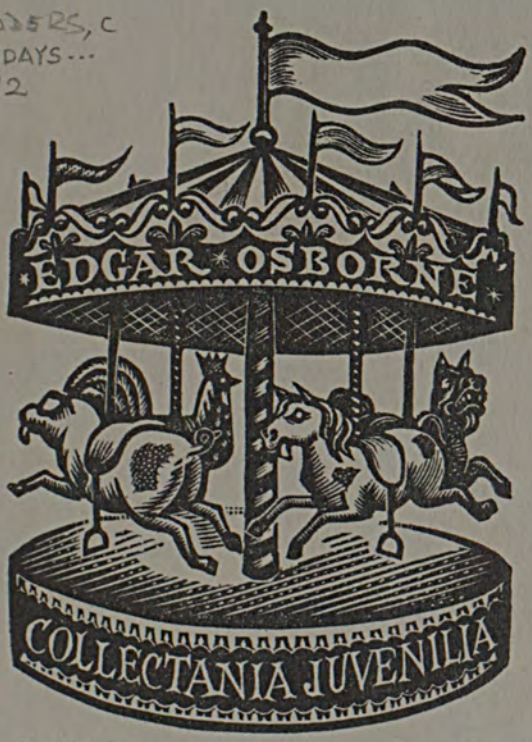
Quite Lifeless, not
mentioned in Darlin.
Scarce, worth retaining for
collection. — Tho Lowell has
no apparent point of interest
His chief merit — that
it does not press religion,
a lecture — a instruction.

G.P.



Dorothy Wetton
her book
the 6th
1845

HOLIDAYS AT HOME.

WRITTEN FOR THE AMUSEMENT

OF

YOUNG PERSONS.

BY

CHARLOTTE SANDERS.

THE THIRD EDITION.

"Fancy, that mark'd the manners of the few,
"From *Nature* sketch'd the characters she drew."

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TO

THE youthful Family of that Friend, whose affection and esteem have, from childhood, been regarded among Life's *chief* and *dearest* Blessings, is this little Work presented, with every Sentiment of *esteem* and *gratitude*, by their greatly obliged,

Respectful,

and affectionate,

C. SANDERS.

Jan. 1806.

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HOLIDAYS AT HOME.

CHAPTER I.

"DO you know, Mamma," said the sprightly Isabella, one morning as she entered Mrs. Lymington's dressing-room, "that my sister says this is the shortest day, and the beginning of winter: but I am sure she is mistaken; we have had very cold weather for some weeks, and the ponds have been frozen over a fortnight." "All this is true," replied her mother, "yet winter does not begin till the sun enters Capricornus, on the twenty-second of December." "You will believe me another time I hope, Isabella," interrupted Josephine, who had followed her sister into her Mamma's apartment: "It is the winter solstice: is it not, Mamma?" "You are perfectly right, my dear; but why are you out of humour?" "Because Isabella is so stupid; I have been endeavouring a long time to teach her all these

things, yet she will not remember them; I should have thought she might have recollected the *shortest day.*"—" And why *that day* in particular?" " You know, Mamma, it is always a day of joy; our brother and cousins return for their Christmas Holidays on the twenty-second of December; dear Edward! dear Harcourt! dear Alexis! how glad I shall be to see them again!"—" You will not be more so than I shall," said Isabella, " although I had forgot the day on which they usually return: I am sure I love them as much as you do. Is not Edward much improved, Mamma?" " The Doctor has of late given us very flattering accounts of him; I hope he will also find his sisters have made some progress in their studies."

Jos. I am *certain* he will; for I have learnt a number of things since Midsummer: I have a hundred questions to ask him, and I am sure he will be puzzled.

Mrs. Lym. It is very probable with half that number. On what subjects do you mean to try his extent of knowledge?

Jos. History, Geography, Arithmetic.

Mrs. Lym. In the latter, allow me to predict, he will greatly surpass you; and in the other two I should be pleased to find him your superior; as

it would be a check to the vanity that deserves reproof.

Jos. You think then, Mamma, I do not know enough to talk to a schoolboy who studies Latin?

Mrs. Lym. I should be concerned were you not capable of conversing on the subjects you have mentioned; but, in my opinion, you are not better informed than every little girl of ten years old ought to be, notwithstanding the conceit that in your own mind has attached superior merit to all your acquirements.

Isab. Josephine always thinks herself *so* clever!

Mrs. Lym. She has in general too exalted an opinion of her own abilities: it is a failing I wish particularly to correct. So limited are the powers of the human understanding, that the best informed have little to be conceited of. Have you also a design, Isabella, to puzzle the school-boys?

Isab. Oh no, Mamma, there are many things that Caroline and I wish to be informed of, and I am sure they will have good nature enough to instruct us. I wish they would come; what time do you think they may arrive?

Mrs. Lym. I expect them to tea.

Isab. It will be dark before that time, and we shall not be able to show them the garden, the

park, and the hermitage; all will be new; for we lived in town when they last came home.

Mrs. Lym. And to-morrow a new day, in which they may see it all.

Jos. But you said they were to be in school with us all the morning. How then can they have time to amuse themselves? Do excuse their attention to business, for the first week at least, Mamma.

Mrs. Lym. Not upon any account; you know it has ever been my plan to continue their morning studies throughout the vacations. Idleness is the most pernicious habit that youth can acquire; the early years of life, are the parts of a volume too valuable for even a single day to appear a useless blank; each page should present to recollection some commendable action, or knowledge attained. The afternoons shall be devoted to amusement: and, for this I am assured, that the recreations of the evening will not be found less agreeable for the employments of the morning. But where is your sister Caroline, and your brother Edmund?

Jos. Caroline is putting the last stitch to a watch-string for Harcourt, and we left Edmund making a little whip for Alexis. I told him it was a silly piece of work; but he would go on with it.

Mrs. Lym. And why *silly*, Josephine?

Jos. Because Alexis is nine years old, and too much of a man to be amused with such a childish toy.

Mrs. Lym. Did you tell Edmund so?

Jos. Yes, Mamma.

Mrs. Lym. And what was his answer?

Jos. That not being able to make any thing better, he knew his cousin would accept it.

Mrs. Lym. I am certain he will, and receive the present with pleasure. Good natured little fellow! May I be permitted to inquire whether the generous example has found any imitators?

Jos. Oh yes, Mamma, I have been making such a *nice*——I forget—if I commend my own performance, you will think me vain.

Mrs. Lym. I had rather you spoke of it with less emotion: inform me simply what token of remembrance you have to present, and leave your friend to judge if it merits commendation.

Jos. A purse is what I intended for Harcourt.

Isab. I have a ball worked in worsteds for Edward. Would not you like to see it, Mamma? I will run and fetch all the keepsakes. Caroline's and Edmund's, I am sure, are finished.

Mrs. Lym. No, my love, it is late; and breakfast taken into the parlour. Send Caroline and

Edmund to kiss me as soon as their governess can spare them, and do you attend her in the school-room. *(The children embrace their mother, and retire.)*

About five o'clock in the afternoon, as they were amusing themselves in the play-room, the sound of the front-bell announced the young gentlemen's arrival. "They are come, I am sure," exclaimed Josephine, hastily throwing down the doll she had been dressing, and jumping over a band-box that stood before her.—"I did not hear a carriage," said Caroline, "and if the boys *are* come, you need not overturn my baby's clothes; see how every thing is tumbled, and I am so overjoyed, I cannot stay to put them in order." "Do not be uneasy," interrupted Isabella, "I will place them as well as I can for you, when we come up again; but let us hasten down, for I long to see Edward."

In five minutes, the happy little party were assembled in the parlour. As soon as Edward had returned the affectionate caresses of his sisters, he admired the size and ornaments of the room in which they were sitting. "What a pretty apartment, dear Mamma; I think I shall like this house better than the one in London; I am sure I shall in summer; but at this season it must be very

lonely; for as we came along I did not perceive any mansion near it; and the country, all covered with snow, looked so dreary! I shall hate to stir out. Here, at the side of this charming fire, will I station myself. It is my place, Alexis; I have taken possession of it for the holidays.

Mrs. Lym. I am sorry to observe you are not yet improved in politeness, Edward. For this evening, the whim shall be complied with; your cousins will take their places on the other side; and to-morrow I think I may venture to say, curiosity will induce you to resign your warm situation for a ramble round the park, which is very extensive, and will afford a scene perfectly new to you.

Harcourt and Alexis placed their cousins, Josephine and Caroline, nearest the fire, and contentedly seated themselves next to them, although not less cold than Edward, who amused himself with playing with a face-screen that hung beside the marble chimney-piece. Isabella remained standing by her Mamma; Edward, suddenly starting up, exclaimed, "Come, my dear little girl, here is a seat for you as well as your sisters; it is a comfortable place, I assure you; I should like to keep it, were there not more politeness in resigning it; beside, I cannot sit still longer than five

minutes, indeed I cannot, Mamma; but now I am at home, I will endeavour to correct myself; I wish I could behave as well as Harcourt and Alexis."

Mrs. Lym. If you try to imitate their good example, there is no doubt but you will succeed. It is a pity, where the heart is good, that the indulgence of a thousand disagreeable habits should give an unfavourable opinion of its possessor. Other children can be still when any thing is said that demands their attention; but while I am speaking to you, you are drawing the thread half out of my housewife. Now you have taken up my scissors; they are not a boy's plaything. Oh! Edward, give me not reason to say you are incorrigible!

Edw. Do not think so, dear Mamma, I will be very quiet indeed. I told Alexis in the chaise that I had formed a resolution to behave well, and leave off all my ugly tricks. What beautiful pictures, Mamma! (running from one to the other) where did you buy them?

Mrs. Lym. They are drawings, some of them mine, and some your sisters', which, for first performances, are tolerably well executed.

Har. They are very nicely done; but I suppose, here and there, one may discern a few touches of the master.

Mrs. Lym. You are a little mistaken; these have had no assisting tints; they are entirely their own performances; at this distance from the metropolis, it would be difficult to engage a master of superior abilities; it is from their governess they receive instructions; but I do not allow her to finish any of their pieces; it is a kind of deception I have always censured, which tends only to encourage idleness in the pupil, and falsehood in the instructress. Such drawings as are well done, I have framed, and hung up where they may be noticed, as an excitement to future correctness; such as are not worthy this distinction, are put aside to be copied again with greater nicety.

Edw. I wish I could draw; but I know I should be ready to tear the copy in pieces, if I could not imitate it in five minutes.

Mrs. Lym. If you will condescend to give half an hour's attention to it every morning, I am sure Miss Neville would instruct you with pleasure. Your studies can admit of this variation, and you will find it prove a very pleasing one; the picturesque scenery of Wales has ever been acknowledged a beautiful subject for the pencil; and when you can imitate Nature, I shall be happy to have the views you have attempted in my draw-

ing-room. It is my intention to render the present vacation as agreeable as possible to you all. When I receive a satisfactory account of your morning occupations, your application shall be rewarded by the pleasures of the evening.

Edw. What pleasure can we have here, Mamma? If in London, you might take us to the Play, the Circus, or the Opera.

Mrs. Lym. It is true, we are rather at too great a distance from the metropolis to visit those places; but I see no reason why we should not convert one of those large rooms into a theatre, and get up a drama amongst ourselves.

Har. A *play*, Mamma! Oh delightful!—and what play shall it be?

Mrs. Lym. I have altered one of Madame de Genlis' for the purpose; I shall not say any more of this plan at present, the execution of it depends on a series of good behaviour from all parties.

Edw. But if we have not our parts to learn, we shall not be able to perform it before we return to school.

Mrs. Lym. They are all ready; to-morrow you will receive them; they may be learnt at your leisure; but remember, that inattention or ill behaviour will put aside the performance.

Edw. You shall see, Mamma, we will not

forfeit this indulgence.—If we are good, what other amusements do you design to treat us with?

Mrs. Lym. Several: Excursions about the country will be one of the most agreeable. You are fond of stories and poetry; I have exerted myself to furnish you with entertainments in this way, when the close of evening shall urge a return to our own fire-side.

Edw. Thank you, dear Mamma; how good you are to us. I have just thought of a pretty poem I have learnt: may I repeat it?

Jos. One that we all know, I suppose; something from the Speaker, no doubt.

Har. Mamma, I dare say, would not have any objection to hear again any of our old pieces.

Mrs. Lym. No, indeed, for many of them present new beauties at every repetition.

Edw. But this is quite new.

Har. And written by an elder sister of one of our companions just before she left the country seat of a friend. For I know what poem Edward wishes to recite. We have often said how much you would be pleased with it, Mamma.

Mrs. Lym. As I can in some degree rely upon your judgment, I am prepared to listen to it with pleasure; but I observe you have not left off

the early appellation, Harcourt; I am still your Mamma.

Har. And well does your maternal care of us, dear Madam, merit the endearing title; you have supplied a mother's place, ever since we left India and the best of fathers; you have loved and treated us as your own children; you are entitled to all our gratitude, and the dear, the tender name of mother.—*(Kissing Mrs. Lymington's hand affectionately.)*—But I interrupt my Cousin; I am sure you will think him greatly improved. Harcourt paused; when Edward, with just emphasis and correct pronunciation, recited the following Poem:

THE PRIMROSE OF DECEMBER.

THO' fogs and sleeting rains prevail,
Thou flow'r of humble form,
Rear'st thy fair head to meet the gale,
Nor droop'st beneath the storm.

Tho' frosts begem thy wrinkled leaf,
The amber petals bloom,
Of garden ornaments the chief,
Within stern Winter's gloom.

I'll shield thee, Primrose, when the snow
On breezes keen descend,
Yon Osiers shall a screen bestow,
Thy foliage to defend.

So Innocence—if Virtue guard,
Shall brave Misfortune's storm,
And life's clear zenith 'gain reward,
Its once unshelter'd form.

Then bloom to cheer the dreary day,
The sole corolla near;
Till Spring with warm enliv'ning ray,
Proclaims thou'st nought to fear,

Ah! then I'd seek thee in the shade,
The flow'ry tribes pursue,
And where I've seen the blossoms fade,
Retrace the Violets new.

When forc'd this pleasing spot to leave,
May some kind hand be found,
Robin, thy little cares to ease,
And scatter crumbs around.

So when the death of Winter's past,
And Cowslips deck the plain;
I'll hope where here I fed him last,
To meet the Pet again.

And mem'ry, with delight, shall trace
The many cheerful hours,
Spent with the lovely feather'd race,
Our shrubs and fav'rite flowers.

While Hope the scene presents to view
That friendship could endear,
May Spring the happiness renew,
That Winter promis'd here.

CHAP. II.

THE following morning it had ceased snowing; the frost still continued, but regardless of cold, Edward and his cousins, accompanied by little Edmund, set out on a ramble before breakfast. Every object was new; and, to youth, the charm of novelty is that of pleasure. Dreary as the country had appeared to them on their journey, it now seemed divested of its gloom. The sun was rising with unusual splendour, the circling smoke ascended from the chimneys of the distant cottages, while the cheerful whistle of the husbandman echoed in the valley.

A thousand sources of amusement in a moment seemed to present themselves. "We will ask Mamma," said Edward, "to let us take a ride to that large white mansion between the hills; I wonder who it belongs to?" They had scarcely ceased expressing their admiration of the noble edifice, and the picturesque scenery around it, when they found themselves on the bank of a frozen rivulet. "Here will be delightful skateing," exclaimed Harcourt—"For those who have skates," replied Edward; "those who have *not* must be content to slide. Were I sure Mamma would not be angry, I would ask her to let me

buy a pair: I have six shillings of my pocket-money remaining: But let us cross the bridge, and get into the path that leads to the village; there seems to be some pretty cottages: it is a charming country! the inhabitants must be all *very* happy."—"Do you really think *so?*" said Harcourt; "let us visit some of them. Winter, I fear, is not a season of happiness to many of the poor."—They had scarcely entered the hamlet, when they were followed by a rosy, curly-headed boy, who with the part of an old red cloak tied across his shoulders, ran barefoot to entreat their charity, shivering with the chilly gale as he besought it. "This urchin begins his trade early," said Alexis; "I thought such little wretches as these were only to be met with in the streets of the metropolis; and a gentleman once told me they were for the greater part impostors."—"Perhaps he was mistaken," replied Harcourt; "let us however see if this be one:" then addressing the half-starved object that still humbly kept its distance beside them:—"Do you every morning thus early begin the trade of begging?"—"It is not my trade, or my employment, young gentleman," said the poor boy; "when the weather permits me to work in the fields, or when mammy is well enough to work at home, to get us any bread;

but now she is ill, and daddy is dead; if I do not *beg*, my brothers and sisters must perish with hunger.—Spare one little halfpenny to save them!"—"That I will," exclaimed Edward, "here are six shillings, take it all—poor children!" "To be convinced this is no imposition," interrupted Harcourt, "suppose we visit the wretched family. Where do you live, my lad? show us the way; we wish to see your mother, your brothers and sisters."—"Heaven bless you! good young masters," said the boy, "keep your money then, and give it to mother yourself; she will know best how to make use of it for the good of us all." The object of their charity then ran on before, regardless of the icy path, that cut at every step his bleeding chilblains, and soon conducted them to the entrance of a shattered hovel, where no reflection of the cheerful blaze glimmered upon the humid wall; no lighted fuel crackled on the hearth: upon the extinguished embers lay a faithful dog, who, by his position, seemed still to feel a fancied warmth, and started for a moment at the approach of strangers; he growled, till satisfied they meant no ill, and with a gentle turn indulged again in slumber. Upon a miserable bed reposed the wretched mother, surrounded by six helpless little ones. The children for some moments be-

held the affecting scene with mute astonishment. "There is no imposition here," at length articulated Edward, while a tear, that he could not restrain, fell upon the infant's cheek that had ran towards him, lisping out, "bead, b-e-ad, do you bring us any bead?" He approached the poor woman, and put into her hand the silver he had offered her son; Harcourt and Alexis followed the generous example. "Money, I fear," said Edward, "will not be of much use to these poor people, who are too ill to provide the necessaries it might purchase; let us hasten home and inform mamma of their distress; she will do more for them than *we* can."—"You are in the right," replied Harcourt; "she is *very* good and charitable: we will return directly, only let me ask the boy one question.—Is it long, my lad, since you lost your father?" "Ah no, Sir! three days since he went out, as usual, to seek employment. Mother has long been ill, and he could get no more in the day, by his hardest labour, than would purchase a little nourishment for her at evening. That night he did not return, it had snowed all day; the next morning we heard that a poor labourer had been found frozen to death.—It was our father; he is to be buried at the expense of the parish, but the gentry say it is already too overburdened for t'

to do any thing for mammy or us."—"Unfeeling wretches!" exclaimed Edward; "great people may be rich, but I am sure they cannot be happy; I mean those who can hear of distress like yours, and not endeavour to relieve it. Let us run home immediately, Harcourt; but stay, had we not better leave our great coats behind us: I will put mine upon the poor woman's bed, and do you, Harcourt and Alexis, wrap yours about the shivering infants." They waited not to receive the thanks and blessings of the indigent family. In less than half an hour they were at home, where each severally repeated the melancholy history of the cottager and her children. Mrs. Lymington, attended by her apothecary and housekeeper, visited the wretched habitation; they arrived in time to save and to restore the almost expiring parent to her affectionate children, and cheer with comfort the widowed heart, oppressed with penury and sorrow. The interesting scene the children had witnessed, supplied matter of conversation till the breakfast things were removed. Edward and Alexis then went to their studies. Harcourt purposely remained in the parlour, and when they were out of hearing, requested Mrs. Lymington's permission to buy a pair of skates for his cousin, who had expended the money destined for the

purchase, on the poor cottagers; her consent was easily obtained, and he received at the same time sufficient to purchase a new pair for himself. The occupations of the morning were well attended to by the little party. Edward exerted all his patience, and succeeded in drawing an outline tolerably correct. In the evening the parts of the little play were delivered, and the whole read aloud.—"I perfectly recollect, mamma," said Edward when it was ended, "the piece you have altered and adapted to us, *La Curieuse*. Who shall we get to play the Baron? you have made him a speaking character; the other boys' parts I can perceive you wrote purposely for us; for in the original the *cousin* is a *girl*, and the son only appears mute in the last scene."

Mrs. Lym. You are right; I had boys as well as girls to amuse; and for a first attempt of the kind, I found it necessary to adapt the piece to their years and capacities, for which reason many interesting scenes are omitted, and excellent speeches shortened; for I feared my little company would not be able to do them justice. In short, mine is but a faint sketch of the very pleasing original, and by no means a just or correct translation. As to the Baron's part, I have a young friend, who is fond of speaking,

and I have no doubt will accept it; Miss Neville has undertaken the mother's part.

Edw. Who is your young friend!—dear Mamma, tell us his name?

Mrs. Lym. Master Clifford; you have never seen him, yet he is the son of a very old friend, and a most amiable youth, whose society will afford you both pleasure and instruction. We will take an airing, and call upon him to-morrow after school. I fear I must not venture to take Edward, lest he should put Lady Clifford's work-box into the same disorder he has mine.

Edw. I forgot—dear Mamma, I will be very quiet, and not meddle with any thing upon your table this evening again. Is there a Lord Clifford, and did he know Papa before he went abroad?

Mrs. Lym. Sir Charles was his most intimate friend; he will be rejoiced to hear they have taken up their residence in Wales, and lately purchased a house in this neighbourhood.

Edw. So am *I*. Papa will be so happy to visit them when he returns.—I suppose they are agreeable people; very *lively*, very talkative?

Mrs. Lym. Their conversation is generally sensible and pleasing; some years ago, it might have been more *lively*, as you express it, before they had experienced so much affliction.

Jos. What has happened to them?

Edw. Do tell us their history, dear Mamma.

Mrs. Lym. Sir Charles was the only son of a worthy Baronet in the West of England, who inherited with the paternal estate, all the virtues of his illustrious ancestors, and long after his marriage kept up the generous hospitality, for which the noble mansion had been noted through preceding generations. He redressed the grievances of the poor, was a friend to the honest and industrious, an enemy only to the profligate and idle. His aim was to ensure the happiness of *others*, and the birth of a son completed his *own*; that of a daughter two years after, was another source of domestic joy. Their children were the pictures of health and loveliness; endeared to all around them, monarchs might have looked with envy on their felicity. Alas! how soon was the scene of it to close. The little Laura was about three years old, when the nurse, walking out as usual one morning with her and her brother, met an old acquaintance, who living near the road, invited her to her dwelling; as it had ever been her mistress's orders not to take the children into any house, they were told to amuse themselves in an adjoining copse, till her return. She had left them about ten minutes, from the little boy's ac-

count, when an old woman came up and said the nurse had sent her to fetch his sister, and that she would return for him presently. They were scarcely out of sight when the maid came back: you may judge of her astonishment at Henry's inquiries for his sister, and the reproaches of her own conscience for having left them; she ran through every field where there appeared a possibility of meeting with the vagrant, but her search was in vain, nor has the infant since been heard of; five years have elapsed since the melancholy event. The negligent nurse immediately received her discharge, and it is said the agony of her mind soon after deprived her of her senses. You will imagine what must have been the parents' feelings; unable to bear the sight of that country where they had been deprived of such a treasure, they resigned the paternal estate to a distant relation, and passed more than four years upon the continent. About six months since, they returned to England; and in an excursion into Wales, purchased the noble edifice between the hills, which you may have observed in your walks this morning.

Edw. We admired it very much, Mamma, and I intended to have asked you who it belonged to. You say, Sir Charles and Lady Clifford resided in Devonshire. How could you and Papa

be intimate with them, for we never lived there?

Mrs. Lym. No, my dear: Your father's intimacy began when they were fellow-students at Eton. Lady Clifford was the valued friend of my earlier years, before her marriage; and after, whenever they came to town, we had the pleasure of their society for a few days, but never at the periods of your vacations.

Edw. How sorry I am for them!

Isab. What can have become of their dear little girl?

Mrs. Lym. It is imagined she was taken away by a gipsey woman; similar instances have been recorded of those vagrants enticing infants away to rob them of their clothes.

Edw. Wicked woman! she will never be happy; do you think she will, Mamma?

Mrs. Lym. No, my love, those who do wrong can never be so; but it is an unpleasant subject to dwell on,—I do not like to see melancholy little faces; let us enliven the remainder of the evening with a game of Crambo,

Edw. May I first, Mamma, repeat to you a farewell to Robin, written by the same young Lady whose Primrose of December you admired yesterday evening?

Mrs. Lym. Certainly; and I am happy to perceive you can confine your attention sufficiently to the subject to speak with propriety; at least your last attempt pleased me exceedingly. Thus kindly encouraged, Edward recited

A FAREWELL TO ROBIN.

When frost had crystaliz'd the thorn,
And short and cold the day,
My Robin have I sought at morn,
Upon the icy spray.

With cold and hunger sore oppress'd,
He came devoid of fear,
The welcome and invited guest
Of crumbs I scatter'd near.

Oft at my call the warbler flew,
As anxious to repay
The bounty that compassion threw,
With Nature's sweetest lay.

A mutual league by friendship made
Gave Winter's morn a charm;
For sacred was the thicket's shade
That shielded Bob from harm.

And may it guard my fav'rite long—
Tho', Robin, we must part,
Another friend demands thy song
Who owns the feeling heart.

Thine still the promis'd scatter'd boon,
Her tender hand shall strew;
Nor fail each morn, e'en oft at noon
The charity renew.

My Robin, favour'd bird, adieu!
To mem'ry ever dear,
Reflection mingles joys with you
Possess'd a season here.

But now, alas! they're mine no more,
The transient pleasure's past;
A wand'rer on Misfortune's shore,
By life's rough tempest cast.

I'll think on scenes so late enjoy'd
The happiness I knew,
When cares for thee my mind employ'd—
Sweet Robin! friend, adieu!

CHAPTER III.

School was no sooner over the next day, than Edward ran to his Mamma, to remind her of her promise of taking them to Sir Charles Clifford's, and kindly asked whether his sisters might not accompany them. "It was my intention that they should have been of the party," replied Mrs. Lymington; "but passing the door of the study

about half an hour ago, I heard a noise, as if some one had been crying. I must inquire into the cause of this disgrace."—"Why, Mamma," interrupted Edward, "I will tell you.—No—I *will not*—do not ask me any questions, for fear I should: I love to prattle, and the truth might escape without my intending it. They would think me ill-natured to inform you, and so it would be; for I should not like sisters to come and tell you tales of me."

Mrs. Lym. That is a liberty I have never allowed; nor did I wish to gain any information respecting their conduct from you; their Governess will answer my inquiries. Tell Miss Neville I wish to speak with her.

After having conducted her into the parlour, Edward retired, for he did not like to hear that any one of his sisters had incurred the displeasure of their instructress. Desiring Miss Neville to take a chair, Mrs. Lymington continued, "It was my intention to have indulged my little girls with an airing to Sir Charles Clifford's this morning, if every thing has gone on well. I thought I heard some one in disgrace. I must beg of you to inform me what has been the matter, for I cannot take a disobedient or an untractable child along with me."

Miss Nev. Miss Josephine, Madam, has lost one of her new gloves. I was reprimanding her for her carelessness when you were passing.

Mrs. Lym. I cannot, from this account, permit her to go with the rest; shall I trouble you to send her to me?

Miss Neville left the room with little Edmund, who returned in five minutes, accompanied by Josephine.

Edm. Sister will be very good, Mamma, pray do not be angry with her. *(Josephine again burst into tears.)*

Mrs. Lym. This is not the first time, Josephine, that I have had occasion to reprove you for negligence and untidiness; you have drawers to yourself, and it is a shame if a girl of ten years old cannot keep them in proper order, and know where to find her gloves or tippet when she wants them; I suppose it is mislaid, perhaps to be found in some dirty corner of your play-closet.

Jos. No, Mamma, it is lost, as we were returning from church on Sunday. I know not where I dropped it.

Mrs. Lym. And did you not go back to look for it?

Jos. I did not miss it till I got almost home.

Mrs. Lym. Another proof of the carelessness

of your disposition. You recollect you were promised a new book on Isabella's birthday, instead of purchasing which, I must expend the money in buying you a new pair of gloves.

(Josephine falling on her knees.)

Jos. Indeed, Mamma, I will be more careful; try me but this time.

Mrs. Lym. No, Josephine, I have long found milder methods ineffectual; when remonstrance fails, correction is necessary; you must therefore do without a new book, and submit to the punishment of being left at home, while those who are good accompany me to Lanvillin: all further supplication is useless; you may go up stairs, and do not let me see you again till we meet at dinner. "Poor Josephine!" exclaimed Edmund, as she shut the door, "I am very sorry for her, Mamma. She wished so much to have a new book, and talked so often of the one you intended to buy her; do pray, let her have it."

Mrs. Lym. No, my love; were I rich enough, I could not think of replacing all she loses by carelessness, and supplying her with subjects of amusement; at the same time, it would be indulging the failing it is so necessary to correct.

Edm. Caroline and Isabella will both have new books; I shall not like to see her turning

over her old ones. You know, Mamma, I have five beautiful bright shillings, that your good friend was so kind to give me some time ago, pray take one of them and buy Josephine a book with it.

Mrs. Lym. And you really could part with one of those?

Edm. Oh! yes; because I had rather see my sister happy; and I am sure she will not be so, unless she has a new book. You keep the shillings, they are pretty to look at now and then, but I would part with them all to give *her* pleasure.

Mrs. Lym. Good little boy! as you request it so earnestly, I *will* take one of your shillings and buy a book with it for Josephine; you shall have one also for your generosity.

Edmund capered about the room for joy, till the carriage drove up to the door to take them to Lanvillin. Edward and his cousins accompanied them on horseback, for Mrs. Lymington had purchased three beautiful little poneys, which she had presented them, to vary the amusements of the holidays.

Lanvillin was one of the most romantic situations in Montgomeryshire, perhaps in Wales, and the young people were delighted with the charming views it presented on all sides. "What a

health, but all his little property had been lost with the vessel; Papa inquired into his circumstances, and finding he had no family, offered to take him into his service: for several years he was his porter, but thinking him too old to labour any longer, he has had that little cottage, (designed at first for an ornamental building,) fitted up for him in the neatest manner; he has a charming garden; his only business is now to cultivate it, and to enjoy himself in the servants' hall as often as he is disposed for society."—They were now arrived at the hermitage, and found the honest Selkirk employed in making some fishing nets; he felt himself highly honoured by the attention of his little guests, and good humouredly pointed out to them every beauty and convenience of his admired habitation; and the young people regretted they could not lengthen their visit. The fortunate mariner afforded subject of conversation till they returned to the hall; Sir Charles and Lady Clifford were greatly pleased with their youthful visiters, whose behaviour gave Mrs. Lymington the greatest satisfaction; at three o'clock they returned to Mount Newton, and all spoke of Master Clifford in the warmest terms of commendation to Miss Neville and Josephine; the latter, thoroughly ashamed of her past conduct, was, at the inter-

cession of her brothers, and sisters, restored to favour. After dinner, their lessons being repeated, and exercises well written, they were allowed to dance till tea-time, while Mrs. Lymington and Miss Neville, by turns, played their most favourite airs on the grand Piano.—"Have you a story for this evening, Mamma?" said Edward, as the tea equipage was removing.—"No, my dear, for I think it is too late to begin one; but I have something that will perhaps amuse you as well." She then took from her pocket-book a paper, and read the following Poem:

THE GRANDSIRE'S TALE.

When swell'd by evening gales the peal,
That shook the village spire;
Fair Emma from the wheel would steal,
To cheer an aged sire.

"Ah! do not be so sad," she cries,
"For wint'ry storms are o'er;
"And summer ev'ry want supplies
"In Nature's rip'ning store:

"Serener skies the hills surround;
"How warm the gentle breeze!
"See! how the moonbeam gilds the ground,
"And plays among the trees.

"Let us beside the cottage door
"The rural meal prepare,
"And there the lib'ral season's store
"Beneath the woodbine share."—

"'Tis true, the wint'ry whirlwind's past,"
Replied the hoary sage;
"Yet shall Misfortune's tempest last,
"To wreck the bark of age."—

"Restrain the thought, my grandsire dear,"
Resum'd the tender child;
"To *storms* succeed a *zenith clear*;
"To *whirlwinds, zephyrs mild.*

"Behold an all-creative Hand
"Dispensing *ever* GOOD;
"By whom the seasons, at command,
"Return with fruits and food.

"And shall not *these,* if we pursue
"The track of virtue giv'n,
"A scene of happiness renew
"That lifts the mind to Heav'n?

"Ah! why, my sire, shouldst thou complain?
"Each gloomy thought dispel:
"Dejection cannot long remain
"With those who've *acted* WELL.

"And lives there one, with error, say,
"Can charge Alberno's fame?
"While all to poverty a prey,
"Have cause to bless the name."

She paus'd, and to the arbour led
Her trembling parent dear;
Awhile sad Melancholy fled,
For Emma's kiss could cheer.

Together the repast they shar'd,
And oft Alberno smil'd;
Now prais'd the meal by her prepar'd,
And bless'd again his child.

In converse and endearment, flew
The tranquil hour away;
Till night her sable mantle threw,
And veil'd the face of day.

As then preparing to retire,
An unknown voice was heard;
Straight to the gate return'd the sire,——
A warlike youth appear'd.

"Excuse the liberty," he cry'd,
"If shelter here I crave;
"Where never yet its been deny'd
"The wretched or the brave.

"A shepherd lad, untutor'd guide,
"My course directed here,
"Whose home no shelter could provide,
"Or hospitable cheer.

"A stranger in this clime I roam,
"Who late forsook the plain,
"To share the joy of friends and home,
"At peace restor'd again.

"Six tedious days and nights I sought,
"With unavailing care,
"The mansion by a father bought——
"Imagine my despair:

"When thither chance my footsteps led,
"At length,—but on the road,
"I learnt each valu'd friend was dead
"That shar'd the lov'd abode.

"That now within its ruins dwell
"A lawless, ruthless band;
"And an untimely death befel
"The owners of the land.

"Ev'n *more* than parent do I mourn——"
He paus'd and wept anew;
"Ne'er shall felicity return,
"Or pleasure time review."

"Welcome, sweet youth!" Alberno cry'd,
"Partake the humble store,
"That ne'er the friendless was deny'd,
"The trav'ller or the poor.

"Nor will I check the falling tear,
"That bathes thy cheek so pale——
"In sympathy, oh! deign to hear
"A wretched Grandsire's tale.

"Ten years since I, a father bless'd,
"Embrac'd my only boy,
"Whose mind a thirst of fame possess'd,
"That robb'd me of my joy.

"For now to join the warrior band,
"He sought th' embattled plain;
"Left parent, wife, and native land,
"To perish with the slain!

"Too soon the fatal truth we knew,
"That conquer'd was the foe;
"And victory her millions slew
"With keenest shafts of woe.

"Ah! why rejoice th' unfeeling world
"At *conquest, glory's* call,
"When war's wide banners are unfurl'd,
"And sons and husbands fall?

" A mother sunk beneath the blow,
" That to our bliss was giv'n :
" Left to its grief the wretch below,
" And sought her child in Heav'n.

" Nor e'en could tenderness repel,
" Affliction's direful sway ;
" For soon a widow'd daughter fell
" To misery a prey.

" Her child *surviv'd*, and still I brave
" The woe *her cares* relieve ;
" For when this precious charge she gave,
" Amelia bade me *live*."

" AMELIA!" and the stranger's cheek
Became a paler hue :
" For *me* she died—her shade I'll seek
" In death—my sire, adieu!—

" Could I console the tortur'd heart
" My absence caus'd to bleed;
" Or griefs that memory impart,
" Bid happiness succeed ;

" Then would I wish life's clouded day,
" With thine alone to close;
" Some peace the future might portray;
" Some moment of repose.

" None such th' unworthy may attend;
" The cause of sorrow I;
" Could my distress a parent's end,
" 'Twere just for *him to die.*

" Ah! why allur'd by din of arms,
" Sought I the road to fame?
" What are delusive honour's charms—
" What *now* a hero's name?"

" Astonishment!" the grandsire cry'd;
" Oh! unexpected joy!
" The cruel papers then have ly'd,
" That would have slain my boy.

" Ah! cease to wound my care-worn heart,"
(The youth embrac'd the sage,)
" Comfort might yet a son impart,
" To my enfeebled age.

" My waning life it soon shall close,
" Where then shall Emma find,
" If Edward will not share her woes,
" A friend or *father kind?*"

" He will," she cried, a falling tear
Bedew'd the hand she press'd;
He felt existence still was dear,
And thrice a daughter bless'd.

"Oh! never let the good despair,"
Resum'd the beauteous maid;
"The Pow'r that wields the shaft of care,
"Ne'er limited its aid.

"Throughout life's thorny path of woe,
"This cheering comfort's giv'n—
"That *virtue's happiness* below,
"And promis'd bliss in Heav'n."

CHAP. IV.

THE arrival of some company had for more than a week prevented Mrs. Lymington from fulfilling her promise to the young people; but the first evening they were alone, she read aloud to them the following Story:

ROSA,—*A Fiction.*

'It was the beginning of autumn, when Sir Elwin Elfort left his villa in Northamptonshire, to visit an estate he had lately purchased on the confines of Devon. He wished to have prevailed on Lady Elfort to accompany him, but she imagined herself too delicate to undertake the fatigues of so long a journey; a journey, which was deemed,

in her opinion, perfectly useless, as the steward's inspection of the premises would answer every purpose; but the steward was an old man, who had become gray in the service of the Elfort family; and Sir Elwin had too much humanity to add to his natural infirmities, by requesting him to undertake such a fatiguing excursion: beside, Sir Elwin was a man of genius, and no one could dissuade him from visiting the county, whose romantic and luxuriant scenes, which had so often charmed him in description, seemed to offer innumerable subjects for the pencil. His drawing apparatus was carefully packed in the travelling chariot; and Lady Elfort saw him drive from the lodge, accompanied by a single attendant, with no other emotion than an exclamation on the singularity of that disposition, which could induce him to undergo so much fatigue for the sake of making a few landscapes, which, when finished, an artist only could admire. Miss Elfort, also, who was sipping her morning-tea in her Ladyship's dressing-room, thought her father a very unfashionable man, of a most extraordinary taste, to leave Higham Castle just as the shooting parties were commencing, and all the nobility returned to their neighbouring villas.

'Sir Elwin's pleasures were not of the same

nature as his Lady's; they consisted in books, agricultural improvements, and the comfort of his fellow-creatures; amongst whom were included the industrious labourer and the honest mechanic; nor did he scorn to lift the latch of the humblest cottage, when he imagined his presence could dispense a comfort to the needy. Lady Elfort, vain of her person and *superficial* accomplishments, had been foolishly taught to think *real* ones were not requisite in the character of an heiress, whose chief value was sixteen thousand pounds. She seemed to be alive only in the brilliant party, or the midnight assembly; at *home*, unless surrounded by the crowd of fashion, it was difficult to distinguish whether she really existed; insensible to every domestic concern, resembling a beautiful statue—a mere ornament of the splendid drawing-room: yet Lady Elfort possessed a heart, which had it in early youth been properly regulated, might have largely contributed to the happiness of her family; for she was capable of the warmest maternal affection, and sincerely attached to Sir Elwin, although too much led away by fashion, to openly approve his inclinations and pursuits. Aware of her own insufficiency, she had procured from Paris a Governess for her daughter, in whom she mistook superficial

for real abilities. Madame Frivole was artful, conceited, and imperious; but an insinuating manner, and deference to opinions she secretly despised, rendered her a favourite with Lady Elfort, and her young pupil, who at eleven years of age, was a proficient in every fashionable accomplishment, and the darling of an infatuated mother. Sir Elwin had, from the first, disapproved the plan of education adopted, and remonstrated warmly on the absurdity of it; till a long and nervous illness induced him to permit Lady Elfort, for the re-establishment of her health, and his own domestic peace, to continue the education of their daughter in what manner was most agreeable to herself. He would frequently call the darling Jessy into his study, to attempt instruction by conversation, but her little head was always so full of some new dress, or expected invitation to some baby ball, that all he said skimmed but the surface of the brain, and left no permanent impression. Sir Elwin's absence produced a kind of holiday at the Castle; for it was agreed by her Ladyship and Madame Frivole, that this would be the most convenient time to receive the largest parties, as the Baronet was known always to prefer a select society to the splendid rout. Lady Elfort doated on numbers and confusion, for

nothing *less* than a crowd could, in her opinion, be fashionable or elegant.

'Whilst the most extensive preparations were going on at Higham, the owner of the splendid domain was travelling with enthusiastic pleasure through unfrequented roads, yet not unmindful of the inhabitants of the castle; often did he wish they, like himself, were sensible of the beauties of Nature, and the pleasure of imitating her romantic scenery. Sir Elfort was within about thirty miles of his newly-purchased estate, when they were overtaken by a violent storm of thunder and lightning, which continued with increasing violence as night came on.—"If we can find any dwelling near here, an' please your honour," said the postillion, "I think it would be prudent to alight, for the horses are startled at the flashes, and it seems as if it would be a night to terrify the stoutest of us."—"With all my heart, William," replied Sir Elwin, "for your sake as well as ours; but we are upon an open road, and I fear there is no shelter to be met with." "No house quite near, Sir; but I think I spy a few yonder, a single one at least."—"Let us hasten onward then, my good fellow."—The rain now fell in torrents; there was not a tree to save them from its fury, and it was with difficulty they pro-

ceeded. The faithful Robert who attended his master, exclaimed every now and then, trembling with fear, "Oh! Sir, how dreadful!"—"That there is something awful, I allow," said Sir Elwin, "in this conflict of the elements; but to encourage needless apprehensions is ridiculous and childish. We are not just now in the most agreeable situation, but many have experienced a worse; what is this to a shipwreck, Robert?—a mere nothing."—"Ah! Sir, but we often hear of accidents by lightning."—"Not half so frequently as by numberless other casualties; and the blessing we derive from the tempest, far overbalance the evils of its effects; there is the same Providence to protect us here as at the Castle." The kind conversation of his master dispelled, in some degree, the servant's fears. After braving the storm for twenty minutes longer, the postillion at length drove towards a small cottage, the only object in view beside the boundless ocean; the waves of which now rose to a tremendous height. By the flashes of lightning they perceived a vessel at a distance. "Look, Robert," said Sir Elwin, "how she is tossed upon the mountain waves! Let us check our fears; pray for the preservation of our fellow-creatures beyond the reach of human aid, and bless the Power that in such a night has led

us to a place of shelter."—They alighted, and Sir Elwin gently lifted up the latch of the cottage door.——A small lamp was burning on a table, beside which was seated a venerable peasant, attending to a rosy little girl who was reading.—"Let us not interrupt you," said the Baronet; "we are travellers, and induced by the badness of the weather, to ask the favour of you to let us pass the night in your cottage."—The old man arose; his looks seemed to express astonishment and doubt; the girl closed her book, and crept closer to his side, as if to ensure his protection. "I see," resumed Sir Elwin, "you are not accustomed to receive such late visitors; but, for whatever inconvenience our stay may occasion in your mansion, you shall be handsomely rewarded." "Oh! Sir," replied the old man, "I have no doubt of that; if we can but accommodate you and these two gentlemen," looking at Robert and the postillion, who were behind.—"I beg your pardon; for indeed your great coats are made so large, that at first I could not help suspecting you were ——" "Smugglers, hey my good friend!" —"Dear! how could you think so!" exclaimed the little girl, who now ventured a nearer gaze at the strangers; "Smugglers have such naughty looking faces, but these gentlemen do not look

as if they were wicked; beside, they seem so good natured; and this gentleman, (taking hold of the Baronet's coat,) has spoke so kindly to you."—During the child's observations, Robert had whispered to the cottager, that his master was a person of rank and fortune, who perhaps would make his, if he received them hospitably.

The peasant apologized for his freedom, and insisted on giving up his bed to Sir Elwin, proposing at the same time, making up another for Robert and William.—"What shall we do with the horses?" demanded the latter.—"A very necessary consideration," said the old man.—"I like the man who would shelter his cattle before he thought of his own refreshment. I do not keep horses; when I want one, a neighbour is so kind to lend me his. I have therefore no stable, but there is a shed, where I sometimes put the cart, the chaise will stand under that; there is an out-building adjoining it, which we have converted into a hen-house, there I think the horses may rest upon some clean straw till morning; your honour will excuse their pacing through the parlour, it is the shortest way; and it is the wisest plan to leave the farthest way about till fair weather. Throw a fagot upon the fire, Rosa, and make the skellet boil, we will put in an egg or two; his honour

may fancy them, with a bit of bacon, for supper; had we better refreshments to offer him, he should be as welcome."

The humble cheer needed no long preparation; the peasant and his noble guest were just going to sit down to the frugal repast, when they were startled by the noise of footsteps, and several people were heard passing the door, uttering the loudest exclamations of joy. Upon inquiry, they found that the crew of a fishing boat, which had been out since day-break, was safely landed. It was the same bark *driven* about by the tempest that had attracted Sir Elwin's notice, on their approach to the cottage; who now, as they passed, attended by their joyful families, thus addressed the wearied owners.—"Thank God that ye are safe, my honest fellows, it is terrible work to plough the ocean in such a night as this; the peril over, get dry clothes, and celebrate your preservation with your wives and children, and thus let a stranger share their satisfaction;" putting a guinea into the hand of the nearest. The liberal donation was received with shouts of gratitude. "Forget not your condition, my good fellows," resumed Sir Elwin, "hasten to your fire-sides, and be thankful to Providence that has thus miraculously restored you to its comforts. Good night, brave mariners!"

"I am very glad," said Rosa, "they are safe. How much must the mothers and children have suffered, whose friends were out at sea! I told Simon, two hours ago, there was a vessel in distress, and he said, Heaven protect the poor wretches, smugglers or fishermen!—for he has not a hard heart, although he spoke so roughly just now; he is very good to every body, very good indeed to poor Rosa."—"And who is Rosa," said Sir Elwin to himself, as they took their places again round the oak table; her address did not seem to be that of a low-bred cottager. "Your daughter is a feeling little girl!" said he to the old man. "Ah!" bless your honour, she is not my daughter; no such comforts remain for me; I have outlived them all. I have seen fourscore years; am almost worn out with poverty and infirmities; but in Heaven's good time we shall meet again! I tell Rosa I must soon leave her, and then the tears come into her eyes; she cannot help it; you see, Sir, the dear creature has so much affection."—"She is a lovely child," resumed Sir Elwin, "and I must know what relationship she bears to you; for I am interested in all that concerns you both."—"She is neither my grandchild, niece, or cousin," returned the cottager; "Rosa's is a little melancholy history; I do

not like to think of it at night, it disturbs my rest: but if your honour wishes to hear it to-morrow at breakfast, I'll tell it with all my heart." Sir Elwin politely consented to suspend his curiosity till the morrow.

'The dim embers of the extinguished fagot showed the lateness of the hour; the favourite spaniel, his constant attendant, had taken up its station on a bench in the chimney corner, which Rosa caressed till she fell asleep. "Come, Sir," said the cottager, taking up a small lamp, "allow me to conduct you to your chamber; would I had a better to take you to, after the fatigue of an unpleasant journey.'"

Mrs. Lymington paused. "Oh dear!" exclaimed Edward, "That is not the end of the story; I would not give any thing for such a short one; I do not like it all: I expected it would have been such a *long one*, I am quite dissatisfied; why did not you write more, Mamma?"—"Your present impetuosity does not merit my indulgence in having written any for your amusement. I had hoped, in the course of the last six months, you had become sensible of the absurdity of throwing yourself into a passion upon every trifling occasion, or giving way to your ill humour in a

flood of girlish tears. Your hastiness has rendered you undeserving of a reply on my exertions to afford you entertainment. You will oblige me by going to bed; it is late;—and were it not past the usual hour, after such behaviour I should request your absence."—Edward made an attempt to take his mother's hand—it was not withheld; he kissed it, knelt down, but unable to speak, sensible of his misconduct, silently withdrew. Mrs. Lymington, after embracing the other children, said, "You shall hear the remainder of the story, my loves, the first evening we are alone; I am now too tired to continue, and you too sleepy to attend to it. Good night." A few evenings after, at the request of the little party, Mrs. Lymington took up her manuscript and read as follows:

CHAP. V.

'It was a delightful morning, and Sir Elwin, according to his usual custon, arose at an early hour; he found the active Rosa already busy, preparing breakfast: to avoid giving any interruption to the domestic concerns, in which she was assisted by a little villager, apparently some years older than herself, he took a walk upon the sands

for a mile beyond the humble habitation, and was pleased to perceive no apparent ravages of the last night's storm. The air was calm, and the sun rose in full majesty upon the world of waters. He watched its rising splendour, the vessels that diminished in the distance, and the barks of the fishermen, who were just unfurling their small white sails to the gentle breeze,—had contemplated the pleasing scene perhaps much longer, had not the striking of the village clock induced him to turn his steps towards the cottage; the hospitable inhabitant, in all probability breakfasted early, and curiosity to be acquainted with Rosa's history, made him hasten his return.

'Simon was already seated in his arm-chair, and the bowl of bread and milk smoked upon the table. After the usual inquiries of the morning, he thus began his promised narrative:

"The father of this dear child was the son of a respectable merchant, who left him young in life possessed of an ample fortune. He had been indulged, as only sons too often are, in every youthful folly, but with his property he inherited neither his father's sense nor caution; business became a fatigue to a man worth thousands, and he resolved to relinquish it. A set of vicious companions led him to the gaming-table; notwithstanding the diminution his fortune had sustained,

he could not abandon their society. I have often lamented he had no relation living to warn him of the dangers to which he was daily exposed :—His father was dead; among the circle of his acquaintance were a number of pretended friends, but not one real one; I have sometimes thought that he deserved the blessing, for in spite of all his failings he had a generous heart, and was ever less the world's enemy than his own. His estate was in this neighbourhood, and I had frequent opportunities of witnessing his benevolence, as I lived in one of the small farms belonging to it, then happier than a monarch. My wife was every comfort to me at home, and my children, the sharers of my labours, produced all my pleasures abroad. If an unfavourable season prevented our making up the quarter, he would say, "Do not be uneasy, Simon, I have no doubt of thy honesty; pay thy rent when thou canst, nor fear being troubled by my steward; those who oppress the poor are undeserving of the gifts of fortune." He was down here on a shooting party, when he married our Rector's daughter, a most lovely and amiable young woman, who could not be long kept a stranger to his imprudence; her little fortune was soon squandered among midnight sharpers; but she loved too well to reproach him; the

paternal mansion still remained untouched, and the truth was for a while concealed from her aged father. She remonstrated when they were alone, but the failing had taken too deep root; her arguments could not persuade him to break off those connexions that had led him to the brink of ruin. Every year seemed to involve him in new difficulties, while it lessened mine; for the crops of our little farm became so abundant, as to enable me to pay my rent punctually, and to lay by a small matter beside. It was about the time that Rosa was born, hearing by chance of a considerable loss he had sustained at play, in compassion to her mother and the worthy Rector, I sent, as from an unknown hand, all our little savings, and I rejoiced to find it had been sufficient to save him from destruction. It was long a source of heartfelt satisfaction to me, and at that time I stood in need of comfort; a malignant fever raged in the neighbourhood, to which my dear Lucy, and our youngest darlings, fell lamented victims. My two eldest sons were at sea; a worthy Admiral, a friend of my father's, had obtained commissions for them. —Brave fellows! they fell in defence of their country. Pardon me, Sir, is there a parent who can reflect unmoved on the cruel consequences of war? What recompense is the wreath of vic-

tory to those who lament the slain? Old people are tedious; I fear I shall exhaust your honour's patience; I will hasten to a conclusion.—It is two years, about the fall of the leaf, when Mr. Bellamy was expected to return to the manor, to pass the shooting season, according to annual custom. He had written to Mrs. Bellamy to prepare for his reception, appointing a day when she might expect him, having left the metropolis a few weeks before to attend the Rector, whose declining health had long given her secret uneasiness. On the day her husband was expected at the manor, she left the rectory, promising to return the following morning, and taking with her the little Rosa, then five years and a half old, to beguile the tedious moments of expectation. As evening approached, she became uneasy, fearful that some accident had happened; after having seen her darling child undressed and put to bed, she seated herself, regardless of the chilly air, at an open window, and gave way to her dejection in a flood of tears. The moon shone with its brightest lustre, illuminating objects even at the farthest extent of the lawn; she watched and listened to every distant sound till the village clock struck twelve. At length, by the repeated persuasions of a faithful attendant, she was induced to accept some refreshment and

go to bed. After passing a sleepless night, she arose early the ensuing morning, and endeavoured to stifle her apprehensions, which every moment became more alarming, by imagining whatever was probable to occasion her husband's absence, and looked forward with apparent composure to the hour when her suggestions might be realized by a letter. Breakfast was brought in—Rosa followed, and dissipated for a while her mother's anxiety. As the tea equipage was removing, the footman was heard to ring at the servants' gate. The footman brought in a letter; it was from Mr. Bellamy, confessing his former errors, and dated from a prison. He had suffered himself to be prevailed upon once more to visit the gaming-table, where he had lost even the paternal estate, from whence he desired his wife to remove instantly with her child. She obeyed, and sought consolation in the arms of an expiring parent, from whom she concealed the *real* cause of her sorrow, and to a husband's illness attributed a dejection not to be disguised; her agitated mind became unable to support the death of one so justly dear; her fortitude was unequal to this last stroke of affliction; a rapid decline, in the course of a few weeks, terminated her misery; and the remains of the amiable, lamented Mrs. Bellamy

were interred in the same vault with her father's. —The rectory, with the property of its late worthy owner, devolved to Mr. Bellamy. It was sufficient to release him from confinement, but before his distracted mind could form a plan for the future provision of his child, a disorder he had caught in prison put an end to his life. The little Rosa was left without a friend. The new owner of the manor, who had obtained immediate possession, to extend his prospect had made known to me his intention of pulling down my cottage, and gave me notice to quit it. I had to seek a new abode, and, poor as I was, determined this child should be the sharer of it, till some unexpected turn of fortune might enable me to place her in a better. Her mother had taken uncommon pains to instruct her; I had a few books, and resolved to continue the pleasing task to the extent of my abilities. I purchased this lowly cottage, which I had chosen, not only for the easy terms on which I had it, but for its distance from the scene of happier days. I laboured abroad for our support, as long as my health would admit of it; but I am now grown old and feeble—Heaven only knows what will become of my poor Rosa."—"She shall not want a protector, nor you a friend," exclaimed Sir Elwin; "allow her to finish her edu-

cation with my own daughter: I will be a father to her; you shall supply the place of a grandfather. I have a cottage vacant, on the pleasantest part of my estate—it is yours. You must accompany us to Northamptonshire. We will lessen the fatigues of the journey by going only a few miles a-day."

'The gratitude of Simon was beyond the power of verbal acknowledgment; he kissed Sir Elwin's hand, and wept, who, after desiring him to prepare for their departure at the expiration of three weeks, set out to visit his newly-purchased estate. On his arrival at the first inn, Sir Elwin wrote to Lady Elfort a circumstantial account of his adventure at the cottage; a description of the lovely Rosa: and concluded, with endeavouring to interest her in the history of the friendless child he had adopted, whose affectionate heart, he had no doubt, would soon become attached to Jessy as to a sister; and Jessy might derive many advantages from Rosa's amiable disposition and engaging manners. It was thus he wrote; but a doubt stole over his mind, as he folded up the letter, whether his sanguine expectations would be realized.

'The mother of Rosa had ever lived in solitude, and in retirement had commenced the task of

education. Fashionable follies, and frivolous occupations at Higham Castle, pervaded even the school-room. In such a mansion, was it to be expected that Rosa should long retain her ingenuousness and sincerity. Sir Elwin saw but one way to avoid the impending mischief; it was to become himself her tutor; he would willingly have been the instructer of his daughter, could her mother's consent have been obtained. Rosa, attached to him by gratitude, he imagined would be attentive to his instructions, and suffer herself to be guided by his admonitions. The culture of her opening mind seemed to present many pleasing hours to his future prospects, when the fashionable circle, to which he ever refused his society, should render him a recluse in the apartments of his own fête-devoted mansion. With such pleasing anticipations, he left the inn, and soon arrived within sight of the object of his journey, which, upon inspection, answered his highest expectations. The house was of an ancient structure; he would have wished it modernised, had there been a probability of inducing Lady Elfort to have resided there only three months in the year; but he knew its varied prospects had no charms for her; there were no neighbours with whom she would associate; he therefore accepted an old friend

as a tenant, whom he promised to visit once every year, to talk over the scenes of their boyish days, for they were students together, and to make views of its environs. At the end of three weeks he returned to the cottage, with such clothes and necessaries for Simon and Rosa, as could be purchased at the largest market town he had passed through. The latter, as soon as dressed in her new attire, ran joyfully up to Sir Elwin to thank him; after kissing his hand respectfully, she said: "I wish, Sir, I could be as good as you are."—"What do you mean, my dear?" demanded the Baronet; "Why, that I could do a quarter of the good you do. I think if I were rich, I might manage to do something that would make me *so happy*."—"And what is that, my little friend?"—"Susan has been very kind in coming to assist us, since we lived here; she is tall and stronger than I am; she did all the hard work that Simon would not let me do. I wished to acknowledge her kindness before we left the cottage, and made her try on all my old clothes; none of them would fit her, for she is tall and lusty; but if I were rich, I would give her money to buy better."—"Would you, indeed; and is this *all* that you wished to be rich for?"—"Yes; for you are going to take care of Simon; I shall be so happy to see him provided

for by your bounty, and to know that he need not work in the fields any more."—"Heaven bless you for your generous intentions!" exclaimed Sir Elwin; "here are five guineas, give them to the industrious Susan."—Rosa knelt down to thank her benefactor, then flew to impart her happiness to the companion of her domestic labours, whose exclamations of gratitude and transport were repeated till the carriage came to convey her generous friends, perhaps for ever from her sight, when her emotion was increased by the worthy Simon desiring her to consider herself henceforth as the possessor of his humble tenement, to which she might invite her parents to remove, if she thought it more comfortable or convenient than their own; sobs were then her only language, while with tearful eyes she beheld them drive from the cottage. Rosa's cheerful prattle (as soon as she could recover the parting scene) enlivened the tediousness of the journey. After travelling several days, they arrived at the little farm destined for Simon, where every thing, by Sir Elwin's appointment, had been prepared for his reception. The journey seemed to have renewed his health and spirits; the establishment of the little mansion entirely met his approbation; and the servants, who were few, seemed equally

pleased with the pleasing countenance of their benevolent master, of whom Sir Elwin took a friendly leave, promising to visit him on the morrow; and lifting the weeping Rosa into the chariot, ordered the coachman to drive to the Castle. Soothed by Sir Elwin's affectionate attention, she endeavoured to regain her usual serenity:—"I will not cry any more, dear Sir; for I see it distresses you; but I have lived so long with good Simon, and love him as I would a father; and though I am to live with you, and you are so kind to do for me what he could not, I hope I may still love him."—"Undoubtedly, he is entitled to all your tenderest affection."—"Not quite; I have another Papa, you know;" (taking Sir Elwin's hand;) and though a new one, I feel that I must love him also, and the sister he has promised to give me." They were now at the upper lodge; it was getting dusk; and Sir Elwin expected to find at the chateau, an illuminated drawing-room, crowded with fashionable guests; the ensuing Chapter shall unfold his pleasing disappointments.

CHAPTER VI.

'It happened this evening, and it might be recorded as a wonder, that Lady Elfort was alone

with her daughter, and Madame Frivole; they were at tea when the strangers were announced. Sir Elwin, after affectionately embracing his wife and Jessy, recommended to their protection his little charge, who, although fatigued and embarrassed by the presence of her Ladyship, lost no portion of her usual good humour. Sir Elwin seated her by his daughter, to whom she began describing the beauties of the country they had passed through, and the pleasures of travelling; but, finding her observations unattended to, she soon became silent. Lady Elfort had taken her hand, when Sir Elwin introduced her, and said she was a pretty little girl; but there was a haughtiness in her Ladyship's manner, that seemed to check all farther familiarity. Madame Frivole had not deigned to notice her; Jessy, at the request of her father, had honoured her with a kiss, but it was evident she thought too meanly of Rosa to make her a companion.—"I cannot think," unpolitely whispered Jessy to her mother, "why Papa brought that little country girl home with him; I shall never like her; she has just the face of my large wax doll."—"One infinitely handsomer, I think," replied Lady Elfort, giving at that moment a fashionable stare, that deepened the blush of Rosa's confusion.—"What fine hair

she has! you must not hate her, Jessy; she appears very good humoured; I cannot much wonder that your father was struck with her. I suppose the little innocent has never been to school?" turning to Sir Elwin.—"She has not," replied the Baronet; "a mother was her first instructress, and who so fit for the employment."—"True; very true, Sir Elwin," interrupted the French woman, "but Ladies have not always time to instruct their children, nor always able to bear the fatigues of it; such a delicate constitution as my Lady's could not support it: most children are spoiled who are taught by their Mammas; that young Lady *may* be able to read, but I know several of her age that can scarcely tell their letters."—"Rosa is not one of those," said Sir Elwin; "will you oblige me, my love, by reading a few pages aloud? I have the book in my pocket, with which you amused yourself in the carriage."—She took it gracefully, and standing opposite to Lady Elfort, read two pages with great feeling and correctness.—"You have been well taught indeed, my dear," said her Ladyship, as she closed the book.—"Pray, can you work?"—"A little, Madam; I can hem muslin."—"Oh! I am glad of that," interrupted Jessy, "for you shall assist in making my new dress; may she not, Mamma?"—"No, Jessy, that

is your servant's employment; it is your father's desire this child should be treated as your sister; if, upon a more intimate acquaintance, I find her as deserving as she appears to be, *I* shall esteem her *such;* she has already half won my affection." Jessy sullenly seated herself beside her Governess. A short time after, Lady Elfort desired her to fetch a work-basket, that stood on a table at the farther end of the room.—"La, Mamma, why cannot you ring for Benner," peevishly replied the mortified Miss Elfort.—"Will your Ladyship permit me to fetch it?" demanded Rosa, nor waited for a reply; placing it on the table, she added, "can I get any thing else for you, Madam?"—"No, my love, I am much obliged to you."—Rosa did not return to her seat, but remained standing by Lady Elfort, to whom she presented her scissors, and sought every opportunity of continuing her attentions.—"Do you not blush, Jessy," said Sir Elwin, "at being thus surpassed by a stranger; let her conduct be a lesson from which you may derive improvement. Lady Elfort, for the first time this evening, felt her heart upbraid her, for the plan of education she had adopted; she beheld a little stranger stand by to anticipate her wants, when her own child, whose every wish had been gratified from her

cradle, thought it a trouble to oblige her in the smallest instance; she was never so much inclined to think Sir Elwin in the right, or to so severely censure her own conduct; she even applauded him in her mind for his generous friendship towards the lovely orphan, and resolved to take upon herself the expenses attending her education; and when she became of age, to give her a fortune equal to what Sir Elwin intended for Miss Elfort; her Ladyship was by no means selfish, and her pride was rather an assumed than a natural failing; from the time she had received Sir Elwin's letter, she had felt an interest in Rosa's fate, and secretly hoped with him, that bringing up an amiable child with Jessy, might prove of more real benefit than all their admonitions, and hereto useless remonstrances. At ten o'clock, Madame Frivole was desired to attend the young Ladies to their apartments. Rosa, as Sir Elwin embraced her, asked if she might not visit Simon in the morning? her affectionate request received his entire approbation. After respectfully bidding her Ladyship good night, she cheerfully retired. Miss Elfort begged to sit up to supper, and being refused, left the room in tears.

'Lady Elfort was particularly agreeable this evening, and Sir Elwin thought he had never ex-

perienced home so comfortable.—"Has my Amelia any engagement for to-morrow?" demanded the Baronet, as they were sitting alone after supper. "Not one," was the reply. "We shall then have to-morrow evening to ourselves."—"We shall; and I think I begin to like a family party; only it is so *unfashionable*."—"However unfashionable, it surely has its charms—the charm of happiness;—and why should happiness be sacrificed to fashion! Believe me, Amelia, dissipation may destroy, it never can produce felicity. Let us henceforth live not for the gay world, but our children; be ourselves the directors of their pursuits, the inspectors of their improvements, and thus render ourselves worthy their confidence and friendship, nor in future trust the formation of their minds to the self-interested and the artful. We will receive parties, continue to partake of every rational amusement; but let not such frivolous occupations be in future the chief business of our lives.—"That they have ever been so, I now think of with regret," said Lady Elfort, "and deplore too late the hours thus lost to happiness, my husband, and my child."—"Say not it is too late, if you have independence to renounce the errors that have so long imbittered our domestic peace."—"I do renounce them," replied

Lady Elfort, "and for every moment of uneasiness my thoughtlessness has occasioned, solicit your forgiveness."—"The happiness of this evening shall obliterate the remembrance of the only error I ever thought my Amelia guilty, a preference to the foibles of the fashionable. We are rich, and there may be some few still among the great, who may feel inclined to follow the fashion, given in our example of conjugal attachment and domestic happiness. At least, it would be worth the trial. Lady Elfort, from that evening, resolved to take an active part in her daughter's education. The servile flattery of Madame Frivole, during Sir Elwin's absence, had not been unnoticed, and she received her discharge a few days after his return. Freed from such a pernicious monitress, Jessy's heart, naturally affectionate, when left to the guidance of its own feelings, became sensible of every maternal exertion, repaid each attention with gratitude, and in time derived improvement from the example of an adopted sister; happiness was restored in the family of Sir Elwin, and the worthy Simon lived several years to witness the reward of virtue and benevolence in the scene of their merited felicity.'

Edw. What a pretty story! How I love Sir Elwin!

Isab. And the charming little Rosa, I like her character the best of all.

Har. I wish Master Clifford could have heard it? Will you favour us, Mamma, by reading it again the first evening we have the pleasure of his company.

Mrs. Lym. No, my dear; for I think I have one that will amuse him better.

Edw. What is it, Mamma? When will you read it to us?

Mrs. Lym. To-morrow after your rehearsal, when the Twelfth Cake is introduced.

Jos. Oh! I am *so* glad! Shall we have a holiday, Mamma?

Mrs. Lym. Yes, Josephine; and I hope it will prove a day of real pleasure, free from peevishness and dissatisfaction; and that in your various games you will accommodate yourselves to each others inclinations. I have done all in my power to make you happy; but the good humour of the party will alone render my efforts successful.

Carol. I am sure I shall not quarrel with any one. I like Crambo, Cross-purposes, and the house that Jack built.

Edw. We shall have fine fun; I'll cry the forfeits.

Jos. No, indeed; Harcourt said he would. I

am sure we shall have no clever things to do if you cry them, and I am resolved not to play unless Harcourt is the crier.

Mrs. Lym. To avoid all dispute, it is my request that the boys take it by turns to cry them. I advise you to be careful, Josephine; the first that displays any peevishness, or ill-humour, is immediately banished our society.

Jos. Then pray say something to Edmund; I am sure he will be rude and troublesome.

Mrs. Lym He will, I am inclined to think, endeavour to behave well. We must consider he is a little boy, and play at something which he can enter into the spirit of. When tired of our gambols, he may retire to the nursery, and draw the King and Queen again Lucy and her party. *(Taking a paper from her pocket-book.)* I have looked over the Poem you gave me last night, Harcourt; it is very well for a first attempt. Will you allow me to read it to your cousins?

Har. If you think it will afford them any amusement, Mamma, but——

Mrs. Lym. You are going to enumerate its errors to obtain a compliment. I understand you, Sir; I am not in a humour to flatter this evening; excuse therefore the interruption, and suffer me to read unmolested, the first poetical production of a school-boy, called the

BIRTH-DAY.

"No cheering sun the clouds disperse,
"Or morning mists dispel;
"And in the night, oh! ten times worse!
"What heavy rains have fell."

'Twas thus the youthful Lydia spake,
Absorb'd in childish grief;
And urg'd Adolphus to partake
The wo that claim'd relief.

His counsel sought, whene'er distress'd,
Reproofs that might amend,
For in the *brother* she address'd,
Was ever found the *friend*.

Tho' older he by years a few,
Her converse ne'er could tease
The chief enjoyment that he knew
Was Lydia e'er to please.

And now, by tenderness he sought
To soothe her infant grief;
To ev'ry sorrow fancy wrought,
Administer relief.

"What tho' by rains, or foggy air,
"We're forc'd at home to stay;
"The weather should not form a care
"On Bella's natal day.

"With smiles let's greet the cheerful hour,
"A source of joy supplies;
"Nor by ill-humour'd murmurs sour
"The holiday we prize."

"In summer had her birth-day been—"
Said Lydia, with a tear;
"We could have danc'd upon the green,
"Or gamboll'd with the deer."

"And need we seek so far around,
"Dear girl?" Adolphus cry'd,
"*At home* is pleasure *always* found,
"Howe'er elsewhere deny'd.

"Not to dry walks or cloudless skies,
"Is happiness confin'd;
"Good Humour oft its charm supplies,
"The *sunshine* of the *mind.*

"Ah! Lydia, spoil not thus our mirth,
"And ev'ry sport destroy;
"The morn that gave a sister birth
"Let's celebrate with joy."

"Begone," she cry'd, "the sullen tear,
"All peevish contest cease,
"That might distress a sister dear,
"Or wound a brother's peace."

And now the presents they prepare,
  Affection's tribute send,
In ev'ry little treasure rare,
  To please a darling friend.

A rose had yet escap'd the blast
  That in November blew,
And ev'ry garden sweet surpass'd
  That near the arbour grew:

Now recollected is the flow'r
  That own'd their fost'ring care;
They hasten to the fav'rite bow'r,
  Nor heed the chilly air.

Returning from the lov'd retreat,
  With spirits light and gay,
Within the portico they meet
  The Heroine of the day.

"Accept the rose," Adolphus cries,
  "Unshaken by the storm,
"This sweetest birthday-present prize,
  "The emblem of thy form.

"While yet life's fair unclouded spring,
  "No distant tempest fears,
"Let the sweet flow'r a counsel bring,
  "T' improve advancing years.

" Soon shall its with'ring leaves display
" How transient beauty's pow'r,
" By nature subject to decay
" With ev'ry passing hour.

" Be thine more lasting charms than these,
" To life's gay spring confin'd——
" Such as at *ev'ry* age shall PLEASE,
" The beauties of the mind.

" Improv'd in reason, knowledge, sense,
" As rolling years increase,
" Thine still be *virtue, innocence,*
" The bosom's lasting peace.

" So shall return thy natal day,
" Till childish pastime o'er,
" We shall not venture to display
" Such birth-day trifles more.

" Yet still the season we'll enjoy,
" In happiness be gay,
" And share a tender mother's joy,
" On this thy natal day."

CHAPTER VII.

It was their annual holiday, and the children assembled at the breakfast table in high spirits and good humour. At ten o'clock, according to appointment, their little friends arrived; at twelve, the rehearsal began, when the juvenile performers acquitted themselves to the entire satisfaction of Mrs. Lymington and Miss Neville. It was agreed that Harcourt should again invoke his Muse for a Prologue, and that the grand representation should be that day fortnight. Various diversions filled up the time till dinner. Josephine was so much interested in each, as not to care who cried the forfeits. Upon the removal of the cloth, the Twelfth-cake was introduced. Josephine and Edward reminded their Mamma of the promised story, who took a paper from her pocket and read as follows:

The FAIRY of the CAKE;

OR,

Twelfth-day Monitor.

(Written for the Children's Magazine.)

It was the sixth of January, and the youthful families of Amand and St. Villeroy, met accord-

ing to their annual custom, a day devoted by the parents to the happiness of their children.

Their estates were within half a mile of each other, and the festival was celebrated either at the chateau of Amand or St. Villeroy; the latter this year claimed the honour, where a large room had been fitted up for the occasion, for it had been agreed the amusements of the evening should commence with a dance, which was continued with great spirit till eight o'clock, when the doors of an elegant saloon were thrown open, where, at the farther end, a throne had been erected for the monarchs of the night, and on a velvet cushion lay a crown and sceptre, the ingenious device of the elder daughters of each illustrious mansion. The canopy above was ornamented with artificial flowers from the hand of the youthful artists; festoons of coloured lamps, intermixed with the same, were hung round the apartment, from the centre of which was suspended a glass chandelier; the lights of its numerous branches reflected in the mirrors that adorned the pannels, enlivened their effect, and gave an air of cheerfulness to all the decorations. Cane seats of the most curious workmanship, surrounded an oval table, which supported a large twelfth-cake ornamented with a variety of figures, that attracted the children's ad-

miration, as they took their several stations around it. "Dear! how beautiful!" exclaimed the eldest St. Villeroy; "I never saw any thing so handsome." —"What a pity," said Mademoiselle de St. Amand, "that this day comes but *once* a year!"— "Do let us sit up till twelve, Mamma," said a little girl of about six years old, whose wish was repeated by her sister, though two years younger. "I have given you permission to sit up till *ten*," replied Madame de St. Villeroy, "and that is late enough."

A murmur of discontent was heard throughout the juvenile assembly, till a figure that was placed foremost upon the cake attracted universal notice. It represented a queen; for it wore a crown: it was extremely beautiful, appeared to be made of wax, and was placed in the attitude of playing upon a harp.

The children indeed fancied that its slender fingers touched the strings; what was their astonishment when they heard it sing distinctly, and with the sweetest voice, the following verses:

"When ev'ning twilight fades away,
"Descending on the lunar beam,
"Instructive precept to convey,—
"We fairies act as mortals dream:

"Now resting on the closing flow'r,
"Or on the dewy molehill meet,
"In dance to pass the midnight hour,
"And cheer with songs the frugal treat.

"Start not—no evil sprite am I,
"For fairies e'er the good attend;
"Correction's part by sport supply,
"And prove of innocence the friend."

The music ceased—the figure thus continued:—"My name is Harmonia, the queen of the fairy world. I look with pity on the failings of mortals, their animosities and self-wrought grievances distress me; whenever my presence can be of any service, I present myself before them. The young are more particularly under my influence; for when ill habits are strengthened by years, it is not in the power of a friendly monitor to eradicate the poison. I come not to interrupt the festive scene, but to draw an important lesson from its effects. I have said I am a fairy; this little assembly are, no doubt, well acquainted with the properties attached to an aerial character. They will, doubtless, expect to see some wonderful specimen of my power, perhaps the table converted into a garden, or the apartment into a palace; but every thing *here* is so well arranged for this eve of frolic, that

further art would be *superfluous.* Let me see how far I can contribute to the general pleasure,"—laying aside the harp, and by the assistance of a wand, leaping off the cake, and advancing to the eldest young lady—"I feel disposed to grant *one* request, to oblige each of my little friends. What do *you* most wish for, my dear?"—"Oh! that twelfth-cakes were produced *every day.*"—"If," replied the fairy, "at the close of this evening, the wish is instrumental to your happiness, it shall be complied with. Well, young gentleman," addressing Master St. Amand, who sat opposite, what is your wish?"—"That I had a nice little horse to ride on."—"The wish is not unreasonable, I grant it with pleasure."

A beautiful white poney was immediately led into the room, to the surprise and delight of the whole company; each left their places to stroke and caress it. Twenty minutes elapsed before Monsieur de St. Amand could persuade them to let it be conveyed to the stable.

As soon as order was restored, the fairy accosted Louisa de St. Villeroy, "What shall I do for you, my love?"—"Be so good to persuade Mamma to let us sit up till twelve o'clock."—"A bold demand, indeed; but as I am the first queen of the evening, I suppose I *may* take upon me to grant

the request," bowing gracefully to the ladies at the top of the table. "Oh! how happy you have made us, dear Madam," said Louisa. "The effect of immoderate indulgence will prove the reality of that," replied Harmonia, who then turned to a little boy on the left, saying, "What should you like, Sir?"—A twelfth-cake TWICE as large as this."—"Indeed!—Make ROOM for it then, young gentlemen and ladies. You are satisfied, I hope—here it is."—"Thank you, thank you, kind fairy, I shall now have cake till the day comes again!"—He cut off a piece immediately, and began eating it, without offering any to the company. Suddenly he perceived it diminish, and, for fear of not having enough, hastily cut off another slice, and put it into his pocket. The remainder instantly disappeared, and its place was supplied by an immense rod. "Well," said he to himself, the fairy is not *quite* so kind as I thought her; however, I have still a piece in my pocket." —He felt for it, but found only a small folded paper, on which was written, an emetic, or a remedy for GREEDINESS. Ashamed of his conduct, he made a thousand promises of future generosity, and entreated the fairy to permit him to wish again. "That I cannot do," said she, "the completion of *one* wish is sufficient. The paper, on

your apparent contrition, I commit, with the rod, to the care of your mother; the present mortification will, I hope, prove the further use of both unnecessary. Your friend, I imagine, will edify by your example, and form a better wish. On what have you decided, my little fellow?"—"To have, if you please, an open carriage, with two live horses, small enough to drive about these large rooms, when the weather will not let me go abroad."—"You might have made a wiser wish, as the event shall prove; when young people's desires are unreasonable, they must blame only themselves for the consequences."

The equipage immediately appeared, the prettiest that was ever seen; the colour of the horses was a bright chestnut, and the harness silver; on the handle of the whip was engraved, "Let youth with caution guide the steeds." The active Henry read the words, but paid no attention to their import. Vain of his new employ, he wished to try their swiftness; but, unable to manage what he had never before attempted, he was soon thrown from his seat, and the carriage broken into a thousand pieces, as the nimble-footed steeds disappeared. "Had you asked," said the fairy, "for what had been proper for a child, this accident would not have happened; it is but a slight

one, yet let it leave an impression on the mind, that our wishes and pursuits, if not adapted to our ages and capacities, may often lead to difficulties, but never conduct us to happiness." Then turning to Emily de St. Amand, "One should not think, to look at this little picture of health and satisfaction, that she had any request to make." "Only this one wish, dear Madam, for a *dress* and cap with feathers, like Mamma's; it is so pretty!"—"For a lady, no doubt, though *ridiculous* for a child."—So saying, Harmonia struck her white wand upon the table, and instantly four pages, clothed in blue and silver, brought in a dress like that of Madame de St. Amand. Emily capered about the room for joy, and could scarcely be prevailed upon to stand still, while they put on her new attire. She attempted to dance again, but found the train extremely inconvenient, and the head-dress, with feathers as long as her arm, very troublesome; she could not turn from side to side, without incommoding some one who was near her; and in half an hour would gladly have exchanged her inconsistent apparel for the simple frock. "Young gentleman," said the fairy to the younger St. Villeroy, a boy of eight years old, "from what you have seen, you will, no doubt, wish with more precaution, take one moment

more to recollect before you speak." "All I wish for," said Clement, "is a set of large *golden* nine-pins."—"A very splendid request, indeed; behold I keep my promise, they are here, amuse yourself till you are tired."—"That I shall never be, with such charming playthings," resumed the delighted boy. "What has this good child to ask for?" demanded Harmonia, addressing Isabel de Villeroy. "A purse QUITE FULL of GOLD."—"And may it prove to YOU, what riches seldom are to the possessor, a BLESSING."—Isabel received, in the most grateful manner, her valuable present, hastily left the Saloon, and returned soon after with a countenance animated with joy. "You appear the happiest of us all," said her elder brother.—"The close of the evening," interrupted the fairy, "must determine who is entitled to that appellation; at present I admit of no inquiries, here is still a young lady to make her choice."—"Pray let me have a purse twice as large as Isabel's."—"It is *yours*, be *careful* of its contents, and remember that gold is not *always* a blessing, it may be productive of much *misery* and *mischief*."—"But not with ME, Madam; I will not buy any thing but what is useful,—books, caps, thimbles, pencils, rulers, housewives, work-baskets, and pocket-books. Oh! what pretty things it will

purchase."—"I have now done my part," resumed the beautiful Harmonia, and leave you to the pleasures of the evening. Should any one of you be desirous of seeing me again, tap three times upon the table, as the clock strikes twelve, and I will return." So saying she disappeared, and the young people betook themselves to their annual sports; king and queen were drawn by the elder St. Villeroy and Emily de St. Amand, who were immediately conducted to the throne, from whence they received the homage of the cheerful assembly. The cake was then divided, and presented to the company. It was so rich with sweetmeats, that the young gentleman who had wished for one twice as large, for a while forgot the incident of his confusion, and ate of it immediately.—Forfeits were continued till nine o'clock, when the dance was renewed, but not with former hilarity. The queen, unused to a flowing train, could scarcely move without tearing her dress, and her head began to ache with its load of finery, unaccustomed to any ornament but its natural auburn ringlets. The younger St. Villeroy was so delighted with his golden nine-pins, that he left his partner every five minutes to look at them. The little boy, who had eaten so much cake, felt a sickness, which reminded him of his failing. The lady, who had

received the largest purse of gold, was so occupied with the ideal disposal of it, that she frequently made mistakes, or went down the dance with another's partner; and before the clock struck eleven, all was confusion, peevishness, and ill-humour. The party was broken up; each complained of being tired; the owner of the golden nine-pins fell asleep upon one of the benches, and the young lady who wished to sit up till midnight with the one who had desired a twelfth-cake every day, felt it difficult to keep themselves awake. Never did an hour seem so *tedious;* each unwilling to testify their impatience or fatigue, secretly wished it away.

At length, the clock gave warning, when Mademoiselle de St. Villeroy asked her Mamma's permission to summon the fairy, that they might have the pleasure of bidding her good-night.—The signal given, she re-appeared, and thus separately addressed the little society: "Will you have a twelfth-cake *to-morrow*, young lady?"—"Oh! no, dear Madam, I am quite tired of the festival, *once* a-year is *quite* often enough."—"You who would sit up till midnight, have, I hope, sufficiently enjoyed the entertainments of the evening."—"Not *much* since TEN," they all replied, "we became so SLEEPY."—"Give this gentleman

his powder," said Harmonia, pointing to the greedy child, who was rolling upon the floor, "a few strokes of the rod will be necessary after he is in bed. Correction is the only remedy for his illness. And now, young ladies of the golden treasures, I hope you have not purchased your pleasures too dearly."—"I have not bought ANY THING as yet," replied the owner of the largest purse; "to-morrow will do; I have it all in my head."—"Perhaps so," said the fairy, "but where is your money?"—She felt for it, but the purse was empty. "What can be the meaning of this? who can have robbed me?"—"No one," said the Monitor; "I recalled the treasure which you would have made an improper use of. Look in this mirror, and behold the good you might have done, when your selfish mind sought only to gratify its vanity."—"Oh! what wretched beings!" she exclaimed; "here is a father and six children in prison, and a group of our villagers apparently starving. Ah! if I had thought of their distress, I would have sent them half my riches. I would have rescued this man from confinement."—"Then will I overlook your former thoughtlessness," resumed the fairy, "and restore the purse. Whatever you take from it for benevolent purposes shall be replaced, but when you think only of selfish grati-

fications, you shall find it empty. Behold now the effects of *real* generosity," presenting the mirror also to her sister. "Did you ever see this poor boy, ladies?"—"Yes, many a time, and he was one of the musicians to-night, but I missed him at our second dance."—"Observe in his hand the purse of Isabel; with her generous present he saves from perishing a widowed mother, and six helpless little ones. We see from this, that the acquisition of fortune is *sometimes* a blessing, and the source of happiness; the satisfaction of a liberal heart can prove it. As my last donation, worthy Isabel, accept a second purse, which will ever be a source of self-felicity, while you make it instrumental to the bliss and welfare of the deserving and unfortunate. Let the events of this evening teach you the folly of indulging unreasonable desires, and the uneasiness that must ever be the result of acting contrary to a parent's better judgment. We must be frugal of pleasure, if we would taste its real enjoyment.——Should the twelfth-day party of my little friends, even at a more advanced age, seek happiness through the medium of *moderation*, good humour, and filial obedience, the Fairy has not been a useless monitor, nor the wishes accomplished in vain."

CHAP. VIII.

At nine o'clock the following morning, little Edmund tapped softly at the door of Edward's apartment, "Get up brother, Mamma has sent me to call you, breakfast is going in."

Edw. Well, did not Mamma say we might sleep as long as we chose this morning?

Edm. Till eight, Edward; but it is now nine o'clock, and she will be angry if you do not come.

Edw. Teazing little fellow, go along.

Edm. You need not speak so sharply, Mamma sent me.

Edw. Well, well, say I am coming.

Edm. Let me then advise you to make haste, *(and he tripped nimbly down stairs again)* "and so," continued Edward, turning again to his pillow, "our holiday is over, and we must again to business. I hate the vacation fag; I am sure it is not practiced any where but here, yet Mamma will have it so; she is very good, knows what is best for us, and her commands should be obeyed; *(rising)* I will try then to do all she desires with cheerfulness, and good humour." In a short time Edward made one among the little party in the breakfast parlour.—"I was extremely pleased

with your behaviour, my dear children, yesterday," said Mrs. Lymington; "Josephine and Edward were more condescending and agreeable than usual.

Edm. And will you not reward them, Mamma?

Mrs. Lym. With what, my love?

Edm. You have some nice little sweet cakes.

Mrs. Lym. Which you would have no objection to, I suppose; for your good behaviour, you shall have one, it is a recompense for a little boy; but your brothers and sisters, who by their amiable conduct, contributed as much to my happiness as their own, are entitled to something more. It is their part to choose, mine to furnish the entertainment that will reward them best.

Edw. How good you are, dear Mamma; will you favour us then with another story?

Alex. Or some poetry.

Har. Do, dear Mamma.

Mrs. Lym. For the sake of variety, suppose I read a drama. I have one which I believe will be new to you all. You must not expect, Harcourt, that it will abound with incident or novelty of situation. When I dramatized a domestic tale, I wrote not to please the multitude, but to improve the hearts of my children.

Har. And such a drama, I am sure, will give

us more pleasure than any that have been performed; for it will be devoid of those improprieties which I have heard you censure in, at present, the most celebrated.

Mrs. Lym. You allude to the abhorrence I expressed the other day, at the invocations so frequent in the German pieces. I have not yet read one that I can acknowledge myself pleased with; the moral tendency of all appears to be bad; and such productions, I hope, I shall never become fashionable enough to admire, while our own country can produce dramatic geniuses, whose works might improve the age, and do honour to posterity. It is late, we must suspend our conversation to another opportunity. Edward, I shall hope to receive a good account of your behaviour from Miss Neville.

Edw. Why of me particularly, my dear Mamma?

Mrs. Lym. Because you are most apt to forget to practise the restraint so requisite over a too troublesome and restless disposition.

Edw. I will endeavour to be quiet, and make myself agreeable: indeed I will. *(The children retire.)*

Edward, desirous of obliging, sat down in a great bustle to his drawing, but found no time

gained by precipitations; for, in placing his board, he overthrew a cup of water over his sister's copy, and full twenty minutes elapsed, before things could be again arranged in their proper order. The accident had ruffled his temper, and the drawing which he sought to do, with so much eagerness, now appeared replete with difficulties; a tear more than once glistened in his eye, he strove to suppress it; the promise he had given his mother, and the kindness he had experienced since his return, subdued the rising emotions of ill humour; not having lost all command of himself, he tried to correct his failings, and for once succeeded; for what we wish to do *sincerely*, we can generally accomplish. By twelve o'clock the outline was correctly finished; the lessons had been repeated to Miss Neville's satisfaction; and Mrs. Lymington, when the tea things were removed, read to her little circle the following Drama.

THE GOVERNESS.

Sir Sidney Somerville.	Emily.
Albert, a Steward.	Louisa Somerville.
Sambo, a Negro Boy.	Mrs. Benhamond.
Henry Somerville.	Laura Benhamond.
Farmer Woodley.	Mrs. Woodley.
Constantia.	Lucy.

ACT. I.

Scene I.—*An elegant apartment at Mr. Sidney's Villa, with folding doors opening to the garden, and a variety of choice plants placed upon tripods in different parts of the room.*

Sir Sidney, *followed by* Albert.

Alb. I am happy, Sir Sidney, that hereto you have found every order executed to your satisfaction. Some of the apartments are not yet finished, but the upholsterer has promised the furniture without fail the latter end of next week. Your honour gave us rather short notice; so short indeed, I feared from the beginning it would be impossible to have the old mansion entirely modernized by the time of your arrival.

Sir Sid. 'Tis all very well, Albert; I had long found the warm climate of the Indies disagree with me, and resolved to quit it on the death of Sir Edward Somerville, my Constantia's father, to take possession of this paternal mansion, for he had no son to inherit the large domain; the name and title, as you may remember in this case, was to descend to the husband of his daughter. You were Sir Edward's steward for thirty years: entitled by your fidelity and honest services to his confidence. You knew, you caressed, that daughter in her lovely infancy; you remember the day in which she exchanged a parent's for a husband's protection; you beheld the joy that agitated his aged bosom at this, the completion of his most sanguine wish; and witnessed the increase of our mutual felicity, during the years we resided one happy and united family beneath this paternal roof.

Alb. Would that my worthy master had never persuaded you to quit it; but he meant all for the best.

Sir Sid. He did. The appointment to India was an advantageous one; and in exhorting me to accept it, he sacrificed his feelings to my interest, and knew not, till we had left him, the loss he had to sustain from being deprived the society of his amiable daughter.

Alb. Often when he has lamented her absence, have I endeavoured to urge the necessity of your speedy return, he would not hear of it; and said, the future welfare of his children required a longer residence; that in a few short years, he hoped to embrace again his darling child; till such an interview could take place, he would comfort himself with his grandchildren. It was his intention to have had them home every vacation. Their mother's death was a stroke of affliction as unexpected as insupportable; my poor master never held up his head after the melancholy news arrived; more than twelve months he lingered in a declining state of health, yet would not suffer one to write to you; whenever he felt a little better, he would take up a pen himself; his letters were always cheerful, for he made me read them, lest any expressions might have escaped him, that could convey to you any idea of his sufferings; and they were written with an endeavour to administer that comfort to you he stood so much in need of. Twenty times a day would he traverse my young lady's apartment, lean upon the old harpsichord, and burst into tears. Pardon me, dear Sir, the sad scene still hangs heavy on my mind. I would restrain my grief, if it were possible, that I might not add to your affliction.

Sir Sid. Words are not wanting to convince me of your attachment, good old man; yours are not tears to give offence, they speak your affection to my Constantia and her father; mine shall mingle with them; we'll pay this last tribute to their loved respected memory in this mansion, where every apartment will long excite the indulgence of our sorrows. Soon as your letters reached me with the sad intelligence, here I resolved to fix my future residence, yet felt a reluctance to revisit it, in its former state. The alterations have been judiciously executed, and in these I have to acknowledge your judgment and feeling; alas! they avail but little. When I left England, Albert, I had a wife; this, the native mansion of my Constantia, however altered, however modernized, must bring back to recollection the scene of long lost happiness. I had hoped the suggested plan would have robbed remembrance of its poignancy, but it is still the same; and I shall lament with my children their mother's loss, who died soon after our establishment at Madras.

Alb. It was your wish, Sir, that Master Henry and my dear young ladies who were at school, should be fetched home. They arrived a week ago, but you have not seen them. They were in bed when you came last night, shall I go for them?

Sir Sid. Presently, good Albert; first let me acquaint you with my intentions respecting them. If I am ever to drink again of the cup of happiness, it must be presented by my children. They are my all; the only treasure that my heart acknowledges, and in their society I seek an alleviation of my sorrows. Here, henceforth, under my own inspection, shall they receive their education. My son shall find a tutor in his father; and for my girls, I have been recommended to an able instructress. In my way hither, I stopped a few days with my old friend Lord Belmore, to whom I related my intention; her ladyship immediately made inquiries, and has been successful; an accomplished but unfortunate woman, having just completed the education of the daughters of an intimate acquaintance, has undertaken that of my Constantia and her sisters; but let me not forget to ask after our poor neighbours.

Alb. They will rejoice to see your honour again, though, thanks to your generous remittances, they have all cheerfully borne the burden of labour, without sinking under that of misfortune.

Sir Sid. To continue to each the comforts and conveniences of life, shall be the thought of my leisure hours; and when, Albert, I behold once more the sun of happiness arise on all around me,

one cheering ray may reach again the gloomy confines of my heart.

Alb. Ah! doubt it not, Sir; time will wear away the remembrance of the deepest sorrow.

Sir Sid. Yet not the stain of *conscience;* one little speck *there,* will blot out peace for ever. Albert, to you I speak with confidence; you remember my sister, have heard me speak of her: she married—the deserving object of her choice was not of noble or illustrious family; and for having dared to give her hand unsanctioned by a brother's approbation, was banished his society for ever. Cruel pride—unfeeling prejudice; had it not been for this, I still had lived in my Amelia's affection, and could have found consolation for my loss in a sister's presence. It was some months after I renounced her, Albert, that I became a husband. I could then have pardoned her attachment, and sought to effect a reconciliation, but it was too late.

Alb. Have you not heard, then, since of the dear lady?

Sir Sid. Once, by chance, the circumstance of the husband's death, and widow's misfortunes, was mentioned by a friend, who had lately been in France, but was acquainted with no further particulars than that she had left Orleans with her

infant, as soon as their debts were discharged; to effect which, she had deprived herself of every valuable; a long and expensive illness having put a stop to all his mercantile pursuits, and reduced them almost to beggary. The brother, who could have proved himself a friend at this trying period, had renounced all affinity. Too late, Albert, my heart relented of its unkindness, for never since have I been able to obtain the slightest tidings of my injured sister. *(He retires to a distant part of the room in great emotion.)*

Scene II.

Henry. (Peeping in) Papa is here, I am sure; I must venture in.——Papa, my dear Papa, how glad I am to see you! Cantwell told me you was come, and I have been hunting for you in every room but this;—how do you do, my dear Papa? [*Exit* Albert.

Sir Sid. (Embracing Henry) Well, very well,—thanks to my dear boy; run for your sisters, my love, I am impatient to see them.

Hen. Oh! they are just at the door, for they followed me almost through every room; but if you was really so impatient to see us, dear Papa, why did you stand talking so long with Albert?

Sir Sid. I had a great deal to say to him, my dear, as I have to you and my dear girls.

Scene III.

Enter Albert *with the children. They run to* Sir Sidney, *who affectionately embraces them.*

Const. I am very glad to see you home again, Papa. I was so tired of being at school; but you will let us have long holidays *now*, will you not?

Sir Sid. I am sorry to hear you say you were tired of school; the governess with whom you were placed, was, in your dear mother's opinion, a most amiable woman; she was also extremely accomplished, and from her attentions I had hoped you would have derived every wished improvement.

Const. I *did* try to learn, Papa, but she was so particular, and then it was hard to stay so long at school; to be there three years, learning every day, and for the last twelve months, no holidays allowed us as the others had.

Sir Sid. This was indeed an unavoidable hardship; for, after your good grandfather's death, you had no relations in England who could receive you at the different vacations. From Mrs. Mansel's society you might have derived pleasure

and instruction, and should have submitted to the necessity of passing the holidays at school without repining.

Emily. But, Papa, it was so ill-natured, when the Miss Trifles asked us to go home with them, with their Mamma's consent, not to give us permission.

Sir Sid. You attach an undeserved censure on your governess's character. It was my express command that you should not pass a day out of her sight; she therefore did her duty in refusing any invitation that might be given you.

Lou. You know, Constantia, she told us, she could not consent to it, because she had our Papa's command to the contrary. You should not say Mrs. Mansel was ill-natured; we had not any lessons to learn; in the holidays we always drank tea with her, and she gave out a number of toys for our amusement.

Const. Yes; you have reason to talk of her kindness; *you* was her favourite.

Emily. Not more than I was: and *you* might have been her favourite also, if you had not been so fond of Miss Lawless; but you *would* follow her example, and you know what a wicked girl she was, and that Mrs. Mansel said she should expel her as soon as her mother returned from Scotland.

Sir Sid. I am greatly concerned at this account, Constantia, that you should prefer the company of the undeserving, to the society of the amiable. Mrs. Mansel, I am certain, was entitled to all your affection and gratitude.

Emily. Indeed she was, Papa; you cannot think how kind her behaviour was, after she knew our dear Mamma was dead; she talked so tenderly to Constantia and all of us. I *do* love my governess, and shall be sorry if we stay away from her very long.

Sir Sid. I hope you will ever esteem her, Emily, as your first instructress, and be grateful for all her attentions. This large mansion would be a gloomy place without society; in that of my Constantia and her sisters, I had promised myself still some happy hours; this made me determine on continuing their education at home. Mrs. Mansel deserves my warmest thanks: it is not from dissatisfaction of her conduct, but for an alleviation of my own affliction, that I remove you from her maternal care.

Const. I am sure, I am very glad: we shall do much better at home.—We can have masters, and I can teach in their absence.

Sir Sid. That is a task you are too young to undertake, however you might be capable of it,

which I at present have many doubts of. You must prepare to receive a new instructress; to whose lessons and requests, I hope, it will not be necessary to enforce obedience and attention.—Disappoint not a father's sanguine expectations. Constantia, you are my eldest daughter, add not to my present trouble by being the most unamiable. Say that you will endeavour to make me happy, by correcting the errors of a too giddy disposition; I will not attribute them to the heart—yours, if formed after that of the best of mothers, must be worthy. I will hope you have been influenced by a pernicious, though too powerful example; and, that removed, you will suffer a superior mode to regulate your future conduct.

Hen. I am sure Constantia will be good, and so will I, and Emily, and Louisa; for we shall rejoice to see, and make you happy. Time will pass so pleasantly; I shall like to say all my lessons to you. Will you let me come with you into the library, and read some Latin, Papa?

Sir Sid. Not now, my love; I have a little business in the village.—To-morrow we will commence our studies; you may now go and amuse yourselves.

Emi. Thank you, dear Papa. *(Running out.)*

Const. Where are you going, Emily? You are

absolutely as rude as a ploughboy: You do Mrs. Mansel great credit, indeed! Did you ever see the young ladies run across a room, in that vulgar manner, at Piermont-place. Come back, if you please, and walk with elegance. *(Emily stops.)*

Sir Sid. I prefer the lively steps of my little charmer, to a more formal deportment; and, if elegance is accompanied with haughtiness and ill-humour, as in your example, it is an acquirement I do not wish her to possess. You have mistaken the term; whatever is natural or easy, cannot be inelegant.

Const. I thought I might be allowed to tell my sisters their faults; there is nobody else in the house to set them right; Cantwell may be a good housekeeper, but she is certainly extremely vulgar. I suppose you would not have them thought rude and ill-mannerly by their new governess.

Sir Sid. Nor should I like to have my eldest daughter thought ill-humoured or imperious.

Const. Do you mean to stand all day at the door, Emily, in representation of a statue?

(Emily returns, goes up to her Papa, then walks in a stately manner across the room.)

Emi. It was rude to leave my dear Papa so abruptly; but he is not angry, and I will behave better in future. Now for the elegant step of a ball-

room. I was so overjoyed, dear Sir, at your arrival, I forget all Monsieur Pasgrave's graces—let me try to recollect them. Will that please you, sister?

Const. Better—Stay at the door, and observe how I leave the room. Louisa, do you follow me. *(Constantia leads her sister to her father, makes an affected courtesy, and, with a stately air, leaves the apartment. Henry mimicking them.)*

Hen. Boarding-school graces!—Do, Papa, let me practise a few of them; Constantia will be grieved if no one follows her elegant example. But seriously, Papa, do you not think it a great pity that my sister is so conceited; she makes herself very ridiculous.

Sir Sid. She will in time, I hope, become sensible of her errors: however her conduct might attract the ridicule of strangers, it should have escaped a brother's; at least, while the failings of youth in your own character stand in need of correction, you should rather conceal than expose those of a sister. Leave me, my dear boy, I am not in spirits to talk more with you this morning. *(Exit Henry.)*

Scene IV.

Sir Sid. This interview with my children has shown me all the importance of the task I have un-

dertaken: a public education was not calculated to improve my Henry's too volatile disposition; but he has a good heart, and this turn for ridicule may be corrected.—My Constantia's conduct gives me a severe disappointment: she was a fond mother's darling; and I had hoped to have found her all that was amiable and lovely.—Alas! how seldom is it we obtain the expected satisfaction from those objects to which we attach the most extensive ideas of happiness! *(Exit.)*

CHAP. IX.

SCENE V.——*Mrs. Cantwell's apartment.—Mrs. Cantwell at work, Constantia standing by her; Emily and Louisa amusing themselves with arranging her work-basket.*

Const. AND are you sure, Cantwell, all is quite true that you have been telling us about governesses?

Cant. Perfectly true, my dear young lady: I could give you fifty instances more of their ill-treatment of their pupils.—They are a set of cruel mischief-making beings; the upstart half-educated daughters of some broken English tradesmen, or artful, insinuating, hypocritical Emigrées, who

come over for protection, and who exercise their genius and flimsy accomplishments to the injury of the truly deserving among our own sweet country-women: for I do not mean to say that all governesses are half-educated, I speak of the generality of those who look out for private situations.

Emi. The one, then, Papa has chosen, may be a good one.

Cant. She *may*, to be sure; but the contrary is more probable. My master is a worthy man, but no great judge of these matters: he had better have employed me to have looked about for him; we should soon have heard of somebody.

Const. I will not obey her, I am resolved; for I am sure I could have taught my sisters very well. Do not you think so, Cantwell? and we could have done without.

Cant. Yes, my good young lady; you would have taken great pains with them, and it would have been much better than letting a stranger into the house, who, perhaps, will be a spy upon us all; and make a world of mischief, with the tales she will carry to your Papa.

Lou. Papa will not listen to her: he never would suffer us to tell tales of one another.

Cant. Very likely, Miss.—But your having no Mamma, this person will have great authority;

and, no doubt, the full command of my master's ear, at all times. Poor young ladies! how I shall pity you.—Confined all day long to your studies, permitted only to walk out when your governess pleases, and never allowed to come into the housekeeper's apartment.

Lou. I shall be sorry for that; for you have been very kind to us: though I do not believe all governesses are so cruel as you would have us imagine them.

Emi. We shall lose all our nice cake and sweetmeats.

Cant. No, my love; I'll endeavour to watch an opportunity to bring you all you have been accustomed to.

Const. You are very good, Cantwell; and be assured I shall ever love you. The contents of my purse may not be always at my own disposal, but while it is, allow me to beg your acceptance of this little trifle, for all your attention to us since we came home. *(Offering her half-a-guinea.)*

Cant. Bless me, dear Miss, what are you thinking of; that gold would buy you a number of pretty ornaments; I beseech you not to think of thus rewarding my poor services.

Const. Papa will supply me with all I want;

and I must insist on your taking it: Do, dear Cantwell, oblige me.

Cant. I would not displease you for the world; dear young lady, I know your generous heart would be hurt at a longer refusal; and thus with heartfelt gratitude, accept your favour.

Emily. And now, Constantia, you have not a sixpence remaining.

Const. Is that your concern, Emily.

Emily. No; but I think you will be sorry, should we walk out, and meet with any poor beggar, that you have given *all* away.

Cant. Your sister has certainly a right to dispose of her money as she thinks proper. It is not always charity to give to vagrants; they are provided for by the parish, and the country abounds with impostors. Allow me to persuade you to check a too liberal disposition.

Const. Indeed I did not think of the poor just now; but I will ask Papa to give me some silver; should we meet any one who appears deserving of relief, I cannot think it right to refuse them a trifle.

Cant. You are too good indeed, my love; I fear your kind heart will meet with many impositions; let me persuade you not to ask your Papa for any more money at present; he might think

you had been extravagant, or demand an account of what he gave you. And might be displeased at your liberality to a poor servant; for all people do not think alike.

Lou. He would not be displeased, I am sure, at our giving to any one who wanted assistance; nor to you if you was *really* poor.

Const. It is true you have good clothes, high wages, and many things to make you comfortable; and as Louisa impertinently observes, are not absolutely poor; he therefore might be displeased should he inquire how I have spent it; what shall I answer?

Cant. You might make a thousand exeuses; and if he insisted on knowing, you could say you had lost it.

Const. And do you think I would impose on my father by a falsehood, Cantwell? No; it would be *very wicked.* Miss Lawless told stories, and it was the only part of her conduct that really displeased me; for our dear Mamma, when we were very young, had inspired us with a love of truth, even in the most trifling transactions.

Emily. (aside.) Cantwell is a naughty woman, I am sure.

Cant. I did not mean that you should tell a story to your Papa, if it could possibly be avoided;

you might say you had made it a present to a friend, and perhaps he would not ask further about it; but, dear ladies, I must leave you; I have a thousand things to attend to; take all the pleasure you can; run about this large house, and amuse yourselves till the time of your confinement arrives. *(Exit* Cantwell.

Scene VI.

Lou. I wonder grandpapa was so fond of Cantwell; she could not be deserving of his kindness; how naughty it was to wish Constantia to tell a story.

Emily. Grandpapa might not know much of her; she was attentive to him in his illness, in hopes, perhaps, he would make her an elegant present; he was a stranger to her motive, and therefore pleased with her civilities.

Scene VII.

Hen. (running in.) Oh! what fun! I cannot help laughing, to think how droll he looks.

Const. Who? What is it you mean, bursting in upon us in this ungentlemanlike manner.

Hen. Come, come this way, and I'll show you such sport; never had such fun in all my life! it will surprise you all—such a sight!

Emily. Where, brother?

Lou. Do tell us what it is.

Hen. No, no; come into the garden; I would not spoil your surprise for the world; here, this is the shortest way. *(Exeunt through the folding doors.)*

Scene VIII.

The Garden.——Sambo discovered harnessed like a dog, and fastened to a large garden chair.

Emily. (starting back.) Oh! what is that!

Hen. What should it be but my new horse; now you shall see how I'll make him fly. *(Seating himself in the chair, and flourishing a long whip.)* What, you are sulky; you won't stir; hey!

Const. It is Sambo, I declare!

Sam. 'Tis indeed, Missa; Sambo do any thing to please young Massa;—Sambo no horse.

Hen. We shall see that: you are as black as one, I am sure, and as strong for ought I know. Come, none of your airs—go on I say.

Sam. Sambo no go on, Massa; young Massa coach so heavy; Sambo no draw more; Sambo die, cords so tight; leather strap cut so.—Oh! dear, if old Massa was here; Sambo no be young Massa's poney. *(Sambo looking up receives a lash of the whip.)*

Emily. How can you laugh, and be so cruel, Henry. Poor Sambo will be killed, pray undo the harness.

Hen. Yes, to be sure, that has cost me and Ned so much trouble; not I truly. Sambo's my horse, my plaything, my slave.

Const. Fie, brother, I cannot bear to see you so heard-hearted. I cannot bear to hear him cry so. *(Going.)*

Lou. Do not go, Constantia; I am as much shocked as you can be; but instead of leaving Sambo to be the sport of our mischievous brother, let us endeavour to set him at liberty. I have been trying to undo these cords, but it is impossible without cutting; lend me your scissors.

Const. How unfortunate! they are in my work-box; what shall we do? I will run in and fetch them. *(Exit* Constantia.

Scene IX.

Emily. Pray, brother, undo these cords; Sambo will die, indeed he will.

Hen. No danger of that; he is not hurt, notwithstanding all his blubbering.

Lou. It makes me quite unhappy to hear him cry so.

Hen. His noise adds to the sport; what are a negro's tears!

Sir Sid. *(who has entered unperceived.)* The tears of a fellow-creature; unfeeling boy, assist me to unloose these cords, and then prepare to receive the correction your inhumanity deserves.

Sam. Oh! dear, dear; good Massa, pity poor Sambo.

Sir Sid. Yes, Sambo, most sincerely do I pity you; never should you have accompanied me to England, could I have thought my son would have treated you with such unfeeling cruelty. *(Taking the cords and harness out of Henry's hand.)* Put yourself, Henry, into the same position of the poor object before you, and whom I have released; if you dare to hesitate, *this* shall command obedience; when you feel the weight of the carriage, you will be able to judge whether Sambo complained without reason.

Hen. Indeed I cannot move it, dear Papa; I had no idea it was so heavy; the cords are so tight. Oh! pray take them off.

Sir Sid. Why should I be affected at your complaints, you were deaf to those of Sambo; you could laugh at torture, and exult in cruelty.

Sam. Young Massa mistaken, thought poor negro no suffer, no feel pain; old massa very good,

but not all white men; some very cruel beyond sea to poor black people; young Massa know better now, no make Sambo horse again,

Sir Sid. You can forgive him then, and you wish me to release him!

Sam. Oh yes! cords cut, chair so heavy; but all forgot, now cannot bear to see young Massa suffer de torture.

Hen. I am very sorry indeed, Papa.

Emily. Pray, Papa, forgive Henry; he will never be unkind to Sambo again, I am sure.

Sir Sid. *(Taking off the cords.)* Since you intercede, and he appears sensible of the inhumanity of his conduct, I will release him; and tell me, my son, is there that being in creation, that man is authorised to treat with contempt or wanton cruelty! The same Almighty Power that allotted a fair complexion to the European, ordained sable tints to the skin of the Indian; and to the negro gave a soul, perhaps as spotless as that which would ransom a fellow-creature from slavery. I can never reflect on the cruel traffic without shuddering; the disgrace of a Christian country, where the luxuries of life are purchased at the price of human sufferings. Sambo is *not* a slave, the freedom of his parents was obtained soon after my settlement in India; they died in

my service, and to their orphan child I promised my protection. Were he even of the number of those unfortunate beings, I should insist on your asking pardon for the insult and cruelty of which you have been guilty.

Hen. (sobbing.) Pray forgive me, Sambo; I did not think how much such a play could hurt you, or I would not have persisted in it.

Sam. (kissing his hand.) Dear Massa, do not say any thing more about it. I know you will be kind to Sambo,—Sambo love you dearly, because Sambo love Sir Sidney.

Sir Sid. I will yet hope Henry has a heart to reward your attachment by the kindest treatment, and that the incidents of this day will check in future every inclination to sport with the feelings of a fellow-creature. The groom who assisted in preparing these instruments of torture, shall be instantly discharged. You, Henry, shall be indulged in every innocent recreation that can contribute to your health or vivacity, but avoid pastimes to which the feelings of humanity are sacrificed, as the basis of all that is vicious and immoral.

CHAP. X.

ACT. II.

SCENE I.—*A room in Woodley's cottage.—Mr. and Mrs. Woodley, Mrs. Benhamond, and Laura.*

Mrs. Ben. You agree, then, to take my little girl as a boarder?

Mrs. Wood. Why yes, Madam; but as we never saw you before, and Miss is so nicely dressed, folks may perhaps be inquisitive, and country neighbours are always curious; if you could give us reference to any friend in town, it would be more satisfactory.

Mrs. Ben. I have no friends in the metropolis, nor any that I could trouble on such an occasion; but to remove all your apprehensions, which the singularity of wanting a lodging for a child of this age has excited, I will inform you I am a widow, now obliged by misfortunes to support myself and this dear girl, by my instructions to others. I am now going as governess into the family of Sir Sidney Somerville.

Mrs. Wood. Sir Sidney Somerville! The worthy gentleman that is just returned from India, and who lives at yonder great house?

Mrs. Ben. The same. I ordered my luggage to be carried thither; and when the mail stopped in the village, the neatness of your cottage attracted my attention, and its vicinity to the castle seemed to excite my farther inquiries; for I would place my Laura, at least where I could have the happiness of passing a short time every day with her; we have lately lived together, and the thoughts of a separation will be painful to us both. *(Laura takes her mother's hand, kisses it, and endeavours to restrain her tears.)*

Mr. Wood. It is a pity, Madam, the young lady cannot go along with you. Sir Sidney is a noble-minded man. I could venture to affirm he would have no objection.

Mrs. Ben. Being a perfect stranger to his person and family I could not make such a request with any propriety. I will see my Laura every day, and the hours of my absence, rely on the care of those whose honest countenances have induced me to place a confidence in strangers.

Mr. Wood. We will do our utmost, dear Madam, to deserve your good opinion. My dame is fond of young people, and I am sure will be happy to have so lovely a companion.

(Exit Mr. Woodley.

Mrs. Wood. That I shall, and endeavour all in

my power to make the young lady comfortable. Summer is coming on, and our little garden will soon be all in its beauty. Are you fond of flowers, Miss?

Lou. As fond as I am of the country.

Mrs. Wood. That is fortunate; for Joseph takes great pains to keep ours in nice order.

Enter WOODLEY, *with wine and biscuits.*

Mr. Wood. Do, Madam, accept of a biscuit and a glass of wine, as a little refreshment after your fatigue; sit down and rest yourself, I will see you safely to the castle.

Mrs. Ben. I am greatly obliged to you for your attentions; you must excuse my accepting of any thing. Laura will take a biscuit.

Mrs. Wood. And this sip of wine, I hope, Madam; it will not hurt her, I am sure; we made it ourselves from the gooseberries that grew in the garden.

Mrs. Ben. Take it, my love.

Lau. Mamma, you have scarcely taken any thing since breakfast; you are not well; do let me prevail with you to have only the half of this nice little biscuit.

Mrs. Ben. Be not uneasy about me, my Laura; a change of situation is ever unpleasant, and particularly so, situated as I am, though I could not

expect to have you always with me; yet Lady Melville's kindness in permitting you to receive your education with her daughters, makes me now feel the affliction of a separation more acutely; but it is wrong to give way to useless dejection; you must be cheerful, my dear girl; indeed you *must;* I will see you again as soon as possible. Adieu, my love! *(embracing her.)* And now, Mr. Woodley, as it is nearly dark, I will accept your offer of accompanying me to the castle.

(*Exit* Mr. Woodley *and* Mrs. Benhamond.)

Scene II.

Mrs. Wood. (taking Laura's hand.) Be composed, my dear young lady, you will soon see your Mamma again; in her absence, we will pass our time as cheerfully as we can. You shall go with me into the hay-field, and then we will come in to supper upon some strawberries and cream, or gooseberry food, which you like best?

Lau. Whatever you please, Madam; I have no choice; but I shall like a walk to the hay-field. I am extremely obliged to you for all your attentions, and will endeavour to raise my spirits; perhaps you will have the kindness, as we go along, to tell me something about the family of Sir Sidney and the young people.

Mrs. Wood. Willingly, my love; I fear there are none of them so amiable as you appear to be; they have been here with the steward, but they trod upon the borders, and did a power of mischief both to our house and garden. *(Exeunt.*

Scene III.

The library at the castle.——Henry and his sisters amusing themselves with books of prints.

Sir Sidney and Albert.

Sir Sid. I have been round the village, Albert, and am happy to find all my poor neighbours are comfortable. I have to thank you for all your kind inspection of their premises, and attention to their ease and convenience during my absence.

Alb. It was my greatest pleasure, your honour, after my dear master's death, to see that they were as well off as during his life-time. His delight was to behold a happy peasantry, and to derive enjoyment from the felicity of his fellow-creatures; he felt the blessing of an ample fortune, as it enabled him to relieve their wants, or encourage the deserving. In my evening walks round the castle, reflecting on his virtues, I have wondered at the many, who, in a round of trivial amusements, or shameful dissipation, spend almost

a whole life and fortune in the pursuit of pleasure, shunning the very scene where it might be most enjoyed; for the rich man, living with frugality upon his paternal estate, has the power to raise a little paradise around him, and draw upon benevolence for the surplus of happiness; but my reflections lead me astray. I was going to tell your honour of a poor traveller, who, with her child, was found a little beyond the upper lodge, exhausted with fatigue and hunger. The porter took her in; for some time we doubted if she was alive, but, by the humane attentions of Mr. Potion, we have now some hopes of her recovery. She was at last able to inform us, that her husband was a soldier; that when the regiment was sent off to Scotland, being too ill to accompany him, she had set out to follow as soon as she was able, in hopes to come up with it at York; that, greatly distressed, she had been obliged to ask charity more than once to support her child, a fine ruddy boy as your honour ever beheld, but scarce a rag to cover him.

Sir Sid. You did right, honest Albert, to send for Potion; he is a worthy man, and an honour to the profession; he never yet staid to finish his dinner when the poor required his assistance, nor slighted the case where he knew his attendance

could only be requited by the thanks of a grateful heart. You must ask Cantwell to make up a few things for the child.

Alb. Alas! your honour, they will be *few*, if she has the making of them. I am not accustomed to speak unfavourably of my fellow-servants, but I have lived too long with her, seen too much during Sir Edward's illness, not to perceive that self is the idol of her idolatry.

Sir Sid. I am sorry to hear this; however, another time we will talk more largely on the subject. You have a grand-daughter among the housemaids, who, I am sure, will not think her time ill bestowed in clothing the vagrant traveller.

Alb. She will be proud of the commission, your honour; I'll hasten to tell her of your kind intentions. (*Exit* Albert.

(*During this scene, Constantia appears greatly agitated, and as Albert leaves the apartment, timidly approaches her father.*)

Scene IV.

Const. Papa, will you give me leave to go and see the poor little boy?

Sir Sid. Certainly, if you wish it.

Hen. And I will go too, Constantia.

Loui. and Emily. And we also.

Hen. I will give the poor woman my half-crown.

Loui. I a pocket piece, and this new sixpence.

Const. *(aside)* I too would give something; I must ask, let what will be the consequence. *(Aloud)* Papa, will you have the goodness to give me a few shillings?

Sir Sid. What, you do not like to give so much as half a guinea?—Hey! Constantia.

Const. Would you not think it too much at once, Papa?

Sir Sid. The merit of the object might determine that; but if you wish to give a part, I can change it; here is ten and sixpence.

Const. *(in tears.)* But I have not the half guinea—forgive me, dear Papa—I have—

Sir Sid. Lost it?

Const. No—I was desired to say so, but I will not tell a story. I have *given* it, and I fear to an undeserving object.

Sir Sid. To whom?

Const. To Cantwell, *(sobbing,)* and I do think her un-de-serv-ing, because she persuaded me to tell a story; and I am sure, from what Albert has just now said, *he* thinks so too.

Sir Sid. If such is your opinion, why did you make the present?

Const. I thought her very good then, and wished to acknowledge all her kindness to us since we came home, for we thought our new governess might not like us to see or speak to the housekeeper. Pray, dear Papa, forgive me.

Sir Sid. I cannot be displeased, since you acted from a generous motive, and have told me the truth. This woman, I fear, has more art and dissimulation than we are aware of. I shall discharge her as soon as possible. Keep secret my knowledge of this little transaction, and as a reward of your sincerity, accept the double value of the gold you have parted with; spend as much of it as you please, to render the poor woman and her child more comfortable.

Const. Thank you, thank you, dear Papa. Come, Henry, let us go directly to the lodge, and when we return, we will look up something to make them clothes of; I know I have two old frocks, and a morning dress to spare. Good bye, Papa, till we see you again.

Sir Sid. Good evening, my dear children; when you come home, I must beg you to go into your own apartments, as I have arrangements to make up with Albert that will not admit of interruption.

As it is now dusk, I request you not to make a long stay. Get your hats on, and when ready, William shall attend you. *(Scene closes.*

CHAPTER XI.

SCENE V.—*The children's apartment, Mrs. Benhamond followed by Cantwell.*

Cant. WELCOME to the castle, Madam; this is the young ladies' study, Madam; it was a favourite apartment of my old master's. He was singular in his taste, and liked it because the windows looked towards the village, and he could see a few shabby cottages, that he had injured a princely fortune to repair.

Mrs. Ben. And for which, doubtless, he received the blessings of the poor inhabitants.

Cant. Yes, Madam, he had blessings enough; (the empty sounds of the sycophant and the vagrant;) more's the pity I say, fewer would have pleased his relations better; though one should think he had bequeathed his heart with the estate, for the present owner is just as busy among the poor as he was.

Mrs. Ben. May I trouble you to inform Sir Sidney of my arrival?

Cant. John shall tell him when he takes in supper; at present my master is very busy, and certain persons must not be intruders; he is closeted with his old steward. He knows you are expected, you may therefore take the liberty of sitting down. You can amuse yourself, Madam, with the ladies' books till they return.

Mrs. Ben. Are they walking so late?

Cant. Only gone as far as the lodge; they will soon be back; but if you are tired, Madam, at being alone, you can come into the housekeeper's room and have a cup of tea; I was just going to pour it out.

Mrs. Ben. I beg I may not detain you; I had rather remain here.

Cant. *(aside.)* Some proud upstart, I'll be bound for it. *(Aloud)* I will leave you; good evening, Madam. *(Exit.* Cantwell.

Scene VI.

Mrs. Ben. And this is my reception! So different to that I received at Lady Melville's! I must not think of the past, but accommodate my mind to present circumstances. Should my situation here prove otherwise than agreeable, I have still the consolation of Lady Melville's friendship;

she is the only being now in England acquainted with my sad history. *(Going to the window.)* Yonder is the cottage in which I have left my child; could I have brought her with me, I might not have felt thus dejected. *(She sits down and bursts into tears.)* It is wrong to give way to my feelings. Should my little pupils return, what would they think of me! an air of melancholy is not calculated to interest them in a stranger's favour.

SCENE VII.—*Enter* Sambo *timidly.*

Sam. Sambo beg pardon, no like be rude; see lady as she pass, look so pale, so ill; wish to know what he shall get her; all at tea below, so merry, no think of stranger lady; Sambo bring up one cup, one little piece of toast, fly in de moment.

Mrs. Ben. Not any; I am *much* obliged to you. My journey has fatigued me, but I shall be better presently. Sir Sidney is engaged, I am informed, and the ladies are out.

Sam. Yes, Massa little busy just now; so good, so much to do; treat all poor neighbours as he did father and mother in India. Sambo run tell young ladies to make haste home. *(Exit.*

Scene VIII.

Mrs. Ben. It is certainly a proof of the goodness of a master's heart, when his dependents speak well of him. This poor negro has inspired me with a favourable opinion of Sir Sidney. Perhaps the cottage in which Laura is an inmate, has been repaired at his expense, and its honest inhabitants made happy by his bounty; it will be a satisfaction to have constantly in view the mansion that contains my child. Music has often relieved my mind when oppressed with melancholy; I will again try its effect. Here is a harp, apparently much out of use, that the tuning of it will at least afford me some employment.

Scene IX.

A Gallery of the Castle. Enter Constantia, Henry, Louisa, and Emily, followed by Cantwell.

Const. And you have seen her, Cantwell?

Cant. Yes, Miss; a very smart lady, I assure you; her travelling dress is fit for a duchess, and I warrant she is as proud as she is pretty.

Emily. I shall like her if she is handsome.

Lou. I hope she is good-natured. I long to see her.

Const. So do I; yet I do not much like the first appearance.—Hark! what music is that?

Cant. Oh! I suppose she is amusing herself with the old harp that belonged to your Mamma. Sir Sidney had it put into that room, in hopes some of you might in time become as great a proficient as she was.

Emily. I wish I could play; do you think the new governess will teach me?

Cant. Certainly, my love; she is one of those, I could answer for it, who pretend to teach every thing, for which no doubt she will receive an enormous salary.

Hen. Well; and if deserving, what harm is there in an enormous salary; but, Cantwell, why would not you go and see the poor woman?

Cant. Me, young master, go to see such sights! I have too much feeling—too much sensibility of nerves, as the doctors call it, even to take a thorn out of the maid's finger,—I should have fainted dead upon the spot.

Hen. My opinion is, Cantwell, you have too *little* feeling, since the delicacy of your nerves would suffer you to let a wretched object expire, rather than make you hasten to its relief. If you had not liked to have seen the poor creature, you

might have sent her a trifle, that would have been doing *some good.*

Cant. It is all vastly well, Sir, if rich folks like to throw away their property upon vagabonds and beggars; but those who work hard for their money, have other uses to put it too. Had not you better go in and welcome your governess, young ladies?

Const. Since we *must* see her, it may be as well to go in now. Louisa be attentive to your behaviour; Emily, hold up your head.

Hen. And Constantia, observe me walk *elegantly.*

Const. Teazing boy! I wish you were at school.

(Exeunt.

SCENE X.

The Children's apartment.——Mrs. Benhamond playing on the harp.

Enter CANTWELL *and* Children.

Cant. My young ladies, Madam.

Lou. (to Cantwell) She looks very good humoured. *(Exit.* Cantwell.

(Mrs. Benhamond affectionately embraces them.)

Mrs. Ben. You have had a pleasant walk, I hope, my dears?

Const. Yes, Madam, the evening was pleasant,

but we have been to see a poor woman who is *so ill.*

Hen. And the sweetest little boy; but they will soon be well now; the doctor says they were only ill from want and fatigue.

Lou. Poor woman! how happy she will be when she gets to her husband.

Mrs. Ben. Is she then very distant?

Lou. Oh! yes, he is a soldier, and in Scotland; she tried to follow, had travelled many days, till at last she could not get any further, and was taken up almost dead just by the upper lodge.

Mrs. Ben. And her sufferings have evidently depressed your spirits, and made you look so grave.

Const. I cannot indeed help thinking of her. Had you been there, *you* would have been as sorry for her.

Mrs. Ben. Why should you think so? You do not know me.

Const. That is true; but I am sure you are good to the poor; Sambo told us how kindly you had spoken to him; beside you look so—so kind.

Emi. Yes; and I expected you would be so cross; I quite trembled when I came in, but I am not afraid of you now. *(taking her hand.)*

Lou. Cantwell is a great story-teller, for all

governesses are not haughty and ill-tempered. You will, I am sure, be kind to us; will you not, Madam?

Mrs. Ben. Undoubtedly, my love; I am very fond of young people, particularly those who are good; regard me not as a governess, but as a friend, and we shall be happy.

Hen. And when we are happy, we will make Papa so; poor Papa grieves so, since we lost dear Mamma. My sisters, I am sure, will endeavour to be good, and so will I. Cantwell has been trying to set them against you, but it won't do; we shall love you, I am sure we shall, and we shall be happy; and Papa will be so pleased, that he will forget his sadness. You look sorrowful, dear Madam, what is the matter?

Mrs. Ben. Nothing, my dear; I have travelled many miles to-day, and feel a little fatigued.

Const. Pray be seated then; I beg your pardon for not observing you were standing so long. I hope you have taken some refreshment.

Mrs. Ben. I did not choose any, I am much obliged to you; I shall be perfectly recovered to-morrow.

Lou. I hope so; for I am sure you look very ill this evening.

Mrs. Ben. Fatigue, and parting with my

friends, has affected my spirits. There are few minds that can support a separation from all that is most dear, without the countenance displaying some emotion of grief.

Const. I knew you was not happy: Who have you left to come to us?

(Mrs. Benhamond endeavouring to conceal her tears.)

Mrs. Ben. I have left a daughter, who, since her father's death, has been my only comfort. For six years accustomed to her engaging society, every hour that I pass without her, will now appear, I fear, an age of sorrow.

Const. Oh! why did you not bring her with you?

Mrs. Ben. It was a liberty I could not think of. I have therefore engaged an apartment for her at farmer Woodley's. They seem worthy people, and I can have the satisfaction of seeing her every day.

Hen. Albert speaks highly of them; I am glad she is there. I will obtain Papa's permission to fetch her to breakfast with us to-morrow morning.

Mrs. Ben. Thank you, my dear.

Scene XI.

Enter Sambo *with wine and cakes.*

Sam. Good Massa so busy, Cantwell tink he no like be disturbed dis evening. Sambo tink

Lady so tired, advise her to take de wine and go to bed.

Const. A little warm whey would be better; desire some to be made directly, and Mrs. Benhamond's apartment to be got ready.

Sam. Yes, Missa, me fly; me know Miss like new lady. (*Exit* Sambo.

Scene XII.

Mrs. Ben. I am extremely obliged to you for this attention, my dear; but it is not my wish to give any trouble.

Hen. Do not think of it, Madam: all our servants are not like Cantwell. Sambo will make it himself, rather than ask her; for the honest creature is the best nurse in the universe.

Enter Lucy.

Lu. It is nine o'clock, ladies.

Const. We will come in a moment, Lucy. Good night, Madam, I hope you will rest well.

Mrs. Ben. (*embracing them.*) Good night, my dears; to-morrow, I have no doubt, we shall meet in better spirits.

Lou. Lucy, call us very early, that we may contrive things for the poor woman.

Hen. And call me too, Lucy; I will go early to Woodley's, and fetch Miss Benhamond to breakfast. Good night, dear Madam.

(*Exeunt* Children.

Scene XIII.

Mrs. Ben. The little specimen I have seen of my pupils' characters, is very flattering; they seem to be possessed of amiable dispositions, and a natural goodness of heart displayed itself, in their visit and attentions to the poor wanderer. Miss Somerville appears about the age of my Laura. Confirmed as I am in my good opinion of the Woodley's, yet I shall await the morning with impatience, when I may again embrace my child.

Enter a Servant.

Serv. Madam, will you allow me to attend you to your apartment.

Mrs. Ben. Most willingly; the fatigue of my journey has made me feel quite unwell.

CHAP. XII.

ACT. III.

SCENE I.—*The Garden at the Cottage.*

Lau. WHAT a charming spot this is! how various and delightful are the prospects around, and what a number of pretty flower-beds! not a weed to be seen; every thing so neat, and in such nice order; how industrious must the owners of it be, who, notwithstanding their daily occupations, make time to cultivate the garden. Now I am here, I will assist them. Mamma will be pleased to hear I have made myself useful, and found, at the same time, an amusement. Dear Mamma! I wonder how she has slept. I wish I could see her, for one moment, to inquire after her health. Were Mamma here, I do think this cottage would be the most charming place in the world: without her, I cannot really enjoy any thing; and parted from every friend, it is a hard task to be cheerful. I cannot help wishing myself again at Lady Melville's with dear Juliana, Florentia, and Sophia. What pains did they take to assist me

in my lessons. I shall never see them again! How kind was it, to favour me with this remembrance. *(Kissing a locket)* Yet the hair of my dearest friend is wanting; it shall be added, and then the little treasure will be complete.

SCENE II.

Enter Mrs. WOODLEY.

Mrs. Wood. Good morning to you, my dear; you are up early. I went into your room, to assist you in dressing, and was surprised to find you had left it.

Lau. I am greatly obliged to you, Madam; but Mamma, when I was very young, taught me the independence of waiting upon myself.

Mrs. Wood. And in that showed her good sense. It is an error in education, to make young ladies helpless. I fear you have not slept well; the bed, though perhaps clean, was harder than the one you have been accustomed to.

Lau. No, indeed; every thing was extremely comfortable. I could not help thinking of Mamma, but at last sleep overcame me, and I did not wake till morning; when the sun shone so bright, it induced me to take a walk in the garden. I am in the habit of taking exercise before breakfast.

Mrs. Wood. And a very healthy custom it is; I am sure I should be dead without it; why, there is Joseph now strong and healthy, who, before we came here, and turned farmers, was in a deep decline, as the doctors said; but I have always thought, and I'll still maintain it, that labour is the best physic, and air the ablest physician.

SCENE III.

Enter WOODLEY *and* HENRY.

Wood. Here they are, young gentleman. Master Henry has taken the trouble to come over this morning, to inquire after Miss Benhamond, and request the pleasure of her company to breakfast at the Castle.

Lau. With Mamma!—Oh! how does she do? let us go this moment; but did Sir Sidney really say I might see my dear Mamma?

Hen. Yes; I went to Papa's dressing-room, and obtained his permission immediately; he was extremely displeased that Cantwell did not inform him last night of Mrs. Benhamond's arrival. Sisters are impatient to see you.

Lau. Allow me only to slip on a white frock, and I will attend you in a moment; Mamma

would not be pleased were I to go in this, as it is the one I travelled in.

Mrs. Wood. Master Henry will do us the favour, perhaps, to come into the house, and take a basin of new milk; I have just brought in the piggin.

Hen. I thank you, friend; as I have been up some time, shall have no objection to accept the offer. *(Exeunt to the cottage.*

SCENE IV.—*Sir Sidney's Library.*

Sir SIDNEY *and* ALBERT.

Sir Sid. Have you seen the poor woman at the lodge, this morning, Albert?

Alb. I have, your honour; she is better, and desires to return you the most grateful thanks for all your kindness.

Sir Sid. I am glad she is in a fair way of recovery; but do not let her attempt continuing her journey too soon; we must contrive some method of conveyance for her, at least part of the way.

Alb. Heaven reward you, Sir, for all your goodness to the poor! sure never gentleman took up their interest so warmly.

Sir Sid. Forbear this language, Albert; flattery does not become your years, and sincerity has

ever marked your character. The gifts of fortune are a treasure lent by Providence to mankind; duty and feeling equally impel us to distribute them for the benefit of others; and when our actions are influenced by natural inclination, what do they display that deserves commendation?

Alb. Forgive me, Sir, I meant not to flatter; I would see you in better spirits, and wished you to partake the happiness that you had imparted to all around you.

Sir Sid. I know your friendly motive—I spoke too hastily. When the mind is overwhelmed with uneasiness, expressions too often escape us, which may wound the feelings of those we most esteem. Need I tell you, Albert, I am still unhappy; my recent affliction has deepened the wound, that one cruel act has left upon my memory, and filled my bosom with increasing anguish. My sister, Albert,—what may be her fate—her sufferings, doomed to a life of hardship; alas! ere this, perhaps, has death closed up the scene of misery; and her last words were upbraidings on the brother who had renounced her.

Alb. Indulge not the melancholy idea, good Sir; endeavour to be cheerful; at least if not for your own sake, but for my young master's and my dear young ladies.

Sir Sid. They have indeed a claim to my exertions. Thank you, honest friend, for having reminded me of my duty. Some one, I think, beside Henry, it was Sambo, told me their governess was arrived.

Alb. She came last night, Sir, while we were looking over the accounts, and Cantwell thought you would not like to be interrupted.

Sir Sid. Such were *her* ideas of propriety; and I suppose her reception of the stranger was of a piece with her usual politeness. Have you written her discharge, Albert?

Alb. I have, your honour; and paid her up to the next quarter, as you requested.

Sir Sid. We must endeavour, then, to find some worthy woman among the villagers, to supply her place; and Lucy, till we are settled, shall inspect the domestic concerns; for I do not wish Cantwell to stay another day in the family. When Mrs. Benhamond and the young people are ready, we will have breakfast in the parlour. Henry is gone to fetch her daughter; had Lady Belmore mentioned the circumstance, I should have requested the mother to have brought her here; if amiable and accomplished, she will be a great acquisition, and excite a spirit of emulation in the minds of my children. *(Exeunt.*

Scene V.

The Children's apartment.——Constantia, Lucy, Louisa, and Emily at work; a variety of linen, &c. spread about in different parts of the room.

Const. You think then, Lucy, this gown will make two frocks for the child?

Lucy. Yes, I am sure it will, Miss.

Const. Do you cut them out, while we go on with these things. See! I have almost made a petticoat.

Lou. And a pair of stays. Emily has not done any thing; how can you be so idle!

Emi. Indeed I am not idle; but you know I cannot work very fast, I am not so old as you are.

Const. Suppose you are not, you might make a little better use of your needle. Look what stitches, and see how slight; it will come to pieces in the wash.

Emi. Dear Constantia, how particular you are, as if the poor woman would examine the neatness of the work.

Const. It signifies little whether she will or not. Whatever is worth doing, is worth doing well, Emily, Mrs. Mansel used to say, and I am sure Mrs Benhamond is of the same opinion.

Lou. Oh! Lucy, have you heard how she does this morning?

Lucy. I went in not long since to open the shutters, Miss, and she said she was better. She seems a very pleasing Lady; I hope you will like her.

Const. That I am sure we shall; I am quite delighted that she is come. Do you know Lucy, she has a daughter, and Henry is gone to fetch her to breakfast with us. I long to see her; if like her mother, she must be very handsome! I hope Papa will let her live with us, it would be such a comfort to Mrs. Benhamond, and give *us* so much pleasure.

Scene VI.

Hen. *(tapping at the door.)* May we come in?

Const. Oh, dear! It is Henry and Miss Benhamond; I wish we had thought of putting all these things away before she came; however, it cannot be helped. *(Lucy opening the door.*

Hen. Miss Benhamond; my sisters, Constantia, Louisa, and Emily. *(Exit* Henry.

Const. How do you do, my dear; pray walk in. We did not expect you quite so soon, but

you will excuse this confusion, I am sure. Lucy, clear a chair.

Lau. I beg I may not interrupt you. How is my dear Mamma; will you permit me to see her? when I return from her apartment, I will assist you.

Const. I am much obliged to you. Do you love work?

Lau. Yes, *very* much.

Lou. And reading?

Lau. Books are my delight.

Emi. And you can play and draw.

Lau. I can play upon the harp, and draw in water colours.

Lucy. You are detaining Miss Benhamond, ladies; you forget she is anxious to see her Mamma; allow me to show you her apartment, Miss.

Const. Do so, Lucy. We shall hope to see you again very soon. Give all our loves to dear Mrs. Benhamond. (*Exit* Laura *with* Lucy.

Scene VII.

Const. What a charming girl! what beautiful eyes and hair she has, and so elegant in her manners. She must be very clever to play upon the

harp, and draw in colours. I cannot sketch an outline correctly, although I have learnt so long. I wish I had paid more attention to every thing while I was at Mrs. Mansel's; Miss Lawless's example induced me to treat with contempt all that was said for my advantage. She is an undeserving girl, and I will not think of her any more, but endeavour to make amends for former failings by my present good intentions, and future improvements.

Emi. If you are determined to alter your behaviour, Constantia, I hope you will not speak so hastily to me again; you might have said my work was ill done, without colouring with anger.

Const. *(embracing her.)* Forgive me, Emily, I will be more gentle. You know I love you; but when any thing vexes me, I cannot help expressing myself crossly; yet I will try, indeed I will.

Lou. And if you will be good-natured to us, we shall do all we undertake with double satisfaction; you shall see how neatly I will put these strings on.

Emi. And you shall not have to find fault with the length of my stitches any more.

Const. I wish I could get this cap finished before breakfast; when Lucy returns, she shall hem the border, and then it will soon be completed.

Scene VIII.

Enter Mrs. Benhamond *and* Laura. *The children throw down their work, and run to embrace her.*

Mrs. Ben. Good morning to you, my dears. You are busy, indeed. You seem to have more employment than you know what to do with; for it not only occupies the chairs and tables, but the ground has a share of the materials.

Const. Indeed, Madam, we have been so desirous of finishing the things in hand before breakfast, that we did not think of arranging the remainder till Miss Benhamond came in. Lucy had cleared away a little, but Emily has tossed them upon the chairs again.

Mrs. Ben. You should accustom yourselves to put every thing in its place as soon as it is done with; the pieces and gowns you had no further occasion for, might have been folded up, and replaced in your drawers; but I am sure you will be more attentive to order and regularity another time. Laura, my love, assist the ladies in the arrangement of their apartment, and then there will be room for us to assist in their occupations.

Emi. Are you going to work with us, and for the poor woman

Mrs. Ben. Certainly: you will give us leave to partake of your pleasure.

Const. Willingly, dear Madam; but do not think any more of our untidiness, or my wishing to lay the blame upon Emily. I do speak too hastily—but I am going to correct myself, and I hope you will do me the favour to tell me of all my faults. I have a great many, and am very sorry for having made Papa so uneasy since I came home, but it is my *wish* to be good.

Mrs. Ben. Then there is no doubt but you will soon become so.

Enter HENRY.

Hen. Good morning, Madam; Papa sent me to say he should be glad of your company to breakfast; allow me to show you the way to the parlour. *(Exeunt.*

SCENE IX.

The breakfast parlour.—Sir Sidney, Mrs. Benhamond, Laura, and the children, who run in eagerly to embrace their father.

All. Good morning; good morning, dear Papa. *(Sir Sidney, disengaging himself, rises to receive Mrs. Benhamond.)*

Sir Sid. Permit me to apologize, Madam, for the negligence of my servants, in not announcing your arrival to me last night.

Mrs. Ben. *(Aside.)* My ear is surely acquainted with that voice. *(Aloud.)* I beg you will not think of it, Sir. May I be permitted to ask, if you are any way related to Mr. Selwin, of Staffordshire? *(With emotion.)* There is a resemblance in your voice—your manners so STRONG, I could almost fancy; yet it *cannot* be possible.

Sir Sid. You are not mistaken, Madam. I am the same. The name of Selwin was exchanged for that of Somerville, on the death of my Constantia's father. Why this emotion—this surprise? Your features, too, present me with a faint resemblance of what were once a beloved, an injured sister's. Oh! speak, can you inform me of her fate? Were I not almost assured she no longer existed, I should say I now addressed her.

Mrs. Ben. You do—I *am* your sister; forgive the intrusion—for twelve years a stranger to the transactions of my family, I did not know Mr. Selwin and Sir Sidney Somerville were the same.

Sir Sid. My sister, my Amelia! Can you forgive my injustice, and receive me again as a brother? Overlook, in some degree, my former cruelty, and supply their mother's loss, to these

my darling children. The act was too unkind—I fear you cannot pardon it; and well should I deserve the misery, were you to leave me, and for ever shun the presence of him, whose unfeeling conduct robbed you of years of merited felicity. Amelia, I *am* unworthy your attention; sunk in my own esteem to the level of the *basest villain*,—yet has this interview given *some* alleviation to my sorrow—for I have still a *sister*.

Mrs. Ben. (Throwing herself into his arms.) And I a *brother*. Restore me but his friendship, and all is pardoned. You, Sidney, are a parent; in you permit me to find an uncle's protection for my child. Yours shall share with her a mother's tenderness: our re-union yet presents a portion of happiness; let us not then, for those that have been resumed, reject the *present* blessings.

Sir Sid. My Laura, my niece, my daughter; Constantia, Henry, Louisa, Emily, embrace her as your sister.

Emi. She *is* my sister, and I will love her as well as you.

Mrs. Ben. How little did my anxious mind presage this tide of joy. From a variety of misfortunes, and to avoid the curiosity of many, when I became a governess, I assumed the name of Benhamond; in that capacity, a stranger to their ori-

gin as they to mine, I came to educate a brother's children: nor will I resign the pleasing task; the duties of instruction will wear away the poignancy of reflection; and, when united to a brother's, their tender friendship blunt the remembrance of misfortune.

Sir Sid. My Amelia! How could I ever injure so much excellence!—Had you known the days, the years of anguish I have passed,—for ever the hours of connubial bliss were poisoned with remorse and repentance,—when every domestic comfort seemed to reproach me, for having done my utmost to destroy a sister's felicity, you would long since have looked with pity on my sufferings, and have forgiven the cruel prejudice that deprived you of my affection.

Mrs. Ben. Embitter not the joy of this moment with a retrospect so gloomy! You had my forgiveness ere you became sensible of the injustice of your opinions. While the plant of happiness shoots forth its tender blossoms, as we pass the thorny paths of life, let us gather with satisfaction, and possess the opening sweets with gratitude; since on human soil its Roses never yet attained perfection.

End of the Third Act.

CHAP. XIII.

THE following morning at breakfast, Mrs. Lymington again received the thanks of her youthful audience, for the entertainment of the preceding evening. "I fear you fatigue yourself too much, Mamma, in reading that pretty Drama," said Edward; "for you are not so cheerful as usual this morning."

Mrs. Lym. I received, my dear, last night, a letter of unpleasant intelligence; this may have affected my spirits, as I am greatly concerned for my friend's distress, whom I intend to visit immediately after breakfast.

Har. Is it any one we know, Mamma?

Mrs. Lym. A great favourite of yours when you first came to England, Mrs. Edgecombe. You may remember, she spent nearly six weeks with us in London. About three years since, Mr. Edgecombe purchased an estate in this neighbourhood. He was a man of the strictest probity, and highly esteeméd in the commercial world; though now, by the unexpected failure of a fo-

reign banking-house, (with which he had considerable correspondence,) reduced almost to the brink of ruin.

Edw. How sorry I am for them!

Jos. And I too—Poor Aurelia! What will become of her; so accomplished, so amiable, and brought up as she was, to have a large fortune?

Mrs. Lym. That her parents have a cause for dejection, if I am at all acquainted with her heart, would fill it with more sorrow than the loss of future wealth, even had she been of an age to have lamented the deprivation.

Jos. May not we go with you, Mamma, to Mrs. Edgecombe's?

Mrs. Lym. No, my dear; your presence at such a time as this, would be an intrusion. I shall hope to receive a good account of your behaviour from Miss Neville. If possible, I shall endeavour to prevail on Mrs. Edgecombe to return with me; as I think a change of scene might relieve the oppression of her spirits.

Edw. But, Mamma, you will be back by the time school is over.

Mrs. Lym. Such is my intention; but should I not return alone, you must excuse my furnishing any entertainment for the evening; as my friend will probably demand all my attentions.

Alex. And on such an occasion, we would willingly dispense with them.

The carriage drove up to the door, and the children returned to their occupations of the morning. Mrs. Edgecombe's villa was but four miles distant; they had just finished breakfast as Mrs. Lymington was announced: they were alone; for Mr. Edgecombe's business still detained him in London. "How kind was it of you, dear Madam," said the unfortunate lady, "to favour us with your society thus early. We have been very lonely of late; and when the mind is ill at ease, it is apt to upbraid solitude with an augmentation of its sufferings." A tear fell upon the friendly hand she affectionately pressed; no wild expression of grief escaped her; and, however affected with her husband's misfortunes, she endeavoured to sustain the hard trial with resignation: for imprudence had not occasioned their sorrow, nor self-reproof increased the miseries of approaching adversity. After having conversed some time on the melancholy state of their affairs, "It is not on my own account I feel the most," said Mrs. Edgecombe; "Aurelia's situation is truly distressing, thus to become the sharer of our troubles." "If I may judge," interrupted Mrs. Lymington, "from the specimen

I have observed of the goodness of her heart, it is for those of her parents she is so much affected."

Mrs. Edge. They, perhaps, need not her tender sympathy. Aurelia is not our daughter; from you I shall no longer conceal her interesting history, which, till this morning, she was herself unacquainted with; when justice, in consideration of our misfortunes, urged a disclosure of the secret. About nine years since, as we were travelling into Devonshire, to visit Mr. Edgecombe's father, within a few miles of his villa, we were startled, in a narrow lane, by the feeble cries of an infant. The postillion stopped, or it had been ran over; for it was too young to be sensible of danger. The evening was damp and cloudy; no human being but ourselves appeared near the spot. Mr. Edgecombe alighted, and brought to the carriage a very fine child, which seemed to be about three years old, and almost naked. After expressing his surprise at the inhumanity of those who could have thus exposed it to such a dangerous situation, he said, "We must not leave this unfortunate infant to perish with cold and hunger. Let us take charge of it, at least for to-night; and to-morrow make diligent inquiries about its parents. I immedi-

ately took it in my arms, endeavoured to sooth and wrap my shawl about it, in hopes that when warm it would become more composed.

When we arrived at our father's, I observed its face was exceedingly swelled with crying; and though apparently in want of food, it seemed too ill to accept much of the nourishment that was offered. Notwithstanding every attention, the indisposition increased; and the physician, who attended the family, scarcely gave any hopes of its recovery. We made the most diligent inquiries, but could not procure any intelligence of its parents; that they were people of rank, we were led to imagine by the fineness and make of its chemise. Often have I wept over the little stranger, when its life was despaired of, at the thought of what must have been their sufferings at its loss. In a few weeks, we had the pleasure to see a naturally good constitution get the better of the disorder; and our little charge regained every day a larger portion of strength and spirits. There was a respectable school for orphan children established in that neighbourhood, and we now entertained some thoughts of procuring a recommendation from the Patroness, who was an intimate acquaintance of our friend's; yet every day its manners became more engaging; and the

more we saw of them, the less we seemed disposed to put our design into execution. Its feeble attempts at articulation, could scarcely have afforded more delight to a real parent, than they did to us. Our attachment hourly increased; all thoughts of a separation were soon excluded; and after unsuccessful inquiries, for more than five months that we remained in Devonshire, we could not discover those who had a superior claim. At our departure from my father's, Aurelia became our adopted child. I must not omit to inform you, that we were more strongly confirmed in our opinion of her being the offspring of illustrious parents, who probably had been kidnapped, by the crest and initials, which were marked upon the cambric, (her only covering) when we found her."

"Can you recollect," said Mrs. Lymington, with evident emotion, "with what crest and letters the linen was marked?" "I have it still," replied Mrs. Edgecombe; "the initials were *L. C.* and the crest, that of an *Eagle*." "*L. C.!*" exclaimed Mrs. Lymington, with astonishment, "it certainly must have belonged to Lady Clifford; allow me to look at it." "With the greatest pleasure," replied Mrs. Edgecombe. "Excuse me for a moment, and I will fetch it."

Mrs. Lymington, at her friend's return, examined the marks attentively, and then exclaimed, "There can be no room to doubt it. Aurelia is the daughter of Lady Clifford. Let us hasten to restore her long mourned, long lamented child." Aurelia wept, and threw herself into Mrs. Edgecombe's arms: "I cannot leave *you*, indeed I cannot," said the affectionate girl, sobbing aloud; "let me see my own mother very often, but continue to reside with you." "She will have a claim to *all* your duty, all your tenderness," replied Mrs. Edgecombe: "Mine is only a debt of gratitude, which a heart, generous as yours, will never refuse, to the many anxious days and months I have watched over your unprotected infancy." "Did you not inform us, Madam," said Aurelia, addressing Mrs. Lymington, "that my mother was Lady Clifford? allow me to accompany you to her immediately; she is rich, and I will solicit her assistance for these my dearest friends: I must ask her to make them happy."

The carriage wrs ordered, and before two o'clock they arrived at Lanvillin. Mrs. Edgecombe would not alight, till her friend had prepared Lady Clifford for their reception. She had the pleasure of finding her alone, (Sir Charles being gone on a visit to a gentleman in the neighbour-

hood,) her Ladyship appeared unusually dejected; it was the anniversary of Laura's birth-day, every returning period of which increased her melancholy. The conversation soon turned on the object that occupied all her thoughts; which gave Mrs. Lymington an opportunity of inquiring into every particular respecting the object of her uneasiness; confessing, at the same time, her motive; that a friend of hers had in her possession a piece of cambric, which, she was in hopes, might lead to some important discoveries, respecting at least those who had kidnapped the darling infant: that the mark having struck her, she had borrowed it to show her. There was something peculiar in the *make* as well as *mark* of the child's linen. Every proof was eagerly sought that could give validity to the fact, by the anxious mother; who, as she examined the figures, observed also that the date of the year corresponded, on comparison with others that had been made at the same period, and left not a doubt remaining.

Mrs. Lymington then related Mrs. Edgecombe's unfortunate situation as the subject that led to Aurelia's history. A servant was ordered to desire Mrs. Edgecombe and the young lady to alight. Lady Clifford, impatient to embrace her

child, accompanied by her friend, left the drawing room to receive them: overcome with emotion, at the persuasion of the latter, her ladyship and Mrs. Edgecombe went into a parlour adjoining the great hall, where Charles was amusing himself with his books. "Allow me to present you a sister, my dear boy," said Mrs. Lymington. "Oh! how I shall love her!—but Mamma——" "She is indeed your sister, who was stolen; and see, my dear Madam, all other proofs were superfluous:—here is still the faint scar of a wound on her arm, which she received when a twelvemonth old, by falling over a sharp edged plaything. How can I ever sufficiently acknowledge all my gratitude for the preservation of this blessing." "My dear, my new Mamma," interrupted Aurelia, "allow me to ask one favour." "A thousand, if you wish it; what could I refuse my Laura?" "I cannot tell you all now, but the first minute we are alone, I will: there is some little obstacle to the happiness of my best friends, that I think you would feel pleasure in removing." "I should rejoice to add to their felicity, whose tender protection of you, has restored so large a portion to my sorrowed heart. Let us henceforth, my dear Mrs. Edgecombe, make one family; for neither can sustain a se-

paration from this dear object of our maternal regard. Sir Charles, I am sure, will hasten to London, to offer the services of friendship to Mr. Edgecombe. Till every thing can be arranged to their satisfaction, I must request the pleasure of your society." "Oh! I am so happy!" exclaimed Miss Clifford, embracing by turns her Ladyship, Mrs. Edgecombe, and Charles. Where is my dear Papa? I am impatient to see him." "I expect him every minute, my love."

Mrs. Lymington waited only Sir Charles's return, and then took leave of her friends, promising to spend the following Thursday at Lanvillin.

The morning studies had long been finished, and Edward had amused himself with writing the following Poem, which he was reciting when the first appearance of the carriage through the trees prevented his receiving the applause of his youthful audience.

THE SQUIRREL.

A pris'ner to the grated cage,
For no offence confin'd,
Poor Squirrel shall to-day engage
The muse of Pity's mind!

Who would thy little hardships tell,
A fav'rite's woes bewail;
Lament thy warm nest, mossy cell,
And forester's regale!

No beech-wood to allure thy flight,
Or oak or mastic tree,
Lost to the poplar's tow'ring height,
Pine buds, and liberty.

No hoarded cone or winter's store,
Poor animal for thee,
Or shining acorns tempt thee more
In hollow cavity.

Remov'd from all by Nature dear,
Thy woods, thy furry tribe;
What shall Compassion now endear,
Or soft Affection bribe?

Dost thou around the brassy wires
Some daily passport seek?
What heart shall feel thy just desires,
Or hand the bondage break?

Yes, oft thy plaints are understood,
Whene'er Maria near
Cheers thy captivity with food,
And checks each causeless fear.

Can childhood's tenderness repay
  Thy native freedom lost?
Tho' soft thy bed of freshest hay,
  With milk thy viands moist;

With nuts and chestnuts still supply'd,
  Canst thou awhile forget
The rural pleasures here deny'd,
  No more thy woods regret?

Then mayst thou happy pris'ner be,
  No cruel torments fear;
With open'd door once more thou'st free,
  To play thy gambols here.

Thy mistress early taught to know,
  That even insects feel,
By kindness shall those cares bestow,
  That may thy sorrows heal.

On her protection then repose,
  And all thy troubles end;
Upon her bosom safely dose,
  The bosom of a *friend*.

As the carriage drove through the park, Mrs. Lymington observed the children at the front windows anxiously watching for her return; the instant it stopped, they were at the hall-door, ready to receive her.

Edm. What a while you have staid, Mamma; we thought you never would return.

Jos. We did not think any such thing, Edmund; I wish you would not speak at random, but consider if what you are going to say is truth.

Caro. Do not be so cross, Josephine; perhaps you or I do not always consider as much as we ought to do.

Edw. Indeed, Mamma, we have expected you this half hour. Why did you stay so long? You found Mrs. Edgecombe well, I hope?

Mrs. Lym. Better than I expected, my dear.

Isab. And Aurelia?

Mrs. Lym. Very well.

Isab. Why did not you bring her home with you? You said perhaps you might.

Mrs. Lym. Come into the parlour, and I will tell you; but I believe I had better reserve what I have to say for the evening; the events of this morning would make quite an interesting little history; as you are acquainted with the parties, the relation would, I think, afford you more amusement than any fiction my inventive imagination could produce.

Alexis. I shall long for evening, to hear it; and then there is so much pleasure in listening to a true story!

Mrs. Lym. By your cheerfulness, I cannot doubt of your good behaviour; and if the narrative does not furnish sufficient employment for

the evening, I have the copy of a Drama, sent a short time since to the Editor of the Children's Magazine, that I believe will be new to you.

Edw. Thank you, dear Mamma; you shall see how quietly I will sit to hear it.

Edmund. What a delightful morning it has been! Do you think it will be as fine to-morrow?

Mrs. Lym. There is no appearance to the contrary at present. I find you have not forgot the promise I made you: if you continue good, you shall find me willing to fulfil it. I will take you with me to the fair, to buy a coach for your little brother; but where is my darling?

Jos. Lucy has just taken him out to walk in the park. Do you know, Mamma, Harcourt has been trying to write a play for the Children's Magazine? will you permit him to read it to you?

Mrs. Lym. Certainly. I dare say it is a pretty composition.

Har. Not so long as those you make for us, dear Mamma; but I never attempted any thing of the kind before. As you contribute to Mr. M——'s publication, I felt a desire of writing something also.

Mrs. Lym. Pray produce it; we are all attention.

Harcourt took out his manuscript, and read the following *Drama*.

CHAP. XIV.

THE GIDDY GIRL;

OR,

REFORMATION.

PERSONS.

Mrs. Carlton	William Bloomfield.
Dame Bloomfield.	Robert Plane
Miss Henrietta.	Sally Bloomfield.
Miss Harriet.	Mary.
Miss Isabella.	Kitty.
Miss Julian.	

ACT. I.

Scene I.—*The School-Room.*

Isabella *and her Sisters drawing.*

Isab. Yes, that will do: What an easy copy! I am sure Miss Julian might have given me one more difficult: this is only fit for an infant: I can finish it in ten minutes.

(Draws carelessly without looking at her copy, and sings the air of a favourite country dance.)

What a charming tune! how glad I shall be when

to-morrow comes, to go to dancing;—I hope it will be a fine day; there are no heavy clouds at present; yet it generally rains on a Friday, I observe. I hate that stupid drawing:—it gives one so much trouble; for we must not measure even with a bit of paper. I thought this copy was an easy one, just now. I am not in a drawing humour; it must be finished, however, and then I may go to work.—I like work sometimes, when I can make the stitches as long as I please; but I prefer dancing to *all*—to be dressed and caper about with so many young ladies!—Oh! it is delightful!

Hen. Pray, Isabella, do not talk so; I can hardly tell what I am about.

Har. Nor I neither; and I am sure her own outline will be wrong.

Scene II.

Enter Miss Julian.

Miss Jul. Permit me to look at your drawing, Miss Isabella. Bless me! how black you have made these strokes; and the church is falling on one side! *(Isabella continues singing.)* There is not one part of the copy you have imitated cor-

rectly. I never saw any thing so ill done. Do you observe, Miss, what I say? Please to look over, while I point out the faults. *(Isabella laughs.)* What is it you mean, Miss? I command you to be serious; it is extremely rude to laugh when you are spoken to, particularly in the presence of one to whom you owe respect. I desire you will pay me some attention, and do over again all that I rub out.

Isab. *(Whimpers.)* I shall not have done it again by twelve o'clock; I am sure it was not *all* wrong.

Miss Jul. Add not to your other faults that of impertinence, Miss Bell; I fear you will oblige me to inflict some severe punishment, for this morning's behaviour, which you must submit to, if your drawing is not neatly finished by the time your sisters have done their different occupations. You surely do not presume to laugh again.

Isab. Is it any harm to laugh? I thought you liked to see us merry.

Miss Jul. At proper times, undoubtedly; but to laugh when you are told of your errors, is unseasonable, improper, and impertinent. Your present mirth arises from a giddiness of disposi-

tion that renders you truly disgusting, and an object of reproof.

Isab. You tell me I must not cry?

Miss Jul. Certainly not; when you are spoken to, with mildness, to give way to tears on every trifling occasion, displays a weak mind: children have seldom any *real* cause for sorrow; their tears are therefore, in general, the effect of passion, peevishness, or ill humour.

Hen. Have not I quite left off crying, Miss Julian? It is a long, long time, I am sure, since you saw me with red eyes.

Miss Jul. I am glad to observe you have endeavoured to get the better of this infantine weakness. It is ten days or more, I think, since I observed you wipe off a tear that had startled on a slight provocation.

Hen. And I am resolved not to cry again, let what will happen to vex me. Look, have not I done my drawing well?

Miss Jul. Not so correctly as I could have wished; you have hurried it too much: I must trouble you to rub out those trees, and do them in a better manner.

Hen. I am very sorry—for I thought they were correct; so sorry that I could cry, if I had not promised you I would not: I will sit down

patiently, and try if I can make it better; then I know *you* will be pleased with me, as well as my dear Mamma.

(Isabella, in a hurry to do her copy, overturns the Indian ink.)

Isab. (Laughing.) There, Henrietta! See what a pretty figure you have made of my book, by leaving your ink so near! Now it *cannot* be finished, and I may go to work—I am *glad* of it.

Miss Jul. Not quite in such haste, young lady; we will cut out this page and begin upon a clean one: The fault was yours, not your sister's; her ink would not have incommoded you, had you not fancied yourself in the dancing-room, and by kicking your feet about, jogged the desk: would you sit still, and be attentive as other young people are, half your punishments and misfortunes might be avoided. Carelessness brings its own correction. It is your Mamma's intention to take your sisters a walking with her this morning to the Cottage, on the Heath: your business must be finished, consequently you will have to remain at home.

Isab. They shall not go without me; I can finish, if I like: See how fast I can draw!

Miss Jul. There is no merit in doing any thing too hastily; nothing can be well done that is done

quick; besides, were you to finish, your Mamma would not permit a young lady, who has been impertinent to her governess, to accompany her.

Isab. I only *laughed*, and I am sure Mamma will not be angry with me for that; she hates to see us grave and gloomy.

Miss Jul. Perhaps so; yet she would be equally displeased at an unseasonable gaiety, that prevents attention to your studies, or renders you disrespectful and impertinent to your instructers; and I must inform you, Miss Isabella, that a continuance of this conduct will entirely lose you my esteem, and lessen you in the opinion of all with whom you are acquainted.

Isab. I will try to be steady, and then, perhaps, Mamma will take me with her.

Hen. Why do you not ask Miss Julian's pardon, Bell?

Har. I am sure you ought; for you have behaved very ill.

Isab. It is no business of yours, Harriet; I shall do as I think proper.

Hen. Let her alone; she will ask, perhaps, if we do not teaze her.

Har. I was not teazing; I was only advising, Henrietta.

Miss Jul. And will not you take your sister's kind advice, Miss Isabella?

Isab. No:—I will not ask your pardon, because she tells me to do so: I will beg of you to forgive me, because I feel as if I had not done quite right. I will try to be more attentive.

Miss Jul. And if you try you will succeed; perseverance can conquer the greatest difficulties. I am pleased with the candour with which you have acknowledged your faults, and for this time am willing to overlook them. Your music-master is come, ladies, and I will attend you to the parlour. *(Exeunt.*

SCENE III.

A Carpenter's Yard.

ROBERT *finishing a pair of Oars.*

Enter WILLIAM.

Will. You are hard at work this morning, Robert; you seem to be preparing the oars; pray, are you going upon the water this fine weather?

Rob. No, William; you know I have not a boat: These are for one of the young ladies at the castle: there is a boat belonging to their Papa's canal, but the oars are lost; therefore I was desired to make new ones.

Will. And did he give you directions?

Rob. No, William: I should have been better

pleased if he had. It was Miss Isabella; and I almost doubt whether she had any permission to order them; she spoke to me on Wednesday, in the plantation, as I was going to the servants' hall for our weekly soup. I found her as lively as ever, yet I thought her looks seemed to say she would not like any one should know of the little frolic which is intended to take place this evening. She has persuaded me to come and row her and her sisters about the canal.

Will. And will you?

Rob. I have promised.

Will. Fie, Robert; ought you to have promised? You know the children are never allowed the use of the boat; you should have dissuaded Miss Isabella from the frolic, and pointed out the danger that may attend it; for you are not strong enough, I am sure, to use the oars you have made.

Rob. Not *strong* enough! I admire that, indeed;—If you was to see all I do for father, you would not say I wanted strength.

Will. Then I must say you want *prudence*. Should any accident happen—Indeed you must give up this business.

Rob. And what would Miss Isabella think of me, after all her kindness to me, when I had the small-pox, and her present to my mother in the winter.

Will. She cannot think the worse of you; and

I am sure will one day reflect on your refusal as a kindness. If she has done so much for you, return the friendship, by preventing her committing an act of disobedience, that a too giddy disposition would have led her into. By doing this, you will indeed show your gratitude, and prove yourself a friend. We know, from experience, there is no pleasure in acting contrary to a parent's judgment.

Rob. True, William;—but how can I see—how tell her—that I will not come?

Will. Mother expects Mrs. Carlton and the young people to call upon her this morning. The servant came to know if she would be in the way at one o'clock. Do you write a note; you can spell and indite prettily, and I will find an opportunity to give it to Miss Isabella. Here is a scrap of paper, the back of an old copy; you have a pencil, let us sit down upon this plank, and put down what you have to say.

Rob. But to such a young lady, who, no doubt, writes so well?

Will. What does that signify? do your best, and when you have done that, what is there to be ashamed of?

Rob. *(Takes the paper, and after some consideration writes as follows.)*

"*Dear and Honoured young Lady,*

"Let me hope you will excuse the free-
"dom I have taken in writing, because I knew
"not how to see you again; and, indeed, my con-
"science tells me I have done wrong, in making
"the oars. I have the highest sense of gratitude
"for all you have done for us, and would be the
"first to oblige you in any reasonable pursuit that
"was consistent with your duty to the best of pa-
"rents; but, indeed, I cannot consent to use the
"oars, unless I had their commands. Should
"any accident happen, they could never forgive
"me, nor could I forgive myself. Allow me then
"to warn you of the dangers of disobedience, and
"to decline the favour you intended me. Should
"any other scheme of pleasure be fixed upon,
"with permission of your good Mamma, in which
"I can be useful to you, you may freely com-
"mand, honoured young lady, the services of
"your obedient and ever grateful servant,

"ROBERT PLANE."

Will. (After having read it.) Just the thing! Now go in and write it fairly; I will wait for it, and, in the mean while, amuse myself with your tools: I have a great inclination, you know, to turn carpenter

SCENE IV.

The Cottage on the Heath.

Dame BLOOMFIELD *and Children.*

Sally. See, Mother, how neatly I have dressed Kitty! Keep yourself clean, love, and the lady will say you are a pretty little girl.

Kitty. I will take care of my frock, and make one of my best courtseys, when Madam Carlton comes to see us.

Mary. I have put the parlour and kitchen in nice order, and set the fruit upon the table.

Dame. Good children! I had rather you should be praised for industry and good housewifery, than for the comeliness of your persons. Is your brother's dinner ready? He will soon be returning from school.

Mary. The potatoes are quite boiled enough, but he is late to-day. Can you guess, Mother, what has detained him so long?

Dame. No, my dear: he has never yet been kept in disgrace.

Sally. Nor ever will, I dare answer for it; William takes too great delight in his learning for that.

Kitty. I see him coming. Oh! now we shall have our dinners. Not yet though:—I forgot:—I have a little bit more to sew, and then I shall deserve it; shall I not, Mother?

Dame. Yes, my darling, you have worked well this morning; but I must inquire if you have read to-day.

Mary. Twice; and passed several long words without spelling.

Dame. Good girl! How happy should I be to see you, when grown up, able to give those instructions to others, which your sisters, with so much pains, now so kindly bestow on you.

Scene V.

Enter William.

Will. Mother, I am afraid you have been a little uneasy about me. I called upon a friend, Robert Plane, and staid longer than I intended.

Mary. You should not have played, when you might have thought it would make us all uneasy.

Will. It was not *play* that detained me. Permit me, Mother, to tell you all about it. Miss Isabella had desired Robert to make a pair of oars, and to steer the boat on the canal for her, this evening: he had almost finished them, yet half repented of his promise; I staid to make him quite repent, and write a letter to the young lady to dissuade her from such a dangerous excursion: I have it; and when she comes, I will find means, by taking her to see the bees, to slip it into her hand, while we are in the garden.

Dame. You had good reason for staying with your friend; and I love you the better, my dear boy, for the sincerity with which you have mentioned the whole affair. I should have grieved, had any accident happened to the dear young lady; who, notwithstanding her extreme giddiness, has one of the best hearts in the universe. As it is half a holiday with William, we will defer our dinner, till good Madam has been with us. Girls, take up your work, and your brother shall read to entertain us.

CHAP. XV.

ACT. II.

SCENE I.—*Enter* Mrs. CARLTON *and Children.*

Mrs. Carl. BE seated, my good Mrs. Bloomfield; pray do not let me interrupt your occupations. *(Sitting down by Dame Bloomfield.)* I came to propose a little plan of industry for the winter's evenings. It is good to look forward in time, you know. You have a young family, and like to have them in constant employ, as well as two or three more of my good neighbours. I have some friends who wish to encourage this active turn, and who propos buying a number of spinning-wheels, finding the hemp and flax, and buy-

ing all that you can spin, at a moderate price, to have wove for household uses, or to sell at a lower rate, the overplus for the benefit of those who are too old or infirm to profit by the institution: Also worsted, and knitting-needles, by which means we shall be able to supply the labourer with warmer and cheaper stockings than he could purchase. You are fond of spinning, I know; therefore shall have one of the best wheels I can procure. Now, let me ask which *you* like best, Sally; spinning or knitting?

Sally. Since you favour me with a choice, Madam, I had rather knit.

Mrs. Carl. And you, Mary?

Mary. I am fondest of spinning, Madam.

Mrs. Carl. A wheel for you, then.

Dame. Dear, Madam, you are too kind to us; But I hope the future services of my poor girls will reward your goodness; they are obedient, obliging, good tempered, and, I indulge myself in the hope, that these humble qualities will deserve your friendship, when I am in the grave, and by some means render them useful to their generous benefactors.

Mrs. Carl. There is no doubt of their being all you wish them; for never, in your situation, did I see young people so well brought up. You must have taken infinite pains with them?

Dame. Such has been my endeavours. When left a widow, I found in the forming of their minds, the only alleviation of an affliction I felt in the loss of a worthy husband. They seemed to have a double claim upon me; with *him* would have perished all means of subsistence, had we not mutually exerted ourselves for the support of each other. My eldest girls have, by their needle-work, supplied themselves and their little sister with clothing, as well as contributed to my comfort in other respects. Their brother, whom I was enabled by the kindness of a friend to place at school, by the assistance he can give his master in writing lines, and setting copies, is favoured by him with a weekly allowance.

Mrs. Carl. That is well, indeed; but in winter, when he has no better employment, at the dusk of the evening, I shall request him to make nets for my garden, which labour will be productive of an addition to his pocket-money.

Will. Thank you, Madam. I shall like that exceedingly. I once made one for mother's favourite cherry-tree. Our garden is not a fine one, but our fruits are not amiss; it is prettily laid out, and we have bees; the young ladies would like, perhaps, to visit the hives, before they partake of the dessert that Mary has prepared for them.

Isab. Oh! yes. I long to see the bees. *(Runs out, William follows.)*

Henri. Will you give us leave, Mamma?

Mrs. Carl. Certainly: but it was very right to ask. Isabella is gone without permission.

Harriet. *(To Cottage Children.)* Ask Dame to let you put on your hats, and accompany us.

Dame. Oh! surely they are not afraid of their complexions. Go, my loves, with the ladies, and show them all your little favourites.

Cottage Children. Thank you, Mother.

Henri. Thank you, Dame. Come, dear Kitty, I must take your pretty little hand.

Harri. Let me have the other. *(Exeunt Children.*

Scene II.

The Garden—William *and* Isabella.

Will. A word with you, Miss Isabella, before your sisters join us in the arbour.

Isab. Do not let it be a long one then; for I am all impatient to see the industrious creatures. Ah! these are the hives!

Will. I have a little letter from Robert Plane. Do not colour, Miss; I must say he did not mean to offend you. *(Isabella reads the note.*

Isab. I am sure he did, though!—Ill-natured boy! I had promised myself so much pleasure.

Will. You would have had a *great deal*, to be

sure, Miss, had the boat upset; and it would, doubtless, have given much pleasure to any one, to have seen the tears of your dear Mamma, and the agony of your Papa, had you been brought dead out of the canal.

Isab. Dead! there could have been no *danger!* Robert said he would guide the boat,—poor timid fool, I detest him!

Will. With a more skilful pilot, the danger had not been less; for, to my knowledge, the boat is not fit for use; and your Papa has long since forbiden any one to get into it. How could *you*, therefore, think of doing what he had forbidden? Excuse the freedom with which I speak, young lady; we cottagers, who pride ourselves on obedience, and contributing to the happiness of a parent, cannot help feeling surprised at an omission of duty, in the children of better fortune.

Isab. (Affected.) I am sure I did not think there had been any harm in our going upon the water.—I believe I did hear the use of the boat forbidden.

Will. Most likely, but you were too giddy to attend to it, and your thoughtlessness induced you to lead into danger and disgrace, one, whose life was as precious to his poor and honest parents, as yours is to Madam and the 'Squire. You cannot be angry at Robert's letter, when you think of the motive.

Isab. (With great emotion.) No: I am not

angry;—I was just now, but it is all gone. I am ashamed of having asked him to make the oars; they have cost him some labour and expense. *(Giving him money.)* Give him this, and say I thank him sincerely for the freedom of avowing his better principles, and I blush to acknowledge myself undeserving any future favour he would feel disposed to do for me. Let me thank you, too, for all you have said to me;—I am apt to be too soon angry—I am very giddy—very thoughtless; but if I promise in future to do nothing without Mamma's consent, you and Robert will, perhaps, think better of me, and forgive my having been so hasty.

Will. We are *poor* children, Miss, and our opinion cannot influence your actions.

Isab. Indeed you are mistaken; Mamma has ever taught us to respect the worthy; and, in whatever situation they may be found, seek to obtain the approbation of the good. *(Isabella sobs.)*

Will. Dear Miss, do not grieve so, I cannot bear to see you uneasy: I know you will correct your errors; but dry your eyes, your sisters are coming this way. Breathe upon your handkerchief; in the mean while, I will divert their attention. You can go round that hedge, and meet me at the bee-hives; the air will help to take off the redness *(Exit William.*

SCENE III.——ISABELLA.

How shall I bear to see my dear Mamma? What a wicked child have I been! What atonement can I make for such a fault!—Had it not been for these honest little peasants, what would have become of me! William bade me not to cry, why should I not? I can feel no pleasure, till I have made some acknowledgment of my fault. I am very unhappy; yet how much more so might my thoughtlessness have made the best of parents. *(As she is going out of the arbour, she meets Robert.)*

SCENE IV.

Rob. Forgive this intrusion, Miss Isabella; I could not help asking father to let me come down to see William, in hope I might find you here. You are not angry about the letter, I trust:—you have been so kind to me, I cannot bear to incur your displeasure; yet I could not finish the oars without warning you of the danger of using them. I should be unhappy to have your anger.

Isab. It is over now, good Robert. I *was* very angry at first, but now I am only angry with myself. I cannot bear that you should look at me; you, who are the most obedient of children, and I, the most inconsiderate. William will tell you all I wished to say.—I am unworthy to reward your kindness; but Mamma must know,

whatever uneasiness it may cost me, all you have done for us. She is here; come with me to the cottage.

Rob. Indeed you must excuse me; the continuance of your friendship is all I ask: I would not she should know any thing about the oars, or get you in blame for the world.

SCENE V.

Enter Mrs. CARLTON *and* DAME.

Mrs. Carl. Ah! my good little fellow:—how are your father and mother?

Rob. Very well, I am obliged to you, Madam. Permit me to thank you for all your kindness to them for our delicious soup—for—

Mrs. Carl. Enough, my good boy. What do I see! Isabella grave!—for the first time serious, and in the midst of youthful companions,—in an hour of recreation!

Isab. I am indeed serious, Mamma; I am unworthy your regard; yet however you may despise me, I must acknowledge my faults, that you may love, may thank the dear children that have convinced me of them. I would have gone into the boat,—would have gone without your knowledge this very evening:—persuaded and entreated Robert to make the oars, and steer it;—his letter will tell you all,—read it, dear Mamma.

(Mrs. Carlton takes the letter.)

Rob. Dear Miss, do not be so distressed; your repentance is so sincere, Madam, I am sure, will forgive you. Permit me to intercede for Miss Isabella, and say that I am the most to blame: When she first asked me to be of the party, I ought, with courage, to have refused, and openly have pointed out the danger. It is wrong to suffer ourselves to be persuaded, even by those we most love, to any pleasure or pursuit that conscience cannot sanction; for, as I have somewhere read, "There is no motive of gratitude or friendship, that can justify a wrong action."

Mrs. Carl. You are right, my little friend; and, I can answer for it, will never fall into such an error for the future: this noble representation of your conduct, speaks your character, and shows you deserving of our most grateful attentions. You have a taste for drawing, and shall receive instructions at my expense. Mr. Carlton has friends abroad; they are the patrons of genius, who will rejoice in forwarding your improvements, and assisting your studies. Your frankness and contrition, Isabella, have softened my displeasure; you have my forgiveness; and may the errors of the day be remembered, only to check in future, the too violent effusions of a volatile disposition.

Isab. Thank you, dear Mamma: not profes-

sions, but endeavours to follow every good example, shall show the sincerity of my intentions, and the guard I mean to set upon those spirits that have so often led me into error.

Dame. And you will do well, young lady: For, however striking may be the sallies of wit, or pleasing the effusions of mirth, the cheerfulness arising from the approbation of conscience, will ever be *superior*, as it forms the basis of *happiness.* *(Scene closes.*

Mrs. Lym. Your first attempt, Harcourt, does you great credit; and I am pleased that you can employ the leisure of your holidays for the amusement of your juvenile friends.

Jos. It is very pretty; he has drawn Isabella's character exactly.

Isab. That is the reason I do not like it, for I never was so naughty as to bespeak any thing without Mamma's knowledge.

Har. I hope you are not offended, Isabella; the first scene was all I intended as any resemblance to you; and, if such an occasion was to ever present itself, you would, I am sure, imitate my Isabella in the *last*; for you could not be happy under a parent's displeasure.

Jos. It is certainly a pretty little piece; but I like your's better, Mamma; you promised us one this evening; may we hear it?

Mrs. Lym. I thought you were impatient for the history I have to tell about Aurelia.

Jos. Oh! yes; I had rather hear that than the Drama, if you cannot favour us with both: but the quarter bell has rung, and we must prepare for dinner.

Har. After tea, we shall have the history, and to-morrow evening ———

Mrs. Lym. A Drama, if I receive a pleasing account of your behaviour.

Isab. But to-morrow is the fair, and I fear you will not have time, Mamma; it may be late before you return: could not you favour us with the history after dessert, and read to us in the evening? We have been very good, almost all the afternoon lessons are said, and the remainder can be repeated while you eat your fruit.

Edw. Do, Mamma, grant my sister this quarter of a holiday.

Har. I am sure they will be doubly attentive to-morrow.

Alex. Yes, and so will I, and Edward, and Harcourt.

Mrs. Lymington, ever willing to oblige her little circle in any reasonable request, selected from among the papers written for their evening's amusement, the following Drama.

CHAP. XVI.

THE GRANDMOTHER.

IN TWO ACTS.

PERSONS.

Capt. Smith.	Isabella.
Mr. Frederic Smith.	Hortensia.
Cecil.	Florentia.
Charles Dobson.	Mrs. Frederic Smith.
Simon.	Miss Dobson.
Mrs. Smith.	

Scene, throughout the Piece, at the Estate of Mr. Frederic Smith, or at a Cottage in the Isle of Wight.

ACT. I.

Scene I—*The Parlour of a Cottage. Mrs. Smith discovered with Books, and a number of Phials on a table before her. Isabella at work, Simon attending.*

Mrs. Smith. And you think the mower's wife better, Simon?

Simon. Yes, Madam, thanks to your kindness; I saw neighbour Hardy this morning, and he said she was purely, and had felt only a slight return of fever last night.

Mrs. Smith. I am glad to hear it. You'll distribute those medicines as they are directed. I am happy to find our number of invalids begin to decrease.

Simon. They do indeed, Madam; there has been very little sickness of late, and it is through your means that the village has been so healthy; you do so much——

Mrs. Smith. No, Simon:—I have not the *means* of being bountiful; yet, with a moderate fortune, good management and economy, something may be done towards promoting the comfort of our fellow-creatures: and surely the indigent have a claim to the exertions of every feeling heart.

Isab. I should like to cure the poor sick cottagers; yet I do not think I could perform the operations that my dear Grandmamma does.

Mrs. Smith. The operation of dressing a broken chilblain, or a cut finger, is a practical part of surgery I could wish you to be able to perform; it may not be pleasant, I allow.

Isab. Ah! no,—that it is not; for I feel almost ready to faint when I see you dress one.

Mrs. Smith. Perhaps so:—it is a delicacy of feeling bordering upon affectation, that I wish you to conquer:—the skilful dressing of a wound

has often preserved a limb, that, by neglect, might have suffered amputation. To a generous mind, the desire of alleviating misery, will so far stifle the emotions it may occasion, as to admit of giving every necessary assistance:—but hasten with these things, good Simon; and in your way call upon the poor woman on the Mount, and tell her that the christening clothes for the twins shall be finished by to-morrow evening.

(Exit Simon.

SCENE II.

Isabella. Impossible, my dear Grand-mamma; indeed I cannot get them done.

Mrs. Smith. Not if you are idle; had you the inclination to finish them, exertions would not be wanting. I am sorry to perceive, Isabella, that of late you have been less industrious, and seem dissatisfied with every little plan that humanity suggests for the benefit of others. This alteration, I fear, may be attributed to your recent acquaintance with the ladies of the castle; you may remember, I admonished you not to form too hasty an attachment.

Isab. Yes, you cautioned me on their first arrival; but what could you see in their conduct to warrant the admonition? They are affable, and extremely accomplished.

Mrs. Smith. And is this sufficient to entitle them to your friendship?

Isab. It was impossible not to be pleased with their affability and condescension: you recollect they paid *us* the visit first.

Mrs. Smith. And may you never have reason to wish it had been the last.

Isab. My dear Mother, what an opinion have you formed! I am sure I shall derive improvement from their society. A London education has given an *ease*, an *elegance* to their manners, it it is impossible to acquire in the country.

Mrs. Smith. Has it not, at the same time, given their hearts a tincture of selfishness and pride; and, if report speaks true, a disregard of expense and want of economy in all their proceedings? For your sake, my child, I have made some inquiries respecting the family; it is rumoured that the Squire is a man of broken fortune; a sportsman, and a gamester; his wife a woman of weak understanding, who, till very lately, has suffered herself to be led away by every fashionable monitress.—Such a woman was the wife of my unfortunate Frederic!—

Isab. Do not sigh; perhaps my uncle is doing better than you imagine.

Mrs. Smith. That is not very probable: 'tis now near fifteen years since he rejected a mother's friendship; yet his imprudencies never fail to

affect me, as often as a recollection of them returns.

Isab. Do not suffer them now to distress you; I will be every thing you wish: let us not talk of the family at the castle; I will not solicit or desire their acquaintance.

Mrs. Smith. You are every thing to me, Isabella; we live in solitude, and it pains me to deprive you of any rational amusement; at your age the mind thirsts for novelty, and every scheme that promises variety bears a charm of attraction. I would not prevent your mixing with the world; I am only anxious to have you enter it with those whose conduct may be worthy imitation; I dread the influence of fashionable dissipation. You *have* hereto acted with prudence, and I think, in every situation, you will conduct yourself with propriety; yet I do not wish you to appear much abroad, till your father returns to England: a few weeks more, and he will be your companion, friend, and protector; in the mean time, I do not require you to refuse all invitation from the castle; accept that for this evening. I am much mistaken if you do not find yourself disgusted with every character you will meet with there. I have reason to think, the accomplishments they boast of are very superficial, and from such you will not be able to derive improvement.

Isab. It would be better, then, I did not go.

Mrs. Smith. By no means; I wish you to be convinced of the truth of what I have asserted: this can only be done by visiting them, which you may do with safety. It is a girlish intimacy I would have you avoid; and this I think you will not hastily form with characters of their description; therefore let me persuade you to prepare your neatest dress for the evening.

Isab. I will then, since it is *your* desire; they mentioned a party of pleasure, a ball, or a concert. I wonder which it will be; I hope a concert, for I love music exceedingly. *(They go out.*

SCENE III.

A Room in Mr. Frederic Smith's—Miss HORTENSIA, FLORENTIA, *and* CECIL.

Cecil. So!—uncle Oliver is returned to England?

Floren. Yes,—who would have thought of seeing him alive, and here! I imagined he had been dead long ago:—I cannot think what he came back for. I am sure we are not obliged to the chance, that in a stormy night led him to a brother's house; we shall be finely *criticised*. Papa has been particular enough of late; we did not want any one to make him more so.

Cecil. True; no doubt our new guest will: the Captain and he agreed wonderfully well last

night, (if there is truth in what I have heard,) for the *first time* in their lives.

Hort. Do not think any more about him, we have enough to do to settle the amusements of the evening. I wonder if the little rustic will be here?

Flo. There is no doubt of it; she said she would ask her grandmother.

Hor. And come, I dare say, drest in all her *best;* so shy,—so timid,—she will scarce have power to look at our dresses, or to prevent the tear of envy falling on her own.

Cecil. You are mistaken, sister; she does not know what envy is; and I am sure has no occasion to envy you: for, however she may be disguised by unfashionable apparel, she has the most beautiful face I ever beheld.

Flo. You have always some uncivil thing or other to say to us; the girl is a mere rustic, and must be considered as such by every one: she is very well, but would soon be spoiled by flattery.

Cecil. Not half so soon as you;—I wish either of you had as good an understanding; you would give all your fine dresses to gain as much admiration in the *beau monde*, as *she* would excite.

Hor. Nonsense!—have done talking of her, and let us contrive for the evening. Will my father permit us to have the vessel?

Cecil. No; not unless we will accept his company to steer it.

Hor. That will never do: it will spoil all our fun.

Cecil. Entirely; so I have hired one of Edward's father, and after tea you can propose a walk by the sea side; and then, unknown to all the sober set at home, we can make a moon-light excursion upon the ocean. If Dobson and his sister should come, we shall have a delightful party.

Hor. Hush!—I am sure I hear my uncle's footsteps; let us go into the alcove, and talk the matter over more fully: the little rustic will stare with astonishment; and ask where she is going to be transported to? Ha! ha! ha!—I cannot help laughing, to think how silly she will look. *(Exeunt*

SCENE IV.

Capt. Smith. Yes, I have fortunately overheard a part of the plan; I guessed the water frolic would not be given up for a father's disapprobation. What dangers will not unthinking youth expose itself to, for the sake of pleasure! Cecil, from his own confession this morning, cannot steerthe vessel;—a father's company was not accepted;—an uncle's probably would be refused, yet it may be useful. I too will take a boat this evening and follow theirs, to be at hand, should any thing happen. Their giddiness may produce

some accident that an old man's caution might prevent.

Scene V.

Enter Frederic.

Fred. Have you seen the young people, brother?

Capt. Not lately; I heard them talking—they left the apartment as I entered it. I seek not their society; for I observe, with pain, a father's is avoided.

Fred. I am sorry to say it is too true; our children have been so indulged, that now we find it difficult to exact obedience on the most trifling occasion.

Capt. Affection must be wanting where obedience is *exacted*: I fear you have followed a mistaken system of education; their present conduct will neither contribute to their happiness, or your own; but if the heart is good, much may be hoped for; the failings of youth are not always irretrievable.

Fred. There are moments when their conduct, and my wife's imprudence, give me the most heartfelt concern. But is not what I suffer, the just punishment inflicted by Providence for the errors of my earlier years, when I refused to be guided by a mother's opinion in the choice of a partner for life?—What evils await filial disobedience! Can a blessing attend him who has, in

almost every instance, preferred the opinion of the profligate, to a parent's judgment? How often do I reflect on my treatment of this best of women, whose society I shunned, whose presence I banished myself from for ever. Tell me, does she still exist? You have merited her confidence, and have enjoyed a constant correspondence:—Oh! where *is* my injured mother?

Capt. You are then ignorant of her place of residence?

Fred. Entirely.

Capt. Her last letters have been dated from a cottage in the Isle of Wight, near Chale. I expected to have been set on shore almost opposite to her house, when I was carried by a tempest to a distant part of the country, and landed on an estate, the owner of which I found to be my namesake: this circumstance I should not have noticed, had not a portrait, which hung in the parlour, struck me as your likeness. I was told the 'Squire was at his favourite seat, a few miles distant. Anxious as I was to visit my mother, a thought of being able to give intelligence of a long-lost son, induced me to ascertain whether the original of the picture, which had so forcibly struck me, was my brother. Let us set out in search of her habitation; Frederic, you must accompany me.

Fred. No, my brother; how can I obtrude myself into a parent's presence, till you have acquainted her of my sorrow and repentance; yet what can you say for one whose imprudences have driven him to the brink of ruin? A few weeks, and the estate on which you landed, with this castle, must have a new possessor. I have contracted debts, the disposal of *them* only can discharge.

Capt. Indeed! Suffer *me* then to be the purchaser. I am returned to England to make happy my mother and my daughter; 'tis thirteen years since I left my darling infant to her care. Pardon my impatience, I must inquire for their humble dwelling: from description, it cannot be the distance of a mile from hence.

Fred. It is now almost six, will not you stay tea with us?

Capt. To tea? Oh! that has reminded me: I will restrain my impatience, and visit them in the morning; for this evening, if I mistake not, I can do you an essential service. I allow no questions—to-morrow you shall be informed of all. *(Exeunt.*

SCENE VI.

An elegant Drawing-Room.——Miss DOBSON, *her Brother*, Miss FLORENTIA, CECIL, Mrs. FREDERIC SMITH *making Tea.* HORTENSIA *playing on the Grand Piano*, ISABELLA *standing by her.*

Cecil. So, Miss, you are fond of music?

Isab. Very; but I prefer pieces which are not so loud: what Miss Hortensia has been playing, may be very fine, but it appeared to me all confusion.

Hort. *Indeed!* 'tis because you are no judge. Pray, have you ever received musical instructions?

Isab. Yes, I play sometimes to amuse my grand-mamma.

Miss Dobson. "Auld Robin Gray," I suppose, and fifty other ditties that ancient ladies doat on.

Young Dobson. Or now and then, perhaps, when in a livelier mood, "The Soldier tir'd of War's alarms."

Isab. She does not like very plaintive airs; I sometimes sing "The Shipwreck'd Boy," but she is better pleased with cheerful tunes.

Cecil. *(To Isabella.)* And will you favour *us* with a song?

Isab. Certainly, if you wish it, and will have the goodness to excuse me, if I should be a little out of tune; as I am not accustomed to perform before strangers.

Miss Dobson. Pray do not apologize to us.

Hor. *(Aside.)* She is not so timid as I imagined. *(Aloud.)* Come, let us hear your "Shipwreck'd Boy."——

(Isabella sings and plays with great taste; during the last verse the Captain enters, who is struck with surprise and admiration at her performance.)

Capt. Pray, young lady, from what master did you acquire that judgment? Never did I hear any thing so divinely sung.

Hor. La! Uncle, how did you suppose she should have been taught by a master, in such a place as this; *she* has never been in London; her dress might have told you that at once.

Capt. Will you allow her to answer my question? You did not surely teach yourself?

Isab. For what I know, Sir, I am indebted to the kindness of a friend; for whose amusement I practise without the assistance of a master.

Flo. You cannot play long pieces of music, I presume; songs are far easier.

Isab. *Some* lessons I am very partial to.

Hor. Yes, Hook's progressive ones you think pretty enough.

Isab. For young beginners.

Hor. Are you a proficient then?

Isab. Would you like to hear one of Haydn's or Clementi's?

Flo. Which you please; you play either, no doubt, equally well.

Miss Dobson. Favour us with one of Haydn's.

Mrs. F. Smith. You had better have chosen

an easier composer: beside, I believe we have not any of his compositions in the house; for they require more practice than my daughter's health will admit of.

Hor. And, I am sure, to look at your rosy cheeks, no one would think you had practised any thing beside milking the cows.

Cecil. For shame, Hortensia, you are absolutely rude.

Mrs. F. Smith. Come, Ma'am, favour us with something; my daughters have a variety of music, the works of the most fashionable composers.

Isab. I am obliged to you, Madam; but I believe I can recollect a piece of Haydn's.

(Isabella plays in a masterly style, to the astonishment of all the Party.)

Capt. Charming girl! I should be glad, young lady, if you would give my nieces a lesson of music every day.

Hor. Us, Uncle! Who have been under the best Italian masters, while we were in London, for six months together; they must know better than——

Capt. Whatever they may *know*, niece, their pupils execute in a very inferior manner. *(Exit. Capt.*

Flo. *(After having examined, with minute attention, every part of Isabella's dress.)* Do you never wear any thing but white?

Isab. Not *often*; my mother thinks it the neatest wear.

Flo. And do you not *think* sometimes for yourself?

Isab. Yes, always; but I am inclined to give the preference to her opinion, and to whatever she approves.

Hor. Dear, how condescending! but tell me, do not you think our hats, ornamented with flowers and feathers, much prettier than your plain chip bonnet, tied with white ribbons under the chin.

Isab. I do not like them *half* so well: such ornaments are proper only for a ball-room, I should think.

Hor. And, pray, who has given *you* leave to think. When cottagers set the fashion, we may expect to see stuff gowns in the assembly, accompanied with a head-dress of oats and wild poppies.

Isab. I beg your pardon if I have said any thing improper; I am sure I did not mean to offend; I spoke but as I thought; and surely the liberty of opinion, in a land of freedom, has never yet been denied even to a cottager.

Hor. Pray, don't imagine it of so much consequence, child; no one was offended.

Isab. Will either of you, ladies, favour me with a tune upon the harp?

Hor. Oh! you must excuse me, indeed it is so warm.

Cecil. Play us only one little air, sister.

Hor. Indeed I cannot; you know I hate to be teazed.

Isab. It is unpleasant; and if you *could* play, I am sure you would not be so uncivil as to require *much entreating*.

Hor. Do you suppose, then, I CANNOT play? Cecil, reach me the harp. *(She plays, makes several blunders, then pushes away the instrument.)* Detestable thing! there is no bearing it; I knew, from the first, it was good for nothing.

Cecil. Come, there's enough of music; what do you say to a walk? Charles and his sister, I am sure, will go with pleasure. May we hope for Miss Isabella's company?

Isab. If you are not going far; because I promised my mother to be at home early.

Hor. We are not going to *walk* far, my dear; it is a fine evening, and I know you will enjoy it. Let us get our cloaks. *(Exeunt.*

End of the First Act.

CHAP. XVII.

ACT. II.

SCENE I.—*Another apartment.*

Capt. Smith. I wonder who this little rustic is! What pleasure would it give me to see my bro-

ther's children half as amiable: some prudent mother has, no doubt, been the guardian of her early years; but they have wanted a good example in a parent's conduct;—let me then rather pity than condemn them; should I be able to regain for them a grand-mother's affection, they may yet be worthy: my daughter, too, will, I hope, also present a model for their imitation; my mother speaks highly of the goodness of her heart, and engaging manners; how tedious will appear every moment till I again embrace my child. *(Exit.*

Scene II.

Changes to the Sea Side. A small Vessel seen at a distance.——Cecil, Hortensia, Florentia, Isabella, Charles, *and* Miss Dobson.

Cecil. Yes, there she is; Edward told me he would bring her down.

Hor. What a delightful evening! We shall have a charming excursion. I wish, Cecil, you had brought your flute; music is so pleasant upon the water.

Isab. You surely are not going out to sea this evening, ladies? You told your Mamma you were only going to take a walk.

Flo. And have we not walked, child? Perhaps you never were in a boat, or pleasure vessel; when

the moon rises, you cannot think how pretty it will be; the whole country will appear like an enchanted island.

Isab. Excuse me, I cannot think of accompanying you; my dear mother would be very uneasy at my going such an excursion without her permission: besides, it is getting late. I have observed it lighten several times, as we came along, and there is every appearance of a tempest.

Her. Nonsense! It is only the lightning of a summer's evening; if you are so fearful, you may return.

Cecil. You cannot think of leaving us; what would my mother say? She would, indeed, acknowledge you wanted common politeness.

Isab. It surely would be better if we all returned, as she is unacquainted with your intentions; should a storm come on, and any accident happen, I am certain she would censure our disobedience and imprudence; therefore permit me to dissuade you.

Flo. You will not find that an easy matter, my dear, when we are determined to have any thing our own way; it is not in the power of father, mother, or any one, to dissuade *us*; so I advise you to come along.

Isab. Indeed I cannot think of it; I would not displease my mother for the world. Good evening to you.

Cecil. *(Taking her hand.)* No, no; that will never do—we cannot suffer you to turn informer. Charles, assist me in conducting this little deserter to the vessel.

Isab. *(Breaking from them.)* Dare not to insult me, Sir. What have you seen in me to authorise this freedom? 'tis true the mansion we inhabit is a cottage; yet I have a *father*, who, were he in England, would not see his daughter thus ill-treated.

(The company surround Isabella.)

Cecil. Charming! you would make an excellent actress, my dear.

Hor. Think not to escape us now, Madam.

Isab. Since you force me to be rude, I WILL. I MUST RETURN. *(Attempting to make her way through them, Captain Smith advances, who had followed them unperceived.)*

Capt. And who is there shall here dare prevent you? Be not alarmed,—you shall return; and I will oblige these disobedient children to follow your example. None but those who were as thoughtless as yourselves, would go on board a vessel they knew not how to steer, or think of putting out to sea, when there is every appearance of a tempest. If you have any respect for me, or dread a parent's anger, Cecil, discharge the vessel you have hired, and return to spend the evening with music, or a little dance at home; your con-

sent to this shall alone induce me to keep what I have seen, a secret from your father.

(Cecil dismisses the Boy who has care of the Vessel.)

Cecil. There, Uncle, I know you are particular, yet I *do* wish to please you, if I could; now, Madam, you can have no objection in continuing of our party.

Isab. It is late, Sir, and after what has passed, I could wish to bid you good evening *here*.

Capt. At least, favour us with your company a part of the way, and when I have seen them within sight of their home, allow me the pleasure of protecting *you* to yours. *(Exeunt.*

SCENE III.

The Cottage.—Mrs. SMITH, *with a Book.*

Mrs. Smith. I cannot read any longer; my mind is so uneasy about Isabella; the dear child promised to be at home by sun-set; it is now near ten, and every appearance of a tempestuous night; it lightens violently, and every now and then I hear the distant thunder. She has not, however, a long way to come; the castle is not far from hence.

SCENE IV.

Enter SIMON.

Simon. Would not you like a candle, Madam? It is so dark, I thought you could not see to read.

Mrs. Smith. Nor can I, Simon; yet do not shut the shutters, it will make the time seem more tedious; for Isabella is not returned.

Simon. Oh! do not be uneasy, Madam, she will soon be here, I am sure; perhaps they have a little dance, and she does not like to be the first to break up a party. When young people are in company, they are apt to forget how time goes: would you like I should run over for her? I can take the umbrella, in case it should rain.

Mrs. Smith. We will wait one quarter of an hour longer; I wish not to appear impatient; the dear child is very much confined. It is only for her sake, Simon, I wish myself a few years younger; for she must find an old woman's society often tiresome. Poor thing! I weary her with a repetition of my pains and infirmities.

Simon. You are low-spirited to-night, Madam, or you would not think so: Miss Isabella is always cheerful, and I am sure she is as happy as the day is long. *(Looking out of the window.)* Dear Madam, I do believe I see her; she is coming over the green, and an elderly gentleman with her. I will run and open the gate. *(Exit Simon.*

Mrs. Smith. How happy I am she is safe! I thought they would not, if she was prevailed on to stay late, suffer her to return alone.

SCENE V.

ISABELLA *enters, runs up to her Mother, and embraces her.*

Isab. I hope you are not displeased, my dear Mother; we took rather too long a walk, and I fear you have been uneasy; but this kind gentleman would take the trouble of seeing me safe home.

Mrs. Smith. It was kind, indeed! Pray, Sir, take a chair. Simon, bring some cowslip wine and biscuits.

Capt. I thank you, Madam, that trouble is unnecessary; I will sit with you a few minutes. You seem to have a delightful little cottage; I am a stranger in this part of the world, but already highly pleased with that part of the country I have seen. It is much such an habitation (from description) as this that I am in search of; perhaps you are acquainted with the neighbourhood, and can inform me if one Mrs. Smith and her grand-daughter live any where near you?

Mrs. Smith. *(Aside.)* My ear is no stranger to that voice; yet, by this light, I cannot recollect any features that bear a resemblance. *(Aloud)* My name is Smith, and this dear child is my grand-daughter: may I ask your business, Sir; have you any letters from my son?

Capt. My Mother—my Isabella! *(Embraces her.)* Now am I blest indeed.

Mrs. Smith. And *blessed*, your aged mother, my son! For these six months past have we daily expected your arrival. But you came from the castle; what mystery has kept you from us?

Capt. A sudden storm obliged me to land upon an estate in a distant part of the island, which I found belonged to a gentleman of the name of Smith; a portrait I observed in the parlour, led me to think that gentleman was Frederic; I hastened to his present place of residence, and found it was my brother!

Mrs. Smith. And found him, I fear, the same extravagant, unthinking man, he ever was. I knew not it was him who resided at the castle; the young people only have called upon us; in them I traced no likeness of their father; their dress was such, they could only be resembled to painted puppets. Our name is so common a one, that their bearing the same, neither struck me with interest or surprise. Would that this misguided man could feel a portion of happiness in his family, like what you will experience in the society of an amiable and affectionate daughter.

Capt. Let us, at least, endeavour to impart it. Receive my brother as your son: he repents of former indiscretions, and is impatient to solicit

your forgiveness for every former act of disobedience; he entreats your friendship for his children, who, by your admonitions, may yet become all that is good and amiable. His wife too, is sensible of her follies, and, I am certain, would be pleased to be received as your daughter.

Mrs. Smith. If, indeed, Frederic's repentance be sincere, he shall no longer want a parent's friendship: 'twas he who first avoided a mother's presence; yet this instance of unkindness shall be forgotten; Simon shall take a note to the castle; I will see him immediately. A parent can make a thousand allowances for the failings of her child.—Let those (if such there are) who have never deviated from the path of rectitude, bear in mind an indelible impression of error; but let us *forgive*, as for the imperfections of human nature, we would obtain forgiveness. *(Scene closes*.*

CHAP. XVIII.

EDMUND arose in high spirits the following morning, and applied himself attentively to his lessons, till the bell rang to breakfast. "I shall soon be ready, Mamma," he exclaimed; "I can eat very fast."

Mrs. Lym. I beg you will not; to eat too

* Written for the Children's Magazine, Oct. 1800.

hastily is both greedy and ungenteel; I shall not be ready this half hour; for I have no inclination to take a medicine for having taken food without chewing it, as a young friend of mine was once obliged to do.

Edm. I will not be in a hurry to finish my breakfast; for I should not like to be ill. I know we shall go as soon as it was over. Should you not like to be one of the party, Josephine?

Jos. No,—indeed. What is their to be seen at a Fair? a parcel of toys, and a crowd of vulgar people, that can only afford entertainment to such a little boy as you.

Car. I am sure you are mistaken, Josephine: Mamma would not go, were she certain of only meeting vulgar people there. I suppose there may be farmers and country-women, and *also* ladies and gentlemen.

Mrs. Lym. You are right, Caroline; country people who go thither to dispose of their goods and cattle, gentlemen and ladies who walk round the booths, to please and amuse their children.

Isab. I wish I might go with Edmund!

Edm. Mamma, will you let Isabella have a holiday?

Har. And her sisters, as it is little Hammond's birth-day, of which permit us to wish you many happy returns.

Mrs. Lym. Thank you, Harcourt; you have made a bold request, yet there is too much reason and affection in it to admit of a refusal. Indulgence should ever be the reward of good behaviour. Permit me to inquire in what manner you intend to amuse yourself to-day?

Alex. We have not yet settled any plan; will you do us the favour to direct our choice?

Mrs. Lym. Would you like to accompany us to the fair, young gentlemen?

Edw. I should, Mamma, very much.

Har. And I.

Alex. And I; for I have never been at one.

Carol. May not we go too, Mamma?

Mrs. Lym. I have no objection to your and Isabella's company; Josephine, who is afraid of mixing with the vulgar, may amuse herself in the library.

Jos. What, stay at home all alone?

Mrs. Lym. At the Fair you will meet with vulgar people, and your pride would prevent your enjoying the pleasures of it. I therefore seriously advise you to stay at home; yet, with whatever indignity you may treat those of an inferior station, allow me to say, to them the higher orders of society are greatly indebted. If the farmer did not bring his corn to market, or the miller grind it into flour, what should we do for bread?—and

why should we behold with contempt, the most useful of our fellow-creatures? You forget, that in the sight of the Almighty all are equal.

Jos. Forgive me, Mamma, I spoke without consideration.

Edm. Then you must never blame me again, Josephine, for the same fault. Permit sister to go with us?

Carol. I am sure she will think more justly in future; she does not mean to be proud; Josephine is very good sometimes; she never passes a beggar, without giving something to relieve his wants.

Mrs. Lym. My amiable Caroline! Your affectionate intercession is never wanting; ever the peace-maker of our domestic circle! to add to your happiness, I will permit Josephine to accompany us: and to vary the pleasures of the day, we will take a rural dinner at the cottage.

Carol. What with Farmer Fairfield, and the good old Dame that nursed Josephine when she was little?

Mrs. Lym. Yes—we have not seen them these two months. I will send them a note, to inform them of our intentions.

Edw. That will be delightful!—but, Mamma, kiss Josephine, and make it quite up with her: she will not be comfortable if you feel the least displeased with her.

Alex. Do you speak from experience, Edward?

Edw. Yes: for often as I am hurried away by the impulse of the moment to do what is wrong, I feel my mother's displeasure the severest correction, the most afflicting consequence of my failings. *(Mrs. Lymington embraces Josephine.)* Oh! now all is forgiven and forgotten, our wishes will be granted; you will not refuse Josephine a little favour, Mamma?

Mrs. Lym. Certainly not; tell me, my dear, what it is: you need not fear a refusal, even if it were a large one.

Jos. You know pretty Fanny, Mamma, Dame Fairfield's grand-daughter, her parents are very poor; I wished to take her some present from the Fair, whatever you think would be most useful and acceptable.

Mrs. Lym. Should you like to give her a new frock?

Jos. Very much.—Let me see, she was three years old in August last; I should think four yards of calico would be sufficient; that of half a crown a yard, perhaps, fine enough; for it should be strong, and then it would be durable: well then twice four is eight, and four sixpences are two shillings, eight and two are ten, ten shillings; and I have just half-a-guinea in my purse, if you will permit me to spend it, dear Mamma?

Mrs. Lymington's consent was easily obtained;

in a few minutes the carriage was announced, and the young gentlemen accompanied the cheerful party on horseback. When within sight of the place where the Fair was held, they committed their poneys to the care of a servant, and each took upon himself to escort a lady through the busy crowd. Edmund was the first who stopped to purchase:—So many pretty play-things presented themselves,—so many coaches, with two, four, and six horses, that he hesitated to which to give the preference. The little Hammond, too, seemed ready to jump out of his nurse's arms, to get possession of every glittering object he beheld. After having consulted with his brothers, sisters, and cousins, Edmund at length put into his hand a splendid carriage, with four horses. The little prattler was delighted, and holding out his treasure, exclaimed as they passed along, "Coach, coach, Ebbo, give me coach!" They then stepped into a linen-draper's, and Josephine made choice of a pretty piece of calico. Mrs. Lymington purchased a few yards of dimity, which she presented to Isabella, that she might have the pleasure of giving the little girl a petticoat. Caroline begged that she might be allowed to purchase some Irish. "I fear," said Mrs. Lymington, "you will spend all your money." "Well, Mamma, and if we do," replied Josephine, "it will be spent usefully; there are a number of

pretty things, to be sure, in the fair that I should like to have; if I had them, they would soon become old, but when I think of the poor child, and the clothes we have bought for her, I shall always feel new pleasure."

Mrs. Lymington, afer having bought a few more articles, which she imagined would be most acceptable to John and Betty Fairfield, accompanied the young people to several different booths. The young ladies, whose liberality for the indigent child had nearly emptied their purses, received elegant fairings from Edward, Harcourt, and Alexis, who, in their turn, were not forgotten by Mrs. Lymington. Edmund's generosity to his little brother, was rewarded by a new book, and a pretty set of nine-pins. So many happy faces attracted universal observation; they were accosted by several gentlemen and ladies, among whom were a number of Mrs. Lymington's friends; they were soon joined by Lady Clifford, Mrs. Edgecombe, Miss Clifford, and Henry, who also presented their little keepsakes. Josephine, Caroline, and Isabella, were charmed with their little friends, and were greatly concerned when they had passed more than an hour in each others company, to hear Lady Clifford talk of returning. "When shall we see you again?" said Edward, taking her hand; "I hope very soon, for I like you *very*

much." "You will meet again next week, my dears," replied her Ladyship; "Laura, who has heard from her brother all about the play, since she cannot have a part, is desirous of being prompter.

Edw. Oh! we do not want one; I know every line, every scene; and if the others are out, I can correct them.

Mrs. Lym. Were they as perfect as you would have us imagine, some thanks are certainly due to Miss Clifford for her kind intentions.

Edw. I beg pardon, Mamma; I spoke too hastily; she will forgive my rudeness, I hope, and favour us with her company. I did not mean to be uncivil, for I should be delighted if she would condescend to be my partner in our dance, when the play is over.

"With the greatest pleasure," said the amiable girl, as she followed Lady Clifford and Mrs. Edgecombe to the carriage. The young people had scarce lost sight of their friends, when they were accosted by a boy, who besought them to buy a bullfinch, which he held up for their observation, in a small and dirty cage. "Naughty boy!" exclaimed Edmund, "how can you keep the poor creature shut up in such a narrow place? Do buy it, Mamma,—see how it flutters; I am sure you can find a larger house for it at home."

Jos. Pray do, Mamma; it will beat itself to death.

Isab. We will take so much care of it, indeed we will.

Carol. And clean it ourselves every day; it shall never want,—never be forgotten.

Mrs. Lym. (To the lad.) Are you by trade a bird-catcher?

Boy. Father is the greatest in the country, Madam. I had this morning four fine bullfinches, and six linnets: we had last Autumn twenty old birds in full song; but the winter, though they were housed, was too cold for them, and seven only of the set lived, (beside those I have mentioned,) and this little sulky, to be brought to the fair; he would soon pine himself to death alone; but if your Ladyship likes to have him cheap; while he lives, he will be a plaything for the young ladies and gentlemen. He can pipe well enough when he has a mind to it; and the rest being dead or sold, it would be, as one may say, an act of charity to take him.

Mrs. Lym. It is a pity, my lad, your father did not bring you up to some more useful, and less cruel employment.

Edw. Yes;—for it is very wicked to catch pretty birds. We never suffer a nest to be destroyed in our plantations.

Har. And more wicked to keep them in this state of confinement. What is the price you ask for it?

Boy. Only two shillings, young master, as it is the last, and not likely to live long.

Mrs. Lym. I have spent so much already this morning, that I think it would not be right to make any more purchases.

Jos. Mamma, I have sixpence.

Carol. And I threepence.

Edw. I have still a shilling, that will make one and ninepence:—Harcourt, lend us only threepence?

Har. No:—but with Mamma's permission, I will buy the bird, present it to my cousins, and assist them to recover it.

Mrs. Lym. Do so, my dear:—It will be indeed, a charity; for it appears almost exhausted.

Har. *(Taking the cage with one hand, and giving the money with the other.)* I wish I could persuade you, young lad, to leave off bird-catching. You are strong, and apparently healthy; if you will go to plough, or drive a team, I will speak of you to farmer Fairfield; if you are an honest industrious boy, I am sure you will be well provided for.

Boy. Thank you, Sir; but I should not like that kind of life;—I could get more at home with father, was it only by making of nets; and then in an evening, we can take a sup of good ale together.

"What an indolent being!" said Alexis, as they walked on together, and the boy turned away from them whistling.

Isab. What a wicked boy! not to like work.

Mrs. Lym. I cannot suppose we ought to call him wicked, my love, as his parents are probably the most to blame; had they inspired him by their example, with early habits of industry, he would now have despised the cruel and idle practice of bird-catching, or loitering away his evenings, (which might be so much better employed,) in an alehouse. But there is an appearance of rain, and the sooner we get to the farm, for the sake of our little charge, the better; for there we can obtain a fresh supply of water and seed, if not a more roomy mansion.

Saying this, she hastened to the carriage, and the young gentlemen again mounted their poneys.

CHAP. XIX.

THE village clock struck two as they entered the farm-yard, at the gate of which stood the worthy inhabitants, ready to receive them. Betty was dressed in her neatest attire, and John had put on his holiday suit; for it was always considered as a little festival, whenever their worthy mistress honoured them with a visit. "Where is my pretty Sally?" eagerly demanded Josephine, rudely bursting by her sisters, and running into the house before her Mamma. "You need not be so uncivil," said Caroline; "we are all as impatient

to see her: it is well Miss Neville is not with us. Here comes the sweet little darling:—Sally! Sally! how do you do, my dear?" Sally, confused at the sight of so many strangers, looked back, and wished to have ran away, but finding herself completely surrounded, began to whimper. Observing her distress, Mrs. Lymington took her upon her knee, where a few cakes, and a pretty toy, soon restored her natural cheerfulness; and Sally, (whose timidity wore off by degrees,) soon became the engaging sprightly plaything of the juvenile party. For a few minutes, the new purchased charge was forgotten; it was only a few—Harcourt, who still held the cage, the moment the farmer had paid his respects to Mrs. Lymington, addressed him in behalf of his little prisoner, whose unfortunate situation he represented so pathetically, that the good old man recollecting a cage that had lain useless for many years in the lumber-room, hastened immediately to fetch it. In his absence, Mrs. Fairfield supplied them with hemp-seed, which they had the pleasure to see their little favourite was not too ill to peck, nor did it seem to fear the hand that offered it. In a short time, the farmer returned with a dusty, though commodious mansion. "Your patience, I fear," said the honest man, "is almost exhausted; I warrant you have thought it an hour since I left the room; I know I

should at your age; but I cannot run a race with you now, Master Harcourt, nor trip it so nimbly as our friend Master Edmund; the rheumatism is a woful enemy to agility; but, thank God, my knee is not quite so stiff as it was a few weeks ago."—The children surrounded the farmer, and the cleaning of the cage was an important subject of employment to Josephine and her sisters, whose clean white handkerchiefs were converted into dusters, before Betty had thought of offering her assistance. At length the business was completed, and Bully placed in his new habitation. Every motion testified his approbation of the change; 'twas no longer the flutter of restraint, but the action, the twitter of ease and satisfaction. As Mrs. Fairfield had a favourite cat, it was agreed to suspend the cage by a nail to the wall, above the reach of this formidable enemy. As they were deliberating on which side the room it might be placed with greatest safety, Edmund exclaimed, "I am sure, farmer is very good, to let this pretty paper be torn with a nail; is he not, Mamma?"

Mrs. Lym. I think so, indeed.—I always tell good John and Betty, they spoil you all.

Farm. Do not think so, my dear lady; when young people are good, we do not mind putting ourselves to a little inconvenience to oblige them.

Alex. Thank you, Farmer Fairfield: If you and I were in India, I would ask papa to give you a fine house to live in, and a nice palanquin to take the air in. Oh! I wish we had one *here*; 'tis such a charming carriage!—how comfortable we could carry you along!

Farm. Thank you, thank you, pretty masters, for your kindness. I wish for no palanquins:—we have enough in England to supply our wants; and when we are weary or sick, a good bed to lie down upon; and never do I step into it, Master Harcourt, without breathing a prayer of gratitude to Providence, for the blessings we daily receive, and wishing every unfortunate fellow-creature possessed the same enjoyments.

"Mamma," said Isabella, "I should like to hear the history of this pretty bird. I wish we had thought of asking the cruel boy how he came by it; at least where he caught it."

Mrs. Lym. Poor little creature, it has no doubt suffered a great deal while it was under his confinement.

Har. I think the history of a bullfinch would be very entertaining. Could not you write one about our new acquaintance, Mamma, and read it to us some evening, instead of any other story?

Jos. How could Mamma write any thing about

it? She knows not who it belonged to before the bird-catcher.

Har. That is true; but I am sure a pretty history might be imagined. We have those of a canary, a sparrow, and why should not that of a bullfinch be equally amusing?

Mrs. Lym. I have an idea that it might; and perhaps the first leisure hour I have, may be induced to make the attempt.

Har. Thank you, dear Mamma.

The children betook themselves to various sports till dinner-time. Mrs. Fairfield received their presents with the warmest expressions of gratitude; it seemed to be a day of universal joy. The farmer fancied himself young again; and joined, with spirit, in every game that was proposed, and proved himself the loudest in the sport. After dinner, Mrs. Lymington and Betty gave their assistance in forfeits. John could play a few tunes upon his old violin, and a dance by the young people succeeded "The House that Jack Built." "I could not have thought," said Edward, as they were partaking of some refreshments, "that the country could be made so agreeable in winter; we have had such a variety of pleasure since we came home, that even the Midsummer holidays could not have passed more delightfully."—"Every season has its

charms," replied Mrs. Lymington, "to the mind disposed to enjoy them. When the weather prevents an excursion abroad, 'tis wisdom to enlarge our domestic enjoyments, and to endear by lively pastime and instructive conversation, the comforts of *home*."

Jos. If I was poor, I should not like winter; every thing is so dear,—coals and provisions so expensive.——

Carol. But if one was rich, Josephine.

Mrs. Lym. And if rich, why then give that season the preference?

Carol. Because one could do so *much* to make the poor people comfortable: if one had a great deal of money, one could buy coals and bread for them.

Mrs. Fair. You are very good, young ladies, to think of these things.

Jos. What, for doing one's duty, good nurse? If I were but rich, I know what I would do.

Mrs. Lym. What, my love?

Jos. I would put little Sally to school.

Mrs. Fair. You are very kind, my dear, and I wish every rich lady had a heart like yours.

Mrs. Lym. When your little grand-daughter is old enough, it has always been my intention to have her taught to work and read at my own expense.

Mrs. Fair. Dear Madam, you are too kind, too considerate.—What have we done to deserve such goodness?

Mrs. Lym. Did not you nurse my Josephine

through a long and dangerous illness? and must not every mother feel a strong attachment to those who have been careful of her children?

Jos. You make me wish to be rich, Mamma. If I had but a small sum to give away every winter——

Mrs. Lym. That you may easily have. Instead of spending your weekly allowance in trifles and toys, lay apart only the half, and in six months you will find yourself possessed of sufficient to gratify your generous wishes, towards any object you may hear of. The practice of economy has made many rich, while a turn for extravagance has brought the affluent to poverty.

Jos. I wish we had thought of this sooner, Mamma:—But if I begin now, I hope it will not be too late.

Carol. And I will do the same, and Isabella; then by next Christmas, I think we shall be able to purchase a little firing for our poor neighbours:—but the carriage is come—Oh! dear, I am very sorry:—We shall see you again I hope very soon. Good bye, Betty; good bye, dear little Sally.

Josephine took charge of their new favourite, and the young party returned delighted with the amusements of the day. The next they were engaged to spend at Lanvillin, where parties of juvenile pleasure were formed for the remainder of the week. It was here that Harcourt, at the

solicitation of his friends, wrote the following Prologue, for their little play; which he also recited at the first rehearsal.

Excuse me, ladies, if I first appear,
To ask admission for my play-mates here.
Josepha took me from my desk just now,
And, laughing, coax'd me I *can't* tell you how,
Boldly to come, and now a something say
By way of Prologue to their little Play.
In vain I urg'd excuse; that school-boy, rude,
Was ill adapted hither to intrude.
The little gipsy, with familiar grace,
Spoke as she led, and gently strok'd my face;
"An English prologue, surely you can speak,
"If, cousin, oft at school you chatter Greek;
"When *doubtful, trembling,* and at first afraid,
"With Edward, you the part of Belcour play'd.
"Though youthful actors rarely can excel,
"It must be own'd, you spoke extremely well."
This flattering argument my mind possess'd,
And led me here again to do my *best.*
Suppose me then, (compell'd to something say,)
Some stage-struck student, begging for a play;
As first in class, the first ordain'd to speak,
And from our master, this indulgence seek:
That *monarch* of the *form,* with brow severe,
Whose birchen sceptre fills young hearts with fear.
As crowding in the rear my comrades wait,
With doubtful hope, the sentence of their fate,
Their apprehensions, blended with my own,
Like some poor culprit, I approach the throne.
"Would you for once, kind Sir, the wish approve,
"That, through dramatic region tempts to rove,

"Admit what oft in former times has been,
"The fairy structure of a *mimic scene:*
"Our books arrang'd, and clear'd the forms away,
"To entertain, this evening with a play."
"A play!—young people, do you think me mad?"
Reply'd our sage: "And thou, advent'rous lad,
"Shall dearly answer for this bold request;
"The strictest PUNISHMENT is e'er the BEST:
"To *treble* task, attention we require;
"And give these vicious play-books to the fire;
"With pris'ners' fare, your rage for acting cool,
"And learn to act upon the STAGE of SCHOOL."
Here, thanks to fate, we tread no classic sod,
Nor dread an IMPOSITION, or the ROD:
'Tis HOME, dear name! that happiness implies:
All that the *good,* and all the youthful, prize.
In friendship's cause, I've ventur'd to appear,
Since all shall meet a kind indulgence *here:*
E'en on my first attempt, tho' made so free,
Your approbation in that *smile* I see:
Nor too severely censur'd, I'll engage,
From that will be the heroes of our stage;
No critic *here* shall pop his head between,
To mark the errors of th' imperfect scene.
Should your applause subdue our childish fears,
I think I may predict *increasing years:*
Increasing *worth,* may future efforts boast,
If those to-night can please who strive the *most:*
Oh! let me go—and tell them to appear,
You look so *kind,* I'm sure I've nought to fear;
I'll haste to set their little hearts at ease,
Whose chief delights, these partial friends to please.

After the pleasures of Lanvillin, the amusements at home were renewed the ensuing week; and Mrs. Lymington, the first opportunity, read to her youthful audience the promised history of a Bullfinch.

CHAPTER XX.

The Story of the Bullfinch.

Warm, commodious, and secluded as was the native nest, I had scarcely dressed six mornings my newly feathered pinions, than I felt an inclination to try their powers, in a larger excursion than that allowed us, around the bushes that concealed our habitation. Often would my mother preach to us of surrounding danger, and the snares spread by mankind for our destruction, yet we felt every day the warmth of the meridian sun, and the green foliage of spring sheltered us from the passing shower. We lived in security, and it was not easy to excite apprehension. There were four of us equally impatient, lively, and courageous:—Our parents daily repeated their admonitions, not to venture far abroad till we were stronger, and in full plumage; they represented to us every danger, every misery, that was the consequence of every filial disobedience; we loved them with the tenderest affection, yet their counsels were disregarded; we saw them

at sun-rise depart the nest, and several times a day return with provisions for their nestlings; we heard them converse of gardens, granaries, and new-sown fields; listened with rapture to their relations, and, envious of their flights, resolved to taste, like them, the pleasures of liberty. They had left us, as usual, one morning; we agreed also, to spend the day abroad, and in the evening, entertain them with an account of all we had seen, and obtain their pardon. *Such* were our intentions; but when we suffer ourselves to pass the bounds of duty, it is difficult to say whither indiscretion may lead us. For some time we amused ourselves with admiring the splendour of the sun from the tops of the adjacent trees; we adjusted our feathers, and bade adieu to the nest, resolving to keep as much as possible together in our flight.

The provisions we met with seemed far sweeter than any we had tasted. We sipped the clear water of the pebbled stream, and dressed our plumage on the brink of the rivulet. The sky, still serene and calm, every grove and meadow that we passed, seemed a new region of delight; and the diversity of objects, for some time, rendered us insensible of fatigue. Towards evening, my sisters, who were more delicate, and less healthy than my brother and myself, begged us to let them rest upon a green hedge, by the road

side; this road led to a village, and, for the first time in our lives, we saw ourselves near the habitations of men. Every parental caution rushed upon our minds, but what could we do?—Downcrest and Sparkle were unable to proceed, and there appeared to be no higher place of shelter; we therefore endeavoured to conceal ourselves in the thickest part of the hedge: here we were soon startled by the new and strange sounds of human voices. A stone was flung among the bushes; it touched me upon the wing, and fell with redoubled violence upon Downcrest, who dropt lifeless from the bough. Imagine our alarm and distress, when another still larger, aimed from a stronger hand, deprived us of the dear remaining nestling, who, from excessive fatigue, was unable with us to quit the place of danger. How bitterly did we lament their loss, and our impatience of liberty. The school-boy's cruelty had been often represented to us, and we had been warned of every snare, invented for the destruction of our species; we wished to return,—yet, how could we appear in our parent's presence after having led their darlings into danger? Yet, to stay out all the night, and give them cause to imagine some evil had happened to us all, was what we could not resolve on. Two more hours were spent in useless deliberation; it grew dusk, and we shivered beneath the chilly dews of eve-

ning, as we endeavoured to retrace the circuit of our flight. One tree was so like another, that we could find no object to direct us to the nest. Exhausted with fatigue and sorrow, we were at length obliged to take refuge in the trunk of a hollow oak, where sleep put an end, for a while, to reflection and care. We awoke ere the sun rose upon the mountains, and again sought the mossy mansion: we were deceived with the appearance of many that resembled it, till the chirping of the new-fledged brood convinced us of our mistake. As we passed along, we beheld hanging loosely to a branch, a nest that had been plundered; we shuddered at the sight, and now became really apprehensive of every danger that we had been taught to expect, from an unacquaintance with the world. Nearly another day elapsed in unavailing search: the country, and every object that the preceding morning had appeared so delightful, now offered not a single charm; the weather too had changed; a bleak wind arose, and we had often to seek a refuge from the hail-storm. After a long and fatiguing excursion, (which we continued at intervals, as favoured by a gleam of sunshine,) we stopped to refresh ourselves on the lofty branches of a pine, with the clear drops suspended from the foliage that was still gemmed with the partial showers; and here,

far from the abode of man, no new peril excited apprehension:—Alas! danger may be nearest when we promise ourselves most security! We listened to the tinkling of the distant sheep-bell; it was a sound to which we had been accustomed, and produced no alarm; we even flattered ourselves we might be approaching the home where we had so often heard it, and that the flight of another morning might restore us to all its comforts, when the report of a gun destroyed the delusive dream of hope, and robbed me of my beloved Airy. I was now deprived of every companion, and my distress greater than can be imagined; nor were my spirits recruited by repose. I arose the following morning unrefreshed by my slumbers. I beheld several inhabitants of the air begin with cheerful songs, the excursion of the morning; and among them a few bullfinches, whose friendship and society I solicited in vain. To all I was a stranger—had forsaken the nest of my parents, and where else could I expect or hope to find protection? There were a few who pitied my misfortunes, and one invited me to partake with him in the yard of an adjacent farm, the first repast of the day. The rest seemed to shun my society, and bade me return to the home I had forsaken. In the farm-yard I again partook of abundance, and we agreed to breakfast there

together the ensuing morning, should I not find the road to our abode; of this I could not form the slightest recollection, and another day passed in solitary flight and unavailing repentance. I anxiously looked forward to the morrow, when the society of a pleasing companion might dissipate the gloom my disposition had contracted from misfortune. At length the hour of appointment arrived. At the same instant we alighted at the door of the granary. The kind of grain we had before so plentifully been regaled with, lay scattered with still greater profusion; but when we had cleared our little repast, and wished to remove, we found our feet fastened with a glutinous substance to the ground. We had not long lamented our miserable situation, when we were seized by a young urchin, and put into a cage, (not much larger than that from which your generosity delivered me,) who ran into the house delighted with the success of his stratagem, for he had observed us the day before, and had spread bird-lime to detain us, should we again come in search of provisions. He had a brother, a little older than himself, whom he called from an inner apartment, to come and have some fun with us, as he termed it. Alas! 'twas torture:—we were taken out of our prison, and they fastened a piece of packthread to one of our legs, which

seemed to threaten dislocation to our tender limbs at every struggle to get free. They had continued this cruel pastime for more than a quarter of an hour, when a favourite cat entered the room. The inhuman boy was then amusing himself with seeing my unfortunate companion hop upon the floor, who, alarmed at the approach of our dreaded enemy, attempted to make his escape by flying from the pursuer, but his flight was impeded by the string, and I beheld him, with inexpressible agony, expiring in the torturing claws of the savage grimalkin. I was immediately secured again in the cage, to preserve me from a similar fate; and here, perhaps, I should have perished with hunger and thirst, had not the mother of the boys (who possessed a small share of humanity) pleaded in my favour: "So, Will," she exclaimed, "you have caught the poor birds, and have suffered the cat to run away with one of them already, and this, I suppose, you mean to starve to death; for you have not given it any thing, as I see, to eat. You know I hate your barbarous sports, and your father was a simpleton to give you a penny to purchase the bird-lime; you never should have had it from me. How often have I told you *both*, that boys who are cruel to dumb animals, will, when they are men, treat their fellow-creatures with inhumanity. This pretty songster shall be

no longer at your mercy: I will take charge of it till I can procure a better mistress; and beware how I find either of you at bird-catching again."

Saying this she took me with her into her own apartment, and replenished my cage with water and provisions. Under her care I should have felt myself comfortable, had not the troubles and sorrows I had undergone, and the melancholy fate of my loved, lamented friends, rendered me almost insensible of every enjoyment.

In the course of a few days, a young lady, daughter to the lord of the manor, called at the farm, to whom I was presented with a thousand encomiums on the blackness of my head, and the beauty of my plumage. My new mistress soon provided me with a splendid mansion, the nicest hemp-seed, and the clearest water; nor did I find in her, as in my former possessor, a sportive tormentor. She treated me with the greatest kindness; I even approached the gilded wires of my cage that I might be nearer to her hand, from which I frequently pecked the groundsel she had gathered, and fluttered with gratitude as she decorated with shepherds-purse the barriers of my splendid prison. Could I have known what had become of my parents, I might have felt myself happy in her protection; but ignorant of their fate, a melancholy seized me, not to be surmount-

ed. The pleasing airs she played upon her harp, could not recall my cheerfulness; yet in return for her indulgences, I endeavoured to imitate the most pathetic. She would frequently open the door of my cage, and allow me to place myself on the top of the instrument, while from its tuneful strings she produced the most delightful sounds. I had here no enemy to fear; for the cats inhabited the stable and the kitchen, they were never seen in the parlour or the drawing-room; the hours of confinement while Julia was engaged with company or her masters, were by no means irksome. I had seen too much of the dangers of the world to wish for perfect freedom; I was only anxious to behold again my parents: almost daily did I meditate a flight, in search of their habitation; yet the thought of leaving the young friend, who had been so kind to me, was distressing; my gratitude for her indulgent attention was only inferior to filial affection: this led me once more to brave the perils of the world, and encounter the hardships of a solitary traveller. The door of my prison being, in the absence of Julia, one morning left ajar, the windows of her apartment were open, and the warm sun shone with uncommon splendour; I once more extended my wings, and in a few minutes lost sight of the hospitable mansion, yet resolved to proceed with

caution, and to observe every tree and shrub that might conduct me to Julia in the evening. At noon, overcome with heat, I stopped to rest in the shade of a thick plantation, that seemed to lead to a beautiful garden, where I became suddenly oppressed with drowsiness, and turned for a few minutes my head under my wing, yet could scarcely be said to be asleep before I was startled by the shaking of the branches beneath me. Alarmed at the motion, I attempted to escape, when I found myself enclosed on all sides with a kind of net work, such as I had heard my father describe to be used by those inhuman wretches, who make a profit of the miserable beings they thus get possession of. I soon found myself in the hands of the young bird-catcher, of whom you had the kindness to purchase me; by him I was conveyed to an apartment where there were several small cages piled one upon another, which contained different kinds of birds. There was also in the centre a large one, the prison of the bull-finches, and in this he placed me: judge of my surprise, to find there my long-lost parents. I eagerly inquired how they came to be sharers of my imprisonment, and was told, that, unable to endure the nest without the society of their off-spring, they determined to set out in search of us; that having, after a tedious flight, stopped

to recruit their exhausted spirits in a green hedge, adjoining the bird-catcher's garden, they were entangled in a snare that had been placed there for the detection of the giddy or unwary. You will imagine our mutual transports, and the sorrow they felt, when I related the fate of Downcrest, Airy, and Sparkle; their deaths had been untimely, but not more than what at that moment seemed to await their surviving relations. The prison was so crowded, that none of our companions, except the few who were nearest the wires, lived to see the morning: we were fortunately of that number, and soon had the grated mansion entirely to ourselves; for the dead birds were taken out by our jailor at his first visit, whose chief employment was now to instruct us to pipe; he played upon a flute, and we were kept without food till we imitated the tunes to his satisfaction; had I not been encouraged by the example of my parents, I should soon have grown weary of this exertion; but the task to them was doubly painful, and I saw them daily undergo it with cheerfulness and patience, notwithstanding the impediments of old age, and the natural wild note of our untaught species. Every difficulty we had to surmount, seemed but to endear us more strongly to each other. The imprudencies of my youth were pardoned, and the sigh only that was

breathed to the memory of their ill-fated offspring, reminded me of my errors. Time obliterated the poignancy of recollection, and we began to taste again of happiness, when in a night of the severest frost, my aged parents were frozen upon their perch: it was then I found it difficult to practise the lessons of resignation they had inculcated; their loss was the severest of my afflictions, and I scarcely knew how to support myself, deprived of their society. In a few weeks after their decease, I was taken to the fair.

Should the events I have related, mark with sufficient energy the miseries attending filial disobedience, and teach the young, that juvenile happiness lies only within the bounds of affection and duty, the grateful bullfinch has not proved an idle or uninteresting moralist.

Edw. What a pretty story! I could almost fancy Bully himself had told it. I wonder how you can think of so many to entertain us with?

Mrs. Lym. And you have really been amused this evening?

Edw. Oh yes!—the story of the bullfinch is almost the prettiest you have ever read to us.

Mrs. Lym. Indeed! then you are not in your usual spirits, for you do not seem to have enjoy-

ed it; for I have at times observed you have been uncommonly grave.

Edw. I was thinking, dear Mamma, that the holidays are nearly at an end, and in a few, very few days, we must leave you and our dear sisters;—I used to be glad when the time came to return to school, but you have been so kind to us this vacation——

Mrs. Lym. Not more so than I ever was; it has been your endeavours to oblige, that have made you see my conduct in a different point of view; you have experienced the advantages of good behaviour, and how much an attention even to the most trifling errors may contribute to your own happiness, as well as to that of those with whom you are connected. There are scarcely any characters, however worthy, that have not a few rough points, and to such I would rather affection should give the polish, than the file of correction.

Alex. We shall have no one to read stories to us at school.

Mrs. Lym. But you will there partake many other amusements, which will render the revival of our plan for entertainments at home, doubly agreeable, when we meet again at Midsummer.

Jos. Fond as I am of stories, I should be as

tired of hearing them every evening, as Mamma would be of writing them for us: yet I wish we could have another this week; but Sir Charles and Lady Clifford are expected to spend a little time with us.

They arrived on the morrow, accompanied by Mr. and Mrs. Edgecombe, Henry, and Laura; the next, and three following days, were wholly taken up in a rehearsal and performance of the little comedy; in which the young people, by their exertions, received merited and just applause. Each evening concluded with a dance. It is scarcely possible to imagine a scene of more perfect juvenile felicity and good humour than that which exhibited itself at Mount Newton; nor was that of the elder circle inferior. Mrs. Lymington had lately received letters, in which she was informed that Mr. Lymington was with the father of Harcourt and Alexis on his return to England. By the friendly exertions of Sir Charles, the affairs of Mr. Edgecombe were settled in a manner the most satisfactory. The amiable and united families were prevailed on to remain another week with their friend; who, at the request of her youthful guests, read, as a conclusion to their winter evenings' amusements, the following Drama.——

CHAP. XXI.

THE ERRORS OF EDUCATION.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

MEN.

Mr. Topaz.	Young Oatley.
Young Topaz.	Sir Chas. Camelford.
Rantall.	Hubert.
Farmer Oatley.	Mr. Melborn.

WOMEN.

Mrs. Topaz.	Julia.
Clementina Topaz.	Madame Fontange.
Lucy.	

ACT. I.—Scene I.

An elegant Toyshop at Tunbridge. Young Topaz discovered sitting in a small Room at the farther part of it, reading aloud.

"To be, or not to be?—that is the question.
"Whether 'tis nobler in the mind to suffer
"The stings and arrows of outrageous fortune,
"Or to take arms against a sea of troubles,
"And by opposing end them?—To die,—to sleep—"

(Several ladies and gentlemen enter.—Tom throwing away the book.)

Young Topaz. 'Tis ever so,—eternal interruption!—And thus it must be, while in this gay

repository I strive to court the aid of genius. Where is my father!—Oatley!—all away!—all absent!——then must I to the post alone. *(Advancing.)* Fair Ladies, may I crave your pleasure?

1st Lady. We wish to look at some bracelets, Sir.

Young Top. An article, ladies, that we can exhibit in all its extensive variety:—Brilliants, that would give splendour to a drawing-room; pearls of the fairest quality; mock pearl, or foil, that on the stage would equal, if not surpass, the diamond's lustre.

2d Lady. We are not actresses, therefore would choose such ornaments as would appear by daylight to advantage.

1st Gen. What is the price of this cane?

Young Top. Three and sixpence only, Sir; dirt cheap: you will not meet with its fellow all over Tunbridge; quite a Goldfinch, Sir: "That's your sort." You could not have a better for the purpose.

1st. Gen. What, Sir, do you suppose I am going to play the "Road to Ruin?"

Y. Top. Dear Sir, I beg your pardon, many gentlemen have acted it in *private;* I do not, believe me, take *you* for a Goldfinch of the Theatre.

1st Lady. Sister, have you chosen the bracelets?

2d Lady. Here are two pair so pretty, I know not to which to give the preference.

Y. Top. Give it to them *both*, Madam. *This* pair would be beautiful on the wrist of sleeping Imogen; or this, equally brilliant on the fair arm of Cleopatra.

1st Gent. *(Aside.)* The theatrical Topaz we have heard so much of since our residence at Tunbridge. *(Aloud.)* Pray, Sir, can you inform us what the play is to-night.

Y. Top. The Merchant of Venice; Shylock, first time, by Mr. Rantall;—promises to be the finest actor in England;—*great* in *everything*, but superlatively great in Shylock;—sold him a beard not an hour ago. The whole piece will be well played, depend upon it; and "this accounts for it."—*Good acting—good Playhouse*—under the best government:—most liberal manager in the three kingdoms!——Portia, by a young lady of great abilities from Ireland;—all the world on the tiptoe of expectation, Sir: and the after-piece from the pen of a new performer, that for dress, splendour, machinery, decorations, music, effect, and plot——leave out the last word if you please, Sir, it is obsolete; you'll find it among the works of old authors;—never seek it among the *moderns*. If a piece is *loud*, *striking*, and *splendid*, it would

be unfashionable to enumerate its incidents, or examine whether they are founded on probability.

1st. Lady. What is the lowest price of the bracelets, Sir, if I take two pair?

Y. Top. Six guineas, Madam:—any other article I could recommend to your notice this fine morning?

1st Lady. Not any:—you may inclose a card. I shall speak of your repository among my friends.

Y. Top. My father will give you his most gracious thanks, fair Lady: 'tis his, this magazine of gewgaws; my employments are of a nobler cast. In yonder closet, far from the tumult of the busy world, I study plays, and turn my thoughts to poetry.—You understand me, Sir; prodigies should not be seen too often; it damps curiosity,—half my father's business depends on his son's eccentricities; I therefore never assume the tradesman's character, when he is in the way to support it. *(Opening the door.)* Allow me, Ladies; the lock is a little rusty:—Gentlemen, good morning; your most obedient humble servant. *(Exeunt Lad. and Gen.*

Now to my studies, to perfect myself in Hamlet: I promised to perform it on Rantall's night; that is, if I can obtain father's consent: for, wild as I am, I have never yet acted any part without it.

Scene II.

A Parlour.—Mrs. Topaz *ornamenting a fine Screen.*
Enter Mr. Topaz.

Top. So, Mrs. Topaz, at your usual employment; always some new whim; one can never come home to a comfortable apartment; the house is littered from one end of it to the other, and you in the midst of confusion, surrounded with paper, paste, and medallions.

Mrs. Top. So much as I stay at home, it is very hard, my dear, that I cannot amuse myself as I please. You must acknowledge, the well-fancied ornaments of *our* apartment excite universal admiration.

Top. And, perhaps, behind our backs, universal ridicule: believe me, Mrs. Topaz, these are not employments for our present station, however they might have accorded with our more prosperous days.

Mrs. Top. Dear, Mr. Topaz, what plebeian ideas!—as if people of real taste, in every situation of life, were not at liberty to display their abilities.

Top. Not if an exertion of such must infringe on a system of economy, which a turn of unfavourable circumstances have rendered but too necessary: and, let me tell you, it requires no great abilities to patch on medallions that are bought ready painted. For the mother of a fa-

mily, it is both an idle and useless employ; not to mention the sums that are weekly expended on gold paper, and all sorts of coloured trumpery.—Unpleasant as it is always to find my rooms in this disorder of *taste*, I should not repeat the subject so often, but on Clementina's account. The girl, with a natural good disposition, at an age when she should be made useful in her father's family, is positively the most useless thing belonging to it.

Mrs. Top. So you are pleased to say; because I do not choose she should spoil her pretty hands by assisting with the pastry, which, according to your ancient notions, ought to be her province. You consented to give her a genteel education; and now she has received every accomplishment, and left the boarding-school, you wish her to become a drudge to domestic business.

Top. By no means,—you entirely misunderstand me; to see her accomplished, would give me pleasure, did I not, at the same time, observe she was ignorant of all family concerns and management.

Mrs. Top. It is time enough for her to be acquainted with such things; she is not yet seventeen, and I hope before she is twenty, will marry into a family of too high rank, for it ever to be necessary.

Top. In the highest rank, an attention to the

use or misuse of property can never be unnecessary: were it the fashion to economize, how many millions of their fellow-creatures might be benefited by the frugality of the rich! I know not on what you may found your expectations of our daughter's future quality; I confess I have not any, nor a desire for her to share more of greatness than her parents have hereto done. To wish our children riches, is not always to wish them felicity. In the middle ranks of life, Clementina might have made some worthy man happy; but from her cradle have you raised her ideas above her station, and spoiled her by improper indulgence, of which a little time must show you the dreadful consequences.

Mrs. Top. What is it you mean, Sir?

Top. That her extravagance, and your want of economy, have led me to the brink of ruin.

Mrs. Top. You are always talking in this low-spirited manner, to affect one's nerves, and make one uncomfortable. *You* on the brink of ruin, indeed! with one of the most elegant repository's of jewellery in all Tunbridge, and the most frequented!

Top. What business is sufficiently lucrative to support extravagance, when a daughter's shoemaker's bill alone, for the last half year, amounts to four pounds ten?

Mrs. Top. It is a great deal, to be sure; but it is impossible to go shabby in such a place as this: beside, Clementina has been to six balls.

Top. And was it necessary the daughter of a Jeweller should be present at half that number?

Mrs. Top. You surely would not wish her to be confined as if she was in a convent?—Poor girl, she will never be able to make her fortune!

Top. The fortunes that may be acquired by gadding, are seldom worth the having; men of principle and merit, would not choose a wife for her superior excellence in dancing; and I much fear, it is the only real accomplishment our daughter can boast of.

Mrs. Top. You forget the sweetness of her voice, and her execûtion on the piano, and that she is perfectly mistress of every fashionable invention.

Top. Transparent screens, pasteboard flower-stands, and varnished tables, I suppose you mean are the favourite and expensive objects of her employment.

Mrs. Top. And why should not the dear child follow her innocent pursuits? they are the occupations of a gentlewoman.

Top. When the example of frivolity is given in a mother's conduct, it is no wonder a daughter should think it worthy imitation; this abuse of time and faculties has long been a subject of altercation; it is with regret I still perceive remonstrance is ineffectual.

Mrs. Top. Such it will ever be, Mr. Topaz; our ideas can never assimilate on this subject. Have I ever interfered in the plan of education you have

pursued with your son? Although it has every where made him an object of ridicule and censure: then why give your opinion so freely on that which I have adopted for his sister? Time, I fancy, will show which has been regulated with most wisdom.

Top. In regard to Tom, the world may laugh at his eccentricities, it is all it can do,—his disposition is amiable, and never did he commit a fault that could incur my serious displeasure. He is fond of poetry, writing, and theatrical amusements; but for these, does he ever neglect his business? *No:*—His study is at the back of the repository, where he can see and hear all that passes.

Mrs. Top. True; when he is not rehearsing, or invoking the muses. Dear, Mr. Topaz, I wish you would be more careful; you have brushed away a wreath of gold leaves that was to have surrounded the medallion.

Top. No matter; it is just as well upon the ground, as where you were going to place it.—— Matilda, would I could persuade you to listen to me with attention. It is not yet too late,—a little economy would retrieve the follies of extravagance, and a change of employment contribute to our domestic comfort. Reason with my Clementina; tell her a father's circumstances will no longer admit of superfluous indulgences, and that he entreats her, for his future peace, to limit her expenses in dress and amusements.

Mrs. Top. You had better tell her all this yourself; I have never laid any restraint upon her inclinations, nor *ever will;*—it is your delight to make us all uncomfortable.

Top. Far from it, Madam:—I would recall you to reason, and avert the storm of affliction that is ready to burst upon us. I will see my daughter,—represent to her my situation, and do not despair of obtaining from her that pity a mother's heart denies me. *(Exit Top.*

Scene III.

Mrs. Topaz.

He is more than usually melancholy of late, and always out of humour; yet, what have I done to excite his displeasure? There surely is no harm in amusing myself with fancy-works?—It might be more commendable for the wife of a tradesman to be occupied with her domestic concerns; and I have sometimes lamented, I cannot accommodate myself to his taste. I believe we should live happier, yet, when I think of the fortune I inherited, and the manner in which I was brought up by my fond parents, their only, their darling child, it has made me fancy myself entitled to a thousand indulgences, which my present rank in life will not, with propriety, admit of. When I reflect that I married Mr. Topaz from affection, and a sincere esteem for the worthiness of his

character, perhaps I am to blame in not attending to the duties more particularly, that an inferior station seem to require. Could I believe there was truth in the apprehension of approaching misfortune, I believe I would exert myself to the utmost to make him easy; but it is a melancholy subject, and doubtless the offspring of his too anxious disposition. *(Looking at her watch.)* Bless me! 'tis almost twelve o'clock; I have three very particular visits to make this morning, and it is time I began the business of the toilet. *(Exit.*

CHAP. XXII.

SCENE IV.

A Dressing Room,—Miss TOPAZ, *Young* TOPAZ, *and* JULIA; *a variety of Ornaments, Caps, &c. displayed in different parts of it.*

Young Topaz. So then, Clementina, you will not hear the last act of my comedy.

Clem. You must excuse me, brother; the four you have read, have quite fatigued me; you know I have no taste for the Drama:—beside, I must try on these turbans; I expect Madame Fontange every minute.

Y. Top. I am sure you will be pleased with the denouement; *such incident! such effect!*—should not be surprised if it was to have a run of ninety nights.

Clem. Nor I, if it ever get accepted.

Jul. And why should it not get accepted, dear cousin? the piece has certainly merit.

Clem. So has every thing, in your opinion, that relates to Dramatis Personæ; I suppose you will be for exhibiting your theatrical abilities, some night or other, before a Tunbridge audience.

Y. Top. Yes; she shall play Juliet, and I Romeo.

"But soft,—what light thro' yonder window breaks?
"It is the east, and Juliet is the sun."

Jul. I have not such thoughts, Clementina; although I like plays, I am more partial to poetry, and now and then have vanity enough to prefer my own thoughts to that of others.

Y. Top. You shall write a Prologue, Juliet, to my new Comedy:—*neat*,—to the *purpose*,—*spirited*,—lash at the times, Eh!—cut them up,—keen satire!——you understand me!

Jul. I doubt if I understand the business; however, I'll perhaps make the attempt.

Clem. I wish you would be quiet, brother; now will she be so entranced in the world of ideas, that not a living soul will be able to extort a syllable, on the most trifling subject, for a week to come. Pray, Tom, let those feathers alone; I wonder you will always be coming into my dressing-room; you know I detest your company.

Y. Top. Thus then, fair ladies, do I take my leave,

"Good night, good night;—parting is such sweet
"sorrow,
"That I could say good night till it were morrow."

(Exit Young Topaz.

Scene V.

Clem. 'Tis morning now; you are dreaming, sure:—Oh! now I know; it is the stupor of Dramatic mania, that thus inverts diurnal order, and to dark night transforms meridian splendour. Thank Heaven, Julia, I am not one of those eccentric beings called a genius, who are for ever boring every body with the objects of their invention, or moping about the house the silent spectres of melancholy and ill-temper. *(Trying on a turban.)* Tell me, my dear, would it not look better with another rose in the front?

Jul. Not, in my opinion; but I have no taste, you know:—Do you mean to purchase either of these head-dresses?

Clem. Certainly: do you think I ordered them merely to look at?

Jul. You had a new cap at the *last* assembly.

Clem. And could I appear to-night in the same?

Jul. Without any impropriety, if you must go?

Clem. If I *must* go—Julia, is not dancing my favourite amusement? and am I not at liberty to do as I please?

Jul. You have ever thought yourself so, yet it would have been more to your advantage had some restraint been laid upon your inclinations at an earlier age.

Clem. Mamma herself was never contradicted, and I am sure she would not contradict me in any thing.

Jul. It would be better if she did; and that you went less into public.

Clem. Have I not a right to frequent balls, assemblies, and private parties? Mamma was heiress to a large fortune, and papa's family was one of the most *respectable*, although a younger son; and from the estate being injured by his father's attachment to dogs and race-horses, he was at his death obliged to take up some profession, which his father's liberality to him, and promises of future provision, had before rendered unnecessary. He chose that of a Jeweller; and, not to disgrace a brother, who was high in the army, assumed the name of Topaz.

Jul. I have a faint recollection of my grandfather, although very young when papa sent me over to England for education, and placed me under my uncle's protection. Is it not strange,

Clementina, that more than a twelve-month has elapsed since we have received a letter from my father?

Clem. It *is* rather extraordinary; my father wrote, I know, on our removal from London; but the letters may not have reached him, as gentlemen of the army seldom continue long in a place; beside, there have been several engagements in those parts with the enemy.

Jul. There have, indeed! and my dear father may be among the number of the slain!

(Weeps.)

Clem. Dear how low-spirited you always are! He may be well,—I am sure I know nothing to the contrary. I declare one knows not how to speak to you; your excessive sensibility turns every thing into sorrow, and renders your society disgusting; for you seem to think it extremely becoming to be always weeping.

Jul. Pardon me, Clementina; my disposition is not quite so lively as yours; of *late*, it has been unusually gloomy.—My father's silence, and the dejection that is visible in my uncle's countenance, has thrown a depression on my spirits I cannot conquer.

Clem. Yes, he does look woful enough, to be sure; but his ill humours are nothing to you; *you* never get an angry word, they are all my portion,

and you see the uneasiness they give me.—— *(Singing, and trying on another turban.)* This must be the cap for to-night; it will be the envy, the admiration of the whole assembly.

Jul. Fie, cousin! how can you be so thoughtless;—something, I am sure, is the matter; some uneasiness of mind, I am inclined to think, has made the alteration, if there is any, in my uncle's disposition. Were I in your place, I should seriously reflect whether any part of my conduct had not occasioned it.

Clem. I dare say you would!—you are so *good*, so *wise*,—and practise so well what you preach! I suppose you would have me refuse the invitation of this evening, to stay at home and help you to coax papa into good humour.

Jul. I could wish you, indeed, to grant him your society. It is evident your present line of gaiety is highly displeasing; and the sacrifice of one evening, to make him comfortable, might have the happiest effect, both on his spirits and disposition. Allow me to say, your conduct is highly reproachable; to act contrary to the wishes of an affectionate parent, is to invite every ill consequence that marks a deviation from the path of duty.

Clem. You may lecture as long as you please, Julia; it is to no purpose, when my inclination's

fixed,—*go* I will——Oh! here come Fontange and Lucy.——My dear cousin, you have performed your part, as Tom would say, to admiration; but since we are interrupted, to "exit now would be to merit fresh applause." *(Exit Julia.*

SCENE VI.

Enter FONTANGE *and* LUCY.

My dear Fontange, how are you this morning? Do not I look wretched?—my mope of a cousin has been talking me into the vapours. The prettiest turban, Fontange, ten minutes ago,—I thought it the most becoming———

Mad. Fon. Il vous sied a ravir, Mademoiselle,——never saw you look so charmante, so interesting———

Clem. Oh! shocking!—pray do not use that expression any more.——*Interesting!*—it implies all that is triste, sombre, and insipid; all that my cousin is,—and what *I* would not be for the universe.

Mad. Fon. Mademoiselle Julie, very pretty young lady, only a little too grave;—had she but a quarter of your vivacity———

Clem. She would be the beauty of Tunbridge! You would not offend *me* by saying so; I know she is handsome.

Mad. Fon. Pardonnez moi Mademoiselle, she has not your complexion.

Clem. Come, come, Fontange, do not flatter;—I have a mind to try on this muslin robe;—assist me, Lucy. *(Puts on the dress.*

Lucy. It fits beautifully, Madam.

Clem. Suppose I have it then; it will suit the turban better than any of the others. Julia would say I do not want it. How should she know what I want: Mamma would say, Please yourself, my love. So I *will;*—therefore leave it Fontange.

Mad. Fon. *(To Lucy)* Does mi Lady go to de concert, on Friday?

Clem. I believe I shall:—What of that Fontange?

Mad. Fon. Only Mademoiselle overlook de concert turban; the prettiest thing of the kind ever invented. Allow me to leave it for your inspection.

Clem. For my purchase, I suppose you mean:—Well, Fontange, fashion will certainly be my ruin, as papa says;—yet if you *will* bring temptation before me, how can I withstand the charm?

Lucy. You have six head-dresses already; all *new*, within the last six weeks, Madam.

Clem. If I have six score, and choose to have one more, who has the right to control me? are you Julia's deputy, that you take upon yourself thus impertinently to censure my conduct?—Leave the turban, Fontange.

Mad. Fon. Any further commands, Mademoiselle?

Clem. No;—I think that will do for the present. You may call again in the course of the week; it is possible I *may* want something more; for you know I cannot bear the vulgarity of appearing any where twice in the same dress. *(Exit Mad.)* Here, Lucy, adjust these sleeves:—What is the matter?—you are stupid as an idiot to-day: what are you thinking of?

Scene VII.

Lucy. I was just then thinking, Miss, how unkind it seemed of you, to give so much thought to dress and public places, when my master is so indifferent.

Clem. Pray what ails him?

Lucy. He complained of a violent head-ache this morning, and I am sure his looks denote that he is ill.

Clem. Yes, ill enough in temper; he has no disorder but peevishness; and that's a complaint I'll never stay at home to nurse him for.—I wish I had remained at school; kind as my dear Mamma is, every indulgence she gives me seems to create some domestic disturbance. How can he imagine a girl of my spirits and accomplishments, can consent to give up every pleasure, and spend her evenings at home in the dronish circle of a family party? I wonder how Julia can submit

to it. Not one assembly has she been to, since we left London.

Lucy. And yet she is not less fond of dancing than you are; but I have heard her say, since her uncle's circumstances obliged him to enter on any profession, she felt a reluctance to partake in amusements that the middle ranks of life could not indulge in, without the world attaching to them the censure of impropriety.

Clem. Well, let her do as she pleases, I am sure I do not wish for her company.—Make haste and pin my robe.—There now! you have run the pins into me.—What an awkward, clumsy animal you are! Give them to me;—you may go and dress my cousin; she will perhaps be glad of your assistance. Get out of my sight!

Lucy. I wish you had half her good-nature.

(Exit Lucy.

SCENE VIII.

Clem. I cannot think why Mamma made choice of such a helpless creature! She may keep her for her own service, or transfer her to Julia. I'll go this moment, show her my new dress, and desire her to get somebody to wait on me who has been accustomed to attend people of fashion; for I cannot bear my delicate dresses should be touched by the fingers of a rustic.

(Exit Clementina.

Scene IX.

The Study of Young Topaz.—Young Topaz *and* Rantall. *Tom spouting* "Speak the speech, I pray you."

Y. Top. There, Rantall! What think you of that specimen?

Rant. Wonderfully well indeed! if you can speak with as much confidence before an audience.

Y. Top. Why should you doubt it? Did I not perform Macbeth to an hundred of our friends at the Academy? 'Twas that night's applause that strengthened my passion for the Stage; but finding my father did not approve of my becoming an actor, I resolved to commence author; and except at your benefit, never to exert my abilities as performer within the walls of a theatre. But to the point, Rantall: Have you presented the copy of my comedy?

Rant. I have:—Mr. Cast, the Manager, has promised to give it early attention; but as your fame is not yet established as an author, I would advise you to call upon him in the course of a few days.

Y. Top. Thank you, good friend, a thousand thanks are yours! I *will* pay my respects to Mr. Cast. The piece has merit, incident, situation, humour to recommend it, adapted to the taste of

the times——must meet with his approbation. Now, Charles, for a rehearsal of our parts.—I Hamlet, and you Horatio: here we may be overheard; let us to the garden, where we may give a free scope to action, and, unobserved, may even "tear the cave where Echo lies, and make her airy tongue more hoarse than ours, with" repetitions of the Drama.———

CHAP. XXIII.

ACT II.

SCENE I.—*A Counting House.* TOPAZ, *sitting pensively, surrounded with Books and Papers.*

Topaz. THESE papers but add to my uneasiness; to the heart-harrowing pages shall soon be added that of bankrupcy: ruin—ruin every where presents itself to my disordered mind,—my wife, my daughter,—what will become of them? Still insensible to the misery that awaits them.—It is her false indulgence to Clementina that has been our destruction. In times like the present, when every necessary of life is purchased at so deara rate, the richest can have little to spend on superfluity, and the artisan, nothing on dress and luxury. Never till this time did I wish to lay any restraint on their inclinations. My Matilda's fortune has ever been at her own disposal; large as it was, it has proved insufficient to supply the

demands of fashion and dissipation. Unaccustomed to contradiction from her infancy, she cannot endure the slightest remonstrance; and the follies of her own education have been transmitted to that of her child; yet the goodness of her heart is visible in a thousand instances. Averse to saying any thing that might imbitter her happiness, I have delayed the painful task of expostulation: in this, perhaps, I have erred; had I sooner exerted a parent's authority, the misfortunes that now threaten us might, in some measure, have been avoided.——Unfortunate father!

SCENE II.

Enter JULIA, *with chocolate and toast.*

Jul. Allow me, Uncle, to persuade you to accept a cup of chocolate; my Aunt is not come down yet, but you were up early, and fasting so long is not good for your health.

Top. Thank you, my dear child;—Clementina would not be thus mindful of a father.

Jul. She is a little thoughtless, but her heart is good.

Top. Is it not in danger, Julia, of corruption from dissipation?

Jul. Let us hope she will be tired of its follies before any serious evils arise from their effect.

Top. Sit down, Julia; your presence is a comfort to me:—You are not my daughter, and yet

you seem to feel for me all the tender affections of a child.

Jul. Can I do otherwise?—You have been a parent to me, and well supplied the place of that dear father, whom I left in India. To you was intrusted the important charge of education. I had hoped he would have been spared to have acknowledged all your kindness,—your unremitting care.

Top. My brother may yet return, Julia; we have received no *certain* accounts of his death.

Jul. Alas! it is hardly probable; yet, when in good spirits, a faint hope will sometimes glance thro' my mind that we *shall* meet again. Could this hope be realized, it would restore *us all* to happiness.

Top. What do you mean, my love? Who is unhappy?

Jul. You are, I am sure: I have long observed it:——if you would allow me, I think I could guess the cause.——

Top. It does not signify, Julia; misfortunes are the consequence of error.

Jul. Not always, dear Uncle; they may sometimes be regarded as trials of the good.

Top. What is it but error, to have yielded to foibles and indulgences that my reason and judgment equally disapprove, when exerted authority

and early expostulation might have prevented future calamity.

Jul. Remonstrance will yet avail. I will talk to Clementina; represent to her———

Top. A father's ruin and despondence———. Alas! my affectionate niece, it is too late. My creditors are become impatient. Clementina's frequent appearance in public, has rendered them outrageous: unable to satisfy their demands, I must soon exchange this mansion for a prison.

Jul. Do not say so:—perhaps the last year's remittances have not been all expended. Make use of those, my dear Uncle, to satisfy the most clamorous.

Top. And what would become of you, my child?

Jul. Think not of me; the education I have received has provided me with many resources, and I can impart my instructions to others.

Top. Talk not thus; you distress me; I should be a monster could I appropriate your property to my necessities. No, Julia; from your strict economy, great part of the last remittances remain untouched. I have been looking into the accounts this morning. Here are notes to the amount; it is no small comfort, that I can see you saved from sinking with us into adversity; it will, at least, support you till I can extricate myself from present difficulties.

Jul. They are no longer mine, they are *yours*; you *must*,—you shall permit me to return them. Would that I had the means to make them doubly worthy your acceptence.

Top. Forbear this importunity, my generous child, and know that were the sum twice trebled, it could not save your Uncle from imprisonment. Be persuaded, Julia; put them up. When I am taken from you, I tremble to think what situation you may be reduced to. Young, beautiful, and inexperienced, thrown upon the world without a friend or adviser; —*where, without money*, could you claim protection? —and *with it*, how difficult to find a *proper* or a *safe* asylum!

Jul. Do you think, then, I would leave my Aunt?—No:—I will endeavour to alleviate her and Clementina's sorrow.

Top. Their future kindness will, I hope, reward your affection. Do not weep—my case is not an extraordinary one. Many of late, whose commercial interests presented the fairest prospects, have, by the unavoidable, but dreadful consequences of war, been plunged into adversity; and where the cause of misfortune cannot be traced to self-error or imprudence, the burden of its evils must be doubly felt, because apparently *unmerited*.

SCENE III.

Enter CLEMENTINA *singing.*

Clem. Good morning, Papa: Mamma sent me to say she was ready for breakfast.

Top. You may say I am busy looking over some papers. Your cousin has been so kind to bring me a cup of chocolate.

Jul. My dear Sir, you do not surely mean to deprive us of the pleasure of your company; my Aunt, I am sure, will be quite unhappy, if you do not take some breakfast.

Clem. Come, Papa I have so much to tell you about the ball the other night.

Top. Will you never have done with the odious subject of balls and assemblies, Clementina?

Clem. Not till I am tired of frequenting them; that will not be till I am too old to bear the fatigue of dressing for them; but if you will breakfast with us, Papa, and smile as you used to do formerly, I will talk of the books my cousin and I read when we were at school together, and I dare say she has some pretty scraps of poetry of her own composing which she will favour you with a sight of.

Top. Ah! Clementina, I wish your amusements were as innocent as her's; but I believe you *hate* books of every kind.

Clem. No;—*some* I think very entertaining. I used to like history, and some times think I will make it a rule to read a few pages every day;—

but I know not how it is, I cannot find a moment's time. I should think, there must be *some* pleasure in study, since Julia and my brother, can shut themselves for whole days together, with their favourite authors, and desire no other company. Do you know, Papa, Tom has written a comedy; I have heard the first four acts; 'twas quite a clever thing, I assure you, and———

Jul. Stop, Clementina, you forget he wished it to be kept a secret.

Clem. Oh! so he did;—what a thoughtless thing I am; but Papa will not mention it, I am sure.

Top. No, indeed, I shall not; he will surprise me with it some day, I suppose; for he is generally anxious to obtain my approbation; he *will* mount his Pegasus; but his excursions never lead him out of sight of duty. With a mind that apparently detests the slavery and uniformity of business, when a father's interest requires his assistance, he has never scrupled to submit to the toil.

Clem. He was always *your* favourite, you know, Papa.

Top. I believe I have ever loved you both with equal affection, Clementina; some part of your conduct I could wish to see an alteration in; but in adversity, you will learn to correct the errors that have been so fatal to your family.

Clem. Now, my dear Papa, you are going to be low-spirited again : for ever the old subject—Clementina's faults. I wonder you cannot find some in my cousin ?

Top. Julia is an example of all that, at your age, is most amiable.

Clem. It is very strange she should be so much better than I am—we were at the same school ?

Top. You were ; and both under the same excellent instructress. Your lively disposition taught you to consider every necessary restraint a hardship. You complained, whenever you came home, of severity, and the particularities of your governess exaggerated every little grievance : a mother's fondness for you would not suffer her to investigate the subject of dissatisfaction, and you were spoiled by false indulgence. Julia, on the contrary, in Mrs. Milsom's disposition, found a resemblance to that of the mother she had lost ; this cemented the attachment, and gave additional weight to all her instructions.

Jul. Permit me to remind you, my dear Uncle, that my Aunt is waiting for us.

Top. Another time then, Clementina, grant me your society for a few minutes in this apartment. I have something of importance to communicate ; and let me hope you will so far copy Julia, as not to treat the subject with levity or inattention. *Exeunt.*

SCENE IV.

The Repository.—Farmer OATLEY, *and Young* OATLEY.

Farm. How is it with you, my dear boy? I was passing through, and would halt a bit to inquire after you and our good master's health.

Oat. Old master not very well of late; they say he has some disorder on his *spirits*,—but, do you know, Father, I think as how 'tis more upon his *heart*.

Farm. Poor man! máyhap it is:—we knew him when he was a gentleman. 'Twas wrong of his father to bring him up to the expectation of that estate he knew his own follies had rendered not worth the having. His brother, at the old gentleman's death, would have been as badly off, had not a distant relation, when he was young, given him a commission, by which he rose to great distinction in foreign service; but this younger son, brought up to no profession, to find himself at his father's death, scarcely in possession of thirty pounds a-year; it was enough to break a stouter heart than our master's, Charles.

Oat. I am sure he is under some embarrassments, he looks so melancholy. Times are hard, and people have little to bestow on ornaments. I do believe we should not take sixpence a day, were it not for young master's oddities; folks drop in sometimes to hear him talk. He is a great *spouter*,

do you know, father; always a play-book in his hand or his pocket; he has taught me to read Shakspeare, that I may be able to hear him his parts.

Farm. I had rather he had taught you *arithmetic.* I'll tell you what, Charles, let me hear that you run after stage-players, and spout verses, and I'll trundle you into the waggon, take you home again, and send you to plough.

Oat. What, father, after I have been so long in the family? You forget now, all master's kindness to us, when he lived on his father's estate.

Farm. No, I don't—no, I don't:—I'll tell you what, son, no good ever comes of people going out of their sphere. A fig for all romanticated notions!—study plays, indeed!—half of them are only fit to light one's pipe with; a pack of nonsense, lies, and immorality; and as if we had not enough in our own country, we must import them from foreign parts.—Study to be an honest man, Charles; that's the *best* study.

Oat. "And that's the noblest work"——

Farm. Don't spout, Sir:—I can't bear it.

Oat. May one not be honest, Father, and a sort of genius too?

Farm. Why, to be sure, Genius and Honesty do *sometimes* go together; but I'll tell you what, they oftener travel contrary roads. The ideas in the brain of Genius get so whisked about, new

thoughts crowding in continually, old ones pushed out of their places,—that *Principle* itself sometimes slips off the seat of Memory,

Oat. Well, well, Father, I'll attend to business. *(Aside.)* That is, if we have any to attend to.

Farm. Do,—there's a good lad, and serve thy master faithfully, for he has done us many services in his time;—'twas him who put thee to school, and always made us a present of a cow on his birth-day. I cannot bear he should be distressed, Charles. I have never yet been able to thank him as I wish, but *now* is a fair opportunity. Perhaps I have a prescription about me that will cure his malady; the profits of industry may relieve a worthy master from necessity.—Can one see him? Can he be spoken with?

Oat. I'll go and see, father. *(Exit Oatley.*

SCENE V.

Farm. Poor gentleman!—poor Master Topaz, as thou callest thyself!—This comes of a genteel education;—in my mind, an useful one would be preferable. It would be well if all schoolmasters and instructers were of the same opinion; at least so far as to join utility with accomplishments, for *alone*, they are a poor inheritance: this is exemplified in the case of my worthy master. Had he known how to turn his hand to the plough, as the saying is, he might have been able to raise a

fortune upon the basis of industry; but to be led away by a whimsical disposition to turn jeweller,—why it was to turn to *ruin*. I never expected it would be otherwise; yet it almost breaks my old heart to think of it!

Scene VI.

Topaz *and* Oatley.

Top. My worthy friend, how is it with you? it is long since you favoured us with a visit?

Farm. Yes, my good Sir;—I do not travel far from home, but, business calling me to town, I thought I might as well look in upon Charles, and ask after all the good family.

Top. We are all well, I am obliged to you. How is your good dame, and the young people?

Farm. Better than we have been for many a year, I humbly thank you, Sir; we have had a plentiful harvest, and every thing seems to prosper with us, notwithstanding the badness of the times, and the miseries of war, which I fear you in this part of the world have felt the effects of.

Top. These are among the evils that the tradesman is liable to: there are thousands who have greater subjects for complaint; what right have I, then, to murmur?

Farm. Ah! my good master, I see you have met with great uneasiness;—people who are eager for jewels, are not always in a hurry to pay for

them. It is so, Sir; the bad debts may be read in your melancholy countenance; suffer me to wipe off the old scores that give you so much concern.

Top. What is it you mean, my good old man?

Farm. *(Emptying a leathern purse upon the counter.)* There:—that will help to cancel them; 'tis but the produce of a few months labour; the golden seeds of industry; I would sow them *here*, that master might reap again the harvest of happiness, from the soil of gratitude.

Top. Receive my sincerest thanks, my worthy friend, for all your generous intentions. Suffer me to replace the gold—take it with you—put it out to interest, for the benefit of your wife and children.

Farm. Dear Sir, if you would but take it, what pleasure would it give them; they long to see you as happy as you once made us, when you placed Charles at the grammar-school, and increased our little stock by your annual donations; since things have turned out so prosperously, would you but thus receive our thanks.

Top. You must excuse me; I have a few difficulties to encounter,—when those are overcome, all will go on comfortably again.

Oat. Since you will not oblige father, will you grant me a favour, Sir, to let me henceforth serve you for nothing.

Top. No, Charles,—you have been a faithful lad, and well deserve the little I can afford to give you.

Oat. Ah! no, Sir;—but I will be more attentive in future, and study accounts more than plays; and I'll persuade Master Thomas too, though I believe he is so bigoted to the theatre, it will be no easy matter: I'll try—I will indeed, Sir, do any thing, if you will let me serve you for pleasure,—for affection,—for any thing but money.

Top. We will talk of this another time, Charles; take your father into the parlour, the breakfast things are not removed; and tell Clementina I wish to speak with her. I will be with you soon again, my worthy friend; take a little time to rest, before you proceed on your journey.———

(Exeunt Farmer and Oatley.

Now for this much sought, yet dreaded interview. Could but my afflictions raise half the interest in a daughter's bosom, they have done even in that of those who are not related to me, I were less miserable. I will yet hope her future conduct will be marked by discretion.—My dear Matilda I thought appeared this morning with all her former kindness, and Clementina was less volatile.

SCENE VII.

Enter CLEMENTINA.

Top. Now, my Clementina, to resume the conversation of the morning.

Clem. Not an enumeration of my faults, I hope, Papa?

Top. You have for more than three months, my daughter, seen me languid, unwell, and dejected; insensible to every domestic comfort.—With a heart oppressed with sorrow have I answered the salutations of the morning, and took leave of you when your evening parties called you from my presence, with a mind overcome with anguish.—It is time to account for this disorder, and make you acquainted with the extent of my sufferings. I am a bankrupt, Clementina:—in a few days must this sad news be made public; in what light will you then appear in the world, dressed in all the gaiety of expensive fashion!—You have frequented every place of public resort, regardless of a father's circumstances, nor ever stopped to ask yourself the question, whether his line of life could authorize such an appearance, or his slender income support your extravagant conduct. Had you listened to the well-meant admonitions of Julia, all had been well; at least the unavoidable misfortunes of situation might have

been sustained with greater fortitude, had they not been accelerated by your prodigality. For the first time in my life, Clementina, I am going to exact your obedience. You have an invitation to a private dance this evening:—send an apology. If you can go after what I have said, I will never more acknowledge you as my daughter.

(Exit Topaz.

Scene VIII.

Clementina *sits down and bursts into tears.*

Clem. The apology, then, *must* be written:—'tis Miss Revel's birth-day. I had my spotted muslin, and my hat new trimmed for the occasion; it was to have been a most delightful party. What excuse can I make? That papa is unwell—yes, that will be nearest the truth. I am sure I would not have gone to so many balls; if I had thought it would really have made him so uneasy; although not inclined to indulge me as much as mamma, he has always been extremely kind to me. I wish I had not suffered Fontange to leave so many things; I know not when I shall be able to settle her account. *(Clementina writes the note; as she is folding it, Lucy crosses the stage.)* Come hither, Lucy; I am sorry I spoke so hastily to you this morning; I will entreat mamma to let you stay with us. Papa is, as you told me, very unwell, and I am so unhappy——

Lucy. I am sorry there is any cause for you to be so:—shall I send Miss Julia to you?

Clem. No;—I will go to my mother, beg of her to point out all my errors, submit to correction, and entreat her to regulate my future conduct, so as to obtain a father's approbation.

(Exeunt.

SCENE IX.

An Apartment at an Inn.

Colonel CAMELFORD *and* HUBERT.

Col. Well, Hubert, have you met with any apartment that will suit, till this touch of the gout will permit us to proceed on our journey towards the metropolis?

Hub. Yes, Sir; after traversing the furnished apartments of several boarding-houses, in which I did not meet with one to my satisfaction, I stepped in to buy a cane at a Toy-shop, a few doors below, and continuing my inquiries, was informed there was in that house, a pretty apartment above stairs to let, just what your honour would wish for; we struck a bargain directly, and I was so pleased with the neatness of the drawing-room, and its convenient situation, that I ran out of the shop to tell you of our good fortune, without once inquiring the name of the master.

Col. It is no matter, Hubert;—but did they

say we could remove thither this evening?—for you know I detest the noise and bustle of an inn.

Hub. As soon as your honour pleases;—I'll order the baggage to be taken directly, and send a message to have the apartments prepared by tea time. *(Exit Hubert.*

Scene X.

Col. Do so:—'Tis unfortunate, after having escaped unhurt in so many engagements, to return to my native country, and here to be taken prisoner by the gout. The evils we cannot remedy, must be supported with patience!—For two years have I been wishing to revisit this happy island; let me still hope it contains the blessings I have been so anxious to return to; a few days rest, with the attentive care of my faithful Hubert, I shall be able to proceed on my journey.

Scene XI.

A Dressing-room at Mr. Topaz's.

Clementina *re-perusing the Note she has written.*

Lucy *waiting.*

Clem. Yes, that will do; and now the painful task is ended; go it must. Lucy, to your care I commit this note; let it be delivered as soon as possible. I will go to Julia;—ask her for some instructive author, and at least spend this day to my father's taste. *(Exit Lucy.*

(As she is going meets Julia.)

Ah! my dear cousin,—I was just coming to ask you to lend me a book.

Jul. I shall be happy to supply you;—but have you no new dress to make up,—nothing of that sort to demand your attention?

Clem. I fear such employments have taken up too much of it; however, I am resolved to pursue a different conduct; yet I almost fear my habits are too deeply rooted: for much as I wish to oblige my father, I cannot help regretting the pleasure that I have relinquished; and have, more than once, felt an inclination to recall Miss Revel's note; yet, believe me, Julia, my father's misfortunes have deeply affected me: What will become of us!—My mother too is in the greatest affliction; should Fontange hear of our distress, she may send in her account,—if it should fall into papa's hands, he will never more have any esteem for me.———

Jul. Let us save him this additional uneasiness, and settle it without his knowledge.

Clem. That would give me the greatest comfort, if I had the means; but I have been so thoughtless, so extravagant of late, I have not a single guinea remaining.

Jul. If I might persuade you in future, Clementina, purchase only such things as your allow-

ance will permit you to pay for immediately. It is a bad custom to have accounts of long standing, and exposes, young persons especially, to many impositions;—promise me you will not fall into this error again, and I will settle your present account with Madame Fontange.

Clem. My dear girl, how is this possible? how can you have sufficient; and if you *have*, what right have I to expect such an instance of generosity?

Jul. Mention it to no one:—I rejoice that I have the power to save my uncle an additional vexation. Hush!—some one is coming;—'tis Fontange:—allow me to make an excuse for your not seeing her; it is of the utmost consequence, that our present affliction should be kept a secret to the world. I am generally grave, and in me she will see no difference: retire, my dear cousin.

(Exit Clementina.

SCENE XII.

Enter Madame FONTANGE.

Mad. Fon. Bon jour, Mademoiselle Julia! I just took de liberty of calling to show Miss Topaz the pattern of a new dress.

Jul. My cousin is very unwell this morning, and cannot be seen by any one. She desired me, *if* you should call, to ask you for her account.

Mad. Fon. There was no great hurry, Mademoiselle; but I knew Miss Topaz was so punctual

that I just slipped it into my pocket-book before I came out, for fear she should ask for it. Here it is Madam; a mere trifle———

Jul. In my opinion, Fontange, it is a considerable sum, and more than, I fancy, you will receive again from my cousin, who finds her health so much injured by attending every assembly, that she is resolved to stay more at home in future. I will trouble you for a receipt, if you please.

Mad. Fon. Dear, Mademoiselle, there is no hurry; when Miss Topaz gets better, I will call again.

Jul. By no means:—she begged the account might be settled as soon as possible; and desired me to say, she would send to you, when she wished to see any new fashions.

Mad. Fon. Mademoiselle always tres obligeante. *(Exit Fontange.*

Jul. Good morning, Madame. *(Tearing the bill.)* How fortunate that I had the power to settle this business; this bill would have driven my uncle to distraction. What a sum expended for a few hours amusement! How many blessings would it have procured for the indigent!—Never shall Clementina become acquainted with this woman's exorbitant demands; the obligations she might feel herself under to me, are all cancelled by her father's care and tender protec-

tion. I owe him more than I can repay; and rejoice that I have been able to render him this trifling assistance. *(Exit Julia.*

CHAP. XXIV.

ACT III.

SCENE I.—*Young* TOPAZ, *followed by* OATLEY.

Young Top. "What ho! Horatio!"

Oat. "Here, sweet lord, at your service."

Y. Top. Why don't you give the cue with more expression, Sir?—have I not taught you where to lay the emphasis, and now you mutter out the words as if they contained no meaning?

Oat. The truth is, Sir, father and I have had a little talk on the subject, and he has threatened to send me to plough again, if I think any more of acting: beside, I do think it a little unseasonable to spout about the house, at this time, when there is so much distress in it.

Y. Top. What do you mean?

Oat. My good old master.

Y. Top. My father! What is the matter, Oatley?

Oat. He is very unhappy, Sir; father found out all the causes of his trouble, and would have relieved a part of it, but he would not let him.

Y. Top. My father in trouble, do you say!—

Yes, I feared it would be so; trade has been so dead. I wish he had turned counsellor instead of jeweller; the law is a never-failing profession. I'll persuade him to give up his gewgaw magazine, and strike into it directly. We'll not study Shakspeare again, till he is happy.

Oat. Won't you indeed, Sir?

Y. Top. No, Charles; I have now a more important part to act than that of Hamlet; lay that aside, till Rantall's benefit, and let me study that of a dutiful son. I fear it is a part I am not yet perfect in. I could almost regret every hour I have squandered in useless rehearsals, or in endeavours to acquire an author's reputation: yet let me not be too hasty. I'll to the Manager; if he accepts the comedy, there is still some good in authorship, if its profits can relieve a father in misfortune! *(Exit hastily.*

SCENE II.

Oat. I wish father could have heard that speech; he would have said that genius had some goodness of heart, whatever other qualities it might be deficient in. It is a pity that Master Thomas did not consider the dreadful situation of master's affairs sooner; but his head was so full of Hamlet, and the comedy: this passion for the Drama is an error; but I can see he repents

of it; and contrition for a fault, is half way to amendment.

SCENE III.

Enter JULIA.

Jul. Ah! Oatley, I am glad I have met with you. Have you found an opportunity of executing the little commission I gave you to Mr. Alltype's, the bookseller.

Oat. I have, Madam; he desired me to say that some particular business had prevented his sending you an answer about the poems before. *(Giving a letter.)* *(Exit Oatley.*

SCENE IV.

Jul. This is indeed beyond my expectations; an offer of ten pounds for the copy-right. Successful Julia!—I shall be able with this to discharge, unknown to my uncle, an account in the neighbourhood, for which I know he has been frequently dunned. I will go immediately to Mr. Alltype's; it is probable I shall now meet with him at home.

SCENE V.

Enter CLEMENTINA.

Clem. Whither are you going in such haste, Julia?

Jul. To Mr. Alltype's. The poems are approved of, and I am going to receive the copyright.

Clem. I give you joy:—I have not seen you in such good spirits for a long while, nor did I imagine your feeling heart would permit you to taste such satisfaction, when all your friends are miserable.

Jul. What I now experience, is a *delightful* satisfaction, that my little labours have enabled me to remove but a single obstacle to their happiness. Come with me, Clementina; you shall witness my proceedings, and then reprove, if you can, my present cheerfulness. *(Exeunt.*

SCENE VI.

Changes to another Apartment—Enter COLONEL *and* HUBERT.

Col. Well, Hubert; I like these apartments prodigiously, they are so airy, so convenient;—the ornaments are prettily fancied, and the cornices of the curtains painted in a superior style. The mistress must sure be a woman of taste and abilities. She came in soon after breakfast, to ask if I had found every thing agreeable, and her address seemed to be that of a perfect gentlewoman.

Hub. I fancy, indeed, your honour, she has not been long accustomed to the trade of letting lodgings; perhaps some recent misfortunes have

obliged them to admit a stranger. Her countenance is melancholy, so is that of the two young ladies.

Col. We must inquire a little into their situation. If deserving, Hubert, they shall taste the profits of my hard services; *hard*, did I say! 'tis a word I did not mean to use; I would say *glorious*; and what brave officer is there who have fought for his king and country, who would not say the same? Do you remember our last skirmish with the enemy, Hubert? There was warm work.——

Hub. Warm indeed! I never expected to see your honour leave the field alive.

Col. My brave comrades fell so thick round me, that in the account of the engagement, it would not be a surprise if I should find they had numbered me with the slain! This I am the more inclined to believe; for since that time, I have not received any letters from England. This thought, Hubert, has given me many a sleepless night; and at the close of the war, determined me to see how all fared on this side the water; I procured leave of absence to return to my native country; purposely passed through this part of Kent, because my father had a hunting seat which I should like to take a peep at, and see if any of the good neighbours are in being who treated me so kindly when a boy.—When a little

more worn out with service, it is in that solitude I wish to pass the remainder of my days.

Hub. Your honour, sure, does not mean to return to India?

Col. Most assuredly, Hubert; I only came to England in a frolic.—I could not be easy without coming in person to convince my family of my safety, and to assure myself of theirs. I am neither ill, maimed, or superannuated; and till one of these evils overtake an officer, he can have no excuse for quitting the service.

Hub. You forget the gout, Sir.

Col. That is not an every day infirmity, Hubert; it only makes a prisoner of one now and then, and if its fetters never press harder than they do at present, I shall think myself still able to encounter the enemy.

Hub. I had hoped your honour would have made a longer stay in England.

Col. Why, my honest fellow?—Oh! I know the reason;—you have friends here:—stay with them. You are not in the army; yet never shall I meet your equal. You have watched me many a night, Hubert, stood near me in the field of battle, and borne with an old man's petulance; another may not do as much. When you enlisted under the banner of my servitude, you had

left a wife, a mother, an infant family, for them forsook your native country.—Return, and share with them the profits of your faithful services ;—their claim is superior to a master's: look not so grave; in England, India, every where, Hubert, I can still be your *friend*.

Hub. You have always been too kind ;—it grieves me to the heart to leave your honour, and yet the nearer we get to Surrey, my fancy pictures so strongly my little cottage; and in the smiles of my wife and children paints every domestic comfort in such lively colours, that I feel it would be impossible to bring my heart again to leave it.

Col. Nor shall you; live there and be happy; I will rejoice in your felicity: but let us drop the subject at present; you must nurse me well of this fit of the gout, or I shall be too selfish to resign you with good humour. To give a new course to our ideas, let us take a few turns in the garden: do not be surprised, I am not yet so infirm, but by the help of my cane, and your friendly arm, I believe I could figure in a minuet.

(Exeunt.

SCENE VII.

Enter TOPAZ,—*two Men following at a distance.*

Top. Notwithstanding all my speed, I am still pursued; one only chance remains for my escape. This is the house of Melborn. We have lived on

intimate terms; but necessity is the test of friendship—I come now to prove its sincerity: *(Knocks.)* he was ever among the most welcome of my friends. Is your master within?

Enter Servant.

Ser. Yes, Sir.

Top. Say that I wish to speak with him immediately.

Ser. Be pleased to walk this way, Sir.

Exeunt Topaz and Servant.

SCENE VIII.

1st Bailiff. If you had not stopped for a glass of ale, comrade, we should have been up with him

2d Bailiff. Let us plant ourselves here and seize him as he leaves the house; I saw him enter. *(They retire.*

SCENE IX.

An apartment at Mr. Melborn's.

Enter MELBORN *and* TOPAZ.

Mel. My dear Mr. Topaz, I am happy to see you: Mrs. Topaz and the young ladies are well, I hope.

Top. As well, Mr. Melborn, as present circumstances will admit of. I have been a little unfortunate of late; my brother, we have reason

to apprehend, died abroad. You know he was my only relation.—In short, I am greatly distressed for the loan of a few pounds; could you grant me your assistance?—the favour would be ever acknowledged with heartfelt gratitude.

Mel. Had you requested my assistance in any thing but money, with what pleasure would I have granted it. I would have gone to the farthest part of England, Mr. Topaz, to have served you: but with money, it is impossible.

Top. I am concerned to hear you say so; I always thought your fortune a considerable one.

Mel. It is so, *very considerable*;—but what a number of things has a gentleman of property to do with a considerable fortune—carriages to keep, and taxes upon income to pay.——

Top. While that upon humanity strangers are left to discharge. Could you picture to yourself, Mr. Melborn, our present unhappy situation, the misery of my wife and daughter,—born to affluence, and long the sharers of every domestic comfort. For them I solicit your compassion; their affliction pointed out to me a resource in your friendship. Mistaken fool!—I imagined the professions of the wealthy had been founded on *sincerity*.

Mel. Believe me, Topaz, I am sensibly touched at your misfortunes, and heartily lament

my inability to redress them:—the crops have failed this season; my steward has not been able to send me my rents for the last half year: and stocks are so low, I cannot possibly think of selling out, the disadvantage would be so great, otherwise I would, my friend.

Top. The unwilling are never at a loss for excuses. It is time to drop the subject; that man can never be a true friend, Mr. Melborn, who, rather than incur a slight disadvantage for the cause of humanity, would resign an unfortunate fellow-creature to every pang of human evil. I apologize for the freedom I have taken, and wish you a good morning. *(Exit Topaz.*

Scene VIII.

Melborn.

Poor man! I declare I pity him;—but it will not do to let one's feelings get the better of one's prudence. Topaz's embarrassments are a sort of mystery:—dashed away—lived beyond his income, I suppose. His wife, it is said, is a perfect fine lady, and the daughter, I believe, has been brought up on the same principle. Now I recollect, Miss Melborn was struck with her dress, at the last assembly, as being the most elegant and expensive in the room. If circumstances are as bad as he

has represented them, it surely was madness to admit of such extravagance, and the height of folly to permit her to appear in public. However weak Topaz might be in some things, I was always inclined to esteem him as a worthy man; but if well-meaning people will act imprudently, they must submit to the consequences; for I'll ever maintain, that misfortune originates in *error*.

(Exit.

SCENE IX.

A Parlour at Mr. Topaz's—Mrs. TOPAZ *and* CLEMENTINA *at work*; JULIA *reading*.

Mrs. Top. Forgive my inattention, my dear girl; my own thoughts overwhelm me with affliction, and yet I cannot listen with any pleasure to those of others. Sould Mr. Topaz not succeed in his application to Mr. Melborn, what will become of us, Julia?

Jul. Do not let us look on the most melancholy side of the picture, dear Madam, but hope for the best; make not yourself thus uneasy.

Mrs. Top. Can I be otherwise, Julia, when I behold myself the author of our miseries?—my thoughtlessness,—my own extravagance, and the mistaken education of Clementina, have been a husband's ruin: he has of late endeavoured to persuade, but never reproached me for the abuse of all his kindness; yet my conduct must have

forfeited his esteem for ever! Years of deep repentance and remorse, could not atone for the miseries I have occasioned. Reflection, Julia, fills my mind with horror and self-detestation.

Jul. You must not indulge this melancholy: Cloudy as is now the aspect of fortune, let us not wholly darken it by despair. "Some white minute yet may come;" at least while hope can bring us one momentary comfort, it were folly to exclude it.

Clem. Pray, dear mother, be composed; forbear these self-reproaches; I only am to blame. Had I followed Julia's good example, we had all been happy. With what reproach of conscience do I look back upon my former follies!—yet *you* do not reproach me: even my father pressed my hand with tenderness as he left us; yet the sight of me must be a dagger to his heart:—suffer me to leave you, and in some menial occupation, while teaching my proud heart humility and repentance, I will endeavour to provide for my own subsistence.

Jul. What wild thought are you encouraging! you must not leave us; the present period presents the most important duties to be fulfilled at *home*. Let us *unite* our abilities at least, to lessen, if we cannot avert the mischief that threatens us. You are a proficient in dancing and French, why not

become an instructress? I will undertake to teach the harp and piano, and we will appropriate our profits to a parent's benefit.

Mrs. Top. Amiable child! how can I ever acknowledge with sufficient gratitude, all your goodness? Our former conduct, Julia, has not been marked by the kindness your affectionate heart deserved.

Jul. Harbour no such unpleasant ideas, my dear aunt. It was a difference in our taste and pursuits, that made us almost strangers to each other's persons. Yet let me hope, our hearts were ever united by the sincerest friendship. I acquired a taste of scribbling, addicted myself to study, and conceived a distaste for every thing that was not poetry:—and when we met, the attempts I have been making at composition, have thrown a seriousness into my countenance, that has often been mistaken for ill-humour. I will endeavour to become something more like a rational creature; correct my eccentricities; and, in future, study only to make YOU happy.

Enter a Servant with a Letter.

Mrs. Top. *(After having read it.)* He has met with a refusal:—read, my children, the extent of our calamities.

Jul. *(Reads.)* "Contrary to all my expecta-

"tions, Melborn refused my request. Be not "alarmed, Matilda; I write this from a prison.— "I had scarcely left the house, when the bailiffs "overtook me. I would speak comfort to you, "my beloved wife,—my daughter,—Julia!——— "Alas! I cannot—I know not on what wreck of "hope to rest the thought:——for my sake—for "your own—be careful of your health; if this "blessing can be preserved amidst our fallen for- "tune, it will enable us to meet and mingle our "tears together,—the only consolation that pre- "sents itself to the mind of, my dearest Matilda, "your

"UNFORTUNATE HUSBAND."

Oh! that we had some friend to whom we could apply!

Clem. Let us go to my dear father.

Mrs. Top. Immediately, my love; Julia will go with us.

Jul. Suffer me to remain at home, till I have put in execution a little plan; the *success* of it may befriend, the failure cannot injure us; in less than half an hour, I will follow you. Remember me to my uncle.

(Exeunt Mrs. Topaz and Clementina.)

And now to summon all my resolution. Of the gentleman who occupies the drawing-room, I have heard a character the most worthy and re-

spectable. Were he only to appear in my uncle's behalf, his confinement might be rendered less oppressive: What if I endeavour to interest a stranger in his fate! the affection of the motive will surely apologize for the freedom.

Exit Julia.

Scene X.

The Colonel's Apartment.

Enter Colonel *and* Hubert.

Col. 'Twas a delightful evening, Hubert!—There are a number of pretty shrubs in the garden; six turns through was as much as my gouty ankle would admit of:—well, well,—a few days patience will set all to rights again. Hush! did not some one tap at the door?

Hub. I thought so, and please your honour; perhaps it is only a cat.—I'll go and see, however.——

Col. No, it was not like the scratching of a cat, booby. Who can have any concerns with us, I wonder?

Hub. A young lady, Sir; one of the pretty misses that belong to the house.

Col. Well, desire her to walk in; and set a chair, Hubert.

SCENE XI.

Enter JULIA *in great agitation.*

Jul. Let me hope you will not be offended, Sir, at this intrusion.—I came to—to—request—

Col. Pray, Madam, be seated: no apology is necessary. If I can be of any use, I beg you will command my services. You seem very unwell; Hubert, fetch a glass of water and my cordial drops. Has any accident happened to any of the family? Something, I am sure, is the matter.

Jul. My uncle, Sir, has been very unfortunate; he was this morning arrested, and sent to prison. I am ignorant of all customary forms, but I thought if you could have the kindness to appear and say something in his favour, it might abate the rigour of his confinement.

Col. And what can I say, dear young lady? a perfect stranger to his person, and but a few hours his inmate?

Jul. Oh! that is very *true*:—you *cannot* know him; for if you did, you would hasten to give him comfort: he is the best of men, of fathers, and of uncles!

Col. I believe it; and that you are the best of nieces:—be composed; affairs may yet turn out well. Do you know the sum for which he has been arrested?

Jul. Not exactly; I can only guess it to have been at the suit of a creditor, who, notwithstanding all my uncle's former kindness, has been very troublesome of late. I beg your pardon; I will hasten to the prison, and if I cannot relieve, I will share his confinement.

Col. Amiable girl!—Call a chair, Hubert:—*(Exit Hubert.)* I will accompany you; but first take a glass of this cordial; prisons are damp places, and you will need it.

Jul. And will you see my uncle!—on my knees, let me express the obligations I owe you.

Col. That I cannot admit of. *(Raising her.)* 'Tis true I am unacquainted with your uncle:—when a fellow-creature is in distress, 'tis not a time to inquire whether they are friends or foes; and he is the greatest hero, who, in the day of battle, shows humanity to the enemy. Dry up your tears, young lady; 'tis weakness to despair. Providence never yet denied its succour to the deserving. *(Exeunt.*

Scene XII.

The Prison—Topaz, *Mrs.* Topaz, *and* Clementina.

Top. Matilda, what a mansion is this! yet let me thank you for the early compliance with my wishes. My Clementina! my child! comfort your afflicted mother; she will need your soothing

attention, when I am no more!—my heart is almost broken;—a few more tedious days, perhaps, only shall we have to weep together:—I feared we should not have met again,—that the horrors of a prison would have terrified and kept you from me, till death had closed the scene of misery. Matilda!—Clementina!—Julia!——Ah *where* is she?—Would she not accompany you? she who professed so much affection!

Mrs. Top. In a few minutes we shall enjoy her society. Encourage not a suspicion against her affection. She *is* the best of children;—our support, our consolation.—Hark! what wild uproar is that?

Top. Be not alarmed, my love; it proceeds from the common prison.

Clem. What unseasonable mirth!

Top. Unseasonable indeed!—I hear also footsteps in the entry: who can it be?—they are not the light steps of Julia.

Scene XIII.

Enter Young Topaz.

Y. Top. My father! I come to bring you back to comfort, freedom, joy!—and "Joy comes well in such a needful time!" The Comedy's *accepted;* a seventy night piece, depend upon it!—an hundred, perhaps.——No, no; not quite a Pizarro.—

And now, father, acknowledge the force of eloquence and good acting; for no sooner had I related our misfortunes with all the pathos I was master of, than our liberal and good-hearted Manager gave me fifty guineas for the copy.—Paid me before-hand,—here they are,—the golden profits of genius,—all your own, my dear father: and Heaven grant they may be sufficient!

Top. Alas! I fear they are not.———

Y. Top. That's unlucky!—takes away all the pleasure of the seventy nights run.—Write a Tragedy,—set about it directly;—best place in the world,—write from the feelings of the moment,—must touch,—must affect them,—the *audience*, I mean.—Can't strike out a Comedy,—not one cheerful idea remaining;—never intended to compose again, could the success of a first attempt have restored a parent to ease and prosperity;—thought of sitting down contented, and resigning authorship, with its attendant anxieties, for ever,—did indeed, father.———Don't despair; "All may yet be well:"——Who have we here? Julia and a stranger.

Scene XIV.

Enter Julia, Colonel, *and* Hubert.

Jul. My uncle, Sir.——

Hub. Mr. Topaz will excuse the intrusion.

Col. Topaz!—Edward!—my brother!—do my ears deceive me—Astonishment!—thus grown, improved beyond a father's recollection, can this be Julia!—my child,—my daughter, for whose advantage, at an early eage I *(embracing her)* submitted to the sorrow of a long separation? To meet thee thus is happiness indeed!——

Jul. My father!—By what unexpected chance of war are we indebted for your preservation!

Col. This shall be explained hereafter;—my heart is too full of joy, mixed with emotion at a brother's sufferings, to allow me to enter on the subject at present.

Top. My brother!—my long-lost friend?

Y. Top. Had we known, dear uncle, that you were living——

Col. Why then you would have lost an agreeable surprise.

Jul. And a charming incident for the last act of a Comedy.

Top. What grief have I experienced, my brother, at a silence which seemed to confirm the supposition of your decease! To behold you restored to us at this melancholy period! Yet, in the anguish of the moment, one satisfaction presents itself—Julia has regained the blessings of a father and protector.

Col. 'Twas this dear girl who interested me in a stranger's fate; I accompanied her to the gloomy

mansion; her solicitations were *irresistible*, not to have been withstood by the most obdurate heart; in the composition of mine, Nature infused so many drops of sympathy, that feeling may almost be accounted a weakness. The failings and distresses of mankind equally affect me; yet in one instance, I acknowledge with gratitude the gift of excessive sensibility, since it has brought me hither to save my Edward from ruin, and perhaps distraction.

Jul. (To Mrs. Topaz.) Do not weep, dear madam, my father lives, and we shall all be happy.

Top. Could I have ever thought, Charles, when you left me in the bosom of affluence, we should have met in the confines of a prison.

Col. By leaving it as soon as possible, we will endeavour to forget the painful emotions of this interview. You can omit the prison scene, young Mr. Author, and your comedy will be the better for it. If you must write, let it be, in future, the employment of your leisure hours; give it up as a profession. Should you still wish to shine in character, assume that of a British Soldier: it abounds with action, requires abilities to support, and is, when *well* sustained, the most respectable. If the cast is agreeable to you, the part of *Commission* shall be written out and procured tomorrow.

Y. Top. The very thing, my dear uncle!—re-

plete with business, incident, and *effect!* It is a part, too, methinks, that I could support with honour. How shall I express my thanks, my obligations!

Col. Leave them for duty to cancel; attend to that in every part you attempt; the world will bestow its *just* commendation; and what will give still greater satisfaction, your own conscience will applaud the performance. And now for my acknowledgments, dear brother, for the preservation of this treasure. My lovely, my amiable Julia, be henceforth with her, and these our dearest friends the sharers of my affluence. Start not; I must have it so. My *Comedy* of happiness cannot be complete without. I must borrow my nephew's genius for to-day; and though not able to *write*, I may surely be allowed to *compose* one. Attempt not to dissuade me; I am an obstinate old man, as Hubert can witness.

Top. Excuse me, I cannot accept your generous offer; my creditors' demands are so numerous.

Col. Not more than I have power to discharge. Supposing even that they *were*, for one year at least we could draw upon economy for what might be wanting; 'tis a bank where industry need never fear a failure. My fortune is immense; consider the years I have been in service, and that our good King liberally rewards his bravest

officers. Should the infirmities of age continue to hasten their march, why I'll sell out; and spend the remainder of my life in the bosom of England and my family.

Top. Ought I to accept your generous kindness, where imprudence, and I have reason to fear improper indulgence, have been the cause of our afflictions and misfortunes?

Col. Then the same will never be the cause of them again. The precipice we have been once nearly falling over, we ever after cautiously avoid. In the censure of a father's, might be found some excuse for our mistakes and follies; but since ALL are liable to deviate from the road of *rectitude*, it were unjust to cast reflections on his memory. If there *are* parents who have mistaken the path, let children, from the events of this day, derive experience; and in the wiser conduct of maturer years, atone for the ERRORS OF EDUCATION.

THE END.

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