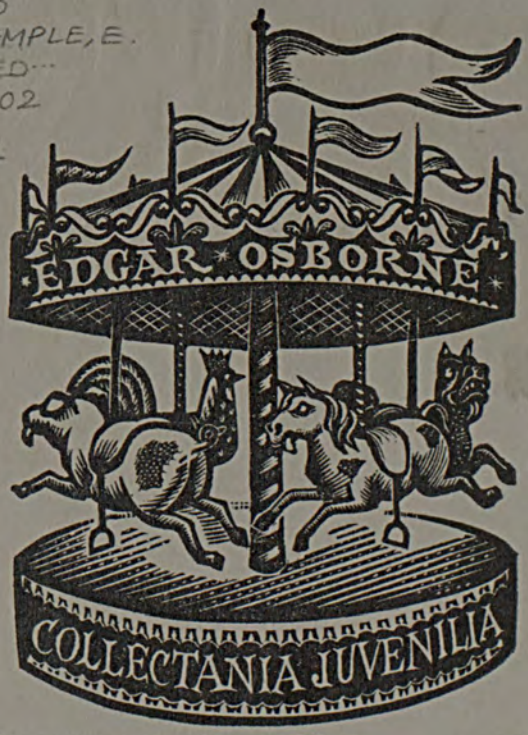


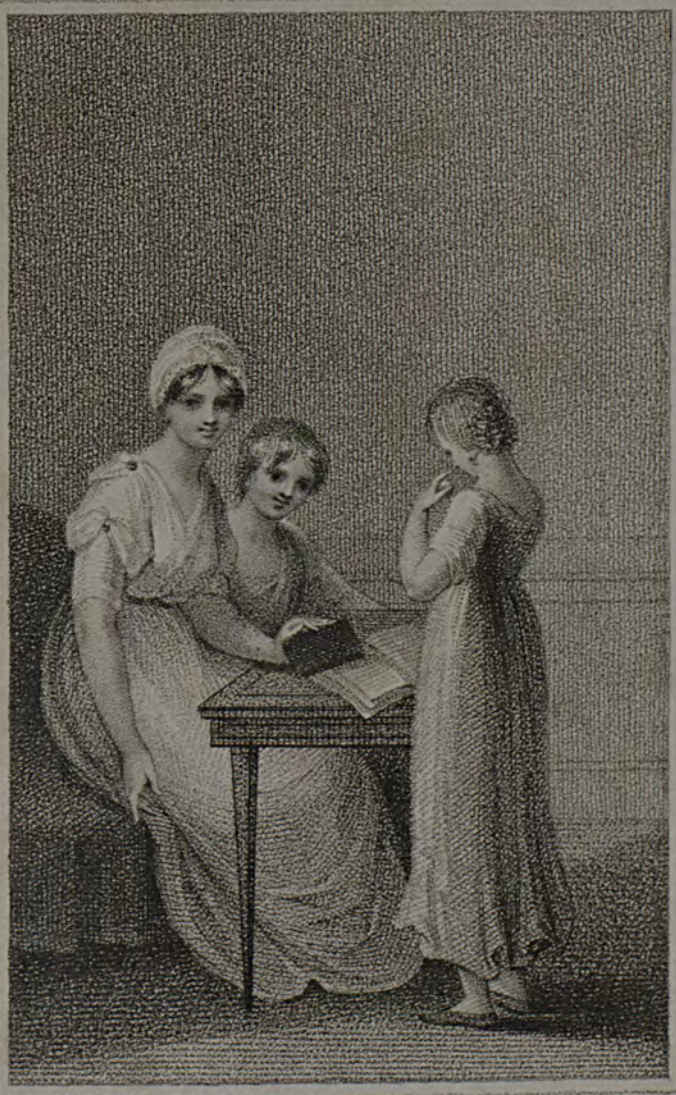
Latitia Gibbon
1808.

Given to her by Henry Law.
in July.
1808

THE

RED BOOK,

&c. &c.



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"Rose hung down her Head paused a Moment and then enquired of her Aunt, if the black Book was to be read aloud, as well as the red one?"—

THE

RED BOOK,

AND

THE BLACK ONE.

BY THE AUTHOR OF

SUMMER RAMBLES.

VOL. I.

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1802.

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THE

RED BOOK

AND

THE BLACK ONE.

SUSAN ARNOLD was only twelve years of age, when she accompanied her mother to a small neat house in Devonshire, which, with a few acres of land, and two gardens, plentifully stocked with vegetables, fruit, and flowers, Mrs. Arnold inherited from her father; it was beautifully situated,

surrounded with pleasant walks, and was one of the most healthy spots in England. Particular circumstances obliged her mother to observe the strictest economy in her household expences, and she was not sorry that she had no very fine neighbours, though she rejoiced to find two or three agreeable families at a small distance from her abode, who had too much good sense to despise her, because she had neither laced footmen, or a brilliant equipage.

Mr. Arnold had met with some very unexpected and severe losses, which obliged him to undertake a voyage to Barbadoes, at the moment in which he was forming projects of happiness

and

and comfort, by retiring from all commercial concerns, and giving up his whole time to his wife and daughter; and, on the same day on which he sat off for Bristol to embark, Mrs. Arnold, with Susan, and two maid-servants (both extremely attached to their mistress), also left town, determined to pass the time of her husband's absence, at the cottage, and there endeavour to support with cheerfulness and resignation, (instead of repining at what could not possibly be avoided) the unexpected change in her circumstances, and her separation from the only person whose society could have made her entirely

forget it. Attention to the morals and education of her Child, was Mrs. Arnold's chief and dearest employment, and books, music, and a few rural amusements, of which she was extremely fond, filled up her time very agreeably.

She had been but one year in this delightful retirement, when she received the melancholy intelligence of her sister's health, being in so bad a state, as to make her immediate departure for Lisbon absolutely necessary, and it was accompanied with a request, that she would take charge, for a few months, of her youngest daughter, whose going with her would be extremely inconvenient. Mrs. Arnold,

as

as it may be supposed, readily consented to receive her neice, and Susan (who was particularly attached to her cousin), from the moment she heard that the day of her arrival was fixed for the third in the following week, could neither eat, drink, or sleep in peace; her lessons were hurried over in a most careless manner, her garden neglected, and her poultry quite forgotten; so, that if the favourite top-knot hen, with her little brood, had not had somebody more attentive to their wants than their young Mistress was, they would probably have suffered severely by her neglect. The truth is, that Susan Arnold, the most humane and charitable, as well as the sweetest

tempered girl in the world, who never consulted her own convenience, when she had it in her power, by any possible means to oblige another, and thought any trouble she had taken to do so, amply repaid by the satisfaction she felt arising from it, within her own breast, yet Susan Arnold, this favourite of mine, and of all who knew her as intimately as I did, was not faultless. I must however, in this place, intreat my young readers not to be too hasty in passing judgment on my little friend; she had, as I have premised, a great many good and amiable qualities, and though they were sometimes shaded and obscured by the fault I have hinted at, and which truth will oblige me fairly to

expose

expose, the readiness she always shewed to confess her errors, instead of seeking, by frivolous and childish excuses, either to avoid blame, or to fix it on another; the candour with which she acknowledged herself in the wrong, and the regret and sorrow she appeared to feel on occasion, generally excited more pity than anger, even in those who felt most the consequence of her fault. The case was, that Susan could go through her every day employments with the utmost attention and exactitude, but whenever novelty came in the way it never interested her moderately, but occupied her mind entirely, and while it lasted, every other thing was forgotten; she could not accustom herself, unless when she had

had not any thing new to employ her thoughts on, to divide her time properly, and allot a just portion of it to her different occupations; she wished to do so, but the instant any novelty came in her way, every other thing gave place, and all determinations of amendment were laid aside. When her little white hen's chickens were hatching, it was impossible to tear her from the spot; she could scarcely allow herself time to dine, but sat the whole day on a block of wood, watching the "little darlings," (as she called them) as they peeped out from under their mother's wing; but in the mean time poor Susan never recollected that old Rachel was waiting for her at the corner of the barn, to whom

she

she had promised to go and ask her Mamma for a little wine for her sick husband; nor did she, when some time after, she had a box of colours given her, and that she spent almost three whole days in the summer-house, drawing flowers, and endeavouring to colour them, like those which were growing before her—ever once reflect, that she was neglecting her reading, writing, and music; that her Mamma, who was never happy out of her company, was left quite alone; and moreover, that she had undertaken, in that time, to finish some baby-linen which she had begun for a poor woman in the village, who depended entirely upon her promise, the moment however that Mrs. Arnold pointed

out

out to her the fault she had committed, her sorrow and regret are not to be described; and she would ask forgiveness of the meanest person in the neighbourhood, when she believed they had been put to the slightest inconvenience by her neglect, and thought she never could do enough to make them amends for it. Susan had been many weeks exceedingly attentive to all her Mamma's wishes, when the letter came which fixed the day for her cousin's arrival at the cottage, and produced a total change in her conduct, for she could attend to nothing else. In the midst of reading, she would lay down her book to ask what bed Rose was to sleep in? where her clothes were to be kept, and whether

Mrs.

Mrs. Arnold thought she had had her hair cropped since they left London? said she was sure she would be vexed if they had cut off her fine long hair; and then, after reading a minute or two longer, would stop to inquire, whether it would be possible for her to arrive on Wednesday at one or two o'clock, instead of six or seven, as was mentioned in the letter. Her work succeeded no better, she could not sit still a moment, and when the happy day came which was to bring Miss Rose Wilmot (though she knew it was impossible she should arrive till the afternoon), Susan could not sleep till her usual hour of rising, but was up with the lark, and had been sometime at the gate before Mrs. Arnold came down to breakfast.

It

It was in vain to endeavour to persuade her, that her impatience only made the time appear longer, and that it would be much more prudent if she would set herself about her usual amusements, than to be continually running to look out at the gate, or to her Mamma, every five minutes, to know the hour; that her anxiety would not bring her cousin a minute the sooner, and that she only made herself uneasy, and teased every body about her; she said, she could not bear to leave the gate; Rose must arrive at length, and it would be *such* a pleasure, *such* a delight, to see the heads of the horses as they come round the old oak. The hours, however, passed away without

any

any appearance of Rose—night came on it grew very dark—Susan was unwilling to leave the gate, but she dared not remain any longer. I should be glad if I could pass over in silence this weakness in my little friend, but truth a second time obliged me to declare that Susan Arnold, at the age of thirteen, was so great a coward, that she dared not venture to go from one room to another in the dusk of the evening without a candle. What she was afraid of, I never could learn, because she did not know herself, and, open and candid as she was on all other occasions, there was something so childish in being afraid *because she could not see*, that she never liked to talk on the subject, but

was

was doing every thing in her power to get the better of a weakness of which she was really ashamed ; and on this occasion she particularly desired to summon all her little stock of courage, rather than quit the gate, and she certainly staid there much later than she had ever ventured to do before ; but the evening closed in, darker than usual, and the trees, she imagined, assumed different forms uncommonly frightful, which drove poor Susan from her post.

She found her Mamma at tea, and requested (after wondering twenty times what could possibly detain her cousin) that she might be allowed to

set

set up till half past ten o'clock, in the hope of seeing her before she went to bed; her request was granted, but she was disappointed in her expectation; for when that hour came, it did not bring Rose; and, though she was vexed at the thought of having to wait another day, and tired of watching and listening to no purpose, she retired to her room without murmuring, for she was sensible of her Mamma's indulgence, and would have thought it the highest ingratitude to have appeared discontented.

Mrs. Arnold was accustomed to read an hour, and sometimes much longer, before she went to bed, she therefore went up stairs with her daughter, leaving

ing the servants to sit up for Miss Wilmot, and they wished each other good-night at the door of Susan's room, which was close to that of her mothers; she was soon undressed, but had scarcely time to pop her head under the bed clothes, (as she usually did the moment Mary withdrew with the candle) before she recollected having neglected to hang up her little Canary bird out of the reach of Miss Tibby, the favourite cat, and as she had once or twice already neglected this necessary business, which she had particularly desired might be intrusted to her care, and as poor Cary had had several narrow escapes in consequence of her forgetfulness, by which she had incurred her Mamma's dis-

displeasure, she could not possibly compose herself to rest. How to go down stairs alone, and without light, she knew not; and she could neither call Mary, or ring her bell, for her Mamma would hear her, and naturally inquire what the matter was; she would not be guilty of a falsity for the whole world, and she should be obliged to confess her negligence and forgetfulness, as she had been repeatedly ordered, in the most possitive terms, never to go to bed without remembering her bird. The fear of making Mrs. Arnold angry, outweighed in Susan's mind every other consideration, and, coward as she was, she

would have ventured to go to any part of the house, and at any hour, rather than wilfully risk her displeasure.

Behold, then, my trembling little friend, with one petticoat on, and a loose night-gown, gently opening her chamber door, and stealing softly along the passage, whether she thought her grand-father's picture would step out of its frame, and come forward to lead her down stairs, or whether she expected, (which was equally probable) that she should see giants and fairies skipping about the hall, by the light of the moon, which was now up, and shone brightly in at the windows, I cannot ascertain, but true it is, she

was

was as much frightened as if she had been certain of it. I am, however, happy in being able to add, that, whatever her thoughts were, and however strong her fears might be, she would not allow them to get the better of her determination of not going to rest till she had obeyed her Mamma's commands, but went, what she called, boldly on, though she has since confessed to me that her heart beat, and her knees trembled prodigiously. She crossed the little hall, and went towards the parlour, but—how shall I relate the terror which siezed on her! when, by the light of the remaining fire, she beheld, sitting on the very chair on which she had sat

at supper, with her Mamma, a little strange figure with a long nose and fiery eyes, dressed in a black robe which trained on the ground, and who, by a low grumbling sound, appeared evidently displeased at her approach.

It is not to be imagined that she stood long, either to examine this hideous personage, or to listen to its muttering; she ran to the kitchen as fast as her trembling legs could carry her, but neither of the maids were there; poor Susan could scarcely stand, and knew not what to do or where to go; she fancied she heard the sound of Mary's voice, and was flying towards her, when she met the horrible long-

nosed

nosed figure creeping upon its hands and knees, its black robe training half a yard behind it, and coming directly towards her, she could now no longer command herself, but screamed so loud that she brought the whole family about her, Mrs. Arnold, Mary, Peggy, and, to her very great astonishment, Miss Rose Wilmot, who, after having tenderly embraced her aunt and cousin, caught the terrible little figure in her arms, and said, "Come, Miss Cora, let me pull off your cloak, if you please, that you may salute the ladies." It may easily be believed, that poor Susan looked extremely foolish, when she discovered that the object of such very dreadful alarm was no other than her cousin's

little

little dog, which she had muffled up in a cloak to keep it warm, because she fancied it was prodigiously delicate; and her first care, on entering her aunt's house, had been to place Miss Cora on a chair by the fire, while she went to look after her parcels, work-bags, and netting-box. The reason of her arriving so late was soon explained: the lady, who had undertaken to leave her at her aunt's, in her way to Exmouth, being in a very ill state of health, and not able to rise early, had occasioned their being rather late both the evenings they had been upon the road; and this (the last of their journey) they had been particularly so, having such an old crazy post-

chaise,

chaise, that there was some part of it to be secured with a rope, or a linch-pin, to be examined at almost every mile stone, and Rose was glad the lady had but two miles farther to go to the place where she intended to sleep.

Our young traveller was very much fatigued, and, as she said, extremely sleepy; and, after a light refreshment, was glad to retire; and Susan was not a little pleased at having company (a small bed having been placed in her room for her cousin), and made no objection to allowing the formidable figure with the long nose to occupy a chair by her side. Her fright had considerably damped the pleasure she expected

pected to receive on her first meeting with Miss Wilmot; but, after some hours of sound sleep, and the daylight having, as it always did, made her laugh at her weakness, and wonder how she could possibly have been so much frightened; the certainty of having Rose so near her, gave her the utmost delight—that dear Rose, for whose company she had been so long anxious, and to whom she longed to communicate all her joys and all her sorrows. Of the former, she had much to recount, such as being whole and sole proprietor of a pretty little garden, well planted with fruit and flowers, and at least twenty pots of geraniums myrtles, &c. Add to this, a whole

colony

colony of cocks and hens, chickens and pigeons; but her greatest joy and boast was, the privilege her Mamma had given her of distributing milk, vegetables, and some other things (of which she had the keys in her own keeping) among her poor neighbours, according to her own judgment.

Of her sorrows I have little to say: the only thing capable of disturbing her natural cheerfulness, and the sweetness of her disposition, was when she had, by suffering herself to be led away by any new object from her different occupations, and the duties she had undertaken to fulfil, incurred her Mamma's displeasure; or had, by her negligence,

occa-

occasioned any trouble or vexation to others; for when her happiness was interrupted by the untimely death of one of her little family, or that a north-east wind had nipped her apricot or her peach-trees, her chagrin never lasted long; Mrs. Arnold had taught her to expect disappointments, but to recollect how many comforts she still had left, and to be grateful for, and endeavour to render herself deserving, of a continuance of them.

She was very soon dressed, and at her cousin's bed-side; and, without any ceremony, awoke her out of a sound sleep to tell her how glad she was to see her there. Rose had quite forgot

forgot both her journey and her arrival, and stared about her, first at her cousin, and then round the room, but immediately recollected herself, and appeared equally delighted at their happy meeting; and her joy was beyond expression, when, on approaching the window, she beheld the extensive prospect; the woods, the fields, and gardens, the sheep upon the hill, and Mrs. Arnold's cows in the meadow near the house. All was novelty and delight to Rose, whose walks had hitherto been confined to the *tour* of Portman or Manchester Square; unless now and then in the summer, they were extended to Hyde Park, or once or twice in a year to Kensington Gardens.

Gardens. "Oh! my dear Susan, exclaimed Rose, "how beautiful this is! I hope, when my Mamma returns from Lisbon, she will come and live in this charming country, and that I shall never leave it again.—Do look at those sweet trees upon the side of the hill! Let us make haste, and run there before breakfast."—"You make me laugh, my dear cousin," said Susan, "the trees you see are at least two miles distant, and there is a river between that hill and our house, though you cannot see it; but I hope you will see it soon, for we will ask Mamma to walk with us after breakfast down to the ferry; you will be so pleased, Rose! It is the prettiest walk in the whole

whole world, I do really believe, and you will see old Thomas the ferryman, and Dame Margery. You cannot think what good people they are, and what a pretty little house and garden they have, so clean and nice, and their room hung round with pictures, and every thing so neat! I am sure you would like to spend a day there, you would never be tired of looking at the river, and old Thomas bringing the people over in his boat. All the market people are obliged to cross the ferry, and often travellers, and sometimes cows, and ladies, and sheep, and carriages, and horses; you never saw any thing so entertaining."

If

If Rose was already pleased, this account made her quite impatient to go down to breakfast, hoping her aunt would indulge them with a walk to the ferry. Mrs. Arnold readily consented to accompany them, for she was glad to oblige her neice, and particularly so, to pay a visit to Dame Margery, for whom, as well as for her good man, she entertained a very high regard, knowing them, though simple and plain in their manners and conversation, to be in possession of many good and amiable qualities, which would have done honour to their superiors.

The

The breakfast was soon over, and the young ladies were preparing for their walk, when, to their great disappointment, they perceived the weather growing cloudy, and very soon after, that some drops of rain had fallen on the laurestinus which grew outside the window. Mrs. Arnold said, she saw no appearance of being able to venture far from home, but assured them she would take the very first opportunity of fine weather to fulfil her promise of walking to the ferry with them, and advised Rose in the mean time, to go up stairs with Mary, unpack her clothes, place her books on a shelf, with those of her cousin, and her work, and all her little parcels and boxes, where

she

she might be able to find them when she wanted them. Rose had many good qualities, but neither neatness nor order were to be found amongst the number; five minutes sufficed to pull her things out of her trunk upon the floor, and to fill every chair with books, work-bags, and boxes, of which she made but little use, and, leaving Mary to put them where she thought proper, returned to the parlour as fast as she could, she found Mrs. Arnold and Susan just where she had left them, and in deep conversation; Susan appeared extremely attentive to what her Mamma was saying, who was pointing towards a beautiful book which lay upon the table

table before her; it was bound in red leather, and the leaves were finely gilt. Rose said, it was the prettiest book she had ever seen in her life; but was surprised, on opening it, to find it contained nothing but blank leaves, and begged to know what it was designed for. "In that book," said Mrs. Arnold, "I propose to keep a journal of *the surprising adventures* of Mrs. and Miss Arnold; and, as it will no doubt be very interesting, and full of *remarkable events*, I mean to entertain my friend Mr. Morton every Monday with a full and true account of all we have done and seen (worthy a place in my journal) in the preceding week, and shall then put it by, to shew to your uncle, on

 his

his return, that he may know how we have spent our time during his absence."—"Oh dear!" said Rose, "how charming that will be, and how I shall long for Monday, that I may hear it read, it will be so like a story; though I shall know it all before-hand, I wish you had another book to write my adventures in!—"There will be no occasion for another," replied Mrs. Arnold; "if you desire it, my dear, the *Adventures of Miss Rose Wilmot* shall be included, and I will be the faithful historian of all three; but it is necessary to premise, that there are certain conditions annexed to this entertaining project, which may not, perhaps, be quite so agreeable to you; Susan is acquainted

quainted with my intentions, and consents to the terms; but I am doubtful of obtaining *your* consent; for in *this* book (taking one covered with black from the table drawer) I shall record all your faults; and I promise you, that as I shall faithfully write in the red book all your good actions, and that I will not suffer any to escape my observation, but will give you praise even for a good intention, so I will, on the other hand, keep a strict account against you, and as faithfully record all your faults in the black one." Rose hung down her head, paused a moment, and then inquired of her aunt, if the black book was to be read aloud, as well as the red one? Mrs.

Arnold said, she hoped there would not always be something to read in the black one, but that whatever she wrote there, she certainly should read to Mr. Morton, and shew to her uncle.

Rose hesitated some time; she was sensible that (though she was not what might be termed an ill-disposed girl), she was very likely, in the course of a month, to fill many a page in the black book; and, as she perceived her aunt was not disposed to spare even her own child, she hardly dared to accept the terms, though she was delighted at the thought of having her good actions proclaimed. She asked Susan how

how she should like to have her faults made so public? "Not at all, my dear Rose," answered Susan; "very far from liking it, I feel so uncomfortable at the thought of having all my negligences and forgetfulness exposed to Mr. Morton, whose good opinion I am so anxious to obtain, and of letting my father see how little I have attended to his good advice, that I hope it will, in a short time, occasion such a change in my conduct, that Mamma will have nothing to write of me which I shall be ashamed to hear read." Rose said, she wished she could hope the same thing with regard to herself; that she was, however, determined

termined to try the remedy (though it might be a little bitter to swallow), if her aunt would take the trouble to observe her conduct, and would depend upon her generosity to make some allowance for her having been suffered to have her own way, for some time past, more than would have been the case if her Mamma's ill health had not prevented her watching over her actions, and directing her, as she wished to do.

All things being thus settled, Mrs. Arnold carried her two books into her closet, but soon returned to the young ladies, whom she seldom after

after quitted; but how they spent their time, the books must inform you, for my task is ended for the present.

THE RED BOOK.

JOURNAL FROM THE 3d TO THE 10th OF MAY, 1800.

THE day after Miss Wilmot's arrival at the cottage was showery, and I did not like to venture so far from home as the ferry; our walk, therefore, was postponed to a more favourable opportunity, and I desired Susan to amuse her cousin, by shewing her the house and gardens, with every other thing she thought worthy of her notice. They soon ran over the house,

house, for the apartments are small, and by no means numerous: they had no long galleries to traverse, no spacious antichambers or magnificent saloons; neatness and convenience were the only objects attended to when the cottage was put in order for my reception; and the little parlour, with the glass-folding door leading to the garden, was (Susan told me) the only thing which Rose stopped to admire; she had been accustomed to a *fine* house, but not to any thing which she thought half so agreeable as the shrubs and flowers render this charming apartment, where I usually breakfast in the summer.

All

All was new and delightful to the young Londoner; she examined every tree, begged to know their names, and said, she should never be happy without a garden; repeated her wish, that her Mamma might hire a house near mine; and said, she should not be sorry if she was never to see London again as long as she lived. I joined them in the garden, and pointed out to Rose a great many beauties among the plants and flowers which she had never noticed, for her knowledge of them had been confined to a few pots covered with dust and smoke in her Mamma's balcony. We visited the arbour, which I, jestingly, called Susan's study, because she likes to take her books with her,

her, and read there; and after that the poultry yard, and Rose was introduced to the top-knot hen, the bantams, and the Guinea fowls. The evening was spent in looking over books, drawings, and music, deciding on the merits and demerits of the first, agreeing that nothing could possibly be so tiresome as copying eyes and noses, and disputing, though very amicably, on the difficulties of Nicolai and Clementi.

The weather continued showery all the following day, but the young people were too happy, after a twelvemonths separation, to be very anxious about any other amusements, except that of chat-

ting

ting together of their old play-fellows, and of different circumstances which had happened to them when we lived in town, and they saw each other almost every day. Susan had neither eyes or ears for any body or any thing but her cousin, and never quitted her for a moment; but Rose, though equally delighted by their meeting, and whose tongue had been just as much employed, had, in the course of the day, begun to read, to work and write, to play on the piano, to draw, to knot, knit, net, and cut paper landscapes; the first page she looked into (in an old magazine) was concerning spinning of cotton, and that made her think of shewing Susan her work, and of doing a little

bit

bit of the overcast, and when I complimented her upon her improvement, she assured me, she had made a much greater progress in her writing, and she would write a page or two to convince me of it. Unfortunately, however, as she was copying something from the same book, though in a different place, the third line mentioned a new song, and she started up and flew to the piano-forte to play a real new song, and not such old stuff as that, and in this manner she ran from one thing to another, without being settled ten minutes to either. The sun rose with extraordinary lustre on the fourth morning after her arrival at the cottage, and as soon as we had breakfasted, we sat out for

the

the ferry to visit Dame Margery and old Thomas; the weather was so remarkably fine, that it promised us a much pleasanter walk than we could have hoped for after so much rain, and to Rose it was particularly delightful, who, from having been long pent up in a large town, had no idea of the freshness of country air, or the pleasures arising from such a ramble.

The ferryman's cottage was a new object of admiration to her, and well it might be so, for it is neatness itself; the little garden before it is kept in the nicest order, and already blooming with early flowers. Old Margery, in her brown stuff gown and striped

cotton

cotton handkerchief, came out to meet us, and conducted us into her nice little room. Rose looked around her with wonder and delight, for she had never seen the house of a poor person so clean and comfortable; the grate was as bright as silver, and the tea cups and saucers were ranged on the chimney-piece, in the most exact order; the table is only oak, but so well rubbed, that it might almost serve as a looking-glass, and the pictures of the king and queen, prince of Wales, and the king of Prussia, with several other great personages, in flaming crimson, blue, and yellow, ornament the well white washed walls. In one corner hangs young Thomas's violin, (for Margery has a

son

son who is a very great musician, according to her idea of musick) and opposite to it is a cuckoo-clock, which is as true and exact, she says, as the fine clock up at the great house, which cost my Lord such a deal of money.

Margery's first question, after particularly inquiring into the state of mine and Susan's health, was concerning Rose, whom she had never seen before, said "she was a very pretty young lady, though she did not look quite so fresh-coloured as Miss Susan did, but it was no wonder, her great surprise was, how people could live in such a place, as she had heard London described to be,

 and

and assured her, that by the time she has been a couple of months with her aunt, her cheeks will be as red as cherries, and that she will eat as heartily as a plough-boy."

She had a daughter, of whom she was extremely fond, married to a farmer, who lives about two miles up the river, and, as she had lately been brought to bed of a little boy, and I had promised the good people that I would be godmother to their grandson, we were settling the day on which the christening should take place, and in what manner we were to go to the farm, when the door was opened in a very

very sudden and unceremonious manner, by a fine lady, dressed in a silk coat, and a hat in the very extreme of fashion, who with a haughty and commanding air, asked Margery, where the ferryman was, why he was not in waiting! and whether they supposed her servants had nothing to do, but to seek after him?

"Madam," said Margery, "he will be here immediately, he is just now coming over from the other side with his boat, and your ladyship, Madam, will not have long to wait. Will you be pleased to sit down?"

"Sit down! good woman," said the lady, "why, I should be suffocated in five minutes in this miserable little hole."

"Well, sure!" muttered Margery, "it is'nt so small for that matter."

"Will your ladyship please to have a chair by the window, where Madam Arnold is sitting? There comes a fine pleasant air in at the window, and there is a sweet briar just on the outside, which smells charmingly."

The fine lady said, sweet-briar always made her head ache, and affected her

her nerves! that she preferred walking down to the river, and waiting for the boat, and that she really pitied her with all her heart, if she was obliged to spend the rest of her days in such a wretched hovel.

Poor Margery, who is the happiest and most contented of all human beings, could not help feeling a little indignant at being treated in this contemptuous manner, and was very much hurt at finding herself the object of any one's *pity*, when she thought herself rather the *envy* of her neighbours; old Thomas would have smiled, but have said nothing, Margery was not inclined

inclined to be so silent, but said in reply, " that if all great ladies and their lords were as happy in their grand houses as she and her old man were in their humble cottage, and if they were blessed with such good and dutiful children, as God had given to them, to be their comfort, they need not be desirous of more happiness, but that when that was not the case, they were much more to be pitied than she was."

The lady appeared to be piqued at Margery's observation, and flounced out of the room without speaking or taking the least notice of me or my children,

children, though we had risen on her entrance. She had not been gone two minutes, when one of her servants came into the room to ask for a bit of twine, to tie up a parcel which he held in his hand, and whilst Margery was looking for it in the drawer of her little oak table, perceiving I was at the window, and, as he imagined, not attending to him, he said, "Why, Dame, you set off my lady purely; I was waiting at the door, and heard what you said, and I thought to myself, thinks I, why, how true all that is! for you must know, my Lord don't care a pin's head for her, and he never sees her when he can keep out of her

way;

way; when she goes to town, he comes into the country, and when she is here, he goes to town, so that is the way they live; and as to her children, they will never give comfort to their parents, nor to any body else; and my reason for thinking so is, that they are always laying their little heads together, contriving how to deceive their Papa and Mamma, or else they are fighting and quarreling amongst themselves like so many cats and dogs."

When the man was gone, I commended Margery for being contented with the situation in which Providence had placed her; and, on our way home, made

made many observations to my young people on the cruelty the lady had been guilty of, in endeavouring to render a person dissatisfied with her lot, who has always looked up with gratitude to God for the many comforts she enjoys in preference to her poorer neighbours, little thinking any body could ever look upon her as an object of compassion; "who (as I have often heard her say) never wanted a warm dinner or comfortable clothing, and had always a trifle to spare to a friend in distress, and to whom God had given a heart willing to spare it." No wonder, then, my dear children, that poor Margery was sur-

surprised at the lady's contemptuous manner of speaking; and had she been of a different disposition, and some years younger, it might have made her unhappy and discontented all the rest of her life.

"Mamma," said Susan, "I am sure I have done wrong, but I am very sorry for it; what you have been saying makes me see my fault, though I have never thought of it before. I have often told little Mary Barnet, that I wondered how she could eat such very brown bread, that her frock was very coarse, and that if she lived with us she should have

better.

better. I am very sorry I ever said so to her, and will never do it again. I hope I have not made her discontented."

I told her, I hoped not, and desired she would remember her determination, and reflect upon the bad consequences such conversation might have upon a girl of her age, though she is very happy at present, and neither wishes for luxuries which are beyond her reach, nor envies those who are in possession of them.

Having many letters to write, and the weather during the rest of the week

week being very unfavourable for walking, my young people were obliged to amuse themselves as they could, as it was not in my power to be constantly with them.

THE BLACK BOOK.

OBSERVATIONS IN THE FIRST WEEK.

I HAD flattered myself, that having so lately conversed with my dear Susan on the subject of her great and almost only fault, she would have endeavoured to spare me the mortification of having any thing to write, at least in the first pages of this uncomfortable looking book, and to herself that of hearing it read; but sorry I am to be under the disagreeable necessity of observing, that, according to her usual custom,

her head has been so completely filled with her cousin's arrival, that every thing else has been entirely obliterated; and that if *I* had not been anxious to prevent the evils, her want of thought and negligence might have occasioned; I tremble when I think on the regret and sorrow she would have brought upon herself, and which she might, perhaps, have had too much cause never to have forgotten.

You cannot but recollect, Susan, that Hannah Greenwood's little girl was last week dangerously ill, that she is miserably poor, and in want of almost common necessaries; that you had

had willingly, and with the greatest appearance of satisfaction, (indeed, I am certain you felt it at the time) undertaken to carry her every day a little basket, filled with such things as she most stood in need of during her illness! but how shall I add, that since your cousin has been with us, you have never once been near her, and she will be recalled to your memory only by this public, and, I think, mortifying reproof; truth obliges me also to add, that if I had not been more attentive to her wants than you have been, the poor miserable child might have languished for weeks to come in the wretched state in which I found her,

though

though she is now, by my care, in a fair way of recovering. What a pity it is, that with the best heart in the world, and feeling, as you do, for the distresses of your fellow-creatures, you should ever suffer your head to mislead you, and that you should allow every novelty which comes in your way to work such a change in you.

With regard to you, Rose, I am very sorry to perceive that I also deceived myself, when I hoped you would have left behind you that disposition to trifling, and dislike of order and arrangement in the distribution of your time, which I have always perceived in

in you; the moment I saw your innumerable boxes, work-bags, and small parcels, I began to fear what I was afterwards soon convinced of, and find, that though you are now twelve years of age, and that it is ridiculous to see you fly from one thing to another (from your work to your books, from books to music, and from that to drawing, all within a quarter of an hour, like a baby with its playthings), you are just as unsettled and whimsical as ever; that you begin twenty things, and end nothing; and that you still continue in your old way, of putting off to another hour what ought to be done in the present one.

 I am

I am afraid, my dear girls, you will find these pages very unentertaining; but it depends so much on yourselves to let this be the last in the Black Book, that I cannot possibly pity either of you, if you furnish me with any farther observations."

THE RED BOOK.

JOURNAL TO THE 17th OF MAY, 1800.

ROSE was extremely confused when I read my observations on her conduct, knowing, that, though we were alone at that time, I should probably shew them to Mr. Morton, and that they would hereafter be seen by her uncle; but Susan was much more than confused, she was distressed and unhappy, and, bursting into tears, quitted the room the moment I had finished my reading. I soon after sent

Rose to seek for her, but she was not to be found, and it was above a quarter of an hour before I discovered that she was gone to Hannah Greenwood's cottage, to which place we immediately followed her, and reached it in a very short time, having but one small field between us.

The child had been sleeping in a chair by the fire; and I found Susan begging her, with tears in her eyes, to pardon her negligence—and (opening her basket), "Here, my little Mary," said she, "is a pot of preserved damsons, which Mamma gave me for myself; I will not taste them, or any thing of the kind, till you are quite

quite recovered; and here are two of my nice night-caps; I have brought them to you, because I had quite forgot to make those Mamma cut out for you; but I will make them for myself, I shall not mind their being coarse, they will serve to make me remember how ill I have behaved to you, and to be sorry for it every time I put them on."

Little Mary, who, fortunately, had not suffered in the least by her neglect, could not understand what she was so afflicted about; she was only sorry she had been so long without seeing Miss Susan, and said, if she did not leave off crying, she would

cry

cry also; I was, therefore, obliged to take her away; and, in walking back to the house, the conversation being renewed, my pardon was solicited and freely granted, both to Rose and Susan, on their promise of amendment, or at least of doing every thing they possibly could to correct themselves of the faults I had with justice laid to their charge, and hoping that in a very short time I should have no account to keep against them.

They now determined to divide their time properly, and fix on certain hours for their different occupations; and, having consulted me on the subject, I arranged every thing for them as I

saw

saw best, and was very much pleased to see Susan once more return with assiduity to her books, music, &c. and to the proper discharge of several little engagements she had taken upon herself to fulfil, and which, I wished to convince her, were become so many duties, which it was strictly incumbent on her to attend to.

I give to my niece all due praise, for endeavouring to fix her attention on what she was employed about on Wednesday morning, and for resisting a strong inclination, which I perceived her struggling with, to leave a very pretty little head she was copying, with one eye, till the next day, that she

she might begin to spot the caul of a cap for Mary. She finished the head, and it was so much admired some days afterwards, that I hope it will incite her to more steadiness; for, I believe, it is the first thing she ever did finish since she was born.

Towards the end of the week, I received a letter from a lady, who, on her way from Cornwall to London, fixed on the following day for dining with me, if I would give her an early dinner, and permit her to continue her journey soon after it. She is a very particular friend, and I rejoiced at the prospect of our meeting; but my hope of being able to persuade her to stay

all

all night with us vanished, on finding her accompanied by another lady and her daughter (a child of eleven years of age); and I soon perceived, by my friend's manner, that, in order to lessen her travelling expences, she had encumbered herself with two companions, every way disagreeable to her. Rose and Susan were extremely surprised, when they heard the lady scream out to her servant, and reprimand him severely, for neglecting to hold the parasol over Miss's head, when she stepped out of the post-chaise; and ask, "if he had a mind his young lady should be burnt as black as a crow?" and they were still more surprised, when Susan (who thought it would be civil

to

to welcome, and conduct her into the house), going to take her by the hand for that purpose, and saying, she was glad to see her, was prevented by her Mamma's exclaiming, "My dear young lady, I intreat you not to stop her; let her get into the parlour as fast as possible; your house stands so exposed, that what with the sun, and what with the wind, the child will be quite destroyed."

I must confess, that I was not less astonished at these extraordinary precautions than my two girls, and concluded the poor thing must be in a dying state; but how were we all struck, when her Mamma had unpacked

packed her from two or three great coats, and had taken off a large bonnet which was tied under her chin with a double silk handkerchief, at beholding, instead of the delicate puny child we expected to see, a stout clumsy girl, whose skin was as coarse as a milk-maid's, and whose hands were as red and chapped, as if she had been rubbing the grates and washing the floors.

I had no enjoyment of my friend's company; for we were teased the whole time she staid, by the lady and her daughter, or rather by the *lady*, for Miss would have liked a scamper in the garden, in defiance of sun and wind

wind, if Mamma would have suffered her to expose so much delicacy to the rude elements; but she was not allowed to move from the parlour, not even to go into the hall, with Susan and her cousin, lest she should play and overheat herself; and she muttered complaints against my friend, because she had objected to having *all* the windows of the chaise drawn up; and she was sure the dear little creature had caught cold in one of her eyes, which appeared extremely inflamed, she said, though nobody saw it except herself.

Poor Rose, who thought it incumbent on her to attempt something for the amusement of the young stranger, brought

brought in her skipping-rope; but the lady wondered how she could propose any thing so fatiguing, to a *little creature so extremely delicate.* At table it was still worse; every body was to be attentive to her wants, and to be teased and tormented with a detail of what she was to eat, and what she must not touch; what the physician had said would agree with her, and what would be her death, if she was allowed to eat it; while she, poor thing, only waited for her mother's permission to make a hearty dinner on any dish at table, even on that very vulgar and indelicate thing, a sirloin of beef.

My

My poor girls were all astonishment; they had never met with any thing so strange; but I was extremely pleased to observe, that, though it was impossible for them not to be struck with the ridiculous whims of the lady; and that they had all the difficulty in the world to refrain from laughing, when they looked at the bouncing object of her tender care; they neither laughed, whispered, or made signs to each other of any kind, but behaved with the utmost decorum.

Coffee was served immediately after dinner, and, very soon after it, we were released from the restraint we had been under for upwards of three hours. I

was

was not sorry to see my friend depart; for her visit had given me no kind of pleasure, and I thought I could not give her a stronger proof of my friendship, and wishes for her comfort, than by desiring she might be speedily set down at her own house, and be quit of her troublesome *compagnons de voyage*.

We were talking of our guests the next morning after breakfast, when Mary came into the parlour, and told Susan she was wanted in the dairy. Rose begged that she might accompany her cousin, and invited me to be of the party. We found four poor children (Susan's pensioners) waiting at the gate, with their pitchers in their hands,

for

for some milk: their little ruddy faces were close to the bars, and each had a hand ready, at the first word of command, to open the gate, and advance towards the dairy. Their pitchers were soon filled, and they departed; but not till the girls had made two or three *dips*, by way of courtesy, with a "thankee, Miss Susan," and the boys their best bows, by a nod of the head, and a scrape with one leg so violent, that they raised the dust in a cloud about them. Observing one of the little girls lingering behind the others, I asked her if she wanted any thing.

"To speak to Miss Susan, if I pleased," she said; "she had got a present

present for her, which she was sure she would like ; her brother Tom had been at Exmouth, and had picked up some *beautiful things* by the sea side, and she had brought them to Miss, because Miss was always so good to her, and spoke to her so good-naturedly, and because she loved her ;" and taking out of her pocket a paper full of very common shells, she gave them to Susan, who received the humble present as graciously, and with the appearance of as much pleasure and satisfaction, as if it had been the greatest rarity, and of the utmost value.

THE BLACK BOOK.

OBSERVATIONS IN THE SECOND WEEK.

I RECOMMEND to Rose, to endeavour to recollect herself, before she does any thing likely to disconcert or disappoint those who are kind enough to take the trouble of seeking to oblige her; and to remember, that when a person wishes to please, however they may err in the method they take to do so, we ought to be grateful for their kind intention, and hide from them, if possible, that their attempt was ill-judged or useless. The poor

girl, who presented Susan with her little hoard of shells, thought them extremely beautiful: and, had they really been so, and equally valuable, would have made exactly the same use of them. I was vexed, to see the poor thing so confused by your loud laugh; and should have been glad, if I could have said any thing, to prevent her thinking that your mirth was occasioned by the meanness of her present; but she was gone in an instant, and, I am very much afraid, mortified and disappointed.

THE RED BOOK.

JOURNAL TO THE 23d OF MAY.

I HAD waited above half an hour, with the tea-table before me, when Susan and her cousin entered the parlour, very warm and out of breath; and I was just going to inquire, why they had hurried themselves so much, when Rose threw her arms round my neck, begging me to pardon the fault she had unthinkingly committed; and assuring me, she had not the least intention to mortify poor little Ellen; but that she could not help laughing, when she saw the

the *fine* present she had brought to Susan; and particularly, because she appeared to think so much of it. She said, they had been two hours endeavouring to think of some way of at least mending (since they could not recal) what she had done; and that she hoped they had so far succeeded, that all idea of having been laughed at was quite effaced from her mind; that she had been to desire Ellen, to ask her brother Tom, the first time he happens to go to Exmouth, if he would be so good as to bring her some of the same shells as those she had given to her cousin; and that Ellen appeared extremely pleased at the demand, and said, "Sure, Miss, I *sartenly* did think

think you was laughing at me, for bringing them to Miss Susan, only mother said it was *unpossible*; for young ladies knew better than to laugh at poor people, when they were doing no harm, but only trying to shew their love; and so, I suppose, it was something else *as* made you laugh; and, since you like the shells so much, Tom shall go on purpose next week, and bring you his pockets full."

Rose was very much pleased at having settled this matter so well; she had been (Susan told me) quite uneasy about it; and that they had both been terribly surprised, when I drew the black book from the drawer, having

ing flattered themselves that it would not have made its appearance this week.

The weather was so settled and fine, that we walked out almost every day, my two children always endeavouring to draw me towards the ferry; and, if they failed in their attempt to make me extend my walk to that distance, I was obliged to name an early day for paying a visit to Dame Margery, that the time of the christening (for which they were very impatient) might be fixed; and that we might know if we were to go to the farm, in young Thomas's boat, as had been projected.

Passing

Passing, one morning, by a cottage, near a lane in which we had been looking for primroses and violets, we were struck with the wretchedness of its appearance, and the marks of poverty and neglect exhibited in every thing which belonged to it. The garden was in the utmost disorder; a very few cabbages, and a great many weeds, and so trodden down (probably by the pigs, as there were two or three at that time in it), that it had much more the look of a piece of waste ground than any thing else.

A pond, near this unflourishing garden (once, no doubt, the delight of all the ducks and geese in the neighbourhood)

hood) was so choaked up with mud and rubbish, that the air was infected with its noisome stench. The windows of the cottage were almost all broken, and some *half-washed* rags were spread to dry on a hedge near the door.

Whilst we were looking at this miserable habitation, a young woman, with a child in her arms, came out of it, and placing the infant in a little wicker chair near the door, sat herself down on a large stone, pulled a ballad out of her pocket, and began to sing, and then read it with great attention. Her appearance and present occupation, joined to the little notice she took of the cries and complainings of her

poor

little dirty sickly-looking baby, readily accounted for all the wretchedness which surrounded us; and I made Rose and Susan observe, that, though the idle creature had a very nice fresh-looking linen gown on, she had suffered one sleeve to be ripped almost away from the body, because, in all probability, she could not prevail upon herself to take the trouble of putting a stitch in it. She had a muslin cap, with half the border torn, and hanging down her back; and her *dirty* apron was pinned round her waist, because she had no tape to tie it. The child cried for some drink, and we were just going towards it, when a very well-looking young man came through a gate from a field

a field near the house, and catching the poor thing up in his arms, and pressing it to his breast, with an angry, though sorrowful countenance, said, "Oh, Mary! can you see this poor baby die by your negligence and want of care, and yet go to bed with a quiet conscience?" But she did not stay to hear him; for the moment he began to speak, and that she perceived we were observing her, she rose from her seat, and, with her ballad in her hand, went into the cottage. The young man sat down, with his child, on the seat his wife had quitted, took an orange from his pocket, which he peeled and divided, and then gave a piece of it to the unfortunate little

crea-

creature, whose mouth appeared parched with thirst; and, turning to us, he said, "Oh, dear ladies! my poor child is very ill; and I am, instead of being a happy and contented man, as I hoped to be, one of the most miserable creatures in the world. That young woman is my wife. I married her, because I loved her, and thought her prudent and industrious; but, God help me! I have been cruelly deceived. Her father and mother are very worthy people, and are worth a good deal of money, and when their daughter married, they gave her a deal of good things, a cow, and poultry, and household furniture, and linen, besides money, to begin the world with; so that,

with

with what she brought me, and what I had of my own, we might have lived very comfortably, and were looked upon by our neighbours as people in easy circumstances. Ah! Madam! this was a very different place at that time, there was not so pretty a cottage in many miles around; the front of it was covered with honey-suckles and jessamine; but my wife grew so lazy, that when she had been boiling beans and bacon, or greens, for dinner, she would throw the hot water upon their roots, to save herself the trouble of going half a dozen steps farther, and so they soon died. My garden was full of good vegetables, and we had the finest poultry in the whole neighbourhood; but

all

all is gone, even my cloaths, and I have scarcely enough left to appear decently on Sundays. But what breaks my heart is, to see my poor child so neglected; it is impossible it should be well, for it is never clean, and has nothing given it to eat, but what is unwholesome, and improper for such an infant. I should not so much mind myself, though she never provides any thing for me, nor do I ever (though I work hard) enjoy the comfort of a warm dinner; but when I have been working a whole long morning in the fields, in the busy time of the year, if I step home to eat a mouthful, I am glad to swallow a bit of bread and cheese, and return to my labour. She

is

is so bad-tempered too, that she must not be spoken to; and my poor mother, who took care of my house before I was married, was soon obliged to leave us. Oh! it was a sad change for me! I wish I had never seen her!"

We were very much affected at the poor young man's account of his misfortunes. Rose whispered me, to advise him to turn his wife out of doors, plant more honey-suckles, and put his garden in order; but, above all things, to get another cow, that his child might have some milk; and Susan asked me, if we had not better take the poor thing home with us; but

though

though I could not well comply with either of their requests, I felt myself so much interested in the young man's favour, and so desirous of saving the life of his child, that I determined to ask him a few questions, relative to his intentions concerning the unworthy woman, who was the cause of his misfortunes, and to offer him what assistance I had in my power to give him.

I found, that her father and mother, who are extremely irritated by her conduct, finding that all their admonitions were to no purpose, had at length determined to take her home, and oblige her, whether she liked or

disliked it, to earn her daily bread by her labour, or go without it; and that *his* mother was to return to his cottage, and endeavour, by care and proper nourishment, to save the life of his little boy, and, by order and good management, to restore to his habitation its former decent appearance: but he said, "his cow was sold, his poultry all dead, his bed and other furniture destroyed, every thing torn and broken to pieces, and he had neither money nor credit to replace them. I would pass over, in silence, the answer I made to this information, but that I should lose the opportunity of taking notice of, and doing justice to, the proofs my two good girls gave of their

their feeling and humanity. I was delighted to perceive the pleasure which sparkled in their eyes, when I told Allen, that I would assist him with money to purchase what was necessary to his comfort, and that he should repay it me when he was able; that the moment his wife was gone, and his mother had taken her place, if he would come over to my house, I would give him some clean linen, and other things for his child, which would, I hoped, soon restore it to health; and that I should, before long, see him comfortable and happy; and, when I afterwards remarked to them, that the poor man's little property had

been suffered to go so entirely to ruin, that it would require much more than I could spare to settle him as completely and comfortably as he was when he married, they both desired they might add all their pocket-money to what I intended lending him; and that the sum I had allotted, to treat them with a ride to visit M—, and its environs, might be expended in something useful, as a present to Allen.

I would not stay to hear the thanks and unaffected expressions of gratitude he was beginning to pour forth, but hurried away with my children as fast

as

as I could; and before we reached home, Susan had settled a whole wardrobe for the little boy, which was to be made out of her old frocks and petticoats; and Rose had, in five minutes, formed at least half a dozen projects, by which she hoped to add to the comfort and conveniency of both father and son.

I had many fears on Susan's account the whole of the following day; a new employment! and that so interesting! I trembled for her, and could I do otherwise, when I saw her, several times, on the point of neglecting different things which she had settled to be

be done on that day? But I was relieved from my anxiety, when Rose observing, that our walk to Allen's cottage, and the melancholy history he had given us of his unfortunate marriage, would read very well in the Red Book. She started from her seat, put her work in the basket, and said, "If I sit here, and forget myself, I am afraid it will be *my* turn this week to entertain Mr. Morton, if he should call upon us with the Black One; and added, that she was afraid he was ill, for we had never been so long without seeing him. I was glad I had it in my power to make her easy on that head, knowing our excellent and worthy

thy friend to be absent from home; and told her, she might soon expect him here to pass his judgment upon us.

THE BLACK BOOK.

THIRD WEEK.

THE RED BOOK.

JOURNAL TO THE 30th OF MAY.

IT was a subject of great joy to all parties, when, having gone through my journal of the preceding week, I replaced my book in the drawer, which I locked, and put the key into my pocket.

"Is that all? What, no black story?" exclaimed Rose and Susan.

"Nothing more, my dear children," said I, "and I wish I may never have any

any thing to record of either of you, but what may be thought worthy of a place in the book in which I have been reading."

Our dinner was remarkably cheerful, though we were alone, and Monday is a day of some anxiety; but the moment was passed, and had left no sting, and Rose and her cousin were all gaiety and sprightliness; every thing on the table was so good, that the cook had certainly exerted herself; the soup was such as she had never made before; the chicken delightful; and Peggy had never made such fritters in her whole life: so true it is, that when we are pleased with ourselves, it goes very far

far towards making us pleased with every thing about us.

We talked of Allen, and his little boy; of the frequent walks we should have to his cottage; and, of the pleasure it would give us, to see his child recovering his health and strength, and the house and garden wearing a better appearance. The afternoon was passed in assisting Susan in the work she had undertaken for little George, and the table was filled with scraps of muslin, flannel, and dimity.

I had engaged myself to dine the following day with Sir Thomas and Lady Melford. Rose and Susan were

were also invited, and the hour was fixed upon for the coach to come for us. Nothing could be more delightful than our drive to Melford Hall; it could only be equalled by the hospitality and friendship with which we were received by the worthy old knight and his lady. Our pleasure, however, was not without alloy; Rose was not with us: she was at home alone, regretting, too late, what she might easily have avoided, and repining at her folly. *Why* she was not with us, must be made known in another place.

We found a large company with Lady Melford, in the drawing-room; her married daughter, her husband, and

and two children, a boy of twelve years of age, and a girl of eleven, both extremely ill-bred and troublesome, interrupting every body to ask impertinent questions, and making so much noise, that nobody could be heard but themselves. There were several gentlemen and ladies, who were entire strangers to me; and, amongst the rest, a French gentleman, with his wife and daughter, who were come into the neighbourhood to spend the summer: they were sitting by Lady Melford, who speaks French (of which she is extremely fond) as fluently as she does her native language; but the young lady, a very sweet-looking girl, of about thirteen or fourteen years of age,

age, was left, at the other end of the room, to the mercy of the two boisterous creatures, I have already mentioned; who, having sufficiently tired the rest of the company, were, I soon perceived, determined to try if they could not revenge themselves upon her, for the little attention they had been able to gain from others. Their first amusement was, to pretend they did not understand her, though I knew (having just heard Lady Melford say so to Madame de St. Claire) that they both spoke and understood French as well as they did English. I could not hear all which passed between them, though I caught a word or two now and then, and heard Mademoiselle de

St.

St. Claire desire them not to distress themselves on her account, but to leave her, and return to the company; Master and Miss Hertford shrugged their shoulders, and shook their heads; and all at once Miss Hertford, as if she had just found out her meaning, jumped round her chair, and, in an instant, untied a coral necklace which she wore about her neck, and let it fall to the ground. Poor Mademoiselle de St. Claire was quite confused; and I heard the two rude things telling her, they thought she had said her necklace was too tight, and begged one of them to untie it. Their next frolick was, to pretend they thought she complained of being hungry, and to fetch an enor-

enormous piece of bread and cheese, and throw into her lap; and then to call a gentleman to her, saying, she wanted to speak to him. I could really bear this no longer: the poor thing coloured like scarlet, and appeared so distressed, that, as nobody else seemed to perceive her situation, I determined to rescue her from their clutches; and accordingly went up to her, brought her to the other part of the room, and seated her between myself and Susan, and we were not long in entering into a very agreeable conversation. Susan exerted herself as much as she could, to second my intention of making Mademoiselle de St. Claire recover herself, and forget the imper-

impertinence of the two little Hertfords, and did her best to make herself understood by her; and I was very much pleased she did so, instead of sitting, as I have seen some young persons do, an hour or two by the side of a foreigner, without opening their lips; or else declaring, with a foolish downcast look, that "they could not speak French," though they were conscious, that nothing prevented them but the false pride of not chusing to risk a few mistakes in a language, which nobody would expect them to speak with perfect correctness; and surely a few blunders, or an ill-turned expression, would be much sooner overlooked, than

 that

that silent reserve which (as they all are persuaded we learn their language, and must know enough of it to be able to answer a simple question) they misconstrue into pride and stateliness.

Master and Miss Hertford followed Mademoiselle de St. Clair, as soon as they thought I had ceased to observe them; and I heard them say, "they would try to tease the *French girl* a bit more;" and accordingly, getting behind her chair, they began to pull her hair, pin her gown fast to Susan's, and fifty other foolish and vulgar tricks, for which they richly deserved punishment, and which I determined, by some

some means or other, to put a stop to; and was very much provoked that they were not seen by some person, who had authority enough over them, to put an end to their follies. I was meditating on a project to make them noticed by their grandmamma, who sat opposite to us, and who was so deeply engaged with Monsr. and Madame de St. Claire, that she saw nothing which passed, when Mr. Hertford, coming up to us, said, in a very severe and angry tone, "Charles Hertford, and you, Miss Sophy, I have, for some time, been observing your behaviour, and shall leave you to judge, whether or not I ought to be pleased with it: we are going down to dinner, and in politeness to

Monsr. and Madame de St. Claire, the conversation at table will be mostly in French; but it appears (though you were once perfectly conversant in that language) that you are now entirely ignorant of it, and therefore it would be very unentertaining to you to be with us. I therefore advise you to go and dine in your nursery, and there amuse yourselves with your toys, and with playing tricks with each other, you have exhibited *here* quite long enough.

John, take Master and Miss Hertford to their maid, and tell her, we shall dispense with their company till to-morrow."

Master

Master and Miss began to whimper, and to mutter something about pardon, and Mamma seemed inclined to plead for them, but Mr. Hertford was not a man (I saw it with pleasure on this occasion) to be easily brought to change his orders, for without paying the smallest attention to Mrs. Hertford or them, he sternly said, "Go directly;" and they left the room, much to the satisfaction of Mademoiselle de St. Claire, Susan, and myself.

Sir Thomas was a very old friend of my father's, and has known me from a child; Susan is his very great favourite; and, as he left the dining parlour almost immediately after the ladies withdrew,

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he invited her, with her new acquaintance, to walk with him into the garden. Madame de St. Claire asked me if I would join the party, and I was very glad of the opportunity it gave me of conversing with her.

Sir Thomas told me, he had made acquaintance with this family three or four years ago at Montpelier, and had, through them, received the greatest marks of attention from several families of distinction in its neighbourhood, that there were very few people in the world for whom he felt a more sincere esteem than for Monsr. and Madame de St. Claire; and, putting her hand into mine, obligingly added, that he could

could not give either of us a greater proof of his friendship, than by desiring to make us known to each other, being well assured it could not fail to add very much to the happiness of both.

Madame de St. Claire appeared equally desirous with myself to fulfil the good old knight's wishes, and I have promised to call upon her in a few days. I was extremely pleased to find, that the little habitation, they have hired for a few months, is no more than a mile and a half from the cottage, and Susan flattered herself with spending many agreeable hours in the company of Mademoiselle de St. Claire; but I must do her the justice to say, that

that this agreeable visit to Melford Hall did not make her forget poor Rose, of whom she spoke to me several times when she had an opportunity; and when we got into the coach to return, finding two pots of beautiful geraniums, which Sir Thomas had ordered to be put there for her to take home, because she had been particularly struck with their beauty, when she saw them in the green house; she appeared more satisfied at the opportunity it would give her of presenting one of them to her cousin, in the hope it might be some consolation to her, than in having them to decorate her window.

The

The day after our visit, whilst we were speaking of Allen, and wondering we had not seen him, Mary came into the parlour, to tell me that a young countryman desired to speak to me; and ordering that he might be shewn in, we were soon made acquainted, by Allen himself, with the cause of his delay. He told us, that his wife's father came to fetch her the day after we saw him; that he was sorry, when the time came, to see her taken from him, but she went away without speaking a single word to him, or even kissing her child; and was so indifferent, and so very unconcerned, that he thought it would be quite

foolish

foolish to grieve after such an unfeeling creature. He locked his door, he said, as soon as she was gone, and, with little George in his arms, walked to his mother, who lived in the next village; but he found her so unwell, that she had not been able to come to him till that day; so that he had been obliged to stay at home, and nurse his child.

We gave him what linen we had prepared for little George, and with a small parcel of nourishing things, which I always keep in the house, I slipped into his hand the money I had promised him, and said he might expect to see us in the following week.

THE BLACK BOOK.

OBSERVATIONS IN THE FOURTH WEEK.

THE consequence of the little attention Miss Wilmot paid to my remonstrances, and of her usual disposition to trifling, followed the fault so immediately, that it scarcely needs being pointed out to her; but the engagement I have entered into, and the strict probity and love of order, of which I make profession, obliges me to fulfil my painful task.

The

The morning of the day, on which I had engaged to dine with my worthy friends at Melford Hall, I informed my young people that the coach would be sent for us at an early hour, Lady Melford having some other friends, she wished to oblige in the same way, and, that knowing her wish, made me desirous of being ready the moment it arrived, as I would not, on any account, keep it waiting. Susan prepared to dress herself, and put up a little drawing which she had promised to her good old friend; but, I was sorry to see Rose begin the day in her usual loitering manner—just going to step round the garden with Cora, to give the poor thing a little air—then, only

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one moment, to try if Farren cotton would make a pretty *a la Grec* on cambric muslin ; then discovering an excellent place for the canary bird, and running up and down stairs, to find something to measure the height, that she might ascertain whether it would not be more out of the reach of Tibby ; and finally wishing, before she began to dress herself, that she might step over to Ellen's, to inquire if her brother had been at Exmouth, and if he had brought the shells for her.

It was in vain that I represented to her the folly of delaying to get ready, that what she was doing, and still wished to do, might just as well be deferred

ferred to another time, and assured her that the instant the coach came, I should set off, without waiting for any one. I might have been peremptory, and have *ordered* her, in positive terms, to go up stairs and prepare immediately for our visit, but I determined to advise only, and let her suffer the consequences of not attending to my counsel.

Off she went like an arrow from a bow, but (as I afterwards learned) meeting at Ellen's with a number of sea weeds, and other curiosities of the same kind, she forgot to return with equal speed, and only came up to the gate, in her morning dress, just as Susan and myself were stepping into the coach.

I need

I need not make any comments on the subject, it will be easily supposed, how vexed and mortified she appeared when she saw us driving away without her, and how lonely and dull the hours passed, which she was obliged to spend alone.

END OF THE FIRST VOLUME.

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