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Jane Austen knew the work of this Minerva Press novelist, and reportedly laughed at it. After reading 'a most tiresome novel in eight volumes by a Mrs. Hunter, containing a story within a story, and in which the heroine was always in floods of tears', Austen wrote a mock thank you letter to her niece, Anna, in the style of Mrs. Hunter. But Hunter has since found more appreciative critics, and she is now considered noteworthy for her 'ingenious role-playing, critical prefaces and for entering as author among her characters' (*The Feminist Companion to Literature in English*, Virginia Blain, Patricia Clements & Isobel Grundy eds. (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1990), p. 553). In the splendid facetious preface to *The Unexpected Legacy*, the fictitious author, Mrs. Sedley, who also plays a leading role in the plot, has to defend novels from an eloquent attack by her male friend.

PREFACE.

“Their only labour, how to kill the time,
“And labour dire it is, and weary woe!”

“IF such be the misery attached to indolence,” said I, placing the poem on its shelf, and drawing out my concealed manuscript, “I may at least plead in defence of novel-writing a benevolent principle, which in its exertions serves at least to ameliorate the unhappy condition of people of this description; and although I may have to encounter those who are governed by prudential motives, and a rigid circumspection in the acrimony they display against novel-writers and novel-readers, some may have the candour to pronounce that time not unprofitably bestowed which has saved me from feeling it an insupportable burthen, and themselves from ‘the labour how to kill the time.’”

I was interrupted in my meditation by the bell at my gate announcing a visitor: it was my accustomed guest, who, entering, drew his chair to the fire, complained of the easterly wind, and, taking off his spatterdashes, asked me what I had ordered for dinner. I satisfied his curiosity, adding, that there was yet time for his favourite pudding; and I promised to treat him with it upon condition that he would help me out with a handsome argument in favour of novel-writing. He gave a nod of assent; and I, spreading the sheet of paper before him, withdrew. Willing to allow him full time, I did not join him till the dinner hour, when I found him reading the newspaper, and my preface in the same state in which I had left it. “How is this?” said I, somewhat disappointed: “could you find nothing to say in favour of a novel?” “No,” replied he, “you had said all that can be said in their favour.”—“I am of a very different opinion,” answered I, taking up my knitting work with a serious air: “you might, if you had been in the humour, have found many arguments in recommendation of a *good novel*.”—“There is a solecism even in the term you employ,” cried he, rising: “there are none *good*; for those which are merely *harmless* can have no claim to that title, and those which are *dangerous* are positively bad. Of this I will soon convince you.”—“Let us have our dinner,” cried I pettishly; “for, when once you mount your pony, there is no knowing the length of your journey.” He laughed, but was silenced. The cloth was no sooner removed than he renewed the subject, by asking me whether I really wished to know his opinion of novels. “It will be amusing,” replied I, smiling; “for it will, I doubt not, be like most you support, influenced by the wind that blows: but let us hear what you have to say by way of illustration to what you have advanced against good novels.”—“Willingly,” answered he, collecting himself into seriousness.

“In the first place, we will consider the baneful effects of the *very best* models of this species of composition, as they strike on the vivid fancy of youth. Is it not undeniable that they are expressly calculated, by the extraordinary events with which they abound, to excite in a powerful degree the curiosity of the reader, who, beguiled by a semblance to truth, acquires the habit of viewing the real scenes of life through a false medium, and gradually loses the relish for the unadorned pages of sober truth?... You are silent, my good friend: we will proceed. Is it not as indisputable, that a young and inexperienced

creature must, when thus diverted from the simple deductions of common sense and daily observation, be in danger of deviating into the paths of delusion and error? Let us trace one of these pupils of Romance. Prepared by an imagination which, it is more than probable, needed no auxiliary to adopt the sentiments to which, it may be, she was a stranger, the young adventurer goes forth into this world's warfare with a fastidious sensibility which precludes content. She rejects all that is common in the allotment of human happiness, as too vulgar for her refined ideas; and views with contempt, and even abhorrence, all the imperfections to which human nature is, in some way or other, exposed; whilst, blinded by her own imaginary perfections, she becomes the dupe of the first man who finds it for his interest or his amusement to flatter her vanity by an affectation of her folly. Is the evil lessened, think you, because with a childish avidity, rather than from a judicious discrimination, she has drawn her principles of conduct from works of genius and taste? Is the deadly nightshade less baneful because it is alluring to the eye, and grows amidst the choicest productions of nature? No, my good friend; and, whether the sensibility of a girl is awakened by a Julia de Mandeville; or whether she thrills with horror in the Forest of Fontainville; whether the cup of enchantment is offered in the Simple Story; or whether, with a mind as pure, she gives to an *Evelina* tears of sympathy and exultation, it lessens not her own danger. The reins are in the hands of Fancy, and sober Reason is dismissed. Enthusiasm and the prompt affections of the heart are gratified; and the chequered path of life has only one road to happiness and greatness—that of a *virtue*, which, however opposed, is always *triumphant*, and commonly ends with a title and a large fortune. Alas! how different is the story of human life! in which man is taught by experience, as well as by his reason and the revealed purpose of his Maker, to expect no recompense here for the services he pays to virtue, beyond the peace of his own mind, and the hopes of a future existence in which he will receive the reward of well doing.

“Can you imagine, my dear Mrs. Sedley,” continued my friend, “that the imagination of youth needs these incitements to activity?”—I rose, and stirred the fire.—“Do you think that you would act wisely in ordering more fuel to that blaze, and increasing the heat which your physician would at this moment tell you was more than sufficient for the purposes of health? Thus it is with the very best works of fancy: they tend to debilitate our natural vigour, and, by their enervating effects, to render us like sensitive plants, which shrink from the slightest touch, and wither when exposed to a healthy temperature of air.

“How many examples could be produced of girls sickening over the unembellished duties of their station, pining amidst comforts, and disgusted with the security of humble life! How many, impatient of the parental yoke, have forsaken the abode of innocence and safety for a man whom, peradventure, they may have danced with twice or thrice, and met as often on a public walk! But without appealing to such instances of youthful indiscretion, which you may, perhaps, without greatly erring, ascribe to very different motives, I will follow one of your sublimed heroines a little further in her course. Prepared by chimerical hopes, and *refined*, as it is termed, to a susceptibility which makes no allowances for the foibles of poor erring man, the delicate visionary

becomes a wife, it may be a mother, and under these characters her fate is determined and her duties are marked out. But can she, who expected the perfections of an angel, be prepared to meet the contradictions and weaknesses of a mere mortal? Will her dreams of everlasting constancy and unceasing admiration be realized? Will even the honest and fair portion of kindness, protection, and duty, which she may receive, satisfy the cravings of a mind thus raised beyond reasonable views? Disgust and discontent succeed to disappointment. The husband, whose foibles a sound judgment would have overlooked, or at least have balanced with some good quality, is styled in the language of despair '*a Sir John Brute*;' and it is ten to one but in the end the fair mourner finds that she does not misapply the epithet. As a mother she stands no better chance: for, a stranger to the plain rules of moral conduct and moral discipline on the one hand, and unprovided with firmness and patience on the other, she is perpetually fluctuating in her plans for her children's benefit; and, as they exhibit talents or defects, she worships them as *idols*, or neglects them as incorrigible. It always excites my compassion," continued my friend, "when I meet with a being of this description. She appears to me to have no affinity with this world, nor a resting-place in it. Too refined, and, I will add what candour dictates, too pure, and too virtuous, for degrading pursuits; too impassioned for common blessings; too cultivated for your '*Castle of Indolence*,' and too delicate for usefulness; she passes her pilgrimage in pursuit of a shadow, which cheats her of the gratifications of sense, and checks her in her progress to more noble and satisfying attainments.

"You may have observed that I have confined myself in these remarks to what you call *good* novels, and which I rank with the first productions of human genius, notwithstanding my seeming severity of judgment. They are medicines, but they are not usefully applied. It is not in youth that we meet with the asperities of a sordid and selfish mind, or the cold-hearted apathy of worldly pride: for these they are antidotes, or at least emollients, which most constitutions of mind at *forty* may safely use without danger to prudence or hazard to their principles.

"But what shall be said for some modern publications circulating amongst us, in which genius is debased with the jargon of metaphysical pride and subtilty, for the purpose, as it seems, of poisoning the vital springs of life; in which crimes which ought to appal the human heart are softened down as constitutional weaknesses, and balanced by brilliant talents and splendid virtues; in which the religion and the laws of the country are sifted by an inquiry at once insolent, virulent, and sophistical; and the unguarded victim of an idle curiosity is taught to believe the former a fable, and the latter chains forged by tyrants, and an usurpation on his rights as a man? Is it by removing every barrier against the encroachments of passion, that a youth is to become master of himself? Is it by rendering vice less hideous that he will the more firmly resist her solicitations? Or, misled by his own vanity, will he easily discover that the argument which seduces the *boy* would be refuted by the *man* with cool contempt and reasonable logic? It is, however, to be lamented that, wise as the admirers of such publications as these may be in their own conceits, they should so rarely discover in time, that it must be by more substantial food than that which any novel can supply that they will be made men or philosophers; for, when they do stumble upon this conviction, they will view with scorn the fallacy as well

as danger of those doctrines which in the hour of heedless youth and eager curiosity have beguiled them of their time, and confounded their simplicity.”

“You have gone much further into this subject,” answered I, “than I think necessary for my purpose; and although I admit the truth of your arguments as these justly reprobate dangerous novels, yet I cannot help thinking your objections to a good novel rest solely on the weakness of the reader, who, deficient in more solid attainments, would be at the mercy of every accident, whether she read novels or shunned them. I firmly believe a good novel is entitled to the gratitude of many for the little knowledge they have. No one who, reflecting on human nature, looks out for a remedy for indolence, will deny that a good novel may furnish employment for the mind, which, deprived of this aliment of easy digestion, would have recourse to something worse; and in a country like this, where, by the influx of opulence and ease, there are probably more idle people than in any other, novels are of some use. But I will go further in my defence of a good work of this kind, and assert, that in the blooming region of fancy, and in the paths of genius, there may be found secure spots in which innocence may sport, and in which the traveller, weary of the dull road of life, may rest a while without forgetting the purpose of his journey. Thus I think I have proved to you that the writer of a good novel has at least a claim to the good will of society, as the contriver of an agreeable amusement, and the enlivener of a vacant hour: for you will allow, that whatever contributes to the sum of human enjoyments, without being too chargeable to human prudence, is so much gained. But I think that even more may be said in favour of works of this sort,” continued I with increasing ardour. “In all ages of literary knowledge and human improvement, it has been the study to allure curiosity to the school of morality by means of fiction. Instruction cannot assume a more pleasing form than when attired by the hands of a chaste and correct fancy; nor will that lesson be useless which shows Vice smarting with self-inflicted wounds; Folly blushing beneath the keen eye of Ridicule; and Virtue, although impeded by trials and opposed in her progress, steadily pursuing her road and reaching the recompense annexed to well-doing. Surely a species of composition which has for its aim so benevolent an end, cannot, if it be properly conducted, deserve your condemnation. I have seen disobedient daughters who had not been novel-readers, and discontented and weak women amongst those who regard them as *sinful books*, and as carrying along with them a contagion never to be evaded but by shunning even those suspected of indulging in the perusal of them. To a mind without strength there is nothing which may not be hurtful; and he who believes that his wife or his daughter will be perverted by an acquaintance with the works of those women in particular whose lives are the best commentaries on their books, must have a shallow judgment, and a better claim to my respect than any which arises from his contempt of a *good novel*.”

“I should not be displeased to see a novel from your hand,” observed my friend with a smile; “for, with all your faults and imperfections on your head, you want not experience; and you seem to have considered the subject very maturely. If you will engage to try your abilities, I will bring you to-morrow an excellent recipe for your government, by adhering to which you will confirm me in your opinions.”— “I thank you,” replied I with an air he understood: “I have written one without any recipe but that

which an honest and simple understanding afforded me; and although I believe it would neither corrupt nor mislead any girl, I shall take care it add not to the national sin.”—“Why, is it possible that you have dared to keep from me a secret of this kind?” cried he, with assumed wrath. “Let me see it this very moment.”—“No,” replied I, laughing, “you have too much alarmed my conscience; you are yet too young for novel-reading; and I am no longer at a loss to account for your eccentricities, knowing, as I do, that you have not slept these fifty years without an anodyne prepared from the circulating library.”—“It is false,” cried he: “I am not yet sixty years old, and for the first thirty years of my life I was engaged myself in a work entitled ‘Confidence betrayed, or The Romance of Major Oldcastle.’”—His features swelled, and he was silent for some minutes. I was softened; and, placing my manuscript before him, diverted the gloom which I well knew would succeed to his recollection of his injuries. No entreaties could detain him for the evening. He left me; and I passed away the solitary hours in writing down the conversation of the day; not exactly knowing whether it might not be more properly reserved as *a concluding* chapter, than placed before my work as a preface.

In a few days my manuscript was returned, and to it was affixed the following extract from “Les Lettres Juives.” It is left to the reader’s judgment to decide how far the writer of the subsequent pages understands the true meaning of, or has profited by, the instruction contained in the selected passage.

“Autrefois les Romans n’étaient qu’un ramas d’aventures tragiques, qui enlevaient l’imagination, et déchiraient le cœur. On les lisait avec plaisir, mais on ne retirait d’autre profit de leur lecture que de se nourrir l’esprit de chimères qui souvent devenaient nuisibles.

“Les jeunes gens avalaient à longs traits les idées vagues et gigantesques de ces héros inventés: et les génies habitués à des imaginations outrées ne goûtaient plus le vraisemblable.

“Depuis quelque tems on a changé cette façon de penser. Le goût est revenu; au lieu du surnaturel on veut du raisonnable; et à la place d’un nombre d’incidens qui chargeaient les moindres faits, on demande une narration simple, vive, et soutenue par des portraits qui nous présentent l’agréable et l’utile.”

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THE
UNEXPECTED LEGACY.
VOL. I.

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THE
UNEXPECTED LEGACY,

A NOVEL.

BY MRS. HUNTER,
OF NORWICH;

AUTHOR OF LETITIA; THE HISTORY OF THE GRUBTHORPE
FAMILY; AND MRS. PALMERSTONE'S LETTERS

TO HER DAUGHTER.

IN TWO VOLUMES.

VOL. I.

LONDON:

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AND W.T. ROBBERDS, NORWICH;

By R. Taylor, Black-Horse-Court, Fleet-street.

1804.

THE
UNEXPECTED LEGACY.

CHAPTER I.

IT is now about four years since that I was unexpectedly summoned into Derbyshire, in order to take possession of an estate bequeathed to me by a distant relation of the name of Underwood.

The young gentleman whom my deceased friend's attorney sent to London to give me this intelligence, was a clerk in his office; and, delivering a letter from him inclosing one from my cousin, written to me in her last illness, he further informed me that it was necessary I should take the most speedy measures for my journey; his master meaning to wait for my instructions in regard to the funeral, believing also that Mrs. Underwood had in her last will left some particular directions relative to it.

Dismissing my courteous informer to the repose he needed, my first attention was given to my relation's letter. In this, she mentions in general terms the reasons which had hitherto precluded her from having had a personal acquaintance with a relation so worthy to succeed her in her property, and in the duties annexed to a competency: this subject was hastily dismissed for one apparently more interesting to the feelings of the writer. She proceeds to inform me, that with an annual income of five hundred pounds, and some cash in hand, she has imposed no conditions save *one*, which she was convinced, from the character I bore, would be cheerfully acceded to, and faithfully observed, on my part. She had left to my care and kindness a young person, who had for some time found under her roof an asylum from the injuries of the world; and for which she had been amply recompensed by a gratitude and affection which had smoothed her passage to the grave. "I can give you," adds the writer, "no stronger evidence of my regard and good will, than by believing that with my little fortune you will adopt my sentiments in regard to an amiable woman, whom I shall quit with the fond hope of meeting her in a better world, and in the persuasion that I have provided for her security in this."

It is necessary for me to inform my readers, that, in my first emotions of surprise, on hearing of my "good fortune," as an accession of wealth is commonly called by those who think nothing beyond it, I was suddenly checked in my gratitude, by the doubt which arose in my mind of there being some mistake in the business, and I began to prepare for a disappointment of those prospects so suddenly presented to my imagination. At length I recollected having heard my mother speak of her *cousin miss Gertrude Underwood*, as of one whom she had much, though unintentionally, offended; and I remembered having seen this lady once or twice, when a little girl; but the reserve and ceremony of these visits had left no impression of affinity or family union on my memory. I recollected also my mother's saying she was glad when she departed; for she knew that *Gertrude Underwood* hated her, and only came as a matter of form. I read my letter a second time: it was signed *Gertrude Underwood*, and she referred to the years which had elapsed since she had seen me at my mother's house. The next difficulty was less easy to conquer. I thought this lady's preference of me seemed to carry along with it an imputation on her justice, and for which I could not satisfactorily account consistently with my own notions of rectitude. Thus to have overlooked the claims of a deserving, and, as it appeared, a distressed young woman, who was the declared object of her love and esteem, in favour of ties of consanguinity so remote, and so feebly sustained by intercourse, as those which subsisted between Mrs. Underwood and myself, surprised me; and I could only perceive a narrow spirit, and a weak dependence on another for the discharge of a duty which it was incumbent on herself to have performed: and with this hasty

judgment in disfavour of the *donor*, the honour and integrity of the receiver was some how or other involved. During my journey, my mind was engaged by reflections resulting from these considerations; and I questioned my companion with much curiosity relatively to the young lady, Mrs. Underwood's companion. He said, "she was a widow, and had a fine little boy;"—my cheek flushed;—"that most people thought Mrs. Underwood had considered Mrs. Paulin as her daughter, she having been so kind to her, and so much attached to the child, who was indeed a most beautiful boy."—"How long has this lady lived with my cousin?" asked I, with an unpleasant sensation which was momentarily augmenting. "About two years," replied he; but she has known her longer; for Mrs. Paulin was at first a guest in Mr. Hampden's family." This was the attorney's name with whom the young gentleman resided. "She is," continued he, "in manners as well as in person, one of the most elegant women I ever beheld." I changed the subject, for it oppressed my spirits, and soon after gave myself up to my own thoughts. I arranged my plans of conduct in a way which soon tranquillized my mind; for, calculating with my new inheritance my own little annuity of two hundred pounds per annum, which I enjoyed for my life, I discovered that I stood indebted to Mrs. Underwood for the ability of exercising a benevolence to which my heart was not a stranger. Absorbed in my meditations, my companion made me even start, when he interrupted my reverie by telling me that he had orders to stop at Mr. Hampden's house, if I had no objection, as both his lady and himself thought it would be better for me to sleep there, than at my own house, till after the funeral. "Shall I meet Mrs. Paulin at Mrs. Hampden's?" asked I irresolutely.—"I believe not," answered he: "she was too much indisposed when I set out for town." It instantly occurred to me, that I should be an intruder on her sorrows; and I agreed upon turning towards those from whom I hoped for some intelligence respecting this lady, who was thus connected with my every thought.

CHAPTER II.

THE chaise soon after approached a handsome house: but a heavy rain which was falling prevented my curiosity from observing the direction of the road, till the young man told me "he had taken the lane, for the sooner we were housed the better." The master of the mansion had used the same precautions, for he was at the moment we drove into the stable-yard dismounting from his horse. With prompt courtesy he received the stranger, and, leading me through a corridor, said it was preferable to the lawn. We found in an elegant drawing-room his wife, who appeared surprised by our entrance. She rose however with alacrity to receive me, saying she was rejoiced to see me sheltered from the weather, but she had not heard the carriage.—"Her gentleman usher can account for that," replied her husband with a smile; "for we met in the back court, and I was too eager in my duty to make excuses for back stairs and passages, or even to think of my own *boots*."—He was rising—his wife prevented him. "Mrs. Sedley will soon be convinced," said she, "that we mean not to treat her as a stranger; and you know the etiquette of my drawing-room has established your privileges of *resting* when *fatigued*, in boots or without them. What a day you have both had!" continued she, ringing for coffee, and stirring up the cheerful fire: "I have had the 'travellers by land and by water' in my thoughts continually." The tone and manner with which this was said pleased me. During our comfortable repast, she asked her husband whether he had found time to see Mrs. Paulin?—"He had taken the farm in his way home, had found her composed, but anxious to hear of Mrs. Sedley's arrival." I observed with seriousness, that I was not less anxious to meet a lady who had engaged my thoughts to a painful degree from the hour in which Mrs. Underwood's letter had reached me. "It has been a matter not only of surprise but also of concern to me," added I, "that my cousin should have delegated the power of rendering justice into any hands but her own, and I cannot account for the omission of an obligation to friendship, by bringing forward my claims to her favour. Mrs. Paulin will, however, I trust, soon understand that Mrs. Underwood's successor is not less anxious to secure independence to her, than to convince every one in the family that Mrs. Sedley is allied to her

cousin in more respects than one.”—“Mrs. Underwood was no *stranger*,” observed Mrs. Hampden, taking my hand affectionately, “to the steward she has appointed to succeed her in her works of mercy and benevolence.” I burst into tears. “I am utterly unable to account for her goodness to me,” replied I. “All she could know of me amounts to no more than that I have been prepared by adversity to meet properly the duty she has assigned me.” “I will have no business brought forward tonight,” cried Mr. Hampden with assumed cheerfulness. “Let us, my dear Maria, persuade our guest to go to bed: it is the best place for her after a journey which has completely tired her; and in order that she may sleep undisturbedly, we will assure her that Mrs. Paulin is in no need of pecuniary assistance. Her excellent friend knew this, otherwise she would have provided for her. She has, however, not forgotten to secure to her the friend she wants; and I warn you, madam, to be on your guard, if you mean to secure your heart for a choice of your own. Mrs. Paulin will serve you as she has done us: common regard does not satisfy her, and she contrives to be loved in a way that does not suit every one.” Relieved by this good-natured explanation, I became more collected; and was soon after conducted to my comfortable apartment by Mrs. Hampden, who, during the many little attentions and precautions of kindness, told me that it would be necessary for me to go to Rickland Farm the following morning, in order to give the requisite orders for the interment.

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CHAPTER III.

IMMEDIATELY after breakfast the next morning, I was conducted by my kind host in his carriage to Mrs. Underwood's house. I was prepared for the shortness of the distance which separated the friends, by Mrs. Hampden's saying that she should join us at the dining hour, and that, if it did not rain, she should prefer walking. On some remonstrances on my part, she good-humouredly told me that three or four Derbyshire stiles would never keep her from invading on my privacy; and unless I left her to her accustomed walk, it would be necessary to build a wall of defence around the dwelling to which I was going. On the road I was entertained with an account of the advantages of my newly acquired property. "It might be said to be the most compact thing in the county, for one and the same hedge nearly inclosed the estate;" and, "in this cottage-building age," added Mr. Hampden, "you will rarely see one so commodious or more tasty."

"It was the amusement of your cousin's life to embellish her house and garden; and she happily succeeded in diverting her thoughts from a secret cause of trouble, which for some time depressed her spirits after she came to reside in this part of the world. Her love of retirement, however, was not banished by her renewed cheerfulness. Except ourselves, and one or two more, she admitted no visitors."

The chaise quitted the high road, and entered into a plantation of some extent. A good gravelled coach-way winding round it brought us to the house. It was the modest mansion of competence and taste, and from a gentle swell commanded a view more romantic than extensive. I was called from observing its beauties by the recollection that Death held there his prey; and that my gratitude, unless recorded in heaven, could only reach the mortal remains of my benefactress. Need I pursue this thought? I believe not:—for inconsiderate and unfeeling must that mind be, which in such circumstances would not have offered a tribute to heaven.

CHAPTER IV.

AN aged man-servant received us at the gate. "How are you, Jonathan, this morning?" asked Mr. Hampden in a tone of kindness. He bowed, passed his hand across his eyes, but made no answer. We were shown into a handsome parlour. "I will let Mrs. Paulin know the lady is come," said he, retiring. "Do so," replied Mr. Hampden, "and you may add that she is come to *comfort*." Notwithstanding this assurance I perceived in Jonathan's face no abatement of his melancholy. He sighed deeply, and left the room; whilst, oppressed by sensations which some may think weak and romantic, and others ridiculous, I wished myself in my little apartment in Gower-street, with my fifty guineas a quarter for my wants and whims, and freed from the penalty of heirship charged with prejudices to surmount, and discontents to allay.

The appearance of Mrs. Paulin did not compose my spirits. She was in a deep mourning dress, and with suppressed emotions she welcomed me to Rickland Farm. Before she had finished her compliment her voice failed her, and she covered her face. I was silent, for I was troubled. "I have, my dear madam," said she with more composure, "ventured to hope that, by remaining here in this hour of common sorrow, I might be of some use to the sharers in my affliction, and of some service to you; but it may be that my heart too promptly suggested this excuse for apparent officiousness: the truth was, I could not leave the house whilst my dear friend..." She was unable to proceed.

“Come, my dear Mary,” said Mr. Hampden, taking her hand and joining it with mine, “you must endeavour to console her successor, for she needs support. You are wrong to yield thus to a despondency of mind. An event which in the course of nature must happen to all, ought to find us prepared to meet its visitation; and in a life like that of our departed friend, in which an active course of virtue was closed by a resigned old age, we ought rather to contemplate its recompense than to yield to selfish regrets. You must set Mrs. Sedley a good example; for I suspect that she is not altogether a stoic. But where is my boy?” added he with assumed gaiety. “I must introduce him to my client before I proceed to business.”—Mrs. Paulin’s expressive countenance lost its paleness. “I left him very busy above stairs,” replied she, deeply blushing, “preparing Sappho’s breakfast. We cannot make the poor faithful animal take her food, nor keep from her mistress’s room.”—“We will go to him,” observed Mr. Hampden, leading the way, “and be at once at home.” The apartment in question might have assumed without affectation the title of *the library*; for it was filled with books, and furnished with the varied resources of cultivated leisure. Its principal ornament however at that moment was, in my eyes, a lovely boy about four or five years old, who was stretched on the carpet, and, as it appeared, vainly endeavouring to allure a fine spaniel to a bason of bread and milk; and whilst holding the dog by the collar with all his strength with one hand, he caressed her with the other. “Taste it, my poor Sappho,” cried he, unmindful of our entrance, “only taste it; it is sugared.” The animal, impelled by an instinct more powerful than the soft pleadings of the child, still struggled to obtain its liberty, which the opening of the door gave her a chance of effecting. The child more eagerly held her, and Mr. Hampden assisting him he conquered. “Now coax her to eat her breakfast,” said he; “otherwise she will die like mamma Underwood, and then I should grieve more.”—“Do you not see this good lady whom I have brought to comfort your mamma, and to love poor Sappho?” asked Mr. Hampden: “have you nothing to say to her?”—“No; I have only a kiss for her.” He without the smallest embarrassment presented a face of exquisite beauty, and, having kissed me, begged I would take care of Sappho, who would not leave mamma Underwood’s room. A maid servant entered, and he was invited into the garden to feed the birds.

We now proceeded to the business of the day. Mr. Hampden, raising the seals of a cabinet in the room, produced Mrs. Underwood’s last will and testament, in which he was named joint executor with myself. Legacies to her three servants of a hundred pounds each, with her donation to the poor of her parish, and instructions for her interment, constituted the principal objects in it. A codicil written by herself gave to *Mary Pauline Murray*, commonly called *Mrs. Paulin*, and then an inmate of her house, the sum of five hundred pounds, as a tribute to her merit, and a mark of the affection of the donor. For the payment of these several bequests I found three thousand pounds in the public funds. To these necessary preliminaries succeeded the last offices of humanity to the respectable Mrs. Underwood.

CHAPTER V.

IMAGINE me, gentle reader, quietly settled in my new abode, and on those terms of friendship and intimacy with the Hampdens, which convinced me that they were not dissatisfied with their new neighbour. Sappho, without any imputation on her constancy, found in my love and favour a remedy for her grief. My cousin’s prime minister, Mr. Jonathan, contentedly kept his post with even enlarged prerogatives; for Mr. Hampden finding that I was rich enough to keep a post-chaise, and I, that Jonathan had a nephew who could drive one, and assist him in the garden, increased my establishment by this luxury. Mrs. Becket at the head of the kitchen department found her lady as easy to please as the one whom she still regretted; and Mrs. Paulin, apparently contented with Sigismund’s new mamma, had settled into her usual occupations and amusements. It will easily be imagined how much I was surprised, at the end of a few weeks enjoyments, to be asked by Mr. Hampden whether I had concurred in the

commission which Mrs. Paulin had given him, to inquire whether Mr. Thompson the farmer would let his rooms. "And for whom?" asked I with undissembled astonishment. "For herself," answered he. "But it is, I perceive, as my wife said, one of poor Mary's flights, who, fearing you should be weary of her, has formed the design of breaking her own heart, and distressing yours." I confirmed Mr. Hampden's supposition in regard to myself, and he quitted me, perfectly convinced that I meant not to resign my right to Mrs. Paulin without a struggle.

CHAPTER VI.

I HAD not been without the curiosity so naturally arising from the circumstances I have related concerning Mrs. Paulin. Her designation in the codicil to Mrs. Underwood's will had not escaped my notice. Her youth and attractive beauty neither agreed with the title she bore, nor her love of retirement. That she was unhappy was too apparent, although her melancholy was blended with a composure which neither rendered it obtrusive, nor herself a dull companion. Of her virtue I could have no suspicions; for, had I met her unsupported by her friends, I should have pronounced her an innocent woman. On weighing these observations with others which hourly occurred, I thought she was a deserted wife, and, in consequence of an imprudent choice, was left by her own family to all the bitter fruits of disobedience and a too easy credulity. On entering her room, in order to expostulate with her on the subject of my discontent, I found her weeping. "To what cause am I to attribute these tears?" asked I, sitting down by her. "Are you tired of me? and does it distress you that my claims on you for comfort have too much the appearance of legality? Have not I told you in a thousand different ways, that I consider you as Mrs. Underwood's most precious legacy? I now repeat it in a language you must comprehend: but if you wish to leave me, say so, and choose your abode; for there will you find that my happiness must spring from yours. It is true, I shall regret your absence, and, it may be," added I, smiling, "wish I had not been the heiress to Mrs. Underwood. How little do you know, my dear Mary," continued I, "the being whom you wish to abandon for rooms in a stranger's house! Is it possible that you have not discovered that you are in a home for life, and sheltered in a bosom neither cold nor capricious?" She gave me her hand, and, sobbing in my bosom, thanked me for an explanation she had not dared to request. "And why not, my love," asked I, "if you perceived ambiguity in my proceedings with you?" "I can hardly tell you," replied she, blushing; "but I thought the little curiosity you discovered was an indication that you took no interest in the fate of a young woman who had more names and titles than one; and I have attributed your kindness to me to your regard for Mrs. Underwood's memory. No tongue can describe what I felt on hearing my dear friend's bequest to me read. Though defamed, and rejected by all my relations, I am not afraid of having my story known to you: but you have not asked even Mrs. Hampden a single question." "Say no more," replied I with eagerness: "I wanted no evidence of your innocence beyond my cousin's report and the affection of these Hampdens. Whenever you please to favour me with your confidence I shall be gratified; and in the mean time banish from your mind every fear for the future; *your* child is *mine*, and as a daughter and mother we will share this asylum of peace and contentment." "It is as I thought," answered she, deeply blushing: "you think Sigismund is my son; but indeed he is not, though my life is only valuable to me as it is the means of his preservation. You must be informed of the circumstances of my life in order to account for my attachment to him, and my disgrace with my family: I cannot be easy till you acquit me." "Well," replied I, "this history of your life must be postponed for to-day; Mr. Hampden having promised to introduce a beau at my table. He tells me your favourite major Oldcastle is returned home; and I shall soon discover whether he has not had something to answer for in your choice of the lodgings in question." "I will not deny it," answered she, smiling through her tears, "nor will you be surprised when you see him, that I wished, when no longer the inmate of this blessed roof, to find a father under his. I could live with Mrs. Hampden: but her husband's connexions are

numerous, they receive a great deal of company; and your poor Pauline wishes only to live unnoticed and unknown." "It is time for my 'poor Pauline' to dress for our guests," replied I in a cheerful tone, "and to believe half her sorrows the effects of too timid a spirit; and also that Mrs. Sedley is not of the number of those whom she wishes to avoid." Her tears redoubled, but they were tears of gratitude; and I left her to compose her spirits.

CHAPTER VII.

I HAD every reason to imagine that the favour I found in major Oldcastle's opinion, from the first hour he was a guest at my table, arose from Sigismund's introduction of me; who had no sooner received his old friend's caresses, and inquired after *Leo*, a large Newfoundland dog, the major's friend and companion, than, turning with vivacity towards me, he eagerly recounted my goodness to poor Sappho, whom I had consoled, and who *slept* instead of *moaning* in my bedchamber. "Then she has forgotten Mrs. Underwood," observed the major with a suppressed sigh. "Oh, no!" replied the innocent child: "we all remember her, and love her for sending mamma Sedley to us." I soon perceived the effects of this observation. The major relaxed into pleasantness, and displayed the complacency of manners which results from an acquaintance with polished life and cultivated society. When our visitors departed, I observed to Mrs. Paulin, as a proof that I partook of the curiosity common to my sex, that I had found mine strongly excited by the major, and wished to know what had been his motives for living in retirement. "He has quitted the service many years," replied she, "and, I believe, for some time lived more like a recluse than he does at present. I have been told by Mrs. Underwood, that early disappointments in life, owing to the treachery of a friend, had disgusted him with the world; and that, from an excess of sensibility, he had acquired an asperity of manners which unfitted him for society. Time has confirmed him in those habits, and in a bluntness which few are disposed to tolerate; and overlooking in their turn a man who proudly asserts his independence, and his claims to respect, they settle the account of a merit they cannot set aside, by calling him a *cynic*, and affecting to believe that a heart of melting compassion for the woes of his fellow-creatures is obdurate to the feelings of nature. A similarity in the leading circumstances of their lives soon united Mrs. Underwood and this gentleman in an intercourse and friendship which nothing could have severed but the event that has lately taken place. Her sweet and gentle spirit greatly contributed to soften his severity of manners; for I have heard that he was, on fixing near her, absorbed in melancholy. You will find from time to time his contempt of wealth, fashion, and greatness, break forth: his maxims, as these relate to his judgment of the world, class all mankind in two divisions—the *fool* and the *knave*. I think, however, your vanity will not be humbled by the place you will occupy in his list; for he very benevolently admits all whom he favours with peculiar regard, to take their posts with the former of these epithets."—Mrs. Paulin paused.—"You have," said I, smiling, "awakened as you may conceive a *froward child*, whom it will weary you to quiet again. But I have never been perfectly at my ease since I first heard of my favour with Mrs. Underwood. Curiosity has not slept, in respect to those motives which influenced her in the preference of one who I may say was a stranger to her, whilst she had within her reach friends to whom she was closely united. I have been so much engaged in business, and Mr. Hampden has been so often on the wing, that I have not had an opportunity of making the inquiries I wished." "It is late," observed my companion, "and my little story may not contribute to your night's repose. We will have it over the tea-board to-morrow morning." I submitted, and she retired for the night.

Certain indications, with which I was too well acquainted, gave me to understand that I might spare myself the trouble of seeking my pillow; for my *mind* was not *sleepy*. Time and management had however succeeded in giving me some power of control over those thoughts which had been the frequent

companions of the widowed Mrs. Sedley; and I diverted their approach by thinking of the friend who seemed to be the destined inmate of my bosom. She had that day displayed new talents; for she had sung and played on the harp with powers of voice and with an execution which had surprised me. I recalled to my mind her person, as she gracefully touched the instrument, and a saint Cecilia rose to my imagination. I remembered the impressive tones of her voice, and the joy which animated her countenance on seeing the old major; and I said to myself, "Surely this creature must be an orphan: no parent could reject such a daughter!"—I now wondered that I had not better discriminated the character and lineaments of Sigismund, than to believe that Mrs. Paulin was his mother. She was fair; her eyes and hair were in perfect harmony with the delicate texture of her skin: but nature, in order to finish her work more completely, had deepened the colouring in the arched brow and eye-lids. Sigismund was of a clear brown complexion, with dark hazle eyes, and a cheek of the peach's hue; active, and sometimes unruly: and with a fearlessness of danger, and a trust in every one around him, he exhibited hourly the captivating graces of a vigorous intellect and warm affections.—To these traits of his mind I opposed the meekness and softness of his supposed mother; and again I wondered that I had taken up the idea of their being related; for Mrs. Paulin did not appear to me more than twenty years of age, and Sigismund was in his fifth. The clock struck one, and reminded me that late hours were not in my physician's prescription.

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CHAPTER VIII.

THE serenity with which Pauline, for it is time to drop her assumed title, officiated at the breakfast-table the following morning, gave me no cause for apprehension; and no sooner was Sigismund dismissed for a walk than she placed before me a manuscript.—“This,” said she, “was written for the information of Mrs. Underwood, who insisted that I should have it in my own possession, on an occasion which I shall have to mention in the particulars I am about to relate to you relative to your cousin. You will also, my dear Mrs. Sedley, learn better, from perusing my little history, to estimate the value of a gentleman of the name of Furnival, who was Mrs. Underwood’s counsellor in her last worldly concerns, than from the most elaborate praise my gratitude can dictate. This gentleman,” continued Pauline, “to whom I am indebted for more than life, has been for years the intimate friend of Mr. and Mrs. Hampden. He is in the law, and, with acknowledged talents in his profession, he stands unrivalled in the world for his integrity and benevolence. On conducting me to Mrs. Hampden’s, he paid his friends a visit which they had long solicited; and in a very short space of time we were both domesticated, not only in their hospitable abode but here also. From that time Mr. Furnival’s visits have been annually made during the summer vacation. Last autumn, some time before he returned to town, he was with us at breakfast; and according to custom, on our producing our needle work he looked for a book. He was undecided in his choice of our amusement, but at length his eye was caught by one now in his possession: it was an elegant edition of Virgil. ‘How is this?’ cried he, opening it: ‘are you not contented with understanding the greater part of the living languages, that you invade on the dead ones?’ Mrs. Underwood laughed, and replied that he well named Latin authors to her, for it was indeed a dead language to her ear. ‘It is a book,’ added she, ‘which is useless to me; perhaps unfriendly:’—her gaiety sunk—‘but I bought it for the sake of its unfortunate and last proprietor.’ Mr. Furnival was during this time examining the arms, and the name on the title page. ‘I have heard much of this *Philip Sedley*,’ said he: ‘he was a man of singular merit, and unquestioned bravery: of what nature were those misfortunes to which you have alluded?’—‘Not of that sort,’ replied Mrs. Underwood with emotion, ‘that are likely to overwhelm in ruin a man of singular merit or of distinguished courage: but I think you must mean his son. I know he left one to struggle with the difficulties resulting from his father’s misconduct.’—‘Probably,’ answered Mr. Furnival; ‘for it is a recent event which led me to an acquaintance with major Sedley’s name. A friend of mine was employed to settle the terms of a life-annuity for his wife, some few months before he died. He was much pleased and sensibly interested by their manners, and tenderness for each other, and frequently mentioned the widow to me as a deserving woman labouring under a loss which could never be repaired in this world.’—‘Do you not know her maiden name?’ asked Mrs. Underwood with eagerness. ‘Yes; it was, by her register, Frances-Charlotte Walsingham,’ answered Mr. Furnival.—‘I am then right in my conjectures,’ observed Mrs. Underwood with visible agitation, and wiping away her tears. ‘she is my only surviving relation, and the daughter of one I *once* loved. You will not wonder at my tears, Mr. Furnival, when I add, that my life has been coloured by events in which this lady’s mother had too active a part for my peace—and I fear I ought to say for my *forgiveness*. What she thought a duty of friendship, I received as the merciless machinations of a concealed rival to obtain the affections of a man on whom I depended for my hopes of happiness. But we will, if you please, drop the subject for the present.’—‘I have good reason,” continued Pauline, “for saying that Mr. Furnival had instructions for making her will the next day; and that she finally settled her affairs at that time. Thus I have accounted to you for Mrs. Underwood’s conduct, and have only to add, that some little time before her death she employed me in searching in her cabinet for letters. She saw them consumed in the fire; and with a languid smile observed, that love letters of more than thirty-five years date would add little to the annals of Cupid, and much less show her wisdom in having preserved them. I saw that they were signed *Philip Sedley*. She

read to me with attention one or two from your mother, remarking the style and sentiments as she proceeded; and with a deep sigh she added, 'I was every way deceived, Pauline, and, it may be, have harboured resentment where gratitude was due.' She desired me to burn these letters also. From this time she frequently mentioned you, regretting that it was too late for her to unravel an ænigma which had confounded her understanding, although it could not render her unjust to the innocent. Mr. Hampden was informed of her intentions in your favour, and ordered to give you immediate notice of her death. This, my dear madam, is only one trait among many of the heart of a woman, who could not have died in peace with a lurking enmity in her bosom. I have now only to entreat you to read my papers," continued she rising: "they have been hitherto propitious to my wishes; and I trust that truth will establish me in your regard. I am going to seek the truant, and we will bring the major home with us." So saying, she withdrew, and left me to my curiosity.

CHAPTER IX.

I OPENED the pages; and found the first addressed 'To Mrs. Underwood; with the Life of Mary Pauline Murray.'

MY DEAR MADAM,

To have been sheltered from ignominy and protected by your generous cares, when abandoned by my natural connexions, is the grateful theme on which you have commanded me to be silent. I obey; for I know no language which can properly express the sensations of a mind conscious of its innocence, yet branded by suspicion, and which in the hour of its humiliation finds a refuge where its truth is admitted, and its hopes are renewed. But is it not permitted me to enumerate the blessings with which Providence has seasoned this trial of my faith and trust? Has not Heaven, in its mercy, raised up for my support friends who encompass me with their love and kindness? Can Pauline, the cherished Pauline, recollect that she has been insulted and degraded, without paying the due tribute of praise to Heaven for opening to her the paths of peace and safety? I cannot pursue these thoughts. I am overpowered by a gratitude so hourly excited. Your poor Pauline must be silent, and leave to Heaven the care of recompensing her benefactors.

But you wish to have before you the detail of events which you have only heard in part. You wish, ah my revered friend, such were your words! to know *your* Mary Pauline Murray, from her cradle, being certain that from that hour she was destined to be *your child*.

I have, my dear—shall I say—*mother*, often listened with not only attention but assent to your opinions on the influence of early impressions on children, as these regard the moral character and particular biasses of the adult. I think that in the history of my infancy the truth of your observations will be established: and in the errors of my youth you will trace the careless hand, to say no worse of it, which consigned me to the guidance of another, by whom I happened to be treated with fondness, though without judgment. Impressed with this idea you will, I fear, find me prolix if not tedious in my account of the first years of my life. But I feel the necessity of appealing to that candour which will consider the seed that has been *sown* before it pronounces the soil *unprofitable*; and to that charity, which will not condemn the too early shoots to perish, because they came not in season, nor are matured by wisdom. Knowing, as I do, that my mind possesses with its simplicity the rectitude which only requires to be regulated, I disdain a humility which belongs properly to depravity. *Your* Pauline acknowledges no

errors but such as your wisdom will correct, nor any faults that virtue needs to blush at. To her tribunal she hastens, and to her representative she appeals with unlimited confidence.

My parents at the period of my birth had already four children, two boys and two girls: the youngest of my sisters is eight years my senior. An extensive and successful commerce enabled my father to live at his ease, and promised him a provision for his family's future support, although it was not of such a sort as to class him in that line of consideration by which, in such a mercantile town as Liverpool, the more opulent *trader* is distinguished from his neighbour. He was however contented in his station, and constantly engaged in his business, and conceived that his respectability was as acknowledged as his credit was solid. He perceived no defects in an education which had gradually conducted him to affluence, nor could he discover the advantages of a more liberal one, having, as he said, frequently heard these learned gentlemen speechifying in the town-hall to show their wit, whilst they neglected their day-book and ledger; and instead of the *gold chain* they so eagerly sought, they were often entangled where their learning was of little use. According to my father's creed, every man knew enough, who understood his calling; and every man was a good man, who honestly paid his debts, supported his family, and employed the poor. But my father's opinions, though little in favour of a more enlarged plan of education, stood in no need of correction on the side of morality. A plain understanding and his Bible had taught him, that he who neglected his household was worse "than a heathen;" that honesty and industry were the only road to comfort; and that in serving God was comprised serving his neighbour. Thus guided my father was at least removed from the poor man's reproach, although his bosom did not glow with universal philanthropy; and notwithstanding he was not the enlightened guide of his children, they were the objects of his love and indulgent protection. In his hours of relaxation he was easy to please, though despotic in his demands. A few plain friends, a plentiful table, with pipes and tobacco, constituted his social enjoyments; which he rather too often observed that he paid for by working hard; and he thanked God, that neither he nor his children were in danger of being "choked with a baker's or butcher's bill."

My mother was of a more ambitious spirit: she had been a beauty, and was still a very handsome woman. She had prudently given up a train of *admirers* in favour of a man who was willing to marry her although portionless: but she had discovered that my father's generosity had certain limits; and after a few trials she submitted to live in Mr. Murray's "*hugger mugger*" way.

Some years of prosperous returns from a purchase in the West Indies, in which my father had a considerable share, convinced my mother that her husband was not a mean man. No opposition was made to her improvements in the furniture of the house, provided the smoking-parlour was left undisturbed; nor was any article of dress noticed, "if it was good and durable." These indulgences gave place to more ostensible wishes. "Alderman Butterfont's children were educated in boarding-schools; his lady had a country house, and his one horse chaise was laid aside for a handsome coach." For a time these observations were silenced, by my father's saying, in a tone which my mother understood, "It is all true, Becky, but I am not alderman Butterfont; nor will alderman Butterfont ever be the man your husband hopes to be." My expected appearance produced however a compliance in one point, which my mother had given up as lost; her husband having warmly insisted that her girls might make good wives like herself, who had never been in a boarding-school; and as for his boys, he would take care to bring them forward in the learning they would need. But my mother had been unfortunate from the time of my sister Judith's birth, and her health indicated no better success with me. She spoke of the fatigues to which the cares of her family exposed her, and with some tears of her apprehensions. My two sisters were immediately placed in the same school with the miss Butterfont's; and my youngest brother, a

turbulent boy, was sent to the West Indies in order to cure him of his predilection for the sea, or to confirm him in his preference of a sailor's life. This respite from labour, with the gratification of her wishes, was repaid by my being born a healthy child: but my mother was advised by her female friends not to think of nursing me, as it would infallibly destroy her. Instances innumerable were brought forward in support of the opinion that children might do well on panada, and my mother preferred the experiment to having "the plague of a wet nurse in the house." On the third day of my existence, having been starved out of my resistance to the pap-spoon, I was consigned to the care of nurse Nightly, who with a sick and helpless daughter lived in an obscure part of the town. My removal, as it happened, neither shortened my mother's confinement nor corrected my father's opinions in favour of mothers suckling their children; for his wife had a milk fever, and from other alarming symptoms even fears for her life were entertained. Happily country air, with the purchase of alderman Butterfont's villa and coach, who had suddenly become insolvent, so entirely established her health, that before the winter my mother recovered her usual spirits, and was perfectly satisfied that, although she had paid somewhat dearly for the secret, yet it had produced an indemnification fully equivalent to her wishes; for she had learned the direct road to my honest father's compliances, by being on the brink of the grave and remaining delicate.

CHAPTER X.

THE tender cares of my nurse, aided by a natural goodness of constitution, reconciled me to my food. When I had nearly reached my third year, a circumstance occurred which made me of some importance to my mother, and afforded my father an opportunity of displaying his wealth. A lady of the name of Maisin lived in a handsome house in the country near our summer residence. She was the widow of a native of Switzerland, who had passed the greater part of his life in Paris. At his death she returned to England, leaving her only child, a daughter, with the mother of her late husband, for the purpose of finishing her education, and consoling the aged and fond parent for the loss of her son. Mrs. Maisin was remotely related to my father, and on her first return to her own country had applied to him in those difficulties incident to a new establishment. My father had been useful and friendly; but her remoteness from us, joined to a love of retirement and a depression of spirits, had prevented an intimacy. Mademoiselle Maisin was in the mean time engaged, with the approbation of both her parents, to marry monsieur du Rivage, the associate in the banking-house of her father, who, although nearly double her age, had gained her heart. The sudden death of her grandmother prevented the celebration of the marriage; and in order to restore the young and affianced bride to health and spirits, which had been materially injured by her grief, monsieur du Rivage and his sister accompanied her on a visit to her mother. The beauty and accomplishments of this young lady, the gay and amiable manners of her female companion, who, although approaching to fifty years of age, claimed the prerogatives of youth and the respect due to a cultivated understanding, soon rendered Mrs. Maisin's abode the residence of cheerfulness, and the resort of her fashionable neighbours.

My mother, whose gradual progress to gentility, with her claims of relationship to Mrs. Maisin, found an easy access to the gay parties formed for the stranger's amusement, became elated by her intercourse with a family to whom she was indebted for her self-consequence; and availing herself of the feeble interest of her deserted infant, she urged to my father the necessity of my baptism, and proposed to him her darling project of giving an entertainment to Mrs. Maisin's family, which should include all those of their select friends who had noticed them. This permission was granted with his usual indulgence, and even with an injunction "to do the thing handsomely." On this occasion my sisters were sent for from their school in order to be prepared for exhibition, and my nurse received orders to bring

me to Wellsdown, the name of my father's country house, some days preceding the ceremony, that I might be equipped in a style which had not been deemed necessary in "Dock-lane."

The amiable mademoiselle Maisin, with that warmth of affection so congenial to the heart of a being destined by nature for a mother, found in me an attraction which prepossessed her in my favour, even before my christening robe and laced cap were finished. She requested the favour of answering for me at the baptismal font; and my mother, flattered by this condescension, was for a time proud of her little Mary. My nurse, elated by the notice I had gained, was eloquent in my praise, and, without intending it, excited in the bosom of my future godmother an interest in my fate, with a surprise that my mother could so unaccountably give up to another the pleasure of having such an infant in her house. At the font I was presented by mademoiselle Maisin with her name, and my baptismal register made out as Mary Pauline Murray; monsieur du Rivage answering as my godfather.

The ceremony being over, my nurse, regaled with a good dinner and gratified by my father's kindness, returned with her precious charge to "Dock-lane," leaving my mother to the joys of her fête-champêtre.

CHAPTER XI.

WE were, however, both contented; for my happiness was in Dock-lane, and my nurse was loaded with my godmother's gifts—a purse containing no less than ten guineas, a gold locket and beads for me, a new gown for Tabitha her lame daughter, with some muslin for herself, which, to use her own words, was "fitter for a duchess," and which I suspect was appropriated to a being she regarded with an idolatry beyond that which any rank would have produced! It would have been no matter of surprise to me, when qualified to appreciate justly the mind of that friend Heaven had given me, if, in her donations as my godmother, humanity had made them more liberal and extensive; but my nurse talked more of my perfections, than of her daughter's sufferings and total incapacity to earn her bread. This unfortunate creature had been subject to convulsion-fits from her infancy: these, at the age of fourteen, yielded to a paralytic attack which deadened half her limbs, whilst the acute sense of suffering seemed to have acquired force from its concentrated power of acting, and from time to time she was liable to tortures from spasms in her stomach. Her patience and piety were established long before my birth; but young as I was when I last beheld her, I still retain a perfect recollection of her mild and placid countenance, and a grateful remembrance of her kindness to me. Methinks I now see her before me neatly dressed in her humble attire, and hear her voice, whilst with smiles she encouraged her pupil, and, with an animation which spoke the spirit that the ruined tenement confined, would talk to me of Heaven, and the happiness prepared for good people. Her Bible was her consolation, my improvement her amusement, and the labour of her poor feeble hands knitting sale-stockings, for which she gained fourpence the pair; which, as she observed, was a blessing, as this pittance supplied her with a costly remedy for the spasms in her stomach, and thus spared her good mother's purse. My friend Tabitha freely communicated to me her knowledge, and, I scruple not to add, a portion of her own innate goodness of heart; for before I could speak the name of the insect I could have crushed, she had taught me to respect its life and ease.

Enabled by the bounty of my godmother and my father's kindness, my nurse changed her abode for one she thought more airy for me and Tabitha. The allurements were powerful—a little garden in which flourished one large walnut-tree, and a neat cottage, which made one of several built on a piece of ground at the outskirts of the town, and to each of which was annexed an equal proportion of the ground which had been a garden; but, being too much exposed to the depredations of its neighbours, became a

better speculation to the owner by building on it. Our walnut-tree was the gift of fortune, and the envy of our less lucky neighbours. My nurse's taste for flowers soon added to this advantage, and the neatness of our garden attracted the notice of every passing eye. Here Tabitha had her seat, and here it was expected that I should regain that strength and activity which for some months had yielded to the maladies incident to my age, amongst which was the small-pox. Happily, although I had caught the infection in Dock-lane, I had the disease in its mildest form, and the vestiges of it disappeared before my strength was recruited.

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CHAPTER XII.

IN this situation I attained my fifth year. Tabitha's knitting-needles were not unfrequently found rusty in her work, for I was become a prodigy of learning in "Cabbagefield-row," and could read as well as my instructress. One sorrow alone hung over this happy period of my life. This was my Sunday visit to my mother: the sight of my white frock and red shoes was the signal for my tears, and my perverseness became, at my father's house, the indication of a stupidity which mortified my nurse and disgusted my mother. In vain was I entreated to repeat the psalm and the collect I could say so perfectly, in vain tempted by promised rewards to tell my father and mother the pretty story of the red-breast. I was stubbornly silent and inactive till the moment of departure, when, with a joy which I took no pains to conceal, I quitted the presence of the fine lady my mother, whose very looks intimidated me, and whose observations constantly discovered some blemish in me.

My nurse, no less weary of these visits than myself, complained, as the winter approached, of the fatigue of carrying me a long mile. Her plea was admitted. My mother's visiting list was increased, my father was in the corporation, and my sister Becky had a lover, and would soon be married. Yielding to these several indispensable duties, my mother increased my pension, and all was complete happiness at "Cabbagefield-row."

The sedentary habits to which poor Tabitha was condemned, insensibly became mine as the winter drew us from the garden. The fascinating stories of Joseph and his brethren, of Naomi and her daughter, of Daniel with the lions, riveted me to her knee; and with a memory which astonished my partial friend, and which often tired her, I exacted in "the thrice and thrice told tale" a precision which admitted of no abridgement. These attainments, and my progress in reading, were the inexhaustible subjects of nurse's conversation, when my wants or her demands led her to my father's house: but as these reports went not beyond the kitchen, my stupidity and sullenness were not forgotten in the parlour.

I was interrupted one morning whilst feeding my robins, by being called into the house, to see a present my mamma had sent me; the footman having at the same time brought a formal invitation to dinner, for the anniversary of the new year, then within a few days: a smart bonnet and cloak with a fine muff were displayed before my eyes, by way of softening to me this bad news; but, turning from the gift with terror, I burst into tears. Nurse, moved to pity, pleaded the length of the road and the hazard of my taking cold; when to her amazement she was told that Mrs. Maisin would take us up in her carriage in her way to my father's and that we were to be sent home in the evening. This silenced nurse, and the servant departed with no very favourable opinion of my docility.

CHAPTER XIII.

THE day of tribulation arrived. I was dressed clinging to Tabitha's knees, and my fine new muff was thrown indignantly on the floor, when Mrs. Maisin's carriage stopped at the door. Nurse, her honest face flushed with the ineffectual labours of the morning, took her seat; and I, awed into silence, with suppressed sobs, blubbered cheeks, and inflamed eyes, was placed in my corner. "What has been the matter with this poor little girl?" asked Mrs. Maisin compassionately.—"Nothing, madam," answered nurse; "only she does not like to be with *strangers*: she is as cheerful as a bird with us; but she will, I hope, remember what she promised Tabitha, and behave prettily now."—"Yes," replied I, struggling with my rising tears, "I will not grieve her." No further notice was taken of my sorrow; but there were

tones of kindness and sympathy in whatever Mrs. Maisin said to me, that beguiled me of it, and by the time I reached my mother's drawing-room I was composed and sociable with my new friend. But the sight of a number of persons collected in the drawing-room entirely intimidated me, and with terror I clung to my nurse. My mother ordered me to make my curtsy to the company; and I burst into tears. "Poor thing!" said my mother to a lady next her, "I doubt very much whether we shall ever make any thing of her: this is always the case when she is noticed."—"What do you mean?" asked Mrs. Maisin in a quick tone: "the child is only frightened. Come to me, my pretty Mary." "I would rather go *home*," answered I sorrowfully. "So you shall," answered she, "very soon, if you do not cry." She drew me gently towards her, and I did not resist. "Whom do you love?" asked my sister Becky. "Tabitha," answered I. "And whom besides?" "Mammy Nightly." "And do you love no one besides?" "No," replied I, alarmed by her tone of voice. She laughed, and said I was an "odd little body." During this time a gentleman was examining my wrists and ancles. The pressure of his touch, though gentle, alarmed me, and with an imploring look I asked Mrs. Maisin what he was going to do to me. He instantly desisted, and she again soothed me. I had now finished my visit of ceremony; for my mother rang the bell, and ordered the servant to carry me to my nurse: and, joyous as the vagrant bird which a happy chance has reconducted to its parental nest, I left the room. The kindness of the servants soon banished my timidity. I became sportive and talkative, and, treated with dainties, enjoyed the new year's day. One of the maid servants gave me a little basket, in which was neatly wrapped up a Christmas pie, and some cake for Tabitha. This favour rendered me caressing and grateful, and I told my stories and played off my little talents. I was even sorry when nurse told me that the carriage was ready, and that I was to go home. A kiss offered and received had warmed my little heart, and with a face glowing with contentment I was equipped once more in my new bonnet and cloak: but my basket was my special care, and I took it on my arm. At this moment I was ordered into the drawing-room to take leave. Nurse insisted I should take my muff, and I entered with more courage, being under her protection. I received my mother's kiss: then running to Mrs. Maisin, I told her with infant loquacity what I had gotten for Tabitha; and throwing down the muff on the carpet, I displayed my treasures. My father was pleased: he called me his good little girl, and gave me two half-crowns for my basket. Unmindful of the observation I attracted, I placed myself at Mrs. Maisin's feet, and she gave me paper in which to wrap up the half-crowns in imitation of the pie. But the carriage was now announced, and with a tender embrace I was quitting her, when she said, "Do not forget your pretty muff, Mary."—"You may have it," answered I, "I do not want it; for it will be a long time before I shall come here again." Nurse, ashamed of my disregard of my mother's gift, took up the muff, and retreated with her charge.

CHAPTER XIV.

FROM this time I was visited by doctor Hawksbury, a young physician, who was the gentleman that had examined my limbs so carefully. He had observed they were not strong; and I was placed under his care by my good father. I was now invited to exercise by every toy that could allure me, and a diet prescribed which was not less useful to Tabitha than to myself. My father also came frequently to see me, and I ranked him among my best friends; for he sent me a rocking-horse, and taught me himself to spin a humming-top. I was not mistaken, when in my contempt of the muff I predicted that I should not want it for some time: for the summer passed without any invitation to dine at Wellsdown. This neglect was however amply made up by my father's frequent calls, and his even smoking his pipe under the walnut-tree; and with my Sunday visit to Mrs. Maisin, I had no cause for discontent. The ostensible reason held out by my mother for not recalling me home was my sister Becky's approaching nuptials, and an excursion to Buxton. On the marriage taking place, which was in the autumn, I was remembered; and with the expectations resulting from Mrs. Maisin's commendations of me, I entered the drawing-room

under her protection with more timidity than terror. My sister's lover was present, and she introduced the little rustic to Mr. Budgely, the affianced bridegroom. He was a fat, good-humoured-looking man; and attracted by his notice of me, and his dexterity in conveying an apple from my grasp into the sleeve of his coat, we grew familiar; and all was well for a time, except when I was called to order in my mirth by my mother, who did not like noise. Mr. Budgely taking the hint now told me fine stories of the waxwork in Fleet-street, and unluckily finished by showing me, as he called it, "the way to Lunnon:" which it may be necessary to explain to you, by telling you that this was lifting me from the ground by my ears. The pain occasioned by this trick was too great for my philosophy, and I screamed violently that he had "killed my throat." The poor man, who had not the least intention of hurting, goodnatureedly soothed me. But he was desired to desist; for that my temper was such that kindness would only make me worse. I was sent from the room, and my father followed me. My peace was however made before dinner; but I was on my good behaviour, and remained a fixture till the visit finished.

I need not enlarge, my dear madam, on the natural effects of an infancy thus regulated: nor will you fail to draw from it those inferences which have occurred to myself. My emancipation from my narrow bounds of knowledge was yet deferred. My mother accompanied Mrs. Budgely to town, and she thought I could not be better than where I was. I often think of the gleanings from which I acquired food for my restless curiosity and expanding faculties. Mrs. Maisin passed this winter in Paris, and I was left altogether to Tabitha. She was indefatigable in procuring books from her humble friends; and by her means I became acquainted with "The Mirror of Chastity," "Argulaus and Parthenia," "Valentine and Orson," and "The Life of Doctor Faustus," a famous conjurer. To these marvellous books succeeded a much better, but not less unsuitable one for a girl of my age, whose reasoning powers were yet in embryo, and who had not a single conception which did not spring from her heart and imagination. Mrs. Rowe's Letters from the Dead to the Living fell into Tabitha's hands; and, absorbed in the pleasure they afforded her, I read in this charming book so often that I imbibed a portion of its enthusiasm. The return of Mrs. Maisin in the spring, and my mother's leisure, were followed by my leaving my paradise in Cabbagefield-row. I will pass over my grief on this occasion. The treatment which I received from my mother could not however be called severe; for she was seldom at leisure to correct or encourage me. My sister Judy was become her idol; and my mother saw no advantage in confining a beautiful girl in a school, who had a good chance of making her fortune before she was eighteen. Judith became in consequence her mother's companion, and the sharer in her amusements, before she was sixteen. My enjoyments were so far from being restricted by my sister's leaving her school, that they were augmented. Judith was as fond of reading as Tabitha, and a new field of literary improvement was opened to me from the circulating library. But there is no human pursuit unmixed with disappointment and vexation: my chance of partaking of Judy's banquet depended upon accidents which I could not control. At one time the novel escaped me in the very climax of distress; at another, at the end of the first volume, &c. Teased by these frequent interruptions, my ingenuity found out an expedient, and from the resources of an imagination which from my birth had been exercised I finished the story in my own way; the heroine was raised to the pinnacle of earthly happiness, and her oppressors were covered with ignominy.

CHAPTER XV.

I HAD reached my eleventh year in this state of mental neglect, but as it had occasionally been obviated by Mrs. Maisin: she had taught me a little French, and I had read with her Goldsmith's Natural History abridged for the use of children. She had in vain urged my parents to send me to a good school. But I was become necessary to my father's comforts, and my mother had entirely lost her predilection in

favour of boarding-schools. A serious indisposition with which my father was at this time attacked, rendered me even useful to him; and I heard with exultation the praises of the little nurse from his physician doctor Hawksbury, who was the intimate of the family and my great favourite, he having much relieved Tabitha from the dreadful pains in her stomach. Whether it arose from a jealousy of my growing favour in the invalid's room, or whether from my father's frequently observing that I read the newspapers as well as the town clerk, and could better tell him the meaning of French words than Judy, I cannot say; but I was sent on a visit to Mrs. Maisin's, and Judith took her station in the sick room. The experiment however did not answer, notwithstanding poor Judith had a nervous fever; the doctor could only cure my father; and some offence being taken from my mother's being informed indirectly that the doctor was engaged to marry a lady to whom he had been long attached, he was dismissed, and another physician employed: from that time I saw my good friend the doctor very seldom at our house. The secret however at length reached me; "miss Judith pined for the doctor."

CHAPTER XVI.

THE sudden illness of Mrs. Maisin, which plunged me into the deepest sorrow, became the æra of my rational existence. Although the intelligence of her danger met with no delay, her daughter did not arrive at the house till after she had breathed her last. Neither my father nor my mother had been deficient in acts of kindness to the deceased, and they were at hand to receive the afflicted madame du Rivage, in order to prevail on her to take up her abode with them till after the funeral. This offer of friendship was declined; but my godmother in her sorrow remembered me, and requested my company to share in it. It may be that I was useful to the mourner; for, unacquainted with grief, I had not learned to suppress mine, and I spoke of the loss of my tender friend with all the pathos of nature, and madame du Rivage became fond of a being who was never weary of talking of her mother. The succession to a large fortune, and the business incidental to it, detained my godmother some weeks in England; during which time I was constantly with her. Monsieur du Rivage at this period was approaching his sixtieth year; but he had not accelerated the effects of time by his follies. A remarkably fine person, equal spirits, and a cheerful compliance with the modes and usages of polite life, gave him an air of youth without lessening his dignity. He became fond of his wife's Pauline; and she flattered by this partial favour, amused him by her jargon of French and English, and by a returning gaiety of spirits contributed to divert madame du Rivage's mind from its sadness. "Ma chère mère, et mon père," were grown familiar epithets; and unmindful of the hour which was to separate her from those on whom she leaned for gratifications hitherto unknown to her, she enjoyed the present, and insensibly assimilated her manners to those of her elegant friends. But monsieur du Rivage, now pressed by his concerns in Paris, prepared to leave England, and my regrets commenced: these were so little spared, that I fretted myself ill, and even alarmed madame du Rivage. Her compassion effected my recovery; for I was informed that she had gained my parents' consent to take me to Paris with her. All was enchantment from this hour; and with a tear paid to my good father for his sacrifice, and a farewell visit to Tabitha and her mother, which was softened by the munificence of my godmother, who left a commission with doctor Hawksbury to pay them for life ten pounds per annum, I quitted England with friends never to be forgotten.

CHAPTER XVII.

THE succeeding six years of my life were marked by such favours by the great Disposer of events, that, whilst my bosom glows with humble gratitude for the blessings which then surrounded me, my spirits sink at the recollection of those changes which have clouded the bright prospect before me. My intercourse with my father had been punctually kept up; and apparently contented with my happiness, he

employed no arguments for my return home. Monsieur and madame du Rivage had been explicit with him and my mother in their views relative to me; and I was considered by all their connexions in Paris as their adopted child. I have reason to believe that in this preference of me had been included their own plans of future comfort. Madame du Rivage had never had the hopes of being a mother; and her husband cheerfully acceded to a project from which with herself he expected comfort. His fortune was ample, and his few connexions in Switzerland too remote to interest him. A plan of retirement from the fatigues of a banking-house had for some time been the object of their wishes. Both loved the country; both were refined in their tastes, and looked forward to the period when these might be gratified without interruption from the bustle and claims of the world. Their hopes in me were not ill-founded; for, granting to me only a common capacity and a pure heart, they well understood that a pupil of theirs could not be altogether unworthy of them. Gratified by my undivided affection, and constantly occupied in their tender cares of me, I received, on entering into my seventeenth year, a *proof* of their generosity. I was told that madame du Rivage from that time had destined for my benefit a sum of money in the English funds, which had been left to her from an aunt, and which was secured to her particular but unconditional use, by being in trust and standing in her maiden name. Without therefore losing sight of those claims which they conceived I still had on my father's justice, I was given to understand that my modes of life with them had in some measure removed me from the mediocrity in which my father would probably leave his family; and that, in order to provide me with a little independence of my own to manage, they meant to appropriate the interest of this sum to my particular use. My acknowledgments for this favour were followed by my being promised an excursion to England to see my friends, and I learned that during madame du Rivage's absence her husband intended to put in execution his views of retiring from Paris.

Elated by the hope of seeing a parent endeared to my memory by a thousand acts of kindness, and to whom duty gave claims I had no inclination to reject, I lost no time in communicating this joyful intelligence to my father. His reply to this letter was as usual affectionate; but it wore an air of dejection which touched my heart. "He hoped he should live to embrace his child. But his comfort was, she stood secure in the love of those who would never abandon her. He had been *poorly* for some weeks; but my letter had cheered him, and the sight of me would renew his days." Alas! I had not the last embrace. A letter from my mother's attorney announced his death to me within three weeks after the date of his letter. A copy of my father's will soon followed, in which madame du Rivage's adopted daughter had been entirely overlooked: a codicil added in my father's hand-writing, and annexed to the will a few days before he took to his bed, is prefaced in words to this effect: "In order to provide for any exigency of fortune which may occur to set aside the hopes and prospects of a child I consider at this moment as being amply provided for by those who have cherished her as a child, I leave to my wife ten thousand pounds, in order that she may be enabled the more effectually to assist her children, or *any individual child* who may need her cares and support." My father had disposed of the remainder of his property by bequeathing legacies of five thousand pounds to each of my brothers and sisters. The house at Wellsdown, with the farm of about two hundred and fifty pounds per annum, had apparently been left as my mother's future provision, till this codicil was made, and for the execution of which my father's property in the West Indies stood charged. Monsieur and madame du Rivage were in the first instance surprised by the extent of my father's fortune, and in the second much offended by his forgetfulness of me. My mother's letter was not better calculated to please them. It contained a detail of the grievances to which she had been exposed by the favour and confidence of her deceased husband; her eldest son thinking he had been unworthily treated; and she herself thought that the will was in some respects defective for Judith, who her father must know would have an unlimited power to do what she pleased with her money. Rings were the compliment sent with this letter, with her "love to Mary." A postscript

was however added, that “she should be glad to hear from me.”

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CHAPTER XVIII.

THIS event and its consequences set aside the intention of seeing England: but it hastened madame du Rivage's measures in regard to her gift; and she gave instructions to her mother's solicitor and her law agent for the transfer of the stock into my name, appointing him and doctor Hawksbury as my trustees. This detail, my dear madam, is necessary to my narrative. But I now hasten to events more important to me than the loss of a fortune I had never thought of, or the accession of an income for which I had no use, and which it was determined should be left to accumulate in Mr. Furnival's hands.

The disastrous epoch of the French revolution was now commenced. History had prepared her crimson page; and want of bread had introduced tumult and discontent. This dawn of "Gallic freedom," as it was called by some, and of "Gallic atrocity" by others, could not be viewed with indifference under either of these aspects; for both the enthusiast and the enemy of innovation equally felt themselves impressed by a sense of danger which menaced them. Monsieur du Rivage had long foreseen the storm; but, engaged in very extensive connexions, he had been unable to secure his retreat from the commotion. He was the friend of liberty, but perceived not her approach in a reform which levelled with so much fury every established regulation of order and justice. He continued to act with his usual reserve, admitting to his table only those to whom he was attached; and amongst this number were few who were active in the reigning politics of the day.

In the number of our guests was admitted an English gentleman of the name of Middleton, who had not only claims on monsieur du Rivage's attention as his banker, but also from the particular recommendation he brought with him. The first time I saw him was on our leaving our summer residence for Paris; and monsieur du Rivage, in his introduction of him, sufficiently indicated the manner in which his wife was to receive him. We had that day at our table some persons who made light of the popular phrensy, and gave the most brilliant colourings of hope to the termination of a contest in which millions would find freedom. Mr. Middleton with youthful ardour supported this opinion. Monsieur du Rivage checked the enthusiasm: "I wish," said he, "the event may be found answerable to the hazard, and that those who have contributed to unshackle the multitude may live to see order spring from disorder. But there rests the danger."—"And there also rests the triumph, my good friend," cried Mr. Middleton with energy: "death cannot defraud those of glory, who have commenced the work of liberty." Monsieur du Rivage smiled, and, as I remember, told him he was misnamed, for that instead of Augustus Middleton he ought to have been called *Algernon Sidney*. The conversation changed for one more pleasing to me, who well knew my mother's dislike of politics.

It appeared from his conversation that Mr. Middleton had accompanied an English family to which he was nearly allied, and who were then near their departure, or set forwards towards Italy; and that, enamoured with the dawn of Gallic liberty, he chose to remain at Paris till a friend, whom he daily expected from England, should join him; when they meant to follow the party in their route, who having two ladies in it, found Paris in too great a ferment for their courage or amusement.

The domestic comforts which Mr. Middleton found under our roof soon rendered him a frequent visitor. My dear mother's health was the too-well grounded pretext held out for the retirement in which we lived; a friendly and unceremonious circle amused her dejected spirits, and it was never complete without Mr. Middleton.

To the youthful heart of your poor Pauline he had been irresistible from the first hour she beheld him. The manly graces of his person, the energy of his mind, his various accomplishments, with the independence of an understanding which placed him above the vanity of displaying them, won on my fancy. I compared him without ceasing with the young men who courted my notice; and I pronounced without a blush, that I could only *love an Englishman*. It is true, this confession had no witness; nor did I acknowledge to any one that on one point Augustus Middleton gave me offence. The correct gaiety of his manners, his unrestrained good will and easy politeness, mortified me; for these plainly manifested that I had nothing to hope. I believe my mother suspected that I was in danger of imitating my sister Judith; for, unaccustomed to concealment with her, I permitted her to perceive that something disturbed me, whether Mr. Middleton was present or absent. One evening she with assumed cheerfulness observed she was afraid that nervous complaints were infectious, for I had many symptoms like hers. I blushed, and said it might be, for my health depended on hers. "Better so," replied she smiling, "than that it should like your poor sister Judith's depend on a love-sick fancy, which will cheat her of every chance of a remedy. I often think of that poor girl," continued she, "who was, without dispute, a beautiful one, and was not unamiable in her temper: but, from her youth, Judith has preferred the complaints of unrequited love and despairing constancy to the title of a wife. Not that she has preserved her first love," continued she, laughing, "from the censure affixed to our sex; for I know she has transferred her wounded heart no less than three times since doctor Hawksbury's cruelty. But she has so ingeniously contrived to fall in love without hope, that I think I may predict she will never marry. Her last three years' flame was a married man, whose wife was supposed to be consumptive; but the lady got well, and, to her husband's great contentment, presented him with a son and heir. Doctor Hawksbury," continued madame du Rivage, "in writing me this account, informed me that her health was injured by these extravagances of an idle imagination, and that she was in a constant nervous state. She forgets that her nightly vigils and daily dreams will not *detain* the charms of youth, or add usefulness or respectability to her character when these are fled. This is amongst many others," pursued she, "one of those errors to which young women are liable, and which, in the first instance, neither implicates the purity of their hearts, nor their principles; as it frequently arises from a sensibility of mind which needs only regulation and judgment. Remember, my Pauline, that human life is not a romance; nor is it the less happy, or the more barren, for not being strewed with the flowers which a youthful fancy thinks necessary for its decoration: keep therefore a strict watch over your imagination whilst you are young. It is, my child, a fair gift when under the control of reason and experience, and is the source of our most refined pleasure; but in our sex it wants no adventitious supports; it requires the *curb* rather than the *spur*. We cannot oppose to its encroachments that ambition nor those active pursuits which engage the other sex, and which are calculated to control, or at least to divert, its activity. Many of us, I doubt, are disqualified by education to balance its suggestions by the force of a vigorous and imperative reason; but we can all of us, Pauline, find a refuge in the simple line of duty, and in the restraints wisely imposed by our religion. Guarded by this armour, we shall be safe amidst danger, and neither lavish our affections nor give our confidence on the mere report of imaginary excellence or imaginary preference. Were I a man, I should carefully avoid a woman whose heart had been frittered away by disappointed passion, or chilled by unrequited love. Preserve yours, my dear girl, for the man on whom you will have a legal claim for protection and love; preserve it as the temple of those affections which as a wife and a mother will secure your tranquillity, and from which will spring unceasing motives for the performance of your duties. Be content," added she smiling, "with that repose which results from a quiet state of mind, and the innocent pursuits of an unruffled temper, although your life may not furnish the incidents proper for a novel, nor your love adventures excite that compassion which much oftener wounds than soothes the feelings of a woman of true delicacy." In recalling these admonitions to my mind, I am aware of the conclusion which they must make against a pupil thus instructed and guarded. Alas! madam, I had been the child of imagination from

the hour I could speak: and I now became a dissembler; for I eluded my revered madame du Rivage's observations by an assumed gaiety, and an indifference to Mr. Middleton which sometimes approached to neglect. I was unhappily soon furnished with an apology for my dejection and pale cheek. The continual alarms which followed the fall of the Bastille seemed to have altered the equal and hitherto firm mind of madame du Rivage. Her terrors were beyond all description; and the safety of her husband became a more serious evil to him, than the dangers she so prophetically dreaded.

In this state of nervous irritability she remained for many weeks; and we saw scarcely any one except her most intimate friends. Mr. Middleton still kept his ground; for he was become necessary to her husband's amusement as well as her own. But it soon appeared that the philosophical admirer of the new order of things had changed his opinions; and in his conversations with monsieur du Rivage he constantly urged him to remove his family from France, predicting at the same time the hazard of remaining in a country rapidly advancing to anarchy and ruin. About this time also we saw less of him, he being, as he said, much engaged with some English friends who were on the point of leaving France. His return to our domestic circle was unaccompanied by his usual cheerfulness or health. He was pale, complained constantly of fatigue, and with a dependence on our good nature frequently indulged in a pensive silence little calculated to amuse the invalid.

One evening, after more than a fortnight's desertion of us, he dropped in on our solitude. Your poor Pauline received him coldly. My dear mother, observing his altered countenance, welcomed him with cordiality, and began to question him in regard to his health. He replied that he knew of no *bodily* malady. "I am not your confessor," answered she, smiling; "but, if I were, I should ask you whether the malady were not in your mind, and one you may not have had the wisdom to escape." He rose from his seat, and with visible agitation traversed the room. "There is not a calendared saint," said he, taking madame du Rivage's hand, "to whom I would so soon unbosom my griefs as to you. Judge of my condition, when I tell you that I am upon the brink of destruction; that I believe you could save me; yet I dare not ask your friendly interposition. A false principle of honour, and a mistaken sense of duty, impose silence: and I must obey."—"I wish," answered my mother, "that you had left Paris with your friends."—"Wish!" repeated he in an agony: "it was my ultimate hope to have done so. But a fatal infatuation prevented my plans. It seems to me," continued he, "to prevail in proportion as the danger here magnifies. Why do you not persuade your husband to leave this devoted country?" My mother took the alarm instantly. "Good God!" cried she, "another tragedy has been perpetrated!"—"No," answered he, recollecting himself; "I have heard of nothing *new*; but I should be happy to know, before I left Paris, that you were determined on quitting a residence which will ruin your health by perpetual alarms. My good old uncle," continued he with more composure, "has been affected with a portion of your panic, and, having seen from afar more of the hazard of my remaining here than I do myself, has travelled to Nice in order to reclaim a nephew who has been seized with the mania of *French liberty*. That delusion has however passed away. But unfortunately my uncle, in his cares for me, forgot his age and infirmities. He is very ill; and to-morrow at an early hour I quit Paris. But I shall return hither the moment I am assured of his safety. With what joy should I find you ready for your flight from this miserable country when I return! I must now see monsieur," added he, rising; "and when I have finished my business in his office, I must return home to prepare for my journey." He took my hand. "Second me in my advice, my dear Pauline," said he: "prevail on your mother to seek peace and health in England, or in Switzerland." He immediately left the room, and I burst into tears. "Middleton has met with some recent disappointment," said she with calmness; "and because his mistress has probably more prudence than himself, he has taken offence at that deity, before whom he bowed a few months since with ecstatic adoration. These warm and ardent spirits never know a medium: it is all hope or all despair with them!

But, my dear child, we are under the protection of an overruling Providence, and guarded by a man as much, nay more interested for our safety than his own. My husband cannot quit Paris with quite the same ease as a young man who has nothing to do but to order his *chaise de poste*, and to avail himself of an unlimited credit. I hope he will say nothing to monsieur du Rivage. He wants no advice to excite in his mind precautions for our safety. He has vexations enow, without being harassed with my apprehensions," continued she, weeping. "My husband's purse has hitherto been judged an equivalent for his more active services. He would not remain a week in France, could he quit it with honour; but du Rivage will never make a shipwreck of a good conscience to save my life, or his own." I succeeded in composing her fluttered spirits, by agreeing with her, and making light of those evils she feared.

But it was not possible to be deceived. Those events, which in rapid succession banished the misguided inhabitants from Paris, and which so totally excluded security and the home-felt joys of domestic peace, appeared to rivet monsieur du Rivage to his desk and the capital. The fluctuation of specie, the dread of impending insolvency, and the hazard of being thought wealthy, by turns harassed his mind: to these troubles was added the decline of his wife's health; and I perceived daily that his own was yielding, and that his cheerfulness was assumed.

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CHAPTER XIX.

MADAME du Rivage's physicians advised her to return to La Fontaine, the name of our country retreat; urging to monsieur the necessity there was for her being beyond the reach of the *tocsin*, and the rumours and distractions of the city. The sinking and at intervals passive patient made no objection to this measure; and early in May we were settled in our retirement, with an old and faithful servant and the gardener and his wife. Monsieur du Rivage having given us two days of his time returned to Paris, reminding his wife that a few short leagues only would be between them. We had been accustomed to see him depart. But, good God! what a difference was there in our farewells! His solicitude for our comforts, his reiterated promises of seeing us again in a few days, appeared to us only to indicate the apprehensions which he concealed: and heavy at heart I followed his steps with my eyes, secretly foreboding that I should see him no more. Judge, madam, of the condition of a people, to whom such fears at length became so familiar as in many instances to deaden the sensibility of their minds!

Our habitation was more elegant than spacious; it was situated about half a league from the great road between Estampe and Paris. The domain annexed to it was small, but sufficient for all the purposes of modest luxury. It had been expressly chosen by monsieur du Rivage, as a retreat necessary for him, and which would call out neither malignity nor curiosity. Its principal beauty was derived from its vicinity to the duke de Fouclaut's house and grounds. Immense sums had been lavished by him in rendering this chateau and its gardens an object worthy of his elaborate taste; and L'Eclair was justly admired as a terrestrial paradise, in all points save in the primitive innocence of its proprietor.

Our garden, and a wood of some extent belonging to the duke, separated us from his house: and our noble neighbour had with much courtesy sent monsieur du Rivage a key to a little wicket which separated us from the wood, with a compliment, that we might not only consider the wood as an appendage to our garden, but also every part of his grounds. Monsieur du Rivage, contenting himself with returning suitable thanks for this favour, had cautiously availed himself of the privilege it gave him, and we never opened the wicket except when L'Eclair had no guests. The motives for these precautions were no secret with me; for monseigneur's character for gallantry and extravagance fully justified the reserve with which monsieur du Rivage shunned a neighbour whose cash account would have been as unprofitable as his intimacy might have been dangerous to his family.

From an old female domestic who had lived in the late duchess de Fouclaut's service, and who was the intimate friend of our good Catharine, I learned many particulars relative to this family; for madame Claudine took delight in telling me stories of her dear children, as she called the duke's son, and a daughter, at that time of my age and in a convent at Paris; Sigismund having been sent when a mere child to a great-uncle's at Vienna.

In describing the infant traits of her idol, mademoiselle Marianne de Fouclaut, the good Claudine would measure me with her eye, examine my hands and hair, and then with fond delight describe the paragon of beauty her dear Marianne. "She ought to be taller than you," would she observe, "for her parents had noble persons; and although she has not your complexion, she is as beautiful. But, ma bonne enfant, never be vain of your beauty. Madame la duchesse was the most beautiful woman in France, and one of the most unfortunate wives!" Then gazing on my face she observed, "that her Marianne's eyes were dark brown, like her sainted mother's." The common tribute which these conversations exacted were tears, and a silent ejaculation to Heaven, whilst wiping her dimmed spectacles. Sometimes my

curiosity was excited by Claudine's news of the duke's being at L'Eclair, and with bitterness she would describe his associates. These were generally such as placed me on my guard; and I never saw the duke but once, and that at a distance. He had two elegant females with him. I sheltered myself at Claudine's house, a neat little farm, which was her property, and was managed by her son. She told me that I had done wisely; for the two opera girls had no chance for future favour, but that of the duke's seeing no newer face. I took this caution, and heedfully guarded mine from his view during his short visits at L'Eclair.

CHAPTER XX.

ON our reaching La Fontaine with my dear invalid, Claudine came to visit us. She was shocked on beholding the ravages of sickness in the emaciated form of madame du Rivage: but with an address which marked her judgment she applied comfort and cheerfulness to her despondency; and her assiduities were so affectionate and useful, that my mother was unhappy if Claudine was prevented from her daily visit. Some weeks passed under the anxiety of seeing my mother's advances to her grave.

The malady under which madame du Rivage laboured was of that sort which no medicine could reach. Whether some unsuspected disorder lurked in her veins, and poisoned the springs of life, it is not for me to determine; but of this truth I am certain, that the train of ideas produced by the state of public affairs greatly contributed to destroy her. Her ordinary dejection and silence now and then yielded to transient intervals of cheerfulness: but she became a shadow; and sleep was a stranger to her eye-lids, except when procured by opium. One object of terror occupied her imagination, namely, fears for her husband's life. One day, distressed by my inability to sooth her, I urged our returning to Paris, and thus preventing monsieur du Rivage's frequent, and to her dreaded, journeys to us. She shook her head: "No, no," said she wildly; "he will escape without me." Then bursting into tears, she more composedly said, "I will have no more sleeping potions: they will distract me. Do not weep, my dear child; I cannot bear to see your tears. My malady increases my sensibility; and every proof I receive of your and my husband's affection only makes me more impatient *to die*. I know what detains du Rivage in France. It is his wife: he thinks that *she* could not have sustained the loss of her usual indulgences. Alas! it is now too late to convince him how little poverty would have been regarded by me, when compared with what I have endured for some months! But let us not talk of the past. Swear to me, that when I am no more you will conjure your father, in my name, to fly from this wretched country. You will find, Pauline, in that cabinet a letter addressed to Mr. Furnival. He is a man whom you may trust; and I wish you to go to England. The little provision you will find there, will enable you to give bread to your father. Urge this to him; and let him not lose his life by his cares to save a shipwrecked property whilst there is one plank to support him. He is buoyed up, my child, by a sense of honour, and fallacious hopes. I am and have been long of this opinion; but he has one comfort: you will never abandon him; and God will reward you for your attentions to a man who has been a parent to you." I will omit the warm effusions of my heart, and quit a subject for which I am still unequal.

CHAPTER XXI.

DURING a fortnight which monsieur du Rivage gave to his own sorrows and mine, after the death of his beloved wife, he frequently adverted to the embarrassment of his affairs. "Could I," said he, "retire from this country without injury to others, I would, and should long before this have quitted it at the hazard of begging my bread. But, my dear Pauline, I am responsible for the widow's mite and the orphan's little portion. It has been my principal concern of late, to acquit myself faithfully of these obligations; and I

have the consolation of knowing that I have saved many who would have been ruined by my more precipitate measures. I stand secure, however, no longer than whilst I am in a condition to be fleeced. They have, in consideration of my usefulness, permitted me to maintain my credit; but the exorbitancy of their demands on that credit must end in my ruin. I have regulated matters as well as I can for my emigration. You must be content to remain here till you leave France. I have reduced my establishment at Paris, and shall make this house appear as one to be let, or sold. Should I have the good fortune to dispose of it, you must shelter yourself with Claudine. For it is better that you should not appear again in Paris.”—This conversation ended by supplying me with money, and informing me that he should send for all the most valuable articles of furniture. These arrangements took place. Catharine and myself took possession of the rooms which looked into the garden; and the house was shuttered up in front, and appeared on sale or in want of a tenant.

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CHAPTER XXII.

MY dejected mind for a season brooded over this scene of desolation: gradually it reverted to past illusions. Augustus Middleton's image became the solace of my thoughts, and my harp was tuned in order to practise the music he had given me. Claudine with unceasing goodness visited us; and my dear father's letters and visits spoke only of comfort. The king's arrest at Varennes and his confinement were now terminated by an atrocity never to be cancelled from the annals of France; and struck with horror at the deed, I began to pray fervently for my own escape from a country grown hateful to me. To add to my troubles, poor Catharine sprained her ankle, and was lame. Secure from danger by the duke's absence, I took my usual walk to Claudine's alone; for at her house I learned the rumours of the day. I was the more alert, from not having seen my good friend for near a week. At some little distance from her door, I saw her in earnest conversation with a very elegant young lady, whose appearance excited my curiosity; but a black lace veil so entirely excluded her face from my view, that I could not catch a glimpse of it. She held an infant in her arms, and caressed it fondly from time to time. At length, reluctantly giving the child to Claudine, they parted; Claudine taking the path to her house, and the lady that which I was in. I curtsied in passing her. She returned the compliment with grace, but hurried on.

On entering the house, Claudine received me with cordiality, and immediately introduced to me her daughter, madame Meunier: "And is this angel boy," cried I, "your grandson?" "No," replied she: "it is a nurseling Jeanneton has the care of."—"Was that his mother," asked I, "whom I passed, and whom you were talking with?"—"That was mademoiselle de Fouclaut," answered Claudine: "she is at the chateau." My alarm prevented my perceiving Claudine's embarrassment. "Good Heavens!" cried I, "I wish I were at home." "Be under no fears," replied Claudine: "there are no opera girls at the chateau: you are safe enough." Reassured on this point, I now gave my attention to Jeanneton: she was pleasing in her person, notwithstanding an air of melancholy, and the reserve of her manner. She was modestly dressed in the Parisian fashion, and in her replies to my civilities discovered neither rusticity nor an ignorance of politeness. "I dare say you thought I was dead, ma chere mademoiselle," said Claudine with cheerfulness; "but I have been much engaged in preparing for my guests; and I hope," added she, "to be repaid for my trouble, and to send home my daughter in better spirits than I find her. Poor Jeanneton never conditioned to be a soldier's wife," added she, "and she pines at the absence of her husband, who must do as he is ordered, and rank with the rest of the *free* men of France, although he likes a uniform still less than his wife: but we must submit; and trust to a ruler who can say to our new masters, 'Thus far shalt thou go, and no further.'" Madame Meunier checked not her tears. "Your mother's consolation and this sweet boy will be useful to you," said I compassionately, "and the country air will restore your health, and confirm the hopes of the child's parent."—"I hope so," answered she with emotion; "it will be my pride and glory to rear him for their comfort and joy; for they have been my benefactors." I discovered before I finished my visit that she had lost her own infant, and in nursing the little Sigismund had found a comfort beyond her hopes.

CHAPTER XXIII.

IT soon appeared that mademoiselle de Fouclaut as well as myself found an attraction to Claudine's in the little Sigismund, for I several times met her returning from the house: she was always alone, and shunned, as I thought, my observation. I mentioned my opinion to Claudine, adding a wish that she would relax from her dignity, and invite me to walk with her. "Poor lady!" answered Claudine, profoundly sighing, "she has no more pride than her mother. But she dares not make acquaintance with

you, nor speak to any one. It is owing to the good nature of her duenna that she is permitted to leave the chateau.”—“Surely,” said I, “her convent was a more eligible prison than the one you describe?”—“Assurément,” replied she; “for there she had Jeanneton and the whole community to love her. But she has been from thence some time, and has lived at her father’s hotel in Paris. I always suspected a snake in the grass when I heard of his kindness to her; for I say, Can the Ethiopian change his skin, or the leopard his spots? When I see that, I will believe that the duke can act like a good parent. It is all now come out why he was so kind: he wants to marry her to a man as old as himself, and who he fancies will not disgrace him because he has money. Ma foi! He would judge right, were he to marry him himself; for vice cannot sink beneath its level. But for the daughter of the noble and virtuous house de l’Ormesson! My blood, mademoiselle, boils at the idea. I do not know which to reprobate most, the meanness and barbarity of the duke, or the insolence of the old baboon, who dares to sit in the presence of this angel! I knew him when her domestics would not have spoken to him. She may thank our new law-makers for this lover!” Well knowing Claudine’s political creed, I contented myself with pitying mademoiselle de Fouclaut, and again expressed my wish to be known to her. I will try what I can do,” replied Claudine: “you would be a comfort to her: but we must manage with mademoiselle Babet, her keeper. The fool courts me, in order to find favour with Simon, my son, and I have given him his cue. I cannot help laughing, to see him act his part.”

Day succeeded day, and I gained no ground: twice or thrice I met mademoiselle de Fouclaut; but she passed me always veiled, with hurried steps; and disappointed in my wishes of becoming her consoler, I became her censor; attributing her reserve to pride, and to a contempt of my proffered kindness. Claudine seemed to have forgotten her commission; and I sometimes thought that Jeanneton received my visits as an intrusion; for she left the house with her little charge, not unfrequently in five minutes after I entered it, under the pretence of giving him air at his usual hour.

A short visit from my dear father for some days turned the channel of my thoughts. He looked thin and pale, and I found that he had been indisposed. I was now informed that I was to hold myself in readiness for the arrival of an English family from Bourdeaux, with whom I was to make my way to England. My reluctance to losing sight of him was overruled by the arguments he used; and convinced that he could with more safety execute his purpose of emigration without me, I consented to his plans. He asked me some questions relative to the letter his wife had written to Mr. Furnival, and gave me another for that gentleman from himself, cautioning me to be careful of them. His provision of assignats appeared to me super-abundant, and I told him I should not want any. “You can give them me at Paris,” said he thoughtfully, “in case you do not; but it is not certain when I can visit you again: it is better for you to have too many than too few; and it is not decided what day my friend Wilmot will come for you.” The caution which had induced him to destroy every letter and paper he could find in the house, and his being unattended, completed my consternation; and unable to conceal my alarm, I implored him not to leave me. “You distress me, my dear child,” said he, moved by my tears, “by a request which it is impossible for me to comply with. Be assured, Pauline, that my thoughts have no object so near to them as your safety and preservation. Summon up your resolution to meet the difficulties of the hour, and confidently trust that I act with prudence. You will find your clothes at the hotel, whither the Wilmots will conduct you. It is not improbable that I shall be in England before you. Let this be your comfort, and look forwards to the hour of our reunion. I will in the mean time rest on the assurance of your safety, and the assistance of the Almighty.” He tenderly blessed me, and hastily mounted his horse.

Exhausted by my tears, and oppressed by an intense head-ach, I yielded to poor Catharine’s advice of walking in the garden; and taking the path to a small elevated summer-house which

commanded the road, I entered it, and seated myself at the window with that lassitude which seeks relief from every surrounding object: although hopeless of diverting my melancholy thoughts, I found a momentary solace in opening the sash, and contemplating the view it afforded. I had not enjoyed this respite many minutes before I heard the trampling of horses, and soon saw a party of the national guard advance, escorting a carriage. "We are lost!" cried I with frantic terror, and darting from the summer-house, "we are lost! and my father has been arrested!" Impelled by my terror, and the sense of self-preservation, I rushed forwards to the wicket-gate in my view, and with a force which danger lent me I broke the rusty and slight bolt. Hope now directed my fleet steps. "I might be sheltered in the chateau; I would implore a refuge there." Judge of my surprise, when I beheld mademoiselle de Fouclaut with no less terror of countenance hastily advancing to meet me. "Heaven has not deserted me," cried she with agony. "But to what cause am I to attribute seeing you here?"—"The soldiers, the guards seek my life!" answered I panting. "Oh save me! They are in the house! In pity save me!"—"You are deceived by your fears," answered she calmly. "The victim they seek is before you. As you wish for peace on earth, and for happiness in heaven, hear me! Take this casket, and return to your habitation. It is no time for me to say more," added she, placing it in my hands. "Farewell! We shall meet in a different hour." She turned from me with emotion, and waving her hand said, "Fly from this spot." I stood notwithstanding motionless for some minutes, gazing on the beauteous phantom as she swiftly made for the chateau. The deadly paleness of her countenance, the fixed despair of her tearless eyes, with the tones of her voice and the impassioned energy of her words, struck me with the awe impressed by some heavenly visitation; and I looked to the casket in my hand for a conviction that my senses had not deluded me. It restored me to recollection; and concealing it I retreated, securing the gate as well as I could, and took the path home with a perturbation of spirits which retarded my steps. I had never before this extraordinary interview seen mademoiselle de Fouclaut without a veil. Her graceful stature and elegance of form had not escaped my observation; but I now recalled to my mind a face of unequalled beauty. She wore a white robe, and had evidently quitted her room in haste; for her head was uncovered but by the dark and abundant tresses which nature had bestowed. No time can erase from my memory the eyes I then beheld! nor have I ever seen any to equal them; although Sigismund's sometimes recall them to my remembrance.

My slow approach to the house was observed by Catharine, who although still lame, and obliged to walk with a crutch, met me near the hall-door. Her quiet aspect reassured me, and I quickened my pace. "Be under no alarm," said she, "on seeing two or three of the Paris guards within; they are on duty at the chateau, and have nothing to do here but to pay their *compliments*. One amongst them does me the *honour* of remembering me; and I must," added she, winking, "be civil to such *friends*." "I need not appear," observed I, trembling. "Indeed you must," answered she, "and fearlessly too; for my *good friend* has inquired for mademoiselle Pauline, and I came to look for you."

Timid, and still alarmed, I followed her slow steps, and found three men sitting in the hall with some wine and bread before them. I instantly knew one of them, from his having almost daily brought to our house in Paris pastry from a patissier's shop near us. Concealing my surprise at the metamorphose which a blue coat and a national cockade had made in a lad whom I had a hundred times seen, in a white apron and tucked up sleeves, bringing almond pastry for our table, I civilly performed the honours of a house in which there was little for luxury or even hunger. I apologized for the scantiness of their entertainment; observing, that two solitary women needed not "une grande cuisine;" reminding Catharine at the same time of some potted meat, which she instantly produced. "Comment!" cried the young pastrycook, with a familiar and awkward attempt at gallantry, "N'ai-je pas le bonheur de faire mes devoirs à mademoiselle Pauline? et assurément cela suffit pour me rendre heureux." He now with all due observance of etiquette introduced to my *favour* his two companions, who with more modesty bowed in

silence. “Que je suis heureux, mademoiselle, de pouvoir vous faire ma cour!” exclaimed the maker of tartlets, applying the meat to his bread: “I was told that you had quitted France.”—“No, monsieur,” answered I confusedly. “Since the death of madame du Rivage I have been unwell, and have been endeavouring to regain my lost health here.” He acknowledged I was become thinner and paler than when he last had had the *felicity* of seeing me. “Mais mademoiselle étoit toujours charmante.” I stopped his eloquence by inquiring what had occasioned his visit into our neighborhood. “Nothing that will call upon us for courage,” replied he: “it is an easy duty—only to convey mademoiselle de Fouclaut to her father and her lover de Béne, who are now safely lodged in the prison of the Abbaye.” I could not suppress my tears. “Why should you grieve, ma chere mademoiselle?” asked poor Catharine, alarmed for her own safety as well as mine. “Thank God, we have nothing to do with ‘la noblesse!’ and these our great neighbours,” added she, turning with familiarity to her *friend*, “have taken good care to let us know it: for, although we are, as one may say, next door neighbours, they never deigned to notice us. I have heard that the duke’s daughter is a perfect beauty; but I never saw her: and my young lady and I have been curious to no purpose; for I fancy she has never been out of the chateau since she came.”—“She is indeed beautiful,” answered one of our visitors, who had hitherto been silent. “I saw her once at her father’s hotel in Paris, and in my life I never beheld so charming a creature! The domestics told me she was as good and amiable as she looked. I cannot help pitying her,” added he: “she is the victim of a father who has ruined himself by his baseness, and her innocence will not save her.” “What, you think her innocent?” observed the pastrycook with a consequential air. “But where is the plot without a woman? No one shall persuade me, that she would have consented to marry ce scélérat de Béne without good reasons. She could not be ignorant that the laws of tyranny were abolished, and that she was free, with all France.” “Well, be this as it may,” answered the man, “I know enough of you, Etienne, to maintain, that if you had ever beheld this angel, you would, like myself, rather face a troop of grenadiers than see her in the hands she will be in before sunset.” This tribute to humanity, with the compliment annexed, called forth the sympathy of *citoyen Etienne*, and with more expletives and stronger asseverations than were needful, he declared that he would die in the cause of beauty and of his country: then heroically drinking off a glass of wine to my health, he rose, and retreated with his comrades to join in the tumultuous cry of “Vive la nation!”

Let it suffice, my dear Mrs. Underwood, we saw from our half-closed windows the carriage pass, in which was the ill-fated Marianne, with Babet her governess and one of the national guards.

To what purpose should I endeavour to detail the horrors which assailed me, on this and other similar occasions, during a period unexampled in modern history? The revolution in France is not a subject for my pen. I am unable to lose sight of “partial evil in universal good,” were it even proved to demonstration that such had been the balance in favour of that liberty which sprang from the blood of millions and the despair of the good and innocent. It has been fatal to my happiness, and I mean not to mention it but as it is connected with the story of my private sorrows.

On retiring to my room for the night, I yielded to the impulse of curiosity, and with a palpitating heart I opened the casket. Removing the manuscript, which first appeared, with some letters tied up and directed “For Sigismund,” I proceeded to examine a shagreen case evidently made for a picture. It was indeed a portrait! and the faithful representation of the one indelibly fixed in my heart. It was Augustus Middleton whom my eyes beheld, the same noble, serious aspect, the same pensive and penetrating eyes! Yes, it was that idol which my imagination had erected as the supreme object of its hopes and fond faith! It was of larger dimensions than usual for miniatures, and encircled by costly diamonds: the reverse

contained the initials of his name and a lock of his hair mixed with pearls. It was ticketed, and I read “Augustus Middleton, the father of Sigismund Middleton.”

Your hapless Pauline stood this pang!!!

Three or four rouleaus of louis d’ors, with the articles I shall briefly mention, finished my examination of those proofs of the child’s birth and claims which are now in Mr. Furnival’s hands. A coral necklace with a ruby locket, marked “The gift of madame la comtesse de Verneuil to her goddaughter Marianne de Fouclaut.” A miniature richly ornamented of Béatrice de l’Ormesson, mother of Marianne de Fouclaut, and duchess de Fouclaut. The portrait of a beautiful English female, marked Charlotte Aimsforth. A diamond hoop—and a wedding-ring. Several strings of large pearls, with a number of unset gems of considerable value, as I am now informed. Diamond rings, with a watch and trinkets; and finally a diamond cross inscribed with my name, and a gold snuff-box with madame Meunier’s, and intended as gifts for us. In this enumeration I may have been wanting in precision: but my pen had been sufficiently exact had it altogether omitted these evidences of Sigismund’s extraction; for the certificates of his mother’s marriage and his own baptism are what Mr. Furnival principally values. The marriage certificate is signed by a priest of the name of du Clos, who performed the ceremony. The witnesses, Nicolas and Jeanneton Meunier, and an English signature of Frederick Boothby, esq. The baptismal evidence is signed by du Clos and the Meuniers.

I shall now pause. You will have with this my translation of Mrs. Middleton’s appeal to me. Read it, my dear and sympathizing friend; and you will not blame me for the interest I feel in preserving a child thus bequeathed to my care; for whom I have encountered disgrace and reproach, and for whom I would meet death without shrinking.

THE
MEMOIRS OF MARIANNE DE FOUCLAUT.

I KNOW, mademoiselle, from whence my hope must come; and with conscious truth and integrity do I look for help from on high, and a refuge in the grave. Yet nature has pangs that are beyond the power of human fortitude. Who can speak peace to the anguished mother's spirit, which trembles with direful forebodings? Alas! with more! the dread of *certain* destruction to the helpless being to whom she gave life? Oh! let me reach the cordial Heaven presents in mitigation of the sufferings it has inflicted! Let me hasten to the hope it allows me, before *reason is cast from its seat!* The wretched wife of Augustus Middleton, your countryman; of that Middleton who enjoyed the friendship of madame du Rivage and her amiable Pauline, is the suppliant who now implores your pity for her child, for Augustus Middleton's *son!* Succour him, Pauline! save him from impending destruction! For thou canst. Oh! let my pleadings reach thy gentle bosom! Be the guardian angel of my innocent helpless child! The sheltering hand which is at this moment his only prop and stay, may be, *will be,* involved in my ruin; and his life will not be spared by an enraged and disappointed *father.* The climax of my fate rapidly approaches. I am prepared to meet it, and to brave without a murmur the horrors which await me.

I have shunned you, mademoiselle. Yes, I have denied myself the comfort which my soul has languished to taste! Like the bird, who seeing the enemy near its nest, instinctively takes every direction from it, in order to divert the foe from its precious young; so have I avoided an intercourse which might have led my oppressors to my child's asylum. Alas! to be known as Marianne's friend would be a *crime;* to love her, *destruction!*

I have no doubt the faithful Claudine has frequently mentioned to you Marianne de Fouclaut; nor should I be surprised to know, that she has awakened in your bosom a portion of that sympathy which belongs to the character she so much delights to place before me as the object of her admiration and esteem. But it behoves me to leave in your hands a particular detail of my life, with the circumstances which have conducted me to the precipice on which I now stand. You will, yes, mademoiselle, you will be the guardian of my Sigismund; and it is necessary you should know his wretched parent. The time may not be remote when Middleton will bless you for his son; and should he still be obdurate, preserve my manuscript for my child, and teach him to respect his *mother.*

I shall commence my history by a brief account of my infant years, at which period I lost my mother; and was, with a brother older than myself, consigned over to neglect. Our father's profuse dissipation had not only exhausted in a great measure the means by which he supplied the fatal indulgences of his unchecked passions, but had also so entangled the funds provided for us, that he thought of the only expedient which remained, to prevent, *not our ruin,* but the retrenchments which were become necessary to support his own style of magnificence and his pleasures. A second marriage was projected. But my father's title was found no equivalent for the price which he exacted for it; and one or two disappointments of this kind convinced him that his quality could not allure such an alliance as his poverty needed, and as his pride could accept. He therefore gave himself up to a liberty which imposed no restraints, and continued to defraud his children of their rights. My brother and myself resided at this chateau with an establishment reduced to two or three necessary domestics; the good Claudine and her husband having the superintendance of the family, and authority in all that related to us. Left to the enjoyments of health and sportive gaiety, treated with the fond and faithful love of these

excellent people, we had, it may be, advantages far beyond those attentions which a fastidious greatness could have bestowed; for with innocence we enjoyed the privileges of Nature, and knew no cares nor wants in the simplicity she prescribes. I soon lost my dear brother and playmate: at the repeated entreaties of our great uncle who resided at Vienna, he was sent thither; and I have never been able to learn more of his fate, than that on the death of this relation he entered into the Spanish service, and went to Mexico. My father never named him without indications of a resentment which I feared to provoke. I loved this brother tenderly, and I gave my infant his name of Sigismund, not daring to call him *Augustus*. Some time after my brother's departure, I became subject to restraints unknown to me under the tender Claudine. A woman called mademoiselle de la Croix came to the chateau; and I was told that she was not only to govern me, but the family. Claudine, with cool contempt and an invincible perseverance, opposed her authority; and, being supported by the other servants, she disgusted de la Croix with her post. Her complaints to my father were, I presume, the cause of his visiting the chateau; and the contest for power was finished by his removing me and "ma gouvernante" to a convent in Paris; Claudine and her husband retiring to their farm, in which she now lives.

Young as I was, I soon perceived that I had gained little in having exchanged the simple lessons of Claudine, with her perpetual accounts of my mother's virtues and conduct for the instructions now within my reach, and which I shared with the other pensioners without distinction but as to age. Here, whilst sickening over the flower I was embroidering, I traced in imagination my rambles with Claudine, and the happy hours in which she helped me to cultivate my parterre at L'Eclair.

The Lives of the Saints, with De la Croix's Lectures on La Civilité, began to affect my health and spirits; and I lost my relish for the few amusements within my reach, when I was delivered from the control of a woman, who, although in a subordinate capacity, contrived to tease me into a dislike of her.

The husband of the hitherto supposed mademoiselle de la Croix suddenly appeared, as a fortunate adventurer, from the East Indies; and whether affection or conscience were the motive for his seeking a reunion with his wife, I cannot say; but she became reconciled to his opulence, and left me to the sole care of the abbess, who appointed a lay sister called Maria to attend to my personal wants. This woman was extremely good-natured, and I was now in danger from too much lenity; for it was impossible, according to la soeur Maria, "to refuse so amiable a child any thing." And having found favour with many of the girls, I partook largely of their clandestine course of reading, and found a full indemnification for the risk I ran with themselves of detection, in the indiscriminating delight with which I read every book of the prohibited kind that came into the hoarded treasures of my companions. I was nearly fourteen when the number of the pensioners was augmented by the arrival of miss Charlotte Aimsforth, who was at that time nearly sixteen. She was a Roman catholic; and the intention of her parents was confined to her acquiring more facility in the French tongue, as well as in the Italian. Her education, indeed, wanted no advantages, for it had been liberally attended to at home. But as some prejudices favourable to a Paris convent of the very first class had been entertained by her mother, she was sent thither for a year, in order to finish her course of studies with the polish of Parisian manners, Mrs. Aimsforth having formed the design of going into Italy, and taking her daughter in her *route*. From the first hour we met we might be said to be friends: and Charlotte, pleased with the fondness and docility of her pupil, took pleasure in instructing me. The idleness of the child soon gave place to an ambition of imitating miss Aimsforth, and learning English became the supreme object of my wishes. Eighteen months elapsed in this course of real improvement; for happily, as I then thought, Mrs. Aimsforth's visit to the continent was deferred for a year longer than she had projected. During this period my confidence and trust in miss Aimsforth became boundless, and were repaid by a zeal for my

improvement which did honour to her principles and understanding. My father's neglect of me was a source of uneasiness which augmented as my reason enlarged; and I poured out my complaints of his unkindness into Charlotte's ear with all the pathos of an injured child. His visits were seldom, and finished by settling with madame the abbess for my maintenance, which was strictly limited to *the needful*. About this time I was confined to my room for some days by a slight fever. My father was apprised of my indisposition. He sent me a physician; but he was on the eve of a journey, and had not time to see me. This intelligence was prudently softened to me, for I was not told that his absence would be for some months.

My recovery was followed by rapidly growing tall; and the abbess, fearing a consumption, relaxed in her discipline, encouraging me to use more exercise, and giving me ass's milk. Thus I became the care of my friend Charlotte; and with a mother's care did she watch over me! The spring was now advanced, and my indisposition forgotten, when one morning, whilst running a race in the garden with one of my companions, I was suddenly stopped by hearing la soeur Maria call me. This good creature was no less distinguished for her embonpoint than her good humour; and I, willing to spare her fatigue, with an Atalanta's speed directed my steps towards her. "Monseigneur is in the parlour," said she, "and asks for you." I too well knew the shortness of his visits; and passing the tortoise pacing messenger, I gained the apartment in a minute. Panting for breath, my hair in disorder, and my cheek heightened by my exertions and joy to a colour remote from sickness, I appeared before him, and timidly welcomed his return to Paris. He gazed on my face with an air of surprise; then taking my hand with kindness, he asked me whether I was indeed the poor little sick girl of whom he had heard? I replied that I was "indeed his Marianne, and perfectly recovered." "You are grown," observed he, surveying me with earnestness; "you are much improved in your person, my dear girl." He kissed my hands, and examined them. "Mademoiselle est charmante," observed madame Miron the abbess, "elle croit tous les jours dans l'esprit et dans les graces." "I am delighted with her," answered my father, "but not surprised. A pupil of madame Miron must needs have wanted capacity had she not improved with such a model before her." Madame bowed with an air not remote from gratified vanity: "Oh! pour cela, monseigneur..." My father interrupted her by asking me how I filled up my time. I detailed to him my avocations, not forgetting my proficiency in music, and my knowledge of the English language. Miss Aimsworth's kindness was not omitted, nor did I fail to speak of the favour I enjoyed with the good madame Miron. "You will grow too fond of your convent, Marianne," said he, smiling: "I do not intend you for a recluse. But, situated as I am at present," added he with gentleness, "I am glad to find you so happy in retirement. It will not be convenient to me to remove you to the hotel till next winter. But it is time for you to be on a different footing in this house from that of a child. You will have the goodness, madam," added he, "to provide for mademoiselle de Fouclaut an apartment suitable to my present views. I shall send for a female attendant, and her masters in future will give her more of their time." He now requested to see my English friend; and wild with joy I flew to summon her. The modest and dignified Charlotte received his compliments with ease; and I believed with astonishment, that a man whose face I had scarcely dared to look at could so suddenly become pleasing. He passed an hour with us; and then, requesting an audience with the abbess, quitted us with gaiety and fascinating politeness.

Elated by condescensions so unexpected, delighted by a kindness and generosity beyond my most sanguine hopes, I forgot that I had ever thought my father neglectful of me. My happiness admitted of no alloy, the idea of pain or trouble would have checked the tide of pleasure too much; and with undissembled exultation I told Charlotte that my father was "proud of his daughter." She smiled, but made no reply.

In the evening of the second day after this interview my dear Jeanneton arrived at the convent loaded with gifts for mademoiselle de Fouclaut's friends. A kind letter from my father directed me in the application of them. A gold snuff box for madame Miron, chocolate and confectionary in abundance for sister Maria, with a neat purse containing five louis d'ors: the first of these articles was ostentatiously displayed, the latter passed more secretly from my hand to hers. An elegant silver work-basket in fillagree for Charlotte Aimsforth, decorated within by trinkets of female use; a watch with costly trappings for "his Marianne;" and a purse containing more gold than she had ever seen in her life. I was soon after settled in my peculiar apartments, and enjoyed the privileges of a young woman of quality.

My father's visits became frequent; and in proportion as his favour appeared I was anxious to please him. He loved music, and perfectly understood it. I was indefatigable in practising, and ordered my master (for such was now my power) to give me double lessons. I sang to the duke, and he praised my voice and execution. I danced to amuse him; he was enchanted with my person; "for it was like his sister's."—"Do I not resemble my mother?" asked I: "Claudine used to tell me I was her very image." "Not in the least," answered he; "you have her voice, but your traits are exactly like those of your aunt Louisa." He appeared agitated, "I hope your fortune will be more propitious," added he. "She died at nineteen." I was silenced. "I shall bring with me," continued he, "at my next visit, an old admirer of poor Louisa's. He wishes to see you, and I desire you will attend to your toilet." He named the day, and changed the conversation by asking me, "how long miss Aimsforth would remain in the convent." I answered, that she was in daily expectation of hearing from her family, and of the precise time when they would be in Paris in order to visit Italy. "She is a handsome young woman," said he coldly: "but I think she is losing her time strangely here." He proceeded to inquire what books I read with her. I mentioned some celebrated English authors. He smiled, and replied, she would be "une précieuse," and, like most of her country women, fit for the fate that awaited them—a life passed in "sober sadness." I laughed in my turn, assuring him that miss Aimsforth was the most cheerful young woman in the house; and that she was the animating source of our rational amusements, for there was nothing she did not know. "She will never know the science which is the most useful to her sex," replied he, rising; "nor would it much avail her in her own country." Again I was silenced; for I could not comprehend what my father meant; and he left me soon after, with his accustomed kindness. I had, however, sufficient discernment to perceive that my friend appeared less accomplished in my father's eyes than in mine; but attributing this to Charlotte's reserve when in his presence, I suppressed this proof of his unfavourable opinion in my account of his visit. The introduction of monsieur de Béne to the ill-fated Marianne followed. He appeared to me to be older than my father, and his dress, which was *outré*, heightened the defects of his person. He was, I thought, the ugliest man I had ever beheld, and a complexion naturally yellow, or produced by climate, gave him a sickly and cadaverous look which disgusted me. His compliments and gallantry diverted me notwithstanding, and my father's cheerfulness rendered me unrestrained. My aunt Louisa's beauty became the channel through which monsieur de Béne paid his adorations to mine. "He thought he beheld her before him," and I then thought that he had been a pretender to her favour. "Marianne's voice will more powerfully bring your divinity to your remembrance," observed my father with a smile. "Do you think you are equal to the experiment?" I was implored to sing, and I went to the harp. Ecstasies followed, and my father appeared pleased with my exhibition. On the departure of my guests I went to my friend Charlotte's room. Some letters brought by the post a short time before my entrance were yet before her. Occupied with the impressions which monsieur de Béne had left on my mind, I began to relate to Charlotte his extravagant speeches, and to draw from his singular countenance and manners a picture too ridiculous for my own gravity or hers. She laughed immoderately at my folly, for I *acted* monsieur de Béne as well as *described* him; when suddenly checking her mirth, she with assumed seriousness made me a curtsy, and congratulated me on

having gained a lover. "Let us see," added she, taking up one of her letters: "in less than a month you will be madame de Béne; in less than a month my mother will be in Paris. What an admirable substitute will you make for her duties! She hates public amusements; but under the eye of such a duenna as yourself, and under the wing of such a time piece as monsieur de Béne, she will leave me to the pleasures of Paris, for a time at least." My mirth vanished; and, forgetting monsieur de Béne, I said with consternation, "Then we are at length to be separated!" My tears flowed; and Charlotte sympathized with me. She endeavoured also to comfort me, and, in order the more effectually to succeed, showed me the prospect of a winter filled up with happiness: "Read my letters," added she, "and let us give care to the wind at present."

Mrs. Aimsforth in her letter specified the time when she meant to be at Paris. She added, "Your father's lawsuit, which is decided in his favour, will still detain him in England for some time: I mean therefore to pass that interval at Paris. Your brothers think you will have no objection to see more of it than your convent. Mr. Hamilton, either anxious to see you or the Louvre, &c. will be in my suite. I need not point out to you more explicitly his intentions, nor our concurrence in them. Those obstacles which stood in the way of his virtuous and decided preference are removed; and his fate now depends on you." "You mean not to be cruel?" said I, returning the letter. "No," replied she, smiling: "I admit the truth of the proverb, 'Old love is not easily forgotten;' and Hamilton gained mine before I left off my frocks. He is four years older than myself, and has been constant to his first flame. But I shall have a spare beau on my hands," pursued she archly, "that will tease me to death, for he is unlike every thing *comme il faut*. I wish," added she, laughing, "that you had not seen the irresistible monsieur de Béne. You might have helped me to humanize my cousin." "Is he as handsome as monsieur de Béne?" asked I with concealed curiosity. "You will see him," answered she; "and you must consider him, as he is considered in England by this time, as a sort of phoenix, doomed to perpetuate his race after the fabulous manner of that bird; for he is now four-and-twenty, and has never been in love; pretending as an excuse for his frigid heart, that it is not his fault, but that of our sex." She continued to give me a sketch of her cousin, which evidently marked her affection for him, and concluded by saying, "that she knew well to whom she stood indebted for her prospects of happiness with Mr. Hamilton." I listened with avidity to these commendations of Augustus Middleton, and my heart received impressions in his favour before I beheld him. In the mean time my father announced his intention of removing me from my convent. De Béne was not mentioned, and I forgot him. My friend and myself were hourly engaged in planning schemes of pleasure and delight for the ensuing winter; and we were actually speaking of this *wonderful* cousin, when she was summoned to receive her mother and her family, who were with madame Miron. My mind followed her; but I had now a tender father, and, with some composure, I practised a lesson on my harp. Charlotte entered, her face glowing with contentment. "Her mother wished to see her dear Marianne." "Oh! I cannot appear before her in this deshabelle," said I, with a palpitation at my heart which I could not account for—"there are your brothers—" "There is no one but Augustus," replied she; "they are gone with Hamilton to a banker's near us; and he will not know whether you are in a court dress or in a robe de chambre." I had no reply, and I followed her. Mr. Middleton was standing when I entered. You have seen him too often, my dear Pauline, to render any description of his noble person necessary.

My reception from Mrs. Aimsforth was more than polite, it was gracious and affectionate. Charlotte with gaiety presented Mr. Middleton to me. "This is the *cousin* of whom you have heard me speak," said she: "he is come to Paris, to learn to be a beau garçon: favour him with your notice; he is harmless, and will not disgrace us at the back of a chair at the theatre." This attack on his gallantry was received with much more spirit and animation than I had expected, and for nearly an hour I listened to a

conversation of ease and gaiety; Mrs. Aimsforth during a part of this time being engaged in settling accounts with the abbess, and fixing the hour for her daughter's removal on the following morning.

The entrance of Mr. Hamilton and Charlotte's brothers renewed the ceremony of introduction, and a whisper from Mr. Hamilton determined Mrs. Aimsforth to take her daughter home with her. My spirits now fled; I could not forbear weeping. Madame Miron reminded me, that I also should soon quit her house, and that she should soon have to regret the absence of two of her children. Charlotte comforted me more effectually by telling me that she would visit me daily till I was at the hotel.

In vain did I endeavour, when left to myself, to recall to my mind the persons of the two young Aimsforth's, or Mr. Hamilton's. Augustus Middleton's every look and gesture had filled up my fancy, and I followed its impressions, by engraving on my heart an image never to be erased till it ceases to beat.

At my father's next visit I spoke of my friend's departure from the convent, of her approaching nuptials, and my wishes to be enlarged in my turn. He smiled, and with gaiety said he was rejoiced to find that I wished to mix with the world. "You must however," added he, "have patience for a week or two. I am going into the country with my friend de Béne, and you will be better here till my return." "May I not be permitted to receive my friend?" asked I timidly. "Certainly," replied he; "and should her mother wish you to pass a *private* day with her, you may go; but it is on condition that it be a select day." Madame Miron, before whom this indulgence was granted, bowed in token of acquiescence, my father hastily quitting us. I will, my dear mademoiselle, abridge my account of the hours which rendered a month a space of time that appeared momentary, and for the result of which you are prepared.

My faithful friend Jeanneton had motives at this period which influenced her to count as tardy these hours of my felicity. Her mother's commands, and her affection for me, had delayed her marriage with monsieur Meunier till such time as my emancipation from my convent should take place. Meunier was become impatient of the frequent delays which had been opposed to his hopes. He lived in the duke's house under the particular protection of the major-domo, who had invariably served and bewailed a master to whom gratitude had attached him. On my return home from Mrs. Aimsforth's one evening I found Jeanneton weeping; and knowing the precise situation in which she stood, I consoled her, adding that I was in daily expectation of seeing the duke; that madame Miron had received a letter from him, and I was to be prepared for instantly leaving the house at his expected visit. "Yes, yes," answered she, "I know all that, and much more, my dear Marianne." Her tears redoubled. "Your English *friend* has acted wisely in never appearing here," added she, "since miss Aimsforth's departure, and you must not say a word to your father of any company you have seen at Mrs. Aimsforth's beyond the ladies of the family. It would displease him, and perhaps make mischief between him and monsieur de Béne."—"Monsieur de Béne!" repeated I: "what has he to do with my concerns?" "Ah! ma chere demoiselle," answered the weeping Jeanneton, "you will be his wife in a few short weeks." Let it suffice, I was told that my destiny had been for some time determined; and she had the intelligence from her lover Nicolas Meunier, that the marriage ceremony would immediately follow my removal from the convent. You will not be surprised that my English *friend*, with Charlotte, should be the sharers of my distress at this moment. But I was unprepared for any better excuse with the abbess for my dejection than the real plea of indisposition. Her kindness led her to invite Mrs. Aimsforth to visit me, and she came alone. A kind and soothing prelude led to the object before her. "I know not," said she, taking my hand, "in what light my present interference may be regarded by superficial inquirers; but I act a part which appears right in my own judgment. Augustus Middleton loves you, mademoiselle. His family and fortune, his character

and religion, with those talents for which he is deservedly distinguished, would at any period sanction his avowed pretensions to your favour; and the duke de Fouclaut might without any degradation of his rank think himself happy in his alliance with Mr. Umfreville's nephew. But your father's views are well known. His ambition and necessities have only his beautiful daughter for their prop. He is embarked in the political career of the duc d'Orleans, and is said to be playing a game of extreme hazard; in which he looks to de Béne's wealth and influence for an escape. This man is of mean origin, vulgar and illiterate. By cunning, and subtilty in mischief, he three or four years since returned from Martinico laden with wealth; and, gratified by your father's condescension in courting his intimacy, was for a season the duke's fawning sycophant; when having discovered his motives, and yielded to his necessities the supplies he requested, he now exacts a homage for his gold, and requires the hand of his daughter, in the expectation of raising a family to succeed him who will have no reason to blush at their extraction. Your father's late indulgence and liberality, with de Béne's visit here, confirm this report, which is not to be disregarded. Augustus wishes to be the deputed guardian of your youth and innocence, my dear girl. I will engage for my Marianne's welcome in England. Mr. Umfreville lives only in the hope of seeing his heir married; for he fears not his choosing an *unworthy* mate. What shall I say to him?" added she, smiling. "I am rather disposed to carry home with me a favourable report of my talents as a *match-maker*: for I love Middleton as my child; and, as a mother, I do assert that the woman of his choice shall have my protection." I sunk into her arms, and weeping said that Augustus was necessary not only to my safety but to my existence.

I now found, my dear Pauline, that I could reason. My father's plans were before me; and I recalled every indication of them which had hitherto passed over the surface of my unsuspecting mind. I indulged without restraint the sentiments of a tender and grateful heart. Mrs. Aims worth's discourse and Augustus's love were barriers which could not fail to defeat my father's cruel purpose, and comforted by hope I regained my composure.

In a few days I was settled in the magnificent but solitary apartments of the hotel which my dear mother had formerly occupied for one or two winters. The first use I made of my authority was, to give orders for Jeanneton's marriage-fête, which Blanchard our maitre d'hotel rendered splendid; for he loved her and Nicolas. One of the guests, under the assumed character of Jeanneton's cousin, gave it charms for me: and Jeanneton's wedding-day was a happy one! My next indulgence was, being attended by my father to visit Mrs. Aims worth. We found Mr. Hamilton and her two sons with her, and all was ceremony. She mentioned her purpose of quitting Paris, observing that the political ferments not only made it unpleasant but insecure. The duke answered, that such disorders were unavoidable, and would for a time too much engage every one to admit those pleasures which were annexed to a time of repose. "I have avoided," added he with an embarrassed air, "every habitual indulgence of my taste for society; the noblesse in France are at this time watched with a jealous eye; the more unobserved we are, the better; and I have only to regret that Marianne will find that she has exchanged one prison for another, and a father's cares for those of her good madame Miron."—"I shall never be unhappy with my father," said I with eagerness, "nor was I so in my convent when assured of his tenderness." He smiled, and, turning to mademoiselle Aims worth, asked her whether she had given me a predilection for a life of retreat, glancing his expressive eyes on Mr. Hamilton. She blushed; and her mother, by mentioning the arrangements for their proceeding to Italy, and the day they intended to commence the journey, seemed to have relieved my father; for he became gay, and, as he could be at pleasure, pleasant and entertaining.

My purpose of a steady rejection of the hated de Béne was regulated by Jeanneton. She cautioned me to act on the defensive; Nicolas was to direct every thing; and hope detained my Augustus in Paris.

The Aimsworths were no sooner on the road than my father entered on his projects. He asked me the reason that my friend had not taken the name of *Hamilton* in Paris. I replied, that she preferred delaying the ceremony till they reached Avignon, where they meant to stay some time.—“Then you may, after all, be a bride before her,” observed he with great gaiety; “for de Béne will not lose a moment when he knows you are here.”—“De Béne!” said I with terror. “Even so,” replied he sternly: “this is no time for *choice*. De Fouclaut is governed by *necessity*, and his daughter *must* share in his fate.” He rose, and left the room. I saw no more of my father till the next day, when he introduced a gentleman who I afterwards discovered was the duke d’Orleans: I performed the honours of the table, and, abashed by the scrutiny with which he examined me, I retired immediately after the servants withdrew.

I have not the intention, mademoiselle, of detailing to you the domestic life of the *leader of a faction*; for such was my unhappy father: his time was engaged in perpetual hurry and fatigue, his hours were irregular, and his conduct and steps mysterious, rarely going out attended, entering by private doors, and at all hours of the night, and very often sleeping from the hotel. If I did not regret the convent, the reason is obvious; for it is very certain that my life had little to make me fond of the world. One day I was summoned into his apartment. He was stretched on a sofa, his face bruised, and he appeared exhausted by fatigue. I discovered my surprise, and asked whether he had met with any accident. “A *trifling blow*,” said he, rising, and looking in the glass: then laughing at his rueful figure, he observed, “he hoped de Béne had escaped better than he had done, for otherwise he would be a lover for Hecaté rather than his Marianne.” He drew me towards him, and tenderly embraced me. “My dear father!” said I, “send me to the convent again. Do with me whatever you please, but this man’s name is horror!”—“Which you must strive to conquer,” answered he with firmness; “for there is no alternative. But my head aches, and coffee will do me more service than conversation.” I was dismayed; for I thought he looked cruel, and his dark eyes ferocious. I served him with the coffee, in profound silence, he deeply musing; when suddenly stretching his limbs, which seemed stiffened by pain, he asked me whether Jeanneton had taken as great a dislike to de Béne’s face as I had done. “I do not know that she ever saw monsieur de Béne,” replied I, terrified by the question; “at least I am certain she never spoke to me of his face.” “Why, I hear,” replied he, “that she is weary of her easy servitude with you. Blanchard tells me, Nicolas has asked for his dismissal, and is going to turn marchand de bas et de gands. I suspect his jolie petite femme to be the instigator of this plan, thinking her *talents* are lost here.”—“You are mistaken, I believe, monseigneur,” replied I with more courage. “She has mentioned her husband’s intentions; he thinks he has met with an advantageous offer, which will fill up his vacant hours; but he has no thoughts of removing his wife: it is, as I understand, a partnership, in which another person will occupy the shop and its accommodations. Jeanneton would never consent to leave me: nor does her husband think of leaving the hotel; but only to have employment during your frequent journeys.” This explanation sufficed; the duke observed that he was satisfied; and Jeanneton had nothing to do but to make her court to monsieur de Béne, for the continuance of a station which she had found an easy one. I was permitted to retire, on his saying he was sleepy.

I know not, mademoiselle, of any better apology for those expressions of harshness which have, and may still drop from my pen when employed on the subject of my father’s conduct. It may not be improper to delineate a man who, from the ties of nature and the obligations of duty, has a claim to my respect. Alas! Marianne needed no incitements to love and obedience: her heart still fondly cleaves to her father, whilst her reason condemns him. Few will dispute the endowments the duc the Fouclaut has received from nature; but fewer still will be disposed to believe, that in a mind so versatile, and in a course of frivolous not to say debasing pursuits, there can be found an extent of genius, and a persevering spirit which needed only more noble objects to render him a distinguished member of

society. Vanity and unopposed passions have degraded his honourable feelings; profusion has rendered him sordid; a desperate fortune has given to personal bravery, I may say *hereditary courage*, a contempt of danger and a temerity which nothing can check. Consummate in finesse, fascinating when he chooses, and proud of an ascendancy over others, which he believes they are born to feel, he has been from his youth upwards the dupe of those whom his judgment despises and his pride scorns: impatient of control and furious in his anger, he can at his pleasure make the stubbornness of his will bend to his projects of ambition and schemes of power: and had the duc de Fouclaut been consistent in any character, he might have succeeded in gaining the confidence of that government which he now labours to overthrow; but pleasure allured him, and *inconstancy* was proverbial with his name.

My personal attractions pleased him, and it may be that for a time he yielded to the feelings of a heart prone to the admiration of beauty, a tribute which he himself mistook for the pure sentiment of nature. His elaborate praise of my person has often confounded me, and my blushes have checked his warmth; but I was soon regarded as of more importance than that of merely flattering his taste, and to effect his designs he taught me to love a parent who was bartering away my peace.

The date of my marriage certificate will convince you that love was inventive, and that Marianne had interchanged vows which no power on earth could set aside. More than three months had elapsed since I had lost my title to the name of de Fouclaut. My father's perpetual engagements abroad were not neglected. Jeanneton's "cousin" was a welcome guest; and Blanchard, believing his tale of his being in the service of an English gentleman, who was for a time on an excursion, gave him a general invitation to his table. To say the truth, it little corresponded with the antient magnificence poor Blanchard had witnessed at l'hotel de monseigneur; for all wore the signs of fallen greatness within. Neither carriage nor horses, not a supernumerary servant; a garden, which was extensive, become a wilderness of weeds! these were the indications of ruin I had to contemplate, instead of those delights which Charlotte and myself portrayed in the convent. To this melancholy picture I had also the terrors and alarms you with all the inhabitants of Paris shared, and for my peculiar portion, the troubles which *even love* could only mitigate.

Augustus never ceased to urge to me the necessity of leaving my father's house. Sometimes he spoke of madame du Rivage, imploring me to throw myself into her arms. He expatiated on her merit, and omitted not that of her Pauline, the daughter of her adoption. At another time I was informed that he had prepared me an asylum, to which I might retire on the first signal of danger. Monsieur du Rivage was yet detained from his purpose of emigrating; but he was certain it was his intention, and that he would serve him, in providing for my safety, when he removed his family. I promised him that I would obey him; but urged in my turn the expediency of remaining with my father till necessity, or his persevering in favour of de Béne, should justify the measure, and the hazard of his search and resentment.

A few days of calm succeeded, when I was ordered to attend my father in his library. De Béne was with him; but I experienced, mademoiselle, the efficacy of Claudine's lessons; I recollected my mother, and my nerves became firmer. My father with much form handed me to a seat, and thus addressed me: "You are called upon, Marianne, to vindicate the honour of your father. Have I not informed you that it is my purpose to unite you to this gentleman? Speak; and recall to your memory the precise time when I signified to you my purpose." "It is," said I, fixing my indignant eyes on the wretch before me, "more than four months, monsieur, since my father acquainted me with the interest you had gained in *his good opinion and favour*. I contented myself at that time with simply marking my

reluctance to a plan, in which neither my inclinations nor judgment had been consulted. I well know the obedience which parents exact in this country from their children, on the point immediately in question; but I appeal to you, monsieur, has not this law been reformed by your assistance and my father's? I am, with all due respect both to you and my father, determined to marry no man who has not a better claim to my favour than that which arises from my supposed incapacity of judging, or resisting persecution. I am the daughter of *Beatrice de l'Ormesson*," said I, rising with spirit, "and I will imitate her in her truth and virtue. I reject the hand you offer, monsieur, because I should fail in the obligations annexed to receiving it. As the friend of monseigneur," added I with augmenting terror, on observing the rage which swelled his features, "I shall esteem you, and as a man of honour I entreat you to pardon a frankness which I have been thus called upon to maintain. Indeed I cannot love you."

My father sprung from his seat. "This insolence is too much to bear," exclaimed he with ungovernable fury. "Ungrateful and perverse idiot as thou art! I will teach thee to know de Fouclaut, and to tremble before him, and the man of whom thou art unworthy." He dragged me with rude violence into the interior room, and, shutting the door on me, bolted it. The courage which had sustained me yielded to this violence. I fell on the floor, and, overpowered by my feelings, wept bitterly. My father's threats and exclamations reached me; and I heard de Béne say, "I am satisfied. Do not urge matters with too much severity: she will soon see you will be obeyed." He took his leave, appointing to meet him at the usual place of rendezvous. Judge of my astonishment, when on hearing my father's returning steps, and thinking all was lost, I beheld the duke enter, with a countenance impressed with solicitude and tenderness. "Are you hurt, my dear girl?" said he, raising me up gently, and placing me in a chair. "My dear, my precious Marianne! speak; say you forgive me. I could not act otherwise than I did. Let me make my peace, and relieve your spirits from dreading your father. Listen to me, and pity me." I fondly clung to his bosom, and wept. "The firmness and noble disdain you have shown before me, and your rejection of a man so unworthy of you, have convinced me that you may be trusted. It is foreign to the present purpose to detail to you those circumstances which have placed me in a state of dependence on this *reptile* de Béne; let it suffice that I am in his power. His insolence has looked to you for the acquittal of those services which he has tendered me. My necessities were some months since pressing; he supplied me with another loan, and we became more intimate: he expressed a wish to see you, and I readily gratified it. I had now to oppose your youth to his pressing overtures of marriage; and he seeing the subterfuge, grew angry. I was obliged to compromise matters, and I engaged not to oppose his addresses. Proud of my concessions, he spoke of his approaching happiness to the duc d'Orleans, giving him such an account of your beauty as excited his curiosity. He requested permission to see you, and you have not forgotten the only guest whom your father has received since you have been here. You were no sooner retired than my friend reproached me with the folly and forgetfulness of myself, in granting to de Béne even the hopes of an alliance with my family, and, extolling you, said it was degrading you to be known to a *de Béne*. I urged my necessities: 'You may purchase gold wherewith to balance his account,' said he: 'I will hear no more of this marriage. The time is not far remote when I shall be in a situation to take care of mademoiselle's fortune. She may aspire to the highest views for an establishment. Deserve as you have done the gratitude of your future prince; though a *Bourbon*, I am grateful.' I urged de Béne's influence, and the mischief he could effect by his desertion of the glorious cause in which we were engaged. 'Leave him to my management,' replied he, 'and do you continue to amuse him. Although I know the scoundrel, and that his zeal is to gain his own ends, he is too useful to mine to be discarded. He is in some secrets, as you well know, that must not be blazoned; but I shall crush the reptile when I have done with him. In the mean time I will leave him no leisure to persecute you, or to insult your daughter by his pretensions.' In consequence of this conversation, de Béne has been detained at Toulouse for a considerable time; and he will, with myself, return thither, charged with monseigneur's commissions. De

Béne has discovered that the duke had visited you; and is jealous of him. He has reproached me with having failed in my word, and sworn bitterly that he would be revenged. It is in his power to take away my life, Marianne, and in a moment to send thee from this sheltering roof. Fool that I have been," continued my father with extreme emotion, striking his forehead, "to be thus leagued with a villain!" My secret trembled on my lips. "Let us fly this wretched country," said I fondly. "Name it not," replied he: "I am embarked, and must abide the storm. It will soon pass, and de Fouclaut will then show himself a man not to be overlooked." I was silenced. He continued to give me instructions for this plan of duplicity and intrigue. "You must affect to have received some injury from your fall," said he, "and be prepared to see me again the *tyrant*." He rang the bell, and ordered Jeanneton to attend. When she entered, he with sternness commanded her to assist me in gaining my apartment, and to remember that it was his pleasure I should remain in it. We withdrew, I supporting the terrified Jeanneton.

The detail of what had passed appeared to Jeanneton an interposition of Providence in my favour: "We should gain time, and all would be well." Her prudent cares prevailed. She insisted on my being bled, and going to my bed. These measures being conformable to the duke's intention, I complied with them. The report circulated in the family that I had hurt my side by a fall, and was much indisposed. I soon discovered the advantages which resulted from my feigned indisposition. I began to dread my father's observation; and even my husband became a convert to Jeanneton's opinion, that no steps could be taken for my removal with so much safety to my health, as well as security, as after my father had left Paris.

During a month, in which my illness was magnified, I enjoyed my retreat with hope, and some cheerfulness; my paleness and fallen cheek imposed on the duke, whose visiting hour was commonly in the morning before I was up. He attributed this change to my want of exercise, and promised me to hasten the time for my enlargement. My blushes were noticed; but he had taught his child duplicity, and with a sigh I talked of his long absence. "My return," said he, "will be in triumph; the contest for power will be finished, and a Bourbon qualified to reign will be on the throne. But you must receive a visit from de Béne; he must be treated with gentleness."

Stung by the imposed violence on my principles of rectitude, this information really affected my health, and I became feverish. My father, unmindful of this circumstance, led my lover to my bed-side, who finding me languid and pale, dismissed as I suppose his suspicions, and with apparent sincerity lamented his having been the cause of my suffering—finishing by declaring his disapprobation of my father's resentment, and repeating his awkward vows of love and adoration. I mildly thanked him for his preference, but implored him to consider my rejection of him, however *improperly* made, as the result of those opinions which I held indispensable in the engagement which he solicited. "I am ready to acknowledge your claims to consideration, monsieur," added I. "I grieve that I cannot accede with readiness to my father's wishes; but I cannot deceive you. I must esteem the man to whom I pledge my faith. Leave me with this declaration," added I, weeping, "and to the hopes of a father's returning favour. Be assured that I do not blame you for an instance of that momentary severity which my unguarded frankness produced in him." The duke rose, and with haughtiness bade me not forget the lesson. "I am no trifler," added he, "and expect that my daughter should be something superior to a romantic puling girl." De Béne took in good earnest the alarm. "You will again terrify her," said he, drawing him away: "she is ill, and must not be agitated. Farewell, mademoiselle! I go with the precious hope that the time may arrive when you will *esteem* de Béne." I bowed my head, and they retired.

The following morning my father left Paris with his *friend* for Toulouse. Once more my Augustus had access to his Marianne. I was now advancing in my pregnancy, and Augustus determined on remaining at Paris till my delivery; I pleading that my father's life depended on my remaining where I was, and urging the wickedness of leaving him to a fate he might shun, by yielding to my arguments, and availing himself of an asylum at once honourable and necessary. About this period Mr. Middleton received the intelligence of his uncle's illness and extreme danger at Nice. Doctor Wingrove was with him, and also Mr. Aimsworth. The good old man had avoided France; but had trusted that his influence, joined with that of the Aimsworth family, would prevail on his nephew to quit it, and to secure to me a place of safety in their tender bosoms. Let me hasten from the remembrance of his pleadings of love! My heart sickens! De Béne had my father's life in his hands. He was remote from me, and I could not assent to leaving him with his abhorred de Béne. Oh! fatal was the moment which spared me the guilt of placing in this assassin's hands the dagger for a father's bosom! It has reached my own, and he has armed others to reach him! Never for a moment have my husband's prophetic words ceased to sound in my ears: "I yield," said he, fondly clasping me in his faithful arms, the big drops of anguish bedewing his face and mine. "May your sacrifice be acceptable in the sight of heaven! Should we never meet again, may its recompense be your consolation!" "We shall meet again," exclaimed I frantically; "and a father's blessing shall reward you for a father's life and joy." We parted, Pauline! Yes, we parted, and Marianne lives to recall the pang, and smile at the death which menaces her! The largeness of the sum of money he left in Nicolas's hands seemed a presage of his lost hopes. A letter announcing his safe arrival, although it mentioned the approaching dissolution of his uncle, calmed my spirits, and Hope once more plumed her wings. Soon after his departure, Blanchard desired to be admitted to an audience. He had received letters from the duke. "Monseigneur thinks this establishment useless to him," said he with visible distress, "as his return is deferred, and he is obliged to go for some time to Nimes and Bourdeaux. I have orders to shut up the house, and to send you to the villa near Fontainebleau with madame Meunier and Nicolas; the duke believing that you will prefer being in the country during his absence. I am to go to the Normandy estate, and look into matters there." This reprieve lightened my spirits. I cheerfully replied, that I languished for the country. "So I perceive," said he, looking pitifully in my emaciated face; "but why not go to l'Eclair? My master has surely forgotten the neglected state of la Rondeau: you will be miserably accommodated there. But these perilous times, my dear young lady, are such, that safety is the first boon we now ask of heaven. But I will do what I can for you, my dear lady, and will send some moveables to the villa. He gave me the duke's letter, and withdrew.

My father's style was changed: I was *commanded* to retire to la Rondeau, and to remain there till he could join me, and still further retrench his household. "Confine your walks to the garden," added he, "and forbear going to mass. We are at a crisis which calls upon us for sacrifices. Let me find you in good health, and cheerfully disposed to meet my commands." I was tranquillized, by thinking with Jeanneton that this letter had been framed to please monsieur de Béne. Our removal from the hotel followed, and I was not sorry to escape Blanchard's eyes. At la Rondeau we discovered the obligations in which we were indebted to this good domestic; for, had he not foreseen and provided for our wants, we should not have had a bed for our repose. But I had now no wants; for a letter from my Augustus reached me, breathing comfort and faithful love! "Mr. Umfreville was thought in no condition for hope. Yet in the midst of his family he had experienced a consolation which appeared to smooth his passage to the grave. That he frequently mentioned me, and listened with satisfaction to his nephew's fond praise of his Marianne; that he sent me his blessing, and commended my discretion in not hazarding a journey in the critical state I was in; having been convinced by Mrs. Aimsworth that my father would with joy acknowledge an union of such manifest advantages to himself."

The only being I saw at la Rondeau was a girl, who in her varied occupations took care of her grandfather, an infirm man who lived in an apartment remote from mine, and whom I rarely met. Jaqueline was good-humoured, and not displeased to have some one to talk to. Jeanneton and she were soon friends, and the confidence she shared was returned; for Jaqueline mourned for an ungrateful lover, and Jeanneton mentioned her poor lady as one who had a severe father. My kindness in no wise lessened the poor girl's sympathy. I believe I might have trusted her further; but I contented myself with deploring my hard fate, and regretting that I should soon be left alone for some days, Jeanneton being under the necessity of going to Paris in order to prepare for her expected confinement. "And why cannot you go with her?" asked the innocent girl: "I am sure I will never betray you; and as for my father, you might be gone for a month, and he never the wiser. He is now a cripple with his rheumatism." "I think you might venture," observed Jeanneton. "I shall not perhaps be absent a fortnight, and I am certain your health will be ruined by the life you now lead." You may easily judge of the result: I was conveyed to Paris with Jeanneton; and, to use Meunier's words, "safely lodged under my *own roof*." My Augustus had provided me with every comfort. He had foreseen his Marianne's *every* want! and opposite my bed I found his picture—the resemblance striking. He was gracefully bending before the bright figure of Hope, who with smiles pointing to heaven presented him a tablet, on which was written "*Les fideles peuvent attendre le bonheur*." The little journey, with the perturbation of my spirits, accelerated, according to Jeanneton's calculation, my confinement: but my infant was vigorous; and in ten days his languid mother returned to the villa, Jeanneton believing that the continual dread of my father's return retarded my recovery. The hazardous experiment turned out in my favour; in this quiet abode and purer air I recruited beyond her hopes. And Jaqueline, who had been alarmed by seeing me look so pale and thin, was convinced of the truth she had often heard, "that there was nothing like the country for health." Satisfied that my child was safe, and in the hands of an English woman whom Nicolas had chosen for the trust, I indulged for a short period in those hopes so essential to my well-being. But I was disappointed in my expectation of letters, and again my spirits sunk.

I was soon after surprised by my father's and monsieur de Béne's arrival. My first welcome was returned by a silent embrace on the part of the duke; his lips trembled when he pressed my cheek, and his tears bedewed them before my own could escape their bounds. De Béne was stately and cold, and my trepidation was augmented by seeing the gloom which hung on both their countenances. The evening passed in a reserve and constraint which no one endeavoured to conceal; and we separated early. I was now determined to inform my father of my marriage; and after an unquiet night, I rose early, and went into the garden in order to gain strength for the conflict. The duke was there before me, and I saw him traversing a walk with unequal steps. On turning, he perceived me, and, beckoning me, I joined him. "This is well," said he; "I want to have some conversation with you *unnoticed*." He led to an arbour near, and seated himself. "My question, Marianne," said he with emotion, "is not *now* what it *must be* an hour hence. I do not ask you whether you are prepared to marry de Béne or not; but I ask you, whether you can see your father die on a scaffold? There is no alternative," added he sternly. "Tears and lamentations will do no good. You must be a Fouclaut, and submit to fortune. Were the first monarch on earth to solicit your hand at this moment, I could not give it but with the loss of my honour and my life. I am entangled beyond the power of retreating; you are a beggar, and I am ruined. I would fly; but de Béne holds me in his toils, and the snares of death encompass me. Speak, Marianne," added he: "your wretched father is your suppliant." I was unable; for, unequal to the conflict, I sighed and fainted. On recovering, I found that my father had assumed a different air. "You will quit this house tomorrow," said he with unfeeling calmness. "Jeanneton's condition will not permit her to attend you to l'Eclair; but you will find a woman there not less qualified for her office, and one whom de Béne likes better. He is suspicious not only of my sincerity but of Jeanneton's discretion—on what ground I cannot discover.

Your good sense will point out to you the conduct you ought to pursue in regard to a man whom you will find it necessary to treat with respect; and whom it is for your interest and my safety *necessary to please*. I will do all in my power to retard the sacrifice which I exact. Whilst I can prevent it, you shall not be precipitated into an engagement which my soul abhors as much as yours. But, I repeat it, he has my life in his power, and has already betrayed the duke of Orléans to a faction which will be his ruin. I leave you, Marianne, to your prudence and *duty*." Thus saying, he withdrew, and I remained stupefied.

Jeanneton found me in this state; and on seeing her near me I gave loose to my tears. She silently permitted them to flow, then with her accustomed tenderness mentioned her mother. "She will be near you, my dear lady," said she, "and my brother will be ready to execute your orders—your Jeanneton with your child prepared to receive you. Sink not under apprehensions which will destroy you. We shall have letters from Mr. Middleton; and you know Nicolas. Condescend to perform the part imposed upon you by a parent who considers you only as the instrument of his intrigues, and who in his wild (and may I not be permitted to say wicked?) projects of ambition and disloyalty forgets you are his child. Dread communicating your secret to him. You must oppose prudence to his cunning; and, when driven to the last extremity, frustrate his plans, and be just to Mr. Middleton's by escaping: for in what code of laws will you find, my dear Marianne, any obligation which binds you to fulfil engagements which had their rise in deceit and baseness, and which are at this moment enforced by necessity, and a cowardly anxiety for his own escape from a danger which he has voluntarily invited, and madly drawn on himself? Only be firm, and preserve your health. My dismissal is even favourable to you; for I shall cease to be suspected; and it is my decided opinion that your father is not to be trusted at this hour."—"Alas!" replied I, "what have I not to dread! It is now above six weeks since I heard from Augustus! I know not if he lives!"—"You do not consider the obstacles which retard the regularity of the post," replied she: "nor of Nicolas's resolution to convey you to Nice as soon as I am in safety, and in a condition to attend you. Trust to God, and to friends near you; and again I entreat you to temporise with de Béne, and to be on your guard with your father. You will soon see your faithful Claudine, and she will be your consolation; whilst I shall be with your child." My spirits thus composed, we returned to the house. My presence was not commanded till the dining hour; and the pretence of preparing for my journey gained me permission to retire. The gentlemen were apparently at their ease, and monsieur de Béne again the modest lover and the sycophant.

The following day I quitted la Rondeau with my father and the despicable de Béne, Jeanneton remaining there till her husband appeared, in order to conduct her to her comfortable home, and my precious treasure. We travelled in de Béne's carriage, and his manners became respectful and attentive to me. My father's, on the contrary, were cold; and he looked gloomy, and talked very little. After dinner he somewhat relaxed from his taciturnity, and I listened with some curiosity to a conversation in which I had no share. It referred to political events and political men; and both agreed in condemning monsieur le duc d'Orléans. "He was a fool and a poltroon—the slave of an ambition too great for his talents and dastardly soul." They execrated his measures, and pronounced that he would be the ruin of many better men than himself. To this discourse succeeded de Béne's boastings: "*his* wisdom had foreseen all the evils resulting from *such a leader*—*his* wealth and influence had been abused; but *he* stood secure." And with an overweening pride he gave *de Fouclaut's daughter* to understand that her future condition would be brilliant.

It appeared, on our reaching l'Eclair, that we were expected guests. I was received with much ceremony by une petite bourgeoise who was stationed in the salon for that purpose. She was not uncomely in her features; but, dressed as she was in the grotesque remnants of her own wardrobe, and

the spoils taken from those of a superior class to her own, she attracted my curiosity and surprise. A very fashionable robe, but too strait for her size, pinioned back her arms to painful constraint; this was of rich pale violet-coloured silk. A petticoat of muslin, soiled and coarse, was trimmed with fine Brussels lace. Her coarse and stagnated arms were adorned with bracelets and rings little suited to the pearls in her ears and round her neck. She had adorned her head with a pure democratic spirit, for she had followed no edict but that of her own will. Feathers, flowers, ringlets and beads composed an assemblage of ornaments, which I conceived it must have taken hours to arrange. The manners of this young woman, who appeared to be thirty, perfectly agreed with her incongruous dress. They exhibited by turns a natural vivacity, with an acquired pertness and assumed ease: then, checked by my silence and my father's stately reserve, she discovered an awkward embarrassment which I pitied.

Our repast soon succeeded to mademoiselle Babet's first compliments. My father taking my hand, with a face demonstrative of the passing thought, placed me at the head of the table, monsieur directing the young lady to the seat next to me. She was however useful to me; for she observed that I looked unwell, and asked me with good nature whether I did not wish to retire to bed. Grateful for my escape, I followed her. She conducted me through the great salloon, and I saw that it had been recently stripped of its ornaments: not a picture remained, nor any vestige of its costly furniture. "I hope you will like *our* bedchamber," said she, opening the door of an apartment in which were two beds; "I thought you would prefer a companion, to sleeping alone in this great empty house." I thanked her with coldness, but observed that I admitted no intrusion on my hours of repose. She coloured; and I, recollecting my part, added with a languid smile, that the buzzing of a fly prevented my sleeping; and that, although I wished to be near her, I preferred a room to myself. "It shall be as you like," answered she; "I do not wish to be troublesome, so that we are *but sociable*." She instantly led me to the next apartment, and I was contented. She with more loquacity than I desired, but with a kindness I could not find in me to repress, assisted me to undress, and, having performed this friendly office, left me to my repose. In the morning, without any previous signal, she entered the room, inquired after my health, and asked me whether I chose my chocolate in bed. These civilities were intermixed with a familiarity and freedom which surprised me. I requested she would let my father know that I wished to see him. "The gentlemen are in the garden," replied she, opening the sash, and loudly calling "Monsieur, your daughter wants to speak to you." How powerfully are we under the control of early habits! My weak pride and fastidious delicacy were offended by an intrusion on their accustomed demands of deference and respect; and with a childish disgust at manners which a better experience of life would have taught me to overlook as of no importance, I yielded to a resentment unworthy of a sound judgment or a firm temper.

My father instantly obeyed this unusual summons, and on his entering mademoiselle withdrew sans cérémonie. With some emotion I begged of him to instruct me in regard to the full extent of those humiliations to which it was necessary for me to submit, being at that moment unprepared to meet with an associate so unsuitable as mademoiselle Babet, or to tolerate in an attendant a familiarity at once vulgar and impertinent. I spoke with a portion of my father's pride: he felt the appeal; but, suppressing the resentment which it would in any other situation have excited in his haughty mind, he told me with much calmness, that I was under a mistake in supposing the young woman was a domestic. "Her father is a respectable man," added he, "and a useful member of a club under de Béne's influence. She is in a word, Marianne,"—his face became pale and his voice sunk,—*"like yourself, a guest under this roof. Like your father, you must bend before you can recover your proper place. Once more I repeat it, your father's life is at stake. We shall leave you tomorrow; our embassy is of direful import!"* He checked himself, and proceeded to inform me, that the girl had good-naturedly observed to de Béne, that she had no doubt of your liking her when you knew her better; for she was not made to be the tormentor of any

one, advising him to gain your love by dismissing his jealousy. She has acutely discovered that he is jealous; and so have I, and what is more, that he entertains suspicions which he dares not avow, nor can I even conjecture on what ground he has entertained them. Be this what it may," continued he, "policy on my part, and submission on yours, are the only means left of averting the evils we dread; and I must shorten a conversation which may give umbrage to de Béne."

At dinner I took occasion to lament the unquiet state of the nation, and observed that, as we were two unprotected women, I hoped mademoiselle would be of my opinion, and confine our walks to the garden. De Béne praised my prudence; and Babet, with a loud laugh, said she would abide by such conditions no longer than whilst monsieur de Béne was absent; for, having no fears of being molested, and loving liberty, the garden would soon lose its charms for her. At length the evening released me from the restraints of the day. My father, on rising to retire, coldly observed that he should be up too early in the morning to see me; and de Béne, with much ceremony kissing my passive hand, withdrew with him for the night, saying that he had yet letters to write.

CHAPTER XXIV.

EXHAUSTED by my exertions, and sunk to despair by the corroding reflexions which my husband's silence perpetually supplied, I remained till day-break without closing my eyes. I heard the gentlemen depart; and nature, solaced by the hope of a respite from suffering, sunk to the repose she needed. On awaking, I found my watch sounded ten, and I mechanically put my hand to the bell-string, but as suddenly checked it: the idea of my forlorn condition rushed into my mind; and I felt that using the powers nature had given me to serve myself, was the slightest evil I had to sustain. My toilet finished, and my features composed, I made my way to the room in which we had supped; but in passing a smaller apartment I discovered Babet quietly knitting. She was surprised at seeing me. "How is this?" said she, rising, and placing my chair. "I have been on the watch for the sound of your bell this hour. Surely you did not ring; or it is out of repair?" "I thank you, mademoiselle," answered I pensively, "for the kindness of your intention; but I mean to wean myself from a weak dependence on others, in services I can perform with my own hands. It is time I should forget the woman of quality," added I smiling, "and on this point at least I find the task easy."—"How idly you talk, mademoiselle!" replied she, cheerfully preparing the coffee: "the wife of citoyen de Béne may expect to see duchesses behind her chair, or kneeling to tie her slipper."—"I would rather be the lowest menial on earth," replied I, "than live to see the hour of such elevation over those with whom I have classed."—"I am not surprised to hear you say so," answered she, "for I pity them, and have yet to learn to insult a fallen enemy. I am not ill-natured, mademoiselle,.... but let me see you eat something." I was subdued even by this touch of commiseration; my tears flowed; and poor Babet looked compassionately: again she pressed me to take some coffee, and I tried to oblige her. "That is right," observed she; "we shall soon be friends, I see. I am not a fool, mademoiselle. I saw you as an offended woman of quality yesterday, yet then I pitied you; today I see you as an unhappy girl, and I pity you still more. I am not much flattered by monsieur de Béne's preference of me for the post I am in, nor well pleased with his manner of proceeding: yet I must perform my task; for my father's bread depends on him. I was told that I should meet here his affianced bride, who for particular reasons would live privately at l'Eclair till his return from his journey, when the marriage would be solemnized, and an establishment formed in which I should be considered. In the mean time I was not to be looked upon as a domestic, the lady wishing for a companion, and my cheerful temper would content her."—"And so it does," replied I with eagerness, and seizing her hand, "for you have a good heart, and refuse not compassion to the wretched!"—"But you are wrong to be wretched," answered she: "an old husband is not, to be sure, exactly what one likes; but you will learn by

experience, that it is possible to be comfortable with one who is wealthy. You have managed badly to rouse his jealousy. Here is a letter he left for me; read it," added she, unmindful of my consternation, "and let it direct you to be more on your guard." I took it with eagerness. It was from de Béne to her, and written the evening he left the chateau. In this he informs her "that I had a concealed lover, of a rank too degrading to be mentioned to the duke, whose violence would be fatal. She was ordered to watch me with unremitting vigilance, and to keep my letters for his examination. That he still loved me; and, trusting to my gratitude, would not only shelter me from the ruin which awaited me, but from disgrace." I returned the letter, and with scorn observed, that nothing surprised me from a man who could persist in his pretensions to a woman who had repeatedly told him that she could not love him. "This calumny," added I, "serves only to render him more contemptible. It is my father's pleasure to sacrifice me; but I shall have a friend whose power he cannot control: death will shelter me." "And why not secure de Béne," asked she with gay levity, "from the hazard of marrying a girl who hates him, and who is young enough for his granddaughter? But we have had enough of weeping for one day; and you now understand me; I must have fair play: be easy, only remember we must have no intriguing nor love-letters. I am honest, mademoiselle; and I expect you will be so whilst I have the honour of attending you. I wish to be useful to you, and I beg you will allow me to serve in your apartment: for the rest, we must do as well as we can; there are books in the library, and a harp expressly sent here for your amusement by monsieur de Béne. His confidential domestic told me that his master adored you; and that he has been generous to your father. I shall neither confine my walks to the garden nor treat you like a prisoner. You will like madame Claudine, our neighbour, and we shall do very well together."

Claudine now appeared in the court, and with alacrity the loquacious Babet rose to meet her. My emotions were suppressed, when with her present of *crème de mousseline* for mademoiselle Babet she was introduced in form to me. The dear woman became pale, and, sitting down, said that she had given an ugly wrench to her ankle. Babet instantly offered to examine it, but this was declined; and she appeared to have forgotten it, in her remarks on the poor young lady's apparent bad health. On rising to take leave, Babet insisted she should not move till the evening. "Your son will know where you are," added she smiling, "and it is not proper for you to walk without support." Unable to endure the restraint I was under, I left them, to examine the books; and to my surprise, when I joined them for dinner I found Simon with them as neat as a lover. My condescensions charmed Babet; and nothing loth she left me with Claudine, for a walk in her lover's company. You may judge of our mutual feelings. But she implored me to practise self-command, and to hope that all would be soon well. "You must, my dear lady," added she, "oppose prudence to injustice, and management to cunning. The young woman whom de Béne has chosen is good-natured: but she must not be trusted at present; nor do I think her sufficiently prudent even for her own safety. She is thrown out of her element here; and she finds my son Simon a better gallant than none. He understands very well the part he has to act; and Babet is amused with his compliments, without perceiving that he is laughing at her; for, between ourselves, she is not a wife for him: nor will you wonder, when I tell you that Babet is more delighted with the new laws in regard to matrimony than with all other reforms."

A correspondence was thus opened to me; and I heard of Jeanneton's safety and of my infant's welfare: but the cordial my sinking spirits needed was yet withheld, and all was cheerless. Soon after Jeanneton's confinement she lost her child: and Nicolas was by means of a friend given to understand, that it behoved him to seek his safety by engaging in the army for more remote service than the capital. The information was of too serious a kind to be disregarded; and he entered as a volunteer in the regiment which his friend commanded as colonel, and whose nephew was particularly attached to Nicolas. Poor Jeanneton had only to lament his absence; for the fond and faithful husband concealed

from her the real motives which had governed him, pleading only the necessity of so doing. His absence was however the completion of my wretchedness. Hope was extinct, and a fatal idea too powerful to be removed took possession of my mind; for I still firmly believe, mademoiselle, that my husband is no more. Augustus Middleton could neither be *base* nor *cruel*. As well could I be taught to doubt of my own existence, to believe that honour and truth are names without meaning, as to suspect that virtue which I had revered as the basis of my Augustus's firm mind. But I *was abandoned*; and although my nature recoils with horror, whilst the suspicion passes to you, the Aimsworth family were my husband's heirs. Oh pardon me, Heaven, if I err! and let pity heal the wound of offended friendship and vilified honour!!

Claudine, alarmed by my condition, advised Babet to allure me from my apartment, in which I passed hours in a state of torpid inactivity. Jeanneton's arrival with Sigismund saved my life, and reinstated my fluctuating reason. My child became the object of my cares; and Babet, pleased with the augmentation of her society by the arrival of Simon's sister, left me without constraint to the diversion which the child had given to my melancholy.

Sometimes I walked to the farm; but more frequently Jeanneton passed the day with me at the chateau: and from what I could observe, Simon had assumed the lover so well, that he was become one in reality. He strenuously maintained that Babet was an honest girl, and that I might trust her: but her connexions with de Béne were urged by Jeanneton; and Claudine trembled at his name, suspecting he had been the enemy whom Nicolas had been warned to shun. I listened to her plans and project with more avidity; for Claudine appeared more anxious to preserve Sigismund than for my deliverance. "Were he in safety," said she, "I would appear; and your father would listen to me, or I would lose my life." "But de Béne..." replied I weeping.... "is a tyger," answered she with eagerness, and with an emotion which surprised me. "But were your child beyond his reach, I could tame him." In vain I urged her to explain herself more fully. She refused, saying that she referred to events which had occurred many years back, and which she meant not to bring forward unless urged to the last extremity of her patience. She had, however, said enough to alarm me for the life of my child, and she instantly perceived it. Your intervention was pointed out, and a detail of your precise situation followed. Claudine entered warmly into those plans of caution which I have followed, agreeing with me that the fate of her family depended on the removal of the child before my father's and de Béne's return; which we had reason to expect would not be delayed much longer. I immediately began to write the particulars of my disastrous life, for your perusal and the future information of my unfortunate son. Simon has drawn the bolts of the little wicket. The casket is prepared, and my sainted mother's secret gift will supply her wretched grandchild with bread. Claudine, the faithful Claudine, has, by her care, a second time saved the hopes of the house of Ormesson. Angel of mercy! for such my soul believes thee, receive my fervent prayers before they gain the throne of grace. Join to them the solemn purpose of protecting innocence. They will ascend, Pauline, and heaven will applaud the deed...

Babet has this morning received intelligence from her father, that she is to prepare herself and her *prisoner* to leave l'Eclair, the duke and monsieur de Béne being unable to quit Bourdeaux. Clément, monsieur de Béne's private secretary, is ordered to conduct to the *impatient lover* mademoiselle de Fouclaut and her faithful Babet. The poor woman is inconsolable; and I dare not tell her what might more alarm her. But I am collected, Pauline; and I say to you, that mademoiselle de Fouclaut will not go to Bourdeaux.

I now hasten to the conclusion of my business in this life; to-morrow morning I shall see Claudine, I shall see Jeanneton, I shall embrace my precious child! Simon is prepared with a note for his mother. She will inform you of the hour you will find me near the little wicket: I think it better to meet you in the wood, than to hazard being seen in your house. You have only one week to wait for Marianne's *last adieux*...

Gasping, fainting, frantic with terror, I am once more seated in this abode of misery. Babet has left me *to sleep*. She thinks a bull has terrified me. No, Pauline, the fiercest of its kind in mad fury is mild and placable to the monster who pursues me! But let me pause.

Returning home from Claudine's this morning at an earlier hour than usual, having promised Babet to breakfast with her, I perceived a man sitting under a tree in the path before me. The stranger's appearance had nothing in it wherewith to alarm me; yet I hesitated, and irresolutely advanced, hoping to see him quit his post. He probably saw my diffidence; for he rose, and entered the thicket, and I stood till I saw him mounting the hill which lies between us and the hamlet. On reaching the spot he had left, I saw he had dropped his pocket-book, in which he was writing when I first perceived him; and assured that he was a harmless traveller, I was prompted by the wish of restoring his property. I looked to the road he was in. He had gained the ascent, and was looking at me. I instantly held up the book. He clasped his hands together, bowed, and disappeared. Surprised by his behaviour, I opened the book, judging from its bulk that its contents were few and unimportant. Two leaves appeared, and I saw with consternation the address to myself, and I read what follows:

"Fly, leave l'Eclair, thou most innocent, most abused of women! Thy deliverer is in the village; he will wait to see thee pass the inn. Trust him; for he is faithful, and has in Paris a sure refuge for thee. Before sunset thy escape will be impossible. Thy father will be a prisoner in Paris. De Béne's hour of retribution is come; he is also in custody. Fly, and fear not. Destroy this intelligence. I wait to receive thee, with a certainty of saving the life I have brought to the brink of destruction. O let me thus expiate my crime!"

I stood motionless for some time. Then tearing the paper into atoms, I rolled it in the dust with my foot. The wind had removed a fragment. I know not wherefore I took it up; for it appeared a blank to my eye: yet I did, and, turning it, read the name of *Clement* written with ink; the other part was written with a pencil. The toil is frustrated! De Béne will miss his prey. Marianne is the care of Providence! I will not leave l'Eclair, but will now watch the appearance of my child's saving angel! Claudine will be with you, and twelve is the appointed hour. One farewell must part us, and Marianne Middleton will be soon at peace!! I hasten to meet your embrace, and *to die*...

CHAPTER XXV.

IN the first impulse of my sympathy and compassion, I would, had I been left to their government, have followed the wretched Marianne to her prison, and there ratified the solemn vow my lips had uttered, to devote my *life* to her child's preservation. It is however registered in *heaven*, and Pauline is satisfied.

I lost no time in visiting my precious charge: and leaving to your imagination the first interview with his friends, as being too painful to detail, I will proceed to inform you of the measures we pursued. Jeanneton went immediately to Paris, in the hope of being useful to her lady. Sigismund remained with Claudine, waiting for my departure from La Fontaine, when she was to join her daughter. I found

Jeanneton and her husband had concurred in the same opinion with Mrs. Middleton, as this related to her husband's death, and the conduct which had resulted from that supposed event, on the part of the Aimsworth family. Having no arguments of sufficient weight with which to combat these opinions; and being equally biassed with themselves in favour of Mr. Middleton's honour, I took up with these prejudices, and silently pronounced the Aimsworths culpable of the meanest designs; and the *real* heir of Mr. Middleton regarded as a friendless orphan, whom it was their interest never to acknowledge.

Day succeeded day without other consolation than such as monsieur du Rivage's letters afforded me. The Wilmots were arrived in Paris, but had not fixed the time for their quitting it. This interval of suspense was soothed by Claudine's conversation, and the increasing fondness of *my child*; for such did I call him *then*, and such will I call him till my "voice is lost in death."

Claudine, who relieved her dejected spirits by perpetually recurring to the subject of her distress, left my curiosity nothing to wish for, in regard to a family to which I was so peculiarly connected by the circumstances I have related.

It may not be improper to detail to you my sympathizing friend Claudine's narrative of events respecting the family of the unfortunate object of your commiseration. It is interesting: and if it does not beguile you, as it did me, of some of those hours of painful suspense I passed, it may divert your thoughts from resting on one example of suffering innocence left to struggles beyond its strength.

CHAPTER XXVI.

“I MUST begin my story,” said Claudine, “with an exploit of my forefathers. One of them, then a vassal, and living with an ancestor of mademoiselle de Fouclaut, saved his young master’s life in a battle fought under the great Condé. The hazard of his own life, and the astonishing bravery he showed, were not overlooked by his noble father, the duke de l’Ormesson. He gave him this land; and his name was exchanged for that of *Bon Valet*. Not only were these honours granted him, but a picture was drawn of the transaction, and I have seen it in the great gallery at the castle hundreds of times. These favours retained the grateful and faithful dependent at the castle: he died there, and was succeeded by a son as honest. My mother at her death left me a young girl under the same protecting roof; and it was my pride, and is now my glory, that the blood of *Bon Valet* has never degenerated. On the marriage of mademoiselle de l’Ormesson, the heiress to the wealth, the honour, and the virtue of her noble house, her mother retired to a beautiful villa near Toulouse, I remaining with her daughter, then duchess de Fouclaut; and I shall never forget my good lady’s words when she left l’Eclair. ‘I leave you with comfort, my dear Béatrice,’ said she to her weeping daughter: ‘you have near you a faithful friend. Remember, she is the child of your nurse Chrétienne, and the descendant of *Bon Valet*.’ My blood, mademoiselle, rushed from my heart to my face, and I envied not my noble patrons their titles. This farm was, at the period I am arrived at, on lease to a good tenant, who for his pleasure and convenience, being a wealthy bourgeois of Paris, rendered the house what you see it. With my lady’s consent I married a man who was not less honest than myself, and the duke was pleased to make him head gardener. Two years passed away; these winters my lady spent at Paris, and I was left dame des affaires at the chateau. I soon saw Paris did not improve the duchess’s health or spirits, and that the adoring husband was left there.

“The mask gradually dropped, and the duke became jealous of one who loved his wife better than he did. He found the lease of my land was expired; and he urged me to sell it to him, saying it interfered with his improvements. ‘So did poor Naboth’s with his lord’s, monseigneur,’ replied I smiling; ‘but you are too generous not to accept of his words, which are mine also: The Lord forbid that I should give the inheritance of my fathers unto thee! an inheritance,’ added I, ‘that will teach my children’s children to be faithful in their duty.’ ‘You may perform that duty,’ answered he, ‘more effectually by residing near madame de l’Ormesson, and I will give you a farm there, more advantageous to your family.’—I was firm in my refusal, and the duke showed that he was offended; for from that time my poor Augustine’s ‘right hand appeared to have forgotten its cunning;’ nothing he did was right; and we quietly submitted, till my dear lady hinted, it would please her to see us comfortable at our farm. I saw how matters were going on, and for the sake of peace we retired to an abode in which *we* found her. Soon after, she lost her mother, who by the way forgot her daughter too much, in the solicitude for her own salvation; but she was never herself from the time she became a widow, and buried her eldest daughter. My lady had been a wife three years when her son Sigismund was born. What a change followed that event! Continual demands on her purse for the expenditure of the house at l’Eclair, whilst the mines of Peru would not have sufficed for the duke’s hotel in Paris! My lady lived like a recluse; by the months together, we saw nothing of the duke. We in this time had two children, Simon and Jeanneton; but our curé’s mother took a fancy to my girl, and I was left at liberty to attend my dear lady. The curé was as fond of our Jeanneton as his mother, and she was at length an inmate of their house, and the pride of their hearts; for she was as ready to learn, as they were to teach.

“But to return. I now perceived the visits of monseigneur were more dreaded than desired; for my lady was either coaxed or menaced to give up rights which she ought to have steadily preserved for her children. But she loved too tenderly this ungrateful man, and a return of kindness from him subdued on her part every resolution and resentment. The birth of Marianne was followed by exactions which roused the spirit of the gentle duchess. She firmly refused to sign a deed, which would have made her children beggars; and she had now *cruelty* to sustain. Her health, unequal to the inquietude of her mind, daily sunk; and the physicians declared she was in a consumption. I was again stationary at the chateau, and beheld her hourly sinking under a dejection of spirits beyond the aid of medicine. Patient and gentle, she still supported the fatigue of rising and changing her apartment, this being recommended. The duke, struck by the danger of losing her, *or with other views*, became again the fond husband, in every one’s eyes but *mine*; for I well understood that he had gained his purpose, and that my lady had at length signed the deed, which left her children and their property to his management. This had been the cause of her illness; and well it might! However, all was attention and tenderness from this time. I had as usual attended her levee one morning, and seen her on the sofa in her dressing-room. She desired me to place a devotional book within her reach. I did so, and by it her salts, with a cordial, the greater part of which she had already taken. ‘That is well,’ said she, looking at it, ‘I think it has done me good; for it takes off my faintness.’—‘Will you take it now?’ asked I. ‘No,’ replied she with more than usual cheerfulness; ‘I have had some refreshing sleep this morning.’—I withdrew as usual when she was engaged at her devotions; and seeing two of her women stationed in the antichamber, I went forwards to my own room, in order to change my clothes. In less than an hour I was hastily summoned. ‘My lady was expiring.’ On entering her apartment, I found her retching with violence, her countenance of a livid hue, and bedewed with cold sweats; her brows contracted, and her eyes half closed: she was supported in the duke’s arms, who *appeared* in a terror perfectly corresponding with the cause before him. ‘What was the potion,’ exclaimed he, ‘I found in this accursed glass,’ dashing it with fury from the table, ‘and which my wife desired me to give her when she became faint?’ One of the women answered, it was a portion of the same cordial which the duchess had taken in the night, and for several days. The dying saint opened her eyes, and faintly said, ‘Give me more of it.’ She was obeyed, and, receiving the medicine, remained for some time undisturbed; and at length sunk into a sweet slumber.

“I was now informed that monseigneur had found the duchess on her knees in prayer; that gently remonstrating with her, that the posture did not suit her feebleness, she yielded, and confessed the exertion had been too much, requesting him to give her the cordial prepared for her. She took it; and the duke conversed with her some time, when the nausea suddenly coming on he called for assistance. The following morning she had apparently gained on the latent foe; and the physicians from Paris declared her not only free from danger, but also flattered us, that nature thus relieved would effect a still more desirable state of health than the patient had for some months enjoyed. I was not deceived, mademoiselle. About two months after this incident, every one was prepared for her death. I was sitting in her room one night, when she thus addressed me: ‘To say, my dear and faithful Claudine, how truly I love you, is not now needful: God will recompense you for your goodness to me. But you have duties yet to perform for your dying friend. Take this sealed packet, and promise me, without opening it, to place it in the hands of the person to whom it is directed. I have already given a duplicate of it to monsieur le Pere Gardien: he will confirm this when he comes. He also is informed of the casket of jewels which you have in your keeping. They are destined for the future provision of my daughter, by a parent who has weakly signed her ruin, as far as relates to this world’s wealth. She is indebted to you, Claudine, for this bequest; and to her grandmother for a fund which will secure to her bread in a convent. You knew the duke better than I did,’ continued she, weeping: ‘love had not blinded you, nor could a mistaken duty have betrayed you to *rob* your children.’—I made no reply. She continued—‘Yet I think that, when I am

departed, de Fouclaut will be kind to these precious remains of a woman he can *never* forget.’ She paused, and was in mental agony, and in a broken voice said—‘O pardon me, Saviour of the world, if I wrong him! and as I hope for thy redeeming grace spare him! if . . .’ I could hear no more, her sobs rendering her words inarticulate. ‘I have one hope still remaining,’ continued she with recovered calmness: ‘I will probe his heart before I depart hence. He shall see the victim whom he has immolated praying to *her God*, and *his God*, for his happiness and reformation. You will be *faithful*,’ added she, fixing her eyes on my face; ‘you will respect the father of my children. I ask not what are and have been your thoughts of the sudden illness which surprised you. Dismiss them; and remember that Sigismund and Marianne will want your tenderness.’

“The duchess lived ‘to probe the heart of her destroyer,’ for such was the duke in my opinion. He quitted the dying angel in frantic sorrow, and from that hour she calmly met her friendly conqueror.”

CHAPTER XXVII.

“FOR many days,” continued the good Claudine, wiping away her tears, “the duke was in a high fever, and his physicians had fears for his life: but, with a vigour of constitution which equalled the demands of his unbridled passions and cruel nature, he escaped—if to live for accumulated guilt can be called an *escape*.” She devoutly kissed the cross in her bosom.

“My cares during this period were given exclusively to the dear children. The pompous funeral was too much for me to witness. At length I was summoned to the duke’s apartment. I trembled on approaching him to that degree, that I could not stand. He observed my condition, and with kindness said, ‘sit down, my good Claudine: we have, I see, been mutual sufferers in the late melancholy event.’ I burst into tears, and they relieved me. ‘I wish,’ continued the hypocrite, ‘to talk with you relatively to my dear children, and to thank you for your kind services to them during my illness.’ I bowed, and said I had been comforted in the performance of my duty to them. ‘I wish,’ replied he, ‘that I could find consolation. My reason points out to me arguments for patience and resignation, which my feelings yet weakly reject; although it is certain that death is a deliverance from a suffering body and deranged mind.’—‘Deranged!’ repeated I with astonishment. ‘You have been misinformed, monseigneur. Madame was sensible to her last sigh. I never witnessed so calm and collected a mind in an hour of such conflict. Le Pere Gardien will tell you the same, as well as the physicians and her women. No no,’ added I, ‘madame la duchesse died as she had lived, like a saint!’

“‘Insanity is not always raving,’ answered he, ‘nor are the ideas of a distempered brain always incongruous. It frequently happens, that only on certain incitements, and under certain impressions, the disordered fancy can be detected even by the most skilful observers, and those medical men.’—‘I know nothing of this,’ answered I; ‘but I know that all the doctors in Europe could not convince me that my dear lady’s reason was disturbed.’—‘What! because your fanatic priest told you she died saying her prayers?’ said he sternly. ‘But tell me, woman! have you not proofs of her insanity, in the suspicions which led her to use such precautions as showed she thought her children unsafe with her *murderer*? Answer me,’ repeated he in a rage, ‘what have you done with the papers she committed to your care—your secret commissions?’ God was with me, mademoiselle. ‘They are in safety,’ answered I with a strength not my own. ‘Hear me, monseigneur. I am neither your accuser nor your judge. I know my dear

lady died praying for your happiness here and hereafter; I know she loved you tenderly and faithfully; and I know no power on earth can make me forfeit my word to her, or be less faithful to her commands than I have been. The contents of the packet she delivered to me I am unacquainted with. It is at this hour in honest hands in Paris, and there it will remain; for Claudine is resolute in duty.' He was utterly confounded, mademoiselle. I proceeded: 'Monsieur le Pere Gardien had the same instructions with myself. He is a good and pious man, and I presume to say he has conscientiously performed his duty. My lady said to us *both*, that they were papers of consequence to her children, and before me she requested the good father to renew his promise of sending to her uncle at Vienna the papers he had received from her. I remember what passed. 'You know the motives which govern me,' said madame; 'the safety of my husband will be assured.' Fear not your poor Claudine, monseigneur,' continued I, weeping: 'I have joined with your departed saint in imploring blessings from heaven for you. I have witnessed the agonies of her soul, from the dread of having harboured a suspicion of your honour and humanity. Permit me to advise you to drop this subject for ever, and leave to the great Searcher of hearts your *innocence*, and her offence. Show to the world that your wife is justified in having chosen the father of her children for *their guardian*. You are no stranger to her wishes in regard to my services. These I offer you, monseigneur; and I will teach your children to love you.' The duke appeared lost in his own reflexions; the big drops of sweat bedewed his pallid face, and I remained silent. 'I will trust you,' said he, at length rising from his seat; 'I believe you are honest.'—'I dare not be otherwise,' replied I, 'for I fear God.' I kissed my cross. 'Be it so,' said he. 'I commit my children to your care. This measure is no less for their well being than my own honour. Le Pere Gardien dares not profane his vow, and the ravings of a distempered brain must be erased from my remembrance. I am innocent of this act of atrocity. I wish I stood as clear from offences of less magnitude. But I have been too profuse, Claudine; retrenchments must be made.'—'There cannot be a more generous intention,' replied I with eagerness, 'nor a more suitable hour. Your children are infants, and before they will be of an age to claim your consideration all will be well.' He failed not in his plans of reform at l'Eclair. But you know from his injured daughter the manner in which we lived at the chateau. We were however happy till that saucy minx de la Croix arrived; and I then showed the duke I was still a *Bon Valet*. From the time I returned to my peaceful home he never noticed me, and when I lost my dear husband he passed my door with the wretch de Béne and his crew. Poor Marianne thinks politics and her father's necessities alone have placed him in that man's power; but I know better. The duke's life was in his hands before he went abroad as an adventurer. And I know who sent him thither. But these are old stories,' added she, checking herself. 'sufficient for the day is the evil thereof! When le Pere Gardien was on his dying bed, he sent for me, and desired I would give a sealed note to his successor in case of his death. His name was du Clos. 'He will understand from its contents,' added he, 'that you are Claudine, the late duchess de Fouclaut's faithful attendant. If he shows you this ring, deliver up to him the papers your lady left with you.' Monsieur du Clos did succeed le bon Ambroise, and I gave up my trust to him.

"I suspect," added Claudine, "he was ordered to send them to Vienna to Sigismund's protector, who was a knight of Malta, and his great uncle by the mother's side. This introduction," continued Claudine, "to monsieur du Clos, who was till then curé of a large parish in Paris, and has been since in want of bread, and either emigrated or concealed, led us to be good friends, and he often came to see me. He was pleased with his reception, and we frequently talked of the duke and his poor children. It is needless to say, du Clos knew more of him than was good; and from the time of our first troubles he told me that he would bring down destruction on his own head and his innocent daughter's. Nicolas thought of this good man, when our lady was prevailed upon to give her hand to Mr. Middleton. Du Clos united them, and he said he had done a work of which he should never repent; for that Mr. Middleton was a

man of honour, and merited the first woman in France. Poor soul! I trust he will not live to recant this opinion.”

I was curious to learn more of monsieur Meunier, and I asked whether she had not some fears in giving her daughter to a man in the duke’s suite. “Bless you, my dear mademoiselle,” answered she, “Nicolas was never a domestic to him, or any man. Monsieur Blanchard brought him up from his cradle, and gave him the best of learning, intending to place him in a good post under the late government; I believe, part at least of the money was paid for the place: but the troubles of the times came on, and poor Nicolas was disappointed, and Blanchard’s money lost. I have had a friendship of many years with Blanchard,” continued she; “for I know he has been a faithful servant, although to an unworthy master. He loved my poor lady; and he is a good man. Nicolas only lived at the hotel till something could be done for him; he is a worthy creature, and no wise fit for the duke’s service: but he took a fancy to him, and Nicolas had his measures to keep; and Jeanneton was near his heart. I never was more astonished in my life,” continued Claudine, “than when Blanchard came to tell me that the duke wished for my Jeanneton to attend his daughter at the convent, for he had never noticed me from the hour I left l’Eclair. I was sensible France could not furnish her with a more suitable attendant, and that was enough for me. She is indeed, mademoiselle, all you think her; and instruction has not been lost on her: but she is now unhappy; and God only knows what will be the end of our cares.” I endeavoured to comfort poor Claudine; but my own anxieties hung on my spirits.

CHAPTER XXVIII.

ONE day, soon after this conversation, I received a letter from monsieur du Rivage: it was written in English, and brought me by a man who acted as porter at the banking-office. I was informed that Mr. Wilmot would be with me in two days; and Jaques would take care to convey my trunks to Paris, after conveying Catharine to her friends at Estampe. You may imagine that orders so succinct surprised me. I questioned the messenger with caution; and he answered with caution. ‘He believed la Fontaine was disposed of. He understood monsieur Wilmot was on his way to England; his master was well; but too much engaged to come for me himself.’ Not daring to pursue my inquiries, I prepared for my journey, and Claudine for hers, to Paris, with my Sigismund.

The appearance of Mr. Wilmot had nothing in it wherewith to attract or repress confidence. He was a man upwards of fifty, and was civil and simple. On the journey I talked of my father. He answered with reserve, “that he ‘wore well’ for a man of his years; that he would have done well had he ‘wound up’ ten years sooner. For his part, having only one child, a daughter, he was determined on leaving France; he had for a long time seen the storm approaching, and had prepared for it; his property was in the English funds; but he had hopes of recovering some debts due to him in Paris; and he had of course been trying what he could do.” These observations and replies to my questions silenced me; and my companion slept undisturbedly.

Mrs. Wilmot received me with much kindness, and I soon returned to the subject which so immediately interested me. I was alarmed by not meeting monsieur du Rivage. She conducted me to a bed-chamber, and, after some formal prelude, told me that my father had happily escaped from Paris; and, giving me a letter from him, withdrew, saying that she supposed I should like to be alone. She was not mistaken: for judge of my consternation by the detail of my father’s letter!

Monsieur du Rivage, with the anxiety of the tenderest of parents, fully explained the motives which had governed him in his resolution to entrust my safety to Mr. Wilmot, a man whom he had known some years, and whom he had importantly served. His difficulties had at length placed him in the predicament he had long foreseen. His integrity in having paid to some persons their own money, and who were marked as the victims of the ruling faction, had rendered him obnoxious and suspected. He saw his life was in their power, and had taken the only means of preserving it, *a flight*; which if happily effected would unite us in London. He had sent at different times, and with the concurrence of Mr. Wilmot, my clothes, with every article of fond remembrance belonging to my dear mother, to Mr. Wilmot's correspondent in Paris, directed to his care, with the name of 'Mary Murray.' Mr. Wilmot had for me madame du Rivage's jewels, which were charged with my expenses till I should be with Mr. Furnival. Mr. Wilmot had also in trust for me his gold snuff-box, in which was madame du Rivage's portrait. I will abridge the remainder of a letter, which in vain contained every argument of hope and consolation; for it was plain that my father, considering the perils to which I should be exposed, had given up a comfort the dearest to him in life, in order for my greater security.

Mrs. Wilmot at length interrupted my sorrow. She informed me it was absolutely necessary that I should appear cheerful, and as an English lady on her way to her parents; that monsieur du Rivage had left my instructions with her, and I was not to see any of my former Paris connexions, nor repeat his name. "You are in perfect safety with us," added she, "and we have no doubt of seeing our good friend in London." "You have for me, I find," said I weeping, "my dear father's snuff-box: will you indulge me with it?" "Tomorrow will be the same," replied she; "and your eyes are now swelled with weeping, and may be noticed. My daughter will be home soon, and may bring some one to sup here. You had better make yourself *a little smart*." Unwilling to offend, I changed my travelling dress for a gown, she assisting me with evident curiosity. Whether the sight of lace and muslin produced any effect, or that she sympathized in my dejection, I could not ascertain; but she civilly apologized for her daughter's absence, saying that Anna had been tempted to the national assembly to hear citizen Chaumier's speech, with others from the first orators. "She left with me a message for you," added Mrs. Wilmot laughing, "which is quite in Anna's way. She bade me tell you, that she would certainly denounce you as being an aristocrate, if you retired before she came home." My spirits were not quite prepared for *badinage* of any kind; and I could with difficulty force a smile for this.

CHAPTER XXIX.

IT had been with some surprise that I had perceived the magnificence of Mr. Wilmot's accommodations. His manners and his lady's did not exactly correspond with the first hotel garni in Paris; but during the time we waited for miss Anna's return, in order to sup, I learned that he paid no more for the apartment than a cabaret would have cost him ten years back. "So it was an ill wind which blew no one good." At length, weary with waiting, he insisted on the supper being served, observing that it was ten to one whether Anna would not sleep at madame Broudier's. The mother finding it in vain to oppose this opinion, we sat down to a good supper, Mr. Wilmot observing to me, that nothing was spared by living shabbily on a journey. We were in the enjoyment of the repast, when miss Wilmot attended by a handsome young man entered the room. She lavished on me a frank and familiar welcome; and placing herself at the table with her gay escort, they ate with an avidity which might have surprised me, had I not heard they had been the whole day in a tribune, so engaged with oratory as not to have had time to think of food.

For a time, little was said that could divert my attention from miss Wilmot; who in a mode of dress, which had sprung from freedom, appeared to me to have forsaken modesty with loyalty; for I could not recollect having ever seen at Versailles any lady so *undressed* as miss Wilmot. Nature had not been liberal in giving height to this young lady; but with embonpoint she had delicate limbs, and a complexion of dazzling transparency; fine and nearly flaxen coloured hair, good teeth, and an expression of spirit and animation rarely found with fair women. She wore rouge, and probably her eyes were indebted to it for a portion of their brilliancy; and although her features were not regular, nor her person faultless, she had pretensions to beauty, which with more modesty few would have disputed. She appeared to be one -or two-and-twenty years old, and to have acquired a power with her parents which astonished me. Monsieur Broudier, le bon citoyen, appeared perfectly at his ease; and, without paying much attention to Mr. or Mrs. Wilmot, went over the subject of the debates with the young lady with much fluency. I listened with amazement to her ready replies; and whilst she descanted with eloquence on the merits of the speakers whose cause was *liberty*, I viewed the snow white arm extended to enforce opinions which made me shudder. I thought I beheld an enemy to tranquillity not less to be feared than the glorious Chaumier of whom she said so much. I was silent and depressed. This young woman's manners disgusted me; and the violence of her invectives against some miserable and misguided men under sentence of death shocked me. I pleaded fatigue, and rose to retire. "I have promised for you, miss Murray," said the wonderful miss Wilmot, her face relaxing into sweetness and smiles: "my friends are dying with impatience to have another Angloise in their circle; and should I break my word, Broudier will tell them that I dread your attractions and the loss of my own honours." A look of intelligence passed from monsieur Broudier, which was understood. "This gentleman's sister," continued she, "gives an early déjeuné tomorrow to the most celebrated patriots in Paris. You will meet Chaumier, and we shall attend him to the Thuilleries. The modérés will be annihilated tomorrow." I made my excuses, and pleaded my want of spirits, and my eyes betrayed me. "My dear girl," said miss Anna with a look of more compassion than I expected, "Freedom is my divinity. Do as you please; only lay your commands on Broudier, to give a bad report of you to his sister, or I shall be chidden." He bowed with politeness, saying she had taught Philippine to be incredulous to any report of an *English woman*, that spoke not of her merit. I retired, and my night toilet reminded me of the scanty drapery become the mode in Paris during my retreat at la Fontaine.

CHAPTER XXX.

THE following day was given to the better arrangement of the contents of my trunks. They had been sent to the hotel; and, as it appeared, I could not have found a more agreeable amusement for Mrs. Wilmot. Her curiosity and remarks diverted me. My laces, or rather the laces of my dear benefactress, called forth her admiration in ecstatic terms. Silks and satins were unfolded and measured, with advice how to manage them; then entered an account of her own bargains: "she had bought sets of damask table linen, not a pin the worse for wear, for a mere song: she had, however, been teased to pick out the ducal coronet with which they were marked: it had been a job that hurt her eyes, for they were as fine as a cambric, though only sixpence a napkin." I sighed, and said the task would be too difficult for mine; for I should think of those who had been despoiled of them. "Poor creatures!" replied she, "they are to be pitied: but if I did not purchase their property somebody else would." I was answered: and she next began the history of the beautiful madame Broudier's hotel, *her* influence, her *power*; and the magnificence of her fêtes. We were, I found, under this lady's protection, and our safety assured by her power with citoyen Chaumier, who was her slave. "Has not your fair daughter some claim to our gratitude?" asked I, smiling. "Madame Broudier's brother appeared to me to have lost his liberty, and to hug his chains."—"Dear me!" replied she, "one would not think you had lived in France. Every man must be gallant, whatever happens. Anna is a favourite at his sister's, and of course she must be civil to him: but Mr. Wilmot knew the two brothers when they had not twelve hundred livres of their own in their shop. No, no, we shall choose an English husband for Anna. She is a handsome girl, and with a good fortune need not fear. I do not trust to all I see here," added she: "things may turn out differently from what is expected, notwithstanding all Anna says; but I never contradict her, being no politician."

CHAPTER XXXI.

IN the evening the triumphant miss Anna again amused me. She was attended by monsieur Broudier. Her conversation now pleased me, and I was struck by one observation that she made. Broudier with some humour mentioned a lady who had been with the party, and whose coquetry had amused him. “No revolution,” said miss Wilmot, “can effect a reform in that point amongst your countrywomen. I cannot precisely define the difference between a coquet of the old school and the one who worships at the altar of Reason. But I see as many now as I ever did, and I sometimes think that, with all the advantages on the side of reason, we cannot yet boast of our triumphs over affectation. To say the truth,” continued she, “I am more disposed in favour of the coquet of St. Cloud than the coquet of a jacobin club, and, like the good man of the house, more disposed to tolerate the gambols of a lap-dog than the rough sport of the ass who imitates him in his approaches to me.” To this remark I was induced to yield an assent, which my longer acquaintance with her has confirmed; for I never saw a woman more remote from coquetry than miss Wilmot; and to this hour I lament her deviations from the character in which she must have been an object of esteem. I was frequently surprised by the solidity of her conversation, and led to admire the sweetness of her temper; and not less frequently was I startled by the opinions she supported, and the unexampled contempt she openly avowed of her parents’ understanding and rules of conduct. Irresistible by means of a frankness so genuine as at once to make its appeal to the heart, I insensibly viewed her more favourably than at our first interview, and with augmenting good will I returned her overtures of friendship with more cordiality than I believe she expected. On the fourth day of our acquaintance she gave me a card of invitation to sup at madame Broudier’s; and in order to induce me to accept it, she told me it would be gay and brilliant. I begged to be excused. “This is my wise mother’s doing,” said she laughing. “She has taught you to believe, that no modest woman visits my friend Philippine, because she lives with the man whom she loves. But be assured you will find in her circle not only the chaste but some of the first women in Paris for talents.” She proceeded in logically proving that madame Broudier’s situation needed no apology on the side of unsophisticated virtue, for that her life was regulated by the innate feeling of her heart; and that was pure and generous. I pleaded my father’s injunctions not to visit my former acquaintance; and evading an argument which would have criminated the propriety of madame Broudier’s conduct, I succeeded in the refusal of her politeness without offending her warm advocate.

CHAPTER XXXII.

THE appearance of Sigismund with his protectors soon followed my arrival in Paris. Miss Anna, who was enjoying the comforts of a muslin handkerchief, and nursing a sore throat caught in her zeal for liberty, saw my expected guests descend from the carriage; monsieur Meunier, en habit militaire, as an officer attending them. My eagerness in obeying the summons was not unnoticed either by the mother or the daughter: “Who are those people?” asked the curious mother. “My friends,” replied I, “my country friends!”—“Do not detain miss Murray,” said Anna laughing: “moments are ages in some calculations.” I stayed not to calculate. My introduction to Nicolas preceded all other inquiries; for my fond hopes regarded him as the harbinger of glad tidings from Mr. Middleton. He shook his head despairingly, and I found nothing to comfort me in regard to his unhappy wife. ‘The public fury was pointed against her father, and his colleague de Béne; they were in the Abbaye, and mutual accusers of each other. Marianne’s fate was deplored.’ Meunier next spoke of his favour with his colonel Vieuxbois, and the friendship of his nephew, to whom he had owed the permission of seeing his wife. “My friend and captain,” added he, “saw the state of my mind; and I believe he saved my life by his kindness. I am,

however, unable to do any thing for my dear lady," continued he, "and my honour is engaged to return with the answer to the dispatches which I brought to Paris, and which were the pretence for my journey. I am now a pleader for my poor Jeanneton, mademoiselle," continued he. "She is determined to go with you and Sigismund to the port from which you embark, and you must indulge her. Your friend's connexions with Chaumier will render this easy to you, and you will want her services on the road." Jeanneton's tears prevailed, and I engaged to speak to miss Wilmot, and let her know that the child's nurse would accompany me to Havre, the port to which I had learned we should be destined. He smiled, and observed that miss Wilmot had powerful protection. Our conversation finished by again and again adverting to the mystery in which Marianne's fate was enveloped. Meunier again confirmed my suspicions of the Aimsworth family, declaring it could not be otherwise, and recommending to me the utmost caution in my measures, as these would relate to Sigismund's safety. "Till the duke's fate is determined," added he, "I shall keep my lady's apartment, and the money of hers which I still have in my possession. I may be yet the means of saving her, and her asylum shall not be given up." I commended this plan; and with tears and sighs our conference ended, by making the necessary arrangements for the future measures we had before us.

CHAPTER XXXIII.

THE reception my friends gave me on my reappearance did not surprise me. "Mon Dieu!" exclaimed the lively Anna, "what a woe-begone face! Is he gone for ever? My dear Pauline, why was not I permitted to see this *Mars* of yours, and to witness the tender adieux, as well as those ladies he brought with him? It would have been a useful lesson to me, who am deplorably deficient in scenes of pathos and sentiment."—"You are in a fair way of improving," said I, smiling through my tears, "and will soon show your master that you can weep. But my distress has for its source a more melancholy cause; for, in love, hope rarely forsakes us." She became attentive, and the mother curious. I proceeded, and detailed briefly the situation of the mother of the child they had seen, with my engagements to convey the infant to his father's family in England. The wife of the gentleman you supposed my lover," added I, "has determined not to lose sight of her precious charge whom she has reared, till I quit France. Her mother concurs with her in this design, and the husband urges it as a duty incumbent on her, and which will relieve me of much fatigue on the road. I must now petition you, madam," continued I, "to favour me in this work of mercy, and to interest Mr. Wilmot in a cause not only of humanity, but on which depends the future security of an innocent being."

"I am not only astonished, but grieved, mademoiselle," replied Mrs. Wilmot with an inflamed countenance. "*To me* this appears a very improbable tale. Does your *father*, as you call monsieur du Rivage, know this child's parents?" "He knows his father," answered I with courage, "and would sanction me for saving the offspring of a man whom he highly esteems."—"But how did it happen that he knew not of your engagements with the child's mother?" asked she. "Monsieur du Rivage never mentioned to us the probability of our being burthened with an infant on our journey. I do not believe Mr. Wilmot will consent to taking him."—"Then I must remain in Paris," replied I, "till I can find an opportunity of less difficulty for quitting it: for nothing shall tempt me to leave him behind me, nor any danger terrify me from the performing my solemn engagement to his imprisoned mother of seeing her child secure with his English friends."—"You seem to have courage for the undertaking, young lady," observed she, rising; "and, for so young a *mother*, more than many could display."—"I am not offended by your insinuation, madam," returned I with resentment; "for I should despise the woman, who, if in her power, would not be the mother to a child under the dreadful circumstances in which this stands." Mrs. Wilmot retired with a malicious smile, and the sounding door showed her displeasure by a report by no

means necessary to its closing after her.

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CHAPTER XXXIV.

“BRAVO! bravissimo!” exclaimed miss Anna, grasping my hand with force. “The wife of Sabinus, the heroic Eponia is before me! I see her in the timid, blushing Pauline! But fear not. We are not all of us of the dastardly blood of a Vespasian. I shall speak to Broudier, and you shall be satisfied. My poor mother is one of those women who, entrenched in the frozen armour of chastity, would be contaminated by an acquaintance with charity. But my father enjoys with his ignorance a quiet spirit. You must be content; and leave to my mother her opinion, that you are a frail sister or an imprudent wife. As to my father, I shall manage him with other arguments.”—Prepared as I had been from miss Wilmot’s conduct towards her parents, and grateful as I was for her generous purpose, I could not help remarking the extreme contempt she had shown for her father and mother, and I entreated her not to forget, in her kind considerations for me, the *respect* due to her parents. She laughed heartily: “You are an incomprehensible girl,” said she. “What with your simplicity, and acuteness, I find you fascinating. You have a mind, Pauline, which cannot remain long shackled, witness the spirit of your present engagement. Tell me: do you find in my mother any qualities to respect?”

I hesitated. “Allowing she is a weak woman,” replied I at length, “yet as a mother, she is even in this instance governed by motives which I must respect. She is anxious for a daughter’s good report, and considers herself as the guardian of that being for whose errors she thinks herself in a peculiar manner responsible. I hope, when she is more cool, to convince her that I have claims to her good will, and that Sigismund is entitled to her commiseration.”

“Oh, for heaven’s sake leave her to her banquet!” cried miss Anna with levity. “There is nothing so delightful to her as her own system. You have left the narrow path of her prejudices; and were she to see you, like another Elijah, mounting up to heaven, she would not be converted into an opinion that there can be any road to it but her own. Leaving therefore *respect* for a woman whom my reason *cannot respect*, I, like a good daughter, have repaid her cares of me by making her *fear* me. And if you are just, you will balance the account fairly between us. You will agree that, as matters are settled, it was necessary for my existence that I should have a mother. Instinct prompted mine to feed and clothe me. The love of dominion, and vanity, prompted her to make of me a slave and an automaton. For years I was mentally and corporeally kept in the stocks, and was not permitted to breathe but at her command. I have broken my chains, Pauline, and now I take the reins, and will prevent my good mother from disgracing me.” Her face glowed, and, fearful of offending, I remained silent. “I see,” said she with a bewitching smile, “your dissent from these opinions; but you had a madame du Rivage for your mother. She did not, like mine, exercise over you, when a child, an authority and a discipline better suited for a dancing dog than a rational being. She taught you to respect her, by exhibiting the virtues she inculcated. Your reason sanctioned the deference you paid her. You knew she was wiser than yourself. But mine has discovered the fallacy of an usurped authority, and a weakness, which was better qualified to be directed than to be obeyed.”—“I will not dispute with so powerful an opponent,” answered I, “and you have told me that freedom of opinion is one of the rights of man...” “Even so,” cried she, interrupting me with an air of triumph, “and *of women* also, thanks to our glorious patriots! Liberty, Pauline, knows not the distinction which arbitrary man has imposed on his equal. One and the same imprescriptible law of reason governs her children.”

I have, my dear Mrs. Underwood, been diffuse in portraying to you a character I believe as new to you as it was to myself: but whether it proceeded from my simplicity, and the effects of Tabitha’s

lessons in my infancy, or whether from my not having had the honour of knowing madame Broudier's circle, I cannot now determine; but certain it is, that I still cleave to the commandment of honouring my father and mother, at least as far as the concealment of their foibles goes. My friend miss Wilmot had, I found, been for some time favoured with instructions which never reached me. Monsieur Broudier had been a clerk in her father's business. His beautiful sister, the wife of a shopkeeper at Bordeaux, had, by her *talents*, drawn to her house those who noticed the peculiar address and zeal of her husband. He became useful to his party, and in his sudden elevation removed to Paris, under the favour of the *great Chaumier*. Monsieur David Broudier followed his brother's fortune; but he had generously smoothed the path of his late employer's retreat, and had been highly useful in collecting outstanding debts. Anna, on her reaching Paris, was received with joy by her old acquaintance madame Broudier; and giddy with the homage she received under a roof too magnificent for real worth, she had enjoyed her pleasures and finished her education; Wilmot passively yielding up his daughter to the public gaze and comments, in consequence of monsieur Broudier's good offices and influence.—This account of the Wilmots is necessary to my history, which I will now resume.

The all-conquering miss Wilmot reduced her mother to listen with a cold assent to my tale. Mr. Wilmot satisfied himself with reminding me, that it would lessen *my ear-rings* considerably, for I should find another carriage chargeable.

This was made easy; and Anna took care of the necessary passport for Jeanneton. It contained ample provisions for her security in her return to Paris; for she was recommended to the different municipalities in her route, as a woman entitled to their particular care. On reaching Havre de Grace poor Jeanneton's spirits failed her; and I participated with her in her distress. Anna, whose generous cares it was impossible to resist, was the witness of our grief; and, with a confidence that time has justified, I mentioned Sigismund's mother's name, imploring her to exert her influence in order that she might have the consolation of knowing that her child was in safety. She became pale, and made no immediate answer. "We importune you with our sorrows," said I weeping. "You compassionate us, my dear Anna: but what would be your feelings did you know this unfortunate lady?" "Not more acute than they are at present," replied she musing: "but write a note; I will send it to Broudier: he will manage it. I am going to write to him: Jeanneton has only to leave my letter at his sister's hotel."

I instantly wrote as follows: "Be comforted: your child is on his road to his family in England, fondly, faithfully cherished in the bosom of that friend to whose care you have consigned him, and who will shelter him till death, or till his future fortune renders her useless. In heaven will she answer for the trust: there we shall meet. Farewell." Hope sometimes whispers, that my note reached her, and that, like a ray of light, it has shed on her gloom a transient beam of joy. But, alas! I know not her wretched fate; having had no letters from Paris for some months. Jeanneton, in one that she wrote me, and which came to my hand by Hamburgh, mentions her safe return, and her having delivered miss Wilmot's letter into monsieur Broudier's hand. He took it, and, looking at the address, said it was well, and passed into the house with haste.

Miss Wilmot in our conversations encouraged me to hope it was delivered; but she observed that there was hazard in the attempt; and that she had reasons for believing that Broudier had enemies—which would add to the difficulty—though it was certain with her that he would leave nothing untried to oblige her.

We found, as we expected, a neutral vessel ready to receive us; and Mr. Wilmot, ever provident in his cares for himself, had, as he conceived, prudently secured the cabin accommodations, and provided for a sea appetite. We were summoned at a very early hour on board the ship, and had to encounter a wind more boisterous than suited us. Occupied with my innocent charge, who by no means relished the bustle, and fearing his taking cold, I made my way into the *steerage*, or the lady's cabin, as the man called the place, in which were some beds. I instantly secured myself in one of them, well contented to be in safety from the motion of the vessel, and at leisure to feed my froward Sigismund. He recompensed me by falling into a sound sleep; and oppressed by fatigue, I disposed myself to follow his example. Mrs. Wilmot's clamours prevented my tasting this repose. A gentleman had rudely taken possession of her bed in the state cabin, and Mr. Wilmot was very ill in the other. 'She should catch her death by staying on deck; and she never knew such shameful behaviour.' The ship-steward assured her that all the beds were of equal goodness, and that his captain had judged the ladies would prefer being together without constraint. She was obliged to submit, and he helped her to mount into a nest similar to mine; where rocked to slumbers, we both forgot our cares.

The intrepid miss Anna, during this time, was enjoying the novelty of the scene around her with unsubdued spirits; and, by her ease and familiarity with the sailors, amusing them as much as herself. She had, to use her own words, hardly recovered from the ecstasies of seeing the sun rise, when a lady, who had till that moment been concealed behind the close-drawn curtains of a four-wheeled carriage secured on the mid deck, called to some one to release her from her confinement; and the captain, a fine young fellow, eagerly pressed forwards to receive her in his arms. "I was not surprised at his gallantry," said Anna on joining me. "She is handsome, and not thirty, and is richly dressed in a style that is captivating to some, and suspicious with me. I have left her," continued she, "under the tender cares of monsieur le capitaine, who is now at her feet: and if there are charms in *un pied fort mignon garni d'un sabot de soye brodé*, he is a lost man. Do leave this horrid place," added she: "you will be amused on deck; for this lady has, I will be sworn, received her education dans le boudoir d'une fille figurante." I begged her to leave me for a time to my indolence and Sigismund's state of quietness; and she withdrew to comfort her father, who was dreadfully incommoded by sea sickness.

Sigismund, after his comfortable nap, was good-humoured and playful; and the steward civilly offered to carry him up stairs to a sailor, who would nurse him as carefully as I did. Relieved from him, I employed the interval of ease, by rectifying the disorders of my hasty morning toilet, and I was combing my dishevelled locks when Anna again appeared to hasten me.

"Never mind your hair," said she laughing: "it will make no figure with the beautiful tresses of the princess on deck. But to console your vanity, I must give you an item of her head. I told her, on returning to the snug corner which I had quitted some time since, that I had been to visit the sick. 'You would pity,' added I, 'the discomfited sufferers as I do, but I could scarcely keep my gravity on seeing their rueful faces,—they brought so forcibly to my mind Don Quixote and poor Sancho his squire under the potent effects of le précieux baume de Fier à Bras.' 'Good Heavens!' cried she, entirely ignorant of my allusion, 'what madness has seized Mr. Whaley to take a quack medicine, knowing as he does the weakness of his constitution! I must go and prevent his repeating the dose: I would not for the world lose him!' I reassured her," added Anna, "and told her he would need no more, for the best of all possible reasons; and that I had been dismissed as an intruder. She now found that my father was his companion in suffering, and, calling to a black servant, bade him bring her his master's liqueur chest from the carriage. She was obeyed; and having tasted of three or four different sorts, she commissioned him to

carry to the gentlemen in the cabin the costly appendage of luxury, saying: 'Be sure, Juba, to tell my husband that I sent it, and that he must take some eau de la reine.'

"I am convinced," continued Anna, "that this enchantress is in the road to fortune; for the man whom she called her husband asked me after his dear Constance,—his dear madame Verneuil."

Thus prepared, I followed Anna to the quarter deck. We apparently interrupted an interesting conversation between the lady and our gallant captain, who reluctantly gave up to me his seat. I was surprised by her beauty. She was fair and blooming; and her hair, which was singularly redundant and of light colour, wantoned in the breeze which swelled our sails, and gave to her charms more eclat than I expected. Her manners were frank, and she saluted me with much gaiety, and, laughing at her maid-servant's woe-begone looks, displayed a fine set of teeth, though not much compassion—for the poor girl was extremely ill.

At this moment Anna with the honest seaman approached us. Sigismund, contented with his rough-featured nurse, and delighted with air and sunshine, had refused Anna's invitation to come to her arms. "Well then," said she in a caressing tone, "let this pretty lady kiss your nice strawberry, Sigismund." The smiling cherub yielded to a request which in his mind was associated with the idea of playful indulgence; and miss Wilmot presented the alabaster shoulder on which nature has impressed a red mark, which you have, my dear Mrs. Underwood, kissed a thousand times, and as often acknowledged its resemblance to a strawberry. The lady's cheek was instantly suffused with a deeper hue. "Ciel!" exclaimed she, "c'est lui! C'est mon nourrisson! C'est Meunier's Sigismund! Où est sa mère?"

You will judge of my surprise. But prejudiced by Anna's report of this woman, I was reserved in my reply, and only said, that his mother not being able to accompany her child to England herself, I had been entrusted with the care of him to his father's family, who resided in England. And I instantly asked her, when she had seen madame Meunier. "Not since I quitted her," answered she with coldness and hauteur: "they were people not likely for me to meet under any other circumstances of fortune than those which conducted me to seek a temporary refuge from the dangers which menaced my life, as well as my unfortunate husband's. The marquis was one..." She drew forth her handkerchief, and, covering her face, added... "whose loyalty was fatal to him."

I felt neither disposed for more conversation with madame nor with Mrs. Wilmot, whose curiosity was becoming troublesome to me; and saying 'Sigismund was hungry,' I withdrew. The civdevant marquise soon forgot her husband's loyalty, and with eagerness asked Mrs. Wilmot my name. She replied, "Murray."—"What, Mary Pauline Murray?" said she. "Well, it is wonderful! But these sorts of secrets will escape!"—"There is none affixed to my friend's name," observed Anna: "She goes but by *one*—and under that has enjoyed the esteem and protection her virtues will ever command."—"I mean not to contradict your assertion, madam," answered the lady: "she may be all you think her; and it does not necessarily follow, because I believe her the mother of that child she has with her, that she should be an unworthy companion for you. She may be a married woman. However, it is proper for me to account for my knowledge of a business evidently intended to be concealed; and after what has passed, I beg your attention to what I have further to say of this young woman's concerns.

"I was, in consequence of my husband's arrest, obliged to conceal myself, being in no condition to share with him in the horrors of his prison, as I was in daily expectation of being a mother. This event

took place immediately after I had found a shelter; but you will not be surprised that an infant born under these circumstances of terror and affliction was short-lived. The person in whose house I was concealed was connected with Meunier, who wanted a nurse for the child I have so unexpectedly met here; and my timid protector giving me to understand that he feared I had been traced to his house, and partly explaining the recompense connected with Meunier's negotiation, I was prevailed upon to suckle the infant in return for that asylum I needed. My friend conducted me to a neat house in la Rue St. Honoré, where we found Meunier alone, and who was actually feeding the child in order to quiet it. I entered on my post, and succeeded better. He left me, saying he was going for the domestic, but should not be absent an hour. He was punctual; for I had not finished Sigismund's toilet before he returned with a decent-looking woman, whom he presented to me as one who would obey all my commands. Then having mentioned the traiteur whom he had engaged to serve our table, and leaving money with Catharine, he retired. I soon found my companion was no more in the secret than myself. We however amused our curiosity by surveying the house, and examining the delicacy of the child's linen, who appeared to be twelve or fourteen days old. My alertness and healthy countenance, I believe, satisfied Catharine's scruples, and silenced her suspicions of my being the mother of the child. We were mutually surprised by seeing the elegance of the apartment which was over the one evidently destined for family use. In an alcove was a bed of rich pale green silk fringed, and made up in the first style of the mode, the hangings and window curtains of the same costly materials; carpeted with no less expense: but I was soon engaged by a picture which filled the pannel over the chimney, that fronted the folding-doors of the alcove. It represented the most perfect figure of a young man on his knees, grasping with exquisite expression the drapery of an ascending female figure, who with the attributes of Hope was hovering over him, and with a gracious smile held a scroll in her hand, on which was written, 'Je suis à vous: les fidèles peuvent attendre le bonheur.'

"I had now been more than a month in my peaceful sanctuary, when Meunier told me that his wife would be with me in two days, and that our nursery would be complete, for she had promised him a little playmate for Sigismund. Catharine had orders to prepare the room of state for his lady; and with many apologies, he gave me to understand that the boudoir annexed to the apartment would be too near his wife for me to remain in it with my charge, as he might disturb her. I was of course left to my choice of two others; and, making my election, removed my things and Sigismund into it. A large *armoire* filled up one side of it; but it was handsome and convenient, and I began to furnish the shelves and drawers. One of the latter had some impediment within, which prevented its sliding. I found it was a book; and opening it, I was not displeased to find it in my mother tongue, which twelve years disuse had made me fear I should forget. The book was in verse, and entitled 'The Triumphs of Temper,' and on the title-page was written 'Mary Pauline Murray. The gift of Pauline du Rivage.'

"I have the book still," added she with a careless air, "somewhere amongst my clothes; for it was useless to the people in the house, and I liked the story. I shall not after this account add any thing," continued she, "beyond the termination of my humiliating office. Meunier's wife arrived, and was soon after delivered of a son. But we were not made for each other. She lost her infant when a month old; and on her observing that I was a young *nurse*, I told her she could not do better than take my post, for which she was better qualified than myself—for that I could not live without exercise and air; and frankly owning that I had received offers of pressing kindness to join a friend who resided at her chateau, I wished to leave my prison. She made not the least objection; but with more generosity than I expected supplied my purse, which, to say the truth, needed replenishing. I have never seen those people since, and, in the events which have taken place since in my situation, should have forgotten them, but for this incident."

“Well, Anna,” asked Mrs. Wilmot, “what is your opinion of your *favourite* now?”—“Exactly what it has always been,” answered she, rising with carelessness. “I know she is engaged in a work of mercy which few are qualified to perform, and fewer still to comprehend as one in which she glories. She has well studied ‘The Triumphs of Temper,’ however, and is now preparing for the Triumphs of *Virtue*. But not being uncharitable myself, I will believe this lady will have pleasure in hearing that miss Murray has not been known to the Meuniers, nor ever beheld this child till within six months; when his mother appeared, and consigned him into her hands. It may not be displeasing to madame to know also, that this mother’s accommodation in Meunier’s house had nothing in it to surprise *her*; for that she was a woman of the highest rank, and the wife of one of the richest commoners in England. Sigismund’s first *nurse* therefore has no reason to think herself degraded by having administered to his wants; nor can I think her asylum *the worst* she might have found for herself.” “Certainly not,” observed the lady with an acquiescent air. “People of the first quality in France have been driven, by the monsters now in power, to extremities which happily I have escaped; and as the *wife of Mr. Whaley*, and in England, I shall endeavour to forget the past; for it is my maxim to drive away care.”

My appearance finished a conversation which had changed Mrs. Wilmot’s suspicions into certainties; and had so much offended Anna, that but for me she would have been rude. She joined me in a spot remote from her mother and Mrs. Whaley; and turning to the friendly being who again was near to take the child, she chatted with him about his wife and a little boy he had left at Boston, who was “as like master as two sea biscuits.” “Were he with you,” said Anna, “you might make a profit of him: the old gentleman in the cabin would give something for such a boy as this, or yours.” “Oh! let his young madam alone for that business,” answered he, winking significantly: “our captain is a very *friendly* man; and has been ‘hail, fellow, well met’ for ten days with them before they came on board.”—“She is very handsome,” observed Anna, surveying her: “your captain is in some danger.” “Not a jot,” answered he, discharging the contents of his mouth: “he loves a girl that is as modest as she is *vartuous*; but when a young fellow is axed, why to be sure it can’t be expected he should say nay. But, Lord help her! she will be forgotten the moment he claps his eyes on Sally Trueman, though I heard her with my own ears tell him, that he would always find a welcome at her house if fortune should ever conduct him to Liverpool. She is a *true* one, I will be sworn,” added he; “and as to her skin, ‘tis like all the rest. Look at your own, miss, and then judge. Lord! I know these sort of sharks in the twinkling of an eye! they are all alike! Now how should it be,” continued he, taking another quid, “that madam there and yourself should not see she wears false colours? It surprises me; for it is as plain as a pike staff that she has more colour than her own. I always suspect one that never changes. My Peggy’s veer with the compass when I am about to leave her; and she is as fair as alabaster, and has a colour like the rose in June, when our sails are furled. Poor soul! she is pale now, and will be so a long while!”

The honest sailor was now called away; when, with more than a usual portion of her wonted spirit, Anna vowed she would put madame’s rouge to the test before she lost sight of her. In vain I argued and entreated. “She shall restore the book,” cried she, leaving me, “I am determined. I like courage and spirit in a woman, but I am at war with impudence.” It appeared, however, that Anna was defeated in her design. She found her mother and Mrs. Whaley had changed the subject of conversation: “probably,” added Anna, “because they had no more to say on it. My mother was eloquently descanting on the bargains she had met with in Paris, and exactly calculating the profits which would have accrued to her could she have persuaded her husband to have consented to her buying a set of table china worth a guinea each piece, and which she could have had for a bundle of useless assignats, then only waste paper. ‘Were they not beautiful, Anna?’ asked my mother, with a fond regret of the lost bargain. ‘They

were manufactured at Séve,' continued she, 'and perfectly white, except the gilt edges and the arms of the family to whom they had belonged.'—You had better say no more of them, my dear madam," observed I, maliciously smiling: "you forget what you heard, that they were the property of *monsieur le marquis de Verneuil*, who with his lady emigrated to London: and who knows but they may discover the Holland sheets you have in your trunks, and reclaim them as stolen goods? I saw my arrow had not been sent for nothing," continued miss Wilmot; "and addressing the disturbed Mrs. Whaley, I proceeded in my appeal to her feelings, by a pathetic description of the cruelty and injustice which had opened the door to the pillage of those unfortunates, who, it might be, were wandering in want of common necessaries. I dare say," continued I, "*your hotel* has furnished some of the good bargains offered to us. 'Sans doute,' replied she with evident confusion. "Our poor friend du Rivage," observed I to my mother," saw his goods and chattels exposed to sale before he left his hiding-place; and had he looked narrowly amongst his books, poor as he was he would have given six sols for Pauline's 'Triumphs of Temper,' for the sake of her, and his wife's name." Madame only smiled, but I understood her. "I find by your servant, madame," continued I, "that you are going with Mr. Whaley to his seat near Liverpool: you will have consequently an opportunity of obliging my friend by restoring to her a book of no value to you; but to her inestimable, as being the memorial of her more than mother. Any one will direct you to her family, who live near Liverpool, and who are well known." She bowed, and said she would endeavour to remember it, should the book again fall in her way. She immediately called to the captain, and begged his assistance to the cabin. "I shall not trouble you with the altercation between my mother and myself," continued Anna. "I quitted her, by telling her that I had never seen the part of a woman of fashion so vilely played; nor a female adventurer more decidedly marked."

CHAPTER XXXV.

DURING the bustle of leaving the ship, which fortunately for some of us had gained her port after six-and-thirty hours of their suffering, I was casually placed near Mrs. Whaley. For some minutes she did not deign to speak to me: but at length subdued by the innocent smiles of Sigismund, she said, "Come, young gentleman, give me a parting kiss for old acquaintance' sake." The child received her salute. "I hope, one day," observed I with cheerfulness, "that you, madam, as well as myself, will have more unequivocal proofs of Sigismund's gratitude than the offering of good will which he now so readily gives to kindness."—"He is a fine little fellow," replied she, looking at him with curiosity, "and I am glad to see him with a mother who appears to have the feelings of one, and who prefers him to the opinions of the world." I coloured with resentment, and replied, that in being useful to Sigismund I was without apprehensions for my reputation, and proud of the distinction of being chosen by his virtuous mother as capable of supplying her duties to a child of such importance to a noble family.—"You are a perfect heroine, miss Murray, I perceive," answered she with a contemptuous smile: "but I know the world."—"So it appears," retorted I, quitting her side, "and more of it than it is likely I should know."

CHAPTER XXXVI.

ON landing, Mrs. Whaley with much formality took her leave of Mrs. Wilmot, and, with her suite, repaired to an inn remote from ours. I now discovered that Mrs. Wilmot intended to put my patience to the test, and, by her neglect, to signify to the people in the inn that she had no more concerns with me than if I had been a pauper. Anna, with more tenderness than I expected, attended her father, who was really in a state to need her cares. I therefore without delay sought for my own comforts: and my rhetoric, and the appearance of my friend the honest seaman, produced their effects; for the landlady knew him, and desired his sister would come to attend my little boy. I was thus established in the rights of an English woman, and finished the evening by writing to Mr. Furnival, and preparing him for his young and unexpected guest.

In the morning I presented myself in the apartment destined for our general use. Mrs. Wilmot was alone, and waiting her husband's and Anna's return from the custom-house. "Mr. Wilmot was well; but she had the headache." The brevity of her responses silenced me; and I very quietly prepared Sigismund's bread and milk. "Where is your little boy?" asked she. I answered, and added that I had gotten an attendant for him. "I am glad to hear it," replied she; "for his noise is insupportable at times. I find," added she, "Mrs. Whaley's servants are to go to London to-night in the stage coach from this inn. I dare say they would be civil to you on the road: indeed their lady engaged they should, in case you were in it; and that they should see you safe to your friend's house. We could then take a chaise instead of a coach." "That you may do at any rate, madam," replied I, stung to the quick by her unfeeling proposal; "but neither monsieur du Rivage nor my guardian Mr. Furnival would acknowledge their Pauline in the company of *Mrs. Whaley* or her servants." I instantly quitted her, and, meeting the mistress of the house, desired her to show me to a sitting-room. She courteously took the child from my arms, and led the way. I next informed her, that not being yet decided, whether it would not be proper for me to wait for my friend's arrival, I wanted money, and, giving her some louis-d'ors, requested she would exchange them for their value in English currency. She civilly engaged to do so, and, on my further request, said she would send for her niece to amuse the child. In a word, I was installed in my own apartment and privileges when Anna returned, and was writing again to Mr. Furnival when she entered the room. I related in simple terms her mother's proposal, adding, that as I was in England I had no doubts of my

safety, and should quietly wait for Mr. Furnival's instructions. She swelled with passion. "This is the mother," said she, "you bade me to *respect!*" Then laughing immoderately she with fury rang the bell. The servant appeared. "Let some one tell my father that I dine here," said she. "For God's sake," exclaimed I, "consider! do not offend your parents."—"I do consider," said she with calmness: "nor will I quit this room without you. I know, miss Murray, the promises these parents of mine made to your anxious and miserable monsieur du Rivage, and I know these promises bind my father not to lose sight of you till you are under Mr. Furnival's roof. I have only to remind them of the price they exacted for their services," added she, relapsing into a rage. "Will you tell me that I am failing in my duty, by counteracting a conduct at once despicable and dishonest? Will you tell me, that my principles of honour and rectitude are violations of duty to my parents, when from persisting in them I oppose their meanness?"—"It is that unfortunate child," replied I, weeping, "which has led Mrs. Wilmot to her present harshness." She took the child, and, with an emotion which surprised me, burst into tears. They were the first I had seen her shed. "Poor innocent!" said she with melting tenderness, "thou art not friendless. But how many like thee need a Pauline!" She paused, and, checking her tears, sang to him "*ca ira.*" At the supper hour Mr. Wilmot appeared, and, with some confusion of face, pressed us to return to the drawing-room. His daughter fixed her eyes upon him. "I have hired a good coach," continued he; "and if miss Murray thinks another good night of repose will enable her to travel in the morning, I think of setting out at eight o'clock." Anna's smiles returned. She threw her arms around his neck, and kissed him. I followed in the train of peace, and Mrs. Wilmot appeared to have forgotten the stage coach. The gaiety of Anna, with an excellent supper, smoothed even her mother's brow, and she confessed Mrs. Whaley had the appearance of a *gay* lady.

CHAPTER XXXVII.

MY reception from Mr. Furnival banished for a time every care. Simple and unaffected goodness relieved me from the embarrassment of introducing his young guest. I was prevented from speaking. "We will talk about him," said he, kissing him, "when we have provided for his wants. We did not exactly know his age. You must get him a good girl to play with," added he, turning to his housekeeper. "Dawson will not neglect him, my dear child: though I am an old bachelor, she has seen a cradle before now in her master's house." The good woman smiled. "If," said she, "we had all you have rocked to peace, sir, we should long since have rivalled the Lying-in Hospital: but this young gentleman shall share my bed to-night and to-morrow. The lady shall choose his nursery." I blushed, and she withdrew with her contented charge, who had wonderfully improved since he had commenced traveller, and forgotten the faithful face of Jeanneton. You have seen Mr. Furnival, my dear friend, and I check my pen. But your Pauline cannot forget a reception which in one hour gave her confidence and hope. His unaffected manners and cheerful ease banished from my mind the painful sense of having appeared before him in a character liable to his suspicions as well as to Mrs. Wilmot's; and after an early supper I attempted to introduce my little story. "To-morrow," said he, placidly smiling, "you shall tell your adventures. I will trust to-night to your fatigue for the safety of my silver spoons. Retire, my child, and sleep, with the assurance that I am not one to judge any cause before the pleadings come on. As madame du Rivage's Pauline I receive you, and with a welcome that needs no professions." He rang the bell, and, with an emphasis on the word, desired Mrs. Dawson to attend *miss* Murray to her room.

END OF THE FIRST VOLUME.

R. Taylor, Printer, Black-Horse-Court.

THE
UNEXPECTED LEGACY.

VOL. II.

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THE
UNEXPECTED LEGACY,
A NOVEL.
BY MRS. HUNTER,
OF NORWICH;
AUTHOR OF LETITIA; THE HISTORY OF THE GRUBTHORPE
FAMILY; AND MRS. PALMERSTONE'S LETTERS
TO HER DAUGHTER.
IN TWO VOLUMES.

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THE
UNEXPECTED LEGACY.

CHAPTER I.

YOU will suppose I lost no time in placing before Mr. Furnival the manuscript, with the little treasure of his unexpected guest; and I was gratified by seeing the impression I had made on his feelings. You know Mr. Furnival, and the peculiarity of his habits in applying to his cravat for relief in those moments of sympathetic benevolence which oppress his bosom. "Your story is a melancholy one," said he, untying his neckcloth, "and brings to my remembrance the unhappy catastrophe which left this boy's father an orphan in the cradle. His parents lost their lives in returning from Ireland; the packet-boat started a plank, and all on board were lost. But I trust we shall be able to reinstate this child in his undoubted claims; and be the event what it may, you have acted conformably to your religion, and the example set before you by madame du Rivage." I mentioned Mrs. Wilmot's suspicions, and Mrs. Whaley's confirmation of them. "You must be prepared," answered he, "to expect such will be the result of your peculiar situation till the truth be made manifest. With the candid my protection of this child will have its weight, and I shall take care of his interest. When monsieur du Rivage arrives, his concurrence will proclaim your connexion with the child, and the tale of a gossip will be lost in a truth which will not disgrace you, nor those who take up the cause of the injured. Dismiss from your thoughts, therefore, all alarm for your reputation; I will take care of these documents, and now read you a letter from your old friend doctor Hawksbury." The doctor evidently still remembered his little favourite. A cordial invitation to his house, with the expectations which he had raised in the minds of his two girls, was followed by his informing Mr. Furnival that my mother and my sister were with Mrs. Budgely in Watling-street. The next morning Mr. Furnival proposed calling upon them, observing that it might be agreeable to my mother to have notice of my arrival, and to see me at his house. Governed by his judgment, I wrote a short note, and he took charge of it. At dinner he gave me an account of his commission. 'The family were in the country, and only a dirty boy appeared to answer his inquiries. The cook was gone out on a jaunt, according to the lad's report. He did not know exactly where his master's country house was, for he was not a servant; but nephew to the porter, who had left him to take care of the house, it being Sunday, and no business to do.' Mr. Furnival left the note, and the boy engaged to give it to his uncle at his return. I was disposed to regard this delay as a reprieve rather than as a privation. I was in hourly expectation of seeing the poor fugitive monsieur du Rivage; and released from my inquietudes in regard to my child, I gave up my mind to the suspense in which my father's absence involved me. Mr. Furnival shared with me in this source of uneasiness. He had called on Mr. Wilmot at his hotel. 'The family had left town for a few days.' And my compassionate friend strove to amuse me by showing me its extent. Mrs. Dawson, in these excursions, carried me to shops; and with a youthful taste for novelty, I modelled my dress by English fashions, and Sigismund's by the standard of ease and neatness. Eight days passed; the tender epithet of "my dear child" was become familiar to me; the plain and singular person of Mr. Furnival forgotten; whilst his manners won me to love and reverence him as the first of human beings. Dawson had lived with him eighteen years. She was never weary of talking of her good master; and with joy I perceived that Sigismund could make him forget his time, and his old favourites. For Mrs. Dawson with much seriousness asked him how many of Patch's kittens were to be saved. And he answered with

great indifference, "*One,*" whilst he fondly caressed the lisping cherub on his knee, who then articulated "Papa." But to return from an image of pure delight to the vexations which troubled this hour of repose.

Again Mr. Furnival repaired to Watling-street. He was more successful than in the first instance: for Mr. Budgely received him; and probably knowing his reputed wealth and professional consideration, he received his visitor with great respect. He gave Mr. Furnival to understand that my note had duly reached my mother's hand; but that particular engagements had prevented her answering it, she being unable to fix a day for seeing me in town. "I will conduct miss Murray to her," answered my friend coldly, "if that be more convenient to Mrs. Murray. Her daughter regrets that she has passed more than a fortnight in England without having seen her family." "It has fallen out rather unluckily," replied he, "for we are all curious to see the pretty French mademoiselle; and if you can make it convenient to dine with us to-morrow, I should be glad to see you, with miss Murray, at my little box at Hammersmith." Mr. Furnival accepted the engagement, and they parted, my friend being with ceremony attended to his carriage by Mr. Budgely, who observed the beauty of "Mr. Solicitor's horses."

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CHAPTER II.

A FAINT recollection of Mr. Budgely's manners, whom I had never beheld but once, with Mr. Furnival's account of his reception, added little to the expectation of the pleasure my first visit to Hammersmith would produce: but my mind turned with hope to the welcome of a parent; and recalling my mother's predilection in favour of *beauty*, I fondly yielded to the suggestions of vanity, and hoped that my external appearance might produce me an interest in her favour, which my long absence had probably weakened. I even thought my English dress, and chip hat with pale blue ribbands, wonderfully becoming; and with frankness I confess, I saw not in your Pauline a girl a mother could reject.

My companion during our little journey became thoughtful, and at length thus addressed me: "I do not like to repress hope, my dear Pauline, especially where the object is so legitimate as the wishes which now prompt yours. I know little of your relations beyond common report. But your friend the doctor *does know them*. He came to London expressly to serve you, when madame du Rivage's donation was finally settled in your favour; and he requested of me to keep the secret, and to permit the stock to stand in my name; and, for your security, to give him a bond for the sum. This I did: and you have at present three thousand seven hundred pounds, I having been lucky in my speculations for you." His reasons for these precautions were conclusive with me. "Your mother and her children had so influenced your father, that he believed your fortune with madame du Rivage would be brilliant, and that you would inherit the whole large property of your benefactors. In proportion as he approached his grave he became anxious to see you. He was overruled, and flattered to hopes by madame du Rivage's promises of being in England in the spring. The doctor, who had been discarded from the time he rejected the hand of your sister Judith, was at this time told by the physician who attended Mr. Murray, that his patient had expressed a wish to see him, as a friend whom he valued. He called, and without using any ceremony entered the sick man's room. He was alone, and in his chair. Instead of talking of his complaints, which were of a kind not within the reach of medicine, he spoke of the ferments in France, and of you. Hawksbury gave his opinion, and predicted that the sittings of the 'notables' indicated the monarch's necessities and sinking power; with other remarks of the same kind. Mrs. Murray soon entered the room, and with much reserve said, she did not know he was there. 'Mine is a visit of friendship,' replied the doctor, 'and I am gratified by seeing Mr. Murray support confinement so cheerfully: it will shorten his penance, and I hope soon to see him in a condition to return my visit.' Your mother observed, that every exertion fatigued him. The doctor shook the poor incurable by the hand, and departed. The codicil to the will has been ascribed by your brother to this visit, and he has never bowed to the doctor since. Hawksbury is perfectly at his ease on this subject of offence, for he believes your brother's acquaintance would neither promote his pleasure nor his interest, and he also thinks you are entitled to your mother's consideration; who, from the time she has been a widow, has been carefully watched by your brother and Mrs. Budgely. She divides her favours between them, living by turns with each. Your situation, my poor child, calls upon you for prudence. Monsieur du Rivage is now at your mercy; and it is your duty to relinquish those claims, which, it is to be feared, will be the only means of bread to him for his life. I do not even ask you what will follow his arrival. But I warn you to be on the reserve with your family in respect to a resource, which in justice you cannot call your own till the fate of your benefactor is decided." He paused, and with visible distress loosened his cravat. Need I repeat my answer? No, my dear madam, you will supply it. "I expected no less," replied Mr. Furnival. "But, my child, your nest has been hitherto lined with down, and guarded by affection. Do not expect to meet with a madame du

Rivage in your mother. Neither her education nor her heart will supply to you the tenderness yours requires. You are legally, if nature has law with your family, entitled to a provision out of your father's property. I conclude they will acknowledge this, at least; but I am disposed to think that they will be neither liberal nor willing donations which you will gain from them. Let not this idea disturb you. Remember, you have a guardian to protect you, and that guardian knows his duty."

Jacob at this moment checked his horses for directions to Mr. Budgely's house; and a lad pointing to a turn from the great road, we entered a narrow lane, and proceeded. "Your brother-in-law has a wonderful predilection for strait paths," said Mr. Furnival, observing a dung-cart would unavoidably impede our progress. "I hope he is uniform in his preference; and will finally find the 'strait gate,' which some men of *his calling* as well as of my own find so difficult to pass." He dropped the glass. "What are we to do, Jacob?" asked he with good-nature. "Only to wait a few minutes," replied the servant; "we are quite in our road." The cart moved slowly on, and we reached an obscure door. A stout low man, in a cotton nightcap and a scarlet waistcoat, with naked arms and a spade in his hand, appeared, and with an air of resentment, as I conceived, saluting Mr. Furnival with "Your servant, sir," asked Jacob what fool had directed him to his *back door*. "However," added he with more good humour, and opening the chariot door, "they say there is an escape from all blunders but death. So you will do well, fair lady, to make the best of a bad road;" and offering me a hand, not perfumed by the sweets of Arabia, he hastily conducted me into the garden. "This is miss Murray, I presume?" said Mr. Budgely, as we advanced to the house. I bowed. "Well," replied he, "you will find the women within, better prepared to receive you than I am: but I have been giving my rascal a lesson this morning," added he, addressing Mr. Furnival, who prudently walked with the wind in his favour. "The scoundrel calls his duty *dirty work*; and I have shown him that *no work is dirty* which is profitable."

We entered; my head turned giddy, my eyes closed, and I fainted in my mother's arms.

CHAPTER III.

MY return to consciousness discovered to me several females occupied in giving me succour. I was however too faint to speak, till my mother in a tone of compassion proposed to me to yield to her advice, and endeavour to compose myself by lying down. I passively submitted, and was assisted in gaining a bed-room. It was now observed that my linen, as well as my face, had received the water with which I had abundantly been sprinkled; and my sister Judith, who was more particularly assiduous about me, sent my mother to her room for articles requisite to supply the want of my robe and corset, which were too wet for my safety. When equipped by her care, she tenderly advised me to endeavour to compose myself. "You may sleep," added she, kissing my pale cheek, "and I will in the interim take care and dry your clothes." My head was throbbing with pain, and nothing loth I consented to lie down again, and she quitted me. I believe I did slumber for a time, for I found myself warm, and my headache better. When I was able to recall more distinctly the agitating interview as being somewhat more than a dream, I recollected that my mother looked much older than I had expected to see her; that Mrs. Budgely was become immensely fat; and that Judith looked pale and sickly. My meditations were interrupted by the approach of some one; it was my sister Judith, who with great kindness had brought with my apparel some chocolate. "We shall dine late, I believe, to-day," said she, "and if you could get into the air now you would be quite well. I know enough of nervous complaints to pity those who have them. I am sure it has fluttered my nerves to see you so overpowered; but I am glad to see you notwithstanding." Again she kissed me. "Where is my dear mother?" asked I: "I hope I did not frighten her?" "She will be with you presently," answered she, taking from my hand the empty chocolate cup: "but I wished to know whether you were better. Your corset is dry, and you will now dress." A recollection at this instant caused me to blush. It may be I ought to blush, my dear friend, even at this moment, in communicating to you the weakness which then caused my confusion of face. I had with caution, on leaving la Fontaine, secured about my person Sigismund's treasure. His father's picture had found its place in my corset; and on reaching London, and giving up my trust to Mr. Furnival, I had contented myself with mentioning to him the picture I still had of Mr. Middleton. He said I might give it him at my leisure. Alas! I had not found leisure or inclination to part with the image of that object which reigned in my bosom. I wore it in the lining of my corset; and it now instantly occurred to me that it had been discovered, and probably injured. "Good heavens!" exclaimed I, "the picture! Is it hurt? I would not for the universe have it injured!" "Make yourself easy," replied my sister, drawing it from her pocket; "it is quite safe." She examined it with attention, and with a sigh observed it would indeed have been a pity had such a face been spoiled; for in her life she had never beheld so beautiful a man. "It is not mine," answered I with eagerness; "it is a trust for another, and of infinite importance. But has any one seen it besides yourself?" "Only Mrs. Budgely," replied she, "who thought more of the diamonds than the god-like countenance. She says the frame is only *paste*." "Its intrinsic value is not to be calculated," answered I, "as it relates to the well being of—" The door opened, and my mother entered. She kindly inquired after my health, and said that I had fluttered her; for she was not quite so young, nor so strong, as when I had last seen her. Inquiries were now made and returned. I was told that my younger brother was dead; and in the same moment, that "he was no loss, having turned out very unluckily." He had lived to spend a great part of his money, and had been cajoled, by a girl whom he kept, to make a will in favour of a boy that she had persuaded him was his own. I had now to reply to many questions relative to monsieur and madam du Rivage; and my mother with astonishment found that her daughter was returned on her hands. She had indeed feared, from the accounts from France, that monsieur du Rivage might suffer. "But who could

have believed that so prudent a man would have remained in such a country till he was a beggar!" I replied, that I trusted that would not be his fate, and I was only anxious for his arrival, when his friends would show him the fruits resulting from a life of goodness even in this world. "They will be extraordinary ones," replied she with some tartness, "if they do not show him the difference of being rich and poor. But," continued my mother, "by what means have you found out the rich Mr. Furnival?" I told her that my father had particularly recommended me to his care; and that I had not presumed to intrude on Mrs. Budgely, under circumstances which might have made me an inconvenient inmate with her; and also that the family with whom I travelled had particular injunctions from monsieur du Rivage to see me safe under Mr. Furnival's roof, where with her permission I meant to remain till my father's arrival. "Undoubtedly," replied she; "for I am sure I could not receive you, having no house of my own." I was now relieved by a maid-servant's entrance, who said that two ladies were arrived; adding, "They have been in the parlour some time, and my mistress wonders that you do not come down stairs." "Who are they?" asked my mother. "I do not know," answered the girl: "they are to dine here, and we are in a fine fluster!" She retired with the utmost speed. "One might as well question a brick-bat as that creature," observed my mother rising. "Could I not be indulged by remaining here?" asked I. "By no means," replied she: "it might offend Mrs. Budgely, and I dare say they are only neighbours that she has detained to see you."

CHAPTER IV.

I FOLLOWED my mother's steps to the parlour, and was met with an acclamation of joy by miss Wilmot. "My sweet Pauline," cried she, "how fortunate is this rencontre! Did you not think me dead? for you could no otherwise settle to my advantage my apparent forgetfulness of you. How is our angel boy? I long to see him. He will forget his *Na, na*." I replied without embarrassment to her kindness, and told her that unless she came to Chancery-lane her favourite would forget her lessons in a new one, for he already called Mr. Furnival *papa*. To this succeeded my compliments to Mrs. Wilmot, which were received with much formality. Mrs. Budgely was silent, and I perceived that she had lost her beautiful red and white; for the lilies had disappeared: and I judged that she had been perplexed by her unexpected guests; for her discourse consisted of remarks on the inconveniences of the country, where there was nothing to be gotten, as in town, at a minute's warning. These and such like observations were finished by hinting at the bustle of the morning, and by lamenting the gentlemen's absence, as threatening to spoil the *poor dinner* which she had provided. Mrs. Wilmot, to whom this was addressed, consoled her;—the gentlemen were in sight; and my mother was sent to hasten the dinner.

Anna, whose careless eye roved unchecked from one to the other of the assembled group, instantly singled out Mr. Furnival; and with smiles which his goodness could not resist, she asked him how he liked the *bird of paradise* which had found a nest in Chancery-lane. "So well," replied he, "that I mean to cage him, and hang him out of my sight; for, not contented with good treatment, he is trying to nestle in my bosom." She laughed, and replied that she would answer for his success. My mother appeared not to understand this conversation as in anywise relating to me; and Mrs. Budgely, still maintaining much stateliness and colour, led the way to the dining-parlour.

CHAPTER V.

I HAD not been left so uninformed, as not to expect to see any other modes and habits of life but such as I had been accustomed to. I had been taught to regard as illiberal, not to say invidious, the ridicule which has no fairer object than the foibles and weaknesses which particular classes in society, and particular circumstances in life, induce. I had read of London citizens, and I had heard of rich bourgeois of Paris; but I had never been a partaker of their sumptuous boards, nor the witness of their awkward attempts at distinction.

In a room sixteen feet long, including a bow-window of the exact dimensions of a side-board, we found a table abundantly covered, whilst the side-board was elaborately set out with plate, like a silversmith's shop-window. In the corner of the room was a small table garnished with pewter pots, whose elevation, and frothy heads, looked disdain on three or four drinking-glasses below them.

Mr. Budgely had no sooner placed his friends than he suddenly rose, and, saying he was thirsty, demolished the snowy honours of one of the porter pots, and in his haste the glasses received a portion of his favourite beverage: then turning to his guests he invited them to drink, observing that it would do them no harm, nor spoil their stomachs, after their melting walk. They declined his courtesy; when taking off his wig, he deliberately hung it on a bracket, and called for his night-cap. I did not dare to encounter Anna's saucy eyes. I dreaded to turn mine from off my plate; and it would have been an empty one, but for my sister Judith's attention.

Mrs. Budgely was evidently discomposed. She pronounced "the turbot was not worth a pin, that the fowls were boiled to rags, and the ham was hard." "It is harder where there is none, Becky," cried the husband; "and besides, I think your cook has done wonders to-day." "You mind no one but yourself, Mr. Budgely," answered the angry wife: "Mr. Wilmot has asked twice for beef." "I am your man," said he, nodding at the petitioner; and sharpening the carving-knife with his own, he cut into the smoking surloin. "There!" said he, "taste that beef, and tell me whether the free men of France have better." It was pronounced delicious; and Mr. Wilmot acknowledged he had not seen such a surloin in France. "No, I believe not," replied Mr. Budgely, "nor can they ever succeed in producing such beef: it is a judgment upon them for cheating us of the breed; it never answered; for they dwindle to nothing with them. I have been told," added he, "that they had no horned cattle in their country till they got Calais from us, and took with the town the live stock in hand. There is a good picture of the business," added he, pointing to Hogarth's *Siege of Calais*: "our troops were wisely commanded there! Who would ever have shown the hungry mounseers such a surloin as that? I do not wonder they fought like devils for such plunder." Mr. Furnival's gravity nearly forsook him; and I was prepared for Anna's laugh; instead of which, she gravely thanked him for a historical fact she had never heard before, assuring him at the same time, that although the breed of horned cattle had degenerated in France, they were *abundant*, and rivalled England *in numbers*. "Perhaps they may, miss," answered the contented Mr. Budgely; "but, in my mind, one fat beast of English growth is worth half a dozen of their lean ones." "They think so in France," replied she; "and were you there, you would find I do not deceive you." Mr. Furnival called for water; he had swallowed too hastily. "Come, miss, will you hob and nob with me?" asked Mr. Budgely, pleased with her cheerfulness. "Willingly," answered she, "provided I have a glass to myself. Give me that goblet, young woman, with some water." The girl, hurried by so unusual a request, drew incautiously the rich cut glass from the dozen, which terminated the pyramid of plate; when touching a large and massy silver

waiter, set up on its edge for its greater display, it fell forwards, and with a crash of no common portent announced the mischief it concealed. Mrs. Budgely's philosophy was not of that sort which, in the poet's words, 'could keep her temper tho' e'en china fall.' The epithet of "*brick-bat*" would have been gentle, compared to some which escaped her in her displeasure: and the "*brick-bat*," apparently roused in her turn, answered that she had not been hired to wait at table. This produced a diversion in the culprit's favour; and we were entertained with the grievance to which I now attributed my sister's ill-humour. The footman had left his place in the morning, having refused to assist at the cart business, alleging he had full employment in the house. Mr. Budgely acknowledged the fellow was handy, and that he had been angry; and with this concession my sister's features settled. The wine and fruit succeeded to this disturbance, and all was harmony. At length Mrs. Budgely, filling her glass for the fourth time with mountain wine, said, "I would drink this to our newly arrived sister, did I know her name." "Use that which pleases you best," answered I, unconscious of her design: "Mary is my English name, Pauline my Paris one." "I should imagine neither the one nor the other would suffice for a young woman with a child to present with herself to friends who have not seen her for years," replied she. I burst into tears, and was unable to speak. "This is neither the time nor the *place*, Mrs. Murray," said Mr. Furnival rising with calmness, "to enter into a story of some importance to your daughter. Let it satisfy you for the present, that she is one who will do you honour. The child alluded to is not hers; and in the protection she has afforded him she has given an evidence of her virtue you *must* approve. I shall be glad to see you in Chancery-lane, and shall be at home to-morrow. You shall then be informed of those particulars which will fully convince you that your daughter, in her claims to the name of Murray, will not disgrace it. What say you, madam?" added he with a smile: "will you pass the day with us to-morrow? My carriage shall attend you at an early hour, and you will, before you leave us, love my little client *Sigismund Middleton*." My mother hesitated. She was 'in daily expectation of seeing her son; and would postpone her visit till he could accompany her. She was quite confounded with what had passed, and found herself unwell with the hurry of the morning.' "You surely have been indiscreet, child," added she, turning to me: "what could induce you to burthen yourself with another person's child?" "What indeed," observed the enraged Anna, "but the lack of that wisdom she will never attain whilst she lives? But be contented," added she: "you have enough of it in your family. Mrs. Budgely's prudence and *tenderness* will manage this unlucky slip; and Pauline will be saved from open shame." "Well, enough has been said for the present on this strange affair," observed Mr. Budgely; "Mr. Furnival does not seem to wish us to take the boy, or to stir in his concerns; and so let us be cheerful, and think no more of him. Is he a bye blow of poor du Rivage's, miss Mary?" I answered with resentment, that monsieur du Rivage, although a stranger to his existence, would bless me for having preserved him from the dangers to which he had been exposed. Mr. Furnival ordered the carriage, and the pitying Judith led me into her room. "You see, my dear Mary," said she, "what has been my lot since my father's death. My sister Budgely never knew what it is to love. I have, and I pity you: you will be miserable with us...but is it true that you are still unmarried?" "Indeed it is," answered I; "this child is not mine. He belongs to parents much my superiors in rank and in fortune." "Then the handsome man whose picture you wear is your lover! Good heavens! how I pity you! I thought he might perhaps be your husband, and the father of this infant, and I almost envied you; for what would not a woman of sensibility endure for such a man?" I hastened from her, not wishing either to repress her kindness, or to make her a sharer in my disgrace with the redoubtable Mrs. Budgely, by augmenting her zeal in the cause of disastrous love. Fatigued as I had been by the occurrences of the day, I stood in need of the consolation I found in my ride home. Mr. Furnival saw my depression; and with a kindness which cheered me he thus began: "I do not ask my poor girl her opinion of the relations she has quitted. You have seen them without disguise; for it requires better talents than

they have, to practise the concealment of defects which more polished minds can with ease gloss over. You cannot now, Pauline, be ignorant that you will be treated as a rival for your mother's fortune, and they will succeed in those views for which you are disqualified. Till we have intelligence from monsieur du Rivage, no steps can be taken to secure you from a situation in which you would not live a twelvemonth; I shall in the interim consider such plans as will secure you from vulgarity and meanness. Be perfectly easy, my child; Furnival has secured the orphan before he knew you; and should you doubt my affection, depend on my principles." I attempted to speak my gratitude. "Let us change the subject," said he: "you have been sufficiently harassed to-day. I am pleased with that madcap your friend; I cannot believe she is the daughter of that woman whom she calls her mother." "One would imagine," replied I, "by the manner in which she treats her, that she entertained the same suspicions with yourself; for nothing can be more remote from filial respect than her conduct to both her parents." To this remark succeeded the traits in Anna's character which had so much surprised me; and with this subject before us we reached our peaceful home. Mr. Furnival followed my steps to the nursery, and with much exultation observed that he had Sigismund's first compliment. After supper, with some confusion I related to him the incident of the picture, and, giving it to him, begged he would take care of it. He viewed it with attention, and with a smile observed it was a dangerous inmate for any young woman's bosom: "One would take this face upon trust," added he, musing over it. "But, Pauline, believe *no* man till you have a better confidence than any external advantages can supply. Study his principles, and the course of action which these have induced, before you give him your affections." He then gaily laughed at my account of my sister Judith's admiration of the portrait, and observed that, had Sigismund resembled his father more, he might in time have been Judith's flame.

CHAPTER VI.

THE following morning, whilst at the breakfast table, I was surprised to see miss Wilmot enter; and still more astonished on hearing that she had made her way to me in the Hammersmith stage and unattended. "Were you not afraid," asked I, running over with my eyes her Frenchified and careless dress, "of being taken for a stranger to whom no civility or deference was due?" She laughed with her accustomed thoughtlessness, and replied, that she was neither a baby to be frightened with raw head and bloody bones, nor a silly damsel who in every strange face perceived an enemy; she had been highly amused, and preferred a stage to a family airing. "But did your mother think such a vehicle a proper one for a girl who has not been a month in England?" asked Mr. Furnival. "I did not consult her," replied Anna. "Here I am, and, what is more, I have neither encountered man-traps nor woman-traps. But now for my history," continued she: "My father is already disgusted with England. 'Every thing is so dear here.' I have my reasons for being of his mind; and I have so well succeeded that he has taken the house we now are in at Hammersmith only by the month, during our absence from London, in order to pay a visit to an old aunt of my mother's who lives at Bedford. My father's agent hired our present habitation, and your Mr. Budgely entered into the transaction. He formerly knew my father; and finding he had the reputation of 'a good man,' he wrote a civil letter, offering his and lady's services on our first settlement. We reached Hammersmith the day before yesterday, and found Mrs. Budgely at our new abode. She had been useful, and my mother was thankful. The morning, however, produced a difficulty. The gardener said, we had no right to the vegetables without paying for them; my mother insisted this privilege was in her charter; and in order to settle this important debate we walked to Mrs. Budgely's. The detail of your arrival and fainting followed, with remarks on the bustle and confusion you had occasioned. My mother with amazement now found she had an opportunity of learning something of madame du Rivage's reception; and signifying her surprise that the late companion of her journey had been so long in England without having seen her friends, she added, 'Pray, madam, did she bring her little boy with her?' 'A little boy!' repeated your sister with astonishment. 'What! has she a child with her?' 'Most assuredly,' answered my mother: 'but there is a mystery in the business which I cannot solve. She says that the child is not hers, and that she is not a married woman; but no doubt she will be explicit with you. Monsieur du Rivage did not appear to have any better knowledge of this ænigma than ourselves; he never mentioned the incumbrance of the child to us, nor made any provision for his journey. However, miss Murray was in no want of cash.' 'Nor do I think she will want it,' observed your sister Judith; 'for I have no doubt of her being married, and to such a man! Never did I behold such a face and air.' 'Show Mrs. Wilmot the picture,' said Mrs. Budgely with a more composed countenance. Judith eagerly drew from her pocket your concealed lover. My mother gazed on it with mute wonder, and then suddenly turning to me, said, 'Is it not the very image of the officer who came to the hotel with the women and Sigismund?' 'I saw him only once,' replied I, 'and that from the window; he had dark hair, this is light brown; but peradventure his head is of the cameleon tribe, and changes accordingly as it is viewed. You also forget that his wife travelled with us to Havre. She perfectly agreed with Pauline, and convinced me that miss Murray had not known either her or the child more than two months.' 'Pray, madam, do you not think these are diamonds?' asked miss Judith, still enamoured of the picture. 'Diamonds, truly!' said Mrs. Budgely, surveying the brilliants on her fat fingers: 'I think I ought to know diamonds: you may have such diamonds by the bushel.' 'I believe these are diamonds,' replied my mother, 'and very valuable ones.' Your entrance with your mother prevented more, and Mrs. Budgely dispatched your sister to help in the store-room. You know what passed till your departure. We were detained to supper; and you

became the subject of conversation. My mother brought forward Mrs. Whaley's story, and I became angry. 'Well, my dear madam,' cried I rising, 'I think by this time you can add little more to the suspicions with which you have entertained miss Murray's family. It is late, and I am weary of a subject which points directly at the innocence of a young woman whom I love for her virtue.' 'I suppose you are in the secret, young lady,' observed your brother. 'Sufficiently so,' answered I, 'to know that she will never be acquainted with disgrace, although she is allied to cruelty and meanness.' 'You are rude, Anna,' said my mother. 'I always am,' replied I, 'when provoked by malignity.'—I hurried from the room, and waited in the garden my mother's and father's approach. In our walk home I was told that I must not think of keeping up any intercourse with you till your family noticed you. I made no answer; but determined on keeping my ground. So I took the stage, and proceeded here. To say the truth," continued she, "I am curious to know what will be your conduct in the line of duty you have so strenuously recommended to me. What will you do with the animals with whom you are connected?" "I will enforce my doctrine by my practice," replied I: "but, timid and abject as you believe me, I mean to reserve my obedience for my mother. When she is acquainted with Sigismund's story, and his claims to my protection; when she knows he has a provision for his necessities, and future prospects of wealth, she will be reasonable, and will consent to my acting in concert with Mr. Furnival for his welfare. Monsieur du Rivage will, when he appears, corroborate my evidence; and from what I have seen, I hope my mother will permit me to remain with him whilst he lives." "Oh, you need not fear it," cried Anna. "Would to God he were here!" replied I: "my mind is on the rack by his delay. What does your father really think of his absence?" "Why, to say the truth," replied she, "were he capable of thinking, he would share in your inquietude; but he contents himself with leaving *all to time*." Sigismund now entered, and with sportive frolic she allured him to her; till recollecting her hour was arrived, she left me, heedlessly laughing because I insisted on the footman's seeing her safe in the stage.

CHAPTER VII.

THREE or four days had elapsed, when a note addressed to Mr. Furnival, and signed by my brother, announced to us his and my mother's intention of making a morning visit for the purpose of hearing some explanations in regard to miss Mary Pauline Murray's conduct. My heart palpitated; for I had not forgotten my brother John's harshness of temper. Mr. Furnival encouraged me, and I met the visitors with collected composure. A cold bow was the return given by my brother for my offered cheek, and my mother scarcely spoke to me. Sigismund was in the room, and Mr. Furnival, with a smile, presenting the beautiful boy to my mother, said, "Come, sir, answer for yourself, and restore your generous preserver to the confidence of her mother." Sigismund, unable to answer to this appeal, said "Mamma!" and came to my arms. "Then I must speak for you," continued Mr. Furnival with seriousness; "and on the word of a man whose honour has never yet been called in question, I do affirm Mrs. Murray, this child's mother to be a native of France of the highest rank, and, in consequence of that rank, now a prisoner with the duke her father. Desirous of preserving her infant, she implored your daughter to convey him to his father's family, who are natives of England. This father monsieur du Rivage well knows; but he quitted France before this child was born, and his fate is uncertain. I have, however, in my hands such proofs as will secure to the child the inheritance his birth legally gives him: it is a princely fortune; and till I see him in possession of it, or his father, he is my client, and will remain under my protection." My brother insolently laughed. "This is a good story," said he: "but it is a pity, Mary, you did not suckle your child yourself. I have heard Mrs. Whaley's account; and I have now your 'Triumphs of Temper' in my pocket, with your name at length." He drew the book from his pocket, and, showing me my name, added, "Can you deny this?" "I have no inducement to deny it," answered I with firmness. "Mr. Middleton, Sigismund's father, borrowed it of me; and you may return it to the woman who placed it in your hands, and tell her that Mary Pauline Murray will have not only her triumphs of temper, but also of a virtue *she* cannot injure." "And did you borrow Mr. Middleton's picture as one of your triumphs of virtue?" asked he with fury. I blushed: but resentment gained the empire. "I shall account for its being in my possession to my mother," answered I, "whenever she chooses to question me." "The business is plain enough," said he, turning to my mother: "this fair lady will take care of herself. She has not lived with du Rivage for *nothing*, since he lost his mate. And 'les fidèles peuvent attendre le bonheur' with the aged as well as the young gallant. Her good friend has not been unmindful of her. She is in good hands, and has only to be faithful in her *calling with Mr. Furnival*. Mr. Furnival rose. "Do not imagine," said he with sternness, "that this roof protects you from my resentment; for it protects no scoundrels; it is my contempt of an insinuation to which my life gives *the lie*..." He rang the bell; and on the servant's appearing, he said with calmness, "Show Mr. Murray the door;" and instantly left the room. My brother sullenly followed the servant, telling my mother to take him up at a coffee-house which he named. "You have done wisely," said she, "to throw yourself on your family pennyless as you are, with all this scandal following you. I am sure I do not know what I am to do, nor what is to become of you. Every body thinks du Rivage is caught, and will be guillotined; and I cannot receive you without offending my son and Mrs. Budgely. I will allow you twenty pounds a year, on condition you conceal your name, and pass for a French emigrant. It is the fashion to notice them; and you may get a place as a governess. It is a shame that du Rivage did not provide for you before he was ruined: he had engaged to make you his child!" "My dear mother," replied I in a soothing tone, "have the goodness to listen to me without anger. My father and yourself consigned me to monsieur and madame du Rivage's care when I was yet a child; you both voluntarily acceded to their adoption of me; and so entirely was I regarded as their child, that my

father did not think it incumbent on him to make any provision for his fortunate Mary.” “No, certainly,” exclaimed my mother, interrupting me: “we had a right to expect your great and rich friends would leave you a handsome fortune, and give you a good marriage portion.” “Such no doubt were my father’s views,” replied I, “when he overlooked me; and I do not mean to call to judgment a parent I shall always honour. But I am involved in the misfortunes of my benefactor: he is unable to make my fortune; and to his other causes of depression his anxiety for me may be added. His last act of paternal love,” added I, bursting into tears, “was his recommending me to his tried friend Mr. Furnival. I am at present sheltered by him, and want is yet a stranger to me. Here, with your permission, I mean to remain till I know the fate of my benefactor. He may yet be preserved by that Providence in whom he trusts. I may yet live, to repay in part his unnumbered acts of kindness. I may yet live, to be his help and consolation; and the talents I have acquired from his generosity shall be employed for his support. As *Mary Murray*, I will, if it be necessary, labour for him, as his Pauline watch over his declining years and sinking spirits. I appeal to you, I appeal to my Maker, can I act otherwise without condemnation and my own abhorrence?” She was silent. I continued: “In regard to the circumstances under which I have incurred not only suspicion, but the insults of a brother whose duty it was to protect me, I have only to assure you, that it is not improbable that you will hear a court of justice proclaim Sigismund’s rights to a name and fortune, far beyond those pretensions in which you believe I am a partaker. My evidence will be acknowledged, as that of Mary Pauline Murray, his *deliverer*, not his *mother*; and with the proofs of his parents’ marriage, and his identity, Mr. Furnival has no fears of seeing him acknowledged by his father’s relations. It still remains to be known whether that father is not yet living,” continued I: “but till this be ascertained, he will be Mr. Furnival’s charge; he not judging it prudent to commence a business of such importance, whilst the family, who are the collateral heirs of Mr. Middleton, are absent from England. They are on the continent at present, and he means to write to them as soon as he has their address. I have only to add, madam, my sacred engagement with his unfortunate mother. Till this child is the acknowledged and cherished inmate with his family, he is my care, and I am bound by every obligation of humanity, and honour, never to lose sight of him.” “It is mighty fine all this!” answered she: “but you seem quite equal to the business without my advice. I wish you success in your adventures. You certainly cannot do better than to remain where you are. It may turn out a good job for the lawyers, if all be true you say, and you may be paid for your nursing, and the loss of your good name.”

Mr. Furnival’s entrance saved me the answer this unkindness might have produced. “I find, sir,” observed my mother, “that my daughter Mary has got into great trouble with this child. I am disposed to believe, as you encourage her, that her story is as she has related it. It happens unluckily for her, that Mr. Whaley should be my son’s neighbour. He lives in the late Mrs. Maisin’s house, and is a man of large property. His lady is a most charming woman, and my son John and his wife cannot help being convinced by her report of Mary’s being in a situation which must preclude her from their notice and society. Mrs. Wilmot has no less influenced my daughter Budgely’s mind; and I know not what I can do with her.” “Make yourself perfectly easy on that head, madam,” replied Mr. Furnival with emotion: “I am, it is true, rather too old for a young lady’s *amusement*; but Pauline will not need a *keeper* more indulgent. My friend monsieur du Rivage understood this, when he appointed me to be her guardian. His destruction is by no means certain, and he shall find Pauline has a *guardian*.” “It is very kind of you, sir,” replied my mother with an air of contentment. “I shall leave her to your consideration, and I hope you will be recompensed for your trouble in getting master Sigismund’s estate for him.” “I beg, madam,” said I, “that you will, before we part, see the proofs of what I have asserted. This child has a property with him which will convince you that his birth is honourable.” She took her seat again. Mr. Furnival

rose in his turn, and with great seriousness observed, that “it neither suited his character to produce vouchers for what he had asserted, nor his client’s interest to make his concerns a gossip’s story.” “It is mighty well, sir,” answered my disappointed mother: “I shall leave my daughter to your care; and I only wish she may find those who are less curious and less suspicious than ourselves. The time may come when she may stand in more need of her relations, whom she has disgraced. I have done my duty.” “Most assuredly,” replied Mr. Furnival with a sarcastic smile; “it was not possible for you to have done *more or less.*” He ceremoniously conducted her to the carriage, and I yielded to my painful emotions.

CHAPTER VIII.

ON my friend’s return to the room he found me much distressed, and he took his seat by me in silence. At length he said, “These are nature’s tears, Pauline, and a tribute which by no means lessens you in my good opinion: but under this trial of your feelings reflect on the cause of your distress; and let it strengthen you in your weakness. I am a man of a plain understanding, my child; and I am also a man who has placed his hopes on the commands and precepts he finds in the word of God. I shall never give my sanction or support to one who violates the first and most important duty prescribed by that law, as it regards the good order of society and the safety of youth. But in imposing the obligation on children to obey their parents is included, with me, the obligation of parents to perform their duty to their children. The laws of this country—and glorious laws they are!—have provided a refuge for the oppressed, in cases wherein the weaker is exposed to the oppressor; and you may legally make me the guardian of your personal security, as well as of your little property. I advise you to avail yourself of this privilege, and you are instructed so to do by madam du Rivage. Let me appeal to your understanding. Is that woman a parent, who, like your mother, gives up to another the care of a long absent child, who is not only poor and friendless but calumniated, and of whose innocence she has evidences of more than sufficient weight to counterbalance the charges of malignity? Is that woman a mother, who sent you from the maternal roof and trusted your infant years to the direction of another? Is she a parent, who could forget your claims, in favour of injustice and craft,—and who now, although provided with the means of sheltering you, and frustrating the mercenary designs of your family, shrinks from her duty, and leaves you to your supposed necessities and injured reputation? Thank God, she has thus acted!” added he with warmth. “By her folly you are saved; and I promise you that you will never need the *tender mercies* of your brother and sister, as they call themselves. You must see, my dear child, that madame du Rivage has unfitted you for the abode of vulgarity and meanness. Be thankful to Providence for the asylum to which he has conducted you; and leave to me the defence of your reputation. I am but an old gallant; but, I thank my Maker, I am equal to correct insolence, and to give protection to a girl like you”—He paused.

“I think,” continued he, “of making a visit to Mr. Wilmot. Write to him that by your order I am sent to settle for the expenses of your journey, and to reclaim the jewels he has in his trust. Add the list of them, as it stands in poor du Rivage’s letter. I shall finish with this kind-hearted Mrs. Wilmot also, and caution her to forget Mary Pauline Murray, before we leave London. It does not favour your health to be shut up here. I intend to pay the doctor a visit, and may probably extend my holidays.” “Then you despair of seeing my wretched father?” observed I, renewing my tears. “Not altogether,” replied he: “but when I consider his age, and the distresses which have borne down his mind and enfeebled his health, I should not be surprised that he had sunk under the fatigues of his journey, and had found in death a friend; for such must be the summons that calls a man like du Rivage to his grave.” “He has been butchered by his foes!” cried I in unspeakable agony; “and you know he has.” “Indeed I have received no

intelligence whatever," answered Mr. Furnival with solemnity, "nor do I think this has been his fate. Wilmot told me that he was quite broken down when he was with them in Paris; and that he had then eluded danger by the fidelity of a porter belonging to his house. He meant to go to Rouen, where he had a secure asylum in an American's house, and he travelled on foot with the porter till he was beyond pursuit. This man returned before you quitted Paris, and gave a good account of his master, who had only two days' journey to his friends at Rouen. This is the whole of my information; and you must endeavour to think of him, as being in a merciful Being's care and guidance, whether in life or in death. And remember, Pauline, your faith is defective without this trust." My angel boy now entered; and leaving him to amuse Mr. Furnival, I withdrew to endeavour to strengthen my mind to more fortitude. My suspense and augmenting apprehensions relative to monsieur du Rivage afforded an ostensible cause for my dejection, and occasioned me an illness of some days. I was however mending, and my physician urged Mr. Furnival to lose no time in his purpose of leaving town, as the journey would contribute to my recovery.

The day before we were to set out I was agreeably surprised by hearing miss Wilmot's cheerful voice, as she ascended to my room. A month, or more, had elapsed since I had seen her; and on her entrance I was no less surprised by her paleness than by her heedless dress; which, although it was in the English mode, was far remote from English neatness. I found that she had accompanied her father to town, and had his permission to pass the day with me. When left to ourselves, she observed that I was destroying myself by indulging a sensibility at once childish and unreasonable. "To what cause," asked I, "am I to attribute the change I see in you? Your heroism has not better served you than my weakness has me. I find you as pale as myself." "I could have disguised *that* by similar means to those I have used for the concealment of the miseries I have endured since I left Paris," answered she: "but I am come for comfort, Pauline; and if in my confession your prudence cannot absolve me, your heart will, in spite of its suggestions, plead in my favour. We may never meet again; and when your virtue shines forth like the morning light, your poor Anna's glory may be in the shade. I wish you to remember me as one perfectly indifferent to the opinion of the world, but anxious to preserve your esteem. I was Broudier's wife before I saw you," continued she. "He knew when I left Paris I was in a way to be a mother. We parted, with his solemn promise of being in England in a few days after me. He did not appear; and I wrote to him. I thought his reply to my letter contained more of the politics of Paris than of anxiety for his wife, and I gave him to understand that I was offended. His last letter has satisfied me: but he urges me to persuade my father to return to the continent, his prospects being too brilliant to allow him to leave Paris; and with a detail of his rising fortune, he advises me to acquaint my parents with my situation and marriage. He adds that Mr. Wilmot would treble his fortune by the purchase of confiscated lands, and I might urge this argument with assurance, on the honour of a man who needed no pecuniary inducements to preserve him faithful to the woman of his choice, and the first object of his ambition and affection. I have for some time," continued Anna, "hesitated in regard to the means I should employ to effect my husband's wishes and my own. I detest England, and I dread the passing eye. Fortunately for me, my father has received a letter from an old acquaintance who is now settled at Morges, a neat little town in Switzerland; and who writes with enthusiasm of the comforts of a place, in which he enjoys a good house and garden for twelve pounds per annum, and can treat himself and his family with more fine trout than they can manage for sixpence. My father talks without ceasing of the blessings of Morges; and my mother incessantly of the expenses of Hammersmith. I urge the stupidity of those around us, and all is en bon train for my dénouement. My poor mother would go into perpetual banishment, rather than face her daughter's disgrace, as she would call my connexion with a man to whom I had plighted my vows of

fidelity. But I wish to reserve my secret till she is on the road. Your sister and her 'brute' are my torments; for they are continually opposing to my plans the security of the English funds, and the money that may be made by buying and selling of stock. Do you know," continued she with unabated vivacity, "that Mrs. Budgely and your wise brother are now good friends and confederates, to keep your mother at a distance from your bewitching face and prevailing rhetoric? They found Mrs. Murray very much disposed to find you a *good* girl as well as a beautiful one; and in her rebuke of Mr. John's warmth before Mr. Furnival, she had the courage to say, she was glad that you had found such a friend, for you must have been miserable with her. Let me hear by what means you softened her to make this concession." I briefly went over my conversation with my mother, not omitting the part she maintained in it. Anna listened with serious attention to my little narrative. "I have more than once said, Pauline," observed she, "that you are beyond my depth. Tell me, by what principle is your conduct regulated? so timid and apprehensive at one hour, that I call you a child, so firm and collected at another, that I own you my superior!" "Your compliment shall not make me vain," replied I smiling, and taking her hand. "Madame du Rivage shall not be defrauded of her just tribute by an affected modesty on my part. I am, as far as I am able, what she incessantly laboured to make me. My attainments in knowledge were secondary objects with her. She was a christian, Anna, and she has left me one. Daily do I bless her name in my petitions to heaven; for, with the precepts and hopes of the gospel, I cannot willingly err, unless I deliberately choose 'darkness rather than light.' My understanding rests satisfied with every sacrifice my religion enjoins; and I feel its burthen nothing in comparison with those dangers from which it secures me. Shall I proceed, my dear Anna, and prove to you, that what I conceive to be a duty I boldly undertake, even at the hazard of offending those I love?" She was silent. "You have been unfortunate," pursued I with tenderness. "It was not in political debates, or in the circle of madame Broudier's friends, that you could find that guide which is requisite for the most exalted reason. I mean not to sermonize," continued I; "but, on your own innate principles of right and wrong, I will maintain, that neither your reason nor your love of independence would be infringed by a conduct of more consideration to your parents. They are weak and ignorant, you say. But can that excuse you from insulting them with your superiority? Were not you weak and ignorant when they cherished you? You say that your mother's mode of instruction was a restraint on your freedom. Might she not perceive, ignorant as you deem her, that the native strength and vigour of your mind needed a check? And if she acted according to her best judgment, can you on that ground find an apology for the contests I have witnessed, and in which you were governed by the very love of power you so vehemently reprobate? I appeal to your good sense. Consider your present situation, and the future claims of your child. Enter into no schemes in which your father's comforts and property may be sunk. I mean not by this caution to implicate either the integrity or good sense of monsieur Broudier. I even plead for him. His enthusiasm is increased by the triumphs of his party. How soon may he have to lament their ruin, and his own; and to regret the advice he now gives you, when he has to deplore your ruin, with his own folly, in having lost the asylum he may need!"—"I believe you are right," replied she, musing. "It may be better to inform my father of the necessity which obliges me to leave him, and to advise him to remain quietly where he is safe. He loves me, and I should be sorry to injure him. I have no fears for Broudier's success, nor any doubts of his attachment. I shall inform him of my intention of joining him; and he will be satisfied."

We were now summoned to dinner, and with a gaiety which astonished me she accosted Mr. Furnival as an old friend. The servant was no sooner withdrawn, than with the most perfect unconcern she asked him how she could return to France; and without delay she informed him that her husband wished her to return. Mr. Furnival was surprised. She continued to inform him of monsieur Broudier's

prospects, which had influenced him to give up his design of emigrating to England, and of his claiming her as his wife, her parents still being uninformed of her marriage. The good old man cautioned her, in the strongest terms, to remain with her parents. "I should conceive," said he, "the hazard of informing them of your situation to be much less than the dangers you may have to encounter in France at this time. I think they would be much easier led to forgiveness by your confidence, than by your desertion of them in favour of a man who is of the number of those who have made marriage a mere convention of inclination, and a divorce a matter of whim and convenience." She coloured. He continued: "A father's heart and home, my dear young lady, are well worth the experiment I recommend. You have a plea your parents must admit, and which is in your favour. They cannot but love a daughter whose mistakes have arisen from their indulgence. Notwithstanding your husband's brilliant prospects, nay, what is more, without calling in question an affection which prompted him to take advantage of your youth and inexperience, I must strenuously support my opinion. Declare your marriage, and remain with your parents." She looked distressed. "Consider of what I have said," added he with tenderness; "and if I can be useful to you, write to me, and send your letter here: it will reach me; and if my interference can be made useful to you, command it." She bowed, but was unable to speak.

CHAPTER IX.

IT is perhaps fortunate for me that you have some faith in the veracity of your historian, my dear madam, otherwise I should do wisely to suppress the sudden return of miss Wilmot's gaiety. She began an argument in favour of those measures which had produced the horrors of France, and, with a partial but eloquent precision, gave the characters of the leading members of the different factions. Mr. Furnival was amused; and she was enthusiastically haranguing on the heroism of Charlotte du Coudray, when the servant announced that Mr. Wilmot had sent a coach for her, and that he waited at a coffee-house she had to pass. Her gaiety fled. She approached me: "Adieu, Pauline," said she with emotion, "forget not your miserable friend." She hurried from me; and I have not forgotten her—although I shall probably never see her more; for she quitted England with her parents some short time after I left town. Mr. Furnival having seen her to the hackney-coach, and ordered Jacob to attend her, returned to me. "This miss Wilmot of yours," said he, "has not yet been able to conquer the feelings of nature. She was subdued by parting with you. Poor thing! I sincerely pity her!" He untwisted his neckcloth. "Is it not a deplorable consideration," continued he, "to see a young creature so graciously endowed by her Maker as that girl is, under a delusion which must inevitably conduct her to evil, and to its miseries? With a heart replete with warm and benevolent affections, with an understanding beyond the common standard of her years, she is so entangled in the jargon of politics and the sophistry of unprincipled declaimers, that her reason is utterly confounded, and her heart corrupted. She is one of the innumerable examples of those, who, in order to gratify an overweening pride, leave the safe path of duty for the vain conceits and doctrines of men more ingenious than honest; more pernicious than the concealed adder. Remember, Pauline, that no reason that is human can be an equivalent to the power which it has to encounter from the dominion of passion. The most distinguished reason is a mere rope of sand, without a firm conviction of those religious obligations which alone can secure it from error. Our Maker understood that we were insufficient, of ourselves, to the temptations which would assail us; and he has, in his mercy, given us a law to preserve us unspotted from the world, and to be a rock of defence even for that reason of which we make our boast. Let this law be its light with you; and be not deceived. Reason may err, or be betrayed; but the word of God is immutable, and never-failing." "I trust," replied I, "that my poor friend will soon discover this truth. You acknowledge she has a good heart and a good

understanding?” “I do,” answered he: “but it is to be feared, the one will be rendered useless, if nothing worse, and the other will be still more perverted by the miserable connexion she has made. Poor girl!” added he with compassion: “to judge of her *energies* (as she has been taught to call a silly vanity of rising above the meek and quiet spirit which is the ornament of her sex) by the condition in which she was in going from you, I should conceive it would be a long time before she will reach the standard of monsieur Broudier’s ideas of female heroism; for, with a voice almost lost in her agony of tears, she promised me to take care of her father; and added, that you had taught her her duty. I was touched by this trait of her docility; and, observing I had yet some preparations to make for my journey, withdrew.”

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CHAPTER X.

IN August 1792 I again saw the place of my nativity. As I approached it, memory busily brought forward the events which had marked the few intervening years that had separated me from it. The scene of domestic comfort had closed upon me in France. My father no longer lived to welcome his child; my nurse and Tabitha had also paid the debt of nature. I became pensive; till Mr. Furnival's cheerful voice roused me, and diverted my meditations to a subject of more use,—for his words of kindness touched my heart, and a sentiment of gratitude swelled it. I traced the hand of mercy, which had conducted me, from the tender and simple examples of my nurse and her daughter, to the more enlightened instructions and enlarged plans of madame du Rivage, which had established my principles. I was even now protected by her agency; and sheltered by a being, whom I had not known three months, with a compassion merciful as my necessities required, your Pauline, Mrs. Underwood, yielded to heaven its tribute of gratitude; and blessed with fervour the privilege which encouraged her to trust in an *almighty Friend*.

CHAPTER XI.

MY reception from the good doctor Hawksbury was cordial and affectionate. His lady's was polite and courteous. Two fine girls of about nine or ten years old received Sigismund with caresses and admiration; and with the ingenuous warmth natural to their age, they left us, in order to show Mrs. Fanny the young guest's nursery.

I found Mrs. Hawksbury was no stranger to my situation; and Mr. Furnival, in the course of the evening, entered into the detail of those measures he meant to pursue, in order to substantiate Sigismund's birthright. Mr. Whaley was mentioned: and I learned that some doubts, which his lady's conduct had rather confirmed, were entertained in regard to his marriage. "She gives herself out here," added Mrs. Hawksbury, "as having been the widow of a man of quality, and a *ci-devant* count. An emigré of the name of Arnois, who is a portrait-painter here, pretends to be an old acquaintance of the *ci-devant* countess. He is constantly with her; and it is whispered that Mr. Whaley is jealous of this handsome Frenchman." I was on the reserve, and determined to add no celerity to the lady's loss of reputation. A week or ten days passed. Mrs. Hawksbury's civilities relaxed. She became languid and nervous, and declined our little excursions and walks. I on the contrary improved in health by following the prescriptions of the friendly doctor. One morning, in a ramble with the two girls, and our escorts the doctor and Mr. Furnival, the children espied on a door-way an advertisement, that "the famous *model of Paris* was to be seen within." They expressed much curiosity to see a place in which I had lived, and where Sigismund was born; and suppressing my reluctance for a show which I well knew could afford me no pleasure, I seconded their request. Some company were in the room, and gratifying their curiosity. I soon perceived that the miniature of Paris was a too exact delineation for my feelings of the place I had quitted; for, my eyes turning to the Boulevards, I was struck with the house in which I had shared the comforts and pleasures of my benefactors. The showman was pointing out to the company the public buildings, &c. and he asserted that any inhabitant of Paris could ascertain, not only the house in which he had resided, but even the windows of his bed-chamber provided it was in front of the building. I assented in silence to this assertion, and was retreating from the view of mine; when two young women observed that Mrs. Whaley had assured some ladies in their shop, that she had almost persuaded herself

that she was in a street she called *Honoré*, and could see the very bed and picture she had told them of. "That lady has been three times here with company," answered the showman: "she knows Paris, and was delighted to see it so exactly represented." "And which is the street she mentioned?" asked one of the girls with curiosity. "*That*," replied the man: "it is called la rue St. Honoré." "Well, I see nothing in it to make such a laugh," observed her companion. "No," replied the other; "you did not hear her tell about the green lutestring bed, and the young lady." They took the place some people had quitted, and continued their examination of Paris, too remote from me to hear their remarks. I now again experienced, my revered friend, that even innocence could not shield my bosom from the envenomed dart of defamation. The curiosity I had attracted when at church with Mrs. Hawksbury was no longer attributed to my being a stranger, and dressed in the mode. I recollected that Mrs. Hawksbury had not been out from that day; pleading her want of health. I recalled to my mind, that I had seen no female visitors; and with an anguished bosom I discovered that my society was shunned, and Mrs. Hawksbury's prudence called in question. In the evening, being left by ourselves, she asked me with some compassion what had depressed my spirits, and why I had declined walking with the gentlemen and her daughters. I frankly told her of the incident of the morning; and with tears added, I should in future dread the inspection of every eye. She coloured; and replied, she knew of no remedy for a case of such delicacy beyond the one I had, namely, the consciousness of my own innocence: but she could not deceive me; my reputation had been deeply injured in Liverpool, by the representations of a woman whose own levity was the subject of censure. "I have," added she, "done all in my power to stem the current of opinion, and to vindicate you; but it has been to no purpose. Your being here with Mr. Furnival has also been remarked; and your brother's account of your refusing to live with your mother has gained credit. I am sorry, miss Murray, to distress you; and it may seem harsh, when I add, that, as your friend, I would advise you to live retired in the country, and remote from Mr. Furnival. Neither my influence nor my situation as a parent will suffice to reinstate you in society here. The doctor laughs at this scandal, and wishes me to offer you the accommodations of my house. Believe me, I would with pleasure do so, were it not for my children; but, my dear miss Murray, I confess..." I interrupted her, and assured her that I was in no wise offended by a conduct of caution, which had such serious motives for its regulation; neither could any inducements prevail on me to reside in Liverpool. "Mr. Furnival," added I, "has already written to a lady in Derbyshire, who, he doubts not, will receive me. He does not think of my returning to his house, judging it not only unfavourable to my health, but also to Sigismund's." She appeared relieved by this confidence, and with much kindness said, she hoped to see me restored, with honour, to the good opinion of the world. I smiled, and replied, I had nothing to do in it, but to preserve the good opinion of my friends, and to trust to Providence the event of a conduct of which I had never for a moment repented. She observed, that the reputation of a young woman too often depended on public opinion. "Certainly," replied I with assumed spirit; "and that young woman who exposes hers to misconstructions can never be accounted blameless, unless she hazards unmerited reproach in favour of a positive and superior duty." She made no reply, but observed that she feared to remain longer in the garden. I sought my consolation in the happiness I communicated to the helpless Sigismund, who with joy and confidence hailed me as his friend, and with infantine fondness clung to his preserver. My spirits were composed by seeing him in a peaceful slumber: and the petition I offered to heaven has not been disregarded; for he has been succoured, and his Pauline has been sheltered, with 'the pure of heart.' Mrs. Hawksbury examined my countenance with some anxiety when I joined the party in the supping-parlour. I perceived, by her extraordinary cheerfulness and assiduities about me, that she had accomplished her design, and wished not that her husband should know by what means it had been effected. When the girls withdrew, Mr. Furnival mentioned his intention of proceeding to his friend's in Derbyshire; and

giving me a letter, he added, "Read it, Pauline, at your leisure: it concerns *you* more than myself; for it is from Mrs. Hampden, who wants your boy for the deserted nursery, her daughter having left her with her children." Doctor Hawksbury with eagerness pressed me to send Mr. Furnival with my excuses; and to keep his nursery for the approaching winter. His lady remained silent. I declined his honest invitation, and mentioned with some qualifications my repugnance to remaining in Liverpool, where I was, in a peculiar and painful degree, at once the subject of curiosity and animadversion. He coloured, and with much seriousness acquiesced, observing that I was made to excite envy, and to refute malice. "She will do *more*," said Mr. Furnival, shaking the doctor's hand: "she will extract from their venom a salutary medicine; for her faith and good principles will be strengthened, and her conduct justified in her preserver's own time. In the interim she will have innocence to guard, and innocence to protect her; and with a few friends she may laugh at the world." Mrs. Hawksbury hoped it would be so. "I do more than hope," replied Mr. Furnival with vivacity; and, applying to his neckcloth, "I am certain it will be so, madam; for, bad as the world is said to be, I must believe that a virtuous girl, with your husband to fight her battles, and with old Furnival for her *gallant* and *keeper*, will make her way through it, and put to silence an army of gossips." He smiled; but in 'such a sort,' that not one muscle of the doctor's serious face relaxed. We soon after retired for the night, and, on our final departure, with the doctor's warm blessing and his lady's kind adieux. I will, my dear Mrs. Underwood, transcribe for your better knowledge of my friend's excellencies, his letter to Mr. Hampden, with his wife's reply, which I have in my possession.

'MY DEAR GEORGE,

'I HAVE a poor little girl on my hands that I do not well know what to do with. She has had the temerity to brave the world, by harbouring in her bosom a deserted infant; and to provoke envy, by not only being a beauty, but also a modest unaffected beauty. But it happens that her principles are stronger than her nerves, and calumny does not agree with her constitution. Nor is Chancery-lane an abode that suits her, although I have had the honour of being called her *keeper* instead of her guardian. So I mean to bring her to your wife with her bantling, not knowing another female so worthy of the trust. Therefore, let us find the boy's nursery ready, and your wife's pure heart prepared to receive innocence and merit. I shall let her know the day she may expect us.

'Yours,

'FURNIVAL.'

Mrs. Hampden's reply was as follows:

'To Mr. Furnival.

'YOUR dear George, my good friend, says that you do not deserve a letter from him; and that he has a right to be surly, till you make your peace for having been absent from us three successive vacations. Subdued by the flattery contained in your letter, I am more placable. To be, in your estimation, the female best qualified to receive *Mr. Furnival's young and beautiful mistress*, is enough for my glory, and has disarmed me of all resentment. Assure this happy and amiable object of your favour, that in Maria Hampden she will meet a mother and a friend; for, as being your gift, I must love

and prize her. Tell her that my daughter Fielding leaves us tomorrow, and that the nursery will want a guest. Tell her that her protégé will find a foolish grandmother whom his endearing smiles will amuse. Tell her, that I shall glory in seconding the benevolence of a being who has lived to communicate comfort and joy to the mourner. Tell her (if thy left hand knows what thy right hand has performed in works of mercy) what thou hast done for the happiness of George and Maria Hampden; and then leave her to judge of the reception she will meet with, under that roof of peace we owe to Mr. Furnival. My husband thinks I have said more than is necessary; asserting that three words would have sufficed. Let him take the pen. *Come and try us.*

GEORGE HAMPDEN.

Come and bless us, says MARIA HAMPDEN.'

Soothed to composure by these letters, I expressed in lively terms my acknowledgements to Mr. Furnival. "Aye, aye," replied he, untying his neckcloth, "I will show you a woman you will love and reverence. True genuine virtue, Pauline, despises the maxims of a narrow-minded, cold-hearted caution. It is superior to the abject fear of being soiled in aiding the weak and oppressed to escape from the peltings of malice and the buffetings of detraction. Conscious of her own unsullied brightness, she can smile at the impotent attempt to spot her purity, and with calm and dignified firmness maintain her privilege of succouring those whose innocence needs support and merits protection. Virtue, Pauline," continued he with increasing energy, "solid and true virtue even here, shows the source from which it springs. It is merciful and tender, and, like the God of mercy and compassion, will not be diverted from its course by the shallow judgments of those who, in their affected zeal for a cause they do not understand, insolently condemn as wrong all that lies beyond their comprehension. But it ought to be no matter of surprise to you, that such as know not their Maker in his most glorious attributes, as these relate to us children of the dust, and imperfect in all our boasted prerogatives, should without pity see a victim immolated on the altar of envy and hatred. But we must have no more tears," added he: "you must not let the good doctor perceive you have been disturbed. He has been much vexed already by his immaculate lady's difficulties in regard to you, and her dread of the world's censure. Poor Hawksbury, I suspect, forgot, when he became enamoured with a statue, that he did not possess Prometheus's gift; for he has not been able to transfuse one spark of that benevolent flame which warms his own heart, into the cold bosom of his wife. But we will not repay his generous intentions by leaving with him a subject for discord: he is mortified enough already... But every man is not master at home, nor every woman wise enough to know when her husband ought to rule."

I now proposed to Mr. Furnival my assuming the title of a married woman, alleging that I should think myself justified in evading, as much as was possible, an idle and impertinent curiosity, not only on my own account, but also on Mrs. Hampden's; and by being called Mrs. Paulin by her and her more particular associates, it might prevent, amongst her neighbours and with her domestics, that spirit of inquiry which I so much dreaded to excite. I urged the prudence of the young woman who attended me and Sigismund, and the probability there was of my remaining unknown under Mr. Hampden's roof. He perfectly concurred with me in my opinion of Fanny's fidelity and good sense, adding with a twist of his cravat, "Her mother has been long one of my seraglio, and it may be your brother would call Fanny my daughter; for Dawson, her aunt, had her to rock for more than twelve years under my roof after her father's death." He was not however so well satisfied with the intended change of my name; but it was finally determined to leave this delicate point to Mrs. Hampden's decision.

CHAPTER XII.

DURING our journey into Derbyshire I was naturally led to question my friend in relation to Mr. and Mrs. Hampden. I was informed that he had long known them; that they had only one child, a daughter, happily married to a clergyman of the name of Fielding, who lived in his parish near Grantham, and that Mrs. Fielding had already given her husband two fine boys and a little girl. "You must know," continued he smiling, "that Mrs. Hampden was once the arbitress of my fate. Her father, knowing my situation to be such as not to render a fortune with a wife necessary, pleaded for me with more authority than tenderness; and his daughter, pressed by his entreaties and commands, adopted the wise measure of trusting me with her secret engagement and decided preference of my friend Mr. Hampden. So being in my turn as honest as herself, I became her confidant; and finally succeeded in establishing the happiness of two persons I loved. The father was rescued from his difficulties, and Hampden placed in a situation of ease and profit. Maria was happy, and I had only to govern my own wayward heart... But for a time this was no pleasant work. It is only within a few years that I have been wise enough to trust it: and although we constantly corresponded, I never visited them till their daughter's marriage; when finding all was peace within, I yielded to their fond wishes, and have since made their house my summer retreat from time to time." The frankness and simplicity of this confession, with the reflexions of wisdom it led to, raised in my mind the reverence of Mr. Furnival's character to what with colder hearts than mine would be called idolatry. But I now check my pen. You know Mr. Furnival. You were present when he led the trembling Pauline to the sanctuary of Mrs. Hampden's arms. You claimed a share in those tender cares which reassured her; you claimed the right to exercise your office; and you bade Pauline taste of the cordial Heaven had prepared for her support. My happiness is without alloy, for you believe me worthy of your protection; and under that protection no one will dare to defame me! Ah my dear and revered friend! what would not my swelling bosom prompt, but for your commands! Yet what language could convey to you the gratitude of

Your obliged and faithful

MARY PAULINE MURRAY?

CHAPTER XIII.

PAULINE waited not long for my thanks for the information her narrative had afforded; and a walk in our little wood finished her story.

"I have yet, my dear Mrs. Sedley," said she, "to mention my cares as these related to monsieur du Rivage's fate, and the result of those measures we pursued in regard to Sigismund. In the first place, let me at once say that my consolation depends on being able to contemplate my more than father, as in his grave; but there are moments when even this hope yields to the horrid thoughts of his being in a prison, and wanting every comfort. I cannot enlarge on this subject," added she with visible distress: "it is too much for my faith and fortitude!..."

“In respect to my dear child’s concerns,” continued she with more composure, “I have been governed by Mr. Furnival’s advice. Influenced by my representations, and Claudine’s and her daughter’s suspicions of the views the Aimsworths had adopted, he thought it prudent to act as though he believed them capable of taking so dishonourable a part as that which without scruple I had attributed to them. He soon gained information of the place of residence the family had chosen; and he desired me to write to Mr. Middleton; proposing to direct the letter to his seat in the North, to the care of Mr. Middleton’s agent there, in order that it might be forwarded to him without passing through the hands of his relations. This proposal met my wishes. My letter contained little more than an account of my arrival in England with Sigismund. I briefly said, that for reasons which would be explained I should defer till I heard from Mr. Middleton the relation of those events which had placed his son in my hands, contenting myself with believing that, as a father, he would be satisfied of the infant’s security whilst protected by *Pauline du Rivage*. An immediate answer was requested; and my address was to a friend of Mr. Furnival’s who lived at Durham. This gentleman, who is in the law, had the goodness to see himself my letter safely delivered at Umfreville Hall; but it has not been noticed.—From madame Meunier I have received two letters: both were discouraging and melancholy, (for both were written soon after we parted,) except as the last held out to me the consolatory hope that the wretched Marianne knew that her precious child was safe, and in health with me in England. Jeanneton had spoken to monsieur Broudier, on delivering miss Wilmot’s letter to him. He had said, ‘It is very well: all shall be done that can be done. You need not return. I shall write to mademoiselle Wilmot. She knows my zeal in her service.’ ‘Beyond this all is an impenetrable cloud,’ adds she, ‘both as it regards my dear lady and Mr. Middleton.’—“For a time,” continued the weeping Pauline, “I was convinced that death had removed Mr. Middleton, and I endeavoured to bring over Mr. Furnival to this opinion: but he chose I should write to Mrs. Hamilton; and ordered me to be direct in my inquiries relative to Mr. Middleton, and explicit in the reasons which entitled me to a speedy answer from her. Following his injunctions, I earnestly requested from her the intelligence I so much desired. ‘It is no idle curiosity,’ added I, ‘which prompts the question: is Augustus Middleton dead, or has he outlived his honour and the feelings of a man? Nothing less can account for his silence to an appeal, in which the innocence of his miserable wife Marianne Middleton and the fate of his son Sigismund Middleton are involved, and to which the name of Pauline du Rivage is affixed. This Pauline du Rivage, madam,’ continued I, ‘is not a woman who will be easily diverted from performing her duty. She has promised an injured and innocent mother to defend her offspring, and she will die if it be necessary in the cause she has undertaken. But she has Heaven and justice on her side, and she has friends who will assert her pretensions to notice in a different way, should this application fail.’

“This is the answer I received,” added Pauline, giving me the letter. I read as follows:

‘*Turin, &c. &c.*

‘MADEMOISELLE,

‘Mr. Middleton is living: if such an existence as his can be called life. He has in his possession such proofs of his worthless Marianne’s perfidy, as must conclusively and indisputably destroy your assertions, and the claims of the infant under your protection. We have Marianne’s declaration that no fruit, but that of hopeless misery to Mr. Middleton, sprung from his ill-fated marriage with a woman who meanly preferred contempt and ignominy to death, and, what was still more dreadful, consigned to

destruction a faithful husband for the completion of her guilt. I am disposed to believe that your humanity has been imposed upon. I need no experience of the speciousness with which Marianne de Fouclaut can veil her want of principle, nor any proofs of the villainy which stamps the character of the duke her father. Your honesty, like my own, has been abused, mademoiselle; and you are charged with the care of a child, who, if he live, will blush at hearing his parents named. I pity you: and should your feeble resources render my purpose, what I intend it, useful to you, you have only to apply to Mr. Watson at Aimsworth Castle, who will be prepared to answer your draft for a hundred pounds. It is uncertain how long I shall be absent from England; but should any future exigence arrive to you or the unfortunate child in question, you will do well to recollect that Charlotte Hamilton considers it as her duty to succour innocence under every circumstance of distress. Mr. Hamilton desires me to inform you, that my cousin Augustus Middleton makes no part of our family at present. He is on a tour, his return undetermined, his pursuits rather those suggested to him by his friends, than resulting from his own hopes of relief from a dejection of spirits, which has not only excluded him from every enjoyment of life, but which has also threatened to destroy the hopes of his family, whose pride and boast were in his virtues and talents. I remain

‘Your humble servant,

‘CHARLOTTE HAMILTON.’

“There is my reply to this unfeeling woman,” said Pauline, her face glowing with the keen sense of her wounded feelings.—It was as follows:

‘MADAM,

‘The unsuccessful advocate for truth and innocence needs no incitements to duty, nor fears any discouragement. I want no pecuniary aid in the performance of those engagements which have united Sigismund Middleton’s fortune and preservation to my own well-being. Though abandoned by his father and rejected by his father’s relations, he wants not friends. The feeble instrument Heaven has appointed for his support will be sustained by the mercy which guards the helpless orphan. Sigismund will be preserved; and will live to rescue the spotless name of his mother from reproach, and, it may be, to pardon a father, whose injustice has thrown him into the hands of strangers, who are unacquainted with those views which stand in his way to his father’s bosom. They are fully convinced of his claims to the name of Middleton, and of the cruelty of those who ought to protect him. Pauline du Rivage, madam, has not yielded up her judgment to a ‘well-told tale.’ She has the strongest evidences in her hands, that in the cause she has to maintain truth will support her; and in this cause she will never cease to plead till the injured Marianne de Fouclaut’s wrongs are acknowledged, and her son established in the rights of his birth.

‘PAULINE DU RIVAGE.’

“Mr. Furnival,” continued Pauline, “was not aware of the comfort he afforded me by declaring that he would take no steps in the business till the family returned to England. ‘A personal interview with Mr. Middleton,’ pursued he, ‘will effect more than volumes of letters; and when he sees the documents in my hands, he will acknowledge his son: at least we will make him just, Pauline,’ added he

smiling, 'or prove to the world that we are so ourselves. If, as I suspect, he has been the dupe of the machinations of his relations, our facts will undeceive him, and he will no longer wish to conceal his connexions in France, nor his being a parent.' Fearing to discover to my revered friend the secret influence Mr. Middleton had in my bosom, I acceded to his opinions; and expressed only my satisfaction that Sigismund would not be removed from me. But to you, my dear and indulgent Mrs. Sedley, I may say all I think. What can be said in favour of Mr. Middleton's honour? what for his conduct as it relates to *me*? Was not Pauline du Rivage entitled to a hearing, on a point of this consequence? Would not curiosity alone have suggested its gratification, had not his mind been predetermined to renounce for ever his ties with the angel he left to destruction? He dreaded the inquiry; for he believes his wife is innocent; and knows that his unfortunate child is the legal heir to his estate." She burst into tears. "I should have suffered less," continued she, "had I heard of his death. There is something peculiarly painful in finding those, to whom you had given every moral excellence that can dignify human nature, sinking beneath the level of the worst nature. Middleton has an understanding superior to any imposition of fraud and falsehood; he is acute, cool and persevering in his modes of action. Why did he not return to Paris, and seek there an elucidation of those appearances which produced doubts and suspicions? Why did he not seek me here? He was able to journey for his amusement. Oh, it is palpable! Middleton is base and cruel! However, my part is decided. Never will I part with Marianne de Fouclaut's child! The hour in which I hear his inhuman father is in England, I will quit it. He shall never be at the mercy of the Aimsworths, nor a bar in the way of his father's ambition!"—I saw that this was not the moment for combating her enthusiasm: I therefore contented myself with recommending to her some regard to her health, and repeating my assurances of constant regard and attention to her comforts. She thanked me, and proceeded to inform me of the inducements she had to quit Mrs. Hampden's house for Mrs. Underwood's. "I soon perceived," said she, "that Mrs. Hampden was the woman Mr. Furnival had described to me; but you know her, and my praise would be useless. Mrs. Underwood's intimacy in the family, and her conduct to me, soon paved the way to my confidence in her goodness. She was consulted on the expediency of my being called Mrs. Paulin, and she took my part of the question; because it gratified my feelings: the retirement in which she lived gave to her house attractions which Mr. Hampden's had not. At Rickland Farm we had no intruders; and it is needless for me to remark to you, that Mr. Hampden's connexions and business bring many visitors to his table. On these occasions I commonly sought a refuge for myself and Sigismund at Mrs. Underwood's; and in the similarity of our tastes and amusements we mutually found these days pleasant. Tenderness and confidence calmed my spirits; and the interest Sigismund gained in the hearts of his friends was a cordial to mine.

"In the following summer Mrs. Hampden persuaded me to accompany her and her husband in a visit to Mrs. Fielding, her daughter. Sigismund and Fanny were Mrs. Underwood's guests during my absence. On our return from Grantham it was resolved that I should see Matlock. My scruples were overruled. 'The full season was later in the summer, and I should find only the beauties of the spot to amuse me.' This prediction was in part verified. There were few people in the house, but in the number of those we met at the dining-hour was a family Mr. Hampden knew; and induced by his friends, he engaged to pass a few days with them. We took possession of an apartment in a house called the Temple, and settled at once into the party which we found so inviting. Charmed with our temporary abode, we several times dined there, instead of joining our friends at the large house called the Hall; and, exhilarated by the scene around me, I found my health and spirits equal to the demands made on them by a good-humoured lively girl, the daughter of the gentleman and lady with whom we might be said to pass our time. At the expiration of a week Mr. Hampden with some regret said his holidays were

finished; and that we should either remain without him, or be obliged to leave Matlock on the Sunday morning. Our decision was prompt; and to finish the entreaties which succeeded, we proposed to make the most of the intervening time. On returning from a long but delightful ramble, my young companion and myself took a seat on the road which separated the two houses, and which was placed there for the accommodation of the company which resorted to our host's table; our friends attending Mrs. Hampden to a shop within our view, whither she proceeded for the purpose of enlarging her orders for articles made of the Derbyshire spar, and which were destined by her as a present to a lady in London. The delay of the party was longer than we had foreseen; but we enjoyed our seat, and chatted at our ease till our attention was called forth by the approach of a lady and two gentlemen, who in their way to the hall had no other road but the one before us. The lady was elegantly dressed, but was veiled, and the night was approaching. She was supported by her two escorts, one a military beau, the other a handsome well-dressed young man. 'Those are of the party who drove in this morning after you left the hall,' observed my young friend: 'the lady is very handsome. I should judge they were very great people by their gay carriages. They drove up with a coach and four and a tandem, and in a style that nothing disgraced but a man who seemed to be the owner of the equipage, and such a 'fright' my eyes never before beheld! The lady has wisely left him to his repose,' added she, lowering her voice to a whisper; 'he is old, and dreadfully sickly.' A loud laugh from the still slowly advancing party was followed by these words, 'Oh! never fear: I will manage it.' And I instantly recognised Mrs. Whaley. She approached the bench on which we were seated, and with affected languor slightly bowing to us, placed herself in the vacant place, the gentlemen standing before her. 'You have killed me with your odious hill,' said she, addressing them. 'I must rest, or alarm my husband by sending for the coach.' Gallant offers of carrying her followed. At length, on my asking my companion whether we should walk to our friends, she turned towards me with affected surprise, and exclaimed, 'Bless me! fortune is singularly obliging to me! Who would have expected this second favour? I hope you are well, madam. Pray how do little Sigismund's concerns go on? Has he found his father's castle, or is it still *le chateau d'Espagne*?' 'He has found all he wanted,' answered I with firmness and resentment,—'*friends* in whose bosoms he has a sure refuge.' 'I am glad of it,' replied she; 'but permit me, madam, before you depart,' for I was rising with that design, 'to inquire of you what is become of the Wilmots our fellow travellers. I hear strange reports of your friend miss Wilmot. They tell me that she is returned to Paris, not being able to find in London any private lodging so commodious and fit for her purpose as those in la rue St. Honoré!' She laughed rudely. 'Were the report true that you have heard,' replied I with cold disdain, 'yet would miss Wilmot still possess one claim to lenity; for she would show that frailty was not always without modesty, nor vivacity and wit without discretion. But it fortunately happens that I can assure you, madam, that this lady is with her parents and her husband in Switzerland, and in a situation which entirely refutes the idle tale you have heard.' I immediately quitted the spot, the gentlemen making room for us to pass, and civilly bowing. I was too much fluttered to speak for some moments. My companion perceived my disorder: 'Surely,' said she, 'that lady cannot be a modest woman; I never saw so confident a one! She has disturbed you by her impertinence; and had not the men with her been wiser than herself, they would have been rude. Did you observe how they stared at you?' I at once satisfied the amiable girl's curiosity, by telling her that the lady in question was by chance in the same packet with the Wilmots and myself; that miss Wilmot, having discovered that she was a woman of levity, had treated her with some coldness, and more marks of contempt than pleased the lady's vanity; and to this cause, and the idle curiosity of her beaux, I attributed her unexpected attack on me. 'Say nothing of it,' added I: 'it will vex Mrs. Hampden, and we shall see no more of this Mrs. Whaley.' Some little traits of her husband, given with more gaiety than I felt, finished the subject as far as it related to my companion's amusement; but

your poor Pauline quitted Matlock the following day, with sensations not unlike those which I conceive a reprieved criminal feels. I related this vexatious incident to Mrs. Underwood on my return home, and with tears enlarged on the continual anxiety I suffered, lest it should be remarked by Mrs. Hampden's servants, that I shunned company at home and made no visits abroad. She entered into the state of my mind with that tender sympathy which had resulted from her own disappointments in life; and I soon after became stationary with her, Mrs. Hampden generously consulting my peace more than her own gratification. In this peaceful abode, in this sanctuary from the world's scorn, in this asylum from every evil, you found me, my dear Mrs. Sedley. I was in deep affliction. I had seen my guardian angel's last look! and I was again the child of sorrow and repining. You arrived..." She suddenly rose, and, throwing her arms round me as she kneeled, buried her face in my lap, and added "*My mother!* bless your Pauline! receive the thanks she cannot speak!"—I did bless her, gentle reader, and Heaven vouchsafed to hear my prayer: my heart has received its recompense.

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CHAPTER XIV.

MY personal knowledge of Mr. Furnival took place at his usual and annual visiting term. To my obligations to him for the comforts I enjoyed was added the natural curiosity of beholding a man whose name was held in reverence by every one within my reach. The joy which his entrance communicated to the assembled groupe of his friends acted upon my mind with irresistible force. I forgot he was a stranger to my person, and with them I eagerly met his warm and frank salutation. He appeared in his turn to have forgotten that Rickland Farm had a new mistress; for in five minutes after the first greetings he called me 'his dear friend.'

I think I should, from Mr. Furnival's external appearance alone, have judged him to be something above the class of common minds. He was dressed with the simplicity and neatness of a quaker, without the stiffness and peculiarity of their sect. His person was of the middle height, and well made, but thin; his hair very gray, and his complexion approaching to the delicate tints of an infant: but his eyes still sparkled with the animation of his mind, and a colour glowed in his cheek, which at the first moment I saw him I pronounced to be the fallacious mark of health. I was not mistaken; for Mr. Furnival's temperance and habits of life had for years counteracted the original weakness of his lungs. Poor Pauline welcomed him with tears. I surveyed his varied expression of countenance and tones of voice, whilst he received this tribute of her gratitude and affection. "Where is my boy?" said he with a smile which would have suited a pitying angel; and tying his slackened cravat, "he will welcome me with a shout of joy. Can he manage his rocking-horse as well as he does his mother?" Sigismund entered, and with transport acknowledged his Benefactor. Impressed by the scene I had witnessed, and, I may add, oppressed by a sense of my obligations to him, I was more silent than usual during the course of the first evening I passed with him. Pauline perceived it: and Pauline understood me. On quitting Mrs. Hampden's for our home, he gaily addressed me: "You see," said he, "the spoiled child is not quite so young as Sigismund; but I trust to you, Mrs. Sedley, not only for my own reformation but also my playmate's. I shall be with you for a lesson to-morrow morning, and you must order two portions of bread and milk instead of one at your breakfast table." My eyes filled: he pressed my hand, and turned from me. But I must check my pen. I forget that the young and the gay, the busy and the prosperous, may censure as dull a detail which has for its subject nothing more interesting than Mr. Furnival, and the sympathies of a mind which in some degree was like his own. Let it suffice, I was in a week his 'dame Sedley' and prime counsellor. One morning he took an opportunity of consulting Mrs. Hampden and myself in regard to the steps it was proper to take with *his daughter*, as he constantly called Pauline, relatively to some intelligence he had gained of monsieur du Rivage. It appeared that he had never slackened in his inquiries in regard to his unfortunate friend. Mr. Wilmot, when called upon to settle the account of Pauline's journey and voyage, and to deliver up the jewels he had in his hands for Pauline, discovered to Mr. Furnival the meanness of his mind. He pleaded that du Rivage might appear, and want them for his own exigences. But his evasions answered no other purpose than to render Mr. Furnival more firm in his demands, and better qualified to trace poor du Rivage's route and projects on leaving Paris. Amongst other expedients which his active zeal suggested, was assiduously searching out the French emigrants in and near London, whose arrival in any way corresponded with the period of time in which his friend had effected his escape from Paris. The spring after his autumnal visit, in which he had so much befriended me by his conversation with my cousin Mrs. Underwood, he saw by chance three persons in St. James's Park sunning themselves on a seat, and eagerly conversing aloud in the French

tongue. Their appearance bespoke them ecclesiastics; and they were men of a certain age, and their manners such as to invite his approach. He seated himself beside them, with an apology which at once proclaimed the motive of his intrusion; for with that frankness and courtesy which with the undesigning at once leads to confidence, he begged to know the precise time in which they had emigrated, and by what road they had reached England. After listening with sympathy to the tale of sorrow each in his turn brought forward, he enlarged on his hopeless anxiety in regard to his unhappy friend monsieur du Rivage, and detailed the circumstances of his escape from Paris, and the progress of his journey till within some leagues of his asylum at Rouen: adding, that from that period no intelligence had been gained of him, notwithstanding the zeal and diligence of the gentleman in whose house it had been his intention to take refuge till he could find an opportunity of reaching England. "I am from the neighbourhood of Rouen, sir," observed one of the priests; "and your relation of your unfortunate friend's age and infirmities, with his delay, brings to my mind an occurrence which precisely agrees with the time you have specified. I will, if it please you, relate the particulars which strike me as having an analogy at least with the circumstances you have mentioned: you must judge for yourself: but in a crisis which has involved thousands in the ruin it portends, there want not examples of an interposing Providence in favour of the oppressed. At any rate, with this hope before us, you will find in it some alleviation of your present suspense." Mr. Furnival, eagerly thanking him, proposed their adjourning to a coffee-house, and dining with him; "for," added he, "the miseries of poor du Rivage were depicted in their pale and wan faces."

They had no sooner settled themselves in their warm covert than the curé began his tale.

"Previously to the unhappy events which have cast me on the generosity of your hospitable shores, monsieur," said he, "I patiently exercised my functions, although insulted and disregarded by my flock. It was numerous, but composed principally of the poor and unlettered; and my district being of large extent, I had diligently prescribed to myself the duty of visiting all the cottages in rotation. I relaxed not when I found I was considered as an impertinent intruder; for many of the poor people still loved their priest; and to prevent their being suspected of so doing, I made my visits general. One morning I passed a cottage which in the fullest plenitude of my influence I had abandoned, as being beyond my power to reform. The owner of it was a dissolute man, whose insolence had offended me. He was sitting at his door repairing a net; and I inquired after his wife. 'She is within,' answered he, 'and I dare say will be thankful if you will give your passport to a dying man she has been fool enough to harbour.' 'It is my duty to visit the sick, and to assist the distressed,' answered I: 'your wife should have applied to me.' 'Enter then,' answered he insolently, 'and let us see what your prayers to your saints can do for him: at present he is past eating.' I made no reply, but entered the house. The woman met me, and, with more piety than I expected, said in a low voice, that God had sent me; and leading the way to a hovel in the back part of the house, she directed my attention to an aged man in the agonies of death. I felt his pulse: it spoke the conflict of expiring nature. 'Why have you not called upon me for succour, Thérèse?' asked I mildly. 'He would not permit me,' answered she with confusion. I had not time for contest; but drawing near his miserable bed I repeated the usual prayers for the dying. A convulsive struggle and a deep groan interrupted me. I raised him in my arms. He opened his eyes, and, gazing on my face, sighed profoundly. I applied my cross to his lips: he refused it, and pointed to a small book near him. The woman put it into my hand, and I saw it was a neat and elegant edition of the Neufchatel Liturgy. Every priest in France is not a bigot, my good sir. I had a dying fellow-creature before me, not the articles of *any creed*, and I repeated his prayers to *my God* and *his God*. The woman now brought

some mulled wine, and endeavoured to get a portion of it into his mouth. But it was too late: he feebly turned his dying eyes on me, pressed my hand, tried to speak, but could not, and, sinking into my arms, with little struggle expired. The terrified woman screamed, and her husband entered. He surveyed the dead man; then brutally turning to his trembling wife he said, 'Well! did I not tell thee as much yesterday? St. Peter never opens the door to those who are penniless.' 'Sainte Vierge!' exclaimed the woman, 'how can you talk so like a heretic, Jaques, before monsieur? This business may cost us our lives, without his assistance. What shall we do with the body?' The fellow was evidently struck by her question; and with more civility said, he hoped I would befriend him, for the deceased was neither an aristocrat nor a Frenchman. 'If he had been,' observed I mildly, 'it was your duty, both as a christian and a man, to succour the afflicted; and you will find no difficulty with me in regard to his burial. But has he left no papers behind him, which may direct you to his friends? If they will not recompense you for your humanity and loss of time, I will.' Jaques was softened, and, thanking me, said he had never named them, or said more of himself than that he was born and bred in Switzerland. 'When I first saw him,' added he, 'which is now a fortnight since, I found him, as I thought, dying on the road: an ass was near him, with his packsaddle and two bags, which we have found to be filled with linen for sale. He implored me to harbour him for the night, saying, although he was a poor man, he was an honest one, and had wherewithal to pay me for his lodging. So I took off the bags, and having mounted, or rather, laid him on his beast, I led him home with me. Theresa was frightened at first; but she got him to bed, and gave him some hot wine. He was better in the morning, and told us that his illness arose from having been drenched with the rain, and having no change of clothes. He complained, however, of having a dreadful pain in his bones, and asked her, whether he might stay with us till he was well; adding, she might repay herself by means of his goods. So, sir, all was agreed between *them*: but he grew more and more feeble, and we saw it was all over with him.'—'Why did you not get him a doctor?' asked I. 'I did ask him more than once,' replied the woman with eagerness, 'whether he would have one; but he always answered he had one in that little book you saw, and that he knew physic would do him no good.' I next proposed examining the packsaddle. Jaques surlily answered, that he had examined it, and its contents proved he was an honest man, for there was nothing in it but straw. Convinced of my inability to detect the knavery of this fellow, I gave up the business, observing they had to concert such an account of the deceased's connexion with them, as to elude inquiry. This they made no difficulty in promising, and I interred the corpse as their relation, who on his journey had died at their house suddenly. My assertion, that I had seen the man before he expired, sufficed; and Jaques and his wife appropriated undisturbedly the property he had left. Nothing however appeared but 'the old cousin's beast,' and no suspicions followed.

"I was not forgotten for my kindness. The woman gave me the poor man's prayer-book; and I lost not the opportunity of giving her, in return for it, my spiritual advice. She wept, and told me I was a saint, like the poor *gentleman* who was gone to heaven. 'Then you think,' observed I, 'that he was something more than he appeared?' She coloured, and replied, she was certain of it; but that her husband would kill her if he knew what she had said. I engaged to be faithful, and kissed my cross: but she solemnly declared she knew not his name, and that he had not a paper with him beyond the book in my hands, and a few assignats: 'but,' added she, 'ignorant as I am, I saw by his behaviour he was no common man; and I call God to witness I did all in my power to comfort him. My husband is a rough man, monsieur, and he grew somewhat weary of having a sick man in his house, and a little uneasy also that he had taken him under his roof; but I persuaded him to be patient, and answered for concealing him from our neighbours.'

“When she withdrew, I examined her gift, in the hope of finding the late possessor’s name; well knowing these people could not read. It was alternately bound up with blank paper, and many pages of these were filled up with the pious effusions of the writer, and with passages taken from the Gospel and Psalms: but the writing was neat and fine, and evidently that of a female hand; the title page, on which the name had been written, was rent off; but so hastily that the word *Paul* was left jagged and imperfect.”

Mr. Furnival observed, that the book might turn out an important evidence, he having in his hands many letters, not only of his unfortunate friend’s writing, but also of his wife’s, who was christened *Pauline*. “Alas!” replied the curé, “I have it not. My flight from my country resembled that predicted by my Divine Master to the Jews of old; but blessed be his adored name!” added he, devoutly crossing himself, “he has prepared many mansions of peace for his followers!” “Cannot you recollect the writing?” asked Mr. Furnival. “My letters may recall it to your mind.” “I cannot say with certainty,” answered he, “for that in question was pale and minute; and my eyes being weak, I consigned the book to a shelf with others, after having examined it without success for the immediate object of my inquiry.”—An engagement followed for the next day to dine in Chancery-lane, in which was included the party, who had by more general conversation much interested the benevolent heart of my friend.

CHAPTER XV.

THIS second interview was favourable to Mr. Furnival’s hopes of ascertaining the fate of his friend. The gentleman thought the letters which he examined were written in the same hand, though the characters were larger, and more carelessly formed. “This visit proved no unfavourable one to the poor emigrants,” added Mr. Furnival, “for they learned the way to a door always open to them at four o’clock. But, my dear friends,” continued he, addressing Mrs. Hampden and myself, “I am still at a loss how to proceed. The only test to be relied upon is Pauline’s evidence. She may have some knowledge of this book; yet of late she has submitted to the belief of her benefactor’s death, and I dread renewing in her mind a suspense which has already worn her to a shadow. What is your advice?” I argued for a plain statement of the business to her, and convinced my friends, that her imagination was constantly picturing monsieur du Rivage under scenes of misery and horror; and that I was certain the experiment would be in her favour, by an explicit appeal to her understanding and principles. “She thinks,” added I, “that her friends know more of the wretched state of du Rivage than she does; and she concludes from their reserve, that he is in a dungeon.” I was deputed to act; and I lost no time in placing before Pauline the particulars above detailed. She wept, but with fervour blessed God that he was at peace; and she not only described the book with accuracy, but repeated also from memory several affecting and pious effusions of madame du Rivage’s writing. “I shall never forget the last she wrote,” said the weeping Pauline. “It was as follows:

““Chasten me, O my God! as thy erring but not disobedient child. I bow with submission to thy will, and bless thy interposing grace, which wounds for the wise purpose of healing. But in mercy receive me, before my faith in thee is cast down by witnessing the oppression and ruin of those I love. Oh! God of all mercy! I implore thy pity. I am weak. My husband clings to my heart. Save him from his persecutors; and when I am at rest, protect and encourage him to seek in thee an asylum from his sorrows, and a place of safety for the remnant of his days.’—“She not only repeated this petition,”

continued Pauline, “many times, but turned down the leaf on which it was written, desiring me not to omit placing the book on her husband’s desk as soon as she was dead. ‘It will comfort him,’ said she, ‘for he will see that heaven in removing me was merciful: he will have the support of his own conscience for the trials yet to come; for he has been a faithful steward over those things committed to his keeping. He will recall to his memory, in the hour of poverty,’ continued madam du Rivage, ‘his own principles of action. How often have I heard him assert that a spirit of benevolence and generosity never impoverished any man! that, in his regard for the benefit and ease of others, he was securing his own comforts and gratifications! And yet, my Pauline, is he steady to his principles, although he has long known that amongst those whom he has to fear are many whom he has served by his friendship and propped by his credit.’—But let me quit a subject too painful for my present feelings,” continued Pauline: “let it suffice that I should know this book in any state and condition; and would give all I possess to see it again.” Pauline’s evidence, however, so forcibly corroborated the priest’s account, that Mr. Furnival and ourselves have remained without any doubts as to the termination of monsieur du Rivage’s sufferings. If in this detail of his last and concluding scene I be censurable for having digressed too far, and unnecessarily, from the more immediate thread of my narrative, my apology is this: Humanity dictated the page, which is intended to give that relief to others which I have experienced from it myself; for it is more soothing than painful to the human heart, to contemplate the good man sheltered from the storm, though still remote from us, than to see him buffeting in the waves, and his escape doubtful.

CHAPTER XVI.

I COULD not with reason be mortified, much less offended, should it happen that my readers regard me in the same point of view they do the scene-shifter at the theatre, as a person useful in his way, but too insignificant for their notice. Yet there is even in the humblest stations in life an ambition, which when properly directed will ensure to us approbation and even glory; although it may be a glory neither adorned with laurels nor borne through the world on the wings of fame. I have hitherto endeavoured, to the utmost of my ability, to bring forward the machinery committed to my hands without bungling; and I now begin to hope for promotion, and to be allowed to face from time to time the audience. I am, however, modest in my pretensions; and in courting its applause, I shall not venture to give my own wit instead of the part allotted me. As I believe no character will so well suit my talents as that of an *old woman*, I will try to support that, and proceed to place before my readers an example that an old lady may be a reasonable being.

I had from day to day perceived that Sigismund’s influence over his mother’s mind was pernicious to himself, and fatiguing to her; and, what was equally evident, that neither my wisdom nor years had been able to resist his attractions. Sigismund was advancing to his sixth year; and although an amiable tyrant, he perfectly understood that his will was the law. Mr. Furnival’s visit did not mend matters; and I took the alarm. Mr. and Mrs. Fielding’s arrival at their father’s with their children made Mr. Furnival my guest; and, pleased with their management of their young pupils, I ventured to point out to Mr. Furnival my plan of extricating Sigismund from the dangers annexed to his passing his infancy with two women, who trembled ‘lest the winds of heaven should visit his face too roughly.’ My friends seconded me, and Mr. Furnival’s concurrence was gained. Poor Pauline acknowledged “that no people on earth were better qualified than Mr. and Mrs. Fielding for the task of education; but such a child as Sigismund still wanted a mother’s care, a mother’s tenderness.” I smiled. “Are you quite satisfied,” asked I, “that in this reluctance to parting with your idol you are disinterested? What think you of his

triumph over you this very morning? A few tears subdued your firmness; a smile reconciled you, not only to the rebel but to your own better reason. Ask yourself what will be the future character of this noble boy, reared with a tenderness which precludes all rivalry or emulation, which induces habits of fastidious nicety, even to his rejecting his bread and milk because a fly was drowned in it; and which must render him the slave of his own passions and the prey of the designing.”—Pauline was not prepared for so serious an appeal.—“I could no more bear to see him in a large school than yourself,” continued I; “but in Mr. Fielding’s family he would enjoy a home, and the advantages of an enlightened and cultivated father. Let us make the experiment; and if in ten days he be not reconciled to his new playground, and contented with the restraints of wisdom, he shall return to us, and, as major Oldcastle says, preserve his complexion, and charm our eyes.” My remonstrances were not lost. Master Sigismund was sent with his new companions to the Grantham hills, and we had the satisfaction of hearing that he had given his great coat to a boy who had none, it being useless to him; for the Fieldings never wore one. Mr. Furnival’s departure for London was softened to us by the prospect held out of our being his guests in the succeeding February; and the goodness of his nature prompted him to give Fanny a holiday with her aunt Dawson, by way of balance for the absence of her little charge. She went to town with Mr. Furnival, and was to remain there till our arrival. The intermediate months, notwithstanding these desertions, had their enjoyments. Pauline gained spirits; for Sigismund braved the snow, and had forgotten his maid Fanny. She was however indulged in her wish to see the hero of Mrs. Fielding’s praise; and making Grantham our road, we passed ten days with our friends and the hardy Sigismund. From thence, escorted by major Oldcastle and my man-servant, we proceeded to London. At Stilton we ordered fresh horses and some refreshments; and whilst these were preparing, Ralph our servant entered the room, with that confidence which he felt in the indulgence of his ladies, to show us a small basket filled with toys. “I beg pardon,” said the honest creature, “but I thought you would like to see them, they are so neat and uncommon; and I think, madam, if you saw the poor man without, you would buy something of him. He is a French prisoner here, and sells these things for his poor countrymen, who with himself are in Yaxley barracks. Here is a shoe, ladies,” continued Ralph, producing one an inch long. “It is made of a piece of bare beef-bone: I am sure my bones would have been as bare, before my ingenuity would have reached to that contrivance for keeping me alive.” “Where is the poor man?” asked Pauline with compassion. “In the kitchen,” replied the servant: “he is resting himself, poor soul! and his crutches into the bargain. They let him go about to sell these things: there is no fear of his escaping, unless to another and better world.” “Bring him hither,” said the major, “and let us hear whether he can recommend his wares better than thou hast done.” Ralph understood the language of nature: “His face will speak for him,” answered he, hastily retreating to execute his commission.

The person thus described entered the room, supported by one crutch and Ralph. He was wrapped up in a threadbare military cloak; his head bound round with a coloured handkerchief, which by no means lessened the effect of his emaciated and deadly pale countenance. “*Asseyez-vous, monsieur,*” said Pauline, drawing forward an arm chair; “*reposez-vous pendant que nous examinons ces jolies bagatelles.*” She filled a glass at her hand with some mulled wine, and with tenderness pointed to it. He obeyed her first command; for, sinking into the chair, he fell back in it, his features became convulsed, and from a struggle we thought the forerunner of his dissolution he was relieved by groans and a burst of tears. The major offered him some of the wine. He took a little; and fixing his large and expressive eyes on Pauline, he deeply sighed. “It is indeed *madame du Rivage,*” said he: “but misery has so changed Meunier that she knows him not! Tell me, does Sigismund live? Do you yet believe Nicolas faithful? Oh speak! and let me die in peace.” “Good God!” exclaimed the frantic Pauline, “what shall I do to preserve

him? He is dying! Send for succour! I shall be distracted!" "Be calm," said the major with firmness: "you increase his emotions: he is too weak for happiness; but he only needs repose to recover him." And again cautioning Pauline, he left us to provide for the invalid's wants. Tears now were the only language employed; and I ventured to inform monsieur Meunier that we had just parted from Sigismund, who was in perfect health. He raised his eyes to heaven, and his lips moved. Pauline, unmindful of the major's injunctions, now taking poor Meunier's hand, and tenderly pressing it in hers, spoke of Sigismund's *friends*. "They have succoured *me* for his sake," added she with eagerness: "they will succour you *for your own*; for faithfulness and Meunier are one." Again he raised his imploring eyes to heaven, but was unable to speak, and again his fleeting spirits seemed to desert him. He was carried to the bed the major had seen prepared in the house; and with Ralph's assistance, the poor invalid was conveyed to it in a condition of extreme weakness. During the time the major thus exerted his friendly cares I was engaged in soothing Pauline. I had succeeded but indifferently. Her tears had, it is true, ceased to flow, but her countenance was flushed by anxiety and distress, when the major again joined us. He spoke with seriousness, and assured her that Meunier would do well, and that he was going to visit the commanding officer. "It happens," continued he, "that we are no strangers to each other, and he is a man who will permit another to give succour to the prisoner of war. Your friend has now the comforts necessary for his cure; and do you write, Mrs. Sedley, to Furnival, and tell him we shall not be with him this week." Pauline with renewed tears blessed him, and fervently implored heaven to recompense his kindness. He smiled, and, taking her hand, reminded her that she could repay him by relying on his services and ordering a good dinner, as he should bring home guests to share it. He kept his word; and we had the satisfaction of hearing from the surgeon that his patient was in no immediate danger from his wound. "It is a gun-shot wound in the hip," added he, "improperly treated by being healed too soon. He will probably be lame for life, but, with the comforts he will now enjoy, may do very well." The officer assured us that he would cheerfully promote every plan for his further enlargement; and with the most perfect politeness made over his prisoner to Pauline, with a compliment which proved him no novice in the language of gallantry.

The following day we were allowed to visit the sick man, and the gratified Pauline found him accommodated as she wished. I cannot better show my respect to my readers than by relinquishing the opportunity now before me of embellishing my work with a few strokes of the pathetic: but it so happens, that my imagination is never in the descriptive mood when my heart is under the strong impressions of feeling and pity; and the recollection of Meunier's *eloquence of looks* has ruined me for the pathos in words. Let it therefore suffice that I place before my readers the narrative which he has supplied for my pen; and which was given us, as his strength and our precautions admitted, during the ten days we remained at Stilton.

Nicolas Meunier, during our first interview, had listened to Pauline's information of the events which had conducted her dear Sigismund to the security he enjoyed. But a sadness she had remarked in him checked her wishes of hearing of his family, and of those occurrences in which there were so many circumstances to dread. He failed not to observe it, and with visible agitation said, "My captivity has had one alleviation: my beloved wife..." He stopped. "Say no more, my good friend," replied Pauline, struggling with her feelings: "it is needless." "She is happy, mademoiselle," answered he; "and I endeavour not to murmur. I have however had much to suffer, and you have much to hear that will call upon you for fortitude. I almost shrink from the task, although I have so lately implored the Almighty to give me the opportunity I have now before me, and to permit me to leave an evidence behind me, that in

no one instance of my conduct have I failed in my duty to my benefactors. I have been graciously heard; and now have only to relate to you a scene of atrocity which will no less astonish than afflict you.”

NICOLAS MEUNIER’S NARRATIVE

I WILL begin, my dear madam, by informing you, that in consequence of a wound in my right arm, and the importance my noble colonel gave to it, as having been received in the defence of his nephew, my captain, whose life was by my interference providentially saved, I obtained my discharge from further service, and retired with some *éclat* and a small pension. My dear wife, in the mean time finding she could be of no use to her lady, no sooner saw me in a convalescent state than she proposed to me to give up the apartment in la rue St. Honoré, and to retire to her mother’s. Her arguments for this step were grounded on the uselessness of the expense, and the little probability of her lady’s needing the rooms, or thinking them a proper refuge should her escape from the Abbaye be effected. But perpetually clinging to this fond and fallacious hope, she assiduously employed her time in preparing for her beloved lady an asylum in her mother Claudine’s house; and with an invention her zeal prompted, she contrived a means of eluding danger for the future inmate of the rooms, which she fitted up with her lady’s furniture. I will not detail to you the endless projects we conceived. Alas! they served no other purpose than to keep up an inquietude already pernicious to poor Jeanneton. Amongst the number of these projects was, however, one that I could not give up. In the relation given me of our lady’s intimation of the danger that was approaching on the morning of that fatal day she left l’Eclair, the circumstance of Clement’s name appearing had not been omitted; and I determined to discover what was become of him. With this purpose I lived more at Paris than in the country, and from policy served in my shop. But my inquiries proved abortive; and I was led to believe that he had left Paris, or was a prisoner with his master. You can be no stranger to the horrors perpetrated at the Abbaye on the fatal second of September (continued Meunier, wiping his languid face). We ought not to weep, my dear mademoiselle, for an angel’s release from misery, nor to stand appalled by the means by which she regained her native abode. No; let us reserve those tears of pity for the ferocious tigers who through eternity will have to suffer for their insatiate cruelty! But, *dæmons* as they were, they are blameless in comparison with those who rendered her the willing victim of their mad fury!

On hearing of the tumult, I flew to the Abbaye; and forgetful that my arm was still in a sash, I instinctively put my pistols in my pocket. My uniform gave me access into the house. Great and just Being! I have seen death in the field of battle—my nerves have not relaxed; but in that slaughter house in which brother was armed against his defenceless brother, what heart would not have been appalled? Sickening at the view, I slowly traversed a long corridor. All was as silent as the grave there; but from one moment to another I heard the more distant sounds of uproar and confusion. My passage was intercepted by a narrow staircase, and the hope which shot a ray through my soul renewed my strength and braced my arm. I ascended with my pistols prepared, and found myself in a passage which I conceived led from the offices to many apartments. A lamp was suspended near a niche in the wall, made I suppose for the guard. Shall I proceed, mademoiselle?...or shall I leave to your imagination a still more terrifying idea of insulted virtue? Marianne’s spirit was fled, and unconfined exulted in its purity. She was extended on her father’s bosom, her own bare, and one arm dreadfully wounded. I stood transfixed, but, reeling at length to the seat, recovered my recollection. The steps of several persons riotously singing, and which approached me, put me on my guard. I started up, and, presenting my pistol, warned them to stop. “Who are you?” asked the leader of the party, who I now perceived was an officer

of the national guard. I named Meunier of the ——brigade. “What, Vieuxbois’s brave lieutenant?” rejoined he. “What are you doing here?” I explained the tragedy before me as well as my emotions would permit me, and conjured him to assist me in removing the bodies. They at once swore they would serve me, and, covering them with their cloaks, deposited them beyond the reach of insult. Touched by the scene and my agonies, these people faithfully served me; and the commanding officer exerted so much zeal, that I had the following night the consolation of seeing performed the last duty in which Meunier could be useful.

Distracted with alarms for my wife, who was far advanced in her pregnancy, I instantly set out for Claudine’s. I was too late. The horrid tale, which no time can erase from the annals of France, had reached my wife; and on seeing me she fainted. Let me abridge this part of my narrative... Suffice it, I was delirious when the grave enclosed the mother and my infant. Claudine, mademoiselle... But wherefore should I tell you the remedies she applied to my lacerated bosom? They were such as have sustained me to this hour, and will soften my pillow in my last! During the whole of this winter I was my mother’s care, and my retirement was frequently cheered by my captain’s visits. Vieuxbois was generous and grateful; and he could not forget the service I had been so fortunate as to render him: it was his pleasure to call an act of simple duty one of heroism; for he was attached to me as to a man whom he had found faithful. His arguments prevailed, and I accepted his offer to join his uncle as steward, and particular follower of his fortune in the new appointment and promotion which conducted him to join the troops in Flanders. My little commerce had flourished in the hands of my careful and honest associate; but I was miserable and unsettled, and even Claudine recommended a change of scene she conceived to be remote from danger. In consequence of these arrangements I left her early in the spring, in order to prepare for the campaign and to settle my commercial concerns. Monsieur Luzarche, my partner, wished to enlarge his speculations; and I, leaving him to his plans, took care of the shop for some short time whilst he was absent.

CHAPTER XVII.

ACCIDENTALLY crossing a court in my way to my abode, I met Clement. I believe I should have passed him, so much was he altered, had not his club-feet attracted my notice. On my accosting him he started; but, recollecting himself, expressed much satisfaction at the rencontre. Impelled by my curiosity, and the hopes of hearing something from him of de Béne’s fate, I invited him home with me; and he acceding to my proposal, we soon reached it. His shabby appearance and meagre countenance spoke his necessities; and as master of the house, my partner being still absent, I ordered some refreshments to be brought. “You do not eat,” observed I: “you look ill.” “I have been long in a poor way,” replied he dejectedly. “Who has not?” answered I, filling his bumper: “but we must stand to our posts till we are discharged.” He took the wine, and then observed that he had heard of my *honourable* discharge. “Yet I am on the point,” replied I, “of following my noble commander to Flanders.” “I heard you were disabled,” said he, “and on the invalid list.” “I am indeed disabled,” answered I, “from ever knowing the comforts of a home; but I wish to spare a better man than myself, and one who has a wife to cherish: that is unhappily no longer my case.” He expressed his concern, and I proceeded to mention the fatal effects of mademoiselle de Fouclaut’s death on my poor Jeanneton. I perceived that he applied to the bottle several times during this little relation, which my feelings rendered melancholy. “I suppose,” continued I, “your master de Béne’s sun is set? What is become of him?” “Curse him!” answered he, again replenishing his glass, “he has met with his deserts. He massacred his thousands, and was too mildly

treated.” “He seems to have ill recompensed your services,” observed I: “Why do you not enter, and serve your country?” “Because I cannot meet a cannon-ball as you can,” answered he. “I have a bad conscience, and must clear up my accounts before I die. Notwithstanding the defect in my feet, I could still earn honest bread than ever de Béne gave me; but I am at present too miserable to seek employment.” “Try what confession will do,” answered I with assumed gaiety: “the time was when we thought it useful to the work of reformation, and a sovereign remedy for a troubled conscience.” “We might not have been the worse,” answered he gloomily, “had we still believed our grandmother’s tale: but as I have more faith in a red coat than in a black cowl, and think you an honest man, I will try and gain your absolution if I can.” “Do so,” replied I, ringing for more wine, and urging him to eat, “for I am not of those disciplinarians who mortify the body for the sins of the soul.” “O Nicolas!” exclaimed he, “you know not the wretch whom you would comfort. I have been the blackest of villains, and now suffer the torments of the damned. But I will tell you: I am a dying man; and I may expiate a part of my sins by proving the innocence of that angel whom I have helped to murder.” I shuddering bade him proceed. “I need not tell you,” continued he, “of the favour I enjoyed with my master, and it may be as little to the purpose to mention the first cause of his preference; yet I will tell you, that I am the nephew of his honourable father, and that, when it was his pleasure to forget he ever had one, he recollected that his cousin Clement had too good a memory to forget his having been servant to our notaire, and having run away to Paris with more cash than his own, which my uncle refunded, and which pacified his master. I was then an honest young fellow; but he found me acute, and with his training I became a knave, and useful to him. I was soon informed of his connexions with the *ci-devant* duke de Fouclaut. The intimacy was no less useful to de Béne than to de Fouclaut. My master had wealth, and wanted alliance with a *father* it would not disgrace him to acknowledge; and de Fouclaut had nothing left but a *daughter*. I will pass over some transactions preceding my cousin’s happy adventures at St. Domingo, in which the duke had befriended him, and which, with his gold, had produced an equality that sometimes surprised me, notwithstanding they so strenuously supported the system of equalization: but not knowing exactly the secret services which had rendered them slaves and tyrants to each other by turns, I shall say nothing of my fortunate cousin’s early talents for *physic* and *philosophy*, which I suspect had been useful to the duke.”

CHAPTER XVIII.

“THE projected alliance between these *great* men,” continued Clement, “was no secret to me; for my master returned home one day in such good humour that he told me he should be ‘the happiest man on earth,’ and described his future bride like a man in love. On seeing mademoiselle Marianne I was not surprised. But every man has his taste. Your pretty Jeanneton was more to mine. Be not displeased with this acknowledgment,” added he: “remember, you are in the confessional chair. However, your wife was a less reasonable woman than I expected, and your honey moon had no wane. Stateliness and reserve were prevalent amongst the females of the duke’s hotel, and your wife was as proud and coy as her lady. I therefore amused myself *en passant* with a nymph who was better tempered, and left you to *your Lucretia*.” He filled his glass, and with increasing impudence and loquacity continued: “On the eve of quitting Paris, for the prosecution of some one of those diabolical schemes which were hatched at the palais royal, I received orders to precede my master by some hours, in order to secure for him, and his colleague de Fouclaut, horses for their route to Thoulouse. They were, I found, to pass the night with the duke d’Orléans; and pretty well understanding in what way these nights were passed, I paid a visit to my dulcinea. I was not however unmindful of my commission; for I rose with, or rather preceded, the sun; and opening the window of Jaqueline’s little garret, I stood for a moment to inhale a sweeter atmosphere than the room afforded. Jaqueline’s lodging was in a house in the narrow lane which runs parallel with de Fouclaut’s garden, and she enjoyed from her aerial abode the whole view of it. It was in the early time of spring; but the morning was calm, and promised a fine day. I was soon diverted from my purpose of putting on my clothes, by the appearance of mademoiselle de Fouclaut and your wife. They were both wrapped in pelisses, and en bonnets de nuit. They reached the marble bason and stopped. You with your Jeanneton’s handsome *cousin* hastily joined them; and it was evident you had entered by the door in the lane. The weeping Marianne sunk into his arms, and he slowly led her to the temple, whilst you discreetly remained with your wife. My eyes followed the lovers. He placed himself, and fondly seated on his knee the beautiful object of his adoration; the light and slender pillars of the temple affording me a full view of the tender scene. It was not difficult to guess that it was a parting one. He wiped away her tears with her handkerchief, and placed it in his bosom. He kneeled at her feet, and she with frantic gestures threw herself into his arms. At this moment you and Jeanneton approached them; and with gentle violence, and pointing to the rising sun, you led your handsome cousin to the walk, and the outlet by which you had entered, Jeanneton and her lady returning to the house. ‘What are you about?’ asked the half slumbering Jaqueline: ‘you blind me with the light. You seem neither willing to stay, nor to go.’ Engaged in huddling on my clothes, and by the scene I had witnessed, I made her no reply, and she took offence; and cordially wishing me at the devil, I hastened from her: but you had eluded me, and I had lost time, as well as the good-will of Jaqueline.

CHAPTER XIX.

“MY master’s detention at Thoulouse, whilst it gratified his ambition and increased his influence with his party, by no means flattered his passion or relieved his thoughts from the disdainful coldness of Marianne. He began to suspect de Fouclaut was making a dupe of him; and he told me that he well knew the duc d’Orléans had not only visited Marianne, but had spoken of her beauty in the most enthusiastic terms. ‘I know de Fouclaut,’ added he. ‘The cursed pride of his rank, which still revolts at his alliance with a man to whom he stands indebted for *more* than the roof which shelters him, would exult at seeing

his daughter the mistress of a Bourbon; and who can say whether the girl may not be as ambitious as her father?' 'I do not think she regards rank in a lover,' replied I, still feeling the effects of a bottle of good Hermitage in my head: 'young ladies are accurate judges in some cases, and overlook titles, and even gold, for the endowments of nature.' I smiled, and he took the alarm, and with a lip quivering with rage he said, 'Then it is as I suspected! She has a young lover!' He eagerly pressed my hand with his well-stored purse. 'Be honest,' said he, 'and tell me all thou knowest.' I pocketed the bribe; for my conscience was drowned in the good wine I had swallowed. "I shall spare you the hearing of a twice told story," continued this wretch. "I was eloquent: the garden scene, however, worked up a storm which brought me to my recollection; and for *reasons of my own* I endeavoured to moderate it. He bade me retire; and upbraided me for having kept the secret so long from him.

"In the morning I found him very sullen; and fearing his resentment would interfere with my own views, I renewed the subject of his ill-humour. 'I was an ass,' observed I, 'to trouble you with a silly story, which ought rather to make you laugh than angry. If, however, you expect a wife who has never had a little intrigue, I advise you never to marry.' 'You know the lover,' answered he, relapsing into fury, 'and sport with your benefactor's feelings.' I solemnly assured him he was a stranger to me; and with many protestations of my fidelity, I *honestly* told him that he would act wisely to leave the duke to make his own fortune, and his fair daughter to choose her own lovers, and be happy himself in his own way.

"I mean to do no such kindness to mademoiselle Marianne,' answered he gloomily. 'I see further into this business than you do. Her father favours these nocturnal interviews; it was Egalité whom you saw.' I laughed, and assured him that he was deceived; for that the lady had chosen much better, adding, that I had never beheld so handsome a young fellow in all France. He was surprised; but immediately spoke of your and your wife's functions with execration, and proposed to me a recompense adequate to my labour, could I succeed in detecting you and finding out the lover. I was soon after sent to Paris with a commission too profitable to be refused.

CHAPTER XX.

“WELL knowing that every advance to your intimacy would be rejected, I remained quiet, and only inquired at your hotel after Jeanneton’s *handsome cousin*. Blanchard said, he was gone into Italy with his master; and I said no more. I renewed my visits to Jaqueline’s garret, but mademoiselle had deserted the garden. De Béne again returned to Paris, and was outrageous at my want of success. Again I pacified him; for my purse needed replenishing: again he departed; but I was left, in order to watch you. Some overtures I made to conquer your reserve having been received with more incivility than was common, or, as I thought, needful; and reflecting that I had never gone further in testifying my admiration of madame Meunier’s beauty, than she might, or might not, receive as the tribute due to her charms; I conceived, that in shunning my acquaintance you were actuated by motives that were independent of jealousy. One day, on your alleging that you had your shop to attend, for declining my invitation to dine with me, you may recollect that I walked with you to it; observing that I hoped you would not reject me as a *customer*, although it seemed your intention to avoid me as an *acquaintance*. You slightly bowed, and said, your time was fully engaged, for your partner was on a journey. On entering it, I found only a lad behind the counter. I made my purchase of some stockings, and you gave them to the boy to tie up. I paid for them, and asked for a receipt. You went to your desk, and wrote me one; and I saw you place a letter in your bosom of some bulk. ‘Give me the parcel,’ said I to the lad; ‘I am going home, and I can put it in my pocket.’ He assisted me in so doing; and I departed. I went not far; but taking my station, saw you again leave your shop. I followed you, and saw you at the post-office. You deposited the letter, and paid some money at the wicket; then disappearing, you took another direction.

CHAPTER XXI.

“MY measures were immediately adopted; for I was fully persuaded that your foreign correspondence was concerned with that business which it was *now* my interest to detect. I knocked boldly at the wicket. The same man appeared; and with three bright louis d’ors in my hand, I begged he would permit me to speak to him apart from witnesses. He eyed the gold, and, opening the door, civilly said there were no persons in the office but himself: and I entered. On the desk was the object I sought, which he had just stamped with other letters.

“‘I am, sir,’ said I with great solemnity, ‘a man in the confidence of citizen de Béne.’ He bowed servilely. ‘I need not point out to you the perils which menace the republic.’ He shrugged up his shoulders: ‘Ah que non!’ replied he with a grimace of acquiescence. ‘A person long suspected has this very instant delivered to you a letter, and paid for its postage.’ ‘I received it officially,’ answered he, turning as pale as ashes: ‘this is the letter.’ ‘A suspicion of your conduct is not the question,’ replied I: ‘it is from my opinion of your patriotism and honesty that I am led to appeal to you. It too frequently happens that the innocent suffer for the guilty: the man who gave you that letter may be ignorant of the mischief he is concerned in. It is even possible that the packet he has delivered may contain nothing in it wherewith to criminate his employer any more than himself: but I wish to compare this name with the signature of the writer of the letter.’ ‘It is a delicate business,’ observed he, coldly looking at the louis d’ors which I carelessly passed from one hand to the other: ‘this envelope may contain bills of exchange.’ ‘Let them remain, if such be your pleasure,’ said I gravely; ‘I have only to report the success of my commission to my employer, citizen de Béne.’ I rose to depart. ‘Pour l’amour de Dieu,’ said the terrified man, ‘have patience; you shall be satisfied.’ He instantly proceeded to an operation of some ingenuity and dispatch; and the letters were spread before me:—one written by you, to your ‘beau cousin,’ and another in a female character to Mrs. Hamilton, and which covered a third. I smiled, and observed, that as in most plots the *woman* was the most in the secret, so that was precisely the case in the instance before us, adding, that it was incumbent on me to secure the letters. But in so doing I wished to explain to him the authority by which I acted. ‘Do not think this trifle is a bribe to seduce you,’ said I, giving him the money in my hand. ‘Come to me this evening at de Béne’s hotel, and you will find it not only for your advantage, but security, to know the man to whom you trust these papers.’ He hesitated, and said he could not well quit the office; but would, if I pleased, call a man to receive such letters as might be offered. I saw his caution, and yielded; inviting him to dine with me. Let it suffice, Malpoix had his terms granted; and your letters travelled to Thoulouse. Master of your secret, you will not be surprised that you no longer received your letters. Malpoix was too well paid to betray his trust, or to become careless.

“De Béne’s return to Paris more effectually confirmed Malpoix in his interest; for he added promises of promotion to his purses of gold, whenever the correspondence should be completely in his hands. I thought I knew de Béne,” continued Clement; “but his conduct now puzzled me. He still urged the duke de Fouclaut to complete the marriage, and even supplied him with a considerable sum of money. I expressed my surprise at his patience and long suffering. He smiled with bitterness. ‘Leave me to my revenge,’ said he: ‘I will soon show this girl my power over her and her worthless father; and instead of the asylum she has so notably prepared for herself and him, as she writes in her letters, and which he would with joy accept, as the only means of escaping from ruin and my just resentment, I will

still hold them both in my toils. I have not forgotten, Clement,' continued he with fury, 'his insolent hauteur, when I proposed settling his accounts by taking his daughter. 'What!' cried he, yielding to his pride, and unmindful of my power, even as it regards his very life, 'de Béne proposes the daughter of de Fouclaut for his wife?' I only smiled, and said '*Even so;*' and he trembled before me, and abjectly sued for pardon; pretending that his Marianne was yet a *mere child*. I suffered this evasion to pass, till, urged by his necessities, and finding me still useful, he proposed carrying me with him to see his daughter. I did see her, Clement: and I adore her as the loveliest of her sex. Let it suffice, de Fouclaut has from that time been entirely supported from my purse; and his credit has been propped by my securing to Marianne the wreck of that property which was legally hers. I have not been unmindful of his conduct since our engagement was ratified by his solemn oath, that Marianne should be his benefactor, his friend de Béne's! I have not forgotten the proud rejection of my proposals by his daughter, which I am convinced he dictated, in consequence of the lures thrown out by the duke of Orleans. All this I have overlooked. Marianne stood between me and my resentment. But mark,' added he, choked with rage, 'she tells her husband, her *proud Englishman!* that her father scorns *de Béne*; that she has no doubt but that he will bless the means which have provided for her a refuge from *dishonour*, and a shelter for himself, remote from the lawless dominion of ambition! He shall be my sport, my derision! Clement,' added he, striking the table with violence; 'and when I am revenged, with le bras roturier will I crush him!' 'Perhaps you wrong your friend?' observed I, nowise disposed to be mischievous to such an extent: 'you take up this matter too warmly. It appears to me the young lady needed not the good offices of her father; and it is certain from her letters, that she still dreads to inform him of her situation. I suspect she has been the dupe in her turn, and that the lover is not the man he pretends to be. As for the marriage, I laugh at that: thanks to our new laws, marriages are now nothing; and a woman may call any man she prefers a husband, till she sees one whom she likes better. After all, monsieur, it would be better, in my opinion, to attribute this business to the wise instructions of her convent, and her faithful Jeanneton; and to let this matter pass over. You have now the means in your hands of making her believe her lover has forgotten her: you say you love her; and to what purpose all your pains, if you mean no more than to disgrace her?' 'I cannot live without her,' replied the old dotard: 'this her father knows!' 'And you will have her,' answered I, interrupting him; 'in a little time resentment will bring her to your wishes. She will have no letters to answer from Italy. Our good friend's letter of advice, of the duke's having sent her into Normandy, and under the care of a woman better qualified for the trust than his Jeanneton, will do our business.'"

"I started from my seat, mademoiselle," continued Meunier: my self-command forsook me. "Villain!" exclaimed I, "is this thy tale? and dost thou expect me to pardon thee?" "Hear me to the end," replied he with a look of despair. "This is nothing to what I have done, and I shall not resist your purpose; for I am weary of my life." I groaned, and sternly bade him proceed, as he hoped for pardon in another world. "I will hasten so to do," replied he, "and will pass over some time, in which we had nothing new to expect. Your letters went on as usual; but they were written with caution and reserve, and, like the oracles of old, often perplexed us.

"One day Malpoix brought us a packet directed to the duke de Fouclaut. 'It is from Turin,' said the smooth-faced rascal; 'I thought you would like to see it.' De Béne paid the postage, to his agent's contentment; with a bribe to secure all letters directed to the duke for his perusal. "You may think of me as you please, Nicolas," said the specious villain, "but I declare before my Maker, that if these letters had fallen into my hands, I would have saved Mrs. Middleton; and for a reason you will admit. I should have

gained by being honest; and when that is the case, few could resist the pleasure of serving such an angel as your lady! But I was born to be an agent of the devil!

“These letters were nearly as follows: for I have them at my lodgings with the rest; and now that sleep is a stranger to my eyelids, I read them till I am with the damned.” He paused; and I was silent. “The first was from a nobleman. It begins thus,” said he, wiping his pallid face: ‘I am, monseigneur, a father; I stand in this country in a similar order of rank with yourself. My opinions and views for the establishment of my family are such as you have probably entertained. Yet, monseigneur, I scruple not to address you on a subject which, as a man, and a man of honour, I submit to your attention. If, in the interruption of the correspondence between your daughter and her *husband*, you have interfered, from a suspicion that she has degraded you and herself, dismiss your fears; Mr. Middleton having pretensions on the side of *family, fortune, religion, and merit*, to the first alliances on the continent. If, in your resentment as a parent, you have exerted the authority of one, offended by the *secrecy* with which your daughter has secured to herself the man she loved, I conjure you to pardon the offence in favour of the sufferer, who is at this moment in a condition truly pitiable. His life and his faculties depend on the effects of seeing his fondly beloved wife. Hasten to restore him to reason, and to the hopes of his afflicted and miserable family. Be assured,’ continues the writer, ‘that neither your honour nor your interest will suffer by your attending to this appeal to your humanity. You will find in Augustus Middleton a son, who in the highest elevation of fortune and greatness would be your pride and boast; and in his honourable connexions, friends who love your daughter, and implore from you a gift necessary to them. In the name of Heaven I conjure you, monseigneur, to depend on my judgment. Your daughter’s presence might yet save the life of her husband; and without adverting to arguments of an interest she must have in a fortune *which is princely*, and which will find, in case of her husband’s death, successors in his family, I will conclude by assuring you that this family are infinitely more anxious to embrace his wife, than for the inheritance his death will secure to them.’ This letter was signed with several names,” added Clement; “but I only remember the last: it was Spollino, marquis of D——; and the answer was to be sent to a banker’s at Avignon, from whence it would reach his hand by express. You shall see it tomorrow, as well as one from Mrs. Hamilton to Marianne. We wrote, however, as well as this noble correspondent. De Béne was so well served for his money, that I remember he swore, he was tempted to believe that de Fouclaut had written the answers himself for the sake of a little running cash; ‘for,’ added he, ‘I know from experience his talents, and the readiness and facility with which he can serve his friends when it suits himself.’ However, we kept up de Fouclaut’s dignity in our epistle. Monseigneur, after many polite acknowledgments, proceeds formally to announce his daughter’s marriage with monsieur de Béne; an event which had taken place soon after her quitting the convent, in which she had resided from her very early years. That it was incumbent on him to say, he had in the first instance found his daughter more reluctant than he expected to his commands. ‘But,’ added the writer, ‘you are too sensible of the duties annexed to high stations, to make it necessary for me to urge, that it rarely happens our views for our children will either admit of that indulgence we may be disposed to grant them, or of those prospects which, in the season of youth, they may entertain for themselves. I have however the satisfaction of knowing that my daughter is happy, and under the protection of a man, whose tenderness and generosity have convinced her that she has acted wisely in giving up a romantic fancy to the dictates of a sounder judgment and a sense of duty.

“It would have been degrading madame de Béne to have withheld from her the letter inclosed in yours, monseigneur. I have, with the most entire confidence in her virtue and principles, placed it in her

hands; and shall, at her request, add to this packet the answer she may think needful to send to her former companion and confidant; who will do well to recollect that, in the errors of youth, few are more dangerous than those in which she concurred.

“But this part of the subject is now sunk in my compassion for the fate of a young man, who, betrayed by his passions, has lost with me his pretensions to honour, although not his claims to my pity for his condition. I remain DE FOUCLAUT.’ ...Judge, my dear mademoiselle, whether Meunier wants fortitude or patience! No, I did not: for I was dumb; and petrified with horror, I listened to him with breathless eagerness. Prudence suggested to me the necessity of imposing on him in my turn: “Your master ought to have been duc de Fouclaut,” observed I with a languid smile: “his letter was quite in his style; but proceed.”—“I was grieved to the soul,” said he, “on hearing him read Mrs. Hamilton’s letter to mademoiselle. I declare to you, it cut me to the soul! for, after all, I would not have given douze sous to have seen de Béne happy, as he called it; and I am no enemy to love, and had often contrasted his baboon face with that of the poor lady’s lover. Besides, Nicolas, I could not help thinking my master a fool, as well as a knave, to take so much pains, and to spend so much money, for the mere purpose of destroying another man’s happiness, and being gulled himself; and I have a hundred times laughed, when putting on the cork calves to his legs...” “Well, go on,” cried I impatiently: “what did he write for the innocent madame Middleton?” “Oh, pour cela!” answered he, “we had his head, and that was not made of cork: le diable has not a better when he works in his own way. Madame *de Béne*’s letter to her friend was not less edifying than her friend’s was touching.”

Poor Meunier, with emotions too powerful for his weak frame, paused. Let me finish this painful task with repeating it as briefly as I can. “She begins by saying,” continued he, “that in order to close for ever a correspondence from which nothing could result but a more acute sense of self-condemnation, she informs Mrs. Hamilton that she had found the recompense of duty to her father. That he had discovered her deviation from it, in consequence of her *indisposition*, and the *peculiar circumstances* which had occasioned her confinement, from the woman whom he had placed in the post of the discarded madame Meunier. That, on her recovery, she had been sent to her father’s chateau in Normandy. And that in consequence of those appeals to her understanding and to her heart on her father’s part, and to those proofs of unexampled affection and generosity on the part of monsieur de Béne, she had voluntarily returned to that path, in which only she could find peace of mind, and that acquittal promised to repentance. She added that she had been thus circumstantial in a detail which had wounded her bosom with the keenest pangs of contrition and self-abasement: but reflecting on the affinity subsisting between the Aimsworth family and Mr. Middleton, she conceived it to be an act of justice to declare that they had nothing to fear from any claims to a succession, which might, and as she believed, in default of more *immediate heirs* to Mr. Middleton, would revert to them—Providence having in an especial manner signified to her its disapprobation of a union unsanctioned by parental authority, and even illegal in the eye of those laws which although superseded could not be infringed without punishment. The loss of my hopes as a mother was the beginning of that repentance in which I have found peace. My ardent wishes are that Mr. Middleton may recover; and in a renewal of his health experience a larger proportion of felicity in more legitimate bonds, which heaven may approve, as resulting from a more sober judgment, and a higher sense of duty, than he has done from the impetuosity of passion and youthful inconsideration.” She adds in a postscript, continued Meunier with an agony not to be described, “that Nicolas has abandoned his wife for the life of a soldier, and is with the troops in la Vendée; wishing she could with propriety recall Jeanneton to her service, who she still believes was rather a weak than a

designing woman." This I believe Clement would gladly have recalled; for again my patience yielded; and I should have been desperate, had I not been overcome by faintness. It was now his turn to recommend wine to me; and pretending that my tears flowed more from the recollection of my loss than on account of a calumny in which was included the ruin of every one it could reach, I led him on to proceed in his story; not however without hinting from time to time that I had information to give him in return, which would probably give a new face to his fortune.

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CHAPTER XXII.

I HAD now, mademoiselle, to listen to Clement's long account of de Béne's declining popularity, and the apprehensions and divisions which had gradually taken place in the duke of Orlean's party. "Marianne, love, and jealousy," continued Clement, "yielded to his negotiations with Jews; and from the private and long visits of one who generally went away before day-light from the hotel, I took the alarm. My master, finding he could neither impose upon me nor find a friend whom he could more safely trust, explained himself fully. He told me, that he had long been preparing for his emigration; that the Jew I had noticed had happily secured for him large sums in the American funds, and for his pains had pillaged him like *a Jew*. 'I know,' added he, 'that de Fouclaut is a marked victim. I cannot save him, were I willing to do so. I shall marry his daughter, however, and it will be her fault if she be not a happy woman. I love her to distraction, Clement; and I have already suspended measures at my own peril, in order to save her. Nothing but the apparent union in which I act with her father has suspended his arrêt. But my influence is losing ground daily. I am thought unfriendly to the rising faction, and I am preserved by those who were my friends, merely as the *price* they mean to give for their own security. I must go once more to Thoulouse with de Fouclaut. In my absence your business here must be, to secure me a safe retreat in Paris, to which I may trust for security during some time. I shall conduct Marianne thither; and when she finds there is no alternative between de Béne and the guillotine for her father,' added he, curling his shaggy brows, 'we shall hear no more of delays.'

"The result of our conference was my asking for my dismissal, on the pretence of a sick brother's wishing to see me, and from whom I expected a legacy: this was graciously granted, on condition I could wait till my good master left Paris. I immediately secured a decent apartment in a tradesman's house; and you will suppose I diligently observed my master's instructions, in removing thither whatever would be necessary for his future exigencies. Amongst other and more necessary articles, I took a box in which were placed your and your lady's letters. I had never been her enemy, Nicolas," added the miscreant, "whatever you may suppose; and I was determined to keep in my hands these proofs of her innocence, not without the prospect of their being one day useful to her and to myself. I found also in the box a few old trinkets and a ring or two out of date; which made no great difference between me and my worthy cousin." He passed his hand over his bronzed face, and smiled.

"De Béne in this interim saw you and Jeanneton discarded at la Rondeau, and his beautiful Marianne safely secured at l'Eclair under the *surveillance* of Babét du Bois. But he did not lose sight of your services. And how you escaped I know not; for you had better fortune than some who had offended de Béne, and who lost their heads without seeing an enemy. He also thought it necessary to make you the writer of another letter, which was addressed to Mr. Middleton, and sent through the same channel as those to the kind-hearted Italian nobleman. In this you inform your correspondent, that having received intelligence from your wife of her lady's being married to monsieur de Béne, and of the duke's hotel being shut up, and that she had been obliged to dispose of the few marks of her lady's former bounty, in her pecuniary difficulties, not being able to discover whether she was still at the duke's castle in Normandy or elsewhere; and having also heard that monsieur de Fouclaut's state of fortune now makes him solely dependent on his son de Béne for bread,—you finish by a hint that some assistance is necessary for your wife, and with a direction to your shop. You add, that in the life of a soldier, you have found incredible fatigues and hardships, with unceasing anxiety at not having heard from Mr. Middleton;

concluding that the marriage of de Béne to his lady must have surprised and vexed him, unless he had found another as *fond* and more *faithful*.”

My part was taken, mademoiselle, (continued monsieur Meunier). I suppressed my feelings, though nearly suffocated by the attempt.

CHAPTER XXIII.

“THE providing a retreat for my master,” pursued Clement, “was a work of precaution, and of more difficulty than I had foreseen. But I was persevering, and had an interest in succeeding. My trunks were valuable; and I wished to secure them from the prying eyes of my hostess. I had gold, and it was a dangerous commodity. Yet day succeeded day, and my labours finished by passing the night under alarms you will easily imagine. I was returning home one evening, weary with my useless walks into various obscure parts of the town, and discouraged by the difficulties of my undertaking, when crossing a court I perceived two women before me, the one infirm and aged, the other young and tall, both meanly but decently clothed. I *slowly* followed their *slow* steps. A small threshold at the outlet met the old woman’s foot. She tripped; and notwithstanding the arm of her companion and guide, she fell on her knees. The young one uttered a cry of surprise and alarm. I offered my assistance, and in raising the poor woman saw she was blind. She complained of her knee; and her terrified companion, with reproaches on her own carelessness, appeared unequal to supporting her. I bade them be composed, and offered my assistance. It was accepted with gratitude, and at length we reached their home by various turnings and obscure alleys. I carried the lame woman up a narrow staircase, and, placing her at her ease, sat down myself. ‘I am afraid, my dear Madelaine,’ said the grateful woman, ‘you have nothing to offer to this good gentleman for his kindness, but our thanks; and yet I am certain he must be fatigued.’ ‘A little,’ replied I, ‘not altogether with having assisted you; but I have walked many hours, and I am faint for want of food. I have been too much engaged to-day to think of my soup.’ Madelaine looked distressed. ‘We also have been out,’ said she pensively, ‘ever since the morning, and it grieves me, monsieur...’. I interrupted her, and at once reminded her of a *traiteur*’s shop we had passed. ‘My home is remote,’ added I rising, ‘and with your permission I will fetch from thence what shall serve us all. Your mother wants something also for her bruised knees. I am not a very rich man,’ added I smiling, ‘but rich enough to gratify my humour.’ I departed, and soon returned with my purchases. These were such as suited my appearance of decent mediocrity; and I had not omitted a remedy for the knees, nor a bottle of wine. I found the table prepared for my stores; and with a neatness which pleased me we had our repast. Gratitude and a glass of wine made the old woman loquacious. Madelaine was reserved, but courteous and assiduous; and with a dejected and pretty face betrayed an anxiety for the departure of her guest which she could not conceal; for she observed more than once ‘that it was growing dark, and monsieur’s home was remote.’ I had, however, from calling her mademoiselle, learned that she was a widow; her husband the son of the blind woman; that he had lost his life in a mob. This relation was concluded by sighs and tears on the part of poor Madelaine, and by her mother’s reminding her that it was the will of God, and that she ought to remember that her husband died doing his duty. ‘For,’ added she, addressing me, ‘our dear François received his deadly blow in the endeavour to save the life of his benefactor, whose house was burnt to the ground by the very wretches whom he fed, and all because he was, as they said, an aristocrat. We have suffered, monsieur, with our sorrow, more poverty than we can well bear; but God will not forsake those who do their duty, and hope in him. I tell my daughter this every day; but I am a heavy burthen on her industry.’

“I am not quite a fool, Nicolas,” continued Clement with energy; “I know well enough that *religion has its use*; nor was I displeased to find these women had more of it than I had myself. I told my story; and, as it happened, the truth served my purpose. My attachment to a good master whom I had long served; his beautiful young wife, who would inevitably be involved in his fate, produced the sympathy I wished to excite. I dispelled their fears by enlarging on my plan; and finally they agreed to shelter this unfortunate couple a *few days*. Madelaine showed me, with more alacrity than I expected, her small apartment. ‘It is clean,’ said she, ‘and it has an advantage which may render it useful.’ She opened a door: this led to a stair-case; and, as she informed me, to a ground-floor room in which her husband, who was a chair-frame maker, worked. ‘We took the apartment expressly on this account,’ added she, sighing; ‘for my husband could work early and late without disturbing his poor mother. But it is now useless! and I must pay the rent of it for three months longer, not being able to let it; such are the times!’—You may judge I did not hesitate one moment in perceiving the utility this outlet to another alley afforded; and before we parted all was arranged. The next morning I was Madelaine’s tenant; and with a cart-load of bird-cages and wire-work opened my shop in the face of day and my neighbours, leaving Madelaine amply provided with the means of rendering her apartment more tenantable for her expected refugees. My intimacy with these women satisfied me more and more. The sobriety and modesty of Madelaine imposed upon me manners which gave her no offence. She had neatly prepared her room; but with good sense observed, that she had cautiously avoided to furnish it unsuitably to her condition, modestly offering me the surplus money. This I refused; and I further engaged it would be only a small portion her services would gain. ‘My wishes are bounded,’ said she, ‘to being able to provide for my mother, and to save the lives of those who are persecuted unjustly. From this hour,’ added she, ‘I consider this room as your charge: there is the key of the stair-case door; and you may place here in safety what you please. We have secured the entrance on our side; and I would advise you, never to be seen on the stair-case: what is portable bring to us, and thus secure it. I work for the shops with my needle, and none will notice your approach in the common way.’ In a few days my trunks at my lodgings were prepared for the inspection of my hostess; and I called at de Béne’s hotel for news. ‘All was well: they expected his return to Paris.’ I was questioned. My answer was ready: ‘My brother was dead; and I had my little and expected inheritance, and was on the point of leaving Paris.’ My tale at my lodgings succeeded as well. I begged the mistress of the house to assist me in packing up my trunks, alleging my sudden summons into the country. She readily complied; and by presents of articles not worth removing, and paying her the *full demand* she made, we parted such good friends, that she invited me to think of her house whenever business recalled me to Paris. I was now settled in my shop, which served me as bedroom and kitchen, as it had done to many of its humble tenants: but my business attracted few customers; and I was undisturbed, though not idle. My retreat became however tiresome, and I persuaded these women to board me. I ventured to call on my late civil hostess, as a traveller in the stage coach from Estampe. She received me with kindness, and wished that her husband had been in the way to have seen me. ‘He is on duty at the Abbaye to-day,’ added she; ‘they are waiting the arrival of some prisoners who are expected this evening; they say the *ci-devant* duke de Fouclaut is amongst them.’ You will judge of my sensations; I need not describe them. I shortened my visit, pleading my hurry of business; and, repairing to my friends, told them to be in readiness for my master’s wife, with a perturbation which made them tremble for her safety. Madelaine wept and prayed, and again promised to be faithful. In return, I gave them a liberal supply of assignats; and telling them that my life was uncertain, and devoted to my master and his wife, and that my absence depended upon circumstances I could not foresee, and my return would be equally uncertain, I left them invoking *Heaven* and every saint to preserve me, and

prosper my undertaking. They knew not that I had no friends *there*," added Clement, "but I did: and I left them unable to bear the thought. I wandered about, undetermined what course to pursue. I had received no answer to my last letter to de Béne. He might have left his colleague. I knew that my letter had reached its destination, and that no one could decypher its contents but himself. I went into a coffee-house; and there, with additional horrors, I found every one reasoning and debating on the arrêt of the expected prisoners. All agreed that de Béne was amongst them. Some said the duke has escaped; other betted ten to one that he was amongst them. During this contest, a gentleman entered. He had seen them; and they were both in the Abbaye, and he had heard to his astonishment that de Fouclaut had given his only daughter in marriage to de Béne; that she was also to be arrested, and would probably be in prison the next morning. 'Where is that unfortunate victim?' asked another with compassion. 'She is in the neighbourhood of Paris,' answered the first speaker, 'at a seat once her father's, or rather once her own—till he cheated her of it; after having destroyed her mother, and a son then a child.' Had I been equal to my emotions, I might have heard more; but had the earth opened under my feet I could not have been more appalled. As I withdrew the speaker was eagerly relating the suspicions which were entertained respecting the death of the duchess; and the supposed cause for the duke's protection of de Béne, who was then serving in a chemist's shop.

"I followed the impulse of the moment, and in a state of mind I cannot describe I found myself, when nearly dark, on the road to l'Eclair: but exhausted by my internal agonies, and the speed which had impelled me forwards, I sunk on the ground, and, as I suppose, slept; for it was daybreak when the voice of some one passing in a cart roused me. It was a woman and a boy. They stopped, and inquired whether any accident had befallen me. I pleaded illness; and hearing the road I was going, they humanely offered to convey me to the cabaret in the village they had to pass; observing that my lame feet and condition moved their compassion. At the cabaret I said I should wait for a horse, or some conveyance; and ordering some refreshment, I threw myself on a wretched bed. Sleep, more salutary than the former, brought me to more composure; and I now formed my plan. I had learned from the woman, whilst in her cart, that her house was at a short distance from the village of l'Eclair; and with other particulars I had drawn from her and the lad, I conceived that both might be rendered suitable agents in my project of saving the angel I had conducted to the verge of destruction. My acknowledgments on parting had been received with a look I had translated to my wishes; and on taking my offered tribute, she had shaken her head, and said in a low voice 'que le Dieu vous conduise!' But the suggestion now arose to overset this hope... 'Babét du Bois knew me... Mademoiselle could not be a stranger either to my name, my person, or my station about de Béne, and she would never trust me with her confidence. Yet her life hung on the moment;' and starting from my bed I left the house, saying I was going to walk, and to look at the chateau within sight, not expecting the conveyance for some hours.

"I took the path like a man not able to run away. The morning was delicious, and the hour yet early. I sat down for a few minutes in view of the house, and saw mademoiselle quitting the court. I concealed myself behind the tree, and she, without observing me or any other object, took the path to a neat house, I following her steps. This was, as I learned too late, your Jeanneton's mother's abode. She entered; and I was for a moment prompted to do the same, but again recollected that my appearance would tend to discredit my report of her danger. 'Could I but give her the intimation undiscovered,' thought I, 'all might be effected. She has friends under that roof. She entered their abode with habitual confidence, she will communicate to them the information she receives, and they will urge her to trust to the friendly agent appointed to save her.' I wrote the direful intelligence with a pencil on a blank leaf

from my pocket-book. Words could not be stronger, nor more alarming. And with directions for her escape I pledged my life for her security. I kept my post, in the road she had to repass in her way home. She saw me, and stood irresolute. Dreading to surprise her, I hastily retreated through a thicket, leaving the paper under the book, in her path. From the rising ground, and at some distance, I turned. She had the book and paper in her hand, and held them up to my observation. Good heavens! how angelic! how meek and soft was her invitation to return for the trifle she supposed I had inadvertently dropped in my haste to quiet her timid fears! My heart smote me, Nicolas, even *then*: and in agony I said, 'But *for me* she had been happy and secure!' I waited at the cabaret. No interruption was given to the torments I endured from this suspense, till the alarm was general.... 'The duke de Fouclaut's daughter and her companion had been arrested at the chateau.' My indisposition returned; and my host at the cabaret, engaged in the tumult and the news of the day, left me to take care of myself. The following morning I returned to Paris; and there I learned that *madame de Béne* at her *own request* was with her husband, a prisoner in the Abbaye; whilst others, better informed, said she had implored to share with her father his confinement; and that she had solemnly protested she was in no wise connected with de Béne, and would prefer death to his name: for that he was her scorn and abhorrence."

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CHAPTER XXIV.

“I WAS too much indisposed for some days to be able to take any steps. My grief gave me additional claims with Madelaine and her mother. They nursed me, and strove to comfort me by the same lessons of piety which had served themselves. But I had no comfort from this quarter; and I cursed myself again and again for having been the servant of the devil, when I might have been with more profit the friend of the innocent. Madelaine, in the mean time, praising without ceasing my *fidelity*, recollected the name of a man who lived near the Abbaye, and who was employed there to go on errands. ‘He had known her husband, and was one of those who had brought her the *sad* news of his accident. He had shown much compassion for her; and she thought something might be done with him, towards gaining my master the comforts with which I was enabled to supply him.’ Let it suffice, I became at length monsieur Pataud’s comrade, and assistant in the office of errand-man, and my designation known in the house by the name of ‘*Pieds-tortus*,’ Jaques Pataud being promoted, by the influx of prisoners, to a menial station within the house. De Béne was thus amply supplied with comforts, which to my contentment were shared with the duke and his daughter; who I learned lived in the same chamber with de Fouclaut, and who was indebted to her youth and beauty for this consideration. My confidence in Pataud increased, and I ventured to go further, and to mention Marianne’s escape. ‘I do not believe,’ said he, ‘that she wishes it; for it was not long after her being here, that I know she might have had friends more able to have effected it than you are aware of. The girl, who has led me to this infernal abode, is the niece of the porter here, and I love her, and she loves me. She was appointed by these powerful friends to wait on mademoiselle in her room; and what is more, she was intrusted with a note for her. She gave Josephine a ring, when she asked her what she should say to the person who had intrusted her with the commission. ‘Tell him,’ replied she, ‘that I am now happy; and with my last breath will bless his humanity. Tell him, that I now wait for death with impatience; and that in my father’s lost honour and wretched condition his child will be a partaker, as long as Heaven appoints him to be her defence. Should he ever chance to meet the person,’ added she, ‘who gave him this blessed note, let him present that ring to her; and let it also be the pledge of my having destroyed the note before you.’ ‘Josephine told me,’ added Pataud, ‘that she had faithfully delivered her commission; and that the gentleman paid her well for her trouble.’ ‘Notwithstanding this account,’ continued Clement, ‘I hazarded a few lines to her. She took them from Josephine, and, reading them, returned the note. ‘Tell those who employed you, my good Josephine,’ said she with mildness, ‘that I prefer death to any enlargement from such a quarter.’ She cautioned her in regard to being the bearer of any future message, or note, and assured her she would never quit her father. The girl told her lover, on this occasion, that she could not help grieving sometimes for the poor young lady, whose proud father did not deserve such consideration; for he was a cruel man, and had no pity for his child; reproaching her with having been his ruin.” Clement paused. “Need I remind you,” said he with a tremulous voice, “of the second of September? Need I proceed to the moment in which my eternal misery was announced!! I saw her, Nicolas! I heard her say ‘Strike, ruffians! strike! I am the feeble barrier to de Fouclaut’s heart! I am his child, his Marianne!’ But I fled! The coward, who the moment before had thought his own life worthless but as it could deliver her, fled! Her voice, her words struck on my appalled senses. ‘She will call thee her murderer,’ whispered the dæmon within, ‘and thou canst not now save her! Save thyself!’—I listened to the groan of death, I heard the retreating steps of the assassins! Some power superior to my will prompted me to the fatal spot. I took from her bosom this cross, and from her finger this ring, whilst with horrors you cannot understand I thought I heard a footstep approaching. You know the rest. I was concealed, and saw you still faithful, and myself

damned! I have from that hour been on the rack,” continued he; “sleep is a stranger to these eye-lids. I hear in the hour of darkness my crimes announced. ‘It was my fell mischief that brought destruction and death to Marianne.’ Take my life: I am weary of it!”

“You may,” said I with solemnity, “employ what remains of the term of grace in the service of the innocent being who has escaped thy miserable and villainous master’s revenge. Mrs. Middleton’s child is now in England, and it is your duty to reinstate him in his claims to his father’s protection, in case he has survived these infamous plots; or to place his birth and existence without delay before the family who are the heirs to his father’s large estate.” He listened with avidity to my discourse; and I proceeded to inform him of your situation, mademoiselle, and the documents in your possession, which would serve to corroborate his evidence. Before we parted, he pleaded poverty; and I, still suspecting him, went with him the next morning to his lodgings. I found he had not deceived me in his report of the women who sheltered him; and I have reason to think they were tired of him. I made my terms with him before we parted, pleading that unless he left the letters in my hands, I had no evidence with which to prove my innocence, nor could he with prudence journey with them. He exacted a price for them, which confirmed me in my opinion of *his penitence*; and I doubt not, had I been able, I might have bribed him to new villainy. I carried off, however, my precious bargain; and these letters are in my mother’s hands. The cross was a plain gold one, of no importance; the ring an intaglio on onyx: these, as they were to him, as he said, reliques of a departed saint, I left with him, he swearing by the cross, which his impious lips pressed, not to defer his journey. This seemed to be no less Madelaine’s wish than mine; for she told me she feared he was deranged sometimes; and that he was very troublesome to her. She blushed in saying this, and I understood her. I reminded him of the good offices of these women, hoping he would not be ungrateful. “Oh, monsieur, pour cela, we have no reason to complain,” answered Madelaine with eagerness. “When monsieur Clement had money, he was very kind to us. We are satisfied, and only wish we could have been more useful to him. But as that is now unfortunately prevented, we wish him to leave Paris as soon as he can, *now he has money*. We shall not stay in this apartment long.” She spoke with anxiety; and opening the door to the little apartment, she added, “See, sir, our friend Clement has already been obliged to part with many of his things; but he has impoverished himself in doing his duty.” In a word, my dear mademoiselle, I perceived clearly that this worthy young woman dreaded him, and that she rejoiced at the prospect of getting rid of a guest who did not suit her. I gave her my address: and she availed herself of it the following day; when she informed me that he was become insolent and tyrannical, extorting from her the obedience of a slave, and importuning her to quit her mother, and to marry him. I sent her away comforted; for she had a trifling donation promised, and which my partner engaged to pay her weekly till my return. “My hard fortune followed me,” added Meunier; “but the life of Meunier as a military man is foreign to the present subject. Let it suffice, that I was taken prisoner at the capture of Valenciennes by the British forces; that I escaped, and reached St. Morlaix, and was again taken in a privateer, and brought hither: and for what gracious purpose, good God!...” He burst into tears... “To see the child my Jeanneton so loved, to prove my fidelity, and her unexampled attachment to her benefactors!...to see, it may be, Providence justified, and to close my eyes in peace.”

Pauline was unable to speak. “We shall not let you close your eyes, monsieur,” said I, assuming a cheerfulness I felt not, “till you have tasted the recompense you deserve. You shall not only see Sigismund, but his *father*, before we part with you. It is true, we know nothing of Mr. Middleton: but his child has found a parent, and you will not long want a friend.” I was now the historian, and Mr. Furnival the hero of my tale.

CHAPTER XXV.

WE quitted Stilton, leaving Meunier a prisoner on his parole, and in a situation of ease and comfort. Poor Pauline had gained nothing in appearance by this journey; but encouraged to hope, and soothed in her sorrow, she yielded to our plans; and she saw London and its environs with some advantage to her health. Meunier's recovery was her cordial. Mr. Furnival's interest procured him the permission to come up to town as soon as he was able to undertake the journey; and to our joy, we saw him on his *one* crutch before we left town, and under the first medical hands in London. Mr. Furnival, whose mind had the peculiar faculty of thinking nothing was done whilst any thing remained to be done, which his feelings deemed essentially requisite to comfort, requested as *a favour*, his friend the good emigrant priest to give up his obscure, and to him chargeable, lodging, and scanty board, to share with Nicolas a pleasant abode at Chelsea. This arrangement was made in my presence; and had I needed a lesson in the art of conferring favours, I must indeed have been dull of comprehension had I not profited. Yet to this hour it is doubtful to me, whether he thought at the moment of any thing beyond this gentleman's goodness *to himself*, in giving his imperfect knowledge of the English tongue, and his society to Meunier, in exchange for an exemption from every pecuniary care; for he repeatedly observed, with that complacency at once so ingenuous and natural to him, that he should now fancy monsieur Meunier was *comfortable* when he was not with him. Meunier was in danger of being too much subdued by these traits of goodness; and with tears he told Pauline, that he could not comprehend a man, who seemed not to know that in conferring obligations he was performing any thing more than gratifying himself. "He carried me," added he, "to the lodgings this morning, and, with the delight of a father regulating the comforts of a sick child, gave his orders to the master and mistress of the house with an exactness which marked the interest that he took in my welfare, and with a minuteness that would have escaped me; for, on seeing a child, he asked where it slept, adding, he hoped it was too remote to incommode his *friend*." Pauline had no need of this incitement to heighten her enthusiasm in respect to Mr. Furnival's character, nor myself any clue to the motives which regulated a course of life drawn from the pure precepts of a religion, to which his *heart* as well as faith assented with an attachment so prevalent, that to have deprived him of this spring of action would have rendered him an inanimate and useless incumbrance to the spot of earth which he occupied. But I must curb my pen when Mr. Furnival is the subject—simple genuine goodness having attractions for me, which both as a matter of *principle* and of *taste* calls from me an admiration and reverence, which may be thought to have led me too far from my duty as an historian.

CHAPTER XXVI.

PREVIOUSLY to our quitting London, which was delayed to the beginning of June, we had consulted Mrs. Dawson in respect to our several commissions for our country friends. She recommended a celebrated haberdasher's warehouse in the city, where, in her words, 'things were given away, and where ladies of quality crowded to purchase bargains.' Pauline, somewhat curious to see this fashionable lounging-place, and governed it may be by the vanity which is said to be the inmate of every female bosom, had contrived to render her appearance somewhat more attractive than common for the purpose of shopping. Yet there was so much discretion employed in the business of her toilet, that it is more than probable I should not have discovered any unusual cares had been used, had not the major complimented her on her dress: and on hearing how we meant to dispose of our morning, he observed, I had with me *a*

model for the dress of a modest woman and a gentlewoman; and he hoped Pauline would become the mode. Mr. Furnival, gratified by seeing her out of mourning, commended her taste, and lamented the folly and absurdity of his country-women, who, he strenuously maintained, were the first in the creation for personal charms; “not merely,” added he, smiling, “on the score of complexion or features, but from that characteristical donation with which nature has graced them. Does it not make you angry sometimes,” added he, turning to me, “to see modesty despoiled of her *drapery*, and it may also be of her moral existence, by fashions sent us from warmer climates, and the unlicensed coquetry of females, whose purpose is to allure, not to be respected? I grieve to see women shivering with cold and nakedness, and looking as if they were drawn from a bath, rather than clothed by decorum and decency! Is it not astonishing that *vanity*, if no better motive can be found to operate, has not told an English-woman, that she is degrading herself by servilely copying the modes of other countries? The moment I see a beautiful girl undressed for exhibition, and in a winding-sheet, I wish to cure her folly by the penance,—not of standing in the church during divine service,—for they have braved that trial of their strength,—but in the *church-yard*, and by the tombstones of those who have died *of cold* and folly.”

The carriage was announced; and we prepared for our departure. “Now I like that bonnet,” said he, addressing Pauline with a smile: “it is neat and modest, and suits the face it covers from the gaze of fools. Do not forget to buy one like it for Mrs. Fielding.” Thus dismissed, we repaired to the fashionable shop; but we had forgotten the fashionable hour, and the string of carriages Mrs. Dawson had mentioned were not in our way.

We proceeded to an inner shop; and were courteously served, and gratified by seeing the various articles of fashionable attire for some time; when two ladies entered, who directing their steps to the opposite counter were soon engaged in a similar way with ourselves. At length, in a voice which Pauline instantly recognised, Mrs. Budgely angrily said, “Why do you show us your trumpery Manchester muslin?” Then turning she added, pointing to a piece from which Pauline had purchased a gown, “Bring that there muslin here, young man.” “How fortunate is this!” exclaimed Pauline, eagerly advancing to her mother, who appeared not less pleased by meeting her daughter. During their greetings, Mrs. Budgely, with curiosity and some irresolution of manner, remained silent. Pauline, without noticing her sister’s embarrassment, introduced her mother to Mrs. Sedley, to ‘her dear Mrs. Sedley, with whom she resided.’ Mrs. Budgely’s muscles relaxed, and with a curtsy she acknowledged she had frequently had the pleasure of hearing my name. Then with increasing graciousness she inquired whether I did not think the shop we were in a good one. “But,” continued she, “these people sell for ready money, and rather than not sell they will take any thing of one customer, and refund themselves with another.” Perceiving my office was to keep Mrs. Budgely engaged, I adverted to the muslin, observing that I thought we had bought some of it at a very fair price. She examined it, and with rude familiarity remarked that the *Lunnoners* well knew country ladies. The shopman took offence, and gravely answered, ‘It was no wonder, nor saying much for their acuteness.’ “Why, you must think a guinea a yard too much for this muslin, Mr. Vamper,” replied she, still examining it. “We have not found others of your mind,” replied the man, gravely folding up his wares. “That young lady’s was the third robe since yesterday morning when it came in, and I fear not her liking her bargain.” She hesitated. “Come, madam,” cried the man, “you know it is worth the money.” “I know it is too *dear* for those who know what *money is*,” answered she, turning away with quickness; and addressing her mother, she asked her whether she was ready to go, for that she could see nothing she liked, and would try elsewhere. The poor old lady, therefore, again said something in the complimentary style to me, and in my turn I mentioned to Mrs. Murray the day of

our leaving Mr. Furnival, adding that I should share in Pauline's disappointment, should it happen that we were absent when she called on us. "I hope," replied she with much confusion, "you will not be offended by my not doing so. My daughter knows my reasons for not visiting at Mr. Furnival's house." "Why, cannot you give your mother an hour this morning?" asked Mrs. Budgely: "we shall be at home at three o'clock, and I shall be very glad to see Mrs. Sedley in Watling-street." I curtsied, and the business was settled, we leaving them to their engagements till the appointed hour.

Pauline hoped much from this rencontre. Her mother's kindness was however balanced by her being apparently out of health, in Pauline's opinion. "She pressed my hand," added she, "and whispered that she had something to tell me. I wish to know what it is; for I doubt she is not happy." I proposed taking Mrs. Budgely by surprise, by anticipating the time she had named for our visit; and Pauline eagerly adopting the plan, we reached the house half an hour before three. On asking for the mistress of it, a sturdy porter showed us the way; and on seeing the maid on the staircase, he bawled out, "Why, Jane! here are the ladies." Jane, in her bedgown and dirty cap, started with surprise from her knees, and, removing the mop and pail, muttered, 'She knew there was not time.' She was putting down, as we presumed, the best carpeting; but, recovering from her confusion, she conducted us into the drawing-room, saying that her mistress would wait on us in a few minutes.

A stranger ignorant of the wealth of a London citizen, or the affectation of it, so ruinously displayed, might have imagined that by some miracle he had been transported into the cabinet of the grand caliph; rich silk, carpeting, lustres, and gilding, giving to a room of no narrow dimensions an air of magnificence more conformable to a palace than Mr. Budgely's shop. But we soon turned our attention to the more curious objects which decorated the room. These were the family portraits. At the bottom of the apartment was Mr. Budgely at full length, contemplating his future honours; an elevated model of the Mansion-house occupying a marble slab at his elbow, and his common-council-man's robe forming the drapery of it. The artist, probably, having considered the more peculiar defects of Mr. Budgely's person, had generously given him six feet in height, not foreseeing the inconvenience which would reduce the hero into Mr. Budgely's own standard. But it so happened, that the crimson damask sofa, which had its fixed station at his feet, insolently raised its back to a level with his knees, and gave to the common-council-man the appearance of having suddenly grown from it. His solemn cast of features ought to have checked our mirth; and when Pauline recovered her gravity, she assured me, that she verily believed her good brother was sensible of the indignity offered him; for that, although his broad face had vacancy of thought, it was not sorrowful.

Opposite to the unfortunate master of the house hung his lady, who with ornaments of carving and girandoles filled the pannel over the chimney; and who, in the character of Rubens's plump wife, smiled on us from amidst a profusion of feathers, pearls, point lace, and velvet. The side of the room opposite the windows, though not less than twenty-eight feet long, admitted only of Mrs. Murray and miss Judith, with a bracket between them for a lustre. Mrs. Murray was meditating; her elbow gracefully placed on the English Encyclopædia, opened on the table: globes and maps were at her feet, and in the back ground a library of general use, for the names of the books appeared to have been taken from a bookseller's catalogue; and contained law, physic, and divinity. Miss Judith had evidently been more careful in the choice of her character; for her portrait approached nearer to truth than her mother's. The tender-hearted Judith appeared as Sterne's Maria on the road to Moulins, her pipe at her girdle, and the faithful Sylvio at her feet: she was attentively tying up in vine-leaves a white handkerchief marked with

the initials L.S. Rocks and cascades, trees, goats, shepherds and shepherdesses, were not wanting; but what particularly diverted us was a man in the back ground, who in a three-cornered hat, a large wig, and a black coat, was so much in the Dutch style, that we thought it must be mynheer Zuyder himself, whose name was on the canvas. It was not without difficulty I could compose my features, in order to receive with suitable decorum Mrs. Budgely's grave compliments, who at this moment made her appearance, dressed in a muslin robe so beautifully embroidered with coloured silks, that Flora might have taken it for her holiday suit. A bonnet, or cap, of lilac crape was finished by a Brussels lace veil; and a sash of the same colour marked that Mrs. Budgely had no waist. Pauline, somewhat disconcerted by the failure of her project, asked for her mother. "She will be here soon," replied the sister, displaying a superb watch, and sounding it. "We are before our appointment," observed I, smiling. She made no reply. "This apartment," continued I, surveying the pictures, "is however happily calculated to entertain a *too early* guest. May I ask you the name of the artist you have employed? I do not think I have seen any of his portraits before." "Probably not," answered she; "for he is a stranger here: the poor man was driven from Holland when it was besieged by the French. Alderman Gobbet took him up; and as he works cheap, and wanted bread, we were induced, out of civility to our friend, to give him a 'lift.' But nobody thinks my picture like me: it is ten years too old for me. He has succeeded tolerably in the dress, and the lace is loop for loop like my own point." "I do not think he has succeeded in his likenesses of any of the family," observed the timid Pauline. "I should not have found out Judith in any other place: I cannot think this painter a flattering one. Pray where is miss Murray at present?" "Miss Murray!" repeated Mrs. Budgely: "why, do you not know she is married? I should have thought your friend doctor Hawksbury would not have failed sending you such a proof of his wisdom; for he helped to make the 'maiden all forlorn' a wife, who will soon be 'all tattered and torn.'" Mrs. Murray entered the room; and the salutation had not time to finish before Mrs. Budgely renewed the subject of miss Judith's change of name; and with the utmost scorn and derision she laughed at the 'curate's lady.' "I hope, my dear mother," said Pauline with compassion, "that you will see her happier than you expect." "I have no fears for her happiness," answered the mother. "Mr. Maitland has the best of characters, and, although a young man, is highly praised for his learning. Considering all things," added she, deeply sighing, "Judith might have done worse." "Who denies it?" said Mrs. Budgely with augmented colour. "No one who knew her would have wondered had she married a footboy." "You are too severe, daughter Budgely," replied the mother with some resentment on her part; "and after all you can say, you well know your sister was mistress of herself and her money." "Money!" echoed the lady: "I admire that! Who wanted her money? What difference could it make to us, whether she spent it in quack medicines or threw it away on a beggarly school-boy?" She rose and pulled the rich bell-string with fury. "Bring chocolate!" was the order; and replacing herself on the sofa, the conversation was at a stand. At length she asked Pauline what was become of her little boy, and whether he had found his father. "No," replied Pauline smiling; "but he has found a mother in Mrs. Sedley, who is no more ashamed of the title than I am." The door opened, and the porter entered in his livery coat, bearing on his sinewy arm a silver tray filled with all the appendages of an elegant morning repast; and followed by the damsel we had seen, in a long-trained robe, carrying a silver cake-basket furnished with all that luxury has produced to gratify a childish taste. "Bring me my usual luncheon," said Mrs. Budgely, surveying with complacency these evidences of her opulence. "Sweet cakes do not suit my stomach," addressing me: "I am for the wholesomes." "We perfectly agree," returned I, "on that point: I dare not touch rich cake." A magnificent sandwich tray was now placed before the lady of the house, with a tankard of porter; and with great dispatch she proceeded to uncover a silver dish, in which was a broiled beef-steak. With much more kindness than I expected she shared it with me; and softened into good humour by my commendations of her cook, she observed

it would be wonderful indeed, if the instructions she had given the wench had not made her perfect. This was followed by a story of her having lost a cook, who ungratefully had quitted her after she had made her fit for any place in *Lunnon*. She now asked Pauline, whether she had heard from miss Wilmot, her dear friend. The answer was in the negative. "Dear me!" exclaimed she, "that surprises me. I concluded you were in one another's secrets. Do you not know that the family are gone to look after miss Anna's husband?" A second negative was given. "Well, I only wish she may not repent not having married, as her mother did, in her own parish church. But I am a true English-woman. I should never have been easy without knowing where to look for my marriage certificate. Give me, say I, the English way of becoming a wife. But I fancy the new-fashioned way of getting married in France suits some young ladies,—and particularly miss Wilmot, who loves freedom, and is the declared enemy of obedience. But they tell me that in making this new law the new kings were losing their time; for in France husbands *to have* and *to hold* were never quite so well understood or liked as in this country. It will be well for your friend if she finds a father for her child with a better head than her own, or with any head on his shoulders, at the rate they are going on in Paris. I am sure you ought to bless God for your escape; and as you have been so fortunate as to find friends here, for yourself and master Sigismund, I advise you to remain where you are; and not to think, like miss Wilmot, of running after a husband who cannot give you a house of your own, nor provide for your family. You did not know this all-accomplished young lady, madam, I believe?" added she, turning to me: "I am sure you would have disliked her as much as I did for your daughter's acquaintance. She sickened me of French learning. Such a slattern! and as pert as a magpie, with her two or three lingos! I could not help laughing when I thought of my Mr. Budgely with such a wife! for, as he says, 'Becky, be contented with your mother-tongue, and your husband's purse will carry you to Leadenhall market with the finest of these learned ladies.' But we are old-fashioned people, madam. He is not ashamed of his trade; nor his wife of her kitchen-wisdom; though we could, thank God, spend with many who keep their coaches and think themselves our *bettors*." She raised the porter tankard to her lips, and drank to my health. Knowing that Pauline wished to be informed as to poor miss Wilmot, I endeavoured to gain from the loquacious Mrs. Budgely some particulars which might lead to her purpose of writing to the unhappy girl. I therefore took care the subject should not drop. "This poor girl is to be pitied," replied I; "but what can be said for her mother, who has brought her up to be useless and idle; and who has now the weakness to be governed by her?" "Governed!" repeated Mrs. Budgely: "Why, miss Wilmot thinks she has sense enough to govern the whole world; and although I would swear she cannot darn a stocking, one might fancy, to hear her talk, that she was wiser than Solomon." "Do you know where the family are now settled?" asked I. "Settled!" echoed she, with a smile of triumph. "In some private lodging, I suppose, at Paris, or near it; for they talked of a town called Morges, as being cheap and pleasant, and very retired. This was not unsuitable for miss Wilmot's confinement, which was approaching, and she had been more noticed than she suspected. People thought she had delayed rather too long her married title; and madame 'Broudier' gained little favour with her neighbours, although the silly old man took so much pains to tell us of his son-in-law's power in Paris, and the chance he had of being mayor there. But, as my Mr. Budgely said, he would find three common-council in Lunnon who would buy all the mayors in the world, if the commodity was worth having. Mr. Budgely, madam, has not lived in the world for nothing; that I know; and he told Mr. Wilmot again and again his mind. 'A rolling-stone,' said he, 'never gathers moss. Never give up *I have* for *I shall have*. Trust to the English consols, my good friend, and stay where you can call your house your own,' says he. 'Send your daughter to her husband, and let him maintain her. Tell him that is the fashion here.' But this good advice was all lost."—"The more is the pity," replied I; "for it might have been rendered very useful. But pray do you know who has the care of his affairs in England?" "No, not I," answered she

with resentment; “for although he knew Mr. Budgely was in the stock-broking line, he did not choose to employ him, after all the civilities we showed his family.” Finding that Mrs. Budgely was on the point of beginning a long story of the condition in which Mrs. Wilmot had left the house she had occupied at Hammersmith, I rose, and, pleading more visits, reminded Pauline of the hour; Mrs. Budgely entreating in vain that we would wait for her husband’s return home, “who,” added she with a gracious smile, “will be happy to see you, madam, though you do not know him.” I became curious, and at length I learned that I owed my favour with Mr. Budgely to his having seen my name in Mr. Breadley the stock-broker’s hand.

“He has let us into a secret which concerns you, Mary,” continued she, turning to my companion. “Of what nature?” asked Pauline with a heightened colour. “Oh, I shall not tell you,” replied she: “all I shall say is, that you have been more fortunate than wise. But it is a long lane which has no end; and I hope, as matters now stand, that you will settle into a prudent woman. My mother has often repented letting madame du Rivage keep my sister so long,” continued she with amazing volubility, and addressing me; “for it was but too likely she would bring her up to be as fashionable as she was herself, and unfit for her station with us. However, madam, as you have been so kind to forgive what must have offended you, as well as ourselves, I shall say no more on the subject of her marrying without her mother’s consent; and it must be some comfort to you, that your son might have done worse; for Mary has no reason to blush at her relations.” “My dear Mrs. Budgely,” cried Pauline, “why will you persist in an error I have taken so much pains to remove?” “Because I know more of the matter than you think,” answered she, gravely nodding her head. “However, I was never one of those who went about to publish the lies of a Mrs. Whaley, and to show your name in a book she found in your lying-in room. It is an ill bird with me who befouls its own nest.”—Mrs. Murray, who had taken but little share in the conversation, and who appeared out of spirits, now said with an embarrassed air, that she was very glad to find Mary had found friends, and to hear that they were satisfied with her conduct. This being particularly addressed to myself, I answered by assuring her that she might safely dismiss every care, as these related to miss Murray, as I considered her not only as a *daughter*, but as a blessing. We were now suffered to depart without opposition, with the compliment, “that it was hoped we should not forget Watling-street when we were in town.”

CHAPTER XXVII.

MY account of our morning call, although it amused Mr. Furnival, could not dissipate Pauline’s concern for her mother. She persisted in her opinion that Mrs. Murray was unhappy on her account, and wished to be on terms of more kindness. Her tears flowed in saying this, and she appealed to me, as an evidence of her mother’s sickly countenance. “You will never be wise,” replied the good old man with tenderness, “till you can better judge of your mother. Hawksbury has produced the affectionate squeeze of the hand, and paved the way to Mrs. Budgely’s sandwich tray, by talking of the *rich widow* who has taken you up, and the fortune you have in the British funds. His lady has found, that the best way of making her peace at home, and recovering her credit abroad with her immaculate gossips, was, to publish your innocence, and to implicate that of Mrs. Whaley, whose levity has been too manifest for strict decorum. As these opinions do no harm, the doctor leaves to his wife the honour of fighting your battles; and she now speaks of ‘her amiable and beautiful friend miss Murray’ with all possible enthusiasm and praise. Your sister Judith, in the mean time, not being able to forget the miniature picture,”—Mr. Furnival smiled—“sought out a lover who approached it in perfections. Hawksbury says she has succeeded; for that

Maitland is the handsomest young fellow he ever beheld, and that he has moreover good talents, and an excellent character. But Judith, on finding her romance terminating happily, resolved to do something also for yours, and she has given many people to understand that you are a married lady, and that Mrs. Sedley is Sigismund's grandmother; and that the period is not remote when you will be the envy of your sex, and the pride of your family, who never deserved you. Judith's resentment, it is probable, has had some share in this defence of you; for she had the spirit which your mother wants, and had refused to remain with her at Welldown. She was in her own lodgings when she first saw Mr. Maitland. His sister, happening to be a guest in the same house, introduced him as a visitor; and with an independence no one censures who knows her situation, she has secured to herself the protection of an honest man, and an alliance at once respectable and suitable for her; for she is *your sister*," added he kindly: "poor Judith only wanted a madame du Rivage."—"Good heavens!" said Pauline with emotion, "how happy should I be to hear that my mother had resolution to live with Mrs. Maitland!" "Oh, let them alone," replied he, nodding his head: "it would not surprise me to see your mother break her chains. I have seen more examples than one, in which the selfish have defeated their purpose, by fancying they might trample on the slave they had subdued."

On Pauline's leaving us in order to prepare for our removal from town, Mr. Furnival, with a sigh, asked me whether I had not suspected Pauline to have some disappointment of a tender kind hanging on her heart. "I see no necessity," added he, "for the repugnance she discovers for society; nor that alarm when I talk of seeing her happily married. She must know that your protection and mine are, with her own conduct, evidences of her worth which the world cannot reject; and I think all is not peace within, Mrs. Sedley." My answer was explicit. "I feared as much," replied he with emotion, and applying his hand to his cravat. "The quivering lip and the downcast eye did not escape me, when she gave me with blushes Middleton's picture, and her excuses for detaining it. I was then almost on the point of betraying my suspicions. Poor thing! Unrequited affection, though it has no support from reason, often influences the character of mind, and bereaves the heart of the only remedy which might heal the wound, by subduing those spirits which are so needful to give renovation to hope, and to remove the weight of rejected love from the memory. I wish," added he, "these Aimsworths would return; we should soon remove from her the duty she now opposes to my wishes. When Sigismund is separated from her, she may be persuaded to relinquish her romantic project of living single." "My romance," replied I with cheerfulness, "goes much further than hers; for I intend her for Mr. Middleton's wife; and should this dream of happiness be frustrated by his being dead, I will try the effects of time and plain sense; having seen *unchangeable* attachments settle into a very comfortable state of wedlock, with nothing better for its support than gratitude, mutual esteem, and the friendship resulting from mutual kindness and a common interest." He laughed, and said he wished he had found such a physician at twenty years of age; but that he still thought me no better than an empirick, who was imposing on him remedies in which I had myself no faith, and would have rejected with disgust when labouring under Pauline's malady.

CHAPTER XXVIII.

ON reaching our peaceful abode we forgot not the Grantham road; and Pauline with a mother's joy saw the improvement of her child, and the health and gaiety which at once pronounced him happy. But our domestic circle was not complete. Mr. Hampden was at the castle, and the duke still detained him. His return introduced a new topic for chit-chat: the splendid society the duchess had with her; their varied amusements, and above all the theatrical talents which had been displayed, were detailed for our gratification: "But," added Mr. Hampden, "even there I left an example of the insufficiency of human enjoyments in restoring lost peace. There is one amongst this train of belles and beaux who sighs for a quieter scene. He is a relation of the duchess, and of course an object of general attention and solicitude: without this claim to consideration, Mr. St. Clare would impose deference and conciliate good will. His fine person and unobtrusive manners must please; and the dejection of his spirits has, or I am much mistaken, excited a sympathy in more female breasts than one. He is in deep mourning; and at first I supposed he had lost his wife: but I have since heard he wears his sables for an uncle. My early rambles brought us acquainted," continued our friend; "for he seemed to enjoy a morning walk with me, more than mixing with the gay and elegant loungers. The duke noticed this preference, and observed to me that he had foreseen the duchess's plan would not succeed; for that St. Clare had been miserable at the castle: 'his sorrows are too recent,' added he, 'to be soothed by company, or beguiled by music, plays, or balls. I wish you could persuade him to make an excursion to your house, and then propose others round the county: he has taste and curiosity. We should gain something by renewing his spirit of inquiry; here we only depress him; and Gertrude already repents of having filled her house by way of annoying him, rather than curing him. I have without difficulty," continued Mr. Hampden, "engaged him to follow me in a day or two, when we shall settle our plans for visiting the beauties of Derbyshire. You must befriend me, major," added our friend; "he is a man exactly made to interest you." "Then I shall shun him," replied the major, "I hate to be interested; I suppose he is some disappointed heir, or a whining fool who expected his mistress to be faithful till he was weary of her." "We shall see," answered Mr. Hampden laughing; "but in case you should not like him, I will make him over to Mrs. Paulin. He has lived some time on the continent; and as this '*melancholy fool*' is at least near thirty, and has not lived in vain, you may like him," added he, "although he be the despairing lover."

Our expectations were not disappointed on seeing this gentleman. We were assembled in Mrs. Hampden's drawing-room, when we saw him on the lawn: he was on foot, and followed by a servant well mounted, leading his master's horse by the bridle. Exercise had given to his manly countenance the glow of health; and the dignity of his person, which rose to six feet in height, was not lost by the simplicity of his dress; which was mourning, and his hair out of powder. Mr. Hampden flew to receive him with a welcome which went even beyond his usual hospitality; and introducing him to his wife, he forgot not her friends.

"You see, sir, my family," said he to his noble guest: "it is not so numerous as the one you have left; but we strive to imitate a good example. Every one does what he pleases under this roof, as well as at the castle: shall I show you to your apartment?" "You do well to remind me of my duty," answered he, surveying his dress; "but a ten-miles walk has not been without profit, as my coat-pockets will testify, although I am covered with dust." The major began to look curious, and he displayed his gleanings of plants and ores; with an animated account of a miner's cottage and family, with whom he had

breakfasted. On his retiring to dress, we began a warm debate on the merits of a man who had so much excited our curiosity, and the major settled the argument, by saying, he was not surprised at his having gained Hampden's heart; for that was at every man's service who was what his Maker designed him to be. The day did not pass unpleasantly, though the colour in St. Clare's face gave place to a pensive paleness before we left him; and from the warmth of his manner when speaking of France, and French women, we had discovered that neither the politics nor the females of that country were much to his taste.

Mr. Hampden had, however, his triumph: for before the party separated Mr. St. Clare was engaged to walk at sun-rise with our cynic; and in our ride home he pronounced that St. Clare's temporary absences and pensiveness had more in them than common grief. "What makes you think so?" asked Pauline. "Because he has no common mind," answered he. "He is a man who struggles with adversity, and who has virtue and understanding to support him in the conflict." "I wish to be as candid as you," returned she; "but would it be uncharitable to fancy, that with such attractions of person, and with such captivating powers of conversation, he has been the fabricator of his own difficulties; and that, by injuring the peace of some unguarded bosom, he has planted self-reproach in his own? What think you, Mrs. Sedley?" "I think he is a widower," replied I, "and that he loved the wife he has lost. He wears a plain gold ring on his finger, and I observed he from time to time fixed his eyes on it with an expression of sorrow." "Dear me!" cried Pauline, "that proves nothing: it is usual for men to wear them abroad, as simple memorials of friendship. Besides, this circumstance would have been mentioned at the castle. I am persuaded that he is an unmarried man." "Well," replied I, laughing at her eagerness, "I am for waiting. The major and you will soon find out his history; for you neither of you lack, I perceive, either curiosity or invention." Jacob stopped at farmer Thompson's gate, and we dropped our companion.

CHAPTER XXIX.

SEPTEMBER still found St. Clare at Mr. Hampden's. The duke was at Brighton; and St. Clare 'detested watering-places.' Mr. Furnival, who had been my guest this summer, liked his nest, and St. Clare liked Mr. Furnival. Pauline's harp was always in tune, and she became fond of walking, and an amateur of plants and fossils. Habit had made 'my dear Mary' familiar to St. Clare's ear; but his guarded lips pronounced her *Mrs. Paulin*. An attack of that malady which Mr. Furnival called a cold, and from which I had for some time drawn my apprehensions of his lungs being affected, imposed upon him and ourselves some cautions, and Rickland Farm was for some days the general rendezvous. St. Clare without murmuring submitted to a season of repose the rain had enforced on him; and, forgetful that it fell in torrents between Mr. Hampden's house and mine, as well as elsewhere, we found him at our breakfast-table with a new publication and the news-papers. The tea-board and the daily Chronicle were dispatched; and Mrs. Paulin with alacrity produced her work-bag; for amongst the varied talents of Mr. St. Clare was comprised reading with grace and propriety. The work-bag was hanging on one arm, whilst with a smile she gave him the book. St. Clare was idle; and instead of taking the hint, he noticed the work-bag, *or the arm*; for he observed, nature had never so well succeeded in baffling art; for, beautiful as was the rose, the hand which had embroidered it was infinitely more exquisitely formed. Pauline blushed; but, recovering herself, said the work was done by a dear friend of hers, whose heart was matchless in goodness, and whose beauty was the least of her perfections. A sigh escaped her; and it was not lost on St. Clare. His animation fled; and still detaining the work-bag, *and the arm*, he said, "We

must have faith and patience, Mrs. Paulin, although the transient bloom of life disappears before this colour fade. There is a world where..." He stopped, and his countenance changed. In order to break a silence which I saw was becoming critical, I said, with assumed carelessness, "That work was performed, Mr. St. Clare, by a *French woman*, and in a convent: let it rectify your opinions in regard to them." "Were you ever in a convent, Mrs. Paulin?" asked he, relinquishing the work-bag for the book. "No," replied Pauline gravely, taking out her work. "I thought it could not be so," answered he with a forced smile. "But may I be permitted to ask you the name of a convent from which has proceeded a proof of taste and ingenuity so worthy of commendation?"

Pauline mentioned the convent of St. — at Paris. "I have heard it spoken of as a good seminary for education," answered he with assumed calmness, "and I know one lady who was in it some time. But that was an English plant," added he, smiling with ambiguity of expression: "she would have flourished in any soil: her heart was too pure for deceit and hypocrisy! Did you ever hear your friend speak of miss Aimsforth?" The paleness of death covered Pauline's face. "Miss Aimsforth!" repeated she: "good God! yes; I have heard of miss Aimsforth! of that miss Aimsforth who..." Her emotions were too violent to proceed. "I will finish her accusation," cried St. Clare with little less agitation. "It is her own perpetual reproach, and will never be erased from her memory. You have heard of Charlotte Aimsforth, Mrs. Paulin? of that miss Aimsforth whose unsuspecting nature, and too partial fondness for the most perfidious of women, have been the destruction of a man without parallel, and the innocent destroyer of the peace of her family and her own tranquillity!" Pauline sunk into my arms. "What have I done!" cried he wildly. "Tell me, madam, by what inexplicable concurrence of causes do I find in a *Mrs. Paulin*, a friend of the infamous, the base Marianne de Fouclaut!" He burst into tears. "Retire," said I, "all shall be explained: only leave us." "I cannot!" exclaimed he with impassioned eagerness. "I have murdered her. Oh let me hear her pronounce my pardon!" Pauline revived, and shuddering said, "Is Mr. Middleton dead?" "I will have no questioning now," said I with authority. "You must both be more composed." I rang the bell; and with the assistance it procured me, the again fainting Pauline was conveyed to her room. She was relieved by the remedies we applied; and leaving her more composed, I returned to the room I had quitted. St. Clare was still with Mr. Furnival; and having given a good report of my patient, I again rose to withdraw. "Stay a few minutes," said Mr. Furnival: "the occurrences of this morning are of too interesting a nature to admit of suspense. Mr. St. Clare tells me that the Aimsworths are returned to England, and are now at Aimsworth Castle. I have promised him a sight of Pauline's papers, and he waits for them. Cannot you get them?" I hesitated. "Tell her that her *father* requests them," said he, "and that he will be answerable to her for the propriety of those measures which he has adopted." I delivered my commission; and Pauline without speaking gave me the keys of her cabinet. On joining the gentlemen, I perceived I had again broken into an earnest conversation. St. Clare's face was flushed with a feverish colour, and Mr. Furnival's eyes beamed with compassion on him. I delivered the papers to him. "Have you brought the whole?" said he eagerly. "We have to unravel a skein that will not admit of a half-told tale. Not a thread shall be broken in the artless narrative of my noble-minded girl. I will trust to St. Clare for his estimation of her character. Truth with him wants no concealment, nor will her conduct need an advocate." He gave the papers to St. Clare, who bowing with emotion instantly left us. On his leaving us, I again and again adverted to my having so incautiously given *all* the papers for St. Clare's perusal. "Be easy," said Mr. Furnival, nodding his head; "and tell Pauline, that her sacrifices on the score of female delicacy must be set against my disappointment of a profitable suit in chancery: she cannot love Middleton too well for St. Clare's acquittal, and I shall have the pleasure of seeing this poor boy in his proper station before the end of a month. We shall have no cross questioning in this business,

dame Sedley; therefore prepare Pauline for her triumphs, and the temporary loss of her idol." He smiled mysteriously: but the major's appearance suppressed my curiosity; and seeing them at the chess-board I withdrew.

Pauline was in a profound sleep when I entered her room; and dismissing the maid-servant I took her post. On awaking she sighed deeply. I spoke to her; and she asked me what was become of Mr. St. Clare. "He is gone home," said I with cheerfulness, "to read those papers, which will convince him that 'the most perfidious and base of her sex' was the most faithful and innocent of human-beings." "And what will be the conclusion?" asked she, raising herself in her bed with eagerness. "Mr. Middleton is dead, and Sigismund wants neither Mr. St. Clare nor the notice of his relations. Would to God they had never known such a being existed! But I am born to be wretched!" "That depends on yourself," replied I gravely: "if you cannot consider this child more than yourself, you will deserve to be so: but I will trust to your understanding and your principles. This child will be reinstated in his natural rights; and Pauline Murray will in a few weeks be acknowledged as the *preserver* of an infant, instead of its reputed and disgraced mother." I remained silent; whilst she gave an unrestrained current to her tears. "I have long made up my mind, Mrs. Sedley," said she at length, "in regard to the reproaches of this world, as these relate to Sigismund: and tell me, what will be the advantages resulting from those rights, which will give to him, with his wealth and greatness, its dangers, and the forced regard of a family in which he will be received as an unwelcome intruder? Has he not with me a competence sufficient for all the purposes of virtue? Has he not with me a mother, in whose bosom to lodge every care, every thought?" She looked earnestly in my face. "He is now mine by every claim," pursued she. "His injured mother gave him to me; his abused father is in his grave: let these Aimsworths enjoy his fortune in peace, if they can find it. Let me seek a refuge for Middleton's orphan, and my own comfort, in which we may live strangers to the world, and undiscovered by his relations. They do not want him. Nor will he ever want them. Can you, can Mr. Furnival, believe that these people wish to see Mr. Middleton's heir appear?... What but motives of interest led Mrs. Hamilton and her friends supinely to yield their assent to *impossibilities*? Why did they not come to Paris? Why did they not exert their influence with the deluded husband, in support of an angel whom they so well knew? Why did they not do *this*, Mrs. Sedley, instead of passively seeing him *die*, the victim of suspicion and credulity? But Sigismund shall never be in their power. I will fly with him to the furthestmost corner of the earth, rather than lose sight of him. He is mine: and I will take care of *Augustus Middleton's* deserted child!" I took her hand, and with calmness observed, that I had no doubt Mr. St. Clare was better qualified to answer her questions than myself; and to him I referred her. "But I will in my turn," added I, "ask you one question, Pauline, which you are able to answer: Are you not at this moment in danger of sinking into a romantic girl? Your conduct, as it has related to this child and his unfortunate mother, has manifested a perseverance in virtue, and a firmness of mind, both honourable and praise-worthy; but are you not losing sight of those principles, on which depends the recompense of well-doing, by contemplating even in idea a project which rests on no better ground than an early prepossession for this child's father, and a fond attachment to an object gratifying to yourself? Does it become the woman who has nobly relinquished ease, reputation, and even her youthful hopes, for the more conscientious discharge of her engagements in a duty to which she was called by the particular agency of an overruling Providence, to murmur and repine, when by the same directing hand the object of her cares is removed from her protection, for the purposes of its unerring wisdom? Be satisfied, Pauline, with having performed your part well, and be grateful for the happy termination of your difficulties, and the assured security of your beloved child. It is no less a duty, Pauline, to be just to ourselves than to others; you have nobly devoted yourself to the care of this child,

whilst he had no protector but yourself: it is now time for you to reflect on your situation as a young woman prepared by education and trial for the titles of wife and mother, on more legitimate grounds than you have hitherto borne them. When I consider, Pauline, the feeble tenure by which your present comforts are held; when I consider that in the course of nature both Mr. Furnival and myself will be removed before you, I cannot help rejoicing at Sigismund's happy prospects, and anticipating the hour of your deliverance from calumny and suspicion. I expect to see madame du Rivage's pupil rise superior to the girl of seventeen, and, under the guidance of a solid judgment and a grateful mind, making such an adoption as may secure her future life, as well as gratify her affections. We shall soon hear from Mr. St. Clare," continued I with cheerfulness, "I have no doubt but the suspicions you entertain of the Aimsforth family will be removed, and then my Pauline's tender fears and romantic plans of stealing from them their remaining hope will appear to her, as it does to me, the baseless fabric of an idle fancy." Pauline made no other reply than pressing my hand, and sighing deeply. She was however not the worse for my sermon; for she appeared amongst us at the tea-hour with composure, and with firmness listened to Mr. Furnival's predictions that Rick-farm would be on sale in a month, unless we could find another boy to love and talk of.

Three days elapsed, and we could only be composed; for St. Clare still kept his room, and, as Mrs. Hampden observed, "we all missed him." At length she was deputed by him to deliver to me the following letter, with the narrative annexed.

CHAPTER XXX.

To Mrs. Sedley.

MADAM,

I SHALL not attempt to describe the condition of mind into which I have been plunged by perusing the manuscripts you did me the honour to place in my hands. No, madam, it is not St. Clare's sufferings which call on you for compassion: these he must sustain, as he has done, by means of those aids which are not of this world. A duty more important than any consideration for himself is now before him. He has to rescue the memory of Augustus Middleton from indelible disgrace, and to stand forth as the evidence of an integrity which none living would have dared to implicate whilst he was on earth to answer for himself. When we next meet, madam, neither you nor mademoiselle Pauline du Rivage will need an apology for my unguarded conduct the last time I had the honour of being with you. In knowing St. Clare's sorrows, you will pardon his being unequal to that self-command which prudence would have suggested in a cooler hour.

I remain, madam, with respect,
Your humble and obliged

ST. CLARE.

MR. ST. CLARE'S NARRATIVE.

IT is necessary, in order to complete the elucidation of those events in which not only my happiness has been shipwrecked, but also the peace and prospects of the most generous of her sex, to enter into a short detail of those circumstances which so firmly cemented the ties of friendship between Augustus Middleton and myself.

Miss Umfreville, his mother, and my own, were near neighbours and friends from their earliest years; and on my mother's marriage to Mr. Boothby, and settling at St. Clare with her husband, a mutual promise was made, that in this separation there should enter no abatement of confidence or affection between the friends. Miss Umfreville, soon after losing sight of her companion, became Mrs. Middleton. My mother's situation at this juncture prevented her visit to England; but the intercourse of letters still kept up the fond hopes each friend cherished, of again meeting with augmented blessings. This promised visit took place the following year, and my mother had the comfort of seeing the newly-born Augustus Middleton and his happy parents. The succeeding one was clouded by my father's illness and death. A few weeks after this event, Mr. and Mrs. Middleton, prompted by the interest they took in my mother's sorrow, determined on their visit to St. Clare; and in order to silence the fears of Mr. Umfreville, which they regarded as arising more from his repugnance to his being left even for a week by his idolized niece, than from any reasonable cause for alarm, they determined on leaving Augustus, then in his cradle, for his amusement and consolation. Permit me, madam, to be brief in regard to an event which left on my mother's spirits an indelible impression of sadness; and which when known announced Augustus Middleton an orphan. You have already heard of the fate which terminated his parents' lives in their passage to Holyhead on their return home.

My mother's despair, on this occasion, for many months menaced her life: and my good uncle St. Clare conceived that she was rapidly declining into the same malady which had been so fatal to her husband. He therefore sent me to my grandmother's, in England, and conveyed my mother to Lisbon for the winter. The voyage was happily followed by the patient's slow recovery; and still doubtful of her health, Mr. St. Clare persuaded her to remain a second winter in a situation so evidently useful to her. During this period I was as often the guest in Augustus's nursery as he in mine. My grandfather was the rector of Mr. Umfreville's parish, and his abode very near the hall. No speculative doctrines or differences in religious worship could prevent such men as Mr. Umfreville and my grandfather from being friends; for both were liberal, and both loved and revered goodness under every form of worship and opinion which inculcated the precepts and example of their Divine Master and guide. From the age of childhood was I taught by my mother to love Augustus Middleton as *a brother*, as one whom it was my peculiar duty to *love* and to *serve*. The catastrophe of his parents' death was repeatedly told me with tears; and with every eulogium of fond regret and affection, I was reminded, that I was *two years older* than my *friend*; that it was my *duty* to press forward in those attainments, in morals and learning, which might render me one day useful to my *brother*. I was given to understand, that every hope she entertained for my proficiency and advancement in virtue was connected with her solicitude to see me useful to her Amelia's child; and in order to cement these ties, and further these views, she cheerfully yielded up her own comforts, and risked my life to the dangers of an element she dreaded. I was, in consequence of her plans, educated by my grandfather; and the only separation between me and Augustus was confined to my annual visit at St. Clare's, in which my good grandfather shared with great satisfaction. I was in my seventeenth year when death deprived me of this friend and guide; and from that period my summers were passed at Mr. Umfreville's. My mother having, from the happy experience resulting from my safety, lessened her dread of the Irish passage, once so fatal; time and the discriminations of a more mature judgment had now rendered my mother's exhortations to love Augustus Middleton useless. But to whom was he not dear! Who that knew his worth was not his friend!

Mr. Umfreville, who perfectly understood his beloved nephew's motives for remaining with him, when the laws of his country had made him master of his own actions, was induced by affection and gratitude to urge to Augustus a measure from which his heart had hitherto revolted; and the tour of Europe was brought forwards, as a plan not only of utility to Mr. Middleton but of essential service to the Aimsworths, who were at that time meditating on their journey to the continent. Augustus, who was particularly attached to his aunt, the only remaining sister of his father, did not endeavour to conceal his pleasure on receiving a permission which he had so considerably forborne to request for his own immediate gratification: my tender mother and my uncle instantly according with my wishes of joining the party. Our rendezvous was settled to be in London; but my uncle unfortunately was attacked by an illness of some danger, and I was detained at St. Clare for several weeks.

On joining my friends at Paris, I found the Aimsworths on the point of quitting it for Italy; and I was soon informed of the motives which still detained Augustus in that capital. It is needless for me to say, that I concurred in those views which had Mrs. Aimsworth's sanction and my friend's happiness for their object, and which I clearly perceived to be of the utmost consequence to mademoiselle de Fouclaut. I witnessed, madam, an union from which I fondly hoped to behold every wish of his family gratified, and which I have a thousand times execrated as ruinous to every prospect of his friends, and fatal to himself. Yes, madam, I witnessed those vows which sent Augustus to his grave! I beheld that beautiful

form, and sweet and touching modesty, which had subdued a heart conscious of its excellence, and which had so steadily refused itself to folly and frivolity! I listened to the angel's voice when, with the timid blush of virgin purity, and with dignified piety, she solemnly plighted her faith to Augustus! When the ceremony was over I blessed it with so much energy that she smiled, whilst a tear fell from her eyes; and she said, "Are all your English friends, my Augustus, like those whom I know? for, if they be, you must teach me your secret of gaining hearts: and what is more," continued she, "dispose them to overlook an apparent disregard of duty, in favour of a man whom they know to be as honourable as I believe him to be unequalled in goodness." She again gave him her hand, and he pressed it to his bosom, whilst with a melting tear and chastened joy she yielded to his embrace. We were obliged to leave the hotel immediately, and she bade me tell Charlotte Aimsforth, "that she was beyond the reach of fortune; for she should *die* Middleton's wife." The priest who performed the marriage ceremony, and who appeared particularly affected by this scene, again joined their hands, and with visible emotion gave them a fervent benediction; then reminding us of the hazard of remaining, we left the house. On our way to the hotel, du Clos, the priest, told me that he had known the duke de Fouclaut many years, and knew him to be unworthy of such a daughter. "When I hear this innocent and injured young creature is safe in England, and in the bosom of her husband's family," added he, "I shall thank my God for having appointed me as the agent of his merciful purposes; for I have no doubt on my mind in respect to her fate were she long in the power of her father."

Mr. Umfreville, to whom Mr. Middleton's situation had been faithfully communicated by Mrs. Aimsforth and myself, had in the mean time felt the privation of his nephew's absence in a degree proportionate to his peculiar attachment and strong affection. He received the intelligence of his engagements in Paris with much more alarm than resentment. It had long been the supreme wish of his heart to see Augustus married; and the connexion with Marianne de Fouclaut had nothing in it to disappoint his ambition, or to offend his principles. Mr. Middleton's long minority had made him rich; and with his uncle's fortune, to which he was heir, he was placed in a point of view which entitled him to overlook fortune in his choice of a wife; whilst at the same time it was an acknowledged truth, that his birth and connexions gave him pretensions to the highest alliances. Mr. Umfreville, satisfied on these important points, thought only of detaching Augustus from France, dreading lest, in the connexion he had formed in that agitated country, his safety might be implicated with the intriguing and caballing de Fouclauts. He determined on joining the Aimsforths, who were at this time settled in Nice, thinking that his influence when nearer Augustus would operate more effectually in drawing him from a spot in which he was not safe an hour, and, by his sanction of the marriage, secure to his Marianne the asylum needful to her. This plan was for a time opposed by his chaplain, doctor Wingrove. He had in his knowledge of physic been no less useful to his patron, than by his talents as a scholar to Augustus whom he had educated from his infancy. He reminded Mr. Umfreville of his peculiar and too often excruciating malady, which had for years incapacitated him for the exercise of a carriage without hazard, even on roads unequalled for goodness, and in a vehicle constructed for his use. But he soon perceived his friend had in the disquietude which succeeded to these hints a danger to encounter for which he had no remedies. The result of these observations was, strenuously recommending to him a voyage to Italy, in which his general health might be benefited, and his spirits relieved from the augmenting depression in which the poor old man indulged as one without hope. A vessel was prepared for him at Newcastle; and after a prosperous voyage, as it related to winds and weather, Mr. Umfreville reached Nice, but in a state of health at once precarious and alarming: he was ill when he arrived with his painful malady: it

increased; and Augustus found him surrounded by his afflicted family, and they nearly hopeless of his recovery.

I omit, madam, in this detail those particulars which have been mentioned by the suffering angel, Mrs. Middleton, in her touching narrative consigned to mademoiselle Pauline's care. I omit to place before you the state of my unhappy friend's mind at this period. A fever of some danger was produced by his agitation. The punctuality of Marianne's and Nicolas's letters, aided by his excellent constitution, relieved him, and quieted our apprehensions: but his feebleness was extreme; and it was necessary for us to remain at Nice till he recruited his strength. A letter from his wife rendered him more docile to our entreaties. It was, madam, the last he received from her. She informed him in it of the absence of the duke; the tranquillity in which she passed her hours; and her exemption from every complaint but such as are incident to her condition, "which," adds she, "I bear cheerfully, in the sweet hope of a recompense I shall share with my Augustus. Jeanneton laughs at my little indispositions, and heroically suffers much more than I do from the same cause. She is my comfort, Augustus, and you must love her as your Marianne's mother. I shall, at my father's return," continues she, "fearlessly communicate to him my marriage and condition. I have the most substantial reasons to believe that he will not only pardon my offence, but will also become the cheerful partner in my journey to you. I am certain that such are the impending dangers of his situation here, that he will bless me for having provided for him an asylum at once so honourable and secure. He will, my Augustus, forget, in his children's happiness and his own, his wild schemes of ambition; he will quit the turbulent scenes by which he is now surrounded, and in which he knows his life is daily exposed. He will fondly cling to our peaceful domestic joys. His heart will be renewed with us; and we shall see our father such as nature destined him to be; we shall see him fondly blessing our little ones; we shall see him happy, my dear Augustus; for we shall allure him to virtue, and he will die in our arms, and with hope."

To this letter succeeded one of those paroxysms of fury in Paris, which served as the prelude to new horrors. The alarmed Middleton could not be opposed in his designs. Neither Nicolas nor his wife had answered his letters; and in a state of fearful expectation we prepared for our journey to Paris. We had reached the frontiers with so much haste, and so little caution, that we were stopped by an impediment we had not foreseen. The extreme anxiety Middleton had discovered to reach the capital, with his fluency of language, and his unguarded offers of *any price* for horses, produced a suspicion in the newly constituted and patriotic municipality, that he was a Frenchman, and on business unfriendly to *la nation*. During our detention I happily recollected the name and residence of a gentleman who knew us; but on my naming him, I found he was in the country, and some few leagues remote. My coolness and arguments, however, prevailed. Middleton was permitted, with an escort of four guards, to apply to this gentleman, whom he more particularly knew than myself. Irritated by the loss of time and the impertinence of these new magistrates, he urged on with so much speed the miserable beast they had given him, that he fell, and his rider received a blow on his head from the flinty road, which at the moment was thought fatal by his attendants. He was brought by them to me in this state of apparent death; and I was for some time uncertain as to the event. A violent brain fever succeeded to his first stupor: at the end of six weeks the younger Aimsworths, to whom I had written, assisted me in conveying our passive, and, I may add, nearly idiotical patient to Nice, where we found Mrs. Aimsworth very ill, and Mrs. Hamilton in the expectation of her father's arrival and her own confinement. We had been flattered by the hope, that, in the renovation of his bodily forces, Augustus would recover his mental vigour. Alas! these expectations were fallacious; for although we perceived transient moments of

recollection, such was his condition that he appeared insensible to the distress of his friends, and the deep mourning we wore for his beloved aunt was not even noticed by him. It is needless for me to particularize the impressions made on us by the diabolical letters we received from France: but it may not be improper to mention, that the family quitted Nice soon after Mrs. Aimsworth's death, in consequence of that event; and in the hopes of alleviating her husband's sorrow by a change of place. An old connexion at Turin decided him to a preference of that situation; and we were received by Mr. Aimsworth's early friend with attentions at once soothing and beneficial. The forlorn and wretched Middleton soon found a sympathetic friend in the marchese di Spollino; and by him was written that affecting appeal to the duke de Fouclaut, which was intercepted by the arch fiend de Béne employed. You know the answers we received.

In the mean time signor Spollino had suggested to me the expediency of trying again medical skill; and our Augustus and myself were conducted by him to a beautiful villa he had near the city. I had soon the consolation of seeing that he enjoyed the garden, and that he always knew me. But his unconquerable taciturnity still remained, and hope receded from my anxious bosom. His physicians proposed short sea cruizes; and this plan was followed the ensuing spring by a success I had little expected. These dawnings of hope were progressively followed by more cheerful prospects; for he became better in health, and would sometimes speak to me. He was always contented when in a carriage, slept in it very frequently, and in these slumbers discovered to me the latent cause which retarded his cure. With what anguish of soul have I heard him pronounce the name of his 'wife! his lost Marianne! his sainted Marianne!'—'Nicolas!' 'Jeanneton!' by turns escaped from his lips. Why do I wish to recall his image, when on one occasion he started; and with eagerness asked me "when we should reach Paris." "We shall see our friends at Turin this evening," replied I, pressing his hand. "Shall we?" said he, bursting into tears: "then they have not been murdered." "You have been sleeping," answered I: "but now look at the glorious prospect, and tell me whether Titian's skies are too glowing." He languidly raised his eyes, but made no reply.

I must hasten from this period of misery. Mr. Middleton gradually recovered his reason: sometimes he mixed with the family circle; but his melancholy augmented, and he never named his wife. The death of *Mr. Aimsworth* had long been foreseen; and his rapid approaches to the grave again plunged the family into the deepest distress. Middleton appeared, however, to gain by his efforts to lessen the general sorrow around him, and passed more of his time with his uncle than with me. I found he read to him sometimes; and that he now sought consolation in his own room in acts of devotion. On the event of Mr. Aimsworth's dissolution he was calm and resigned; and with a sigh he observed that he envied him the repose he had found. "So should I at his age," replied I, "and with such an account prepared of *talents well used* as he can produce. But human life, Augustus, is a field of glory; and we cannot give the same triumph to the young adventurer, who quits its toils with impatient disgust, as to the veteran who has braved its perils and stood firm in his duty. "Yet even Aimsworth," answered he, "sunk when bereaved of his wife. Wherefore then do you reproach me for wishing to die, after all you have seen me endure? Do you imagine that I have forgotten Marianne? Do you think I am a stranger to her face? I know she is dead: and what have I to live for?" Hurried away by my feelings, rather than guided by my judgment, I endeavoured to relieve him from this idea. "Why then is she not here?" asked he with eagerness. "To what cause am I to attribute her silence, and the conduct of her friends, who never name her? Am I always to be treated as an idiot? Even Boothby, the friend of my soul, names not the wife I deplore. He fears to participate in the anguish I feel, and he sees me mourn without a

comforter.” My emotions betrayed me. “I know,” continued he, “that there is some dreadful business concealed from me: but be not deceived, Boothby, my mind suffers more from your reserve than from the effects of my late accident. I conjure you to tell me what you know of my wife.” My heart died within me, madam, I could only grasp his hand. “Speak,” said he; “you shall find Augustus Middleton is prepared by a faith which is able to support him in ‘the crush of worlds!’” —“A sense of what you owe to yourself, your family, and your Boothby,” answered I with assumed firmness, “is all that is necessary to sustain you under an evil neither uncommon nor without remedy. I have, with others of your friends, been silent, from a regard to the weak state of your health, and the consequences of an accident which unavoidably affected your head for a time. I will convince you of my opinion of your principles and understanding, by placing before you the proofs of its being your *duty* to forget Marianne de Fouclaut.” Never shall I forget the tone with which he said, “It is enough: produce them: I am calm.” —You will judge, madam, I had gone too far to recede. I placed before him the letters, including one which had reached us from Nicolas, and which is mentioned in Clement’s narrative. “The life of Boothby is now in your hands,” said I: “I will retire, and leave you.” “Remain,” replied he, trembling with eagerness, “and see the triumph of *friendship*.”

I silently took my place. He opened the damned scrolls with an universal tremor, and read them deliberately twice over. A paleness covered his face; and sinking back in his chair he fainted. I flew to his succour, uttering such expressions of despair as I believe roused him; for he faintly said, “Be not alarmed: this is physic that must either *kill* or *cure*.” He took the drops from my trembling hand. “Poor Boothby,” said he with a smile I shall never forget, “thou art a coward.” I offered to remove the papers. “Not yet,” said he, approaching the table, “I have not done with them, and you see I am not *mad*.” He drew out his watch, and applied a small seal to that which had impressed his wife’s letter; then, placing it in his bosom, suddenly rose. “Whither are you going?” asked I, extending my arms. He rushed into my embrace, and burst into groans and tears. Once more did I see him carried to his bed as passive as an infant! But heaven was merciful; for he fell into a profound sleep. On awaking he took from my hand a cordial; and gazing on my face with attention he said, “My dear Boothby, you have shared the rack with me. Why do you not take the cordial heaven has granted me? Retire to your bed; and if you fear to leave the *lunatic*, send Henderson to me.” The poor man sighed, and approached him. “Have you also watched?” asked he with tenderness. “But be comforted: Augustus will repay your cares if he can: for he is no longer the child, nor under the pangs of doubt and suspense. His God will not deceive him.”

His conduct from this time appeared to be the result of a plan he had formed for his recovery; his hours of retirement were passed in devotional exercises: and I rejoiced, for I well knew that I had little to apprehend from any excesses of a superstitious kind from a man whose mind was too well informed for the purposes of a weak and erroneous faith; and although he was under the influence of a deeply wounded spirit, that neither his understanding nor his opinions would lead him to a cell as a refuge from sorrow. He soon convinced me that I had not erred in my judgment; for he proposed to me accompanying the two Middletons as far as Brussels, on their way to England, whither family concerns obliged them to go. You will judge I met this plan with alacrity; but he rejected proceeding with them quite to the destined port, and we left them, in order to pursue our own excursion. With what contentment of mind did I perceive that fatal indolence yielding to my entreaties and projects! With what gratitude to heaven did I see his mind emerging from the cloud of sickness and sorrow which had enveloped it! We visited, in our route back to Turin, several of the towns in our road: but I perceived curiosity was not yet awakened in Augustus’s mind; and I therefore adapted my taste to his, and we

rather loitered than travelled on the road. His imagination had taken the lead, and the objects of nature only had charms for him. Every romantic spot, every retired and neat abode, was in unison with his mind; and with enthusiasm he would bring forward his darling project of restoring me to St. Clare and my mother, and of spending the remainder of his days in some retired spot near us, which should be inaccessible to all but ourselves. "We must see more of Italy first," answered I smiling: "my mother's commands must be obeyed." "Does she not wish you to return home?" asked he. "Not for the purpose of being an anchoret," answered I, "but to give her the joy of seeing Augustus Middleton what I have engaged he shall be." "Joy!" repeated he with emotion. "Have I not, like the authors of my being, been the source of sorrow to her? Have I not clouded her days by intercepting from her maternal eyes the pride of her life, and doomed that son to cares which have withered his bloom, and wasted his health in unprofitable toils? Had the same element ingulphed me, which in its fury reached my parents, I had been happy! Those pitiless waves were no more than the blind instruments in the hands of unerring wisdom to recall to a state of blessedness 'those meet for their inheritance.' But I, Frederic, was left to buffet with the storm; left to struggle in the black surge of treachery and baseness; to feel my soul wrung by dark and hellish devices; and what is more, Boothby, to feel that Marianne is injured! Yes, injured!" repeated he wildly: "at the tribunal of her Maker will you hear this truth proclaimed, 'She has been forced into the arms of a monster!'"

We had constantly avoided entering into any discussions with our unhappy friend on this painful subject; and madame du Rivage's letter was, as we conceived, calculated to replunge him into that condition from which he had escaped. We had intelligence on which we could depend, that the duke's hotel was shut up; that Marianne, his daughter, lived at l'Eclair, with de Béne and her father; and that no one doubted of her being de Béne's wife. We had therefore concluded mademoiselle Pauline's information to be a stratagem of de Fouclaut's for purposes too obvious to need discussion. And you will not be surprised at our conclusions when I add, that we had been informed of de Béne's wretched fate on the second of September; and of the report current in Paris that the duke and his daughter had effected their escape, by means of a girl in the house, the day before the horrid massacre.

I will now hasten to the conclusion of my history. The public affairs of France, and Mr. Hamilton's motives for residing in Italy, had lengthened our absence from England some months after the general wish of being there had been started and reasoned on. The hopes of peace, with lord M—'s first embassy to Paris, paved the way to our wishes; and we without difficulty effected our purpose of passing through France, having received passports from Paris so favourable as even to provide against the probable exigency of our being delayed on the road from the want of horses.

We had reached Grenoble in perfect safety; and Mrs. Hamilton was so well pleased with her accommodations, that she cheerfully acceded to her husband's wish of staying a day or two in order to repose herself and the children. The hotel in which we had thus comfortably established ourselves, fronted la Grande Place, and was moreover spacious and well conducted. On assembling in the morning at breakfast, we found it was the day of an annual fair, and we were drawn to the balcony to survey the motley groupe collected in the square. Charles Hamilton, the eldest boy, importuned his friend Augustus to walk with him to see more nearly the wonders which so attracted his eager eyes; and the fondness with which this request was granted was too common to excite notice. I was however kindly invited to join the party by the good-natured boy, and I accepted the offer. We were disappointed in our first great object; the crowd pressed so much round the exhibition of some marionnettes, that we could not

proceed, either with safety to the child, or near enough for his gratification. In order to pacify his impatience, and amuse him, I directed his steps to a small stall, or rather a table, on which were placed for show the merchandize and the purchases of poverty; and taking up some trifle, I observed that it was prettier than Punchinello, and that we might carry it home with us. This rhetoric succeeded; and during the time Charles was selecting what best pleased him, I surveyed with some attention the poor man, who was eagerly serving so unexpected a customer. He was wretchedly clothed, and exhibited a countenance at once worn down by sorrow and sickness; and I fancied he spoke his language correctly, and that in his civility there was more politeness than was common to his apparent condition. Charles, having filled his own hands and Middleton's, left me to pay the man, not forgetting to tell me to bring something for his brother and sister. I was not indisposed for the commission; and taking up some tinselled toy, I remarked to the poor fellow, that *his* was but a sorry traffic, for it did not allow me to throw away my money: "but if you will accept of this silver as a donation," added I, "it will be well disposed of." He cast down his eyes, and bowing thanked me with confusion and embarrassment. A paper Harlequin caught my eye, and I took it; throwing down another Italian crown. "You are sent from heaven for my deliverance," said he with a tremulous voice. "The money your charity has bestowed will save my life. Would to God I could speak to you alone! I have," continued he, lowering his voice, "some trifling relics of better days about me, which, if I could convert them into money without danger of my life, would provide for me in a convent in Italy. Your generosity, monsieur, speaks you an Englishman; and I implore you to give me whatever you may please to think an equivalent for them." "I will do more," answered I, "if I find you what I believe you to be. Ask for me at the hotel at what hour you please." He mentioned six o'clock, and I gave my name.

On rejoining my friend, I found him quietly amusing himself with the children; and I recounted to him the incident which had detained me. Mr. Hamilton observed, he was sorry I had engaged myself, as he had depended on my company to visit the ruins of a Roman temple near the town. Perfectly understanding that the business I had to transact with the poor man would suffer nothing by being transferred to Middleton, and being as willing as Hamilton to visit these remains of antient taste, I made over to him the expected visitor, and contented myself with leaving instructions with Henderson for conducting the man cautiously to our apartment, and to his master. Augustus, on our quitting him, said he had letters to write, and retired to perform a task long since necessary. It was near eight in the evening, when, as we slowly walked down the street which led to the hotel, I perceived Henderson anxiously watching our return. The instant he saw us, he darted forward to meet us. "God be praised!" said he, "you are returned. I thought every moment an hour; my master is ill, and I have been miserable! Mrs. Hamilton knows nothing about it." Hamilton on entering the house went to his wife, and I, with forebodings of evil, repaired to Augustus. He was sitting on a sofa as motionless as a statue, and was neither less pale or cold than marble. Before him, on a table, were his empty purse and some trinkets. "What have you here, my dear Middleton?" asked I. He started at my voice. "You have been disturbed," added I: "surely the stranger..." He interrupted me: "Be satisfied till tomorrow," said he: "I am overpowered by his visit; yet not for worlds would I have missed seeing him!" We instantly led him to his bed; and, as was ever the case with our dear patient, his perturbations were succeeded by a heavy sleep.

Henderson's account followed my first cares: "My master," said he, "on your leaving him after dinner repaired to his apartment, and, reminding me of the expected visitor, said he would write to the marchese di Spollino. I placed before him what was necessary, with a book, and left him, and then took

my post. The man was punctual to his time; and on asking for you, sir, I stepped forward, and bade him follow me. On ascending the stairs, his peculiar manner of treading them occasioned me to turn my head, and I perceived he was club-footed, and withal the worst-looking man I ever saw. I stopped in the ante-room, and explained to him your engagement for the evening; adding that my master was however prepared to receive him. He appeared distressed and irresolute. 'I had hoped to have quitted Grenoble to-night,' said he with emotion. "Mr. Boothby's absence will be no cause of disappointment to you," replied I; "for Mr. Middleton and he have one and the same heart and purse in their acts of benevolence." He sat down, saying something of his being faint and weary; then, after a momentary pause, said he was at my orders. I do not know, sir, what put it into my thoughts, but there was a look in this fellow's eyes that I did not like. So I determined, on showing him into the room to my master, to remain within call. The interview was longer than I expected, and it began to make me uneasy; when suddenly the door opened, and the man hastily advanced. My appearance as suddenly checked his speed: 'Good God!' said he, 'I was running to seek help for your master; he is fainting.' - "And it is necessary," said I sternly, "for you to see him recovered before you depart." I turned the lock, and put the key in my pocket at the same moment. 'Assurément,' replied he, following me: 'mais monsieur n'est pas en danger.' My master was reclined on the sofa, his face covered with his hands; and those convulsive sobs which we have so often feared would suffocate him, clearly showed me that he had been much disturbed. In the terror of the moment, it is possible, the things on the table might not have been minutely remarked by me; but I can assert that I saw nothing on it but the writing implements when I prepared some drops for my master, which he took from my hand, saying he was better. When turning to set down the glass, my eye was struck by the sight of the trinkets. 'You may retire,' said my master to the man: 'I hope you are satisfied, honest friend?' 'Perfectly,' returned he, bowing, 'and sincerely rejoiced to leave you better.' 'My disorder is nothing new to me,' replied my master. 'Henderson, show monsieur the way.'—He was obeyed; and I cannot add, sir, with alacrity on my part; for I never saw a thief, if that fellow was not one. And when I unlocked the ante-chamber door to let him out, I could not help saying he had met with *good luck*. And with a ghastly grin he answered, it was not before he wanted it. On my return to the room I mentioned my opinion to my master. 'He has been the messenger of peace to me,' said he languidly: 'I only want Boothby to share with me feelings too powerful for my wretched spirits.' You know what has since passed sir," added the faithful Henderson: "but, good God! what tidings of joy could this fellow communicate? I still repent that I did not detain him." Unable to solve the mystery, and engaged in my attentions to Augustus, I suffered the hours to pass till he awoke; when he mentioned his having neither any wish nor purpose to detain a person to whom he stood indebted for intelligence of the utmost importance to his happiness. Henderson was silenced; and I was soon informed of what had passed.

I will confine myself merely to the substance of the conversation which ensued, after this execrable villain's introduction to my friend. He produced several articles of fashionable use, worn by gentlemen; such as buckles, snuff-boxes, and a ring or two of no great value. Augustus, judging from the man's trepidation, and apparent reluctance to advance, that he feared lest some suspicion should be attached to his business, encouraged him, by observing that he was not a man to doubt of those exigences in life which might make him poor, without any imputation on his honour or honesty. "You only do me justice, sir," replied he, "in believing that I have not forfeited either the one or the other in gaining the few valuables I have brought. They were left to me by a master whom I served faithfully; but they would be my ruin if found upon me." "Well," replied Mr. Middleton, giving him his purse, "we will so manage as to secure you from this hazard. Let me know your route; I can send them to you when you

are in safety, and I have a friend at Nice who will take care of them for you. They are, without doubt, of value to you as memorials of a good master: to me they are useless." The man sat down, and covering his face groaned. "Tell me," continued the benevolent Augustus, "can I more effectually serve you?" "Yes," replied he in a tone of despair. "You can relieve my soul of its insupportable burthen. You can speak of pardon to a wretch who is without hope! or you can recall your goodness, and leave me to perish as an expiation for my sins. I know you, sir," added he: "I served de Béne, and, as I told you, I served him faithfully, and have ruined myself for *ever*."

I leave to your imagination the effects of such an appeal on the feelings of my friend. When composed, the man proceeded to place before him what he infamously called his confession. These were the most important parts of it:—That the unhappy Marianne was taught to believe Mr. Middleton was dead, and also given to understand that in a fit of insanity he had destroyed himself. She was next assailed by terrors of seeing her father on a scaffold. She yielded; and the marriage with de Béne took place, although the ceremony was performed when she was unable to quit her bed.

De Béne, however, kept his engagement; for he instantly set out with the duke de Fouclaut for Thoulouse, leaving his nominal wife with a woman called Babét, whom he could trust, and with this man. During the space of many weeks she remained too weak to leave her room; but at length she walked in the garden, and gradually excited his pity and compassion. She observed it; and on thanking him one day for some fruit he offered her, she asked him to befriend her, adding that her request included no breach of duty to his master, nor any thing criminal in the sight of heaven. "I have sacrificed myself to save a father's life," continued she. "Let that pass... In heaven all will appear, and I shall be justified. I was a mother, Clement, before I was a widowed wife—and, to save my infant from my cruel father's horrid purpose, wrote, whilst he dictated with a drawn dagger over the sleeping innocent, a letter which sent his father to his grave, and has made an outcast of my child. You can serve him when I am no more; this blessed moment is not remote... My hours are numbered, and each revolving sun promises me freedom and a grave." Clement, for as such he announced himself, engaged to serve her; and she informed him that her child was at an old villa of her father's, and passed there for the grandson of the man who lived at la Rondeau. From this time he undertook the commission of seeing the child, and contributing to the comforts of the miserable family, which consisted only of a very aged and infirm man, with Jaqueline his grand-daughter, who passed for the mother of the vigorous and beautiful child who was called Sigismund. Clement continued his narration, "Madame de Béne," said he, "gradually becoming more and more satisfied with my zeal, disclosed to me her views. 'You will outlive me,' said she: 'such is my persuasion. Take care of this cross, and when I am dead be it your first care to secure my infant. His father's family is rich and powerful, and will receive him and recompense you: endeavour to discover Meunier and his wife; they will be useful to you, and assist you with such evidences as will more than suffice for my child's welcome to his country and friends. This cross will alone be your passport,' added she, weeping and kissing it, 'to one heart that you will find at Aimsworth Castle. Charlotte Aimsworth, now Mrs. Hamilton, will shelter my child, and pity his wretched mother.' With this proof of her confidence and trust, my lady gave me twenty louis d'ors, saying it was all the money she had, but that Meunier had money of hers." The wretch paused. "Proceed," said Augustus. "I suppose you are prepared, sir," said he with dismay, "to hear that I was soon after at liberty to execute my lady's orders; but it may be you do not know that my master suffered with the prisoners in the Abbaye. But permit me to pass to what now remains. I had no sooner seen the storm burst, without ruin to myself, than I went to la Rondeau. The chateau was sealed as national property, the old man was dead, and the

neighbours told me that Jaqueline had found good friends at Paris, for that a lady fetched her away in her own coach; and Jaqueline told them she was going to England with Sigismund, who would be as rich as a *milord*.

“Thus defeated in my purpose,” continued Clement, “and pressed by my necessities, I own I used the money my lady had intrusted to me: but happily I have still the cross; and your goodness has led me to relate to you circumstances which I would give worlds, if I had them, to forget.”

Middleton now told me he had been tortured by the sight of the cross. “It was,” said he, “the gift of Charlotte Aimsforth when in the convent to her Marianne. The initials of her name were on it, and my wife constantly wore it in her bosom: too well did I recall the hour when with pretended jealousy I added the letters A.M. Absorbed in my reflexions, I remained silent and gazing on the cross. “Have courage, monsieur,” said Clement, “though I have not succeeded so well in serving you, as to my sorrow I did in injuring you, yet I think you will soon hear of your child; for, after many ineffectual inquiries, I at length met by accident in the street Nicolas Meunier. He wore an officer’s uniform; and perceiving that he wished not to take notice of me, I went after him; he turned into a coffee-house, and I requested to speak to him. He, with much pride and reserve, bade me be quick, for he had no time to lose. I instantly, monsieur,” continued Clement, “mentioned his unfortunate lady, and the commission with which I had been intrusted by her. ‘You need not give yourself any trouble in the business,’ replied he with coldness. ‘The child is at this time safe in England, and will be protected by those who will not want your interference. There are such proofs of his birth with him as must establish him as Mr. Middleton’s legal heir; whether it please him or not to provide for his son during his life. I have had many vexations on this child’s account,’ added he, ‘and I may truly say he has been the death of my poor wife, whose affection for her lady, though ill requited, devolved, with her last sigh, on the poor deserted infant. But providence has been kind, and innocence has found a protector.’ I urged him to be more explicit. He said ‘it was useless; but as he might never see me again, he would take his oath that he was present and witnessed mademoiselle de Fouclaut’s marriage with Mr. Middleton; and that she was far advanced in her pregnancy when she dismissed from her service his faithful Jeanneton.’ I pleaded the cruel circumstances which had forced my lady to act as she did. He abruptly replied, ‘it was needless to talk of a matter on which his mind had long since been made up; he knew he had been ungenerously treated, and his wife hurried to her grave in consequence of her fidelity.’ He added, that he was on the eve of his departure to join his regiment under Dumourier, and pleading business left me.

“I saw I had nothing to expect from this quarter, monsieur; and warned by declining health and advancing misery, I determined to leave France, and seek a refuge in some convent in Italy. The savings of my better days were however of that sort which made it dangerous for me to offer them for sale. My natural defect, I well knew, would, upon the slightest suspicion, lead to the discovery of my having lived with monsieur de Béne. I therefore trusted to the usefulness of my feet for the safety of my life; few men can walk better than myself notwithstanding their unsightly shape; and with my wares on my back I make nothing of six leagues a day. Struck by the humanity of the gentleman this morning, and convinced by his generosity that I could not do better than to try him, I hazarded to mention the business which has brought me hither. The rest you know. I have disburthened my conscience, as it relates to my solemn engagement made to my lady. Ah, monsieur,” added he, “she was an angel! and you have been basely betrayed by those in whom you trusted! I was not one of those... Yes, by this cross,” he took it up and

devoutly kissed it, "I swear that to the last hour of my life I shall repent of having been an accessory to those who have destroyed her and ruined your peace."

"I had supported this excruciating interview," continued poor Augustus, "to the last efforts of nature. I believe I fainted: but I was soon recalled to my perception and a father's pangs; for I shall never behold this blessing here!" Need I detail the effects of this scene on my friend?

CHAPTER XXXI.

OUR detention at Grenoble was followed by our taking possession of a chateau near the town, which the late miserable proprietors had left commodiously furnished. In this retreat we passed six weeks: they were the last of my friend's sufferings. Notwithstanding Henderson's suspicions of this man had passed into our minds, we determined to place before Mr. Middleton every evidence we could produce which favoured the pretensions of his son, and which soothed his fond hopes. With the motives which had induced us to suppress mademoiselle Pauline's letters, we placed them before him with Mrs. Hamilton's reply, in which I had perfectly concurred. From that hour he gave himself up to the cares which regarded this child's security; and with sentiments which we did not attempt to oppose, spoke of the benign being who had interposed in saving him from destruction...Pauline du Rivage!...But I check my pen. Suffice it, I was taught to *adore* the woman whom I had believed a confederate with Middleton's murderers.

I shall leave for the present the last testamentary act of my friend; only observing that to me were bequeathed his hopes, his duties, his affections as a father...precious legacy, although till within a few days the misery of my life, the corroding care of my pillow! I must indulge myself in placing before you the calm and resigned Augustus in the last hours of his mortal existence. He appeared to have anticipated the recompense of virtue and suffering. He was collected, easy, and even cheerful at intervals. The morning preceding that of his death, I entered the room by the dawn of day. I was not surprised to find him in his easy chair, a recumbent position being too painful for him. His windows commanded the rising sun, and it appeared in its refulgent glory above the hills which bounded our horizon. Augustus desired me to draw up the sash, and with placid delight he welcomed the soft breezes which refreshed him. "These zephyrs," observed I, "bring 'health on their wings;' and without being poetical, I would sooner trust to the influence of the Æsculapius before us than to a college of physicians for the remedy which you want." "I have enjoyed," answered he, "a doctor far more renovating than your favourite divinity Apollo. I have been favoured with a sun which has illumined my dungeon when his glories were to my eyes darkness; and what is more, Boothby, which will exist, when, in the sublime language of my poet,

The sun himself, with weary clouds opprest,
Shall in his silent, dark pavilion rest;
His golden urn shall broke and useless lie,
Amidst the common ruins of the sky;
The stars rush headlong in the wild commotion,
And bathe their glittering foreheads in the ocean.

MRS. BARBAULD'S POEMS.

Then, even then, will my friend live and participate with me the blessedness of an eternal home. Then,” added he, pressing my hand to his bosom, “the weight of gratitude which sometimes oppresses me will have its relief, and the recompense I cannot give, will be in the hands of Boothby’s approving God and my merciful judge.” I was subdued, and he suffered my emotion to pass unregarded. In the course of the day he fondly caressed his favourite little Hamilton, and spoke to him of his cousin whom he would find in England; then again expatiated on the traits of that madame du Rivage’s character who had educated his child’s saving angel, anticipating the effect which she would produce on us when for the first time we should meet, and pleasing his imagination by predictions too sanguine to repeat.

The scene *closed* on the following day. He breathed his last sigh in my arms. Henderson attended his remains to Turin, and we immediately proceeded to Paris, determining to lose no time in our inquiries after the still suspected Clement—Henderson engaging to be equally industrious in the course of his melancholy journey. Nothing now remains but to recount to you the perplexing circumstances which resulted from our researches after this villain; and I will give you, madam, the narrative of our progress into a maze, in which we lost sight of the object in view at every turn.

CHAPTER XXXII.

OUR first inquiries were directed to la Rondeau. The very first cottage we entered teemed with intelligence. We were told that the chateau was become national property: and an imperfect account succeeded of the duc de Fouclaut’s death; for the narrators differed in their melancholy tale—some affirming he had been guillotined, and others that he had been murdered in his bed. They were, however, precise in the knowledge of Jaqueline and her grandfather. The old man was dead, and Jaqueline was in service at the cabaret in the village.

We as explicitly mentioned our commission, and said we were sent for a child who had lived some time at the chateau with Jaqueline and her father. “You must be under some mistake,” replied they with one voice. “There has been no child there, nor any guests but two ladies, whom no one knew, and who were supposed to be some of the duke’s madames: but Jaqueline can tell you more about it, for she lives hard by.” We sent for the young woman: she confirmed the report the people had given us as it related to the child; but added, “It would have been no wonder had one been born in the house, for that madame Meunier scarcely saved her distance; and she did not believe she would then have left her dear lady, had not the duke her father, with the old baboon he had forced her to marry, taken away the sweet lady and carried her far from madame Meunier.” “Did you ever see a man with club-feet,” asked I, “who inquired of you concerning a child?” A firm negative was given me. She appeared even more surprised when questioned relatively to the lady, and with much simplicity related the distress she had been in on her grandfather’s being turned out of the chateau. “My neighbours,” added she, “were my only friends; and they can tell you, I must have perished had they not been charitable, and had I not saved a little of the money which my ladies had given me; which was a comfort to my poor father.” The simplicity with which the girl spoke admitted of no appeal, and we left her better satisfied with us than we were by this inquiry. For all we gained from it was, a conviction that Marianne and Jeanneton resided together at la Rondeau at the precise time we had been taught to believe the former in Normandy, and the latter separated from her lady.

Our next steps were directed to la rue St. Honoré. I had accompanied my friend in his visit to the owner of the house which he had prepared for his wife's retreat previous to his leaving Paris, but I could not recall his name. Fortune was, however, in this instance propitious; for the old man opened the door himself, and, recollecting me, civilly received us. I briefly detailed the cause of my visit; and he frankly told me, that although he had suspected an intrigue was on foot, he had been satisfied with his tenant monsieur Meunier, and was sorry when he gave up the apartments. "When we parted," added he, "he was out of health from a wound that he had in his arm, but c'est un brave et très respectable homme." To our questions he had nothing to say, for he lived at that time in another quarter of Paris. His wife entered the room, and he repeated what had passed. She was young and pretty, and listened with curiosity to his detail. "Surely," said she with amiable eagerness, "these gentlemen will not be discouraged! Le pauvre enfant! I would seek him to the world's end! Ecoutez! There is a woman who lived with madame Meunier, we will send for her."

The husband, with nonchalance, observed that Catharine lived in a remote street, and it was ten to one whether she was at home. "That we shall soon see," replied the wife with spirit: "if the gentlemen please, I will attend them. Such business as this should be followed without buts or ifs. Suppose you had a son," added she tartly, "and had lost him as these poor parents have theirs,—mon Dieu! seeing him die before their eyes would be comfort compared to what they must endure." "It has been their death," answered I: "but their friends, madame, will not rest till he is found; and they are able to recompense those who contribute to the discovery. This child is heir to a very considerable fortune." The husband was silenced; and the lady, with great exactness giving the coachman his instructions, entered the carriage with us.

Catharine was at home, but she was in dishabille, and we walked in a little garden whilst the lady prepared her for our visit. She was about fifty, and without any demur said that she was sorry she had so little information to give us in regard to an infant that she had so dearly loved, for that madame had told her that we were in search of the dear baby whom she had nursed at madame Meunier's. "I will be exact, however," continued she, "for I hope you will find him. There was a secret in the business from the very first," continued she; "for my aunt, though then very poorly, permitted me to leave her, in order, as she told me, to oblige monsieur Meunier, who wanted some one on whom he could depend. And I, well knowing my aunt had for years found kindness from monsieur Blanchard, his father, as one may say, was no wise unwilling to serve him. In conducting me to his house, he told me that I should find an infant and a young nurse to receive me. 'But,' added monsieur smiling, 'my wife will soon be with you, and then my cares will cease; for she will not treat it as a rival to the one that she will bring me, nor as a stranger to whom she is indifferent. Your aunt has given me such a character of you that I shall now be easy till my wife returns from the country; and I hope for a little while you will not mind the confinement.' I promised to be attentive, and I kept my word. I found in the house a very handsome lady; and the surprise which she discovered I shared. She was then suckling an infant beau comme le jour; and my master modestly passing the room in which she was, showed me the apartments, and gave me the necessary orders for our ménage; saying a traiteur near us would furnish our table. I was quite struck by the appearance of the house, for it was richly furnished. Monsieur left us, saying to madame that he should call again, and that in the interim she had only to give her orders to me." "Describe this lady, my good woman," said Mr. Hamilton, interrupting her. "She was a sweet pretty creature," replied she, "about the size of this lady, but she had blue eyes, and a skin de roses et de lys!—And hair! it was like silk-worms silk, and so long that she could not comb it herself; but she said her country abounded with

fair women and light hair.” “What was her name?” “I never heard her called any thing but Constance,” answered she.—But I will not unnecessarily detail the numberless questions which the woman had to answer. Her little narrative will fully satisfy you, that we perceived not Middleton’s Pauline du Rivage in this flaxen-haired lady. Catharine told us moreover, that she was as gay as a bird for some days, singing, and amusing herself with examining the moveables in the house; and with endless conjectures in regard to the child, she settled into a belief that his mother was an English lady of high rank, because the baby’s clothes were in the English mode and fit for a prince; and a picture of a gentleman which was in the best apartment they both concluded was like Sigismund. In the mean time madame Constance knew no more how to dress or manage the infant than he did himself, and poor Catharine had him on her hands from morning to night. An old gentleman came every fine day, and the nurse and the child took airings with him. He was madame’s uncle; and Catharine observed, that these airings made madame gloomy the remainder of the day. Once or twice the lady nurse told Catharine that there was no need for them both to be prisoners at a time, and that she might go out if she liked to visit her friends; but Catharine said she had given her word, and her friends would like better that she should keep it than to see her. This displeased, but Catharine thought her too young and giddy for a nurse; though she was five- or six-and-twenty. Many of her hours were passed in writing, and she received letters daily. Catharine saw monsieur Meunier but seldom. The old gentleman was punctual every day, but always at different hours. He was a very tall, thin man, and very grave and formal. Madame Meunier’s arrival and accouchement followed. She was in a fair way, but her infant was weakly. All was comfort, except some bickering between the lady nurse and Catharine, for she would not fetch a napkin or water for her own hands. The good Catharine now spoke of her being suddenly called home to attend her aunt, who died of a paralytic fit.

To these cares and troubles succeeded her visit to madame Meunier. The poor woman had also been in great trouble; her child dead, and monsieur forced to join the army in la Vendée. She told her faithful Catharine that she had taken Sigismund to her bosom as her only remaining blessing, and she wept bitterly. Her fine nurse had left her at a moment’s warning, and when she was in despair for the loss of her little boy and her husband’s absence. She desired her maid-servant to bring Sigismund to his *best* nurse; and Catharine found him in health, and still more beautiful. Madame Meunier mentioned her intention of leaving Paris, and living with her mother in the country during monsieur’s absence. “Kiss your little charge again, Catharine,” said she, “for you may never see him more: I hope he will not remain long in this country. But should you ever see this angel face, and this mark, you will remember it is Sigismund; and that I predicted he would live to bless those who sheltered him.” She again wept, and, giving me his dear little shoulder to kiss, said, “What think you, Catharine, of a woman who had this cherub at her breast three or four months and could leave him for a jaunt of pleasure without kissing him; nay more, without knowing that I could supply her place? But you see how he thrives!” She made me a very handsome present, and I retired. Poor woman! I never saw her from that hour.”

To our questions respecting Clement we received no other reply, than that she had never seen a man of that description. Nor did she know the old gentleman who visited Constance, and whose frequent calls were known to her master, who came with him twice or thrice; and she believed he was employed to keep madame Constance to her duty; it being clear that she feared and hated him. “Have you ever seen this madame Constance since?” “Yes, sir, I have seen her twice; but she was in an open carriage with a gentleman, and though I curtsied she did not know me.”

I leave to your judgment, madam, the result of this visit; to us it was unsatisfactory. By the merest good fortune I recollected Meunier's partner in business; and after having listened to his lamentations relative to Nicolas, whom he supposed dead or in an English prison, we in our turn simply stated our vexations. He confessed that a child named Sigismund had been born, as he had concluded, in Meunier's house in la rue St. Honoré. He had seen him frequently; but he neither knew his parents nor what had been his fate, monsieur Meunier being much on the reserve. He knew nothing of Clement. But a lad who was in the shop told us that such a man had passed the night with Meunier, and that they sat up late, and went out together the next morning. "I have seen the fellow several times since," added he, "and I think he is now in Paris; for I am much deceived if I did not pass him yesterday: there is scarcely any mistaking him, for he looked, when here, as if he had been taken from a gibbet." "Did they appear as good friends?" asked Mr. Hamilton. "Yes; he supped with my master, and ate and drank heartily."

I should tire you with the speculations which resulted from information so imperfect: nothing was clear but that a child of the name of Sigismund had been born, and for a time had lived under Meunier's, or rather Mr. Middleton's roof. Every inquiry relative to monsieur du Rivage was uniformly replied to in the same way. He had buried his wife, and had quitted Paris secretly with his adopted daughter in a condition of insolvency and distress. Marianne's fate was constantly mentioned as resulting from her being with de Béne, and no one disputed her being his wife. The duke's fatal end was mentioned, with execrations on his name. Our suspicions now fell upon Meunier and his madame Constance; and, fatigued and harassed by the subject of our perpetual anxiety, Mrs. Hamilton was too unwell to travel. At this juncture Hamilton and myself were prevailed upon to go to a very popular club, by three gentlemen who had dined with us. The scene of exhibition of these orators was far remote from our hotel; but under the escort of a deputy, a general, and his aide-de-camp, we had little to fear. We were, however, soon satisfied with the oratory we heard; and our friends complied with our wishes of returning home to supper. The night was dark and rainy, and monsieur le député undertook to pilot us by a shorter course than the usual one. To this some slight objection was made by the other gentlemen, one of whom said the passage was the most dangerous of any in Paris: his caution was overruled by us; and we reached the perilous court, which was in fact a passage not altogether inviting at any hour, for it was extremely narrow, and contained only warehouses. We however advanced; when our ears were assailed by the most dreadful language, and the report of a pistol. Groans followed, and the hasty retreating steps of some one spoke the mischief. We pressed forwards till impeded by the body of a man stretched across the passage, and apparently dead. Our cautious companion, who most probably knew the place better than we did, now asserted that we were near a door which led to a house in which the man might find succour; and, with repeatedly knocking at one, we found admittance into a miserable-looking place I should have taken for a gaol, or something still worse, by the faces I saw about us. But from these observations I was soon diverted; for, on bringing a lamp near the wounded person, what was my surprise on recognizing *Clement!* I instantly gave my friends to understand the importance of his life to me; and, with an authoritative tone, the general ordered him to be conveyed to the *house*. We now followed, and traversing passages and broken staircases at length gained a spacious court and a handsome public hotel, which, to my amazement, I recollected as being the one we had quitted. Medical assistance being procured, and the wretch placed on a bed, I began to breathe more at my ease, for he opened his eyes and faintly groaned. The surgeon, however, gave me no hopes, saying, death would instantly succeed any attempt to extract the ball. I begged to have more assistance, having the most pressing motives for saving this man's life. "I implore you, monsieur," added I, "to recommend to me any professional man whom you wish to act with you: prolonging his miserable existence even for an

hour is *saving life* to every hope of mine.” He shook his head, “Je vous entendez,” answered he, surveying his patient; “but I fear it would take more than an hour to settle his accounts; I know him: he lived with de Béne, and is a hardened wretch.” He gave orders at the same moment for le sieur Champrimeau to be summoned; and this being a celebrated name, I was satisfied. A cordial was given to Clement, and every means used to stop the effusion of blood. He recovered to recollection, and uttered an execration on his murderer; then gazing around him, saw me. “Be not alarmed,” said I with gentleness; “Boothby will be again your friend. But tell me by what accident you are here, and in this condition.” He made no answer, but shutting his eyes groaned most piteously, at the same time grasping my hand convulsively. The second surgeon confirmed the opinion given by the first; and I saw I had not a moment to lose. In the most affecting terms I could employ I mentioned Mr. Middleton’s death, and conjured him to be explicit in his answers to the questions I had to propose. Let it suffice, madam, such was the obduracy of this villain, that for a time I despaired of extorting from him a word, though he voluntarily told people about him, that he had for once met with his *match*, and he had been shot by a man whom he attempted to stop and to rob, knowing he was good booty. At length, wearied with my prayers and exhortations, he said “Cease to torment me. Have I not enough to suffer? I know nothing of the child beyond what Nicolas told me. I never exchanged a word with his mother in my life. I was her murderer. But Nicolas has been...” Death closed his lips; for no cordial could recall his fleeting spirit. You will, madam, judge of the impressions such evidence as we had collected was calculated to make on our minds; and with the conviction it enforced we prepared for our journey home. But nothing could calm my anxiety; my very dreams had Middleton’s child for their object; and my health suffered from the restlessness of my mind. I laboured to trace more minutely du Rivage’s connexions, and the causes for his quitting Paris. And I learned that he had happily escaped from the guillotine as well as from his creditors; and that his adopted daughter was not the partner of his flight. “I saw her myself some weeks after,” added the gentleman who gave me this information, “in an open carriage on the road with a young lady and an infant; and was on the point of stopping the carriage in order to speak to her: but recollecting that she might have solid reasons for wishing not to be noticed, I suffered her to pass. The lady with her was fair, had fine light hair, and was playing with her hat at bo-peep with the child who was on Pauline’s knees. We were going in a contrary direction; for I was returning from the country to Paris; they leaving it.” Trusting to this gentleman, I further explained to him my reasons for my solicitude in regard to monsieur du Rivage and his adopted daughter, and asked him whether he thought England was the spot a native of Switzerland would under du Rivage’s circumstances have preferred. “Certainly not,” replied he: “but to say the truth, I am doubtful whether or not this poor gentleman ever quitted Paris; for the last time I saw him, he looked like a dying man; and whenever the truth appears, it is my firm belief it will be found that he, like many others, died in a garret here. However, his darling Pauline had no symptoms of misery with her; she was dressed, like her beautiful companion, in a riding-habit, and looked as handsome as ever I saw her.”—Thus again disappointed, and my mind still more confounded, I left Paris with my participating friends. Our conversations, always recurring to the vexations we had shared, and the disappointments which had chilled our hopes, took the decided relief which sprang from thinking that the child of whom we had heard so much was not Mr. Middleton’s, and in proportion as this doubt was admitted our conclusions followed. Need I add that we pronounced Meunier an artful designing knave, and mademoiselle Pauline du Rivage less the angel than the deluded girl?

We were surprised by meeting Mr. Aimsforth at Dover, who, in order to spare Mr. Hamilton, had brought him to that place intelligence which required his immediate presence in Ireland. This was the death of his rapacious mother-in-law, who had been the cause of many difficulties to my friend.

Leaving his wife and children to Mr. Aimsworth's care, we took the Cornwall passage, and without loss of time reached Ireland. I found my mother watching my uncle's dying couch, and him like the patriarch of old saying "Let me see his face, let me bless him, and then depart!" His prayer was heard. For he died in my arms in less than a month after my arrival at St. Clare. With the inheritance I assumed his name; and when I disgrace it may there be none to pity me!...My mother! But I must check my pen: she is beyond my praise! and whilst I was yielding to a dejection fatal to her future comforts, she was planning with the duchess of D—— those means of relief for me which would once more send from her the prop of her own sinking spirits. Mrs. Hamilton's letters precluded the last faint hope. The attorney who had been employed by Pauline du Rivage was dead; and the steward had not seen him since the time he gave him, at his house in Durham, Mrs. Hamilton's letter for his client. My mother's petitions and Hamilton's arguments prevailed. I quitted my retirement, and we travelled together to London. There we parted, and I became a guest with my amiable relation, and for a time experienced that dissipation, however seasoned by taste and refinement, is no remedy for grief.

I have thus traced with minuteness those events which by the unerring hand of Providence have conducted me to a duty I hold dearer to me than life. I shall now have my Middleton's child for my blessing. A remnant is spared, and Heaven is justified. When is it not so, my dear madam? Dark and intricate as the dispensations of Providence may appear to our limited views, protracted as the punishment of sin may be, and is, in mercy, ordered, and suspended as the manifestations of its constant protection of innocence frequently appear, the truth of those promises in favour of the virtuous and the helpless is *immutable*. Sigismund's parents live not here, to bless their child. But they are not less happy! No: they have their recompense before them, and will one day hail those beings who have trained their child to be a fit inmate with them in that abode in which 'every tear shall be wiped away.' St. Clare checks his feelings. It is to heaven he directs them. His friend's precious legacy is within his reach, and gratitude swells his bosom.

Mr. Furnival will second my request for permission to wait on you tomorrow. Tell your amiable friend that I will be composed. I will not even attempt to praise her matchless excellence. But assure her that Sigismund is still hers. She shall direct my conduct. She shall never have to reproach St. Clare for teaching his child to forget his mother, his saving sheltering friend! I am subdued by the reflexions which crowd on my mind.

Your most obedient servant and friend,
FREDERIC BOOTHBY ST. CLARE.

CHAPTER XXXIII.

OUR first interview with Mr. St. Clare convinced me that Pauline possessed that self-command which with me is the test of a sound understanding, and which I have seen practised by my own sex much oftener than by the lords of the creation. Whether this observation has had its influence on my opinion I will not determine; but most assuredly it appears to me that reason acts independently of muscular strength. I perceived also that, in compassion to St. Clare, who with an air of fatigue, and a face pale and agitated, strove in vain to say something no one could hear, that she smiled most graciously; and giving him her hand she said, "These emotions will subside, my dear sir, and you will be happy with your little boy." Her heroism failed: she shed some tears, but added, "I weep for joy." The poor cravat, like poor

human nature, yielded to Mr. Furnival's feelings of honest triumph and delight. "Od-so!" cried he, surveying the fracture, "I did not intend making paper stuff of my neck-cloth! But never mind! They were invented by a hangman, and my heart will swell for a month to my throat. I am better without them." He now with cheerfulness proposed his plans to Mr. St. Clare, and it was determined that Sigismund should be our guest for a few days, in order to prepare him and his escort for Aimsworth Castle. The major accompanied Mr. St. Clare to Mr. Fielding's the following day; and in the reception Sigismund met with at Rickland farm St. Clare saw an evidence that Pauline had a mother's tenderness to regulate. Mr. Furnival, whose spirits rose with the necessity he found of supporting Pauline's for the approaching separation, asked Mr. St. Clare how he liked the boy. "If," added he gaily, "you are ashamed of him, say but the word: I am not; and will engage to get, at a guinea a man, a crowd of witnesses to prove that he is old Furnival's child." The reader will supply the answer to this proposal. But St. Clare had now recovered his gift of speech, and with an impassioned eagerness engaged to return with Pauline's treasure in a month. "I shall trust to your promise," answered she with a forced smile; "and what is more, for gaining Mrs. Hamilton's consent to parting with a blessing so recently restored. But she is a mother, and will, I hope, acknowledge in me one not less tender than herself, though my claims are now feeble." There was no precise necessity for St. Clare's warmth of manner, nor the solemn assertion which accompanied it. But so it was. He declared that Mrs. Hamilton would not only feel but acknowledge miss Murray's claims to Sigismund Middleton superseded even those of his parents; and betrayed by his feelings he added, "My dear Pauline, trust to the honour of a man who..." He changed colour, and finished the sentence by more composedly saying, "I know this Mrs. Hamilton and her family. You have nothing to apprehend but from the excess of their gratitude."

CHAPTER XXXIV.

I SHALL not follow the travellers into the north. A delay of a few days passed in town, for the purpose of preparing Meunier, and collecting Sigismund's proofs of birth, was however unavoidable, and from thence we had good tidings of our friends. Mr. Furnival's letters from the Castle were cordials which kept up our spirits. Pauline read with pleasure, that "he was in danger of loving Mrs. Hamilton better than he did his own girl." This assertion was however recanted, in consequence of her reply to a letter Mrs. Hamilton wrote to her. November approached, and the honour of St. Clare became doubtful. We were however lenient; for, jealous of his good name, he had taken the liberty of writing to Pauline; and the delay was clearly proved to be owing to the spells and enchantment which detained Mr. Furnival. Another week elapsed, and we became fretful; "for it was madness for Mr. Furnival to travel so late in the year." The rainy season was commenced; and the major kindly discovered that we could not get through the day without him. Curtained up for the evening with a new book and a blazing hearth, we were drawing to the work-table, when the sound of a carriage reached us. "There is Mrs. Hampden!" said Pauline. "This is like her! How kind to hazard such an evening!" "She will be in no danger," replied the major smiling; "for I hear four horses." He darted from the room; and in a moment we heard Sigismund's voice asking for mamma. Is there a bosom which has not experienced the swell of joy which nature feels on beholding unexpectedly the faces of those whose image is fondly erected in the heart? If such there be, I should be losing my time and wasting my paper to record the simple gratifications which succeeded to our first emotions of surprise and pleasure. Wherefore should I relate to the cold and fastidious reader, the details of wonder and delight with which Sigismund amused us? wherefore recount the adventures of the two white ponies, and the feats of horsemanship performed by his cousin Charles and himself, or the story of the sociable in which Meunier rode with Mrs. Hamilton, and Augusta and George? To such, these tales of infancy and innocence would be but as the "sounding brass." But ask the fond mother, who clasps in her embrace the returned school-boy, the restored darling girl after her visit of a month, whether there is eloquence in nature, or pleasure in such reunions. Sigismund's loquacity was however not seasoned with discretion; for he told his mother that Mr. St. Clare and Mr. Furnival had promised Mrs. Hamilton she should meet her in London. Monsieur Meunier was called upon to witness this fact. Meunier smiled. "Ah," cried the sprightly child, "I see you have not forgot the secret, or Mrs. Hamilton's message to mamma!" Pauline with some haste rising proposed to him to hear this message, whilst he was undressing; and Sigismund, occupied in his endeavours to persuade her that he was neither sleepy nor weary, lost sight of his secret. His mother, reminding him that Fanny would expect a little news, settled the matter, and he retired.

CHAPTER XXXV.

I WAS somewhat alarmed the next morning on being told that Mr. Furnival wished me to breakfast with him in his own room, not doubting but the hurry of the journey had rendered him unwell. I was agreeably surprised on finding my supposed invalid seated in much form and order in his easy chair, and the apartment suitably arranged for a female visitor. The cheerfulness of his greetings at once dissipated my fears, and I asked him whether Pauline would relish being left to receive her two guests, who, on leaving us to sleep with the Hampdens, had engaged to breakfast with us. "They promised," added I, "that Mrs. Hampden should join them; but I know her dislike to early hours: she will not come till two o'clock." "Never mind," replied he: "leave them to manage. I want to consult you without Pauline's suspecting the business." I laughed. "What, St. Clare has spoken to you already?" observed he with some surprise. "I understood that he had not his letters from his mother before he was in the North." "Why, my dear friend," replied I, "was there any occasion for speeches? Did you suppose Rickland Farm was the palace of Armida, and the widow Sedley with her gray locks and spectacled nose the object of attraction? or that it was the honeyed wisdom of your Nestor-like lips which drew St. Clare hither?" "I yield," said he, humorously taking off his velvet cap, and bowing: "your sex have the faculty of reading hearts as well as gaining them. But can you tell me how Pauline will receive this lover? There lies the test of your abilities: I wish to see her happy," continued he, "and I confess to you it will grieve me should she reject the addresses of St. Clare. He is worthy of her; and a man I should prefer to any I know for her protector. His house will be built on a rock, Mrs. Sedley; for neither his understanding nor his principles are at the mercy of every new opinion of conceited declaimers."—I encouraged him.—"This is all as I wish," answered Mr. Furnival: "but you might hint that I am not a Methusalem, nor does St. Clare need to sow acorns in order to raise a forest of oaks for his bride. Read to her Mrs. Boothby's letter, and ask her whether the comforts of such a mother are to be delayed for the punctilios of female reserve and idle whims. I wish Pauline to show St. Clare that she is a wife who will suit him; and if she accepts of his hand, let it be generously: his mother lives but in the hope of seeing him married, and pines in uncomplaining sorrow at his absence." I rose to drop the window-blind, and saw St. Clare on the gravel-walk with Pauline, Sigismund at a distance with Meunier, and showing him his little garden. "I believe," observed I, "St. Clare will need no auxiliary; give your opinion." The good old man viewed them with pleasure, and said he thought they were made for each other. He now, with a contentment of heart which silenced my more selfish one, spoke of his intentions in Pauline's favour, and the prudent measures Mr. Middleton had adopted for the security of his son. "He has made him a ward in chancery," added he, "but has nominated St. Clare as the guardian of his person; and, wisely considering the immense accumulation resulting from a clear estate of seven thousand pounds per annum and two minorities, he has been liberal to the Aimsworths. To Pauline he has bequeathed five thousand pounds, and to St. Clare the same sum, with a handsome provision for his tutor doctor Wingrove, and Henderson. St. Clare has a letter for Sigismund, which he has orders to keep till he is fourteen years old. Umfreville park and house are named as the occasional residence of his son, and express orders are given in his will that the establishment there should be kept up. So we may, my good friend, hope to see our Pauline sometimes; and if I knew I should never behold her again on this side of the grave, I should die contented in leaving her guarded by virtue and beloved by an honest man."—A sigh escaped me—"You will soon think as I do," continued he, taking my hand affectionately: "we know the tenure on which human comforts depend; and the only means of renewing the lease with time is, to look forward to the happiness which we have promoted, and to see youth and usefulness prepared to supply our place." "I

have only to wish you were less useful," observed I, "unless you could renew your youth. It is not possible that your health can long resist the activity of your mind, or the perpetual employments in which you are engaged." "Mrs. Hampden has given you her text," answered he smiling: "she has believed me consumptive these thirty years; but I never was one of those qualified for the castle of indolence; neither 'swollen with sleep' nor able to show 'the calm, broad, thoughtless face which breathes repose.'" "No, in truth," replied I, looking at his hectic cheek and glassy eye, "you want only the seraph's wing, to be in your element." "I shall live to bury you," replied he smiling: "let that be your comfort, and in the mean time I will be yours, and let you into a secret. I have not for the last three years been in the harness, as you think. My name has been useful to my partner Mr. Carlton: but he takes good care I do not work too much; and, as his son is now useful, all goes on well with my friend.

"I often," continued he, "reflect on the incidental circumstances of my life; and it is with gratitude that I trace the invisible hand of Providence as fashioning my disappointments to my weakness. Do you know, I was once in danger of being a miser! The only relation I have living is a second Elwes, and with an estate of three thousand pounds per annum has not a roof over his head that is water proof. He lives in the Fens in Lincolnshire, because he cannot get a tenant for his house. I have not seen him these thirty years, nor wish to see him. He is an old bachelor; and about ten years since, on a child's being sworn to him, he paid the overseers the allotted sum, and heard of its death in the poor-house with no other concern than for the money he had paid for its *murder*. My father was not a generous man. Frugality was, however, so qualified in him as to leave on my mind a reverence for his name. Yet I can remember my mother's influence was often exerted to prevent the entrance of parsimony into our house. She died when I was sixteen, and my sorrow for her loss was accompanied by alarming symptoms of a consumption. My father, prudently judging the desk for which he intended me no remedy for weak lungs, sent me to Lausanne, and during two years I lived with poor du Rivage's father. On my return to England I petitioned my father to permit me to engage in commerce; but I was refused, and my road prescribed, by a father who would be obeyed. So I plodded on, and my father was contented. I was in my twenty-seventh year when he died and left me the honest earnings of his life. I had seen the object of my love; and no sooner were my affairs settled than I applied to her for her favour. The sweet girl burst into tears, and with unfeigned truth and touching eloquence told me she loved, and was beloved by, a worthy man, and implored me not to speak of the honour I intended her to her father. She was then nineteen, and to the charms of youth were joined a solid understanding and genuine modesty. For a time this disappointment hung on my spirits; but in the enthusiasm which prompted me to make that object happy who was unattainable to me, I experienced a consolation that soothed my heart. When she married, however, I had again to struggle. I applied to business; for the habits of my life were not those of taste or dissipation, and I cheerlessly filled up my time and increased my fortune. You will smile when I tell you that I tried to fall in love; but my heart was refractory, and I gave up visiting the ladies. In this manner of life I lived till I was forty; when I became alarmed lest in the increase of my wealth I should become a miser. So I resolved to be something better; and by persevering in that resolution I have found not only a solace in my isolated condition, but also that I had taste and refinement, not indeed for pictures, books, horses, or dogs, but for enjoyments that will never pall. My first effort of this kind was taking into the profits of the office a worthy man who as head clerk had fagged for bread for his growing family. He brought me more and more clients, and my cent. per cents increased. I now set up a trade for myself, still thinking of my wretched cousin, and dreading old Mammon. I had long discovered that my casual donations at a prison did no good, they were only a dose of laudanum to a patient in a fit of the colic; a temporary relief, to be followed by an increase of pain. I therefore enlarged the plan, and, without

draining my purse of more money, I have made it my business to prevent men from going into a gaol. My customers in this trade consist of young beginners in life; old tradesmen who have more mouths to feed than they know what to do with; and widows who have activity and knowledge sufficient to manage a calling which is necessary to keep the family together. This business has answered all my views; and the account will, I humbly trust, be in my favour. My heart reposes in the consciousness that I have not lived in vain, and in the imitation of my Maker I have found peace and security. But to the privilege I have assumed," continued he, "of propping a weak credit and giving courage to an untried adventurer, I have superadded, and that gratuitously, the duty of teaching them by my vigilance to shun the rocks which so frequently shipwreck the industrious and the active. Look into our gazettes:—I can prove that two-thirds of the bankruptcies which crowd them are produced by an inordinate ambition for gain, or the love of parade and dissipation. It is not long since I had the good fortune to cure a young couple of this mania. My five hundred pounds had done well for three years, and I was satisfied with the interest of seeing from time to time the young grocer busy and contented. On calling with an order my housekeeper had sent him, I found only his lady behind the counter, who, with a dress fitter for a drawing-room than a shop, was directing the two lads to be nimble, whilst with stately reserve she spoke of the weather to her well-dressed customer. Having perceived symptoms of this lady's indisposition, I asked for her husband, and was informed he was gone down to Margate. 'What carries him there?' was my next question. She coloured, and said he was gone to secure a lodging for her, her health requiring a month's sea bathing. I made no comments beyond the lady's good looks. But a note to the husband recalled him to his shop; and the lady finds the air of Leadenhall-street, and serving behind the counter, very healthy; for she is now mother to a fine boy, and perfectly reconciled to Mr. Furnival, and the good sense of her husband."

CHAPTER XXXVI.

SHOULD the foregoing conversation have been found insipid, I beg my readers to ascribe to my want of judgment the preference I have given it to the more pleasing, but to me the more difficult task of composing love speeches for St. Clare. Such has been his reserve, that on this subject I must have trusted to my own ingenuity; and well knowing I never had talents for the tender conversations of lovers, I have, in my own opinion at least, offered a fair equivalent; and such would be the opinion of all my readers, could I convey to them the simplicity of heart which gives lustre and spirit to every action and word of Mr. Furnival. Let it however suffice, that such was his eloquence and St. Clare's arguments, that we followed our friends to town soon after Christmas, in order to prepare for Pauline's change of name, and my trial of philosophy; she becoming with Sigismund Mrs. Hamilton's guest, and St. Clare a more suitable inmate under the duke's roof. My abode was with Mr. Furnival; and I discovered that the idol of my worship had the weaknesses of human nature; nay, more, those of a woman. I have seen him making his bow to those whom he would have passed unnoticed, because he had overheard them praising *his daughter's* beauty; and he pronounced the duchess the very first woman in England, on the mere evidence of her being pleased with Mr. St. Clare's Pauline. Happily for the gratification of his vanity and the conviction of his understanding, he saw madame du Rivage's pupil could maintain with dignity the favour of the great, the torrent of fashion, and the prosperity of her fortune.

Vain, however, were her endeavours to check the anxiety or limit the cares her *father* gave to her appearance. He insisted that St. Clare's wife should be known as *his* mistress, and that for once in his life he would enjoy the reputation of being a generous man with the multitude.

I soon became tired of being full dressed; and frankly told him that I was determined to give up my post of intelligencer, having nothing new to bring him on the score of Pauline's praise, and that he might go by himself to crowded rooms for me.

My friends were indulgent; and they left me to enjoy an evening in Chancery-lane, which I preferred to the party for the new tragedy at Covent-Garden. Mr. Aimsworth had engaged to take care of monsieur Meunier; and telling him that, the piece being more like a pantomime than a tragedy, he had been induced to prefer a front box, he conducted his companion into one. The following morning, our breakfast table was enlivened by Meunier's relation of the adventure at the playhouse, which had amply supplied the defects of a condemned representation. I shall place it in my narrative as a caution against too much security in a path which, however smooth, may, as it appears, have its dangers.

CHAPTER XXXVII.

"WE had not been seated in the box five minutes," said Meunier, "before a black servant on the seat before us rose to the repeated summons of 'Mr. Whaley's servant! Mr. Whaley's places!' You may judge I was instantly on the alert; and Sigismund's lady-nurse, with the air of a duchess, and a dress which bespoke her character, passed me to her seat. She was led by a country-man of my own, who with all the importance of a *ci-devant* duke placed himself so adroitly, that the lady sat between him and her less favoured spouse; for monsieur was not only young, but handsome. I had scarcely communicated to Mr. Aimsworth the good fortune which had placed me so near an acquaintance, before we were again disturbed by two ladies, who entering took the still vacant seats on the same row with my *friends*. We were however settled, and the curtain rose. You will not expect from me a very accurate description of the play," continued Meunier, laughing, "although I was benefited by Mrs. Whaley's translation of it to her beau, whose imperfect knowledge of English stood in need of assistance from his kind companion. The first act passed, and monsieur had no reason to think himself neglected; but the ladies near him caused a diversion on the part of Mrs. Whaley which no assiduities or tender sighs could counteract. The strangers, for such the ladies were to their neighbours, talked of 'the beauty' miss Murray in the duchess's box—the gentleman behind her was Mr. St. Clare, her lover:—one of the ladies had seen that morning the future bride's dresses—they were elegant beyond all description:—but Mr. St. Clare was immensely rich, and miss Murray would have a large fortune.—From this important subject they digressed to the story they had heard. 'Miss Murray had saved the life of an infant of the first quality in France, and had narrowly escaped the guillotine.' The marvellous took the lead, and Mrs. Whaley now had enough to do to examine the side box.

"From this time the gallant at her left hand was left to construe for himself; and, teased by his questions, she fondly turned to her helpmate, asking him whether it would not fatigue him to stay for the entertainment. He answered in the negative, adding, 'We must not desert our friend.' On the conclusion of the performance several young men joined my companion, attracted, as I suspect, by the novelty of Mrs. Whaley's face, who is still very handsome. Thus detained, I sat meditating on my own conduct, and finally concluded on suffering to pass *unnoticed* a woman so completely despicable. I found the party still waited for a friend; and some impatience escaped Mrs. Whaley on this subject, monsieur refusing to go in search of the vagrant. At this moment entered the adjoining box, which was now empty, the poor half-starved and shabby Luzarche. He accosted his frail and unfeeling wife with emotions which discovered much more of contempt than tenderness. 'Eh, bien, ma mie,' said he with a bitter mockery,

‘me voici! Tu vois que la misère m’a épargné, pour faire mes remerciemens à monsieur votre cher et très honorable *époux*.’—‘Who is this fellow?’ asked Mr. Whaley with some alarm. ‘Ne vous vous inquiétez pas,’ replied Luzarche, bowing obsequiously: ‘il ne s’agit pas de grand chose: je suis un pauvre diable, que ce monsieur là a eu la bonté de soulager d’un fardeau trop pesant.’—‘You are either mad or tipsy,’ said Mr. Whaley: ‘begone!’—‘Oh, he is mad!’ cried the terrified wife: ‘I never saw him in my life: for pity’s sake let us go: he will be furious. My dear husband, take me away, or I shall die with terror.’—‘Comment!’ exclaimed Luzarche, laughing immoderately, and with a gesture that baffles description, ‘this is indeed comique, though not en règle; three husbands for one wife! and in a war like this! c’en est trop, madame! mais je me retire, et je vous laisse entre les bras de ces messieurs.’ At this moment Mr. Murray entered the box, saying the carriage was drawn up. ‘Oh, thank Heaven! you are come,’ said the weeping Mrs. Whaley: ‘here is a wretch who has insolently terrified me, and now laughs, with *others* who ought to know better, at my distress. Let us go.’ ‘I will soon spoil his mirth at least,’ replied Mr. Murray, looking fiercely at the miserable offender, ‘if he does not decamp this instant.’ Luzarche with folded arms kept his station. ‘Peut-être, monsieur fait-il le quatrieme *époux*,’ said he. ‘I thought we had in Paris slackened the matrimonial noose tolerably; mais, pardi, ces Anglois veulent toujours être nos maitres.’ Mr. Murray, enraged, attempted to collar him; but Mr. Aimsforth held his arm. ‘You had better retire with the lady,’ observed he: ‘this man shall be taken care of. He has friends near him.’ ‘No matter what becomes of him,’ said the half-fainting Mrs. Whaley, making her way to the box-door. I presented my hand. ‘Meunier,’ said I aloud, ‘will be answerable that he shall never offend you again, madam.’ She trembled to such a degree that she was obliged to sit down. ‘Retire,’ added I, ‘and do not provoke him to madness.’ She made an effort to rise, but was unable. A burst of tears succeeded. ‘Va-t-en, ma princesse,’ said the still inflexible Luzarche, ‘Je ne t’empêche pas; car je n’ai ni feu ni lieu: suis en paix ta bonne fortune, et oublies, si tu le peux, le misérable Luzarche!’ Mr. Murray again looked fierce and menacing. But Mr. Aimsforth, putting a card into his hand, advised him to take care of the lady. He prudently did so; for, as we discovered afterwards, the unhappy Luzarche had his pistols prepared in his pocket. I will not describe to you his extravagant joy at finding me; but seeing him ready to faint, we led him to a coffee-house. He wept most bitterly, and confessed that he had only had a penny roll the whole day for his support. When replenished by some refreshments, he entered on his history. ‘It will not amuse you,’ continued Meunier with compassion, ‘but as it leads to this meeting with his wife; for, availing himself of the liberty his worthy uncle had gained him, by satisfying his creditors, he came to England to search for this monsieur d’Arnois, and the faithless wife whom he had adored. But in vain did he seek his rival in London; who with an assumed name had left Paris before his mistress, or rather his wife; for such, by the indulgent law of divorces, madame Luzarche became to her gallant on leaving la rue St. Honoré, and her nursling.

“Within these few days chance threw Mrs. Whaley in Luzarche’s way, whilst he was giving a shilling lesson to his pupil, a shoe-maker’s daughter, in a little parlour next the shop. The lady entered to ask the price of a pair of clogs she saw at the window; and, being in immediate want of them, she desired the man to prepare them with speed for her, the streets being too dirty and wet for her safety. Her dress and a servant in livery proved that her condition was one of more ease than belonged to monsieur d’Arnois’s companion, and, suppressing his feelings, he resolved to follow her. By this means he learned that she was the wife of Mr. Whaley, a man of very considerable fortune and some respectability. Extreme poverty had damped Luzarche’s spirit; and with less love, and something like *prudence*, he wrote to her, stating their mutual situations, and engaging to leave her unmolested upon condition she would supply him with the means of returning to France. In pathetic terms he described his

wretchedness, and with much compunction mentioned his errors in regard to his uncle, assuring her, that on her compliance with his terms of a final separation, he should find in this more than father's kindness—a pardon, and an asylum for his life. To this letter he received no answer, but the one given him by the footman: 'His lady relieved no emigrants from particular applications, as she liberally subscribed to the fund for their general benefit.' Luzarche determined to be revenged, and then to die. In this temper of mind he was met by one of his country-men, who had been more successful than himself as a language-master; and he, perceiving Luzarche's dejection, gave him an order of admission, which one of his pupils had just presented to him, recommending to the miserable Luzarche to amuse himself. Trusting to fortune, Luzarche followed his counsellor's advice, and he was in the pit when his wife entered the box.

"I have fully convinced him," added Meunier, "that his wife is no longer to be thought of either with regret or resentment; and, free from the misery which oppressed him, Luzarche means to live pour l'amour de moi et de l'amitié." A few words will finish the history of this unfortunate man; and I trust my readers will not be displeased to know, that he soon after went to Hamburgh with good recommendations. His talents for business and his conduct have fully justified Meunier in the character he gave him; and the merchant is satisfied with him and his abilities.

CHAPTER XXXVIII.

THE period for Pauline's marriage approached. She had received from doctor Hawksbury her mother's cordial benediction and good wishes; and her mind was tranquil on that point. Solicitous in the discharge of duty, we were consulted in regard to those steps it became her to take relative to Mrs. Budgely, urging that she had no resentment to gratify, but had to fear the imputation of having overlooked a sister. St. Clare proposed visiting Mr. Budgely; but this Mr. Furnival would not permit, contenting himself with informing him of Pauline's being in town, and of the purpose for which she had left the country. "On my telling him that you were in Cavendish-square," added he, addressing Pauline, "with Sigismund's friends and relations, he replied that he would tell his wife, but he was sure she would not think of visiting such great folks; for they were quite out of their line; but that it would be looking kind if Mary would call before she left London. Now I am, my child, still of opinion," continued Mr. Furnival, "that, whether as the poor Pauline or as the happy Mrs. St. Clare, you are quite out of Mrs. Budgely's line. She neither wants you nor wishes to see you. Call, however, if you think it necessary: for my part, I think little of observances regulated by nothing better than appearances. But I may be wrong, and governed by prejudice."

Thus permitted, Pauline and myself took the road to Watling-street. We were told that Mrs. Budgely was at home by the same porter who had received us before, and who with much civility warned us of the several impediments in our way through the warehouse or shop, which was filled unusually with casks and goods. A small court we crossed showed us that we should not be received in the drawing-room; and entering a dark passage, he instantly opened the door of a back room, saying, "Here is your sister, madam." Mrs. Budgely, entirely thrown off her guard by this unexpected intrusion on her privacy, with an inflamed countenance and loud voice said, "You stupid rascal! did I not tell you that I was not at home to nobody?" "Yes," replied the man with a surly tone; "but I did not know I was to send away your relations." "Why did you not call Jenny?" replied the mistress, still elevating her voice. "She was up stairs," answered he, retreating, "helping the man to take down the beds:" and

banging the door after him he escaped. Our apologies followed, and these were offered without venturing to advance further into the room; for, besides being somewhat confused by our reception, we saw no chair unoccupied. "No, no," cried she, softened by our excuses, "you shall not go. But it is enough to provoke a saint to have such fools about one. This blundering fellow knew I had enough to do this morning to be in no condition to receive company. But I do not mind you; nor will you be surprised at the bustle you see, when I tell you that I shall have my house full to-night, it being my third and last sandwich party for the season." The maid servant had during this explanation disembarrassed the chairs from the various articles of plate, which had been polished by the owner's hands, and were now removed in a large tea-board, by the girl, to their destined place. I could not help admiring the judgment which had so appropriated every thing around Mrs. Budgely to her occupation and appearance. On a table stood a pewter porter-pot, and in a dish of the same metal the remains of cold boiled beef, and part of a loaf of bread. The embroidered robe had judiciously been spared, and a dark cotton loose gown supplied its place. A nightcap, not exactly as from the hand of the laundress, was further soiled by the plate powder; and the gown had gained no advantage from the contact with her hands. A large jelly-bag and stand were before the fire, and we modestly kept our distance from the hearth. "Well, my dear Mary," observed her sister, rubbing her hands, "you now see what it is to be the wife and mistress of a family; and as you will soon be one, I hope you will think, as I have done, and shall always do, that nothing is well done where servants are left to manage. People may have money, but I know of no fortune that is well spent where there is no care. Not that I ever think of *sparing*, when I entertain company. Thank God, we need not think of the cost. No one will ever find cream of tartar lemonade or raisin wine negus in my house. Come, you shall taste of my jellies; this is the last of twelve dozen I have run off; only see how clear they are!" She presented us the glass; and we acknowledged with truth that they were delicious. "Well they may," said she exultingly; "I never use any wine but sack and rhenish." "Your party will be numerous, I presume?" observed I. "We shall have three rooms open," answered she, "and they will be well packed: but the more the merrier on these occasions." She now inquired after Mr. St. Clare, and asked Pauline whether she should not regret leaving England again. Pauline smiled, and said, Ireland was so connected with the mother country, that she should always think herself within reach of her friends, and should frequently see them. "Shall you be able to understand their language?" asked she: "they tell me they speak Irish in Ireland." "Oh, I have no fears on that head," replied Pauline, suppressing her mirth; "Mr. St. Clare will help me to understand his countrymen." "Well, my dear Mary, you are the best judge," continued Mrs. Budgely; "and a husband with a large estate is not to be had every day. But you are lucky in one thing: for you have found a home every where since you left your father's house. For my part, I should be like a fish out of water in a foreign country: therefore I say, Lunnun for ever! But pray, madam, is this gentleman no relation of yours?" I replied in the negative. "Then I suppose the young gentleman has no parents living, and is master of himself and his fortune?" "He has a mother living," answered I, "and has been some years master of himself, and the boast of that mother." Pauline gravely inquired after the health of hers. On this subject Mrs. Budgely enlarged; and very circumstantially recounted the several instances of her sister's and brother's meanness: "but," added she, "what could my mother expect in a house where the cheese is weighed out, and where the master and mistress live like cat and dog? Such gentry! say I. I suppose you have heard of the bustle at their great cronies'? The fine Mrs. Whaley has been turned out of doors: she was nothing after all but a kept madam. However, she took care to provide for her dismissal, and now lives with her French gallant on Whaley's three hundred pounds per annum. John wanted me to invite her to my house when she was in Lunnun; but I told him I had seen enough of French breeding, it did not suit *Jerry Budgely the Salt-drier's wife*." She was interrupted by her husband's entrance, who, having with much cordiality paid us

his respects, gave his lady a card, saying, "The Gobbets, after all, will not come." She coloured, and read their apology. "A lame horse, truly!" said she, throwing indignantly the card from her hand; "I suppose Mrs. Gobbet would never survive being in a hackney coach! I question whether when she was Nelly Waters she had ever rode in any but the stage from Coventry! Such pride! The next time I give sixteen shillings for a job coach to visit her she shall call me fool! Let her give her sour wine and tenpenny cake to her quality neighbours in the square for me! This is the *third time* I have invited her since she left Thames-street, and the last, I promise her. She will be mad enough when she hears that we have six military men here; for, with all their pride, they cannot manage to get off their daughters! I will take care they shall know that I have guests who can tell thousands for their hundreds!" "You need not travel far from home for that, Becky," answered the husband with complacency: "We all know Gobbet's *paper manufactory*. All flash, my love! all false credit *there!* But that may do better in the square than in Thames-street. People there understand these matters. *No taking-in* will do there." During these observations the lady's complexion settled to its usual roseate hue; and we rose to depart. "Why, you might come this evening," said she with the utmost good humour, "and bring your intended with you. We shall have room, and I should like to see this fine gentleman who is to be my brother." Pauline pleaded an engagement. "I wish we could ask you to dine with us," observed Mr. Budgely: "but on these grand occasions even I am left to shift for myself." This was said with good-humour, and we advanced to the door leading to the little court; when Mrs. Budgely, drawing with promptitude a huge key from her pocket, declared we should have *a peep* at her table; and, applying it with alacrity to a large lock on the warehouse door, she added, "every thing would be cold." Of this truth there could be no doubt, for no icehouse could be colder than Mrs. Budgely's *salle à manger*. With shuddering impatience and dismay I was however obliged to listen to the detail of the superb decorations preparing to give eclat to the truly sumptuous table, which would not have disgraced a palace, whilst the display of bed-curtains of all colours and materials scantily covered the humid walls around it. At one end was a sort of recess, which I found terminated in the large folding-doors of a cellar; and a number of hogsheads were piled up in visible order, on each side of this *Æolus's* cave; for every wind of heaven seemed pent up in it. Observing my retreat from this whirlwind, Mrs. Budgely kindly explained to me her contrivance to keep this annoyance from her guests. "We have a large screen," said she, "which will conceal all this; and when the transparencies are placed, it will serve for the servants to fetch and carry from; and with the coloured lamps round the room I only fear we shall be too warm." "It is more than can be said for it now," observed Mr. Budgely laughing: "but I have had enough of it; for I never liked these sandwich suppers, madam. Do you?" I replied, that I rarely went into large parties of any kind. "You are in the right, madam," continued he: "I never will go where there are six bottoms to one chair; they tire me to death." "You may be trusted, Mr. Budgely," answered the wife without ill humour; "for you will take care of one chair be you where you may. But these things do not occur every day." "No," replied he: "it is well they do not; for, what with porters' and upholsterers' work, a house is not settled again in a month." I found this observation contained in it a little leaven; for Mrs. Budgely replied, "Well, you need not say any more on that subject; you know *I* pay the costs." We were now permitted to depart; and with Mr. Budgely's good wishes that nothing might happen "between the cup and lip," and his advice to be careful, "to make hay whilst the sun shone," and wishing Pauline happy, Mr. Budgely suffered the servant to shut the door of the carriage, and say "Go on."

CHAPTER XXXIX.

INSTEAD of detailing the order of Pauline's wedding-feast and the elegance of her bridal attire, I will compromise matters with my young readers, by giving them a specimen of love *in a cottage*, which it is probable will please them as well; although it must be acknowledged the picture is not exactly correct, nor may it be finished off to their entire approbation. St. Clare was, however, so pleased with the following letter from Mrs. Maitland to her sister, that he read it to us; and told Pauline, that whenever he became enamoured of parade and dissipation she might send him to the curate's in order to learn wisdom. I now present it to my readers.

“MY DEAR SISTER,

“Mr. Maitland and myself received with the sincerest satisfaction your kind letter; and, further prepared by doctor Hawksbury's intelligence, read with joy your marriage as announced in the newspaper. We are highly gratified by finding you believed we should take an interest in your happiness. Believe me, we have never failed in so doing; and now rejoice that the innocence always unimpeached by the good and generous, has a complete triumph over those who vilified it for their own malicious and selfish ends. I need not repeat to you the troubles I have encountered in my progress to a harbour of peace, as you have heard from the good doctor the particulars of those persecutions I endured on account of my marrying; but when you know Mr. Maitland, you will acknowledge that I am one of the most fortunate women in the world. Every one loves and respects him: and well they may; for he is the friend of every one, and without wealth has been useful to many; for his piety is not without charity, nor his knowledge without profit. I often think he is the very image of Sigismund's father, whose picture I shall never forget. The same sweet and penetrating eyes, and manly seriousness, you will find in my beloved Maitland, though still so young; but he was always serious in his deportment, although gentle and cheerful in his temper. I think with what surprise you would see the poor sickly brow-beaten Judith you met at Hammersmith. Since my getting up, I am grown as plump and rosy as a milk-maid, and my dear boy thrives hourly, though curtailed of his milk. However, my mother Maitland says, six months is a fair allowance. I wish you could see us surrounded as we are by comforts! It is true, we have no side-board of plate, nor “silken canopies of state.” But love presides at our homely board, and peace is on our pillow. My little fortune suffices for our wants, with my father's rectory of a hundred and fifty pounds per annum, and which will devolve to my Charles, whenever the Almighty recalls his faithful servant. But since my husband has settled with him, he has as it were taken a new lease; and we may, with God's blessing, indulge in the hope that he will be spared to us some years. The duties of his office were certainly, as he performed them, too much for his strength; but, as he says, his curate has been his physician. As for me, who never knew what it was to have a friend, you will judge of my gratitude in finding all I say and do thought right. My dear mother commends my endeavours to become useful in the family; and she already says she is jealous of me, for that her good man likes no pudding so well as his daughter Judith's. What must I be, my dear Pauline, were I not the most grateful and contented of beings, to find myself the cherished object of love and affection with those who cannot love the unworthy! for they are virtuous. But I think I cannot live long with such guides without improving, and I never wanted an affectionate heart. Life has been to me a mere blank till within these two years. Heaven grant that you may experience, as I have done, the comfort of having a kind husband! and when you are a mother, which I fervently hope you will be, that you may see with my delightful sensations your infant

dandled in its father's arms, as his pride and joy. My eyes overflow, my dear Pauline; and Maitland will chide me for indulging what he calls a pernicious sensibility. But I wish you could see him when he chides his grateful Judith! He is thought by every one the handsomest man in this county. Charles is the very image of his father: I hope master Sigismund resembles his. It would be a thousand pities if he do not; for, let people say what they please, a handsome face is a good letter of recommendation; and, for aught I can perceive those who have not this advantage to boast are as vain of ugly ones. But Maitland will laugh at me. So I will say no more on this subject. My mother has been very kind to me, and would be more so were she at liberty to do as she pleases. I have never been favoured with a line from Mrs. Budgely. But Mr. Maitland does not choose I should write again; which is no matter of concern to me, I do assure you, though I have no resentment; for, as my husband says, they have their enjoyments, and we have ours; and acrimony and ill-will have nothing to do with our plans in life.

“With our united and affectionate compliments to Mr. St. Clare I will now finish my long letter, trusting that in future we shall see more of each other, as the doctor says you will not be lost to your English friends; and in this number your affectionate sister will I hope be remembered, though remote from your scene of action.

“Yours faithfully,
“JUDITH MAITLAND.”

CHAPTER XL.

IT may be asked, why Mrs. Sedley, at the hazard of being censured as prolix and insipid, continues to multiply the number of her pages; where, according to all the prescribed rules of novel-writing, her work cannot terminate better than with the happy marriage and brilliant fortune of the heroine. But, my dear young ladies, I am no novelist; and I think I have already informed you that my occupation was similar to that of a scene-shifter. It is no fault, but rather a duty, to make the most of my calling; and I cannot help being of opinion that I have shifted some, to bring forward others highly requisite to the conclusion of the drama. But, dropping at once all allusions, I would ask in my turn, whether, in delineating human nature with fidelity and truth, the eye of experience can overlook the errors and mistakes of those beings which compose society, or the weaknesses and foibles which lessen the sum of human happiness, and degrade human nature. I am led to hope that most of my readers, like myself, are graciously secured by Providence from any approximation with open profligacy or hardened guilt, although we may be appalled by hearing that there are beings like ourselves who “shake with all the fiercer tortures of the mind,

“Unbounded passion, madness, guilt, remorse;
Whence tumbled headlong from the height of life,
They furnish matter for the tragic muse.”

But a subject still more within the reach of every reflecting mind than these, it is to be hoped, rare instances of abandoned depravity is the consideration of those *minute causes*, and *petty neglects*, in the commencement of life, which kill “the promised fruit while yet a little embryo,” and lay waste the work of the Creator. Under these impressions, which experience justifies, I regard the progress of folly, and the approaches to vice, as so many landmarks placed in the road of life. Nothing in this view is trivial; and a Mrs. Budgely, or a Mrs. Whaley, with such as resemble them, are, under this point of view, entitled to notice.

To begin therefore in proper order, I shall complete my sketches of common characters by employing the materials they have furnished; and thus contribute my mite to the truth of that adage, which asserts that “education makes the man.”

Mrs. Murray, who from the absence of principle rather than from the defect of understanding (for plain and positive duties require no complex investigation), gave up a daughter whom she believed unfortunate and innocent to the interested controllers of her own actions, and to an indolence which called every exertion an useless contest; and an interruption of her own comforts discovered at length, when stimulated to action by a domestic she favoured, that she was not made “to endure all things;” and with a spirit and firmness her son had little reason to expect, she suddenly left his house, accompanied by the offended Abigail; and with the utmost resentment and pertinacity insisted on her rights to the Wellsdown-house for her life. The squire on his part was defeated: for neither concessions nor blustering could move his mother; and she gained her point by his purchasing her life in the estate, and they parted with irreconcilable enmity. Without consulting Mrs. Budgely, she hired a house near her daughter Maitland, merely from the motive, “that it would provoke her, to see that she would do as she pleased.” She succeeded; for Mrs. Budgely was provoked; and with intemperate language abused the Mr.

Maitlands, who had been strangers to her intentions, till doctor Hawksbury informed them, that by his advice, and with the assistance of her attorney, she had hired a house at N——, their market town, and within four miles of their abode. Had Mrs. Murray been five years old, instead of more than sixty-five, no situation could have been more suitable; for she must have been benefited by such an association with virtue and plain sense. She was however made sensible to some of the advantages it secured to her; and the latter days of Mrs. Murray would have been her best, had not an inveterate hatred to her offending children stood between her and the comforts within her reach.

The alarms which succeeded to Pauline's marriage, relatively to the fate of Ireland, determined Mr. St. Clare to return thither for the purpose of conducting his mother to England; and during his short absence his wife paid a visit to Mrs. Murray. She found her comfortably and commodiously lodged in a handsome house, and with Miss Maitland, who lived with her as her companion. Her passions had subsided, and were settled into a weak fondness for her grandson. Pauline, however, furnished some gratification to her vanity; and her daughter St. Clare's post-coach and four met with a most gracious reception. Her visit to the Maitlands amply repaid her for the performance of a duty from which she had little pleasure to expect, and she returned to town with the fullest conviction that Judith had been fortunate, and that her husband and his family were estimable in every point of view. Resentment had rendered Mrs. Murray generous: in her first effusions, she had given her daughter Judith a promise of allowing her a hundred pounds per annum, upon condition she continued near her. Mrs. St. Clare had the satisfaction of seeing this intention formally arranged, and beyond Mrs. Murray's power to retract. Her death, which happened this year, proved the prudence which suggested the measure; for she bequeathed every shilling she possessed, amounting to five hundred pounds per annum, to her grandson; although her daughter Maitland had at that time three other children equally promising.

On her return to town, my amiable Pauline called on Mrs. Budgely. She was not at home; but we had, in consequence, a visit from her, though the guests of Mr. Furnival. The conversation turned on Pauline's late journey to N——; and with cautious attention to promote the peace she wished to see re-established, she mentioned her mother's agreeable situation and neighbourhood. "Oh, no doubt but she will be taken good care of," replied Mrs. Budgely with a malicious smile: "her six hundred pounds penny rent will be very convenient to the parson. But, dear me! I know my poor mother so well, that I should not be surprised if she quarrelled with them in a month." "She is, I believe, settled for the remainder of her life," answered Pauline with a smile; "for, to say nothing of the fascinations of her son-in-law, she is completely subdued by her grandson, and so happy in her present *thralldom*, that I trust she will never have a wish to break her chains. For, believe me, she never was in a situation in which you had less reason to fear an undue influence." "Lord! do not mistake me, Mrs. St. Clare," returned the irascible sister: "I do assure you, I do not care where she spends her money: so long as John is disappointed in his low, pitiful schemes; and as Judith is likely to be a curate's wife *in all points*, it is all mighty well." "I wish you could see her little Charles," replied Pauline; "I am certain you would be delighted with him." The tone with which this observation was made could not be mistaken; and yet I was surprised by the mode in which it was received. Mrs. Budgely awkwardly laughed, and then with emotion said, "Oh, that time is past and gone. To be sure, I did once wish to have a family: but I would not now be a mother for all the world; for, as Mr. Budgely says, children are certain cares and very uncertain blessings." "Much of the one and the other depends on ourselves," answered the unconscious Pauline; "but the Maitlands will never prevent those they are favoured with from being comforts." The servant's entrance with refreshments interrupted a conversation which had in some way or other

produced visible seriousness on the part of Mrs. Budgely. She refused to taste any thing; said she had the headache; and with much impatience of manner concluded a visit of *ceremony* with *ceremony*. Our comments on the cause of Mrs. Budgely's sudden depression have been since confirmed. Mr. Budgely has lately gained in the lottery the highest prize of 30,000l; and an immediate change of abode succeeded to this accumulation of a fortune before ample and solid. His lady now lives in a square; and, what is still more gratifying, is the opposite neighbour to Mrs. Gobbet, who sees her whirl past her daily in a post-coach and four to her country-house. But, as Mrs. Maitland observes in her letter to Mrs. St. Clare on this occasion, Mrs. Budgely would not only give the thirty thousand pounds for a boy like hers, but begin the world anew for the chance of being a mother. "But there is always a something," adds the contented Judith, "to counteract the unreasonable wishes of such a mind as poor Becky's; and had not her husband been as patient as Job, she would have made him more miserable, and less indulgent, than he has been: and yet I am certain, if Providence had blessed her with a family, she would have found a new source for envy and discontent. She has lately written to my mother, who is hourly declining, to complain of our pride. My husband only smiles, and observes, that were 'pride made for man,' he might have pretensions to it; but that not being the case, he contrives to be grateful and humble, before that gracious Being who has strewed his paths with the sweetest of flowers.

Of the 'squire, Mr. John Murray, few will expect me to say much; for, in truth, his character contains nothing worthy of notice, nor his life any thing for instruction. A decided sordidness and hardness of nature need neither comments nor cautions; nor can it afford a subject of curiosity or interest to my readers, to hear that he continues the poor and childless man with a large estate. A much more important inquiry now claims my pen; and without the fear of being thought an egotist, I will place before my readers my own infirmities and imperfections, for their use and benefit.

CHAPTER XLI.

NOTWITHSTANDING my parting embrace was unexpectedly soothed by the certainty, that for a time at least no seas would divide me from Pauline, I saw her depart for the North with a grief of heart I wish not to recall to my memory. And I so completely indulged it that I at last discovered, that in yielding I had been fostering a sickly discontent which encroached on the comforts of my life, and exposed me to enemies I had never expected. Mrs. St. Clare's tender and amusing letters became the food of something in my mind not unallied to envy; and I surprised myself repeatedly in making comparisons between my claims to Pauline's affection and those Mrs. Boothby so anxiously wished to establish. Something like perverseness had operated, in my obstinately refusing to accompany them to the castle; and it had been with some difficulty I had kept the secret from passing my lips, which preyed on my heart, and which whispered, "Your place is supplied by Mrs. Boothby. Pauline must love such a mother. You would only be in her way." Such symptoms were not to be disregarded; and happily not being constitutionally a part of my mind, they were soon dispelled by a proper regimen; part of which was the resolution of being more with my neighbours than in my solitary home. Mrs. Hampden's friendship aided me; and the major's good humour convinced me, that he was again friends with "the simpleton whom forty or fifty years had not improved in the art of self-government."

CHAPTER XLII.

AMONGST the various little occurrences with which Mrs. Hampden had endeavoured to amuse me on my return home to our village, she mentioned an agreeable addition to our neighbourhood: an old acquaintance of her husband's having secured the vacated house called the Lodge. "They saw it in their way to Buxton," continued she, "and were so pleased with it and its furniture, that they inquired of the person who has the care of it, to whom it was necessary to apply; and Mr. Parry, surprised by my husband's name, with whom he was formerly intimate, immediately determined on paying us a visit. The family consists of himself, a wife, and a daughter; and I am certain they will please you. They have resided in France some years, on account of Mrs. Parry's health: and delighted with being near us, they have finally agreed with sir Thomas's creditors for his house and the moveables. You will see them very soon, and at my house, for they have promised to make it convenient to their finally settling in their own. You will like my favourite," added she with sympathy: "Fanny Parry is a very charming young woman."

In due time I was introduced to this family; and having been under the wise discipline of common sense for some time, my mind was in a better humour for amusement, and I was just to the merits of these truly respectable people. I suspect something had been said of the cause of my still too apparent dejection; for I found I was treated with marked kindness. Mrs. Parry looked like the mother, who had cheerfully conceded to a blooming daughter those charms she might have still contested; for she was only at the epoch of beauty in the fashionable calendar, and, it may be, had not yet seen her fortieth year. The husband was older by ten years, at least, but was not care-worn, and appeared to have more vivacity than his lady. The daughter was extremely pretty, and in five minutes I discovered she was amiable—for she was unaffected.

After the cloth was removed, Mrs. Parry with a polite apology engaged the mistress of the house in a serious consultation relative to hiring servants, and the gentlemen talked of the war. Some recent

news from Paris led Mr. Parry back to his detention in France, and the edict which had shown him and his family the inside of a prison, as chargeable with the crime of being English subjects. "I dare say you will be surprised," said the young lady, addressing me, "when you hear me declare, that had it not been for my mother's terrors and the inconveniences she suffered, I should have been highly amused in my captivity. For we were not treated with harshness, and could have any thing our money could purchase. I am certain I saw more originality of character in our prison than I have seen at Buxton; nor could I have formed a conception, that under the pressure of similar circumstances I should meet with characters so opposite.

"Amongst the group I think I now see an English family who were till then strangers to us. The daughter, a very handsome woman, had unhappily married a Frenchman; and it was whispered that monsieur Broudier had suffered death in Paris. Of this intelligence, however, she and her parents appeared ignorant. But imagine to yourself the contrast of this daughter, with the most beautiful hair I ever beheld, uncombed about her ears, haranguing for hours, in her robe de chambre, on the blessings of freedom and the age of reason; whilst the poor whining silly mother, Mrs. Wilmot, was lamenting not only her real misfortunes, but enumerating article by article the contents of a box of linen which had been lost! the poor father in the mean time dejectedly endeavouring to keep out of mischief his grandson, a poor dirty and hungry child, who was our torment: for master Publicola, though not five years old, was as dexterous as a Spartan boy in pilfering whatever he could find that was eatable; and his heroic mother, without attending to his wants, or the disgrace he incurred, calmly asserted that Publicola would be prepared by his education to be an independent and reasonable being. Yet, Mrs. Sedley," continued the amiable girl, "it was not possible to refuse one's pity and good will to madame Broudier. She was the animated spirit which cheered me. I never saw such firmness. I shall never forget her consolation to her parents, whom by the way she despised. She finished her stoical flight by reminding them that the emancipation of millions and millions still unborn was cheaply purchased by individual distress and ruin. That very night, poor creature! she with the utmost gaiety asked me to lend her a chemise; 'for,' added she laughing, 'as I do not enjoy all the advantages of a savage life, I wish to defer nakedness for your sake, my dear Fanny, as long as I can.'" Miss Parry now proceeded to describe to me, in lively colours, an old French marquis who made collations for the party, and charades and bouts-rimés, till the evening he was summoned to Paris to meet his disastrous fate. A ramble in the garden followed; and from Mr. Parry I learned the following particulars of this unfortunate family. Monsieur Broudier had for a time suffered his wife and her family to remain tranquilly at the little town of Morges, in Switzerland. His conduct was such as to confirm the confidence miss Wilmot had placed in his honour and affection, and he succeeded in gaining the esteem and respect of her weak parents. It by no means appeared that Broudier in his conduct had any intentions of a sinister kind; but following the enthusiasm, or rather the fanaticism, of his political creed, and his ambition, he succeeded in convincing Wilmot that it would be for his advantage to transfer his money from the English bank, for the purpose of purchasing the national property of confiscated lands in France. This plan was pursued to a large extent of Wilmot's fortune: and such was the common interest which united the family, that the father cheerfully granted Broudier full powers to negotiate the business in his own name, on certain conditions of advantage and security for his own life, and his wife's. The estate thus purchased had on it a noble chateau, and was near Paris: it was therefore agreed that it should be the future residence of the family; and Broudier, without delay, yielding to his vanity, prepared it with a show and parade which little conformed to the spirit of republican tenets. Suspicion and jealousy resulted from this ostentation; and a division in his faction completed his ruin. He was arrested under the vague but common pretences which he had seen so fatal to

others: but sanguine, and trusting to his importance, he gave his wife orders to wait at Dijon for his arrival; at which place she received his letter in her way from Morges. Slenderly provided with pecuniary resources, yet hoping from day to day for intelligence that this cloud had happily passed, the family remained for some weeks, living in that privacy which suited their slender finances. At this juncture the order for the confinement of the English arrived, and Mr. Wilmot and his family, as English subjects, thus became known to the Parrys. "It may not be amiss," continued Mr. Parry, "to observe to you, that madame Broudier had a secret influence which the females, of my family at least, did not perceive, and which, in all probability, saved her from a more serious confinement as the wife of a denounced Frenchman.

"An Irish gentleman, who from policy rather than a want of interest with the reigning despots, submitted to be imprisoned, was her protector: and I have no doubt of his having succeeded in his designs of gallantry; though it is still to be seen, what will result from his Quixotism in respect of his love of his own country. He was deep in the scheme of freeing Ireland from her chains, and was well paid for his activity in deluding his countrymen. I should not be surprised to hear your amiable Mrs. St. Clare should meet her late acquaintance in Dublin; for I know O'Neal is there. My daughter," continued he smiling, "was in some danger of being fascinated by the sweetness of this woman's temper and the brilliancy of her talents; and with a generosity I wish rather to regulate than to repress, she was her warm advocate and defender amongst the ladies who were more discriminating than herself. I was not sorry when she lost sight of this syren: for, to say the truth, she is amusing; and one cannot but deplore the perversion of such talents and the corruption of such a heart."

The addition of this amiable family to our society has been of use to me; and since I have been miss Fanny's "good Mrs. Sedley," she has ingenuously confessed that she was not so ignorant as not to perceive the precipice to which madame Broudier's turn of mind was conducting her; but that she had been frequently impelled to support her cause with warmth, against two ladies who were notorious for their coquetry, and who hated her on account of her attractions. The mother, who was present at this amiable confession, with apparent satisfaction smiled her approbation. "I flatter myself that my child was under the influence of a generous and amiable motive on these several occasions, in which she stood forth as the champion of madame Broudier," said she with great mildness, "and I did not wish to check those effusions of a benevolent spirit which had for their object succouring and supporting even the culpable in an hour of distress. I trusted to my daughter's principles and good sense for her safety; and with a more correct judgment there can be but one opinion in regard to this miserable and erring woman. The delusions of the doctrines she had been taught could not always impose on *herself*, any more than on any attentive observer of her conduct. I have, Mrs. Sedley, seen the workings of nature and of conscience appear through her stoical pride and assumed gaiety many times; and it is not without compassion that I trace her future career. She will be the victim of doctrines which have not only overleaped the restraints of religion, but which take pride in confounding the simplest deductions of experience." "She has been very unfortunate, my dear mother," observed the sweet girl in a deprecating tone: "you will allow her parents were by no means qualified to guide and control such a mind as hers." "I do not wish to overlook this palliating circumstance," replied the mother; "but let me ask you, in my turn, did not these parents love her? and can any weakness on the side of judgment, or any errors in conduct, which result from confined notions or infirmities of temper in the well-meaning parent, absolve a child from the charge of insulting the weak, and repaying the cares of a mother with ingratitude and contempt? Let this question be brought to the test of madame Broudier's creed, and, for a moment, let us not consider the positive

command to honour our parents as more obligatory than she does. Is there nothing to be paid by creatures so feeble and helpless as we are, for the tender cares of those that toil in order that their children should reap; who stand forth as their guard in youth; and who have to sustain their unstable feet with unremitting anxiety, and too often with disappointed hopes and heartfelt pangs of anguish? What can be said for a child whose mind has been better furnished than her parents, by the very bounty of those parents; whose views have been more enlarged by the means they have with ardour procured; and, it may be, by the relinquishment of their own ease and indulgencies? What, I repeat, can be said for that child, who employs her talents, and her flippant wit, for the purpose of rendering those ridiculous whose weakness she might support, and whose infirmities she would, had she humanity or gratitude, regard with tenderness, and yield to with cheerfulness? When I see an outrage of this kind," added Mrs. Parry, "it shocks me, not only as a mother and a christian, but as a being endowed by nature with sympathy for the wretched of my species; for I cannot help believing the heart of that being must be callous, which can sport with a parent's defects, or insult their feelings." The daughter took her mother's hand. "How favoured am I," said she with emotion, "who find in my parents the first objects of my esteem as well as of my love!" "They are your best friends, my dear Fanny," answered Mrs. Parry with cheerfulness: "but they are not perfect; and it may be a madame Broudier would discover that we have our weak side, when we implore heaven to preserve to you a docile mind and a firm belief in our good intentions. These will never oppose your true happiness, although they may not always coincide with you in opinion."

CHAPTER XLIII.

WITHOUT regard to the order of time, I shall place here the result of our inquiries relative to this unfortunate family. Sigismund's friends left no steps untried to discover their situation. We have reason to believe that madame Broudier did accompany her gallant to Ireland, as his wife; but Mr. St. Clare has been unable to trace her or O'Neal further. Monsieur Broudier suffered death; and his chateau and estate again became national property. A letter I have lately received from Pauline, who is at present in Dublin, with her mother, for the purpose of a third confinement, will not, I trust, be an unpleasant offering to my readers; and as it will gratify me by transcribing it, and at once finish the information we may wish to receive concerning the Wilmots, I hasten to lay it in part before them.

"A few days since, my dear friend, our Sigismund's triumphs were completed. At rather a late hour in the evening, a stranger of a genteel appearance inquired for my husband, who was reading to his Pauline and mother in my dressing-room. Henderson showed the stranger into the dining-parlour, and came himself to deliver his message. 'He says, sir,' said the faithful creature, 'that his business, though momentary, requires his seeing you; but he does not choose to send up his name.' St. Clare gave poor Henderson a reproving look, and left us. 'You need not fear, my dear ladies,' said the faithful creature: 'this stranger is a true son of St. Patrick, and more likely to blunder on some mischief for himself, than to injure others: besides, his face is a letter of credit: but I will be in the way, though no cloven-foot appears.' We had neither time for suppressing or increasing our fears; for in less than five minutes my husband returned with a neat little box in his hand, and at once explained the stranger's visit. He had engaged his honour to deliver it either to Mr. St. Clare or Mrs. Boothby; and hearing my husband was in Dublin, presumed so hasty a visit, which might have been judged too intrusive by a lady, would find an excuse with him. 'Your friend monsieur Meunier will explain the rest,' added he bowing, and, I have not a moment to spare.' 'He was booted and spurred,' added Frederic; 'and, leaving me and my thanks,

instantly withdrew.' Mrs. Boothby voted for the box remaining unopened, but two against one was a decided majority. I will leave you to judge of our feelings when we found we had the intercepted correspondence of our unfortunate friends before us, with Sigismund's coral necklace and ruby locket, which poor Jeanneton had forgotten at his departure from her mother's. We made no opposition to our dear mother's prudence: she secured these papers, and we were recompensed for our docility by the perusal of Meunier's little narrative, which I now send you:—

“‘Being of late more in Paris than usual, in consequence of Luzarche's return, and the arrangements which his good uncle has made for his future comforts, I have met with an adventure which will interest Mrs. St. Clare as much as it surprised myself. Stepping into a *traiteur's* shop for some little refreshment, I found him roughly speaking to a little boy, whose shabby gentility and pale meagre face spoke his necessities. I asked for some soup; and the man engaged in serving me ceased to speak to the humble petitioner, who with eager looks surveyed the pastry spread around. ‘You are hungry, my little man,’ observed I, giving him a cake. ‘So is my grandfather,’ replied he, hastily devouring his prize; ‘and this ill-natured man will not send him any dinner.’ This appeal did not soften *monsieur le traiteur*. He thundered out a malediction on England, and English beggars, and told the child, he and his grandfather might go to the diable. ‘Tis but a sorry journey,’ observed I laughing, ‘for an empty stomach: send the poor man his dinner: I will pay you.’ No objection being made, he gave his orders to a lad in the shop to carry Wilmot's dinner, and, addressing me, said ‘there was no end of trusting such people.’ Having gained all the intelligence I wanted, and having seen the ragout and the little boy enter a house opposite the shop, I withdrew, and, as you will imagine, lost no time in making my visit to Mr. Wilmot. Sickness and dirt were more conspicuous than penury. He was in an easy chair, and appeared dropsical and lethargic: the child had some difficulty in explaining to him, that I was the gentleman who had sent him his dinner. ‘I was in hopes,’ replied he, ‘that he had news of your mother's arrival, for otherwise it is all over with us.’ My assurances of relief, and mentioning my knowledge of Mrs. St. Clare, roused his attention, and shaking his head, he said, ‘Ah, *monsieur*, had my Anna been like Pauline, I had not lived to want a dinner. However, she was forced to leave me; and had not her mother's illness and death exhausted my resources, I should have held out till her return; for she has changed her cursed name of Broudier, and is now an Irish gentleman's wife, and I expect them every day. The sooner the better,’ added he, ‘on all accounts, for this boy is ungovernable.’ ‘He looks unhealthy,’ said I. ‘How should he look otherwise?’ answered he with more emotion than he had yet betrayed. ‘I wish he were dead! It would be a happy release for him; and I should die undisturbed.’ I now proposed sending him to my mother's in the country: to which he made no objection; and having settled with his hostess, of whom he spoke with commendation, I left him under her peculiar care, and in the hands of a skillful doctor; the poor ragged boy, with a transport of joy, attending me home, and talking of the green fields he should play in. You need not be told the reception he met with from my dear mother, who with uplifted hands, and the tenderest compassion, discovered that poor Publicola neither knew his letters, nor had been taught a paternoster. He was, however, so fearful of being sent from the green fields, that he became docile, and Claudine was satisfied with her pupil. In this manner the three last months have passed: and I began to fear that poor Wilmot would not live to see his daughter; for he rapidly declined, and had the jaundice to a high degree. A card left at my house, by a gentleman, announced to me Mrs. O'Neal's arrival, and her request to see me. I was astonished at finding her in an abode elegantly furnished, and herself gaily attired, and perfectly cheerful and easy. She thanked me for my kindness to her father and her son, and begged to know the sum I had advanced for them. I replied, I had only acted

by commission, and should be amply repaid by knowing I had served her, and gratified Mrs. St. Clare, her friend, the *ci-devant* Pauline du Rivage. She coloured. Her lips trembled. 'Friend!' repeated she with emotion. 'But Heaven will recompense her! She wants no acknowledgments from me.' She changed the subject: and with eagerness listened to my story of Sigismund, and the prosperous state of his fortune, with the happiness of madame St. Clare. Bursts of triumph escaped her, and I gave her credit for a mind acutely sensible and generous. I inquired whether I might be permitted to see my poor sick friend, not doubting but that he had been removed to her house during my week's intermission of my visits to him; when with an air of the most perfect unconcern she told me I should find him in his own chair, and with the careful nurse I had secured him, for he could not be more comfortable. Suppressing my feeling, I gravely rose, saying, I was going to see Mr. Wilmot. During the space of fourteen days I repeated my visits to the dying father. Happily he suffered little, and I much question whether he was sensible of her neglect. But I was; and my soul revolted at the idea of seeing again this wretched and contemptible woman! convinced that she was equally obdurate as a mother, from her having made no steps either to recall her son, or to visit him. I turned my thoughts to the care of the abandoned child, and blessed heaven for his escape. In this disposition of mind, I was surprised by my captain and friend Vieuxbois's telling me that Mrs. O'Neal requested me to sup with her, having business of consequence to communicate to me. My refusal was explicit; and Vieuxbois, laughing at my scruples, and the unequivocal terms I had employed, more seriously added, that I did not know her excellencies. 'I do,' pursued he, 'and you will find her true to friendship. She wishes to serve Sigismund and his Pauline du Rivage.'

“Unable to resist this plea, I accompanied my deluded friend, and we found madame O'Neal and her husband cheerfully enjoying a new political pamphlet. It supplied for a time a scope for her oratorical flights, and un petit souper followed. I was serious, and with good humour she rallied me on my taciturnity: then suddenly checking herself, she added, 'On one point, monsieur, we both agree; for no opposition of character, or of opinions, has concealed from us the charms of virtue, as exhibited in a Pauline du Rivage; and could I produce no other proof of my alliance to virtue, I would rest my pretensions on the irresistible attractions I felt to love her under her embodied form. Pauline is now a married woman, and an insurmountable barrier is between us; for I respect even Pauline as the child of prejudice, because she is not one of guile and deceit. I have in Mr. O'Neal found a friend, to whom I shall intrust the care of conveying to her hands a proof that honour is not annihilated within that bosom in which she has a place. Amongst some trifles which have lately reached me, from the wreck of poor Broudier's fortune, I have found a hair ring. It was carefully sealed up, and ticketed with these words, "Sent in answer to the note from Pauline." I confess,' continued she, 'that in the various troubles which engaged us, neither of us thought of this commission: but trifling as it is, I know it to be invaluable to Pauline, and she shall have it.' She produced the ring: it was, as she informed us, a sort of bagatelle made at Bath, and purposely intended for the cheap gifts of girls and boys. Miss Aimsworth's name was written in it. But I trust it will reach you.

“It now occurred to me to send the letters; and on consulting captain Vieuxbois, he assured me that I could not have a more secure opportunity of conveying them, O'Neal's honour being unimpeached, and his promise sacred. 'He has been deceived,' added he, 'and I rejoice at his resolution. His uncle has passed an act of oblivion over his errors; and he is going to Ireland, where he means to reside, and, by marrying his cousin, secure more firmly his uncle's favour and a good estate, which,' added he smiling, 'luckily for him, is not national property.' 'And madame O'Neal!' cried I with

amazement. ‘She must not be judged by common rules,’ answered he with eagerness.—But knowing as I do that Vieuxbois is a much better soldier than a reasoner, I will not lessen him in your good opinion. Let it suffice, the treaty of amity now subsisting between him and the separating *friends* is settled.

“‘Vieuxbois said something relative to poor little Publicola Broudier’s remaining under my care. I soon satisfied him that this depended solely on his mother’s pleasure, I having no wish to resign him. My dear mother is become fond of him, and with a *christian* name, which she has given him, will he find the christian’s charity and zeal. He improves in health, and gets forward in his alphabet: we shall, I trust, make him useful to some better purpose than that his mother so eloquently sets forth. For poor Publicola already blushes when he cannot repeat his lesson.’”

“Meunier, my dear Mrs. Sedley, finishes this letter with his usual prayer for peace. He sighs for England, and the renewal of that kindness he experienced with us. Claudine kept her birth-day with the usual eclat. She is now eighty-two.”

CHAPTER XLIV.

I TRUST it will not lessen Mrs. St. Clare in the opinion of my readers, when I inform them, that she could not, under any article of her faith, find a prohibition to exclude her from attempting to recall the erring Anna Wilmot to the paths of peace; and following the dictates of her own pure and ingenuous mind, she employed such language as, with enthusiasm she observed, could not fail to touch her friend; “for,” added she, “I have said the truth, in telling her that her return to me would contribute to my happiness as well as hers.” Her proposal followed; and she informed her, that both Mr. St. Clare and herself had determined to apply Mr. Middleton’s legacy to the benefit of those who had generously aided in the protection of his son. “My husband,” added she, “found a worthy claimant in monsieur Meunier, for his deposit of five thousand pounds. Your Pauline has her Anna Wilmot, and the child of that man, who generously hazarded his own safety, and opposed his own opinions, in order to administer comfort to Sigismund’s wretched mother.” With these assurances of a decent independence, Pauline placed before her a plan of retirement, and a picture of that life, her fond imagination and innocent heart conceived to approach nearest to unsullied virtue.

She received this answer.

“Forbear to torture me with your letters, or to render that being a coward whose hopes terminate in the grave. Leave to the convictions of my own reason the conduct I pursue. Do what you please with my child, and think not that in abandoning him I want natural affection. You will be more useful to him than myself. Would to Heaven my parents had left *me* to chance! I should not, it is probable, now have existed. I want no *pecuniary* aid, Pauline. Forget me. I am on the point of leaving Paris.

Adieu for ever!

This laconic epistle was transmitted to Mrs. St. Clare, with one from Meunier. It appears that monsieur Vieuxbois became soon weary of his philosophical mistress; and she disgusted with a lover who could not argue like a logician on Paine’s “Age of Reason.” With all bienséance, she quitted his protecting arms, and embarked with a *new friend* for St. Domingo. Vieuxbois being convinced that in the choice of a wife, whom his good uncle strongly recommended, although she was not one of those

extraordinary females “not to be judged of according to common rules;” yet that she had the sympathies of nature, and a good understanding, married, and settled in a way little conformable to the fashion, but much so to the views of his uncle, who having served his country, and lost half his limbs, had been permitted to retire into the country, and to finish his days in comfort.

Meunier still continues the father to the deserted little Publicola Broudier; and he speaks of him as a promising youth, and takes much pleasure in his instruction.

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CONCLUSION.

HOW soothing and consolatory is it to the human bosom in which benevolence resides, to turn from the consideration of folly and misery, to the contemplation of a being like ourselves, who having escaped the contagion, and harmonized every discordant passion, calmly meets that grave, to which he looks for not only a new but an improved state of existence! My last winter months were consecrated to the first of all human duties; for I was learning the "End of the pious Man;" and practising my own mind in a submission to that divine will, which called to its destined abode a spirit matured for heaven. Who that has travelled a few years, in this our earthly pilgrimage, will not, like myself, find before him the chilling annals of departed friends? and who, if they have the faith and the hopes of the gospel firmly knit about their hearts, will faint when a *Mr. Furnival* dies? Supported by health and youth and activity, although we keenly feel the depriving stroke which separates us from those we love, we still perceive in the gloom which surrounds us, the clearing sky, and the cheering prospect of another interval, in which all will smile anew. Thus we advance to the last stage; and, unmindful of the provision it will want, fill up the void in our comforts, and the place of our retreating enjoyments, by pursuits that often disgrace us, or, in the fretfulness of discontent, render us burthensome. But even in the decrepitude of old age, under the infirmities of sinking nature, *Mr. Furnival* could smile. He had not the frowardness of a sickly infant: no splenetic humour nor absurd whims wearied his attendants. Although time worn, and bowed down by sickness, he welcomed with cheerfulness all who approached him. His younger visitors were sent away comforted and encouraged, "Mr. Furnival would get well again, he did not look like a dying man." With his more experienced friends, he mildly bade them look beyond his grave for their consolation, and take care not to die before they were summoned. This lesson was enforced by his constant application to business. "It amuses me, dame Sedley," said he, "to settle my lesser accounts. Fear not; I am not behind hand in the main chance." It might be said that *Mr. Furnival* was the executor of his own will; and those who are curious in regard to the defalcation of the wealth they supposed had been amassed, must be supplied by myself, and a few others of his friends, with a list of cancelled bonds, which would nearly bring his fortune to their calculation. Amongst his numerous donations of this peculiar kind, many hundred pounds passed into a fund called "the poor man's purse." He had been for many years an unknown contributor to no less than twenty different societies of this sort. To each was sent a bank bill. But to what purpose should I enumerate the acts of benevolence he left behind him? His *will* was, like his life, prompted by zeal for his fellow-creatures' happiness, and the hopes of approbation from his Maker.

No one of his legatees was, I believe, more envied than myself; for, before he died, he gave me his favourite picture of The Good Samaritan, because, as he said, he knew *I liked it*; and on the back he had placed these words, "Friendship knows no grave,—we shall meet again."

Pauline, with the name of his adopted child, had to sustain the grief of the most affectionate daughter: Mrs. Hampden, with an equal share of his fortune, was named residuary legatee with Mrs. St. Clare.

In all things governed by the impulse of his heart, he did not choose to name the major in his will. "I think," said he, "we have managed better; so we have bought him stock, and now he may growl as he pleases. I will make him promise to keep a horse." The major retired with his gift of three thousand

pounds to a sick bed, and has not yet named Mr. Furnival. Pauline has him with her at present, and I hear he is become more cheerful.

Adieu, gentle reader! Being determined not to be *old* before my time, I have written this Novel; I do most seriously assure you, that it has promoted the peace and harmony of my mind. Let it not put you out of humour, nor excite in you a contempt for a gray head so employed. Wisdom, like the current coin, may be divided and subdivided, till in the penny it only suffices to purchase a morsel of bread. But, provided this be wholesome, the penny is not to be despised which supplies it. Remember that we have not always guineas in our purse.

FINIS.

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