall be able to tell why I do not like grown people when I am grown up myself?—can you, mamma?”

“Of course, my dear child, I think I have reason for liking some people better than others, for else, you know, I should never have married your papa.”

This answer was a great comfort to Grace; but it was also a great distress. She thought, “Then of course mamma must have loved papa better than any body else in the whole world; and yet mamma never saw him after I was two years old.” She had never before realized her mamma’s loss; and she lost herself in thinking how thoughtless she must have been till this moment. Seeing so many families, with both parents living, prepared her for these thoughts; besides a little incident which had very much contributed to the first part of her conversation. At the small party she had just been at, was Mrs. Mason, who talked a good deal to Grace. She made her come and sit with her on the sofa, praised her hair and her eyes, and alluded to Mr. Everard’s *compliments* to her, as she called them. Grace did not like this, and longed to be rude and run away, but she thought her mamma would not approve of her doing so; she therefore sat still. Mrs. Mason then went on telling her, that she did not wonder at Mr. Everard admiring her so much, for that once he admired her mamma very much, and she should not wonder if he were to be her papa after all.—“Should you like Mr. Everard for a papa, my dear?”

Grace stared at the lady in such a way, that Mrs. Mason felt the meaning of Mrs. Ward’s remark, that Grace’s eyes were like those of a grown person. At length she said, “Mr. Everard is my godpapa.”

“Yes, my dear, I know *that*,” said the lady, “but I mean your *papa*—your real papa.”

Grace still fixed her eyes in Mrs. Mason’s face, and re-

plied with a very proper tone and manner, "What do you mean!—my papa is dead!"

"Grace had never before mentioned her papa to any stranger, and she felt as if she had been wrong in doing so now. Mrs. Mason actually was annoyed, and though an unusual circumstance with her, was at a loss for an answer. She however said, "I know it, my dear; but don't you know people can marry again? and if your mamma married Mr. Everard, he would be your papa."

Grace did not think, this time, whether her mamma would approve it or not, but as soon as she could, she slid off the sofa, and escaped to the other end of the room.— Soon after her games of chess began. Mrs. Mason's remarks had made her very uncomfortable; she had never chanced to have heard such made before. When her mamma alluded to her papa, she felt very much re-assured, and thought it exceedingly singular, since Mrs. Leslie very rarely mentioned him. She did not dislike Mr. Everard, or even feel much afraid of him now. She had seen a good deal of him, and understood him a little, and she saw he was kind to *her*; but when she went to bed, she got an opportunity, when Emily did not see her, of having a long look at her papa's picture, and felt very much satisfied at the conclusion she came to, that it was not in the least like Mr. Everard. Few persons can understand the effect of remarks of this kind upon an observant and sensitive child, in Grace's circumstances; if they did, they would not be so cruel as lightly to inflict such pain. The ignorance a child is conscious of in such matters, adds to the sting, and should be its protection. There is an injustice, too, both to parents and children, as the effect of such communications unadvisedly made, may produce lasting and irremediable evils, and every parent has a right to make such an important communication in the way that seems most suitable to the dispositions of

children. But Mrs. Mason was not of a character to take such things into consideration ; she was of a social disposition, and had very little to do besides finding all the amusement she could among her neighbours.

CHAPTER XXXIII.

How partial parents' dotting eyes,
No child was e'er so fair and wise.

Gay's Fables.

THE next day there was another large dinner party at home. The guests were principally neighbours of Mr. and Mrs. Ward, and strangers to Mrs. Leslie. Mr. Everard, however, was there,—also Mrs. Mason. The children appeared, as usual at such times, only in the drawing-room. After the gentlemen came up there was music. Mr. Everard, who was very fond of music, and understood it thoroughly, was near the piano, as usual ; he asked Mrs. Leslie if Grace played well enough to be asked to sit down.

“Indeed she does,” said a nice looking young lady—the Miss Wallis, before mentioned ; “Mrs. Leslie, I was quite surprised at your little girl the other evening at our house ; the children were dancing, and some one proposed, a new dance, with a slow air and a country dance. I really did not wish to undertake it, for I dare not play for dancing without the notes before me. Emily went and brought up your little girl ; she said she was not afraid, and I assure you she played for a good half hour without a single mistake, as steady as old Time.”

Mrs. Leslie was pleased to hear Grace could do such a thing, as it was quite new to her. She said Grace had mentioned playing one dance for them. She asked what slow air she played, and heard it was "God save the King." Mr. Everard said he had rather hear Grace play that, than any thing; and Mrs. Leslie went herself to speak to Grace, who was just finishing some game. Grace was much more alarmed at the idea, than on the former occasion; because, she said now that it was music,—then it was dancing, and nobody listened. Her mamma reminded her, that since it had been requested, people would be more pleased by her obedience than by her skill, and she need only suppose she was practising. Grace followed her mamma, sat down, and played "God save the King," through; with more touch and force than is commonly met with in a child. Every head was turned to the piano at the first notes of the well-known anthem, and every one was surprised to see there a little girl,—and so small a one. She was made to play it over again. At the end, Mr. Everard praised her very simply, and so as not to annoy Grace at all. He asked her who taught her her chords, for they were particularly correct.

Grace put her fingers on the minor chord in a sort of nervousness, and looked at her mamma, who was good enough to answer for her.—She had heard a gentleman play it in that way once, some time ago, and Grace found the notes out afterwards.

"I suppose you liked those chords and the bass?" asked Mr. Everard.

Grace said, "Yes, much better than the old ones."

Miss Wallis said she had observed the difference immediately, and asked Grace to show her, which she did. Miss Wallis then played it, and Grace had to set her right twice; also she made some remarks on her own mode of

bringing in the parts, which showed a good deal of taste and judgment.

“But why,” said the young lady, “do you not play those chords every time, and why not the same bass, which has a much richer effect?”

“Because,” answered Grace, “there would be too much of it, and because you know it comes in so much better the second time.”

Miss Wallis said she had an excellent ear, and she wished she had half Grace’s taste. Some other persons round the piano also praised her. Mr. Everard said he hoped Grace would not trust to ear, or taste, but practise as her mamma and aunt had done before her,—“Depend upon it,” said he “nothing is like practice, for a lady’s play.”

Grace was allowed to escape to the other end of the room. Some little girls would have been injured by this sort of praise: Grace was not likely to be: she was accustomed to remember advice, more than praise; and she often received praise as a piece of politeness to her mamma, which, in fact, the praises of children usually are. Grace, then, carried away Mr. Everard’s advice alone. “That is just what mamma often says,” thought she, “nothing is to be done without practice.” Then one uncomfortable thought passed her mind, of what Mrs. Mason said last night, and mechanically she turned her head where that lady sat. Mrs. Mason’s eyes, and those of the lady to whom she was talking, seemed looking at her.

We will take the liberty of hearing what they have been talking about.—“Well, I do declare!” said Mrs. Mason, “Mrs. Leslie is leading her little girl up to the piano; I do wonder at mothers,—they do all think their children such prodigies! and as for that little Grace, I am quite sick of her name; every body is saying something or other of her; one talks of her dancing, another of her chess, another

of her manners, and now, I suppose, we shall have her music !”

“*I can speak of her music,*” said a lady on the sofa, “for I was quite pleased at her talent, yet perfect simplicity, the other night, at my house.”

“Well, you may talk of her simplicity, if you please,” returned Mrs. Mason, “but I must say I can see nothing of it; in my opinion, there is a great slyness about that child, and I am not the first to notice it. I assure you, many persons have spoken to me of what took place here the night of their grand juvenile party; and my opinion is, that Mary Anne Duff could tell tales that would make that little Grace blush.”

“It was Mary Anne Duff that devised the Fairy Bower, and was crowned queen, was it not?” asked a third lady, who sat on the sofa.

“Yes,” replied Mrs. Mason, “and she deserved it, for a very pretty notion it was.—But,” added she, looking significantly, “it is my opinion that *some* that night got more than they deserved.”

The lady enquired farther, and Mrs. Mason became more explicit. Mrs. Wallis was shocked at the idea of such falsehood in so nice a looking child as Grace; and Mrs. Mason supported her opinion by declaring many had the same thoughts, and assured Mrs. Wallis she would hear of them before long. She also said she had heard, from very good authority, other stories of Grace’s duplicity, and she was sure her mamma was quite deceived in her; adding, mothers always were, affection blinded them to every thing!

Mrs. Wallis said that Mrs. Leslie was not a person of that sort, and she never could believe any child of hers could be guilty of such a mean, base action.

Mrs. Mason replied, that Mrs. Leslie was such a vast favourite every where, that she had no doubt many would

think the same ; but if people were bold enough to speak their thoughts, it would be found, that pretty nearly all the company that night were of her opinion.—“Not Mr. Everard, of course,” she added. Then looking at the piano, where the party of whom she was speaking were grouped, she continued her remarks in another direction. She soon, however, returned to Grace, who was then showing Miss Wallis the chords, called her a conceited little thing, and wondered any body could see any thing in her manners ;—for her part, she thought her the rudest and most disagreeable child in the world ; and she gave her version of the conversation between them the evening before.—“I saw she was all alone, with no one to speak to, so I got her by me on the sofa ; I did every thing to please her ; I chose out the nicest cakes, and praised her, as you know one does children, talked to her ever so long,—when, would you believe it ! I turned to take a cup of tea, and this rude little thing had got off the sofa and was at the other end of the room, when I turned round !”

Mrs. Wallis did not receive all this as Mrs. Mason expected ; so she continued in the same strain to the other lady. But we have heard enough to see that Mrs. Mason did not like either Grace or her mamma, and was not very scrupulous in the means she took to make others of her own opinion. No one had spoken first of the supper scene to her but Mrs. Ward ; but she had that morning been making calls, and for want of something better, had made it a subject of conversation and mystery. It was a great pity that Mrs. Ward made any remark in the first instance, till she was more certain, especially to any person she could not be sure of. Grace was her guest ; and though but a small one, in a measure under her protection. Mrs. Ward did not like Grace, and suffered that feeling to make her forget proprieties she ought to have observed.

Good breeding would have taught this, or true Christian feeling,—they are the same thing outwardly, and that is the reason they are sometimes mistaken one for the other. Mrs. Mason's mode of talking is what is generally called *gossip*; perhaps hers might go a little farther, Mrs. Wallis did not gossip, as far as we have seen.

CHAPTER XXXIV.

'Tis the sublime of man,
Our noontide majesty, to know ourselves.

Coleridge.

Fear to stop and shame to fly.

Gray.

THE next day Mrs. Ward and Ellen were going to London; the latter to pay a visit to the dentist, and her mamma to make calls. It was not necessary for Emily to visit Mr. Parkinson, and she disliked his room too much to wish to accompany them. Her mamma was surprised at her readiness to stay at home, for Emily was generally always ready for a day's excursion, or any change. She found it was not mere politeness to Grace,—she said she wished to stay with her, for she liked her.

“My dear Emily,” said her mamma, “I do think you are bewitched with that little girl; are you going to become a sentimental young lady?”

“Well, mamma, I cannot help liking Grace,” said Emily, “and I shall enjoy a morning with her alone; for it is some time since I have had a talk with her.”—(Ellen

had joined their evening toilet since Mary Anne left.) “Especially,” added she, “now she is going away so soon,—there is scarcely a week left.”

After Grace had read this morning, her mamma told her she had a letter to write, and Grace went down to Emily with her work. Emily was pleased, and said they should have a nice comfortable chat together. Grace rather wondered at her feeling; for she was never alone with Emily, without the sense of their secret becoming tenfold more painful to her.

“Why are you so grave, Grace?” said Emily.

“I was thinking of a great many things, Emily,” answered Grace, “and one is, that I am glad to be alone with you, for I want very much to thank you for something.”

“Thank me!” cried Emily, “what have I done for you?”

“Not *done* any thing exactly; but *said*,—you said something that I shall never forget, and I am very much obliged to you.”

“What can you mean?” asked Emily, seeing Grace quite in earnest.

“Why, you told me I interfered, and so I did, and I wish you to be so kind as to say you forgive me.”

“Why, Grace, I never shall get to know you! you are certainly the oddest girl I ever knew!” said Emily, “what do you mean?”

Grace then explained and said she could not help it now, for the time was past, and whatever came of it all, she must bear it, for she knew she had done wrong, and only asked Emily to forgive her. The tears stood in Grace’s eyes;—Emily was amazed,—was perplexed, and could say nothing. Grace said, “Then, Emily, you will not say you forgive me?”

“How can I forgive you?” said Emily, “I have nothing

to forgive ; I hardly remember what I said ; I spoke in a great pet, and I ought rather to ask you to forgive me ; only I never do such things."

Grace explained what she meant more clearly ; and ended with saying, " Now, if I had let you tell all about it, as you wished, you know all that has happened afterwards would never have occurred ; so now will you forgive me ?—besides you know it is going on now."

Emily said she would do or say any thing to please her, adding, " you are so strange, Grace, like nobody else ; you seem to think all the faults of every body about you, belong to you."

Emily said this more seriously than usual, and added, " I am sure I don't know what would become of you, if you went to school."

" Is school so very bad ?" asked Grace.

" Very bad ! to be sure it is ! why, I am almost a good girl there ; though some are a good deal better than me too !"

" You ? yes, of course," said Grace, rather timidly.

" I, good, Grace ? why I am sure you must think me very bad indeed ; and lately, that you have seen more of me, I have often wondered you will speak to me—but that is the difference between you and Constance and some other good girls ; I don't know what it is exactly though, I don't like them but I know I like you."

Grace's eyes glistened with pleasure at this confession, and she said she was so glad that Emily liked her—she longed to kiss her friend—and some how or other she managed it. Emily was a good deal affected, but she got over it, and said, " Well, now, Grace, that we have got so far, you shall tell me, don't you think me very bad ?"

Grace looked exceedingly amazed ; she longed to say how good and how clever she thought her ; and she re-

remembered the difference she felt between her and her brother George, with some pain, but said nothing.

“Now, Grace,” continued Emily, with some vehemence, “I have asked you, and you *shall* tell! Don’t you think me very bad?”

“No! to be sure I do not,” answered Grace.

“Well, but do you mean to say I have never done or said any thing which you call ‘*wrong*,’ since you have been here?”

Grace began going over the events of the Fairy Bower, which were always ready to start forward with her, and she could remember nothing—she was thinking whether not speaking of the broken cup, was sufficient; but she considered that, now, as much her own doing, as Emily’s; when suddenly, she knew not how, Emily’s habit of exclamation came to her mind. She coloured very much, and felt confused.

“Well,” said Emily, as quietly as she could, “say what it is; I ought to be satisfied, you have been so long finding it out, I thought there would be a hundred things in a moment.”

“Oh, Emily!” cried Grace.

“Well,” returned the other, “say at once; it is much worse to be kept guessing, as I am.”

“Do you really wish it?” asked Grace.

Emily assured her she did.

“But I know,” said Grace, “you do not think it wrong, so it is no use my telling you, I have heard you say, you don’t think it wrong; I know many people do not.”

Emily assured her she really wished to hear, and would not be the least offended. Grace then reminded her of the conversation that they had all together, the morning of the party; when Isabella and Constance both objected to what she said. Emily now remembered and understood; she said, rather satisfied, “Oh, is that all? I thought it was something much worse.”

“ Ah !” said Grace, rather disappointed, “ I said you did not think it wrong.” There was a pause, and Grace ventured to add, “ How I wish you would !”

“ Why do you care about it ?” asked Emily.

“ Because,” replied Grace, “ I cannot bear people I am with, especially if I like them, to do what I think wrong. I am afraid you will say that is *interfering* again ; but I do not think I shall ever be able to help that ;” and the glistening tears in her eyes, proved her sincerity.

“ But,” said Emily, “ if you were at school, you would see how impossible it is to avoid it. Every body does it.”

“ But you know, Emily, even if every body does, *we* must not, if it is a wrong thing ; but you think it right.”

“ Right !” said Emily, “ no, I don’t say right ; neither right nor wrong, because every body does it. Why, Grace, I am sure you do not think of every thing you do ; *you*, even, must do a great many little things without thinking whether they are right or wrong.”

“ Yes, *little* things,” said Grace, “ and great ones too, I dare say, if I knew them,” and she thought of her late mistake ; “ and I should do a great many more if I were at school, I know ; but I do not call this a *little* thing ; because I think, you know, it has, *perhaps* to do with one of the Commandments ; but I know you do not think so.” Grace was surprised that Emily did not assent. The truth was, Emily had too much sense to give the light answer to Grace she had before done ; for she knew well enough that it was not a fair one. Having no answer, Grace continued rather timidly, “ And I think if we do not quite know whether a thing is right or wrong, it seems so much better not to do it ; then afterwards, if we are sure either way, it is so much more comfortable, either to begin doing it, or not to have done it at all : don’t you think so, Emily ?”

Emily said gravely, she had never thought so much of right and wrong, as Grace. “ If I like a thing,” con-

tinued she, more in her own way, "and it is not very bad, I do it; and if I don't, I don't want to do it;—why you know, I could never get on at school, if I did your way; there would be no end of it; and I must stand debating all day."

Poor Grace was always alarmed at the *terra incognita* of school—she pleaded guilty to knowing nothing about it; and was only so glad her mamma did not send her to school. However, she was clear-headed enough to keep to her point, and remarked, that school had nothing to do with what they were talking of. Emily said it *had*, because every body did it there, and it was so catching; and it was impossible to express your feelings without exclamation of some sort or other. Grace agreed to this, and said it was very difficult—she often wanted words for the purpose. "But," continued she, "do you mean that really every girl at your school uses such words?" Grace just then remembered a remark Ellen had made of Selina Carey, and was afraid she too might have forgotten her first thoughts.

"Oh, not quite *all*," said Emily. "I know there are two who never do, because they have been watched and teased. Elenor Brown sets every body to rights, and one day she took this up, and some of the girls said what I do, that every body did. Elenor said that Selina Carey did not, so we set about watching those two, and I never heard them say any thing of the sort, certainly. The other girls, also, set upon watching all the school, and kept a list, but I did not care about it. Elenor Brown, though, is a very disagreeable girl, really. I am almost sure you would not like her, Grace; though perhaps you might, too. Selina Carey, every body likes; but she is particular in all things, and is no rule, because she is like nobody else."

"But," returned Grace, "if she is very particular and very good, and attentive to her lessons, as you have said

before, and every body likes her, I should think she is a very good rule."

"Well, so she would be, for *you*, Grace, she is somewhat like you; I often compare you, and yet you are quite different; I like her—but not as I like you. You know, I could not say all I have been saying to you now, to *her*;—oh, no. If she was forced to object to any thing I did—these words, for instance—she never did, though—I should call her a 'dear particular thing,' give her a kiss, and run away; and when Elenor Brown found fault with me, I said, why we only say 'Law;' and we all went on arguing, just to provoke her, as long as we could; but then I always make myself a great deal worse than I am, to provoke Elenor—it is such fun." Grace looked grave, though Emily's manner was very droll and trying. "Now, Grace," continued Emily, "you want to give me a lecture, and you are as bad as Elenor;—no, not as bad, either,—or as good, I suppose—but now you see, as I told you just now, how bad I am, and it is better you should know it at first; for I am not likely to change, and then you know you can throw me off, and hate me at once—which will be much better; I know you will in the end, for no good girl ever liked me, and you are the only one I ever took a real fancy to." There was some passion in Emily's manner as she said this; and she went on with more vehemence, "Now, Grace, say it at once; say you hate me!"

Poor Grace was exceedingly affected; she could only throw her arms round her friend's neck, and say nothing. Emily's tears, too, began to fall fast. At last she said, "You don't mean to say, Grace, that you can like me after all I have told you."

"I do," said Grace, "and I always shall, I am sure,—only, Emily, please do not talk in that way of yourself and of me,—I cannot bear it."

"Well, but you must find out the difference between

us, sooner or later," returned Emily, "and I had rather you should know what I am at once."

"But if you think you are wrong, Emily," said Grace, very much puzzled, "why do you not change? you *can*, you know, if you please; do you *really* think yourself wrong?"

"Yes, to be sure I am—I am wrong, and bad, and what you would call wicked."

"Oh, Emily!" cried Grace, very much shocked, "how can you talk so! I have never seen any thing to blame but that one thing."

"Well," replied Emily, "that is partly your own blindness, and partly because I can keep pretty well before you.—I always should, I think. Why, you know, I shall not use any of those words before you; at least, I shall try not."

"Oh, dear Emily!" cried Grace, distressed, "that is worse than all!"

"Why?" said the other, "I thought you would like it."

"If it is wrong to be done at all, it is always wrong,—and I think," added Grace, doubtfully, "it is almost worse to do as you say, than to do it *always*.—No," continued she, "not *worse*, because it might get you into a habit of leaving it off; but then, you know, it is of no use to do any thing of that kind only to please any body like me.—It is not like your papa or mamma, or any body of that sort."

"But papa and mamma don't tell me," said Emily.

"But suppose the third commandment does?" answered Grace, very seriously; "do think of that, please, Emily; I only ask you to think of it—it may be so, you know!"

Emily said she *could* think of it, but it was no use; if she left off these things she must go on leaving off others, and the girls would all find it out, and she should have no

peace ; it was much worse to make a turn, than to begin right at first, though that was very disagreeable,—and that if she made any turn, it must be when she left school, and could do as she pleased.

Grace had sense enough to know if people wish to correct themselves of any thing, it is best to begin at once, and not defer, and she said so. But Emily persisted that Grace could not judge, as she had never been at school. After a long pause, Grace said, timidly, “But I suppose school is not worse than when we are grown up, and have a great deal to do, and a great many people to see, is it?”

“Yes,” replied Emily, “it is ; because then, you know, we shall be old, and may do as we please.”

“But still, then we may not do wrong,” said Grace.

“Oh,” said Emily, “right and wrong are quite different to us at school, and to grown up men and women.”

Grace still could not think so, but her ignorance of schools and of grown up people made her diffident ; and besides, she thought she was quite teasing Emily, and had some time felt uncomfortable. She therefore only said, presently, that she hoped she had not said any thing to vex Emily, who assured her she had not, and reminded her that the conversation was brought on by herself. A few kind words passed between the young friends, and then another subject was started. When the clock struck twelve, Grace said she must go to her mamma, and told Emily she was to ask her if she would like to go out with them, for they were going to walk before the beauty of the day was over. Emily was quite disposed, and went to prepare. Grace found her mamma folding the letter she had been writing, and she bade her light a taper. As Grace waited by her mamma’s side, she saw the direction was to Mr. Everard ; she was just going to remark on it, with pleasure—for she liked Mr. Everard now, and wished to say so, since at first she had been alarmed at his man-

ner—when Mrs. Mason's words came into her head, and she could not speak. Thus—if there was really any truth in the insinuation—did that lady deprive a mother for ever of the comfort which such a spontaneous testimony from her child would have been to her heart.

When Grace was at leisure, she thought a good deal of her conversation with Emily.—“How good she is!” was her first thought, “how little she thinks of herself,—and how well of other people,—how I wish I was like her!” Then she considered with some surprise her way of talking, and going on to do a thing, when she knew it was wrong. If it had not been for the one specimen Grace had actually seen, she would have believed it was a misunderstanding of words, and only that Emily was much more particular than herself,—but this puzzled her a little, and she could not understand it. Then came her unknown world—*school*—and put an end to her speculations. She could only think, as usual, how glad she was that she was not there.

Grace told Ellen the other day she never could tell people of their faults. She was mistaken; she had done so before in her way, and had been doing so now, but she did not know it. It came to her hand, to do, and in the same way, no doubt, as she grew older, she would be able to correct others, when proper.

CHAPTER XXXV.

Lord! Polly, only think—
Miss has danced with a Lord!

Evelina.—LETTER IV.

THE young people were to dine with the elder part of the family to-day, since Ellen was to have that pleasure, having spent the day in London; and as the party did not return as soon as Emily expected, she proposed getting drest ready; for Ellen would have a good deal to say. Just as they were beginning, however, the carriage drove up, and presently Ellen found them out, in their room. She came in with all manner of pretty things in her hands, for they had been to the Bazaar. Emily began helping her to put them down, and was exclaiming, "What have you got—let us see—how very pretty!" when Ellen said, "I have got something to tell you that will surprise you more than all in these papers!"

"What is it?" cried Emily, in a tone of pleased expectation, "I like to be surprised."

"Well, you shall guess," said her sister, "because I am sure you never can!—I must give you one hint, though; you know we have been to Grosvenor Square; now, you shall have three guesses."

"Well, it's about Isabella, I'm sure," said Emily;—"Isabella is going to leave school, and coming out."

"No!" said Ellen, "but you'll never guess, except I give you one more hint,—it has something to do with the Duffs."

“ You don’t mean that they are all coming to Isabella’s grand party ? ”

“ No ! but try once more . ”

“ Well, then, Isabella has given Fanny her beautiful pearl brooch . ”

“ No ! but you burn , ” said Ellen ; “ really, Emily, you have been very near indeed .—It is, that Fanny is going to stay in Grosvenor Square—not going only to the party, but going to *stay*, you know, more than a whole week ! ”

“ Well ! I *am* surprised , ” said Emily, in a manner very satisfactory to Ellen. “ Why, you know, *we* never go and stay there !—Really *going* ! do you say ? What will they do about the dancing and cards ? ”

“ Oh, I suppose Fanny will not dance or play ;—you know she can’t ; but mamma said that would not signify *there* ; because, you know, the Duffs have wished so much to get acquainted with the Wards ; and now Isabella has taken such a fancy to Fanny—it’s very pleasant. Mamma was more surprised than you, and has talked of nothing else, all the way home. She is very much pleased, and thinks it will be such a nice thing for the Duffs . ”

“ And I was thinking , ” said Grace, “ what a nice thing it would be for Isabella ; I mean, if Constance knew her well . ”

“ Oh, the Duffs will be the most pleased of the two , ” said Emily, “ but it is only *Fanny*, you know, not *all* of them . ”

“ Yes, but mamma says the others will come afterwards, and she has always wished so much that they should be acquainted , ” replied Ellen, “ indeed, it seems very odd to me that they should not ; you know, they are both our cousins, and we know both so very well. I could hardly believe, till you reminded me, the other night, that Isabella and the Duffs had never met till that week, since

they were quite little things ; and that my uncle and aunt had never seen them at all."

"Well, but how did it all happen?" asked Emily.—
"Isabella, I suppose, persuaded her mamma, as she sometimes can."

"Yes ; I will tell you about that presently ; but you shall hear first, what my aunt said to mamma. She began talking of our party, and she said she never was at one so nicely managed ;—she was quite amazed, without dancing or cards, how an evening of children could be so spirited, and yet not boisterous. Then she said a great deal was owing to that elegant Fairy Bower, for it threw a grace and quiet over the scene, which the children felt insensibly—(I tell you her very words.) This led her to talk of Mary Anne Duff, and how clever she was, and she admired all the Duffs ; she said they were very superior to what she had expected, for she had never heard they were pretty ; and she thought their manners good—especially Fanny's ; then she talked of Fanny's writing verses, which Mary Anne told her ; I was by then, and heard her."

"Stop !" cried Emily, "I don't understand,—what do you mean by *then*?"

"Why, after the Coronation of the Queen of the Fairy Bower, you know, I went to lead Mary Anne into the back drawing-room, and found my aunt was talking to her ; Mary Anne was giving her an account of the idea of the Fairy Bower first coming into her head ; and she said it was from some verses of Fanny's, and repeated one line, which you know : my aunt was very much surprised at Fanny's cleverness, and spoke to Isabella about it, that evening. Well ! now I come to Isabella's part ; she immediately set upon Fanny, about her verses, and said she wished she would write some to *her*. Fanny said she would with all her heart, and that she would do them by the time of her grand party, on the 28th ; which, you

know, Isabella was always talking of. After some more talk between them, Isabella settled that she would do all she could to persuade her mamma to ask Fanny, to come and stay with her, to write these verses, to be ready for the grand party: my aunt liked Fanny, and at last agreed, and Fanny is to go next Monday."

"And the party is Tuesday week," said Emily. "Well, we shall hear all about it, to-morrow night, at the Duffs. I really quite long for it."

"To-morrow!" cried Ellen, "I thought it was Saturday we were going."

"So it was; but did you not know, the other day, mamma had a note from my aunt Duff, saying that she could not persuade Miss Newmarsh as she thought she could, and so the party must be either to-morrow, or next week; so mamma chose to-morrow."

"But why did Miss Newmarsh object?" asked Ellen.

"Why, you know, it was Saturday, and Miss Newmarsh never does any thing after seven o'clock on Saturday evening, because of Sunday," replied her sister.

"If it was a large party it would be different," said Ellen, "but you know it is only just ourselves, and one neighbour's family, and we should leave quite early.—I am so sorry, because of the little Wallises: but why did mamma say Friday?"

"It is lucky mamma did say Friday, else, you know, Grace might have been gone; for I want Grace to go to the Duffs."

"Grace, gone!" cried Ellen; "what do you mean? I thought Grace was staying at least a week longer; and we hoped she would go with us to Isabella's party; my aunt sent a message to your mamma, Grace, about you and herself too; but she told mamma she did not like to make a formal invitation of it, to Mrs. Leslie, as it was but a juvenile party. When does Grace go?"

“Next Tuesday,” said Grace, “mamma changed her mind, and settled it rather earlier, this morning.”

“Oh, how sorry I am!” cried Ellen; “that is worse than all. I never once thought of your going away, Grace.”

“I am very sorry, indeed,” said Grace; “I seem to know you all so well, now, I do not like to leave at all;—but mamma says she must go home on Tuesday, and so it cannot be helped. Mamma said, too, that perhaps I should see you again before you go to school, so I have been thinking of that.”

“But don’t you think your mamma will go, or like you to go, to this party, Grace? because, I remember mamma said that she hoped it would tempt Mrs. Leslie to stay;—for it will be a very grand one; several little lords and ladies, as there always are, you know.”

“I don’t know, really,” said Grace; “mamma generally does as she says at first; and you know, if she has business at home, she *must* go.”

“Well, I hope she will not,” said Ellen; and here the dinner-bell summoned the young people.

It was, as the conversation between the young folks showed, quite a new thing for the Duffs to make acquaintance with the elder branch of the Ward family. Lady Musgrove had for many years steadily, though not unpolitely, avoided any intercourse, and it was only the sight of the young people, hearing of their talents, and the proof of what she considered an elegant taste in the Fairy Bower, which induced her to listen to Isabella’s entreaties. Isabella was resolved on her point, and had various methods for gaining it still in store; but her mamma spared her the use of them, by consenting, after a moderate degree of teasing. Lady Musgrove did not ask all the family to the party. She told Isabella to write to Fanny, and say she wrote by her mamma’s request, to ask her to come on Monday or Tuesday, and stay a week, but not to mention the

party. Isabella accordingly wrote as affectionate a note as her circumscribed task allowed ; for her mamma would let nothing be said but what alluded to the invitation. Isabella had great difficulty in writing this note.—It may be thought singular, that so accomplished a young lady should be at a loss in this respect ; she could have written an affectionate epistle, and have run on to any length ; or she could have copied a formal invitation, from the note tray. But any thing between these, did not come within the range of her powers. The note, at length, ran thus :—

My own beloved Fanny,

Mamma desires me to write, and send her compliments to your mamma, and she hopes she will allow you to come to us at the beginning of next week, and stay a week with me, in Grosvenor Square. Papa and mamma both desire their compliments to Mr. and Mrs. Duff. You know how glad I shall be to see you,

My darling mignonne,

Your own ISABELLA.

This was shown to Lady Musgrove, who said it would do pretty well ; but made Isabella date it very fully, and add her surname to her signature ; also, she presided over the direction. Isabella was about to write, simply Miss Fanny Duff, Winterton ;—it became eventually,—

Miss F. Duff,

James Duff, Esq.,

Winterton,

Surrey.

CHAPTER XXXVI.

Defer not the least virtue.

George Herbert.

THE next morning, which was Friday, Emily and George went out after breakfast, in order to make a new arrangement, in consequence of Mrs. Leslie's leaving on the following Tuesday. She came for a fortnight, and had stayed nearly three weeks; still every one had hoped she would yet prolong the visit,—both Mrs. Leslie and Grace being acceptable in their respective circles. Mrs. Ward certainly expected that the invitation to Grosvenor Square would be an inducement, and she considered Mrs. Leslie's neglect of it, as another proof of her very unaccountable simplicity. At first, she thought that Mrs. Leslie was offended at receiving no regular invitation, and she explained fully Lady Musgrove's reason; but she found this made no difference in Mrs. Leslie, who, however, was so easy and pleasant about it, that it was impossible to be angry with her, as Mrs. Ward felt inclined to be. When Mrs. Leslie and Grace came down this morning, with their work, they found Ellen alone in the room; and they heard where George and Emily were gone; Mrs. Leslie said to Ellen, it was very kind of them to take so much trouble for Grace's sake. "I assure you, my dear Ellen," added she, "Grace and I shall talk a great deal over this visit, so much pleasure will last Grace for a very long time."

Ellen could speak of nothing but her sorrow that the

visit was at an end ; and they went on, talking on the past and the future. Grace was delighted to hear her mamma say, she hoped now they would often meet in the holidays.

After some time, Mrs. Ward came in ; she presently said, "Do you know, the most extraordinary thing has happened, I ever met with. Thomas just now came to me with a very long face, and told me that one of the coffee cups and saucers of the best tea service has disappeared ;—nobody in the house knows any thing at all about it."

"Somebody must have broken it," said Mrs. Leslie.

"But then, you know, the pieces would have been found in one of the rooms, next morning. I know I can trust Thomas, and I think I can, the rest of the servants ; and they say, that really and truly they know nothing about it. Thomas says he did not put away any of the best things till yesterday, because we were having parties so often ; and yesterday, he first counted them over, and could not make them right ; but as he was in a hurry to be ready to go with us to London, he said nothing, hoping to find the missing one, among some other set ; but he and all the maids have looked every where.—I saw no cup broken ; did you ?"

"No," said Mrs. Leslie.

"No," said Ellen.

Poor Grace ! we hope the reader feels a little for her.

"You may think it strange," continued Mrs. Ward, "that I should think so much about a cup and saucer ; but, besides their being really very handsome, they were the gift of my poor mother, on our marriage ; and she took a great deal of pains, indeed, about the pattern and form ; besides, several have unfortunately been broken, and mostly coffee cups ; so that they become very precious now. I told Thomas when he first came, he might break any thing in the house, rather than that tea service."

“As you cannot find the pieces, I cannot help hoping the cup and saucer may be found whole,” said Mrs. Leslie.

“No, indeed, I quite give that up, for I feel pretty sure some one has broken them, and is afraid to tell. I mean to question all the children;—of course I should not care so much if they could be matched; but I have tried different people at Spodes’, and they all say it cannot be done.”

After this, the subject was dropt. Grace felt very miserable, and longed for Emily’s return. Other matters were talked of, but Grace thought of but one; and when she heard the hall door open, she went and caught Emily, and made her come at once up stairs, to take off her bonnet. Here she told her what had just happened, and she said, “Now, Emily, do, pray let us—or me—do once right in this unfortunate business;—let me tell I broke the cup.”

“But you did *not*,” said Emily, (Grace always fancied she actually had) “it was *I*, you know, and you agreed that it was my business.”

Grace remembered her lesson about interfering, and was silenced. “I’ll tell you what I’ll do,” continued Emily, “if mamma asks me, I will tell her at once; but, you know, Hanson is to come to-morrow, and then we shall know about it; and it is a great pity to tell now, when Saturday is so near, and we have been waiting so long.”

“May I just say one thing?” asked Grace, fearfully.

Emily gave her leave, and she said, that “the cup was brought up for *me*, and you cannot think how uncomfortable I have been down stairs, all the time your mamma was enquiring about it.”

Emily still persisted it was her affair, and repeated, she would tell if questioned; and also reminded Grace of the certainty of the whole affair of the Fairy Bower coming out by this disclosure; representing very strongly that her mamma would be much more angry and sorry that the acquaintance between the two families of cousins should be

checked, or most likely put an end to, than that the breakage of a cup should be concealed; and she also said it would be more ill-natured than ever, *now* to betray Mary Anne, or to do the least thing that might lead to a discovery. Grace had never thought of all this; she saw now that confessing this small accident would almost certainly lead to a breach for ever between these two families; and she had seen, that Mrs. Ward was very anxious indeed, for some reason or other, that the acquaintance should take place. Her new rule, however, came to her relief, and she resolved *not to interfere*; as, without doubt, in this matter, Emily had the greatest right to direct. She, therefore, only asked Emily what she was to do if Mrs. Ward questioned her, adding, "then, Emily, I *will* tell; only you shall say how."

Emily said, "Tell mamma *I* know all about it."

"And then, Emily, about my own mamma; I must tell her if she asks me!"

Emily said she could do as she pleased about that; but hoped Mrs. Leslie would not tell. She also explained that *she* should not care herself that Mary Anne's deceit should all come out, but that her mamma would be very much vexed that any thing should occur just at this moment, and certainly it was not fair that Fanny should suffer for her sister's fault; "However," she added, "it is not at all unlikely, for my uncle is very particular in such things, and my aunt, I know, would be very glad to get rid of Fanny's visit altogether."

After this, Emily endeavoured to console Grace a little, by its not being likely that any thing farther should occur to-day, about the cup, for it was just one o'clock, when they were to dine in the library, and then be off directly for Winterton, and that she had other things to talk of to her mamma—about the little party for Monday, and so on. This was true; and besides Mrs. Ward had a note to write

to her sister, for the young people to take ; for, from the change of day, the elders were not able to go to Winterton, as before arranged, since they were engaged to dinner at a neighbour's, in Fulham. Mrs. Ward regretted this much, as she wanted to talk over Fanny's projected visit, and other things, with her sister. Mrs. Ward, therefore, wrote her note, instead of coming in to luncheon, as usual, and the children departed without any questions being asked.

CHAPTER XXXVII.

Judge before friendship ; then confide till death.

Young.

GRACE felt her other trouble coming on as she approached Winterton. It was above an hour's drive, especially now the roads were heavy, and they reached the house rather before five o'clock. Grace quite dreaded seeing Mary Anne ; and much more from the feelings she imagined must be hers, than from any thing else. The parting scene had convinced her that Mary Anne was conscious of some delinquency, and now that lasting results seemed likely to be the consequence of her deceit, Grace wondered more and more how she felt, and how she looked. She soon had a view of the latter, at any rate ; but, became only more and more perplexed as to the former. Mary Anne greeted Grace among the rest, and all began talking. Fanny was in very high spirits, and her new prospects soon became the topic of conversation.

“I suppose you have heard,” said she, “that I am going to stay a week in Grosvenor Square, with your cousin Isabella.”

They assented.

“Ah, Fanny is very much pleased,” said her mamma; “but she should remember it was all Mary Anne’s doing, and it is rather hard on Mary Anne that her generous feeling should not get its reward; but I tell Mary Anne she must not mind, her turn will come some day.”

“I am sure,” said Constance, “I should not think it much of a reward to go to Lord Musgrove’s, they are all very worldly people, and mix in very worldly society; besides, I dare say there will be cards and dancing, every night.”

“I don’t care for the cards or dancing, or any body I shall see, but dear Isabella,” said Fanny, “and she will be all the world to me!”

“All the world, Fanny! what a false sentiment and expression!” said her sister.

“Ah! Constance, that is because you love nobody as I do Isabella, and you do not understand that feeling,” returned Fanny. “Isabella and I love each other, just as Edwin and Angelina did; only they were man and woman; and just as Damon and Pythias did, only they were two men. She says to me;

‘No, never from this hour to part,
We’ll live, and love so true.’

And I say to her,—

‘The sigh that rends thy constant heart,
Shall break thy Fanny’s too.’”

“How can you be so ridiculous, Fanny?” exclaimed Constance.

“ You may call it ridiculous if you please,” said Fanny, “ but it is quite true, and you would have been very glad to go to Lord Musgrove’s, if Isabella had taken the fancy to you, she has to me ; you know how much you talked of her and liked her at first, when you and Miss Newmarsh fancied *you* were her favourite. *I* knew how it was, all the time, and could have laughed at you !”

“ Fanny, you do not understand me,” said Constance, with great command of temper. “ I liked Isabella then, because there seemed a great deal promising about her ; and I should *then*, and would *now*, do any thing to do her good ; but I would not go to such a house as *that*, for mere fancy and pleasure, as you are doing ; I hope I am not so inconsistent.”

“ Well, and why may not *I* do Isabella good ?” asked Fanny.

“ Nonsense, Fanny,” returned her sister, “ you know very well, *that* is not your reason for going, and you do not think about it.”

“ No,” said Fanny, “ because I love Isabella too much to think of any thing but seeing her ; don’t you know that the presence of the beloved object is every thing ? why ! don’t you know that people *die* willingly for those they love, as Angelina says, when she thought Edwin *had* died for her,—

‘ And there forlorn, despairing hid,
I’ll lay me down and *die*,
’Twas so for me that Edwin did,
And so for him will I.’

You see she is quite ready to die for him, as I am for Isabella.”

“ How ridiculous you are, Fanny,” cried Constance, “ talking of dying in that way ; why should you die for

Isabella's sake? I'm sure she would not die for you. I dare say she cares very little about you."

"But she does, though," said Fanny, "else why has she asked me, for a whole week? the fact is, you do not understand what true friendship is, and you say, like Edwin, when he was vexed,

'And what is friendship but a name?—
A charm that lulls to sleep,
A shade that follows wealth or fame,
But leaves the wretch to weep.'

"I am sure," replied Constance, "I say no such stuff."

"Fanny just knows Edwin and Angelina," said Mary Anne, "and can quote nothing else."

"Well, no wonder, that is all Miss Newmarsh's fault," replied Fanny. "I should be glad enough to have more poetry like that; but *that*, and Henry and Emma, are the only two pieces, in all our poetry, at all to my taste—yes! and the rest of Goldsmith, and a piece here and there, perhaps, in other books. Miss Newmarsh is so cross, she lets us have no poetry at all."

"No poetry at all! what do you mean?" said Constance, "why, we have all Milton, and four volumes of that sweet Cowper, and all Goldsmith besides, and several collections of the extracts from all our best poets, modern and ancient!"

"Yes, I know that, and I say I like pieces here and there, and some of Cowper; I like that line,—

'Oh, for a lodge in some vast wilderness!'

So beautiful it is! that is what Isabella and I are to do—to fly like my bird, far away from all the bustle and evil of the world, and live quite happy, all alone!"

Here George, who had been with Campbell and some other boys, came into the room, and joined the party.

“Live quite happy, all alone, Fanny!” cried he, “*that* I’m sure you would never do! why, you’d have nobody to talk and quote poetry to.”

“By *quite alone*, I mean just *one* more,” said Fanny.

“That is, by ‘one,’ you mean ‘two;’ and by ‘two,’ you mean ‘three,’ and so on. But pray who is this ‘*one more*’ to be?—Isabella, or me? oh, not poor me; I see by your look of contempt; oh! oh! dear me! dear me, what shall I do?” continued he, pretending to cry. “Fanny likes Isabella, whom she has seen just twice, better than me, whom she has known all her life! ah! well does her favourite poet say all that about Friendship!” and he rehearsed the stanza Fanny had just before done, but in very different style; repeating the last line, and ending, “ah, to weep! to weep! how true that is! cruel Fanny!”

Of course, this gave a turn to the tone of the conversation; no one could help laughing at George, for he was very droll, and very good-natured; but Fanny was a little provoked.

“Well, *Fanny, dear!*” continued he, “don’t be angry, it’s I, you know, that should be angry.”

“Why should you be angry?” asked Fanny.

“Because,” replied George, “I see, as plain as a pike-staff, that you are going to cast me and all of us off, for your *darling Isabella*; and as I don’t care for bouncing B one half so much as I care for myself and all the rest of us, of course I am very angry, and think you a very silly girl.”

“I am sure, George, you are very rude to speak of your cousin in that way,” said Fanny.

“Well, then she has no business to be *my cousin*,” replied George, “for you know, Fanny, I am not more polite than necessary to any of my *cousins*.”

“Indeed you are not!” cried Fanny, “and I hope before long you will learn better manners!”

“Weugh!” exclaimed George, with a long whistle,

“my dear pretty Fanny, I see we must have a little serious talk together.” Then assuming a graver air, he asked her whether she thought there were any such people in the world, as those of whom Edwin speaks—

‘Who leave the wretch to weep.’”

She said, “Yes, all bad people.”

“Well, *Fanny dear*,” said he, “take care you don’t make another of these ‘*bad people*.’”

“Do you mean,” cried Fanny, indignantly, “that I shall deceive and desert Isabella, and leave her to weep and to die?”

“No, not exactly that,” answered George, “but that you will desert all of us, and leave us to die,—you know, you have made me weep already.”

“George, what nonsense you talk!” cried Fanny, impatiently.

“Well! and pray *why* have not *we* quite as much right to die, if we please, as Isabella?” said George, “and as to nonsense, I appeal to the company! Now, Grace, you are no relation to any of us, and are, besides, always the fairest judge in the world: have I talked more nonsense than this cousin of mine?”

Grace had now become used to being appealed to by George, and generally found something to say; she was rather afraid now, as she saw to her surprise, that Fanny was really provoked; she answered, “Why there is a great difference between you! one is in jest, and the other in earnest.”

“Very good—sapiient judge!” cried George; “Fanny is in earnest in her folly; I am in jest in mine.”

“Not in her *folly*; in her *sense*,” returned Grace, “you may keep your folly to yourself, George.”

“Sense! sense! do you use that word in two *senses*?” said George. “A *pun* I do declare! but a very vile one,

for nobody but you, would have thought of either sense or meaning, from the lips of my fair cousin there; don't look shocked, Grace!" continued he; "you don't know Fanny yet—she will not be offended; she sets up for being a young lady, with sentiment instead of sense, and poetry instead of meaning."

"Well, and are not sentiment and dear poetry worth all the dull things in the world put together?" exclaimed Fanny.

"There!" cried George, triumphantly, "what more would you have. You see, Grace, Fanny would not let you help her off! so you might have spared your pains."

The young people were here summoned to a very plentiful tea, which broke in upon the conversation. George was too fond of amusement at all times, and not very serious; yet he gave Fanny some hints in this conversation, which might have been of use to her all her life, had she attended to them; but it was rarely that she took in or considered, the advice and opinion of her elders and instructors; much less would she listen to those of her companions, if they were disagreeable to her. Now, especially, she was more elated than she had ever been in her whole life, and George had perceived this.

CHAPTER XXXVIII.

Thus conscience does make cowards of us all.

Shakspeare.

THERE were puzzles and riddles for the young people after tea. All the party amused themselves with them ; meanwhile, the following conversation took place.

“ So, Fanny,” said Emily, “ I find you and Isabella settled this visit together, the other night.”

Fanny said that Isabella proposed it, and talked it over.

“ And how was it your mamma and Miss Newmarsh consented ?” asked Emily.

“ Miss Newmarsh was very much against it,” replied Mary Anne ; “ she said, if it was Constance, she should have been glad, because *she* had principle and firmness, and would do Isabella good, but that Fanny was quite unfit.”

“ And she said too,” added Constance, “ that it was a great slight to ask Fanny, and not Mary Anne, who was the beginner of it all, and whose elegant fancy was so conspicuous the other night ; by the bye, we have been trying to make those flowers, and we cannot do it at all, the tiresome people send us the wrong paper and wire ; and the gum will not hold, and nobody can cut out the leaves properly ; we have tried in vain, and now have quite given it up. How did we manage the other day ? it seemed as easy as possible.”

“ Oh, the paper was the right sort, and so was the gum

and the wire, and there were so many of us," said Mary Anne, hoping to put off any dangerous remarks.

"And you know Grace helped us," said Ellen, "and cut out all the patterns, and taught us how to make them up; you know she knew more about the flowers, a great deal than you, Mary Anne, though it was all your plan; oh, by the bye, Mary Anne, I wanted to ask you, when I saw you, how it was about the Fairy Bower,—the name I mean."

While Ellen was speaking, Mary Anne was reaching over for the snuffers. It has been before remarked, that she was not handy; and the confusion and alarm into which Ellen's impending question threw her, increased her natural clumsiness. In her hurry and agitation, she upset one of the candles, on the puzzle Ellen was putting together. "Oh, Mary Anne," cried several voices, "see what you have done! how could you be so awkward?"

"Mary Anne always is awkward," said Fanny.

Every body was disturbed; the bell was rung; the damage, that table, puzzle, and candle had sustained, rectified; and Ellen went up stairs with the maid, to do the best she could with her frock and her hands, both of which had severely suffered. As soon as Mary Anne had seen things pretty straight in the drawing-room, she said she would see after Ellen, and left the room.

"I have no patience with her!" said Emily, in a lowered voice, to Grace, as they walked to a sofa at the other end of the room, "and if it was not for mamma, I would tell all this moment."

Constance and Fanny, finding the party at their end of the table broken up, presently followed them.

"Why, Emily," cried Fanny, whose spirits seemed constantly rising, "I am surprised at you, who always laugh at me! I am sure you are quite as sentimental, with

Grace Leslie, as I am with Isabella! how you have been whispering to her!"

"Well, and why not? may not I have a 'darling *mignonnette*' as well as Isabella?" cried Emily, taking off that young lady to the life.

"Fanny is so delighted at what she considers her good fortune," remarked Constance, "that she cannot contain herself; you cannot think how ridiculous she has been! she carries the note close to her heart, and is every minute saying something or other to us, to try and provoke us. Poor Mary Anne cannot bear it; for she is very much vexed, certainly, and says it is very hard the reward should all fall upon Fanny, who has done nothing."

"Done nothing! indeed!" cried Fanny.

Her sister, without heeding the interruption, continued, "But *I* don't care the least in the world for it. I would not go to Lord Musgrove's house, if they were all to come here and ask me."

"But you would to do Isabella good, you *said* so," remarked Grace, in an enquiring tone.

"Yes, but that would be done in quite a different way," said Constance. "I would not go for mere pleasure, or to the party which Fanny is always talking about. If I had had more serious talk with Miss Ward, and she had taken a fancy to me, and asked me to come, I might perhaps have gone then."

"Well, and that is just what she has done with me," cried Fanny.

"Nonsense, Fanny!" said her sister, "you know, you talk nothing but ridiculous stuff to *her*, as well as to every body else."

"Well, but just remember, Constance," returned the other, "that you and I, both had what you called a serious talk with Isabella in the ante-room, before it was the Fairy Bower, and that you were very much pleased with her,

and Miss Newmarsh too, and if she had liked your seriousness as well as mine, you would be so still."

"I shall always be ready to do her good, I hope," said Constance, with her usual command of temper, "but I do not consider yours the right way. I should just as soon think of going to a regular dance and card party at the house, which nothing would induce me to do."

"Nothing but an invitation, I suppose," said Fanny.

"Fanny, you are very contemptuous, but I forgive you," returned her sister.

"Do you mean to go on in this way, Constance?" said Emily; "I declare if you do, by the time you are grown up, you will be fit for nothing but a monastery, and you must leave the world, and shut yourself up in a convent."

"I hope I shall leave the world," returned her cousin, "but I hope I shall not shut myself up in a convent, and be any thing so shocking as a nun."

"Not be a nun!" cried Fanny, "not be a dear beautiful nun! Oh, I had rather be a nun than any thing else in the whole world!"

"Really, Fanny, I am quite ashamed of you," said her sister. "Do you know what you are saying? don't you know a nun is a Roman Catholic?"

"Oh, but a nun is the most unfortunate and interesting creature in the whole world!" cried Fanny, "and they all look so miserable, and wander about and sing all night, and they wear long black garments, with a streaming white veil, and an immense long string of beads, with a cross at the end of it; and they go about curing all sick people, and binding up their wounds."

"Fanny!" cried Emily, "what a medley you are making! I know what it is all from. I told you of a nun in one of Mrs. Ratcliff's novels, and some one else has been talking to you of Madame de Genlis's 'Siege of Rochelle,' I am sure; but all that is not true of nuns!"

“No, to be sure not!” said Ellen, “first they would cut off all your hair, and then bury you, and shut you up in a convent, with bars, and you could never get out again.”

“Yes,” continued Grace, “and they would never let you see any of your friends, except before the abbess, and several others; they would not even let you speak alone to your papa or mamma, or brothers and sisters, and if you tried to do so, or to get out, they would clap you up in mortar, in a cellar, and leave you to starve. Oh! I would not be a nun for the whole world; how can you wish it, Fanny?”

Fanny still persisted in her wish, if Isabella would be a nun, too, and she said she would ask her. After some more conversation of the same kind, the young party partook of a slight supper, and soon after departed. Grace gave an account of the evening to her mamma; it had been a pleasant one—nearly all talk. Mrs. Leslie asked how she liked the Duffs at their own home.

“Very much, mamma; Fanny is so odd and amusing, but I cannot quite make out if she is in jest or earnest. Constance does not like some things she says, and all the rest laugh at her; but Constance is sure to be right.”

Her mamma said she was glad that Grace liked the Duffs, as well at home as abroad.

“Yes, mamma, I do, I think,” returned the young visitor, “though sometimes I was surprised they were not quite—quite—”

“Quite what?” said her mamma.

“Not quite so good-natured as I expected, I think,” continued Grace, “not so good-natured to *each other*, I believe I mean, mamma. I do not mean they were quarrelsome, but they were not more good-natured than some other sisters I have seen, and I thought they would be, because they all seemed so fond of each other, and praised each other so much, whenever I have seen them.”

CHAPTER XXXIX.

—Generous actions meet a base reward.

Parnell.

The next day, Hanson was to call, in her way to a friend's at Hammersmith ; and very anxious the two young friends were, to hear how her negotiation with John Edwards, at Spodes', had succeeded. She did not come, however ; but sent a message by her brother-in-law instead, saying, her sister's children were ill—they thought of the measles—and she did not like to leave them till they were better, or to come to the house, till the danger of infection was past. Grace was disappointed, though she scarcely expected any good news if Hanson had come. Emily had wondered that her mamma had made no enquiries, as she said she would ; though as yet, there had not been much opportunity. She fully expected to be questioned in the course of the day ; nothing, however, happened concerning the broken cup that day, or the next, which was Sunday. On Monday, the following conversation took place between Mrs. Ward and Mrs. Leslie, which may serve to account for the silence which had surprised Emily. There was always a little space after breakfast ; between Mr. Ward's departure for London, and Mrs. Leslie's appointment with her little girl, in her room. Except Mr. Everard or other visitors were in the room, the two ladies were alone, which was the case on this morning. Thomas was removing the breakfast things, and in leaving the room, had a narrow

escape with the cream jug. This reminded Mrs. Leslie of the broken cup, and she asked if Mrs. Ward had heard any thing more of it.

That lady said she had, and she wished to mention it to Mrs. Leslie, "and," continued she, "that is the reason I have not questioned the children, as you shall hear. But did you know that before their grand party, on the sixth, your little girl was very ill?"

"No, indeed," replied Mrs. Leslie, "how could that be? I heard nothing of it; Grace seemed in particularly good spirits, all the evening."

"Yes," answered the other lady, "she managed to get over it very well, but I can assure you it was so. Hanson told Hannah she never saw a child in such a state; she was quite alarmed; and that she lay upon her bed above an hour, trembling to such a degree, as almost to shake the bed."

"Poor Grace!" said her mamma, "she had one of her palpitations!—no, she did not tell me; I wonder what brought it on: do you know, I have never known those palpitations brought on by any thing but excitement, or suffering of mind; you would hardly think it in such a child."

"I was very sorry to hear it," continued Mrs. Ward, "and wished she had sent for some drops of some kind; but Hannah told me that she would not let Miss Emily even come for you, much less tell any one else."

"She never likes me to know when she is ill, but generally sooner or later she alludes to it in some way afterwards," answered Mrs. Leslie; "I rather wonder she has not now, for I remember she seemed quite worn out at night after the party, and I warned her of one of these palpitations,—I wonder she did not mention it then."

"Why I cannot help thinking," said Mrs. Ward, "that she might have some reason for it, for Hannah came and

told me before breakfast on Saturday, that she had remembered that Miss Emily came down stairs, just before the party, for a cup of coffee, and that Hanson soon after came in from dressing all the young people, saying that poor Miss Grace was quite ill, and all the rest I have been telling you. She also said that Emily was to take her up a cup of coffee, and asked if it was gone, and seemed very anxious about Grace. She afterwards went up to dress Grace, the very last thing ; you may remember Grace was late down that evening, long after all the rest. Now, you know, if Grace had any accident with this cup, it may quite account for her not speaking to you about being unwell."

"Not at all, I assure you," said Mrs. Leslie, "it is just the thing that would *make* her speak."

"Oh, indeed," cried the other lady, "you don't know what children are in other people's houses ! she might tell *you* at home, but she might be afraid of me, and very natural it would be, that she should say nothing about it."

"Indeed," replied Mrs. Leslie, "I should be very sorry to suppose that Grace knew any thing about the cup.—Besides, do you not remember, that she was in the room when you were talking about it, and even asked us?—what did she say?"

"I do not know if she spoke ; I know Ellen did ; but my reason for speaking to you is, that I would make no farther enquiries, till I had told you this, and asked you what I should do."

Mrs. Leslie thanked her for this kind consideration, and said, of course she would question Grace immediately, and hoped Mrs. Ward would do the same by Emily ;—for of course she must know.

"She may know about the illness, but very likely not about the cup," said Mrs. Ward ; "you know Emily was down long before Grace."

Mrs. Leslie was shocked at this insinuation, and a little hurt, and Mrs. Ward, to support the opinion she had put forward, told Mrs. Leslie, as gradually and gently as she could, that she had some doubts if Grace practised in a morning, as Mrs. Leslie believed.

Mrs. Leslie was for a moment startled, but immediately said, "I know she did not for two mornings, when first she came—she told me. You know, she is at perfect liberty to do as she pleases any morning; only, sometimes, I ask her, merely to know how much sleep she gets, now she is so much later in bed than at home."

Mrs. Ward was quite aware those were the only two mornings she had ever heard of; perhaps she did not like to acknowledge she was under a mistake, for she went on, "Surely, you don't expect a child, under such a free permission, to practise every morning, such weather as this."

"But I expect Grace to tell me the truth," said Mrs. Leslie, "and nothing would distress me so much as to think there was the slightest error in this respect; I shall question Grace this instant; I have no more doubt of her than I have of myself, else at this moment I should be quite miserable."

Mrs. Ward saw that *this* matter would quickly be cleared up; and considered, that in justice to her own insinuation, her grand charge against Grace should not be passed over. She believed Grace guilty; therefore she might be quite justified in telling her mamma her suspicion about naming the Fairy Bower. She accordingly did so by degrees, giving many proofs, which indeed, one after another, sounded sadly startling. Poor Mrs. Leslie, on her part, remembered Grace's unusually low spirits that night after the party, and her downcast manner the next morning; also, she had an impression of being frequently, latterly, puzzled at little things about Grace, which she could not understand. Yet, happy mother! in spite of all this accu-

mulated evidence on every side, she did not doubt her child! such a character, may a little girl gain and deserve at the age of ten years. Mrs. Ward did not tell that the last charge against poor Grace had become regularly the talk of the neighbourhood, at both parties they had been at lately, and at two at home, several persons had alluded to it in some way or other. Mrs. Ward might think it would too deeply pain Mrs. Leslie; but it would have been far better, if she thought it right to speak at all, to tell the whole. Mrs. Ward did not know that all the talk of her neighbours, originated entirely from her own conversation with Mrs. Mason, above ten days ago.

CHAPTER XL.

And if it were possible that he should always do rightly, yet when small numbers are to judge of his conduct the bad will censure and obstruct him by malevolence, and the good sometimes by mistake.

Johnson.

——Why any secret?
I love not secrets.

Wallenstein.

MRS. Leslie found that her little daughter had been some time waiting for her; they, therefore, read together, as usual. After which, Mrs. Leslie said, "Grace, my dear, before you leave me, I have a few questions to ask you."

Her mamma's manner was serious, and Grace in a moment thought about the cup; she was not alarmed, as she was at the first, about betraying Mary Anne,—she had

got Emily's leave to do as she pleased, and she hoped the questions would be about the cup.

"What, mamma?" said she, eagerly and hopefully.

"Why did you not tell me you were ill on the evening of the party?"

This was quite unexpected to Grace; it startled her; and she paused for an answer. At any other time, the one which would have been true *now*, would have done, viz. that she never liked to let her mamma know of those palpitations, because they always soon went away; but there was *another* reason, and she felt she could not give this alone; her face of expectation fell, and she was silent.

Mrs. Leslie continued, "Was it, Grace, because you broke the cup?"

"Oh, mamma!" cried Grace, with a voice of joy, "do you know I broke the cup? how glad I am!" and she hid her face against her mamma.

"My dear girl!" exclaimed her mamma, both shocked and amazed, "what can this mean? what could you have been thinking of, Grace, not to say so, when Mrs. Ward was asking about it the other day? and why did you not tell at first? was that the reason you did not speak of your palpitation?"

"Oh, *no*, mamma!" cried Grace.

"Now, Grace," said her mamma, gravely, "this is a very serious matter; I will explain it to you, and you must answer me quite openly. Mrs. Ward does not *know*, but she *thinks* you broke the cup, and were afraid to say so; she thinks some other things, too, which I shall tell you. You see your character for truth is at stake with her, you are therefore *bound*, my dear child, to clear yourself if you can; at any rate, you can tell *me*. Now, Grace," continued her mamma presently, stroking the fair hair of her child, "you are old enough to act for yourself, and I hope firm enough to tell me exactly the truth, whatever it may

be. I will first tell you, that *I* do not believe that you have done any thing very bad, though I must ask you some questions which will make you start."

Grace could only cling round her mother's neck, while her heart beat violently, and presently her tears flowed fast. At last she said, "Mamma, I care for nothing now you say *that*, and now you will know there is something wrong."

Mrs. Leslie said nothing to excite her little girl, but told her to go into the dressing-room, and take a little water. "And when you come back, Grace," added she, "you shall explain as much of this mystery as you can." Grace did as she was bid; the water seemed to have a wonderful effect upon her; she felt quite equal to what she had to do, and what was more, she knew what she meant to do. Since the discovery of the loss of the cup, Grace had foreseen, that most likely her mamma would speak to her, and she had thought much on what to do in that case; she had at last made up her mind; what line she resolved upon taking, will be seen in the following conversation. Grace returned, looking quite calm, and certainly feeling more comfortable than she had done for nearly a fortnight.

"Now, Grace," said her mamma, "tell me first how you broke the cup."

"I did not break it, mamma!"

"My dear child, you really quite puzzle me! what do you mean? you certainly said you did."

"Yes," returned the little girl, "I always *think* I did; because it was quite my fault; it was brought up for me, and I ought to have moved it; but it was Emily who actually broke it; she told me I might tell *you*, but I am not to tell her mamma; only to say that she, Emily, knows all about it."

"But why did not Emily tell?"

"Ah, mamma," said Grace, "there was the fault! I

have thought it over and over again, till my head ached, and now I am quite sure *there* was the fault—but it cannot be helped now.”

“But, my dear child, it can be helped now, if you tell, though it is indeed a sad pity—why did not Emily tell?”

“Because, mamma, Hanson had promised me to try and get the cup matched, and Emily thought it would be better to wait for the chance of a new cup; she thought her mamma would not be so much vexed.”

“And that is all, is it?” asked Mrs. Leslie.

“All about the cup, I think.”

“Then now, Grace, about your palpitation—why did it come? and why did you wish me not to know?—for I have heard you did.”

“Yes, I did, mamma, and I believe I do now; though you cannot think how I should like to tell you all. I wish I knew what was best! I will tell you all, every bit, if you desire me, but if you do not, I must ask you to do me a very great favour indeed.”

“My dear girl,” said Mrs. Leslie, “I do not like so much mystery,—I do not think it can be right.”

“Indeed, mamma,” said Grace, with tears in her eyes, “it is *not right*, but I cannot help it now; the only reason I do not tell you all, is because I do not think you will like it, particularly just *now*; and Mrs. Ward will not like it, and I think you will not know what to do.—Shall I tell you?”

Mrs. Leslie paused for a little time, and then told Grace she would ask her two other questions, which were necessary; meanwhile she would consider over this matter. The first was about practising.

Grace said she had practised every morning an hour, except those she had mentioned before to her mamma,—saying, “Why should I not, mamma? you know I do at home.”

The second startled poor Grace excessively on all accounts.—“Did you give the name to the Fairy Bower?”

“Oh, mamma,” she cried, “who can think me so wicked! you know I *said* I did, and they drank my health; how could I have sat there, if I had not? or how could I look at you now?”—And she certainly raised eyes on her mamma’s face, that must have been hardened in deception to have been any thing but true.—“What made you ask?” continued she.

“Because, my dear, it was observed that you looked pale, and seemed confused. Can you *prove*, Grace,” said her mamma, “that you gave the name to the Fairy Bower?”

Grace considered, and said, “Yes, she thought she could.” Then she remembered that Emily wished not to be applied to at present, because of Fanny’s visit, and she added, “No, mamma, I do not think I could.”

“Grace, every thing seems a mystery with you at present,” said Mrs. Leslie.

“No, mamma,” returned Grace, very despondingly, “only *one* great unfortunate mystery, and now will you say if I shall tell it you?—you know I wish it, but am afraid.”

“Grace, are you prepared for the consequences if you do not? Mr. and Mrs. Ward, Emily, and all the rest, may think *doubtfully* of you—of your *truth*,—especially after we are gone; if you tell *me*, I can clear all up.”

“Oh, mamma, you do not know half! If I tell you all, though I know you always know what to do, yet I think even *you* will be puzzled; and, indeed, mamma, I think it would be worse to me than all I have gone through, if this unfortunate secret came out through *me*; and I *think* you would not wish it: besides it will not be quite so bad as you fancy,—I have *one* kind friend who knows all.”

“Then, my dear child, why does not that friend help you now?—that is the place of a friend.”

“Ah, mamma,” cried Grace, “there is *my* fault again! I have been full of faults and mistakes,”—and the tears sprung into her eyes—“and that is the reason I have got into such perplexity. At one time I could not do right, but now I think I can just manage to keep right, if you will let me.”

“Then on the whole you prefer not telling me,—is that what you mean?”

“I think so, mamma.”

Mrs. Leslie paused. She had seen her little girl's struggle between her strong wish of relieving her mind, and a certain feeling of propriety of some sort. She was doubtful if she should allow Grace to sacrifice herself to such a feeling. She saw some one else was in fault, and she naturally guessed Emily, who had already shown a want of straightforwardness. She thought Ellen was Grace's “friend,” who had seemed so much more like-minded to Grace than her sister. She approved Grace's feeling, of not betraying Emily, who had been kind to her; and she thought, whatever the mystery was, it must shortly come out. Had Mrs. Ward mentioned the unworthy whisperings and surmises, that were abroad concerning her innocent child, she might have done differently; but Mrs. Leslie had the same generosity of principle as her daughter. Already also she respected Grace's liberty of action, and did not like to force a confession from her. She also believed Grace's judgment, that telling her would only add to the perplexity. She herself did not like to dwell on the alternative that might be presented to her, of betraying Emily, to clear her child. Mrs. Ward had frequently laughed at Mrs. Leslie for her constant trust and confidence in others, yet the latter lady continued unchanged, and was now acting on her undoubting principle. Had

she, could she ever have, suspected that her hostess entertained such unkindly feelings and thoughts, towards her little inoffensive guest, as to allow herself to be the foundation of a serious charge against her, and to spread it in the neighbourhood, she might *not* have adopted the line, which in the circumstances seemed to her the best, namely, to let matters rest with Grace, where they were, and to trust to Mrs. Ward for believing her and being satisfied for the present, with or without explanation. She therefore continued the conversation with her little girl thus:—"And Grace, you think you can be pretty sure that you will not be uneasy after we are gone, when you think that the family here are not regarding you altogether as you would wish?"

"I am *sure*, mamma, I shall care for nothing, when *you* know there is a secret, for that has been my trouble,—and—and—*this* is my trouble, mamma," continued she, "that I am afraid of every word I speak to you,—but I don't care now."

"Grace, I do not mean that it should always go on so; I do not like such mysteries."

"Do you mean to tell, mamma?" said Grace, looking much alarmed.

"No, I do not, my dear," said Mrs. Leslie; "but I think something must happen before long to bring out the truth."

"The truth, mamma!" cried Grace, thinking her mamma must have the whole matter in her mind.

"Yes, my dear, *the truth*,—you know the truth at present is in the dark."

Grace mused; she wondered how such expressive words could be used by any stranger to all the circumstances.

"Now, Grace," continued Mrs. Leslie, "tell me what was the favour you had to ask me in case I did not desire to hear all your mystery."

"That you would be so very kind, mamma," said the little girl, "as not to betray me in the least, if you can help it."

Mrs. Leslie agreed to this, and Grace thanked her warmly. Mrs. Leslie asked what she meant to do about the cup.

Grace answered, if her mamma had no objection, she would speak to Emily, and would herself immediately go to Mrs. Ward, and tell her how it happened.

Mrs. Leslie gave her leave, if she liked to do so.

"I cannot quite say I *like* it, mamma," said Grace, "for I believe I am a little more afraid of Mrs. Ward than of most people, but I had rather do it."

Grace asked her mamma one question, if she might tell Mrs. Ward properly the reason they did not speak about the cup—that they had hoped to match it. She added, "I did not like to do so, because it seemed as if I wished to....."

"To lessen the fault, I suppose," said her mamma.

Grace assented.

"Well, Grace, it is a pity," returned Mrs. Leslie, "but you must not *refine* too much, (you know the meaning of that word, I think.) Under the circumstances, you had best tell as much of the truth as you can; you know you have by some means or other got into a tangle, and you must not wonder you have to pay for it a little, especially if you think you have not done *quite* right yourself."

Grace carried her mamma's last words away with her, as she often did, and had not done considering them before she had found Emily.

CHAPTER XLI.

And mistress of herself, though china fall.

Pope.

GRACE did not ask Emily's leave, but told her she was going to tell her mamma her share in the breakage of the cup. "How I wish," she added, "I had broken it myself! Shall I say *you* broke it? or shall I say you know all about it? or will you go and tell your mamma yourself?"

Emily saw Grace was resolved upon going, and was not sorry to be spared, and to have the ice broken for her. She was afraid of her mamma, and had added to that feeling by putting off the evil hour, yet she continued to do the same. This is the way people do who have not firm principle. They act only for the very present moment; then try more to find the most pleasant, or least troublesome, rather than the right way; and to a certain point they succeed. They have often less trouble than others who strive to find the best way; but every now and then they find themselves in terrible straits, and think themselves the most unfortunate people in the whole world. We hope poor Emily will never come to such a pass as this; but she must take heed to herself and make a change, or when she grows up she will be in great danger. She followed the dangerous rule now; she told Grace, if she could not help it, to say, that "*Emily knew all about it.*" This would put it off again; Hanson *might* come to-morrow; her mamma *might* be satisfied with Grace's

explanation, and not say another word,—so she would be spared all unpleasantness.

Grace found Mrs. Ward alone, else she thought she must have deferred her explanation. She did not give herself time to pause, but at once said, as well as she was able, that the cup and saucer were broken by her fault, and expressed her sorrow for it.

“Then you *did* break it, after all!” said Mrs. Ward.

Grace said she did not actually break it herself, but it was through her it was broken, and she considered it all her doing.

Mrs. Ward then asked if any of the servants broke it?—and then, *Who?*

Grace said, Emily knew all about it, and would tell her if she wished.

Mrs. Ward then asked Grace why she did not tell her at once, since she was not afraid now.

Grace felt ashamed of answering this question, but said, “There was a chance of getting it matched.”

Mrs. Ward assured her that was not likely, and added, “I suppose your mamma sent you here, Grace?”

The little girl said her mamma knew she was come, but did not send her.

Mrs. Ward seemed pleased that she came, but presently said, “How was it, Grace, you did not mention it the other day, when I was asking about it?”

Grace paused for an answer, and at length said, “Because I had promised to say nothing about it.”

Mrs. Ward was so kind as not to press Grace farther. She knew now, if she wished it, she could hear all from her own daughter; she therefore only said, “Well, my dear, I am glad you have told me, as mystery about such a thing is unpleasant in a house.”

Grace thought Mrs. Ward had never spoken so kindly to her before, and she now ventured to express her sorrow

about the accident more strongly, and to allude to her hope that it might be matched.

Mrs. Ward was satisfied by her sorrow, for it seemed sincere, and told her to think no more of it, nor to make herself uneasy about the matching, since she knew it could not be done, even at Spodes'. She added a few more words, making light of the loss, saying it would make the rest more valuable.

Grace thought this very kind, for she had heard how much, and why, Mrs. Ward valued this tea service, and she went away considering what she could do to repair the accident in some way, supposing Hanson was not successful. Mrs. Ward expressed much pleasure to Mrs. Leslie, at her interview with Grace. She said that though Grace could not for some reason explain every point, she was certainly satisfied by her manner. Mrs. Leslie told her hostess that there was some mystery which Grace was not disposed to reveal at present, and that every thing they touched upon seemed to be connected with it; she had no doubt it would come out before long, and, if not, she should take means to discover it; but meanwhile, she begged Mrs. Ward to be so kind as to trust her little girl, for *her sake*.—"And of course," she added, "I need not ask you not to speak to any body of any thing you may have observed in Grace's conduct that appears at present unaccountable; it would be hard, perhaps, to remove a false impression of this kind, once made; and I can most entirely assure you, that in this case it would be *false*."

In spite of Mrs. Ward's feeling of a sort of general disparagement of Mrs. Leslie's judgment; in particular cases she always found herself compelled to accept it; and this, added to the impression that Grace's manner and conduct had just left on her mind, made her feel somewhat uneasy, on the remembrance of her having unfortunately given vent to her prejudices against the little girl.

Mrs. Ward's interview with her daughter was perplexed, yet, as regarded Grace, satisfactory. Emily told her mamma that she herself broke the cup. Mrs. Ward was not angry, as Emily had expected, and Emily thought how foolish she had been to be so afraid of her mamma; then she thought, perhaps her mamma had been displeased with Grace instead, especially as she implied a question as to Grace's conduct. Emily felt she had been rather cowardly, and now took Grace's part warmly, saying, that Grace had nothing whatever to do with the breakage; that if she had taken *her* advice, it would have been safe now; and that Grace was very anxious the accident should have been mentioned immediately.

Mrs. Ward said that Grace naturally considered she had a share in the accident, since it was for her use the cup was brought up; and she asked her daughter why she did not mention that Grace was so poorly.

"Now, mamma," said Emily, in a more determined manner than she had ever used towards her mother, "I have made up my mind *now* to answer that question, and then you can do as you please. I will tell you all; but if I do, I think it will put an end to Fanny's visit this week."

"Why, Emily," cried Mrs. Ward, "you are full of mysteries! Here is Grace, and Mrs. Leslie, and now *you!* Why cannot you tell me at once, without all this fuss?"

"I am almost sure, mamma, it is all one mystery, and I will tell it you at once, for it is exceedingly disagreeable to me to be the only person that knows it;—it is....."

"Stop, Emily!" cried her mother, in an authoritative tone, "I cannot at all tell that it is proper for me to hear, and I desire you would not tell it to me or any body else;"—and she was leaving the room.—She returned, however, and asked if Grace knew it; to which Emily answered, "Yes."

Emily felt disappointed that her mamma should not approve of what she was about to do ; but she remembered, as a counterpoise, that her mamma had not been displeased, as she had expected, about the cup ; and she had some pleasure in the thought that she could triumph to Grace, over the truth of her assertion, that her mamma would care far less for the loss of the cup, than the loss of Fanny Duff's visit to Grosvenor Square.

CHAPTER XLII.

He spoke, when instant through the sable glooms
——— a flood of radiance came,
Swift as the lightning's flash.

Akenside.

THE last evening of the young party together need not be particularly described. They had a small party,—the one postponed from the last Friday,—which was added to, and passed very pleasantly.—Perhaps it helped the young people to forget they were to part on the next morning ; but Ellen was very full of it, and Grace never had it out of her head for a moment. In spite of every thing, the uncomfortable morning however came. All the family breakfasted, as usual, together. George kept his portion of the table in good spirits, being very absurd about the grief of parting, and crying in different ways for his sisters. “ I can't cry for Grace,” said he, “ because I don't know how she cries, I never saw her ! Emily, does Grace ever cry ? ”

Poor Grace felt very much ashamed, and quite afraid,

lest Emily should say any thing uncomfortable to her feelings; for Emily did do so sometimes. Grace however had resolved if she did, to bear it well and good-naturedly, for she had learned in this visit of hers, that her own ways were not every body else's ways. Emily however this time only laughed, and asked George if he thought Grace and she spent their time in their room together, *crying?*

"No! no!" said George, "I know better than that! I know how you spend your time, and talk, as well as if I was there!"

"Well, how?" asked his sister.

"Why first," said he, "you sit over the fire cutting up and quizzing all the people you have been seeing. Emily says, 'How I hate Newton Grey, and all the Thompsons, and indeed all the rest! I think them all monstrous disagreeable,—don't you, Grace?' 'Yes,' says Grace, 'all but your brother George, and I think him more amusing a great deal than any body I ever met before!' Then, presently, up jumps Emily in a great fuss,—'Bless me,' says she, 'we shall be *so* late! I must begin to dress! Grace, dear, let me *do* my hair first!' Then Grace cries, 'Emily, love, only look! I have got myself into a knot! what shall I do?'—and then Grace falls to crying, though Emily won't tell. 'Never mind,' says Emily; 'there!'—and she breaks the string.—'Now, Grace, dear, come and *do* my frock!' And so you go on till you are both done enough, or very likely quite overdone, like our goose last Michaelmas day."

All this was very amusing. George again reverted to Grace's admiration of himself. Grace laughed. "Well," said George, "it's all quite true, you know, and I have heard you say so once with my own ears."

"If I heard *you* speak of *me*," said Grace, "I am afraid you would not say any thing so pleasant."

“No,” replied George, with an odd face, “I dare say I should call you a *prude*.”

“Is George calling you a *prude*, Grace?” said Mr. Ward, who had caught the last words. “Never mind, so much the better! Master George is not the best judge in the world of such things.”

This was rather a comfort to Grace, for she had never liked the idea of being a *prude*, though she hardly knew what it was. She now felt certain that the words she one day heard from George, *did* relate to herself. Meanwhile George was replying to some remark of his sister Emily’s, who was pulling at his chain.—“Well,” cried he, “I have no objection to show it! I am very proud of it still, and it is more useful to me than any chain I ever had!”

The chain was handed round the table, and its whole history given; in the course of which it was mentioned, that Grace did a great part of it before breakfast, instead of practising. This was not lost on Mrs. Ward. Mr. and Mrs. Ward admired its workmanship, and George was complimented on his good fortune. His papa also added a quaint rebuke to him on the inconsistency of his charge against Grace; and George whispered in a droll manner,—

“Oh, let’s have no feud,
For Grace is no *prude*,
But George is very *rude*.”

So, Grace, you see, you begin and end with a *choriambic*.”

Mr. Ward was to drive his two guests home in his way to London, so there was not much time for leave takings. Emily and Ellen both promised to write to Grace, after Isabella’s grand party; and Emily assured Grace she would tell her about *every thing*. Mrs. Leslie had also requested that Hanson would call at her house, which was

scarcely out of her way, when she went to Hammersmith. Thus all affairs of business and pleasure seemed quite brought to a conclusion. The young people parted in gayer spirits than some of them expected, as Mrs. Ward half promised to bring them over to Cadogan Place, before they dispersed after the holidays.—“I cannot say *when*, Mrs. Leslie,” added she, “because, you know, this very cold weather Mr. Ward wants the carriage to go to Town; but any morning that is fit for him to go in the gig, I will drive them all over to say ‘Good bye’ once more to Grace, who, I can assure you, is a great favourite among them.”

Mrs. Ward thought this testimony to Grace’s popularity quite called for by what had passed that morning; and she kissed Grace, and said “my dear” again, in a way that made Grace observe and remember her kindness; though she was at that moment full of other thoughts towards her younger friends. At last all the farewells, and hopes, and wishes, came to an end, and the trio were closely shut up in the comfortable carriage, on their way towards London. After a little time, Mr. Ward exclaimed, “I have been very remiss, Mrs. Leslie!—it is well I remembered it in time. Yesterday, I sent to Everard, as he had not come down some days, as usual, and asked him to let me drive him home to dinner, since it was your last day. He sent me a note, written in great haste, which you shall see, and he ran in for two minutes just as I was setting off, to say a word on business, and bade me to be sure to remember his message to his little friend, Grace, which you will find in the note. I should be sorry, Grace, you should lose the compliments of such a *great man* as Mr. Everard.”

Mr. Ward handed the note to Mrs. Leslie, which, from the hasty writing, and the motion of the carriage, she was some time reading. On coming to the end, she said,

“Here is some Latin, which you must be so good as to translate for us.”

Mr. Ward took the note, and read straight through as follows:—

Dear W.,

Very much obliged for your thought of me. I am engaged to dine with Lord Minorie,—a party I cannot escape from. Pray assure Mrs. Leslie of my most respectful adieux, and give a miniature message of the same kind to the *Grace* (if not the *Queen*) of the Fairy Bower, “*Palman qui meruit ferat*,” which I suppose you must construe to her, in spite of her classic pretensions.

Ever yours, faithfully,

B. E.

Mr. Ward added, that when Mr. Everard called in the afternoon, he mentioned an idea he had of going to his sister's, at Bath, for the rest of the vacation.—“Quite a sudden notion of his, I fancy,” he said.

Mrs. Leslie heard this last remark in quite a mechanical manner. There are moments, be the subject what it may, when the mind seems enlightened all at once to a whole train of events or feelings, though all previously had seemed dark or dead. This was now Mrs. Leslie's case; she had read Mr. Everard's note, with no especial understanding, beyond a kind parting with herself and her little daughter. The message to herself she perfectly understood,—and hardly noted Grace's; especially being balked by the few Latin words, almost too ill written for her to decipher as a well known motto. When she heard the note *read* through, and the Latin properly inserted, Mr. Everard's words and manner,—“Do not trust to my words, but do not forget them!—*Verbum sapienti*,”—and a hundred other coincidences, suddenly rushed to her mind. She felt certain,

as by inspiration, that her own little Grace, and not Mary Anne Duff, was the deviser of the Fairy Bower! Here was the grand mystery! This accounted for every thing—for Grace's inconsistencies, perplexities, reserves—her palpitation—the broken cup—the connexion of Fanny's visit with all, of which Mrs. Ward had dropped a hint—her own surprise at detecting Grace's handiwork and ideas—and the wonderment concerning the naming of the Fairy Bower. She had been surprised at the entire cordiality of Grace and Emily, especially at parting.—Now it was clear, Mary Anne, not Emily, was the culprit; *Emily*, not Ellen, was the "*friend*." All this, and a multitude more thoughts, rushed through her mind with the speed of lightning, and she looked at her little girl, the colour on whose cheeks had not yet subsided on Mr. Everard's message. Her mamma read it her own way, as Grace's eyes were fixed on *her*; but Mr. Ward laughed, and complimented Grace on Mr. Everard's fine speeches; saying, they had given her quite a colour. As for Mrs. Leslie, the more she thought of all the events of the last fortnight, the more she was convinced of the truth of her new discovery; and the more was she amazed at what now seemed to her, her unaccountable dulness. Then again she did not wonder; how could she for an instant imagine so young a girl, brought up so carefully too as Mary Anne, could be so lost to all right feeling, and such an adept in deceit! and when she looked upon it from this side, she doubted all her former thoughts, and blamed herself severely for allowing such a notion to enter her head. Meanwhile a slight conversation on common topics went on, till Mrs. Leslie and Grace reached their home. Mr. Ward saw them reinstated in their house, and then proceeded on his way to London.

CHAPTER XLIII.

Home thou return'st from Thames, whose Naiads long
Have seen thee lingering.

Collins.

GRACE felt very unsettled, when she came to sit down and try to occupy herself at her home pursuits. Her mamma had said she should not do lessons that morning, since she had not prepared any ; but they would begin quite regular the next day. Grace had therefore to set *herself* tasks ; she had no difficulty in finding these, but much more in keeping herself steadily to them. She began ruling her ciphering book, which she had left undone for a week before. She wrote half a copy ; then she began to learn her lessons, and then practised a little. Between each employment she rose and walked about, and altogether felt restless, and she knew it. It was very irksome to her to set to work heartily, and she felt vexed at not being able to command her mind as she usually could. " Mamma warned me of being unsettled," she thought, " but I am sure it is not the visiting ; it is this unfortunate business that has happened, and I do not think any body could help it—there is no use trying ;" and she was going on to satisfy herself that her restless state of body and mind was all very proper. Happily her mamma noticed it, and Grace always listened to the slightest remark of her mamma's. However she said, " But, mamma, you know this has been such an extraordinary visit, and I have so much to think of."

" My dear," said Mrs. Leslie, " if you live to grow up,

you will have many extraordinary things happen to you ; most likely much more so than any thing that can occur to you, now that you are but a child. You should therefore take this visit as a trial, a sort of *rehearsal*, Grace, that you may act properly when you are upon the real stage of life."

Grace paused over this, and presently asked, "Mamma, did you ever in your life, when you were quite young, feel unsettled, and thinking of every thing but what you had to do?"

"Yes, my dear, very often ; and sometimes when I was old, too.—I am not very far from your state now, Grace," said her mamma, with a smile.

Grace was amazed.—"Why, mamma," cried she, "that is impossible ! you have been giving all manner of orders since we came in, and have thought of every thing, and have been nearly an hour reading all that heap of letters, and are now beginning to answer them, quite quietly. You can't have had all the thoughts roaming about your head that I have ; I can hardly sit still for a minute."

"You need not tell me that, my dear, for I have seen it some time ; and it has got worse and worse, has it not?"

Grace assented ; and she knew what her mamma's remark meant to imply. She did not go on arguing as some really good little girls sometimes do ; she believed what her mamma said about herself, and wondered at, and admired, her self-command. She therefore asked what her mamma advised her to do.

Mrs. Leslie advised her to sit down and write her French exercise for to-morrow, and not to attempt learning her lessons at present ; she could do that in the afternoon.—"By the time your exercise is finished and you have put away this quantity of books, and your desk, and every thing else, Grace," added her mamma, smiling and pointing to the mass of employment with which poor

Grace had surrounded herself, "I shall be ready to take a little walk with you, and then it will be dinner time."

Grace put away all the extraneous articles first, and then sat down to her exercise. She did it with a good heart, and presently was surprised to find she was falling quite naturally into her French verbs and genders, and turning as readily as ever to the well-known places in her grammar and dictionary. Other thoughts came in between whiles, but not to disturb her or make her restless as before. She was surprised to find nearly an hour had passed in this way, and her mamma was calling her to put on her bonnet, as the sun was shining very invitingly. As she ran up-stairs, her thoughts fell as at home and abroad on her mamma's goodness and the correctness of her advice.—"Whatever I want," thought she, "mamma can tell me; and whether I think it right or not, or pleasant or unpleasant, at the time, it always comes right afterwards." As they went out, her mamma gave her a word of praise on the late conquest of her restless spirit. Very sweet it was to Grace's heart, and she prest her dear mamma's hand as they walked, which was a custom of hers when they went out together.

On the Friday this week, Mrs. Leslie had a note from Mrs. Ward, saying they had so many engagements, she could not bring the young people over the next week, as she had intended. They were engaged at home and abroad the beginning of the week; Wednesday, the 28th, was Isabella's grand party; after which Emily and Ellen were going for a long promised visit for a couple of days to Twickenham. She had therefore arranged to keep Emily and George a day longer from school, and hoped to spend Monday, the 1st of February, with them, in Cadogan Place. She mentioned having taken Fanny Duff to Grosvenor Square the day after they left (which plan had been previously arranged.) There was no more particular news.

Mr. Everard was in Bath, but must be back the end of next week. Mrs. Ward went on to say, "The young people miss Grace greatly; I have nothing but lamentations, and George is very funny about it sometimes. Also, *you* have made a great sensation in our world; you, and your singing, are endless topics of conversation."

It gave Grace great pleasure to hear of her young friends, and also to think the day was fixed for seeing them again. All the news in this letter was discussed with her mamma, and Isabella's party was mentioned; Mrs. Leslie asked her little girl, if she had any wish about going, or was disappointed that she did not. Grace said she did not think *really* of going, but she had had rather a wish about it."

"A wish to go?" asked her mamma; "I thought you wished never again to go to a party of this kind, in London."

"Oh, mamma," cried Grace, "Isabella's party could not have been like that; besides, you know, this would have been a different sort of party from any I have ever been at."

"In what respect?" said Mrs. Leslie.

"Why, mamma," answered Grace, rather ashamed, "my reason for wishing to go was, because it was at a nobleman's house; and because I should have seen several little lords and ladies."

"Well, Grace," said Mrs. Leslie, "that is a very fair reason for wishing to go."

"I am glad you do not think it wrong, mamma," said Grace, rather reassured, "for I was glad for the same reason, when Lord Musgrove spoke to me, the other evening, though Lord Musgrove is not like any *old* nobleman—the Earl of Warwick, or the Duke of Northumberland, mamma! It would be next to seeing the King to see the Duke of Northumberland, I think—because of Hotspur."

Mrs. Leslie said, her little girl's feelings were very natural; and she hoped, some day, she would see some of these great people.

“I did not only mean *see*, mamma,” said Grace, “when I was speaking just now; I thought of being in the same room with them, and hearing them speak, and perhaps being spoken to by them. Why, you know, mamma, what a thing it would be if the King spoke to me, or the Queen, if we had one! and this would be the same sort of thing.”

“Well, my dear,” replied Mrs. Leslie, “you would not have met our good King, or even the Duke of Northumberland, at Lord Musgrove’s, or any very illustrious people in that way; so you must make that your consolation on this occasion; and happily for us, *good* people are quite as often met with in our rank as in any other. I have often, however, Grace, regretted for you, that it should so be that your youthful days should have fallen upon a time, when, we may say, we have neither King nor Queen. In my young days, our good King was in health, and it was my grandest treat to be taken to see him in processions, and at more private times. Indeed it is a pleasure to me now to look back on those days, and I am sorry you will not have the same.”

“But, mamma,” said Grace, “I have seen his coach, and the beautiful horses, and the Prince Regent, and that is something near the King himself.”

“Yes, my dear, and now we look upon the Prince Regent almost as King; but *I* cannot feel it the same, when I remember his father.”

The conversation was here disturbed by the entrance of visitors, and soon after Mrs. Leslie and Grace went out for their walk.

CHAPTER XLIV.

I'll read again the Ode that I have writ.

Shakspeare.

THE kind reader must consent to leave Grace and her mamma a short time, and accompany us to Grosvenor Square, to see what is going on there this very day, just before dinner time. There was a dinner party expected. Isabella not yet being introduced, never joined the company, except at quiet family parties; and she did not much like appearing at all before dinner, from the difficulty of disposing of herself on its announcement. It must be confessed, this ambiguous age is very awkward for young ladies; but Isabella had helped to thrust herself into it two or three years earlier than most of her contemporaries. Besides, had she been older, most likely she would not have been required to appear in any way uncomfortable to herself. She had now retired to the back drawing-room, and was pretty well shaded by the broad back of a capacious chair, on which herself and her friend Fanny Duff were seated. Both were leaning forward on a small table, upon which were pen, ink, and a sheet of paper spread open. Fanny was gazing in a sort of reverie, looking rather puzzled than genius-struck, and presently she laid down her pen, as though giving the matter over for the present. "Gracious me!" cried Isabella, "if mamma does not come down presently, I shall have to receive all the company!—How disagreeable it will be, darling *mig-*

nonne!" added she, in not at all a dissatisfied tone.—
"Oh, Fanny!" presently she exclaimed, "we shall have Lord Minorie here presently; how delightful that will be!"

"Who is Lord Minorie?" asked Fanny, with some awe.

"Do not you know Lord Minorie?—Lord Minorie, the poet! Why you might as well not know Lord Byron! He has published volumes upon volumes of poetry, and some people like him better than Lord Byron."

"I should like to see a poet and a Lord," said Fanny, in a tone rather doubtful as to which should have the pre-eminence.

"Yes, very likely, but that is not what I am thinking of; I should like him to see your verses, *mignonne*; I am sure he will think them very clever, and he could make you quite fashionable, if he chooses. He is such a funny little old man! he always says, 'my dear,' and has such odd manners."

This account rather confused Fanny's notions. She thought a poet was always young and handsome, wore an open collar, and looked very haughty and gloomy; or old and blind, with a long beard, like Homer, or the Welsh bards. She also thought a Lord had always very grand manners, and was tall, and noble in countenance; and her host had helped to establish her ideas. She was amazed to hear Isabella criticise so fearlessly a poet, who had printed volumes upon volumes,—and a Lord.

"Here's a carriage!" cried Isabella, "I'm sure it is Lord Minorie, darling *mignonne*! he always comes a long time before any body;" and she went into the other room to receive him.

Fanny changed her place a little, to get a view of the expected guest. In he came presently. His appearance certainly justified Isabella's description: an odd little old

man, he certainly was. His young hostess received him with a good deal of air, which he seemed not to appreciate.

"Yes, my dear, yes," said he in a fidgetty manner, "I know I am early; I guessed mamma would not be dressed after her morning's drive.—Well, what have you got here?" continued he, walking to a table, and opening books; "any thing new?—Who's that? eh?" said he, spying Fanny in the next room, and taking up his glass.

Isabella followed him, and attempted a formal introduction, which seemed little heeded.

"What's she about?—writing? let me see,—verses, I declare! why, what's this, my dear? have you got a young poetess hidden here? come, give them to me,—let me read;" and he seated himself at Fanny's side, took out his spectacles with deliberation, and read the following verses. They were in a childish hand-writing, and though ill-written, were not illegible:—

On living things and dead I call,
Oh, listen to my verses all,
And tell me what upon our ball,
Is like my friend.

The birds that sing so merrily,
The moths, and fishes of the sea,
The skipping lambs, too, full of glee,
Are like my friend.

The slow and spouting little stream,
That runs along but is never seen
But where it shines high reeds between,
Is like my friend.

The red red and the pure white rose,
That both in summer and winter blows,
And well would crown her lovely brows,
Are like my friend.

“Now, my dear,” continued he, “what do you mean by ‘our ball?’”

“Our earth,” said Fanny.

“Ah, so I suppose; but that won’t do at all; and all that stanza is poor—poor indeed!—Moths—moths,—what d’ye mean by that?”

“Butterflies,” replied the young poetess, “but it would not come in.”

“No,” replied Lord Minorie, “nor be a very flattering similitude.—Well, ‘spouting,’ what is that?”

“Spouting out between the stones,” said Fanny.

“Ah! ah!” returned the poet, “that won’t do! we’ll put a mark against *that*. Don’t you see something very amiss in this stanza?—oh, for shame!” and he struck out the rhymes *stream* and *seen*; “that will never do! And these lines—

“‘That runs along and is never seen,’

“‘Both in summer and winter blows.’

“These do not scan nicely; we must find something better than that. What d’ye mean, my dear, by roses blowing in summer and winter? I never heard of a rose good for any thing that does so.”

“Artificial roses,” said Fanny.

“No! no!” answered the critic, “never compare a lady to mock flowers,—that won’t do at all. Well, I suppose you mean she’s as ‘firm as a rock,’ by this stanza?”

“Yes,” replied Fanny.

“Well, we’ll make that do,” said Lord Minorie, “but it’s no compliment, you know, to call a lady bold and stubborn; we must do something with that;” and he put another great stroke across the line. “Boreas—Boreas! Oh, no!” continued he, shaking his head. “Well, the ideas are all fair, very fair. Now we come to a change.—

Umph! umph! don't be so fond of dying! What's this brilliant fairy bower?"

"It alludes to a bower of my sister's invention," said Fanny.

"Well, we'll keep that then! Ah! convent! nuns!—very good! Happy—miseries! that's queer! what were you going on to say, my dear?"

Fanny said, some more verses, but she did not know what.

"You should always have an idea, and don't write too much. Well, we can make something of it—a snug pretty sonnet, I can see. Here, get me a pen;" and he took out his knife, and deliberately set to mending the pen. "Now for it!"

In a very neat precise hand, very different from his scratches, he inserted his corrections between Fanny's broad lines. When he had got half way, Lady Musgrove came in. "Here I am, my lady," cried he; "coming to you in a moment; but I have found a young Sappho here, and we are busy courting the muses." He then told Fanny to transcribe from his paper what was corrected, while he went and spoke to her Ladyship.

Presently Lord Musgrove entered, and the guests began to arrive. Meanwhile a conversation passed between the poet and his hostess; which, as it relates to one of our friends, we will report.

"I had the great pleasure of meeting and being introduced to your Lordship's friend Mr. Everard, the other day," said the lady.

"Am happy to hear it, but more happy that you call it a pleasure."

"To be sure I do," answered Lady Musgrove, "I think Mr. Everard is one of the most agreeable gentleman-like persons I have seen a long time; and so wonderfully clever and original."

“Yes, yes! enough of that certainly, and unaccountable besides! why now he has taken himself off to Bath—broken all his engagements! no one on earth knows why! But before you use your soft words, your ladyship should see him toss some of his victims; he can do it in grand style, I can tell you.”

“There was nothing like that,” replied the lady, “it was a juvenile party at Mr. Ward’s at Fulham, and he was so pleasant and condescending, entering quite into the amusements of the young people, making extempore odes and speeches,—really most excellent.”

“Yes, yes!” said the poet, “he’s a good hand enough at all that. I can’t do it,—no, not I.”

“Besides,” said Lady Musgrove, “I had the pleasure of a long conversation with him, and I thought him one of the most sensible men in the world: and his voice,—oh, my Lord! his voice would be the making of him, if he had nothing else in the world. I assure you, his verses and speeches to the children, were as great a treat to us grown people, as a professional reader. They had dressed up what they called a little Fairy Bower, and he took up the notion most happily.”

“Ah!” cried the poet, “that reminds me of my business with my young friend there; your Ladyship will excuse me, and not wait dinner for me if I have not finished, I know.”

“Oh, my Lord!” cried his hostess, laughing, “you are a privileged person; you may always do as you please.”—And he fidgetted into the back drawing-room. He found Fanny and Isabella together had just completed the copy, as far as corrected. He then took his pen, and went on. Meanwhile dinner was announced. He nodded to Lady Musgrove’s summons as she passed, and said, “Yes, yes, your Ladyship; coming,—coming before your soup’s gone round!”

The lady smiled, called him an eccentric being, and the trio were left quite to themselves. The noble poet went on writing very rapidly, soliloquizing criticisms by the way; he mentioned Mr. Everard's name when he came to the Fairy Bower, to Fanny's amazement. He was not long over the three remaining stanzas. "Now," said he, "we'll have one more verse, and no more;" and he began writing,—“But”—“What's your friend's Christian name?” asked he, quickly.

“Isabella.”

“Ah! that will do,” replied he, and wrote off the last verse, as will be presently seen. “There,” cried he, “I suppose that's the sort of thing you wished to say! now, young Sappho! write out your own lines fair, and compare them with those I have finished; that will be a good lesson for you; you'll find your ideas were all disjointed, and running one after another. I have put them together, and made a whole piece of them. But, remember, it is *not mine!* I have kept to your words, even,—I have only doctored it up a little. Go on, and improve, my dear,” said he, rising, and giving her an encouraging pat; “pray who's your friend?”

“Isabella,” said Fanny, looking surprised, and signifying Miss Ward.

“Oh!” cried the poet, in a tone not very flattering to either the poetess or to the subject of her lay. “Well,” said he, “you know it's all your doing;” and he quickly departed for his dinner below; joining the party, as he had promised, “before the soup had gone round.”

“He never hears me called any thing but Miss Ward, *mignonne!*” said Isabella as he left the room.

“I wonder he did not guess,” said Fanny.

“Oh, he is such an odd old man, darling!” returned her friend. “But now read your verses.”

Fanny read as follows:—

Search Nature's stores for things of worth,
 Of beauty, modesty, and mirth,
 And say what likest most on earth
 My precious friend.

Like birds that sing so cheerily,
 Like insects in their dance of glee,
 Like bounding lambkins mild and free,
 My sportive friend.

Like a fair stream that glides unseen,
 Save where it shines tall reeds between,
 Yet paints the neighbouring banks with green,
 My modest friend.

Like blushing rose, like rose of white,
 Purest and fairest flowers to sight,
 Yet frailer than my ladie bright,
 My lovely friend.

Like rooted oak, like deep-set rock,
 That stand unmov'd man's fiercest shock,
 And twice a thousand tempests mock,
 My constant friend.

Say, dearest ! wilt thou bide with me
 In homes of bliss and ecstasy !
 Or shall we two more pensively
 Our life's day end !

Shall we in brilliant Fairy Bower,
 Sparkling with light and many a flower,
 Far, far from man, his pomp and power,
 Our bright days end ?

Or shall we, nuns in cloister gloom,
 Shut up within our narrow room,
 All worldly vanities entomb,
 Our calm days end ?

But, precious friend, where'er I dwell,
 Or in bright home, or drearier cell,
 Still, still with thee, my Isabel,
 My days I'll end !

Isabella was too well satisfied with these verses to repine at what she might have lost in any of Fanny's. Not quite so Fanny: she thought Lord Minorie's version better as a whole, but regretted some favourite lines and ideas of her own, which had been sacrificed. One was in the second stanza, where she had gathered together birds, beasts, fishes, and insects, (under their representatives, "moths,") as doing homage to her friend. She was sorry to lose any part of the animal creation; and she found her "fishes" had quite disappeared. Then she was sorry to lose the idea of "crowning her lovely brows;" and "Boreas" was also a great friend of hers. But worse than all was the loss of her beloved "far-off Araby," which usually appeared in every composition of hers. If Fanny had followed the kind poet's directions, and copied out her own verses to compare with his, some day, if not now, she might have understood the value of his remarks, and advice. She did not do so at this moment; she only transcribed the remaining verses, thinking the other, if necessary, could be done at any time. Afterwards she got so much more praise for these lines, than for any she had hitherto written, that the idea of so doing quite passed away from her mind. Grace was likely to have written them out at once, merely because she was told to do so by a kind and clever gentleman, who had taken some pains to help her, and staid away from his dinner for the purpose. Fanny did not look upon it in this light, though it would have been much the most proper way of showing her reverence to him as a poet and a Lord.

CHAPTER XLV.

What then is Taste? —————
 ————— a discerning sense
 Of decent and sublime, with quick disgust
 From things deformed, or disarranged, or gross
 In species. This nor gems, nor stores of gold,
 Nor purple state, nor culture can bestow.

Akenside.

WE must pass on to the following Friday, which was two days after Isabella's long talked of party. In the evening of that day, the post brought the welcome and expected packet from Fulham. Grace received her portion with joy, and found the promise of a great treat in the quantity it seemed to contain. She opened Emily's naturally first. It ran thus :—

My dear Grace,

I have got a great many things to tell you ; and some very strange, which I will begin with. We went early to Grosvenor Square yesterday, as my aunt had requested, in case we could help Isabella in any thing ; for this time she was full of plans, owing to the Fairy Bower ; but, you know, she has no taste or management of her own. Well, we got there between five and six, and who do you think we found there ? “ Why, *Fanny!* ” you will say. Yes ; but who else ?—in her morning dress ? she came the day before. You will never guess !—why, Mary Anne ! Are you not surprised ? Well, guess again,

why she came.—I am sure you can't. She came to devise something like the Fairy Bower! I assure you when I heard it, I was more angry than I can tell you. But really, angry as I was, I could presently do nothing but laugh. They took us into my aunt's boudoir, a smaller back room, where every thing was prepared to surprise us. All the lights were lit all over the room, and certainly there was a great blaze at first, since the other rooms were not yet lit up. At the end of this room there is a rather deep recess, which generally holds an old fashioned cabinet. This they had removed, and fitted it up (the space, I mean) as a Fairy Bower,—they could not think of any other title. This was the only good idea of the whole; and I am sure if *you* had been there, it would have been very pretty indeed; but you never saw such a mixture as it was. There was a great deal more of Isabella's devices than Mary Anne's. Behind was a large transparency, as big as a door, with—what do you think upon it? The verses of Fanny to Isabella, (which we shall enclose.) It was exceedingly ugly and large. In the middle, from the ceiling, which is very high, hung Isabella's favourite—an immense Chinese lamp; and across the front of the recess, in imitation of the festoons of roses, were suspended rows of coloured lamps, such as they hang out of doors in illuminations,—yellow, red, and blue. Then there was an attempt at flowers and evergreens; but they had not half enough, and it had no effect at all. I stood and laughed till I could hardly stand, and George was more unmerciful still. He said some odd things in jest, about the two Fairy Bowers, and spoke of you. But I felt sure that any one who saw both, must know that the same person did not plan them. Isabella's taste, you know, came in; you remember she wished us to have coloured lamps and transparencies. One thing, I must say, was quite different; and that was Fanny's verses. They seem to me very

pretty, really; and all the grown-up people admired them very much indeed. She was quite the "Queen," of the evening, was introduced to a great many grand people, and as much made of her as of Mary Anne, at our party; indeed more, because, you know, Fanny can behave so much better than Mary Anne. She had quite a new frock, which her mamma got at Madame Fillarie's. My uncle had given her a very handsome long *negligée*, of Venetian beads, which she wore, and looked very well indeed. She was in as good spirits as Mary Anne at our party, but not boisterous, like her. It was rather awkward about the dancing, for they two were the only ones who did not dance; but they were taken into the room with the elder people, and made a great deal of. I think Fanny would have managed to dance, if Mary Anne had not been there. She wished very much to dance with some of the little Lords; there were not a great many, though, and it was not a very pleasant party, though so much better than the London one you were at, that I wished you were there. Ellen has caught a bad cold coming home, and mamma talks of not coming to you on Monday, but some day later; if so, I shall not go to school till the end of the week. Now, good-bye, my dear Grace, and believe me

Yours affectionately,

EMILY WARD.

George desires his love. We have heard nothing of Hanson.

Ellen's letter was as follows:—

Fulham, Jan. 29.

My dear Grace,

I am quite glad I have a cold, because I can write you a long letter; though I am sorry that our visit to

Twickenham is put off. Isabella's party last night was very pleasant, but rather dull. Fanny finished her lines, the second day she was there. My uncle and aunt were very much pleased with them, and my uncle gave her a beautiful long bead necklace. They were so pleased with them, that they had them printed on large cards, and distributed to every body that came. Some were in letters of gold; we send you one. Isabella and Fanny tried all they could, and at last persuaded my aunt to ask Mary Anne to come and make a Fairy Bower, like ours: so she wrote to aunt Duff, and asked all my cousins to the party, and Mary Anne to come on Monday; and she said she would drive to Winterton on Monday, and bring Mary Anne back, and then all could go home together after the party. But nobody came but Mary Anne on Monday; and mamma heard to-day the reason. Campbell said, he did not like Isabella well enough, and did not want to go; and Constance, you know, *said* she would not go, if they all came to ask her, (you know they *did*, was it not curious?) and it was not worth while sending Charlotte alone; so I believe Mary Anne and Fanny will stay a few days longer. Their Fairy Bower was very showy; but it was not pretty, like the other. They tried to make flowers, but could not; and Isabella sent out quite at last to her mamma's milliner, and got some artificial flowers; but they looked very few and poor, though they were much more beautiful than ours, when you looked close at them, and I believe they cost a great deal. Isabella got her way about the Chinese lamp, and the coloured lamps; but the housemaid came in and made a great fuss, and said she would not have oil in *her* room; and she made Isabella have spirit of wine. There was also a transparency of Fanny's verses behind, which you could have read a long way off, if it had not been for the lamps in front; but it was not pretty. There was one misfortune which I had

nearly forgotten: the lights were lit so early, to show us, that all the spirit of wine was burned out, long before the end of the evening. If they could have taken them away, I think it would have been better than at first; but it looked very odd indeed, with these dark balls hanging before the rest: the light behind was not very strong, and none of the lights were well managed.—They wanted you for that; for you understood that part a great deal better than Mary Anne. My sore throat has got worse, instead of better, and I am not to leave my room to-day. I hope you are quite well, and your mamma. I have got her beautiful little scent bag, which she was so kind as to put in my work-box one day, to scent it. I shall now always think of her when I open it, and you too, Grace. I will bring it or send it next week, if they go. I am quite tired of writing.

Believe me, dear Grace,

Yours affectionately,

ELLEN WARD.

Mrs. Leslie had a note from Mrs. Ward, explaining their not coming on Monday. She said Ellen was very poorly, and not likely to be better for a day or two. She had been obliged to put off their visit to Twickenham till Monday. She hoped to come to them however on Thursday. She said the party last night was all very well. Mary Anne, however, quite failed in the Fairy Bower: she supposed from Isabella's interference. Fanny got justly great credit for her verses, which were really hers, though Lord Minorie had looked over them and corrected them. She mentioned that Lady Musgrove had told her that Isabella's Fairy Bower was really an expensive affair, though such a poor thing.—With the painting, the transparency, the printing, the flowers, and the lamps, not less than ten pounds.—“A silly piece of business altogether,”

added Mrs. Ward, "and I was glad that Mary Anne and Fanny had little or nothing to do with these expenses. I refer you to the girls' letters for a fuller account of this grand business."

This completed the account of the party. Grace looked at the dangerous pieces of Emily's letter two or three times, to see if her mamma would make any thing of them. She had known her pass over things much more plain; and whatever they betrayed, she shrunk from concealing any part from her mamma: so with only a little hesitation, she put the letters into her mamma's hand.

Mrs. Leslie told her to read them to her, if she liked; and said she did not want to hear every word, if there were any "affectionate little sayings," meant for her only.

Grace could not miss any thing with this sort of permission, and read quite through, finding the dangerous passages hardly dangerous at all from their context. Her mamma made no remark about them, but the subjects they afforded, furnished conversation for the rest of the evening.

CHAPTER XLVI.

Lullaby, lullaby, hush thee, my dear!
Castle Spectre.

MONDAY, the first of February, came, but did not bring the hopes with it, it had promised to do; for the visit of the young party was postponed. It was one o'clock: Grace had finished all her lessons early, and was giving herself a treat at her favourite Moravian work, in the space she had gained. She was talking to her mamma of

Emily and Ellen's visit to Twickenham, and her mamma had just said she should be glad to know that Ellen's cold was well enough to allow of it, when the door opened, and the servant informed his mistress that there was a person below, named Ann Hanson, waiting to speak to her.

"You may show her in immediately, Richard," said Mrs. Leslie; while poor Grace's needle tried very hard to go on at the same pace as before, and her heart beat alternately with hope and fear.—"Oh," thought she, "it is quite impossible—so I do not expect it at all."

Hanson came in with a smile on her face, which respect could hardly subdue. Grace's intention *not to expect*, was a little shaken; and what could she think or hope when she spied a small neat deal box, half hidden, half exposed, under Hanson's comfortable cloak! Mrs. Leslie asked after the little nieces. They were getting well,—had had the measles very slightly. Poor Grace was obliged to keep quiet, and hear two or three such sentences exchanged, before her extreme eagerness was relieved. It was a good trial; for in life nothing is more common than suspense, and to some tempers nothing more intolerable. Perhaps Grace was of such a frame, for short as the time was, her head ached to a point of intensity, and her heart beat so violently, that she was afraid of speaking. Hanson kept her as short a time as possible. She had been looking smilingly at her all along, which only increased Grace's hopes and fears; and now said, "If you please, ma'am, I have got this box for Miss Grace." Now was it a cup, or something quite different? "It came," continued Hanson, "from Staffordshire only this morning."

Grace had learned to connect Spode and Staffordshire! but she could hardly trust the hope that seemed nearer and nearer. The box luckily had been opened, and was only slightly tied. It was undone. It was full of hay; she displaced it carefully,—and discerned a cup—the very

pattern! She sought for the saucer,—found another cup: she looked amazed in Hanson's pleased face, who bade her go on, and she found two saucers.

“Hanson must be a conjuror!” said Mrs. Leslie.

Hanson laughed, and said, “Oh, no, indeed, ma'am.”

“Then Hanson's friend!” continued Mrs. Leslie.

“Oh, no, ma'am, indeed, no more than me; only John Edwards is a very clever man, and very good-natured.”

Grace had by this time discovered the secret of multiplication. One cup and saucer was new, the other was mended. “Can it really be the broken one!—look, mamma!” cried Grace, “who could ever tell on this side?” She then turned them, and showed two or three rivets, which Hanson said they assured her would bear any wear as well as the new one. “Well, Hanson,” said Grace, “how can I ever thank you enough! and John Edwards too! I really had quite given it up.”

Hanson said she was quite as pleased to be able to get them, as Miss Grace was to have them; that none of the people at Spodes' could match them, but that a private friend among the workmen could do a great deal. John Edwards came from Staffordshire, and all his family were in Spodes' works: his brother set about matching the cup immediately, and succeeded, she did not know how; also he mended the other. He also sent her word, that if she gave him time, he would at any other time get her as much or as little of the same tea-service, as she wished; there might be a trifle of difference in the pattern or shape, but it would be of no consequence.

Grace had unsprung the lock of the secret drawer of her desk, and asked Hanson what she owed her, not forgetting the mending, and the carriage of the box, which she thought would be very high, coming so far as Staffordshire.

Hanson told her the price of the cup and saucer; but

said the box was sent up in one of Spodes' crates, and that James Edwards charged nothing for the mending.

Mrs. Leslie let her little girl pay for the cup and saucer, and herself made a present to Hanson and John Edwards for the trouble they had been at. Hanson was distressed at receiving any thing; but Mrs. Leslie advised her to take it, and perhaps she could spend it on some little thing, for one of her nephews or neices. Hanson was pacified by this idea, and talked of her little god-son, and a bible and prayer-book. She thanked Mrs. Leslie very much, and said that she had had great pleasure in doing any thing for Miss Grace; though she did not think she should have thought so much about it, but for seeing her so ill that evening.

They then talked of Fulham, where Hanson was going to call. They told her she would not see the young ladies, if Ellen was well enough to leave home. Hanson was exceedingly concerned to hear of Ellen's cold.—“Dear! dear!” cried she, “poor dear lamb! she's going to have one of her bad sore throats! I must go and nurse her; nobody knows so much of her as I do.” And she began to take her leave that moment. She did not however forget to remark to Grace of her own accord, that she should say nothing of her success at Fulham, except to Miss Emily.

Grace thanked her, and said, certainly she should like to have the pleasure of surprising Mrs. Ward herself with the sight of the cups on Thursday.

“Well, my dear Grace,” said Mrs. Leslie, some time after Hanson's departure, “you seem to have forgotten your piece of good fortune; what are you thinking of?”

“I was thinking, mamma,” answered the little girl, “how curiously one thing hangs upon another, and how fortunate and unfortunate, things may be at the same time.”

Her mamma asked what occasioned these thoughts.

“Why, you know, mamma, the same thing was the

cause of the accident, and the cause of its being repaired ; because, you know, Hanson pitied me for being ill, as she thought it."

"And I dare say, Grace, if you go on," remarked her mamma, "you could hang a great many more events upon your string."

How Grace would have liked to do so ! but instead, she fell into a reverie on the probability of her ever being able to speak openly on this matter to her mamma. We must leave her for the present to her *pros* and her *cons*, and pay a little visit to our friends at Fulham.

The postponement of the Twickenham visit had been equally convenient to both parties concerned. Mrs. Ward engaged, illness not preventing, to send her girls on the Monday, for two days, instead ; stating at the same time the possibility of its not being prudent for Ellen to venture out : in that case, little Clara was to go. Monday came.—Ellen, though better, was certainly in no fit state to leave her room. She was disappointed naturally, but pleased that her loss was Clara's gain. She however thought more of her want of a companion, when disabled from her usual pursuits, than of the loss of her expected pleasure among strangers. George was not a very good companion for one sister alone, especially when that sister was not well enough to enter into his high spirits ; and George at all times found Emily more suited to him than Ellen. Young people who have high spirits and the power of amusement, should beware of indulging their disposition too much, lest their domestic character should be injured. Many a diverting youth grows into a dull man ; and many an entertaining man is acceptable at any place but his own home ; where he is always heavy and uninteresting,—perhaps dissatisfied and ill-humoured,—till a stranger calls forth his powers. This looks very like vanity. Accomplishments and lively talents ought in the first instance to

be spent on those nearest to us, who usually have the greatest claim on us. We should never forget, that however great or clever a man may be in the world or society, *home* is the element and the trial of a Christian. Ellen was occupied by none of these thoughts, however, but sitting over some work rather dismal, in the day nursery, when the door opened, and Hanson appeared.—“ Oh, Hanson !” cried she, “ how glad I am I did not go away to-day !”

“ Oh, Miss Ellen, my poor dear lamb !” cried Hanson, in return, “ how grieved I am to see you wrapt up so !— how’s your throat ?”

Ellen told her she was much better, and was promised to be allowed to come down to breakfast as usual to-morrow.

Hanson said if her mamma would allow it, she certainly would stay till she was down stairs again.

This was very pleasant hearing for Ellen, who was always happy in good Hanson’s company. What is more interesting to an affectionate child than the company of a kind, sensible nurse of its younger days ? Such a character is invested with the familiarity of childhood and the wisdom of age ; and many can bear witness to the maxims of goodness and truth they have learned in a nursery, under such governance. We are glad to leave Ellen and her nurse so well satisfied in their situations, and will pass on a few hours.

CHAPTER XLVII.

There was an old woman, and what do you think ?
She lived upon nothing but victuals and drink ;
Victuals and drink were the chief of her diet,
And yet this old woman could never be quiet.

Nursery Rhyme.

“ My dear,” said Mr. Ward, putting in his head at the drawing-room door, as once before he had done at the breakfast-room,—“ My dear, Everard came back on Saturday, and I have driven him down ; so will you give orders, for I am late ?”

Mrs. Ward rang the bell, and did accordingly, for there was a large party to dinner. Several neighbours also came in the evening. Mrs. Mason was among them ; and that lady had, as usual, plenty to say, and every body to talk to. Music and singing were going on.—“ Ah !” cried she to her next neighbour, “ we shall have no such singing to-night, as last time ; certainly, whatever one thinks of Mrs. Leslie, she sings like an angel ; every one must confess that.”

“ And *is* like an angel, I should think,” returned the lady, “ by all one hears.”

“ All ! not *all* ! surely !” remarked Mrs. Mason, “ Mrs. Leslie has her enemies, like the rest of us ; but for my own part, the worst thing *I* see about her is, that she has really no more sense or management in worldly matters, than a child ! To think of her playing her cards as she has done ! Why the game was in her hands !”—nodding towards Mr.

Everard—"and she threw it all up. Though it's no matter of one's own, it really provokes one to see such things."

"Did you want that gentle Mrs. Leslie to marry Mr. Everard?" asked the lady; "I have heard he is a rough man, though so clever."

"Rough! yes, he can be rough! He is rude enough to every body, and sometimes is to me. Why, only the other night, he was about that little Grace!—as rude as a bear!—But never to Mrs. Leslie; when she is by, he is quite a different man, and she could do any thing with him she pleased. I am sure she has no reason to complain of roughness from him: it's quite a treat to hear him speak to her. For my part, I wonder what she can be made of to resist such manners. Besides, you know, he is one of the first lawyers in London! I have heard he has more briefs than any two of his standing put together: and he could live in the very first style if he pleased,—only he's a bachelor, and does not care for show. To think of her letting pass such a catch!"

"But do you know that Mr. Everard thought of such a thing, or that Mrs. Leslie refused him?" asked the lady.

"Thought of such a thing! my dear ma'am, to be sure! Why it's notorious, you know, she is an old flame of his; and was he not down here every day, but two or three, all the time she was here! If you had seen his behaviour, you would never doubt. And I am sure if she did not understand, she must either be blind, or more silly and unaccountable than any woman of her age I ever knew."

"But," persisted the other lady, "you know she was not obliged to marry him; perhaps she did not like him."

"Why, what *can* she expect?" returned Mrs. Mason; "here's a man, all the fashion, nobody more sought after, plenty of money, in high practice, astonishingly clever, very much attached to her,—so *constant*, you know; why he might have married all the young ladies in London, I

know! but he never forgot her. Then he's so handsome and agreeable, if he pleases. For my part, I can't think what she would have! I am sure if I was not married, I should have no objection at all to Mr. Everard, if he took a fancy to me; but Mr. Mason—good man!—is a very kind husband to me. I can only think that Mrs. Leslie has a very cold heart."

The other lady could not but smile at this mode of putting the matter, as she remarked, "You know every body is not obliged to marry again, and perhaps Mrs. Leslie's thoughts are all with her first husband."

This lady did not know, or remember, that Mrs. Mason had been twice married.

"No, not obliged, of course," said Mrs. Mason, "but when such an offer as this comes, it can be nothing but folly to refuse. Mrs. Leslie married once for love and romance, and all that, and surely she could afford now to marry like the rest of the world. She was a girl then; but now she knows what is what, it is unpardonable; for the sake of her little girl, she ought to consider these things. And Mr. Everard, too, has taken such a vast fancy to Grace; it would have been such a thing for her, poor child!—It's quite absurd to hear the compliments he spends upon that child! Did you hear of the Fairy Bower?"

Just then, the other lady was called away to the piano; and in a change of places, Mr. Everard was advanced next to Mrs. Mason. She continued her conversation to him, and he seemed disposed to listen to her more quietly than usual. This encouraged her to go on, and the following discourse took place:—

"Oh, Mr. Everard! we were just speaking of the Fairy Bower, the other night, and your part in that pretty scene: it was, I am sure, very kind of you to amuse us so much, for it was as pleasant to us old people, as to the children; quite a little spectacle!"