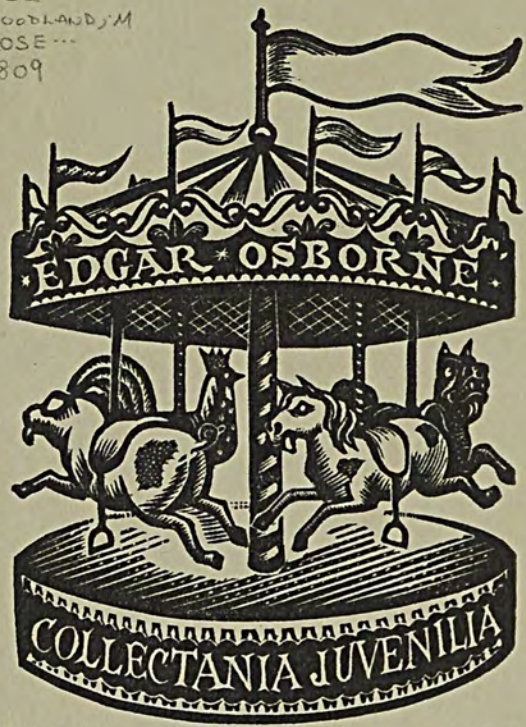




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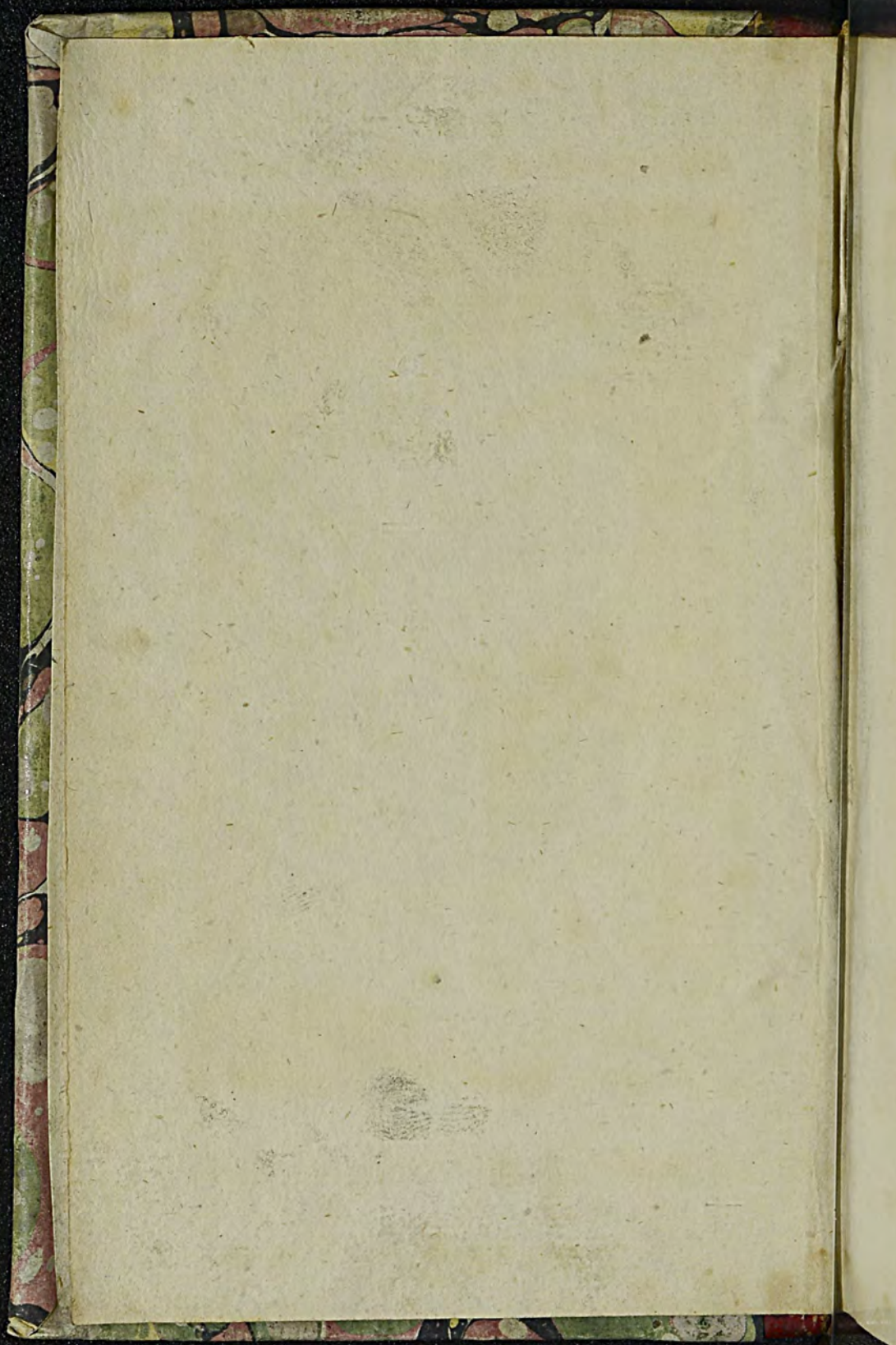
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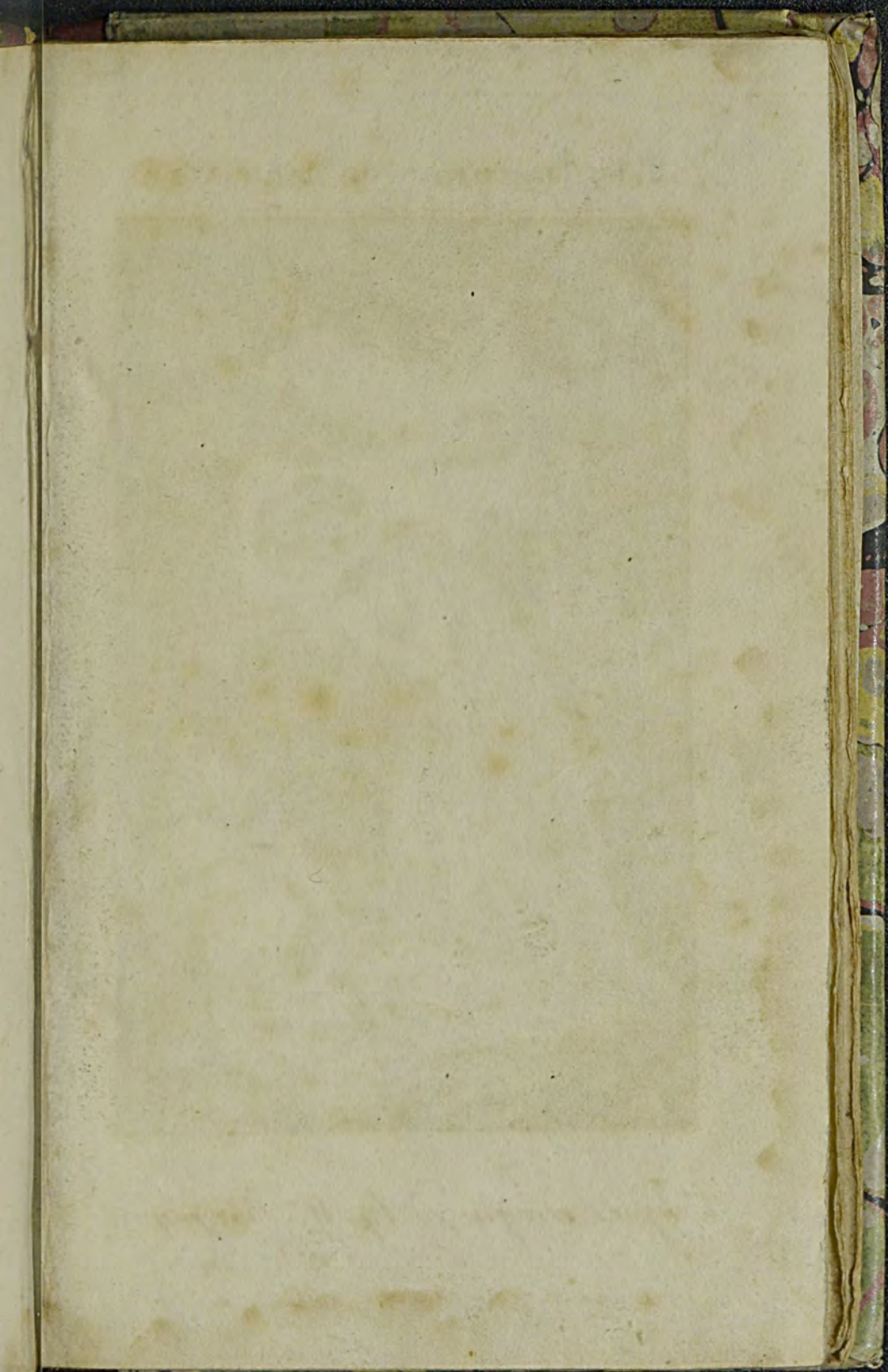
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THE DANGERS OF PARTIALITY.



Engraved by C. Knight.

*Agnes recognized by M<sup>rs</sup> Burgoyne.*

Page 120

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1847-

ROSE AND AGNES;

OR, THE

*DANGERS OF PARTIALITY.*

A MORAL TALE.

BY MISS M. WOODLAND.

London:

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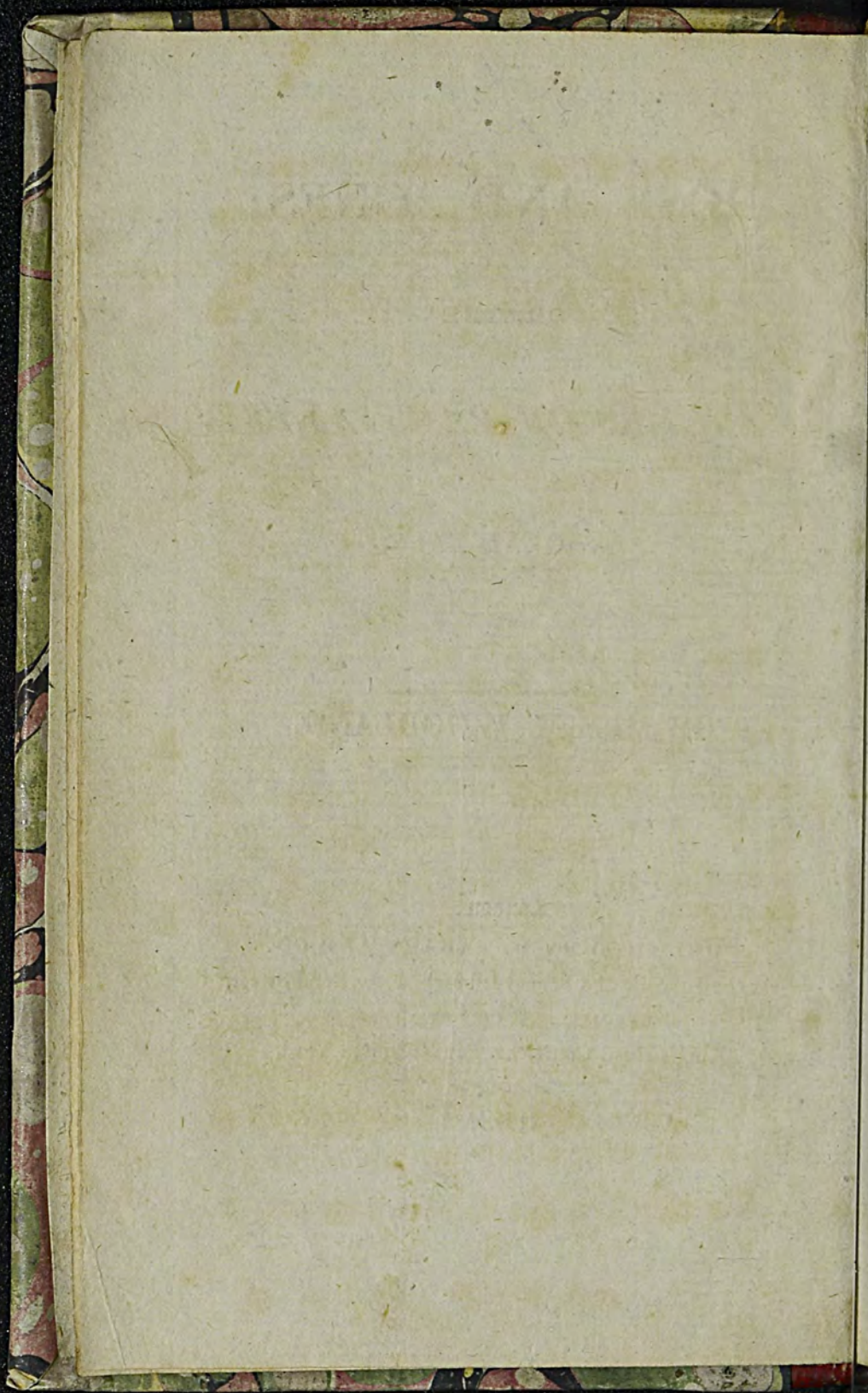
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1809.





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# ROSE AND AGNES :

OR,

THE DANGERS OF PARTIALITY.



## CHAP. I.

OF all the mistakes weak mothers are apt to commit, in the education of their children, none are more fatal than that of indulging exclusive partiality. Could they foresee the dreadful consequences, which arise from such injudicious, not to say barbarous, conduct, they would shudder at their folly, and shrink, with horror, from the injustice of which they are unconsciously guilty.

§

B



The intention, with which this tale has been written, is to show the fatal mistake of treating children with exclusive preference.

Mrs. Woodville, a merchant's widow, of moderate fortune, who resided in Bath, was left with two daughters; the one nine, the other four years of age. This lady, a well-intentioned woman, but with little experience, a superficial knowledge, and a weak understanding, took upon herself to educate, or rather to spoil, the education of, her children.

Among other mistakes, Mrs. Woodville had that of indulging strong and exclusive partiality: her eldest daughter, Rose, who happened to be, like her mother, very beautiful, and the most lively in disposition, was her favorite. Her ill health had prevented Mrs. Woodville from suckling her



youngest, who was committed to the care of a nurse, in the country, till she was four years of age, while her eldest sister was completely spoiled, at home.

Mrs. Woodville, partial as she was to Rose, loved the little Agnes; and the child soon attached itself to its mother with ardor: but Rose, who in consequence of extreme indulgence, had become, as children frequently do, selfish and envious, had little love for her sister; and, encouraged by an artful maid, who not only taught her to practise falsehood and deceit, but made her jealous of her younger sister, acquired the habit of endeavouring to bring Agnes into disgrace.

The capacity of Rose was remarkably quick, though her understanding was little above mediocrity, and she learned with greater facility than her



mother could teach. Agnes, who was much younger, and whose aptitude at learning was not so great, though her understanding was far superior, compared with her sister, was slow. Mrs. Woodville had not the patience necessary for a teacher; neither had she the talent of discrimination. She scolded and brow-beat little Agnes, who, being naturally meek and timid, was rendered fearful, to excess, by such treatment. This timidity, which retarded her progress, was mistaken by the mother for perverse stupidity, and she soon began to consider Agnes as a dull unmanageable child, who required to be treated with rigor.

Rose, instigated by her maid, Betty, took advantage of this mistaken notion: she always contrived to aggravate the little faults of her sister, and



to make a parade of her own superiority, till the deceived and infatuated mother acquired a rooted predilection in favor of her eldest daughter. Every thing that Rose said, or did, no matter how wrong, was applauded: she was suffered to tyrannize over the gentle Agnes with impunity: if she took away her playthings, or forced her to do what she did not like, *“ Agnes was the youngest, and ought to submit: her sister knew better what was right than she did.”*

When Agnes, with tears in her eyes, would beg of Rose to tell her a hard word, in her lesson, that young lady, in imitation of her mother, would call her *dunce*; and, if she repeated the request, would give her a box on the ear. But, if the oppressed Agnes ever complained, which she seldom did, Rose denied the charge with violence; and



to revenge herself, aggravated her mother against her poor little sister, by inventing tales which that too credulous lady believed.

This was not all the unfortunate Agnes had to suffer: she was rudely treated by the servants, who, seeing the unjust partiality of Mrs. Woodville, insinuated themselves into that lady's good graces by praising Rose, and by continually making complaints against her younger sister. The fruits of this pernicious education were such as might naturally be expected. Rose, at fifteen, governed her weak mother, and made herself odious to every body who came to the house. She was pert, selfish, tyrannical, and artful; she was, beside, addicted to the shocking vice of lying, because, when a child, she had been incessantly praised for her lively imagination,



and encouraged to repeat all she heard. She had little affection for her weak mother, and did not scruple shamefully to abuse her indulgence.

Agnes, notwithstanding the great disadvantages and oppression she labored under, was of an affectionate and engaging disposition, mild in her temper, and dotingly fond of her mother, who had a real love of her, as Agnes perceived, though the severity she experienced made her afraid to show it, like her sister, by extravagant caresses; in which, as practised by Rose, there was infinitely more of grimace than affection. This severity made her timid to excess, and the being continually reproached for her supposed stupidity, had almost deadened her faculties.

Agnes was far from plain, but the



continual comparisons made, between her and her beautiful sister, as she grew up, took away all desire to improve her person, by a strict attention to neatness; so that she acquired idle and slovenly habits, which were highly prejudicial to herself, and no less displeasing to Mrs. Woodville, who was herself remarkably neat, and orderly.

Mrs. Woodville, a weak but well-intentioned woman, though she indulged that preference and those prejudices which the accusations of her eldest daughter incessantly fed, was anxious for the improvement of Agnes, grieved at her supposed stupidity, or perverseness, and took every means, but the right, to make her fond of her book, and orderly in her habits.

I have now to relate the history of these sisters. I need not caution



young persons, while they pity the sufferings of Agnes and deplore the infatuation of the deceived mother, to beware of imbibing the pernicious idea, that the mistakes of the parent can justify disobedience, or want of affection, in a child: the child, who is undutiful or remiss in affection, can never grow up to be good and happy. Nothing is more hateful than filial impiety; and filial love always meets a just reward.

Rose, as she advanced from a state of childhood, became more selfish, tyrannical, and artful: she had been suffered to indulge her whims, and the love of finery, till she envied her sister every trifle that was given her, and made but little scruple of taking any means that might bring Agnes into disgrace, and rob her of the affection and kindness she still received from the



infatuated mother. Agnes naturally lived in fear of such a sister, and, mild as she was, could not always patiently bear her tyranny: yet her disposition was so excellent that she could not dislike her: indeed, Rose, like every human being, however faulty, was not without good qualities, though they were overbalanced by her evil habits, and she had moments of kindness and proper feeling.



## CHAP. II.

To give the reader an instance of the injustice poor Agnes suffered, and of the shameful falsehoods her sister told or connived at, to her prejudice, I will relate the following incident, which happened when Agnes was but nine years old.

Mrs. Woodville, one day, found a smelling bottle, on which she set great value, broken. Rose was not in the way, nor was she suspected; but her younger sister was severely questioned, and taxed with having done the mischief. Agnes, who, to her honor be it said, never told an untruth, though she expected blame and even punishment, on this occasion, conscious of being innocent, but not forgetting



the respect she owed to her mother, denied the charge with firmness. Mrs. Woodville, Rose not being there to aggravate her against Agnes, believed she spoke the truth; and the grateful little girl wept, with joy, when her mamma added, in a kinder tone than usual,

“Come and kiss me! I am sure you tell the truth: you could not deceive your mamma with such effrontery.”

“No, indeed, dear mamma,” cried Agnes, throwing herself into the arms of her mother, “I never will deceive you! Only kiss me, and love me, as you do my sister!”

What a lesson this ought to have been to the weak mother. Mrs. Woodville was affected and kissed her again, while Agnes clung round her mothers' neck. Rose, in the mean time, came into the room; and seeing Agnes in her



mother's arms, inflamed with pettish envy, asked " what *wonderful* thing had happened, that such a great girl should be nursed like a baby !"

" Dear Rose," said Agnes, sobbing, " *you* are often in mamma's arms! Do not envy me a pleasure I so seldom have!"

Very pretty truly," interrupted Rose. And so, Miss, you *reproach* your mamma, and *accuse me*! You see, mamma, what you get by spoiling Agnes! These are her thanks!"

Mrs. Woodville, stung by the justness of the reproach the poor child had unconsciously made, and biassed by the envious and false accusations of her eldest daughter, coldly put Agnes from her, and desired her to go up stairs and learn her lesson.

Agnes obeyed, but her little heart was bursting: though her temper was



uncommonly mild, her sensibility was not the less keen, and she felt the freezing change in her mother's voice and manner.

Mrs. Woodville, when the little girl was gone, showed the smelling bottle to Rose, and asked her if, by accident, she had had the misfortune to break it?

"I break it, mamma," interrupted Rose, with a rudeness ill becoming her age, and the respect she owed her too indulgent mother, "I break it!"

Rose had not broken the smelling bottle, but Betty *had*, in romping with her young lady; and the wicked girl, to screen herself, had advised Rose to throw the blame on her innocent sister.

"Because, Miss," said the artful maid, "you know the high value your mamma sets on the smelling



bottle, and how angry she will be to see it broken: I might get turned away, and you would never find another maid who would have your interest so much at heart, and prevent Miss Agnes from coaxing over your mamma, and making herself the pet. I am sure Miss Agnes does every thing she can to make your mamma dislike you, and my mistress, you know, Miss, is so easily to be managed, that if you do not follow my advice, your sister will soon make herself the favorite, and domineer over you and every body else. Her meekness is all hypocrisy, she dare not be otherwise: take care, Miss, or, as I say, you will have the worst."

These reasons were unanswerable to Rose: beside, she did not like to offend Betty, because she might, out of revenge, tell Mrs. Woodville many



things, which, indulgent as her mother was, Rose did not wish her to know.

“Then it must be Betty,” said Mrs. Woodville, “for it is only she who comes into the parlour, beside ourselves”

“Let Betty be called,” replied Rose, pettishly, “but I am sure she is a very careful good girl.

“But who, then, could have broken the smelling bottle,” continued Mrs. Woodville, “if it were not you or Betty; Agnes denies it.”

“And accuses Betty and me; that is just like her!”

“Indeed, my love, she accuses nobody,” said the weak mother; “she only said, on being questioned, it was not her, and I cannot think she would tell a falsehood with such effrontery: beside, with all her faults, she has not the odious vice of lying.”



Rose blushed, partly with anger and partly with shame: had not her favorite maid been implicated, she most probably would have had the grace to have desisted from bringing suspicion on the innocent Agnes; but the wish to screen Betty, joined to the anger she felt at the severe reproof Mrs. Woodville unconsciously had given, made her very improperly persist, and stagger Mrs. Woodville's belief in the innocence of Agnes. That lady, however, called Betty, and asked her if she had broken the smelling bottle? Betty who had her cue, immediately accused the innocent Agnes, and declared that she saw the child break it. Mrs. Woodville angrily called down Agnes, and asked her how she could first be so careless as to break the smelling bottle, which she had been desired not to touch, and



then do what was infinitely worse, tell an untruth?

“ Indeed, indeed, mamma,” said the poor little girl, sobbing, “ I have spoken the truth: I did not break it!”

“ So, Miss,” cried Rose, “ you would make mamma believe, I suppose, that I, or Betty, broke it?”

“ I don't want to do any such thing,” replied Agnes; “ I don't know how it came broke; I only know I did not break it.”

“ I am sure, Miss, that you did, though,” said the wicked maid servant. “ Did not I see you myself? Miss Rose can tell whether I speak truth or not. She knows it was not I who broke it.”

“ I always said, Betty, that you were a careful good girl,” answered Rose, who had the grace to blush,



“ and I don't like you to be blamed; but mamma must do as she pleases.”

Rose then flung out of the room, in a very disrespectful manner, and Betty followed saying,

“ You may believe me, Ma'am, I did not break the smelling bottle; it was Miss Agnes. I would not have told of Miss, had I not been accused of breaking it; but it is very hard for a poor servant to be blamed for the young lady's faults. Miss Rose knows I am not to blame.”

Mrs. Woodville, though she was a little staggered by the earnest manner in which Agnes continued to deny the accusation made against her, was far more willing to suppose she had told a falsehood, than that her favorite daughter, who was five years older, had so degraded herself. She could not indeed suppose it possible



that Rose would league with a wicked servant to deceive her, and criminate her innocent sister. A mother less infatuated, indeed, might have been deceived, like Mrs. Woodville, in this instance; for it was too dreadful to suppose a girl of fourteen so lost to truth, feeling, and the confidence she owed an indulgent but weak mother.

The innocent Agnes, whose supposed obstinacy in persisting to deny the accusation made her fault appear doubly great, I am sorry to say, was severely punished: though Rose, who, as I have before informed the reader, had moments of goodness, petitioned for her sister's pardon, Mrs. Woodville in this instance was not to be moved, and Rose had not either sufficient rectitude of heart or feeling to exculpate Agnes, by owning the truth:



beside she did not choose to offend Betty, for the reasons I have before mentioned.

Rose could not be said to love the mother who so blindly doted on her, or the maid who inflamed her against her sister, and connived at her improper conduct: she loved nobody but herself. Betty, indeed, before Rose had attained her sixteenth year, married; but her wicked conduct met a just punishment: nothing she undertook succeeded: taken by her husband to Scotland, his native country, she was soon after deserted by him, and died in poverty and want.



## CHAP. III.

THE reader must not suppose that Rose was happy, though she governed her deceived mother, tyrannised over her sister, and gratified every whim and caprice. Far the reverse! Her temper was irritable, to excess; she was always discontented with what she had, and wishing for what she could not get.

She had no friends: her selfish imperious disposition made her disliked by her young companions; and people of understanding could not endure her forward and pert manners. To be sure, as she grew older, and mixed with society, she saw the necessity of concealing her true temper, and gradually acquired those specious manners which



impose on persons of little observation and experience.

She was remarkably vain of her person, which it must be acknowledged was lovely. This made her fond of dress, and she took no pains to conceal the contempt in which she held young girls less beautiful, or well dressed, than herself. Such petty pride and vanity, till she had acquired the art to keep them concealed, exposed Rose to the ridicule and contempt of her acquaintance, as she grew up; and she in consequence experienced many severe but just mortifications.

Agnes, on the contrary, as she grew out of childhood, little as she went into society, for her slovenly and aukward habits made Mrs. Woodville loath to have her seen, was generally



liked and pitied. Her gentle manners, obliging temper, affectionate disposition, and, above all, her love of truth, which to unprejudiced persons was visible in every action, made her faults be treated with indulgence. This was an additional motive for the unnatural dislike Rose had conceived against her sister.

Among the persons who visited Mrs. Woodville, there was a Scotch widow lady, whose affairs had brought her for a year or two to Bath, while her only son remained at school at Edinburgh. Mrs. Burgoyne, so this lady was called, a woman of liberal mind and strong discernment, from frequently observing Agnes, conceived a warm affection for her, and no less compassion for the infatuation of the partial mother, especially as she saw



Mrs. Woodville loved her younger daughter, and really wished to be just.

As this lady had an affluent fortune, and mixed in the circles of high life, Rose, who was now seventeen, as far as her haughty temper would allow, paid her court to her : but Mrs. Burgoyne, who was too well read in the human heart not to develop the real character of Miss Woodville, and the selfish motives which induced that young lady to seek to ingratiate herself into favor, repelled her advances with cold civility. She did more ; she made several vain attempts to bring the infatuated mother to a sense of justice toward the neglected Agnes.

Agnes, on her part, was truly grateful for the kindness she received, and loved Mrs. Burgoyne tenderly ; but her love for that lady did not make



her less affectionate, and dutiful, to the parent who had the first claim to her gratitude and obedience.

Rose, stung to the quick, by the preference Mrs. Burgoyne showed her sister, conceived a dislike to that lady, and determined to revenge herself, by inducing her mother, at the first favorable opportunity, to drop the acquaintance. She roused the maternal alarm of Mrs. Woodville, who, though unjustly partial to Rose, still loved Agnes, and was jealous of her affection, by ungenerous insinuations, which made her sister appear ungrateful, in the eyes of the deluded mother. In short, she inspired Mrs. Woodville with a suspicious dislike of Mrs. Burgoyne, and finally succeeded in making her mother drop the acquaintance, as we shall presently see.

Agnes, mild and patient as she was,



as I have said, could not always submit to her sister's ill usage without complaint, or retort; that was beyond the strength of mind of a girl of fourteen: but her complaints were never violent, nor were her retorts malicious: they were wrung from her, by repeated aggravation, and accusations as cruel as they were false.

One morning, a little before the acquaintance between Mrs. Woodville and Mrs. Burgoyne was dropped, the latter called to invite Agnes to spend the day with a young girl about her own age, who was on a visit at her house. Mrs. Woodville was not at home, but the sisters were. Agnes, jumping round the neck of Mrs. Burgoyne, begged she would wait a few minutes till her mamma, who was gone but for a short time, should return. Mrs. Burgoyne readily consent-



ed ; but the spiteful Rose, who, since she found that lady was not to be won by her officious courtesy, had taken no pains to suppress her ill humors in her presence, with unbecoming pertness, said “ that *she* could answer for her mamma, and Agnes must not go.”

“ You must excuse me, Miss Woodville, from taking *your* answer,” replied Mrs. Burgoyne, with cold contempt; “ I shall wait till your mamma returns.”

“ As you please Madam,” replied Rose, and quitted the room leaving Agnes with Mrs. Burgoyne.

“ I fear,” said Agnes, “ Rose will persuade mamma not to let me go !”

“ I hope not,” answered Mrs. Burgoyne, kissing her ; “ but, my dear, I know you are too good a girl to wish to go, if your mamma should make



any objection. You must always love and obey your mamma, without repining, if you would be good and happy."

"That I will!" cried Agnes, with fervor: "my mamma shall never find me ungrateful, or disobedient, though I am aukward and stupid."

Mrs. Burgoyne sighed, as she reflected that such an affectionate child was supplanted by one who, sooner or later, would cause her infatuated mother bitter affliction. She tenderly caressed Agnes, and exhorted her always to be dutiful and affectionate to her mother, who loved her, and was anxious to make her good and happy, however strict she might appear, and to endeavour to gain fortitude, and correct herself of the faults which would be so disadvantageous to her through life. Agnes listened with res-



pectful gratitude, and promised to do her best.

At length Mrs. Woodville's knock was heard. Agnes flew to the passage, but Rose was there with equal speed.

“ I am glad, mamma, you are come,” said the elder sister ; “ here is Agnes, who is always wishing to leave you for other people, dying to go home with Mrs. Burgoyne, who is come to fetch her for the whole day. I knew you would not give your consent, and I wonder my sister can always wish to leave you for strangers.”

“ Indeed, mamma,” cried Agnes, “ I do not wish to be always leaving you ; but Rose wants you to think ill of me.”

“ There, mamma !” exclaimed Rose, turning pale with passion ; “ you see, these are the thanks I get for my anxi-



ety that she should be good, and deserve your affection! But no wonder she is ungrateful to me, when she is not grateful to so good a mother!"

"You are wicked to say so, Miss Woodville," cried Mrs. Burgoyne, who had unavoidably heard all that passed, and, unable longer to restrain her indignation, had quitted the parlour: "your sister loves her mother tenderly, as every good child ought to do. I have seen various instances of her dutiful affection, and fear of offending her mamma. When I have proposed to ask leave for her to go out with me, she frequently refused, because she feared her mamma might want her; or she was afraid she would not like her to go."

"Oh yes," retorted Rose very improperly, "every body in the house can witness that Agnes is a most



*dutiful* and *affectionate* child! She daily gives proof of her wish to please her mamma, by taking her advice, and getting rid of those idle and slovenly habits, which make mamma unwilling to let her go much into company."

"My dear, you forget yourself," said Mrs. Woodville, who, partial as she was to Rose, could not but perceive the impropriety of that young lady's manner, and tone. "Pray, Madam," continued she, turning to Mrs. Burgoyne, "excuse my daughter: her love for me, and her sisterly anxiety for this girl, who would persuade one to any thing, by her affected meekness and tears, have made her forget to whom she was speaking. As to Agnes, I am much obliged to you, Madam, for your polite invitation, but, I must frankly own, I



cannot endure so see my child prefer the company of strangers, however agreeable, to that of her mother. I have long painfully remarked the preference she gives to you, Madam, and must therefore decline the honor you propose doing my younger daughter."

Mrs. Burgoyne, perceiving the prejudices of the mistaken mother were too strong to be combated, and fearing to increase them by argument, took her leave, sincerely pitying the blindness of that lady. From that time all intercourse between the families, at the instigation of Rose, was dropped, to the great regret of Agnes, and the triumph of her selfish sister. Mrs. Burgoyne was sorry, because she thought Mrs. Woodville a kind-hearted well-intentioned woman, and had conceived a strong affection for the



amiable Agnes; but she could not solicit the acquaintance of persons who shunned her. Soon afterward, indeed, her affairs recalled her to Scotland.



## CHAP. IV.

MRS. WOODVILLE, who really wished to be equally just to her children, was unfortunately a weak woman. Rose had gained so complete an ascendancy over her mind and affections, that, when her own judgment even dissented from that of her favorite daughter, she would have the weakness to give it up. As Rose advanced toward womanhood, the envy and dislike she had from her infancy conceived against her sister, and which, by the pernicious insinuations of a wicked servant, had been continually gaining ground, induced her to take the most unfair advantage of this weakness; for she had the art to



make black appear white, and white black. Beside, as she grew up, her selfishness and love of finery increased, and made her view Agnes with still more inveterate dislike.

She knew that her sister, in the fair course of events, must inherit an equal share of their mother's small fortune; the whole of which, as Rose had been taught to love dress, and suffered to gratify all her whims, was in her opinion insufficient. This selfishness she had hitherto taken care to conceal from her mother, who was herself of a generous temper, and who had still the justice and affection to declare that, in her will, she should make an equal division of her remaining property between the sisters.

This declaration was a continual heartburn to Rose, who had now at-



tained her twentieth year: rendered still more vain, and fond of dress, by the admiration her beauty excited, she wished to make herself conspicuous in the fashionable world, and to be raised to an equality with young women of rank. Her flatterers had foolishly assured her she only wanted to be frequently seen, in the circles of fashion, to form an establishment worthy of her spirit and beauty. Rose was too vain not greedily to swallow the adulation she received, and believe assertions so flattering to her proud spirit: but these assertions were no less injurious than they were absurd, for they only confirmed her in envy, and odious selfishness.

Let us return to poor Agnes, who was now in her sixteenth year. She daily became more sensible of her unfortunate situation: she saw that



she was more than ever obnoxious to her sister, and that the heart of the mother she so fondly cherished, by the artifices of that sister, was daily estranged from her. Mrs. Woodville, it is true, as Agnes grew up, abated her severity; but that severity was replaced by a coldness of manner, which was more afflicting to her unhappy daughter.

Timid and affectionate, the fear of offending her beloved mother made poor Agnes silent, in her presence, and repress the emotions of her heart. She felt that she was less informed than young girls of her age usually are, and that she had idle, awkward, and uncouth habits. But had her mother pressed Agnes to her bosom, and said, "My dear child, correct these habits, improve your mind, and be assured I shall love you as dearly as



I do your sister," she would have acquired sufficient courage and emulation to have performed the difficult task: but incessant reproof, without either encouragement or praise, was all the inducement given. Rose had persuaded both herself and her mother that Agnes was not only stupid but perverse, and indifferent to please her; and the deceived mother, while she lamented her daughter's deficiency, thought her incorrigible, and wanting in gratitude and filial affection.

Had the amiable Mrs. Burgoyne long continued to visit at her mother's house, Agnes, by that lady's excellent advice and kind encouragement, would have acquired the fortitude and perseverance to correct her bad habits; but the acquaintance had been too



short to produce any lasting or essential benefit to Agnes.

An unlucky chance gave the envious Rose an opportunity entirely to rob her innocent but imprudent sister of her mother's affection. Agnes had become acquainted with a young lady older than herself, who took a great liking to her, but with whom her mamma very properly did not wish her to associate. Juliana Templeton, so the young lady was called, had never known her parents, who had both died in her infancy: she was a lively West Indian, and had lived with guardians, who had always allowed her to do as she pleased. The consequence was, that she had acquired very wrong notions, respecting filial duty, and proper subordination, which notions she openly avowed, and which



Mrs. Woodville, very naturally, feared she might instil into Agnes.

Agnes, though she was flattered by the animated regard which Juliana, who, with all her faults, had an affectionate heart, professed for her, was too dutiful to disobey her mother: beside, Juliana had indulged herself very improperly in censuring the conduct of Mrs. Woodville, railing against the elder sister, and advising the younger to rebel. Agnes, good and affectionate as she was, could not therefore take any pleasure in her society, and she rejected, though mildly, the repeated solicitations that young lady made her, through the medium of a common acquaintance, to visit Juliana clandestinely, or in open defiance to her mother's authority.

Miss Templeton was certainly very blamable, in trying to make Agnes



either deceive her mother, or set the authority of Mrs. Woodville at defiance, but she was self-willed, wrong-headed, and too lively to reflect on, or foresee, consequences. She was determined, if possible, to carry her point, no matter by what means. She disliked both Rose and Mrs. Woodville; she loved Agnes, whom she thought cruelly oppressed; and she was totally ignorant of the sacred nature of filial duty.

“ Agnes ought to show a proper spirit, and resist oppression; she was hated by her sister, and her mother was both severe and indifferent to her: she could not deny but that she was miserable, at home: why did she not take courage, and demand to be placed with some friend, or respectable family, where she would have no envious sister, or severe mother, to make her



wretched? Why did she pretend to be resigned to oppression, and to submit without reluctance to the imperious commands and ridiculous whims of her weak mother, who was governed by her malicious and no less ridiculous elder sister? Dissimulation between friends was unworthy a generous hearted girl. She knew Agnes must, in her heart, hate her oppressors, and wish herself out of their power. She would deserve to be trampled upon, if she were really so tame as she pretended to be. She ought to show the resentment and indignation she must feel, and set her mother and sister at defiance: she was too cowardly, she gave them the advantage."

Such were the false and pernicious ideas of Miss Templeton, which she very improperly conveyed to Agnes in a letter filled with unbecoming censures



and ridicule of Mrs. Woodville, invectives against Rose, and exhortations to Agnes to be disobedient, and undutiful: *that* the young lady said, *would be showing a proper spirit.* Juliana likewise unmercifully satirized the vanity and notions of grandeur in which Rose, very absurdly it must be owned, indulged, and praised as strongly the unassuming simplicity of Agnes.

Thus this thoughtless young lady, by her folly and improper interference, as we shall presently see, injured the friend she meant to serve, and certainly placed her own character in no favorable light. To interfere in the family concerns of your friends, unless your advice is asked, is not only impertinent but very wrong. It injures yourself, and frequently does still greater injury to others.

This letter, which was delivered



clandestinely to Agnes, and which indeed she ought to have sent back unopened, or carried it to her mamma, was read with just indignation by the affectionate daughter. She was angry with herself for having received it, against her better judgment: "her mother had testified her disapprobation of Miss Templeton, and she ought not to have been persuaded to receive a letter clandestinely. She resolved immediately to enclose it, under a cover, to Juliana, and request, very peremptorily, that she might not again be troubled either with letter or message. But, as she was going to put her intentions into execution, she was called from her room on some occasion, no matter what, and in a hurry threw the open letter into a half shut drawer, thinking she should not be detained.



Agnes, however, was kept below for a considerable time, and Rose, who frequently visited her sister's room, in the interval, came in to the chamber of Agnes, saw the drawer half open, went to shut it, and seized upon the letter, which lay right in view. Her eye being caught by her own name, she did not scruple to read the letter, on the spot; and her triumph, at having incontestable proof, as she deemed it, of her sister's disobedience, and ingratitude, equalled the rage she felt at finding herself so severely, though justly, criticized.

This letter Rose, hurried on by revenge, and the selfish wishes which so long had festered in her heart, carried to her mother, who was alone in her dressing room, and by whom it was read with indignant resentment. Mrs. Woodville, aggravated by Rose,



whose wounded pride and vanity urged her to say every thing that was bitter against her younger sister, declared she would no longer look on Agnes as her daughter, but leave all her fortune to Rose. These were welcome tidings to the selfish elder sister: nevertheless, as she was not wholly destitute of feeling, however it might be overbalanced by her vicious habits, and as she wished to reconcile her unsisterly conduct to herself, she begged her mother to settle a thousand pounds on Agnes, and, as her sister was evidently so very unhappy at home, and dissatisfied with her condition, to send her into the country, to some person, who would take proper care of her. The angry and ill judging mother determined to follow this advice, and send her younger daughter to a distant female relation, a second cousin, who



owed Mrs. Woodville many obligations.

This relation, a middle aged widow, lived at Salisbury, with an only daughter, and, being in straitened circumstances, kept a day school, for the children of tradesmen. Mrs. Melford, so this person was called, was a friendly kind-hearted woman, but her manners were blunt; her education had not been refined, but she had naturally a good understanding, much common sense, and was very well calculated to bring up girls, in the class from which she took them.

Little or no personal intercourse had passed, between Mrs. Woodville and her cousin, since the marriage of the former. Mrs. Melford, though she had the most sense, had not received so good an education as Mrs. Woodville; beside, she was settled at Salisbury,



and never came to town: nor was it probable that Mrs. Woodville, who had been left in affluent circumstances, by her husband, though willing to assist her, would quit the gaities of what she thought fashionable life, to visit a relation, who, in appearance and education, was so inferior to herself. Neither did Mrs. Melford wish to intrude herself on her more wealthy cousin. She contented herself with occasionally writing to inquire after Mrs. Woodville and her family, and lived happily with her daughter, Grace.

To this person Mrs. Woodville resolved to send Agnes; she therefore wrote, immediately, to communicate her intentions to Mrs. Melford, and request she would not fail to come to Bath the ensuing holidays, which were very nigh, to take Agnes into the country with her.



When the letter of Juliana Templeton was produced, and Agnes was taxed, by the highly offended mother, with her supposed disobedience and ingratitude, she could only at first answer with broken sobs and tears. When, at length, she recovered herself, and could speak so as to be understood, Agnes told the simple truth, blaming herself for having been persuaded to receive the letter, but affirming strongly, though mildly, her innocence in respect to the heavy accusations made against her. She used the most affecting and submissive language, to appease her mother's indignation, but her efforts were ineffectual. Mrs. Woodville had been completely prejudiced against her innocent child, and was not to be moved from her purpose.

“ Agnes,” said that lady, “ I have too long been the dupe of your pre-



tended affection. Your supposed filial piety made me patiently endure incurable stupidity, and evil habits, that have been the torment of my life, and which make you a disgrace to your family: but my eyes are now opened, and I see the dreadful but absolute necessity of parting with a child, whose ingratitude, ungracious manners, and ill conduct, render her unworthy of my tenderness, and unfit to live with persons of education. You may spare your tears, Miss; they cannot alter my firm resolution, and only show your hypocrisy in more odious colours. You will go into the country, as soon as Mrs. Melford can leave her school to fetch you: she is a worthy woman, and no doubt you will be happy away from your severe and weak mother. Rose is



now my only consolation! You shall never want; but as the sudden death of your father left your fortunes at my discretion, the daughter, whose affection and proper conduct will be the support of my declining years, in justice ought to, and shall have, the greater portion. Do not attempt again to justify yourself, lest your base ingratitude and hypocrisy provoke a mother's malediction on your head."

Agnes now lost all hope of proving her innocence; beside, her mother's commands, however unjust, were held sacred by her: she saw that she had lost that dear mother's affection; she was indifferent as to what might become of her; she could not be more wretched. A gloomy resignation pervaded her mind: she suffered in silence, neither venting complaint nor reproach,



Rose, who, it must be remembered, had intervals of goodness, however transient, felt a momentary compassion for her unhappy sister, and treated her, during the short time she staid, with some degree of kindness. Miss Woodville, however, made no effort to change the intentions of the angry and deceived mother. Selfish people have generally the art of varnishing their motives to themselves, by sophistry. Rose persuaded herself that she wished her sister well, and that Agnes would actually be happier, living among strangers and in comparative obscurity, than under the eye of her mother in elegant affluence.

Mrs. Melford, on receiving the letter of her relation, as soon as her affairs would permit her, hastened to town, leaving her daughter, a young woman of seventeen, to take care



of her house. The necessary arrangements, for the board and maintenance of the younger Miss Woodville, were soon made. Mrs. Melford had understood, from the letter of that young lady's mother, that it was by her own choice Agnes quitted her home; and Agnes, dutiful and affectionate to the last, would not contradict what her mother had both written and said, though she perceived it had naturally given Mrs. Melford rather an unfavorable opinion of her.

When the thoughtless and wrong-headed Juliana found the injury she had unintentionally done her friend, she was inconsolable—for a day! But her education had been too erroneous, and her faults were too rooted, for this lesson, severe as it ought to have been, to produce any lasting effect. She soon afterward returned



to the West Indies, and poor Agnes and her misfortunes were forgotten. Such is generally the event of violent attachments, formed hastily, and without discrimination, or reflection.

Agnes, though her heart was bursting, parted with her mother without shedding a tear. Mrs. Woodville, prejudiced as she was against her unhappy child, was herself greatly affected at the moment of parting, but she suppressed her feelings, and assumed an air of cold severity, which pierced Agnes to the heart. Rose felt comparatively little, but she wished to persuade herself she *did* feel, and did not part with her injured sister without tears.

When Agnes was placed in the post-chaise, which was to convey her from her mother, her friends, and



her native city, a violent flood of tears gave relief to her overcharged heart.

“ Bless me, child,” said Mrs. Melford, “ what is the matter? I hope you do not go with me against your will? Your mamma assured me it was your own whim to leave her; now, I suppose, that you cannot help yourself, you repent!”

Agnes, drying her tears, mildly begged Mrs. Melford to excuse the sorrow she could not but feel, at leaving her mother.

“ Ay, that is natural enough,” replied the good woman. “ My Grace was ready to break her heart, because I was obliged to come to Bath without her; but she is a good girl, and God will reward all dutiful children. I am only astonished, that, having such a kind mother, and so fine a



young lady for your sister, with such a nice house in so gay a place as Bath, you could wish to leave them to immure yourself in the country. I have not so fine a house, so much money to buy her fine clothes, or any other agreeable daughter to be her companion, but I should sadly grieve if my Grace could wish to leave her mother: ingratitude in children is a great sin. But come, Miss, don't be down hearted; you are young, and have been foolish, but you will learn better in time. There are few daughters, indeed, like my Grace. You must take pattern by her. I would not change her, to be the mother of a countess! She has not had a fine lady's education, but she is a clever lass! Come, Miss, cheer up! You will meet plenty of young folks at my house, and Grace is not much older than you; but I must



needs say she is much tidier than you appear to be, and has not so aukward a gait: but never fear, Miss; you are, as I may say, a relation; I respect your mother, and we shall make you in time a tight clever lass! So dry your tears, and be merry: you will not find me ill natured in the main, though I speak my mind freely to young folks, and Grace is the best tempered girl in the world, though she is my own."

Agnes, though her heart was too oppressed to admit of a cheerful thought, accustomed to yield and be obliging to those around her, did her best to conceal her inward sufferings, which at first were augmented by the consciousness that Mrs. Melford must think her an undutiful child, wanting in filial gratitude and affection.

"Yet," thought the amiable and



affectionate girl, "it is surely better that she should blame *me*, than my dear mother, who only rejects me because she believes me wickedly ungrateful, and guilty of base hypocrisy. She is not intentionally unjust, she is only deceived!"

This reflection helped to console Agnes, and made her resolve not to undeceive Mrs. Melford, but to act in such a manner as to gain the love and esteem of the persons with whom she was going to live, and finally recover the lost affection of the mother she so fondly loved. How virtuous, how amiable, was this resolution! How worthy the imitation of every good child!

When Mrs. Melford and her youthful charge were at their journey's end, they immediately proceeded to the house of the former, which stood in a



healthy pleasant situation. Mrs. Melford first alighted from the carriage, and knocked at the door: it was instantly opened by a young girl, about seventeen years of age, dressed very neatly, and with a pleasing intelligent face. Grace, for it was the daughter of whom Mrs. Melford had spoken, threw herself on her mother's neck.

“Dear mother! How glad I am to see you,” said Grace; “how happy I am you are returned! I have been so dull without you!”

“Ay, child! you love your mother! You are a good girl, as I have been telling Miss, here, and God will bless you! I have brought you cousin Woodville's youngest daughter, as I promised. She is mopeish now, but we shall bring her round; and, hark ye, Grace, you must teach her a little of your tidiness, and make her less



awkward, or she will do us no credit. She seems a good-tempered lass, though she could not stay with her friends in her comfortable home: young folks never know when they are well off. You would not think that her mother, my cousin, is quite a fine lady, and that her sister is as showy, handsome, neat, and agreeable a young lady as ever I would wish to see: quite another thing, as one may say, from Miss, here."

The reader, no doubt, by this time, has discovered that Mrs. Melford loved to talk, and, like most great talkers, ran on without paying much regard to the feelings of her auditors. This harangue was sufficiently mortifying to poor Agnes; but the daughter, who with great good nature and sense had a much greater degree of delicacy of feeling, by her cordiality



and considerate kindness, atoned for her mother's bluntness.

The young girls who frequented, but who did not board at Mrs. Melford's school, Agnes being her only boarder, surveyed poor Agnes with unfeeling curiosity, and tittered almost aloud at the awkwardness, and want of neatness, which were prevalent in her manners, and dress. As she was better dressed than themselves, and known to be born in a more genteel rank of life, envy made them the more disposed to find fault with and turn her into ridicule. Grace however, to the utmost of her power, restrained their ill-bred remarks, and impertinent questions, which she saw covered Agnes with confusion, and embarrassment.

Another mortification awaited Agnes: she was very awkward at her



needle, and was incessantly exposed to the blunt though not ill-natured censure of Mrs. Melford, and the sarcastic sneers of her companions. How she regretted that want of industry, which had made her neglect so useful a branch of female knowledge as plainwork!

Grace, who was an excellent needle woman, took upon her to instruct Agnes, and the desire her pupil had to improve herself, and give satisfaction, that her mamma might hear a good account of her, made her apply diligently to her needle. Grace begged her mother to let Agnes sleep in her chamber, to which Mrs. Melford readily consented; because Grace was so good and so dutiful a child, that nothing reasonable could be denied her. Agnes saw Grace always fold up her clothes, before she



went to bed, and that they were always neatly mended; her drawers too were never in disorder, or her things lost, because she had a regular place for them.

Agnes was ashamed of her own carelessness and want of order; she saw herself exposed to ridicule and contempt, and resolved to be more correct. She found it very difficult to break herself of confirmed habits, but her earnest desire to succeed made her overcome all obstacles. She began to take a pride in being neat and tasty in her dress, because she heard people remark, as she walked abroad, "Really that young girl would be very agreeable in her person, if her clothes were but well put on."

The hope of regaining her mother's affection was the stimulus that gave



Agnes the courage and emulation to shake off the idle habits in which she had indulged. She was no less solicitous to improve her mind than her person: she assiduously devoted her hours to study, and, having a good understanding and an ardent thirst of knowledge, she soon made sufficient progress to excite her to go on.

In the space of three years, Agnes had acquired industry, order, and information, which her mother had so long vainly labored to give her. She was beloved by all who knew her, and was as happy as she could be, while away from and almost forgotten by her mother, who had forbidden her to write, and never wrote herself, except to Mrs. Melford, on business, being contented with hearing that Agnes was in good health. Agnes, however, wrote occasionally to Rose, to



make minute inquiries concerning her beloved mother, and beg her sister to intercede for her forgiveness and future recall. Rose, however, seldom condescended to answer the letters of Agnes, which she took care should not be seen by her mother, lest that lady should be induced again to take her poor neglected child to her house, and heart. The excellent account Mrs. Melford gave of the conduct of Agnes, her improvement, and the desire she expressed to be restored to the arms of her beloved mother, by the ill-natured insinuations of Rose, who could make Mrs. Woodville believe all she pleased, was ascribed by that lady to weakness on the one part, and hypocrisy on the other.



## CHAP. V.

LET us now inquire how Mrs. Woodville and her favorite daughter spent their time, while the discarded Agnes was laboriously pursuing her studies. Rose, who loved the gay world, persuaded her mother to reside in London, and dragged that lady, whose health and spirits were far from good, to every place of public and private amusement. Rose every where sought happiness, but in vain. She had many admirers, but no friends; neither was she capable of tasting the solid pleasures of friendship. She took no delight in the society of her too indulgent mother, whom she hurried into expences too



heavy for the moderate fortune of that lady.

Mrs. Woodville was indeed the most wretched of mothers: she saw herself despotically governed, and involved in ruinous extravagance, by the child on whom she blindly doted, without having the strength of mind to exert a salutary authority, and restrain her daughter within the bounds of moderation, and proper respect. The child, whose dutiful affection might have consoled and made her declining age happy, was, in her opinion, infinitely more culpable toward her than her elder sister, and whenever the image of Agnes rose in Mrs. Woodville's mind, she discarded it with anger and disgust.

Rose, though void of true feeling and affection, and though she treated



her mother at times with unbecoming haughtiness and disrespect, believed herself, and could make that lady and every body else believe, that she was an affectionate daughter. She was an excellent actress: violent and despotical as her temper was, she had acquired the art of making herself agreeable in society. The real haughtiness of her character was only shown to her inferiors, or to those who had the weakness to let her govern them. Beside, the admiration her uncommon beauty met with in society, kept her in good humor.

The circumstances of Mrs. Woodville were visibly on the decline, and Rose, who had now attained her four and twentieth year, and who had refused several good offers, because she thought her beauty entitled her to the addresses of a man of fashion and



fortune, began to tremble at the prospect of being obliged to relinquish the dissipation, and extravagance, in which she had indulged, when an officer, in the India service, of distinguished merit and large fortune, who was captivated by her personal attractions, and deceived by her affected sweetness, fell in love with and married her, in a few months to take her to India, there to launch into all the splendor of high life.

Mrs. Woodville, who had now a very reduced income, and who had put herself to the greatest distress to furnish the bride with a handsome wardrobe, and give her five thousand pounds, which was settled on her a few weeks after her daughter's marriage, was invited by Colonel Liriot, the husband of Rosé, an amiable and liberal-minded man, to accompany



them to India. He was ignorant that Mrs. Woodville had another daughter, as her name had never been mentioned before him. Mrs. Woodville, indeed, had always flattered herself that Rose would not leave her behind, in England, and expected such an invitation would be made, at her daughter's instigation, by the colonel. Too infatuated mother, how miserably was she deceived! The unnatural Mrs. Liriot did not wish to be *encumbered*, as she considered it, with a mother, whose age and declining health required attentive kindness. Before her mother, who, delighted, was preparing to accept the colonel's friendly invitation, could reply, Rose, in a careless manner, said she was very sorry to be deprived of her mother's society, but that she knew Mrs.



Woodville could not leave England, as she had another daughter to look after.

“Another daughter!” exclaimed the colonel, with unfeigned surprise; “and I have never heard her name mentioned before! Where is she?”

“Oh, my dear James,” said Rose, “she is in the country, at school, and is now too old to be away from home, among strangers. I am sure my mother cannot think of going to India.”

The colonel stood in mute embarrassment, looking at Mrs. Woodville for an explanation. The black ingratitude of Rose was a blow unexpected as terrible to the wretched mother: she too late perceived the infatuation, and fatal weakness, of her conduct; yet to part from her unnatural daughter was death. The



colonel and his wife were staying at the house of Mrs. Woodville, till their departure for India.

Colonel Liriot, as I have said, was so much embarrassed that he was at a loss what to say. Rose, who, for many reasons, did not wish her husband to be present, told him she would explain every thing to him, and begged he would leave her for the present with her mother. The colonel was glad of an excuse to retire, but resolved to make inquiries concerning the sister, who seemed to be deserted, and who therefore excited his compassion.

When the mother and daughter were alone, Mrs. Woodville bitterly weeping, said:

“ Can you, Rose, desert the mother, who has devoted her life to you, who has reduced herself almost to poverty



to indulge your extravagance, who has sacrificed her health and her ease to your gratification? Can you wish me to remain here childless? Agnes long, as you know, has abjured the duty and affection of a daughter; she is happy, and in safe hands; a thousand pounds has been settled on her: Mrs. Melford is a worthy woman, my relation, and will do justice by her, I am well assured. You are my only consolation; if I lose you I shall have no daughter to lighten the infirmities of old age."

"I am sorry, my dear mamma," replied Mrs. Liriot, very little moved by her mother's anguish, "that you see things in so gloomy a light. If the thing were possible, I should be happy to oblige you; but I cannot, without exposing myself to the censure of the world, and even of my husband,



take you with us to India. You see how surprised and shocked the colonel was, when he heard you had another daughter: beside, mamma, Agnes was not perhaps so very blameable as one might have supposed. I really think, when I recollect every thing, that she loved you, and, as she declared, was innocent of the insults Miss Templeton put on you. She was almost broken hearted to leave you, and, had I not been persuaded it was for her good that she should not stay at home to be spoiled, I really should have interceded for her. I dare say, by this time, Mrs. Melford has made her a clever, neat girl: all the letters that she wrote to me were filled with nothing but the love she bore her dear mamma, and the sorrow she felt at having offended you. Indeed, mamma, I cannot think of depriving my poor



sister of your protection, or of suffering the world to call either you an unnatural mother, or me a treacherous sister. As to taking Agnes to India, that is out of the question. I will not have it said by my husband's family, that I bring my relations to live upon him. You see, my dear mamma, it is not in my power to invite you to my house."

Oh, ye infatuated mothers, who dote with blind partiality on one child, and suffer its faults to pass unheeded or uncorrected—be warned, in time! Do not yield to an unjust and fatal preference! Do not withdraw that salutary authority, without which you cannot make your child dutiful, and happy!

Mrs. Woodville now, too late, perceived the pernicious mistake she had committed; the selfish and unnatural



conduct of Rose appeared in all its odium, and the distracted mother fatally discovered that she had discarded her innocent and affectionate child, to cherish a serpent that had stung her. She made no further efforts to rouse her unnatural daughter to a feeling of shame, or sense of duty; her heart was too deeply wounded: beside, she knew the attempt would have been fruitless. She told Mrs. Liriot she should immediately write to her relation, to desire Agnes might be sent home: she then asked Rose if she had any letters from her sister?

“ Lord, mamma, I don’t know what is become of them,” answered Rose, pleased to have so soon gained her point, and feeling but little for her unhappy mother; “ I always destroy my letters: but, now I think of it, I have two letters of my sister’s under cover to me,



but intended for you, which I received, the one just before, the other just after my marriage; but I did not read them, as they were not for me."

"And you never even mentioned them," added Mrs. Woodville, in a reproachful tone.

"You know, mamma, I had so many things to think of; beside, you had forbidden her to write to you; but I dare say the letters can be found."

"Where are they?"

"Heaven knows! Some where in my drawers, I believe; but I will desire my woman to look for them."

"No," said the deeply grieved and anxious mother, "I will immediately look for them myself, if *you* don't."

"I can't, mamma; I am going with the colonel to choose a dress, for the



masked ball that is to be to-morrow night, at the Pantheon. I hear there is a most superb one to be had now at the Opera Warehouse, which may be gone by to-morrow. So, mamma, if you please, you can look for the letters while I am gone."



## CHAP. VI.

MRS. WOODVILLE went immediately to seek the letters of her now regretted Agnes: she found them, after a long and almost hopeless search, thrown carelessly behind the drawers, and covered with dust. The mother, with a trembling hand, opened the first, which was dated nearly two months back, and read as follows :

*“ My dear and ever honored Mamma,*

*“ However painful the privation has been, I have hitherto obeyed your commands, and forborne to trouble you with my heart-felt wishes for your health and happiness: my only consolation has been in writing to my*



sister, and entreating her to intercede in my behalf with my dear mamma. I hope she will kindly join her entreaties to mine, that I may be permitted to return home. I should not impertune my dear mamma with a request to be restored to her society, though that has been the dearest wish of my heart ever since I have been here, kindly as Mrs. Melford and her daughter have always treated me, but that I cannot much longer remain at Salisbury, with propriety. Mrs. Melford has married her daughter to a rich and worthy tradesman who lives in the North, and she is going almost immediately to give up her house and school, as her health is very indifferent, and her children insist on her making their house her own. Grace is the best and most dutiful of daughters!



“ Oh, my dear mamma, if you will deign to receive me, and to believe that I never wilfully gave offence, or ceased a moment to feel the gratitude and filial affection I owed, however faulty I may have been in other respects, I shall be the happiest of human beings! Oh, let me return to that home, I shall never cease to regret! to that mother my heart so fondly cherishes! whose maternal cares and anxiety I can never repay! Let my faults be forgiven! Oh, let me again be blest with a mother’s dear love!

“ I hope my dear mamma will not find me the idle disorderly girl, who gave her so much trouble and vexation! I have endeavoured to conquer my defects, with the sweet hope of proving to you how gratefully I remember your tender cares, and how



ardently I wish to atone for the faults which gave you so much uneasiness, and which made me appear to you and my sister stubborn and ungrateful.

“ Mrs. Melford is too much indisposed to write herself, or she would have written.

“ Assure my sister, dear mamma, that it shall be my study to deserve her affection, that every childish dispute and unpleasant recollection is erased from my heart. She makes my dear mamma happy; that alone will ensure her my love and esteem. She thought me ungrateful to the best of mothers; I cannot therefore resent the indignation and coldness she so long felt toward a sister, who, though in fear of, always loved her. Oh, let me, dearest mamma, prove, both to her and to you, that I shall ever be

“ Your grateful and affectionate,

“ AGNES.”



Mrs. Woodville sunk on her chair, overcome by a variety of emotions, in which tenderness and alarm were the most prevalent. Collecting herself, however, she eagerly opened the second letter, which was dated three weeks later than the former. Such were its contents:

“ *My dear Mamma,*

“ I have received no answer to my last letter, which was written three weeks ago, and am under the greatest anxiety! I fear you are ill! Though I am certain the affectionate cares of my sister must leave you nothing to want, or desire, I shall be miserable till I can aid her in the dear and sacred duties she no doubt so arduously fulfils. Oh, how she must love you! Yet, she cannot love you better than I do! Every night, for this last week, in



my dreams, I have been watching by your sick bed; I have seen you pale, and feverish, yet smiling on your children, and bidding them not grieve for their tender assiduities would accelerate your recovery. Oh, I hope you are not ill! I hope it is a phantom of my agitated spirits! Yet, what can I think? Perhaps my former letter has miscarried! I am distracted with doubt, and anxiety!" [Here followed an abstract from the former letter, which is omitted, as it is under the eye of the reader.]

"If I do not receive an answer very soon, I fear I shall be obliged to come to London without your express permission, for the affairs of Mrs. Melford's son-in-law absolutely require him to go in a few days to York, his native city. Mrs. Melford and Grace have kindly offered, should you



not have written by the time appointed for their departure, to take me with them, till I can receive your commands; but such a step would put them to great inconvenience, and might be secretly displeasing to the husband of Grace, though his complaisance for his wife and her mother has made him urge no objections. I cannot tell you, my dear mamma, the kindness and attention I have received, both from Mrs. Melford and her excellent daughter! Oh! I hope this letter will reach you!

“Do, dear Rose, should our mamma be too much engaged, or ill,” [the tears of Agnes here almost effaced the words] “write, yourself, as quickly as possible, to inform me how I am to act. I cannot long support this state of dreadful suspense. How anxiously shall I wait for an answer!



If it be long in coming, I shall either have proceeded to London, at every hazard, or followed Mrs. Melford to the North, where my dear mamma shall again hear from her affectionate but unhappy

“AGNES.”

This second letter completed the wretchedness of the distracted mother; it was written six weeks back: Agnes had not written since. Her letter evidently betrayed an agitated mind, and a frame scarcely able to support the conflict. Perhaps the unhappy Agnes lay herself on a sick bed! Perhaps the child Mrs. Woodville had unjustly discarded, and who revered her with an affection so tender, might have sunk under the cruel trial, have died with the heart breaking conviction that she was totally deserted,



by the mother she so devotedly loved! The thought was agony! Mrs. Woodville resolved immediately to go to Salisbury, and make inquiries at the house in which her relation had lived. The wretched mother still flattered herself that Agnes had accompanied Mrs. Melford and her daughter to the North.



## CHAP. VII.

COLONEL LIRIOT, to whom his wife had told a pitiable story of the disgrace of Agnes, throwing the blame on her mother, and describing her own conduct in varnished and false colours, when he saw the wretchedness of Mrs. Woodville, and heard the cause she had of alarm and anxiety, was sincerely grieved. He was humanely interested for the deserted Agnes, and no less hurt that his wife, by her unpardonable carelessness, should have exposed her sister to such anxiety, and perhaps danger. Though the deeply wounded mother would not complain to her daughter's husband, of that daughter's filial ingratitude, and odious conduct toward



her innocent sister, in the moment of her bitter anguish, she had given him the letters of Agnes to read; and he was a man of too much sense and feeling not to suspect that the conduct of Rose had been far from that of a kind sister, at the same time that he was shocked by the indifference she showed to her mother's deep affliction. He perceived that Mrs. Woodville had been fatally deceived, he felt the warmest interest in the fate of the injured Agnes, and sincerely pitied her wretched mother.

Rose, with all her persuasions, and even haughty reproaches, could not prevent the colonel from immediately accompanying his mother-in-law on her painful journey, instead of taking her to the masked ball. Though a good tempered and remarkably kind hearted man, Colonel Liriot had great de-



cision of character, and was not to be swayed from what he thought his duty, either by persuasion or reproach. On the road, he used all the soothing language of a feeling heart, and, by every tender and respectful attention, sought to mitigate the anguish and self-indignation of his broken-hearted companion. Though they travelled post, and all night, never did time appear so tedious to the anxious travellers. At length, they reached their journey's end. It was in the evening, and Mrs. Woodville had not slept for two nights. She was overcome with weariness and fatigue, yet she immediately hastened with the colonel to the house of her relation. Imagine the agonizing shock the mother received, when she found it occupied by strangers, and was told that Mrs. Melford, with her daughter and son-in-law, had been



gone more than a month to the North, and that Agnes the same day had set out on her journey to London. This intelligence nearly drove the unhappy mother to distraction, nor was the colonel much less concerned. Agnes was a total stranger to London; she might have fallen into the hands of designing wicked people. The mere surmise of the dreadful evils that might have overtaken a friendless unprotected young creature, thrown on a world to which she was strange, to a man of the colonel's humanity, was almost agonizing. But he had acquired fortitude in the hardy field of war; he was inured to suffering. He therefore did not weakly give way to his feelings, but instantly considered what was best to be done, for the frantic mother was now incapable of acting.



Colonel Liriot endeavoured to learn what stage Agnes had taken; but of that the people of the house could not inform him, neither could they give any description of her person. The colonel saw no better way than to return to London, and advertise, should all research prove fruitless: he however carefully visited every inn on the road, and endeavoured, but in vain, to discover traces of the unfortunate Agnes. He learned indeed, in the course of his researches, intelligence that greatly alarmed him, and which he was afraid to communicate to the wretched mother, who was in a state too dangerous to be tampered with. At a village, about forty miles distant from London, he was informed that a young person, genteel in her appearance, but apparently in great distress of mind, about nine-



teen years of age (the age of Agnes) had stopped, with the Salisbury coach, a little more than a month since, had been missing, and was supposed to have drowned herself, but that no traces could be discovered of her name, fortune, or place of birth.

When they arrived at Mrs. Woodville's house, in London, that lady was in a high fever; and, before the day was over, was conveyed delirious to her bed; her life was even pronounced to be in danger. The meeting between Rose and her husband was cold on both sides. The colonel was greatly shocked at the little feeling she had shown, and she was no less offended that he should leave her to attend on the mother, and seek the sister she had so cruelly injured. Colonel Liriot, however, was good tempered, and averse to quarrel: though his esteem



for the wife he had supposed all perfection was greatly and painfully lowered, he did not treat her unkindly. He advertised, and made every research for his sister-in-law, but all his labor was in vain: a letter was in the interim received from Mrs. Melford, who had recovered from her indisposition, and who supposed Agnes happily settled in her mother's house.

The colonel would again have taken a journey to Salisbury, but his presence was indispensable in town; neither was he very willing to leave poor Mrs. Woodville at the mercy of servants and nurses, for Rose, as he with pain remarked, bestowed very little of her time, or attention, on her sick mother. But she could not prevail on the colonel to forego the sweet and sacred duties of humanity; he devoted all the time he could spare,



from indispensable business, to his mother-in-law.

While poor Mrs. Woodville is suffering the dreadful consequences of her fatal errors in education, let us instruct the reader in the fate of the amiable and unfortunate Agnes. Continuing to receive no answer to her urgent letters, on Mrs. Melford being obliged to leave Salisbury, the tender daughter, fearing the worst, determined to go to London, unprotected and unauthorized as she was. She could not imagine that, estranged as her maternal affection had been, her mother would totally desert her. She could not think her sister, for whose former unkindness her heart had framed excuses, would urge that mother at such a moment to abandon her, or that she would have so little sisterly kindness as to neglect to de-



liver the letters. She knew that a young woman, who conducts herself with propriety and common sense, has, in that conduct, the best of protection.

It was not without regret that Agnes parted with the worthy Mrs. Melford, and the kind-hearted Grace, to whom she owed obligations so great: but she was going to see her beloved mother, to show that mother she had corrected herself of the faults which had given her so much displeasure, and to devote her life to prove her affection and duty. She could not feel unhappy at being, as it were, forced to return to a mother, whom she had quitted with bitter and deep regret. The fear alone of finding her honored parent or sister in sickness damped her glowing hopes. She no longer dreaded



to encounter injustice: she pictured to herself Rose eager to atone for her former unkind (she would not call it *culpable*) conduct. She felt that her improved understanding, assiduous affection, and greatly reformed habits, must dispel the mist of prejudice, and restore her to a mother's love.

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## CHAP. VIII.

WITH these alternate hopes and fears, Agnes began her journey to London; but it was stopped by an unexpected event, which I am about to relate. At the first inn, at which the passengers alighted to dine, there was an elderly gentleman and a young man, lately returned from America: these gentlemen sat at table with the other passengers. The elder, who was ordered into Devonshire for his health, a sensible man, whose countenance and manners were prepossessing, happened to sit next to Agnes. Her agreeable and intelligent physiognomy forcibly struck him; it reminded him of a near and dear relation, whose death he had long de-



plored. He addressed his conversation to her, and was pleased with her modest and sensible answers. At length, much to his regret, the passengers prepared to quit the table, and the old gentleman, calling to the younger, said, "Come, Frank Woodville, we must proceed on our journey."

Agnes involuntarily started, and exclaimed in a tone of surprise, "Good Heavens! that was my father's name! He had a brother, who settled many years ago in America."

"Was your father a native of Bath?" eagerly interrupted the old gentleman.

"He was."

"And was the name of his brother Frederic?"

"It was. I have often heard my mother say how dearly my father



loved this brother, and regret that she had heard no intelligence of him, since my father's death. Surely this gentleman," continued Agnes, looking at the young man, "cannot be the son of that uncle? Oh, Sir, if you are," added Agnes, addressing herself to young Woodville, "tell me if my uncle be living, and in good health, for I am sure my dear mother will be most happy to hear of his welfare."

"You now see your uncle, my dear niece," said the old gentleman, tenderly embracing the astonished Agnes: "I was struck by the resemblance you bear to your dear father the moment you entered the room, but to suppose you were my niece was too wild a conjecture. You must not proceed to town unprotected. I have my own carriage, and will see you



myself safely restored to your friends ; so go and demand your luggage. It is not proper that a young lady should be travelling in a stage coach, alone: you must, my dear niece, explain this strange circumstance. Go, Frank, and assist your cousin."

The son of Mr. Woodville, who was a selfish and covetous young man, was little pleased with this rencounter; he judged it however prudent, for many reasons, to conceal his vexation, and behaved with officious civility. The trunk of Agnes was soon unpacked, and she returned to her uncle, who was anxious to make inquiries concerning his brother's family, and to learn by what strange accident he found his niece travelling, thus unprotected, in a stage coach, and going to London, alone.

To the first part of her uncle's inqui-



ries, Agnes answered without hesitation, but to reply to the second was a painful task. She wished to speak well of her sister, against whom she cherished no resentment. To own that she had been for years an alien to her mother's house, mortifying as the acknowledgment would be, was inevitable, and this acknowledgment she felt must bring on an explanation, however she might soften circumstances, little honorable to Rose.

At a loss what to say, Agnes hung her head in embarrassment, when Mr. Woodville again questioned her, concerning her travelling alone, in a stage coach, to London. But her uncle, too anxious to be kept in suspense, insisted on her speaking openly, and requested her to consider him as the sacred representative of her deceased father: Agnes, thus solemnly urged,



by a man whose age and near relationship claimed her respect and obedience, related the events with which the reader is already acquainted, softening as much as possible the ungenerous conduct of Rose, attributing unjust blame to herself, and speaking of her mother with filial reverence, and affection.

Though the amiable girl knew, from various circumstances, that her sister had urged her mother to banish her from the maternal roof, she did not even hint such a suspicion. But Mr. Woodville, who, when his paternal partiality was not in question, was a man of penetration, sound sense, and a generous mind, immediately guessed the truth, and saw that Agnes had been the victim of her sister's odious selfishness. He expressed the indignation he felt, against Rose, in



strong terms; nor was he much less indignant against the infatuated mother; though, out of regard to the feelings of Agnes, he in part suppressed his indignation. He resolved to be a father to his amiable niece.

“ You shall not return,” said he, “ to be ill treated by an unnatural sister, who governs your infatuated mother: that mother has rejected you. I, in the quality of your father’s brother, claim the right of protecting you. I have a sufficient fortune to place you in independence, without injury to my son.” [The son bit his lips, and in his heart wished his cousin any where but in their company.] “ I am at present ill in health, very ill, the doctors will have it,” added Mr. Woodville, with a faint smile; “ but I hope a few months of the pure air of Devonshire, with your nursing,



my dear niece, will bring me round again. I will be your father. It is not necessary for me to take you to London, after what I have heard; we shall therefore proceed to Devonshire, and I will write myself to your mother at the end of our journey."

"But if she should be ill!" interrupted the affectionate Agnes, with alarm.

"Pshaw! Absurd! If your mother were ill, could not your sister have written? No, no! It is not illness that has prevented Mrs. Woodville from writing; it is your sister, who has shut the maternal doors against you, and robbed you of a mother's love: but, take my word for it," continued the good uncle, "your innocence, sooner or later, will come to light, your mother will be miserable at her long infatuation, and her artful favorite will come to no good."



“Heaven forbid!” fervently exclaimed Agnes; “if my innocence, being known, will make my dear mother wretched, and bring misfortune on my sister, I will be content to suffer! But, indeed, my dear uncle, you judge Rose too hardly! She has a good heart, I am sure!”

“God bless you, you are worthy of your excellent father,” replied Mr. Woodville, greatly affected. “Frank, I need not charge you to consider this good girl as your sister.”

Agnes, while she gratefully felt her uncle’s goodness, was still most desirous of being restored to the society and favor of her beloved mother. It grieved her to relinquish the immediate gratification of her filial piety, but her uncle appeared in the sacred character of her father’s representative; his apparent debility and ill



health seemed to require all the watchful attentions of affection. Her mother had not given her permission to return home, and she hoped, through the intercession of her uncle, finally to be restored to that honored mother's protection.

Mr. Woodville already felt an affection truly paternal for his amiable niece, whose strong resemblance to a beloved brother had endeared her to him, even before she had given such unquestionable proofs of the goodness of her heart. Mr. Woodville had always considered the mother of Agnes as a weak though well intentioned woman, and had regretted that his brother had been captivated by her uncommon beauty.

We will now give a brief history of this paternal uncle. Frederic Woodville, a younger brother, had gone



to America, almost immediately after his brother's marriage, to inherit an estate, which had been left him by the family of his own mother: for the brothers, though by the same father, were born of different mothers. Frank Woodville, the father of Agnes; had always been remarkably kind to his younger brother, and the strictest union reigned between them. When Frederic went to America, he had no intention of staying more than a couple of years, but, almost immediately on his arrival, he was wheedled into matrimony by a young widow, of no fortune, but possessed of insinuating manners, great shrewdness, and a thorough knowledge of the world. She had an agreeable person and good temper, but her mind was narrow, and her heart selfish. This lady, who was an American, and attached to



her country, persuaded her husband, over whose mind she had unlimited sway, to remain in America. She had the art of deceiving him as long as she lived, and they had been married twenty-two years when she died. She was the mother of the young man, who accompanied Mr. Woodville, and had instilled her selfish and illiberal notions into the mind of her son, whom she had taught sufficient cunning to hide his real character from the generous and liberal-minded father. On the death of Frank Woodville, the elder, which happened when Agnes was four years of age, all correspondence between Mr. Frederic Woodville and his sister-in-law had ceased. He knew the widow and children of his brother were well provided for, and, as there were no boys, he could not with propriety interfere with their



education, and establishment in life. Beside, his wife took care to engross all his attention, to herself, and son.

A year after that wife's death, he was advised to try the air of his native climate for the recovery of his health: his son, who was brought up in the mercantile line, accompanied him, and Mr. Woodville converted his landed property into ready money, intending to settle in England. On his landing in London, his health was so much worse, that he was obliged to apply for medical advice, and he was ordered immediately to try the pure and mild air of Devonshire; but little hopes were entertained, by the physician, of his recovery. He was in a deep decline, yet, like many persons who suffer under that fatal disorder, he was not himself aware of the extreme danger of his case. His spirits, which



were naturally good, supported him to the last, and deceived those around him with false hopes.

Frank Woodville, whose real character was unfeeling selfishness, it may be well imagined, viewed his cousin Agnes with dislike, and mean suspicion, and only waited for a favorable opportunity to make his sentiments known, and betray the narrowness of his mind. Mr. Woodville, who was completely deceived in this artful young man, had not the least suspicion of what was passing in his son's heart; neither had the artless Agnes, who looked upon him as the worthy son of her generous uncle, whose disposition was as disinterested as it was guileless. While she was forming sanguine hopes of future happiness and reconciliation, a most dreadful blow was impending over her head,



which threw the amiable girl into the most cruel distress, and exposed her to fatal mischiefs. She was soon to receive a shock, which would throw her almost on her death-bed.

At a small inn, in a village a few miles from Exeter, where the travellers halted to sup and pass the night, for Mr. Woodville found himself obliged to proceed very slowly, the worthy uncle, who felt himself unusually weak and ill, as he was walking up stairs, supported by his son and Agnes, dropped lifeless in their arms!!

The shock poor Agnes, whose mental agitation for some weeks had preyed upon her frame, felt on this occasion was so violent that she fell, senseless, by the side of her uncle. When she came to herself, the unfeeling cousin very drily informed her that he should proceed with the corpse,



the next morning, to Exeter, and advised her to go home to her mother.

“Certainly, Sir, answered Agnes, greatly hurt by the visible alteration of his manner, it is my intention so to do; but I am so unwell that I fear I shall be detained here a day.”

“Oh, as many days as you please, Miss, continued the unfeeling cousin, I have nothing to say to that; you are your own mistress; I only have to inform you, and no offence I hope, that you must not expect me to share my poor father’s fortune with a person who is a total stranger to me. Your name may be Woodville, but, as to the *relationship*, why, Miss, you must suffer me to have my doubts of that. My father was a very good man, but very easily deceived. I am no friend to romantic adventures, especially with young women, who are travelling



to London, alone, in a stage coach,  
Excuse my frankness, Miss; I have re-  
lations enough in America, in all con-  
science, so I wish you a very good  
night, and hope you will not take your  
disappointment too much at heart. I  
am sorry for you, Miss, but the fault  
is not mine."



## CHAP. IX.

THIS cruel and contemptuous treatment, added to the dreadful shock she had received, and her recent anxiety of mind, threw Agnes into a brain fever. The next morning, she was unable to quit her bed, and was left at the inn by her unfeeling cousin, who disclaimed all kindred to the unhappy girl, representing her as an adventurer, which his selfish and narrow-minded propensities persuaded him was really the case. Agnes had some money, but insufficient to defray the expences of a long and dangerous illness. When the money was expended, her trunk was opened, and her wearing apparel gradually made away with, so that, when she rose



from a sick bed, she found herself without money or resource.

The situation of Agnes was dreadful; the landlord and landlady of the inn, prepossessed against her by Frank Woodville, treated her with rude familiarity, and, as the house at that time happened to be full, and they wanted the apartment she occupied, they insisted on her immediately giving it up, and threatened, if she did not quit the inn, to have her taken up for a vagrant. She vainly entreated their patience, till she could write to and hear from her family; they said "they wanted the room and must have it."

The fear of having her family exposed, should she be taken before a magistrate, was so excruciating, that, making an exertion almost beyond her strength, for she was still very



weak, she quitted her chamber, with difficulty crawled down stairs, and walked out of the house in the most dreadful agony of mind, scarcely able to support herself, and unknowing where to go, or how to act. She dragged herself along the road, till, at length overcome by mental anguish and bodily weakness, she sunk on the ground, unable to proceed.

Oh, what would have been the feelings of the miserably deceived mother, had she beheld her daughter, thus friendless and exposed, fainting on the public road! Beware, oh ye partial mothers, of the fatal consequences of exclusive preference! Tremble, lest ruin and misery equally overwhelm the favored and the neglected child! Oh, timely be advised! Resolve to be just! Spare yourselves the heart-rending conviction that your



blind partiality has hurled destruction on your children, and never ending misery on yourselves!

It was a sharp morning, in April; the wind was cutting, yet the wretched Agnes was insensible to the cold; her head burned, her lips were parched; she thought herself dying. Her mother's name quivered on her pallid lips, and her anguish was for what that mother might suffer, when the news of her death should reach her family. She had not been five minutes on the ground when a post-chaise, with the blinds down, in which there was a lady, passed by, on the way to Exeter. The lady, whose head was out of the window, seeing a young creature apparently dying, instantly ordered the postillion to stop, and alighted. As she approached, she thought she recollected the face! She anxiously drew



nearer, and recognized the suffering Agnes!

“Good Heavens!” exclaimed the lady, greatly shocked, “it surely cannot be Agnes Woodville whom I see!”

Agnes, struck by the voice, looked up, and gave a faint shriek, attempting, but vainly, to raise herself. The lady, scarcely able to speak from emotion, aided the postillion to bear the poor sufferer to the chaise; then, taking Agnes in her arms, and applying salts, wept over her, in mute sorrow. Agnes, a little revived, in a feeble voice, begged her kind saviour to take her to her mother.

“Let me see her, once again, before I die,” said Agnes, who, as most young people on such extreme occasions are apt to fancy, imagined she had not long to live.



“Where does your mother now live, dear child,” asked the lady.

“In London,” answered Agnes, with a deep sigh.

“And have you no friends in this part of the country, my love?”

“No! I have neither money nor friends. My dear mother, I am sure, does not suspect that I have so cruelly suffered; oh, let me see her before I die!”

“You must not talk of dying, my dear Agnes,” continued the lady, who was, as perhaps the reader may have conjectured, no other than the amiable Mrs. Burgoyne. That lady had, at her son’s persuasion, come finally to settle in London, and her affairs had brought her to Exeter. “I will be your nurse, and soon make you well, then you shall go home; but you are too reasonable, I am sure, and



too considerate, to persist in wishing me to take you in this weak state to your mother, to whom the shock might, delicate as her frame is, be fatal. Till I restore you to her arms, I will supply her place, and be your mother."

Agnes could only weep her thanks. When Mrs. Burgoyne arrived at Exeter, the place of her destination, her first care was to have Agnes put to bed, and to send for the best medical assistance. She watched and attended on her youthful charge with unwearied solicitude: she would not suffer her to agitate herself by an immediate explanation of the destitute state in which that lady had found her. In a few days, Agnes, whose constitution was naturally strong, was pronounced to be out of danger: but she still required great care, and she was ordered



not to travel, for the present, and to keep her mind perfectly calm. Mrs. Burgoyne furnished Agnes with the necessary changes of apparel, and wrote immediately to inform Mrs. Woodville of the safety, though weak state, of her daughter, and to inform that lady that she would bring her to London, as soon as her health should be sufficiently recovered. The business of Mrs. Burgoyne would only have detained her a few days in Devonshire, and she was eager to join her son, who had remained some months behind her in Scotland, to look after a small estate he had purchased for their summer residence, and whom she expected on her return to find in London. On this son, a youth of three and twenty, she doted, for he was truly worthy of her love; but she never suffered her own grati-



fication, or personal convenience, to deter her from performing the sacred duties of friendship, or humanity.

“ My dear Malcolm,” thought that excellent lady, “ will be impatient to see me ; but, when he is informed that humanity requires I should delay the happy meeting, he will not urge my immediate return : he will forget himself, and only think of what his mother owes to an amiable and unprotected young creature.”

Malcolm Burgoyne was indeed the worthy son of an exemplary mother ; nor were his talents less brilliant than his heart and understanding were good. He adored his mother, to whose superior intellect and enlightened mind he was indebted for the excellent education he had received. His father had died when he was an infant, and the admirable mother, though



young, agreeable, and formed to excite general admiration, had refused the most advantageous offers, and had devoted her life to this only son, who answered her fondest expectations, and repaid her maternal cares with the most enthusiastic and pious affection.



## CHAP. X.

WHEN the letter of Mrs. Burgoyne arrived, Mrs. Woodville was too ill either to read it herself or to be informed of its particulars, except indeed that Agnes was safe. Mrs. Liriot, to whom the letter was given, and who was making preparations for her voyage to India, after a week's delay, wrote a formal answer, coldly thanking Mrs. Burgoyne for her humane and friendly conduct, and requesting that Agnes might be sent home as soon as possible, as Mrs. Woodville was dangerously ill, and she (Rose) had it not in her power to spend much of her time in her mother's sick chamber. Colonel Liriot, however, when by accident the



letter of Mrs. Burgoyne fell in his way, for Rose, who was piqued and offended at the humane interest her husband had taken in the fate of her injured sister, because it was a keen and bitter, though just, reproach on her own conduct, did not think proper to show it him. Colonel Liriot, I say, wrote in very proper terms to Mrs. Burgoyne, warmly expressing the gratitude and esteem her humanity had created, and desiring to be very affectionately remembered to his sister-in-law, expressing his concern for all she had suffered, and a hope that he should have the pleasure of seeing her in perfect health, and personally testifying his brotherly regard before he quitted England.

These letters Mrs. Burgoyne would not show to Agnes, in the fear of retarding her perfect recovery, by



the knowledge of her mother's alarming illness: that lady merely told Agnes that her sister was married, and soon going to India, and that her mother was consequently too much engaged to write herself, but that, as soon as she (Agnes) was perfectly recovered, she was to go home, and that she would be kindly received. Mrs. Burgoyne, though averse to deceit of every kind, in this case thought it absolutely necessary to conceal the truth in part. Agnes naturally wished to have seen the letters, but Mrs. Burgoyne reminded her that neither reading, nor any other employment that occupied the mind, was now allowed her.

Mrs. Burgoyne was truly indignant, at the want of feeling and the little filial affection Mrs. Liriot displayed. She no less pitied the neglected and un-



fortunate mother, of whom the colonel had spoken, in his letter, with great feeling, lamenting she had not all the attendance he could wish. As her young charge was now fast recovering, Mrs. Burgoyne, ever active in humanity and kindness, resolved to leave Agnes in the care of a Scotch clergyman and his wife, with whom she had been acquainted for some years, and who now lived a few miles from Exeter, and go in person to London to nurse poor Mrs. Woodville.

She of course did not inform Agnes of the real motive of her journey, but told her that business required her to go for a few weeks to London, and that she should leave her under the care of friends on whose kindness and attention she could depend. She promised to see Mrs. Woodville, and pre-



pare that lady to find her younger daughter no less improved in her habits than she was dutiful and affectionate. Mrs. Burgoyne, indeed, with heartfelt pleasure, had remarked the favorable change in the habits and appearance of Agnes, and warmly expressed her approbation to the amiable girl. When Mrs. Burgoyne quitted her young charge, ever considerate and kind, she said, affectionately embracing her,

“ Do not be uneasy, my dear child, if I should not write immediately; the business which carries me to London will, for some time, I cannot tell how long, engross my whole attention. Be assured, my love, I will not neglect your interest. You shall certainly be informed of my safe arrival, but you must then wait *my* time,



patiently, and grow strong and hearty, that you may be able, on my return, to accompany me back to London,"

Agnes, gratefully penetrated by the kindness of Mrs. Burgoyne, could only thank her with her tears, and promise strictly to obey her friendly injunctions. Mrs. Burgoyne, leaving her amiable charge under the care of the Reverend Mr. Ross and his kind-hearted wife, took the most speedy mode of conveyance, and, after a fatiguing journey, arrived in London, where she found her son was not yet come. She immediately sent a note to Mrs. Liriot and the colonel, to inform them of her arrival and the motives which had brought her to town. The colonel sincerely rejoiced that his mother-in-law would be under the humane care of that lady, for whom he had justly conceived a high esteem, and



returned with the messenger to invite Mrs. Burgoyne to accept an apartment in Mrs. Woodville's house. As Mrs. Burgoyne wished effectually to serve that lady, and as she beside had not yet taken a house in London, she consented to the proposal. The colonel and Mrs. Burgoyne were mutually pleased with each other; but that lady sincerely regretted that so amiable a man should have married a person so unlike himself, and so ill calculated to make him, or any man of generous feelings, happy.

Colonel Liriot, who from the first had had painful suspicions that the conduct of Rose, toward her sister, had been very unkind and who, from his own minute observation of her character, and actions, since the illness of Mrs. Woodville, was fearful that conduct had even been highly culpable, yet, desirous,



if possible, to be convinced his fears were unjust, spoke of Agnes, and endeavoured to induce Mrs. Burgoyne to speak openly of the sisters. But that lady was too good and considerate to wish to cause dissension between man and wife, or excite disgust in the mind of the generous colonel: she therefore spoke with caution, and, as soon as she could, without exciting suspicion of the truth, turned the conversation. The colonel, however, had too much penetration not to perceive the kind forbearance of that lady, and reflected on his hasty marriage with regret.

Mrs. Woodville, on the arrival of her generous friend, was a little better: the assurance she had received of her amiable daughter's safety had calmed the extreme agitation of her mind, and her recovery was pronounced pro-



bable, but slow. She chiefly wanted a mind at ease, and the tender attentions which her unnatural daughter had not the inclination to bestow: Mrs. Burgoyne administered both. Pity creates affection: Mrs. Woodville, deeply sensible of her errors, and bowed down by filial ingratitude and maternal anxiety, was no longer an object of censure. Mrs. Burgoyne assured her of the speedy restoration of Agnes to perfect health, using the most soothing expressions to mitigate the bitterness of self-reproach, and make the ingratitude of her once favorite daughter less afflicting. The generous cares of that lady were amply repaid, by the recovery of Mrs. Woodville. To make her satisfaction complete, her son, Malcolm, arrived in London a few days after his mother: their meeting was full of joy: his



filial attentions and enlivening society helped to lighten the fatigue she underwent. When he heard the affecting history of the amiable Agnes, while he venerated the generous conduct of his beloved parent, and sympathized in the sufferings of her interesting charge, he felt a strong desire to be acquainted with the young creature whose filial piety and general conduct had been so exemplary.

Mrs. Burgoyne did not fail, as soon as she judged it prudent, to write to inform Agnes of her mother's restored affection, and returning health: she gave her hopes that, in a few weeks, Mrs. Woodville would be able to come in person, and bring her back to the paternal roof. Colonel Liriot wrote, likewise, in the kindest manner, to take his leave; for he was obliged almost immediately to set sail for In-



dia. He regretted that it was not in his power to go down himself into Devonshire, to visit Agnes, before he left England, and begged her acceptance of a pearl necklace, and locket, which he requested she would wear for his sake. This was not all the generous colonel thought it his duty to do for his wife's injured sister, whose fortune, by inquiry, he found to be much less than that his wife had received, and which had been settled by him on herself. He thought it but an act of justice to give her four thousand pounds, which made her portion equal to that Mrs. Woodville had bestowed on her elder daughter, and by so doing almost left herself in poverty. He likewise presented his mother-in-law, whose circumstances he had discovered to be embarrassed, with two bank notes of a



thousand pounds each, beside making her and Agnes several handsome presents, much against the inclination of the selfish Mrs. Liriot. But the colonel, as I before mentioned, though good tempered, was not a man to be governed, especially by a wife whom he daily found less reason to love and esteem. His fortune was large, and his heart no less generous and kind.

Agnes now experienced the just reward of her filial piety, and virtuous exertions to correct herself of her faults; her heart overflowed with affection, gratitude, and the most exquisite feelings of the soul!



## CHAP. XI.

BEFORE Mrs. Woodville was sufficiently strong to bring home her beloved Agnes, Mrs. Liriot and the colonel sailed for India. The colonel now, more than ever, repented his inconsiderate union with a woman, who was beautiful and accomplished, but whose disposition and temper he found equally faulty, and who had married him much less from affection than with a view to launch into dissipation and extravagance: her heart was incapable of true love, or of appreciating the intrinsic worth of her husband. Colonel Liriot parted with his mother-in-law with regret; for, though weak of mind, he found her suscep-



tible of affection, and generous feeling.

Mrs. Liriot, who cared for nothing but her own selfish gratification, was little afflicted by the probability that she should never see her mother again; for that lady's health had always been precarious, and the colonel did not think of returning to settle in England for many years. Rose took little pains to conceal her want of filial piety. She was almost indifferent to her mother's feelings, which, injured as she had been by her ungrateful elder daughter, were far more acute.

Before we return to a worthier subject, I will give a brief history of Mrs. Liriot's career. When she arrived at Madras, the place of her husband's destination, she indulged in all the luxuries of the country, and the extravagance of her immoderate desires.



She ruined her health by continual dissipation; her children, ill nursed and shamefully neglected, died all in their infancy; she made her husband, who could neither love nor esteem such a wife, miserable: and, to prevent her from materially injuring his fortune, he was obliged to interpose a husband's authority, and peremptorily check her inordinate extravagance: her deceitful and haughty disposition made her disliked and avoided by all who knew her, and, in less than eight years, she died of a slow decline.

In the hours of suffering, she had no friend, sister, or mother, to sooth the bitterness of pain, or lighten the weariness of solitude. While she sought to excuse, she too late deplored her past unnatural conduct; she had a vague feeling that the odium she had brought upon herself was merited.



Her husband had generously pardoned her ill conduct, and forbore to reproach her; but his kindness and attention were those of humanity, not affection. She died with the dreadful conviction that she had lost the esteem and love of every good person!!!

Such are the fatal but inevitable consequences of indulging in selfishness and deceit!

The amiable and worthy colonel, who was left a widower in the prime of life, with no family, married again; but his choice was more prudent, and he was as happy as I am sure the reader wishes him to be. He always maintained a friendly correspondence with Mrs. Woodville and Agnes, and when, in a few years after the death of Rose, he finally settled with his family in England, he and his amiable



wife became their constant visitors and friends.

The selfish hard-hearted Frank Woodville did not long enjoy the fortune he had so eagerly grasped: his inhuman conduct met with a just punishment. In his avidity to amass more wealth, soon after his father's decease, he engaged in dangerous, at least unfortunate, speculations. He afterward embarked to return to America; but the ship was wrecked, and the small remainder of his wealth was sunk in the sea! He himself narrowly escaped with life, and, from being one of the richest merchants in Philadelphia, he was forced to submit to the drudgery of the counting-house, and all the hardships of straitened circumstances.

The amiable Grace and her wor-



thy mother lived happy, and respected; the husband of Grace, a worthy kind-hearted man, never repented of having married from disinterested motives; he was always kind to his wife and her mother, who enjoyed increasing prosperity, with honor to themselves and advantage to others. Agnes never forgot their kind and meritorious conduct, but through life continued their friend.

The meeting between Agnes and her mother was such as the reader can better imagine than the pen describe. Mrs. Burgoyne and her son were delighted and deeply interested spectators of the happy yet affecting scene. Mrs. Woodville paid a grateful tribute to the memory of her worthy brother, and shed bitter tears of anguish on the past sufferings of her



amiable daughter. She felt, however, a maternal delight in perceiving she had a most pleasing person, agreeable countenance, and prepossessing manners. Nor was the impression her appearance made on the young Scotchman less favorable.

At the earnest request of Mrs. Burgoyne, Agnes and her mother accompanied that lady and her son to their estate in Scotland, where they spent the summer, and the late invalids gained new strength and health. On their return to London, Malcolm Burgoyne, charmed by the gentle virtues, agreeable person, and noble conduct of Agnes Woodville, solicited her hand. His merit, filial piety, and amiable disposition, joined to the great obligations they owed to his excellent mother, induced Mrs. Woodville



and Agnes to accept the offer, and the latter was truly fortunate in her choice.

Mrs. Woodville, always treated with tenderness and respect by the amiable pair, lived to good old age, uninterrupted by any affliction, except the premature death of her ungrateful elder daughter, whose guilt was generously forgiven, and whose fate was sincerely lamented, by the injured mother and sister.

Agnes, warned by sad experience, treated her children with conscientious impartiality; tender and indulgent, but never weak or unjust, she proved as excellent a parent and wife as she had been a daughter; and she had the heart-felt pleasure of seeing her children grow up as affectionate as they were amiable and well informed. Mrs. Burgoyne, for many



years, was a delighted participator in the happiness of the united family, and she blessed the day on which her dear Malcolm took so exemplary and affectionate a companion for life !

THE END.



