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A tale of tragic love, spanning the distance between England and Florence in Italy, the homes of Lord Dreincourt and of the Marchese di Rodalvi and his family respectively

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DRELINCOURT AND RODALVI;

OR,

MEMOIRS

OF

TWO NOBLE FAMILIES.

A NOVEL, IN THREE VOLUMES.

BY MRS. BYRON,  
AUTHOR OF ANTI-DELPHINE.

VOL. I

The web of our life is of a mingled yarn; good and ill together:  
our virtues would be proud if our faults whipp'd them not; and  
our crimes would despair if they were not cherished by our  
virtues. *Shakespeare*

LONDON;

PRINTED FOR J. MAWMAN, IN THE POULTRY,

BY G. HAZARD, BEECH-STREET.

1807.

## DRELINCOURT AND RODALVI

## CHAP. I

There, in domestic virtue rich and great,  
 As erst in public, 'mid his wide domain,  
 Long in primeval patriarchal state,  
 The lord, the judge, the father of the plain,  
 He dwelt; and with him in the golden chain  
 Of wedded faith, ylink'd a matron sage  
 Aye dwelt; sweet partner of his joy and pain,  
 Sweet charmer of his youth, friend of his age,  
 Skill'd to improve his bliss, his sorrow to assuage.

WEST.

AMONG the innumerable villas which grace the banks of the Arno, in the neighbourhood of Florence, none were more distinguished by elegance than that of the Marchese di Rodalvi, who had early in life resigned the bustle of the world, to enjoy the pleasures of rational retirement, enriched with books, and enlivened by the occasional society of friends, whose cultivated minds, and polished manners were congenial to his own.

During six months, the Marchese had considered himself particularly fortunate in having been favoured with a visit from Lord Drelincourt, an English nobleman, to whom he had been attached from his youth, and who had been advised to try the efficacy of a warm climate, towards the restoration of his health, which he had lost by an indefatigable attendance on politics, and vexation from seeing his schemes frustrated and his services neglected.

Frederick Augustus Courtney, Baron Courtney, Earl of Drelincourt, was, at this period of our history, forty-seven years of age, tall and of a noble figure, his countenance expressive and thoughtful, tho' terrible in anger, of which, however, it seldom assumed the appearance; its general character was that of benevolence, tho' his penetrating dark eyes sometimes darted such inquiring glances, that they, who from conscious depravity could not bear their scrutiny, sought to conceal the embarrassment which it occasioned by calling it designing and morose. But artifice was a stranger to Lord Drelincourt's breast, and would have been equally abhorred by him as a crime, and despised as a meanness. He thought, with Francis the First, that "foi de gentilhomme," was the strongest assertion which could be required; and his own spotless honour was a convincing proof, that, from him, it was all that was necessary. A faithful subject, a tender husband, an affectionate parent, and a sincere friend, could Lord Drelincourt be otherwise than respected? When we add, that he was a kind master, an indulgent landlord, the hope of the poor, and the champion of distress; many of our readers will condemn us for exhibiting "a faultless monster which the world never saw;" but we are too well acquainted with human nature to insult their experience by asserting, that we draw a perfect character from real life: no, though we are mortified to confess it, Lord Drelincourt had a fault, which could at times

eclipse all his virtues, "the fault by which e'en angels fell," was the black bane from which his heart had not been purified. Yet a very large portion of this besetting sin, which held even Lord Drelincourt in thralldom, had its foundation in virtue, mistaken virtue it is true, and carried to excess; but we may venerate the cause though we must condemn the effects.

Lord Drelincourt had been brought up with most exalted ideas of his prerogatives, which had produced in him the baneful effects of expecting more, from every one, than any one was inclined to grant. His father, after a licentious and disgraceful youth, of which the follies extended even to middle age, had retired with a ruined constitution, to estates, heavily encumbered by his past extravagancies. He there conceived every day new disgust for his former excesses, and new resentments against those who had called themselves his friends, but who had forsaken him, when they could no longer make him subservient to their designs; though many of them were infinitely his inferiors in rank, fortune, talents, and even virtues, few as he possessed at the time of his associating with them. He married, and entirely renounced the world, collecting all that was useful and desirable from it, into Castle Drelincourt, the seat of his ancestors, where he passed the remainder of his days, endeavouring to atone for his early misconduct by the practice, as he believed, of every duty, and by instilling into his son, the present Earl, who was the only pledge of his union, the knowledge and love of virtue. Unfortunately, the old Earl forgot to mention, that "the excellence, which makes all other excellencies amiable, is humility;" and the young Lord Courtney did not appear likely to know it by intuition; but then, to make amends for this omission, he was constantly warned to preserve inviolate the dignity of his rank; past times were expatiated on with rapture to him, and contrasted with the present age, to guard him against its degeneracy. His youthful imagination was fired with tales of the valour and magnificence of his ancestors, he sighed to see the castle once more filled with armed men, with ladies fair and barons bold; his young head ran on tilts and tournaments, rebellions and sieges, and before he was fifteen years of age, he had learnt to regard every thing modern with contempt or indignation; but what may appear very surprising, a further acquaintance with the world, on which he had looked with disgust from the retirement of Castle Drelincourt, did not contribute to alter his opinion. If any thing more had been necessary to warp the mind of Lord Courtney, and cloud it with prejudice, it would have been effected by the flatteries and absurd conduct of his aunts, the maiden sisters of the Earl, by whose extravagance they had been deprived of their portions, which were unluckily left by their father in his son's hands, until they should marry; and could we suppose interest ever to influence matrimony, we should fear that the poor ladies in losing their property, lost also the probability of establishing themselves in the married state; certain it is, that from the time in which it was pretty confidently whispered that their brother, perhaps through the hope of changing his luck, had ventured their fortunes at a fashionable gaming house, from that time their admirers grew more respectful in their adorations, which at last ended in that indisputable mark of true love, a timid silence; and the ladies, after having candidly acknowledged for ten years successively, that they should soon be thirty, were obliged to submit to waste the winter of their charms in the seclusion of their brother's castle; where Lady Maud became a rigid devotee, and inveighed against the vices of the age with a most edifying countenance, in which the mortifications of worldly vanities were strongly depicted;

whilst Lady Bertha, who was worthy of a better state than the cheerless one of celibacy, consoled herself by reading romances, and studying simples. These ladies vied with each other in fondness for their nephew, and whilst his father extolled the past, and Lady Maud railed against the present times, Lady Bertha told him tales of chivalry, compared him to Cyrus, and insisted that he should wear a plume of feathers in his hat. Lady Drelincourt, his mother, who was an amiable and domestic woman, smiled at the different follies of her husband and his sisters, contenting herself with exhorting her son to be punctual in his religious and moral duties, and never to demean himself by an ignoble action; reminding him always, that virtue was true nobility, and that where much was given much would be required.

Under the instructions of his aunt Bertha, Lord Courtney became, at a very early age, an adept in the art of love; and the charms of Lord Milbourne's youngest daughter made a powerful impression on his youthful mind. Lord Milbourne did not reside far from Castle Drelincourt: he was an amiable man, and of considerable talents, but a numerous family and confined income, rendered his residence in the country rather a matter of necessity than of choice; it was, however, regarded as a very fortunate event by the youthful lovers, who were thereby enabled to see each other frequently; and by the time that the lady was thirteen years of age, and Lord Courtney fifteen, the attachment between them became so apparent, that it could not be concealed from the Earl, who thinking that absence might be the most effectual means of conquering this juvenile passion, determined upon a more public education for his son, than he had at first intended; and Lord Courtney, accordingly, left his parental fire-side, to be initiated into the mysteries of Eton College. He there met with the present Marchese di Rodalvi, whose father died a short time before, and he having always expressed a wish that his son should be educated in England, the young Marchese was sent thither by his uncle, who was left his guardian. The friendship of these two young men commenced with their introduction to each other, and was strengthened by going together to the university. After their studies were completed, Lord Courtney gained the Earl's permission to accompany his friend on the grand tour, from which, however, he was recalled by the afflicting news of his mother's death, and the dangerous illness of his father. He flew on the wings of filial love, and arrived at Castle Drelincourt, in time to receive his father's last blessing, and exhortations to preserve inviolate the honour of his ancestors. The young Earl was much affected at the sudden deprivation of both his parents, but Lady Maud checked the violence of his grief, by telling him it was unchristian to "mourn as they without hope," and that he ought to be grateful that the ravages of death had spared his aunts.

As soon as the Earl could bear to think of consolation, he felt that it could be imparted the most effectually by a lovely and virtuous woman. The object of his boyish attachment had never been erased from his mind, and now rose in his estimation on every succeeding interview; he therefore resolved to follow the early impulse of his heart, and in a few months he had the pleasure of requesting his Italian friend to visit England once more, to witness his marriage. The Marchese came; time flew on "pleasure's rosy pinions;" and when he was obliged to tear himself from the Earl's fascinating society, which had tempted him repeatedly to countermand the orders that he had been given for his return, he found himself so desolate and solitary, amidst all the gaieties of Florence, that he thought the wisest thing which he could do, would be to follow the example of his

friend, and to enter into the married state, in which he had recently witnessed an enviable degree of felicity. He accordingly soon after led to the altar a beautiful and accomplished woman, whose virtues and society from that time, constituted all his happiness. After this event, the intercourse between the friends became limited, for some time, to the exchange of letters, but they still continued to take the most anxious interest in each others' concerns: The satisfaction of the Earl in his union would have been complete, but for the vexation occasioned by the failure of male issue. The first addition to his family was a girl, and though he was disappointed, yet parental feelings were too exquisite to leave any sense of mortification. The next year produced another girl, and Lord Drelincourt could not but think that a boy would have been better. The poor babe, as if conscious that it was an un-wished-for guest, drooped and soon left a world where it had not found a kind reception. Lady Drelincourt wept, and regarded the loss of her child as a judgment from heaven for not being contented with its decrees; but she had hopes again, and again produced a female, whose beauty, even from its birth, interested all beholders. Lord Drelincourt remembered his lady's mortification the preceding year, and disguised his own; but he wrote to his friend, and candidly acknowledged that his disappointment was severely felt. The Marchese's answer ought to have reconciled him to it: "Whilst you, my dear friend," said he, "repine at the dispensations of Providence in sending you three daughters successively, the Marchesa and I can scarcely think it possible, that a parent's sensations should be otherwise than delightful. Alas! they are what we have never known; the want of them is the only imperfection in our domestic happiness, and I see a cloud sometimes come over the lovely countenance of the Marchesa, when we visit those who, more fortunate than ourselves, are enjoying the caresses and endearments of their children. Would that it had pleased Heaven to grant us the little girl, whom you lost! we should not then have one wish incomplete." Heaven at length heard the prayers of both parties. The Marchesa pressed to her enraptured bosom a lovely girl, in the same month that the Earl was rendered happy by the birth of a son. This joyful event diffused felicity over Castle Drelincourt, where it took place. One of the grooms accidentally met Lady Drelincourt's woman, and hearing the tidings, ran without any ceremony to acquaint the Earl, who was walking up and down his study in great anxiety. "O my Lord!" exclaimed the poor fellow, almost breathless with the speed that he had made; "the child is born, guess what it is." The Earl entirely overlooking the unusual familiarity of his domestic, replied in doubting accents, not daring to speak as he hoped, "A girl, perhaps?" "No, my Lord, no," said the delighted fellow, "it is a boy, a fine boy! and may he live to be as good a master to us as your Lordship is." The Earl cordially joined in this wish, and dismissing the messenger of the happiest tidings he had ever heard, with a golden testimony of his approbation, he fell on his knees in gratitude to Heaven, returning thanks for the birth of his son, and invoking every blessing on his infant head. Two years after this, another daughter was born, which completed the Earl's family; and the Marchesa had likewise a son within a year after the birth of her daughter. We shall pass over the succeeding years in silence, in order to resume our narrative at the period when we first introduced the parties to our reader's notice.

## CHAP II.

Regard the world with cautious eye,  
 Nor raise your expectation high.  
 See that the balanc'd scales be such,  
 You neither hope nor fear too much;  
 For disappointment's not the thing,  
 'Tis pride and passion point the sting.  
 Life is a sea where storms must rise,  
 'Tis folly talks of cloudless skies.  
 He who contracts his swelling sail  
 Eludes the fury of the gale.

COTTON.

LORD Drelincourt had received such benefit from a winter's residence in Italy, that he became impatient to return to England; but he was still detained by the reluctance which he felt to leave his friend, whom he might perhaps never see again. At length he resolved to fix a day for his departure, and to request, at the same time, that the Marchese's son, Edmund, might be permitted to accompany him; "It will soften the pain of our separation, my dear friend," said the Earl; "in your son, I shall every day be reminded of what you were, when our intimacy commenced, and in that pleasing recollection, I shall forget the distance by which we shall be separated." The Earl's request was too kind, and advantageous, for the young Count, to be denied; yet he was so dear to his parents, and his society was so valuable, that it could not be granted without reluctance. But they read in Edmund's eyes, the desire, natural and praiseworthy in youth, of becoming acquainted with new objects, and they were unable to withstand the slightest appearance of entreaty, for he had never hitherto formed a wish, to which they could not consent with pleasure: it was therefore finally determined, that the Earl should leave the villa, at the expiration of one week, and that Edmund should be the companion of his journey. The Marchesa wept every day, until the arrival of the fatal one, which was to separate her from her beloved son, for the first time since his birth. His sister, the lively Everilda, who was his senior by fifteen months, he had so far gained over to his cause, as even to plead in its behalf, yet, notwithstanding this, when she saw the Earl's travelling chariot drive up to the door, she threw her arms around her brother's neck, protesting in an agony of tears that he should not leave her. Arguments were lost on her, for unfortunately, she had not been accustomed to listen to them; and when, at last Edmund was obliged to tear himself by force from her embraces, she was conveyed to her chamber in strong hysterics, and the Marchese and Marchesa forgot their grief for the departure of their son, in anxiety for their beloved daughter, their first-born, the idol of her doating parents. Edmund's youthful heart soon recovered from the sorrow naturally felt on leaving home, particularly for the first time; a home, too, endeared as his was to him by every indulgence and elegant gratification; but he had hitherto been confined entirely to it, and he now anticipated with laudable ardour, the improvements which he might reap from a change

of scene: nor was his animation lost upon Lord Drelincourt, whose feelings were soothed by the tenderness and sensibility of his young friend.

It is not our intention to swell these pages unnecessarily, by a hackneyed description of the places through which our travellers were to pass, as we do not approve of giving to a novel the appearance of a book of modern travels, tho' modern travels sometimes assume that of a novel. Therefore, whilst they are quietly pursuing their route, and seeing every thing useful or delightful, we shall amuse our readers, by sketching the appearance and disposition of the young man, whom Lord Drelincourt had honoured with his regard.

Edmund di Rodalvi was, at this period, in his nineteenth year, of a most engaging figure, tall and slender; it was scarcely possible to see one more finely formed, or where dignity and grace were more happily conspicuous: his complexion was brown, and his visage oval; fine teeth, and most brilliant dark eyes, gave expression to a countenance, which, though sometimes beaming with the most speaking animation, was in general, more interesting from a melancholy sweetness uncommon in a young man, and yet more so in one of his nation; but Edmund was the child of sensibility, his disposition, naturally gentle, had become yet milder under the influence of a domestic education, and it was only on important occasions, that the fire of an Italian darted from his eyes, and shone with resplendence in his countenance. His information, even without taking his youth into consideration, was great, and his accomplishments numerous. In acquiring them, time had flown unperceived, though spent in perfect retirement; but he had contemplated the world at a distance with delight, and now exulted in the opportunity that he should have, of comparing the theory of solitude with the practice of society.

Unmolested by any accident, Lord Drelincourt arrived in London with his young companion, who had every day risen in his esteem. They alighted at an elegant house in Berkeley-square, and whilst the Earl's heart beat with anxious solicitude for his family, Edmund's experienced an unusual flutter, at the idea of being introduced to those, with whom he was to be an inmate for some months, and on whom he already felt dependant for his future comforts in England. At that moment he reverted to the dear friends whom he had left in Italy, and shall we acknowledge that the recollection of them filled his fine eyes with tears, which we can only beg may be excused, on the consideration of his domestic education and filial affection: absurdities we acknowledge almost unheard of at present. Fortunately, Edmund's reveries were interrupted by the opening of the door, and the next minute the Earl found himself clasped in the warm embrace of his affectionate son, a young man of engaging appearance, who was immediately introduced to Edmund by the Earl, saying, "This is Lord Courtney, my son:" then turning, added to his son, "The Count Rodalvi, whom I desire you to esteem." Edmund, pleased with Lord Courtney's countenance, advanced to offer his hand, but he was mortified to find his overtures received only by a distant bow, and a formal welcome to England. Poor Edmund thought of Italy again, and never felt more forcibly his distance from his friends, than when he heard Lord Drelincourt's anxious inquiries concerning those dear to him. Lord Courtney informed them, that his mother and sisters were at Castle Drelincourt, and that all the world were in the country, as he had been in town above a week, in expectation of his father's arrival, and had not met with a single acquaintance. Edmund thought, that amid the numerous crowds of people, they had seen as they entered London, (for it was a fine



Sunday in July), all the world might have met acquaintance, and he began to fear that Lord Courtney was one of the new sect, known in the present day by the name of *puppyists*, though after the cool reception which he had received from him, he candidly acknowledged to himself, that he could not precisely form an impartial judgment of his character. Lord Drelincourt declared his intentions of setting off the next day to his seat; and Edmund retired to his couch, wisely forgetting his cares by enlisting under the banners of Morpheus.

The next morning, Edmund quitted his apartment at so early an hour, that he began to imagine, he should have ample time for solitary reflection, before either of the gentlemen appeared. In a few minutes, however, Lord Courtney entered with so intelligent and benevolent a countenance, that though Edmund had been disappointed in his expectations from it the preceding evening, he could not help forming the same again, and they were now nearly resolved into certainty, by the different style in which he was accosted; friendliness, goodnature, and native sincerity, appeared in every word that the young Lord uttered. Edmund, for a moment, regretted the fickleness which must prompt such different modes of conduct, and then remembered it no longer.

Lord Drelincourt, kindly waving his first intention of leaving town immediately, delayed his departure three days longer, to give Edmund an opportunity of viewing the public buildings, and other objects worthy of notice; and as Lord Courtney was very active in his office of *cicerone*, Edmund saw in that short time enough of the capital to understand the usual topics of conversation, and looked forward with pleasure to the winter, when he should be able to study it with the attention requisite, to become really acquainted with a place containing such varied gratifications for curiosity, and so many inexhaustible sources of information.

## CHAP III.

What so sweet,  
 So beautiful on earth, and ah! so rare  
 As kindred love and family repose!

YOUNG.

CASTLE-Drelincourt was situated in the most beautiful and fertile part of Devonshire, and was one of those places which nature and art appear emulous to adorn: whilst the former bestowed on it every advantage of situation, salubrious air, luxuriant woods, and crystal springs; the latter, exulting in her powers, displayed her ingenuity to the utmost extent of the most refined cultivation. By her magic wand, every part of the grounds inspired sensations of tranquillity and admiration, and the hues of the different trees and shrubs, were contrasted with such exquisite variety, or so gradually blended into each other, that the eye was alternately amused and refreshed.

The building itself was awfully grand: It had been the residence of the Earls of Drelincourt for centuries.

“Time’s gradual touch had mouldered into beauty many  
 a tow’r,  
 Which when it frown’d in all its battlements  
 Was only terrible; and many a fane monastic,  
 Which when deck’d in all its spires,  
 Serv’d but to feed some pamper’d abbot’s pride,  
 And awe th’ unlettered vulgar.”

The massy structure of the edifice, plainly told that it had been erected in times, when strength was the only security against oppression. Its situation was admirably adapted to its character. Embosomed deep in woods, it was guarded on every side by hills, gradually swelling into mountains almost inaccessible: on some of the eminences were still seen the ruins of fortresses, that, in former times, had guarded those passes, which if gained by the enemy, would have enabled them to starve the proud castle below into obedience. In the front, the sea bounded the possessions of the Earl, who was particularly attached to this seat of his ancestors, for it had been the scene of many valiant deeds, and in itself possessed every magnificence, and comfort, whilst the surrounding country was fine, and rich in noble seats.

The party arrived at the castle towards the evening of the day after they left London. The congratulations of the domestics, were fervent though respectful, and were received with great complacency by Lord Drelincourt, who in a few minutes had the pleasure of embracing his Lady and daughters. The most heartfelt delight beamed in the Earl’s eyes, and tears of tenderness suffused those of the ladies. Whilst they overwhelmed him with caresses and inquiries, poor Edmund who felt himself rather overlooked in the hurry of the scene, after the first congratulations, amused himself by studying the countenances of the ladies, who composed the Earl’s family, he began with Lady

Drelincourt, whose matronly figure happily united tenderness and dignity; an air of serene gravity spread itself over her features; the general expression of which, was calculated to gain the esteem and affection of all who studied it. Her eldest daughter, Lady Rosamond Courtney, next claimed attention; this lady was at that age, when the features begin to gain in expression, what they may perhaps lose in bloom, she had nearly attained her twenty-sixth year, but although she united every elegant accomplishment, and great information, to a face and figure of the first class beauty, she still remained unsolicited in marriage; and a sense of the injustice shewn to her charms, threw a cloud over her fine features, which sometimes betrayed a degree of hauteur, increased in proportion as she thought herself neglected. She was of a commanding height, and the whole style of her beauty, was that of the majestic haughty Juno, strongly contrasting with the yet more perfect, and truly feminine charms of Lady Maria, the second daughter, who was now reclined on a sofa, from which she had only risen for a few moments to embrace her father; an air of languor appeared in her, which would seem to have been caused by indisposition, had not a complexion fair as alabaster, and of brilliant clearness, heightened by a fine peach-like bloom, forbidden the idea. Her blue eyes were shaded by long silken brown lashes, and a few ringlets of the same colour, played on her polished forehead, whilst the broad lace of her cap, added delicacy to the features, which it partly concealed. Altogether Edmund thought that he had never seen so lovely a woman, and he might have gazed on her much longer, had not his eyes met those of the object whom he was admiring, and he hastily turned them from her, to the youngest daughter, Lady Emma, whom Lord Courtney had called to partake of his chair, and who was listening to her father, with a countenance of such animated sweetness, that Edmund wondered how he could have overlooked it before, and on a more minute examination, he was delighted with its sensibility and intelligence. She was simply attired in a muslin frock, her flaxen hair curled in natural ringlets, which were chiefly fastened by a comb, though a few escaped their confinement to sport upon her ivory neck; her eyes were of a darker blue than her sister Maria's, and the lashes were yet more beautiful. The bloom in her cheeks was perhaps more interesting, by not being permanent, for in general the lily was predominant, but when ever she spoke, or met the eye of admiration or attention, the rose, faithful to its trust, returned in its liveliest tints, and proclaimed itself the herald of the most attractive innocence, and unaffected modesty; her figure was *petite*, but formed by the hand of symmetry, and every movement was dictated by ease and natural grace. Such were the females to whom Edward had been introduced, when their first emotions began to subside, the parties retired to dress for dinner, after which, the remainder of the day was passed *en famille*, and before it was over, Edmund began to feel quite at home, in the amiable and accomplished family circle, by which he was surrounded.

We have said that the Earl was partial to the seat of his ancestors; he was indeed never so happy as when at Castle Drelincourt, and anxious to make all connected with him share in his pleasure, he spared no expence, or indulgence, which could make the country desirable for a residence. The day after his arrival, he began to concert schemes for the amusement, and gratification of his family, and proposed to celebrate his return to England, by giving an entertainment and ball, to the surrounding nobility and gentry, from whom, congratulations and inquiries poured in, as soon as the Earl was known to be at the castle. Cards were accordingly sent out, and the intermediate time was agreeably

employed by Edmund, in examining the books, and paintings, of which the Earl had a fine collection, and every room proclaimed the literary taste of its possessor, whilst the elegance of the decorations, and appropriate ornaments, reflected the highest credit on the ladies, under whose directions they were executed.

Lady Rosamond designed admirably, and one room was appropriated to a series of her drawings from Milton's works. This room was fitted up with peculiar neatness, and in it the ladies assembled in the mornings, when they did not choose to be alone; it communicated with the library on one side, and on the other with a noble gallery, in which were a variety of musical instruments, and which was chiefly devoted to the delights of harmony.

Edmund every day gained esteem in the family, and every day became more tenderly attached to it. Lord Courtney treated him with the most unreserved friendship, and begged that he might no longer be addressed by his title, as the sound of your lordship, threw an air of ceremony over their most confidential discourses.

The character of this young Lord, though abounding in inconsistencies was truly amiable: he had great abilities, and a quickness of perception almost incredible, which might have rendered him one of the first characters of the day, but it was unhappily blended with such versability of pursuit, that no science, or talent, was thought of by him longer, than whilst he was acquiring it. He played brilliantly, but could never practise long enough to do it with correctness. He had a taste for drawing, but by the time he had laid his implements ready for sketching his outlines, he recollected an engagement, and his imperfect design was reserved for completion at some more distant period. He spoke French, Italian and German, with fluency and strict grammatical propriety; he was an excellent classic, and had a taste for composition, both in prose and verse; he would sometimes be seized with a love of study, which would confine him to his library for weeks, in which time he would begin twenty different subjects, proceed happily through the greater part of his discussions, and finish none of them. He rapidly acquired a knowledge of natural history and chemistry, and when acquired, he as rapidly laid the pursuit of them aside. He had likewise a turn for mechanics, and experimental philosophy, in short, there was scarcely either art or science, on which he could not speak, at least well enough to prove, that very little attention would enable him to fully comprehend the subject in debate. His disposition was as various, as were his acquirements, he could pass alternately "from grave to gay, from lively to severe," he would one moment hold a serious argument with a lady on the trimming for her dress, and the next learnedly discuss with a scholar, the loves of Dido and Eneas. He was naturally generous even to prodigality, disdained a mean action, was warm in his affections, and sincere in his attachments. He had however been not a little spoiled by the unlimited indulgence shewn to him from infancy, in consequence of which, though health and spirits, gave him the appearance of uninterrupted good humour, it was yet depending often on the caprice of the moment, and was, like that of many others, the most apparent when he was the most pleased. But his parents were very happy in him, and were with reason proud of his acquirements, his father as a literary man, was gratified with his taste for reading and composition, and the praises, which had been justly bestowed on some of his most finished attempts in the latter, gave the highest pleasure to the Earl, who rightly thought, that a man of rank ought at least to be a patron, and judge of literature, and of the

fine arts. His mother was delighted with his pleasing appearance and manners, and could not conceal from him, that she thought him one of the finest young men of the age, in which Henry perfectly coincided, but laughed at the same time, with such vivacity, that his sisters knew not whether he meant to declare his own opinion, or goodnatureedly to ridicule that of Lady Drelincourt. The Earl rejoiced that his son had no taste for inferior company; on the contrary he was perhaps too fastidious, for his own family united so many pleasing accomplishments to solid information, and polished manners, that he expected from others, more than it was probable he should find, and disappointment sometimes gave rise to ill-founded disgust. Edmund was a companion the most suited to his taste of any that he had ever seen, not that their dispositions were exactly similar, but as discords heighten harmony in music, so the pensive tenderness of Edmund's temper formed an agreeable contrast to the volatile warmth of Henry's; their attachment every day gained strength, and at last Edmund told his friend, how much he had been hurt by the coldness with which he had been at first received by him. "My dear fellow," replied Henry with his usual frankness, "I saw immediately that I should esteem you, but I confess that my father's manner was not likely to make me do it more willingly, "This is the Count Rodalvi whom I *desire* you to esteem," his determined style of speaking piqued me, and I resolved not to comply immediately with his *desire*, though I mortified myself by delay." This little explanation set Edmund at ease, as before it took place, his pleasure in Henry's friendship was sometimes damped, by a fear of its inconstancy. With a temper so amiable, conduct so irreproachable, and talents so promising as we have described, it is almost unnecessary to add that Lord Courtney constituted the delight of his family, and that all the Earl's ideas and expectations of felicity, had their source in this beloved and valuable son.

"Swift to reward a parent's fears  
A parent's hopes to crown,  
Roll on in peace ye blooming years  
That rear him to renown:  
When in his finished form and face,  
Admiring multitudes shall trace,  
The beauties of his line combin'd;  
The courteous yet majestic mien,  
The liberal smile the look serene,  
The great and gentle mind."

## CHAP. IV.

Up springs the dance, along the lighted dome  
Mixed and involved a thousand sprightly ways!  
The glittering court effuses every pomp,  
The circle deepens, beam'd from gaudy robes,  
Tapers and sparkling gems, and radiant eyes  
A soft effulgence o'er the palace waves.

THOMSON.

AT length the day fixed on for the ball arrived, and Lord Drelincourt who was fond of his domestics and tenantry, (perhaps not less so from considering them in some measure as his vassals) resolved they should share in the general hilarity. He therefore ordered the good old English fare of roast beef and plumb pudding, to be abundantly provided for them, and that it should be concluded by a dance in the hall, which was at such a distance from the part of the castle, in which the ball was to be held, that there was no probability, of the sounds of rustic mirth, interfering with the refined enjoyments of the fashionable guests, who moreover, probably would not begin their festivity, until that of the honest farmers and their cherry-cheeked daughters was ended.

Lord Drelincourt looked with pleasure on his rustic guests, as they were seated round his hospitable board, in the hall of his forefathers. His early prejudices returned in all their force, and his liberal mind, enlarged views, and humane disposition, did not prevent a sigh rising in his breast, when he reflected that the "age of chivalry was past." His dependants all loved, though they feared him, and as they rose on his entrance, to congratulate him with respectful ardour on his safe return to his native country, he thought of his father, and of the pleasure which a similar spectacle would have afforded him, he sighed involuntarily, a tear trembled in his eye, "a sigh, a tear so sweet, he wish'd not to control." But soon company of a more exalted, though perhaps less valuable class, demanded his attention.

The first carriage which arrived, was one of dark green, drawn slowly by four greys, the coachman and attendants looking as if they had retained their situations from time immemorial, and the two ladies who alighted from it, were to all appearance remnants of great antiquity. They were the Earl's maiden aunts, of whom we have already made honorable mention. He received them in great state at the top of the stairs; Lady Bertha gave him her hand to kiss, and he then led her into the drawing room, where he introduced Edmund to her, and to her sister, as a young friend for whom he had a particular regard, Lady Maud hearing a foreign name, was rather ungracious in her compliments, but Lady Bertha said with a benevolent smile, "You are welcome, courteous sir, to our island, and I trust that you will find in it, the hospitality which ought always to be shewn to strangers, particularly if distressed, which I hope however, will never be your case." She then took her seat, leaving Edmund much embarrassed what answer to make, as he did not perfectly understand the epithet of courteous, which he had never before heard in conversation; he supposed therefore from the singular dress and

appearance of the ladies, that they came from some distant province; he however thanked Lady Bertha, and told her in reply to her welcome, that he could willingly have suffered any distress, on condition of becoming acquainted with a country so delightful, and with whose fair inhabitants every stranger must be charmed. Lady Bertha had not heard so gallant a speech for many years, and mentally comparing Edmund to Oroondates, she rose and made him a profound curtsy. Edmund returned it with a low bow, and then took his seat by Lady Emma, whose cheeks were dyed in blushes at the characteristic speech of her aunt. Soon after, a Mr. Fletcher was announced; this gentleman was a relation of Lady Drelincourt; he was a widower, and the early loss of the object of his fondest affections, had communicated a degree of misanthropy to his feelings, which was sometimes evident from his expressions, and made him appear severe, but he was only so in words, for in deeds he was benevolence personified. He had married against the consent of his wife's relations, who objected to his small fortune, and she, being of a delicate constitution and susceptible disposition, felt their displeasure so keenly, that she fell into a decline; and three years after their union left him an inconsolable mourner. He was, however, a parent, and for the sake of his little girl, he resolved to conquer his grief, the violence of which would inevitably interfere with his duty to her. Accordingly, he went into society to amuse his mind, but being uninterested in it, he lashed its vices, ridiculed its follies, and sometimes unjustly accused it of the insipidity, which his peculiar disappointments made him feel, amidst what it offers as pleasures. He was succeeded by a young lady about sixteen years of age, a fine figure, and so conscious of it, that in endeavouring to make it finer, she distorted its natural elegance by affectation. Lord Drelincourt immediately, with much respect and affection introduced her as Lady Harriett Parkhurst. She was the daughter of the deceased Earl of Lindsey, who had been Lord Drelincourt's particular friend, he died whilst the Earl was abroad, and had left this much loved daughter to his care; a charge which was received with melancholy pleasure. It had been always the wish of these friends to unite their families by means of their children, and Lord Courtney, and Lady Harriett had been long acquainted with their parents' intentions. In interested views the match possessed too many advantages not to be ardently desired by Lord Drelincourt. His ward was of a great family, being grand-daughter to the Duke of Moreton, and related to many of the first peers in the realm, there was a probability that her fortune would be very large, but her mind, it must be confessed, had been hitherto neglected. She was, however, very young, and was to reside with the Earl until she was of age; he therefore flattered himself that in the society of his family she could not fail to improve. No other guests being expected till the evening, the party sat down to dinner. Lady Maud looked with a sour aspect on the Earl's visitor and ward; Lady Bertha smiled good humouredly on all around her; Mr. Fletcher pleased every one by his animated conversation; and Lady Harriett, though she felt a little awe at the idea of being under the immediate care of her guardian, was delighted to find that he had sent for her to make one at the ball, and fell into a deep study how to make the most becoming dress of her mourning.

Among the surrounding nobility and gentry, there had lately arrived a newly created peer, who by dint of paying enormously for his ground, and being contented with little more, than was barely necessary for his house and gardens, had been enabled to fix his residence very near Lord Drelincourt, much to the dissatisfaction of that nobleman,

who regarded with indignation and contempt the frequent and often ill-timed elevations in rank, which had taken place within his remembrance.

Of exalted birth, and descended from a long train of ancestors, who had never stained their nobility by an unworthy action, he had a nice sense of what was due to every scale in society; always willing to acknowledge a superior himself, he could ill brook a contrary behaviour in others, and though no man entertained more liberal ideas than he did, respecting commerce, which he justly considered as the source of the power and prosperity of the nation, he yet thought, that many respectable merchants, were converted into insignificant and subordinate characters by succeeding in their wishes to reach a higher situation, than that which they might have filled with probity and abilities. Perhaps Lord Drelincourt's ideas of the deference due to noble blood, would not have been so exalted, had he not conceived that in the present rage for levelling, or as they are more fashionably termed liberal opinions, its claims were unjustly neglected. He could not bear to see the possessors of rank, degrading it by associating with men in every respect inferior to them, and adopting the manners of those, with whom they disgrace themselves, by being familiar, merely to feel a licentious ease, a carelessness of conduct, and to be applauded as good fellows, or merry companions without any buckram, or nonsense in their composition. Lord Drelincourt mortified by the manners of the age, unfortunately fell into the contrary error; if some granted too little he exacted too much, and as extremes are always prejudicial, he made the rank which he admired, appear less amiable, and sometimes ridiculous, by the sternness with which he repressed every attempt towards familiarity. Unluckily for Lord Drelincourt's prejudices, it happened that the only one of the mushroom peers with whom he was in a manner compelled to associate, was a man of so contracted an education, and of manners so coarse, that an acquaintance with him could not fail to increase the earl's disgust.

Many of those, for whom fortune has paved the way to honors, join such extensive information and knowledge of the world, with real politeness and upright principles, that they must be considered as an acquisition to any society, and no disgrace to the British peerage; but Lord Dunderton was not of this description; however he had left his card immediately on the Earl's arrival at the castle, and of course it was impossible to omit his family in the invitations to the ball. Lord Drelincourt was too humane ever to be unpolite, for he considered that man as unfit to live in society, who could without provocation, wilfully wound the feelings of another.

The company began to assemble at an early hour, and the dancing commenced with great spirit. Edmund had solicited Lady Rosamond's hand, but she was previously engaged to a Captain Clayton of the guards, whose entrance gave her visible pleasure, and by the respectful ardour of his complimentary inquiries, Edmund imagined him to be a lover and apparently a favoured one. Lady Maria likewise was engaged though she acknowledged it reluctantly, for the young Italian had already made an impression on her heart, that roused her from the languor of indolence into which she had unhappily fallen, from the idea of its being very irresistible and becoming. He was more successful in his application to Lady Emma, whose eloquent blood mantled in her cheeks as she consented to be his partner, and Edmund began to think that he had been fortunate in finding her sisters engaged.



Lord Courtney of course danced with Lady Harriett Parkhurst, and the Earl was delighted to hear his ward generally admired, for though she was far from being handsome, her figure was striking, and vanity gave animation to her countenance, whilst the embarrassment that she felt from her situation, wore the resemblance of an amiable modesty which made her appear extremely interesting. Henry came up to Edmund, when the set was finished to inquire what he thought of his bride elect, adding, "I have looked so successfully into her eyes, all the time we have been dancing, and seen myself reflected in them so languishingly, that I dare say she thinks me on the rack of expectation, and that I shall be a most enraptured husband—not very well furnished in the upper story," continued he, laughing as he pointed to his forehead, "but that is not at all necessary." Edmund answered with truth that her appearance was pleasing, but that, of her mind he did not think there had been sufficient time to form a correct opinion. Henry smiled significantly, and left his friend, astonished at the indifference, with which he could acknowledge that he believed a woman deficient in sense, and yet think of connecting himself with her for life, by the most solemn ties. Edmund's reflections were however diverted by the sound of the music, which struck up a lively tune, and Lady Emma informed him he must choose another partner, as it was not customary to continue the same for more than two dances; this he was sorry to hear, as he was so well satisfied with his present partner, that he felt no wish to change. She pleased without an effort to shine, no forced attentions were requisite to keep up hers, no inordinate flattery to charm her into good humour, gentle and unassuming, her manners harmonized with her partner's, if he was gay, she was cheerful, if he was grave, she became serious; many were dazzled by the majestic figure of Lady Rosamond, many allured by the languishing beauty of Lady Maria, but none who knew Lady Emma, could be insensible to her artless charms, and unaffected virtues. Edmund could not forbear expressing the reluctance with which he relinquished her hand; she blushed at the warmth of his expressions, not that they were so ardent as the fashionable cant of the day, with which the young men continually assailed her ears, but in Edmund they appeared natural, at least she perhaps wished to believe them so. At the very moment, when Emma's blushes made her appear doubly interesting in Edmund's eyes, Henry came to request that he would dance with Miss Clayton, "you will find her a lively partner I assure you," said he "only do not bring her too near my aunt Maud, or you will probably have to defend her from the furious attacks of the old lady, as they by no means assimilate well." He then introduced Edmund to a pretty blooming girl, whose simplicity of dress and pleasing appearance, left him to conjecture what there could be in her behaviour to distress Lady Maud's feelings. He had however no time for discovery, as his partner's place was at the top of the dance; he therefore led her there immediately. When they had gone down twenty couples, with a velocity which precluded the possibility of conversation, they arrived at the bottom of the set, and the young lady drawing a cambric handkerchief from her side, and rubbing her face in a manner which must have convinced the most sceptical, that she was indebted solely to nature for a fine complexion, exclaimed, "Cursedly hot, don't you think so?" Edmund thought that he did not hear rightly what she said, and lamented to himself, only having a knowledge of the English language from books, as he foresaw that the greatest attention, and nicety of oracular information, would be necessary, before he could feel perfectly at ease whilst sustaining a part in conversation. He however ventured to reply

that having been used to a warm climate, he did not feel any inconvenience from the temperature in which they were at that time. "Oh," replied Miss Clayton, "I remember Courtney told me you were Italian, pray is there good hunting with you?" Edmund was again surprised, for he had never had the question put to him before by a lady, but he thought, as he had imagined of Lady Bertha, that she also might be from a distant province, where the customs were probably different. He therefore replied with the utmost politeness, and began to inform her in what the field sports of Italy, differed from those which had been described to him in England. Miss Clayton listened with great attention, then told him that she could not bear the summer, as it deprived her of her most pleasing recreations, adding that she had given her favourite horse Highflyer, a breathing in the morning, to which circumstance she believed it might be owing, that she was in such a confounded heat, with only going down one dance. Edmund was rather disconcerted by language, which he could no longer entirely misunderstand, and began to wish, that the heat of which she so forcibly complained in the first set, might prevent her standing up for another, but she resumed her place with great alacrity, and Lady Emma at that instant going down the dance with the lightness and precision of a fairy, Miss Clayton said, "That girl dances like a sylph, and indeed she does every thing well, I like few maukish misses of quality, but she pleases every body." Edmund acquiesced in this opinion, praised her candor, and began to think her very agreeable, in spite of the provincial peculiarities of her dialect. "You think then," answered she, in return for his compliment, "that women can see no merit in each other; it might have been the case when there was more in your sex, but now let me tell you, there is too little to be jealous of it, consequently we can acknowledge perfection more cheerfully in each other, as we are not often dazzled by seeing it in the gentlemen." Edmund laughed at the compliment that she paid the male creation, and she continued, "I dare say you think Lady Emma a mere child, she does not look more than fifteen, and her sisters will not rectify the mistake. She is only just emancipated from the nursery, where luckily she has had the advantage of a very worthy and well-informed woman for her governess, and companion, and her sisters would gladly have confined her there, until they were disposed of to advantage. Unfortunately however, Lady Rosamond reared her stately form amidst the circles of fashion, for a succession of winters, without any title courting her acceptance, and Lady Maria died away, and told all her nervous susceptibilities, and sensibilities, without finding any one to listen to them but female friends, who were somewhat wearied with hearing them too often; Lady Drelincourt then recollected that Lady Emma was eighteen years of age, and a very good girl, she therefore could not think of secluding her from the world any longer. In vain her sisters kindly urged the impropriety of bringing girls out too soon, in vain with unaffected sorrow, they adduced themselves as melancholy examples of its impolicy, Lady Drelincourt only replied, that they had thought the time very long until the arrival of their fourteenth year, in which they were introduced into the gay world, at their earnest request, and if their expectations had been disappointed, she was sorry for it, but hoped that Emma would be more fortunate. This insinuation did not reconcile the elder branches to the plan, but their mother gained her point; Emma was released, and by dint of goodnature, sitting on her brother's knee, kissing papa before she goes to bed, and never interfering with her sister's imaginary conquests, they are fond of her, and always tell every one, that she is an amiable docile

child, and will in a few years make a charming woman." Miss Clayton here finished the family biography, and Edmund was amused by the animated manner, in which she had delivered it, though he inwardly condemned the severity, with which she had mentioned ladies, one at least of whom, she ought to have respected, as it was evident that her brother, Captain Clayton felt towards Lady Rosamond, a sentiment more tender than that of esteem alone.

The dancing was now suspended, and an elegant room thrown open, where a collation was set out, with such taste and profusion, as formed a gratifying sight to the eyes of the epicure, and a tempting one even to those of the abstemious.

In going into the supper room, Miss Clayton unfortunately met Lady Maud, who was in no very good humour, having lost her money at quadrille, the only game that she ever played. Clayton Hall was very near Courtney Lodge, where the old ladies had resided since the death of their brother, who had devised it to them; consequently Miss Clayton was an old acquaintance, and she made a very polite obeisance to Lady Maud, who scarcely condescended to observe it, exclaiming, "Bless me child, I did not know you, and indeed it is so long, since you have troubled yourself with calling at the lodge, that it would be no great wonder if I had forgotten your face." "I am sure my Lady," replied Miss Clayton with affected humility. "I should have called at the lodge the other day, but seeing the windows closed, I feared there might be death in the house, I am happy to find that my anxieties for you, and Lady Bertha, have been groundless." "You knew very well I believe," grumbled the old lady, "that I always have the south front windows closed, to preserve my yellow damask furniture, and I do not think even the pleasure of your company, will induce me to alter a custom which I have observed long before you were born." "I am sure Madam," replied Miss Clayton, "if my company were to be the condition of the yellow damask seeing the daylight, I should not have had the temerity to mention it." "I want no one's company," said the angry Lady Maud, "who gallops about the country, in the indecent manner that you do, for all the world like that heathen man Nimrod, you may think it very clever, but I think such masculine affectation, very disgusting in a young lady." Miss Clayton crimsoned at the harsh truth, that she had involuntarily subjected herself to hear, and began to wish that she had not provoked it by her flippancy, whilst the goodnatured Lady Bertha, fearing her sister had gone too far, strove to give a different turn to the conversation, by saying, that though it was certainly very dangerous to ride about the country unprotected, yet she thought it pretty enough, to see ladies ambling on little ponies, adding that it was not many years, since she had given up riding a favourite white palfrey herself. The idea of seeing Lady Bertha ambling on her white palfrey, restored the smiles to Miss Clayton's countenance, but she resolved to take a seat at the supper table, quite out of Lady Maud's hearing.

"My dear creature," cried a half naked belle of quality, to Lady Rosamond, "for heaven's sake lend me some books: have you any novels? you are I know an immense reader, and therefore you will pity me, when I declare to you that I have not touched a page this fortnight." "I believe," replied Lady Rosamond rather coolly, "my reading, and your Ladyship's, are not exactly similar." "Oh yes, I am sure I shall like your books, I very seldom read one through, just look at what is new, and miss all the rest, for three fourths of them are alike." "Is Lady Louisa Delany turning critic," said Mr. Fletcher, "how must the poor wretches of authors tremble, when they hear of the fiery ordeal

through which they will have to pass.” “Oh you severe creature,” rejoined the lady, “I am sure you mean to laugh at me, do not you think he does?” turning to Henry, who replied very gravely, “He can only then mean to declare himself ignorant of your ladyship’s well known information and taste.” Lady Laura was delighted, and her vanity prompted her to regard as true the speeches, which her conscience told her, could only be uttered in ridicule. She resolved however to secure the literary reputation, that she fancied she was acquiring; but unfortunately silence would have befriended her more in her design, than did the torrent of nonsense which she poured forth. “Well I dare say you only want to flatter me, but I confess I am naturally of a retired turn, and perhaps too much addicted to study.” “Your Ladyship’s merit is then undoubtedly very great,” replied Mr. Fletcher, “for in good nature to the follies of the world, you hide your inclinations so admirably, that many would be unjust enough to suppose you highly gratified, by the trifling amusements, which your superior attainments, must in reality teach you to despise.” “Oh yes,” exclaimed the literary fair one, “as Shakespeare says so charmingly, ‘An elegant retirement, books and friends, our chain, our fates, our fortunes and our beings blend! oh I am very fond of pretty verses, do not you like poetry?’” again addressing herself to Henry, who replied. “Poetry, I adore it! I would never speak in prose, but, from the fear of being singular, poetry is the language of the soul, the vehicle for truth.

“Love I feel thy rapturous pow’r  
 Thine is all the present hour,  
 Strong delight tumultuous reigns,  
 And throbs throughout my bursting veins,  
 Lo, behold the Cyprian queen!  
 Mark her soul-subduing mein!  
 Snatch, oh, snatch me to thy arms  
 The willing votary of thy charms!  
 Let me feast without controul  
 And breathe in rapture all my soul!”

“Oh you naughty man, I must not hear you talk such nonsense,” cried the fashionable Lady Laura, at the same time tapping him with her fan, and looking down, after vainly endeavouring to blush; she then assumed a tender embarrassed air, but unfortunately it was lost on Lord Courtney, who had already turned from her, to pay his compliments to some other females equally fashionable, and well informed with her ladyship. Disappointed by his departure she began to pay Edmund some attention, and as his face and figure were too striking to be slightly passed over, she inquired of Lady Rosamond in an audible whisper, who he was, and when her curiosity in that particular was gratified, she in a whisper yet more audible, exclaimed. “He is a very handsome fellow, what prodigious fine eyes!” Shall we acknowledge, that even the lords of the creation are not entirely exempt from the failing yclep’d vanity, of which they so liberally accuse the weaker vessels? shall we acknowledge that this failing in Edmund was gratified for the moment even by a compliment paid with so little delicacy, and by so frivolous an object? Alas! we must unwillingly confess it, and if our male readers be mortified by the discovery, they must blame human nature, and not its humble

delineators. Though Edmund undoubtedly felt a temporary sensation of pleasure, yet he blushed at having it excited by one of whose abilities, and even delicacy, he had not conceived a high opinion from the conversation, in which he had overheard her engaged. The blush however was not unnoticed by the lady, who drew her own conclusions from it, and resolved to try the utmost strength of her charms, on the unexperienced heart of the young foreigner. She commenced the attack, by requesting him to help her to some sweet meats, and the difficulty of fixing her choice, and her whimsical rejection or acceptance of them, introduced all the trifling, which in genteel society is considered ready conversation; and all the pert gaiety which is mistaken for wit. However she contrived to keep him by her, until the dancing was resumed, and then as he was an entire stranger to the major part of the ladies, he thought that he could not do better, than request the honor of her hand.

Dancing was her ladyship's forte, in which she certainly excelled; and as she possessed all the refined arts, and studied allurements, which a vain female, stimulated by the desire of conquest, easily acquires, Edmund began to think her elegant and agreeable, and as to her foolish conversation with Lord Courtney, perhaps it was customary to talk nonsense at meetings like the present, at least he had overheard so much from different parties, that hers was by no means singular.

With these ideas, he began to feel rather flattered by her ladyship's excessive attention. The dance being finished, they retired to the bottom of the room, as that part was the coolest and the least crowded. She gave him her fan and gloves to hold, whilst she adjusted a locket, which always came loose on these occasions; and Edmund in gallantry, could not but admire her fine hands, though they were neither so small, nor so white as Lady Emma's. The comparison altogether was certainly not advantageous to Lady Laura, but she soon roused him from the study into which it had thrown him, by asking a thousand questions about his friends, with an air of obliging interest, that could not fail to gratify him, accompanying her inquiries with an earnest survey of his countenance, yet looking down with a well-feigned confusion every time that her eyes met his; then she was silent for a few moments; forgot what she was going to say, and laughed at her own embarrassment. To Edmund all this was new, he had never seen coquetry before, and to whom, does it on a first acquaintance appear in its true colour?

On standing up again, they were near Lady Emma, whom Edmund addressed with his usual attention, but she answered him coldly, and the lively colour which rose in her cheeks on the slightest emotion, almost assumed the crimson hue of anger. She turned from him to conceal it, and he redoubled his attentions to Lady Laura, to hide his mortification.

The evening concluded to the satisfaction of all parties. Even Lady Maud condescended to say that there had been much innocent cheerfulness, and that if all the gaieties of the present day were conducted in as orderly a manner, she should not so often condemn them. Lady Bertha was enchanted with any appearance of shew and gallantry, of which in her youth she had been passionately fond, and Lady Harriett Parkhurst was delighted with so charming a debut into her guardian's residence; particularly as she had met an old friend in Miss Dunderton, with whom she had been two years at a fashionable boarding-school. The young ladies renewed their professions of attachment; Miss Dunderton informed Lady Harriett that her papa was made a lord, and in return had the

pleasure of hearing that her friend was to remain at Castle Drelincourt, and that she should therefore have the satisfaction of seeing her frequently; nor perhaps was Lord Courtney entirely left out of the scheme of felicity. They then criticised the ladies dresses, and informed each other what their partners said to them, and with whom they should like to have danced.

As for Lord and Lady Dunderton they acquitted themselves so well, as to make the Earl declare that when their stiffness and embarrassment should be worn off, and a little attention and politeness acquired, they would not be very exceptionable in their behaviour, and that in a couple of centuries the family might begin to be respectable. Mr. Dunderton terrified with the reports of Lord Drelincourt's hauteur, had contented himself by making a bow in the crowd, en passant, and escaping without further notice, declared to his papa and mamma on their return home, that the world might call the Earl proud, but for his part he thought him very affable and polite. "Yes, yes," said my Lord, "I saw nothing but to like in all of them, and now we've broken the ice however, and we'll keep it open, we must always pretend to give up to his ancient family, and all that, and it will be a good thing to get to know people's titles and how to behave one's self, for I declare I feel quite dashed, to think of making so many new acquaintance at my time of life, but Sophia may catch that young Lord Courtney, he's a spirited young fellow, I like his looks, and I'm sure he cannot see better cloaths on any body's back than she wears."

Miss promised to do every thing papa wished, and her brother said he should have no objection to Lady Maria, but he must own he was frightened of Lady Rosamond. His father, however, soon silenced him, by saying he would have neither, for that poor ladies of quality were useless expensive articles, laying dead without any interest, and that it was well known Lord Drelincourt lived up to his income, and his estate being all entailed on his son, he supposed the daughters might "go whistle for what they would have," with this elegant illustration Lord Dunderton dismissed his family to bed, and we will have the humanity to give our, perhaps, yet more wearied readers, a temporary rest from the labour of perusing these pages.

## CHAP. V.

“Here freedom reign’d without the least alloy,  
 Nor gossip’s tale nor ancient maiden’s gall;  
 Nor saintly spleen didst murmur at our joy,  
 And with envenom’d tongue our pleasures pall;  
 And why? There was but one great rule for all,  
 To wit, that each should work his own desire,  
 And eat, drink, study, sleep, as it may fall,  
 Or melt the time in love, or wake the lyre,  
 And carol what unbid, the muses might inspire.

THOMPSON.

WHEN Edmund entered the breakfast room the next morning, he found so large a party assembled there, that he began to think the revels of the preceding evening were to be continued through the next day.

Lady Harriett Parkhurst was of course now considered as an inmate; Lady Maud and Lady Bertha had been prevailed on to emerge from the retirement of Courtney Lodge, in compliment to their beloved nephew’s return; and the family circle had received the addition of Captain Clayton, who was the acknowledged lover of Lady Rosamond; Miss Clayton, his sister; Mr. Fletcher, who was a frequent and valued guest; and a Mr. Breresford, a young man of remarkably gentle manners, who paid his addresses to Lady Maria.

The Earl’s hospitality and benevolence were gratified, by seeing so large an assemblage round him, and he gaily declared, that he would challenge the country to produce a finer breakfast scene. After it was over, the whole party were requested to consult only their own inclinations in the disposal of their time until five o’clock, which was the dinner hour.

Miss Clayton said that she should visit the stables, as she always saw her favorite Highflyer dressed over before she rode out. Lady Maud lifted up her hands and eyes in silence! The elder ladies retired to the working-room, the younger to music, and the gentlemen to the library, with the exception of Mr. Breresford, who followed the young ladies, to whom he could be useful in a thousand ways, as he could turn over the leaves of their music books, excelled in winding silks, was unequalled for skill in varnishing, and was extremely expert in making flowers.

The gentlemen passed two or three hours very agreeably in the library, which presented to them learning in its most pleasing forms; the room was splendidly fitted up with busts of eminent authors, ancient and modern, whose works were all to be found in the noble collection of books, which the Earl’s taste and love of reading increased every year. Science had here every aid, and study every advantage; the windows looked only towards the thickest part of the wood, and a waterfall sometimes dashed over a rocky bed with noisy velocity, and sometimes dropped at regular intervals, or softly murmured in a gentle stream. Over the door of this elegant retreat, Lord Drelincourt had placed the

celebrated Cardan's motto, "Tempus ager meus."\* It was indeed an estate of which he knew the inestimable value, and which he cultivated with unwearied assiduity. Captain Clayton, unlike the generality of military men, appeared in his element in this place, where most of his brethren would have felt very awkwardly situated. This gentleman had a pale, clear complexion, fine teeth, animated hazle eyes, and an aquiline nose, particularly calculated to express contempt, to the language of which it appeared to be accustomed; his countenance was interesting, although there was in it an air of discontent, and an expression of melancholy almost amounting to peevishness, which rendered it unpleasing to the superficial observer; but when animated by the happy elucidation of a subject, the discussion of a favorite topic, or the starting of some new idea, the fire of genius shone in his eyes, the glow of ardour suffused his pale complexion, and every turn of his countenance bespoke the emotions of no common mind. He soon discovered an intimate acquaintance with the ancients, joined to a minute knowledge of the moderns; and unfolded the stores of a cultivated mind, with an amiable readiness, equally removed from the arrogant presumption of knowing more than the rest of the company, or the contemptible littleness which fears the discovery of not knowing so much. He spoke with fluency, and listened with attention; in short, he gained the admiration of all, particularly of Edmund, who had before only remarked the frigid gloom of his reserved manners.

To dissipate the stupor which is sometimes created by fixing the attention too long on any subject, the gentlemen ordered their horses, highly to the gratification of Miss Clayton, who called them good fellows, and told them that she would ride a match with any of them, as a reward for their kindness in leaving the fusty ancients and foolish moderns. The other young ladies were soon prevailed on to join the party, and Captain Clayton drove Lady Rosamond in his curricle; Mr. Breresford wished Lady Maria would allow him the honour of her company in his gig; but she was dying in a nervous headache, and could only trust herself in a close carriage. Unfortunately Miss Clayton overheard the request, and offered to supply her place; this was far from being Mr. Breresford's wish, he knew the Phaeton-like spirit of the young lady, and it would be no consolation to him, if he were thrown out by her madness, that she would in all probability fall with him. But unhappily the same timidity which inspired his present fears, prevented his ever offering an argument or opinion, in contradiction to any that might be advanced. However, though the monosyllable, no, was rarely pronounced by him, yet, on this occasion, he endeavoured to hint an unwillingness to consent; he therefore hesitatingly replied, that he knew Miss Clayton preferred being on horseback, to the confinement of any carriage, and that he would make interest for a place with the ladies. "Oh, lord!" exclaimed the Amazonian lady, "trust me I should not, through politeness, have offered to let you drive me; no, indeed, but my poor devil has hurt his off-foot, or wants a shoe, for he limps like a wooden-legged beggar this morning. I must send him immediately to a good farrier, one of the veterinary professed; for I had rather hop for a month on one leg myself, than have any thing happen to my Highflyer; so come, order your chariot, and your fiery footed steed, and we shall soon shew them how to drive, and leave the country behind us in style." Poor Breresford trembled, and impelled by his fears, which every moment gained strength, he entreated to be allowed a place with Lady Maria. Miss Clayton cruelly persisted that the parties were all arranged, appealed to

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\* Time is my estate.



his politeness, ridiculed his scruples, laughed at his fears, and at last gained her point. The trembling beau was constrained to help her into his gig, to seat himself by her side, and to take the reins into his unsteady hands, resolving inwardly, that no entreaties should induce him to trust them into those of his companion. For some time all went on well, the gig sought protection alternately from the curricle and the carriage. Mr. Breresford affected to sustain an easy conversation with each party, hoping by that means to be able to continue his gentle pace, and quiet mode of driving; but this was by no means Miss Clayton's intention, she soon urged him to pass the other carriages, on pretence that his horse was uneasy from keeping so near them. Mr. Breresford replied, that the horse was perfectly gentle, and used to remaining by the side of a carriage, as it was the way that he always preferred. "I dare say you may," replied his spirited companion; "but I do not, and you surely will not refuse to change your way for mine." He urged that the road was too narrow where they were; this was just what Miss Clayton desired, "Give me the reins," said she, coolly, "I will engage to pass with the greatest ease." Resistance was useless, he therefore resigned them, but resolved to resume them as soon as the danger was passed. The fair charioteer surmounted every difficulty, and having once gotten a-head, as she nautically expressed herself, she turned to wave her hand to the rest of the party, and told them that they would not be long in sight; after which salutation she stood up to flog the animal, and he being a mettlesome steed, set off at a rate, which in a few minutes justified her prediction. Poor Mr. Breresford could only repeat, "Nay, now Miss Clayton; indeed, now Miss Clayton, we go too fast." She laughed and flogged; and Henry urged Edmund to ride after them, that they might witness the event; which they were soon enabled to do, for coming to a narrow bridge, Mr. Breresford's fears operated so violently, that he imprudently made a desperate effort to recover the guidance of the horse, by endeavouring to catch the reins out of Miss Clayton's hand; she however kept firm possession of one rein, he pulled at the other; whilst the horse, not knowing which to obey, wisely followed his own inclinations, and set off at full speed. At that instant, one of the swinish multitude happened to be crossing the road, and frightened at its danger, ran first to the right, then back to the left, and then, with the stupidity which is the characteristic of its race, directly between the legs of the high spirited steed, who indignantly took a leap, which threw the lady out on one side of the gig, and the gentleman on the other. Nor was this the only bad consequence; a lady was riding at a little distance, attended by a servant, her horse took fright, she screamed, the animal followed the example of setting off, and the servant in vain endeavoured to rescue his mistress, whose situation began to be really alarming. Edmund, spurring on his horse, in a few minutes came up to the lady, and with admirable dexterity, accompanied by no little peril, caught hold of the bridle of her horse, then throwing himself from his own, took her in his arms, and discovered that he had rescued Lady Laura Delany from imminent danger. Terrified and agitated, she burst into tears, whilst she thanked him, and Edmund, giving the horses to her servant, who had come up to them, entreated that she would take a place in the carriage, which was now so near that the ladies within it had witnessed all the alarming part of the affair. Miss Clayton beheld with great composure the mischief that she had occasioned, and for which she was in some degree punished, by having been thrown into a pool of dirty water; and, as she generally wore leather breeches (or drawers, if the term be more fashionable) under her feminine garments, it made the immersion not

altogether convenient. Poor Breresford however almost envied her fall, in comparison with his own, which had been on a heap of stones, and might have proved much more serious, had he not fortunately come safely down on that part called by Hudibrass “the seat of honor!” where contusions may certainly be made with the least danger to the sufferer. However, though not dangerous, the pain was far from being trifling, and in his sense of it, forgetting decorum, he stood ruefully rubbing the part affected, in sight of the whole company, until he was roused to recollection by the horse-laugh of his partner in distress, who exclaimed, “By Jupiter, this is better than all the rest, I did not think when I said we would leave the country behind us, that we should come into such close contact with it.” She then offered to drive home more carefully, but this Breresford firmly refused; and it was settled that he should ride Edmund’s horse, and Miss Clayton Lady Laura’s; though she said a side-saddle was of no consequence, for she could ride on any other just as well, and Breresford had better take it, as the crutch would keep him from falling over his horse’s head. He endeavoured in vain to smile; but the pain which he yet felt, gave an expression to his countenance far from cheerful, though it was certainly risible; and he trotted on very gently, maintaining a perfect silence, until, to his inexpressible joy, his tormentor passed him with Lord Courtney in full gallop.

On putting Lady Laura into the carriage, Edmund was struck by the ashy paleness of Lady Emma’s countenance, and eagerly inquired if she were not well. “Oh yes,” said Lady Maria answering for her, “she is very well, but she was much frightened when you went to Lady Laura, you know she is quite a child, and has never been used to scenes of this kind.” “Might I hope,” replied Edmund “that Lady Emma durst trust herself under my protection, the air would revive her, and so precious a charge would certainly make me a careful driver?” This was not to be resisted, the colour returned to her cheeks, in deepened dies, but she hesitated till Lady Maria said with some peevishness, “Pray go, child if you intend it, and do not stay blushing here, whilst I am ready to faint with the heat and bustle we have had.” Lady Emma then complied, Edmund felt her hand tremble as she gave it to him to assist her, he could not resist the temptation of pressing it; and we need not tell many of our readers, that there is a manner in performing a trifling gallantry of this sort, which speaks volumes.

We have already said that Emma’s was a countenance,

“Where the loveliest expression to features is join’d  
By nature’s most delicate pencil design’d;  
Where blushes unbidden, and smiles without art,  
Speak the softness and feeling which dwell in the heart.”

Her manners possessed a degree of almost infantine simplicity: but there was also an innocent and affectionate gentleness in them, which rendered her a most interesting object, to the lovers of unsophisticated nature; particularly as her mind was too highly cultivated, her imagination too brilliant, and her judgment too correct, to be long hidden from an observing eye, though the veil which timidity threw over them, occasioned her, by superficial observers, to be more remarked for her mild unassuming manners and constant good humour, than her talents, which she carefully concealed from the generality of her acquaintance, well knowing that the display of them more frequently gains envy

than admiration, creating many enemies, and often alienating even friends; with this disposition she appeared to the most advantage, in proportion as the circle was confined, and never had she been thought by Edmund so charming as in their tête-à-tête. He had always admired her but knew not to what extent until this auspicious morning, when he was flattered by the interest that he had excited, and which she had been unable to conceal; delighted with the new and fascinating style of her conversation, equally removed from every thing pedantic or trifling, and amused with the playful wit by which she adorned it, Edmund in gazing on her forgot all the allurements of Lady Laura, and the tender pressure of his hand, with which she had honoured him in her fright; but he felt grateful to the lucky accident, that had placed him in the situation so favourable to his wishes, and he took care to express his sense of it to his fair companion, who answered with truth, that she had suffered too much alarm to feel any obligation to the cause, though it had ultimately produced the good of removing her into an open carriage, which she always preferred. Edmund asked if he might have the gratification of thinking that any portion of her fears were for his safety, or if it was Lady Laura's that engrossed them entirely, "Neither," replied the blushing Emma, "for to acknowledge the truth, I thought my brother had gone to her assistance, and therefore it was for him that I felt afraid." "Then," returned Edmund in a tone of mortification and disappointment, "my emotions were misplaced, they arose from the hope of your being interested for me, and they were exquisite." "Do you think then, that I could be uninterested when you were in danger?" she asked in the softest accents, but conscious that the tone of her voice, expressed more even than her words, she endeavoured to qualify them by adding with a smile "though you certainly could not expect me to feel the same for you as for my brother." She had raised her eyes timidly to Edmund's, but something that she read there, impelled her to cast them down, and crimsoned her face with blushes, whilst he exclaimed with a mixture of tenderness and vivacity, "Indeed, my dear Lady Emma you are right, I do not wish you to feel for me as for a brother, and allow me to assure you that I shall never feel for you as for a sister; though your sisters will be always dear to me as my own." He looked earnestly at her, he read in her countenance, the faithful index of her thoughts, that she understood him, he was emboldened to drop her title, the wearisome repetition was displeasing to the ears of love, he called her, "Emma," she blushed more deeply, a smile played on her countenance, but it seemed restrained by the novelty of her sensations, they were mixed and indefinable; Edmund saw her embarrassment, he alternately feared and hoped, he repeated, "Emma, my Emma," the pronoun had a wonderful effect on the ears of her to whom it was applied. She looked up; tears started into her eyes, and a sigh, the sure unerring herald of love, escaped from her agitated heart, the delighted Edmund re-echoed it; and then, readers! a total silence ensued, neither wished to break it, yet both were sorry when they arrived at the lodge of the castle.

## CHAP. VI.

In our own strength unhappily secure,  
 Too little cautious of the adverse power,  
 And by the blast of self-opinion mov'd,  
 We wish to please, and seek to be belov'd;  
 On pleasure's flow'ry brink we idly stray,  
 Masters as yet of our returning way;  
 Seeing no danger we disarm our mind,  
 And give our conduct to the waves and wind,  
 Then in the flow'ry mead or verdant shade,  
 To wanton dalliance negligently laid,  
 We weave the chaplet and we crown the bowl,  
 And smiling see the nearer waters roll,  
 Till swift into the boundless ocean borne,  
 Our foolish confidence, too late we mourn.

PRIOR.

THE accident on the road had delayed the parties so much, that they had barely time to change their equestrian dresses before the dinner-bell rang. Lady Laura not having any toilet duties to perform, contrived to see Edmund for a few minutes alone; she again thanked him for his interference, which had in all probability saved her life, adding that her family would make a point of expressing their obligations, which her emotions prevented her from doing as she wished. She sighed, trembled, and had intended to faint, but Edmund's heart had been too lately interested, for his senses to be subdued by her allurements; from the same circumstance however, he replied to her in a tone of such involuntary tenderness, and with so much insinuating softness of manner, that he very unintentionally completed his conquest over her Ladyship, even at a moment when every thought was directed to the lovely companion of his ride: but his eyes beamed love, his countenance was animated with hope, and Lady Laura could not distrust such favourable omens, for that they should be inspired by Lady Emma, a mere child, ignorant of art, and who could neither disguise nor assume, was an idea too improbable to be entertained for a moment.

At dinner, of course, all the conversation consisted of comments on the adventures of the morning; poor Breresford felt a little awkward; Lady Maria mortified at the ridiculous figure he had made, and contrasting it in her own mind, with the spirited conduct displayed by Edmund, could not eat, and retired from the table to take possession of a sofa, where she reclined in a state of languor, less affected than usual. Miss Clayton told Breresford that he had better lay down likewise, as she thought his nerves had not yet recovered their tone. Lady Bertha said that Edmund had performed a very gallant achievement, which ought to be rewarded, by an embroidered scarf, or some similar trophy of Lady Laura's gratitude. "My gratitude, Madam," replied Lady Laura, "can never be expressed so warmly as it will always be felt; I can only say that whatever proof of it

Count Rodalvi, may require, I shall be happy to give." Edmund bowed, Lady Rosamond smiled disdainfully, Emma blushed, and Lady Harriett instinctively looked towards her guardian, "Humph," exclaimed Lady Maud, "saying sadly too much, I think. In my time, a young lady would not have run the risk of laying herself under obligations, which required such unlimited returns." "Oh you happy fellow," exclaimed Lord Courtney, "make me your deputy, let me claim your reward." Edmund smiled, and told him that he should receive an embroidered scarf, as proposed by Lady Bertha, but on express condition of wearing it. "Granted," he exclaimed, "I will wrap myself in it as a safe-guard from the wickedness of the times; it shall act as a charm against the allurements of vice; and Lady Laura shall embroider upon it the Choice of Hercules." Lady Bertha thought it would look very pretty, and offered to teach Lady Laura the stitch in which, when she was young, she had worked a set of chairs with scriptural histories.

Lady Laura Delany was the only daughter of the Earl of Carisbrooke. Her father doated on her with mistaken fondness, and made her will a law, to which all around her were required implicitly to submit. Haughty, trifling, and vain, she was not satisfied with admiration, but wished to inspire every one with a real passion: unfortunately her means were not equal to her wishes: the accomplishments so much valued in the present day, she had been too indolent to acquire; and her beauty was by no means so striking as to preclude the necessity of other aids. In this dilemma, she studied the art of charming, till she reduced it to a complete science. She had a regular succession of manoeuvres, which she played off to all on whom she had designs, and by repeated practice she became so skillful in seeing her advantages, and seizing them at the precise moment of success, that her attempts were generally crowned with victory. Unfortunately, her arts had not been sufficiently powerful to entangle any of her lovers in the snares of matrimony; for though the men swore she was divine, yet if marriage were hinted at, a mysterious shrug or an ungenerous smile, which conveyed every thing without saying any thing, generally closed the subject.

Disgusted by the duplicity of her admirers, which Lady Laura was too penetrating not to see, she eagerly embraced the idea of trying her influence on Edmund, whose figure and manners were too interesting to pass unobserved by her, and whose youth, candor, and evident ignorance of the artificial manners of polished society, gave every hope of success. The fortunate incident of her rescue by him, she regarded as a most favorable omen, and resolving not to lose any advantage by delay, the very next morning brought an elegant card from the Earl of Carisbrooke, expressive of his acknowledgements, and requesting Edmund to add to the obligations which he had already laid him under, by favoring him with his company at dinner *en famille*, adding, that nothing but close imprisonment from the gout should have induced him to behave with so little ceremony, and that he hoped his impatience to see the deliverer of his child, would plead his excuse for so abrupt an introduction of himself. "Bravo!" exclaimed Henry, "this is the work of the enchantress: you must go, Edmund, to the palace of Armida; you will find it a magic scene; and then the *boudoir*! oh! the delight of being with a pretty woman in her *boudoir*!"

"J'amie une boudoir étroite, qu'un demi jour eclaire,  
Là mon coeur est chez lui; le premier demi jour,

Fuit par la volupté, menagé par l'amour."

Emma crimsoned, for she knew Lady Laura, and feared that her lover's fidelity was going to be severely tried. Edmund read her thoughts in her countenance, and felt no wish to court temptation. "What shall I do, my lord?" said he to Lord Drelincourt, with a smile. "Do," he replied, returning the smile, "can their be a doubt? Accept the invitation; you will find the Earl a very pleasant man, and if my good opinion of him will prejudice you in his favor, I will add that he is an old friend of mine, and I know not where I could find one much more worthy." "That is quite sufficient, my lord," said Edmund bowing, "for me to esteem him; and I already regret the time which must elapse before I have the pleasure of his acquaintance." "I dare say you do," said Henry, "you are a happy fellow." Then turning to Lady Harriett, with an affected tenderness, he continued in a half whisper, "But happiness will not be confined to Carisbrooke Castle, any more than talents and beauty, at least I shall not be envious of any there." Lady Harriett was much pleased with this address, the only gallant one that she had heard from Henry since the ball, and she resolved first to inform Miss Dunderton of it, secondly, to be violently in love, and thirdly, she wondered which of her talents he admired the most, and endeavoured to recollect when she had displayed any. The morning passed as usual; Miss Clayton teased Breresford to take some lessons from her, how to jump out of the back part of an open carriage, in case of an accident, but he resolutely refused, and took shelter on the sofa with Lady Maria, for whom he employed himself very assiduously, in ornamenting a work-box with some beautiful designs of his own painting.

At length the hour which brought Edmund to Carisbrooke Castle, arrived, and he was received with much politeness by the Earl, who was a venerable figure, apparently near seventy, his feet were raised on cushions, which Lady Laura was placing with filial duty, when Edmund entered. She merely introduced him to her father, and then withdrew, leaving him impressed with an idea, that she, was certainly amiable at home, and might probably appear to much advantage in a domestic circle. The gentlemen were soon mutually pleased, Lord Carisbrooke's manners had an engaging frankness, he was charmed with the ingenuousness and modesty of his young guest, and before dinner was announced, they had quite forgotten the shortness of their acquaintance. Lady Laura acquitted herself with much ease, and elegance, in doing the honours of the table, and shortly after dinner, the Earl requesting Edmund to excuse the methodical idleness of an invalid, prepared to take his accustomed nap, deputing his daughter to entertain his guest. She soon led the way from the dining room, but not to the boudoir, of which Henry had given so captivating an account; no, that was reserved for the season when the blaze of the fire added to its contracted size, would give an idea of cheerfulness and social comfort. She now asked Edmund to stroll through the grounds, which were laid out with much taste; in the course of their walk, her ladyship appeared fatigued, Edmund of course entreated her to accept of his arm, and she was not accustomed to raise scruples; their way led to a beautiful summer house, which they entered for the double purpose of resting themselves, and of enjoying the fine prospect that it commanded. It was built on a small eminence, shaded by wood, and consisted of two rooms, the first was nearly filled with choice exotics, which wafted a delightful fragrance, and excluded the fervor of the sun so effectually, that even at noon it was involved in gloom, which cast an air of

pleasing mystery over the place. The inner room was tastefully fitted up with pale pink furniture; a few fine prints, a small collection of books, and a number of pleasing trifles, seemed to consecrate the scene to meditation and friendship: none but pleasing ideas could be inspired by its solitary situation, and bounded view; for it overlooked only a pretty valley, thro' which a brook murmured in pensive melody, and seemed to tell all who entered it, that they must depend only on themselves for happiness; Edmund was delighted, and his heart felt all its sensibility called forth in a scene so congenial to his feelings. One moment he wished for Lady Emma, and the next was contented with Lady Laura; they fell into a train of agreeable conversation, and time flew unperceived by Edmund, until his companion reminded him, that her father's nap would be finished; rightly judging that it was much better for him to leave the enchanting spot with a wish to return, than to stay till the charm of novelty, and fervour of a first impression had exhausted themselves.

They found the Earl awake and refreshed; coffee was brought in, the conversation became general, and so agreeable, that Edmund was sorry when the hour of his departure approached. The Earl pressed him to repeat his visit, and Lady Laura added her intreaties, exulting in the conquest which she flattered herself she should soon obtain.

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## CHAP. VII.

Such dire achievements sings the bard that tells  
 Of palfrey'd dames, bold knights, and magic spells,  
 Where whole brigades one champion's arms o'erthrow,  
 And cleave a giant at a random blow;  
 Slay paynims vile, that force the fair, and tame  
 The goblin's fury, and the dragon's flame.

TICKELL.

THE next day was to restore the ladies Maud and Bertha to Courtney Lodge, and all the party was invited to escort them there.

The expedition was fixed for an early hour, in order that the young people might explore some curious rocks and caverns in the neighbourhood. When they arrived at the Lodge, they found an elegant repast, and were waited on by children, dressed in all the fantastic disguises, which Lady Bertha (for it was under her direction,) had met with in her various reading. Henry made *les grands yeux* at the little cupid, who brought him a glass of wine, but turning away to conceal his smiles, he saw a girl in the character of Fame, waiting on his father; his sisters were attended by Prudence, Fortitude, and Chastity, and the table was covered with mottoes, devices, figures and allegories. The inventress of the feast, enjoyed the surprise that it occasioned, and looking round with a smile, the benevolence of which, hid the folly of the speech that it preceeded. "I am fond of any thing ingenious," said the good lady, "and I own, I must regret that allegorical feasts and masques, have gone out of fashion since the reign of that noble Queen Elizabeth. Hers were happy days, she could see the value and beauty of chivalry, nor did she think it beneath her learning and virtue to encourage it." This was a subject on which Lady Bertha could be eloquent, for she was deeply read in court intrigues and spectacles, and could repeat most exactly, the number and the order of the horsemen that attended on this occasion, and the pages and the ladies who were chosen for the other, but Lady Maud interrupted her, by saying with a sour aspect. "I do not know in what Elizabeth's virtue could consist, I have no opinion of any woman's virtue, who acknowledges male favorites, and I cannot admire days, when ladies admitted men into their rooms, as if they were lapdogs." "It would be certainly dangerous in times like these, my lady," said Captain Clayton, "when mankind have degenerated from their native simplicity, and hardy virtue, but in the more fortunate periods to which you allude, we are told, that all the men were brave, and all the women chaste." "Things so incomprehensible to us, at this distance of time," added Mr. Fletcher, "that we only consider the assertion in the same light, as we treat that of there being in former days, flying dragons, men who carried their heads under their arms, and beasts that assumed the appearance of beautiful women, to lure their prey to destruction." "Oh but indeed," said Lady Bertha warmly, "Virtue was not imaginary in those days, for all the romances of the times abound in the noblest sentiments; and we even read of an illustrious and valorous knight, who being thrown



into unheard of difficulties, and vanquishing them in the most wonderful manner, is brought to a splendid castle, where he is treated with the utmost respect; a sumptuous banquet is prepared for him, and after being attended by females to the bath, he is led to table, and waited on by naked damsels of the most striking beauty; and all this is mentioned without any levity; nor does the relation of it appear inconsistent with the most rigid virtue; a strong proof of the purity of the times in which they were written.”

“Certainly, my dear aunt,” said Henry, “and at the same time, of the brilliancy of the author’s imagination. I am only sorry that you stopped short of the models which you so much admire.” This sally created general laughter, and Lord Drelincourt took the opportunity of entering into a discussion on the progress of romance, and the different style of writing which had been adopted in different ages. The conversation became interesting, for it was a subject in which all the females could join, except Miss Clayton, who had never read a page in her life; and Lady Harriett, who was however rejoiced to hear that the world contained folio romances, with the delightful titles of “Cassandra,” “Cleopatra, or Love’s Master-piece,” “Cyrus the Great,” and many others which she resolved to procure, as she began to think that it was the fashion to read at Castle Drelincourt.

The collation being over, and all the attendant loves and graces withdrawn, Miss Clayton reminded the party, that if they delayed their excursion much longer, they should inevitably be lost in the wilderness which they meant to explore; they accordingly mounted; but Fate had ordained that poor Breresford should not appear to advantage in equestrian excursions; and, on this occasion, she was particularly cruel in her decree. His old enemy, Miss Clayton, provoked at the coldness with which he had treated her since the day of his precipitate descent from his car, resolved to punish him, by making him once more the slave of fear, and a laughing-stock to the company; she accordingly clapped her spur (for she never rode without one) into her horse, and setting off full gallop, contrived, in passing Breresford, to exercise her whip on his steed as she passed him; the animal, smarting from the lash, set off likewise, and his master not having perceived it, and being taken quite unawares, was hurried into the thickest part of the wood before he was fully sensible of his situation. As for Miss Clayton, she struck into a different path, by which she rejoined the party, to describe when her bursts of laughter permitted utterance, the forlorn situation of their affrighted beau. Lady Maria was not much gratified by having her lover held up as an object of ridicule, for he possessed many amiable qualities, though they were veiled under the effeminate habits, which he had contracted by being brought up in the most retired and domestic manner with a grandmother, who doated on him, and whose death, which had taken place a few months before the time we are treating of, he had mourned with sincere regret, though he had not, like some of the poets of this poetical age, expressed the extent of his affliction by writing a folio volume of sonnets to her memory. At this moment all his best traits recurred to Lady Maria; her vanity was hurt as much as her affection, and she expressed very keenly her disapprobation of Miss Clayton’s love of the ridiculous, adding, “It is surprising, that in your constant search after it, you forget to look where you might find the most ample food for your inclination to expose it, and where you might indulge that inclination to the utmost, not only with peculiar success, but without incurring any censure for using too great severity.” The satire of this speech, only shewed Miss Clayton’s power of teasing in

another light. She asked pardon with the most provoking humility, protesting that had she considered the danger of her frolic, she would not for the world have indulged in it, for that she had heard of people who had lost their senses from severe fright; adding, "how happy it would be if the proverb, that, "what we never have we never can lose," applied in the least to him; for how could I answer to the world were I to deprive it of the talents, and manly virtues of a Mr. Breresford. We must endeavour to make Lady Bertha believe that a malicious enchanter has flown away with him, or transformed him into a monkey; but I will repair the mischief I have done, to the utmost in my power; I will seek for him, and bring him in triumphant safety on my horse's neck; I am sorry I have not a pillow ready for him, but it is only 'when the mind's at ease the body's delicate;' and I dare say his mind is such a chaos just now, that he will not care how his body is conveyed, if it be but in a whole skin." So saying, she set off in pursuit of the involuntary fugitive, regardless of the coldness and gravity of the company, who felt offended by her freedom, and disgusted by her manners. Her search however was vain; her hallooes through the wood were unanswered, and she began to be seriously alarmed for the consequences of her frolic. After continuing her pursuit, and reiterating her shouts for some time, she returned to give an account of her bad success, and related it with a countenance, in which concern was so strongly marked, that her previous conduct was forgotten, and the more readily on account of her brother, who always witnessed with pain his sister's eccentricities.

Lest however our readers should suffer from their fears for the safety of Mr. Breresford, we must inform them of his proceedings. He galloped very furiously, though very unwillingly, nearly two miles, and was alternately in bodily fear for his head, which was threatened with destruction from the huge boughs under which he was rapidly carried, and in bodily pain from the violent and repeated percussions which his head's antipodes suffered, by coming suddenly in contact with the saddle, particularly as he had not yet recovered from the bruises he had received in his recent fall. However there was no remedy, the underwood pricked the horse's legs, and retarded his progress, and in order to make up for the lost time, he redoubled his speed when he found himself free from obstacles. Thus alternately lifted up in the air, and brought down again with additional force, sometimes stumbling and sometimes leaping, the affrighted horse carried his yet more affrighted master over brake and bog, hill and dale, hedge and ditch, of which even our most dashing fox-hunters would not have liked the prospect. Breresford called loudly two or three times for help, but his steed seemed to disdain the idea of assistance, and flew with increased speed to shew that he required none. Breresford then pulled the reins with all his strength, but by that means made the beast rear, until his master thought, like Don Quixote, that he was going to fly into the air. An expedition of this kind, however, he was by no means inclined to risk, as the first step towards it had produced on his susceptible stomach, all the agreeable sensations which the motion of a boat in a rough sea gives to a fresh-water sailor: making therefore a virtue of necessity, he, at length, threw his arms lovingly round his horse's neck, and resigning himself to his destiny, suffered the animal to choose his road. The sagacious steed wisely took the way home, and brought his master in safety to the gates of the lodge. Breresford began to breathe more freely when he felt himself on terra-firma; and, in gratitude for his escape, he strove to forget the mortifying circumstances by which it had been preceded.

He found the elderly party at cards; and, after having accounted with great good nature for his return, he had the pleasure of sitting by the table three long hours, hearing Lady Maud complain of her own bad cards, and her partner's bad play; that she never had a hand, or if she ventured one was basted, and had lost two voles with mattadores. At length the party returned, and were very glad to find the object of their solicitude in safety, and apparent ease. Henry could not forbear laughing, as he enquired how Mr. Breresford liked the woods and dales; if he had taken sketches of the most striking views, as he had proposed; and what he thought to the picturesque appearance of the whole. Breresford bore the laugh with great good humour, saying, that if to inspire terror were one great effect of the sublime, the scenes through which he had passed were, doubtless, entitled to that epithet; but, that he hoped his short stay amongst them would excuse his not having described them with his pencil according to his original intention. "And yet," said Mr. Fletcher, "we do not find flying through a country, any impediment to describing it, in this ingenious age; formerly, indeed, men of talents and information used to spend twenty years in travelling, and then apologize for any imperfection in their accounts, by stating the difficulty of arriving at facts; but now, a tour for a couple of summer months, is quite sufficient for an elaborate account of the places through which it is made; particularly if illustrated by sketches taken, of course upon the spot, and no doubt equally faithful with the descriptions which accompany them. So wise are our present travellers; and wiser still is he who travels by his own fire-side, and with a map, a volume or two of good old authors, and quotations from fashionable moderns, and the poets, can make as entertaining a tour as the best of them."

## CHAP. VIII

Oh, Happiness! our being's end and aim,  
 Good, Pleasure, Ease, Content, whate'er thy name,  
 That something still that prompts th' eternal sigh  
 For which we bear to live and dare to die,  
 Which still so near us, yet beyond us lies,  
 O'erlook'd, seen double by the fool and wise;  
 Plant of celestial seed, if dropt below,  
 Say in what mortal soil thou design'st to grow.

POPE.

FOR some time, affairs went on in an uniform train at Castle Drelincourt; Miss Clayton did not continue her jokes further than she could expect them to be born, Henry made violent love to Lady Harriett, merely *pour passer le tems*, and Edmund every day gained ground on Lady Laura's esteem, and lost it in his own; half his time was spent at Carisbrooke Castle; every evening he resolved to go there no more, and every morning he resolved to go once again for the last time.

Lady Emma was unhappy, but she saw that Edmund was likewise, and she carefully avoided a look, or word, which he might construe into a reproach: nor were they alone melancholy; Captain Clayton's dejection increased, Edmund perceived it, and anxiously wished to enquire its cause, for he had conceived a regard for him, which was returned by the Captain with the utmost friendship. But it was a subject too delicate to be introduced unless by accident, and Edmund was therefore left to conjecture. Sometimes he thought the eccentricity of Miss Clayton might give her brother uneasiness, but Clayton's mind was too strong to sink under the follies of others, and becoming accustomed to his sister's they ceased to mortify him, nor did he throw away upon them remonstrances which experience had taught him were unavailing.

The next idea that presented itself, and apparently a more plausible one, was, that he felt hurt by the treatment which he received from the fair goddess of his idolatry, for Lady Rosamond, in common with many other ladies, was fond of exerting her power, and thought that the sure way to try a man's affection, was to treat him alternately as a slave and a fool. Having received every tender avowal from her lover, and her vanity having been gratified by every compliment and praise which partial affection could bestow, she tried all the variety of caprice to rivet more firmly, chains, which however strong, ought never to be felt. She assumed a cold and haughty air to wound his pride, a reserved and dejected one to mortify his love; she was gay when she thought being so would rouse his jealousy, indifferent and careless, when she saw that by such conduct she depressed his hope of pleasing. In short, she was alternately a tyrant and a spoiled child, and he was alternately disgusted by her conduct, and charmed with her fine sense and brilliant accomplishments.

Accident, however, freed him from a slavery, which became irksome, and deprived Lady Rosamond of a lover whom she treated unworthily.

One morning, the Earl, Lord Courtney and Mr. Fletcher, were obliged to attend a public meeting in the neighbourhood, Edmund and Clayton were therefore left to themselves, for Breresford was so entirely a lady's man, that he was no acquisition to the gentlemen. The morning was uncommonly rainy, consequently there was no other resource than the library. The ladies were in the gallery, and as Clayton's melancholy seemed even greater than usual, Edmund resolved to make him the confidant of his own vexations, and to request to share his in return.

Unfortunately, at the instant that they left the gallery, Lady Rosamond did the same, and took her seat behind a screen, in the room which we have already mentioned, as being appropriated to the ladies work, and which communicated by one door with the library. She had retired here to finish a large drawing, meant as a present for her lover, to whom she was much attached, notwithstanding the absurdity of her conduct towards him. The subject was from Mrs. Radcliff's "Italian," and represented the interesting scene of Ellena's midnight marriage, on which beautiful incident, Clayton had, in reading this admirable work, dwelt with peculiar pleasure, particularly remarking that it would afford an admirable subject for the pencil. Lady Rosamond was so intent on her employment, that she had not observed that the door of the library was open, until she heard Clayton's voice; she then retained her seat, not from any wish to hear the conversation which might pass, for that was an idea altogether unworthy of her, and one which she would have blushed to entertain for a moment, but she was prompted by a too scrupulous delicacy, thinking that if she discovered her retreat, it might be construed into desiring a tête-à-tête with her lover; she therefore continued her drawing in silence, and as the gentlemen had only, the instant before, left the whole party in the gallery, they of course concluded themselves entirely in private, particularly as no one could enter the workroom unseen, on account of the door being open; and thus they were betrayed by the very circumstance which contributed to their imaginary security.

Edmund began the confidential discourse, and stated with the ingenuousness natural to him, his situation respecting Lady Laura, acknowledging that he could easily perceive her to be devoid even of common talents, and as deficient in the qualities of the heart as of the head; yet such was his infatuation, that he had not the resolution to avoid her fascinating allurements, though his own folly and the injustice that he was doing her, were aggravated by the consciousness, that were she even as amiable as she was seducing, he had not a heart to offer in return for that, which she unequivocally told him he had gained.

Clayton smiled at the simplicity of his young friend's narration, but admired the rectitude of principle which occasioned him so much uneasiness. He then, without wounding Edmund's self-love, contrived to convince him, that, in some cases, it was possible to be inconstant, without one party dying of grief, or the other of remorse, a fact always incredulously received by the young of either sex, who are involved in the pains and pleasures of a first attachment, in which real love has however often as little concern, as it had in the present instance. After some further conversation on the subject that pressed so heavily on Edmund's mind, it was succeeded by an enquiry into the dejection which clouded Clayton's spirits. He hesitated for a moment, a blush passed across his

pale cheek, and Edmund requested forgiveness for having, through anxiety, probed a wound perhaps recently inflicted: "No indeed, my dear Edmund," replied Clayton, "my sorrows are neither recent nor real; I have been exactly as you see me, ever since I was a boy. I would willingly tell you my uneasiness, but in good truth it is merely imaginary, or constitutional, and in either view I am ashamed of it. I will, however, relate to you my life, though it is, alas! Unmarked by one interesting event, unadorned by one meritorious action; and this conviction makes the retrospect painful."—

"My parents died when my sister and I were in infancy, and the care of us devolved on my uncle, Sir John Clayton, who is one of the oldest baronets in England, and to whose titles and estates, I have the honour to be heir. He has been a father to the orphans left to his charge, and yet his very kindness has been productive of ill, both to my sister and to myself. From my infancy I had a predilection for study; my uncle's education had been much neglected, and a consciousness of his defects, made him always shun the conversation of literary men. He was anxious that I might be spared any mortification, similar to what he had experienced in their society, therefore was delighted with my evident taste for reading, and encouraged it, by giving me a tutor, who to an extensive acquaintance with ancient and modern authors, added a knowledge of the world, and living manners, rarely found in professed scholars. He had been in almost every part of the habitable globe, had served many foreign powers, and was intimately acquainted with all the European courts. Under his tuition, I devoured learning until every branch of it was familiar to me. I lived in my study, and my sister being left my uncle's sole companion, was taught to know all the points of a horse, as well as any of the grooms, regularly went out to hunt, and could bring a bird down with unerring aim. I take shame to myself, for having observed her education, without endeavouring to correct its defects. To confess the truth, I was immersed so deeply in literature, that every other consideration seemed trifling, and my uncle had no idea that his plans could be improved, so long as my sister exhibited in her countenance, the glow of health, and the smile of good humour; accordingly I became a fastidious bookworm, and she an eccentric amazon." Edmund smiled at these sketches, and Clayton proceeded. "The first mortification that I ever knew, was a refusal from my uncle, when I asked permission of him to travel. His reason for the peremptory negative which he put upon my request, was that during his life, he could never part with either of his dear brother's children, the precious legacies of fraternal love, but that at his death, which could not in the course of nature be long delayed, I should find myself master of his wealth and of my own actions. I was obliged to submit to a control, imposed in so affectionate a manner; I resumed my studies, but I regretted every day that I wasted in retirement, at a period of life, when the perceptions are exquisite, the imagination ready to receive every delightful impression, and youthful hopes on the rack of expectation. My tutor had fired me with disdain for a life of inglorious ease, my heart throbbed with ambition, history and poetry had been my favorite studies, and every page I read, placed glorious examples before my eyes, or in the sweetest strains celebrated exploits, which I contemplated until I longed to emulate them.

"In this frame of mind, I was deprived of my tutor; he died suddenly, and left me almost inconsolable. The solitude or confined society of Clayton Hall, became more than ever insupportable to me. My uncle was miserable on witnessing my sorrow; I once more entreated him to suffer me to go abroad, but in vain, I then requested his permission to

enter into the army, this likewise he refused, but at last as a compromise, presented me with a commission in the guards.

“I went immediately to town, to enter on my new occupation, but not to be interested in it, not to be happy.

“I had never been from home before, consequently was an utter stranger to the manners of the higher classes of society, and I soon found that they were not suited to my taste. The men appeared to affect rudeness and indifference, the women contempt of shame, and neglect of virtue.

“Unknown to them when sensual pleasures cloy,  
To fill the languid frame with finer joy;  
Unknown those powers that raise the soul to flame,  
Catch every nerve and vibrate through the frame.”

“No one seemed to feel as I felt, I saw others rise to the unmeaning routine of the day, not indeed with an air of interest, for that has been long voted out of fashionable faces, but at least with an air of complacency. They idled away the day as a thing of course, and retired to rest perfectly contented with looking forward to a repetition of the same nameless pursuits. Life had not for me “vitality enough to keep it from putrefaction,” and loathing its insipidity I looked round for something to give it a relish.

“I associated with wits professed, but I soon found that they laughed at no one’s jokes but their own. I entered into literary society, there also I saw that too often admiration of ingenuity and talents, was lost in envy towards their possessor.

The sublime alone could please me, and I despised the little occurrences of life, whilst I sighed for a succession of great events. I sickened at the homage paid to valour, and I plunged deeper into company to avoid my own reflections; unfortunately my ideas were too refined, and too far removed from common life to be interested by common scenes, and common actors.” He paused, and then repeated from Shenstone, with such pathos that the tears started into Edmund’s eyes:

“Ah me, my friend, it will not, will not last,  
This fairy scene, that cheats our youthful eyes;  
The charm dissolves, th’ aerial music’s past,  
The banquet ceases and the vision flies.

Smit with the charms of fame whose lovely spoil,  
The wreath, the garland, fire the poet’s pride;  
I trimm’d my lamp, consum’d the midnight oil,  
But soon the paths of health and fame divide.

And vain are books, the sage’s wisdom vain,  
What has the world to bribe our steps astray!  
Ere reason learns by studied laws to reign,  
The weaken’d passions self-subdu’d obey.

Tedious again to curse the drizzling day,  
 Again to trace the wintry tracts of snow,  
 Or sooth'd by vernal airs, again survey  
 The selfsame hawthorns bud or cowslips blow.

Ah no! 'tis o'er! the dear delusion's o'er!  
 A stagnant breezeless air becalms my soul;  
 A fond aspiring candidate no more,  
 I scorn the prize before I reach the goal."

"I am ready to acknowledge," continued he, "that my mortifications have been imaginary, and my disappointments have had their foundation in my own romantic expectations; I regard myself as a mirror, of which the surface, though exquisitely polished, magnifies the failings of those whom it reflects, and which is too brittle to be useful. My ideas have been refined till they have become chimeras, and my sensibility exalted to a pitch of morbid acuteness.

"Last winter I met Lady Rosamond Courtney. In the circle of fashion, she shone like a star of the first magnitude; her beauty attracted me, her talents confirmed my admiration, the haughtiness of her manner did not appear to me a fault; I called it dignity; for I was sick of the condescending familiarity of misses of quality, and I believed myself happy in gaining permission to carry my attentions beyond the mere forms of politeness, and to renew them during the summer at Castle Drelincourt. I fondly thought that I had at length met with an object in whom I could be interested, with whom life would be desirable; but I am doomed to be disappointed, and love does not favour me with his sweets unalloyed by bitters. I admire Lady Rosamond's charms as much as I did the first day when I beheld her; and her talents yet more, for I daily witness their powers; but in woman, the dignity of Juno and the wisdom of Minerva, is not all that is requisite, the same love of impossibility pursues me: I sigh for perfection amid the frailty of human nature; and I vainly seek in Lady Rosamond, the mild grace and melting sensibility which ought to be the peculiar characteristics of the fair sex. Besides, her behaviour of late to me, is not what I approve, nor ought she to condescend to adopt it. Where a woman will tyrannize before marriage, a man must degrade himself by unnecessary concessions; and it too frequently happens, that after the indissoluble ceremony is past, the man assumes his rights with additional severity; and the lady, in the sullenness of despair, submits only from conviction of the fruitlessness of opposition.

"On this subject however, I confess that I ought to remain silent; for, undoubtedly the portionless daughter of an earl, descends from her dignity in accepting the hand of a simple baronet in reversion."

These words, uttered in a severe and sarcastic tone, concluded Clayton's recital; and, after a few arguments on life, and its general disappointments, the gentlemen concluded their discourse, by proposing a stroll during the gleam of sunshine which then appeared.

We hope that our readers have not forgotten the trying situation of Lady Rosamond during the above conversation; and that they have already compassionated the feelings which must have been excited in her breast by the latter part of the discourse. She



was shocked when she found it was of a confidential nature, as she had flattered herself that it would turn either on literary topics, or that the parties would pursue their respective studies in silence. Whilst however, she hesitated whether or not to make her proximity to them known, every moment increased her doubt, and the awkwardness of her situation, until she had heard too much to gain credit for disinterestedness in refusing to hear more; she therefore unwillingly remained a listener.

She was much gratified with the sentiments of her lover and Edmund, but when the former spoke exclusively of himself, she could not but be attentive; she heard with pleasure his unvarnished tale, and rejoiced in his unaffected abhorrence of every thing mean or profligate. He mentioned her name, her heart throbbed; she anticipated his praises, and her cheeks were crimsoned with the fear of being unworthy of hearing them in that unsuspected manner. But what new emotions did not his words create in her bosom! pride, resentment, self-reproach, wounded love, and mortified vanity, contributed at once to give them poignancy! She heard the whole; tears trembled in her eyes, suppressed sobs filled her bosom, but this was no moment to indulge them; she wished but to escape unobserved; for if she before feared discovery, when she expected only her lover's praises, how did she now dread it, when humiliated by his censure! she blushed, though alone, and must have sunk had any one witnessed her confusion. She was however relieved by the departure of the gentlemen, and she then resolved to go to her room through the same door by which they had made their exit, in order to avoid meeting any one in the gallery, through which she must have passed by the other door. She resolved likewise to take no notice of what she had overheard, but to appear in an unconcerned temper, and to give the presumptuous lover, who could see faults in his mistress, his dismissal, without assigning any other reason than a change of inclination, and an absolute diminution of her regard. If Lady Rosamond had possessed the control over her feelings, which she flattered herself she could exercise, this scheme would doubtless have been admirable, and the sweetness of the revenge that she meditated, might have consoled her for the bitter mortification which gave rise to it; but Lady Rosamond was not quite the stoic she believed herself, for her heart possessed great sensibility, though her pride often steeled her from its attacks. In going out of the library, she unfortunately met her father. Her agitation was too great to escape the eye of parental affection, particularly as she was a favorite daughter. The Earl enquired the cause of it in the tenderest accents. Poor Lady Rosamond, losing the command with which she had smothered her vexation, in a voice, choaked with hysteric sobs and drowned in tears, rashly entreated her father no longer to consider Captain Clayton as a suitor for her favor, but to give him his dismissal immediately. Astonished at the sudden change in his daughter's inclinations; mortified at her rejection of a man, whom he already esteemed, and shocked at the breach of hospitality of which she urged him to be guilty, the Earl employed every entreaty to learn the motives of her conduct, and every argument to shew its absurdity; but his efforts were vain; for though Lady Rosamond was too just to condemn, where she could not believe censure to be actually due, yet was she also too proud to submit to it, even whilst she acknowledged its justice. The Earl was therefore obliged, however unwillingly, to acquiesce in his daughter's wishes. She begged of him to conceal them from the rest of the family; and he, in return, requested her to compose herself, tenderly assuring her, that if he ever appeared desirous of influencing the

inclinations of his children, in so important a step as that of marriage, he was prompted solely by his anxiety for their welfare, and his regard to their happiness.

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## CHAP. IX.

Rude were the storms which deep thro' my sad breast,  
 Have striv'n the gems of virtue to expel,  
 Rebellious passions robbed my soul of rest,  
 But in despondency's most baleful hour,  
 I felt within a renovating power  
 Strengthen my soul, and all at last is well.

ANN BATTEN CRISTALL.

AFTER the relation we have already given, it is unnecessary to inform our readers, that Captain Clayton was civilly informed that the continuance of his addresses was not desirable. Lady Rosamond having gratified her revenge, by the haughty indifference and frigid coldness which she displayed, yet found all her pride insufficient, to prevent her from regretting her precipitance in parting with her lover, whose merits had made a real impression on her heart; and the dictates of an excellent judgment, when the clouds of passion, by which it had been obscured, were dispersed, too plainly informed her, that it would have been more consistent with true wisdom to reform her errors, than to quarrel with the condemner of them. But all was now over, Clayton had taken his leave, with manly fortitude, and his sister coolly observing that they were thrown out, and had run on the wrong side of the post, went to the stable to see Highflyer rubbed down preparatory to her departure, and then returning to the house, amused herself in the intermediate time, by cracking a whip with such dexterity, that Lady Maria's nerves, and a valuable set of china, were in the most imminent danger of being shattered.

This unpleasant occurrence, seemed for some time to cloud the cheerfulness of the remainder of the circle. Lady Maria received Breresford's attentions so coldly, that he trembled lest dismissal should be the order of the day. He therefore redoubled his assiduities, and displayed every day new proofs of his knowledge in the polite arts. The most ingenious and beautifully executed trifles were presented to the insensible fair one, and the newest music, and books, with the most elegant trinkets, daily courted her acceptance; but though our inimitable poet says, "Win her with gifts," yet in the present instance they failed to touch Lady Maria's heart, for its wishes pointed to Edmund, who entangled in an intrigue which he had prosecuted without passion, and continued through irresolution, was deprived of his own esteem, and durst no longer solicit that of an object, whom he secretly contrasted every moment with Lady Laura, and every moment lamented the infatuation which had first led him to forget her worth, but to relieve himself from his uneasy reflections, he continued daily to seek refuge at Carisbrook Castle, where he was always received with smiles.

One day as he was going thither, he met Clayton, whose eyes beamed unusual animation; far from appearing a despairing lover,—Hope seemed personified in him, and his whole countenance was animated by cheerfulness; "Give me joy, my dear Edmund," he exclaimed, "I am again a lover, a happy favoured lover, the mountain nymph sweet liberty woos my acceptance of her charms, fair science and rosy health join their voices,

and to-morrow, I wing my flight to classic ground." After this rapsody, to which Edmund listened in amazement, fearing lest disappointment had ravaged his friend's understanding, Clayton proceeded to inform him that Sir John, highly indignant at the capricious treatment which he had met with, and fearing from the listless dejection of his manner, that it had made a deeper impression on him than he wished to acknowledge, voluntarily proposed the measure, to which he had before refused to consent, and advised his nephew to resign his commission, to set out immediately on the grand tour, and to spend some time in every place worthy of observation. "The good man," continued Clayton, "lost all his reluctance to part with me, in his fears for my health; and conjured me to make my expedition as pleasurable as possible, assuring me of an unlimited command over his purse during my absence, and reproaching himself with having kept me at home so long; whilst I inwardly rejoiced at the pale cheek, and hollow eyes, which had procured my emancipation, nor did I ever survey my countenance with more complacency, than the moment after its ghastly expression, and cadaverous hue had produced such agreeable effects. For,

"It was not by vile loitering in case,  
That Grace obtained the brightest palm of art,  
That soft, yet ardent Athens learn'd to please,  
To keen the wit, and to subdue the heart,  
In all supreme! complete in every part.  
It was not thence majestic Rome arose,  
And o'er the nations shook her conqu'ring dart,  
For sluggard's brows the laurel never grows,  
Renown is not the child of indolent repose."

Edmund was delighted with the animated tone in which Clayton pronounced these lines, and congratulated him on his pleasing prospects, assuring him that he should be happy if he could be of the slightest service to him, for which purpose, he would give him letters to many eminent men in Florence, and one to his father, who could introduce him to all the literati in Tuscany, and would be proud of doing it to one, who could so well appreciate their merits.

After some further conversation they parted, with mutual expressions of regard, and Edmund returned to Castle Drelincourt to write his letters. He found the ladies already informed of Clayton's intentions, by means of Henry, who had seen him, and was rallying Lady Rosamond on the sudden desertion of her lover.

Edmund took his seat near the work-table opposite to Lady Emma, who seemed lost in thought, and employed only in cutting a watch-paper; but though she appeared to move the scissars unconsciously, yet the design was completed with all the elegant exactness, which characterised her most trifling undertakings. "What miserable dogs we male creatures are," exclaimed Henry addressing himself to Edmund, "we are unlucky beings, subject to the arbitrary law of the fair, from whose decree we have no appeal. Here is Rose, not content with depriving her humble adorer of the light of her presence, must banish him even from his native country, and I tremble, lest her cruelty should drive him into uninhabited deserts, or unknown shores: confess, Rose, that you feel some

qualms of conscience, some signs of returning love." This was a subject, on which Lady Rosamond was ill-disposed to jest, and she replied with a grave countenance, and severe manner, "Love cannot exist without esteem, and I have ceased to esteem Captain Clayton, though I sincerely wish him every happiness." "Ah!" exclaimed Emma, "you are fortunate in self-command, fortunate in being able to withhold love, when you are obliged to deny esteem, for surely it is possible to continue to love, when we can no longer esteem." Edmund felt the full force of these words, and was covered with confusion, when his eyes met those of Lady Emma, who was pale with emotion. A severe sentiment uttered in a bitter tone, was so great a novelty from her, that it drew general observation. "Bravo, my little Emma," exclaimed Henry, "all for love, or the world well lost, I like the noble sentiment." Lady Maria (addressing her by the appellation, child,) enquired with more ill-humour than was natural to her, how long she had been a casuist in the mysterious science of love? And whence were the sources of her experience? Lady Rosamond coldly observed, that young people would have romantic ideas, till experience taught them their fallacy, and Emma vexed at having betrayed her sentiments, and finding them treated with ridicule, burst into tears, and left the room. Lady Drelincourt mildly reproved her daughters, for speaking harshly to a sister, so gentle and unoffending. Henry laughed, and said, "Women were so fond of mischief, that they would quarrel with each other, rather than not enjoy it." And Edmund retired to the library to commune with himself.—

"Gentle and unoffending, she is indeed," he exclaimed, "but I in wretched folly could throw this pearl away, richer than all its tribe, and for what? For a painted doll, artificial allurements, negative pleasures!" He continued to reprobate his conduct in very severe terms, till he had exhausted all the forms of condemnation that he could recollect in English, French, and Italian, he then after sincerely lamenting the past, began to form resolutions for the future, and determined first to go no more to Carisbrooke Castle, which contained no inducement to an honorable man, secondly to listen no more to the suggestions of vanity, which are beneath the consideration of a wise man, and lastly to endeavour to render himself worthy of Lady Emma's love, as including all the real blessings that a well-placed virtuous attachment can bestow. Having made these resolutions he felt more easy, and after having written his letters, was enabled to join the family at dinner, with the serenity which a consciousness of rectitude and honour, never fails to spread over the mind of the fortunate possessor.

## CHAP. X.

—A prudent father,  
 By nature formed to guide and rule her choice,  
 Resigns his daughter to a husband's care,  
 Who with superior dignity, with reason,  
 And manly tenderness, will ever love her;  
 Not first a kneeling slave, and then a tyrant.

THOMSON.

THE tender attentions of a few days, and a continued absence from Carisbrooke Castle, so completely reinstated Edmund in Emma's good graces, that he ventured to request her permission to inform Lord Drelincourt of his love, and solicit him to sanction it by his approbation. The timid and agitated Emma, vainly endeavoured to put a negative on this unexpected entreaty; the words died on her quivering lips; she looked round the room, but her confusion encreased on finding that she was alone with him; she reddened, and turned pale alternately, and Edmund too delicate to add to the embarrassment, from which, however, he drew the most favorable omens, considered her silence as sufficiently consenting to his wishes, and slightly hinting his hope of her suffering him to believe it so; he turned the conversation to a subject less interesting, in order to give her time to recover her tranquillity before the entrance of a third person.

When Emma retired to her dressing-room, she gave way to all the sensations of animated delight, never felt but once, never but on the first avowal of a first lover. In this instance they were perfect; to find the predilection of her heart returned by the homage of the favoured object, unchecked by fears of censure; what more could be desired? Yet, if possible, Edmund's mind was still happier; his present joy was heightened, by contrasting it with his past anxiety, and he congratulated himself anew on his escape from the snares of Lady Laura, to the silken fetters of the amiable and lovely Lady Emma. Impatient to assure himself of his felicity, he went immediately to the library, where he fortunately found the Earl alone. He felt himself however considerably embarrassed, scarcely knowing how to begin his love-fraught tale; and as the person to whom it was to be addressed, was deeply engaged in the perusal of a new political work, the awkwardness of his situation encreased, and his courage failed so fast, that he even began to meditate a retreat, when the Earl, lifting his eyes for a moment from the fascinating page, saw in Edmund's countenance things of deep import, and immediately relieved him from the unpleasantness of commencing the conversation, by enquiring, with the utmost good-nature, if he had any thing particular to communicate? Edmund then opened his cause, which he pleaded with the impassioned ardour of youth, ornamenting it with all his natural sensibility and ingenuousness. The Earl heard him with smiles, and stated his objections with tenderness; to the family of the Marchese he could make none, it was noble, and Edmund was the son of his first and dearest friend; his virtues and graces had endeared him to the Earl, who believed that he should place the happiness of his daughter

on a solid foundation, by resigning it to one so capable of promoting it. But Edmund was young, and the Earl had an invincible objection to long engagements. He differed from the generality of the world in many of his opinions, and in this among the rest. Far from believing that a long acquaintance between acknowledged lovers was serviceable in strengthening their attachment, and giving them an insight into each other's foibles and peculiarities, he thought it too often happened that in the course of four or five years, (a term not seldom recommended by prudent parents and guardians) the interest of love, and the charm of novelty, gave way to a disadvantageous familiarity, and an indifference only to be distinguished from friendship, by being more selfish and less interesting. Nor did he think the knowledge of disposition, which time might be supposed to bestow, any compensation for these disadvantages; as he was convinced that gross vices, or faults, could not be concealed even in a limited acquaintance; and he did not believe, that, on a more intimate one, a marriage had ever been broken off, from the discovery of what might be called trifling failings. He knew enough of the human heart, to be assured that pride, and the dread of censure or ridicule, frequently overpowers the scruples of timidity, or fears for futurity; which, however they may create distrust, are seldom active enough to be serviceable in removing the possibility of subsequent uneasiness. He stated his opinion to Edmund, who willingly acknowledged its justness in every case but his own, and in that he pleaded for an exception with so much energy, that the Earl was persuaded, and endeavoured to believe himself convinced. He told Edmund however, that the conditions must be mutual, and their agreement exactly understood, and faithfully observed. That if he gave his consent for Lady Emma to receive Edmund's addresses, it must likewise be with the approbation of the Marchese, and on a promise of waiting till a period judged proper and eligible by the parents of both parties, before the marriage should take place. That in the interval, as, on account of residing under the same roof, the greatest delicacy and propriety of conduct were requisite; he must on no consideration solicit the society of Emma alone, or pay her in company the inordinate and exclusive attentions, never excusable but when the opportunities of shewing them might be rare and uncertain. In short, the Earl wished Edmund to shew his love by silent tenderness, and respectful deference, rather than by servile adulation and marked civilities. He repeated to him, in order to soften the apparent severity of these injunctions; that as his attachment was not likely to be tortured by opposition, or embittered by absence, it ought to be manifested with dignity, and pursued with moderation.

Edmund listened with the utmost respect; and conviction attended the arguments which he heard. Conscious of his own sincerity, and satisfied of Lady Emma's, he perfectly agreed with the Earl, that it was unnecessary to be continually proving by words, what should never be doubted from his actions, and that where there was no sentiment which required concealment, stolen interviews were as unnecessary as degrading. He likewise readily promised unbounded compliance with every desire of the Earl, whom he thanked in terms of the warmest gratitude for his paternal kindness and indulgent friendship.

It was soon understood that Emma was the object of Edmund's love, and she received the congratulations of her sisters, on her conquest of the handsome and amiable Italian. Lady Maria turned pale, as she pronounced his name: from the first week of his arrival, she had indulged a secret partiality for him, and was never more sensible of its

force than when she contrasted him with Breresford, whose good-nature, unassuming deportment, and gentle disposition, combined with unceasing attention, had gained a large share of her esteem; but in Edmund she found as much gentleness, and more softness, he was also equally unassuming, yet nobly brave; and had a soul abounding in the finest sensibility, tempered with manly firmness; which, added to his numerous accomplishments, and personal graces, certainly made him a formidable rival to poor Breresford. No sooner however was Lady Maria acquainted with his decision, than, abhorring the idea of endeavouring to rival a sister, by alluring the object of her affections, yet dreading her own weakness, which might lead her to betray her passion, she wisely resolved to deprive herself of the power of erring, by yielding to the entreaties of Breresford, and consented that their marriage should take place early in the spring. The delighted lover immediately took his leave, to make the necessary preparations; and the family were left to themselves, excepting Mr. Fletcher, who was indeed never considered as a stranger, and now devoted himself with the most friendly anxiety, to amuse Lady Rosamond, over whose fine features, since the departure of Clayton, a cloud of regret would sometimes pass, notwithstanding the care with which she endeavoured to conceal the least appearance of uneasiness.



## CHAP. XI.

Domestic happiness the only bliss,  
Of Paradise that has survived the fall;  
Thou art the nurse of Virtue.

COWPER.

THE Earl was now at leisure to shew a little more attention to his ward, than he had hitherto been able to devote. Henry's attentions to her were continued, but with his volatile disposition, it was impossible to be inattentive to a young lady, particularly in the country, where there was no variety of choice, or room for caprice; and it was easy to discern, that these attentions were more the effusions of gallantry than the dictates of the heart; they therefore afforded little pleasure to his father, who saw likewise with regret, that Lady Harriett's mind, if not a barren desert, was however an uncultivated waste; and his mortification was increased by observing also that all his endeavours to fertilize it, were unsuccessful. Lord Drelincourt had too high a relish for the delights of literature, and had in his own family witnessed the advantages resulting from a taste for them too often not to be anxious to inspire his ward with the same sentiments. A love of literature, had guarded his son from the ruinous and degrading effects of vice and dissipation; and had preserved his daughters from the unmeaning frivolity of some ladies of quality and the unblushing effrontery of others. He saw his family respected and happy; their conversation could not be heard without pleasure, or attended to without instruction, and the hours flew unmarked, but by that increase of mental riches, which a judicious use of them bestowed.

Unhappily Lady Harriett had no idea of the real value of time, and if she ever thought of it, her only study was, how to trifle it away with the most ease to herself. When she first came to the Castle, ashamed of being idle where every other person was constantly employed, she had endeavoured to find occupation in the same elegant pursuits, which afforded delight to all around her; but the very perfection that would have encouraged any one possessed of a spark of emulation, to endeavour to profit by it, disgusted the indolent Lady Harriett, who soon ceased to imitate where she despaired of equalling: her crayons were thrown aside, because she could not bear to see her imperfect attempts, compared to Lady Rosamond's elegant designs; and the little music that she had learnt, was lost by not practising, for she had just ear enough to distinguish between her own feeble attempts and the finished performances of the three sisters; nay, even needle-work was neglected, because she found that Lady Emma not only excelled her in the finer branches of it, but could perform the minutest trifles, with a delicacy and exactness which she vainly endeavoured to imitate. Reading she never could be taught to consider as an amusement; and such was her desultory mode of conducting it, that even in the perusal of a novel, she had the childish and impatient folly to look at the conclusion, as soon as she was interested in the commencement. Lord Drelincourt, always anxious to exhibit instruction in its most pleasing form, one evening turned the conversation to that branch of literature, which, though deservedly esteemed the most superficial and useless, is yet

studied so universally, as to make it a serious object of criticism. He had taken from his ward's work-box a book, the alluring title of which he read aloud, as follows, "The Mysterious Cavern, or the Phantom of the Abbey, a tale of mystery and horror." The cheeks of the owner were crimsoned with blushes, whilst she inwardly acknowledged, that, however the title might have raised her expectations of pleasure, from the perusal of a work so mysterious, and consequently so interesting, it was more adapted to catch the eye, than to please the ear. Her guardian good-naturedly relieved her confusion, by saying "Do not imagine, my dear Lady Harriett, that I am going to criticise too severely, the sort of reading to which your sex are, in general, partial; that they should be so cannot excite surprise, for a fictitious work, considered merely in the light of amusement, certainly possesses advantages over many others; no previous knowledge is required, the subjects are generally of such a nature, as to be easily comprehended by the most ignorant, and sometimes so interesting, as to excite anxiety even in the most indolent. I repeat therefore, that I am not surprised at the avidity with which works of the imagination are perused, neither will I entirely condemn the perusal of them; I have never wished to prohibit novels in my family, and I am only anxious to warn you against the abuse of them; an objection has often been urged against them, which is certainly a very important one, that truth appears insipid to those, who are delighted with fiction; Beattie says,

"Eyes dazzl'd long by fiction's gaudy rays,  
In modest truth nor light nor beauty find."

"But this, though too general a consequence, is not a necessary one, and a person who is really fond of reading, and anxious to acquire information, will not long be content to peruse adventures, differing from each other, only in the names of the parties concerned in them. However my intention at present, is not to enter into dissertation on the advantages and disadvantages, arising from the study of novels, but simply to enquire, who are your favourite authors, and what are the beauties you particularly admire in each?" He might as well have enquired what she thought of the perpetual motion, the quadrature of the circle, or the everlasting lamps of the antients, as Lady Harriett could just have replied with equal readiness. Favourite authors she had none, for she most impartially read every novel that was published, and to enumerate the peculiar beauties or excellencies in any, was utterly out of her power; for she read with too much rapidity and too little attention, ever to be able to form an opinion of the real merits of a work; the utmost praise therefore that she could bestow on any, was to call it pretty, an epithet applied by her, to every thing that claimed her approbation, whether tender or sublime, grave or gay, lively or severe, all were pretty; though she never could explain in what their prettiness consisted. The Earl was mortified at receiving no other answer to his enquiries, concerning her opinion on the most popular novels, than that she had almost forgotten them, but that she believed she had thought them pretty; he ceased questioning, and made the discourse general. "If," said he, addressing himself to Mr. Fletcher, "Fielding has been charged with not sufficiently attending to the morality of his heroes, what shall we say of Smollet, who appears to have delighted in exhibiting human nature in its worst colours? He seems incapable of delineating an amiable character, his heroes seldom possess any claim to the affection, or sympathy of his readers, and if he

accidentally introduce a virtuous person, it is generally in a subordinate view; and to be abandoned with the utmost indifference, as soon as he is no longer necessary to the story; this is a great fault, and considerably lessens the pleasure, which the reader would otherwise receive from his easy manner of depicting life, with every scene of which, he was thoroughly acquainted, being perfectly familiar with all the varied minutiae that he so accurately describes." "Yes," said Mr. Fletcher drily, "I acknowledge he may be clever, but I own I feel no great interest in his Roderick Random, after he pulls the ears of his faithful Strap, whose money he has lost at the gaming table, and I cannot help thinking, that Smollet, in a similar situation, would have behaved in the same manner, by the coolness, wholly divested of reprehension, with which he relates the circumstance." "That," said the Earl smiling, "is being too severe on poor Smollet, Johnson said, in reply to some one, who in order to enhance Garrick's merit as a performer, asserted, that by the force of his genius, he actually imagined himself Richard the Third, whilst representing that character. 'Then, sir, if he actually believed himself to be Richard, he deserved to be hung, as much as Richard did.' And you seem to think, that Smollet could only relate the actions of his heroes so naturally, because he himself would have acted, as he describes them to have done." "No," replied Mr. Fletcher, "I wish not to condemn him, but I confess, that if I had been a Strap, I would not have served a Smollet." "Well," said Lady Rosamond, "you professed to speak of novelists of the present day, and I am impatient to improve by your criticisms, only beware how you break a fly upon the wheel." "That is far from my intention," returned the Earl, "I mean merely to remark upon some of the principal authors of the day, and to the credit of the ladies, I am happy to find that they consist chiefly of the fair sex. I will place Mrs. Radcliffe the first on the list, not that by so doing, I mean to acknowledge her as the most perfect writer, but as she has introduced into this country a new species of writing; a species which Horace Walpole seems to have foreseen when he says, 'I believe it very possible to invent a story, of which all the events shall appear supernatural, and yet shall in the conclusion be all naturally accounted for.' In his Castle of Otranto, he has given a specimen of the kind of writing, to which he alludes, and that work may perhaps be regarded as the foundation-stone of the marvellous style, which is at present so much in vogue, and in which, Mrs. Radcliffe has had a croud of imitators, without one rival; for to her alone it has belonged, to make improbabilities pleasing. By the great springs of terror and pity, she obtains unlimited command over the minds of her readers, and the most powerful emotions are excited by her interesting narratives; but her peculiar excellence, consists in the striking situations, into which her characters are thrown; they are conceived in the true spirit of genius, and were I a painter, I know not any modern works, that would afford so many grand and speaking scenes, as are offered by the fertility of her imagination, and the sublimity of her ideas. To illustrate them with the pencil, would be a design worthy of a Beauclerc, nay, even of the lovely princess, whose talents are as exalted as her rank. I have often wished to mention this to you my dear Rose, I think from the works of Mrs. Radcliffe, you could furnish another room, in as interesting a style, as that which you have decorated from Milton; allowing something for the peculiar advantages of his subjects." Lady Rosamond's eyes were cast down at this address, and the tears which filled them could not be entirely concealed; she recollected that Clayton had made the same remark, and the wish to please him, had animated her to excel in her attempt; her father observed her emotion, and without

waiting for an answer, kindly continued. "Having paid due acknowledgments to this queen of terrors, I will proceed to express my admiration where universal praise is given, to the nature-drawing pen of Mrs. D'Arblay; her Cecilia is a constellation of beauties, and if there be one fault in that charming performance, it arises from an exuberance of genius, which delineates every actor in it as a character, and paints them in the strongest though most varied colours; by this means she sometimes destroys the appearance of reality, for in real life most people 'have no character at all;' this however, is a fault with which her novel of Camilla cannot be charged, nor do I know one more simply interesting. The picture of an amiable family, must ever be so to the affectionate and unsophisticated mind, and though I am well aware that with many, I should find my opinion singular, I must yet acknowledge, that Camilla is the work of this charming writer, which I the most admire." Fortunately Lady Harriett had just read this favorite novel, and ventured to say so, adding that she thought it very pretty. Henry smiled archly, and asked her if she knew any one who resembled Indiana, she hesitated, and he continued in a half whisper, "Can Lady Harriett, be so unconscious of her charms, as not to recognize her own portrait, in the beautiful all conquering Indiana?" The credulous fair one, taking as a compliment, what one possessed of any discernment, and knowing the frivolous character to which he alluded, must have felt a severe satire, replied, "Now indeed my lord you mean to flatter me." Her guardian was shocked to hear her put the construction of flattery on a speech little short of insult, and yet more shocked that such a speech should be made by his son, could not hide his mortification sufficiently to continue his discourse immediately. He paused, and Lady Rosamond, thinking he had finished his remarks, exclaimed with unusual animation, "You have been very brief in your strictures, but surely you will not conclude your account of able writers, without mentioning one who might well claim the foremost place on your list, one whose genius is an honour to her country, in elucidating the peculiarities and characteristics of which, it has been most ably and agreeably employed." "By that well deserved eulogium," replied the Earl, smiling, "I presume you mean Miss Owenson, whose talents I admire too warmly to be capable of forgetting them. Her productions bear indeed the sacred stamp of genius in no common degree; they frequently exhibit the beauties of Sterne, Goethe, and Rousseau, and proclaim in every page, an elegant taste, a cultivated mind, and a benevolent heart. Her faults, like those of Mrs. D'Arblay, are only exuberances of genius; finding language sometimes inadequate to the expression of her feelings, she seeks to supply its deficiencies, by laboured epithets and lengthened description; her modesty likewise, frequently urges her to lay before her readers, the rich attainments of her mind from foreign sources, instead of relying on its native wealth, though from the purity and splendour of the specimens which she affords us of it, all other aids appear superfluous." "Her delineation of female characters," said Lady Rosamond, "is exquisite; they are all that a woman would wish to see in her sex represented, and Miss Owenson shews at once what a female ought to be, and what she is capable of being." "I grant her all her merits," replied the Earl, "and am very ready to rank her among the first writers of the present day. There are undoubtedly, many others very ingenious, but I do not admire the melocompositions, of some gentlemen writers, who blunt the edge of their wit, by loading the pages of a novel, with latin and greek notes, to shew their learning, or make them the vehicles for serious discussions on literature, politics, and even religion. I would have a novel a pleasing natural description

of events, which might happen in real life, conveying an useful moral in its conclusion, and drawing characters as they in general exist; such as may be imitated or shunned, accordingly as they are virtuous or vicious, yet not coloured until they are all perfection, or all vice, faults very common with common-place writers, who generally draw in extremes, and make some one unfortunate character the scape-goat of the piece, dismissing him or her at its close, loaded with all the enormities of vice, and responsible for all the misfortunes of the innocent.”

And here, lest our readers should think us in danger of falling into the very error condemned by Lord Drelincourt, of entering into dissertations foreign to the subject, we shall take the liberty of concluding the conversation, much to the joy of Lady Harriett, who was in the utmost dread of again being called on to give her opinion, though she was astonished that the Earl should mention so few authors, and wondered how he could omit, “The Mystic Cottager.” “The Delusions of Sentiment.” “Mysterious Horrors.” “The Fair Orphan.” “Child of Wonder.” &c. &c. &c. All which she had read, and thought very pretty.

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## CHAP. XII.

Faire was the day, but fairer was the mayde,  
 Who that day's morne into the green woodes strayde;  
 Sweet was the ayre, but sweeter was her breathing,  
 Such rare perfumes the roses are bequeathing.

W. BROWNE.

WHATEVER might be Henry's failings, that of indolence certainly did not enter into their catalogue. He was fully sensible of the value of time; and though he might occasionally waste it in dissipation, he never lost it in sloth. He adhered invariably to Lord Chesterfield's advice, in never suffering the hour of his retiring to bed, to influence that of leaving it; and it would be well if those young men, who most scrupulously observe all the censurable parts of his lordship's doctrines, did not in their haste to practise them, entirely overlook the really valuable instructions which are to be met with in his works.

The hours gained by Henry before the family assembled, were spent in reading or writing, and generally concluded with a stroll into the park, or shrubberies; in which he was always now accompanied by his friend Edmund, who was as active, and as early a riser as himself.

One morning they were taking their usual promenade, but finding that they had more of the company of a certain gentleman named Boreas, than was agreeable, they proposed turning back; when their attention was attracted by the sylphlike figure of a young girl, whom, by a sudden angle, they discovered within sight of the house, and who was too busily employed in recovering her shawl from the rough attack of the gentleman above-mentioned, to see that she was observed. She was simply attired in a brown jacket and petticoat trimmed with blue; on her head she wore a straw bonnet, tied down with ribbons of the same colour; and the friendly zephyrs that deprived her ivory neck of its covering, also set at liberty a profusion of chesnut coloured ringlets, which shaded and contrasted its whiteness; whilst every gust discovered a foot and ancle of the most delicate symmetry. She appeared *à la distance* like some cottage girl, but surely the loveliest cottager that ever was beheld; and the young men at that instant discovering that the morning was fine, and the breeze refreshing, resolved to take a nearer survey of the fair stranger. She advanced a few steps, till the encreasing narrowness of the path, obliged them to rouse her attention, for they were under the necessity of standing still, to let her pass. Surprise and confusion crimsoned her lovely face, when, on looking up she saw how near to the house she had unconsciously approached, and she hesitatingly endeavoured to apologize for her intrusion, "I fear—I hope,—I have not exceeded proper limits," said she, in sweet, though trembling accents; "but we understood that Lord Drelincourt kindly wished strangers to enjoy the beauties of his grounds, and we have been therefore encouraged to—." She stopped, unable to proceed, for Henry's admiration was too evident, not to distress her. The unfinished speech however was not that of a cottage-girl, though Henry was bent upon still thinking her one. He took the opportunity

of her silence to say, "Your presence can never be an intrusion, but an honor to any place that you adorn with it; every lady, however, who enters this part of Lord Drelincourt's grounds, is expected to pay the tribute of a salute, to a person whom he appoints to receive it, and I am happy to say, that I am the fortunate man so empowered." "I did not know, sir," replied the young incognita, the deep blush of anger suffusing her cheek; "I did not know, that in any part of his lordship's domains, a female was liable to meet with insult, and I shall be careful how I expose myself to it for the future." She was turning away, but the volatile incorrigible Henry, forcibly seizing her hand, exclaimed, "Now, upon my soul you are too cruel, I meant not to offend, and, as a proof of what I assert, I will be contented to accept, as a pledge of your forgiveness, that which I have a right to demand." Resentment flashed in her eyes; "Begone, instantly," she exclaimed, raising her voice, "or suffer me to go, and do not force me to wound the feelings of my father, by calling him to see his child insulted. His misfortunes have not yet sufficiently humbled him, to bear that patiently." The agitated girl here touched a string which vibrated to her heart, and she burst into tears. Edmund was shocked, and tenderly taking the hand which she had snatched with disdain from Henry, he implored her to compose herself, and pardon the thoughtless gaiety of his friend, who, he would pledge his own honor, meant not to hurt her feelings by disrespect. "Suffer me then," said the weeping girl, "to return to my father; he desired me to continue my walk, whilst he rested from the fatigue of coming here; already he will think me tardy, and I fear his affectionate eyes will see that I have been disturbed." Henry now apologized, with unfeigned sorrow, for his foolish levity, and begged that he might conduct her to her father, to whom he would repeat his apology; but his request was refused with modest dignity, and at Edmund's entreaty, the parties separated. Henry, however, was not of a disposition to be easily repulsed, and returning immediately home, he dispatched his valet to gain intelligence of the wanderers, and took his station at a window, commanding a view of the road into the village; whence he had soon the pleasure of seeing the lovely girl advance, supporting an old veteran, who leaned on her with one arm, whilst the other was rested in a sling. This circumstance, joined to his military air, authorized Henry to conjecture that he belonged to that profession, where honor is too often the sole reward of bravery. Nor was Lord Courtney, in this instance, mistaken; his trusty emissary soon returned with the information, that the gentlemen's name was Macdonald, that he was a Captain in the —th regiment of foot, and had lately returned from America, where he had buried a beloved wife; that grief for her loss, and the irritation of a wound, received some time before, had thrown him into a bad state of health, and that his physicians had prescribed his native air, as the only chance of saving his life. "He lodges, my Lord," continued the faithful narrator, "at the little white cottage, at the foot of the hill, not a quarter of a mile from the gates; the young lady is his only child, and they walk in the grounds every morning; I met them, my Lord, returning home; the gentleman has been a fine man, but he looks very ill, and I believe he is only in confined circumstances, poor gentleman; but his daughter is very pretty, and so dutiful, that the old people at the cottage say her father doats on her, and cannot bear her to be out of his sight; she is, indeed, very pretty." "Enough," interrupted Henry; for though under the necessity of employing a servant, he yet felt degraded in listening to him, and had sufficient delicacy to be mortified in hearing a female, for whom he already felt a penchant, made the theme of his valet's praise.

The obsequious Dawson made his bow, and withdrawing to form his own conjectures as to the enquiries of his master, Henry was left to ruminate upon the plans, necessary to be formed, in order to become a villain.

The day after this adventure, he requested Edmund to accompany him in a ride, adding, that he had determined to call on Captain Macdonald, and apologize for the familiarity with which he had treated his daughter, as he could not bear the idea of appearing to intentionally insult a worthy and unfortunate gentleman. This resolution appeared so proper to Edmund, that he willingly agreed to accompany his friend on so laudable an expedition; their horses were accordingly ordered, and they sallied forth. They soon came within sight of the cottage, in the front of which grew two elms, clipped by the fanciful hand of the owner, who was a gardener, into the forms of peacocks, agreeably to the fashion of the last century; and he was, at that moment, employed in pruning the luxuriance of their tails, and giving an account of the variety of monsters which his ingenuity could shape, to a young lady in a white frock, who stood near him, and whom Henry's beating heart soon recognized, as the same that he had wilfully mistaken in her humble garb for a cottage girl. She was laughing at the old man's ideas on taste in gardening; for he was warmly regretting the disuse of what he called ornament; but, on looking towards the road, she ran into the cottage, and left him to conclude his dissertation alone. To her surprise she saw the objects of her alarm alight; she went from the window and endeavoured to conceal her blushes; she heard voices on the stairs, and her whole frame trembled; her father must inevitably have remarked her confusion, but at that instant the strangers were announced, and his attention was called to them. Henry saw immediately that his conduct had not been mentioned by the young lady, and, at the same moment, he determined to be no less lenient to himself than she had been; not a word of the apology therefore passed his lips; but his behaviour was, in every other particular, marked by the most respectful politeness. The manners of Captain Macdonald were polished, his appearance highly interesting, and his conversation animated and instructive, to a degree that made Edmund soon attend only to him, whilst Henry discoursed in silent eloquence with the lovely girl, who sat at her father's feet, and affected to be wholly engaged in caressing a lap-dog; but the lively crimson which dyed her cheeks, when her eyes, lifted up for a moment, met those of Henry, and the arch smile that played upon her lips, sufficiently betrayed that the favoured Pompey did not engross the whole of her attention. After an agreeable visit, lengthened beyond the mere forms of ceremony, Edmund and Henry took their leave; the latter assuring Captain Macdonald, in the politest manner, that Lord Drelincourt would have the pleasure of calling on him, after which he should hope to see him at the castle; begging in the mean time that he would send for fruit, venison, or any thing which might be agreeable or serviceable in his weak state of health. The interesting invalid gracefully thanked Lord Courtney for his attention, adding, "I have trespassed on Lord Drelincourt's kindness ever since I took up my abode here, by making his grounds my constant walk; but of late, my foolish Mary," smiling affectionately on his daughter, "has deprived me of that pleasure: she was frightened one morning by meeting a dog, when she was alone, and I never could persuade her to walk there after, though she repeatedly acknowledged, that it was only a puppy which had so much alarmed her." It was not Mary alone who blushed at these words, and Henry replied, with some confusion, that, though he was glad the cause of her



fright was so harmless, yet he was sorry Captain Macdonald's walks should be interrupted by any thing unpleasant; but that for the future, he would take care to prevent every obstacle, and hoped to have the pleasure of seeing them resumed.

On their departure, the young men found ample food for conversation. Edmund admired the fire of the old veteran, tempered with an interesting melancholy, which at once announced that he had been unfortunate, and undeservedly so. Henry dwelled on the animated graces of the daughter, her native innocence, and unaffected modesty; and from that day, he thought only of cultivating an acquaintance, which he had so fortunately commenced. It was easy to prevail on the Earl to honor the Captain with a visit; to be poor, infirm, and unfortunate, were always claims on his compassion; but when, added to these, he heard that Macdonald was a brave officer, and a man of family, he felt that he also owed him his respect.

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## CHAP. XIII.

Such fate to suffering worth is given,  
 Who long with want and woes has striven,  
 By human pride or cunning driven  
                                   To misery's brink.  
 Till wretch'd of every stay but heaven,  
                                   He ruined sink.

BURNS.

CAPTAIN Macdonald was highly gratified by his lordship's attention, though his health declined too rapidly to allow him to profit much by it. Henry was a frequent visitor at the cottage, and his conversation and soothing kindness relieved the hours of pain, and enlivened those of languor. The Captain was fond of chess, and Henry frequently played with him; whilst Mary, working by her father's side, lost all fear of the puppy that had alarmed her in the park. Henry had the resolution to treat her merely with civility, and the kind of affectionate politeness due to an amiable child, as he always affected to regard her. Unfortunately the Captain considered her entirely as such, and he would often expatiate to her, on the humane attentions, and compassionate friendliness of Lord Courtney, as wonderful in a young man of his rank, particularly when joined to such varied talents and inexhaustible spirits. But he never for one moment suspected that any motive, more powerful than compassion, urged the constancy of these visits.

The winter was now rapidly advancing, and Captain Macdonald's worn-out constitution, appeared incapable of resisting its rigor. Henry was shocked one day to observe an evident change in him; for though the motives of his intimacy, could not for a moment bear scrutinizing, yet it was impossible not to become attached to the society, and charmed with the virtues of the very man, towards whom, seduced by the sophistry of self-love, and encouraged by the relaxed morality of the present day, he was meditating an injury "sharper than the serpent's tooth." Captain Macdonald saw the emotion which Henry could not hide, and after thanking him for his numerous attentions, he added, "I fear I shall never have it in my power to shew you, that they have not been bestowed on one, ungrateful for them. I am well aware of my danger, and as a christian and a soldier, I can meet death with resignation and courage; but as a father, I shrink from it; you, my Lord, have seen the innocent gaiety, and the unceasing affection of my poor child; ever since her mother's death, she has been my hope and solace; Alas! I shall leave her unprovided for, and unprotected; and this sad reflection renders her presence, which was my sole pleasure, now painful to me. I cannot, my Lord, give a greater proof of my esteem for your character, than in the request I am about to make. You have already conferred favours on me, which as a stranger I could not have hoped for; add to them yet another; promise me, that when I am no more, you will condescend to procure a safe and reputable conveyance for my Mary into Scotland. She has an aunt, who lives near Glasgow; a woman of family and fortune, who is her only relation, but who has never been her friend. Poor Child!" added he speaking quickly, and a flush passing across his

cheek, "poor child! she must learn to bear the taunts of ill-natured pride, and the sneers of insolent wealth, but she will not, cannot, be refused an asylum, where she may be safe, if not happy." He paused, but his fine expressive eyes enquired most eloquently of Henry, if his hopes might be indulged? and the appeal to a heart so good and tender, was not made in vain. Lord Courtney looked earnestly upon him, and in proportion to the confidence expressed in Macdonald's animated though grief-worn countenance, his self-reproach was increased. "And I," he mentally exclaimed, "was about to deprive this brave and unfortunate man, of his sole remaining treasure! I would have planted a dagger in his already lacerated bosom, and under the sacred mask of friendship, have dared to mediate an injury to him, which my heart's blood could not have expiated!" Need we add that the agitated repentant young man, solemnly promised to do every thing that Macdonald should require, his quivering lip, his tears and varying complexion, were vouchers of his sincerity. Macdonald saw, believed, and felt comparatively happy.

Let us do Lord Courtney the justice to declare, that at this moment he most devoutly meant to perform every thing that he had promised; but let no one depend on his own strength, the safest way of conquering temptation, is to avoid it, for security begets danger, and the most virtuous of men, cannot say that he is safe from the snares of vice.

A few days after this conversation, the sufferings of the brave and unfortunate Macdonald were concluded, and he found that repose in death, which during life had been denied to him.

He had at an early age married a beautiful and amiable young woman, against the consent of her parents, and to the inexpressible anger of her eldest sister, whose heart had been freely offered to his acceptance. "Earth has not rage like love to hatred turn'd," and the young married couple found in the rejected fair-one, an enemy as active and powerful, as she was malignant and inexorable. By her arts, a reconciliation with the parents was rendered impossible, they died leaving their entire property to the eldest daughter, and their unaltered displeasure to their youngest, who on her knees conjured permission to see them for one moment, and was refused. She willingly left Scotland, rendered hateful to her by the cruelty of her sister, and the death of her parents, and after some time spent in England, accompanied her husband to America. The brave are not always fortunate, and Captain Macdonald was an instance, that merit may sometimes be conspicuous, without being rewarded. Ever the foremost in danger, he was repeatedly wounded, and in attending on him during a dangerous illness, occasioned by receiving a ball in his breast, the delicate frame of his wife sunk under bodily fatigue, and mental uneasiness. His newly gained strength was so severely tried by grief for her death, that a relapse was the consequence, and he was only restored from the brink of the grave, by the assiduous cares of his daughter, who buried in her anxiety for her remaining parent, her anguish for the one whom she had lost. He would immediately on his arrival in England have proceeded northward, determining to forget in his affection for his daughter, his just resentment against the sister of his injured wife; hoping to succeed in working on her tenderness, or rousing her remorse so far, as to procure a home for his friendless girl; but the mild air of Devonshire, was so strongly recommended to him, that he resolved to spend the winter there, and defer his journey into Scotland until the spring. The spring he was not permitted to see, but his last hours were soothed, by the cheering thought, that he had raised up one friend for his child, and by an involuntary pleasing hope, that if she were

refused an asylum, or rendered unhappy with her aunt, Lord Drelincourt would through his son's representation, procure her an eligible situation in some respectable family; he could not refrain from imparting to her, the consolation that he felt, he conjured her to be virtuous, as she hoped for happiness, adding "When your conscience reproaches you, my darling Mary, think that you have caused your parents a pang, and I am sure the punishment will warn you not to incur it again, by a repetition of the offence. I have recommended you, my child, to Lord Courtney, he is amiable and good, and I trust that Lord Drelincourt will also befriend you if you require aid. We may be permitted to watch over thee, my darling, therefore think not that thou art left alone in the world; trust to God, and to thine own integrity." He had made a strong effort to finish his sentence, and exhausted by it, he fell back on his pillow, clasped his daughter's hand, and spoke no more.

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## CHAP. XIV.

Be obstinately just,  
 Indulge no passion, and deceive no trust;  
 Let never man be hold enough to say,  
 Thus far, no farther shall my passions stray,  
 The first crime past, compels us into more,  
 And guilt grows fate, which was but choice before.

HILL.

NEED we describe the agony and dismay of the innocent, deserted Mary? Ah, no! which of our readers have been fortunate enough never to have wept the ravages of death, never to have felt the melancholy void which his triumph leaves in the aching heart? This poor girl, left at the age of sixteen, without a home, without a protector;—deprived of her only parent, whom she adored; thrown on the wide world in utter ignorance of its ways; no one to direct her, no one to confide in! her anguish amounted to agony; and during the first few days after the melancholy event she was on the verge of despair.

Can it be wondered at, if in this situation Lord Courtney appeared to the solitary sufferer as a guardian angel? can it be wondered at, if she wept with softened grief when she saw his tears flow likewise? and can it be wondered at, if the enamoured Henry felt all his affection increased, as he endeavoured to console this lovely child of sorrow?

In respect to her affliction, he had forborne to visit her till the evening before the funeral; when, being anxious to take every trouble of that mournful ceremony, he was under the necessity of going to the cottage, and could not resist the temptation of sending to enquire after her, whilst she, ignorant of form, unsuspecting of ill, following solely the dictates of her heart, requested to see him. The interview was pathetic, though short. Henry, much affected by her father's death, solemnly vowed never to forsake her; and her heart sinking under anxiety, and oppressed with woe, expanded to the appearance of affection; and, from that moment, admitted unconsciously, a warmer sentiment than it had ever yet received.

Edmund willingly accompanied Henry to Macdonald's grave; and after the last offices were performed to the lamented dead, they paid their respects to the afflicted Mary, who appeared yet more lovely in her sable garbs. Her cheek, blanched by sorrow, was tinted with a faint blush, and the traces of tears remained on it, as dewdrops tremble on a white rose. The gentle languor of her manners, the affectionate gratitude with which she received every endeavour to console her, powerfully interested the feelings of her visitors. When they left her, Edmund was eloquent in her praise, but Henry was silent, for his mind was a chaos, and his thoughts not to be expressed by words.

A few days after this visit, Lord Drelincourt was expressing his pity for the fate of Captain Macdonald, and enquired what had become of his daughter? Henry hastily replied, that she had gone according to her father's desire into Scotland, where she had an aunt in genteel circumstances, and who was her only relation. "I am glad of it," said the Earl, "I wish she may be comfortably situated, and if she had been left utterly

unprotected, I would have endeavoured to procure her some agreeable situation." "Poor child," said Lady Drelincourt, who was composed of every feminine virtue, "she should have been welcome to reside in my family, and with needle-work, and reading to my daughters, I dare say she would have spent her time very pleasantly." The conversation dropped here, but Henry's agitation whilst the subject continued, did not escape Edmund's observation; he, however, accounted for it in his own mind, very easily, by conceiving that Henry had involuntarily engaged his affections more than he suspected, till absence had taught him the extent of his attachment. With this idea, Edmund was perfectly satisfied, rejoicing that the object of temptation was removed, and hoping that Henry would soon recover his usual cheerfulness, of which he had been somewhat deprived by the recent melancholy event.

After this, every thing went on much as usual, except that Henry conceived a violent passion for field sports, in which, however, he was so little successful, that he was frequently absent for whole days without being able to produce a single brace of birds, as vouchers of his skill; and, whether he were fatigued by his exertions, or mortified to find them thrown away, was not easy to determine, but it is certain, that he frequently returned home out of spirits, and out of humour; even his attention to Lady Harriett slackened, she was therefore obliged to console herself, by a yet closer intimacy with Miss Dunderton; and there was seldom a day passed in which the young ladies did not see each other, or exchange epistles, where warmth of expression, and luxuriance of imagination, were more conspicuous than grammatical propriety, or classical elegance. Mr. Fletcher continued to be a frequent guest, and Lady Rosamond appeared more amiable in his presence, than at any other time, for she valued his esteem, and was anxious to deserve it. Lady Maria, finding beauty a very insufficient foundation on which to raise esteem, endeavoured to rouse herself from mental indolence, and bodily languor; whilst Mr. Breresford, whenever he visited the Castle, conscious how nearly at one time, he had lost her affections, sedulously imitated the manners of his involuntary rival, laid aside his most effeminate habits, and discovered, at every visit, some interesting trait, or pleasing accomplishment. As for Edmund and Lady Emma, every day heightened their mutual regard and confidence, and made them more sensible of the happiness which they enjoyed in each other: Love had struck them with his golden-pointed dart, and his flame glowed in their hearts with congenial steady warmth, which required not to be increased by opposition, or exalted by misfortune.

In this state, Christmas was spent in the elegant and hospitable abode, where Lord Drelincourt always celebrated it, according to his ideas of feudal magnificence, and English liberality. He thought that every nobleman should devote half of the year to the services of his country; and to the other half, he believed that his tenantry and the abode of his forefathers had a claim. He abhorred watering-places, and all the public rendezvous of vice and dissipation; justly thinking, that the money lavished in them, was wasted on the most worthless part of society, whose extortion and imposition were systematic; and that, whilst a crowd of hair-dressers, valets, perfumers, cooks, gamblers, and fortune-hunters, were enriched by the prodigal hand of luxury, worthy tradesmen found their industry unavailing, and their respectable families brought to ruin, from three-fourths of their capital being detained for years in right honourable imprisonment, whilst the humblest remonstrance produced no other effect than contemptuous silence, haughty

surprise at plebian insolence, or threats, to which the sufferer would willingly submit, of withdrawing favors, that generally carried ruin when they were conferred. Our fashionable readers will doubtless exclaim, These ideas may be extremely fine, and perfectly correct, but they are certainly rather singular, and not very reducible to practice; whilst, if we could suppose for a moment, an industrious tradesman wasting his time in the perusal of these volumes, we could likewise imagine him eagerly enquiring, if this Lord Drelincourt were meant to represent a character from real life? and, on receiving an answer in the negative, we can see him shake his head, and hear him say, "No, I might have known that it was a fiction."

But Lord Drelincourt was not only singular in paying his bills, though that circumstance alone, might have ranked him amongst the oddities of the day, he had likewise many other remarkable sentiments and customs. He actually thought that the fashionable phrase of liberal opinions, meant laxity of morals; and he could not content himself with the wisdom of philosophy, and religion of nature; but did verily go every sunday to church, requesting his family to do the same; and this, not merely from a conviction of the importance of example to those less exalted, and less enlightened than himself, for then he might have been excused by policy, but he openly acknowledged, that he believed public worship to be a devout and reasonable service, due from man, and acceptable to God. After thus unwarrantably betraying opinions, long since obsolete, we will give our readers time to recover from their surprise, and leaving the family at Drelincourt, to the enjoyment of their rational amusements, and antiquated ideas, we will attend upon the proceedings of Captain Clayton, for we must not deprive him of the title, to obtain which, many a young man has devoted himself to the service of Mars, however destitute of real military ardour. We will therefore continue to call this gentleman Captain Clayton, particularly as we do not mean to keep him for the remainder of this sublime history in Italy; but, before we recount his adventures there, we will conclude this chapter, and introduce him with all proper respect in another.

## CHAP. XV.

At once my soul from bright ambition won,  
 I hugg'd the dart I wish'd to be undone;  
 No more pale science durst my thoughts engage,  
 Insipid dullness hung on every page;  
 The midnight lamp no more enjoy'd its blaze,  
 No more my spirit flew from maze to maze;  
 Thy glances made philosophy resign  
 Her throne to thee, and every sense was thine.

CAWTHORNE.

WE do not mean to enter upon a recital of Clayton's ecstasies, as he viewed with enraptured eyes the master-pieces of art, which every where met his astonished sight. The language of admiration is unfortunately not sufficiently new to afford our readers much gratification; and we wish rather to treat them with the beauties of nature, and of a more modern date, than these famed subjects, which make us feel, that, however enlightened, and accomplished the present age may be, it has much to attain before it equal the perfection of some by which it has been preceeded.

Know then, gentle readers, that after Clayton had filled many letters to England, with more animated accounts, and chearful descriptions, than it was becoming in a discarded lover to have been able to send; instead of flying altogether from the haunts of men, he even carried his perfidy so far, as to think that the society of the Marchese di Rodalvi would be an addition to his pleasures, and formed the resolution of presenting his introductory letters, the first day that he could abstract his ideas from the splendid collection of every gratification to a lover of the fine arts, which Florence at the time afforded. Chance, however, spared him the trouble of a formal introduction, and gave him one infinitely more agreeable to himself, and more interesting to the family

Returning one evening from a delightful day's excursion into the country, he was riding by the side of a beautiful shrubbery, in that indolent humour, which is sometimes felt, when the sensations of tranquility are so pleasing, that their cause is not enquired into, through the fear of destroying their charm; suddenly however the shrieks of females put all his serene sensations to flight, and clapping spurs into his horse's sides, he darted forward with a rapidity of lightening, and was followed by two servants, who emulated their master's speed. Directed by the piercing sound which still continued, he soon reached the spot whence they proceeded, and saw three men masked, two of whom were forcibly dragging a lady towards a carriage. Fear had deprived her of power to resist, she was insensible, and the opposition proceeded from another female, whom the third man restrained from going to the assistance of her friend, though he could not prevent her shrieks, which rent the air. At this instant Clayton appeared, "Cowards!" he exclaimed "base unmanly cowards, instantly relinquish the object of your insulting violence, or expect the punishment that you deserve." One of the men who seemed to be the principal, answered with a voice almost choaked by passion, and in a language unknown to Clayton,



who in the hurry had spoken in English; but the stranger's gestures were *translatable* into every language, for he drew his sword, and his attendants followed his example; Clayton's would have done the same, but they unfortunately had no other weapons than one pistol, which their master seized, and held to his opponent's breast, whilst the squires engaged very valiantly in the cause of their respective principals. The Englishman cracked their whips, the strangers flourished their swords, and talked in the unknown language, whilst their opponents wondered who they were, and what they were talking about. At last for the honour of old England, they resolved to come to closer combat, and accordingly ran suddenly on the enemy, regardless of the glittering steel, whilst the masks not relishing the biting arguments of English whips, which came with all the advantage of novelty, and severe application, were soon thrown off their guard, submitting to have their swords beaten out their hands, and at last taking refuge in flight, notwithstanding the imprecations, which the stranger poured forth in various languages, with a fluency that astonished Clayton, who could not but be entertained by the inexhaustible variety of his epithets. Finding however that he could be understood, he began to parley with him in Italian, whilst the lady who was set at liberty by the flight of her guard, gave to one of Clayton's servants, a direction in English to the chateau, from which she had unfortunately wandered out of hearing. When the assaulter found that there was a probability of an addition to the enemy's forces, he thought it prudent to make peace on any terms, he therefore condescended to say that the young lady, whose terrified senses were only just returning, was his sister, and had escaped from a convent in Portugal, that he was her guardian, and as she had refused to return willingly to his protection; he had thought himself authorized to employ stratagem and force. "Speak, wretch!" exclaimed the fraternal protector in a voice of thunder, "speak to confirm my word, and thine own dishonour." His accents might have almost awakened the dead, but not trusting to words only, he accompanied them by an herculean grasp, that seemed powerful enough to destroy the delicate frame, which he still supported. "Ah, my God," exclaimed the unfortunate female, in a voice that thrilled through Clayton's soul, "suffer me to die in peace, oh! my brother, persecute me not in the grave." She closed her eyes and seemed actually departing to seek refuge in death; her inhuman brother seeing domestics approaching, would have flung her to the ground, but Clayton caught her in his arms, and the ferocious tyrant darting a look of ire upon him, sprang into his carriage, and was in a moment carried out of sight, by four fleet horses. It was now nearly dark, the lady, who appeared to belong to the chateau, leaned against a tree in silence, which Clayton was too much absorbed in thought to break; all the tenderest sympathies of his heart were awakened, and he could not refrain from repeatedly pressing to it, the injured object, who still remained as he thought, lifeless in his arms. We say as he thought, but though he might be deceived, that is no reason why our readers should, and we will candidly acknowledge to them, the agitated girl was not quite so inanimate, as to be wholly unconscious of the interest she had inspired, but not knowing exactly how to behave, she suffered her timidity to seek shelter under the appearance of insensibility, and was rejoiced, when the arrival of the domestics relieved her from her embarrassing situation. Clayton resigned his charge reluctantly to the care of two servants, who had brought a chair for her, and would then have taken his leave, but the other young lady advancing towards him, with an air of nobleness, tempered with softness, said in the most pleasing

accents, "No, sir, that I must not allow, add another favour to the signal one, which you have already conferred on us, and permit me to give my father the Marches di Rodalvi, the pleasure of thanking the deliverer of his daughter's friend." Could Clayton resist? Impossible!—He went, and whilst the young ladies had retired, to calm their spirits after so alarming a rencontre, he made the Marchese acquainted with his name, and intimacy with the Count Rodalvi, by that means increasing the prepossession already felt in his favour. Whilst they are talking over affairs foreign and domestic, asking, and answering, a thousand anxious questions concerning Edmund, Lord Drelincourt, and the rest of the Marchese's friends, we will attend a few minutes to the female branches of the family. "Heavens, my dear Claudina!" exclaimed the beautiful Everilda, "what a wretch is that vile Don Lopez, he deserves to be put into the inquisition, for his shocking oaths, I wish I were one of the officers, he should see it in all its terrors, and I daresay he would then never mention the name of convent, or bear with that of priest, again." "How unfortunate I am," exclaimed Claudina, tears stealing down her pale cheeks, from a pair of fine black eyes, "alas! I never knew the transports of affection in my own family, my heart overflows with sensibility, and had it not been for your friendship, and the kindness of the Marchesa, it must have broken." "Do not distress yourself, my love," said the amiable Marchesa, "your society, makes us happy, and I trust that in time we shall be able to enjoy it without interruption. Do not weep, my dear Claudina, you are yet agitated, but adjust your dress, and come into the saloon, you ought to thank this valiant stranger, surely he equals Orlando, or Rinaldo, or any other hero however renowned, and we have now an admirable opportunity of displaying our genius, by celebrating his exploits in an epic poem." Claudina smiled, and a faint blush passed across her cheek; she however begged to decline seeing him again, and Everilda kindly offered to stay with her. Now Claudina, like many others of her sex, when her request was complied with, became less anxious to abide by it, she hesitated, begged that she might not detain Everilda, and at last owned that perhaps company might amuse her spirits, and that if she found it over-powered them, she would retire.

With Clayton's ardent and romantic disposition, it was natural that he should be very anxious to see the fair objects, whom he had rescued from violence. The tones of their voices were extremely pleasing, but with their features he was entirely unacquainted, as they were both veiled, and the evening was too far advanced, to permit him to make any observations. In this uncertainty it is not to be wondered at, if the time of their absence appeared tedious, his eyes wandered frequently to the door, which at length opened, and three ladies entered; the first was introduced as the Marchesa, the second, whose paleness, langour, and dejection, proclaimed that she it was, whom he had rescued from fraternal tyranny, as Donna Claudina, Louisa, Elvira, de Gomez, and the third beautiful as one of Mahomet's fabled houries, as Signora di Rodalvi. Now by all the laws of romance, we ought to make the valiant knight vow everlasting fidelity to the fair one, for whom his conquering arm had put a host to flight; and this was certainly what he had already intended, but unfortunately, he intended also to find her, "All that painting could express, or youthful poets fancy when they love." Such was one of the ladies, but not the one whom he had expected to find so. The delicate languor, the interesting sensibility, the melting tenderness, of Donna Claudina, could not be seen without being felt, but the brightness of Everilda's beauty made every other fade in the comparison; she was now in

her twentieth year, and in the meridian of her attractions; her height rose to the majestic, her eyes were of a dark hazle, and expressed most eloquently, every emotion of a noble, ardent, and generous, though uncontrollable soul, her complexion was not very fair, but it was clear, and heightened by a bloom of nature's deepest and richest dyes; her bright brown hair curled in a profusion of natural ringlets, and her animated expressive countenance, received a thousand additional charms, from the harmonious tones of her voice, and the enchanting natural graces of her figure. She was one who could inspire only violent passions, if admired it must be with enthusiasm, if loved, to distraction. If Clayton had been struck with Lady Rosamond, in whom dignity supplied the place of female softness, how was his admiration now excited by one, in whom dignity and sensibility were joined? If Lady Rosamond's talents had gained his homage, notwithstanding the repulsive manner in which she often displayed them; what was not due to Everilda, who combined every varied power to please, with an unwearied desire to exert them? The ardent Clayton soon devoted his glowing heart, entirely to one, who appeared so worthy of it, he no longer complained of the insipidity of life, but of its shortness; his whole soul was filled with the ardour of his passion, he lived only to love, but with the unconquering timidity of a real lover, silence closed his lips, though the dictates of his heart continually hovered on them; in the presence of his mistress he gazed on her in mute admiration, but in absence he delighted his imagination by talking to her.

## CHAP. XVI.

Ye cruel maids!

When first ye 'gan to weave my woof of fate  
 Ye dy'd it with the roseate hues of spring. —  
 At length the raven croak'd, with joy ye snatch'd  
 The cords of woe, and dipp'd th' unfinish'd web  
 Deep in the pitchy waters of despair.

SAYERS.

NOW, Cupid being one of the most mischievous urchins, that ever existed, not contented with making such havoc in the hitherto stoical heart of the philosophical Clayton, did likewise most wilfully and maliciously wound, and disturb the peace of the gentle and unfortunate Claudina. This young lady's destiny had been singularly pitiable; with a heart cast in nature's softest mould, a disposition peculiarly amiable, and manners the most interesting and affectionate, she had been the victim of unkindness, chilled by neglect, and discouraged by insult. It was her misfortune to be born too soon. The first three years of her life were the only happy ones that she had ever known. She was then the darling of her parents, and undoubted heiress of a large fortune, left by an uncle to her father's eldest child, unless he, or she, embraced a religious life, in which case it was to devolve to the next; or if there were none other, it was to endow an hospital for thirty decayed noble Castilians. In the fourth year of Claudina's age her parents were made happy by the birth of a son, and from that moment, all her wretchedness commenced. This darling son, who was to transmit the family-name to a hundred generations, was unfortunately likely to succeed to more titles than estates, but the parents lamenting the untoward circumstance, luckily recollected, that if they could not enrich him, Claudina might; and from that instant it was decreed that she should. But to effect a change of prospects, a change of inclination was also necessary, and the little lively Claudina, was to be metamorphosed into the devout and pensive nun. Now this was far from an impossibility, and might have been easily effected by kind and docile means, for even at that early age the child gave strong proofs of the tenderness and sensibility which were afterwards matured in the woman. But her parents wisely took her, at six years of age, from an elegant nursery, where she had always had a crowd of playfellows, deprived her of her toys and sweetmeats, and sent her to board in a convent, seldom going to see her, and then only to reprove her, and repress by sternness the emotions of her affectionate heart, which not all their cruelty could teach her to stifle.

In this convent her acquaintance commenced with Everilda, who was sent to it for education, on account of the Marchese having a sister who resided in its vicinity. Their intimacy soon grew into a lively friendship, and her attachment to Everilda, was one great source of the firmness with which the timid novice resisted the stern mandates of her parents; the severity of the rigid nuns, and the caresses of the artful ones. She looked with horror on vows, which would separate her from the only friend that she had ever known; and that friend possessing, at all times, a soul impatient of controul, disdained it in the

form of tyranny, and fortified with her spirited advice, and independent opinions, the drooping spirits and wavering resolutions of the distressed Claudina. Even her timidity was worked on by Everilda, who drew in lively colours, the offence given to God, and the mockery made of religion by those who professed a sacred call to a life which they loathed, and who claimed merit for offering to heaven a heart, polluted with worldly desires, and the repinings of discontent.

The death of Claudina's parents made no change in her situation, but that of giving her, if possible, a still harsher guardian, in the person of her brother, whose remonstrances were so unceasing, and accompanied with such cruelties, that the gentle object of them, sunk under their force, and seemed ready to resign a life, made wretched by unkindness. Everilda's warm and generous heart bled to see the ravages made by grief in the lovely frame and delicate constitution of her friend, for whom she earnestly requested an asylum with her parents. Her wishes were no sooner mentioned, than compliance prevented their repetition. In this case there were additional motives for their gratification. The Marchesa was one of the most compassionate and tender of her sex; she sympathized in Claudina's trials, and wished to alleviate her sorrows; Everilda's petition was likewise made a few days after Edmund's departure, when her spirits were yet saddened, and her parents were anxious to see them restored by the society of one whom she loved so well, and who was so deserving of esteem.

Stratagem was opposed to force; permission was given to Claudina to spend the day with Everilda's aunt, whom she frequently visited, and the moment she was beyond the walls of the convent, a light carriage with four horses offered freedom to her, and never stopped till she was out of her brother's jurisdiction. She was received with raptures by her friend, and in the elegant society of the Rodalvi family, began to taste of happiness, though she led a retired life, from fear of her brother, who left no art untried to bring her once more within his power: and indeed every day that she was out of it, was of consequence, as his office of guardian was limited to a certain number of years, which was now nearly expired; for his father, either repenting on his death-bed, the cruelty that he had shewn his daughter, or not being so charmed with his son's disposition, as to think proper to trust entirely to it, did not wish to extend the power he should give him over his sister too far. We have already related the consequences of the young ladies having imprudently lengthened their walk much further than usual; and we have now to relate other trials, as severe, and almost as fatal, which befel this unfortunate fair one, though arising from a very different source.

## CHAP. XVII.

—————See

The bitter fruits of thine unhappy love!  
 It blossomed sweetly, and thy cheated hopes  
 Were promis'd, that its bloom should last for ever;  
 What can'st thou wish? What state of life become thee?  
 Go from the world, which has no corner in it  
 That will receive thee kindly, but that cloister,  
 Whence had'st thou ne'er been drawn thou had'st been  
 happy. VICTOR.

CLAUDINA's heart, naturally tender, lavished its sensibilities on those to whom she was indebted, with a warmth, proportioned to their paucity.

She revered the Marchese; she regarded the Marchesa as a mother, and was attached to the interesting Everilda, by every tie of friendship and gratitude, but she was soon convinced, that yet stronger sentiments could exist in her heart; she found with mingled fear and pleasure, that she loved, and for sometime engrossed by the delights of a new and secret passion, she felt not even the necessity of participation. Every day her attachment gained strength, for every day she gazed on her preserver, and his speaking countenance, his fascinating manners, his animated smile, and cultivated mind, were not to be attended to with indifference. One day he was unusually brilliant; intelligence flashed in his eyes, transport smiled on his lips, and as though common language could not express his sentiments, he breathed on his flute the most captivating melody. The susceptible Claudina was overpowered by her emotions, she left the room, and wandered through a grove, where every gale wafted fragrance, and seemed to inspire happiness. "Yes," she exclaimed, clasping her hands, and raising her tearful eyes to heaven, "yes I love! oh delightful passion, till I knew thee, I knew not the value of existence. Ah heavens! who can renounce the world, whilst in it can be experienced feelings such as mine? And what would they have been in the convent of Sainte Frances! I love, and surely I love not alone, no, I feel also that I am loved." And now, lest our readers should think that they have caught us napping, as has been the case with greater authors than we are; or lest Clayton may be accused of inconsistency, or Claudina of vanity, we think it incumbent on us to declare, that though she was mistaken, her mistake was very excusable.—Clayton's soul overflowed with love, and the tenderness of his accents, the sensibility of his glances, might have misled those more versed in the language of passion than Claudina was, particularly if their wish was "father to the thought." It was natural for her to imagine when in Everilda's absence, his voice trembled in addressing her, and his eyes were fixed on her with the most expressive softness, that she inspired his emotions, and though it was possible, it was certainly very improbable she should divine, that his thoughts of the absent, influenced his behaviour to the present, that his love for one, prompted his attentions to another, that his softness was involuntary, his accents tender as his thoughts, and yet these thoughts fixed upon another. Surely Claudina could not be expected to imagine any thing so cruel, and happy in the idea of being loved, she wished

not to be told that she was so. The delusion however was not to last long, and on the very day that it was at its height, the charm was broken, she had returned to the apartment where she had left the family, and advanced into it, before she perceived that Clayton was there alone. She was hastily retreating with that excess of caution, by which even the wisest sometimes betray themselves; Clayton however prevented her design, and taking her hand, enquired in the softest accents, though mingled with evident perturbation, if she had seen her friend? She answered in the negative. He then asked, if she had seen the Marchese, or Marchesa? and received the same answer. "Well," he exclaimed, leading her to a seat, "they have left me here quite solitary, but you will not desert me also?" Claudina answered only by the liveliest blushes, and a sweetness of expression in her countenance, which could scarcely be equalled by Everilda's beauty. Perhaps the moment in a female's existence, which conveys the purest rapture to a susceptible heart, is that, when the declaration of his passion, hovers upon the lips of her lover, when she witnesses her own triumph in his anxiety, and anticipates the delight of consoling him.

Such, at that moment, were Claudina's feelings, she feared to breathe, lest she should dissolve the enchantment with which she seemed surrounded; and dreaded even the tones which vibrated to her heart, lest they should break the spell. "Shall I hesitate," said Clayton, "to speak to you on a subject which has long occupied my mind? Knowing your sensibility, am I presumptuous in hoping to interest it in my favor? Ah! Claudina, excuse my freedom; my heart disdains forms, tell me, if with so much softness you have never loved." He paused, and Claudina blushing yet more deeply, essayed to speak, but her eyes met his, and her unfinished words expired on her lips. "Speak, Claudina," he continued, "my dear friend, friend of those whom I love, answer my question, or suffer me to conjecture the cause of your silence." Claudina, conscious of it, was easily alarmed, and hastily replied, "Alas! I have never known any who wished for my love; never any who deserved it, till fortune atoned for the unkindness of nature, in giving me invaluable friends among strangers." The contrast afforded by her present situation, to that which memory recalled, filled her eyes with tears; she paused, and Clayton continued, "May your love be propitious on whomsoever you bestow it; he must be happy; but my fair friend," continued he in a livelier tone, and taking her hand with a smile, "as you hope for success yourself, plead for me with one, over whom your influence is great, let me implore you to exert it in my behalf; you tell me that you are my debtor; procure me a favor greater than life; procure me Everilda's consent to make me happy, and you will bind me to you for ever in the chains of gratitude." He felt the hand that he held become cold and inanimate; he looked up, and beheld Claudina, who seemed in a moment "transformed by grief to marble, and appeared her own pale monument." Surprised and shocked, he one minute suspected the truth, and the next condemned himself for the vanity of the romantic thought. However, delicacy restrained him from calling for assistance, and he was happy to perceive that it was not long necessary; Claudina revived to anguish, disappointment, confusion and despair. Clayton cast his eyes to the ground in silence; and Claudina, bursting into tears, exclaimed, "Wretched that I am, when shall I know peace? why did I refuse a safe asylum from unhappiness? why did I expose myself to the attacks of fortune, who has already so cruelly persecuted me?" She wrung her hands, and seemed utterly unconscious of any person being near her, till suddenly recollecting herself, she instantly turned to the astonished spectator of her grief, and with

admirable presence of mind, and an unembarrassed air, which could not fail to impress conviction, said, "How weak, how very weak, sir, I must have appeared to you: excuse the little command that I have shewn over my feelings. I have no friend but my Everilda, and the dreadful idea of being deprived of her, quite overpowered me. I feel ashamed of my selfishness, and must beg of you to forget that I displayed it so strongly." She smiled through her tears as she concluded, and extended her hand to Clayton, who pressed it to his lips, and reluctantly resigned an idea which had considerably exalted him in his own opinion, and had made Claudina appear very interesting to him.

Though Claudina's wishes had in some measure misled her judgment, yet she was too rational to grieve for what appeared irremediable. She was consoled in the reflection, that her error was known only to herself, and endeavouring to banish even the remembrance of it from her mind; "She never told her love," but sought to overcome it by constant occupation, her sensibility was however too great for her to be successful in her laudable attempt, she pined in thought, and her health once more drooped under mental sufferings.

The enamoured Clayton having gained the consent of the Marchese and Marchesa to address their daughter, was one of the happiest of men, and most attentive of lovers, even the volatile Everilda, seemed touched by his sincerity, and gratified by his excessive homage. He appeared daily to gain ground in her affections, and his frequent letters to England, were filled with the most rapturous praises of her beauty, her accomplishments, her virtues and innumerable graces. We will now leave him to make sonnets on his fair one's eye-brows, whilst we return to the family at Castle Drelincourt.

END OF THE FIRST VOLUME.



DRELINCOURT AND RODALVI;

OR,

MEMOIRS

OF

TWO NOBLE FAMILIES.

A NOVEL, IN THREE VOLUMES.

BY MRS. BYRON,

AUTHOR OF ANTI-DELPHINE.

VOL. II.

The web of our life is of a mingled yarn; good and ill together:  
our virtues would be proud if our faults whipp'd them not; and  
our crimes would despair if they were not cherished by our  
virtues.

*Shakespeare.*

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## DRELINCOURT AND RODALVI.

## CHAP. XVIII.

Disguise, I see thou art a wickedness  
Wherein the pregnant enemy doth much.

SHAKESPEAR.

THE season was now rapidly advancing, when London appears in its utmost gaiety and splendor. Lord Drelincourt always went there in February, and he this year rather hastened his return to it, as he remarked, with sorrow, the increasing estrangement of Lord Courtney from home, and the dejection which clouded Lady Rosamond's fine features, and cast a gloom over all her ideas and remarks. It was not possible that she should feel otherwise than mortified, when every letter from her faithless *ci-devant amant*, instead of being filled with complaints of her cruelty, and his misery, teemed with the praises of another, and declarations of his own happiness. She could not avoid hearing of his new attachment, though Edmund was too delicate ever to mention it, but Henry never failed to rally her on the futility of her charms, and the readiness with which Clayton had consoled himself.

When the day was fixed for leaving the castle, Lord Courtney mentioned a previous engagement, that he had formed with Lord John Talbot, which obliged him to be in town somewhat sooner than the rest of the family, he therefore took his leave, hoping to meet them at the time appointed. Lord Drelincourt was too indulgent to controul his son, in a matter of no real importance, but he was mortified to observe in him of late, on the most trifling occasions, an air of constraint and mystery, never attendant on actions which will bear scrutiny. He spoke not on the subject, but the expression of gravity in his countenance, was understood by the conscious Henry, who felt hurt to even slightly wound the feelings of a father, to whom, the tenderest affection, the most respectful obedience, and sincerest confidence were due.

The day after Lord Courtney's departure, Lord Drelincourt received letters which made him anxious to be in town, as soon as possible, and as the weather was remarkably fine, he wished his family to accompany him, accordingly they set off a week sooner than they had originally intended.

On their way Lord Drelincourt alighted from the carriage, to shew Edmund a point which commanded one of the most extensive views in England. In returning, the Earl unfortunately struck his foot against a stone, and by a sudden twist sprained his ankle. The pain was very violent, and Lady Drelincourt urged him to stop at Blandford. He had wished to reach Salisbury, where he meant to conclude the day's journey, as it was his customary and favorite resting place; but in compliance with her entreaties, an outrider was dispatched to the former place; when they arrived there, his lordship's ankle was much swelled, a son of Esculapius was sent for, and in a few minutes one arrived, who by the assistance of a good house, with chemicals, and galenicals, inscribed neatly in golden letters over the door, had the most business, and as some would think, consequently the

best medical abilities in the place. The messenger who had been dispatched for him, had informed him, that he was sent for to a lord. This intelligence acted as an electrical shock upon his nerves. "A Lord!" he exclaimed, jumping up, and leaving the ensanguined stream to flow from the arm of a half-price patient, who had called on him; "A Lord! I never heard of one being arrived, I wish I had known, I would have been a little better dressed, but I will wait on his lordship directly," hurrying out of the room as he spoke; he was however recalled by the feeble voice of the sick man, whom he had left, and who asked with the utmost simplicity, if he were to wait there till Mr. Pestle returned from calling on the lord? "Yes, do if you please," replied the man of business, but recollecting himself he added, "I will just tie up your arm before I go," and by this wonderful instance of memory, and presence of mind, he probably deprived the honest countryman of the glory, of dying a death, similar to that of the illustrious Seneca. Fortunately no other obstacle intervened, except meeting a few patients in his way, all of whom Mr. Pestle informed, that he would have the pleasure of seeing them, as soon as he had just looked in on the Earl of Drelincourt, who had been waiting for him a considerable time at the Crown.

As he ascended the stairs, Mr. Pestle had ample employment in pulling up his cravat, arranging his frill, and letting a white handkerchief peep from his pocket; by the time that all this was done, the door was thrown open, and he was introduced into the presence of the peer. After a bow to every individual, which resembled in lowness and humility, that movement called in the East Indies a *salam*, or that which a devout persian makes to the rising sun; Mr. Pestle approached, and surveyed the part affected with the nice eye of medical criticism. "My lord, your lordship's accident might have been much more serious, than you will, I hope, now find it. In the course of my practice, I have seen very lingering, tedious, and difficult cases, induced by cases apparently as trifling. Your lordship has had a narrow escape from a luxation of the tibia, but happily," continued he, "it is so defended by the ligamentum superius anterium, and the ligamentum posticum, superius, that I believe no worse consequences will arise to your lordship, than a violent sprain of the ligamentum deltoides, I will however, send your lordship an embrocation for the part affected, and an ointment to remove the discolouration of the cuticle, and," feeling the Earl's pulse, "I think a composing draught for this evening, and another in the morning, may be of service to your lordship. "What," said the Earl with a smile, "do you think me so violently fluttered by my accident, or so much alarmed for its consequences?" "By no means my lord," answered Mr. Pestle, "I merely mentioned draughts, because we generally; that is, it is customary to send them, but certainly I will not, if they be not agreeable to your lordship." The Earl smiled again, and politely replied, "Yes, I beg you will send them, Mr. Pestle, a custom is seldom general without good reasons, and I like to conform to established rules." Mr. Pestle then departed, with the same profusion of bows, as he had exhibited on his entrance, and had the satisfaction of telling all his patients, that he had been the whole of the morning, with the Earl of Drelincourt, who was a mighty pleasant man. His lady and daughters also were charming women and vastly handsome.

During the examination of his lordship's ankle, Edmund had retired to refresh himself by some slight duties of the toilet, and his valet whilst combing his hair, informed him with that air of mystery, which never fails to rouse curiosity, that Dawson was at the

Inn. "Dawson!" exclaimed Edmund, "what is he doing here when his master is in London?" "Lord Courtney is here too, I believe sir," said the valet with a smile, that spoke what he durst not otherwise express, "not that Dawson told me so sir, he denied it, but I heard him ordering horses to be brought out, as soon as dinner was taken up for my lord; and I was surprised that he should order them, when it was so nearly dark." "And I am more than surprised," Edmund involuntarily exclaimed, he however checked himself from saying more, but he returned to the Earl with so disturbed a countenance, that he was immediately asked if he were indisposed; he replied that he did not feel quite well at that moment, nor did he deviate much from the exact veracity, which he always endeavoured to observe, for he was really agitated, and resolved to satisfy himself, whether Lord Courtney were actually preparing to leave the inn at that late hour, notwithstanding the arrival of the family.

They were scarcely seated at the dinner-table, before Edmund heard the sound of horses' feet, and he again drew attention by changing colour; he complained of a violent pain in his head, and requesting to be excused from continuing at the table, he left the room with a beating heart, and went into another; from the windows of which, he plainly discerned a carriage, and four horses, the useful Dawson was putting in some parcels, and a few minutes after, he distinguished beyond a doubt, the features of Lord Courtney, whom he was shocked to see, accompanied by a lady, in whose slender form arrayed in sable garbs, he instantly recognized Mary Macdonald; a female servant followed her, the door was closed, the postillions cracked their whips, and the carriage, followed by Dawson, was quickly out of hearing.

Edmund's heart was formed of nature's best and most susceptible materials, and his eyes filled with tears, as he mentally exclaimed, "Lost unfortunate Mary! unhappy Henry! one day thou wilt remember with agony, that thou hast basely betrayed the trust of a fond father, of a dying friend! Oh may'st thou yet repent ere thou committest a crime, which when committed, no repentance can expiate." Not one spark of resentment did Edmund feel at the distrust, which Henry had shewn of him, no, he was rather proud that their friendship had not been a partnership in vice. He rejoiced also that Lord Drelincourt was spared the pang of knowing his son's dereliction from the principles which had been so carefully instilled into him; and he sought to console himself by the hope that Henry might not yet be dead to conviction, and that the disinterested advice of friendship, might be received with the penitence of returning virtue.

The next day Lord Drelincourt was able to pursue his journey, whether by the assistance of nature, or of Mr. Pestle's draughts, we will not determine, but he certainly did reach town, in safety with all his family.

## CHAP. XIX.

Now see a splendid city rise to view,  
 With carts, and cars, and coaches, roaring all,  
 Wide-pour'd abroad, behold the giddy crew,  
 See how they dash along from wall to wall!  
 At every door, hark! how they thundering call,  
 Good Lord! what can this giddy rout excite?  
 Why on each other with fell tooth to fall,  
 A neighbour's fortune, fame, or peace to blight,  
 And make new tiresome parties for the coming night.

THOMSON.

THE delights of London, arrayed in the fascinating garb of novelty, could not fail to interest the mind of Edmund, though they never, for a moment, drew his attention from the explanation which he wished to have with Henry; who, as if suspecting his designs, industriously shunned the communication so anxiously sought. Edmund was not however discouraged, but resolved to watch a favourable opportunity, and disguised his wishes, in order to throw Henry off his guard till one should occur.

Lady Drelincourt's nights were always crowded, for every one wished to appear at her assemblies; and the first brought all the fashionables who had arrived in town. Amongst the number were, the Earl of Carisbrooke, Lady Laura Delany, Miss Clayton, and Sir John, who had come to town on business, after an absence of twenty years; and of course discovered wonderful alterations since he had last visited it. The Dunderton family also were of the party, for they had left their cards immediately on Lord Drelincourt's arrival, and much sooner than he wished; he by no means approving of his ward's intimacy with Miss Dunderton, as it increased to a degree of familiarity, of which folly or enmity is too frequently the consequence.

The Earl of Carisbrooke kindly rallied Edmund on his desertion, saying, that Lady Laura was quite offended by it: "I was more reasonable," added he, "and told her, that I did not expect you to devote much of your time to a gouty old man, and a solitary lady, when you had so many fair claimants on your attention at the Castle." Edmund apologized with much grace to the Earl, but he shrunk from the idea of doing it to her ladyship; for though he had never loved her, yet she had certainly first inspired him with a wish to please; and an attachment, even of that slight kind, cannot be remembered by one new to the world, without awkward sensations. The lady however advanced, and with the delightful ease of modern manners, tapped him with her fan, and beckoned him to a seat near her on a sofa, which had fortunately been deserted by two old ladies for the whist table. The hero obeyed the summons with a beating heart, and pressed her hand to supply the place of words; whilst Lady Laura, encouraged by his confusion, and of course imagining that it sprung from the tenderest emotions, laid aside her first intention of behaving with coldness and hauteur, and adopted the same mode of conduct, that she had

often successfully practised in the summer-house, whither she so considerately always invited her guests, to recover the fatigue of walking a quarter of a mile.

“You do not know,” said she, in the tenderest tones that she could possibly assume, “how you hurt me by so suddenly forsaking Carisbrooke; my father was really quite offended with the inconsistency of your conduct, but I always endeavoured to excuse it to him: tell me now, in return for my good-nature, to what it really might be owing?” This home question greatly embarrassed Edmund, who was not prepared either to expect or to answer it; he however extricated himself tolerably well, by saying, that “Whatever had occasioned his apparent negligence, her ladyship must be too conscious of her own attractions, not to know that it must have been as painful to himself, as it could possibly appear disrespectful to others.” Lady Laura might not believe this exactly, for she was too conversant in the language of gallantry, to expect that sincerity should form one of its characteristics; but she appeared perfectly satisfied, and began once more to play off the artillery of tender glances, broken sentences, and affected confusion; though not with the success by which they had been before distinguished; for Edmund’s eyes wandered from her’s to follow the pretty figure, and pleasing countenance of his Emma, as she passed from room to room, paying attention to all, and gaining it from every one, by the graces of her unaffected deportment. Lady Laura saw that she was not attended to, and like a skilful general, made a good retreat, resolving to rally her forces at a more favourable opportunity; telling Edmund therefore, that she should expect to see him the next day in Grosvenor Square, she left the sofa, and took her place at a table where all the softer emotions were lost in the anxieties of *rouge et noir*.

## CHAP. XX

Hard is the fortune that the sex attends,  
 Women, like princes, find few real friends;  
 All who approach them their own ends pursue,  
 Lovers and ministers are seldom true:  
 Hence oft from reason heedless beauty strays,  
 And the most trusted guide the most betrays;  
 Hence by fond dreams of fancied power amus'd,  
 When most they tyrannize they're most abus'd.

LORD LYTTLETON.

EDMUND was too polite to fail in an appointment with a lady, and after having had the pleasure of a tête à tête with Lady Laura, the day being very fine, he sauntered on horseback towards Hammersmith, and would probably soon have returned, as the morning was far advanced, had not his curiosity been attracted by a gentleman a little way before him, who he thought must be Lord Courtney; he followed him till his conjectures were reduced to certainty, and quickening his pace he soon overtook him.

Lord Courtney did not appear highly delighted with the rencontre, or much inclined to loquacity; his replies were short and unsatisfactory, his behaviour cold and absent; but Edmund was determined not to be offended, or to leave him till he had gained his confidence. Henry was too volatile to preserve long an assumed gravity, too good-natured to long affect a coldness that he could not feel; and after riding nearly half an hour in silence, he began to converse with his usual frankness.

“My dear fellow,” said he, “now acknowledge plainly, that you think me a rude, reserved, unpleasant sort of a being; I am sure you must, though you may be more good-natured than I deserve, and not willing to tell me so.” “Indeed,” replied Edmund, “I could not tell you so, without doing my thoughts injustice: part of your own accusation I will agree to, for I know you have been reserved to me of late, but far from thinking that friendship cannot exist without an entire communication, I am of opinion rather that its very essence consists in the liberty of occasional concealment, without giving birth to suspicion or displeasure.” “You are a generous fellow,” answered Courtney, “and I am unworthy of so kind a friend. My concealments have arisen from a consciousness, that your virtue would disapprove my conduct, which justly incurs my own reproaches, and they embitter all the sweets that passion taught me to expect; but which, I am convinced cannot be tasted, if vice be necessary to obtain the possession of them.” He paused, and appeared much affected; after a few minutes he proceeded, “Promise, Edmund, that you will not despise—alas! I may say hate me, if I, at last, place entire confidence in you; from selfish motives I own, on my part, for I am tempted to do it by the hope of finding, in your consolation and advice, relief from recollections and remorse, intolerable to be borne alone.” Edmund earnestly requested his confidence, without informing him, that it could disclose little more than he already knew; but they had arrived at Brompton, and Henry alighting at the door of a small neat house, requested him to do the same. They

entered without knocking, and went into a parlour, which was furnished in a style of plain elegance, and contained a grand piano-forte, a book-case filled with the best English authors, an embroidering frame, drawing implements, and many other useful decorations. Whilst Edmund cast his eyes round the apartment, Henry continued silent and embarrassed: in a few minutes the door was opened, and the unfortunate Mary entered. She started on seeing Edmund, but it was the simple movement of surprise, for no other emotion appeared: the blush of shame suffused not her cheek, though modesty still seemed to reign on it; her manners were easy, unaffected and interesting as they had ever been, she behaved to Edmund with the warm politeness due to Henry's friend, and to Henry himself, every word, every look, bespoke the most delicate and undisguised affection." Strange inconsistency!" exclaimed Edmund mentally, "shall vice wear the aspect of virtue? does innocence associate with guilt? can happiness shine in eyes which ought to be dimmed with repentant tears? ah! could Macdonald see his daughter thus, what would not be his sufferings!" The unconscious object of Edmund's reverie, awoke him from it by asking him in the most engaging terms, to stay and take his dinner with Lord Courtney and her; he started on hearing her so openly join her name to Henry's, and refused her invitation with an impressive look, in which there was more of sorrow, than of anger. Lord Courtney appeared displeased, and enquired what were his objections? Edmund could not give his real ones, he could not allege that the painful reflections excited by his company, were such, as to preclude the possibility of either receiving, or giving pleasure, whilst remaining in it; but he excused himself, on the score, of not having seen any of the family, before he left Berkeley Square. Henry assured him that it was of no consequence, adding, "My father's dinner hour is fixed, as the law of the medes and the persians, 'which altereth not;' and if not one of the family were ready at the appointed time, you would yet see the dishes smoaking on the table, and the servants standing around it, 'punctual as lovers to the moment sworn,' you will therefore keep no one waiting, and in the evening we will return together, and the same apology will serve for both." Edmund still hesitated, there was yet another reason, which he had been ashamed to give, and he now stammered out, something of an engagement to attend Lady Laura Delany, to the Opera; "Bravo," exclaimed Courtney, I admire your choice of company, nor do I wonder at your unwillingness to comply with Miss Macdonald's request, when you are required to protect the timid and interesting Lady Laura." There was a bitter irony in the tone of these words, which offended even the gentle Edmund, and his fine eyes flashed reproachful fire on Lord Courtney, whose conscious looks could not bear their glance; Edmund repeated his apologies to Mary, and rose to take his leave, Courtney rose likewise, "You are not going," said Mary in a tone of entreaty; he took her hand saying, "I must go, excuse me to-day, for I have indispensable engagements." "Do not ask me to excuse you," said Mary, for you must well know, that I could not excuse myself were I capable of wishing to detain you contrary to your inclinations." Offended pride struggled with tenderness in her bosom, the first flushed her cheek, the last trembled in her eye. Henry felt the appeal forcibly, but he felt also, that he had offended Edmund, and he could not bear the thought of seeing him depart in anger. Edmund saw that Henry had already repented his petulance, and this instantly disarmed his quick resentment. "Suffer me," said he, with the smile of benevolence, which speaks immediately to the heart; "suffer me to have the privilege of changing my mind, a privilege always granted to



your sex," addressing himself to Mary, "and every day exerted by you," turning to Henry; "neither can therefore deny it to me, and I hope that Miss Macdonald will permit us to dine together here, as probably her hour is sufficiently early to allow me time, on my return, to change the *deshabille*, for which I must apologize to her." This proposal was immediately accepted with unfeigned pleasure. Mary's eyes sparkled with renovated cheerfulness; the gloom on Courtney's countenance was dispersed, and even Edmund's regrets were hushed, by the propriety of conduct which he saw strictly observed, and the pleasing and rational conversation which was sustained.

The repast was served with an air of comfort, and elegant neatness. The dishes, few in number, were in the first season and admirably dressed. They were waited on only by one servant, in a plain suit; and the plate, liquors, and desert, were all in the style of an excellently regulated household. Mary did the honors of the table, with the most enchanting grace and simplicity: coffee was brought soon after, and the time was filled up with music, in which she was only a learner, but had already made sufficient progress to accompany her voice with much taste and pathos, in the most admired airs of her native country.

At an early hour the gentlemen departed, and Henry desired Edmund to breakfast with him the next morning, when he would candidly relate his errors, and endeavour to profit by advice, "at present," said he, "I dare not think of any thing *penseroso*, for I ought to be very civil to Lady Harriett, and you know she is so exceedingly penetrating, that I must spare her sensibility." Edmund, notwithstanding he used the utmost expedition in adorning himself; yet failed in gallantry so much as to be half an hour beyond his appointment, for which he was reproached by Lady Laura, who told him she "could not forget that he was once more punctual." He blushed at the remembrance, and rejoiced that he had been spared another *tête à tête* with her ladyship, whose society in losing novelty, had lost the only charm that it had ever possessed, and whose artificial manners suffered greatly from the comparison which he daily made between them, and Lady Emma's ease and native modesty. Perceiving that her swain was in no very pliable humour, the lady ordered her carriage, and endeavoured to banish the frowns from her countenance, by reflecting that she should, at least have the satisfaction of exhibiting his fine figure in her box, and that by talking to him on different topics, with an air of deep interest, she might inspire the females with envy, and perhaps stimulate the attention of Lord John Talbot, a fashionable young man, whom report gave to her ladyship as a lover, and her conduct to him, plainly evinced that if he were not so, it was from no want of encouragement. With these consolatory hopes she suffered Edmund to hand her into the carriage, and they proceeded to the opera-house, after stopping to take up a little, lean, wrinkled female, who submitted to act as a foil to youth and gaiety, in order to insure a place at a table, or in public, where her own means were not all-powerful. It happened that Lady Drelincourt and her family were likewise at the opera; and, as their box was opposite to Lady Laura's, they of course had a full view of each other.

This gave no great pleasure to Lady Laura, who suspected that she had a rival in the family, but could not determine exactly on any particular lady. Her suspicions were confirmed by the inattention of her beau, from the moment of their entrance; she spoke, but received no answer, she looked at him, but his eyes were fixed on some individual of the opposite party, with a tender expression, so unlike the fashionable stare of

indifference, that she immediately felt herself forsaken; a discovery not likely to be borne with patience, and she exclaimed in no very pleasing accents, "Really, if you mean to be equally entertaining all the evening, you will draw my attention entirely from this beautiful ballet." Edmund's ears caught the last words of her speech, and he replied, without moving his eyes, "Beautiful indeed! and interesting as beautiful!" Her ladyship burst into a loud laugh, and asked him where he had dined? this question rather roused him, and looking round, he remarked with surprise, the altered expression of her countenance. Ill-nature and malice deformed her features, her lip was drawn up with a contemptuous sneer, and he sought to refresh his eyes by again fixing them on the simply elegant form of Lady Emma. Lady Laura exerted all her self-command, she saw that her empire tottered, and that her only chance of victory was to appear unconscious of defeat. She therefore addressed her conversation to her chaperone, who unfortunately was very deaf, not that this in general was considered as any defect in her, on the contrary, she was often pronounced a very agreeable companion, when she had neither heard nor spoken one word during the conversation; and her society was sometimes sought with an avidity, which however might still have been exceeded, had she fortunately been blind as well as deaf.

A ballet was performing, "very pretty indeed," said Lady Laura to her companion, with her eyes fixed on the box that so successfully rivetted Edmund's attention; "charmingly pretty indeed, do you not think so, Mrs. Arundale?" Mrs. Arundale judiciously never gave her opinion until it was asked, and then good naturedly accommodated it to that of the enquirer. She now followed the direction of her ladyship's eyes, and very naturally replied, "They are indeed, my lady, very handsome." "They," echoed Lady Laura, "what do you mean?" "Which do I mean? indeed they are all handsome, but I think the young lady in pink the prettiest, though the one entirely in white is very pleasing, but rather pale." "I was speaking of the dancing madam," said Lady Laura, very coolly, then added in a lower tone, "It is very entertaining to come to a public place with the deaf and dumb." This ungentle hint recalled Edmund's attention, and he resolved not to gratify himself again at the expense of politeness. Perhaps he had less merit in this sacrifice, as he had already had the pleasure of a curtsey, and timid smile from Lady Emma, which was certainly food enough for a lover to live upon for the remainder of the evening. His returning cares restored Lady Laura's smiles, though she could not do away the effect which her ill-humour had produced; or throw any expression into her countenance, sweet enough to efface the remembrance of the angry passions before imprinted on it.

Towards the latter end of the piece, Lord John Talbot came into the box, and Lady Laura's eyes sparkled with vanity and hope, as he negligently looked round, saying, "How are you this evening? how do you exist all this immense time; these people would weary the patience of an anti-deluvian." "Oh! you gothic creature," said Lady Laura, "surely you can never be tired of this charming harmony. Do you allow this attack on music, Signior?" "Oh!" interrupted Lord John, "Signior Rodalvi is used to something more like music than this infernal noise; but we have nothing good in England, except decent horseflesh, for every thing else it is a beggarly nation." Edmund was astonished, "What," thought he, "is this an Englishman? do the natives of this country then go abroad to despise all other nations, and return to abuse their own, although it is so highly favored,

as to render even their warmest prejudices in its favor excusable?" Lord John had now thrown himself into a chair, as if he wished to take a nap; and bringing his head so nearly in contact with her ladyship's shoulder, as to make it seem a pillow, they presented an interesting picture of the agreeable negligence of one sex, and the condescending tolerance of the other, according to the newest fashions. Had Edmund followed his own opinions of propriety and impropriety, and his inclinations to chastise the latter, he would have ordered the peer to leave the box, and insult decorum elsewhere; but he saw plainly, that the familiarity which disgusted him, was by no means so displeasing to its object, who listened with great complacency to the nothings yawned, rather than whispered into her ear. In about a quarter of an hour Lord John arose, and taking leave of the company with the same careless nod, by which he had saluted them on his entrance, he swung out of the box, notwithstanding the very pressing invitation which he received from Lady Laura to stay, and the hints that she threw out, of returning home before the piece ended.

She would now gladly have turned her attention again to Edmund; but, unfortunately at that moment, some ill-natured or misinformed person, circulated a report of fire having broken out among the machinery; which, added to a powerful smell of smoke, created such terror that the house was soon in confusion, notwithstanding some of the principal performers appeared on the stage, to assure the audience that the cause of their alarm, merely arose from some preparations for a part of the spectacle. Edmund however felt only half satisfied with this apology, and was so pale with apprehension, that Lady Laura began to form a contemptible opinion of his courage, and endeavoured to laugh him out of his fears, assuring him, that a piece would never be heard through, if flying reports of that nature were attended to; adding, that if there were even reason for alarm, she should always commend remaining quiet, as there was much more danger in going with the crowd, than could result from waiting till it should be dispersed. Edmund perfectly agreed with her ladyship, as to the propriety of her plans, but added, that he thought Lady Drelincourt appeared alarmed; he would therefore beg leave to go to the opposite side for a few moments, just to escort the ladies to their carriage if they required assistance, and would then have the pleasure of returning. Lady Laura coldly begged him not to confine himself; adding, "I cannot but admire the perfection of your ocular powers; I am sure the other side of the house might be in flames, and I unable to perceive it." She had forgotten that her eyes, however deficient, could, a few minutes before, distinguish Lord John opposite to her, notwithstanding the immense distance and that he, though very fashionably blind, could not affect to misunderstand her pointed obeisance, and encouraging looks.

Edmund flew to the box which contained one inestimably dear to him, and who rose higher every day in his estimation; for he every day became convinced that in her he should possess a jewel, richer than all the tribe of gay fashionable females, who flutter round the blaze of dissipation, till they are burnt in its flames.

He found Lady Drelincourt much alarmed, and her daughters on that account, were anxious to return home. Henry actually devoted his attention to his mother, and resigned the care of Lady Harriett to Mr. Dunderton, who had just arrived at a time when he could make himself useful, and who received his charge with a profusion of soft speeches. Edmund protected Lady Emma; her sisters had a crowd of beaux, and they were safely guarded to the carriage. "Have you room for me," said Edmund." "We should not

have it for any other fifth," said Lady Rosamond, "but for you, we would submit to be crowded." The gentlemen loudly complained of this avowed partiality. Edmund stepped into the carriage, and never once thought of Lady Laura, till the arrival of Lord Courtney, after the piece was ended, reminded him of his excessive rudeness. "Ah! what shall I do?" exclaimed he, starting up, "what is to be done? ladies assist me, I implore you give me your advice." "When we know your reasons for requiring it," said Lady Drelincourt, "you shall have the very best that we can offer." "Now indeed, my dear lady, it is no jest," continued he, "I have left, that is, I have forgotten—" he stopped, and Henry helped him out, by saying, "You have forgotten what you were going to tell us; but, my dear fellow, do now recollect what you have left at the opera? is it your heart or your toothpick-case." "No," replied Edmund, "I have left Lady Laura." The grave inquietude with which he spoke, diverted the company, and Henry consoled him by an assurance that she would not be lost for want of protection. It was however agreed that he ought to return, in order to make enquiries after the deserted fair one. Henry was deferring all apology till the next day, saying, "Lord John Talbot should have stayed with her, who does he think will take the trouble of escorting his mistress? I am sure he will not find me so condescending, though perhaps when she is his wife I may do it, just for the eclat of the thing." Lady Drelincourt gently reproved him for levity of his speech, adding that she was well assured his words were at variance with his sentiments; he was beginning to hold a mock argument with her, but Edmund could not forbear expressing his surprize, on hearing that Lord John, was an accepted lover of Lady Laura; Henry laughed at the astonishment which he betrayed, asking him if he had expected that one admirer would content her? Emma coloured, and an emotion resembling jealousy passed across her heart, but it was dispelled by Edmund's replying, "I own that had I known it sooner, I should have looked for more attention from his lordship, and less from her ladyship, during the short time I saw them together." "My dear fellow," returned Henry, "would'st thou enslave us again in the trammels of our forefathers; just when we are congratulating ourselves on having shaken them off? no, no, they are as the 'tales of other time,' and the remembrance of them may be 'pleasant, but yet mournful,' for they will 'return no more.'" A servant was now dispatched to Lady Laura, and returned with the information, that she had retired to rest much indisposed. "Well," said Henry, "I congratulate you however, on not having her death to answer for; her indisposition will not be very lingering, I dare say; she will be visible to-morrow, and you will be admitted to the happiness of pleading for your pardon in the magic *boudoir*." The family now separated for the night, and Lady Harriett followed Emma into her dressing room, to enquire with a mysterious air, "If she did not think that Edmund must be attached to Lady Laura, from the emotion which he had discovered, on hearing that she was going to marry Lord John Talbot?" Lady Emma replied, that she really believed he had no attachment whatever, to the lady in question, and that his emotion, as Lady Harriett emphatically termed it, was only surprise, suddenly excited by hearing of an arrangement, with which he was unacquainted. "Very possibly that might be the case," answered Lady Harriett, "only he must have some attachment more than we know of, he is so sparing in his attentions at home: I am sure he does not speak to me, for a day together, but you are indeed a favourite." "I," exclaimed Emma, "why should you think so? does he address his conversation oftener to me than to any one else?" "No, perhaps not much oftener, but always with more interest, and he smiles when

he hears your voice, and when you do not see him, he looks at you; and he plays the tunes which he has heard you admire, and when he takes a pencil into his hand, he copies your sketches, apparently without thinking of what he is doing." Emma blushed, and began to think Lady Harriett in a more rational humour, than she had ever known her. "Now acknowledge, my dear Emma," continued her sentimental companion, "that there is something infinitely soothing to the mind of susceptibility, in the idea of being beloved." She paused for a reply, which Emma gave briefly, saying, "Certainly any one is unworthy of being beloved, who is incapable of appreciating the sincere attachment of a worthy object." "Yes," said Lady Harriett, "and an object may be worthy, though doomed to be unfortunate, as my sweet friend Eliza Dunderton says, and indeed her brother is a proof of her assertion; he is not so lively, so very much the rage as Lord Courtney, or as handsome as Count Rodalvi, but he is interesting, and truly amiable." Then throwing herself into what she conceived a charming attitude, with a tragedy air, which showed how rapidly she improved in the society, and from the counsels of her Eliza, she exclaimed in a pathetic tone,

"Ill fated youth, my heart must feel thy woes,  
But my seal'd lips their source shall ne'er disclose."

Then with a well acted confusion she hastily bade goodnight, and retired, to the great joy of Emma, who could only account for her romantic absurdity, by supposing that she had lost her reason, or was talking in her sleep.

## CHAP. XXI

Friendship! thou greatest happiness below,  
The world would be a desert but for thee,  
And man himself a nobler kind of brute.  
Wherefore did heav'n our god-like reason give  
To make the charms of conversation sweet,  
To open and unbosom all our woes,  
For life's sure medicine is a faithful friend.

TRACEY.

THE next morning Edmund breakfasted by appointment with Henry, whose spirits were again fled, and his countenance expressed the effects of a sleepless night and an uneasy mind.

As soon as they were alone, Edmund remarked with concern, his friend's altered looks, requested him to have some medical advice. "Alas! Rodalvi," said he, "there is not an article in the materia-medica which would afford me relief; unless it have lately gained some, capable of ministering to a mind diseased; there lies my ill, there I ought to minister to myself, and from that I shrink like a base coward." He started up, and walked about in great agitation, Edmund besought him to be tranquil; "Tranquil!" he exclaimed, "no, no, it is not for me to be tranquil! you, Edmund, are happy, you have never forfeited your own esteem; and thousands in my situation would not be unhappy, wretched that I am, I abhor vice, yet cannot summon resolution to practise the virtue, that I know and admire." After a long pause, in which he endeavoured to recover sufficient calmness to resume his discourse, he continued, "I am ashamed to confess, how early I formed the design of seducing the innocent girl, whom you saw yesterday; it commenced even from the moment in which I first beheld her. Encouraged by finding that she had not mentioned my impertinent behaviour to her father, my vanity construed her silence into partiality, and I resolved to improve it to my own advantage, though I was soon convinced that the fear of exciting her father's uneasiness, had been her sole motive for the only reserve she had ever used towards him. Would that she had related it in the first impulse of anger, he would not then have smiled on an assassin, who basely wounded him when he could not defend himself.

"After Macdonald's death, it was necessary to fix on some plan for his daughter immediately; at first I determined upon sending her into Scotland, under the care of my servant, and in the company of Jane Williams, the gardener's daughter, a well-behaved honest young woman, who had waited on her, and to whom she appeared attached. Unfortunately I thought again, and however second thoughts may be deemed the wisest, they are seldom the most favorable to the causes of humanity and virtue, for the dictates of the former, have too often been repressed on a nearer view, by cautious avarice, and the ardour of the latter, damped by the suggestions of self-gratification.

"As the time approached for her departure, my courage sunk under the idea of losing her; I began to hesitate; I persuaded myself that there was something disrespectful

to her father's memory, and that I only half fulfilled my promise, by sending her away under the care of servants; I therefore resolved to accompany her, to place her myself under the care of her aunt, with whom I hoped that my father's name, and my own, would be of service in procuring her respect and comfort. Pleased with any thing like a reprieve, I was delighted with the victory which I imagined I had gained over my inclinations, and compared my triumph to that of Cyrus, or Scipio, thinking my own forbearance in no wise inferior to theirs. I imparted my intentions to Mary, who received them with that innocent sweetness which so enslaves me, that unsuspecting implicit reliance on my honor, which, I thank heaven, she has never yet had reason to repent; believe me Edmund, I have never yet sought to injure the purity which confides in me, and could I gain resolution to withdraw from temptation, I might yet be virtuous and happy, for surely the applauses of my own heart would diffuse balm over my wounded soul." "Oh Courtney," exclaimed Edmund, "there spoke my friend; cherish the noble thought, resign her, Henry, resign her, and fulfil your trust with honor; ah, do not add another victim to infamy, lead her not to lament that ignorance of guilt, which deprived her even of suspicion. Do not teach her its existence, by discovering it where she expected every virtue; my dear friend, the ardour or passion will subside, and your conduct must hereafter appear to you in its real colours, perhaps also at a time, when wearied of the world and disgusted with mankind, all your resources for happiness must be drawn from the retrospect of a well-spent life. What then will be your feelings, when you review your actions and dwell on this period? Perhaps long after the poor deceived object of your love, may have ceased to exist, and will be remembered only by the remorse awakened in your breast, from the consciousness of your base conduct towards her. Seduction, always a crime, is in this case one of the deepest dye, it joins perfidy, cruelty, falsehood and perjury, it offends immediately God and man, and when the hour of your death arrives, you may be agonized by recollecting the violation of your promises given in the same trying moment, to Macdonald." Edmund's fine countenance in speaking, was animated by the energy of virtue, and illuminated by the light of truth, his eyes beamed conviction, whilst the tears which fell from them, softened the rigour of his speech, and attested the sincerity of the tender friendship by which it was inspired.

Lord Courtney listened in silence, he felt the force of Edmund's arguments, for his own heart had taught him the same, but he received them with the peevishness, of "a man convinced against his will." When the unimpassioned Madame de Maintenon, urged Madame de Montespan, to withdraw her guilty attachment from the King, and to fill her heart with the love of God, devoting the rest of her life to penitence and prayer. "Alas! madame," replied the wavering mistress, "you seem to think it as easy to change an attachment, as to change one's linen; and for a King too!" Courtney answered nearly in the same words, "I agree to all that you have said; I know what I ought to do, but how to prevail on myself to do it, is the difficulty which I have hitherto found insurmountable. You seem to think it as easy for me to disengage myself from an attachment, as from an appointment to dine; and an attachment for one too so eminently lovely!" "Her loveliness is no excuse," returned Edmund, "for your irresolution, no addition to your difficulties; every man thinks the woman he loves, eminently and incomparably lovely; and he is only convinced by a new attachment, that she may be equalled and perhaps excelled." Courtney was piqued, "Yes," he replied, "if to do, were as easy, as to know what is fitting

to be done, 'chapels would be churches, and poor men's cottages princes' palaces.' You can condemn my partiality to a girl, who possesses every power to fascinate by nature, for of art she knows not the name, and yet you for weeks, submitted the disposal of your time, to a capricious woman of quality, under the idea of her entertaining a serious passion for you; forgetting she was known as a hacknied coquette, that a woman of that description, will never love any one but herself, that Lady Laura has been so profuse of her smiles in the world of fashion, that it is a proof of greater dexterity to escape them, than of *bonne fortune*, to be favoured with them; and that the former is generally considered more enviable than the latter." Edmund did not wish to quarrel with a friend whom he loved, for a woman whom he despised, though that may be the order of things, among the Quixotes of the day, who manfully meet to fight, are separated by the peace-officers, shake hands, have the satisfaction of seeing their intentions set forth in a barren paper, and gain the admiration of the ladies for their daring courage; he therefore calmly answered, that he confessed his ignorance of Lady Laura's principles, at the time of his becoming acquainted with her, that he discontinued his intimacy, when he became convinced of her favours being general, and that he only now made a shew of it, from a consideration of the politeness, which he deemed due to every female, though by her conduct she might sometimes forfeit her claim to it. This mild reply recalled Henry to a sense of his petulance. "You must forgive me my dear friend," said he, "I grow as savage as a bear, and I am vexed to find you ten thousand times more worthy than I shall ever be; I ask your advice, and if it be not exactly according to my wishes, and diametrically opposite to what you ought to give, I become angry, persuade myself that it is not worth taking, but that my own is infinitely better, and ought to be followed; I will however resume my history, though I know that I must make a poor figure as the hero of it. I told you that Mary was pleased with my determination to accompany her into Scotland; a journey of five hundred miles, appeared to her a terrific undertaking, and she naturally expressed pleasure in having a companion whom she regarded as her best friend. This determined me; I postponed the day of her departure, and never fixed it again. I prevailed on her to change her lodgings to a village, six miles from Drelincourt, called Appleton, on pretence that the rooms she then had were damp; an idea given me by the old people, who lamented the circumstance, and gladly accepted her offer of taking Jane to wait on her. In this retired spot, she remained, perfectly satisfied with my delaying her journey, on account of the severity of the winter, which even under its mildest aspect, is certainly an improper and uncomfortable season for travelling.

"When the time was fixed, for our leaving the castle, I easily prevailed on her to quit Appleton; she had no friend but me; she considered me as her lawful guardian, and thought herself bound to comply with my proposals, which appeared entirely for her comfort. I had travelled very leisurely, never suspecting the probability of seeing my father on the road, as I knew that he did not intend to begin his journey, until the time when I expected mine would be ended; imagine then my surprize and dismay, when I recognized his livery; at the first I thought that he meant only to change horses, for I knew he never made Blandford his resting-place; but I soon found that he was stationary for the night, and I durst not risk a discovery; I endured all the tortures of concealment and anxiety, until you were seated at table, I then framed an excuse to Mary for my apparent



whimsicality; ordered horses, went one stage further that night, and took a different route for the remainder of the way.

“I had previously engaged the house which you saw yesterday at Brompton, and I immediately procured masters in every branch of the polite arts for Mary, whose education had hitherto been solely guided by her own excellent capacity, and natural taste, aided by her father’s occasional instructions, as his confined income rendered it impossible for him to give her the advantages, that his affection wished. Her ignorance of the world, guards her from uneasiness, she perceives not any thing peculiar in her situation, and in retaining Jane as a companion, she imagines that every appearance of impropriety is avoided. Her time glides on in undisturbed tranquillity, marked only by the acquisition of useful knowledge, or pleasing accomplishments. She delights to see me when she can display any improvement, and in my absence, her sole study is to deserve my approbation, by redoubled diligence.

“Alas! shall I cultivate the rich soil of her mind, for another to reap its fruits? Shall I daily see the loveliest flowers of my own planting, spring up, and must another mark their bloom, and enjoy their fragrance? I am denied the privilege of the humble peasant, I have not a right to dispose of my hand; no, I know too well what I have received from my ancestors, and what I owe to them; yet I cannot but think, that the disposal of my heart belongs to me alone, and my Mary would accept it, unmindful of the censure of the world, for she would know that I had not more to offer. Marriage is at best a mere human ceremony, instituted for the convenience and security of society, its form differs in every country, and it is of consequence only so far, as it binds one man to one woman; so long therefore as the end is effected, the means are optional; and as from the peculiarity of my situation, I am under the necessity of accommodating my actions to circumstances, my intentions may nevertheless be pure, my conduct honorable, Heaven knowing my motives, will acquit me of guilt, and men will have no right to accuse me, for I should only deviate from established rules, because a compliance with them, would injure those, to whom I owe the most affectionate reverence, and those from whom, though yet unborn, I may hope to receive it. How few are there who will condemn me for obeying the dictates of my own inclinations! how many would be justified in censuring me, were I to disgrace my lineage by an unequal marriage! in the first instance, I only injure myself, in the last I injure my posterity, I wish not to appear scrupulously virtuous at their expence, and I would rather be accused of failing in the rigid forms of morality, than of forgetting the respect due to an illustrious name and exalted rank. My own actions are free; if they incur censure, I alone am the sufferer: but I have no right to entail shame on my children, for those on whom the name of Drelincourt will descend, shall never have cause to blush for the weakness of their father, and the inferior condition of their mother.” So spoke family pride, and early instilled prejudices; so shrunk Lord Courtney from the idea of giving birth to a titled heir, by a woman, virtuous as she was lovely, capable of adorning any rank to which she might be exalted, and whose only fault consisted in the want of nobility. Edmund combated these opinions with honest warmth. “I do not understand your distinctions,” said he, “you seem to think yourself entitled by your birth, to overcome every obstacle divine and human, that may interfere with your wishes. You say, a just pride, a debt due to your ancestors and to your posterity, forbids your marrying the object of your affection, because her condition in life is unequal to your

own. I grant this, and respect the distinctions which society requires; but I cannot think you excusable in forming a dishonorable connexion with her, and thereby rendering her inferior to every virtuous woman, in even the lowest ranks of life. The right that you claim of incurring censure on your own actions, I will not dispute, but I cannot grant that the noble privilege extends to hers; nor can I imagine what plea you can alledge to involve her in ruin, or why your children by her, should blush to know themselves born in wedlock, yet be enabled to bear the taunts of illiberal contempt, or the reproaches of malicious cruelty, without experiencing any painful sensations on knowing themselves to be the fruits of betrayed confidence, and illicit love. If all obstacles must be made to yield to our desires, however inordinate, then may the tyrant 'wade unchecked through slaughter to a throne,' and plead in excuse for his cruelties, that the intermediate claimants interfered with his desire to reign, and that being unable to succeed by peaceful means, he was justified in waving the murdering steel, and dispersing the obstacles to his gratification. But virtue must be fixed and unalterable, her laws can never be subjected to the arbitrary opinions of men, blinded by prejudice and passion; and the arguments which you have advanced in support of your wishes, only prove that however ingenious the understanding may be, in strengthening the suggestions of the will, and dignifying them with the appearance of reason, it can yet raise no cloud of words sufficiently powerful to obscure that steady light of truth, with which the Almighty has been graciously pleased to illuminate our minds, to guide us through the mazes of error, and to enable us to continue in the paths of virtue with cheerfulness and security." Edmund ceased, Henry replied, arguments were maintained on both sides, without producing conviction to either, and the controversy ended as controversies generally do, by each party being more warmly convinced of the truth of his own opinion, and the fallacy and weakness of that of his adversary.

At length they parted; Henry went to pay his *devoirs* to his fair enslaver, who suspected not the discussion of which she had been the subject, and Edmund delighted with the hope of saving her from ruin, and his friend from remorse, resolved to impart the whole affair to Lord Drelincourt, rightly thinking, that in a case so desperate, confidence would be "more honor'd in the breach than the observance." Unfortunately the Earl was at that time engaged at the house, but Edmund resolved to take the first opportunity of his return, to gain a private audience of him, and in the intermediate time, he went to pay his respects to Lady Laura, and to frame an excuse for his negligence the preceding evening.

## CHAP. XXII.

Then all for parking and parading,  
 Coquetting, dancing, masquerading,  
 For sales, plays, courts and crowds, what passion,  
 Nay churches even if the fashion;  
 For woman's sense of right and wrong,  
 Is ruled by the almighty throng;  
 Still turns to each meander tame,  
 And swims the straw of every stream.

MOORE.

THE groom of the chambers shewed Edmund into Lady Laura's dressing-room, and informed him, that she had been much indisposed. "Mi ladi," said Monsieur La Fleurette, "be tère bad tout le matin; she had des fit historic last night, she had such grand peur of de barbares who made all de grand bruit; and dis morning, one, two o'clock came, she had de historic fit again, and de physician came to help her to die, but she be better for all dat." With this melancholy account he left the room; and soon after her ladyship entered, with an air of interesting languor, and most attractingly dressed in an elegantly deshabelle, of fine muslin, trimmed with beautiful lace. Edmund, naturally compassionate, saw immediately that she was really indisposed, and accordingly paid his condolences in a very tender manner. "I shall soon be better," she replied, "I was hurried and alarmed last night in coming from the opera, which made me rest very ill; but I shall feel quite renovated with a little air." Edmund was really shocked, and attempted to apologize, but she goodnaturedly commanded his silence, and he thought that she had never appeared more amiable. She saw the impression which she made, but unfortunately, in endeavouring to strengthen, she destroyed it. When she smiled tenderly, he recollected Henry's words, and they introduced such a crowd of melancholy reflections, that his countenance became clouded by them. She quickly remarked the change, and asked him to take an airing with her; he endeavoured to excuse himself, by saying, that he was engaged to meet the ladies at a fashionable auction. "What!" exclaimed she, "at the sale of Sir William Lightly's effects?" "The same." "Oh delightful! then I will make one of your party, for it will do me good to be amused; I was very intimate with them all the last winter; I know there are a profusion of sweet tempting articles, and all the world will be there; besides, I was Lady Lightly's particular friend, and she will be pleased to hear I was there; she will think it a compliment you know; *excusez moi donc, un moment.*" so saying, she tripped away to alter her dress, leaving Edmund to wonder at the different modes of complimenting in different countries.

Lady Laura's prophecy seemed actually fulfilled, the rooms were delightfully crowded with a motley group drawn together by avarice, extravagance, indolence, vanity, scandal and curiosity. Lady Laura was in her element, and soon forgot all des barbares, and de historic fit. "How d'ye do, how d'ye do," said she, nodding to Lady Drelincourt and her party; "you see I come to you sans cérémonie." She then seated herself, and after

taking time to recover breath, she ran on, "How very shocking to see all these pretty things so thrown about, what brutes these creditors are, how dreadful to fall into their clutches. It is immensely hard on people of fashion; their clumsy tradesmen never consider the enormous expences they are obliged to incur in order to appear tolerably genteel." "Nor do the people of fashion, I am afraid," said Lady Rosamond "ever consider the expences that their tradesman are obliged to incur, and how many families are ruined by the efforts of their customers to appear genteel." "Oh, Lord! yes, it is very shocking for the industrious souls; but to be sure some of them are horrid cormorants, and bore one to death with their long bills." "And yet, a long bill," said Mr. Fletcher, "is not a characteristic of the bird which you have just mentioned; I am afraid, rather, that you may compare the poor tradesmen to snipes; and the masked ball, or suite of newly furnished rooms, to the voracious gormandizer, that swallows up the little people without finding his ravenous appetite appeased." "Oh, you wretch!" cried her ladyship, "to compare an aukward creature of a tradesman to any thing so delicate and divine as a snipe; but, really now, I am so sorry for poor Lady Lightly; what is become of her, pray?" "I believe," said Mr. Fletcher, "she is in the country, writing a treatise on the inestimable value of friendship, illustrated by various incidents, and innumerable characters, ancient and modern." "Indeed! well I never knew that she could write, but it is a happy resource, poor woman, she may find it very useful; I will subscribe to her book, if she publishes it by subscription. I suppose they have nothing left; indeed they lived terribly fast; quite shocking to receive so many invitations from them, when all the world knew that they could not hold out another winter." "Which I suppose," said Mr. Fletcher, "was the reason why all the world good-naturedly accepted them, fearing, in its tender anxiety, lest every entertainment should be the last." "Oh! you are so severe," returned her ladyship, "if I did not know you, I should be quite afraid of you." "And I have heard many declare their fears of your ladyship, merely because they do know you." She was going to retort, but at that moment, Mr. Sellwell gracefully waving his hammer, entreated silence, with an earnestness, nearly resembling a command. He then opened the sale with a speech, in which he extolled the elegant taste that had collected so matchless an assortment of goods; hinted, with impertinent delicacy, his grief at being called on to dispose of them, and judiciously intimated his satisfaction, on seeing to so brilliant an assemblage of beauty and fashion; who, he doubted not, would willingly do justice to articles, so eminently worthy their attention.

Valuable paintings were now knocked down at one fourth of their original cost, and gaudy copies purchased for three times more than their intrinsic value, whilst the comments of the company formed the principal entertainment. Lord Dunderton had come to bid for bookcases, though they were very useless articles of furniture in his eyes; a small shelf in his counting-house, having always, hitherto, been capacious enough for this library. Conscious of this, he was vexed to find much more bidden for them than he thought they could be worth; though they were most tastefully designed, and elegantly ornamented. He could not however prevail on himself to bid one-third of their value, but endeavoured to vent his disappointment in abusing their late owner. Lord Drelincourt had just stepped in, and stood near him, though he could not have addressed his complaints to a worse subject. "It is amazing, my Lord Drelincourt," he exclaimed, his words almost inarticulate with passion, "it is astonishing to see how some people do throw away their

money. Who would have thought to have seen such handsome furniture, in a young fellow's house not worth a groat? what business had he to be knighted? silly mushroom, he never did any good after; it is, indeed, a strange thing that people cannot be content with that state of life, unto which it may please God to call them. For my part, I don't say nothing out of envy, I am doing well in the world, thank God, but one can't but be vexed to see no distinctions made; why there's a parcel of young fellows just now bid against me, out of contradiction, about them there book-cases; not that I had much use for 'em, but I don't believe the young sparks are so flush of cash; rather a shy article, that I believe with most of 'em; not that I care about it, but there is a respect due, my lord, that there is sometimes a want of that said article in the present day." Lord Drelincourt drew himself up with additional hauteur, until he effectually overlooked the little fat figure who had talked of similarity of opinion, and deficiency of respect; he answered briefly, that he did not carry his expectations of respect being paid to him, to so ridiculous an extent, as to look for it in a mere trifle of fancy or convenience; and that he had not the honor of knowing Lord Dunderton sufficiently to form a judgment of his claims to it. Lord Dunderton thought it mighty odd, that Lord Drelincourt should stand on such ceremony, for a sense of his own importance prevented him from ascribing the coldness, which he could not but remark, to any other cause, and he answered, "I hope your lordship does not consider me as a stranger, seeing we are quite next door neighbours, as one may say, in the country; and I think the nobility should be very friendly with one another, it is a pleasing sight, my lord, and what ought to be." "Sir, you are very condescending," said the Earl, making him a half bow, "and all the nobility are very much obliged to you." He bowed again, and left him, to take a seat near Lady Drelincourt, with the polite attention of the old school, to whose precepts he was very partial; and Lord Dunderton congratulated himself on having made such a clever, civil speech, that it must please the Earl, or the deuce was in him.

The attention of the company was now attracted by the voice of a female, who bid very loudly for a pair of elegant pistols, which Mr. Sellwell had warmly recommended to the attention of the gentlemen, assuring them that they were so admirably bored as to send unerring destruction, if the hand that held them possessed, in the smallest degree, the cool and steady courage so eminently the characteristic of the age. Notwithstanding Mr. Sellwell's compliments, the gentlemen did not appear ambitious of possessing such unerring weapons; the beauty of the mounting indeed attracted some of them, but they would probably have been just as much prized if they had not been bored, for with many it was decreed quite obsolete to fire; to meet and measure the ground, being sufficient to satisfy anyone, however bitterly affronted. The lady proving victorious, insisted on having the prize delivered into her own hands; and stepping forward to receive it, presented the blooming countenance of Miss Clayton, whose roseate tints of health, and exercise, put the deepest rouge of the languid ladies of quality to the blush. She examined the pistols carefully, drew the triggers, snapped them, and professed herself well pleased with her purchase, whilst the gentlemen, admiring the novelty of it, and attracted by her smart figure, began to stare at her, and ask who she was. "Egad, a spirited girl," said Lord John Talbot; "if it were not so consumedly hot, and I were somewhat nearer, I would positively chat a little with her; prithee, Courtney, who is she? and where does she come from?" "Her name," replied Courtney, "is Clayton, and the merry-looking, fresh-coloured old

gentleman beside her, is a worthy baronet, her uncle, who has given her an excellent education in his stables, and trained her as carefully as any of his favorite hounds. She will scour the country in a fox-chase, and is always sure to be in at the death: she shoots flying, and will bring you down as many birds as you please: she will make an excellent wife, and I'll answer for her never having the vapours: shall I introduce you?" "No, indeed," replied his lordship, "I will not trouble you, I have as many eccentricities on my hands as I can manage; the colour of her cheeks would throw me into a plethora; and I should not be able to die in peace, for her yoix, yoix, tally-ho!"

Henry was tempted to bid for a pretty cabinet, containing every necessary implement for work and drawing; it was most ingeniously contrived, and was the production of a French nobleman's leisure hours: if the amusement be thought trifling, let it be remembered, that it was not vicious; and too often, the plans of vice are conceived in the moments of idleness. "Ah! how terrible," exclaimed Lady Laura to Lord Courtney, "to see that sweet little cabinet go for such a trifle; it was poor Lady Lightly's favorite: poor woman, how shocked I am! she could not draw, but she got the sweetest little sketches and paintings from the emigrants, very cheap, and that just did as well: poor woman, how I pity her! I would have bought it myself, to make her a present of it, if I were not almost a beggar already;" pointing to a pile of chips before her, "I have half ruined myself with purchases, but I always did long for this sweet china, whenever I saw it; did you ever behold such brilliant colours?" He replied in his usual rattling strain of gallantry; but his purchase had attracted curiosity, and he was rather puzzled to answer the numerous questions addressed to him on the subject. Lady Harriett simpered, imagining that she could guess his designs; and Mr. Dunderton, who had lately paid her great attention, whenever he could do it unobserved by her guardian, affecting to be in despair, whispered to her, "Happy Courtney! he can testify his love in a thousand ways, of which my cruel fate denies me the power." He might have said, for fate read father, as Lord Dunderton had too recently acquired riches, to distribute them very profusely; he knew how easily "they make to themselves wings and fly away;" he therefore resolved to secure the possession of them, by keeping their pinions closely cut, infinitely to the chagrin of his son, who often found all his eloquence, unable to procure a discharge of his tailor's bill, or even a dinner for his young friends, in return of the numerous entertainment which he was obliged to accept from them. Miss Dunderton did not fare much better, and often complained bitterly to her mamma, that it was a shame for a lord's daughter to go so shabbily dressed, when every miss in the city, was as fine as hands and pins could make her. The prudent mother generally steered a middle course, commending her husband's care for his family, and, at the same time, supplying her son with cash when she could get it; and always allowing her daughter to order to a sufficient quantity of materials for one dress, to make half a dozen fashionable wet draperies. All her indulgence did not, however, lessen the mortification, that the young people felt at their father's parsimony; from which, wisely resolving to deliver themselves, they entered into an agreement, to mutually aid, abet, and assist each other, in every scheme that might appear favorable to their interest. Miss Dunderton promised to befriend her brother in gaining Lady Harriett; and he, in return, engaged to make her a present of an elegant wardrobe on the day of his marriage, and to find her titled husband among his acquaintance. Knowing however the Earl's intentions, with respect to his ward, they felt the necessity of observing the greatest

caution. In order therefore to avoid any suspicion, Mr. Dunderton prevailed on his sister to give up, for the present, her designs on Lord Courtney, to which she consented, as she had previously exerted every art of which she was mistress to gain his attention, without reaping the success that she wished for, and had once flattered herself with the hope of obtaining.

The company now began to disperse, and the major part of them who had been constant visitors at the house, amused themselves with condemning the elegance of the decorations, and complimenting their own foresight, in having always prophesied the end of such profusion.

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## CHAP. XXIII.

Nor reigns ambition in bold man alone,  
 Soft female hearts the rude invader own;  
 But there indeed it deals in nicer things  
 Than routing armies, or dethroning kings.

YOUNG.

MISS Clayton was perfectly satisfied with the amusement she had found at the auction, and declared that it was the pleasantest morning she had spent since she came to town.

The truth was, that this young lady was not exempt from her sex's ruling passion, a love of admiration; on the contrary, it was as ardent in her bosom, as in that of a birthnight belle: the only difference was, that to obtain it, one assumed the manners of an amazon, the other of a courtesan; one dressed almost in man's attire, the other almost in that of nature. Both understood the meaning of the word admiration in its modern sense, that is to signify, exciting wonder; not in the old-fashioned acceptance, when it was understood as synonymous with esteem and love.

When Miss Clayton came to town with her uncle, she had hoped to be considered as the most dashing character of the day; but was mortified to find that folly there assumed such various forms, that every road to notoriety was crowded with votaries, who warmly disputed the prize so anxiously sought after. She rode in a full gallop, and overleaped every obstacle in vain, for a rival candidate drove to the goal, four in hand, and outstripped all other competitors by her dexterous velocity. The purchase of the pistols was however an idea entirely new. Miss Clayton was consoled by having started one so original, and resolving to secure her fame by firing them on the first opportunity, she wore them constantly, and looked so dauntless, that the most unbounded insolence, would have required additional courage, to risk offending her. She one day rode with her uncle, to visit a friend at some distance from town; and, in chattering over other times, Sir John lengthened his morning-call, until they were almost involved in the obscurity of night before their return. "Ods daggers" said Sir John, "I wish we had not stayed so late; I do not half like this gloomy look out. Halloo! you Jacob, keep close to my back: I feel very ticklish, my teeth chatter, I believe its with the cold; but London is grown a shocking wicked place since I was there last, and we may be robbed and murdered, Lord help us! before we get home." "Trust me, sir," replied his valiant niece, "no one shall do the first, unless they likewise manage to do the last, and I believe to that they would find pretty stout resistance." Miss Clayton was inspired by the consciousness of possessing her redoubtable pistols; but poor Sir John had nothing to raise his spirits, and replied, in desponding tones, "Oh! my dear, do not talk of making any resistance. What, if any of the bloody cut-throats should be lurking about, and over-hear you. I'm all in a tremble, I wish I was in bed and fast asleep, Lord help me! I would not get up for my dinner, not if the king himself, God bless him, was to send to ask me. Resistance! no, marry, we would not, make any resistance; I should be overthankful to come off with a whole skin; for what is money but paltry trash, beneath the care of a wise man?" Honest Jacob's back felt as



ticklish as his master's and he was not much consoled by calling to mind the old proverb, that "The devil takes the hindermost." They had not proceeded far, when Jacob exclaimed, in tremulous accents, "Oh! please your honor here be tew men a coming; they be quite handy to us, and there be but one of these tew pistols loaded; will your honor please to take him?" "No, no, tr-tr-tr-truly," replied his honor, "I am but a very indifferent marksman, thou may'st use it thyself." Jacob would have declined the favor, but the horsemen came up to them, and after a very close examination of their features, one of the strangers exclaimed, "Surely I see Sir John Clayton?" "No you don't," replied the cautious baronet, "if you are seeking for him, my friend, I advise you to look further on." He then, in a low voice, informed his niece that the fellow pretending to know him, was all a hum; that there was no end of their tricks in London; but that they should not bamboozle him. Now the terrible intruder happened to be no other than Mr. Breresford, who, like them, was rather later on the road than he thought agreeable, and seeing a party before him, he found "his breast with sympathetic fear alarmed," and slackened his pace, till, on the assurance of his servant, that he could distinguish a petticoat among them, he took courage to quicken it again, as he had never heard of highway-women. He was much pleased to see the face of an acquaintance instead of a robber, but was somewhat disconcerted by the baronet's denying his name; he resolved therefore to try the lady, and coming round to her, said "Surely I cannot mistake, have I not the pleasure of seeing Miss Clayton?" "Yes, sir," replied the undaunted nymph, "pray receive my address." Saying this, she snapped one of her pistols at him, and he, with a piteous shriek, fell off his horse. "Oh, Lord! my dear," cried the worthy baronet, "what have you done? poor miserable sinner, he is killed; oh! what shall we do? what will become of us! I never had a murder on my conscience before." The servant now, by his loud lamentations, informed them of his mater's name, and poor Sir John quaked at the idea of being accessory to the death of an innocent man; whilst even Miss Clayton's laurels trembled on her victorious brows, and she heartily wished herself once more in peaceful obscurity at Clayton Hall. Some persons however coming past, conveyed the wounded hero to a house not far distant, and Miss Clayton led the way for the rest of the party, saying, "we have to be sure run confoundedly on the wrong side of the post, and it will be devilishly aukward if we have to swing for it." "Oh, my dear," answered Sir John, "do not talk about it, I am all in a flutter and my heart's in my mouth, I shall never like the report of a gun again. Oh dear; it can only be manslaughter, for I'll take my affadavit we had no malice afore thought, but I'd as lief be hanged if it was not for the shame, as be sent to any out o'th' way place beyond seas; what could I do at my time of life, all among kangaroos and wild men? No, no, I shall die on my passage, and then I shall be thrown overboard without christian burial, who would have thought a month ago that I should have come to such an ignominious end? What a disgrace it will be to my poor nephew? He'll be forced to change his name, it will be the talk of all Devonshire!" His niece endeavoured to console him by observing, that no man need blush for his name, who was not ashamed of his actions, that with fresh air and exercise life was always worth having, that with good health every body had something to be thankful for, even in Botany Bay, and that after all they might have gone to worse places, as it must be a country that would afford excellent hunting, and plenty of game. "Ah dear heart," said Sir John, "what good would that do us! if there were as many hares as there must be rogues, they would be of no use to us; we

should have no worthy friends to send them to, or jolly dogs to go out with us; and miserable horse-flesh I do suppose; no, no, England is the only place worth living in; I warrant all the fine places abroad, that they pretend to talk about, are a parcel of dirty beggarly holes." They now arrived at the house, and found to their great joy, that Breresford had only fainted, and had quite recovered by the motion of removing, though he could not but think himself mortally wounded, and entreated those around him, not to disguise his danger from false compassion. At length, he was with some difficulty convinced that he might consider himself able to pursue his journey, and received the apologies of his adversaries with his usual goodnature. The next day, the whole town was informed of the adventure; Miss Clayton became the rage, and had the pleasure of seeing herself caricatured in every printshop, under the name of the "Fair Amazon, or Rob me if you dare."—

We are fully sensible of the apology which we ought to make, for stepping out of the direct path of this unparalleled history, to relate Miss Clayton's vagaries; but we thought it would be an unpardonable neglect of the notoriety, that she had taken such pains to acquire, were we to leave them entirely unnoticed, and to mention them at any other time, would have diverted the attention of our readers too much from the grand, important, and interesting incidents, with which we mean speedily to present them.

## CHAP. XXIV

Ah me, is all our pleasure mix'd with woe!  
 Is there on earth no happiness sincere?  
 Must e'en this bitter stream of sorrow flow  
 From joy's domestic spring our children dear?  
 How oft did Thetis drop the silver tear,  
 When with fond eyes she view'd her darling boy,  
 How oft her breast heav'd with presaging fear,  
 Lest vice's secret canker should annoy  
 Fair virtue's opening bud, and all her hopes destroy.

WEST.

EDMUND anxiously sought for an opportunity of speaking to the Earl, but unfortunately his lordship had again entered into the labyrinths of politics, notwithstanding the disgust with which disappointment had formerly inspired him; and as it was not in his nature to espouse a cause, with only lukewarm zeal, particularly one so important in his eyes, as the welfare of his country, he devoted his time with such unremitting attention to public affairs, that he was seldom seen even by his own family, until late in the evening, when he endeavoured in social cheerfulness, to unbend his mind from the ardent and busy thought of the day.

Edmund sensible of this, was extremely unwilling to obtrude a subject on him, which would inevitably embitter the short time, that he allowed himself for recreation, and add new cares to a brow already clouded with anxieties not his own.

But on the other hand, he considered the danger of Mary's situation, and the temptation of Henry's; he felt himself accessory to her ruin, in delaying the prevention of it, and he accused himself of negligence in the cause of virtue, whilst he suffered selfish motives to interfere with his endeavours to promote it. In this doubtful and trying situation, his spirits forsook him, and his altered countenance proclaimed a mind disturbed. The gentle Lady Emma sympathized in his uneasiness, though ignorant of its source; delicacy checked every enquiry which anxiety prompted her to make, and when they were alone, each felt restrained and unhappy, yet neither made an effort to discover the cause of these feelings; Edmund guessed however that his apparent reserve wounded Emma's sensibility, and though fully aware of the confidence due to love, he felt himself unauthorized to entrust it with a secret which belonged not to himself; to see her unhappy was more than he could bear, and he resolved to summon resolution, to acquit himself of the debt, which he conceived he owed to Mary, to Henry, to Lord Drelincourt, and to himself. He would then be released from the painful responsibility which he now held, and in the consciousness of having performed his duty, he hoped soon to lose the sense of anxiety and suspense, under which he suffered. He accordingly entreated Lord Drelincourt

to favour him with a quarter of an hour's conversation, before he went to the house; the Earl immediately complied, and led the way into his study, with a countenance so

benevolent, and unsuspecting of ill, that Edmund felt anew the utmost reluctance to wound his feelings, and the unpleasant situation in which he himself was placed.

However, after he had commenced his account, he surmounted his agitation, and when modestly stating the reasons which actuated his disclosure, and conjuring Lord Drelincourt to save the orphan of a brave officer, whose dying hours had been cheered by the hope, of leaving her not unprotected, his language was so impassioned, his manner so energetic, he maintained the cause of injured unsuspecting innocence with such tender dignity, and pleaded in behalf of forgiveness for Henry's conduct, with such anxious friendship, that Lord Drelincourt lost in admiration, forgot his firmness, and paid Edmund's eloquence the tribute of his tears: Edmund was greatly affected, and again entreating pardon, if he had been too importunate; retired with a mind comparatively at ease, but left the Earl a prey to a variety of contending emotions.

Shall we exhibit the human heart all its weaknesses to our readers? Or shall we deceive them, and represent Lord Drelincourt as a character rather to be desired than expected, unswayed by prejudice, unchanged by circumstances, unmoved by interest.

The partiality with which we are inclined to consider the character of this worthy nobleman, would induce us to conceal his errors, but truth forbids, and as it is our ardent wish to instruct, we must declare his faults, and lament their effects.

Lord Drelincourt would have shuddered at the commission of a crime, and had he been left with such a charge, as dying confidence had bequeathed to his son, though the object of it had been lovelier than the Spartan dame, and he in all the pride of youth, and the impetuosity of passion, yet would he have held her sacred and inviolate. His heart might have consumed in flames more ardent from concealment, but silence would have for ever sealed his lips on the subject of his love, which even to have felt he would have considered as a breach of trust.

Yet Lord Drelincourt was inclined to be lenient towards his darling son, even on the very articles wherein at his son's age, he was the most rigorous in judging himself.

He examined his own actions by the undeviating principles of rectitude and honor; those of his son, he was willing, to consider like a man of the world, and to judge modern manners, by modern rules. Not that he for a moment thought of conniving at his son's continuing an acquaintance with Miss Macdonald; he was too tender a parent to his own daughters, and felt too forcibly the respect due to them, to see unmoved, the daughter of Macdonald standing upon the brink of a precipice, from which one false step, would hurl her into ruin: no; knowing her danger, he resolved to avert it, but shall we confess, that his weakness was in wishing that he had not known it? And though he did not say to Edmund in the words of Constance, "away, this news hath made thee a most ugly man;" yet he could not repress a wish, (even whilst his cheek glowed at its impropriety,) that Henry had been more cautious, or Edmund less communicative. That Henry, had possessed more virtue, or Edmund less. But these thoughts were transient, as unworthy; selfishness and vice, were strangers to Lord Drelincourt's bosom, and if ever they visited it for a moment by mistake, they soon left a place, where they found no congenial associates. Parental anxiety had inspired the wishes, which his nobleness of soul caused him to reject as soon as formed. He had been so happy in seeing his son free from the glaring vices and low excesses of the day, that at the first view he could scarcely regret his having formed a connexion comparatively virtuous: where innocent manners, and a

cultivated mind, would ensure constancy and abhorrence of vice. He feared, also, lest the deprivation of an object so fondly, yet so respectfully beloved, might throw Lord Courtney into despair, and drive him to seek refuge from his own recollections, even in the ruinous and degrading haunts which he had hitherto avoided, from an early instilled virtue, and a proper sense of the purity of religion, as well as of the dignity of rank. These were the considerations that had involuntarily risen in Lord Drelincourt's mind; but from a mind like his, every selfish thought was speedily expelled, and he resolved to converse seriously with Henry on the subject, not doubting of success, even considering his advice as the effusions of friendship, without calling in the aid of parental authority; which however he felt it would be his duty to employ in its utmost power, should his arguments fail to produce the desired effect.

Having resolved on the line of conduct proper to pursue, he endeavoured to compose himself, and went to lose his sense of domestic unhappiness in the discussion of public evils. As soon as Edmund saw Lord Courtney he honestly confessed his breach of trust. Henry looked, on the first hearing of it, as if he knew not exactly how to behave; but after a momentary struggle between anger and friendship the latter prevailed, and he replied, extending his hand to him, "I will not upbraid you, Edmund, with betraying my confidence, first, because I have no right to condemn in another, what I have been glaringly guilty of myself; secondly, because I know you incapable of committing an ungenerous action; and I do firmly believe that in this instance, you have been actuated by the most praiseworthy motives, and a sincere desire to serve me better, than you thought you should do by keeping my secrets; oblige me however, my dear friend, by no more mentioning the subject; it is an unpleasant and unprofitable one, it engrosses too much of my thoughts, and I wish it not to intrude also on our friendly conversations; let this therefore be the last time of discussing it, and we will now if you please, pay our court to the ladies, whom I have not seen since yesterday at noon." His determined gravity, discouraged Edmund from answering, and he willingly attended him into the breakfast-room where the ladies were assembled. Henry soon informed them with an abruptness by which they were astonished, that he was going immediately into Oxfordshire, where he should spend a month. "What can tempt you leave town at a time, when you always declare yourself charmed with its gaiety?" Demanded Lady Rosamond. "What would tempt you all my dear sisters to do it likewise, even were you the gayest among the gay?" Lord Courtney replied: Lady Rosamond laughed, and told him that he dealt in enigmas. "Is there nothing then," said he, "that would tempt you into the country at this season? I did not really think you such a votary of dissipation." "Not entirely of dissipation," answered Lady Rosamond, "but at this season, London affords such various amusements, that both wisdom and folly, may be feasted in the most luxurious manner, according to their several, inclinations." "Well, you are a good casuist, Rose," continued he, "but what is your opinion, Maria? you speak not on the weighty subject." Now it happened that London had always the effect of a hotbed, on Lady Maria's foibles, causing the seeds which had lain dormant during the latter part of her residence in the country, to spring up rapidly in the warm atmosphere of fashion, and to produce plentifully the fruits of affectation and folly. "I am so wretchedly languid," replied the indolent beauty in the most affected tone, 'pon honor, my nerves are so weak, that I am utterly unequal to the fatigue of collecting my ideas sufficiently to give an opinion on any topic; but certainly

the calm retirement of the country is much more enviable, than the bustle of this noisy town, particularly to one so unfortunately delicate as I am." "Yes," said Henry, with goodhumoured raillery, "it is very shocking to be so weak, that you can only spend every morning in shopping, making visits, attending auctions, and exhibitions, and every evening just visit the theatre, and opera, and look into half a dozen assemblies." "Ah, but you do not consider, Henry," she replied, how exhausted I am with any little amusement into which I may enter, in compliance with custom more than my own inclination." "Yes," said he, "I do consider my dear sister, I consider that,

'Miss D. tottering, catches at your hand,  
Was ever thing so pretty born to stand?'

Lady Maria had good sense enough, to know, that she sometimes tempted satire, and goodnature enough, to pardon those who applied it to her; a smile was all the answer that she made, but Edmund gallantly took her hand and raising it to his lips, said, "Lady Maria's charms are too powerful to need any aid, and conscious of their force, she is content to appear 'as though secure of all beholder's hearts, neglecting she could take 'em!" Lady Maria thanked him for the politeness of his counter-quotation, and scarcely suppressed a sigh, as she acknowledged to herself, that the greatest possible inducement to lay aside her indolence, and affectation, would have been the hope of meriting his esteem. Lord Courtney then asked Emma, what would induce her to leave the joys of the town? She raised her eyes involuntarily to Edmund, but meeting his, she cast them clown, and blushing deeply, replied, "The company of my friends makes every place agreeable, and with them I am amused in town, and happy in the country." "A very prudent reply," said Lord Courtney, drawing her nearer to him, for she was almost his favorite sister, "why need you blush child? I cannot imagine how you contrive to bring all this pretty pink into your cheeks on every occasion;" then turning to Lady Harriett, he said, "I will not ask your opinion *ma belle ange*, for I should be jealous of your preference either way." Lady Harriett looked pleased and silly; to look silly did not indeed require much effort on her part, as nature had kindly adapted her countenance for assuming that expression with great ease. She made no answer, and he feeling unequal at that moment to continuing a conversation, in which he was not interested, gave her a tender pressure of the hand, a kind of language very eloquent in filling up the pauses of a brainless beau, and in general received with such complacency, that Henry laughingly declared, he should use it more frequently, but that he was often afraid of not being suffered to withdraw his hand again. "Well ladies," he exclaimed, "I am weary of your pretended ignorance, and your disingenuous replies: know then, that I am going on an expedition, which would tempt every one of you, that is to say a matrimonial one." He then informed them that he had that morning received a letter from Charles Saunders, his intimate friend, and companion at college, with the happy tidings of his being about to shackle himself in silken cords, and golden fetters, with the loveliest of the sex, and imploring the presence of his old acquaintance. "I suppose," added Henry, "to keep his spirits during the dreadful ceremony, I shall therefore go to witness his felicity, and I hope to anticipate my own." He then took a seat near Lady Harriett, and assailed her with such a profusion of

compliments, that she even pardoned the temporary desertion of the charms, which he so liberally praised.

That same day he communicated his designs to his father, took his leave of him and his mother, embraced his sisters, and Lady Harriett, shook hands with Edmund, and departed, leaving the whole party astonished at the rapidity of his movements, particularly Edmund, who strongly suspected him of making truth, in this instance, yield to circumstance, as he had only in the morning been pressed to dine at Lord John Talbot's, with him the next day.

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## CHAP. XXV.

To chase each partial purpose from his breast,  
 And thro' the mists of passion and of sense,  
 And thro' the tossing tide of chance and pain  
 To hold his course unflinching; while the voice  
 Of truth and virtue, up the steep ascent  
 Of Nature, calls him to his great reward  
 Th' applauding smile of heaven.

AKENSIDE.

LORD Courtney's stay in Oxfordshire was prolonged from week to week, till Lord Drelincourt began to grow uneasy, and Edmund suspicious; for he had made enquiries at Brompton, and found that Miss Macdonald had left it at the time of Henry's departure.

At last the truant returned, after an absence of nearly three months. His mother and sisters welcomed him with the greatest affection; Edmund flew to meet him with undissembled warmth, but Lord Drelincourt received him with coldness and gravity; the only means by which he ever testified displeasure.

Lord Courtney adored his father, and greatly mortified by the first cool reception that he had ever met with from him; he manifested his vexation by silence, and affected to be lost in thought, forgetting that his own conduct had justly merited the displeasure by which he felt offended.

Lord Drelincourt impatient at his son's behaviour, soon desired to speak to him in private; and when they had retired into his study, he, with an asperity very unusual in him, reproached Lord Courtney with his disrespectful conduct in absenting himself so long, and then proceeded to converse on the subject of which his hasty departure had before prevented the mention. After setting forth, in the strongest terms, the baseness of his son's designs on an innocent girl committed to his charge, the Earl concluded by peremptorily commanding him to see her no more; adding, that he would himself undertake to send her into Scotland to her aunt.

Lord Courtney was stung to the quick by his father's haughty and determined manner. "Your commands, my lord," he replied with bitterness, "are unfortunately issued too late to benefit the object of them; for, unless you can recall the past, they will be useless; therefore, as far as she is concerned, your interference can be of no service." "I am sorry for it, young man," retorted the Earl, "I am sorry Captain Macdonald should have been so deceived; and that his unhappy daughter should have been consigned to so false a guardian, I am sorry a Drelincourt should have disgraced his name by a base action; and you, sir, I pity, for he who incurs self-reproach is a truly pitiable object." The language of contempt was new to Henry, and ill could his unbroken spirit submit to it. "My Lord," said he, "spare your censures, I have not deceived the object trusted to my care; I have not yet behaved dishonourably towards her, and time will develop whether I shall ever do it." "Have you then promised her marriage?" demanded the Earl. "I have," replied Lord Courtney, with firmness. "And do you mean to perform your promise!"



continued the Earl, in faltering accents. "If she require the performance of it, I believe I shall," answered Lord Courtney. The Earl turned pale, he took two or three hasty turns across the room, "Is it come to this!" he exclaimed; but he could say no more, and throwing himself into a chair, he covered his face with his hands. His emotion created sympathetic agony in the breast of Henry, who ardently desired to fall at his father's feet, and crave forgiveness; but pride, false pride, forbade, and he gazed in silence on the anguish that he had caused in a parent's heart.

At length Lord Drelincourt recovered himself, he looked up, and said in a softened tone of voice, "Henry, I had wished you to begin your travels very soon; I say I had wished, because after the proofs which you have given me of surmounting every thing in the gratification of your own inclinations, I am not weak enough to flatter myself, that you will sacrifice any thing in compliance with mine." "Oh! my father," exclaimed Lord Courtney, bursting into tears, "wound me not to the soul by this cruel coldness, as new as it is painful to me. Banish me for ever from your sight if I be grown odious to you; but be not so unjust as for one moment, to imagine that I could be ungrateful and vile enough to fail in my duty to a father, whom I can never sufficiently reverence and love." It is unnecessary to say after this, that a reconciliation took place. The Earl however trembled, when he recollected that in two months his son would be of age. He was more than ever strenuous for him to go abroad before the arrival of that period; and Henry, anxious to obliterate the recollection of his disobedience from his father's mind, acquiesced in every thing that was proposed to him, though his compliance, in this instance, required the utmost efforts of his resolution.

Lord Courtney's long absence from the metropolis, in its most inviting season, could not fail to attract the notice of his gay acquaintance; and he found himself, on his return, so weary of enquiries that he did not chuse to answer, and railleries to which he was in no humour to reply, that as soon as the birth-day was over, he was very glad to hear the Earl declare his intention of immediately leaving town.

The plan of Henry's route was soon arranged; and a Mr. Barlowe, a worthy and well-informed clergyman, who had married Lady Emma's governess, and to whom Lord Drelincourt had presented a living, was fixed on, as his travelling companion and friend. The family were of course soon acquainted with the intended deprivation of Lord Courtney's society; but the Earl imparted to Lady Drelincourt only, his reasons for hastening his son's departure, and she acquiesced in the necessity of it, whilst she wept at the idea of parting with him, and lamented the unprotected situation of the orphan girl, who had unfortunately won his regard.

The period necessary to elapse, before Lord Courtney was in readiness to depart, rolled slowly on in anxiety and sorrow. He was frequently absent from the Castle; but the Earl knew the severity of his trial, and expected no unnatural firmness from him; though he could not but rejoice, as the moment drew near, which would at once terminate his son's conflict and his own suspense.

After what we have described him to be, after shewing his character in every pleasing and domestic light, it is unnecessary to say, that Lord Drelincourt felt, at his approaching separation from his son, all the anguish of a tender, and all the anxiety of a wise parent. He had seen in Lord Courtney the happiest effects of a domestic education; he saw in his estrangement from home a probability of all the favorable appearances

which he had witnessed with paternal delight, being blasted by the temptations of vice, or lost in the insignificance of folly. It may be asked, if Lord Drelincourt's enlarged mind could not be brought to consider the world itself as one vast city, where different nations, manners, and opinions, are all lost in the appellation of citizens? It was not that he feared "Antres vast, and desarts idle, and men whose heads do grow beneath their shoulders;" he was well convinced, that in all climates, men are essentially the same, and that one mode of conduct will gain the esteem of all alike; but before he sent his son to traverse the vast city, he wished him to have at least a general idea of its plan, and of the object of his search. He knew that Henry was one of the many who are acted on, almost entirely from accidental causes. He was blest with virtuous inclinations and shining talents; but the careful father saw that the nicest discrimination would be required to guard these endowments from degenerating into vices. The vivacity that rendered him the peculiar favorite of a domestic circle, might among strangers, plunge him into excesses, and the more easily, from the facility with which he yielded to intreaty; and which, though among his friends it could be called by no other name than good-nature, might, among strangers, be productive of the most ruinous consequences. His generosity, under the influence of vanity, might become profusion, and render him the prey of the designing; even his taste for the fine arts, his love of enquiry, and thirst for general knowledge, were now sources of anxiety to the Earl, who feared lest they should induce his son to associate with those in whom the sacred gift of genius is too often rendered of little value by their entire want of conduct. It may be urged that the Earl was so inclined to look on the dark side of probable events, that he gave himself unnecessary pain in thus distrusting a son, who had never deserved the suspicion of being propense to change, merely from a change of air. But the Earl was a tender father, and Lord Courtney was an only son; and such a son as was rare indeed, in the annals of fashion. Many may not enter into Lord Drelincourt's feelings, because there are not many who possess the greatest treasure that Heaven can bestow on man, a child, amiable, virtuous, and dutiful, as Lord Courtney had hitherto been. The Earl had seen some like Henry, like him they had left their native isle, rich in public and private virtues; the darling of their friends, and making the esteem of those to whom they were dear, their first consideration. He had also seen them return, but alas! how changed! emaciated persons, enervated constitutions, estranged affections and prostituted abilities, were the precious fruits of their travels, the offerings to their mourning disappointed friends. Could he see and not tremble! could he witness the frailty of expectation, the uncertainty of hope, and not dread the possibility of his brightest prospects being overcast? Filled with melancholy reflections, he sent to Lord Courtney the evening before his departure, requesting his company in the library. He came; a few moments elapsed in unpleasant silence, which at length the Earl broke, by saying in a voice that betrayed all his emotions. "Henry I trust you know how dear you are to me, if you had not been convinced of it before, I could not express it at this time. I love you with the tenderest affection. I esteem and admire you for your own worth, independant of every selfish consideration, and when I consider you as my heir, the last of your illustrious house, the centre of all my hopes, I feel grateful to Heaven, for having made me dependant for happiness in this life, on one so capable of bestowing it; one whom I acknowledge with pride, to be the chief source from which I ever can receive it." He paused, and Henry, pale, and agitated, pressed his father's hands with fervour to his heart,

and bedewed them with the tears of filial love: the Earl continued, "I shall not occupy your time and my own, with common-place exhortations and remarks; my cares in your education would have been ill bestowed, could I now say any thing to you concerning your duty, and propriety of conduct, of which your own heart has not already informed you. I had wished you to make an entire tour of minute observation, through your own country, before you left it to visit any other; and this not only to avoid the ridicule, justly thrown on those, who in their impatience to go abroad, forget their utter ignorance of every thing at home, but also as it would have produced in you the habits of gaining information, and taught you the best means of acquiring it; a task difficult to be learned, even with a tolerable knowledge of the objects of which you go in search, and an entire command of language; what then must it be in a foreign country, where you are utterly ignorant of its peculiarities, and often unable to express your ideas without difficulty?"

"Information is never easy to be acquired, and there is no privilege by which nobility can shorten the way to it; pictures indeed are easily seen, and it is easy to praise them in the same language which they have extorted for centuries, and which like birthday odes, weary the hearer by their uniformity, or disgust the reader by their hyperbole. Of our acquaintance, probably one half would pity my folly, and the other my deficiency in taste, did they hear me declare to you, that I had rather have you study the people, than their productions, and the workmen than their works. I am far from commending indolence in the pursuit of perfection, or indifference in the examination of it, and I am well aware that the character of a nation, may be read in its progress in the liberal arts and sciences; I only wish you not to lose time in acquiring that technical and cant language, which has been repeated until it has become a just prey to ridicule. Let the character of the inhabitants, the wealth of the country, and the sources of that wealth, be objects of your strict enquiry, and minute investigation. As a representative of your country, as a politician, and as a man of rank and fortune, which require their possessor to adorn them with talents, you will find these the fields, where enquiry will yield the most fruitful harvest, they are fields rich in information, which lie too often fallow, whilst the worn-out grounds of criticism and admiration, are plowed until barrenness is the only reward of labour. Let others describe pictures, I would have my son know men. To facilitate the acquisition of this necessary knowledge, hear on every subject, as many opinions as you chuse, but form not your own from those of any other person, for you will never find two people who think alike. Let not that love of novelty, which 'grows by what it feeds upon,' impel you to change the scene too quickly, for you cannot know immediately what it may contain worthy of observation. Even after a little journey within a hundred miles of the capital, I have frequently heard you regret your ignorance of having been near some particular spot, which you had wished to see, your indolence in suffering an opportunity of examining it, to escape, or your inattention whilst in the act of exploring it, of which you only became sensible, by being unable at a future period, to answer the questions, or join in the opinions of those, who had been more exact in their researches. I have one more remark to make, and that is, on the subject of writing letters; I know that this is an employment of which young people are fond; they are naturally warm in their own attachments, and credulous in believing the professions of others. Self-love easily teaches us to imagine, that what is earnestly solicited, must be sincerely desired; and we judge of the pain which a refusal will occasion, by our own unwillingness to give

it. A request to hear from a person, is often dictated merely by politeness, and a desire to appear interested in his concerns; in some it is the offspring of vanity, and in that case compliance only produces a boast of intimacy, which perhaps never existed. In others it is solicited, merely to give the requester an opportunity of shewing his own skill in epistolary composition; thus at least half the number who solicit your correspondence, are actuated by selfish motives. I will now suppose you convinced that the remaining half, are sincere in their wishes for your welfare, and their desire to hear of it. What is the consequence? you waste in writing letters, the leisure time, which should be devoted to reading on subjects, connected with what you have seen, or digesting and arranging the ideas, naturally arising rapidly in your mind, and which must be noted directly, if you wish to preserve them, or to know their change. But you are a traveller, and letters written at a distance are expected to be entertaining; the consequence is, that opinions are hastily formed, and crudely stated; they are read in a circle of friends, and remembered long after you have become ashamed of them, and would wish them to be forgotten. Amidst a numerous correspondence, letters must be short, and consequently subjects are treated with disadvantageous brevity; and that the time which is spent in writing common-place ideas, might be much more usefully employed in gaining new ones, few I believe will deny. I will not dwell on the confidence, often ill placed, which by being continued in writing, has laid the parties concerned, under painful and unavoidable restraints; experience is the only teacher whose precepts enforce conviction; and a youthful heart will pour out its warmest effusions, until the ardor of the moment being passed, memory reviews its productions; reflection would correct them, but they are already out of reach, and may be perused a second time by your correspondent, with sentiments similar to your own, on the recollection of them. I am however far from wishing to entirely deny you the pleasure of writing, or receiving letters; and perhaps the design of transmitting your observations, might stimulate you to accuracy in making them. I would only warn you against encumbering yourself with a load, which, however inconvenient you may find it, cannot be shaken off without giving offence; and advise you to write fully to one, rather than briefly to many. In mentioning religion to you, Henry, you will not imagine that I am about to enter into a disquisition on its importance, of which I believe you to be fully sensible; and I should conceive myself to have been very remiss as the instructor of your infancy, and the guardian of your youth, if I had at this time to enquire into, or regret your opinions on so essential a topic. The conduct which will necessarily be induced by your principles, will be the best evidence of their propriety. But do not confine their benefits to your own bosom; do not rest contented with a sense of right belief yourself, and be ungrateful enough to hear others ridicule and despise religion, without your standing forth in its behalf. Next to uttering infidelity, there is a fault in bearing with it, and suffering its advocate to construe your silence into approbation, or at least into indifference. Formerly in enumerating the good qualities of a distinguished character, that of being a christian always held the foremost place, and as human actions, will ever be prompted in some degree by human motives, perhaps the praise justly annexed to an epithet so honorable, might be a powerful inducement to deserve it.

“Our enlightened age has blotted from the page of panegyric, the title which ought to include every virtue, but we do not see the omission supplied, by any subject of admiration more praiseworthy. I trust however that the very circumstance of the

prevalence of infidelity, will in time lessen its influence. They who are led away by novelty, will grow weary of repeating sarcasms, no longer new, and they who wish to astonish by the daring eccentricities of their opinions, will be disgusted when they find them in the mouth of every witling, who by burlesquing sacred things, can always extort a smile, after his own powers fail to command one; whilst the man of a really enquiring mind, will be careful how he raises doubts, when he hears them repeated by every fool, who seeks to disguise his ignorance, under the affectation of scepticism. Let me exhort you then my dear Henry, to 'be ready to give every man a reason, for the faith which abideth in you,' and though I do not wish you to intrude your sentiments unnecessarily, yet never suffer them to be attacked without frankly explaining, and firmly defending them.

"I have nothing more to add. Your attachment to Mr. Barlowe, is sufficient to ensure respectful conduct towards him, treat him as a friend; you will find him a sincere one, and your behaviour to him, will model that of those around you.—

"He paused and tenderly caressing  
The darling of his wounded heart,  
Looks had means only of expressing  
Thoughts language never could impart."

After this lengthened conversation, in which Lord Drelincourt joined the kindness of the friend, to the anxiety of the parent, he returned with his son, to the remainder of the family, and the evening was spent with the affectionate melancholy naturally rising in the minds of friends, who know that at the same hour the next day, they shall be separated.

## CHAP. XXVII.

Short is the course of every lawless pleasure,  
 Grief like a shade on all its footsteps waits  
 Scarce visible in joy's meridian height,  
 But downwards as its blaze declining speeds,  
 The dwarfish shadow to a giant spreads.

MASON.

THE day at length arrived, the long-dreaded day, which was to deprive this affectionate family of one as estimable as beloved! Henry entered Edmund's apartment at an early hour in the morning; he was pale, trembling and agitated; he grasped Edmund's hand, and for some time was unable to find utterance. At length he exclaimed, "Oh! my friend; had I possessed your virtue, your fortitude, had I followed your advice, or listened to the dictates of my own conscience, what anguish might I have been spared! I need not tell you, that my visit into Oxfordshire was nominal; I read your doubts in your countenance when I mentioned it. In truth it was the thought of a moment, suggested by the fear of losing her, whom you would have rescued from destruction. I went to her, and with undissembled agony, informed her of my dread, lest we should be separated; her anguish too plainly told me to what extent I was beloved, and insensible to every thing but the fear of losing me, she deplored her wretchedness in being deprived of her only friend, the sole consolation of her deserted state. Ill did I requite her gratitude and love! All my resolution vanished at the sight of her distress; in a fatal moment I promised her my hand, though I reserved to myself the privilege of with-holding it, until I attained my twenty-fifth year: what I proposed by the delay, I know not even now; but I have already proved myself capable of falsehood, and I shudder to think how far my guilt may yet extend.

"Loving me as she did, agitated as she was, by the fear of losing me, whom she fondly thought her only benefactor; seeing in the rest of the world no friend, knowing that she had scarcely an acquaintance, is it surprising if she for a moment hesitated, unwilling to rashly refuse, terms apparently eligible and with which many would have gladly and immediately complied? Yes, she hesitated, but her excellent judgment and native rectitude, pointed out immediately, the injury that she should do me, by accepting my proposals, and this consideration had more effect in her decision, than the injustice, (all lovely and virtuous as she is) that she should do herself. She refused my offer with floods of tears, and entreated that I would have the goodness to send her into Scotland, where she would endeavour to forget me, and seek tranquillity by burying the past in oblivion. The conflict which I had witnessed in her soul, and her final conquest over her affection; only endeared her the more strongly to me. I left no arts, no arguments, untried to shake her resolution, and at last succeeded, by affecting to doubt the tenderness, which could so firmly resist entreaty. This insinuation overpowered her fortitude, which though it shielded her from yielding to persuasion, was not proof against the appearance of displeasure; and after vainly endeavouring to appease it, she consented to put herself into my power, and trust to my honor for a future reparation, which yet, such was her regard

for me, I saw she hardly wished to receive. Yes, I saw, and was ungrateful enough to console myself, with the idea that when the time appointed for its performance should arrive, I could easily prevail on her affection, to acquit me of my promise, by stating to her the evils that might accrue to me from its fulfilment.

“To enjoy the pleasure of her society, unembittered by the fear of interruption, and to amuse the agitation of her mind, I made the tour of the greatest part of England with her, travelling in a hired carriage, attended only by Dawson and the faithful Jane, to whom Mary had become much attached. During my journey, my chains were every day rivetted more firmly, by the artless sweetness, and engaging conversation of my companion. I thought myself fortunate above all other men, and was only awakened from my dream of felicity, by the necessity of returning home, for I felt that I had prolonged my absence almost beyond the power of excusing it. You are acquainted with the rest, but you are not acquainted with what I have suffered. It is now that I am punished for my dereliction of honor and integrity. I have parted from Mary, you will have guessed that she is at Appleton; yes, I have parted from her; and surely my late happiness, has been dearly purchased with the misery of the moment, in which I bade her farewell; but it is past, though her anxieties have scarcely begun, for I was cowardly enough to deceive her, and to tell her that my absence would be short; she, whilst surprised at my excessive grief, sweetly chid me for it amidst her own tears. Oh! Edmund, she has many claims on me; promise to befriend her; by your attachment to me, promise it. I am sufficiently wretched in leaving her, without the bitter aggravation of leaving her unprotected.” No longer the gay, the volatile Henry; the repentant Lord Courtney wept as he gave this charge to Edmund, who promised to act in every thing as he wished, and conjured him to compose himself.

We will not dwell on the parting scene; it is not probable that any of our readers are ignorant of the feelings occasioned by the separation of friends; and it is an unpleasing task to dwell on the grief of a hitherto happy family.

## CHAP. XXVIII.

Now whither shall I fly to find relief;  
 What charitable hand will aid me now?  
 Will stay my falling steps, support my ruins,  
 And heal my wounded mind with balmy comfort?

ROWE.

EDMUND had at first thought of returning to his parents in the company of his friend, but Lord Drelincourt, who became every day more attached to him, requested him to prolong his visit, adding, that he should think it unkind, if Edmund deserted him, at a time when his company, always valuable, would be inestimable. This entreaty was too flattering to be resisted, and it was easy to prevail on Edmund to lengthen his visit in a family where his Emma resided. The Earl, to disperse the gloom occasioned by his son's departure, proposed making the tour of Scotland, and the most important parts of England, as he should, by that means, have the pleasure of at once gratifying and instructing all his family. This agreeable scheme was entered into with great eagerness, and as the summer was far advanced, they prepared for it with all possible expedition. Edmund did not however forget his promise to his friend; he took care to see Miss Macdonald before he left the country, and informing her of the address which would constantly find him; he entreated her, in the most polite and friendly manner, to allow him the pleasure of being serviceable to her in any way, in which she would honor him with her commands. She thanked him with her usual grace; but declined his assistance, saying, that she should need none during the short period of Lord Courtney's absence. Edmund was shocked to see the serenity with which she spoke upon a subject respecting which he knew her to be deceived; and he felt conscious of aiding the deception by his silence, but he feared to break it, lest he should betray Henry's confidence a second time, without answering any good effect.

It was not Lord Drelincourt's intention to deprive this deserted orphan of his son's protection, and to cast her friendless on the world: he had formed his plans respecting her, and hoped that they were such, as she would in time be grateful to him for having put in execution.

He had learned the name and address of her aunt, and Glasgow was purposely included in his route, to give him the opportunity of personally stating her niece's claims on her. If she consented to receive her, all would be well; her errors would be unknown; her youth and ignorance might excuse them even to herself, and time, it was to be hoped, would restore her to tranquillity, and her own esteem.

If he succeeded as he wished, he resolved to give her consequence in the eyes of her aunt, by equipping her in a style, suitable to the respectable rank of society in which she was to appear; and his benevolent heart pleased itself with the thought, that his gifts would be at once tokens of his forgiveness and of his anxiety for her welfare.

The object of his kindness, in the mean time, was awakened from her dream of security, and became a prey to mortification and despair.



We have already introduced to our readers Lord Courtney's obsequious valet, Dawson. His master had the highest opinion of his fidelity, which was indeed unshaken, so long as he was liberally rewarded for it. Lord Drelincourt was not, however, equally partial to this domestic, and particularly requested his son to engage another for his travels. He consented for two reasons; the first was, that not feeling himself quite at ease in the Italian language, he wished to hire a native of Italy, in order to accustom himself to it; the second, that by leaving the faithful confidant of his amour in England, he should be certain of gaining whatever information he might wish for, respecting the object of his affections. Now Dawson always thought as his lord thought, and admired what his lord admired: perhaps, sometimes this great congeniality of opinion was purchased at the expense of sincerity, but in one instance it was not so; and the respect with which he behaved to Miss Macdonald, was, contrary to his general rule, felt, more than professed.

After this worthy member of the parti-coloured fraternity was dismissed his lordship's service, he thought that every obligation between them ceased. When, therefore, the departure of the family into the North left him free from observation, and secure from resentment, the first moments of his leisure were dedicated to insult the unfortunate victim of Lord Courtney's love, by declarations of a similar passion from his valet-de-chambre. Miss Macdonald knew what was due to herself, though she was conscious that she had lost many claims to respect, by appearing in an uncertain and equivocal situation. She condescended not to be angry, but she treated her presumptuous admirer with a dignified contempt, which stung him to the quick. Degraded in his own eyes, and not liking the sensation inspired by the mortifying discovery, he resolved to avenge himself, by placing Mary in a situation humiliating as his own; he therefore told her, bluntly, the light in which she would be always considered by all the world; and added, that the hope of ever regaining respectability in society, was as false, as its foundation was deceitful, for that Lord Courtney had been sent abroad solely to break off his connection with her; that the term of his absence might be lengthened to four or five years, and that he had promised to marry Lady Harriett Parkhurst immediately on his return. Dawson, in the latter part of his information, went somewhat further than he was authorized; but he had been so accustomed to relieve the sober narrative of truth by the enlivening graces of fiction, that it is not surprising if a habit contracted in early life was continued, whenever he found, as was generally the case, that he was more attended to, and thought more entertaining from the agreeable variety which he introduced. Mary had, however, heard too much to enquire into its foundation; but she had firmness enough to order her malignant informer instantly to leave her presence, and never more to intrude into it on any pretence whatsoever. He withdrew, congratulating himself on his address in planting misery in a bosom till then undisturbed; and hoping to reap from her despair, a compliance, with which he otherwise durst not have flattered himself.

Perhaps, amongst all the sensations that throbbed in Mary's breast, none were more acute, more painful to be borne, than those arising from the idea of being so soon forgotten by the man, who had appeared unequalled in benevolence, delicacy and affection. She began to write, but she was unable to reproach him, for her pen traced, almost without effort, expressions of tenderness; she read them, and shuddered when she recollected that they were no longer deserved, and might even no longer be pleasing. "Why should I write?" she exclaimed, as she tore the unfinished lines, and consigned

them to the flames; "why should I write? his father may intercept my letters, or he may receive them himself with indifference. Oh, my God!" she continued, clasping her hand and melting into tears, "I have been very guilty, I deserve punishment, but from him it is hard to bear: and yet he wept when he parted from me; they were tears of contrition; he is not naturally vicious; perhaps even this apparent cruelty, may be but the perfection of duty, the firmness of rectitude.

"Ah! why cannot I follow the example which he has afforded me? Why cannot I forsake paths of guilt on which I shrink from reflecting. Alas! I have no father to oblige, no parent to fortify my weakness, to hail my return to virtue. Oh, my father! my dear sainted father! dost thou now behold thy child! Ah! in this moment, how keenly do I feel the force of thy dying words! I have forfeited the integrity from which thou badest me hope for support, but heaven will not permit thy bliss to be tarnished, by suffering thee to witness the wretchedness of thy deserted child."

Whilst Mary's soul was thus a prey to anguish, the Earl was congratulating himself, on having succeeded beyond his most sanguine expectations with her aunt; who, struck with remorse for her past conduct, and flattered by the personal interference of a nobleman, as exalted in character as in rank, declared, with tears, her willingness to receive her sister's child, whose situation she engaged to make agreeable in every respect. Exulting in his success, the Earl wrote immediately to Miss Macdonald, in the kindest and most soothing terms: in language calculated at once, to assure her of his esteem, and to raise her in her own.

What then was the shock which his benevolence received, when his letter was returned with information, that the person to whom it was addressed, had left Appleton the week before its arrival, and that the people with whom she had lodged, were utterly ignorant of her future intentions, or of the place to which she might have removed.

The Earl, greatly concerned at receiving this intelligence, imparted the uneasiness which it inspired in him, to Edmund, who could not, for a moment, bring himself to think Mary vicious, or unworthy; but feared that her flight was the result of wearied expectation, and disappointed hope, on the subject of Lord Courtney's return. The Earl warmly condemned his son for having deceived her respecting it, saying, "It was a selfish weakness of which I could not have suspected him. Nor shall I be surprised at any conduct which may result from it; for how can he expect truth where he gives an example of falsehood? I pity the poor victim of his dishonorable passion, and would rather know her to be wretched, than believe her to be guilty."

Enquiries were useless, when they could not even be directed by conjecture, and Lord Drelincourt was obliged to seek consolation in reflecting on the rectitude of his intentions. Leaving him to pursue his tour, and to spend the winter as usual, we will beg our readers to favor us with their attention to our acquaintance on the continent.

## CHAP XXIX.

Say, thou inconstant, what has Damon done,  
 To lose the heart his tedious pains had won?  
 Tell me what charms you in my rival find,  
 Against whose power no ties have strength to bind?  
 Has he, like me, with long obedience strove  
 To conquer your disdain and merit love?  
 Has he with transport every smile ador'd,  
 And died with grief at each ungentle word?  
 Ah, no! the conquest was obtain'd with ease,  
 He pleased you by not studying to please:  
 His careless indolence your pride alarm'd  
 And had he lov'd you more, he less had charm'd.

LORD LYTTELTON.

ALMOST at the same time that Lord Courtney entered the Italian States, Clayton was preparing to leave them, in consequence of the following epistle from his sister:

*“Clayton Hall, Devon.*

“DEAR BROTHER,

“This comes with my great grief to inform you, that our kind friend, and worthy uncle is no more, being fairly run down by death, and obliged to give in after a hard chace. He never was well after he breathed the confounded smoke of London; all the time he was there, he looked like a cow in a cage, and when he returned into the country, his appetite had failed, and he could not bear the sight even of a round of beef or a venison pasty; which I thought looked very dangerous, for you know they used to be his favorite morsels. He had three physicians, which to be sure might be against him; but he was so bad one night, that I thought he had fairly stole away, so foolishly in my fright sent for one, and he proposed sending for two more; for I do suppose they play into each other's hands when they can. So they came every day to consult, as they pretended, but I never heard any consultation they had, excepting about the news or taxes, or weather; and as they met in the blue room, I generally heard them giving their opinion, as they called it, which they certainly did on every subject but their patient; who, however, might not fare worse for their silence; and perhaps they thought, 'least said, soonest mended.' I hope you will leave foreign parts directly you receive this, for I am terribly down in the mouth, and my eyes water from morning till night, with thinking of the kind friend we have lost; he was a true Englishman born and bred; and as honest a man as ever sat on horseback; he was staunch as the best hound in his pack, though docile as a spaniel; there are few left like him, seeing he was one of them, now affected to be despised or laughed at; that is to say, a worthy country squire, a title, in my opinion, more respectable than that of a town lord; and I believe his tenants will be of my way of thinking.

“I doubt I shall be as soft as a turnip before you come back, for I have no heart to get out of doors; indeed my Highflyer goes very tenderly yet on his off fore foot, and has hung his toe ever since the confounded farrier pared him into the quick; I wish I had the pared him into the quick; I wish I had the paring of the rascal’s ears, for I have now no pleasure in getting on to my saddle, and never was one that could find much entertainment within doors, not having any turn for book-learning, my uncle being no way given to it; and indeed, I cannot think there is much good in it, seeing that every year there are a vast number of new books published, and that we grow neither wiser nor better for reading them, but rather worse, if we may believe what the writers themselves say about the times.

“The grass is down, and we have heavy crops; the corn likewise looks very well, and stands rank; in short, the estate to which you have succeeded, is smiling in peace and plenty; you come to no rack-rents, or lands out of heart; and God grant you may live to enjoy it many years in health and happiness, and be as much beloved as the late worthy possessor was.

“I am, dear brother,

“with my loving service to you,

“your dutiful,

“and affectionate sister,

“FRANCES CLAYTON.”

Whatever our readers may think of this composition, the writer considered it as a very serious undertaking, for she had never written so long an epistle in her life before; and indeed seldom took a pen in her hand, but to give a receipt, or make out the pedigree of a horse.

The eloquence of Demosthenes however could not have produced more sudden effects, as Clayton, sincerely afflicted at his worthy uncle’s death, and anxious to soothe his sister’s sorrow, set out immediately on the receipt of it; and was only consoled for the pangs that he felt, on tearing himself from the beautiful Everilda, by the hope of soon returning to claim her for his bride.

It is scarcely necessary to inform our readers, that Lord Courtney was requested to consider the villa of the Marchese di Rodalvi as his home, during his residence in that most favored part of Italy, where it was situated. Charmed with possessing the son of a beloved friend for a guest, the Marchese and his amiable lady lavished on him the same kindness and attention, as Edmund’s letters constantly informed them he was receiving from Lord Drelincourt. In this agreeable family Lord Courtney began to recover the cheerfulness, and exhibit all the graces of manner, and playfulness of talents, by which he had always been distinguished, till the gloom of self-reproach had clouded the serenity, which conscious rectitude had before diffused over his mind.

He did not however forget Mary: he wrote to her with undiminished affection, and was uneasy when several mails arrived without bringing answers to his letters. One moment he thought that the neglect might be intended as a punishment, for the artifice he had used, in taking leave of her; and, whilst he acknowledged its justice, he yet felt piqued that her resentment should have power to triumph over her love. The next he feared lest she should be ill; he contemplated her in sickness and in sorrow; and his

tenderness shrunk from the scene portrayed by his fruitful imagination. In this state, hoping, yet fearing; wishing, yet dreading, it is not surprising that even the dazzling beauties of the lovely Everilda should fail to inspire in a heart already occupied, any warmer passion than admiration; and it is still less surprising, that the admired Italian, haughty as charming, should perceive, with anger and mortification, the comparative neglect of claims to adoration, as universally allowed, as they were unequalled; and the fair Florentine rejected with coldness and disdain the homage of numerous nobles who solicited her smiles, whilst she sighed to triumph over the heart of the insensible Englishman. To effect this conquest she left no means untried; and as we have never represented Lord Courtney as a stoic, our readers will easily imagine that the powerful attractions of a fascinating female, could not be daily displayed, without making some impression on the object whom they were intended to subdue. Perhaps no man ever loved less, from knowing that he ought not to love. Every thing that increases anxiety, adds to the interest already inspired; every obstacle excites new ardour to surmount the difficulty; and from the moment that constancy is obliged to call in the arguments, of reason, or of honor, love laughs triumphantly, and anticipates his new victory.

Everilda was quick in marking her advantages, and every one that she gained, encouraged her to perseverance. In the triumph of vanity, she forgot what was due to affection; the hope of gaining Lord Courtney's assiduities, erased the recollection of the faithful Clayton's from her mind; and if ever she remembered his love, it was only to remember also, that her's had decreased from the moment of his extorting a confession of it, which swelled his bosom with rapture, but which left in her's a void only to be filled up by the hope of again conquering, again hearing supplications, which belong but to the fearing, anxious, doubting lover. When her own words had assured Clayton of his happiness, his language necessarily changed; it changed however only to that of gratitude and tenderness. Unfortunately he extended his attentions too long. Unable to leave, he lingered near her, till the charm of novelty faded from her bosom, and with it the interest inspired by its influence; for it is a melancholy truth, however the young and the impassioned may shrink from the conviction, that even in love, rapture cannot always exist. A lover may not be weary of reciting the praises of his mistress, but language will in time be exhausted, his epithets must be repeated, the repetition shocks her nice ears, and she thinks that a new admirer, would praise her more agreeably.

Absence strengthens real attachments, and destroys imaginary ones;

“L'absence est à l'amour, ce qu' est au feu le vent,  
Il éteint le petit, il allume le grand.”

Thus it fanned the pure flame in Clayton's breast, and extinguished the meteor blaze of gratified self-love in that of the beautiful but inconstant Everilda. Her parents witnessed the change in her inclinations with sorrow, for they sincerely esteemed Clayton, and were grieved at the mortification which he would feel from the loss of her affections; but her happiness was the study of their existence, and if she placed it in an union with Lord Courtney, he was so amiable, that she could not surely ever regret the foundation on which she trusted it; and in so serious a change, a change for life, undoubtedly little should be sacrificed to mere complaisance; for the deception which would conceal an

alteration of sentiment, must certainly be more dishonorable, and might be infinitely more lamentable in its consequences, than a frank confession could possibly be. Thus reasoned the fond parents, in behalf of their darling daughter, and the son of their esteemed friend: perhaps a latent wish might pervade their bosoms, that if they were fated to trust their Everilda into a foreign country, it might not be entirely amongst strangers, but into the happy and respected family, the envied and courted society of Lord Drelincourt.

The pleasing emotions, of which Lord Courtney began to be sensible in the company of Everilda, were however somewhat ruffled, by a letter that he received, from the faithful, disinterested Dawson, informing his lordship in the most respectful terms, of Miss Macdonald's disappearance; and as we have before said, that Dawson was not fond at any time, of a dry narration of facts, still less did he wish to confine himself to them, when they were so entirely barren of information, that he was at a loss even for conjecture wherewithal to elucidate them: in this dilemma he had recourse to the inexhaustible coinage of his own brain, and struck off a variety of pieces, likely to pass current with the person to whom he mean to send them. He therefore continued his account, with stating that he believed it probable, London might prove the place of her concealment, not that he had the slightest grounds for his conjectures, further than having heard from Jane, that her mistress was much tired of the insipid uniformity, in which she was obliged to spend her time, and frequently lamented not being in town, on account of the impossibility of procuring books or music in the country. This letter, written in a style of apparent simplicity, stung Lord Courtney to the quick.

“Three times, he reads, as oft he reads again  
The cruel lines; as oft he strives in vain  
To give each sense the lie, and fondly tries  
To disbelieve the witness of his eyes.”

At every perusal he fancied that he discovered more incontestible proofs of Mary's guilt. The consciousness of falsehood, which had induced the writer to hurry over his account, he called an honest brevity, and the malignant mystery, which was thrown over the whole, he imputed to Dawson's delicacy, that prevented him even saying all he knew.

In this humour, tenderness was lost in anger, and Lord Courtney execrated Mary's perfidy, whilst he recollected not his own. He accused her of falsehood in withdrawing her affections from him, but he forgot to condemn himself, for likewise offering his to another. He one moment raved against the deceitful sex, and swore that she had never loved him; the next, vanity kindly came to his aid, and whispered that she would never love another. When he had exhausted his rage, he endeavoured to calm himself, and perhaps the source from which he the most readily imbibed consolation for Mary's desertion, was in the idea, that he was at liberty to devote himself entirely to Everilda, unchecked even by his own reproaches.

Elated by her success, stimulated by the wish to ensure it, Everilda never appeared more captivating than at this time. She diffused fascination all around her; and if the eye could have been insensible to her beauty, and her graces, or the mind regardless of her

talents and accomplishments, the heart must yet have yielded itself a willing captive to her sensibility, her tenderness, and the numerous virtues, which shone through all her faults. Her error was indeed of that description, which

“Plays round the head,  
But touches not the heart.”

And might be chiefly attributed to the excessive indulgence, which from infancy she had been accustomed to receive. Naturally haughty, it was not likely that she should become humble from seeing herself implicitly obeyed. Conscious of the charms with which nature had so liberally gifted her, it was improbable that they should be despised by her, for being the theme of universal admiration. She would acknowledge no superior, neither did she ever make others suffer, from feeling their inferiority. Envy was a stranger to her breast, and the consciousness of her own merit, and the value that she affixed to it, taught her to be candid in acknowledging that of another, and liberal in praising it. Quick to take offence, and warm in resentment, a word, a look of apology, would yet disarm her anger. Where she was the offender, she would if treated with mildness, weep at the feet of the injured party, and think no submission too great, to obtain forgiveness of her acknowledged fault; but harshness roused her to a repetition of it, and the least appearance of contempt, would have induced her to continue firm in the offence. Sincerity reigned in every word she uttered, her thoughts and actions, were alike open to the inspection of the world; and conscious integrity, was her never-failing support, for the constructions which it might put on either. Her pecuniary and personal exertions, were ever at the service of the distressed; her friendship was inviolable, her benevolence universal, and her conduct to her parents irreproachable. Such was Everilda di Rodalvi.

## CHAP. XXX.

Oh think of transports which ye whilom tasted,  
 And let the glad remembrance charm your mind,  
 Be not the fruits of joyment quickly wasted,  
 And to your heart her happy image bind:  
 Think what she merits who whilear was kind,  
 Nor by inconstancy her peace destroy;  
 Inconstancy, that monster fell and blind,  
 That vainly fond of every passing toy  
 Treads down its late delight, and poisons rapt'rous joy.

WEST.

ONE evening the Marchese, his family, and guests, were seated in a delightful pavillion, watching the beautiful spectacle of the sun gilding the horizon with his departing rays. Here they enjoyed the cool breezes wafted over the water, which were additionally grateful, from being contrasted with the more than usually sultry heat of the day. It was the favorite hour of the pensive Claudina, who left the happy circles to wander, where she could without restraint, indulge her own reflections. She had not proceeded far, when turning into a retired path, she was surprised by seeing a female stranger, walking slowly, and with irresolute steps: Claudina was alarmed, for she had suffered so much from her brother's cruelty, that she suspected some of his designs, in every circumstance that wore the least semblance of mystery. Thus prejudiced, she was hastily returning, but on looking back, she saw that the stranger had thrown herself on a seat, apparently in the deepest affliction: Claudina then went towards her, saying to herself, "I will not indulge my own weakness, by yielding to the emotions of selfish fear, when the welfare of a fellow-creature may be at stake. Ill would it befit me to be slow in relieving distress, when I am daily receiving benefits from compassion." The stranger, absorbed in sorrow, heard not her approach; and it was not till she had spoken, in the mildest and most soothing accents, that she drew the slightest attention. The object to whom she addressed herself, was, though very young, in a situation which could not fail to interest, for it informed the most careless observer, that she must soon become a mother. She answered Claudina's enquiries in broken Italian, and though her accent was imperfect, her language was polite, and her manner extremely interesting. She said she was a stranger in Italy, and without the slightest knowledge of any of its inhabitants; that she had been informed of Lord Courtney's present residence with the Marchese di Rodalvi, and that he being one of her countrymen, she had taken the liberty of coming to crave some assistance from him: adding, that she had left Florence in the morning, and had wandered until then in the grounds, unable to summon resolution to enquire for him. Claudina was touched with the simplicity and pathos with which she spoke, and intreated her to continue there no longer, as she must already be weary and faint, but to go immediately to Lord Courtney; adding that at that moment he was not an hundred yards distant. "Is he so near?" exclaimed the stranger, turning pale, "oh! no, I cannot see him; alas! my presence may displease him, I



must come again; at present I dare not see him; I am unequal to the task." She burst into tears; Claudina was infinitely affected, ascribing her emotion partly to anxiety, and partly to her situation. "Come," said she kindly, "you are exhausted; let us walk a little further, perhaps the air will revive you?" She then led her towards the pavillion, and when they came within sight of it, said, "you see that pavillion, Lord Courtney is now there with the family, but if you had rather converse with him alone, I will send him to you," receiving no answer, she looked at her companion, who with quivering lips faintly articulated, "Oh! my father," and sunk insensible to the earth.

Claudina greatly shocked, ran to the pavillion, and hastily requested the Marchese to send assistance to an unfortunate English-woman, whom she had left, she feared expiring. Whilst the servants were summoned, Lord Courtney with the animation natural to him, had seized some wine, and gone in search of the unfortunate object, whom he soon found; but what were his feelings, when he recognized in her, the injured, forsaken, Mary Macdonald? "Oh! God," he exclaimed, "what have I done? When will my fault be sufficiently punished?" He pressed the lifeless form in agony to his throbbing breast, and in a few minutes the family brought cordials, and were followed by the servants, with a chair, in which they proposed to remove the invalid; the surprise at Lord Courtney's grief, was universal; but it was augmented when the unknown lady, opening her eyes and fixing them on him, with the most speaking tenderness, said in accents indescribably affecting. "Ah! Henry, how base were they who traduced thee; how have they wronged thy constancy and love? Ah! I cannot forgive myself, for ever having believed what I might have known to be impossible." She closed her eyes again, overcome with languor, and totally regardless of all around her. Lord Courtney's situation was truly embarrassing. He once looked up, but he read unfavorable conjectures, and just condemnation, in every countenance, and he cast his eyes down, mortified and humbled to the utmost. But if his feelings were painful, what were Everilda's, as she gazed upon the scene with silent dignity? Too compassionate to see without sorrow, the situation of her rival, for such she immediately suspected her to be; too proud to reproach him who had reduced her to it, she was indeed eloquent in silence, for her eyes spoke volumes, her countenance was the transcript of her mind, and every gesture, every attitude, was in unison with her feelings. The Marchesa now proposed raising the stranger from the ground, and placing her in the chair, to take her into the house, as the night damps fell quickly. But as soon as she understood his intention, she begged to be excused, and requested the favor of a servant to procure her a conveyance to Florence, where she had apartments in the Casa Agostini. Finding her anxious to return, and that entreaties for her stay, only made her uneasy, the Marchese kindly ordered the carriage to be brought out, and requested her to rely on his services, if she should need assistance at any future period. She thanked him with the sweetest grace, and endeavoured to apologize for the confusion which she had occasioned, by the little command that she had retained over her feelings. "There needs no apology," said Everilda, speaking for the first time, "that your feelings are exquisitely susceptible, is a misfortune, which I lament for your own sake, as sensibility is too often the source of misery to its possessor." There was an ausperity in her tone, that stung Henry to the heart; he looked at her, but her countenance expressed only the coldness of contempt, and he never felt its influence more forcibly. The carriage was now ready; it would have been inhuman to suffer Mary to depart alone, and Lord Courtney rejoiced that

in attending her, he should escape for the present, those looks of censure, which though he had merited, he could not bear to receive from friends so esteemed, and whose good opinion he had till now eminently possessed.

We will not trouble our readers, with the animadversions of the Marchese, and his family, on the recent occurrence, as they may very easily be imagined. Nor will we treat them with any repetitions of endearing speeches, gentle reproaches, and fond forgiveness, that passed between the reunited pair, as whatever other recommendation they might possess, that of novelty, which is the greatest of all, would certainly be wanting.

Mary briefly explained the circumstances, that had prompted her in despair to leave England. "Which," said she, "contained no friends for me; alas! I had rendered myself unworthy of any; I therefore resolved to seek you here, to learn my fate from your own lips, and if it should be as I dreaded, then to end my life in retirement, without ever returning to my native country, where I should every day be made more sensible of my loss; but I find you unchanged, and could I cease to consider myself culpable, oh! how soon could I forget that I had ever been unhappy!" Lord Courtney heard her recital with much emotion, and most aristocratically longed to treat Dawson with an introduction into the Bastile, in all its ancient terrors; Mary wept whilst she assured her lover, as she still fondly thought him, that he should never be reminded of a promise, the performance of which, must involve him in disgrace with his associates. "Never," said she with streaming eyes, "never shall it be said, that my virtue was sacrificed to ambition; never shall my love prove prejudicial to its object. No, I repeat that I will return no more to a country wherein I have no friends. I have felt the horrors, the uncertainty, and disgrace, of my situation; no more will I expose myself to them. You, my Henry, will love the unhappy fruits of our attachment. If I live, my child will console me for resigning its father; my fault shall be expiated by penitence, and humble industry; and if I die, you will perhaps lament a woman, 'who loved not wisely, but too well.'" She burst into tears, as she concluded these words, for all her firmness was spent, in the virtuous resolution that she had taken, and she felt entitled to the gratification of weeping the imperious necessity which demanded her perseverance. The object of her unfortunate attachment, was deeply affected with her distress, and used every argument to console her; but vainly endeavoured to impart to her, the comfort that he himself wanted.

For several days Lord Courtney stayed from the Villa di Rodalvi, unable to summon resolution to renew his visits, yet feeling that every day's delay, increased the difficulty; and certainly every day's absence increased the displeasure of the Marchese and Marchesa, and strengthened them in their determination, never to risk their daughter's happiness, on the uncertain and disgraceful foundation, of a libertine's honor or affection.

Mr. Barlowe likewise was as uneasy and perplexed as any of the party, for he felt responsible for his pupil's conduct, which was certainly at that time far from meriting his approbation. He had not been perfectly satisfied with Lord Courtney's lengthened stay in Florence, for they had long since, seen every thing worthy of note in it, and after that, he justly thought every succeeding day, a day lost; but as Mary was circumstanced, he could not expect to draw his pupil from the place, and indeed even to wish it, would have appeared cruel. He saw the native virtue and delicacy of Miss Macdonald's mind, he lamented her deviation from the path of honor, and he severely condemned the

impetuosity, which had caused him who had undertaken to be her guide, to tempt her astray.

Mr. Barlowe was one of the old-fashioned believers, that whether or not chastity be the principal virtue of a woman, without which no other can exist, yet she who is guilty of a breach of it, is generally capable of many other vices; as she has shewn herself regardless of public scorn, that great bond which holds the world in awe, consequently would not be withheld from the commission of a crime, by the fear of incurring what she is previously loaded with, and still less by conscientious motives, of which she has already proved her contempt. But though he did not affect that lenity of judgment, which is too much the fashion of the day, which under the affectation of candour, authorizes vice, and which has made as many profligates, as the puritanical tenets of Oliver Cromwell made hypocrites, he yet condemned not all alike: he thought not that the commission of any one fault included every other; and he carefully distinguished between hardened vice, and returning penitence. In Mary he saw the latter, he therefore strengthened her virtuous resolves, cheered her drooping spirits, and dispelled her doubts, with the piety of his profession, and the affection of a parent. She told him every transaction of her life, and did not conceal the motives which had inspired her with courage to undertake so long a journey, through a foreign country, attended only by her faithful Jane. She had raised sufficient money for her expences in addition to what Lord Courtney had left her, by disposing of some of her most valuable effects, and the same person who purchased them was fortunately capable of giving her the most expeditious and cheap rout to Florence, being in the habit of equipping travellers for continental expeditions.

## CHAP. XXXI.

Balow my babe, ly stil and sleepe,  
 It grieves me sair to see thee weepe,  
 If thou'lt be silent, I'll be glad,  
 Thy moaning makes my heart full sad;  
 Balow my boy, thy mither's joy,  
 Thy father breedes me great annoy;  
 Ly stil my darling, sleepe awhile,  
 And when thou wakest sweetly smile,  
 But smile not as thy father did  
 To cozen maids, nay God forbid;  
 But yette I fear, thou wilt gae neere  
 Thy father's face and heart to beire.  
 Balow my babe, ly stil and sleepe,  
 It grieves me sair to see thee weepe.

LADY ANN BOTHWELL.

AFTER a week's absence, Lord Courtney gained courage to present himself again at the villa. His reception was polite but cool: he could not complain of any actual alteration of manner, yet that there was considerable change was too evident to pass unobserved by him, and he felt it the most forcibly from Everilda; who, under the mask of indifference, effectually concealed the anguish she had endured since his departure, and affected even to be weary in his company, the better to disguise the pleasure that his return had created in her bosom.

When he took his leave, however, he found no encouragement to prolong his visit; no friendly entreaty solicited his speedy repetition of it; and he could not but perceive that he was not any longer the welcome visitor that he had once been. Unfortunately, in his breast, as in Everilda's, opposition always created resistance, and the most ardent desire to surmount every obstacle to the gratification of wishes, strengthened by difficulty. This uncontrollable spirit now urged him to go once more to the villa, to offer himself in form as a suitor for Everilda's hand; and his offer was in as great form refused by the Marchese, with the additional mortification of informing him, that, as he had declared his intentions, which however flattering, must inevitably be declined, he ought to be sensible that there would be an indelicacy in the continuance of his visits: the Marchese added, that he hoped to be pardoned, if, with the freedom of an old friend, he advised Lord Courtney to pursue his travels for the present, assuring him of a most friendly welcome in case of his revisiting Florence, after Everilda's engagements with Mr. Clayton should be fulfilled. It would be difficult to describe Henry's vexation and anger at this positive dismissal; he requested to be allowed to receive it from the lady herself. "That is unnecessary, my lord," replied the Marchese, "it would only encrease your regret, and be a painful task for her to execute." He then desired permission to see the ladies before his departure, but the Marchese assured him that they were not within; and he was obliged to

take his leave, resolving to revenge himself at some future period, for the mortification which he then felt.

When some days had elapsed without seeing Lord Courtney, it was natural for Everilda to remark the time of his absence, and she accompanied her observation with one not deficient in severity, on his want of politeness, and even of gratitude. But when the Marchese informed her with the utmost candour, of the circumstances attending his last visit, her displeasure unjustly changed its object, and acquitted Lord Courtney to condemn her father. She said little, but her countenance expressed a variety of contending emotions, not unperceived by her tender parents; who began seriously to apprehend that her heart had fallen a sacrifice to the vivacity, talents, and fascinating address of the young Englishman.

Everilda was indeed severely mortified. It appeared to her that her father had acted unjustly, in not giving her, at least, the liberty of choice; and she thought that he had also taken an ungenerous advantage of her absence, by remaining silent on the subject, which had been discussed at that time, until it was too late to recal his decision. To be deceived and treated as a child, was what she could not forgive; and she forgot, in her resentment, the indulgence with which her parents had observed her rising partiality; the kindness with which they had forgiven her fickle, and unjustifiable conduct towards Clayton; and the rational fears and tender anxieties that now influenced their rejection of offers, which they had once regarded with satisfaction, as the probable source of their daughter's happiness: all this she forgot; and remembering only that she had been deceived, rashly concluded, that she no longer owed the debt of confidence to those, who had violated it in the first instance towards her.

Unfortunately Lord Courtney found opportunities to see her, and converse with her, whilst her mind was in this perverted state; and in a fatal hour, he had the temerity to propose an elopement, to which she had the rashness to consent. Thus did this thoughtless young man requite the kindness and hospitality of his father's earliest friend. Such was the return made by the imprudent and headstrong Everilda, to the tenderness and anxiety of the most indulgent parents.

Though Everilda, blinded by passion, had consented to see Lord Courtney in private, yet her native delicacy taught her, that every woman lessens the dignity of the female character, by any clandestine meetings, which must be always degrading to the retiring modesty, which even in the eyes of the libertine, is the most attractive charm of the sex. She therefore submitted to them no longer, than whilst they were necessary to fix the plan of flight, and that once arranged, she forbade every attempt to repeat them. Everilda had a female friend, not far from Florence, whom she often visited; and it was settled, that, under pretence of going thither for a short time, she might take some apparel, and avoid all suspicion in being accompanied by Claudina, and Bianca, her waiting-woman: Lord Courtney was to write to the Marchese two days before the execution of this scheme, with acknowledgments for past civilities, and a declaration of being about to leave Florence; hoping to have the pleasure of revisiting it before he returned to England. This, with parting compliments to the ladies, was to form the contents of the billet, which they flattered themselves would ensure their plans from detection. Nor were the most famed conspirators, of ancient or modern times, ever more impressed with the grandeur of their undertaking, the necessity of inviolable secrecy, and the encouraging prospect of

success, than were this young and thoughtless pair, on an occasion, conceived in a moment of passionate folly, and by which every event of their future lives would inevitably be influenced.

But if Everilda had conquered all her scruples, Lord Courtney had some yet remaining, which, at times, appeared almost insurmountable. He had to inform Mary of his intended departure; and the disclosure, in her situation, was an indelicacy, and a cruelty, which he was not so lost to feeling, or so intoxicated with a new passion, as to consider an easy task. He shrunk from it, he deplored the necessity of it, and there were moments when he would have willingly resigned every hope of happiness with Everilda, to insure the continuance of it with one, whom he had injured and betrayed, only to desert. As the appointed day drew near, his agitation was violent and undisguised. The gentle Mary, shocked and alarmed, could no longer affect not to perceive it, and enquired its cause, with all the anxiety of affection, mingled with the timid delicacy which feared to be intrusive, or to wear the appearance of curiosity. The most afflicting certainty was preferable to the guilty suspense that he endured. He confessed all, and threw himself for pardon, on that affection which he had so basely requited. She heard him with more calmness than he had thought her capable of assuming, and forgave him with more angelic sweetness, than he had imagined could exist in a mere mortal. No word of reproach passed her lips but once; when Lord Courtney was excusing his desertion, under the plea of having engaged his honour to Lady Everilda, who trusted herself entirely to it; she then hastily answered, "My lord, you are the master of your own actions, excuses for them only degrade you, and insult me: I cannot judge of the claim that a female may have on the honor of the man in whom she confides, but I sincerely wish that the lady, to whom you are attached, may find yours immutable, and never, for a moment, feel occasion to repent her confidence." Saying these words, she left the room with apparent composure; and Lord Courtney felt relieved by her magnanimity; though; contrasting it with the narrow and selfish light in which he must have appeared to her, he was not greatly elevated in his own esteem, by the comparison.

Mary was, however, no heroine; she felt that,

"The grief which cannot speak,  
Whispers the woe-fraught heart, and bids it break."

When she found herself alone, she gave way to all the anguish of one deceived, rejected and abandoned, yet still fondly clinging to the object by whom she was made wretched. In vain she sought for consolation, in reflecting that she had voluntarily intended to resign his affections. "Alas!" she exclaimed, "he had already bestowed them on another, and I, lost, unhappy wretch, shall give birth to an unfortunate degraded being, who will not even have its father's love to console it, for the contempt of a cruel world. Ah! my father, the bitter tears with which I shall bedew my innocent child, will wash away my fault in disregarding thy dying precepts. Ah! thou wouldst not judge my errors too severely, for thou also wert deceived!" She wept in an agony of grief, and thought that she could, with pleasure have resigned Lord Courtney to any other woman, rather than to her, whom she knew to be beautiful, and believed to be amiable, or Henry would not love her. She had regarded him as the destined husband of Lady Harriett Parkhurst, until she had taught

herself to consider him as such with calmness; she had likewise been supported by thinking, that in his heart the image of Lady Harriett, would never efface that of Mary Macdonald; which might be remembered with fond regret, long after all intercourse between them had ceased; but now, even this hope, the only consolation that she had asked, was torn from her bosom, and left her lacerated heart to smart under the keenest pangs of undeserved neglect.

In her delicate state, mental agonies came not unattended; they were soon accompanied by bodily ones, so acute, that the poor sufferer was soon made sensible of the rapid approach of that trying hour, when even the most affectionate care, the most soothing attentions, and the most refined comforts, are insufficient to dispel the dread of evil, or lull the sense of pain. Mary was to suffer unaided by these, and unsupported even by her own reflections, but Mr. Barlowe wept over her, and prayed for consolation to be imparted to her, whilst Lord Courtney implored her forgiveness, with tears of anguish, and exclaimed, "Never till now, did I feel the extent of my crimes, never till now was I sensible of my folly, or punished for my baseness." His affliction increased her sufferings, but she bore them with fortitude, and said in the self-accusing language of the humble La Valliere, "I am not worthy to complain." After some hours, wherein exhausted nature had often counterfeited the tranquillity of death, as a respite from her suffering, Mary gave birth to an infant, whose feeble cries, pierced the soul of its young and unhappy mother, and filled her with sensation of the most exquisite delight, chastened with melancholy awe. "So did my mother," she exclaimed, pressing the babe to her throbbing breast, and bathing it in tears, "so did my mother fondly clasp me in her arms. Oh, my God! grant me but this sweet treasure, and never more can I know unhappiness. I am undeserving of thy mercy, but thou wilt accept my penitence, thou wilt not "break the bruised reed," thou wilt not deprive me of a boon so kindly given. My little darling, my all," she continued as she fondly kissed its closed eyes, soft cheeks, and folded hands, "I tremble whilst I look on thee, and consider what trifles may injure thy delicate frame, and on how fine a thread thy precious existence hangs! ah! already have my parental anxieties commenced." There appeared indeed too reasonable grounds for apprehension, even to those less tremblingly alive to danger than a mother; for the agitation which she had undergone, and a premature birth, had visibly affected the innocent child, whose continuance in a world, to which it had been introduced under auspices so unfavorable, appeared very uncertain.

Lord Courtney's transports on finding himself a father, were checked by the alloy of self-reproach; he felt that he had injured his child, and behaved cruelly to its mother, but his heart was too full of rapture to dwell long on any gloomy ideas, and he hastily went to Mary's apartment, to indulge it to the utmost.

He was some minutes before he could gain resolution to look at the babe, but when he took it in his arms, and gazed on its little features, he felt all the sacred and indelible emotions of a parent, and in the delight of expressing them, almost forgot that they might have been more perfect. "My poor babe," he exclaimed, "thy father has deprived thee of thy just inheritance, but he will watch over, and befriend thee, whilst he has the power to do it." To Mary he made the most affecting acknowledgments, and she, absorbed in maternal delight, assured him repeatedly of her forgiveness, whilst the long absent smile of rapture and contentment, played on her innocent and now tranquil features, as she listened to the soft breathings of her sleeping son.

How willingly would Lord Courtney have devoted himself to retirement during Mary's recovery, how willingly would he have abandoned a scheme, of which in his hours of serious thought, he saw all the imperfections. In those hours his cruelty to Mary, his ingratitude to the Marchese, and his injustice to Lord Drelincourt, in taking so important a step, as forming a matrimonial alliance, without consulting him on the subject, all rose to his mental view, but too soon the suggestions of reason and affection, were put to flight by the phantom, false-honor, the illusions of self-love, and the triumph of vanity.

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## CHAP. XXXII.

Vice is a monster of such hideous mein,  
 As to be hated needs but to be seen,  
 But seen too oft familiar grows her face,  
 We first endure, then pity, then embrace.

POPE.

PERHAPS vice is never more certain of success, than when she approaches the object of her allurements by gradations almost imperceptible; it is incumbent, on us therefore to watch our thoughts, before they lead to actions, for that enemy is the most dangerous, whose machinations are the least suspected. Had Lord Courtney been told that he would seduce the orphan, left to his charge with the expiring breath of a brave but unfortunate officer, how would he have spurned the idea, with all the generous indignation of conscious virtue! but had he also been told, that he would afterwards desert her, and abandon the first fruits of his illicit love, the innocent and unfortunate pledge of his guilty passion, then the enormity of the crime would have appeared almost to preclude the possibility of its commission, and resentment would have been lost in incredulity. Let then Lord Courtney's unhappy dereliction from the paths of virtue, in which he had been trained, and with the beauty and pleasantness of which he was fully acquainted, teach us the first rule of prudence, which is to distrust ourselves.

"If a man thinks that he stands, let him take heed lest he fall;" and may we learn by the errors of others, to be yet more watchful over our own.

When Lord Courtney's promised billet arrived, Everilda's cheeks were dyed in blushes of shame, for the deception of which it was the vehicle; and her agitation was observed by both her parents, who unfortunately attributing it to her partiality for the writer, and her sorrow for his departure, willingly consented to her desire of visiting her friend, hoping the change of scene would divert her mind from the attachment which she had rashly formed.

When she took leave of her father and mother, her excessive grief, would have inevitably inspired suspicion in them, had they not been fatally blinded by the previous conjectures that they had formed; and when she in an agony of tears exclaimed, "Oh my dear parents, assure me of your forgiveness and love," they still imagined that she alluded to the opposition which she had recently shewn, and kindly assured her of their undiminished affection.

When Everilda arrived near the place where she had appointed to meet Lord Courtney, she informed the astonished Claudina of her designs, and requested the favor of her company to England. In vain her friend, more rational than herself, endeavoured to dissuade her from the scheme, by dispassionately pointing out its numerous objections; Everilda had unhappily never been accustomed to listen to arguments opposing her inclinations, and calmly repeating, that none would be able to shake her resolutions, she again entreated Claudina to accompany her. This was a request more easily made than granted; the fear of being thought accessory to a step, which she entirely disapproved, and

the dread of appearing ungrateful to her kind friends, the Marchese and Marchesa, made her very unwilling to go forward. But on the other hand, her attachment to Everilda, the reluctance which she felt, to reduce her to the indelicacy of travelling without a female companion, in such peculiar circumstances, and the security which she should be certain of finding in England, from her brother's cruelty, and implacable revenge, with perhaps a hope almost unconsciously indulged, of again seeing Clayton, made her equally unwilling to return. Everilda saw her advantage, and pursued it with the warmest entreaties, soon prevailed. When they arrived at the Villa Polastri, she dismissed her carriage, and all her attendants, but Bianca, her waiting woman, and Giuseppe, her own valet, who were in the secret. After chatting some time with the friend, of whom she had made use as a tool in her designs; Everilda informed her, that she and Claudina were going to stay a few days at a villa, four leagues further, and on their return, would spend the same time with her, but could not then prolong their visit, as the carriage was ordered to fetch them. The young lady knew the villa that Everilda named, though not the family to whom it belonged, and therefore when a handsome equipage was driven up to the door, she wished her friends an agreeable visit, saying, that she should impatiently anticipate the pleasure of seeing them again; and they proceeded entirely unsuspected. Lord Courtney soon joined them, and they proceeded to Bologna, resolving to lay their route through Germany. The indissoluble knot was soon tied, and the parties then wrote to their respective friends, to solicit their forgiveness of the past. Claudina also wrote a candid account of her ignorance of Everilda's intentions, when she left the villa, and of the motives by which she had been induced reluctantly to accompany her, on being made acquainted with them.

It is difficult to say, whether sorrow, mortification, or surprise, predominated in the breast of the Marchese and his lady. The blow fell the more heavily, from being wholly unthought of, for even if they could for one moment have suspected their daughter of artifice, a suspicion which from her natural candour and ingenuousness, would have appeared highly unjust, yet the return of the carriage and domestics, with their account of leaving the young ladies safe at the Villa Polastri, added to the circumstance of Bianca and Giuseppe being detained, as was usual, would certainly have disarmed the most cautious of their fears. The pride of the Marchese was deeply wounded, at his daughter's entering into any family clandestinely; and the anxiety of the Marchesa, was again roused, lest her child should have wrecked her happiness, by risking it with a man, whose character she had too great reason to dread, was that of a libertine.

Mary Macdonald had borne parting with her faithless seducer, better than she had dared to hope; but her child was now all the world to her, and in clasping it to her bosom, she forgot its father's falsehood. Alas! she was not to possess this consolation long; the infant drooped, notwithstanding the cares which affection lavished on it; prophetic anguish embittered its mother's fond caresses, and she had scarcely recovered from her confinement, when she was deprived of this pledge of unfortunate love.

To attempt to describe her affliction, would be fruitless as painful. She contemplated the dying moments of her child, with the wild, though stedfast gaze of despair; hardly durst she breathe, lest she should hasten its dissolution; and when its quivering eyes were finally closed in death, she averted her's in the fallacious hope, that her fears deceived her, and that when she looked on it again, she should find that they had been groundless. Alas! it was too true, the little form waxed cold, nor could its mother's

scalding tears, recal the genial warmth. Still she pressed it to her bosom, still she felt a melancholy pleasure in possessing it, and until she was compelled to resign it to the grave, she felt not the extent of her misery.

Nature sometimes kindly shields us from a sense of evil, even by means of the feelings which render it too acute to be borne. This was Mary's case; the remembrance of her sorrows, was lost in insensibility; a burning fever raged through her veins, the langour of disease suspended the acuteness of grief, and it was long doubtful whether she would recover to a consciousness of suffering. The worthy Mr. Barlowe, transferred to her the cares which he had found useless for his pupil. He watched over her with holy patience; soothed her hours of affliction, cheered those of convalescence, and invited the poor penitent back to life, bidding her depend on him for every worldly comfort, and in teaching her true repentance of her errors, he was enabled also to console her with the well grounded hope of merciful forgiveness.

Leaving him to watch the bed of sickness, sufficiently rewarded for his exertions by the gradual, though lingering recovery of their object; we will again return to Lord Drelincourt and his family.

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## CHAP. XXXIII.

“Tho’ flowers embroider Barca’s faithless coast,  
 Yet there deceitful rocks and quicksands lie,  
 Tho’ richest gems Golconda’s mountains boast,  
 There blasting pestilence pervades the sky.

’Tis thus does Heav’n its various gifts impart,  
 Mingling alternate, ills and blessing flow;  
 And sometimes rapture fills the lighten’d heart,  
 Which disappointment soon absorbs in woe.”

THE revolving seasons had again brought round the period, when the tranquil pleasures of retirement are made to yield to the hurry of business, or whirl of dissipation; and the Earl had now left the shades of Castle Drelincourt to resume his residence in Berkeley Square.

Edmund continued to observe with the impartial eye of truth, aided by the steady light of unclouded reason, the real character, not only of the English, but of the individuals of numerous nations, who are constantly to be met with in the capital.

Every day’s experience exalted the former yet higher in his estimation; and taught him more readily to acknowledge their virtues, and excuse their foibles.

He had heard their roughness condemned, but he thought of them, as Goldsmith admirably expressed himself of the great Johnson, that they had nothing of the bear but the coat. He had heard the superior politeness of the French much boasted of; yet he would not yield the palm even where the English themselves acknowledge it to be due. He maintained with Lord Chesterfield, that they evinced their superiority by disclaiming it; and, in an argument which he held with Mr. Fletcher on the subject, he thus gave the result of his observations, and the opinion that he had formed from them: “I believe it is generally allowed, that true politeness may be more easily felt than taught, and that it must necessarily be felt, in order to be practised in perfection. It does not consist in a certain set of phrases, or a regular number of bows; if it did, even the French must yield to the Chinese, who value each other according to their facility in making obeisances; denote their respect for a person by the number which they make to him; and think that guest the best bred, who returns from the greatest distance after his departure, to make another bow to his host; who, perhaps, expected that he had long before arrived at home.

“True politeness springs from the heart, of which it expresses the wishes in a variety of agreeable ways, as poetry decorates and improves the ideas of the mind; both may receive additional value by being pleasingly communicated; but both must possess intrinsic worth, to be really estimable.” “In the former, I will grant that politeness resembles poetry,” said Mr. Fletcher, “inasmuch as both can make a trifle appear of consequence, and dress it in charms, pleasing, though perhaps imaginary; whilst, without such aid, it would fall into insignificance, and be desired by no one. In this art, partial as I am to my country, I must think we are inferior to our neighbours.” “In the art of making that appear, which is not, I will resign the competition,” replied Edmund, “for that is not

the politeness of the heart, which is what I contend for: it is a bastard production of the head, compounded of interest and vanity. A Frenchman seeks to magnify the importance of a service, by inventing a thousand inconveniences which he pretends to have sustained in the performance of it. An Englishman, on the contrary, seeks to convince those whom he has obliged, however ungracefully, that he has had so little trouble in the affair, that thanks are as unnecessary as undesired. I think whether or not, any may hesitate, which may be the most polite, all will feel which is the most generous mode of proceeding. A Frenchman forms chains of your obligations to him, complimenting you, and drawing them tighter at the same time. An Englishman spurns the idea of chains in any shape, and if you take them on yourself, insists on freeing you, even though he may throw them in your face. I will illustrate my arguments by example. An English sailor, loaded with the rewards of his bravery, meets an old messmate, his equal in courage, though his inferior in good fortune: after the first salutations, the poverty-stricken congratulates the monied man on his new rigging; adding, in a melancholy accent, as he changes his quid, and eyes his companion's new hat, 'Sink my carcass if my skull be n't so weather-beaten,' pulling off the tattered crown of what had once resembled the object of his envy, 'that it might be hove aboard an enemy to save a cannon-ball, and I should hardly grudge the loss of it, if it had the luck, d'ye see, to plump into great mounseer's bread-basket.' In the mean time, his comrade's eyes are rivetted on a wound in this ill-defended skull; and, taking his new purchase from his own head, he decorates that of his companion with it, saying, 'Take that, and welcome, Jack; it shall never be said that Will Flasket saw a messmate hang out signals of distress, and flinched from helping him.' 'No,' says Jack, pride struggling with necessity in his breast, 'I flung out no signals; thank God it's no stormy weather with me, only shallow water; and I'm no pirate, to take what's not my own, and rob an honest man of what he's worked fore and aft for.' Saying this, he seeks to replace the hat on Will's head, who vociferates, 'Avast there, off with your nippers; what are you turned land-lubber, with your palaver? Strike my timbers, take the skull-cap, and sail no longer on your talking tack; I tell you, it's too little for me, it keeps my head in limbo; I'd as lieve have it jamm'd in a turnkit, and if you won't take it, I'll heave it overboard.' This argument succeeds; one departs pleased to have cheated his old acquaintance into the acceptance of a benefit, and the other at receiving so useful a gift without injuring the giver. Some perhaps will say, 'like John Bull's compliments, he always defeats a favor by his manner of conferring it; for where is the generosity of giving away, what he avers he does not wish to keep?' I differ from these remarkers, I think the intention of that manner adds to the obligation. A Frenchman has a house to dispose of, for a season, and will be greatly inconvenienced by its remaining on his hands. He hears of a stranger who wants one, and waits on him to offer his, with assurances that his visit is solely occasioned by being informed of the very great trouble which the stranger has had in procuring accommodations; and that, entirely on this account, he is induced to remove his family, to be enabled to offer his house to him for the most moderate recompense. Confounded by politeness so excessive and unlooked for, the gentleman hesitates, cannot think of giving so much trouble: the Frenchman presses, assures him, that, though the inconvenience be considerable, yet were it much more, or incalculable, it would be overbalanced by the pleasure of serving so worthy, agreeable, or eminent a personage. The gentleman, quite overpowered with civilities, enters on the house, acknowledging to himself, that a

Frenchman is surely the politest being on earth. He finds the house a ruin, the furniture dropping to pieces, the situation execrable, the rent exorbitant, and he begins to think the politeness of a Frenchman not so charming as he had at first imagined. Perhaps it may be said, that these are not instances of what we mean by the term politeness, but they are instances of the difference of disposition, which occasions different modes of behaviour; and a nation will, throughout its several ranks, maintain the same characteristics, though the form of expressing them may be varied according to the circumstances of the parties.” Edmund here ended his dissertation on politeness, and the company laughing, told him, that he gave great proof of his own, by the ease with which he had adopted English prejudices. He replied, that those very prejudices were also in a great degree praiseworthy, as springing from a proper sense of superiority, and a laudable anxiety to preserve it. “Other nations,” he continued, “complain of the insufferable insolence of the English when they go abroad, and they would undoubtedly do better in bearing their honors more meekly, for no one likes to be convinced of his inferiority; but, perhaps the consciousness which they always retain of their advantage over most others, and the pleasure that they take in shewing it, may greatly conduce to their firmness in preserving the character, of which they are justly proud. I may appear partial, but I think I am only acknowledging their real worth, when I declare, that, for truth, honesty, charity, generosity, friendship and benevolence, social comfort, and family concord, the English are unrivalled.” “I am of your opinion, Edmund,” replied Lord Drelincourt, “and think with you, that many of the faults which disgust other nations with my countrymen, may be excused by a candid mind, as rising entirely from that love of their native country, which makes every other fail in comparison with it, and which never forsakes them. Every man says that he loves his country, but every man does not prove his assertion. A Frenchman, German, Dutchman, all love their country, but they will contentedly pass their days in any other, without ever disturbing their peace by wishing to return to their own; wherever money can be procured, that place is desirable to them, and there they would willingly live; but to an Englishman, it is not sufficient to accumulate property, he must hope to spend it in his native country, without which soothing prospect, avarice would fail to stimulate his industry; impelled by the love of gain, the young adventurer crosses the vast Atlantic, explores the frozen or the torrid zone, and exhausts the ardour of his youth in heaping up wealth, which when ease brings time for reflection, appears of no value in his eyes, till he can return to the early scene of his social comforts; for this, he retraces his hazardous route, and thinks every care repaid when he beholds,

“That pale, that white-fac’d shore,  
Whose foot spurns back old ocean’s roaring waves.”

Whilst time thus flew in Lord Drelincourt’s family, marked only by instruction and delight, the tranquillity was interrupted by the arrival of Lord Courtney’s letter from Bologna, and it is needless to say, with what severe mortification the Earl perused its contents. His feelings were keenly wounded by the reserve that Lord Courtney had shewn, and which ill requited the generous and unlimited indulgence, with which he had always been treated. Lord Drelincourt’s views were disappointed, his intentions frustrated, his expectations destroyed; and however philosophers and moralists may argue on the futility

of rank, the insufficiency of riches, and the uncertainty of adventitious circumstances, yet the marriage of the heir of an illustrious family, must in the present state of society, be a matter of anxious importance to those, who are nearly connected with him. An exalted situation is taxed with pains, more than proportioned to its pleasures; for whilst the glare of magnificence, or the flutter of dissipation, will inevitably weary, and grow insipid on repetition, the grasping hand of avarice and the aspiring eye of ambition, are still actively employed; and the mind which has long ceased to be amused by pleasures, whose only attractions were novelty, or gratified by honors, which when possessed, no longer pleased, will yet continue to be tenderly alive to the sensations of mortification and disappointment.

Lord Drelincourt felt not only as a man of the world, but as a tender parent; happy in his own marriage, he anxiously desired to see his son equally fortunate; placing all his own comfort in his family, and in the endearing ties of natural affection, and social love, he ardently wished to see that of his son, derived from the same laudable source, for perfect as the lot of humanity will admit of, must be the superstructure raised on the solid foundation of domestic peace.

It may be very naturally asked, if Lord Drelincourt imagined Lady Harriett Parkhurst to be a female, to whom the precious deposit of his son's felicity might be entrusted, without fear of disgusting him by folly, or wearying him by insipidity? Lady Harriett was, certainly, one of

“Matter too soft a lasting mark to bear,  
And best distinguished by black, brown, or fair.”

But she was thoroughly good-natured; if she had not talents, she had not the scornful contempt for the less informed, which a consciousness of possessing them sometimes inspires. If she was not accomplished, she was free from the affectation of appearing so. She exhibited no drawings finished by the skilful hand of her master; her dressing-room displayed no toilet-boxes, fillagree, or embroidery, the work of some ingenious and needy female; who, under the name of governess, displays her own taste for her pupils' credit: and, when we recollect that her appearance was pleasing, her connections numerous as powerful, herself the daughter of an old and esteemed friend, and by failure of issue in a branch of the family, heiress to immense estates, it cannot be a matter of surprise if the Earl, considering her follies in the most favorable view, was willing to attribute them to youth, to a neglected education, or to any cause, rather than to deficiency of ability; and he had additional reason for his lenity of opinion, since Lord Courtney had never seemed anxious to consider her character more critically; but, on the contrary, had always appeared satisfied with the arrangement which he knew his father had made for him.

Lord Drelincourt perfectly remembered the blooming charms, the fascinating graces, and opening talents of the youthful Everilda; but he remembered also, her impatience of controul, her quickness of resentment, and her love of admiration. Perhaps, however, candour must own that her good qualities would have over-balanced her defects, even in the opinion of the severest judge; but in this instance, the Earl could not be quite impartial; he felt mortified to the utmost, that his son should have formed a foreign connection, as by that means no alliances were made, that could strengthen his

interests in his own country. Nor was the Earl unmindful of the advantages of fortune for his son; which for himself, he had overlooked; for know, gentle readers, there were moments when Lord Drelincourt, like many other lords, felt himself poor. Yes, though the pale children of want may deem the fact an impossibility; though they who are reduced by misfortune from happy competence, to the bitter morsel of poverty, may sigh to think of the comforts to which the retrenchments of one ball, one birthday's expences might restore them; yet, nothing was more certain, than that while his splendid retinue, and magnificent household excited the admiration of the vulgar, and the envy of the superficial observer, they did not shield Lord Drelincourt from feeling poor. Riches and poverty are only comparative terms: the Lydian king thirsted for gold amidst countless wealth; and the Cynic philopher threw away his wooden bowl, blushing to find himself possessed of a superfluity.

Lord Drelincourt's title was supported by estates, which in simpler periods had been deemed fully adequate to maintain its dignity. Unfortunately they had not encreased in the exact proportion of modern profusion, or the unceasing liberality of their possessor, and he had often the mortification of finding the dictates of generosity, necessarily restrained by the suggestions of prudence. He then endeavoured to discover how many, without half his fortune, contrived to live in the most boundless extravagance; to enter into all the most luxurious whims of wanton opulence, and yet never appear embarrassed by the want of that article, of which he too often felt an inconvenient scarcity. His conjectures however did not lead to any great discovery; for as all are blind to their own peculiarities, so, in this instance, he forgot the absurd habit that he had acquired, as well from his father's example, as his own whimsical ideas of rectitude, of regularly paying his tradesmen's bills; a weakness from which they, whose ingenuity so puzzled him to account for, were happily exempt. He likewise in enumerating the members of his establishment, overlooked a numerous train of dependants on his bounty, whom he maintained for no other reason, than that they were aged, helpless, sick or destitute; that some had worn out their lives in the service of the family, and others had known better days; with various causes, equally ridiculous, which never entered into the expences of those, who appeared so much more profuse than himself. Lord Drelincourt was likewise fond of a numerous retinue; and with the early imbibed prejudices of his youth, felt his heart expand amidst a train of respectable and cheerful dependants. His superior domestics were taken from a class in life, exalted by education, though depressed by misfortune; as such, they were treated with humane attention and liberal kindness; nor was the luxurious profusion of his own table supplied by abridging the comforts of theirs; for the encreasing expences of the times, never furnished him with an excuse to curtail the necessaries of his household, in order to sacrifice more extravagantly at the shrine of fashionable folly.

It cannot then be wondered at, if the Earl, under the influence of these ideas, did sometimes feel the influence of the comparative term poorly, more sensibly than was agreeable; and when he further considered that at his death, his lady's jointure, and daughters' portions, though none of the largest, must encumber yet more an income, already insufficient for the continuance of the magnificence, with which the title of Drelincourt had always been supported, he very naturally thought that his son would have



found the large estates, to which Lady Harriett Parkhurst was heiress apparent, no unwelcome appendage to his own.

This pleasing prospect was, however now changed for one infinitely less agreeable, of providing an establishment for Lord Courtney, who could no longer be expected to reside with his father's family; in the bosom of which he had hitherto been so happy, that the unsociable and destructive plan of a separate residence was never thought of, by him.

The Earl sighed again, as he contemplated the necessity of this additional expence: with other singular ideas, he had one remarkably so, in the eyes of many of his acquaintance; it was, that regarding a family estate as a sacred deposit or precious loan; he deemed it alike dishonorable, and dishonest to load it with mortgages or debts; nor did he feel authorized to fell, unmercifully, the venerable growth of ages, to discharge the honorable demands of one evening's amusement in dishonorable society. Scrupulously fulfilling the grand command, of doing unto others as he would be done by, he considered a wrong done to posterity, as the most ungenerous and selfish of crimes, and one of which society ought to shew the most marked contempt.

There is, however, a power which never heard the voice of reason, or owned the claims of subordination, which tyranny could never subdue, or artifice deceive; and to this stern inexorable demon, by mortals ycleped necessity, Lord Drelincourt's knotted oaks were doomed to bend. All the consolation he could receive was, that their venerable shades,

“Where the rude axe, with heaved stroke,  
Was never heard the nymphs to daunt,  
Or fright them from their hallow'd haunts;”

had hitherto been spared for the future interest of his son; and that the same motive now prompted him to pronounce, however reluctantly, their doom.

Mortification was not confined to Lord and Lady Drelincourt's bosoms; it was extended to Edmund's in no trifling degree. The letters from his parents inspired him with the liveliest sympathy in their wounded feelings; and he was shocked that this sister should degrade the dignity, and delicacy so estimable in the female character, by eloping with a man of whom she could know but little, and subjecting herself to be treated with coldness by a family, into which her clandestine entrance could not inspire any very favorable ideas. His vexation was encreased, by observing the cloud that hung over the Earl's brow, and of which Edmund well knew, disappointed projects, and gloomy forebodings to be the cause. He was too just to feel, for a moment, offended by the disapprobation thus expressed; as he was fully conscious, that, exclusive of the disadvantage of any foreign connection, the fortune which the Marchese could bestow on Everilda, though something considerable in Italy, would yet appear very trifling in a rich commercial country, where opulence and luxury struggle for pre-eminence. He thought likewise of Mary, and when he recollected the ardour of Lord Courtney's passion for her in its commencement, and the shortness of its continuance, he dreaded lest his sister should in her turn, experience neglect and fickleness, which would rouse her sensibility too acutely, and pique her pride too deeply, to be submitted to in uncomplaining silence.

## CHAP. XXXIV.

In various talk th' instructive hours they past,  
 Who gave the ball, or paid the visit last;  
 One speaks the glory of the British queen,  
 And one describes a charming Indian screen;  
 A third interprets motions, looks, and eyes,  
 At every word a reputation dies.  
 Snuff, or the fan, supply each pause of chat,  
 With singing, laughing, ogling, and all that.

POPE.

AFTER a few days had elapsed, Lord Drelincourt gained resolution to impart to the family the secret of Lord Courtney's marriage, informing them also, that in a few weeks they would probably be gratified with an introduction to his bride; for whom to ensure their affection and esteem, it was only necessary to inform them that they were related, through her, to Signior Rodalvi, by the ties of fraternal love, as well as of friendship. Edmund bowed his acknowledgments for this delicate attention from his lordship, who never forgot the regard due to the feelings of another, even when his own were most deeply wounded.

Now it happened that this secret, like many others, was a secret only to the person most nearly interested in it, who was Lady Harriett; and therefore, by all but her, it was heard with very philosophic composure. She, wholly unable to conceal her surprise and mortification, exclaimed, "Dear me, married! I am sure it is very odd:" then looking round, expecting to read a confirmation of her opinion in every countenance, and seeing nothing but stoical indifference, she became half ashamed of the emotion that she felt; and continued, in a crying tone, "I'm sure I thought—I thought—" she paused again; but that she thought on any subject, was an assertion so uncommon for her to make, that every one was anxious to hear what she thought on this. However the degree of attention paid to her words, defeated its design, for being unused to it, she was embarrassed, and remained silent, until the Earl kindly said, "And what did you think, my dear?" speaking in the most encouraging tone, for at that moment he saw in her only the child of his beloved friend, and the source from which he had long drawn his most pleasing ideas of future prosperity and comfort for his son. "I thought," she resumed, "that your lordship wished Lord Courtney to marry me; and I am sure I think he has behaved very ungentlely, and it is very hard to be treated so, just when I believed I was so near being married, and he always appeared to admire me so. I'm sure I'm very ill used, and very unhappy, for every body will laugh at me, and talk of nothing else." Here she burst into an agony of tears; nor is she the first person who ever wept unnecessarily, from believing that nothing but her affairs would be talked of, when they were fortunately too insignificant to excite, in the smallest degree, the interest and curiosity which vanity and self-love imagine they must universally inspire.

All however, endeavoured to console the afflicted Lady Harriett, though they might not exactly agree with her in regard to her afflictions becoming a popular topic. The Earl could not but smile, notwithstanding his vexation; Lady Rosamond smiled too, but it was half contemptuously. Emma blushed, and felt distressed that Lady Harriett should expose herself by continuing a variety of weak exclamations amid her tears and sobs; whilst Lady Maria, languidly reclining on a sofa, entreated her to compose herself, saying, "You must, child, have gigantic strength of frame, to endure such violent exertions, the very sight of which fatigues me to death. Surely you not only have 'a throat of brass, and adamantine lungs,' but a marble head and iron eyes, or you never could weep so excessively, and retain a hope of being able to see, or look tolerably again." This last argument checked Lady Harriett's tears immediately; for she recollected that she was going to a ball, at Lady John Talbot's, (the *ci-devant* Lady Laura Delany) where she should see Mr. Dunderton; and, notwithstanding her admiration of every thing said, or done by the heroines of the charming works, which she so eagerly devoured, and her desire to imitate them, in all their actions, she never could discover how they contrived to look the most beautiful, after spending several hours in weeping; a recreation which generally sullies the charms of living fair ones, by flushing the complexion, inflaming the eyes, and swelling the features; for which reason, she was not so fond of personating one of the pensive characters, though they were certainly extremely interesting and delightful, as described in the charming pages of fiction.

When the Drelincourt party entered the elegant suite of rooms, fitted up by Lady John Talbot, to receive the first guests that she had entertained since her marriage, it was easy to perceive that the news of Lord Courtney's stolen match was no secret. All who entered into conversation with them, so carefully avoided any enquiry after the object, of whom they were dying with curiosity to know every particular, were so more than ordinarily civil, and so very voluble on every other subject, that the one they carefully avoided, was evidently that on which they were thinking the most particularly.

Poor Lady Harriett had almost forgotten her recent mortifications, in the pleasure of adorning herself in a new dress, equally elegant and becoming; for to do her justice, she had some taste for decoration; which might, by a skilful hand, have been directed to objects more worthy of attention; and she had now fortunately procured a seat opposite to a splendid mirror, which reflecting every form in the room, yet presented none to her view so charming as her own.

It is, perhaps, wisely decreed, that every situation, however apparently eligible, shall have some drawback to it's pleasures; some pain, known only to the possessor, who sighs in secret over the imperfection which he carefully conceals, and feels the folly of the envy, which he yet endeavours to encrease by every deception in his power. Such was Lady Harriett's case at this moment; her eyes were most agreeably engaged in an occupation, of which they were never weary, however constantly employed in it; but her ears were as disagreeably assailed by a conversation, to which she could not avoid listening; as unfortunately she was seated with her back to the parties, and too much confined to admit of a retreat without discovering herself. "Bless me," exclaimed one of the ladies, "I did not expect to see any of Lady Drelincourt's party here." "And why," asked a gentleman, "should you wish to deprive the rooms of so brilliant an addition?" "Indeed, my lord," answered the female voice, "you mistake me, I by no means wish to

deprive the rooms of an addition to which they have been so long accustomed; I only wish, for the sake of a little dear variety, that Lady Rosamond, or Lady Maria, would favor us with having some other name announced, for really that of Courtney wearies my ears with repetition, having heard it ever since I left the nursery." This was meant for wit, and therefore the lady laughed loudly, as a signal to the gentleman, who re-echoed it, as if it were an effort of his risible muscles in sleep. "Ah, you cruel woman," he exclaimed, leaning back in his chair and shutting his eyes, "how can you ridicule the unfortunate fair ones, who 'withering on the virgin thorn, consume in single blessedness,' how can you triumph so cruelly in matron honors over them." Now the lady to whom he spoke, had been a matron nearly seven years, though she had not yet arrived at years of discretion in any sense of the word, wanting some months of that period, when our legislature pays us the compliment to think we are capable of taking care of ourselves. She had however entered into the holy state of matrimony at a very early period, and with a pretty face, and still prettier fortune, had bestowed herself on an old nobleman; knowing that beauty is a flower which quickly fades, and dreading the possibility of pining in cheerless unimportant celibacy; she therefore gladly accepted the first offer made to her, and thought herself superlatively happy in being able to go out without asking her mamma's leave, and chaproning misses of fifty into public, instead of being obliged to stay at home, from not always meeting with a friend, whom her prudent mother thought steady enough to protect her.

After much unmeaning chit-chat, to which the gentleman listened in a sort of yawning despair, at being obliged to attend, and in which the lady affected to appear deeply interested, in order to tempt some more animated beau to interrupt it, the grand piece of intelligence was given by her, that Lord Courtney had positively married an opera-dancer in Florence. "No surely," exclaimed her companion, "pon honor, you petrify me, and so the old don is not quite compos mentis; an opera-dancer you say? I do not like opera-dancers, or else some of the Italians are prodigious fine women. I attempted to be *cicesbeo* to a few machionesses, and princesses, but the dear creatures require such an infinity of attention, and there were such confounded jealousies and plottings amongst them, that I was obliged to relinquish the pleasing office; my feelings were too fine, I could not bear to see any of them unhappy." "Oh! you wicked wretch," returned the lady, "if you make yourself appear such a shocking rake, I shall be quite frightened of you." "No, do not be alarmed I beg," he replied in a very incredulous tone, "do not be afraid of me; but I will shew you some sweet portraits, if you will do me the honor to look at them; I keep a closet for the purpose, which I call my cabinet of beauties; and you shall see such as are unknown to you, that will be no breach of honor you know. Well, and so Courtney has married an opera-dancer; not very wise, I think to marry her, but I suppose she is an enormous beauty, and so she will be amazingly the rage for one winter. As soon as they return to England however I would advise him to secure Garrow; well, and what says the Earl to this shocking degeneracy in the race of Drelincourt? how does his noble blood bear the idea of the horrid mixture with the canaille? It is a dreadful prospect, he may expect his grandson to turn out a rope-dancer." "Oh! he is almost distracted, of course, and so are all the family; you may see how ill they all look; the women are absolutely ugly; and indeed it is very dreadful to think of having to take an opera-dancer about with them! she can criticise the ballets admirably no doubt." "Egad,"

returned his lordship, "no bad thing, and in case the rage for equality goes forward, she could get her own living and her husband's too; a very rare instance. But I thought he had a wife ready for him, of papa's chusing." "Ready for him, I dare say," replied the lady, "but, he it seems, was not ready for her, and indeed her inanimate countenance, and swarthy complexion, could not be so disguised by red and white, as to deceive his penetrating eyes, even though gold dust were thrown into them." "Come, come, my lady you are too bad now. The girl is very well, and her money is immensely well; she is tall and straight, and as to complexion, that is of no consequence, the fashion varies so, and Egyptian brown will have its turn again. In short, as Courtney has given up the prize, I think when I have time I must look after it, for I want a wife confoundedly." Even this faint praise of another, was by far the most disagreeable topic, he could have chosen to entertain his companion with, and she replied in a tone of peevishness, "Lord Stranton has been seeking a wife so long, that I wonder he does not become weary of so fruitless a task." "And why," he returned, in a lower key, "why has it been fruitless? Because I looked for Lady Nevil's counterpart, and my presumptuous expectations of finding one who equalled her, have always been disappointed." Lady Nevil thought he talked admirably, and gave him her hand to lead her into the ball-rooms; thereby relieving Lady Harriett from the mortifying situation. So long as the conversation which she had overheard, was confined to ridiculing her friends, she found it very entertaining and witty, but when it included herself, she thought that the speakers must be the most illnated people in the world, and felt convinced of the truth of Lord Drelincourt's observation, that scandal is the amusement of little minds, and degrades the retailers of it, much more than the subjects.

At the same moment that Lord Stranton led Lady Nevil into the ball room, Miss Dunderton came from it, in search of Lady Harriett. "My sweet friend," she exclaimed, in the most pathetic tone of romance, "why is your interesting countenance clouded with pensive melancholy? tell your Eliza the cause of your sorrow, that she may sympathise in it." If knowing the cause of the sorrow which this warm friend so immediately perceived, was all that was necessary to excite sympathy, she had no occasion to restrain her's one moment, as she well knew how to account for it, and was at that instant considering the best method of forwarding her brother's interests and her own, by means of the vexation that she affected to lament. Mr. Dunderton soon after appeared, and requested the honor of her ladyship's hand, for the next two dances; which having gained, he assailed her so powerfully with compliments, and wisely affected such entire ignorance of any unpleasant occurrence, that Lady Harriett was brought into good humour by the first, and by the last, felt inspired with a wish to cheat the world, which she imagined so interested in her concerns.

Mr. Dunderton, encouraged by her readiness to accept his advances, at last courageously proposed an elopement, to that happy land, which had it the privilege of separating the parties that it has joined, would probably be a place of the greatest resort in Europe.

Lady Harriett could not in humanity or justice, be angry at a proposal, caused by the irresistible force of her charms, and the conflict which they had produced in her lover's bosom. Her first thought on hearing the extravagant declarations, and hyperbolical compliments addressed to her, was, that as he was undoubtedly sincere, she was at least

justified in listening to him, as Lady Nevil had done to Lord Stranton, who evidently meant nothing but the grossest flattery, whilst Mr. Dunderton, spoke only the true and unadorned dictates of his heart. The second thought was, that a compliance with his entreaties, would convince the world, that she was not mortified by Lord Courtney's desertion, or at a loss for another lover to supply his place; whether such a motive for compliance be perfectly wise, or honourable, we will not determine, but certainly the conduct of many females has been decided by reasons not much more weighty. The third thought perplexed Lady Harriett much more than her thoughts in general, as they were seldom of any other than the simplest kind. This was no less, than whether she should not disgrace her title by uniting herself with one who had none at present, and little better than none in reversion; for all Lord Drelincourt's instructions were not thrown away on his ward, and she had comprehended with tolerable quickness, those which taught her any addition to her own consequence, and the distinction between people of condition, and no condition; of ancient rank, and modern rank. Lady Harriett considered, and reconsidered, the arguments on both sides of the question, with all the judgment of which she was mistress, and to do her justice, she recalled every worldly maxim to her mind, to elucidate the subject, untinged with the least mixture of romance.

Indeed after all that has been said against that branch of literature, to the study of which, she and her amiable friend Eliza, were like many other young ladies exclusively attached; we do not believe that on a candid and impartial enquiry, it will be found that the fascinating productions of the Minerva Press, have taught their fair readers to marry for love, whatever other crimes may be laid to their charge. On the contrary, they generously endeavour to steel the female heart, against the insidious attacks of that little deity, by representing wealth, splendor, and titles, as articles very essential to the felicity, which those who would decry the ingenious works, in which the present age is so fruitful, maliciously accuse them of ascribing to love alone. So far from this, if by mistake a heroine be drawn, marrying an amiable man, to whom she is attached, and in whose society, she is contented with competency, (a thing that cannot in these days be despised, for being too easy to acquire,) her moderation is invariably rewarded, by her husband being discovered as the heir of an earldom, or some trifling affair of that kind; a mark of a strawberry, a worked cap, a coral, some brother kindly dying, or uncle luckily returning from the East Indies, is made the cause of honors, luxuries, and riches; which of course, the readers are informed, add infinitely to the happiness of the parties, whose happiness apparently needed not any addition, and must entirely check any bad consequences, that might arise from closing the book, with a conviction that moderate desires and moderate gartifications, are the most probable sources for the enjoyment of content, and the practice of virtue.

We have surely given Lady Harriett time to fix her resolutions by this digression; but we were led into it, by a generous wish to rescue fictitious history, from an objection unjustly made to it: for conscious that there are too many, which could not be so easily refuted, we cannot suffer it to labour under one, which daily experience shews us it does not deserve.

Mr. Dunderton perceived the conflict in his mistress's mind, he perceived and trembled: he certainly spoke with great sincerity, when he declared, that the moment of her decision, was the most anxious he had ever known, and that on it depended more than

he could express to the fair arbitress of his fate; for on it, depended the payment of several debts, which he had contracted, in the hope of his success, and the happiness of an establishment far from his paternal roof, which he cared not if he never entered again, so rapidly had he improved by fashionable society. He again implored Lady Harriett to believe him sincere in what he asserted. She did, nor was she deceived, but by herself, for if she affixed one meaning to his assertions, and he had previously affixed another, he could not possibly be expected to know her ladyship's ideas on the subject. Let it suffice to say, that her desire to convince the world that she was neither slighted, nor mortified, induced her to consent to a deed, by which she must incur the suspicion she wished to avoid; and Mr. Dunderton with inexpressible pleasure fixed the plan of their departure, which was to take place the very next day. This was not difficult, for Lady Harriett often dined with Miss Dunderton, and though Lord Drelincourt by no means approved of her violent intimacy with this young lady, very properly thinking, that it was not one, from which she could derive much benefit, yet, neither did he foresee great harm from its continuance; and his wish to render her residence in his family agreeable, induced him to suffer her to follow her own inclinations, regarding the time that she spent with her friend, only as wasted in her society, instead of that of many others equally frivolous.

It was finally agreed, that Lady Harriett should call on Miss Dunderton the next morning, and then send a note to Lady Drelincourt, to say, that she should spend the day with her; instead of which she should take her leave almost immediately, and be conducted by her impatient lover to a chaise and four, which would soon whirl them beyond the impertinent interference of friendship.

When Mr. Dunderton had gained the lady's consent, it will be supposed that the grand difficulty was surmounted; but not so; there remained yet another; and one which has often rendered fruitless, enterprises of a much nobler, and more generally beneficial nature than the present; this was neither more nor less, than a deficiency of an article, which becomes every day more fashionable and indispensable, insomuch that any one suspected of being without it, is despised, and treated with very undisguised contempt in all good company. We think that we already hear some of our fair readers exclaim, "How unnatural and vulgar, to represent all the characters in want of money, for that must be what is meant;" but have a little patience, lovely and gentle readers; we must confess, that to us, the want of money, appears one of the most natural wants of the present day; and that many others are of our opinion, we humbly conclude, by the eagerness with which all ranks endeavour to satisfy it, and the ingenious means that they use for that purpose. As to the vulgarity of such a want, it is so generally felt, that if universality constitute fashion, we will not hesitate to declare, that it is as far removed from vulgarity, as the ease of a woman of quality, from the bashfulness of a country girl; the delightful negligence of a modern man of fashion, from the formal politeness of a pupil of Lord Chesterfield; the promises of a candidate at an election, from his performances when he has gained it; the words of a courtier, from his meaning; the religion of half the country from devotion, and that of the other half from charity; or any other extreme, with which our readers may be acquainted.

A generous confidence, between parents and children, is certainly as pleasing to behold, as it is beneficial in its consequences. This did not always exist between Mr. Dunderton and his papa, but on the present occasion, the former was induced to make a

confidant of the latter, knowing the impossibility of proceeding without his assistance; he therefore candidly stated his designs to his father, and the motives which had urged him to them; saying with great sincerity, that he was not impelled by passion, or blinded by partiality, but urged by prudence, and encouraged by the hope of benefiting himself in so advantageous a connexion.

If any thing could be more surprising than that Mr. Dunderton should submit his plans to his father's opinion, it was, that those plans should be approved of by him, as it was the first instance in which Lord Dunderton and his son had ever agreed. On this occasion he warmly commended his judgment; told him that Lord Courtney's misbehaviour was a good chance for him, that it had made stocks fall, and enabled him to buy in at an easy rate, and that it was an ill wind that blew nobody good. He then enquired minutely concerning the lady's fortune, and was much pleased to find his son well informed as to the particulars of it; in short, he approved of every thing, but advancing the money necessary for the matrimonial expedition. Here he could not conquer the natural reluctance that he felt on parting with a portion of that good, which he had all his life been labouring to acquire, and he argued and bartered with his son respecting the cheapest way of going to work, as he expressed it, as if he was bargaining with a cattle-driver to bring him a young filly from a country fair. Four horses, he thought were terribly extravagant, and said it would be quite enough to have them for the first and last stage each way; observing that he had never rode in a carriage with four horses in his life, except sometimes when going to vote at an election, and latterly on the Lord Mayor's day, and such like solemn occasions. Indeed he thought going to Scotland, in any way, was an unnecessary expence, and proposed that the young folks should get married, and keep snug at some of the neighbouring villages for a little time; where, as the country was beginning to be very pleasant, they might have a good bit of pleasure, and fresh air, at little cost, and no risk. To this pleasurable scheme, Mr. Dunderton objected the difficulty of finding a clergyman willing to undertake the dangerous office of joining their hands, as Lady Harriett was under age; he also dwelt upon the ignorance that they must betray if questioned concerning a route which they had never taken; but Lord Dunderton engaged to find as many clergymen, as his son could find couples, who would compassionately join them in the holy state, on which our laws have, contrary to their usual wisdom, fixed such severe shackles, that it seems as if they were now conscious of their impolicy, and therefore generously wave the punishment threatened to the daring ministers who shall disregard them. As to the second objection, Lord Dunderton answered very truly, that they would not be the first travellers who had returned home, without being able to communicate information of any part of their route, or the first who had described places which they had never seen. After much argument, that threatened to destroy the satisfaction with which both parties had at first considered the subject, Lord Dunderton reluctantly gave his son a draft for one hundred and fifty pounds, advising him not to be over ready in producing it, but to see what cash his bride had about her, as she would willingly assist him with a few loose corns, on such an occasion, if he appeared short run; and "a penny saved was a penny got."

If any thing could have added to Lord Drelincourt's mortification at his son's marriage, it would have been the discovery of his ward's folly, when it was too late to prevent any bad consequences that might arise from it. Lord Drelincourt was too much a



man of honor, and too faithful to any trust which he undertook, to feel indifference respecting Lady Harriett's conduct or happiness, now that he had no longer the hope of uniting her to his own family, by the ties of consanguinity. He did not feel any resentment against her, for he considered her as influenced by the sensations of the moment, and the artful allurements of those, who knew how to take advantage of her weakness. But he severely condemned Lord Dunderton, whom he justly conceived accessory to the design, and he resolved to wait upon him immediately, in order openly to testify his displeasure at so selfish and dishonorable an acquiescence. Lord Dunderton, however protested his entire ignorance of the whole, until he had been informed of it, by a letter from his son; and though the Earl was strongly tempted to give him the lie direct yet his own sacred regard for truth, his conviction of its importance in society, and the contempt, with which he thought every one who deviated from it ought to be treated, made him very unwilling to accuse any one of a breach of it, without the most positive proofs; as after such an accusation, he would have deemed it degrading ever more to hold converse with its object. But doubt had taken such strong possession of his mind, that he could not at once dispel it, sufficiently to resume the subject by which it had been inspired. He therefore after a few minutes silence, during which, Lord Dunderton did not appear any more at ease than himself, affected to turn his attention to some paintings, which were at any time worthy of more admiration, than their possessor knew how to bestow on them. "Them there are thought very valuable, my lord," said their sapient owner, who appeared glad to divert the conversation, "and they ought, there is a power of money laid dead in them." "These are the works of some great masters," replied the Earl very coldly. "Yes, your lordship," answered the scientific peer, "I think they are pretty enough, I always buy a good few together, and then it is odds if there are not some, worth looking at among them. That there is called the feast of the vines, and you see Bacchus sure enough, laying drunk a-top of that cask. I like history pieces, and I can shew your lordship a Welshman by Wright of Derby, as natural as life, one would swear one could take the leek out of his hat; I have it in my counting ho—— that is study, I mean." Lord Drelincourt declined the pleasure, saying that he had an appointment which he was obliged to attend, and therefore wished to finish the business about which he came; and that was, to declare, that as the sole care of Lady Harriett's person and fortune was left to him, until she attained her twenty-first year, he conceived himself bound notwithstanding she had deprived him of the former part of his charge to redouble his vigilance in the latter; that being now the only way, in which he could shew his attention to the trust reposed in him, and his anxiety for her welfare. He therefore thought that Lord Dunderton must acquiesce in the propriety of his conduct as a guardian, when he solemnly declared, that until she attained the period when her fortune would be consigned into her own disposal, he should not allow the smallest part of it to be appropriated to her use; but that on the arrival of the time when he should gladly resign his trust, Lady Harriett would find, that he had transacted her affairs, with the integrity, which his regard for his deceased friend her father, and for his own honor demanded. Lord Dunderton by no means approved of this kind of integrity, and as it is very natural to judge the intentions of others, by comparing them with what our own would be in similar circumstances, he immediately thought, that the Earl could only wish to keep Lady Harriett's affairs in his hands, with a hope of reaping some advantage from them. He could not disguise his vexation, and told Lord Drelincourt, that as his own son

had so recently committed the very same fault, he might make allowances for Mr. Dunderton, as he had doubtless done for Lord Courtney. "Sir," replied the Earl, elevating himself to the very utmost of his fine height, "I cannot think the cases parallel: and if they were, I would rather see my son starve, than solicit a maintenance for him, from his wife; but, I have done; I have communicated my intentions to you, I shall abide by my resolutions, and have the honor to wish you a good morning." So saying, he took his leave, regardless of the angry remonstrances of Lord Dunderton, whose frequent wishes that he had known the Earl's resolutions a day sooner, did not contribute to erase the impressions already made on Lord Drelincourt, of his having been meanly privy to the transaction, and afterwards basely denying any knowledge of it.

END OF THE SECOND VOLUME.

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DRELINCOURT AND RODALVI;

OR,

MEMOIRS

OF

TWO NOBLE FAMILIES.

A NOVEL, IN THREE VOLUMES.

BY MRS. BYRON,

AUTHOR OF ANTI-DELPHINE.

VOL. III.

The web of our life is of a mingled yarn; good and ill together:  
our virtues would be proud if our faults whipp'd them not; and  
our crimes would despair if they were not cherished by our  
virtues.

*Shakespeare.*

LONDON:

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BY G. HAZARD, BEECH-STREET.

1807.

## DRELINCOURT AND RODALVI.

## CHAP. XXXV.

Smiles on past misfortune's brow,  
 Soft reflection's hand can trace;  
 And o'er the cheek of sorrow throw  
 A melancholy grace;  
 While hope prolongs our happier hour  
 Or deepest shades that dimly low'r  
 And blacken round our weary way,  
 Gilds with a gleam of distant day.

Still where rosy pleasure leads,  
 See a kindred grief pursue;  
 Behind the steps that misery treads,  
 Approaching comfort view:  
 The hues of bliss more brightly glow  
 Chastised by sable tints of woe,  
 And blended form with artful strife  
 The strength and harmony of life.

GRAY.

IN the Earl's present frame of mind, the gaities of London disgusted, and business seemed irksome to him. He was too tenderly beloved by his family, for his wishes not to be theirs; and at his desire they left the capital, where the latter part of their residence had been rendered unpleasant by many mortifications, and endeavoured to lose the remembrance of them, in the tranquillity of Castle Drelincourt.

The Earl did not allow himself to indulge in weak complaints, or blameable repinings; he obliged himself to consider the bright side of the picture, which he had at first contemplated in its darkest colours; and the natural candour of his mind, soon dispelled the mist, raised by prejudice and disappointment, and taught him to look forward with composure to the meeting, of which, the bare idea, had in his first moments of despondency, appeared an insupportable affliction. There needed only the signal of a smile re-appearing on his benignant countenance, to animate all around him with delight; and as he surveyed the affectionate group, by which he was surrounded, he felt that he had other sources of happiness besides worldly grandeur, and outward shew. In this state of returning cheerfulness, the family received with comparative pleasure, an account of the day when the fugitives might be expected; and when it arrived, every bosom was agitated, though with different emotions. Lord and Lady Drelincourt were filled with sensations of parental love, too powerful to admit those of displeasure, in any great degree, though sufficient to destroy the perfect satisfaction that they would otherwise have experienced. Edmund was

anxious as to the reception with which his sister might meet, and the impression that she would make upon the family. Lady Rosamond was curious to see the female, whose charms had effaced the recollection of hers, from the breast of a man whom she had loved, though she had discarded him in a fit of ill-humour at her own faults. The gentle and affectionate Emma, longed to embrace the sister of her beloved Edmund, and felt already warmly attached to her. Even Lady Maud and Lady Bertha were interested; the former deplored with a rueful countenance, the introduction of foreign blood, into a family, in whose veins the pure English stream, had flown undefiled, till this unlucky mixture; and lamented the increasing partiality that the nation shewed for aliens, which she pronounced would finally be its ruin: whilst the latter called Henry a recreant knight, but longed to see the peerless dame, whose charms had caused him to forget his allegiance to Lady Harriett. Lady Maria was the least moved, a little anxiety to see her brother, and a little curiosity to know if Everilda were as handsome and interesting as Edmund made up the whole of her emotion.

After a day that appeared unusually long, the evening succeeded, as is generally the case even in the longest day.

The party were assembled in the drawing room; one took up a book, another a pencil, a third touched the keys of a piano-forte; all were employed, and none thought of what they were doing. At length the sound of horses' feet and carriage wheels, relieved every one from thinking on a subject, which none chose to make the theme of conversation.

The travellers were now heard to ascend the stairs, and Edmund devoutly wished that he had the power of annihilating the next five minutes.

The door was thrown open, and Lord Courtney entered, leading his lady, and Donna Claudina; he knelt with Everilda at the feet of his father, who forgetting all his anger, blessed them, and desiring them to rise, resigned them to Lady Drelincourt, whose maternal heart knew none but the softest emotions; she embraced them, and wept, whilst Lady Courtney forcibly reminded of her own mother, bedewed her hand with tears, and exclaimed with graceful energy, "Ah madam, you are kind and good, as I have been taught to expect. Already you forgive me; you acknowledge me as your daughter; oh! teach me to deserve the envied title!" Lady Drelincourt again embraced, and assured her of her love. Everilda then turned hastily to Edmund, and throwing herself into his arms, burst afresh into tears, saying, "I know not how to intreat forgiveness for an act, by which I have the happiness of seeing my dear brother again." He pressed her tenderly to his bosom, nor was ashamed of the tears, which trembled in his own eyes, as he gazed on a sister so fondly beloved, and the first of his family whom he had seen during an absence, of nearly two years.

The introduction of the remainder of the party, was of course less impassioned; though Lady Courtney covered Emma with blushes, by taking her hand, and saying, "My heart tells me, I am not addressing a stranger; suffer me think that I am speaking to a beloved sister." Edmund approached, and joining their hands, raised them to his lips, saying, "Never may your unity be interrupted; may it improve into the most refined friendship, and prove a source of happiness to you, as the contemplation of it will ever be to me." When the first congratulations were over, refreshments were brought in, and whilst the travellers were employed in taking some, the rest of the party had leisure to examine them. In Lord Courtney, every trace of care was effaced, by the kind reception that he had met with; and his countenance was distinguished only by the glow of

health, the smile of cheerfulness, and the glance of tender rapture, with which he surveyed his Everilda. Her beauty appeared to the utmost advantage, even under the disguise of a travelling dress; but she had now thrown off a large fur pelisse, which had hidden her fine form; her hat likewise was laid aside, and a profusion of auburn ringlets carelessly flowed from the band, by which the remainder was confined in large curls; her bloom was heightened by exercise and agitation; the slight embarrassment of her manner, added to the interest of her appearance, whilst the varying emotions of her soul, increased every instant the charms of her intelligent countenance. Her animation was happily contrasted, by the interesting melancholy of the pensive Claudina, who felt alone in the large circle, and was strongly reminded by witnessing the bliss of domestic affection, of her own desolate, and friendless situation, which was rendered yet more wretched, by the cruelty of her only relative, her brother. These reflections filled her eyes with tears; she strove to disperse them, by the smile of resignation, which faintly played about her lips; the ineffectual struggle called a slight blush into her cheeks, and just painted them sufficiently, to shew how much the glow of happiness would become her. Sorrow never wore a lovelier form, or inspired more interest in the hearts of the beholders; soothed by their attentions, she felt her spirits gradually revive, and Everilda diffused additional animation around her, when she saw her own smiles reflected in the countenance of her friend.

Though Lady Courtney's introduction to the Earl in the character of his daughter-in-law, was certainly very opposite to what his wishes had once been, yet he could not long withstand the fascination of her manners, the brilliancy of her talents, and the excellent disposition which seemed to regulate all her actions. Had she even been less amiable, his heart would have pleaded for her with irresistible eloquence, for she powerfully appealed to its feelings by her resemblance to her father; and whilst tracing in her countenance and expressions, the features and manner of his early friend, Lord Drelincourt could feel no sentiment but that of the warmest affection, for the object, who constantly recalled to his mind, one in whose society he had passed many of his happiest days.

If Everilda soon obtained the Earl's esteem, that of the ladies, was bestowed upon her, with at least equal readiness. The appearance of kindness, was enough to incite her to deserve it; for some time all her study was to please, and the effects of her laudable exertions were agreeable as she could desire. Unfortunately however the happiness which this perfect family-concord, created in her bosom, was the very means of interrupting its source; for in the ebullitions of it, her vivacity caused her in some instances, to overstep the cautious decorum, and polite attention, which she had on her first introduction, rigidly prescribed to herself.

Sir Edward Clayton, (for in consequence of his uncle's death, we must introduce him to our readers by that title,) had left England the moment he heard of the expected arrival of a woman whom he adored, notwithstanding her unjustifiable conduct towards him. Finding that he could not yet trust himself in her society, without feeling emotions, which he was too honorable to indulge, he wisely took refuge in flight; resolving not to encounter temptation until he was well assured that he could rise superior to it. He therefore took his sister, who told him he was born to be jockeyed by the women, to a small estate, in a remote part of Ireland, which had been left to him by Sir John with the rest of his property, and which he now wished to dispose of, as it was quite abstracted from his other possessions.

During their visit there, his sister's rosy complexion, smart figure, and goodnatured

manners, captivated an Irish baronet; and as he rode well, had an excellent stud, and delighted in field sports, he had not much difficulty in prevailing on her to run for life in the same yoke, as she expressed it; and her brother, pleased to see his sister happily settled, almost forgot the unpleasant cause of his visit to Ireland, in the satisfaction that he received from its consequences.

Sir Edward's departure was of course mentioned at the castle, and on hearing it the imprudent Everilda exclaimed, that she regretted his absence as she had promised herself much amusement from witnessing the struggle of resentment and love in his bosom, when he again beheld her: Lady Rosamond was still too partial to her old admirer, to look very complacently on the woman, whose superior charms had so rapidly effaced the impression which hers had once made on him; this speech was not calculated to make her forget the mortifying circumstance, and she replied with perhaps too much asperity, "Sir Edward Clayton, Madam, is not generally thought a subject of mere amusement, neither are his talents and manners often a source of ridicule to any who are capable of appreciating their value." The coldness with which she spoke and the freezing epithet of Madam, struck Lady Courtney forcibly: she well knew what had been the nature of Sir Edward's intimacy with the family and might therefore naturally have imagined the subject could not be pleasing to Lady Rosamond; but instead of excusing the harshness of these words, by reflecting on the provocation that she had given, she suffered herself to be hurried away by impatience, and added to it by replying, "My dear Lady Rosamond, there needs no argument to convince me that his attractions have been found irresistible; and I ask pardon for the selfishness by which I was prompted to wish for a scene, that I might easily have known could not be generally entertaining;" this little dialogue passed during the first month of Lady Courtney's residence at the Castle; it was easy to see that the impression it left on her mind, and Lady Rosamond's was not such as to promise any very great cordiality; and after this, no subject however trifling, could be discussed, without giving rise to a difference of opinion between them.

Lady Courtney conscious that her introduction into the family was not exactly what had been desired, was jealous of every word that could possibly be interpreted into an affront; and particularly from Lady Rosamond, who was as little used to control, as herself, and approached too near her in talents, beauty, and disposition, not to inspire an idea of rivalry; whilst the powers of wit and satire, were so liberally and equally bestowed on each, that an incessant war of words was maintained between them, and it was difficult to decide after the combat, which party had proved victorious.

In those engagements however, each may be said to lose more than can be won; for the pleasure of triumphing over the vanquished in argument, is much more than counterbalanced, by the probability of having gained one enemy, and lost many friends. However wit may be admired at a distance, all shrink from its approach, justly fearing, that severity of which, they may in their turn expect to be the objects. Self-interest then induces sympathetic compassion towards the conquered, and displeasure towards the conqueror, who is affectedly admired and inwardly condemned.

The frequent altercations between Lady Courtney and Lady Rosamond, gave the greatest pain to the judicious and affectionate Claudina, who saw her beloved Everilda daily losing by petulance, and wilful misapprehension, that influence amongst her new friends, which her talents and manners would otherwise have preserved. Edmund was not less uneasy, for the kind reception that his sister had met with, and the delicate attention with which she was treated,

ought at least, he thought, to claim her forbearance, as strongly as his gratitude; and he was mortified and distressed to the utmost, when he saw her degrading her talents, and accomplishments, by seeking to lessen those of Lady Rosamond, in a comparison with them; for he well knew, that her antagonist was too nearly her equal, to be insulted with impunity, or conquered with facility. He naturally confided his uneasiness to Lady Emma, who endeavoured to console him, by representing the frequent arguments between the fair antagonists, as mere trials of skill, produced by curiosity to know which was the most powerful in conducting them. "Then the best consolation you can give me," replied he sorrowfully, "is, that their disputes originate in vanity, but in what may they end?" "In what can they end," returned Emma, "but admiration of your sister? Every one who sees, must admire her; and every one who knows, must love her; for she requires only to be known, and then what appears to you as a serious fault, would be acknowledged only as the effervescence of her brilliant genius, and lively imagination." "Ah!" replied he, "you are partial even to her faults; I love my sister, and am proud of her; but I can see, and condemn her errors." "And why am I partial?" asked Lady Emma, in the sweetest accents, "I have little merit in acknowledging perfection, when it is allied to you." Edmund kissed her hand with fervor, and the gloom of his countenance was dispersed, as he gazed on the speaking sensibility, tenderness, and modesty, depicted in that of his Emma. Amidst these family feuds, Lord Courtney was the most unconcerned of any of the party; he adored his wife, loved his sister, and treated every altercation between them, as a jest; telling them that occasional discords made harmony more pleasing, and that they would not appear half so charming separate: that they were flint and steel to each other's wit, and he was sure only pretended to differ in opinion, in order to shew it to the most advantage. This he would say with so much good humour, that they were often persuaded into the belief that it actually was so. Lady Courtney would then generously make some concession, which Lady Rosamond would as generously accept, and thus was amity restored, till a difference of opinion maintained too tenaciously, and controverted too warmly, would plunge them into yet deeper opposition. The decline of Lady Courtney's health, however, produced a cessation of hostilities; for Lady Rosamond had too just a confidence in her own powers, to attack her antagonist on unequal grounds; anxiety for her recovery, was a point in which there was no division of sentiment, and to effect this, the hotwells were proposed by the physicians, who seemed to think that her ladyship's indisposition might arise from the change of climate.

Notwithstanding Lord Drelincourt's aversion from all places of public rendezvous for cheapening the sex, he on this occasion willingly waved his prejudice, and consented to accompany the invalid with his family.

Before they had been long at the delightful village of Clifton, where the votaries of health are rewarded for their search, by the beauties of nature, which are there scattered with her most liberal hand, —Lady Courtney's indisposition was discovered to be owing to a cause, which gave her new claims on the affection of her lord, and additional consequence among relatives, whose esteem already knew no bounds, but what her own caprice occasionally prescribed.

In Lady Courtney, however, the pleasure arising from this wished-for circumstance, was considerably alloyed, by the restraints which it occasioned. If she wished to ride on horseback, Lady Drelincourt intreated her to forego so dangerous an exercise, speaking with such affectionate anxiety, and relating so many bad consequences which it might produce, that she



was obliged to relinquish her desire. She was fond of walking, and was charmed with the variety and beauty of the surrounding country, which would tempt the most indolent to explore it; but if she went out of sight of the house, Lord Drelincourt himself followed her, and used such warm intreaties for her return, and looked so anxiously on every step she took, that she gave up the pleasure of walking, that she might not keep him in a state of painful suspense. Company would fatigue, and solitude depress her. Staying in the house relaxed her, and going out of it exposed her to cold; in short, wearied with remonstrances, her patience failed, and she declared in pretty strong terms, that she would for the future, take the trouble of conducting herself, and would be answerable for every consequence, as no imprudence of which she might be guilty, could do her more harm, than the impatience that she felt of such constant contradiction; and to prove the truth of her assertion, she talked herself angry, and then fell into hysterics, and by that means effectually alarmed Lord and Lady Drelincourt into submission.

The reins once given into her own hands, she commenced her career with additional ardour, from the restraint that she had suffered; her spirits acquired new elasticity from contrasting the alacrity of returning health, with the languor of past indisposition; her friends were too happy in seeing her so, to complain of the means by which the change had been produced; and it was not till her extended pedestrian excursions in the morning, and dancing until a late hour in the evening, produced the loss of all their hopes, that they severely repented having trusted her to her own guidance.

Lady Courtney was as highly mortified as any of the party, at this unlucky accident; but she fancied that she could perceive resentment, when she ought only to have met with compassion, and this unjust idea, took such strong possession of her mind, that she counterfeited an indifference in the presence of Lord and Lady Drelincourt, which she was far from feeling, and which naturally added to their vexation.

As soon as Lady Courtney was sufficiently recovered to travel, the family returned to the Castle; conscious that her behavior had deserved reprehension, she tormented herself with fancying that she could read it in every word and look, and with her natural impatience of control, increased by the excessive indulgence always shewn by her parents, even to her faults, instead of averting by gentleness and acknowledgment, the censure for which she confessed to herself there was room, she braved it by additional haughtiness of behaviour, and provoked it by expressing innumerable foolish or unreasonable desires, which she never felt. Among the rest she affected a childish eagerness to be presented at court, and enquired every day, when the happy one would arrive, that was to convey them to town. Lord Drelincourt was at length displeased, and thought the respect due to himself, called on him to take notice of a rudeness, which he could no longer pretend to overlook. "I am sorry Lady Courtney," said he very gravely, "that your residence under my roof, should be unpleasant to you. I am only consoled for so mortifying a discovery, by the hope that you are the first guest to whom I ever made it so; and I must apologize for the dulness of which you so openly complain, by candidly acknowledging, that, in imagining you would be pleased with rational amusements, and family concord, I entirely mistook your character." He paused, and the profoundest silence ensued; a silence the more painful, as it shewed that every one considered the subject too serious, to intrude any remark. Lady Courtney shrunk from the reproof that she had courted. She had always looked up to Lord Drelincourt with affectionate reverence, and ardently desired his esteem, though her behaviour

had of late too often been calculated to deprive her of it. Her heart told her that this was now the case, and the blood forsook her cheeks, to support the pang it felt at the idea. Claudina saw her friend's emotions, she saw pride struggling with contrition in her breast, and she saw Lord Drelincourt leaving the room in displeasure; anxiety conquered her natural timidity; she fell at his feet, and bursting into tears, exclaimed, "Oh! my lord, believe me it is now that you mistake Lady Courtney's character; you think her sullen, now when she is miserable; you believe her wilfully continuing in error, when she is deprived of the power of acknowledging her fault by the anguish with which she feels it." Claudina's impassioned manner roused Everilda, who was too nobly independent to accept a pardon by proxy. She went up to the Earl, and entreated his forgiveness, saying, "I have no claim but on your kindness. I know I must have forfeited your esteem, yet suffer me to hope an avowal of my fault, and an altered conduct, may in time regain it. I should be too severely punished," added she, bursting into tears, "if I thought you would withhold it from me for ever; alas! do not deprive me of a hope, that will encourage all my best resolutions."

Two such graceful pleaders would have gained pardon for much more weighty faults. The Earl embraced them both, every one was affected, and Emma throwing herself into Lady Courtney's arms, sobbed through the excess of her emotions.

The next morning at breakfast, the Earl informed his family that he meant to set off to town the ensuing week; and hoped that they would be in readiness to accompany him. This generous behaviour, effectually overcame Lady Courtney, who never judged her own faults so severely, as when others treated them with lenity: she took his hand, and pressing it to her lips, whilst her tears fell on it. "Ah! my lord, how shall I ever be worthy of the kindness with which you treat me;" she exclaimed, "how odious your indulgence makes my conduct appear, in my own eyes." "My dearest Everilda," the Earl replied, "I have not quite forgiven you; I mean to exact a pledge of your future good behaviour, and that is, that you will gratify me by approving my present arrangement. We shall arrive in town just before the birth-day; and after all, I am I acknowledge, selfish enough to be impatient for the pleasure of presenting so lovely an addition to my family." "You are too good my lord," answered Everilda, "you must in time make me worthy of you. Forgive me dear madam," continued she, addressing Lady Drelincourt, "and you my dear Lady Rosamond, forgive me all whom I may have offended; and ascribe my conduct to my inferiority, when compared with such amiable and exalted characters." "And you do not ask my forgiveness whilst you are playing the fair penitent so prettily," said Lord Courtney, "nor should I grant it if you did; for these sudden amendments, are generally followed by relapses, which are worse than the original disorder." "If mine should be so," replied Lady Courtney, smiling through her tears, "the effect will all fall upon you, for that saucy speech, but I ask pardon only of those whom I have offended, and you are not one of the number; any more than my pretty little Emma, whom it is as difficult to displease, as be displeased with; or my dear Claudina and Edmund, who bear with all my faults, because they know how much I love them." "But I protest against any exceptions," said Lady Drelincourt, affectionately interrupting her, "and however you may love those whom you have mentioned, I will dispute the palm of loving you, with any of them."

## CHAP XXXVI.

Shalle I wasting in dispaire  
 Dye because a woman's faire?  
 Shalle my cheeks growe pale with care,  
 That another's rosie are?  
 Be she fairer than the daye,  
 Or the opening fields in Maye,  
 If she be not faire for me,  
 hat care I how faire she bee!

## MARLOWE.

ON account of leaving Castle Drelincourt earlier than the Earl had at first intended, the preparations for Lord Courtney's establishment, were not completed; and it was agreed that he should continue under his parental roof, a few months longer.

It is unnecessary after the description we have given of Everilda's attractions, to say that she was universally admired, in the circles of fashion; and we are afraid it is equally unnecessary to add, that the admiration which she met with, was highly gratifying to her. Perhaps her fondness for it, might be increased by observing Lord Courtney's pleasure at the attention that she gained; for he was naturally flattered to hear his own opinion, echoed by the voice of public approbation, and his taste made the standard of perfection.

One morning a letter was brought to Lady Courtney, who immediately recognized in the direction, the writing of Sir Edward Clayton; she mentioned this before she broke the seal, and Claudina turned pale on hearing a name, which her heart incessantly repeated, though it never passed her lips:—the contents were read aloud by Lady Courtney, with her usual frankness, and were as follows:

“MADAM,

If during the happy period, in which I was honored with your ladyship's acquaintance, my heart became too fully sensible of the influence of your charms, to patiently bear the idea of any other possessing them, the change in your situation yet taught me too well what was due to it, to intrude myself on your ladyship's recollection, until a necessary alteration in my sentiments, might enable me to do it with propriety to you, and comparative ease to myself. The past, (however painful the task) I have taught myself to forget; and I trust my conduct for the future, will convince you, that my admiration of Everilda di Rodalvi, is at least equalled by my respect for Lady Courtney; which I hope you will grant me permission to testify in person, among your other friends; and I have the honor to remain,

madam,

your ladyship's

most obedient,

and humble servant,

“EDWARD CLAYTON.”

“Generous Clayton,” exclaimed Claudina, “how nobly has he endeavoured to conquer a passion so ill requited.” The animation with which she spoke, was unusual in her; and Lady Rosamond's eyes meeting hers, expressed a degree of sympathy in her feelings, which convinced her that they were understood, and tinged her cheeks with crimson, until Lady Courtney replied, “Compassion my dear Claudina, is sister to love; you had better therefore console the deserted swain, for my cruelty, which believe me he would not then regret.” This speech drove the blood back to Claudina's agitated heart, and vainly endeavouring to smile, she was going to leave the room, when she met Lord Courtney, who said, gaily taking her hand. “You must not run away, for I am going to read an epistle from the valiant knight-errant, who in magnanimously rescuing one lady from violence, was himself taken willing captive by another, who generously resigned him when she found a slave yet more humble; and hear how he thanks her for his freedom.” He then read aloud:

“MY LORD,

You would, I am certain, neither believe nor esteem me, were I to declare, that I never felt any resentment against you, for being as successful with the object of our mutual admiration, as I had once hoped to be. Your lordship is fortunate in possessing a prize, too estimable to be resigned without anguish; but affection cannot be decided by the sword; and I considered my wretched life, of which I was weary, and in which, no one was interested, as a very inadequate stake against yours, which presented to you every charm, and endearing tie. I was not base enough to wish to deprive the woman I had loved, of the object for whom she forsook me, and with whom I could not but acknowledge, that probability she had of enjoying that happiness, which she can confer in as eminent a degree as she is deserving of it; nor was I selfish enough to remember the only injury you ever offered me, and forget the innumerable kindnesses which I had received from you, and your worthy and amiable family: I felt that your fault was excused by its cause; alas! I felt my own wounds too acutely, to wonder that you were vulnerable to the same fatal, unerring weapons.

“When you were acquitted to me by the impartial evidence of my own judgment, I was not conscious of my obligation to submit the cause to that of the world, whose opinion I despise: instead therefore of inviting you to combat with me, I resolved to combat with myself; and am happy to inform you, that I am completely victorious. I have conquered the sense of my misfortune, by considering that it is now irremediable; I have opposed reason to passion, hope to disappointment. The remembrance of my past attachment I have subdued, by the resolution of forming another; and if I must not expect to meet again with an object so capable of creating one

ardent as lasting, I shall be equally released from the fear of another rival so irresistible.

“That you may not think me a vain boaster of courage which I do not possess, or of success which I have not had, I trust you will give me leave to convince you of my victory, by paying my respects to you;

I remain my lord,

“yours most obediently,

“EDWARD CLAYTON.”

“There now,” exclaimed Courtney, “there is style for you; and a style which I like; it is noble, generous and independent. I shall write to him and tell him that my Everilda will be as happy to see him as I shall.” “Indeed,” said Lady Courtney, giving him her own letter, “I should be very remiss, if I did not desire you to say something extremely polite for me, in answer to that epistle.” “Ah! what he has written to you too,” replied Courtney, “already the world knows how you keep me in subjection, and he was obliged to flatter you into goodhumour, that you might give me permission to say I should be glad to see him. Well, I will shew him that if I am afraid, I am not jealous of you, and so with your leave, my Everilda, I will say that we shall be impatient for the pleasure of his society.

“You can never be jealous,” replied Lady Courtney, with a most fascinating smile, “whilst you know that you are so amiable, and so superior to the rest of the world.” “And I can never cease to know it whilst I have such an insinuating flatterer, who so often tells me it,” returned her husband: he affectionately embraced her in saying this, and then went to take his morning ride with Edmund.

## CHAP XXXVII.

Of mortal glory, oh soon darken'd ray!  
Oh winged joys of man, more swift than wind!  
Oh fond desires, which in our fancies stray!  
Oh traitrous hopes, which do our judgments blind!

## DRUMMOND OF HAWTHORNDEN.

OUR readers will easily conceive the emotions felt by Sir Edward Clayton, on his first visit to Lady Courtney. But his feelings were not betrayed in his conduct, which was governed by the most rigid propriety. He conversed on the topics of the day with an air of tolerable ease; and if his lips involuntarily trembled as he addressed an object to whom he had been so fondly attached, he took care that his words at least should be under the control of reason.

Not daring to trust himself to converse very long with Lady Courtney, he naturally paid a great degree of attention to the other ladies, with whom he could discourse some-what cheerfully, for with them the efforts of his mind to amuse, were not interrupted by the feelings of his heart. The unfortunate Claudina was too well versed in the effects of love, since she had become a prey to it, to be gratified by an attention, bestowed without a thought of the object, to whom it was paid. She could judge of his feelings at that moment, by the acuteness of her own: disappointed hopes, and fruitless regrets, inspired those of each party, but similarity of misfortune, did not in this instance, produce the sympathy which generally results from it. Claudina's mind was too much agitated to attend to trifling conversation; her heart was too much occupied to be interested in mere complimentary forms of politeness. Her answers were so short, and manners so cold, that Sir Edward imagined he must have unintentionally offended her; and for a moment the idea started into his mind, that she might have communicated to Everilda, the dislike with which he had inspired her. It is natural to wish to ascribe a disappointment, to the misconduct of any other person, rather than to our own. Self-love made Sir Edward cherish this idea; and under its influence he treated Claudina with coldness, at least equal to that which she had expressed towards him.

The change in his manner, did not escape the quick observation of Lady Rosamond, any more than the cause by which it was produced; and which confirmed her in her suspicions, relative to the state of Claudina's heart.

A marked coldness, is as flattering as a marked attention, for it is only the same cause producing different effects; and perhaps each mode of conduct, may be inspired by the hope of attracting the notice of the object to whom it is directed. The discovery however, effectually chased from Lady Rosamond's mind, the intention of endeavouring to reclaim her faithless lover; an idea which had often obtruded on it, and for which her remaining, or rather revived affection for him, strongly pleaded, though her pride was equally eloquent in urging her to refuse him, should he voluntarily seek to return to his allegiance. But she was too generous to hesitate, when she became sensible that another was deeply interested in her decision; and she would have regarded herself as guilty of a breach of trust, had she persisted in her original intentions, a

moment after the discovery of Claudina's partiality. She therefore directed her conversation chiefly to Mr. Fletcher; who had become extremely assiduous in his attentions to her; and perhaps the conquest of her own wishes, on which she had so generously resolved, was facilitated by the pleasure of shewing her cidevantamant, that the assiduities of another had become agreeable to her.

They who examine very deeply into the sources of their best actions, must have great confidence in themselves, if they expect to be satisfied with the result of their enquiry. It is melancholy to hear people lament, the small portion of virtue there is in the world; and still more melancholy to reflect, how much smaller it would appear, were the motives by which it is prompted generally known.

After Sir Edward had conquered the unpleasant sensations of an introductory visit, his former intimacy in Lord Drelincourt's family was easily revived. The Earl had always held him in high estimation, and his powers of pleasing, when he suffered the brilliancy of his genius to pierce the gloom, in which a too ardent sensibility sometimes involved it, were too fascinating to be easily relinquished, where they had once been displayed. But this renewed intercourse, was on the whole inimical to his happiness. The regrets which he had hushed into tranquillity at a distance, were awakened to keener anguish, as his opportunities increased of contemplating the various charms of the woman whom he had so irrecoverably lost. In absence he had dwelt solely on her faults, and seeing them through the distorting medium of resentment, they appeared sufficiently numerous to reconcile him to her desertion. But in her presence, he remembered only that she had once promised to be his, and was now another's. He had resolved never to see her till he could think of her with composure; to effect this, he thought of her unceasingly, and the very hope of seeing her again, largely contributed to the tranquillity, which he had made the test of his security. He deceived himself; and unhappily he wilfully continued the deception. He felt that he lived but in her presence; when ever he left her, he said to himself, "I am not with her, and I do not feel uneasy, I may therefore visit her again." But he did not inform himself, that his composure arose from his previous resolution to do so. One whole day he stayed away; the day appeared so long, and he felt so wretched during its course, that he resolved to try the dangerous experiment no more. "By accustoming myself to her society," he said, "its charms will become familiar to me; but by abstaining from it, I see how insupportable it makes all other appear." He thought no doubt that he argued admirably; for every one naturally likes the arguments which suit his inclinations.

His respectful homage could not fail to flatter Lady Courtney, who relying entirely on her own principles, and his honor, soon neglected to pay to society, the debt due from all who are protected by its laws, a regard to its opinions, and to the propriety of appearance required for its support.

Sir Edward was her constant attendant, in public; did she dance, he was her partner; did she play or sing, he accompanied her; at cards or table, he invariably took his seat near her; and if he sometimes hesitated, through fear of exposing to censure the woman whom he loved, a smile from her, put every wise and virtuous resolve to flight, and the desire of pleasing her reigned triumphant in his breast.

Perhaps Lord Courtney would have been better satisfied, to see less particular attention paid to his wife, tho' he had been as highly gratified as she was with that of a general nature

shewn to her; but like every other young person he was tremblingly alive to the dread of ridicule, and to be laughed at as a jealous husband, tho' by men who were as compleatly divested of honor, as their ladies were of shame, was a trial which he felt unable to endure with fortitude. He had not the slightest doubt of his wife's conduct; he knew her too well to have even a momentary fear that it might be unworthy of her; but he knew that the world would judge from appearances only, and therefore appearances ought to be observed. He could see many women who merely by a rigid attention to common forms of propriety, had passed thro' life uncondemned, tho' not unsuspected; and yet these were the very women who were loudest in their censures of his Everilda; who wholly unsuspecting of blame, whilst unconscious of deserving it, invited its severity by the imprudent levity of her behaviour. It would have been more friendly to his wife, and more just to himself, if Lord Courtney, on making these reflections had resolved to pursue the plan of conduct, which would have rendered a repetition of them unnecessary; but "the world's dread laugh, which scarce the firm philosopher can scorn," was the phantom that he could not cease to fear; and to avoid it, he submitted to the possibility of becoming in reality, the mark for "scorn to point her slow unmoving finger at," when by a firmer conduct he would have ensured the applause of the wise, the approbation of the virtuous, and have preserved his own honor and his wife's, from the withering influence of suspicion, and the poisonous blast of scandal.

Edmund remarked the cloud that obscured his friend's customary cheerfulness and connected as he now was with him, he could not remark it without anxiety as well as regret. Could Lady Courtney have offended him? their uninterrupted and mutual affection forbade the idea. Was Miss Macdonald the cause? She might be in distress; he might wish to assist her, and require the aid of some friend. This determined Edmund to take notice of an alteration which otherwise he would not have appeared to observe. Lord Courtney seemed hurt, that his gravity should have drawn attention, and denied with some peevishness having any reason for it. Edmund was almost discouraged, but affectionately uttered a hope that his friend was happy. "Happy my dear Edmund," he replied, "yes, as happy as man may be; but life is puppet-shew work at the best; we neither fix our attention on the present scene, nor recollect the past: we are only intent on what will come the next, and when it is over, we find that it has not been worth looking at." Well," said Edmund smiling, "it is not entirely without novelty however; since you can moralize on its imperfections. I shall begin to think our friend Clayton not quite so romantic in his ideas, if you adopt similar ones." "I am not so deficient in ideas," replied Lord Courtney hastily, "as to adopt Sir Edward Clayton's on any subject, for there are none that I less approve;" then conscious of the warmth which he had betrayed, he continued, "but if you think that I am ill-humoured or melancholy, have the charity to accompany me in a ride; for I must be both, in a very great degree, if your society cease to be one of my chief pleasures." It was not in nature to resist such a compliment; and it was just made in time to allay the resentment, that his last speech had occasioned even in Edmund's breast; for tho' always gentle and unassuming, he yet knew too well the respect due to himself, to submit to rudeness, however it might be attributed to the influence of anger, or impatience.

About this time one of those unfortunate affairs of gallantry occurred which give occasion for the pleader on one side, to paint in the most beautiful colours, charms of mind and person, and perfection of connubial happiness, which probably had never any other foundation but in the



fruitful eloquence of the counsel for the plaintiff; and on the other of excusing the breach of every sacred and moral tie, palliating vice under new names, proving neglect which never existed, and teaching mankind to distrust even the fairest appearances of virtue. As this event took place in the higher circles, it afforded incessant conversation, till the remembrance of it was effaced by some other of the same nature more new, and of course more entertaining; attended likewise with circumstances of still greater atrocity, consequently a thousand times more interesting.

Whilst however it was yet the subject of some days wonder, it was mentioned one morning at Lady Drelincourt's work table, where the gentlemen were assembled, waiting for fair weather. Some of them said it was at least a proof that a woman could keep a secret, when her own interest was concerned in its preservation, as the connexion had subsisted many years, without even being suspected. "Well," exclaimed Lady Courtney, with her usual animation, "I declare I think that very secrecy, an aggravation of her fault." "I am of a different opinion," replied Lord Courtney, with unusual gravity, "it at least proved her regard to public opinion, and that is a virtue in every one, and above all in a female." "Yes," answered his lady, "as far as self-interest is concerned, it is very adviseable; and for that reason we see it practised the most scrupulously, by those, who are the most conscious that their conduct requires a screen." "Not entirely so, my dear Everilda," said the Earl, taking up the argument, "in society, next to being virtuous, it is essential to its interests to appear so; and they who, content with the rectitude of their thoughts, are regardless of the construction that may be put upon their actions, are unjust to themselves, and to the virtue on which they rely; for they expose themselves to censure, where they might have been gratified by receiving just praise, and affording a beneficial example to others." "Yet," replied Everilda, "is not vice infinitely more culpable when it affects the language of virtue, than virtue can be made to appear, by the censures of vice? I confess, I would much rather be supported by the applauses of my own conscience, than by the approbation of those, in deceiving whom, I should add hypocrisy to my other faults." "But you do not argue fairly, my dear Everilda," returned the Earl, with the utmost good humour, "you seem to think it necessary, to be vicious and a hypocrite, or virtuous and an object of censure. Virtue to be beneficial, ought to be acknowledged; and I wish only to convince you, that where we rely entirely on the purity of our own intentions, for approbation, we cannot be surprised if the world be backward in granting it; for our intentions can only be known to ourselves, and the world can only judge of them by our actions, consequently ought not to be accused of too great severity if it condemn such as appear deserving of censure; and give little credit to the integrity of principles, which do not seem to have sufficient influence to correct the conduct that offends." "In short," said Lord Courtney abruptly, "there can need little argument to convince any, but those who are wilfully obstinate in error, that vice may be made to appear more vicious, and audacity more audacious, by shewing an utter contempt of the opinions of that society, which they disgrace by their actions; and as the rain has now ceased, I think we may spend our time more agreeably, than in discussing topics, which I am sorry are become so familiar, that they fail to inspire the disgust, which their deformity would otherwise naturally create." He spoke with a bitterness and severity altogether new to him. The Earl seeing that he was ruffled, proposed taking him to the House, and Edmund accompanied them, leaving Sir Edward Clayton, who was a regular morning visitor, in a situation the very reverse of agreeable. He had felt the full force of the conversation, without

daring to take a part in it, lest what he said might be misconstrued. In any other company he would have spiritedly examined the value of popular applause, and the basis on which it was generally founded; but now he shrunk from giving an opinion, lest he should be suspected of teaching Lady Courtney to despise it. "Alas!" he mentally exclaimed, "I have not only neglected the observance of propriety to the world, but I have also neglected the conviction which my own sense of it forced upon my mind. I have said, I will rest satisfied with the purity of my own desires, but I have never really enquired what those desires were; ah! too surely the best of them is a selfish one!—to gratify my partiality for the society of my friend's wife, even though by the unjustifiable indulgence of it, I expose him to ridicule, and her to censure; thus ungenerously subjecting them to evils, which the misjudging world extends not to me; and I who am the only guilty person, am the only one who escapes punishment."

When Sir Edward had once convinced himself that his conduct had been wrong, an alteration in it, was the invariable consequence of the conviction; and he now resolved no longer to prefer his own gratification to the dictates of honor. From that day, he determined to shun society hitherto too fascinating, to learn at a distance, to distrust his own resolution, and to conquer temptation, by taking refuge in flight.

The deep reverie into which these reflections had plunged him, was interrupted by the sarcastic tones, and angry countenances of Lady Courtney, and Lady Rosamond, who were as usual of opposite opinions. The former hurt at the severity of her husband's manner, and mortified by the coldness with which he had left the company, continued the subject, saying, "I must acknowledge notwithstanding the incontrovertible arguments, which the gentlemen have given themselves the trouble to maintain, I am still obstinate in believing that sincerity is an essential virtue in society, and that vice is rendered infinitely more dangerous by being unsuspected." "But there may be an affectation of sincerity," replied Lady Rosamond, "equally calculated to conceal vice, by disarming suspicion, and under the disguise of excessive candour, it may practise the hypocrisy which it pretends to condemn." "And there may be a zeal," retorted Lady Courtney, "which, by its violence, disgusts, instead of convincing, and causes the sincerity of its motives to be suspected." If it had been possible to mistake the personality of these remarks, the tones and looks, by which they were accompanied were sufficiently explanatory. Sir Edward was concerned to witness dissention between two women, each highly superior to the generality of females; to take notice of it, was however to encrease it, and he deferred his departure a few minutes, that he might not appear to have observed what had passed. To change a subject of conversation, that had already produced so many unfortunate remarks, he mentioned music, and requested Lady Rosamond would favour him with a song, which he had greatly admired the preceding evening. She was on the point of complying, when Lady Courtney exclaimed, "Ah! for heaven's sake Sir Edward, have some compassion on my ears, for really anglicized Italian, is too severe a trial for them. If my little Emma would give us a Scotch air, we should have at least nature to interest us." Emma however declined, and Lady Rosamond justly offended at a remark, which common civility ought to have restrained, left the instrument, at which Everilda took her seat, and sung and played a very difficult air, with admirable execution and taste, for she was a perfect mistress of music, and understood its principles scientifically.

When she had finished, she perceived however, that the party of her auditors had decreased, for Lady Rosamond had gone away, and not wishing therefore, to have the appearance

of continuing in Sir Edward's company, she left the room with Lady Emma, and only Claudina remained: nor would she have stayed, had she not thought the desertion of the whole party, would have been so marked a rudeness to Sir Edward, that she sacrificed her inclinations to her sense of politeness, and her unwillingness to wound the feelings of another. Her manner was however so embarrassed, her answers so cold, and she appeared so anxious for his departure, that he became more than ever convinced, of having unintentionally offended her. The idea did not now inspire him with the resentment, which had formerly accompanied it, for he was humbled by self-reproach, and not inclined to censure any actions but his own. "Yes, she despises me," he said to himself, "and with reason; she loves Everilda, with too much sincerity and warmth, to esteem the man who suffers his attentions to endanger her reputation; she saw on my introduction here, to what perils I was about to expose my integrity: if she blamed me for risking it, what must she do now, when she sees how rapidly it fails me? justly may she condemn my presumption, and despise my weakness." Impressed with these ideas, he approached the timid Claudina, who was agitated by every feeling opposite to those, which he supposed occasioned her emotion. "You hate me," he said in the most moving tones, "you hate me, and I acknowledge the justice of your hatred; but I did not expect that you, who are so gentle, so benevolent to every other person, would shew it to me with such cruel severity." "I hate you, Sir Edward?" exclaimed Claudina, turning pale, "ah! how can you be so unjust to my feelings? wound them not by the cruel supposition." "Pardon me, pardon my unhappiness which deprives me of the power even of expressing myself as I could wish;" said he "hatred, is indeed a term too strong; never could its vindictive sensations assimilate with sensibility like yours; but you condemn me Claudina, yet surely the peculiarity of the circumstances in which I am placed, may in some measure palliate my errors." He paused, but as Claudina made no reply, he continued, "Your silence is as expressive as your words could be; you think my conduct as inexcusable as it is base?" he hastily walked across the room, and Claudina terrified at his violence, replied, "Why, Sir Edward, will you persist in asking an opinion, which I am unable to give? why will you ungenerously construe the expression of my countenance, nay my very silence, into censures, as harsh, as they would be from me unjustifiable?" "Then you do not think me so very culpable," he exclaimed, again taking a seat, "you think me not utterly void of virtue? Oh! how rigid, and impracticable, must be the stern tenets of morality, which would not relax somewhat of their severity, in a case so hard as mine." "You still mistake me, Sir Edward," answered Claudina, trembling at the idea of authorizing principles inimical to propriety, "I think you very unfortunate, and infinite would be your claims on the compassion and sympathy of the virtuous, if you looked to them for consolation; but when you can lose sight of rectitude of conduct, for the gratification of self-love, on yourself alone you must depend for support, and weak indeed will it prove, when you have not even the aid of your own esteem, to enable you to bear with the censures of others. You look displeased, I fear I have said too much; yet not to express disapprobation of vicious sentiments, is to partake in them, and no one wishes his errors to be palliated, but to excuse a continuance in them." "Ah! cruel, unfeeling dictates of morality," he exclaimed, "how cold, how powerless, ye appear, when opposed to the agonies of feeling. It is easy to declaim against evils never felt; you Claudina know not the torments of love, of injured, ill-requited love; you cruelly add to my afflictions, you who are so well acquainted with their cause; who have seen my soul absorbed in fancied possession of a matchless treasure, you can upbraid me for lamenting its loss, for gazing

on it with the bitterness of regret; you would refuse me even this poor consolation; you think it makes me happy. Be satisfied, it has not that effect. Every hour of temporary forgetfulness in her society, is purchased with one of added misery in solitude: then my eyes atone with tears of anguish, for the pleasure of gazing on her; then am I at once sensible of my weakness and its punishment; but you have never loved, and therefore cannot excuse the wanderings of passion. You have fortunately passed your existence in the unruffled calm of tranquillity, therefore cannot feel for one, who was born to be the slave of disappointed sentiment. You may have shed the tear of duty over the cruelty of your relations, but you cannot judge of the agony which rends the heart, that finds itself deceived, deserted by the object of its doating love."

These severe reflections, and his agitation were too much for the susceptible Claudina; she burst into tears and clasping her hands exclaimed, "Oh open not my wounds afresh; call not insensible one, whose life is consuming under the influence of passion. Say not that I have never known love. Ah fatal day when I first submitted to its dominion! never since that day has my bosom known peace. I love, and love without hope, I shall carry the impression made on my heart into my grave, but I shall not have dishonored the purity of my passion by seeking its gratification unworthily: my unhappiness will have injured no one, and that cheering reflection will console me in death." "Alas, have you also loved," said Sir Edward immediately becoming calm, "you have indeed by this confession taught me the injustice of my conduct; you say that you have suffered, and how uncomplainingly! Oh! those tears wound me to the soul; pardon me if I have recalled ideas which have caused them to flow; from this day I will strive to imitate your firmness; you shall be my 'guide, philosopher and friend;' your gentleness shall soothe, your resolution encourage me, and never again shall the subject of my ill-fated passion pass my lips; but ah, Claudina, how hard to be silent! How blest did I consider myself when every faculty of my soul was absorbed in admiration; never till then had life held forth its charms to me. In vain I had sought to interest my feelings in the pursuits of ambition, or in realizing the dreams of avarice. My ardent soul soared above the slow advancement of the first, and looked down with contempt on the sordid views of the last. Literature only increased a sensibility already too exquisite for my happiness; and by adding imaginary charms to a state of existence, painted in the most brilliant colours by fancy's magic pencil, inspired me with new disgust of the tame and insipid tints of real life: ah! Claudina, there is in every person's existence an epoch, from which he begins to taste its value. I saw Everilda, I loved, I lived; from that moment I beheld no other object in creation, than as it was connected with her. Every beauty of nature seemed to add to my passion; the air I breathed inspired love; the day flew too rapidly, even though it closed but to be succeeded by another still more delightful. How dreadful then was my disappointment! how keen the mingled feelings it inspired! Can they ever be forgotten? oh no! without them my soul would now become a blank; alas! I must still exist, and still be made conscious of existing, by the acuteness of my suffering! How can I endeavour to forget an object, of which every occurrence in life must remind me? How tear an image from my heart, when there is no other with which I can replace it! Why am I endued by nature with sensibilities so keen, when fortune has cruelly destined them to be the ruin of my peace? Oh Claudina, teach me resignation, promise to befriend me with your advice." "Already," she replied, with a captivating smile, "already you have broken the conditions on which it was to be given." He looked at her with stedfastness, and thought that he had never seen her so interesting. He almost wished his heart had withstood the

force of Everilda's attractions to be sensible of Claudina's unassuming worth and pensive sweetness, and taking her hand with an air of expressive tenderness, he had raised it to his lips, when, at that moment, Lord Courtney entered and she withdrew it in confusion. Sir Edward likewise felt embarrassed, but Henry's countenance expressed pleasure, and his good humour and cheerfulness were displayed in all their wonted powers.

Whilst he was discoursing with the animation natural to him; and which seemed to return with redoubled force, from having suffered a temporary suspension, the ladies re-entered equipped for paying morning visits. Sir Edward rose to depart. "We shall meet you this evening at the duchess's concert," said Lady Courtney. He hesitated, and all his resolution tottered. He stammered out something of an engagement elsewhere, and then congratulated himself on the conquest that he had made over his inclinations. But he soon found the victory neither so easy, nor so certain as he imagined, Lady Courtney would not hear a denial, and declared that she should take no part in the music if he were not there, as she had been so used to his accompaniment that she should be utterly unable to perform without it. "So no hesitation, Sir Edward," she continued, "but say positively whether I must wait your arrival for music, or quietly take my seat at a card table?" False shame now conquered Sir Edward's laudable resolutions; there was no resisting so direct an appeal, without the greatest apparent rudeness, and to have his real reasons known, might certainly acquit him of intentional disrespect, but it would also make him laughed at for his distrust of himself and his quixotic veneration for his mistress's fair fame; and every one knows that in society so polished as that of the present day, it is infinitely less painful to appear vicious than ridiculous.

"I will avail myself of the honor of her Grace's invitation," said Sir Edward, bowing to conceal the tinge of real shame, which passed across his cheek, as he felt the weakness of his best resolves: he looked at Claudina instinctively; for her approbation had that morning become necessary to his own, and he felt conscious that in this instance, he must inevitably risk his claim to it; but the spirit of cheerfulness had fled from a countenance to which early misfortune had rendered it almost a stranger. The glance of sensibility, the smile of tenderness, the blush of pleasure newly felt, had fled, and her placid features retained only the expression of disappointment void of surprise, disapprobation divested of any sentiment harsher than regret. Nor was her countenance alone changed; Lord Courtney's had also relapsed into gloom, and Sir Edward took his leave, bitterly regretting that his irresolution should occasion unhappiness in any other bosom than his own. "How weak Claudina must think me," he mentally exclaimed, "how inferior my conduct to her's! she, with uncomplaining sweetness has borne in silence the agonies of a passion, of which all the pains and pleasures must be keenly felt by sensibility exquisite as she possesses: too surely her melancholy is caused by absence from the unconscious object of her love; for unconscious of its existence must be the man who can suffer it to be unreturned. Probably her native country possesses the treasure to which she has devoted her heart, and estranged from it perhaps for ever, can it be wondered at, if common pleasures appear insipid to a mind like her's? But she is happier than I am. She is rich in her own esteem, and the admiration of all around her, whilst I am a just prey to the scorn of others, and to my own reproach."

Thus Sir Edward Clayton deplored the weakness, which he could not, however sensible of it, summon resolution to conquer, nor was the object that inspired it less unhappy.

The displeasure of her husband was new to her; she believed it to be undeserved, and her

favorite, though dangerous system of governing her actions entirely by her thoughts, forbade any endeavour to conciliate the return of a complacency which she thought was unjustly withheld from her. The dinner hour passed almost in silence, for Lady Rosamond had not forgotten the remarks of the morning, and could not forgive Lady Courtney for usurping the attention of a man, to whose notice she had resigned her own claim in the hope, that it would be devoted to Claudina, whose daily declining health and drooping spirits too plainly proclaimed the listlessness of disappointment, and hopeless regret. Lady Emma behaved with the affectionate tenderness natural to her, but partial as she was to Everilda, she yet shrunk from expression of kindness, which lost their value to her affectionate heart, when accompanied by offensive comparisons of her amiable qualities with the foibles of others.

Lord Courtney seemed anxious to lose the sense of vexation in wine, and sacrificed largely to the insidious power, who flattering his mistaken votary by bestowing exhilarated spirits, deprives him at the same moment of reason to conduct them; and in return for granting temporary forgetfulness, requires the risk of committing errors, which may wound remembrance, long after the power of atoning for them is no more.

“Oh when we swallow down  
Intoxicating wine, we drink damnation!  
Naked we stand the sport of mocking fiends,  
Who grin to see our noble nature vanquish'd,  
Ourselves subdued to beasts!”

## CHAP. XXXVIII.

Oh Fancy, paint not coming days too fair,  
Oft for the joys that sprightly May should yield,  
Rain pouring clouds have darken'd all the air,  
Or snows untimely whiten'd o'er the fields.

SCOTT.

THE concert at the Duchess of D's was a private one, and the aid of professional performers was not required.

To such parties Lord Drelincourt's daughters had always been considered as valuable acquisitions, and the great attainments of Lady Courtney, in the science of harmony, which she had from childhood been accustomed to hear in the highest perfection, caused her performances to command an attention, flattering to her, and no less gratifying to those who paid it, as they were amply rewarded by the exquisite taste and brilliant execution which she always displayed.

On this evening she surpassed her usual powers, and the most extravagant praises were bestowed on her exertions; but on this evening likewise, praise, for the first time in her life, ceased to please her; she saw that her husband was not gratified by the admiration which she excited, and it appeared tedious to her. It occasioned no animation in his countenance, and therefore it created no pleasure in her bosom; she even discerned in the flattery of the men a familiarity which roused her resentment and disgust; and in the neglect of the women, a contempt which she shrunk from, fearful that she might have incurred it by her own imprudence, in affecting a levity of which she abhorred the reality; but however mortified she felt she yet was resolved to appear happy, and was animated, various and charming, even beyond her natural powers: every one pronounced her fascinating, but any one might have pronounced also, that the gaiety which she spread around her, was a stranger at that moment to her own heart; that the heightened colour, the restless glance, the rapid utterance, were as nearly allied to secret vexations, and concealed anxiety, as to the exuberance of mirth or the gratification of vanity; however it is not the fault of society to be profound in its remarks; the men admired and the women envied, whilst Everilda alone felt how insufficient the admiration of the former was to confer real satisfaction, and how much the envy of the latter was misplaced. The Count Solano, who resided not far from Florence, was one of the party. Approaching Lady Courtney with the ease to which he was entitled, from a long intimacy in her family, he informed her that he was soon to leave England; "and," continued he, "I shall leave it with regret, for I have always been partial to it, and if any thing could have raised my opinion of my English friends, it would be seeing them so sensible of your worth, and so alive to your attractions. I shall be proud on my return to say, that, even compared with English ladies, my fair countrywoman's charms are not excelled, and that her claims on the admiration of all who know her, are as universally acknowledged in England, as they were felt in Florence. But what shall I say from you respecting the country for which you have deserted us? Am I to have the pleasure of saying that you are as happy in it, as you once made every one who knew you in your own?" "I cannot judge," replied

Lady Courtney smiling, "what idea would be formed of my happiness by that comparison, but you may certainly say with truth, that England has equally surprised and delighted me: I had feared meeting only with men immersed in the cares of their country, always studying to support its welfare, and to signalize themselves in the temple of fame: I had feared finding the women devoted to domestic duties, and rarely emerging from the delightful amusements of rational retirement, to pay the debt of occasionally appearing in scenes of public life suited more to their rank than to their wishes. But the alarming accounts that I had heard were absolutely false, and a short acquaintance with both sexes, informed me how egregiously they had been wronged. The men condescend to divert their sense of public cares by pursuing private pleasures with tolerable avidity, and the women are not so singularly modest and reserved as they have been described by travellers, who have unjustly represented them, as the most amiable of their sex in their own families, and the most forbidding when absent from them." "The english ladies," replied the Count, "have certainly, from time immemorial, been deemed as cruel as they are fair, and perhaps proud of their irreproachable renown, they have been encouraged to preserve it, by persevering in a severity, which the natural gentleness of the female sex could otherwise scarcely exert." "Whatever may have become of the motive," answered Lady Courtney, "the effect certainly does not remain in any very troublesome degree; any more than exists among the men, that rigid adherence to their own manners and opinions, and that contempt for those of other nations, which, we are told, once formed the most striking feature of their character, and that of which they were the most proud: we may now hear an english nobleman talk in favor of an abolition of all distinctions, we may hear infidelity from a black coat, or treason from a red one; and we may hear the government condemned as tyrannical and oppressive, when its very accusers give the most convincing proof of the confidence they place in its lenity and forbearance, by the measures which they take to incur its just chastisement." "It must be confessed," returned the Count, "that of late years, the peculiar style of thinking which at one time marked the english character as worthy of admiration, has somewhat suffered by the facility with which they have adopted the eccentricities of other nations, without enquiring if they were congenial to the spirit of their own." "Ah, no," interrupted Lady Courtney, "it is an old-fashioned prejudice long since obsolete, otherwise they would not build houses in the italian style of architecture, totally regardless of the trifling variation of climate; nor would they, when built, revive the gothic taste of furnishing them, were it not, I presume, to mark more strongly by the force of contrast, the difference between ancient and modern manners." "Is it necessary," asked Mr. Fletcher, "to point out the difference? I believe there will be little danger of confounding them; I should rather imagine that it is with the laudable design of sending us back to the times of simplicity, when the only preparation for the arrival of a guest, was to strew the floor with a double quantity of rushes, to throw a double quantity of wood upon the fire, to place before him the largest portion of the repast, and when it was over, to entertain him with the merriest story or cunningest device." "If we have as great a variety of manners as of architecture," replied Lady Courtney, "we shall certainly not risk being fatigued by sameness, whilst we continue the amusing and rational plan of bringing the peculiarities of all countries under one roof. Is it not extremely entertaining to ascend a flight of steps after the fashion of the sixteenth century, then to walk through an egyptian hall into a grecian banqueting-room, or gothic ball-room, with painted windows and sash-lights, the recesses lined with glass and ornamented with etruscan



vases? or into a turkish bed-chamber, ornamented full of images and hieroglyphics, leading to a roman-bath with the newest french furniture?" "Very well," returned Mr. Fletcher, "allowing a little poetical licence for the inconsistencies with which you charge us, this variety may not be without its advantages; we are told of Lucullus, that the style of his entertainments was proportionate to the splendor of the rooms in which they were served, each apartment being distinguished by a name indicative of its rank in the scale of importance; and how agreeable it would be to take a hint from him and adapt our conversation and manners to the costume of the apartment into which we might be introduced; we should then confine our topic of horses, to the stables; of politics, to the dining-room; of abstruse literature, to the study, and reserve the easy rattle and fascinating gallantry of the french man, for the boudoir; whilst in the cool veranda, my fair countrywomen should adopt the compassionate custom of Italy, to relieve their husbands from the drudgery of entertaining them, by deputing a *cicesbeo* to pay the attentions which are insipid from those, who are only prompted to bestow them by the old-fashioned notions of conjugal love." "Ah indeed," interrupted Lady Courtney, "you compliment the italian ladies too highly if you suppose that they have any customs with which the english ladies are unacquainted; no, no, so far from it, they even improve upon the licence allowed us from time immemorial, of having a *cavalier servente*; ours are chosen by the husband, or some elderly relation, your countrywomen wisely chuse for themselves, which you must allow is infinitely more agreeable; and they are generally independent enough to shew the world that they are proud of their choice, as they seldom take any pains to conceal it, which is certainly to the credit of their sincerity; but that is the delight of living in a free country, the chains of vulgar prejudices are not known, oh! it is surely charming to be free!"

The uneasiness which Lady Courtney had concealed, as carefully as she had felt it, acutely pointed the severity of her remark. The happy are seldom rigid censors, and Lady Courtney had never lashed the follies of society, until this evening, when she found her spirits unequal to participating in them. The length and animation of the discourse, had gained many attentive hearers, and her satire was concealed under such well feigned ignorance, that some thought she actually meant it as praise, others however who had been taught by experience, to distinguish narrowly between a real meaning, and one ironical, soon discerned the censure in disguise, and conscience unpolitely informing them, that they were included among the objects of her *persifflage*, by a sympathetic movement they withdrew, from the general circle, to make their comments in a smaller one. "What a shameless creature!" exclaimed Lady Nevil, who had very naturally at the mention of *cavalier servente*, looked round the room, to see if Lord Stranton had arrived, "her audacity exceeds all bounds, but what could be expected from an opera-dancer?" "Yet your ladyship must have heard the Count Rodalvi call her his sister, and his family is known to be one of the first in Tuscany." Remarked one of the party, who retained some candour, even when speaking of a beautiful woman. "The Count's calling her sister, does not prove her claim to affinity," said Lady John Talbot, "we all know he would oblige the Earl in any thing, as he is to become one of the family; and perhaps in calling her sister, he only means to say, that she will be so when he marries Lady Emma." "Very likely." "More than probable." Every one repeated to this ingenious supposition, and Lady Nevil continued, "I always thought she had been accustomed to perform in public; no one could sing and play as she does, who had merely been taught music as an accomplishment; what can Lady Stuart, or Lady Glerney, or Lady Mary

Horton, or half the ladies of our acquaintance play? and we all know that they have been taught ever since they could sit upright; I had the first masters in town myself, for fourteen years, and they used to play so charmingly all the time they stayed! and yet I should feel very unequal to performing in public." "I dare say you would," said Lady John, "and I should be very glad if more were as diffident of their powers, for it is a terrible trial of patience, when people fancy themselves so superlatively accomplished, and still more when they are really so." "I am wearied to death with Lady Courtney's praises," returned Lady Nevil, "where she is, there is no rational conversation, and really her confidence increases so rapidly, under the protection of the gentlemen's applause, that it quite makes me tremble." "What can make Lady Nevil tremble?" said Mr. Fletcher, who had overheard the conclusion of the sentence, "Lady Nevil, whose charms would find a champion in every being, who saw them menaced by danger." "We were speaking of Lady Courtney," replied the ready fair one, "and I was lamenting the malevolent constructions that might be put on her charming vivacity, which would make the more candid, and those who were better acquainted with her, tremble." "How amiable is anxiety in such a cause," said Mr. Fletcher, "you are afraid the influence of Lady Courtney's charms, may be weakened by the brilliancy of her wit, but trust me, they receive additional strength from its well turned sallies; the admiration of her beauty, great as it is, might be transient, but the inexhaustible novelty and interest of her conversation rivets it." "And yet the novelty of her conversation," replied Lady John, "has not raised her in the opinion of the censorious, and the effects produced by it, however flattering to her vanity, may not be very beneficial to her character; observe I speak only of the turn which the ill-natured may give to it." "Your ladyship speaks with your accustomed candor and penetration," said Mr. Fletcher, without departing from his accustomed sincerity,

"Envy will merit as its shade pursue,  
And like the shadow prove the substance true."

"The censorious and ill-natured, are certainly intolerable pests in polite society, and the most alarming consideration is, that their mischief, when once suffered to break out, is incalculable; it is like the plague, destroying all before it; its wrath will not be appeased by the sacrifice of the original offender, whose character may have been wantonly offered for investigation, the spirit of enquiry spreads, a general scrutiny may be made, and where can any one say the evil shall end?" He was called away, and Lady Nevil enquired if Mr. Fletcher was in jest or earnest, in what he said? as she never could know exactly what he meant. "Lord, my dear," replied Lady John Talbot peevishly, "I should never have done, if I always asked myself the meaning of people's words, and as to jest or earnest, nine times out of ten, they are to be taken which way you find the most convenient; but all who are connected with the Earl of Drelincourt, acquire some ridiculous way of thinking or peculiarity of manner; I never could admire either Lord Courtney or Signior Rodalvi, about whom the women were once so fatiguing, as the men are now with this illustrious lady of the opera." Lady Nevil knew very well, that her dear friend's opinion respecting Lord Courtney, and Signior Rodalvi, had not always been of the non-admiring class, but with all the forbearance of modern manners, she affected implicitly to believe her, and as she did not see Lord Stranton, she went with her to the altar of the blind goddess, where every passion is forgotten, or swallowed up in the agitations produced by her decrees: here every one was intent

on deceiving, or guarding against deception; on encreasing their store or their debts; on making unerring calculations, or lamenting the unforeseen chances by which they were defeated; and the beauty of Venus, or the wisdom of Minerva, would have been displayed in vain, when opposed to the calls of avarice, and the fluctuations of hope and fear, in the breast of every individual.

Lord Courtney's sacrifices to Bacchus, had not been very successful; he was grave and silent, and unfortunately he could not be so, without drawing attention; for the reputation of being a professed wit, or droll, however enviable and delightful it may be considered, by those who never could attain it, has one inconvenience to its possessor, who is never allowed the privilege, liberally granted to other mortals, of having his hours of care and dullness, but is expected to be always merry himself, and to make every one around him merry also. This is not however at all times an easy task, and Lord Courtney never found it more difficult than at this moment; he therefore went to the grand centre of attraction, where wit is readily dispensed with as unprofitable; a fault of which it is very often accused, even by those who possess it in the highest perfection. It happened unfortunately that Sir Edward Clayton, had this evening likewise devoted himself to the board of green cloth, not less to divert uneasy reflections, than to withdraw his usual attentions from Lady Courtney, whom he had summoned resolution to leave after the conclusion of the music. Lord Courtney was very much in the humour to quarrel with himself, and to divert the inclination he resolved to quarrel with Sir Edward; marked coldness, formal civility, and ceremonious attention, begun the attack, but in vain, he had the field of combat entirely to himself, for Sir Edward, conscious and dejected, bore patiently a conduct, which he felt he had incurred, by the imprudence of his own; and could not rouse his drooping spirits to answer remarks, the personality of which, he trusted was not observed by any other person. His forbearance, provoked still more the headstrong impetuosity of Lord Courtney, who imputed it to contempt; and under this idea, his incivility became too obvious to escape the observation of the company, or Sir Edward's just resentment. Lord Courtney had played carelessly, of which he might soon have been convinced by the rapidity of his losses; for where an attention to the mysteries of science is neglected, every one kindly endeavours to convince the unwary player, that something more than even good cards, is necessary. Lord Courtney had lost all the money he had brought with him, and Sir Edward offered to lend him what he had occasion for, but he coldly declined borrowing of him, and immediately requested Lord John Talbot to become his creditor, for the sum which he wanted; Sir Edward, notwithstanding he felt much hurt, said with great politeness, "Did you fear finding me a severe creditor, my lord, that you would not honor me, by becoming my debtor?" "No sir," replied he, with unjustifiable contempt in his manner, "I have not learned to fear you, but before I lay myself under obligations to any man, I like to be convinced of his sincerity." This remark, could not possibly be suffered to pass unnoticed; Sir Edward replied with becoming spirit, Lord Courtney retorted with unbecoming warmth, for he was certainly the aggressor, and after some severe remarks on both sides, Sir Edward said, "Lord Courtney, you well know that you have injured me in a point, for which the friendship of your life could ill atone; I am sorry you add insult to injury, not that you can by it, encrease the unhappiness which you have already caused me, but, as it argues, what I did not expect from you, a littleness of mind, which cannot pardon the man whom you know you have wronged." "'Tis well sir," replied Lord Courtney, "'tis well you have acquainted me that you consider yourself aggrieved, I could not indeed pardon myself now, were I to omit telling you,

that for every wrong which I have committed against you, whatever satisfaction you may require shall be given."

We suppose that few of our readers, are ignorant of the nature of the fashionable reparation for wrongs, real or imaginary; we call it reparation, for as to the satisfaction to be derived from it, we never could thoroughly understand, from what source the satisfactory sensations were to arise; but this ignorance we frankly acknowledge proceeds from our not ever having been engaged in such agreeable amusements, chusing rather to leave them to those sons of valour, who can digest a brace of bullets, and find them

"Proper food,  
For warriors who delight in blood."

The harmony of the company was rather disturbed by this affair, but as the disputants left the room, and fortunately none other of the Earl's family were present at the time it happened, oblivion of all that had passed, was proposed by the sapient Lord John, who remarked, that "Of all silly, obsolete things, surely contending for the claims of friendship, or the honor of women, is the most absurd, and the greatest torture to the patience of rational creatures. Who thinks of the first but boys at school? and as to the last, the ladies are able to defend themselves, and Lady Courtney as well as any I know, can stand forth in her own vindication." "And who dares assert that her conduct needs vindication?" enquired a voice which sounded like thunder in the ears of the affrighted peer, he looked around, and found that it had proceeded from Edmund, who hearing some flying reports of the misunderstanding between Clayton and Lord Courtney, had just entered the room to gain intelligence respecting it, as Lord John was making his harrangue, "If there be any one," he continued, "who has the temerity to breathe a suspicion of Lady Courtney's honor, let him do it now, and he shall find that its defence it not considered by me of trivial import, nor shall it be easily defamed." His eyes darted indignant lightning as he spoke, his attitude and figure might have been compared by a heathen poet to those of Jove, when he prepares to hurl his thunder on a guilty world, or the angry Mars, when he rushes forth to battle, or to any other deity that the reader may like better; but as we wish to be uniform, we shall not violate the *costume* of our christian history, by pagan comparisons, and will therefore content ourselves, notwithstanding it may savour of the *bathos*, with saying that he looked like the champion of England, when he throws down his glove, (which he knows no one will venture to take up) and challenges the world to dispute the claim of the illustrious monarch to the throne. But alas! we are obliged to repeat, that "the days of chivalry are past," and the Count's challenge was, like the champion's, suffered to pass unnoticed in respectful silence, he waited some moments, and receiving no answer, he continued, "Malevolent indeed must be the heart, which could censure the unguarded vivacity of innocence, and despicable the courage which could hear it censured unjustly, and remain inactive in its vindication." He left the room as he spoke, bestowing on Lord John, a glance of mingled resentment and contempt, which made him feel abashed, for the

"Grave rebuke severe in youthful beauty,  
Had added grace invincible."

Lady Courtney was soon the only person who remained ignorant of the confusion, of which she had unconsciously been the cause, and when Lord Drelincourt, unable to conceal his uneasiness respecting his son, requested his family to return home, she alone, was at a loss to account for the gloom which pervaded the party.

Lord Courtney however had arrived at home some time before, and his servant said, that he had gone to bed rather indisposed with the head-ach; but the Earl could not feel satisfied without ocular demonstration, of his son's safety, and therefore went into his chamber, where he had the happiness of finding him, apparently in undisturbed repose; he left the room with very different sensations from those which had agitated him on entering it; for all his ideas of chivalry, and feats of arms, and fair renown, had been put to flight, by the dread of his son's danger; and though he was of too high courage, and possessed too nice a sense of the laws of honor, to advise the refusal of a challenge from an equal, who conceived himself aggrieved, yet to send one without even the plea of injury, was as opposite from his principles of rectitude, in all cases, as it was in this instance agonizing to his parental feelings.

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## CHAP. XXXIX.

Oh human life how mutable, how vain!  
 How thy wide sorrows circumscribe thy joy!  
 A sunny island in a stormy main,  
 A spot of azure in a cloudy sky.

SCOTT.

THE Earl had flattered himself too much, in supposing that the *fracas* between his son, and Sir Edward, would end without further uneasiness. The former had returned home in the height of passion, and sent a challenge to the latter, which however he might condemn, when restored to the cool use of his unprejudiced reason, he was yet too much enslaved by false shame to retract.

Lord Courtney was ready to acknowledge to himself that he alone had been to blame, but to acknowledge it to the world was a very different thing, and as difficult as it would have been humiliating. He had the firmest reliance on his wife's honor, and not only believed Sir Edward's principles sufficiently strict to forbid any idea of tempting her to debase it, but even thought him infinitely more to be pitied than condemned; yet such is the subjection in which modern honour holds its votaries that he preferred risking his own life, and that of a fellow-creature, the happiness of his family, and the reputation of his wife, to making an acknowledgement that his challenge had been sent in a moment of inebriated madness. He was very anxious that Edmund should accompany him, but durst not propose it, lest that young man, more reasonable, though not less courageous, should not only refuse to attend him, but endeavour to prevent the meeting. He however resolved to sound him as to his opinion on the subject, and accordingly finding an opportunity to be alone with him, he began the conversation, by saying, "Do you not think that Clayton used me ill last night?" "Not having been present at your dispute," replied Edmund, "I am not able to judge of the merits or demerits of either party; but I will engage to say, that Clayton thought you used him ill." "I care not what he thought," said Lord Courtney impatiently, "I think that he aspersed my honor, and that I could take no means of vindicating it which would be too severe." Edmund enquired in what the aspersion had consisted. He could not answer very clearly, because he really did not know, but he still dwelt on the injurious expressions which Sir Edward had used, and repeating that he conceived himself bound to take notice of them, he again enquired Edmund's opinion as to the justice of his cause, and the proper method of asserting it. Edmund had the rare merit of always thinking for himself, a privilege which is much seldomer exerted by rational beings than is generally imagined, some, indeed, may suppose, when they adopt a mode of conduct remarkable for any whim or singularity, that to the wondering plain folks who are content to proceed quietly in the beaten track, their eccentricity will prove that they think for themselves; but they will be internally convinced that it is for fashion's sake, and to make others think of them.

Edmund took not the opinion of any one for the guide of his conduct, which he governed by the unalterable rule of right and wrong, as pointed out by reason, not by custom. He adopted no ideas because they were general, nor was he ashamed of confessing any, because they were

singular; and he now refused to espouse Lord Courtney's cause, notwithstanding his esteem for him, because he could not regard it as just.

Lord Courtney was much hurt by Edmund's firmness in opposing his wishes. "I flattered myself," said he, "that where my interest was concerned, you would have waved your difference of opinion." "And how could I really serve your interest by assisting you in endangering your own life, or that of a worthy man whom you have offended?" enquired Edmund. "I think that he has offended me" replied Lord Courtney, "and this is the article in which your opinion differs from mine: but laying aside every consideration which I might have expected from your friendship, there is something due to the honor of your sister, I confess that I expected more alacrity in such a cause." "Point out the man who dares to asperse it," replied Edmund, "and I will then evince my alacrity in defending it; but I should do it little service were I to publish to the world, that I fight to vindicate what needs no vindication, to clear from suspicion what never was suspected; I will not take credit for my scruples of conscience respecting duelling, for in this instance it is not by them alone, that I am deterred; though at all times and in all cases the subject in a religious point of view is wholly indefensible. Society we are told requires some mode of punishing offences, which however inimical to its good understanding, and continuance, may yet not be cognizable by law, or if they were, where it is asked, is the man of spirit, who would not rather redress his own wrongs, than be obliged to the tardy justice of another for their reparation? It is urged that calumny will only be silenced, impertinence awed, and insult subdued, by the dread of being obliged by weapons more powerful than words to answer for the liberty which they have taken; there may be policy in forbearing to enquire with too great severity into this mode of vindicating wounded honor, but no one can pretend to palliate the guilt of a man who from wilful misapprehension risks the sacred blessing of existence in the cause of obstinacy; who conscious of being the transgressor yet unjustly usurps a privilege which would scarcely be defensible even if he felt himself injured, and had no other way of proving his regard for his honor, than by shewing that its defence was held more sacred by him than life itself. In short if you were impelled to give, or to receive a challenge, from a conviction that you were justified to yourself at least in the occasion of it, then notwithstanding my disapprobation of this ordeal of modern honor, I would accompany you, and rather die by your side, than see you injured, or insulted: when on the contrary I know that you internally acquit Clayton, of the most distant intention to either injure or insult, and even that you cannot avoid charging yourself with intending both, you must excuse me from countenancing an unjust usurpation of the privileges of single combat, by which it was never meant for the aggressor to challenge the aggrieved, nor would I affect to approve what I condemn, or be accessory to a meeting, the event of which might possibly plunge your family and my sister into misery." Edmund remained firm in his opinion, and Lord Courtney was obliged to conceal his own, as he did not wish Edmund to know, that like the generality of people who consult their friends, he had previously resolved how to act, independant of any advice that might be given; and the opposition which he had met with, only confirmed him the more in his observance of secrecy, respecting his intention, as he would rather have owed a reconciliation with his antagonist, to a candid acknowledgment of his own errors, than to the interference of peace-officers. As the hour approached, which was appointed for his meeting with Clayton, Lord Courtney contrived to elude the observation of his family, and by increased cheerfulness, to make them unsuspecting of any impending danger. But before he left

the house, he pressed Everilda to his bosom, fervently imploring the blessing of heaven upon her, nor could he at that moment entirely conceal the emotion to which his various sensations gave birth; and she felt affected by the ardor of his manner, though she had not the most distant suspicion of its cause.

“With what affection he always treats me!” she said to herself, “how amiable he is! and how fortunate I ought to consider myself, in being united to so estimable a man, and by him related to so worthy a family! I will no longer trifle with the esteem of those whom I love, no longer lessen it by a struggle for dominion, which even if acquired, I should only owe to my perseverance in folly, and to their real superiority, in yielding the victory, rather than prolong the contest for it; I will lay aside the idle desire of attracting admiration, which when gained, creates no pleasure in my heart, already occupied with the tenderest esteem for my husband; the unmeaning attention of a frivolous croud, shall be exchanged for the approbation of my own friends, and the good opinion of the few, who may be deserving and amiable as they are.” With these resolutions worthy of her superior attainments, and naturally amiable disposition, Lady Courtney left the dressing-room, to join the ladies, who were at work in the break-fast parlour. No one had more fascinating powers than she possessed, and never before had she exerted them so fully, never before had she appeared so truly captivating; no severity of remark, destroyed the playfulness of her wit, no prejudice obscured her judgment, no caprice or contradiction, dictated her opinions; she was gentle, affectionate, and obliging, goodhumouredly acknowledging her errors, and saying that she should not be guilty of them so often if her friends did not by forgiving her too early, deprive her of the time necessary to repent of them. In the meantime the hostile parties had met, and Lord Courtney was accompanied by a gentleman under sailing orders for the East Indies, and Sir Edward by a foreigner of rank; the seconds vainly endeavoured to reconcile them, neither would allow himself to be in the wrong, or could convince his adversary of the contrary. At length Lord Courtney said, “You perceive Sir Edward, my friend is anxious that our misunderstanding should be amicably settled; it is a natural wish on his part, and doubtless your friend may entertain a similar one, but when resolutions are made, arguments are wearisome as they are unnecessary. My determination is fixed; I esteem you and believe you to be a man of honor, but unless you will retract the expressions which you used last night, I must consider you as my enemy:” he paused for a reply, Sir Edward answered, “To retract what I then said, my lord, would be to criminate myself, by allowing that I had asserted a falsehood, I spoke what I felt, and what I must consider to be true; but I will say, that I spoke it without an intention to offend; and if this acknowledgment will satisfy you, I shall be happy to forget the past; if not, it is all the apology that I can make, and more than in strict justice I am required to give.” “Then you have already said enough, sir,” replied Lord Courtney, “our opinions differ, and words only, will not cause them to agree; the first fire is yours.” He turned pale as he uttered these words, for though his courage was unsubdued, his affections spoke, and at that moment he forcibly felt the value of the life which he rashly placed in the disposal of chance; alas! an unhappy chance guided Clayton’s hand, and though he had turned round and averted his eyes, as he discharged the fatal weapon, it yet carried an unerring aim; the ball penetrated the hip of Lord Courtney, who fired his own pistol in the air, and then sunk upon the earth. It was the transaction of a moment; Clayton ran to raise Lord Courtney, and in an agony of sorrow, lamented the unhappiness of his fate, in thus unintentionally injuring a man whom he sincerely esteemed. “My dear sir,” replied



Lord Courtney, "you add to my sufferings by condemning yourself, where I alone have been to blame; and I call on those gentlemen to witness, that be the consequence of my wound what it may, I entirely acquit you, and declare, that in this instance and in every other in which I have known you, your conduct has been uniformly that of a man of honor, and of one whom I should ever be proud to rank among my friends." He attempted to rise, but was unable; those around him mournfully contemplated the change produced in his countenance, by the sufferings of a few minutes, though he endeavoured to conceal the anguish he endured, and again addressing himself to Clayton, said with firm composure, "I feel worse than I at first imagined myself to be; if you my dear sir, wish to oblige me, you will take the steps necessary for your safety; and for that of those gentlemen, then however this unfortunate affair may terminate, the knowledge of your being beyond the reach of harm, will greatly relieve my mind." Sir Edward refused to hear of flight, and declared his resolution not to leave Lord Courtney, until he knew the extent of his danger; at length however, the entreaties of his own second, and the uneasiness which he saw his refusal occasioned, determined him to depart; when shaking hands with his unfortunate antagonist, and breathing a sigh of regret and self-reproach, he entered the carriage with his friend, and was rapidly whirled out of sight. The removal of Lord Courtney was neither so easy nor so expeditious. The pain of his wound, intense even in a recumbent posture, was rendered almost intolerable by motion; but it was easy to perceive as he approached the end of his journey, that the idea of plunging his family into unhappiness was more agonizing to him than his own sufferings. "I think I could be conveyed privately into the house," he said to the servant who supported him, "I would then have it reported, that I had fallen from my horse, the surgeons could be sent for without exciting alarm, and their opinion might be kept secret." The servant endeavoured to make him easy by promising to evade discovery; but an anxious parent is not to be deceived. The Earl, when he found his son had left the house, without mentioning to what place he was going, was exceedingly alarmed, and when Edmund, whom he had sent to Sir Edward, returned with the unwelcome tidings that he also was from home, the morning was passed by him in a state of the most torturing suspense; in walking from the window of his study, to the top of the stairs, in watching, and listening for his son's return. At length the moment came, when he saw him indeed return, but pale, wounded, and sinking under the firm support of his active attendant; then suspense was changed for the most horrid certainty, he believed him about to expire before his eyes, and it was long before he could listen to Lord Courtney's assurances, that he was only slightly hurt, and his entreaties that his father would inform the family of the accident, that had befallen him, in such a manner, as would quiet any apprehensions that they might otherwise entertain; whilst they were debating, a door was opened, and Lord Drelincourt fearing lest any one might enter suddenly, went himself into the breakfast-room, where the ladies were conversing with the most cheerful cordiality. The agitated appearance of the Earl, drew general attention, and Lady Drelincourt enquired, in the tenderest accents, if he was indisposed? "No," replied he hesitating, "I am not ill, but," He paused, and involuntarily looked at Lady Courtney, with such earnest meaning, that she felt alarmed, and was about to express her fears, when Claudina, who had been all the morning in her dressing-room alone, rushed into the room, and clasping her hands in the attitude of despair, exclaimed, "Oh God! is it Clayton who has dyed his hands in blood? wretched, wretched Claudina! never again canst thou know peace, Clayton has become a murderer! oh! why did I live to hear the dreadful tidings?"

Scarcely had she uttered these words, when she fell senseless on the floor, with such violence, that the consternation was universal, and whilst the young ladies rang for attendants, and endeavoured to restore her to life, the Earl took Lady Drelincourt from the room, unperceived by the rest of the party.

Everilda was much shocked, by the unhappy condition of her friend, whose agitation, had thus betrayed the secret of her attachment, which she had hitherto guarded with such cautious firmness, that even Lady Courtney had never suspected its existence. Now that she was convinced of it, she admired the delicacy of Claudina's conduct as much as she condemned the imprudence of her own. "Alas!" she thought, "whilst my loved friend was sinking under the effort of concealing a virtuous, tho' unfortunate attachment, I was sacrificing duty and propriety, to gratify my vanity, by encouraging the attentions of one, whose affection I had once possessed, and had requited with treachery and ingratitude: what has my boundless love of admiration done? I have by it destroyed the favourite companion of my youth; awakened the sensibility of a worthy man to misery; mortified the husband whom I adore; disobliged the friends whose good opinion I would die to deserve; and incurred the censure of all, who value virtue too highly, to pardon the appearance of vice." The tears swam in Lady Courtney's brilliant eyes, during these reflections, and as she bent over Claudina's lifeless form, they fell on her pale cheek, and seemed like dew-drops, hanging on the pensive lilly. "Alas!" exclaimed Lady Courtney, turning to Lady Rosamond, "had I sooner known the state of my Claudina's heart, what folly and unhappiness, might have been avoided." Lady Rosamond understood the penitent expression of her countenance, and unwilling to add to her affliction, kindly pressed her hand, saying, "To acknowledge an error, is to forsake it, and all may yet be well." The ladies had been so intent on recovering Claudina, that they had never enquired into the cause of her situation, but Lady Rosamond's words awakening a desire to know what had really befallen Sir Edward Clayton, and how Claudina had heard of any circumstance relative to him, Lady Courtney asked the attendants, if they knew any thing of the matter? but they replied only by looks of dismay, and consciousness, which alarmed more than words could have done. Lady Courtney impatiently repeated her enquiries, and finding that when all were addressed, none would answer, she demanded of Bianca an immediate reply, Bianca turned pale, "What would you know my lady?" she enquired in trembling accents. "I wish to know what has occasioned Claudina's alarm, and if you have heard any thing concerning Sir Edward Clayton? you before comprehended me, I am well assured by your countenance, and I detest prevarication." Bianca unaccustomed to being harshly spoken to, burst into tears and replied, "Alas! my lady, pardon my unwillingness to inform you of an event, which may reduce you to a state even worse than that of Lady Claudina; Sir Edward Clayton is well, but he has wounded my lord in a duel, and—" Everilda stayed not to hear more, for darting from the room, with the rapidity of lightening, she flew to Lord Courtney's apartment.

He was laid on the bed, supported by Edmund, Lady Drelincourt was weeping over him, and the Earl was conversing with the surgeons who had just arrived, Everilda's shrieks filled the room, and supporting herself with one hand on the bedpost, she covered her eyes with the other, unable to endure the expression of pain, which at a single glance she had perceived in her husband's countenance. Her agony increased Lord Courtney's: "Oh! my Everilda," he faintly exclaimed, "I shall hear thy shrieks even in my grave, already they vibrate through my soul." At

the sound of his voice she instantly became calm, for a few moments, but her agitation soon returned, and throwing herself on her knees by him, she said in a quick tone, "My Henry, tell me you forgive me—I know you will die—I shall not long survive you—Our separation will be short, and we shall be reunited to part no more." Lady Drelincourt burst afresh into tears, and the Earl tenderly exhorted Everilda to retire. No entreaties however could prevail on her to move, "If Henry will suffer me in his presence, I will never leave him," was her answer, and he requested that she might be indulged in every thing she wished, but it was urged, that her presence would impede the performance of the necessary, though painful operation, of searching for the ball, this argument had some effect, she consented to retire, but suddenly her faculties became suspended, by her feelings, fear seemed to chill her blood, the crimson current appeared frozen in her veins, and she was conveyed cold and motionless, to her own apartment. Anxiety and foreboding sorrow, prevailed throughout the house, and increased the sad suspense in which every one was held, during the interval that necessarily elapsed before an opinion of Lord Courtney's danger could be formed. The female domestics wept incessantly, whilst attending on their ladies, for Lady Maria, whose sensibility was of the sickliest and most helpless kind, had thrown herself into hysterics, and was added to the number of invalids. Lady Rosamond's strength of mind was now truly valuable, and Emma resolutely following the laudable example given by her sister, concealed her tears, and checked the sighs with which her heart seemed breaking, to wait on the sick, to console the unhappy, and to relieve the minds of those around her, by taking every care upon herself. The surgeons were successful in their first attempt to extract the ball, and the family yielding to the flattering suggestions of hope, forgot their recent fears, and rejoiced as if the object of them, were already freed from every probability of impending danger. Soon however these illusions vanished, Lord Courtney daily sunk under the effects of his wound, he became visibly weaker, and his physicians feared the fatal termination of a disorder, already attended by every unfavourable symptom.

## CHAP. XL.

What pleasure can the bursting heart possess,  
 In the last parting and severe distress?  
 Can fame, wealth, honor, titles, joy bestow,  
 And make the laboring breast with transport glow!  
 The gaudy trifles gild our dawning light,  
 But oh! how weak their influence on our night,  
 Then fame, wealth, honor, titles, vainly bloom,  
 Nor shed one ray of comfort on the tomb.

MRS. MADAN.

THE sufferings of the Earl whilst he contemplated the sad change already wrought in the darling child of his heart, the hope of his life, the source of all his joys, exceeded the powers of description. He gazed in silent anguish, on Lord Courtney's altered form, so lately distinguished alike by strength and elegance, now wasted to a shadow, sinking under debility, and exhausted by languor; his cheek, where health had once spread her richest tints, was now mocked by the crimson glow of hectic fever; his eyes, where lately intelligence had dwelt in liquid lustre, now faded under the influence of disease, and were only occasionally lighted up by momentary hope, to contrast more forcibly, the despair that quickly succeeded, from the conviction, which his own feelings forced upon him. Dreadful trial to fond parents, and affectionate friends! dreadful indeed, it is to behold the sufferings of those whom we love! there are moments, when the sympathy excited by them, becomes so agonizing, that self-love teaches us to look forward with comparative resignation, to the hour, when it will no longer be so painfully called forth; when the most mournful recollections of happiness past, never to be recalled, the bitterest regrets for social delights, fled never to be again enjoyed, appear more easy to be borne, than the quick transition from hope to fear, the lingering torments of doubt, and the agonizing pangs of suspense. Every evil is magnified, whilst there appears a possibility of averting it; but when once known to be inevitable, it is submitted to, with a fortitude which diminishes its force. The very hopelessness of grief, inspires courage to attempt its subjection, and the mind dwells on the past with a melancholy tenderness, that softens the remembrance of its loss.

“Did the sharp pang we feel for friends deceas'd,  
 Unbated last, with anguish we must die;  
 But nature bids its rigour should be eas'd,  
 By lenient time, and strong necessity.  
 These calm the passions, and subdue the mind,  
 To bear th' appointed lot of human-kind.”

Mournful indeed were all around, but faint were the sufferings of the most afflicted, in comparison with the agonies which rent the bosom of Everilda; she beheld her husband, the

object of her youthful love, doomed to die, yet fondly clinging to life; and his anxiety to live, distracted her even more than the dread of his death. When she saw him watching the countenances of his physicians, endeavouring to palliate even his own account of his feelings, at some times yielding to the most cheering hope, at others sinking under the influence of despair; then unable to command her feelings, she would hastily leave the room to conceal them, and wringing her hands, in all the agonies of uncontrolable grief, she would exclaim, "Wretch, that I am! it is I, who have reduced him to this state; my guilty follies, my unpardonable vanities, have drawn down this heavy punishment. Oh! merciful God, spare my husband; spare him to his parents, for I am unworthy of him." Thus in prayers and self-reproach, would the unhappy Everilda, occupy herself, until the violence of her grief, destroying in some measure its continuance, she was enabled to return with a composed countenance, though breaking heart, to take her station near the dying Henry; who fondly attached to her, with his natural goodness of disposition, now gave redoubled proofs of his affection, fearing that the remembrance of it would soon be her only consolation.

He had continued a fortnight in this melancholy state, and Lord Drelincourt had never taken any other repose, than on a sofa near him; or would suffer any other person to attend on his beloved son in the night; for his parental feelings never slept, and a sigh from Lord Courtney, or a change of his posture, immediately produced an enquiry into his wishes from his father, who was comparatively happy, if they were of a nature to be gratified.

The Earl's sensations in this trying juncture, were indeed of the most painful kind. He saw his beloved and only son, the object of his most anxious solicitude, and fondest hope, languishing on the bed of sickness, groaning under sufferings, and overwhelmed with sorrow. Ah! how forcibly did this sad spectacle convince him of the inefficacy of riches, and the futility of rank.

"For what avail the highest gifts of heav'n,  
If drooping health and spirits go amis!  
How tasteless then whatever can be given,  
Health is the vital principle of bliss."

"Alas!" exclaimed the unhappy father, as he cast his eyes over the lofty and magnificent apartment, which contained every artificial aid for ease and comfort, that luxury could sigh for, or ingenuity invent; "alas! of what use are the soft carpet, the gilded sofa, and a couch of down, if repose be in vain solicited amid them? What avails the service of plate, if the food which it contains, be loathed; or the long train of domestics, if their attendance cannot in any degree soften pain, or divert languor? Yet let me not be ungrateful, let me rather be thankful, that the afflictions of my poor child, have at least every human alleviation; alas! how many are at this moment suffering under every aggravation of evil! how many uncomplaining spirits, are bowed down with ills increased by want! how many affectionate hearts are broken, in witnessing the sorrows which they cannot relieve! oh God! teach me to extract benefit from thy chastenings, and to be unceasingly zealous to lessen those wants and miseries in the situation of others, from which thou hast been graciously pleased to preserve my own."

Such were the reflections of Lord Drelincourt during his constant attendance on his son,

who received all his medicines and sustenance, from the unwearied hand of parental love. But nature was at length exhausted, and the Earl confessed himself overpowered by bodily fatigue, and mental uneasiness. He complained of lassitude and coldness, and was evidently so ill, that in order to relieve the apprehensions of his family, he consented to retire to bed, whilst Edmund gladly accepted the office of watching over his sick friend.

Lord Courtney found himself much less inclined to sleep than to enter into conversation. "What an inconsistent thing is honor," said he, "or rather how incorrect in general are our ideas of it! Had not Clayton been a man of honor, and one whom I esteemed, I should not have conceived myself strictly called upon to fulfil an engagement made in a moment of inebriated anger; and yet that anger was raised by a man whom I believe to be a contemptible character, though I was once intimate with him, and he called me his friend. I cannot say I returned the compliment, for my ideas of the sacred ties of real friendship were always too exalted to apply the term to every one whom I might meet twice in the same party, and in the same pursuits; however I was weak enough to let the impertinent sneers of this man mortify me, and instead of checking his insolence I turned all the ill humour excited by it against Clayton. You will guess that I allude to Lord John Talbot, who notwithstanding he so liberally bestowed on me the undesirable title of his friend, has most cordially hated me ever since he married a woman whom he well knew I despised, and who he had just sense enough to discover was in fact a despicable character. He could not bear to see me enjoy in marriage a degree of happiness which he could never hope to attain; or place a confidence in my wife, which he never could in his, whose levity even all his vigilance cannot restrain. Yet to confute the malicious insinuations of this man, I have thrown away a life endeared to me by a thousand blessings of which I never knew the value so forcibly as now, when I am called on to resign them." "Oh! my dear Courtney" exclaimed Edmund, "do not say you must resign them, let us rather hope that you may enjoy them many years, and that each succeeding year may add to them." "Edmund," replied Courtney with melancholy earnestness, "we easily believe what we wish; but there are cases, where conviction is unavoidable, and sanguine indeed must be those hopes which could resist it; mine are not so; I feel how easy it is to throw away life, how difficult to recal it; I am attached to it by many ties, and in resigning it, I grieve for my poor father, who has loved me too tenderly for his own peace; I grieve for my Everilda, my mother, my sisters, nay even my common acquaintance I feel attached to, when I consider how soon I must leave them for ever." He paused overcome by his emotions, but in a few minutes he proceeded, "I thank God I have not the fear of death to add my love of life; I have never intentionally injured any one, poor Mary Macdonald excepted: she is the only being whom I ever used basely, and my desertion of her and breach of promise to her father, have dwelt heavily on my mind since I have meditated on every action of my past life, and seen each in its proper colours: but I have repented, and I humbly hope to be forgiven; I feel and bewail my own unworthiness, but I trust to the mediation of my Redeemer, and to the mercies of a God of kindness and long suffering. Poor Mary! I have indeed behaved cruelly to her, but she is not lost to virtue; I never attempted to seduce her mind, and I am now only consoled by the hope that her principles are so far uncorrupted, that aided by them her conduct may yet I trust be exemplary. She shall neither want countenance nor support; I have remembered her in my will, I have recommended her to my father's protection, he will be kind to her for my sake, and he will acquit himself towards her, with that honor and generosity, which

poor Macdonald hoped she would find in me. My Everilda too will not turn from her, with the harsh austerity of unforgiving virtue; she will pardon the errors caused by affection for me, the woman who loved her husband, will never be worthless in her eyes," he paused again fatigued by his exertion, and Edmund could only endeavour to console him whilst his own emotions rendered his attempts inarticulate. At length he prevailed on him to endeavour to sleep; all was hushed around, and only the regular tickings of a time-piece marked the progress of the heavy hours during the last night that Lord Courtney was destined to exist.

The first dawn of day brought the Earl to his son's bed-room. But how was he shocked on perceiving the great alteration which had taken place in his appearance: Henry saw his father's emotion, and shaking his head in hopeless despondency he said languidly, "It is all over with me Sir," he looked earnestly at the Earl as he spoke, perhaps still faintly hoping to be contradicted. But the anxiety of the parent overpowered every other consideration, and Lord Drelincourt involuntarily returned his son's melancholy gesture, which accorded too well with his own feelings. Henry made a vain effort to rise, but finding his weakness insurmountable he gave up the attempt, "I shall never rise more," he said and a tear strayed down his faded cheek; he was silent some minutes, at length he said, "I should wish to see all my friends; I had better do it before I am weaker; my dear Sir, you are too deeply afflicted, do not thus distress yourself; alas! I had hoped to recover and to shew myself sensible of your kindness, but it is now too late to be flattered." All Lord Drelincourt's firmness forsook him when he pressed the feverish, and wasted hand, which his son held out to him; he no longer saw any thing in the world, but that son dying, and in his dissolution every hope of happiness seemed also to expire. The Earl could no longer restrain his tears but giving way to all his emotions he wept, he wrung his hands and looking to heaven exclaimed, "Oh! I have fixed my mind too intently on worldly things, I have even considered my son more as the heir to my title than as my invaluable child; I have not been thankful enough for the happiness I enjoyed as a parent, I have looked upon the blessing which thou gavest me, in too worldly a view, and now I am punished by the deprivation of it. Oh heavy blow, oh! unlooked-for trial! let me not say it is severe, oh God, teach me to thy decrees." The family now entered, drown'd in tears, his mother, wife, and sisters, knelt round the bed of Lord Courtney; who sensible of his approaching end, filled with the awe inspired by a knowledge of it, and agonized by the affliction of those so dear to him, from whom he was so soon to part, gazed on the scene with a sort of stupor, which deprived him of the power of expressing any of the various emotions by which he was bewildered.

The Earl had sent for the physician, who now arrived, and on him the eyes of every one present, were turned with the most beseeching enquiries. Too honest to disguise what he knew, and too compassionate to be able to conceal what he feared, his countenance was so faithful a transcript of his mind, that even those, who notwithstanding appearances, had entertained some hope, found that they had been too sanguine; but that delightful passion will linger long in a parent's heart, and Lord Drelincourt took the physician into another room, to know his real opinion. It would have been cruel to encourage in this unhappy father a delusion, of which a few minutes might discover the fallacy; and the worthy man made a painful effort, to prepare the mind of the Earl, for the shock it must soon receive; he told him tenderly, though with firmness, that his son's recovery was hopeless, nay, that he was at that time actually dying. "Perhaps it is a crisis," said the unhappy father, "it cannot be wrong to hope." "But it may be useless," replied the

physician, "and will add to the bitterness of disappointment,—” At that moment a piercing shriek was heard, the Earl turned pale, and covering his face, threw himself on a sofa near him, "It is Everilda's voice," he exclaimed, "and all is over." Alas! it was indeed; Henry's quivering lips had endeavoured to articulate a last adieu, his wearied spirit hovered on them ready to depart; Everilda's shriek of agony recalled it for a moment, he blessed her, and expired.

Everilda sunk insensible on his breathless body; she was conveyed from the room, and the Earl giving orders for every one to leave it, went to contemplate in solitude and silence, the awful change: but when he pressed his son's lifeless hand to his lips, and found it not yet cold, he covered him with care, drew the curtains, and took his seat again by the bed side, almost unconscious of what he did. The day closed in, and the Earl appeared not; Lady Drelincourt was rendered yet more miserable by the excess of sorrow, to which she supposed he had given way, and entreated Edmund to persuade him if possible, to leave the apartment, where he had spent many hours alone. Edmund was anxious to oblige her, yet was unwilling to intrude on the sacred privacy of a parent's grief; sacrificing however, his own feelings, he went immediately and knocked at the door; it was opened by the Earl, who seeing only him, resumed his seat, and supporting his head on his hand, remained silent; Edmund waited a few minutes, and then said that he came from Lady Drelincourt, and repeated her anxious desire to see him. The Earl answered in a tone of voice scarcely above a whisper, at the same time looking towards the bed, as if fearful of disturbing even the repose of death, "Edmund how can I leave my poor boy, I shall not long be with him, and I must not forsake him for one moment of the short time that remains, before we shall be separated for ever." Edmund would have redoubled his persuasions, but the Earl's anxious looks, and low, agitated manner of speaking, struck to his heart, and he was obliged to leave the room, to indulge his own grief.

At length the hour arrived, which was to consign the lately animated and blooming youth to the stately mausoleum, where his ancestors mouldered into dust, and where all distinctions of birth and fortune, must end in silence and oblivion. The pomp and grandeur of the funeral procession, only contrasted more powerfully, the grief and desolation of the survivors. It was to set off at midnight, an hour that suited well the gloom of the occasion. The street was lined with attendants, and with those to whom a spectacle of any kind is gratifying, whether it be the festivities of the living, or the obsequies of the dead; and the expressions of surprise, and admiration of the populace, were mingled in the air, with the sobs and shrieks of the female relatives of the deceased. Still fondly clinging to the memory of his beloved son, the Earl stedfastly gazed upon the mournful hearse, which was about to convey him for ever from his sight. Innumerable torches illuminated the sad spectacle. The door of the hearse was opened to receive the glittering coffin, the Earl contemplated it with firmness, and not one sigh escaped his agonized bosom, till some obstacle impeded the closing of the door, when one of the attendants shut it with a degree of violence that echoed through the street, and roughly shook the sable plumes, which had before gently waved in solemn dignity. The unhappy father groaned, and hiding his face, abandoned himself to all the bitterness of despair, seeming never to have felt the full extent of his irreparable loss, till the rattling of the carriages told him that his son was for ever gone.



## CHAP. XLI.

Ah! what avail that o'er the vassal plain  
 His rights, and rich demesnes extended wide,  
 That honor, and his knights composed his train,  
 And chivalry stood marshall'd by his side.

CUNNINGHAM.

THE Earl instead of recovering his composure, when he had no longer the body of his son to weep over, appeared to devote himself to yet more unmeasurable grief. After giving orders to get every thing in readiness to leave town, he shut himself up in his own apartment, and refused to see any of his family. In proportion as his grief for the loss of his son faded from his memory, the disappointment of all his hopes returned with additional force. One hour he wept the early doom of one so engaging and so worthy, the next he deplored his own misfortunes in living to see his family extinct, and his estates devolve to a distant relation of despicable character. The dead are seldom remembered long with very acute sufferings, when we are reminded of them only by the recollection of their virtues. But Lord Drelincourt's loss was daily recalled to him by its consequences; and he daily felt it the more keenly, as he became more sensible of its effects. Life seemed no longer to possess a charm for him, no longer could he hope to feel interested in it, and he even appeared careless of its preservation.

Lady Drelincourt wept incessantly, her grief for the death of her son, was encreased by her anxiety for her husband who had repeatedly refused to see her; at length she intreated Everilda to go to him without any previous notice, thinking that he could not repulse the widow of his son: and perhaps he might take a melancholy pleasure in her society; and be induced once more, to cheer his disconsolate family with his presence.

But alas! grief and disappointment had rendered the Earl unjust; and when Everilda with streaming eyes, and a breaking heart, came into his presence, and knelt before him, eloquently looking the sorrows to which she was unable to give utterance, he could not conceal that he only beheld in her the bane of his domestic peace, the destroyer of all his hopes, and the cause of all his miseries. He endeavoured however, to disguise the impression she made on him, by saying that he wished to be entirely alone, and thought his wishes had been generally understood; he was turning away, but she caught his hand, exclaiming, "Oh! my lord, will you forsake me thus? have I deserved this anger from you? oh! I am already too, too wretched, make me not more so by your coldness." The Earl stood irresolute, the image of his friend the Marchese, rose to his view, but it was chased by that of his son, wounded, expiring, lifeless, and before this dreadful image, every other consideration vanished. "They who wish to draw me from my solitude," said he in a voice choked by his emotions, "have acted very injudiciously, by sending one to invite me back to society, whose presence can recal none but painful ideas; let me, my lady, recover this shock, before I hazard my feelings to encounter others, though none more trying can await me." The bitterness with which he spoke, pierced Everilda's soul, but nature had done with her resentments in her; and though the hectic of a moment passed across her cheek, it tarried not; she rose from

her humble posture with an air of dignified sorrow, and casting her eyes to heaven she exclaimed, "Never again, my lord, shall the unfortunate Everilda voluntarily intrude upon you; your coldness has stabbed me to the heart; it may be good for me to be afflicted, but you know not what effect your conduct may have on me, or how deeply you may be interested in it. Farewell my lord, you will at some time think better of me." So saying, she left him, and retiring immediately to her room, refused to see any one except Claudina, whom she sent to Lady Drelincourt with an account of her reception; that excellent woman wept, as she lamented the alteration which grief must have produced in the temper of her lord, ere he could have been urged to treat with harshness, one already overpowered by affliction. The affectionate Claudina, sympathized in Lady Drelincourt's sorrows, but she could stay only a short time with her, as Everilda complained of being much indisposed, and expressed a desire to remain in her apartment.

Lord Drelincourt was not however, of a disposition to continue long under the dominion of prejudice or injustice; he felt that he had treated Everilda unkindly, and he resolved not only to acknowledge it to her, but to abandon a solitude, in which he only added to his sorrows, by fruitless repinings for the blessings he had lost, ungratefully neglecting those that were yet spared to him. With a laudable resolution to conquer the excess of grief, that had rendered him unjust to the remainder of his family, he made them comparatively happy the next day, by joining them at the dinner table. Everilda and Claudina were absent, the Earl enquired for them, but Lady Drelincourt answered, that the former being indisposed, had dined in her own apartment with the latter; indeed since the unfortunate death of Lord Courtney, Everilda had lived so much without any other society, than that of her faithful Claudina, that her absence was no unusual circumstance. But the Earl's affectionate heart, soon expanded with the tenderness natural to it; and uneasy whilst any part of his family were absent, he repeated his enquiries, desiring that a servant might be dispatched to Lady Courtney's room, to request her company. Still she came not; neither did the servant return to account for her delay, and Lady Drelincourt fearing that she might be seriously indisposed, said, "Go, my Emma, and see if Lady Courtney be ill; and if she be not, tell her that your father is with us, and wishes to have the pleasure of her company." Lady Emma went, but returned in a few minutes, paler than alpine snows; she endeavoured to speak, but a sudden gush of tears, deprived her of utterance.

Lady Drelincourt was inconceivably alarmed, she imagined that Everilda must be dying, or perhaps already dead. "Speak my dear child," she exclaimed, "speak if it be but one word, is Lady Courtney ill?" "Indeed I do not know, for I have not seen either her or Claudina," replied the weeping Emma. "But have you not been in her apartment?" enquired her mother. "Yes Madam, but I did not see them." "And why not my dear?" "Because they were not there," replied Emma with the utmost simplicity. "Not there!" exclaimed Edmund, starting from his seat, "what, have they fled? Lost Everilda! but no, I wrong her even by the momentary admittance of such a thought." He then went to Emma, and taking her hand, said in the tenderest accents, "Do not distress yourself, my dearest Emma, tell me what you know of her departure, I will follow her instantly, and all may yet be well." Emma could only weep, and declare her entire ignorance of Everilda's intentions. The Earl now rang the bell, and ordered Bianca to be sent for. "She has not been seen since last night, my lord," said the servant. "Then send Giuseppe," said the Earl impatiently. "Giuseppe it is thought has accompanied her, my lord," replied the man, scarcely able to suppress a smile, for as Bianca and Giuseppe were known to be mutually attached, the

domestics imagined that they had gone to be privately married, and never thought of Lady Courtney, of whose departure they were all utterly ignorant. "Leave the room," said the Earl, and as soon as the door was closed, the family began to consult on the measures necessary to be taken, with the hope of recovering the fugitives. That Everilda in a moment of grief and mortification, should have thought of leaving the house, was only consistent with the natural violence of her temper, and uncontrolled susceptibility of feeling; but that the gentle, prudent, and timid Claudina, should act in a manner so contrary to her usual principles, as to countenance Everilda in such imprudent conduct, and even to become the partner of her flight, was strange and incomprehensible; though scarcely more so, than that so large a party should leave the house, without being suspected, or observed; this however on further consideration was found less surprising, as it was recollected that the family had been in confusion, on account of preparing to leave town; and it now appeared, that Lady Courtney and Claudina's trunks, which had been packed ready with several others, were removed, which left no doubt that their departure was intended to be permanent. It naturally struck every one, that Italy was the object of their destination, and Edmund proposed sending expresses to the different sea-ports, where they would probably attempt to embark. The Earl could hardly conceive it possible, that two females utterly unprotected, should have the temerity to think of travelling through foreign countries, at a time, when the hostility of every continental power, made the attempt hazardous, even for one of the more courageous sex, possessed of every advantage of different passports and numerous letters of introduction; however he could conjecture nothing more probable, particularly as Giuseppe and Bianca had likewise disappeared. These two servants were most faithfully attached to their mistress, and to each other; but possessing much of the fiery impatience of their country's spirit, they seldom agreed with any other of the domestics, and the Earl had frequently wished his son to dismiss them, on account of the perpetual quarrels they occasioned in his household; but Henrietta the illustrious consort of Charles the first, was not more jealous of any attempt to deprive her of her French attendants, than was Lady Courtney, of every hint that bespoke a desire to discharge her Italians: in this instance, her obstinacy was very easily excused by Lord Courtney, who knew that Bianca was the orphan of two of the Marchese's vassals, at their death, she was left friendless, and the young Everilda, not then twelve years old, had taken Bianca, who was of her own age, under her protection; she had taught her reading, writing, and needle-work; and was rewarded by finding her a faithful and unwearied attendant. Giuseppe had been yet more, if possible, the object of his lady's bounty; he was the only son of two cottagers whose poverty was so extreme, that their utmost efforts, could not procure for him, the comforts necessary during a long and severe illness. Everilda in her rambles, found the afflicted parents weeping over their son, whom they believed to be dying, but who was evidently sinking more from inanition than disease; her compassion was easily excited, she ran home, and begged her father to save the poor boy from misery and death. The Marchese never thought his bounty so well employed as when it made his daughter happy, and in a few weeks the object of her cares was restored to health, and received into the family of the Marchese, whom he served with the fidelity and cheerfulness, continually inspired by the remembrance of his obligation to him.

Whilst Edmund was consulting with the Earl, on the most likely means of gaining intelligence of his sister, Lady Drelincourt had visited her apartment, and found in one of her dressing boxes two letters, which she delivered to the Earl, to whom they were directed. The first

was from Everilda, it was written in Italian, and was to the following purport:

“MY LORD,

“I have unhappily been too little accustomed to the language of severity, to subject myself to a repetition of it, where I cannot but think it was unmerited; alas! could I have foreseen the unhappiness I have unintentionally occasioned in your family, by my union with your son, I trust you will believe me when I solemnly declare, that my own life should have been spent in all the languor of a hopeless attachment, ere by indulging it, I would have caused the misery of yours; it is passed, but I might yet have been bound to your family, and endeared to yourself by the tenderest ties; that hope, has hitherto enabled me to support the dreadful trial I have undergone, but your unkindness has destroyed the pleasing illusion; pardon me, my lord, I mean not to reproach you; ill would it become me to condemn, when my own conduct has been so censurable; no, believe me, it is not resentment that urges me to the step on which I now meditate, the favours I have received from you and your family, will never be forgotten by me, or cease to excite in my bosom the liveliest gratitude, which can end only with my wretched existence. The recollection of the happy hours I have enjoyed in your society, will cheer the solitude I am about to seek. The remembrance of the past I cannot be deprived of; it is now my only treasure, and in dwelling on it, my heart will always acknowledge the virtues of the family that I must yet resolve to leave for ever. Alas! I live not for myself alone, a being ten thousand times more dear to me, will owe its existence to my care; oh! my lord, I cannot give birth to my child, if I know it will be taught to hate its mother, execrate her whose follies deprived it of a father. I quit for ever the rank and splendor which have no charms for a broken heart, and which I never knew how to enjoy rationally. In solitude I shall reflect on my errors, I shall repent them with daily contrition, and in time, I trust they will be forgiven. If my child be a daughter, it cannot be thought an injustice to retain the blessing which will reconcile me to life, in the hope of teaching her to avoid her mother’s failings: if it be a son, I shall not gratify my own feelings at the expence of yours; I will resign him to you, when he no longer requires my cares; deprived of him, my existence will soon exhaust itself by its languor, in the grave I shall find repose, and my son will perhaps weep over me, forgetting all my faults in the remembrance that I was his mother, and lived but for him. Farewell, my dear lord, let the tears that now stream from my eyes, expiate my past misconduct, I am punished severely for it, by the incessant recollection of its consequences; oh! let me hope that by you I am forgiven.

“EVERILDA.”

Claudina’s letter was written also in Italian, and contained the following words.

“It is the peculiar unhappiness of Claudina’s fate to make her appear ungrateful to her benefactors; but in this instance she hopes the motives of her actions may excuse their apparent impropriety. A solemn promise of secrecy was required by Lady Courtney, and Claudina knowing her critical situation, feared lest any opposition might deprive Lord Drelincourt of a hope now inestimably valuable. For this reason she complied with Lady Courtney’s request, and what she promised she considers herself bound to perform, trusting that

an anxious attendance on the object of her care, may be of such service, that Lord Drelincourt will pardon, in its future effects, the temporary estrangement from his hospitable roof.”

These letters seemed to oppose the idea of the fugitives having intended to return to Italy, and Claudina appeared to have hinted a temporary absence, in order to make the mind of the Earl as easy as she could, without betraying her trust by more fully disclosing their intentions.

The Earl was greatly agitated at the discovery that Everilda had made of her unexpected situation; one moment he bitterly reproached himself for the coldness by which he had repulsed her when she sought an interview with him, the next he pleased himself with the thought of consoling her for it, by every testimony of affection which he could lavish on her: now the delightful hope of living to embrace a grandson, diffused rapture over his bosom, so lately the seat of despair; and then fearing to indulge in a vision so extatic, he mentally implored heaven to grant him resolution to withdraw his thoughts from worldly views, and to teach him to bear the disappointment of them with fortitude.

Weeks elapsed and no tidings of Everilda could be gained: the suspense between hope and fear was too torturing for the Earl; in a fit of despondency he resolved to forget entirely the dream of happiness, on which he had with fondness dwelt, and weary of continuing enquiries which raised perpetual hopes, ending only in new disappointments, he returned once more to Castle Drelincourt, whilst Edmund tore himself reluctantly from his Emma, to whom his heart became still more fondly attached by a sympathy in grief, and prepared to return to Florence to pursue his search on the continent, and to acquit himself of the painful but necessary task of informing his parents of the late melancholy occurrences.

## CHAP. XLI.

Ah! fruitless now my hopes, my anxious fears,  
 Fruitless my prospects for thy tender years.  
 Once smiling fancy to my mental view,  
 Brightened the scenes that expectation drew;  
 I saw thy youth in all the flush of may,  
 I saw thy manhood rip'ning to the day:  
 Reflection now must sadden o'er thy tomb,  
 And gather painful knowledge from thy doom.  
 Now vain to me the genial mornings shine,  
 In vain the evenings blush with light divine;  
 In vain the summer blows, the autumn glows,  
 Since grief to me such pensive joy bestows.  
 Then scenes of life—ye rosy hours depart,  
 For only sacred sorrow sooths my heart.

HOWARD.

THE distraction of the Marchese and his Lady may be easily imagined. In their despair they determined to proceed immediately to England. The Marchese declared that he would search round the world for his daughter, and the Marchesa knew not whether more to lament her disappearance, or the unhappiness which had forced her to it.

How different the present meeting between the Earl and the Marchese from their former ones; both unhappy; both feeling injured; and both wishing to disguise their feelings. Their embrace was colder than either intended it to be, yet warmer than either intended it to be, yet warmer than they really felt inclined to bestow; but they could not be long together without reviving the sentiments of friendship which had formed the happiness of their youth, and of which the remembrance shed a pleasing influence over the tranquillity of middle life.

The Marchesa and Lady Drelincourt were of dispositions exactly similar; they lamented the unhappy circumstance under which their acquaintance had commenced, and in lamenting them together they found a consolation which lessened the poignancy of their affliction.

Much as the Marchesa was pleased with the whole of Lady Drelincourt's family, yet to Emma she felt particularly attached; probably the hope of Edmund being made happy by her, was the foundation of an esteem, to which her unaffected loveliness, her feminine sensibility, and retiring modesty, daily added new strength. But the excessive anxiety caused by the mysterious uncertainty of Everilda's fate, and the interesting situation in which she was known to be, precluded every idea of tranquillity. The Earl also still devoted himself to solitude, and though he appeared highly gratified in the society of the Marchese, yet he avoided him whenever he could do it without breaking the laws of hospitality and politeness.

He always breakfasted alone, contriving not to see his guests until dinner, under pretence of being occupied in some alterations on his estate; and after dinner he left the table as soon as

possible, with an excuse of writing letters, or looking over papers. But one day the Marchese had unintentionally traced his steps to the mausoleum, where reposed the ashes of that beloved child, whose untimely death had nipped in the bud, every fair and flattering hope of happiness.

The building stood in the shelter of a small wood, where the gloomy cypress, the mournful larch, and sable yew, cast around a melancholy shade well according with the sad purpose to which it was dedicated. A few flowering shrubs were intermixed, but the season of their sweets was past, and their scanty number, and drooping faded appearance, afforded a melancholy emblem of the paucity and uncertainty of sublunary pleasures. The wind howled with the complaining shrillness that generally attends the declining year, and whirled the dead leaves in its blast, whilst the chilling damp of the atmosphere communicated its influence to the heart. Lord Drelincourt's feelings were in unison with the gloom around him. The temporary suspension of the beauties of nature was congenial to a mind, whose brightest prospects had faded under the stern mandate of death: the spring would bring no pleasure to him, for in his heart it could revive no hopes; the glare of summer suns would have been intolerable when contrasted with the darkness reigning in his bosom, but "the pale descending year was pleasing still," and to him the reluctance with which nature delivers her treasures, and her charms, to "stern winter ruler of th' inverted year," was grateful.

At dinner the Earl appeared as usual, Lady Drelincourt asked him if the alterations he had been planning succeeded to his wishes, "I have been attending to them all the morning," he replied "I cannot say my success equals my desires; but in time I trust I shall be rewarded; had I begun sooner to conquer the obstacles which now oppose them, I might have found less difficulty in the efforts which I find necessary, and the consequences might have been infinitely more fortunate than they can now ever prove." He sighed deeply as he concluded, and it was easy to perceive that he had spoken enigmatically, and that the alterations he alluded to, were those which he was anxious to make in his ideas, not in his estates.

He left the room soon after, saying that he had papers of consequence to inspect. The ladies shortly followed, and as the drawing room which they used when the company consisted only of a small party, commanded from one of the windows a view of the wood in which the mausoleum was erected, the Marchese could not resist an inclination he felt, to know if the Earl continued his solitary walks, at the hours when he affected to be engrossed by business or study.

The moon was shining in unclouded brightness, and under pretence of admiring it, he drew aside curtain, and stood near the window. He had not been there many minutes, before he perceived by the stream of silver light which illumined and pleasingly contrasted the gloom, on which it was poured, the figure of the Earl slowly emerging from the thickest part of the wood; he was soon lost among the trees, and then reappeared; his pace was sometimes so slow that it could scarcely be determined whether he moved, or was rooted to the earth; then, as if recollecting himself, he suddenly walked with quick and unequal steps; pausing, again he looked stedfastly on the mild luminary which seemed to send forth its softest beams, as if to calm his troubled bosom. He gazed on it for some moments, and then with folded arms, and downcast eyes again he disappeared in the impervious gloom.

The Marchese was struck to the soul by the despair which this conduct evinced in his friend; He mentally retraced the time when the Earl was blooming, animated, and gay, as the youth he now lamented with such hopeless anguish; and memory fondly dwelt upon the days in

which they had together planted a thousand schemes of pleasure, for that charming season of life, in which the delicious sensations of expected and undefinable happiness are so strongly imprinted on the mind, that it delights to recall the time when it was so agreeably deceived, long after the delusion has for ever fled.

The Marchese remembering the past, and comparing it with the present, shrunk from the contrast.

Never did he feel more attached to his friend, than at the moment when he considered him so changed. A tear involuntarily strayed down his cheek; it was a tribute to past happiness. A sigh broke from his oppressed heart, it was emblematical of the transient nature of the felicity he lamented.

One evening the family had formed a circle round the fire, to enjoy, if not conversation, at least that agreeable unrestrained silence, which among friends who rightly understand each others feelings, is not less agreeable. Every one spoke, only when he wished to communicate some idea which might gratify the rest; and none intruded a frivolous remark merely from thinking it necessary to say something, to exempt themselves from the charge of not being able to say any thing.

A servant however entered with a letter for the Earl, which he said had just arrived by an express, and this incident interrupted the silence that reigned for some time, if we may call that an interruption which was given by looks and gestures, rather than by words.

The mention of the express had fixed the attention of the party, and had roused that of the Marchese and his lady to a painful height; they had been so inured to disappointment respecting their enquiries after their beloved daughter, that they had almost ceased to hope; but as they had still numerous emissaries continually pursuing their search, this express might be from one of them; Everilda might be found, might be waiting to embrace her parents, or she might be languishing in sickness and distress, and needing all their tenderest consolations.

These thoughts passed in quick succession thro' the minds of more than the anxious parents, and every eye was fixed on the Earl, who had turned pale as he examined the seal and direction of the letter. Instead of opening it, he laid it on the table before him, and appeared lost in thought, till hastily rising he was leaving the room to read it in private, when he saw in the Marchesa's countenance, such evident tokens of anxious doubt and mortified impatience, that he stopped irresolute, and after a short pause exclaimed, "Why should I disguise my feeling from those so dear to me, who will imagine as easily as they will pardon them. I know the seal and writing of this letter; it is from," he paused, and making an effort to repeat the name with firmness, continued, "it is from Sir Edward Clayton. He has written I fear to revive my sorrows by craving an oblivion of the cause; he should have known that there are injuries, for which perpetual silence is the most soothing atonement that can be made." He then looked over the contents of the letter, and whilst so employed, the frequent changes in his countenance evinced, that they were of an interesting and apparently of a pleasing nature. When he had concluded, he went to the Marchese and his lady, and taking their hands, said, "let us be grateful my dear friends, our Everilda is found, and heaven teaches us a lesson of forgiveness by granting that the man who deprived us of a son, should restore to us a daughter." The rapture diffused by this information was general, but on the Marchesa it rushed with such force, that overpowered by its influence, she fainted in her husband's arms. In a few minutes however, she recovered, and was



sufficiently calm to peruse the letter that had occasioned her emotion, and of which the contents were as follows.

“MY LORD,

“The hope of imparting pleasure to your lordship’s breast, has excited in mine, sensations to which it has long been a stranger. If, my lord, you will condescend to receive intelligence from a man, who has, as unintentionally as unhappily, injured you beyond the power of reparation, by acknowledgment, or repentance, I trust that mine will be found interesting, when I enform you it relates to Lady Courtney, of whose retreat, I understand you have hitherto been ignorant; and which I accidentally discovered in Wales at a small village, situated in so retired a spot, that if the poverty and humble condition of the few inhabitants which it contains, were not sufficient to prevent intrusion, nature has effectually guarded them from it by concealing them in a deep valley, which even the eye of curiosity might fail to discern, and by surrounding them with mountains, which the hardest courage might on the first view deem inaccessible.

“I am sorry to be under the necessity of adding that Lady Courtney’s health appears in a very precarious state, but perhaps much ought to be allowed for her present situation, and I hope her anxiety to see her friends, may be equalled by the benefit which she may receive from their society: I am at present with the worthy clergyman of the village, whose guest I shall remain, until I have the satisfaction of resigning to some of your lordship’s family, the responsibility that I at present feel; I shall then leave England, perhaps for ever, but never shall I cease to remember, that it contains those, whose welfare will always be ardently wished, by

“my lord,

“your lordship’s most obedient,

“humble servant,

“EDWARD CLAYTON.”

The person who had brought the letter, was Sir Edward’s valet, and by his master’s orders, he remained with the Earl, in order to attend him on his journey, and to act as a guide, which it was indispensably necessary to have. It was determined that the Marchese and his lady, Lord and Lady Drelincourt, Edmund, and Lady Emma, should set off the next day; attended only by Lady Drelincourt’s woman, and one man servant, as from Sir Edward’s description of the village, it appeared very improbable that a large retinue could be accommodated in it. Lady Emma was chosen in preference to her elder sisters, from Lady Courtney having always appeared particularly partial to her, as well as her being now considered by the Marchesa, as scarcely less dear to her, than the daughter for whom she had wept so many hours away, and to whom she was now about to hasten, with all the speed of maternal rapture.

Leaving the party then to pursue their journey, under the direction of Bernard their trusty conductor, we shall request the attention of our readers, to a retrospective view of the

circumstances which led to the discovery of Lady Courtney by Sir Edward Clayton.

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## CHAP. XLII.

Come patience, come and take me by the hande,  
 And trewe repentance teach myne eyes to weepe;  
 Humyllity, in neede of thee I stande,  
 My soul desires thy companie to keepe:  
 Base worldly thoughts, vanish out of my mynde,  
 Leave not a spot of you, or your's behind.

ROBERT DEVEREUX, EARL OF ESSEX.

THE anguish felt by Lady Courtney, when Lord Drelincourt coldly dismissed her from his presence, was unmixed with resentment. She recollected the kindness with which she had always been treated until that moment; she felt that to the excessive grief in which he had indulged, since the death of his son, was to be imputed the change in his disposition, which had produced a similar change in his manners. The former had become gloomy, and inert; the latter, harsh, and repulsive. "And to whom is this sad alteration owing?" she asked herself. "Who introduced dissension and misery into a family, before admired for domestic happiness and love?" Every enquiry she made, received the same answer; she alone was to blame, and she resolved to expiate the mischief that she had occasioned, by withdrawing herself from a family, in which her presence inspired no ideas, but those of the ills that it had diffused around. "When I am gone," she exclaimed, bitterly weeping, "tranquillity at least may visit the haunts, where felicity once loved to dwell; the Earl will become more resigned to the death of his son, when his wretched widow shall no longer remind him of it. My parents shall never know the misery to which their daughter is reduced. I may not live long; ah! how willingly would I resign the burthen of existence, could I bequeath it in a happier form, to the dear child of my Henry, too precious treasure, who may still console its grandfather for the loss of its parent, of which I have deprived it before its birth." Only Claudina had been entrusted with this interesting secret, which Lady Courtney had concealed even from her husband; induced to do so, partly by recollecting the restraints to which she had been subjected when she was before in a similar situation, and to which she had attributed the disappointment of her wishes; but more from the desire of surprising her friends, with the pleasing intelligence at a more advanced period, when there would be less probability of a second defeat of their hopes. It was a circumstance, which she knew would fill Lord Courtney's heart with delight; and though she every moment longed to see him sympathize in the pleasure that she felt, yet she valued the power of making him happy so highly, that she reserved with a miser's care the means of doing it, until she should be thoroughly satisfied there was no danger of disappointing the expectations she might inspire.

During the melancholy interval of her husband's illness, her thoughts were too much engrossed by his situation, to dwell for one moment on her own; but the tender Claudina recollected it, and trembled, and afterwards it was only by her exhortations, that Everilda endeavoured to conquer the violence of her emotions, which threatened to irreparably destroy the hopes, on which her only desire to live, now rested. What then was the sorrow of this faithful

friend when Lady Courtney in the wildest agonies of grief, after extorting a promise of secrecy from her, entrusted her with the plan she had formed, of withdrawing privately from the Earl's roof, and retiring to some secluded spot, "where," as she expressed herself in the first effusions of despair, "she might live unknown, and die unpitied. I have already," she added, "spoken to Bianca and Giuseppe; they will not leave me; this very night I will depart; Giuseppe will take my trunks; I shall want but little, nor perhaps that little long. I have money enough about me to carry me to any part of the kingdom, and to support me when I arrive at a place of security; I can take leave of no one, not even by letter. My heart is too full to think of framing expressions of describe its feelings; but I would not leave thee, my Claudina, without telling thee my designs, thou wilt say when I am gone, how well I loved the friends from whom I fled; for Edmund and Emma, I leave every tender wish, and daily will I pray that their lot may be more happy and permanent than mine has been. Nay, weep not, my Claudina; our hearts will still be united, though distance may prohibit the exchange of our sentiments; think not that I am going to be more wretched; perhaps I may be less so in solitude, and grief, I shall still take a pleasure in thinking of my Claudina, my first, my only friend; nor shall I fear that she may forget me, in the variety of gayer life."

"And do you think then that I would suffer you to go alone?" exclaimed the weeping Claudina, "shall I forsake you in affliction, when your most prosperous days were devoted to me? Oh! no; Everilda, you should know me better. The friendship of our youth shall never be forgotten; I would go through the World with you, and think myself happy amidst distress and danger, if I could bind up the wounds of my Everilda's heart, and cheer her drooping spirits on our rugged way." They wept together, as Claudina concluded her animated declaration; but soon recovering from, though not repenting, her enthusiasm, she endeavoured to dissuade Everilda from a scheme, which appeared replete with inconvenience to themselves and with uneasiness to their friends. But she was not to be reasoned with, her agitation became so violent on opposition, that Claudina, distressed and irresolute, knew not what plan to pursue, and at last yielded entirely to Lady Courtney's persuasions; consoling herself with the hope, that the Earl's temporary anxiety or displeasure, would be amply repaid by the happy effects which tranquillity and indulgence might have on her friend, when an opposite mode of treatment might endanger her health, and the very being of the infant, whose birth was so anxiously desired.

Drowned in tears, the fair fugitives wrote the few lines meant to inform the family of their departure; and then leaving the house unperceived, were conducted by Bianca to the place, where Giuseppe was already waiting with a chaise and four horses, which conveyed them from town, with a velocity that considerably allayed Everilda's fears of pursuit. During her residence near Bristol, she had frequently expressed a desire to visit Wales; the day had been fixed to gratify this desire when she was taken ill it was no more mentioned. But her thoughts now dwelt on that country, of whose mountainous aspect, and wild romantic situations she had heard much; there she thought it most probable that she should find some sequestered spot, which scarcely human feet had ever trodden, and, with the vague idea of a foreigner, particularly of one who had been accustomed to a variety of small states, all independant of each other, she thought that being out of England, she should be also out of the power of the Earl, should he attempt to insist upon her return; for already she had become so enamoured of her plan of solitary liberty, that she would not bear to think of any occurrence that might oblige her to relinquish it.

They had left London at seven o'clock in the evening, that being the hour when they could most easily elude suspicion, as they knew that no enquiries would be made for them before the hours of two or three in the afternoon of the following day, at which time they had crossed at the New Passage and landed on welch ground.

Lady Courtney's impatience was such that she would scarcely allow time to take some refreshment before she proceeded on her search for an abode. She now wished for a situation near the sea coast, under the idea, that it would be more secure, and less liable to intrusion. By the assistance of a map, a book of roads, and various enquiries, they on the fourth day from their leaving London, met with a place in Cardiganshire, which seemed as if intended for a safe retreat from the busy world; and if it appeared that the comforts and luxuries of more artificial modes of living, must be procured with difficulty, it also promised that the rumours of terror, and lamentation of evils, would be there unheard. Nor would a place so sequestered ever have been perceived by our fair travellers, had not the discovery been made by accident. One of the horses having lost a shoe, a little welch lad on the road offered to bring a blacksmith from the village of Llewemawr, where he lived. Giuseppe proposed, as the shorter way, to take the horse to the village; but the boy informed him that the road was almost inaccessible as the houses were quite at the bottom of the huge mountains they saw all around. This account roused Lady Courtney's curiosity, and leaving the carriage, she and Claudina, ascended with great fatigue wearisome height, whence looking down a narrow pass, they espied what might be a village, but what at that distance appeared to them merely a few white stones collected together in the green and narrow valley; such was the lofty eminence from which it was beheld.

The very sight of a retreat so humble and secure, was sufficient to inspire feelings of tranquillity in the bosom of affliction long agitated by all the agonies of passion. "Ah! exclaimed Everilda, let us seek no further; there will I wear out the remainder of my days; the sun that now strikes his slanting beams on the mountain's green and sloping side, will shine sweetly on my grave, and I shall find repose near the little church whose spire peeps from that cluster of trees." She then turned to survey the prospect on the other side of the mountains. They commanded an extensive view of the sea, and of a bold and wild country; she was pleased with the contrast these grand features afforded to the mild serenity of the sheltered vale. "You will like this, my Claudina," said she, "for you can scale these heights, and wander among these rocky cliffs on the sea shore. Ah! I shall feel grateful if we can be accommodated in that peaceful valley; we will immediately make enquiries. But how shall we descend? Nature seems to have protected the inhabitants from intrusion by making their humble residences inaccessible." "How then," said Claudina, with a faint though pensive smile, "shall I be enabled to wander among the cliffs as you promised me. I fear my walks must be confined to the narrow green below, whilst I may raise my eyes in wonder to the mountain's top, and think what sights I might behold, could I but gain their towering heights. It will teach me however to be humble, nor can any place appear confined to me, if I see my Everilda smile in it." Lady Courtney pressed her hand, and said with more cheerfulness than she had ever shewn since her husband's death, "You forget, my Claudina, the invigorating quality of this pure atmosphere; you will soon be as strong as one of the welch peasant girls, of whom we have already seen many, whose labours might make a pampered steed ashamed of his idleness; and you will become as active as one of the goats, that skip from crag to crag, and look down on the world which lies in miniature beneath them, as animals less innocent,

regard from the eminence of power, the unexalted, whom they consider as born only to be subservient to their interests." Giuseppe now returned, with information that the horse was ready to proceed; Lady Courtney enquired the road into the village, he answered, that it was safe to venture in the carriage, but that there was a foot path, which afforded a pleasant, and easy descent. They therefore took the way he pointed out to them, and soon arrived in the vale.

If the grand view from the mountains excited sublime ideas, the placid serenity below, inspired the gentlest and most pleasing sensations. The eye could discern nothing but the clear blue sky, and the steep green ascent, on which a few goats were browsing, and trees scattered here and there, relieved without destroying its uniformity.

The village was in itself, every thing that could be desired; sheltered, warm, and clean; through it a stream hastily ran over a pebbled bed; the cottages had an air of comfort, and were not contrasted by any edifice much more important. A small church peeped from a cluster of trees, and very near it, a modest mansion belonging to the clergyman, was distinguished from the rest, more by the taste of its owner, than by any real superiority that it possessed. A little higher indeed, there was

"A gothic mansion venerably gray,  
The faint memorial of a better day."

Which had once been dignified with the name of a seat, and had in former times, been the residence of a large and ancient family, but,

"The lizard and the lazy lurking bat,  
Had long inhabited the painted room,  
Where the sage matron and her maiden sat,  
Sweet singing at the silver working loom."

The enlightened heir of modern days, had chosen rather to encrease his scanty income, by a mean and painful dependance on the great, than to limit his wishes, to his power of gratifying them. He had therefore long bade adieu to his native mountains and valleys, leaving the seat of his ancestors, to moulder in ruin and neglect, a fit emblem of his own broken fortune, and disappointed hope.

## CHAP. XLIII

Ah me, full sorely is my heart forlorn,  
 To think how modest worth neglected lies;  
 Whilst partial fame doth with her blast adorn,  
 Such deeds alone as pride and pomp disguise;  
 Deeds of ill sort, and mishievous emprise,  
 Lend me thy clarion goddess! let me try,  
 To sound the praise of merit ere it dies,  
 Such as I oft have chanced to espy;  
 Lost in the dreary shades of dull obscurity.

SHENSTONE.

WE should not have detained our readers with the history of this deserted hall, as its fate was not much harder than that of many of its brethren; but it happened to be the only place, in the village, that afforded any prospect of accommodation for the strangers whose arrival had filled the inhabitants with a degree of amazement, which seemed to have deprived them of the power of speech, as Lady Courtney could procure no answer to any of her enquiries. The women curtsied and pulled their children out of the way, the children peeped from behind their mammies, and all the men were out at work, excepting the blacksmith, whose attitude and figure were precisely that of the knight of the anvil, described in Shakspear's King John. However when he had recovered from the first effects of surprise, and his mouth had gradually closed until it came within proper limits for utterance, he directed them to the clergyman, who was a good man, he said and a shentleman porn and pred, and her would tell hur every thing hur wanted to know. To this shentleman they accordingly went and apologizing for their intrusion, explained the reason of it, requesting to know if they could procure lodging in a retirement with which they were already charmed. The clergyman was indeed by birth a gentleman, but was unfortunately born a century too late to be so by any thing more profitable than genealogy. In the days when his ancestors were in their zenith of power, they called themselves Ap Rice; but when their descendants found themselves obliged to retrench their appearances and expences, they carried the spirit of economy even into their name, and striking from it the superfluous A, contented themselves with calling it Price, justly imagining that the Ap, signifying the son of, would be very unnecessarily retained in an age when if the son were poor, the father was never enquired after. We shall therefore introduce the worthy clergyman to our readers as Mr. Price. This gentleman was the youngest of fourteen children: by means of a good capacity and studious inclination, he had been enabled to take orders, and was fortunate enough to procure the living of Lewenmawr, which was worth fifteen pounds perannum; and his success created envy in the breasts of many in his calling whose income was only two thirds of that value. For himself he would have been contented, as his wishes were moderate, and it was not wealth that could constitute his felicity; but alas! the want of the former eventually deprived him of the latter. He had been attached from his earliest youth to the daughter of a neighbouring gentleman. She

returned his passion, and would gladly have shared with him the inconveniences of a narrow income, thinking, and with some reason, whatever selfish prudence or cautious avarice may urge to the contrary, that mutual affection would supply the place of many luxuries. Unfortunately the parents were not in love, and what was more unfortunate still, they were too compassionate to forbid the intercourse between the young people, tho' they were also too worldly-minded to consent to their wishes. Thus, year after year rolled on, marked only by the agitation of hope, or listlessness of disappointment. Time endeared them to each other, but the health of the young lady sank under the trial, to which her parents exposed her. Naturally gentle and susceptible, the conflict between affection and duty was too powerful for her delicate frame. At length her parents seeing her ready to fall a victim to avarice, relented, and implored her to live and to make them happy by being so herself. They fixed an early day for her faithful lover to receive her hand, and at length the long-looked for hour arrived. But his rapture was checked by apprehension; for scarcely could her faltering steps conduct her to the altar, scarcely could her feeble accents pronounce the vow that made him happy; she did however pronounce it, she became his wife, he pressed her in rapture to his bosom. "Now Maria thou art mine indeed," he exclaimed, "I am my Owen," she replied, "let me be ever thine." Overcome by her emotions she struggled in vain against their force; in her weak state agitation was fatal; she pressed her hand to her head overpowered by the violence of its throbbings; alas! it was the flutter of departing life, and sinking into her husband's arms she expired, almost immediately after the ceremony that had united them. Thus in an instant was destroyed the fabric of bliss which slow and painful years had erected, and which fidelity and perseverance had finally completed. The anguish and remorse of the parents exceeded description. The grief of the widowered lover was silent but deep. The prime of his youth had been consumed in anxiety, the meridian of his life was devoted to sorrow, but in his sorrow, there was none of the harshness and misanthropy, which render the indulgence of it a crime. He mourned not as 'they without hope,' he considered his separation from his Maria as temporary, and looked with calm resignation to the period when he might be permitted to rejoin her. Withdrawing himself entirely from society he wept over her grave, which he could see from the window of the little parsonage, that he had fondly hoped would be one day adorned by her presence; he gazed on it unceasingly, and was almost tempted to envy her innocent and undisturbed repose. At other times he was employed in the management of a few acres of ground, and amused himself with some birds which had belonged to his Maria, or with cultivating the flowers with which she had ornamented his garden having planted many of them herself in her occasional visits with her parents. Over these remembrances he watched with the utmost care; as their blossoms expanded, his heart became sensible of pleasure, and when the chilling blasts of approaching winter robbed them of their charms, he sighed and remembered that her's were blighted in their prime. But these objects claimed not all his attention, he wished not to live only to indulge in fruitless grief; he forgot his own sorrows, to assuage those of his parishioners; and relieved their wants from his own frugal stores: he saw himself revered by the few children of unsophisticated nature, with whom he was surrounded, and his earthly wishes strayed not beyond the narrow limits of the vale of Llewemawr, and its humble inhabitants.

"To them his heart, his love, his griefs, were giv'n,  
But all his serious thoughts had rest in heav'n;



As some tall cliff that lifts its awful form,  
Swells from the vale and midway leaves the storm;  
Tho' round its breast the rolling clouds are spread,  
Eternal sunshine settles on its head."

Mr. Price was walking in his garden, when he was informed of the arrival of the ladies, and he immediately left it to receive them with that native politeness which is the offspring of benevolence and good sense, and wants not the superficial ornaments of courtly expression or fashionable modes to recommend it.

He told the ladies that he should be happy in gaining them for neighbours, if it should be in his power to be serviceable to them; and informed them of the mansion that we have already mentioned, one part of which was occupied by a farmer and his wife; but the principal apartments were at liberty. He added that a lady had fitted up two or three rooms in a simple style, the preceding summer; that she had made it her residence for some months on account of her health, but her disorder was hopeless when she came, and she died in the autumn. This account did not discourage Lady Courtney, which the good man was glad to observe, for he had related the fact without disguise, lest she should hear it with additions from any other person, and be made uneasy by it; for he well knew that in solitude and sickness, the mind is ingenious to torment itself, and he thought he could perceive that his new acquaintance had not been accustomed to either, though she at present sought the former, and appeared evidently afflicted with the latter.

After some further conversation, he offered to accompany the ladies to view their destined habitation, and they were well pleased with the prospect of comfort which it afforded.

The rooms were commodious, and neatly furnished. A garden behind the house was carried to some extent on the slope of the mountain, which defended it from every inclement gale, and a winding path conducted the passenger with ease to the highest ascents. The good women of the house engaged to have every thing in order by the evening, and in the interim the clergyman invited the ladies to partake of his humble fare. The luggage was therefore taken off, the chaise dismissed, and the wanderers rejoiced that their search of an asylum, was so successfully ended.

## CHAP. XLIV.

And yet e'en here amid these secret shades,  
 These simple scenes of unreproved delight,  
 Affliction's iron hand my breast invades,  
 And death's dread dart is ever in my sight.

SCOTT.

IT is not in the least surprising, that in this retired spot, the fugitives eluded all enquiry. Our readers must therefore now contemplate Lady Courtney no longer as the

“—————giddy fluttering thing,  
 Who shone in the park, and sparkled in the ring:”

but as a penitent recluse, hiding her charms, and wearing away the uniform day, in the solitary retirement of Llewemawr; attended only by her Claudina, who “pined in thought,” but still wore on her placid countenance, the smile of content, to cheat her friend into the cheerfulness, which she feared had for ever fled her own bosom. Accustomed to restraint from her early youth, it was not now that Claudina found it irksome. She regretted the world, only as it contained the man, of whom she thought incessantly, and whom she every moment resolved to forget. To her, the vale of Llewemawr, never appeared too narrow in its limits, but when she considered that it deprived her of the society, which when possessed, caused her pain, and yet of which the remembrance was now her only pleasure.

Sometimes she felt her spirits sink into despondency, when she beheld the fleeting days of her youth, consuming in hopeless disappointment; the past marked only by the cruelty of her relations, the future promising only mournful remembrances, and fruitless regrets.

But Claudina's mind, was not more ornamented by every bewitching trait of female delicacy, and sensibility, than it was armed with the more masculine endowments of firmness and resolution; and no sooner was she sensible of the lethargy into which her mental faculties were falling, then she made every laudable effort to rouse them from it; not more on her own account than that of her friend, whose spirits, too prone to droop, needed not the contagious influence of example.

To effect this, she resolved to divert her thoughts, by giving them new subjects for employment. She took daily exercise, knowing how much the mind is influenced by the body; and that the sensations excited in the one, by the health-inspiring breeze, and the contemplation of the beauties of nature, ever new and delightful, must preclude in the other, at least for a time, the indulgence of dispiriting and unpleasing ideas. The tender and elegant Leonard, justly says, “Rural air is balsamic to a wounded mind, and the charms of nature, communicate a secret calm to the soul, which stills the stormy voice of the passions.” She wandered among the cliffs on the sea shore, and was soothed by the monotonous murmur of the waves, or amused by the varied sounds of the different birds, which built amongst the rocks, and sought their prey upon the

waters. Sometimes she saw the distant vessel gliding in gentle safety on the smooth waste, at others the treacherous element changing its aspect, threatening destruction to the hardy adventurers, whom it lifted as if to the clouds, and then sunk as though in its fury it would bury them, and their dearly-earned treasures in its fathomless abyss.

Often would she return laden with curious shells, or the most beautiful flowers, either the wild produce of the mountains, or those indigenous to the sea shore: she would delineate them with the most delicate exactness, until the shades of evening interfered with her employment, when she would take her guitar, and play to Everilda all the favourite tunes of their early youth, from the lively airs of the Venetian Gondoliers, to the pensive strains of Metastasio; and her sweet and flexible voice, would for a time charm to rest, in Everilda's bosom, the remembrance of her sorrows. Thus with the few authors that they were enabled to bring with them, and the few that they could borrow from Mr. Price, whose pleasing and rational society, was a valuable acquisition to them, the days passed in tranquil uniformity, and Claudina began to reap by returning health and peace, the reward of her perseverance in what she rightly deemed a branch of duty.

But with Everilda it was very different; whoever has known the approving smile, the partial praise, the lively participation in pleasure, the soothing consolation in sorrow, and the thousand nameless attentions of conjugal affection, will know also, that the kindest offices of the most unwearied friends, must inevitably fall far, far short of the supporting love of an indulgent husband. The loneliness of Everilda's heart then may be easily conceived; her mind accustomed from infancy to the powerful stimulus of constant and extravagant praise from all around her, seemed to sink under mere debility, now that it was no longer supported even by her own approbation. She had lost the wish to please, and none more worthy filled the large space that it had once occupied.

The constant remembrance of her husband was never unaccompanied by the reproach, of having been indirectly accessory to his death; the ghost of her departed happiness incessantly hovered before her mental view, and accused her as its murderess.

With whatever intention we are tried by afflictions, it certainly was never designed for them to inspire unreasonable, or as it may be justly termed, irrational grief. The consequences ever attendant on the excessive indulgence of unavailing sorrow, by depriving the mind of benevolence, and the body of health, ought to teach us, that it is no less offensive to the great Creator, who has permitted us to be afflicted, than it is prejudicial to ourselves, and painful to those, by whom we are surrounded.

He cannot be said to be resigned, who mourns incessantly, and who in obstinately contemplating his sorrows, betrays a stubbornness of mind, which will not be subdued by them.

The attentions of friendship are never more valuable or more praiseworthy than when worn out by suffering, a sense of them can scarcely be expressed by their object. From Claudina they were paid with an assiduity which increased in proportion as the unhappy Everilda appeared unconscious of it, and sacrificing all her own plans, just as she began to reap the benefit of them, she confined herself entirely to the house, never for a moment leaving Lady Courtney, who from the acute agonies of grief, gradually sunk into a state of silent dejection, much more prejudicial to her health, and infinitely more dangerous to her mental faculties: in this sad state, her mind dwelt with foreboding melancholy on her condition; she looked forward to the hour, when she should

bring forth the fatherless child of her Henry, and all her spirits sank, in the idea that she might not live to become a mother. She had heard the little history of her predecessor, to whose death she often reverted, always concluding her sympathizing reflections on it, with predictions that her own was not far distant.

The lady's name was Leeson, she had married a young officer of genteel family, but no fortune, against the consent of her father, who was the owner of the mansion, in which she had died. He renounced her on her marriage, and persisted in his resentment, with the firmness that too often sustains us in error, whilst it is not equally powerful, in encouraging us in virtue.

Mrs. Leeson had accompanied her husband in the expedition, under the Duke of York, which deprived England of too many of her sons; unfortunately Captain Leeson was amongst the number. His wife bathed his wounds in her tears, and had the melancholy satisfaction, of hearing him declare, that death in her arms lost its terrors, though parting with her, added to its bitterness. The young widow returned to England with a broken heart, impaired constitution, and destitute of a single friend.

But her distresses melted not the heart of her father, he piqued himself on the observance of his resolution, and almost feared lest the permission he gave her, to die in the deserted mansion of his ancestors, might be construed into a recantation.

She was not long however his debtor even for shelter; she soon sunk under sorrow and illness, and fled from the severity of an earthly father, to that heavenly one, whose boundless mercies and incessant forgiveness, should teach his creatures to show each other the forbearance and compassion which they continually require and receive from his inexhaustible goodness.

Lady Courtney delighted to dwell on the untimely fate of this unfortunate female, and Mr. Price, with the most benevolent intentions, often enlarged on the piety and resignation, that she had displayed during her illness. But no arguments could erase from Everilda's mind, the idea which self-love naturally inspires, that she was the most unfortunate of human beings. "Say not so, my dear madam," replied the patient teacher of the holy precepts which his practice beautifully exemplified; "say not so; certainly there are many who are more unfortunate than you can consider yourself, and I hope you will never be convinced by the pressure of calamities still more intolerable, than those under which you at present suffer, were not only more bearable than the afflictions of many others, but also than you were destined to endure. We should think it highly presumptuous in any one to declare that his happiness exceeded that of any other created being; nor could we deem the correction severe which might dash his cup of boasted bliss with the alloy of temporary sorrow. Yet a declaration of this nature would be infinitely more excusable than that which you have made, for it might proceed from an excess of gratitude and a lively sense of the blessings that inspired it; but if a decrease of his happiness might be permitted to convince him of its uncertainty, is it not also to be feared that the repining mind may be taught by additional calamities, that those under which it murmured, were comparatively easy to be borne." Seeing Everilda looked distressed, though not convinced, and understanding the silent appeal she made to heaven, by raising her eyes to it, he proceeded in a yet milder tone, "I mean not to declaim in the mere pride of words; I trust that the actions of my past life may give weight to the arguments I would use; I teach what I do know; I have been acquainted with Sorrow so long, that I now consider her as a friend, to whose society, though gloomy, I am so much accustomed, that the gay novelty of any other would not repay me for the trouble of seeking it."

“I know it is not always possible to forget, it is what I could never teach myself, but I would learn to remember without bitterness, and this is what I would wish to teach you.” “Alas,” replied Everilda, “there is even in this life, ‘the worm that dieth not;’ for when the arrows of adversity are turned aside by the shield of fortitude, when the stings of neglect are weakened by the consciousness of rectitude, when even the bitterness of death is allayed by the consolations of remembrance, yet for self-reproach there is no cure, to its wounds the world can apply no palliative, no lethean balm; and when it can endure its own sufferings without incessant torments, it merits still more severe condemnation. Oh God,” continued she, clasping her hands and giving way to an agony of tears, “a contrite heart thou wilt not despise, but a wounded spirit who can bear.” “Yet is not that rather an effusion of wounded pride or mortified self love, than the humble sentiment of penitence or contrition?” asked Mr. Price; he then continued, “It would ill become me to be severe on mankind, and never should the language of censure pass my lips, but with the hope of producing reformation. Yet I fear, if we consider the remorse that arises in the mind, from the recollection of an error, we shall find that the injuries produced by our follies, are less bearable, as we see after the mist of passion or prejudice is evaporated, how easily they might have been avoided. Then indeed every day adds to the painfulness of our recollections, because every day weakens the impulses, which occasioned our fault, and adds to those, which make us ardently long to recal it.

“To repent truly, and to reap benefit from repentance, we must divest ourselves of the garb of selfishness, and be clothed in that of humility; we must deplore our crimes and not their consequences; and when we may humbly hope to have reconciled ourselves to God, by the means which he has graciously pointed out to us, we may then think of a reconciliation with our own reflections.” Such were the discourses held by the worthy divine, whenever he perceived Everilda unusually depressed. Ignorant as he was of her condition in life, or of the peculiar circumstances that had driven her to seek refuge in a situation to which it was easy to perceive she had not been accustomed he knew that she was unhappy, nor did he wish to know more, unless further knowledge could teach him to make her less so. His compassion was warmly interested for her, and he lamented the early wreck of such talents, and graces as shone even through the dark cloud, in which her daily increasing dejection enveloped them. But if he compassionated Everilda, he revered almost to enthusiasm, the virtues of Claudina; unwearied patience, unshaken fortitude, and uncomplaining sweetness, were assembled in the smile of resignation that illuminated her countenance, the pensive expression of which, could not fail to inspire the most tender sympathy in minds of sensibility, congenial to her own; and as she assiduously watched the declining health, and drooping spirits of her friend, guessing her wishes, and anticipating her wants with the tenderest solicitude, she seemed to personify her, who as described by Mason,

“Her meek hands folded on her modest breast,  
In mute submission lifts th’ adoring eye,  
E’en to the storm that wrecks her.”

## CHAP XLV.

Let me, o! let me near some fountain lie!  
 That thro' the rock lifts up its foamy head;  
 Or let me dwell upon some mountain high,  
 Whose hollow root, and baser parts are spread  
 On fleeting waters, in its bowels bred:  
 That I their streams, and they my tears may feed;  
 Or clothed in some hermit's ragged weed,  
 Spend all my days in weeping for this cursed deed.

GILES FLETCHER.

WE will not detain our readers with an account of Sir Edward Clayton's sensations, when he heard of Lord Courtney's death. All that a mind of sensibility could feel, at the dreadful thought of being accessory to the death of a fellow creature, was felt by him; and increased by the recollection, of the amiable qualities of the deceased, and the wretchedness into which his untimely fate had plunged those connected with him.

Literature, in which Clayton could once find a balm for every wound, now became hateful to him. What indeed could books teach him? Poetry and fiction, only led him to contrast and lament the sad realities of life; whilst morality and reasoning, taught him but to condemn more severely, his own conduct, of which the retrospect was already too painful.

In this unfortunate situation he resolved to study the book of nature, and endeavouring to divert mental uneasiness by bodily employment, he assumed the name of Balfour, and wandered on foot through the greatest part of Wales, staying a few days at any place that appeared agreeable to him, and quitting it when the attractive but transient charm of novelty had fled.

At Caermarthen he met with an old acquaintance, a clergyman, to whom he communicated his change of name, and reasons for so doing, and this friend, anxious to serve him, gave him letters to many of his brethren, and amongst the rest, to Mr. Price; and he made use of these letters, just as he felt a temporary wish to have some one, to whom he could communicate his remarks, or was pleased with the situation of those, to whom they were addressed.

The latter motive induced him to deliver an introductory epistle to Mr. Price, with whose conversation and manners he was soon so highly gratified, that he resolved to suspend his wanderings, and endeavour to find consolation in the precepts, and reap benefit from the example, of the chastened mourner, who notwithstanding the retired life he had led for many years, possessed a mind richly stored, if not with classical learning, yet with that kind of reading and sentiment which perhaps affords a greater, and more pleasing variety of information.

It is not requisite for a person to have passed the principal part of his time in the busy scenes of life, to enable him to be an agreeable and instructive companion in retirement. It is certain, that if the paucity and uniformity of incidents be such, as to inspire no interest, and rouse no reflection, the mind must depend solely on its own powers for amusement; and then, memory

may indeed afford truly valuable additions to present ideas, by recalling past scenes, and the sensations inspired by a retrospective view of them, will be gentle, and pleasing, as those felt on perusing for the second time, after a lapse of years, a work in which we were before strongly interested. They please indeed more from a recollection of the much greater pleasure, of which we had before been sensible; the vision is not now so bright; like a landscape by moonlight, the colours appear faded, and indistinct, but the very gloom in which they are involved is grateful, and perhaps adds to the effect.

We repeat that it is not seeing much, but reflecting on what we do see, by which the amusements of youth may add to the pleasures of age; and it generally happens that they who live the most in the busy world, are precisely they who profit the least by its variety.

The statesman, retiring in disgust, renounces the projects of patriotism and ambition, without seeking to occupy the large space, which they had till then filled in his mind; but man was not born to be idle; emperors have amused themselves in solitude, with making watches, or planting cabbages; and he who guided the helm of the state, whose breath made war or peace, whose hand dispensed the riches of his country, or the lives of his countrymen, will in retirement amuse himself with feeding goldfish, laying stones in even rows in his gravel walks, or any other pastime equally innocent. The disabled warrior may still “shoulder his crutch, and tell how fields were won;” but he is as often content to pass the bottle, or hold a hand at cards, without betraying any information superior to that possessed by many who,

“Along the cool sequestered vale of life,  
Have kept the noiseless tenor of their way.”

The sailor, after exposing himself to every peril of the wind and waves, is glad to cast anchor towards the decline of life, in a snug berth, procured by his hazardous industry, and forgets by his fireside, the roaring of the winds, and the rocking of the waves. The manners of different climes, have left few traces on his mind, and those few are gradually effaced, for as Sir William Davenant observes,

“He’s made no use of sight,  
By any thing observed in wide strange seas,  
But only of the length of voyages.”

He is indeed consulted as an oracle respecting the weather, and when he meets with any old acquaintance, he talks of rocks and straits, dangerous passages, and safe anchorages, but of men and manners, he is perhaps unable to give an opinion, notwithstanding the variety that he may have seen.

Cowper’s life illustrates these remarks; during twenty years, he went not thirteen miles from one sequestered spot; yet do his writings betray any want of incident? or what succession of incidents could give rise to more just and beautiful observations, than he has made in his retirement? Indeed it appears to us highly probable, that his twenty years of seclusion, were spent with much more satisfaction to himself, and benefit to his fellow creatures, than the same period may be by those sons of fortune, who in that time run through half the countries of Europe, to

return and abuse their own; who spend their youth like fools, their middle-age like knaves, and their old-age like children. The justice and elegance with which Young expresses his ideas on this subject, will we trust sufficiently apologize for our presenting them to our readers, however our own crude remarks may suffer by a comparison with those of this celebrated author.

“Wisdom is the growth of experience, but experience is not the growth of action, but of reflection on it. In an active life are sown the seeds of wisdom, but he who reflects not, never reaps; has no harvest from it; he carries the burthen of old-age, without the wages of experience; nor knows himself to be old, but from his infirmities, the parish register, and the contempt of mankind. And what has age if it have not esteem?—it has nothing.—”

“And so all this long digression, is to prove that the world is foolish and wicked, as if we did not know that without your illtimed information,” say some of the courteous ones, who may honor these pages by a perusal; yet, fair and gentle readers, accuse us not of a design so malevolent, but rather exert some of that forbearing quality, so necessary for the votaries of the Minerva of modern days, and you will then patiently hear, and implicitly believe, that our intentions were simply to prove, that Mr. Price in his little parsonage at Llewemawr, was a companion as interesting and rational, as could be found in the circle at St. James’s. “Simply enough indeed, and tediously enough, but pray proceed, and do not tax us more with the apologies than you have done even with the offence.” Now, most respected readers, that being a speech admitting of two constructions, we shall, as experience has taught us is the wisest way, construe it into a compliment, and shew ourselves grateful, by immediately complying with the request.

Sir Edward soon told Mr. Price that he should like to become a resident, in the vale of Llewemawr, for a few weeks, if he could be accommodated with lodgings. Mr. Price replied with a courtesy of manner, still more flattering than his words, “Could I find any accommodations in the village equal to my desires for your comfort, Mr. Balfour, I would not be so selfish, as to solicit you to remain my guest; but I frankly confess, I know not of any better, than the bed-room that you have under my roof, and the little closet that I dignify with the name of study, which I beg you will consider appropriated solely to your use; these with a chair in my parlour, and a place at my table, whenever you will honor me with occupying them, and the range of my grounds, over the whole of which, you might range in one quarter of an hour, are what I have to offer you, what you are not only heartily welcome to, but will oblige me by accepting, and what you will not find any of my parishioners capable of offering you. Thus you see,” continued he, smiling, “I threaten you into a compliance with my wishes.” “And mine my dear sir,” said Sir Edward, “are too much interested in it, to need the repetition of such friendly entreaties. I should have preferred a lodging could I have procured one, as your conversation is such a temptation to me, that in order to enjoy it, I fear I shall intrude on your solitude, oftener than may be agreeable to you; but whenever I am troublesome tell me so, and give me an opportunity of shewing my sense of your kindness, by the readiness with which I would make my gratification yield to your convenience.”

Sir Edward accordingly took up his abode with the worthy clergyman; and his mind gradually recovering from the anguish under which it had smarted, softened into a melancholy not unpleasing. The tidings of Lady Courtney’s disappearance had not reached him, and he endeavoured to detach his thoughts entirely from her, feeling that by so doing, he paid the only



tribute of respect in his power, to the memory of a man, whom in life he had esteemed, but whose death he had unfortunately precipitated.

Perhaps he had the less merit in this forbearance, as he found it more easy to practise than he had once supposed it could ever be. But now horror would have mingled with his love, and he could not bring himself to even wish for the woman whom he had so fondly adored, when he considered her as the widow of the man whom he had destroyed. Whether it were that in dwelling on the remembrance of Claudina, his ideas were unalloyed by any sentiments foreign to that tenderness and sensibility, which she was eminently calculated to inspire; whether it were that she gained by the force of contrast, or whether as Rochefaucault asserts, "The heart is never so readily disposed to receive new impressions, as when it is smarting under the wounds caused by old ones;" certain it is, that Sir Edward incessantly thought of her, wished earnestly that he had esteemed her as she deserved, when he first became acquainted with her, and then sighed again, as he recollected that it would have availed nothing, for, had she not owned that she loved, and loved without hope? This recollection filled him with a peevishness, for which he knew not how to account. He was certain it was not jealousy; that could not exist without passion, and he knew that he had never felt the influence of passion but for Everilda. He might have been happy however, he acknowledged, had Claudina condescended sooner to become his mistress, for who so capable of instruction as she, whose conduct so amiably illustrated the precepts she would teach? He wished to know her sentiments on the late unhappy occurrence, but he feared she must condemn him, and feeling that her censures would make him still more dissatisfied with himself, he endeavoured to rejoice that he should probably never be made acquainted with them.

## CHAP. XLVI.

Oh peaceful solitude!  
Where all things smile and in sweet concert join,  
All but my thoughts, they still are out of time,  
And break, like jarring strings, the harmony.

TATE.

Mr. Price did not forget in the pleasure he found from his new friend's society, the attention that he owed to his interesting female acquaintance, and he was so regular in his visits to them, that Sir Edward laughingly enquired into the inducements he had, to be so constant in his devoirs. Mr. Price gave him all the information in his power concerning the ladies, whom Sir Edward had never seen, owing to the increasing indisposition of the one not allowing her to go abroad, and the unwearied kindness of the other, who could not be prevailed on to leave her sick friend.

Mr. Price knew only the time and manner of their arrival; the reason of their retirement, he had never even conjectured, for he possessed none of the restless curiosity, "which grows by what it feeds upon." They appeared to be unhappy, and he had done what he could to alleviate their affliction, "of which," said he, "it was unnecessary to know the source, if that knowledge would not have enabled me to remove it; and I respected their sorrows too much, to discover a wish to be more intimately acquainted with the nature of them. I am however inclined to imagine that they are french emigrants, for they read and speak that language apparently with much more ease than the english, which indeed though they seem to understand it perfectly, and converse in it with the fluency of natives, they yet evidently pronounce with a foreign accent." He then praised in the highest terms the young lady, whom he had never heard addressed by any other name than that of Louisa, and extolled her amiable and interesting attention to Mrs. Belmont, which was the name that Lady Courtney had adopted. "Such firmness joined to so much sensibility, such piety, resignation and fortitude," said he, "I have never seen equalled but in one, who was lovely and amiable, as she is now," he sighed deeply as he concluded, and hastily went to the little window, whence, notwithstanding the twilight was fading away, he could still discern the humble stone that marked his Maria's grave. Sir Edward echoed his sigh, and thought there was yet in the world, another, whose gentle virtues, and unassuming charms would not suffer by a comparison with those of the amiable foreigner, or of the unfortunate Maria, so untimely blasted. The widower'd clergyman had in his enthusiasm touched a discordant string, and Clayton versed in the feelings of the heart, and the eloquent manner in which silence sometimes expresses them, conjectured what passed in the bosom of his friend, and resolved to leave him to his own reflections, well knowing that there are moments, when any society is an interruption to the communion which the unhappy love to hold with solitude.

It was at an hour when every noise in the village was hushed, save those which add charms even to stillness. The moon had risen in unclouded majesty, and some of her beams "slept sweetly on the bank," whilst others played on the surface of the brook, which fled with limpid speed to join the waters of many streams, that were proud to add their stores to the ocean.

The wind just agitated the trees, sufficiently to make mournful music, and at intervals the tinkling of bells, and barking of the watch-dogs were heard, whilst the ponderous swing of a distant waggon, broke with fuller sound upon the charmed ear.

Sir Edward's feelings were soothed by the beauty of the moonlight scene, and his fertile imagination was picturing the vague and indefinite kind of happiness, which though he never could exactly define in what it should consist, he had incessantly sought, and had been as constantly disappointed in his search. He was roused from his reverie by hearing a guitar struck in plaintive notes; and looking round this sublunary sphere as far as his very contracted prospect would allow, he found himself opposite to the walls, which enclosed the peerless fair ones, of whom his friend had so often expressed his pity and admiration. From these walls the dulcet sounds did certainly proceed; Clayton was at all times an enthusiastic admirer of music, and like Marmontel's Fonrose, he generally carried his flute about with him. He now took it from his pocket, his soul was on his lips, and he longed to breathe forth the dictates of sensibility. The fear however of appearing to treat two unprotected strangers with levity or disrespect, deterred him, and he contented himself with listening to the pensive, and fascinating vocal strains, which the lady now added to her instrument; the words he could not distinguish, but the voice was surely Claudina's. The improbability of the idea checked the momentary transport it had inspired. "Of late," he said to himself, "I can never hear of any thing virtuous or delightful, but I associate Claudina with it; and why should I not? she is deserving of far higher praise than I can bestow upon her, shall I then merely refuse it, because I know that from me, it could create in her heart no stronger passion than gratitude?" Whilst he thus argued with himself, the music ceased, and he saw through the white muslin curtain, a female figure walk across the room. Candles were brought in soon after, and he could then plainly discern both the ladies. They were in sable garbs, and one appeared to weep whilst the other hung over her in an affectionate attitude and seemed to be speaking the most soothing language of consolation.

He waited some minutes in the hope of being once more gratified with the melancholy harmony, but he was disappointed, for shortly after one of the ladies occupied herself with needlework, and the other seating herself near the table reclined her head upon her hand and apparently abandoned herself to silent meditation. Not expecting to derive much gratification from being a spectator of this scene, particularly through a curtain, he returned home, with the remembrance of Everilda vibrating through his heart, and agitating it with a thousand painful sensations; till the mild image of Claudina appearing like his guardian angel, put every harsher thought to flight.

The day after Clayton's evening ramble, Lady Courtney happened to remark the more than usual paleness and dejection of her faithful friend, who, tho' she could forbear complaining, could not conceal the ravages which confinement and uneasiness had made in her health. Everilda was equally shocked and distressed at a conviction, which she blamed herself for not having felt before.— "Alas!" said she, "my Claudina, I was not always so selfish, the sense of my own sorrows has destroyed my sympathy for those of others; but I will not suffer you longer to confine yourself so strictly with me; my situation," added she sighing, "deprives me of the pleasure of accompanying you in your walks, but your account of them will enliven me, and I shall feel very grateful if I can see exercise bestow even a temporary bloom on the cheek, which has been deprived of it by too great a sympathy in my misfortunes." Claudina's cheek did,

indeed, gain a temporary bloom as Everilda spoke, conscious that the feelings of her own wayward heart had conduced to rob her of it, but she would not consent to leave her friend alone. To obviate that objection, Lady Courtney sent to beg the favor of Mr. Price's company, and when he arrived, Claudina bent her steps towards her favorite though deserted walk by the sea shore. It was at that season of the year when the beauties of nature are declining daily. Claudina was particularly sensible of the change which had taken place in the scenery during her long confinement to the house. The change however was not unpleasing to the frame of mind that she was in; the rich and varied hues of the autumnal foliage amply compensated, in her eyes, the loss of its summer freshness; and the cawing of the rooks, as they wheeled round in the air, soothed her feelings into harmony as perfect as could have been inspired by the sweetest notes of all the feathered tribe.

When Mr. Price went to Lady Courtney, Sir Edward Clayton strolled to the sea shore to indulge the reflections which pleasingly expand in solitude. He was wandering amongst the cliffs, when turning round one which projected considerably, he saw a female seated on a fragment of rock, and so picturesque were her attitude and situation, that she appeared to his romantic fancy as the figure of Contemplation gazing at the ruins made by the hand of Time. She did not see him, and he knew not whether to advance or to retreat, curiosity dictated the former, politeness urged the latter, but curiosity prevailed, though it is generally imagined that only female minds are subject to her influence. "It is undoubtedly the young emigrée," he said to himself, "and I shall be able to pronounce on the degree of merit, that she may claim in secluding herself from the world, when I know the degree of beauty which she hides in retirement." He was however at the moment disappointed, for the young lady hearing the sound of footsteps, hastily arose and proceeded in her walk. She was veiled, and he could not catch a glimpse of her features, which he was the more anxious to do, as he thought her figure and manner resembled those of Claudina. This idea made him quicken his steps. "Yet why should I endeavour to overtake her?" he asked "is an imaginary resemblance on her part, any excuse for an impertinence on mine? let me not shew her that even retirement, cannot protect her from insult:" he paused and slackened his steps, "yet," continued he mentally, "I would not insult any female, and least of all one whom I know to be unhappy, and believe to be unfortunate; but it is late, she is far from home, and surely there can be no impropriety in my offering to guard her thither," He then once more quickened his pace, as did the fair one her's also, but he gained upon her, she heard the near approach of his steps, and condemned herself for having walked so long, and strayed so far. She endeavoured to exert more speed, but it was ineffectual, she saw the shadow of the intruder parallel with her own, and she thought it would be more wise to slacken her pace and suffer him to pass her. Clayton could see her agitation, she trembled alike with fear and with fatigue, but she averted her face, and drew her veil still closer over it. He thought some apology was due from him, "I hope, Madam, I have not alarmed you," he said, his voice in a moment fixed her attention, she gazed on him as wondering if her thoughts by day, had the power of representing him as perfectly, as he appeared to her in her nightly dreams. "Sir Edward Clayton!" "Claudina!" they exclaimed together, and their hearts at the same instant acknowledged the dominion of the same sentiment. In him it inspired rapture, which beamed in his countenance, and animated his expressions; in her it created confusion, and a thousand nameless conjectures, and regrets. She was not now however so very sorry that she had stayed so far, for as she already

resolved never to see him after that afternoon, if she could avoid it, she was therefore better pleased to have met with him on the seashore, than she would have been to see him in the village, for that would have prevented her walks in future, and she felt within the last few minutes that the air had been of infinite service to her. Claudina still trembled, and her faltering voice betrayed her, Sir Edward remarked it, and reproached himself for having alarmed her; she attributed it entirely to weariness, and he entreated her to take a seat for a few minutes. She complied, but was scarcely seated, when she thought it had the appearance of wishing to prolong the time of his attending her, and the too great caution which betrays the secret it would guard, impelled her to continue her walk. "She has not yet forgiven me," sighed Sir Edward to himself, "and this unexpected meeting which filled my heart with transport, now only adds to my sorrow by convincing me of the disdain with which I am regarded by her." The conversation turned on the occurrences that had led to their meeting, Sir Edward deplored afresh the unhappiness he had occasioned, and lamented that one so lovely and captivating as Lady Courtney, should be estranged from society, and her friends, and devote herself to slow consuming sorrow. Claudina felt a sensation in her breast whilst Sir Edward extolled Everilda, which damped the happiness his presence had inspired. For a moment she doubted his declared ignorance of their abode in Llewemawr, and feared that he might take up his residence there, in the hope of seeing the object of his early and unfortunate attachment. "If so," she mentally argued, "I must be absolved from my promise of secrecy, for never will I be instrumental to the dishonour of my friend, or of her family; and it is a debt I owe to myself and to society, to guard against even the appearance of countenancing vice." These reflections clouded her brow, and her gravity confirmed Sir Edward in his idea of her dislike. Silence ensued, but at length he broke it by saying "If Lady Courtney's unhappiness excite my sincerest pity, and add to the contrition I have long felt, what then must be my admiration of the friendship which soothes her with unremitting tenderness, withdrawing from society the most captivating charms, to bury them in a solitude rendered still more dreary, by the despair which you must too often be obliged to witness, without the power of alleviating." "I am indeed too often agonized by it," replied Claudina, "and in that consists the severity of my trial. Society I have no merit in renouncing, for it had long ceased to give me pleasure, and in solitude I am at least spared the task of hiding the feelings of the heart under feigned smiles," a sudden glow animated her pensive features as she spoke, and Clayton looking stedfastly on her, exclaimed. "How is that man to be envied whose merits could make so deep an impression on a heart of so much sensibility and worth! Yet if he be unconscious of his happiness, he is an object of pity, and if knowing, he can still neglect it, he must be not only unworthy of it, but of existence." The rapid changes of her countenance whilst he spoke, evinced her emotions, tho' he was ignorant of their source, and he continued, "oh! pardon me if I offend by thus adverting to the confidence with which you once honored me; pardon me I entreat you, for I know not what I would say, let my distraction plead my excuse. I am about to leave England, ah! do me the justice to believe that to serve you in any part of the globe my existence shall freely be spent in your service; nor should I account my life entirely wretched, if its last moments were soothed by the consciousness of having been instrumental to your happiness." A thousand sensations undefinable and contradictory, struggled in Claudina's breast, but words could not express any of them, and the fruitless attempt to do it, expired in silence on her trembling lips. Thus the conscious lovers pursued the remainder of their way eloquent even in silence. For know, gentle

readers, that words, the vulgar vehicle by which common characters convey common ideas, are deemed, superfluous by all who are under the dominion of Cupid. They being a race of people wholly different from any other with which we are acquainted, have a language peculiar to themselves, and devote their sublime geniuses to translating smiles, construing glances, and commenting upon sighs. The pleasantest path must however have a termination, and the enamoured pair reluctantly arrived, notwithstanding their lingering steps, at the door of the hall. They would then willingly have recalled the time which they had devoted so entirely to contemplation, but it was too late to correct the taciturnity, which they could now only secretly lament. Sir Edward however at parting pressed Claudina's hand with fervour, and she, roused from the uniform languor in which her life had lately passed, could not conceal the agitation inspired in her bosom by sensations so delightful, and to which she had been so long a stranger. She forgot the presence of Mr. Price, she forgot the effect which surprise might have on Everilda, she forgot every thing but that she had parted from Clayton, and bursting into tears as she entered the room, she exclaimed, "I have seen him once more, my dear friend, I have seen him," but soon ashamed of the emotion she had betrayed, she informed Lady Courtney more calmly and circumstantially of her unexpected rencontre; a smile of transient pleasure and hope illumined the countenance of the latter. "Thank God," she exclaimed, "I trust I shall yet live to see my friend happy, and then will the stillness of the grave be indeed envied by me." Claudina blushed, having only that moment recollected the presence of Mr. Price who with all the delicate consideration natural to him, had risen to take his leave as soon as he perceived that something interesting had occurred. "No, Mr. Price," said Lady Courtney, extending her hand to him with inimitable grace. "You must not leave us, I will no longer have any reserve with so valuable and excellent a friend, propriety no less than inclination now calls on me to entreat your acceptance of my confidence. You, my dear," continued she turning to Claudina "may perhaps wonder to see me so calm, but this inestimable counsellor has at length taught me resignation, he has taught me to subdue the impatience of my own reproach, and to submit to the just censure of the world, which before made the remembrance of my misfortunes insupportable: he has taught me to look humbly for pardon to heaven, and in the devout hope of gaining it, I am well contented to bear the punishment which my own follies have inflicted on me." She then gave a candid account of her life, from the period of her first becoming acquainted with Sir Edward Clayton, down to the time of Claudina's meeting with him. She did not endeavour to palliate the vanity that had led her to sport with his peace, in permitting the continuance of attentions, which added fuel to his ill-treated flame, but she solemnly denied ever having, even in thought, entertained a sentiment inimical to the honor of her husband whom she adored; "and it is this consciousness which supports me now," said she, "for vanity is dead within me, and no warmer passion ever prompted my complacency; Sir Edward will be convinced of this when he sees me, my altered appearance will bring conviction to his mind, the delusion to which I, blameably, contributed will vanish, and all his attentions will, I trust, be turned to one infinitely more calculated to make him happy than I was, even when most deserving of his love."

Mr. Price, as may be imagined, endeavoured to gain Lady Courtney's consent to inform her friends of her retreat; representing in the most moving terms, the distress that her disappearance must have caused, the joy which any information of her would inspire, and above all, the importance it might be for some of the family to be present at the birth of her child, an

event which she now daily expected.

These arguments opened all her wounds afresh, and she wept to excess, though not with the bitterness which had hitherto accompanied her tears. "Alas! Sir," she exclaimed, "you know not the exalted character of the friends whom I have offended, their worth makes me feel more painfully my own degradation; ah, even my own dear father and mother, how could I bear to meet their eyes! Alas! they would not reproach me, their conduct to me was marked only by unbounded tenderness, and ill have I requited it by treachery, disobedience, and ingratitude! Indeed I could not, however selfish I may appear by confessing this weakness, I could not bear to see even my child caressed by those who must detest its mother: oh no, suffer me to remain unknown; I may not live long, death will be welcome to me if you, my good sir, and my faithful friend weep over my grave, which should be near to that of her whom you loved; and perhaps at some future period, my child, my dear child, whom already I doat on with a mother's fondness, may come to shed a tear over my remains, for time will wrap my faults in oblivion, and it will not be taught to despise the memory of its mother when she can no longer offend."

Mr. Price seeing her so much agitated, forbore to press the subject further at that time, though he could read in Claudina's dove-like eyes the meek language of gratitude for the earnestness with which he had pressed a suit that he resolved to renew on the first favorable opportunity.

## CHAP. XLVII.

"To gain the point to which our soul aspires,  
 We nourish toil and reek hard labour sweet,  
 For this, thro' Greenland's frosts, or India's fires,  
 The hardy sailors, death and dangers meet,  
 And the proud chieftain, bolder than discreet,  
 In blood imbued pursues the martial fray,  
 And lovers eke, thro' life's hard tempest beat,  
 Led on by hope, that never dying ray,  
 Hope wantons in their breasts, and strews with flowers  
 their way."

THE change of name adopted by Sir Edward sufficiently accounts for his concealment; as Mr. Price after mentioning to the ladies his having a Mr. Balfour for his guest, in whose society, he every day found encreasing gratification, never repeated his name, except to quote an occasional opinion or remark from him; for judging others by himself, he imagined that the concerns of strangers, could not be very interesting to those, who had in their own affairs subjects of sufficient importance to occupy their thoughts; but his benevolence made him now believe, that it would give Mr. Balfour pleasure, to hear that the ladies, had accidentally heard of an old acquaintance, by whose means the widow might perhaps be prevailed on to return to her friends.

The countenance of this good man, was unusually animated, as he entered his little parsonage, and he found its cheerfulness reflected in the supposed Balfour's, who rose to meet him with great alacrity.

"One would imagine," said Mr. Price smiling, "that you knew I had a little news to communicate, and your haste to hear it reproaches me, for not having before amused you with some village anecdotes." "In truth my dear sir," replied Clayton, "I am impatient to inform you of an adventure of my own, but tell me what is the subject of your intelligence, and you shall then hear mine." Mr. Price immediately entered on the pleasure he felt from the hope of being serviceable to his female friends, and related the substance of the conversation he had had with them, but when he mentioned Claudina's, or as he called her, Louisa's agitation and tears, Clayton hastily interrupted him, "Do you imagine, sir, they were tears of joy? ah! make me happy by confirming that delightful supposition. But no, I deceive myself, they were tears of aversion and anger, you do not answer me, you believe then that they flowed from such odious sources?" Mr. Price unaccustomed to ecstasies, thought Mr. Balfour's brain was a little confused, but seeing him become calm again he checked the idea, and quietly replied with a smile which he could not conquer, "I own I did not expect you would so suddenly have become interested in this young lady, to whose praises you have often listened with an indifference, which I thought they did not deserve; but however, I will not punish you for it, by delaying to answer questions asked with so much impatience. It appeared to me, that she wept with mingled pleasure and tenderness, evidently inspired by unexpectedly meeting a man, whom in my opinion, she regards with more than common esteem, and truly do I hope he will prove worthy the affections of one so amiable."



“He will! it shall be the study of his life to become so,” exclaimed Clayton, “ah! sir, you know not the new existence to which you have restored me.” “You are then acquainted with the gentleman?” asked Mr. Price, with unaffected surprise. “The gentleman, my dear sir!” replied Clayton, “did not you tell me that she wept for me? and that you believed she regarded me with no common esteem? and can you wonder at my transports!” The good clergyman again thought Mr. Balfour’s intellects were disordered, but Sir Edward recovering from the ebullitions of his rapture, soon convinced him of his sanity, by giving him an undisguised account of the unfortunate accident, which had driven Lady Courtney into the retirement, where he had happily discovered her.

Mr. Price sincerely wished that events so melancholy, might have a fortunate termination, and proposed to take Sir Edward with him the next day, when he should visit Lady Courtney, observing that as the meeting, when ever it took place, must inevitably be very painful, it would be adviseable, at least not to encrease the distressful sensations that would be excited, by allowing much time for their anticipation.

Sir Edward consented to accompany him; but on being introduced to Lady Courtney, how was he shocked to see the difference produced in her appearance by a few month’s suffering. Her eyes were sunk, and their lustre quenched in ceaseless tears; her complexion was faded; her lips pale; her voice broken, and hollow; her figure bent and emaciated; and a deep incessant cough, affectingly proclaimed the alarming state of her health. Such was the altered Everilda; and unexpected as severe, was the trial to which Clayton was exposed, in witnessing the afflicting change. For some minutes, he stood lost in thought, and vainly endeavoured to summon fortitude to speak, but the dignified ease of her manner recalled his attention. “Sir Edward Clayton,” she said in a firm tone, though at the sight of him her cheek had become unusually pale, “you see me much altered, and you are afraid I should perceive that you think so; but my health has been too long precarious, to leave me in doubt as to the inroads which disease has made upon my constitution. Let us not however, speak any more on this subject, which no complaints can remedy; or of the past, which no regrets can recal.” She then exerted resolution enough to converse with Mr. Price on indifferent topics, and Sir Edward felt convinced by her composure, her dejection, and above all by her calm politeness towards him, that the remembrance of her husband, was the only idea which now occupied her heart. This conviction made him sensible of the void in his own; and he looked incessantly towards Claudina, whose eyes studiously avoided his, but when they accidentally met, their souls mingled in every glance.

The first visit was short and constrained, but the next was less embarrassing, and in the course of it, Sir Edward gained resolution to enter on the subject of informing Lady Courtney’s friends of her retreat. She had had time to consider it; her delicacy told her that Sir Edward ought not to reside a single day in a village, where she had professed that her intention was to remain unknown; yet to urge the impropriety of it to him, and thereby occasion his removal, was what she could not resolve on, as she thought it would be acting cruelly to Claudina, whose attachment to him she well knew; she imagined she could read in his countenance, that it was returned with fervour, and that he waited only for an opportunity to declare it. Yet this did not authorize her to risk her own reputation, by suffering his visits, for though she knew they were no longer directed to herself, yet the world would not know his altered inclinations, “And I have already,” said she to herself, “outraged society too much in his company.” The result of her reflections was, a

resolution to gain some days of happiness for Claudina, by allowing Sir Edward to send an express to Lord Drelincourt, as in the interim, the most rigid propriety could not be offended, by his being received in company with Mr. Price, as his guest.

It was not in the nature of Lady Courtney's friendship, to praise Claudina without enthusiasm. She delighted to dwell in her absence, on the gratitude she owed her, and invariably concluded her eulogiums by saying, that to see her happy was the only gratification she could receive in life. Sir Edward soon fully comprehended, that he had Lady Courtney's warmest wishes for his success; and if he might believe the softness in Claudina's eyes, the tenderness in her tones, and her ill-concealed embarrassment whenever they were left together, his case was not a hopeless one. But true love is timid; he feared to trust appearances, by which he had before been deceived, or to risk, by a presumptuous declaration, depriving himself even of the delusions of hope. He therefore continued to sigh and gaze in silence, notwithstanding the pretty and lively Bianca told him one day, that she was glad he had come, "for," said she, "Donna Claudina has never looked up, since the day she fainted away, and said your honor was murdered, and I am sure it has made me so dull, that if it had not been for Giuseppe, I should have been as bad as she is."

Sir Edward was however soon called on to act decidedly. He was in company with the ladies one afternoon, when a letter was brought to him; it was from Bernard his valet, and informed him that Lord Drelincourt, with part of his family, and the Marchese and his lady, would reach Llewemawr that evening. Sir Edward turned pale; he saw himself obliged to depart, just when his heart had forgotten its former wounds, in the charms of a new and more fortunate attachment. Lady Courtney perceived his agitation, and guessed that the letter contained information of the time when her friends would arrive. She had complained of unusual languor the whole day, and finding her spirits quite unequal to any new trial, in order to prevent the introduction of the subject at that moment, she hastily said to Mr. Price. "If you my dear Sir, will favour me with your support, I will walk round the garden, for I feel myself suddenly faint and oppressed, perhaps the air may revive me." He reached her cloak, and they left the room, where Claudina and Sir Edward remained. The former attempted to appear very busy, she leaned over some drawings which she pretended to touch, but her trembling hand betrayed itself by the irregular strokes of the pencil, it seemed to guide. Sir Edward appeared no less occupied in admiring the sketches and ornaments, with which her elegant fancy had adorned the room, but he soon left them to gaze on the fairer artist. He took a chair nearer her's; "Claudina," he said, "you must have perceived my uneasiness on the perusal of the letter which I just now received," he paused for a reply, but as he had already affirmed what she could not deny, she did not think one necessary. He continued, "Claudina, that letter told me what I could never gain resolution to tell myself, it told me that I must leave you. Lord Drelincourt will be here this evening, I am not so far lost in my own gratification as to offend him by my presence; I make to him the greatest sacrifice in my power, I tear myself from one whom I love, and esteem beyond the world, and without whom my life will be a blank. I shall leave England immediately; my exile would be supportable had I hope to sustain me in it; oh, send me not 'a banished man to roam,' without even the consolation of thinking that I am remembered by you; speak, my Claudina, but one word, will you pity a man whom you could make happy? will you pardon his past errors in his adoration of your virtues, will you accept his vows and suffer him to live for you?" He had

spoken with a rapidity which defied interruption and when he ceased, Claudina wished he had continued to speak, for she was unable to reply. She remembered the time when she had given way to the most exquisite sensations of delight at Florence, and that they were succeeded by the severest disappointment and mortification. She feared the felicity of the present moment might be equally transient, and she dreaded lest the tones of her own voice should dissipate the fascinating illusion. But silence is eloquence to the lover who can construe it in his favour, and Clayton clasped her to his heart in a transport of joy and gratitude, for the indulgence that she had shewn his cause.

We shall pass over the remainder of the scene for two reasons, first, that by those who have ever been in love, it will be easily imagined, and secondly, that we may not make those who have unfortunately never felt the influence of the tender passion, repine at the insipid medium of an existence merely selfish.

Suffice it then to say, that Sir Edward took his leave of Lady Courtney with the utmost respect, and of his Claudina with the liveliest tenderness, and newborn hope.

On returning to the parsonage with Mr. Price, he paid him the most grateful acknowledgments for the kindness that he had received from him; he told him his reason for a departure apparently sudden, saying that he was anxious to spare Lord Drelincourt the apprehension of even accidentally meeting with him, and should therefore set off to Caermarthen where he should stay that night, and wait the arrival of his valet, he should then probably leave England, perhaps for years; but if he never returned to it, absence would not efface from his mind the remembrance of the obligations he owed this worthy friend, under whose roof he had recovered his peace of mind, and to whom he might be indirectly indebted for every future blessing of his life. Never did human breast contain a warmer or more susceptible heart than Clayton's, and the tears sprung into his expressive hazel eyes, as he pressed Mr. Price's hand, and regretted that a man so formed to embellish and improve society should live in a solitude unworthy of his endowments; not because the praise so justly his due, was confined to the rustic voices of his little flock, the applause of men could not add to his virtues, but the narrow circle in which he moved, confined their fruits, which were sufficiently plentiful to enrich a space wide indeed.

Mr. Price was equally affected with Sir Edward; but he endeavoured to smile as he returned his fervent pressure, saying, "I can hardly thank you for your society, for I fear the pleasure I have derived from it, will make me dissatisfied with my own; yet have I not thy image, my Maria? and can solitude ever be irksome whilst cheered by the remembrance of thee?" He cast his eyes to heaven as he made this apostrophe, and his spirit seemed to soar above the earth which confined him from the angel he invoked." "Pardon me Sir," he resumed, "as I am so soon to lose you, I am already beginning to fall into the habits in which I indulge when alone; but you will readily excuse me, for you are an enthusiast, and will not refuse an old man, a little of the imagination which makes the happiness of a young one." He again endeavoured to smile, but his heart was full, and he turned aside to conceal the tears by which it might find relief. Clayton was unmanned, he bade a hasty adieu, "God bless you." "God bless you," was warmly repeated. Sir Edward mounted his horse, and when he had proceeded a few paces, he looked back, and saw the good man slowly returning to his house, and pausing as he passed his Maria's grave.

## CHAP. XLVIII.

Affliction is the wholesome soil of virtue;  
 Where patience, honor, sweet humanity,  
 Calm fortitude, take root, and strongly flourish:  
 Whilst prosp'rous fortune that allures with pleasure,  
 Dazzles with pomp, and undermines with flattery,  
 Poisons the soil, and its best produce kills.

MALLET.

AS the time approached when Lady Courtney expected the arrival of her friends, her whole soul was agitated; and she walked about the room in restless impatience, perpetually enquiring the hour. One moment she repented having given her consent to see them; the next she was uneasy at their delay, and longed to embrace them. She then, for the first time, regretted the alteration in her looks; "It will make them unhappy," said she, "and I am not deserving of their anxiety."

At length the wished-for, though dreaded, moment arrived. Bianca ran breathless into the room, exclaiming, "Oh! my lady they are all come. There is my honored lady the Marchesa, and your noble father, coming down the hill; for the good pastor went to tell them, that it was dangerous to descend in the carriage; and Lord and Lady Drelincourt are going to his house to stay till you have seen my dear revered lady the Marchesa." "Ah!" exclaimed the pale and trembling Lady Courtney, "the trial will be too much for me; how shall I bear to meet my mother's eyes? Alas! were she less tender, I should not thus dread to see her." Presently footsteps were heard; they approached the door; a hand was about to open it, but desisted as if irresolute, and Lady Courtney distinguished her mother's voice, though suppressed into a whisper. "Ah! save me," she shrieked covering her face, "it is she indeed! hide me Claudina, hide me from my injured parents."

Her exclamation brought them into the room, at the moment when she had thrown herself on her knees, and concealed her face with her hands. "My Everilda, my darling child," said the agitated Marchesa, fondly hanging over her, "will you not embrace your mother?" Lady Courtney looked not up; her bosom heaved with convulsive sobs, and she shrunk from the kind caresses of her afflicted parents. "I deserve your reproaches," said she, "spare them not; I deserve them, and I shall not live very long to be tortured by the recollection of them." "Ah! replied the Marchesa, "can you think so harshly of us my child, as to believe that we should reproach you in affliction? No; God forbid that any severity of ours should add to it! but you have forgotten us, and this wished-for meeting, only plants new daggers in my heart, by showing me that to you it gives no pleasure." "My love, my Everilda," said the Marchese affectionately, endeavouring to raise her, "you will not afflict your mother; she is in tears, will you not speak one word of comfort to her?" "In tears!" exclaimed Everilda, starting up, and throwing herself into her mother's arms, "oh! my mother, weep not for me; let not my own unhappiness be aggravated by witnessing yours." She wept herself in saying those words, and relieved by it, alternately embraced her parents, and uttered the most endearing expressions. She soon recollected Lord Drelincourt, and anxious to

shew him every mark of respect, desired that he, and the remainder of the party might be immediately sent for, as she was able, and anxious to see them.

When they arrived, exhausted by her previous emotions, she received them with affectionate and melancholy composure; she spoke little more during the evening, and by degrees the conversation subsided into perfect silence; all testifying in their looks, the surprise and sorrow, inspired by the striking alteration in her appearance.

It seemed as if nature had only waited this affecting scene to begin her operations. Lady Courtney was taken ill, and though at first, she attributed her disorder to the agitation that she had undergone, yet her sensations soon convinced her, that whatever might be the cause, the effects could not long be doubtful. "The hour to which I have looked forward," said she, "through months of anxiety and unhappiness is then at length arrived," and feeling the love of life revive as it became endangered, she added with the despondency generally attending a situation, which even under the happiest circumstances, subdues the firmness of the firmest, "I shall not survive this trial. Alas! I may not even be spared to embrace my Henry's child; oh God! grant only that I may live to give it birth, and then teach me to be resigned in death."

Her weeping mother endeavoured to encourage her, and besought Heaven to impart consolation to her; but her despondency was such, as to retard even the progress of nature, and every hour added to her sufferings, and increased her danger.

"Oh! my Henry," exclaimed the almost exhausted Everilda, "hadst thou been with me in this trying moment, what could I not have endured!"

At the commencement of Lady Courtney's illness, the gentlemen had retired to Mr. Price's; and as the Earl measured the little parlour with quick and uneasy steps, all the delightful sensations of hope, with which he had been agitated, twenty three years before, on a similar occasion, were recalled to his mind. The intermediate time appeared to him as a dream, of happiness, from which he had awakened to regret that he had ever had so fair a vision. One moment he moralized on the vanity of human wishes; the next, he yielded to the hope which threw sunshine over his breast, of loving his darling son, with increased, though chastened fondness in his offspring "I never" said he "knew the extent of my poor Henry's worth, or of my own regard for him, until death snatched him for ever from me; I had not sufficiently considered the real value of the blessing I enjoyed, and perhaps I was deprived of it, only to make me sensible that I had not appreciated it as I ought. But if Heaven should in mercy vouchsafe again to grant me so inestimable a treasure, I trust that my affection being purified from the dreams of ambition, would not be displeasing; for my study should be to train the object of it, in the purest paths of religion, and morality, and by so doing, to ensure his happiness and make him truly great." Whilst the Earl reflected thus, Giuseppe came, out of breath, to inform him, that Lady Courtney had given birth to a son. "Thank God," exclaimed the Earl with fervency, in an instant forgetting that he had ever been unhappy. The Marchese equally grateful and delighted, was going to reward the messenger, but on looking in his face he perceived expressions of distress, and evident traces of tears. Parental anxiety was easily roused, he hastily enquired the cause of this appearance of sorrow, and the poor fellow after in vain endeavouring to excuse it, sobbed out that his lady was so ill, it was scarcely expected she could long survive the birth of her child.

The Earl's joy was not of a selfish kind, and his heart disowned its influence, from the moment when his friends could no longer participate in it. The unhappy Marchese immediately

proposed going to his daughter; and Edmund distressed beyond measure, at the dangerous situation of his sister, whom he had from infancy admired, and loved, accompanied him with the Earl.

They found Everilda gazing on her new-born babe, her tears dropped slowly on its features, as she traced in them the remembrance of her lamented husband. "Poor child," said she as she pressed it to a bosom, where even maternal delight was poisoned by the recollection of him, who ought to have shared it with her, "poor child, thou hast no father; ah! had he lived to embrace thee, what pure felicity might have been mine! But I shall not long be separated from him; yet how can I leave thee, thou guiltless cherub! thou drawst thy mother back to earth; for thy sake I have lived till now, for thy sake I would still gladly live." She wept again, her agitation increased, and her attendants fearing the most fatal consequences from its excess, prevailed on her to part with her child for a few minutes, and endeavour to compose herself.

She received the congratulations and caresses of her friends with calmness, but as she was too much exhausted to converse with them, they left her to the care of her mother and Lady Drelincourt.

The former knelt by her bedside in a state of the most agonizing suspense; she saw the first-born darling of her heart in a situation, too strongly authorizing apprehension, for already were the once brilliant eyes of Lady Courtney closed, already had death spread his paleness over her once glowing complexion.

The Marchesa endeavoured in vain to disguise her grief; it burst out with increased violence from the effort to restrain it. "I shall lose her," said she, wildly wringing her hands, "I shall lose the dear child who first taught me the delights of a mother! oh! merciful Heaven, spare me this heavy blow; deprive me not of my only daughter, at the moment when she is doubly dear to me."

Lady Courtney faintly endeavoured to speak, but in vain; her voice was so low that it was inaudible, her lips moved, but no sound was uttered. The Marchesa burst into tears, "I cannot distinguish her inarticulate murmurs," she said, "alas! it may be her last request, and I am not able to promise her compliance!" Lady Courtney made another effort to speak, and her voice became rather stronger. She asked for her child, it was brought to her; she laid it upon her bosom, and clasping it in one arm, she extended her other hand towards her mother, cast her eyes to Heaven, a smile played upon her lips, and in a gentle sigh her spirit was released, and fled to join her husband's in happier regions.

## CHAP. XLIX.

The sea of fortune doth not ever flow,  
 She draws her favour to the lowest ebb;  
 Her tides have equal times to come and go,  
 Her loom doth weave the fine and coarsest web:  
 No joy so great but runneth to an end,  
 No hap so hard but may in fine amend.

Not always fall of leaf nor ever spring,  
 Not endless night, nor yet eternal day:  
 The saddest birds a season find to sing;  
 The roughest storm a calm may soon allay.  
 Thus with succeeding turns, God tempereth all  
 That man may hope to rise, yet fear to fall.

SOUTHWELL

WE will not detain our readers in the chamber of death; nor will we dismiss them impressed only with gloomy ideas: We will therefore briefly inform them of the principal events which befel the principal characters in this history, and leave them to supply every deficiency from the fruitful source of their own imaginations.

Sir Edward Clayton did not forget the obligations which he conceived he owed to Mr. Price; and a few days after his departure, that worthy man received a letter from him, enclosing a bill of one hundred pounds, and requesting his acceptance of the same sum annually; saying that as a larger might rather have the appearance of a favour, than a token of friendly remembrance, he trusted the insignificance of what he offered, would induce Mr. Price to oblige him by retaining it.

The present so delicately made, created a sigh in the bosom of the receiver, for it recalled to his remembrance the time when such an addition to his income would have been affluence, and might have ensured his felicity.

It seemed as if the evening of this good man's day was to be gilded by the rays of prosperity; but alas! they came too late and only reminded him more forcibly of the gloom, in which the dark clouds of poverty had involved the meridian. The Earl, with the liberal spirit that ever distinguished his proceedings, offered him a valuable living, on the death of the incumbent, who was in a very advanced age; adding, "And I shall think myself highly favoured, if, until you obtain it, you will grant me the pleasure of your society at Castle Drelincourt, either as a guest, or my domestic chaplain; which would perhaps be preferred by a mind like yours, active and intent to do good." Mr. Price thanked the Earl in the most grateful terms, but declined accepting the honor; "I have been too long a resident in this humble vale, my lord," said he, "to leave it for any other earthly abode; I am attached to it by ties stronger than any worldly temptations could offer to me in another situation. A treasure lies buried there, my lord," pointing to his Maria's grave,

“which I am too much a miser to leave; and I must reply to your goodness in the language of the Scythian, ‘Can I say to her ashes, arise, and go with me to a foreign land;’ oh! no, my heart is buried with them, and every addition to my comforts, would only make me guilty of a fault, in wishing to recal an angel to earth to share them with me:” he paused a moment, and then continued, “but your kindness my lord, will not be forgotten by me; and I may say with Marshal Tallard, that in enumerating my years of sorrow, I shall omit that, in which I had the honor of becoming acquainted with your lordship, and your amiable family:” he paused again; he walked to the window, and the Earl forbore to press him further on a point, that seemed only to give him pain. But though he declined every pecuniary acknowledgment, his claims on gratitude were not forgotten, and soon after the Earl’s arrival in town, an elegant assortment of books, and instruments, with wine, and many little luxuries before unknown in Llewemawr, were received by Mr. Price, as tokens of remembrance. “How happy would these favours have rendered me twenty years since,” he exclaimed, as he looked over them, “but now they make the loneliness of my state still more lonely; ah! it is surely more easy to bear affliction, than happiness, if either must be borne without participation.”

The Marchese and his lady, when the first violence of their grief was subdued, persuaded Lord and Lady Drelincourt to part with their beloved Emma, who became the happy wife of the amiable Edmund; and in her, his parents felt their affliction for the untimely death of Everilda, alleviated.

Soon after the nuptials, the Marchese and his family returned to Italy, accompanied by Claudina, who at the expiration of a few months was prevailed on to give her hand to the man, who had long possessed her heart; and Sir Edward Clayton found with her the rare felicity that can only be tasted in perfection, by sensibility like his; which if it sometimes create imaginary evils, and magnify real ones, yet, when fortunately called forth, heightens rapture, and perpetuates esteem.

Claudina transferred to Emma the pure and faithful friendship, which she had entertained for Everilda, and Edmund experienced in the innumerable virtues of his gentle bride, that shining talents and dazzling accomplishments, are not such solid foundations for happiness as are the retiring graces of domestic life, and the sweets of mutual love.

The Marchese and his lady in time became resigned to the loss of their Everilda, and in embracing a little grand-daughter of the same name, they were sensible of a pleasure, which admitted not of embittering recollections.

The Earl dedicated the whole of his time to the young Lord Courtney, who daily gained a stronger resemblance to his father, whose graces he displayed even in infancy; and promised to unfold a thousand amiable qualities, which dawning every day with increased lustre, cheered the evening of his grandfather’s days with the mild radiance of hope, and called forth once more, all the affections the exercise of which had always laudably constituted the happiness of his life.

Mary Macdonald had, from motives of virtuous delicacy, remained in Italy, notwithstanding the kind entreaties of Mr. Batlowe that she would take up her abode under his roof. She wished not to revisit a country, where her presence might occasion uneasiness to the man whom she still fondly loved. She dreaded the appearance of courting a return of his affection, when he had no longer a right to bestow it. She had experienced her own weakness too forcibly to risk exposing it to a second trial; and she lamented her errors too truly not to



scrupulously avoid every indiscretion that might lead her into a repetition of them. But no sooner did she hear the sad tidings of Lord Courtney's death, then she hastened to England to have the melancholy pleasure of weeping over his grave. She was entrusted by the Earl with the precious deposit of his orphan child, which she pressed to her aching heart with agonized affection; it seemed her own babe restored to her, and she mentally resolved never to forsake it whilst its infant years could be submitted to her care.

She was retained in the family of the Earl, and was treated by him and Lady Drelincourt more as a friend, than a dependant. Her Aunt died shortly after her arrival in England; and left her a handsome fortune, but she entreated permission to continue her office of superintendant of the nursery, until the young Lord Courtney should be required to leave it for more manly scenes; and her society was too highly prized at Castle Drelincourt for the continuance of it not to be readily accepted.

Lady Maria married Mr. Breresford, and finding that mere beauty tho' it may attract admiration, cannot ensure esteem, roused herself from the lethargy of imaginary languor, to animate her husband by her example, and impart to him the lively traits which were requisite to relieve the insipidity of a character otherwise amiable.

Lady Rosamond forgot the impulses of ambition to share Mr. Fletcher's moderate fortune; it was sufficient for the enjoyment of rational pleasures, and elegant recreations; and they had too much good sense to deprive themselves of the comforts within their reach, by aiming at the scenes of profusion and dissipation which were beyond it.

Lady Harriett Dunderton was the least fortunate of the personages to whom we have had the honor of introducing our readers, "turning out," in Lord Dunderton's phraseology, "a losing concern," as a branch of her family which had been twenty years without issue, unexpectedly produced a male heir, to the astonishment of the world, and to the utter discomfiture of Mr. Dunderton; who by this frolic of nature, saw himself encumbered with an expensive silly woman of quality, whose fortune scarcely supplied her with the fashions of the day.

To pretend to instruct our readers relative to the conclusion which may be drawn from the characters and conduct of the principal actors in our work, would be to insult their penetration and our own perspicuity, besides the improbability that their patience which is perhaps already nearly exhausted, should continue thro' a dozen pages of exhortations and reflections. We shall therefore conclude, by thanking them for bestowing their attention so far on our labours, which will be sufficiently rewarded if the result of them be approved.

FINIS.

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