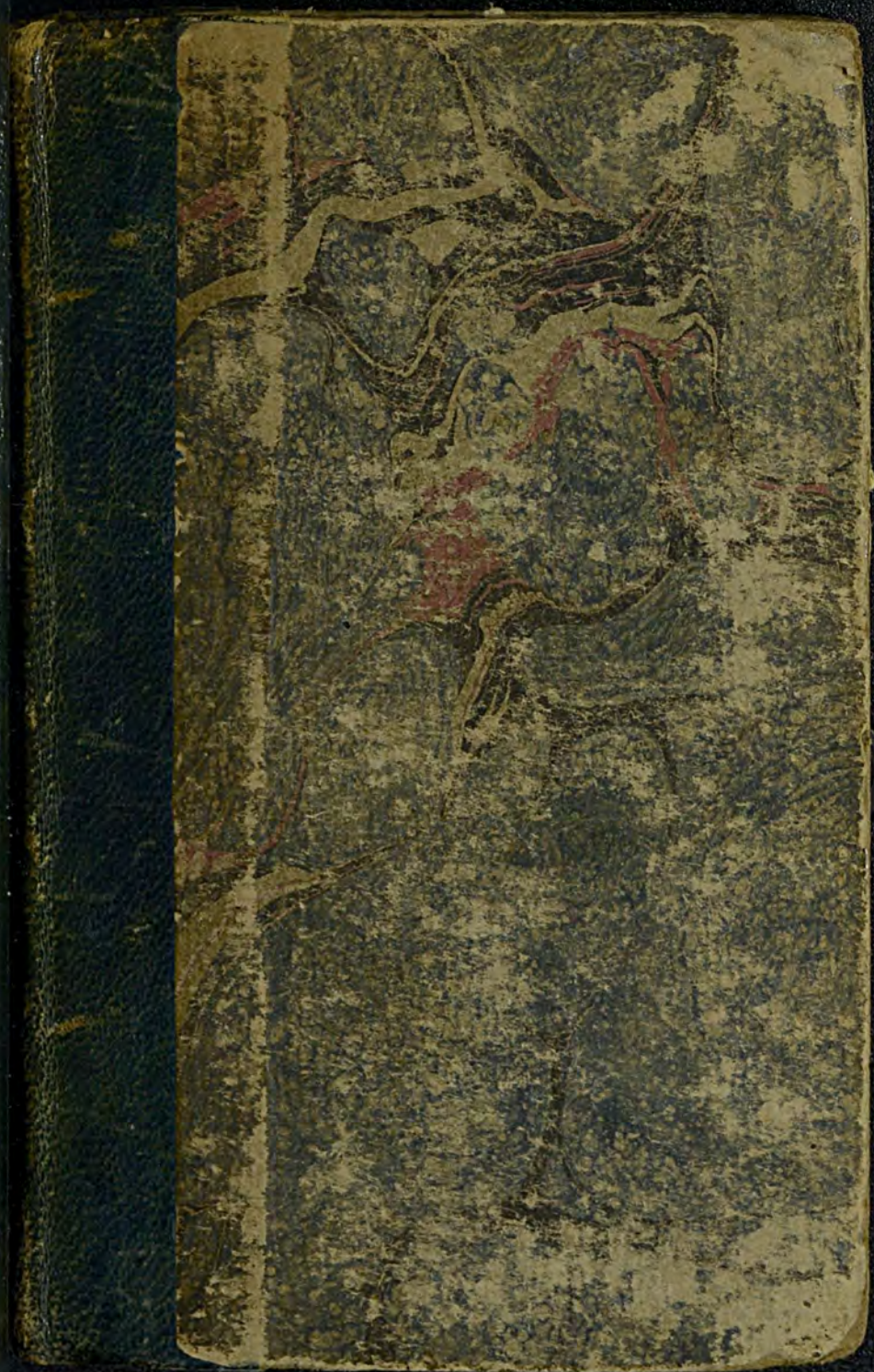


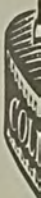


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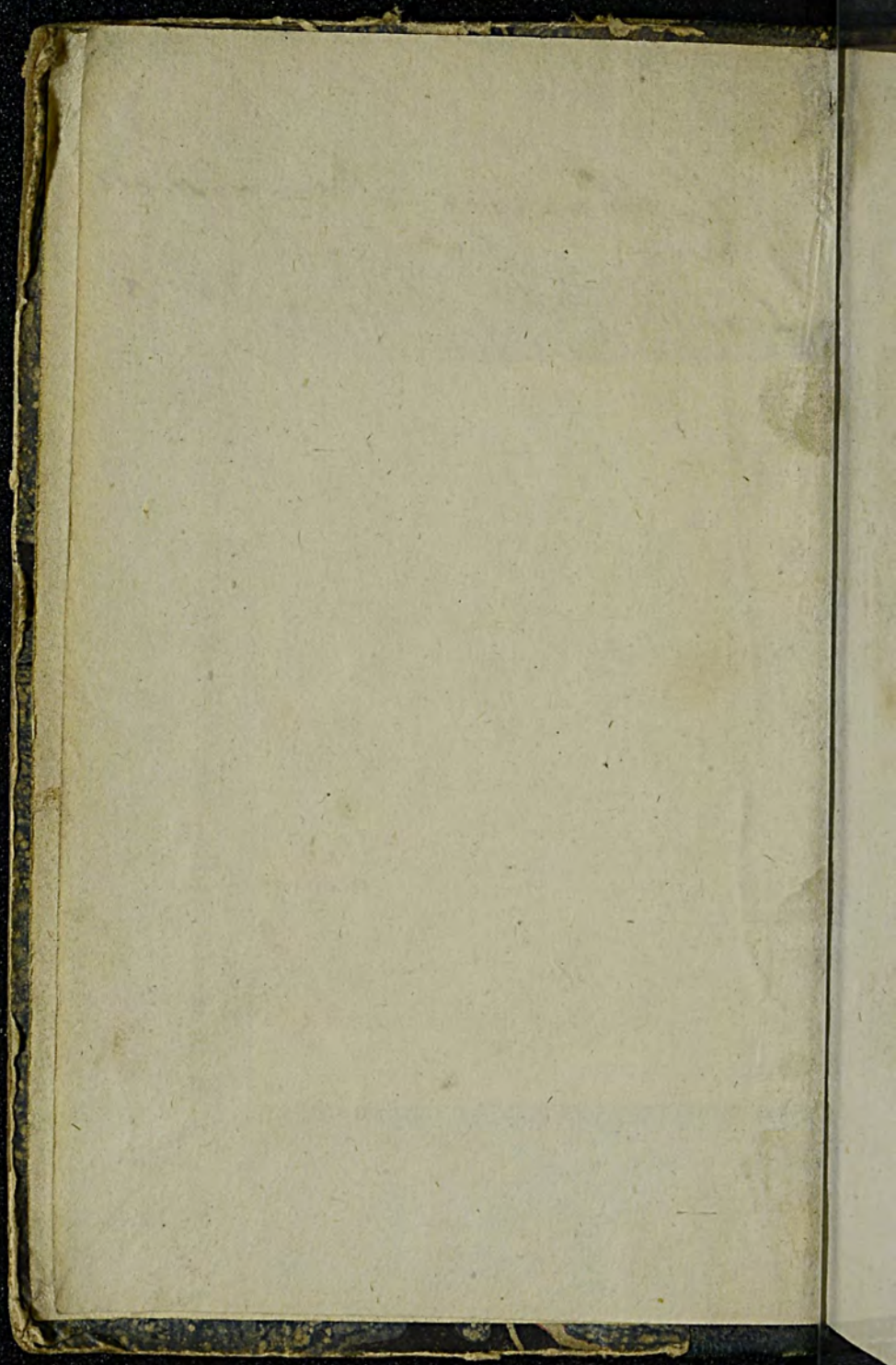
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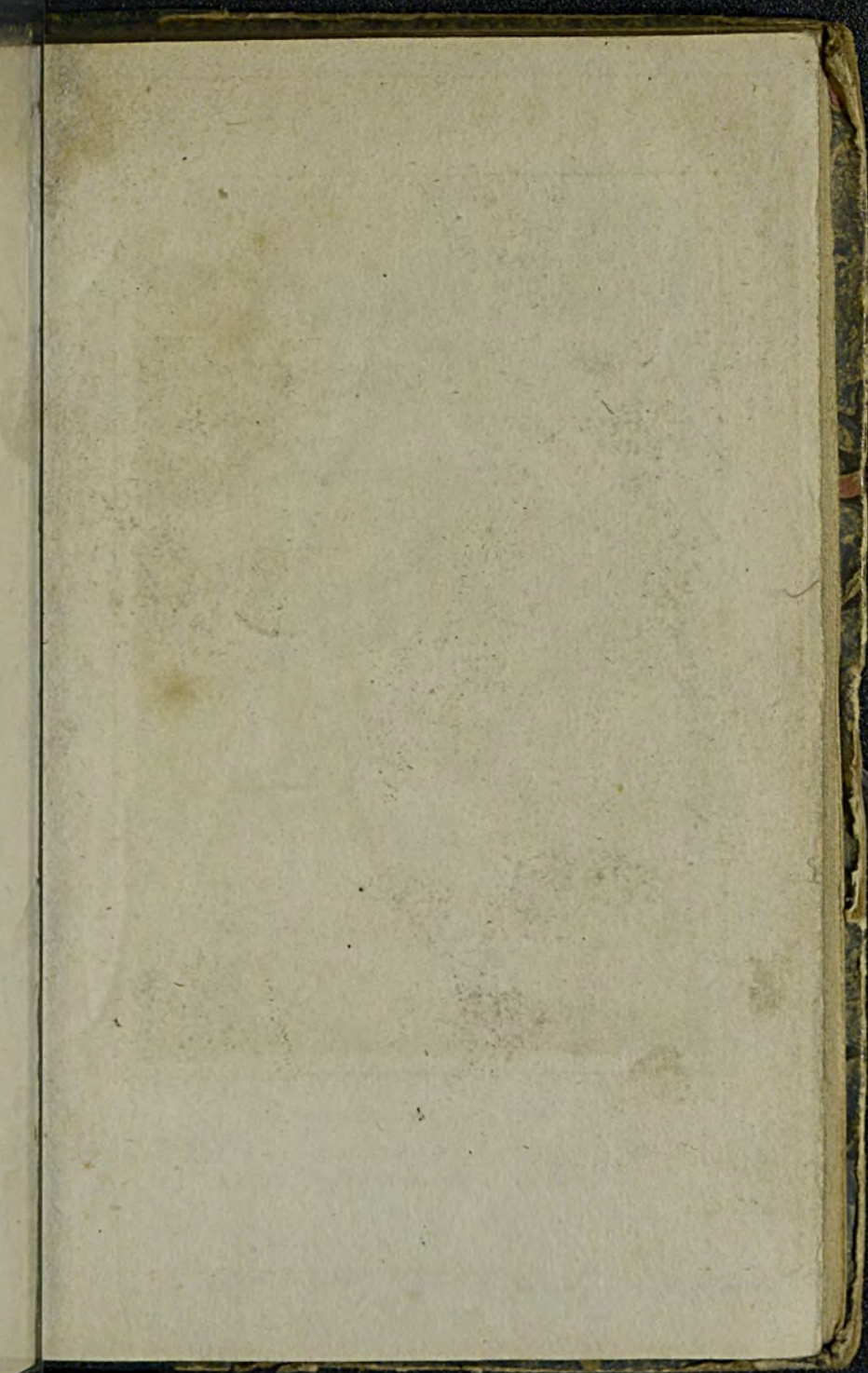
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See page 15.

Published by E. Newbery, corner of St. Pauls.

THE
SHEPHERD'S SON;
OR,
THE WISH ACCOMPLISHED.
A Moral Tale.

INTERSPERSED WITH
POETICAL EFFUSIONS,
DESIGNED FOR
THE IMPROVEMENT OF YOUTH.

BY THE REV. THOMAS SMITH.

Youth, like a flow'r, requires some fost'ring hand,
To tend its foil, or bid its leaves expand;
To watch its progress with incessant care,
And shield its breast from pestilential air.

LONDON:
PRINTED FOR E. NEWBERRY, THE CORNER OF
ST. PAUL'S CHURCH-YARD.
BY G. WOODFALL, PATERNOSTER-ROW, LONDON.

1800.

Chap

II

I

V

V

VII

VIII

IX

CONTENTS.

Chap I.. DESCRIBING some Characters found
in the Work.

II. A Summer's Morning ; a Song ; and a
pleasing Surprise.

III. The Promise fulfilled ; a Journey ;
and a Boarding-School.

IV. Two opposite Characters ; an Excur-
sion ; and a Misfortune.

V. The Return ; Repentance ; and salu-
tary Counsel.

VI. A Recovery ; a Ramble ; and an Act
of Charity.

VII. The Stranger's History ; and the
Youth's Return.

VIII. The Jubilee.

IX. A Visitor ; a Letter ; and a Removal.

X. The

- Chap. X. The Proposal; Gratitude; and a Scene of Affection.
- XI. The Answer; a Present; and a Promise.
- XII. Embarkation; Reflections; and a Song.
- XIII. The Voyage concluded with sincere Rejoicings.
- XIV. A Stroke of Fate; a Will; and a Letter.
- XV. Our Hero's Return; Reception; and Interview with a Lady.
- XVI. A Proof of Affection; Confession; and Acceptance.
- XVII. The Cottage new-modelled; and a Seat erected.
- XVIII. The Wedding Morning; and the Wish accomplished.

THE
SHEPHERD'S SON;

OR,
THE WISH ACCOMPLISHED.

CHAP. I.

DESCRIBING SOME CHARACTERS FOUND
IN THE WORK.

IN a pleasant village, near fifty miles from London, resided Mr. Loveboy, in a beautiful house which he had erected on a rising ground, commanding a very extensive view of the country, while the spacious gardens, enriched with the most stately trees, charming shrubs, and fragrant flowers, seemed to eclipse the beauty of each surrounding habitation.

The owner of this elegant retreat was a gentleman of large fortune, and the descendant of a respectable family, esteemed by the rich, and nearly adored by the poor, who justly stiled him their unfailing friend, their patron, and benefactor. To the former he demonstrated the matchless felicity attendant upon a virtuous life; and to the latter, his wealth, his counsel, or assistance, were readily given on every emergency.

The children, likewise, when tripping o'er the lawn, smiled at his name, and blessed his bounteous goodness; for such were the darling objects of his most peculiar attention. For these he purchased the most valuable and entertaining little publications, and kindly discharged the expences

pences attendant upon the schooling of the peasant's destitute family: nay, some were even sent to an academy, at which they were supplied with raiment, board, and education, by his orders; and when he found them sufficiently qualified, he kindly put them forward in the world, by placing them in such a business, or line of occupation, as appeared the most congenial with their native turn of mind, or best adapted to their health and abilities.

In brief, we must inform our readers, the amiable person we are attempting to describe, was a faithful servant to his Great Creator, and a pattern of goodness to his fellow-creatures. Noble in his person, affable in his deportment, and sincere in
his

his professions, he drew the affections of every surrounding cottager to his feat, and unfeigned petitions were daily waisted to Paradise for his preservation.

In the same village, but within a lowly dwelling, lived Mr. Thomas Woodbine, who, though utterly destitute of the gifts of fortune, was still possessed of a generous mind, and all his actions were marked with the strictest honesty. His occupation was that of a shepherd; and his character, a just and virtuous man.

His son, a boy of eight years old, generally attended him when he led his fleecy care to slake their thirst in the chrystal stream; and when at close of day he penned them in the fold, the youngster's pipe (on which,
for

for his age, he was no mean performer), spread its soft notes, and roused the sleeping Echo.

Mrs. Woodbine, whose affectionate heart was equally divided betwixt her faithful husband and her darling child, endeavoured by every possible means to assist the lawful exertions of the shepherd, that thereby they might be enabled to live in a decent though frugal manner. This, by a course of unremitting industry, she happily accomplished; yet still one grief lay heavy on her heart, and often bedewed her cheek with tears when nature smiled around her.

We have already observed her tenderness towards her boy, and from hence arose the silent sorrow which oppressed her. She was conscious of
her

her inability to place her son at a school; and her distress was often augmented by the tender and pathetic intreaties of Charles, who eagerly desired to enjoy the blessings of learning with his juvenile associates, and to peruse with his neighbours those instructive and amusing books, which the generosity of Mr. Loveboy so often distributed among the infant peasantry. When she reflected that poverty withheld her from gratifying so pleasing and reasonable a request, her wonted contentment was apt to waver, and her poor bosom was rent with sighs which rose to suppress a loud complaint.

Nor was Mr. Thomas Woodbine any stranger to those tender emotions which we observed to fill the breast of
his

his affectionate wife. He wished as ardently as herself to see her son receive the inestimable advantages of education; but instead of foolishly repining at the situation which Providence had placed him in, and which at present appeared as an insurmountable obstacle to his wishes, he meekly prostrated himself before the Father of Mercies, and humbly implored for his offspring that invaluable jewel which his own power could not bestow, and which his small pittance could not purchase.

Whether his petition was heard will be seen hereafter.

CHAP.

CHAP. II.

A SUMMER'S MORNING ; A SONG , AND A
PLEASING SURPRIZE.

THE village clock had just struck six, when Thomas Woodbine, attended by his son, ascended the hill, on whose flowery side his flock reclined amidst the sultry hours of the day.

Nature was arrayed in her gayest robes ; the fleecy clouds disparting, fled before the blazing chariot of the sun, whose beams reflected in the dimpled lake, or quivering through the shady bowers, awaked the feathered choristers, and called them forth to harmony and love.

The blushing blossoms, yet white with pearly dew, diffused their grateful

ful fragrance round the plain, or courted the admiration of the ambulator. The warbling lark, borne on the yielding air, poured forth his music as he rose towards the gates of Heaven; while o'er the enamelled meadow strayed the browsing herds, and the susceptible heart caught more than human rapture from the glowing scene.

The shepherd (having led his gentle lambs to crop the tender blade, or recline in safety beneath his watchful eye), seated himself on a stone which was nearly overgrown with moss, and gazed enraptured on the beauteous prospect which kind creation opened to his view; while Charles, at a distance, attuned his little pipe in softened strains to his own reflections,

B

and

and concluding the pleasing sound
with a most enchanting cadence.

He hung the instrument on a neighbouring branch; and directing his eyes to the bright abode of endless felicity, he thus expressed his thoughts, to which before his simple music played:—

While Nature, drest in all her charms,
Chaunts forth her sweetest lays;
The brighten'd scene my bosom warms,
And tunes my tongue to praise.

Tho' poor, at present, is my lot,
Why shou'd my heart despair?
Heav'n, from a palace, or a cot,
Alike accepts of pray'r.

Then sure my humble thanks may rise
To His eternal throne,
Who, from the mansion of the skies,
Regards the heart alone.

Accept

Accept the tribute, Lord, and grant
I may on thee depend,
To shield me from distressing want,
And prove Thyself my friend.

The song was no sooner ended, than a gentleman, who had listened with the utmost attention whilst it was singing, stepped from behind some honey-suckles which hitherto had concealed him, and taking the young songster by the hand, thanked him cordially for the pleasure which such music had afforded him, and requested to be informed where Charles had read the words which he had so melodiously repeated.

The little peasant stood silent a moment; but at length exclaimed—
“ Alas, sir! I have never been blest
“ with the valuable advantages of edu-
B 2 “ cation.

“ cation. My dear parents are in-
“ deed very kind; but when they
“ have provided sufficient food to sa-
“ tisfy the demands of my hunger,
“ and raiment to shield me from the
“ inclemency of the weather, they
“ have no money left to put me
“ to school; nor must I repine, since
“ it is not in their power: yet I often
“ think, if I could but attend a
“ master a very little time, I should
“ be enabled, by watchfulness and
“ assiduity, to improve myself after-
“ wards.”

“ Pray,” said the gentleman, (who
was no other than Mr. Loveboy),
“ what is your name, and who are
“ your parents?”

“ My name,” replied the youth,
“ is Charles Woodbine. My father
is

“ is yon shepherd, whom your honour
“ may see reclining upon his crook,
“ and gazing upon his dog, who is
“ indeed a faithful animal. My mo-
“ ther is employed in washing at
“ home.”

“ And where,” said Mr. Loveboy,
“ do you reside?” — “ Our cottage,
“ fir,” replied he, “ is that small
“ one, which is nearly concealed by
“ those trees which grow at the bot-
“ tom of the hill.”

“ If then,” rejoined Mr. Loveboy,
“ you are indeed destitute of learn-
“ ing, how came you to the know-
“ ledge of that song which I have so
“ much admired?”

“ Your honour,” said he, “ is too
“ good, in condescending to talk with
“ a poor lad like me; and still more

“ so in inquiring after my simple
“ concerns. The words which you
“ say are honoured with your appro-
“ bation, are no other than the hum-
“ ble effusions of my own heart,
“ which, by often studying, and re-
“ peatedly singing, I have formed into
“ that little song, which I use every
“ morning as a token of praise to the
“ Almighty; and I hope he will ac-
“ cept it, though it is only the pro-
“ duction of a poor child.”

“ I doubt it not,” said the gentle-
man, “ and I believe he will grant you
“ the request of your heart.”

“ Indeed, sir,” said Charles, “ I
“ am contented with my situation,
“ and have no particular desire for any
“ thing but learning; and that I have
“ already

“ already told you is placed beyond
“ my reach.”

“ Repine no more,” said Mr.
Loveboy; “ your wishes may be ac-
“ complished much sooner than you
“ expect. Go, and tell your father
“ to seek some careful person to attend
“ his sheep, for he must bring you to
“ my house at nine o’clock: you must
“ not make it later, for you may have
“ a journey to take before the even-
“ ing; and I shall rely upon your
“ attendance.”

While Charles stood motionless
with surprize, the gentleman wished
him a good morning; and going to his
horse, which was grazing at a distance,
he leaped into the saddle, and was out
of sight in the space of a minute.

Charles, recollecting after a little
pause,

pause, that no time should be lost upon such an occasion, ran to his father with incredible swiftness, and exclaiming—"News, dear father, news!" he arrived at the stone whereon the shepherd was sitting.

He was neither less surprized, nor less elated, than his son, when he reflected on the character and disposition of the person, whose pleasing commands he now received with ecstasy. He doubted not but the youth would be sent to school; yet could not comprehend what journey was intended. He left the sheep, however, in care of a person who was roving over the hill, and made the best of his way to Mrs. Woodbine.

She no sooner heard the charming relation, than bursting into tears of

joy, she exclaimed—"My prayer is
"heard, and my son will now, with
"the blessing of Providence, become
"a shining man."

She cheerfully produced her wheaten loaf, and crowned the board with some boiling milk for their breakfast; while her own heart overflowed in praise to her Creator; and, regardless of food, she enjoyed a banquet, to which the glutton is a total stranger.

The wholesome meal of the former, and the inexpressible feelings of the latter, induces us to leave them to their own enjoyments till the beginning of another chapter.

CHAP.

CHAP. III.

THE PROMISE FULFILLED ; A JOURNEY ;
AND A BOARDING-SCHOOL.

AT a quarter before nine, Mr. Woodbine with his son departed from their cottage, enlivened by the most sanguine expectations ; for the shepherd's wife had, during breakfast, given as her opinion, that Mr. Loveboy intended to place Charles at a boarding-school ; and, therefore, though she could not array him in any finery, she made him both clean and neat, and then, with reiterated marks of affection, yielded him up to the care of the Almighty, firmly believing some months at least would elapse before she should again behold him.

Charles

Charles followed his father with a cheerful heart to the gentleman's residence, and quickened his pace as he drew nearer to the desired spot. Upon their arrival, they were ushered into an elegant parlour, wherein Mr. Love-boy was sitting, perusing a volume of poems, lately published. He laid down the book at their approach, and accosting the peasant with the utmost affability, told him, he must not be surprized if he desired Charles to be left to his own protection; "For," said he, "I have taken a particular fancy to him; and his conversation this morning has determined me (should it meet your approbation) to place him at an academy, ten miles distant from hence.

"His learning will there be carefully
"fully

“ fully attended; his morals purified;
“ and his health considered in all his
“ recreations. As to the article of
“ clothes, I will myself provide him
“ with that which is needful; and
“ shall rely on his future conduct for a
“ full reward of all my attentions be-
“ stowed upon him.”

He then gave his new favourite a letter to deliver at the school; and calling a servant, he ordered him to prepare the horses, and proceed according to those directions which were already given.

The grateful shepherd, unable longer to conceal the violent emotions of his breast, fell on his knees, and embracing the feet of his worthy benefactor, endeavoured (though with many sobs), to thank him for his un-
merited

merited goodness; but Mr. Loveboy, refusing to listen to his own praise, gave him half-a-guinea, and bidding him carry the news to his wife, he politely wished him a good morning, and retired.

The parting was affecting, yet pleasing, between the old man and Charles; the former praying for blessings on his boy, and the latter vowing unshaken constancy to the love of virtue, while he clang round the neck of his weeping parent, and fondly repeated the marks of filial attachment.

The youth at last pronounced an affectionate adieu; and the inhabitant of the cottage returned to the partner of his soul: but here it is impossible that language should express the joy,

the gratitude, and adoration to Heaven, which now employed the virtuous couple, whose son was thus unexpectedly favoured with the fulfilment of his most ardent desires; we shall therefore leave them to their own reflections, and return to the hero of our piece.

He was now dismissed by his excellent friend, and pursued his journey on horseback, with a lighter heart than he ever had enjoyed before. The servant who attended him, endeavoured to amuse his charge, by pointing out the most elegant seats, or the greatest curiosities; and every object appeared so captivating to our young traveller, that he scarce knew which afforded him the greatest pleasure.

Having rode five miles, the servant informed

informed him he might now stop, and rest himself awhile, till the heat of the day should be abated. They accordingly dismounted at a small but neat inn, by the road side; and having seen the horses properly attended, withdrew to a back parlour, which, besides the convenience of a cooling shade, presented them with an entire prospect of the garden.

They here regaled themselves with some home-brewed ale; and Mr. Loveboy's servant drawing from his pocket a small bundle, produced the half of a roasted chicken, which, with some bread provided by the landlord, afforded them a wholesome and pleasing repast.

Two hours passed away in the most agreeable manner, when they deemed

it time to pursue their journey: the reckoning was immediately discharged; and, remounting their steeds, they arrived in an hour at the gate of that mansion which was now to become the abode of young Woodbine for a season.

Having rung the bell, whose handle was nearly covered by the blossoms of those shrubs which surrounded it, the door was instantly opened by a young gentleman, to whom Mr. Loveboy's footman delivered the letter which Charles had brought, and waited in expectation of an answer. They had not tarried long, when Mr. Careful, the master, appeared; and welcoming his new scholar, returned Mr. Loveboy for answer, that he should attend the orders which he had now received,
with

with that degree of punctuality which, he trusted, would give the highest satisfaction.

The servant returned to his beneficent master, and Charles was left to the care of his tutor, and the congratulations of his new associates; who eagerly pressing around him, desired to shew him the school-room, which was handsome, spacious, and airy: their laws were explained, their regulations described, and their daily course of practice submitted to his consideration.

They next conducted him to their bed-chambers, where he was equally surprized and delighted with the pleasing appearance of every article. The play-ground and gardens were the succeeding objects of attention; as

was also a large orchard, where the children were often permitted to pursue their recreations.

Having surveyed the numerous beauties of the premises, they were summoned to the hall by the supper bell, which they readily attended; and having enjoyed a comfortable meal, our hero repeated his ramble with his companions, till the aforesaid bell invited them in to prayers. They assembled with cheerfulness on the usual spot; and having adored their Preserver for the blessings of the day, they retired to their needful repose for the night.

CHAP. IV.

TWO OPPOSITE CHARACTERS; AN EXCURSION; AND A MISFORTUNE.

FROM the juvenile assembly, of which our hero was now become a member, we shall single out two characters, who attempted to gain his friendship with equal assiduity; and these may suffice as a general description; the school being pretty nearly divided between the amiable and disagreeable persons who were its present inhabitants.

Master William Froward was by birth a gentleman; his purse was seldom low; and his person eminently the finest in the place; yet, with these advantages in his favour, he was
still

still very remote from what we term an amiable youth. His passions were strong in the extreme; and though he was often tenderly warned by his tutor to subdue their frequent risings, which rendered him miserable in himself, and utterly contemptible to his acquaintance, such was the obstinacy of his temper, that (disdaining such excellent advice), he resolv'd to pursue his own course, whatever might be the consequence; which, the reader will soon find, plunged him in distress, and overwhelmed him with grief.

We must now quit our observations on this pupil, to survey the portrait of one, who (though by far his inferior in birth and circumstances), certainly eclipsed him in the estimation of his master,

master, and the unprejudiced opinion of every judicious observer.

Joseph Placid was the son of a poor but honest couple, who had died about two years before he was placed in the academy; but Mr. Loveboy (hearing of the distressed condition in which their child was left, and finding that a merciless relation intended to turn him out either to famine, or the workhouse), with his wonted generosity supplied him with requisite apparel, and then placed him under the tuition of Mr. Careful, who received him as kindly, and treated him as tenderly, as though he had been of noble extraction; it being his favourite maxim, that "Our smiles were most needful where relentless fortune frowned."

In

In this situation the orphan began his course of learning, and by unwearyed application, soon obtained that applause which was readily bestowed on the industrious yet unassuming candidate.

Thus he proceeded, till his abilities began to shine with a superior lustre among his companions, and he was now equal to the performance of any exercise which was prescribed for Master Froward.

This was an attainment which the haughty spirit of that gentleman could by no means brook; he therefore constantly endeavoured, by every method, to involve poor Joseph in difficulties, or engage him in quarrels.

All his schemes, however, proved abortive; for the object of his hatred
never

never undertook any thing which had the least tendency to mischief; and as to those brawls, which so often disturb the mind of youth, he observed they were degrading in themselves, and far beneath any child that was born in a christian land, or received any share of a polite education. In short, as Froward was loud, wilful, and assuming consequence upon every occasion, Placid was mild, humble, and inoffensive: yet let not my readers from hence infer, that he had any tinge of the coward in his disposition, or that he was incapable of defending or confuting an argument; but we must make a distinction between an argument and a quarrel; the former of which is often useful, the latter always senseless and disgusting. And here
let

let it be observed, "The youth of spirit will exert himself in dispute only, when morality, or injured innocence, demands it of him: neither then will he wage unequal war with some contemptible being who is below him; but standing secure on the foundation of his own virtue, will boldly accuse the crimes of his equals or superiors, and strike the shaft of conviction to their (hitherto unenlightened) breasts."

These characters, we have already observed, endeavoured to obtain the confidence of young Woodbine; but as Master Froward could not conceal his sour disposition, even upon this occasion, he told Placid, in a surly manner, to walk about his business, for he wanted none of his company,
neither

neither did the new scholar, he was well assured.

To this rough address Joseph replied, that he thought himself equally at liberty with any other person, either to retire, or attend upon their new associate; and if Master Charles (added he) is not displeased with my company, I shall be happy to take a walk with him till the close of the evening. Froward turned himself upon his heel, and muttered a threat as he withdrew: but at this instant Mr. Careful entered the play-ground, and thus addressed his collected charge:—

“ The serenity of the weather, and
“ the fragrance of the new-mown
“ hay, invite you, my children, to
“ taste those blessings which boun-
“ teous Nature offers to your accept-

D

“ ance.

“ance. To this invitation, I now
“add my permission for you to
“stroll over the neighbouring mea-
“dows for the space of an hour; but
“remember not to exceed that time;
“neither run into danger, nor become
“the perpetrators of any evil action.”

With these words he retired, and left the pupils to pursue their walk. After a variety of incidents, too trivial to relate, a bird's nest was discovered upon the uppermost branch of an old tree, to which Master Froward declared he would ascend, and seize upon it as his legal property, himself being the senior of the company.

From this resolution Placid endeavoured to divert him, by representing it as an arbitrary act of cruelty, to deprive a poor defenceless mother of
her

her little family; but as this observation was merely the object of his contemptuous ridicule, Woodbine hoped to dissuade him from this foolish attempt, by representing the danger which might probably attend the climbing a tree which was evidently going to decay. To these friendly admonitions Froward replied, with a disdainful countenance, that he was neither such a fool nor coward as some folks; and positively affirmed, he both must, and would, obtain the nest.

He immediately ascended to the residence of the feathered songster; but just as he extended his hand to grasp its mossy bed, his foot being placed upon an unsound branch, it instantly gave way, and down he fell

headlong, to the terror of each beholder.

As he did not appear to breathe, and the blood ran plentifully from his head and nostrils, the whole train of boys (Placid and Woodbine excepted), ran back to the school in the utmost consternation, exclaiming vehemently, "He's killed! He's killed! He's killed!"

CHAP.

CHAP. V.

THE RETURN; REPENTANCE; AND SALU-
TARY COUNSEL.

MR. Careful was opening the door which led to the lawn, when Placid and Woodbine appeared supporting the bleeding body of the adventurous youth, which seemed to require the utmost exertion of their strength to convey it to the house.

He instantly ran to their assistance; and taking the unfortunate scholar in his arms, enquired by what means the accident was received; and dispatched a servant to procure a surgeon from the adjacent town. A gentleman was accordingly brought, whose abilities

were justly applauded, and whose humanity was extensively experienced.

He no sooner examined his young patient, (who was now laid upon his bed,) than he pronounced the wound of small consequence; and observed, that he was merely faint from loss of blood.

Some remedies having been applied, and a cordial poured into the lips of the unhappy sufferer, he opened his eyes, and began to regain the use of his senses.

His attention was now engaged by his two companions, who were hanging over him with the tenderest concern, and weeping plentifully at the idea of his sufferings.

His heart was visibly affected by their distress; and it seems that repentance

penitance at last found a seat within his bosom; for he pathetically exclaimed—"O my dear friends! Is it possible you can thus sorrow for one who scorned your advice, and treated you with disdain?"

"Had I listened to your persuasions, I might now have been in health, and completely happy; but I was too conceited to yield to your opinions, and now endure my present agony, as a just reward of my pride and folly.—O that I had never attempted to rob the harmless bird of its young, nor ever climbed that unfortunate tree!"

"Alas! my wishes are formed too late; and that misery is now inflicted, which then I might so easily have escaped.

"My

“ My poor head is quite distracted,
“ so that I scarcely know one sentence
“ which I utter; but if Heaven
“ should please to restore me again,
“ indeed, indeed, my excellent com-
“ panions, I will love you both with
“ the most ardent affection, and strive
“ to win the friendship of the virtu-
“ ous, and those alone.”

To these expressions they returned him
the most soothing answers; and kindly
assured him of their forgiveness for
his past errors, and their unremitting
care of, and wishes for, his welfare in
future.

The surgeon then informed them
it would be proper to retire, that his
patient might endeavour to obtain
some repose.

The hint was immediately taken;
and

and they all were quitting the room, when Mr. Careful took one more survey of the invalid, and thus delivered his thoughts before he left him:—

“ I am extremely sorry, Master
“ Froward, for the misfortune which
“ has now confined you to your chamber; yet I sincerely hope it will, in
“ the end, prove of the most essential
“ service; as it must shew you the
“ indiscretion and obstinacy of which
“ you have proved yourself guilty, by
“ rushing forwards in mischief, when
“ kindly persuaded to the contrary.
“ Indeed, the fact you was engaged to
“ perform, was one of the cruellest
“ (if not a sinful) kind: for if you
“ justly consider what trouble a poor
“ little bird must take before its nest
“ can be completed, the materials of
“ which

“ which are painfully collected by a
“ single stick or feather at a time;
“ how carefully she lines it for the
“ warmth of her helpless little ones;
“ and how attentively she regards
“ their safety till they are enabled to
“ shift for themselves: when you
“ reflect seriously upon these things,
“ I ask you what you suppose she must
“ feel, when returning with her load
“ of provision from the adjacent field
“ or village, she finds the shady bush,
“ or the obscure branch of her favour-
“ ite tree, despoiled of her nest and
“ young, by the rude hand of some
“ unfeeling boy, who, unmov'd by
“ her lamentations, exults with rap-
“ ture over his prize?
“ O Master Froward, let this ob-
“ servation sink deeply in your mind,
“ and

“ and let your present affliction prove
“ a constant warning to withhold your
“ hand, if ever you should be tempt-
“ ed to commit so barbarous an act
“ again.”

“ Indeed, Sir, I never will,” ex-
claimed the weeping youth; “ my
“ heart is too much affected at the idea
“ of their sufferings: and should I
“ ever trouble myself on such an ac-
“ count again, it shall be in defence
“ of those harmless creatures, whom
“ I can no more endure to see in-
“ jured.”

“ I hope you are in earnest,” re-
joined his preceptor, “ and I shall
“ now leave you to your repose; but
“ remember (before you close your
“ eyes in sleep) to implore the par-
“ don of your Maker for your folly;
“ and

“ and while you pray for the resto-
“ ration of your health, offer a pe-
“ tition for the sincerity of your re-
“ pentance.”

Mr. Careful, with the surgeon, now withdrew, and left the unfortunate rambler to his own reflections.

CHAP.

CHAP. VI.

A RECOVERY; A RAMBLE; AND AN ACT OF
CHARITY.

THE sun had just risen over the adjacent hills, and began to dart his invigorating beams through the curtains of Master Froward's chamber, when Woodbine and Placid approached his bed, and enquired with the tenderest anxiety concerning his repose. He informed them he had enjoyed an uninterrupted slumber, and found himself so far recovered, that (if his master would permit) he should wish to rise and take a little walk in the afternoon, as he thought the air might prove beneficial to him. Placid instantly ran to inform the tutor respecting this de-

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fire,

fire, and speedily returned with permission for the invalid to come from his room, provided the exertion should not appear to fatigue him.

His friends now assisted him to dress, and carefully conducted him to a little parlour, which Mr. Careful appropriated to the purposes of a study.

It was situated at the back of the house, commanding the entire prospect of a beautiful garden. Its windows were surrounded with clusters of honey-suckles entwined amidst the spreading jessamine, and the gay assemblage of flowers which enamelled the borders regaled the sense, and charmed the eye of each beholder. Within the room appeared a collection of the most valuable and well-chosen books, which, with a microscope, globes,

globes, and harpsichord, offered alternate amusement and instruction to every welcome guest. In this sweet retirement Master Froward was amused by his kind companion Placid (who having received some musical lessons from Mr. Careful) undertook to divert him till breakfast, with playing on the instrument before mentioned.

After performing several pieces to the satisfaction of his juvenile friends, he began to finger an air, which appeared adapted to one of Woodbine's poetical compositions, who requesting permission to accompany the music, sang the following lines :

Sequester'd from noise, in the humble retreat,
Where shepherds recline on the ground,
The children of virtue felicity greet,
And paradise blossoms around.

No scenes of affliction, no terrible news,
The sweets of contentment remove;
But zephyrs ambrosial their odours diffuse,
While music enlivens the grove.

Around their kind master, the wandering flock
Wind carelessly over the hill,
Or follow the kids to the clift of the rock,
And drink from the murmuring rill.

Whilst blest in each other, their owners enjoy
Each pleasure which nature bestows,
In praise to their Maker the day they employ,
And thankfully sink to repose.

Master Froward was returning his warmest thanks to Charles for his song, when a servant entered the room with the tea equipage; as Mr. Careful had kindly permitted the invalid and his associates to breakfast at his own table.

The

The refreshment concluded, Woodbine and Placid retired to their studies while Froward was left to employ his time as he thought proper; which he accordingly devoted to reading and salutary reflections.

The dinner-bell was hailed as usual with a general smile, and its provision crowned with decency and thankfulness. The scholastic hours again rolled sweetly on; and sober Evening once more cheered the plain with her refreshing breezes, when Placid reminded his preceptor of the wish expressed by the young adventurer in the morning.

They accordingly strolled in the adjoining meadows by their master's permission, and Froward was alternately supported by the ready arms of his

companions. The sky was serenely beautiful; the verdant lawn, delightfully overspread with the beauteous cowslip and unassuming daisy, refreshed the wandering eye, while the soft melody of the birds, in the thick foliage of the bushes, gave a higher relish to the enjoyment of the rural scene.

They had not proceeded above half a mile, when ascending a gate which led to a neighbouring field, they beheld (in a dry ditch overgrown with grass) an object, which instantly fixed their hitherto roving attention.

An aged man, whose whitened locks proclaimed his venerable age, lay reclined upon his elbow, and gazing wistfully around him, whilst the gushing tears bedewed his furrowed cheek,
and

and descended in a copious shower on his ancient breast.

Raising himself gently from this position, he threw himself on his knees, and lifting his trembling hands to heaven, exclaimed — “ Eternal
“ Source of light and immortality, who
“ knowest my situation, pity and re-
“ lieve the sorrows of a poor old man,
“ or at least receive this wounded spirit
“ to thyself, and let the earth afford a
“ peaceful spot to the cold remains
“ of my unfortunate frame.”

His heart seemed too full to proceed, and he sunk overwhelmed with sorrow on the bank.

The observing scholars immediately went towards him; and Woodbine, (wiping from his face the drops of tenderness which the stranger's ejacula-

tion

tion had drawn forth) thus addressed him—

“ Pardon, Sir, the freedom of myself and companions, who have thus presumed to approach you, and who cannot resist the impulse of our mutual desire to hear the cause of your pathetic lamentations.”

“ Alas! my good gentlemen,” rejoined the son of affliction, “ I am very faint, nor do I know whether I have strength to satisfy your curiosity, for I have not tasted food since yesterday morning.”

Placid, without making any reply, instantly drew from his pocket a white handkerchief, containing a little loaf and two prints of butter, with which his mistress had presented him in the afternoon, that he might treat his

companions with an unexpected refreshment before their return.

He spread the handkerchief carefully on the grass, and laying out his little stock of provisions in the best order, earnestly intreated the stranger to accept a trifle, which (though intended for his friends amusement) might, in some degree, be useful to his necessity.

“Father of love, I thank thee!” cried the ancient mourner; “I find “thou hast not yet forgotten me.” Then turning his eyes on the juvenile donor — “May Heaven reward thee, generous boy,” said he, “and smile on “all thy future actions!”

The scene became too affecting, and the youths withdrew, while the old gentleman

gentleman endeavoured to satisfy the repeated calls of hunger.

At this instant Lucy, the milk-maid, came tripping along with her pail. Woodbine immediately informed her of his adventure, and earnestly requested a cup of milk for the stranger; she accordingly filled a tin measure for that purpose, and away he ran to the thankful man, whose tears alone proclaimed his gratitude.

Lucy proceeded homewards; and the boys surrounding the object of their charity, again requested the recital, which our readers may find in the following chapter.

CHAP.

CHAP. VII.

THE STRANGER'S HISTORY; AND THE
YOUTH'S RETURN.

IN my early days I enjoyed the smiles of fortune, and my situation was comfortable till about ten years ago, when I was involved in misery by the death of an affectionate brother, who had hitherto liberally supported and assisted all my undertakings.

He was no sooner conveyed to the silent tomb, than I left the country with a distracted mind, and went on board a vessel which was bound for the Indies. We sailed with a prosperous gale for some time; but at length a fatal storm arose, by which the ship was beaten so violently, that
every

every one found it would be impossible to save her.

The only reflection which now engrossed our attention, was that of providing for our own safety, and on this subject we racked our thoughts in vain, since no method appeared by which we might hope for deliverance. At length the dreaded moment arrived, when the vessel struck upon a rock, and fell to pieces.

The piercing screams of the wretched sufferers were now heard above the dire confusion of the elements, though the sky was shaken by the most tremendous peals of thunder, and the vivid sheets of lightning were awful beyond description.

I now fell with my comrades into the bosom of the roaring ocean, and
after

after resisting the fury of the waves for some time, I imagine that I fainted, for I remember no more till I found myself on a rock, which overlooked a small but beautiful island.

Here I remained for six months, subsisting on the roots and fruits of the field, and occasionally taking a few birds by traps, which I prepared for them. At length, however, Providence directed a ship to pass the place of my solitary abode, and I obtained a passage to England. But, O my dear gentlemen! as the shipwreck had totally ruined me, by burying all my property in the depths of the sea, my return was of little use to me.

Alas! dear Sirs, how shall I express what I felt, when, on my return to the place of my nativity, I found my only re-

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lation

lation was dead, and my countrymen forgetful and estranged from me.

No pitying friend vouchsafed a tender word; no charitable neighbour offered me his assistance; but, finding me poor, they all withdrew their notice, and left me to the horrors of the blackest despair.

I left the scenes of former pleasures with a bursting heart, and was driven to that extremity, through hunger, age, and infirmity, that I was obliged to implore compassion from the passing traveller, or solicit an alms at the abode of luxury, from whence I seldom received any thing but the most unfeeling reproaches. Yesterday proving entirely unsuccessful, I began to yield myself a prey to complete despondency; and from the clamours of a dis-
regarded

regarded hunger, and the overwhelming anguish of my soul, arose the exclamation which lately arrested your attention, and drew from your eyes the charming tear of sensibility.

So complete an outcast as myself can offer no return of gratitude worthy your acceptance; yet shall a prayer for your ceaseless prosperity ascend to heaven each day, that Providence shall yet allot to an unhappy man, whose fainting heart revived beneath the influence of your timely generosity.

The mendicant bowed humbly at this close of his narration, and putting on his hat, which hitherto he had held in his hand, pursued his journey, while his youthful auditors reflected with astonishment on his undeserved afflictions.

The day, however, beginning to decline, they returned to the school, making suitable remarks on the occurrences of the evening; and to apologize for their delay, they related their little adventure to the tutor, from whom they received the warmest applause.

They now adjourned to the school-room, there to partake of those wholesome refreshments which crowned the table; after which they retired to repose, with the matchless pleasure of reflecting on those actions which appeared consistent with the dictates of virtue, and well pleasing to their adorable Creator.

CHAP.

CHAP. VIII.

THE JUBILEE.

THREE months had now passed in a constant flow of pleasure, since the last adventure recited in the foregoing chapter, when Mr. Careful informed his pupils that the next day would bring a return of the jubilee; a time which was eagerly expected by the juniors, and enjoyed with the sincerest delight by the whole school. To describe this scene of festivity, with the customs therein observed, is our present intention, and to which we now solicit the attention of our readers.

This festival was first instituted by Mr. Loveboy, as a day of universal

relaxation and hilarity to those youths who received their learning from his bounty.

Mr. Careful, who, as we have already observed, was ever studious to promote the satisfaction of his scholars, kindly extended the privilege of this holiday to all who were placed beneath his care; and thus four times in a year the mansions of literature re-founded with harmless mirth and joyous exclamations.

Our young hero was retiring with his companions to their chamber, when they received the welcome news, and each reclined on his pillow in expectation of the rising sun.

At length the morning broke, and shed its radiant glories over the village, when Placid and Woodbine were
aroused

aroused by the sound of two clarinets, which, accompanied by a French horn, poured forth the sweetest sounds of harmony.

They instantly quitted their bed, and began to dress, when a musical voice, accompanied by the instruments, addressed them in the following manner:—

By Phœbus invited, from slumber arise,
Come forth at the sound of the horn;
His beams are diffus'd thro' the opening skies,
And shine on the jubilee morn.

Come, dance to the music, come frolic and play,
No study your thoughts shall enchain;
But pleasure shall smile thro' the course of the
day,
As you joyfully bound o'er the plain.

The song shall be heard, and the tale shall be told,
Till laughing you roll on the ground;
Each moment fresh scenes of delight shall unfold,
And innocent wit shall abound.

Then

Then rise at the summons, and quickly attend
The voice of your master so kind;
Who, joining the wish of his honoured friend,
Proclaims a release to the mind.

The song being concluded, our young friends (having first performed their morning devotion) ran to the hall, where they found the family assembling as speedily as possible. The number being perfected, they fauntered out to the adjoining lawn, where a spacious tent was fixed for their accommodation, and a plentiful breakfast of tea and rolls provided, of which they partook with the greatest flow of spirits; while the musicians retired to the bank of an adjacent river, and from thence entertained them with several pieces, well calculated to improve the hilarity of the present moment.

Breakfast

Breakfast concluded, the gentlemen began to disperse in little parties of amusement, some chusing one species of diversion, and others preferring another; till the clock struck ten; when they again assembled, to prepare for a ramble through the adjoining villages.

Accordingly, having received their needful instructions from the tutor, they began their procession in the following manner—

Two clarinets; two senior pupils, supporting large colours, beautifully adorned with emblematic figures; twelve boys walking in pairs; a pair of globes, supported by the seniors of a different class, and followed by twelve scholars, and two youths supporting blue flags embroidered with silver, with
the

the twelve remaining children, completed the school; Mr. Careful, with a neighbouring gentleman; a flute and French horn; and, to close the whole, a servant supporting a large flag bearing the title of the academy.

The dresses of the boys were simply elegant in themselves, to which were added a light blue sash and ribbon in the hat, inscribed with golden letters, according to the station they held in the school; and from the breasts of the foremost were suspended beautiful silver medals, given by Mr. Loveboy as a reward of merit on a particular occasion.

In this order they passed through the rural abodes of the villagers, who welcomed them with the loudest acclamations; and this applause they received

ceived till they returned to the hospitable seat of the academy, where they again amused themselves, according to their several fancies, till the bell summoned them to dinner, at which good sense presided, and the blessings of Providence were gratefully received.

The remainder of the day was devoted to singing, dancing, and rejoicing, and the evening was concluded with the illumination of the gardens, and a brilliant display of fire-works.

Thus ended the jubilee, to the honour of its founder, and the inexpressible satisfaction of the pupils, who retired transported with the pleasures of the day.

CHAP. IX.

A VISITOR; A LETTER; AND REMOVAL.

THE cloth was just spread for breakfast, at which the delighted youths were chearfully assembling, when a horseman came to the door, and dismounting, rang the bell.

A general surprize immediately took place respecting the visitor, as who it could be, to whom he came, &c. but every doubt was easily resolved, when, on his entering the room, he informed the boys that he wished to speak with their preceptor.

Mr. Careful immediately attended the summons, and requested the stranger to reveal his business, as he had not
the

the honour to be acquainted with him, neither could he yet tell to what he must ascribe the favour of so early a visit.

The traveller replied, "I am an intimate friend of Mr. Loveboy, who, I believe, has some connections with this seminary, and by his request I have brought you a letter respecting one of the pupils.

"To fulfil his desire, I disturbed you at so early an hour, but I presume the occasion will offer a sufficient apology."

It was impossible to let the friend of Mr. Loveboy remain standing. Several boys immediately ran for a chair, and nearly overthrew each other in their trials to obtain the honour of accommodating the stranger. Such love and unfeigned veneration was paid

by the scholars to the name of their affectionate patron.

The gentleman having received the usual compliments, and being seated in his chair, waited in silence an answer to the letter which occasioned his arrival.

Mr. Careful, after perusing the contents himself, demanded attention from the school, while he read as follows :

DEAR SIR,

I hope on the return of my friend, to hear an agreeable character of the little folks entrusted to your care, which I flatter myself they will labour to obtain. Your last letter having described the improvements of Charles Woodbine so much to my satisfaction, I must request you to send him to my
house

house in the course of the day, as I believe I shall now be able to perform an essential act of friendship towards him, and (provided he continues steady and attentive) he may probably have cause to bless the day when his rural song awakened my attention, and biassed my inclinations in his favour.

I remain, dear Sir,

Your sincere friend,

T. LOVEBOY.

It is impossible to describe the sensations of the little auditors on hearing the contents of this letter.

Woodbine was so truly beloved by every boy in the school, that every one was ready to burst into tears at the idea of losing him, nor was he less affected himself; but, recollecting the

obligations which he lay under to Mr. Loveboy, he restrained the trembling drop of sorrow, and politely assured his tutor that he would prepare for his removal whenever he was pleased to command him.

The stranger was now pressed to partake of the breakfast, but he excused himself, by observing, he had farther to go, and must reach the place of his destination by a particular hour.

Having, therefore, received the warmest wishes that his journey might prove an agreeable one, he remounted his horse and was out of sight in a minute.

Mr. Careful withdrew to his study, and breakfast was served up to the scholars, but their appetite was considerably

considerably damped by the melancholy information which they had just received; instead therefore of being eagerly attentive to their morning allowance, they were all busied in loading Charles with careffes, and inventing little marks of friendship, by which they might be remembered by him when he was absent.

The hours of study returned, which all attended except Placid, who was permitted to attend his friend, and assist him in packing up those articles which were to be removed.

This task was performed with many sighs and tears on the part of Placid, whose little heart was nearly broken by the excess of his affliction.

Charles, whose tender nature could not bear to see the distress of his friend,

friend, took him tenderly by the hand and begged him to soothe a sorrow which must prove unavailing, and rather trust in Heaven for the arrival of that day when they might meet (as he hoped would be the case) without the necessity of parting more.

At length the dreaded moment came wherein our hero was obliged to bid adieu to the delightful pleasures of the seat of literature, and the more valuable company of his affectionate companions.

A servant waited at the door with horses to convey him from this little paradise; and though his bosom was rent with the deepest sorrow at the thoughts of his removal, he hesitated not a moment to perform the wish of his generous benefactor; wiping the
tear

tear which gushed unbidden from his eye, he entered the parlour to receive a kind farewell from his master and mistress, which was given in the tenderest manner, intermixed with the most solemn benedictions; while his associates clung round his neck with inexpressible fondness, or grasped his hand with the ardour of youthful enthusiasm. Completely overcome with the moving scene, he exclaimed aloud
“ —May Heaven reward and bless you
“ all;” then bowing respectfully to his tutor and Mrs. Careful, he added
—“ Words are too poor to express
“ those grateful sentiments which
“ your umerited attentions have in-
“ delibly impressed on my heart, but
“ an all gracious Providence, I trust,
“ will crown you with abundant feli-
“ city,

“ city, and if the petitions of such a
“ youth may hope for effect, mine
“ shall be offered as a daily sacrifice
“ on your account.” He left the
room with flowing eyes, and vaulting
into the saddle, waved his handker-
chief and departed.

CHAP.

CHAP. X.

THE PROPOSAL; GRATITUDE; AND A SCENE
OF AFFECTION.

THE servant on his arrival at Mr. Loveboy's, went immediately to inform that gentleman that his young visitor was arrived. He accordingly expressed himself highly satisfied with the expedition used at his request, and desired that Charles might be introduced.

He was accordingly conducted to the presence of his benefactor, whom he found seated in a beautiful alcove at the upper end of the garden.

After the usual compliments preliminary to conversation, Woodbine respectfully

spectfully offered his warmest tribute of thankfulness for those invaluable blessings which he had already received; and then waited in silence for the occasion of his removal, which, after various questions respecting the academy, his worthy patron thus explained.

“ I have endeavoured hitherto to
“ fulfil your wish of learning such
“ things as were suitable to your years
“ and understanding, but as I have
“ now an opportunity of putting you
“ forward in a way, which (with the
“ blessing of Providence) may raise
“ you to a more exalted situation than
“ you had ever reason to expect, I
“ think it a duty incumbent on me,
“ to make you a proposal, which (if
“ accepted) I hope will prove of essential
“

“ sential benefit to you, and yield
“ myself the highest satisfaction.

“ An acquaintance of mine, who
“ intends making a voyage to the
“ West Indies, wishes to be accom-
“ panied by a youth of genteel address
“ and good education, whose sole
“ employ will be reading to him in
“ his leisure hours, or keeping an ac-
“ count of his little expences, with
“ noting down such remarks as may
“ naturally arise from particular cir-
“ cumstances at various places. For
“ this purpose I have selected you as
“ a suitable person from the academy,
“ and doubt not (provided you em-
“ brace the offer) but you will meet
“ his warmest approbation.

“ I observed, “it might prove be-
“ neficial to you:” my reasons for
“ that

“ that assertion, are founded on the
“ following causes—

“ In the first place, he is extremely
“ fond of children, though not blest
“ with any of his own ; and, secondly,
“ I am well assured (as he has no re-
“ lation living) the bulk of his for-
“ tune will be given to that character
“ whom he finds the most deserving.

“ With this proposal, retire to your
“ parents, inform them clearly of the
“ whole design, and if it proves agree-
“ able to their inclinations and your
“ own, let me see you early in the
“ morning, that our plan may be re-
“ duced to execution.”

At the conclusion of this sentence,
Mr. Loveboy walked into the house,
and Charles politely took his leave,
and retired to the cottage of his hum-
ble ancestors.

His

His heart was nearly overwhelmed with gratitude, when reflecting upon this proposal, he found it not merely pleasing, but truly valuable: his thirst of farther knowledge might now be amply gratified, and himself enabled, through discretionary conduct, to save some trifle for his poor relations.

His generous breast caught fire at the idea: his hopes expanded; his prospects became more extensive, as he reflected on the probable disposition of the character to whom he was recommended: he might love him; he might from his stores of wealth liberally reward him.

“Should that,” cried he, “ever
“prove the case, I’ll enlarge my fa-
“ther’s fold; I’ll add the adjoining
“field

“ field to his cottage; extend his
“ little garden; and raise him to the
“ summit of felicity.”

As he finished this exclamation, he found himself at his beloved home, and peeping through the casement, beheld the virtuous pair leaning over their wholesome repast of bread and milk, which crowned the pleasures of the day.

He lifted the latch with caution, and entered unperceived, as his mother said, “ What pleasure should I
“ feel, was my beloved Charles but
“ present now: I know he is better
“ situated; encompassed with numerous blessings; and treated with
“ the most affectionate kindness; for
“ such is the character of his master
“ through all the country: yet might
“ I now

“ I now behold him, pour my fond
“ blessings on his head, and clasp him
“ to my bosom, I should be blest
“ indeed.”

“ Your wishes,” rejoined her husband, “ are but the copy of my own ;
“ for though I know, and rejoice in,
“ his present felicity, and daily adore
“ that beneficent Providence, which
“ hath fulfilled our earnest desires by
“ leading him to the flowery paths of
“ science, and placing him beneath
“ the patronage of so excellent a
“ man, yet I confess my heart expands with more than usual delight, on the mere expectation of
“ beholding him again.”

“ Heaven grant him safely to return,” said Mrs. Woodbine,
“ crowned with honour, and worthy

“ the attention of our valuable friend:
“ but of that I cannot doubt; his
“ heart is too upright, sincere, and
“ dutiful, ever to permit him to
“ swerve from the paths of morality,
“ or stain his character by folly or
“ inattention.”

Turning her head as she spoke, she beheld her darling listening attentively to her discourse.

“ Defend me,” she exclaimed, “ it is himself!” and flung impatient to his arms, while he returned her warm embrace with streaming eyes, and a throbbing breast.

Mr. Woodbine, amazed at the sudden transport of his wife, looked round for the occasion thereof, and beheld the object of their mutual care.

Starting

Starting from his chair, he overturned the porringers, and throwing his spoon to the end of the room, fell on his knees, and fervently adored his Creator for the safety of his child. He then united his embraces with those of the affectionate mother; and drawing him to the table, loaded him with benedictions.

A number of questions were now formed and answered with avidity; and the cottagers were completely delighted with the description of the school, the character of the pupils, and the recital of the jubilee, with all other matters of importance already perused by the reader. But when the proposal was explained, the grateful couple could not refrain from tears, but sobbed audibly as they poured

forth blessings on the name of Mr. Loveboy; and fervently implored of Heaven a continuation of its blessings on their offspring.

The shepherd's wife now replenished the board with some fresh milk, and a wheaten cake, to grace her son's return; the porringers were replaced, the spoon wiped carefully, and the whole œconomy of the supper restored.

To the enjoyment of themselves and their simple meal we shall leave them for the present, and give our readers breath till the following chapter.

CHAP.

CHAP. XI.

THE ANSWER; A PRESENT; AND A PROMISE.

THE soaring lark had expanded his wings, and began his thrilling address to the morning, when Charles Woodbine descended the stairs of his father's cottage, and prepared to attend the commands of his benefactor.

The sun shone with unusual splendour upon the garden, which still glittered with the dews of Heaven, and the opening flowers perfumed the air with the most reviving odours; whilst the fleecy tenants of the plain began to ascend the eminence on which they daily reclined beneath their attentive shepherd's care.

Charles

Charles was enraptured with the pleasing view, and piously presented his praise to the Almighty for the wondrous blessings which His All Bounteous Hand had so profusely scattered over the country.

Accompanied by his beloved parent, and thus mentally employed, he pursued the path which led to the residence of Mr. Loveboy, and arrived at the gate just as that gentleman entered the parlour.

With the utmost familiarity he accosted his rustic visitors, and thanked them in the most obliging terms for their early attendance in compliance with his request. He then discoursed awhile on the serenity of the weather, the produce of the land, &c.; and finally introduced the subject of greatest

est importance, by asking our adventurer, if he had well digested the late proposal, and whether he could now give a final answer?

To which the youth with equal modesty and politeness answered:—

“ Indebted as I am, Sir, to your
“ generosity, it would (in my opi-
“ nion) be an ill return, was I to scru-
“ ple obedience to *any* command you
“ might be pleased to lay upon me :
“ but as, with your accustomed good-
“ ness, you have proposed a thing the
“ most pleasing in itself, and, doubt-
“ less, tending to my future welfare,
“ I consider myself in duty bound to
“ return you my warmest thanks for
“ such an unmerited favour, and
“ humbly accept your proposal with
“ a degree of gratitude which I be-
“ lieve

"lieve my tongue will never be able
"to express."

"Your sentiments," replied Mr. Loveboy, "are worthy of my favour;
"and I trust, in Heaven, you will
"yet become a shining character.
"But what say your friends to our
"scheme? Are you certain your father
"is willing you should embark
"in the cause? And are you thoroughly
"convinced that your mother's
"feelings will not be wounded
"by your separation? though I hope
"it will prove but of short duration."
"tion."

"My mother," said Charles, "has
"nothing so much at heart as the
"welfare of her child; and if you
"had seen the emotions which joy
"and gratitude produced in her
"mind

“ mind on my repeating your kind
“ intention to her, you would have
“ been assured that she embraced it with
“ the utmost eagerness. My father,
“ as being present, can doubtless an-
“ swer best for himself.”

“ I am indeed unable,” said the
honest man, “ to express myself as I
“ could wish before such a gentle-
“ man; but I hope your honour will
“ believe me when I say, that your
“ proposal has given me the sincerest
“ pleasure which I ever experienced;
“ and I trust in the unfailing Provi-
“ dence of Heaven, to reward you
“ for being so extremely kind to my
“ poor boy.”

A smile of benevolence illumined
the features of their worthy friend,
on the receipt of these declarations;
and

and rising from his chair, he informed Charles, that he had a small present for him, which he expected should be preserved as a mark of his friendship, and a pledge of his further intentions.

With these words he drew from his pocket a beautiful silver watch, suspended by an elegant chain, and adorned with two cornelian seals, set in gold, and enriched with exquisite engravings.

It is not easy to describe the sensations of our hero, or his virtuous parent, at the sight of this elegant and truly valuable gift.

The eyes of the former swam in tears, and the folded hands of the latter were lifted up to invoke those blessings which his overcharged heart
would

would fain call down on the head of the amiable donor.

That pattern of excellence was pleasingly affected by the gratitude of the admiring cottagers; and to give them leisure to compose themselves, he stepped aside to give some necessary orders to his attendants.

He was scarcely out of sight, when the shepherd exclaimed:—"Charles, my dear, my ever-valued son, keep constantly in your memory the goodness and affection of this noble character, that where ever, in the course of Providence, you may be thrown, you may ever study to behave in such a manner, as shall yield him satisfaction, and render me the happiest of mortals."

"Yes, Charles," said the good
I old

old man, " let me but hear that you
" have acted with virtue and integrity
" in the station to which you are now
" invited, and then if Heaven should
" demand your life, I trust I should
" bow with resignation to its Divine
" Will; or if it should permit me
" again to behold you in the land of
" your nativity, my heart, my swelling heart, shall strive to express my
" thanks to you for carefully attending to my directions."

" My dear, my honoured parent,"
said Charles, with a bended knee and expressive countenance, " let me
" treat you to set your heart at rest
" concerning these pious admonitions;
" for here I promise, before the Judge
" of all events, to cleave to your advice, to treasure up your counsels,
" and

“ and to frame the course of my
“ practice as nearly as possible to the
“ tenor of your own wishes.” Then
turning to Mr. Loveboy, who entered
the room—“ And to you, my worthy
“ and noble benefactor, do I promise
“ to act in such a manner as I trust
“ you will approve: and though no-
“ thing can ever express the full ex-
“ tent of my gratitude, it shall at
“ least evince my ardour to merit
“ that attention which you have so
“ lavishly bestowed upon your poor
“ little villager.”

“ You are an excellent youth,”
said his patron, “ and Heaven, I
“ trust, will strengthen your present
“ intentions.”

“ I hope so too,” said Mr. Wood-
bine,

bine, "and to its unfailing care I
"commit my boy entirely."

"You are to be applauded," rejoined his friend, "but I believe the
"conveyance is ready for our little
"traveller; therefore, if you will
"follow me to the lawn, we may there
"give him our adieus, and see him
"begin his journey."

He was accordingly followed by the grateful shepherd and his affectionate son till they came to the spot, where a chaise stood ready for our hero's reception, and into which (after repeated vows of duty to his parent, and gratitude to his benefactor), he leaped with alacrity; and praying God to bless them, he drew up the glasses, and departed.

For some time his friends remained
attentively

attentively regarding the progress of the carriage which contained the object of their love, till the shady trees concealed it from their view.

Then, Thomas Woodbine reflecting that his sheep were in the care of a stranger, repeated his acknowledgments to the patron of his son, and retired to his occupation with more than usual pleasure; whilst Mr. Loveboy returned to his house, with the matchless satisfaction of having bestowed happiness on the virtuous, though indigent, sons of nature.

*CHAP. XII.*EMBARKATION ; REFLECTIONS ; AND A
SONG.

CHARLES soon arrived, in perfect safety, at the place of embarkation ; where he was received on board a ship, entitled the Fortune, by a person apparently about fifty years of age. His silver locks venerably shaded a countenance whereon mildness and compassion was stamped by Heaven ; and his whole deportment was that of a complete gentleman, most amiably blended with the dignity of a true Christian.

To this interesting object the shepherd's son was now to look up, as to the guide of his youth, and the friend
of

of his fortune: and Mr. Friendly (for such was the gentleman's name), convinced our adventurer, by the warmth of his caresses, and the solemn assurances which he gave him of protection, that he was extremely delighted with the acquisition of his young companion. Charles, on the other part, was absolutely enraptured with the manners and conversation of his new patron; and fervently returned thanks to Heaven for such a fresh manifestation of its Divine Favour towards him.

After they had supped together, and the cloth was removed, Mr. Friendly began to inform his attendant of those particulars in which his service would be required, and which

Mr. Loveboy recounted in the preceding chapter.

He then prostrated himself before the Majesty of Heaven, and in the course of his devotions implored such blessings from the source of unalterable goodness, as completely melted the heart of our little peasant, and wonderfully increased his veneration for the devout suppliant.

The gentleman now retired to his bed; and Charles, affectionately wishing him a good night, ascended the deck of the vessel, to enjoy the view of the water by moonlight: for this purpose he placed himself on the forecastle, and beheld with unutterable pleasure the beauteous scene which Nature displayed to his delighted eyes.

The

The rolling billows gently murmured round the ship, and curled in beauteous circles over the wide expanse; while, clear from clouds, the queen of night shone forth, and Heaven was decked with twice ten thousand stars. Such undisturbed serenity, mingled with the warmth of a susceptible bosom, produced the following reflections in the mind of the young voyager, who attentively regarding the brightness of the moon, exclaimed:—

“ How vast, how matchless, is thy
“ love, Great Object of my adora-
“ tion, to me, a poor, a simple, cot-
“ tager! Hitherto thou hast provided
“ for all my wants; protected my
“ person, and enlightened my under-
“ standing! Thou hast raised up for me
“ two

“ two great and invaluable friends,
“ who have both fervently assured me
“ of their favour! Thy bounteous
“ hand hath opened to my view the
“ inestimable stores of knowledge;
“ and hitherto I can truly say, that I
“ have been the object of thy unre-
“ mitting care! To Thee I look for
“ those blessings which I yet may
“ stand in need of; and on Thee
“ alone my hope relies for peace and
“ preservation.”

From this address to his Maker, Charles began to turn his thoughts towards the cottage of his humble parents; and felt his bosom glow with more than filial love, whilst he contemplated their former kindness, and present anxiety for the welfare of their child.

“ Thrice

“ Thrice blessed pair,” he cried,
“ whose tender hearts so often have
“ melted with inexpressible tender-
“ ness over your little son! May
“ Heaven reward your kind atten-
“ tions, and repay your incessant
“ cares with every blessing from
“ above! O may the celestial spirits,
“ who guard the just, still hover
“ round your lowly hut, and shield
“ your earthly frames beneath the
“ broad pinions of eternal safety;
“ while He who rules the vast cre-
“ ation, shall deign to smile on your
“ employments. Long may thy flock
“ remain, my dearest father, un-
“ touched by cruel man, or the fell
“ wolf that roves the mountain;
“ while the sweet tenant of the forest
“ lulls thy soul with his delicious mu-
“ sic

“ sic, and nature breathes her richest
“ odours around thee: and when at
“ close of day the leader’s tinkling
“ bell draws the young lambkins
“ down the winding path which leads
“ them to their fold, O may their
“ shepherd taste the rich repast of
“ reason and of virtue.

“ Thee too, my tender mother,
“ whose ready hand prepares the
“ wholesome viand, or the fresh
“ drawn milk, may Heaven auspicious
“ view thy pleasing task, and
“ crown thy simple banquet with
“ content.

“ Should an All Gracious Providence
“ permit my eager feet once
“ more to enter your undisturbed
“ retreat, I trust I shall there perceive
“ the goodness of the Almighty
“ evinced

“evinced in your preservation; and
“rejoicing myself in the fulness of
“bliss, behold your happiness with a
“thankful heart.

“But now my new patron de-
“mands my attention, and calls for
“my fervent prayers on his account.
“Yes, generous benefactor, the pe-
“titions of thy undeserving favourite
“shall incessantly rise from a heart
“overwhelmed with thy goodness;
“and I humbly trust my Creator
“will vouchsafe to send me an an-
“swer of peace.

“My present station likewise de-
“mands my sober thought.

“Recommended by one excellent
“character to the protection of ano-
“ther, let me study to behave my-
“self in so discreet a manner, that I

“ may credit the recommendation of
“ the former, and agreeably fulfil the
“ expectations of the latter. I must
“ remember the pious admonitions
“ of my beloved parents, and make
“ the law of God my constant rule
“ of life ; otherwise with what face
“ can I again return to my native
“ shore, or behold again the generous
“ man who drew me from obscurity,
“ and placed me in the path to pre-
“ ferment ? How can I view the
“ countenances of those who have
“ poured out their fondest wishes in
“ prayer upon my account ; and who
“ have admonished me both early
“ and late to walk in the ways of wis-
“ dom, if I so far forget myself as to
“ neglect their solemn injunctions,
“ and turn a rebel to the laws of my
“ Creator ?

“ Creator? At present my inclina-
“ tions are wholly on the side of vir-
“ tue; and I rely on Heaven for the
“ increase and support of my pious
“ resolutions.”

He now silently leaned on the front of the ship, and again was absorbed in the contemplation of the expanded waters, and the azure sky, till his fancy, enlivened by the beauty and tranquillity of their appearance, produced the following song:—

While soft o'er creation the Empress of night,
Unveiling her beauty, diffuses her light;
Till deep in the quivering stream she appears,
Or o'er the wild mountain the traveller cheers :
The view of such grandeur refreshes the mind;
And 'midst the gay works their Creator I find.

Serene as the zephyr my fancy would rove,
Amidst the bright proofs of celestial love;
Or guided by angels, to Paradise rise,
And join for a moment the theme of the skies;
Where cherubims warble unspeakable lays,
Compos'd by the faithful, and offer'd in praise,

Yet bound to the earth for a time I remain,
Obnoxious to sickness, to sorrow, and pain;
Till Providence changes my present abode,
And calls me to answer the summons of God.
O then may I taste the rich blessings which flow
From practising virtue and wisdom below,

CHAP. XIII.

THE VOYAGE CONCLUDED; WITH SINCERE REJOICINGS.

NOT to fatigue our readers with an account of the voyage, which would be unimportant to our design, and scarcely entertaining in itself, we proceed to inform them, that after our hero had been at sea the usual time, with a tolerable wind in their favour, he arrived with his kind protector at the plantation which they had undertaken to visit.

But how shall my pen describe the sincere raptures with which Mr. Friendly was received amongst his dependants?

No sooner had he conducted Charles

to his habitation, than the welcome news was spread abroad of his arrival; and multitudes of negroes surrounded the house, most fervently imploring a sight of their beloved master, and thanking the Almighty for his safe return; while the women and children ran to procure the richest fruits, and the most fragrant flowers, as a humble present for their beloved Lord,

The former of these were carefully delivered to the steward, with the most pathetic intreaties for them to be accepted; and the latter were profusely strewed along the path which led to his house, and where they impatiently expected shortly to behold him.

At length he came to gratify their expectations; and he had the heart-felt satisfaction to find that a long absence

sence had in no wise decreased their fond attachment to him; but, on the contrary, he was received with the loudest acclamations, and the most unfeigned veneration, by the collected body.

He was much affected by the testimonies of their fidelity; and having ordered them a holiday for the morrow, and granted to each individual a moderate allowance of rum, he retired with watery eyes and a glowing heart from the interesting scene; while Charles, whose warm and amiable spirit had caught the soft contagion, followed him with a light step and enraptured mind.

Mr. Friendly having breakfasted in the morning, gave his steward permission to assemble the dependents on
the

the lawn before his house, and placed himself in one of the front windows the better to view their rustic mirth, and grateful demonstrations of felicity. From thence he beheld a number of delighted creatures seated on the verdant grass, and eagerly partaking of those refreshments which were distributed amongst them; while others were preparing garlands of flowers for the heads of those who should best distinguish themselves in the festive dance, or other feats of rural hilarity, which were intended shortly to be shewn.

The rejoicing negroes, satisfied with their generous repast, now began to form themselves into select companies for the purposes aforesaid. The jocund dance began to the infinite delight

light of its beholders, who were peculiarly struck with the sincere gratitude of those poor mortals, who, as often as they caught a glimpse of Mr. Friendly, exclaimed—"Good Massa, "Heaven preserve!" And waving their hands to the multitude, spread round the fond contagion, till the earth resounded with shouts of triumphant affection.

These were no sooner exhausted by the violence of their exertions, than a fresh company rose up to renew the scene; and the heroes of the first attempt were received with applause, and crowned with the wreath of honour by their companions.

Thus was the return of their benefactor welcomed with the most ardent rejoicings till the afternoon, when
every

every one of them received a small present from England, and were again assembled to recruit their bodies by a pleasing repast; at the close of which they renewed the dance, and repeated the shout of praise; then leaping, singing, and rejoicing, departed to their respective habitations.

Charles and his patron now withdrew to their dinner; and when the table was cleared, Mr. Friendly thus addressed his young companion:—

“ I doubt not, my dear Charles,
“ but you have been deeply and
“ agreeably affected by the scenes of
“ this day; and indeed it was with
“ the sincerest pleasure that I beheld
“ your cheek repeatedly moistened
“ with the tear of sensibility, while
“ my affectionate servants were loudly
“ intreating

“ intreating Heaven to shower down
“ its blessings upon me. It has ever
“ been my custom to treat these peo-
“ ple rather as my children than my
“ slaves; and I trust, if ever Provi-
“ dence should give you a power
“ equal to mine, you would either
“ act the same by them, or give them
“ the inestimable blessing of liberty.”

“ Alas, Sir!” said young Wood-
bine, “ it is impossible that I, the son
“ of a simple peasant, should ever ar-
“ rive to that height which Divine
“ Goodness hath placed you in, and
“ which you so nobly adorn.”

“ Perhaps not,” rejoined his friend;
“ only let virtue be the guide of all
“ your actions, and then fortune may
“ prove more favourable than at pre-
“ sent you can expect. The illustri-

“ ous

“ous parent of the wisest man who
“ever reigned upon the earth was
“once a simple youth, and kept his
“father’s sheep; and to descend to
“common life, we often see the
“brightest, best, and most ingenious
“characters, taken from the vale of
“poverty, and exalted to adorn the
“world.

“Howbeit, let your constant study
“be to worship your Creator, and
“love your neighbour as sincerely as
“you love yourself; and then, what-
“ever may be your fortune, your
“life will be honourable, and your
“death completely happy. You
“have been an eye witness of those
“rejoicings with which my people
“have received me: you have heard
“the fond effusions of their grati-
“tude,

“ tude, and have seen them kiss the
“ ground on which my feet have trod-
“ den. The reason is very obvious.
“ While many planters regard them
“ merely as slaves to perform their
“ will, and lash them with needless
“ severity to their daily tasks, or by
“ torments more acute, disgrace
“ themselves, and render those poor
“ wretches perpetually miserable, I
“ have ever made it my study to pro-
“ portion their labour to their strength
“ and spirits; and instead of treating
“ them as beasts of burden, I have,
“ by kindness and humane behaviour
“ towards them, rendered them truly
“ good, and faithful to my interests
“ and person.

“ In my absence, my steward fol-
“ lows my directions exactly; so that

L

“ on

“ on my return I have always the
“ pleasure to see my servants happy,
“ and to find myself the object of
“ their warmest esteem.”

With such discourse (which tended to display the opposite effects of cruelty and benevolence to the expanding mind), was Charles entertained by his amiable master, who seemed more delighted with his young associate the longer he conversed with him; and for the space of two years they mutually enjoyed the blessings of Providence; each rising sun bringing new pleasures to their mansion, and each succeeding evening inviting them to a balmy repose.

Our hero might now be said to taste the perfection of happiness; yet sometimes a gentle sigh would rise
from

from his bosom, which naturally retained a strong degree of anxiety respecting his dear parents, and a forcible wish once more to behold their simple habitation: these, however, were over-ruled by a pious resignation to the will of Heaven, which in all events is the best judge of our felicity.

Provided with all the comforts of life, and honoured with the friendship of his patron, Charles Woodbine adored his Maker for the present disposition of his circumstances; and while his lips expressed his praise to the Righteous Giver, his heart relied upon the Eternal Providence for aid and protection in every future scene which might precede the close of life.

CHAP. XIV.

A STROKE OF FATE; A WILL; AND A
LETTER.

IT was near ten o'clock in the evening, just as Mr. Friendly and young Woodbine had finished supper, that the latter was much alarmed by hearing his valuable friend complain of a violent indisposition, from which he seemed to think he never should recover. He went, however, to bed, and a medical gentleman was instantly called in, who bled him immediately, and administered such medicines as the nature of his patient's distemper seemed to require; but on being asked at his departure what was his real opinion, he shook his head, and replied,
it

it was impossible to tell whether he might recover; but he added, it was his present belief, that Mr. Friendly was struck with death; and therefore he requested his friends might be prepared for that awful event, which might take place in a few hours.

He then departed, and left poor Charles almost choaked with tears, and distracted at this melancholy information. Yet he endeavoured, as much as possible, to conceal the sorrow which swelled his heart almost to bursting, and flew to the bed of his beloved master; then falling on his knees by its side, he fervently embraced the hand which Mr. Friendly had reclined on the quilt, and pressing it to his panting bosom, he bedewed it with an involuntary burst of grief,

and fobbed an emphatic prayer to the Most High for the valued life of his benefactor. After the violence of his passion was abated, he wiped the honoured hand from his tears, and fixed his aching eyes on the pallid countenance of the afflicted sufferer, whose heart was melted by the tenderness of his young attendant, and who now beholding him with a look of expressive fondness, said:—

“ It is doubtless a severe trial, my
“ beloved youth, which you now ex-
“ perience : you have ever loved me
“ as a parent, and I, on my part,
“ have studied your welfare with un-
“ remitting care ; but now I am per-
“ suaded we must be separated till
“ the resurrection of the just : yet
“ grieve not, my Charles, as those
“ who

“ who have no hope ; neither suppose
“ that Heaven will forsake you be-
“ cause I am taken from you. Re-
“ member what I have so often told
“ you, that if you pursue the paths
“ of virtue, Providence will make
“ you its constant care ; but if you
“ suffer yourself to be led astray, you
“ will assuredly repent it either sooner
“ or later.”

Charles could scarce reply to this affecting language ; but, at length, through many rising sobs, he declared that his whole life should be guided by those pious directions.

Knowing that his patron stood in need of rest, he relinquished the dear hand, which was still joined to his throbbing breast, and retired to his apartment.

Early

Early the next morning he was summoned to attend his departing friend, for the pains of death were now upon him, and he requested that Woodbine might come, and receive his benediction.

Beholding him enter the room, he lifted his trembling hands to Heaven, and pronounced the most solemn blessings on his favourite; then pressing his hand with the tenderest rapture, he assured the attendant friends who hovered round him, that he was firmly assured of, and rejoiced in the blessed hope of, a glorious immortality. Then turning once more to the object of his tender care, he earnestly intreated the Holy One of Heaven to ratify his blessing.

A few moments he was silent, gazing

ing tenderly on the weeping youth; then raising his eyes upwards with a beaming ray of satisfaction, he eagerly exclaimed:—"My prayer is heard; " and Woodbine shall be blest."—— Articulation failed; his eye-strings broke; and ruthless death received its prey.

I shall not attempt to paint the succeeding scene; it may be much easier imagined than described; therefore to the warm and tender imagination I shall leave it.

After the funeral had taken place, our hero was one day searching a cabinet, to which he had been directed by his departing friend, where, after turning over several articles, his eyes were fixed on a parchment, which proved to be his beloved master's will.

will. He perused it for some time, with no other concern than what arose from his heavy loss; but after reading over a number of legacies intended for particular persons, he was surprised beyond description, to find himself the sole and appointed heir of all his patron's remaining estates and riches. At first he could scarcely believe it a reality; but after he was thoroughly convinced by repeatedly and distinctly reading it, he threw himself on his knees, and clasped his hands in the attitude of a humble suppliant; but his swoln heart was too full to admit of utterance, till a shower of tears came to his relief; when prostrating himself on the ground, he adored, in the most pathetic language, the goodness and clemency

mency of God, who had in so wonderful a manner raised him from total obscurity to the rank which he now held, as the possessor of five thousand a year! “O,” said he, “vouchsafe,
“ Great Director of our humble ac-
“ tions, to enlarge my soul with my
“ circumstances; and direct my ge-
“ nerosity to proper objects, that I
“ may neither hoard with avarice,
“ nor squander in wantonness, that
“ wealth which my God has given
“ me. Let the poor, the infirm, the
“ blind, and lame, be fed and che-
“ rished by my liberality; and when-
“ ever I approach the habitations of
“ misery, direct my spirit to act con-
“ sistent with thy blessed commands,
“ in relieving the sons of wretched-
“ ness, or taking the abandoned out-
“ cast

“ cast to my habitation. O defend
“ me from unseemly pride, that rock
“ on which thousands split; and kin-
“ dle every day that sacred fire in my
“ soul, which may bear my prayers
“ and praises as incense to the sacred
“ courts above.

“ Finally, indulgent Creator, I
“ presume to crave thy aid and pro-
“ tection through the residue of my
“ life; and meekly implore a suitable
“ preparation of my spirit for an ap-
“ proaching eternity: while to thy
“ righteous care and keeping, I com-
“ mit the lives and concerns of my
“ dear parents and valued friends.”

He now arose with a lighter heart,
and more composed mind; when
calling in the friends and servants of
the deceased, he read the will in the
midst

midst of them; who, far from appearing displeased with the circumstance which had so deeply affected Mr. Woodbine, they cordially wished him joy of his good fortune; and many even wept with the overflowing transport they experienced.

He immediately assembled the persons specified in the will, and made a just distribution of the legacies therein mentioned; and having amply rewarded each of the servants for their fidelity to their former master, he gave the slaves their liberty, and agreed to sell his plantation to a neighbouring gentleman, who, like Mr. Friendly, was renowned for his benevolence and humanity.

It was some time before he was
freed from the careffes of the weeping
M throng,

throng, who wearied him with prayers to stay amongst them; but at last he broke from them with an overflowing heart, and secluded himself awhile in his private study.

When he was somewhat refreshed, and more tranquil in his spirit, he seized the blessed opportunity of writing to the beloved inhabitants of his native cottage; and taking up the pen for that purpose, he wrote as follows:—

My ever dear and honoured parents,

IT is with the deepest regret that I inform you, my beloved patron is no more. He is gone to a fairer world, and spirits more congenial with his own, than the inhabitants of this terraqueous globe. His life was honourable;

nourable; and with praise to God I add, his death was truly happy. But, O my dearest parents, how shall I relate it? yet true it is, that this good, this noble character, has left the whole of his fortune (a few legacies excepted), to the son of a cottager; even to the disposal of your own beloved Charles. I know you are astonished at the recital, as I have likewise been; but you may rest assured of its veracity. I have engaged to sell my plantation; and I intend shortly to visit once more the dear abode of rustic felicity, that I may join you in praise to Him who hath made me what I am.

Convey this news to my dear surviving patron, Mr. Loveboy; and assure him I will fly with the warmest

acknowledgments to his presence,
when I have cheered the sight of my
invaluable parents by the return of

Their ever loving,
and affectionate son,

C. WOODBINE.

CHAP.

CHAP. XV.

OUR HERO'S RETURN; RECEPTION; AND
INTERVIEW WITH A LADY.

SEVEN months had now elapsed since the letter which concluded our last chapter was written; and our juvenile traveller at length arrived in perfect safety at the residence of his ancestors.

The sun was just risen from the blushing east, the shepherd was standing at the little gate which led to his cottage, when a post-chaise stopt before him, and his senses were nearly overturned by the sudden appearance of the darling of his soul.

Breathless with rapture at the charming sight, he rushed impatiently to the arms of his son, who warmly

returned his strict embrace; and
“My son!”—“My father!” burst
from their lips at the same moment;
when nature, melted down before the
fervid beams of pleasure, dissolv’d
into a chrystal flood of inexpressive
sympathy.

Indeed the scene must have been
truly affecting, since it caused the
postillion to draw his hand across those
eyes which were unapt to weep.

Thus stood the amiable pair, and
thus affected gazed the rustic driver,
when Mrs. Woodbine came out to
feed her chickens.

She no sooner caught a glimpse of
her husband’s situation, than nature
whispered to her heart the cause; and
swift as the hunter that scours along
the level plain, she ran to the spot,
and

and realized her fond imaginations. But if the scene so deeply affected her husband, think, ye whom Heaven has blest with a susceptible heart, what were the feelings of a tender, doating mother, at the sight of that dear youth for whom alone she wished to live; for whom she prayed incessantly; and in whom her very soul seemed to be centered.

She came to her child; she gazed a moment on his features; but the view was too much for her tender nature. Down dropped the barley from her hand, which the fowls unbidden picked; and prone to earth she sunk her fainting head; but the outstretched arms of her son and husband prevented her falling to the ground. They chafed her temples, sprinkled
some

some cooling drops from the neighbouring rill on her face, and bent her forwards till she began to revive. At length she regained the use of her faculties; and again beholding her beloved son, she exclaimed:—"My God, I thank thee!" and would inevitably have relapsed, had not a torrent of tears relieved her; but these happily lent their needful and timely assistance, and were plentifully mingled with those of her dear companions.

The postboy too was much affected; and he who had before wiped from his face one gushing drop of tenderness, now sobbed audibly, and gave a free vent to the emotions of his heart.

He was now dismissed, with a handsome

handsome present ; and the happy trio walked arm in arm to the blest abode of peaceful serenity.

Here they were indeed completely happy, while Charles recounted the various incidents of his voyage ; and when he described the hearty rejoicings of the poor negroes, his good old parents alternately laughed and wept at the interesting recital : but when he came to expatiate on the death of Mr. Friendly, their poor bosoms throbbed with grief, and their aged eyes were almost drowned in tears. This tribute of affection paid, other subjects arose spontaneous from the presence of their son, dispersed the clouds, and shed the glorious rays of pleasure around their venerable heads.

Breakfast was now prepared ; and
the

the same porringers and spoons produced which we had occasion to mention at a former unexpected interview. This created a great deal of harmless mirth; as Charles repeated the laughable incident with that degree of humour which naturally arises from a heart contented with its own actions, and a stranger to every species of vice.

The wholesome meal being concluded, it was deliberated whether they should send Mr. Loveboy word of the stranger's arrival, or whether he should immediately pay him his respects in person.

Many were the reasons urged on both sides the question; but at last the emotions of gratitude prevailed, and Charles resolved to seek his patron immediately; accordingly, he bade his
dear

dear friends adieu, and fallied forth to the dwelling of Mr. Loveboy.

That gentleman was sitting in his study, at the moment of our hero's arrival; who knowing the ways of the house, had walked in without knocking, as the door stood open to receive the balmy zephyrs of the morning.

He no sooner entered the room, than Mr. Loveboy instantly recognized the features of the shepherd's son; and clasping him to his breast with the warmth of a parent, he adored the goodness of the Almighty, who had thus granted the request of his heart, and blessed him with beholding the safe return of his favourite to the land of his nativity.

He then communicated some private order to one of his servants; and warmly

warmly congratulated Charles on the subject of his return, and the acquisition of his fortune. "A fortune," said he, "which I peculiarly rejoice in, as the just reward of affection and virtue."

In about an hour's time the bells of the village began to ring melodiously; and a number of peasants assembled in their Sunday clothes at the mansion of Mr. Loveboy, who gave them a hearty welcome, and brought them to Charles, who gratefully received their sincere, though unpolished, demonstrations of joy.

For these a plentiful dinner was prepared, while Charles was regaled with an elegant banquet, which the servants had just provided, and which was graced by the agreeable company,
and

and charming conversation of Mr. Loveboy's only daughter, who was the pride of the country in respect of her person, and a pattern to the world for modesty, prudence, and politeness. Charles was surprized at the beauty of her countenance, and delighted beyond expression with the sweetness of her discourse, and the unaffected affability of her manners. She questioned him respecting his journey, the particulars of his voyage, and his various adventures, with which the reader is already acquainted; and from all his replies she received the highest satisfaction, as Charles evidently endeavoured, through the whole course of their conversation, to render that pleasure (in some degree at least) to her which himself received from her charming company,

and the bright display of her understanding.

Her father appeared delighted with the budding friendship of the young friends ; and occasionally endeavoured to increase the hilarity of the moment by his own pertinent and facetious remarks.

Thus passed the day ; till Charles, recollecting with what anxiety his honoured parents must wait his return, he politely acknowledged the grateful sense which he had of Mr. Loveboy's unmerited attentions towards him, and begged permission to retire. This was a proposal, however, to which his friend would not accede, till he had solemnly promised to spend (at the least) one part of every day with him, till he should think fit to settle himself ;

self; and even then he hinted a wish that they might be honoured with his residence in their own village.

This promise being freely given, Miss Loveboy entertained our hero before his departure with a beautiful concerto on the grand piano-forte, of which she was a perfect mistress. The brilliancy of her execution, and the melody of the instrument, completed that conquest which beauty, united with a powerful wit, had begun; and Charles, affectionately bidding his generous entertainers adieu, returned to his father's hut, but left his heart behind him.

CHAP. XVI.

A PROOF OF AFFECTION; CONFESSION;
AND ACCEPTANCE.

MR. Woodbine had left his father's abode about seven o'clock in the morning, nearly a month after the conclusion of our last recital, and was taking a ramble in Mr. Loveboy's garden; when the fair Matilda (for such was the name of the lady before mentioned), was leaning over a Chinese railing, (which encompassed a beautiful pond), and amused herself by throwing bits of bread to the gold and silver fishes, which wantonly sported amidst the circles of the water. In this position Charles espied her; and whilst he was gazing with a profound admiration on the delicacy of her frame,

frame, and the symmetry of her shape, that part of the railing on which she was leaning suddenly gave way, and before she could attempt to save herself, she plunged headlong into the watery element. Our hero, alarmed and distracted with the terrible sight, darted with the velocity of an arrow along the path, and instantly leaped into the pond for her rescue, which (as the water was not very deep) he happily effected. He drew her tenderly to the verdant plat which surrounded the spot of her misfortune, and supporting her head on his bosom, endeavoured to restore those senses, by every requisite means, which the fright had driven from her.

At length he had the pleasure to see them return; when raising herself a little, and fixing her fine blue eyes on

young Woodbine with a mixture of gratitude and affection, she exclaimed: —“ O my deliverer! how shall I re-
“ pay you?” This was a question which awakened the tenderest thoughts of her companion’s heart, and impelled him to make a confession which his modesty had hitherto withheld him from. Looking on her therefore with a passionate degree of tenderness, he replied, “ Was I not well assured of
“ the vast disproportion which is be-
“ tween us, I might indeed grow bold
“ upon your sweet interrogation, and
“ presume to ask a blessing, to which the whole creation cannot produce an equivalent.”

“ Disproportion between us!” returned the languid fair one; “ I am
“ indeed sorry to hear such a word
“ proceed from your lips; for my own
“ part,

“ part, I assure you that I regard you
“ entirely as my equal, since your
“ virtue hath shone so conspicuous in
“ all your actions, that by it alone you
“ have received the advantages of fortune;
“ and my father has often declared, that he esteems you far
“ above the whole circle of his acquaintance. Ask then, my kind
“ deliverer, for what you have hinted
“ at, and let it be what it may, you
“ may rest assured you will not meet
“ with a denial from Matilda Love-
“ boy.”

Emboldened by this charming declaration, Charles avowed his love for her in the most delicate and respectful language, and thus convinced her that the inestimable gift at which he had hinted, was that of her own fair hand. Yet he acknowledged his own
obscure

obscure birth and former situation, which he said might doubtless prejudice her father against him, if he should presume to demand in marriage the only child of that man who first raised him from absolute indigence, and whose generous hand dispersed, by his munificence, the clouds of ignorance from his mind.

She readily replied to the last part of his discourse, by observing, that innate goodness, and not extraction, would be sought by herself, and her worthy parent, in the most important action of her life. But to that part of his discourse which tended to display the strength and purity of his affection, she replied, (with a blush which greatly added to her natural charms), that if his happiness depended on herself, she would by no means

means keep him in suspense; but as her dear father had ever been consulted by her on every occasion, she must of course request his advice before she could attempt to form any resolution in a matter of such consequence as the present: nevertheless, she added, that she had not the smallest doubt of his agreeing to the proposal, as he had ever studied her inclinations, and constantly sought to establish or increase her felicity.

At the close of this sentence, Mr. Loveboy came from behind an arbour which hitherto had concealed him, and with a pleasing smile thus addressed the young couple:—

“ I cannot, possibly, my dear Matilda, express the satisfaction which
“ I have felt during your conversation.
“ With my friend Woodbine I am
“ peculiarly

“ peculiarly pleased, for his noble sentiments, and that humility, which
“ are too seldom found to adorn the
“ character of a man that is blessed
“ with such ample possessions. And
“ with you, Matilda, I am truly delighted, for that sincerity of dutiful affection to which I have now
“ been witness, and for which (if
“ Heaven permits), it shall ever be
“ my study to reward you.

“ In answer, therefore, to my young
“ friend, I observe, I shall esteem
“ myself happy in his alliance; and,
“ with my daughter, will most cheerfully give him my blessing. For as
“ the most exalted character is debased in the eyes of all good men by
“ a series of base or profligate actions, so is the offspring of a peasant ennobled in the esteem of every
“ pious

“ pious man, by a continuance in
“ well doing. Such is the case with
“ my young friend : he has approved
“ himself deserving of attention on
“ every occasion ; and I am sincerely
“ happy that it is now in my power to
“ give him the strongest proof of my
“ esteem.”

To this endearing speech our hero replied by a profusion of the most grateful acknowledgments ; and said, he hoped his future life would evince the sincerity of his professions.

Mr. Loveboy shook him cordially by the hand, and then proceeded :—

“ To you, my lovely daughter, I
“ can only say, that you was perfectly
“ right when you expected that I should
“ not oppose your inclinations. No,
“ my dearest girl, you have ever acted
“ by my direction, and perfectly ful-
“ filled

“ filled my desires ; it is therefore not
 “ only my permission, but my re-
 “ quest, which you now receive, to
 “ marry Mr. Woodbine, if your own
 “ affections are consistent with that
 “ desire ; for I will never be the
 “ means of sacrificing my child’s fel-
 “ city to my own inclinations. How-
 “ ever, in the present case, I fancy my
 “ request is not a disagreeable one ;
 “ and as you must be the best judges
 “ of your own desires, I shall leave
 “ you to settle the business as your
 “ own hearts may direct you.” With
 these words the old gentleman withdrew
 to his study, and left the young lovers
 mutually wrapt in admiration of his
 matchless generosity.

“ My beauteous maid,” said
 Charles, “ you now see that your ex-
 “ cellent parent has left my fate en-
 “ tirely

“ tirely at your own disposal : to you,
“ therefore, I must look for the fulfil-
“ ment of my desire ; or from you I
“ must receive a denial, which will in-
“ fallibly wound me in the deepest
“ manner. Such as I am, if you
“ consent to take me, you shall ever
“ find me grateful, tender, and affec-
“ tionate. If you think you can be
“ happy with me, we will live in the
“ most sacred union, as curling ten-
“ drils fondly twine around each
“ other ; and when our Maker shall
“ summon us hence, one silent grave
“ shall hold our peaceful ashes. But
“ if, upon any consideration whatever,
“ you wish to decline my offer, I will
“ instantly release you from your for-
“ mer kind promise, and endeavour
“ to resign myself to the fatal disap-
o “ pointment,

“ without depriving you either of
“ your ancient cottage, or those rustic
“ employments, in which you doubt-
“ less find much satisfaction.”

His parents blessed him for the goodness of his heart, and were loading him with their praises, when the conversation was interrupted by the arrival of a visitor, at whose approach young Woodbine started hastily from his seat, and throwing his arms around him, exclaimed:—“ Is it possible that
“ I behold my friend, my valued
“ companion, Placid !” It was indeed that young man, who, having heard of Charles’s return, had taken a horse from the academy on purpose to see him, and convey to him the affectionate congratulations of Mr. and Mrs. Careful on his noble fortune. When the first transports were over
which

which arose at the meeting of these faithful friends, and Placid had partaken of a light repast after his journey, he proceeded to deliver his message from the master and mistress of the boarding-school, which exceedingly affected Mr. Woodbine, as it was replete with that affectionate kindness, which in his younger days he had so often received in the mansion of classical retirement. He had, however, the pleasure to hear that they were both in perfect health, happy in themselves, and universally beloved by all who knew them. And after a repetition of various incidents, and change of scholars which had taken place in the years which had passed since they pursued their studies together, Placid thus proceeded:—

“ Mr. Careful, with his accustomed
“ goodness, has provided for me, by
“ taking me as an assistant to himself
“ in the school, for which he allows
“ me a competent reward ; and I need
“ not tell you that I am perfectly
“ happy with such people, and in
“ such a situation. Master Froward,
“ who, like yourself, is now arrived to
“ the years of manhood, has received
“ the family estate by the demise of
“ his father ; and from the time when
“ your sweet admonitions won him to
“ your friendship, he has ever studied
“ those rules of piety which you so
“ exactly followed, and has been
“ often heard to bless Providence for
“ that reformation, which was cer-
“ tainly wrought in him by the noble
“ precepts, and more striking exam-
“ ple, of the Shepherd's Son. Thus
“ you

“ you find his former pride is departed
“ from him, and he is now ambitious
“ only of the renown of virtue. He
“ has lately married a virtuous lady ;
“ and we are credibly informed, that
“ his daily actions are the boast and
“ honour of the place which he inhabits.

“ Our school is in a very flourishing
“ condition ; and since the misfortune
“ which Froward experienced, every
“ species of cruelty has been banished
“ from our society, and the present
“ scholars are in general of a good
“ disposition.”

“ I am extremely happy,” said Charles, “ at so good an account of
“ our old playmate ; and feel myself
“ deeply interested in the welfare of
“ your seminary, which, perhaps, I
“ may shortly visit : however, you
“ must

“ must first spend a few days with
“ me; and though I shall at present
“ permit you to return, as I know
“ your friends will be anxious for you
“ to carry them the news, yet I shall
“ absolutely rely upon your company
“ in a day or two at the furthest.”

Young Mr. Placid then prepared for his journey; and his friend putting a fifty pound bank note in his hand, and tenderly embracing him, committed him to the care of Providence; and sent an affectionate message to his old master, whom he strongly invited, with Mrs. Careful, to come and see him.

The next morning the workmen came, in compliance with Mr. Woodbine's directions, and the little seat of festivity began to undergo a thorough alteration. Its rooms were now increased;

creased; the garden was enlarged; and, in short, the little cottage was perfectly changed to a snug and convenient box, supplied with every requisite, and suitable articles of furniture. At the back of the garden a little gate opened to a rich meadow, which was rendered more delightful by a verdant eminence, that was watered by a chrystal stream which sprung from its summit, and gently murmured down its mossy side.

To this place were Thomas Woodbine's sheep led by a neighbouring peasant; and when Charles arose in the morning, he shewed them to his father as his own property, and no longer the flock of a master; for these were purchased by Charles, with the cottage, land, and meadow, that he might make the worthy shepherd a present

present suitable to his favourite employment. The old man shed many tears of joy at this munificent action of his son's; and his wife clasped her hands with ecstasy, but could utter nothing.

Now was our hero truly delighted; and now his bosom glowed with pleasure. His former promise was more than fulfilled; and his former expectations abundantly exceeded. His parents were beyond expression happy; and peace and contentment reigned undisturbed in this little family, to which Charles now insisted upon adding a servant, to assist his mother in her daily tasks.

He now began to turn his attention towards his own seat, which was built exactly on a level with that of his father; and in the architecture of which
grandeur

grandeur was sweetly blended with simplicity. The gardens and pleasure grounds were nothing inferior to those of Mr. Loveboy; the furniture was consistent with the appearance of the mansion; and the carriage which was built for him and the fair Matilda, was decidedly the most superb in the county.

The building being completed, it was examined by Mr. and Miss Loveboy, with several of their acquaintance, who unanimously declared it the most delightful spot they had ever seen.

Our young adventurer being now settled in his new abode, solicited his friends to honour him with their company to dinner. The invitation was accepted; a dinner was provided, which did honour to its hospitable founder;

founder; and the poor and diseased of the village rejoiced over the remnants of it at their respective habitations; for every dish which went from the table, was first given to the servants, and then distributed amongst the sons and daughters of indigent misery.

When the cloth was removed, and conversation began to circulate, Charles reminded Mr. Loveboy, that as he was now situated, he must presume to call upon him for a fulfilment of his promise. The good gentleman smiled at the observation of his intended son-in-law, and replied, he was ready to attend him to the altar, whenever he and Matilda should think proper.

The ensuing Thursday was named
by

by Charles, and accepted by his friend. The bride elect blushed consent; and the party broke up completely satisfied with each other.

CHAP. XVIII.

THE WEDDING MORNING; AND THE WISH
ACCOMPLISHED.

LONG and tedious did the hours appear till Thursday morning came; but no sooner did it peep from the azure firmament, than every heart was filled with joy, and every tongue prepared to hail the general festivity. The tenants of Mr. Loveboy had assembled round his house by seven o'clock to strew the path with flowers, and to behold their beloved lady go to be united with Mr. Woodbine, who, like herself, was the idol of the neighbourhood. At eight o'clock the lover's went to church, accompanied by their venerable parents, Mr. Loveboy, and Joseph Placid, who had come to
the

the village on the preceding evening ; and after their vows were mutually pledged, they returned amidst the applause of hundreds, whom respect and curiosity had drawn together.

On their entering Mr. Loveboy's drawing room, (for with him they agreed to spend the day), they were agreeably surprized to find Mr. and Mrs. Careful, who from an excess of affection had left their school in care of a friend, and come to offer their congratulations on this happy occasion. They were both received with the most unfeigned joy ; and their charming pupil repeatedly expressed the high sense which he had of the favour they conferred upon him.

A sumptuous dinner was now produced ; and while the joyous company within were absorbed in the fulness

of felicity, the villagers on the lawn were rejoicing round an ox which was roasted for their supply, and drinking the health of the bride and bridegroom in cups of sparkling ale, which the steward was ordered to distribute amongst them. Others were employed in the more delightful purposes of dancing, and other recreations, while the flute, the violin, and tambourine, enlivened the company, and assisted the dancers. Good sense, replete with humour, was present through the course of the entertainment; the sounds of rejoicing were heard on every side; and every breast was a region of delight. Amidst the gay diversions, virtue was justly applauded; and in the height of merriment, true decorum kept its place.

In the course of the afternoon a
lawyer

lawyer waited upon Mr. Woodbine with some parchments, which after he had taken from him, and requested him to be seated, our hero thus addressed the company:—

“ It is well known to you all, my
“ honoured and worthy friends, that
“ the man who is this day permitted
“ to espouse the charming Matilda,
“ was formerly a poor, ignorant, and
“ obscure child, who, absolutely a
“ stranger to learning, and the concerns of the world, sighed for the
“ advantages which fortune had
“ placed beyond his reach, and
“ winged his supplications to Heaven
“ from that hill where he daily
“ watched his father’s fleecy charge.

“ From that situation I was drawn
“ by the fostering hand of this amiable character, whose daughter now

“ I have the honour to call my own.
“ By him I was placed beneath the
“ care of this worthy couple, (allud-
“ ing to Mr. and Mrs. Careful);
“ and from them I received a greater
“ degree of attention than I ever had
“ a right to expect. From you, my
“ young friend, (turning to Placid),
“ I received the dearest marks of
“ amity and esteem; and, finally,
“ from my ever honoured parents, I
“ have drawn the best admonitions,
“ and received continually the most
“ endearing usage.

“ To you, therefore,” (addressing
his parents), “ dear objects of my
“ sacred veneration, I give one hun-
“ dred pounds per annum; and as-
“ sure you of the inviolable affection
“ of that son whom you have ten-
“ derly nurtured, and piously in-
“ structed

“fructed continually. To my ho-
“noured tutor I present this small
“pledge of my gratitude,” with
which he presented him with an ele-
gant diamond ring, and a note of one
hundred pounds; “and to you, my
“dear friend,” said he (turning towards
Placid) “who, by the mischance of
“your fortune, are destitute of pa-
“rents, and not only an orphan, but,
“like myself, the subject of Mr.
“Loveboy’s generosity, I present the
“yearly sum of fifty pounds; and if
“ever you should find yourself in
“need of a friend, I trust you will
“instantly fly to him whose purse
“shall ever be open to supply your
“wants, and whose house shall ever
“be at your service.”

The company were now fully em-
ployed in their own reflections on
this

this unexampled goodness; and the lovely Matilda expressed her pleasure at the action of her husband, in the sweetest manner, when her father, taking up the discourse, informed his son-in-law that he must now receive that portion which was justly due to his benevolent heart, and accordingly laid on the table notes to the amount of ten thousand pounds, as his daughter's fortune.

The generous bridegroom absolutely refused to accept it, declaring that he had a sufficiency for his life; but his father-in-law peremptorily insisting on its being taken, the hero of our piece received it with suitable expressions, and completed the proof of his goodness, by immediately giving the sum of two hundred pounds, to
be

be distributed for charitable and humane purposes, in his own and the adjacent villages, observing, that as Heaven had raised him to the stile of a gentleman, it was both his duty and privilege to bestow the gifts of his Creator amongst the unhappy mortals who were once his equals, and must ever remain his fellow-creatures.

This action increased the acclamations of the company, and warmed the hearts of all his friends, who could, from this beginning, perceive what good he intended essentially to perform with that wealth which God had given him.

His mother, particularly struck with his behaviour, informed the company, that she had for many years retained one favourite wish within her breast, which was, that as Providence
had

had placed herself and husband in so low a station, some friendly hand might draw her child from obscurity, to receive the blessings of education, and that he might one day have it in his power to bestow that blessing on others, which he then stood in need of so much for himself.

She was cordially congratulated by the whole assembly, on the complete fulfilment of her desire; the objects of Mr. Woodbine's generosity sufficiently expressed their gratitude for the same; and, after an elegant supper was served up, and the scene enlivened by a band of music, the evening closed with matchless satisfaction to all parties.

The shepherd and his wife adored their God for his unspeakable goodness to themselves and their child;
Mr.

Mr. Loveboy triumphed in the merciful act which called his darling to the higher stations of life; and Mr. Woodbine, with the fair Matilda, received within the bounds of their native village every blessing they could desire.

Thus, by a constant adherence to the precepts of virtue, and the worship of the Almighty, was a SHEPHERD'S SON exalted to the summit of felicity, and thus was a mother's pious WISH ACCOMPLISHED.

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