

THE
NOBILITY OF THE HEART:

A NOVEL.

BY ELIZABETH ISABELLA SPENCE,
AUTHOR OF HELEN SINCLAIR.

For Fortune can depress, or can advance:
But true Nobility is of the mind,
Not giv'n by Chance, and not to Chance resign'd.
DRYDEN.

IN THREE VOLUMES.

VOL. I.

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THE
NOBILITY OF THE HEART.

CHAP. I.

No friend's complaint, no kind domestic tear,
Pleas'd thy pale ghost or grac'd thy mournful bier;
By foreign hands thy dying eyes were clos'd,
By foreign hands thy decent limbs compos'd;
By foreign hands thy humble grave adorn'd,
By strangers honour'd, and by strangers mourn'd.

POPE.

TEN years had now elapsed since the inhabitants of a small cottage on the borders of the New Forest, were one night, in the middle of December, alarmed at a late hour by a person loudly knocking for admittance. He was habited as a postilion, and supported a sick traveller who was unable to pursue his journey. On Gerard's opening the door, he perceived the paleness of death on the countenance of the stranger, who, overcome by illness and the intense cold, was quite insensible. He had along with him a little girl of about four years old, whom Gerard's benevolent wife gently took in her arms and put to bed. The gentleman lingered only a few hours after his arrival, and expired, supported in his last moments by Gerard and Agatha.

On the close of the melancholy scene, they asked the post-boy a thousand questions about the stranger. The postilion merely replied, "I brought the gentleman from Southampton, and was to carry him to the next stage, when night coming on, his servant rode forward to trace the road, and we soon lost sight of him in the deep snow which had fallen. I could not reach Lyndhurst without hazarding my life, and stopt the chaise to ask leave to get a guide at the house I saw at a distance, by a light glimmering through the trees. To the request I received no answer; and therefore I drove to the spot where the light came from, which proved to be your house. On opening the chaise door I found the passenger insensible, and the little girl, who rested her head on his shoulder, asleep."

Gerard and Agatha wept at the narrative. The beautiful countenance of the sleeping infant had interested them greatly. Her now forlorn situation touched their hearts; and they each declared if no one owned her, she should not want a home such as they had to give her, while they pressed her to their bosoms and kissed her rosy cheeks.

The post-boy staid until the next morning. He was an indifferent spectator of what had happened, and was now anxious to be gone. On examining the pockets of the deceased a purse was found containing a few guineas with some silver, which more than defrayed the expence of the chaise. In the portmanteau there was a pocket-book containing bank notes to the amount of two hundred pounds, but not a single letter nor memorandum that could lead to the smallest discovery who the stranger was. His watch was a gold repeater; and affixed to the chain were two seals, one having a coat of arms with a coronet above it, the other a fine cornelian with a head. The trunk containing his linen was marked A. the child's A.C. both of the finest materials. There was round the neck of the deceased the miniature of a lady, set with brilliants: on the other side of the picture was hair with the cypher A.G. also in brilliants.—Much wonder was excited in the good people who the gentleman could be. Certainly he was a person of condition: and after a long conversation, they agreed to write an advertisement, which was immediately inserted in a London newspaper. No inquiries, however, about the gentleman or the little girl, were ever made. The child, who cried very bitterly, for the first few days, for papa and nurse, could give them no information, except,

“that they had come a long way over the sea in a house they called a ship. Poor dear papa had been very sick, and nurse had been so naughty as to leave her—but that she was papa’s own *Angelica*, and would be nobody’s else.” From this account they would have concluded the deceased to have been a foreigner, had not the little girl spoke English; but what name she bore they could not make out, her articulation was so imperfect, except the Christian name of Angelica.

Soon amid infantine playfulness and the united caresses of Gerard and Agatha, she forgot the sad calamity which happily her childhood prevented her from feeling in its full extent; and while she daily grew in the affection of her benevolent and humble friends, the last ten years of her life had glided on with them in that enviable state so beautifully described by a French author : “*Quel age heureux qui celui où le moment présent est tout, où l’on en jouit avec transport, sans souvenir du passé, et sans crainte pour l’avenir.*”

Chawton House Library

CHAP.II.

How happy in his low degree,
How rich in humble poverty is he,
Who leads a happy life.
FRANCIS' HORACE.

A FEW miles from the small town of Lyndhurst, in the skirts of the New Forest, embosomed in one of its green recesses, the cottage of Gerard stood. A neat paling only divided his garden from the boundless extent of wood that hung its wild luxuriance around it; while the neatness and plenty that reigned within proclaimed Agatha to be an excellent housewife. Gerard had been a serjeant in the late American war; and, after bravely serving his country, returned to spend the evening of his days with a wife, in the simplicity of whose manners and guileless heart, he experienced the tranquil joy of domestic peace. He employed himself in the cultivation of his garden, together with a little of farming, which proved an amusement as well as a benefit. The dairy of Agatha was famed for its excellence, and she was much beloved in the neighbourhood for her benevolent heart, and goodness to the very indigent poor.

Such were the foster parents of the little girl, whom chance had consigned to their immediate protection. Every year Angelica improved in those graces which even their humble cottage could not hide, and while health glowed on her cheek, the superior graces of her mind shone, uncultivated as they were, in every action of her life. Gerard, who taught her to read, write, and account, was so delighted with the progress she made, he declared she would be a fine scholar. Agatha instructed her in needlework; but beyond those common accomplishments she was indebted to her own capacity in the early taste she discovered for music and drawing. With a naturally lively disposition, blended with infinite good humour, she was unlike other children of her age; for she disliked mixing in their sports. There was a barbarity in their manners, which, without being able to account for, shocked her greatly; and she was happier alone in cultivating a small garden she had planted with flowers, in watching their growth, in decorating her chamber with them, in running after butterflies, in rearing young birds, than in all the amusement any playmates could afford her. But her chief delight consisted in sitting under the shade of some of the old trees in a retired part of the forest, to peruse the different little books she got Gerard to purchase for her from the neighbouring town. He had a few in his possession, consisting of an odd volume or two of the Spectator, the same of Shakespear's plays, Pilgrim's Progress, and some magazines, which were sufficient to encourage her partiality for reading. She loved, also, to watch the deer as they bounded over the plain; to listen to the warbling of the thousand birds that formed their concert in the woods; to pluck the wild flowers that grew at every step, to sketch them with her pencil, or to form landscapes from those animated views of nature, which in varied shapes met her eye.

Now and then Gerard took her behind him as far as Southampton. On the day she was fourteen, he presented her with a small poney he purchased for her at the fair of Lyndhurst : she was the more delighted with her gift, when he informed her, he intended in the evening to accompany her for a ride to a part of the country she had never seen. It was a fine evening in the middle of June, when emerging from the dark shade of the forest, they entered a green lane, which at the extent of a mile, presented a more open part of the country; and while it displayed the highest cultivation, was infinitely diversified in prospect. At a short distance she now perceived, amid the high trees that nearly concealed it, an immense pile of building, whose ancient, yet noble structure, immediately excited her curiosity; and she asked Gerard, what the place before her was called?

“Graffington Abbey.”

“Who,” said she, “is the happy owner of that enchanting mansion?”

“Not a happy one,” returned Gerard, coldly, “his name is Earl Devaynes. He has had his trials in this world as well as the poorest of us. He sees no company, and has lived a sad solitary life this many a year. He is, however, well spoken of; and gives a power of money to the poor.”

“What makes him unhappy?” interrupted she, eagerly, “poor gentleman, I pity him from my heart. In so sweet a place, one thing I am sure of he cannot be dull. O how I should like to wander in those delightful woods!—I should want no company : yet I don’t know either, for I often think, father, if my mother and you were to die, what would become of me. You tell me, indeed, the world is a bad place, but for all that I cannot help sometimes wishing to see it.”

“The world, *Anne*, (such they called her, considering *Angelica* too fine a name,) would look very blank upon you without friends or money.”

“Have the people in it then such bad hearts, as to estimate individuals only by their riches?”

“Very often. But night comes on apace, we must return home.”

“Will you not take me, father, some day to see that fine house where the great lord lives—What did you say they called it?”

“I told you before, Graffington Abbey.”

“True. What a pretty name. Do promise to let me see it?”

“I will consider of it. Don’t, however, my dear child, set your mind above your situation; we cannot place you in any other than what it now is.”

Angelica became very thoughtful, and spoke little more during the remainder of the ride. Gerard related to his wife the conversation that had passed, and added, “When this sweet child is a few years older, she will not, I am sure, be content to stay with us. All her pretty manner, with no example at all, shews already her superiority of birth. Then how quick she takes her learning, and what a fine genius she has. I’ll tell you what, Agatha, in a little time we must let her know we are not her real parents : if she then chooses to stay, she is welcome as our own child : if not, she shall have her two hundred pounds untouched; God bless her lovely face, she is too good not to make friends every where.”

CHAP. III.

————— Oh the joy
Of young ideas painted on the mind,
When all is new, and all is lovely.

H. MORE.

A FEW days after this conversation, the butler belonging to Graffington Abbey came to invite them to the tenants' feast. They cheerfully accepted the invitation; and at twelve o'clock the next day, the party set out attired in their holiday suits. Angelica was quite elated with the idea of at length seeing a place she had continually thought of since her first transient view of it; for she had pictured Graffington Abbey as resembling one of those magnificent palaces of which she had read in the fairy tales. She did not expect, indeed, to see giants or fairies, but every thing that was grand and wonderful she there fancied she should behold. Neither was the charm of youthful imagination dispelled by her gradual approach to it. The natural wildness of the forest scenery that surrounded Gerard's habitation, was exchanged for the most beautiful and luxuriant cultivation. The entrance was by a long avenue of noble oaks, which terminated on their arrival at the lodge, from whence they came into an extensive park. The gay foliage of the woods, sloping down the green banks to the margin of the water, gave a cheerful aspect to the scene, which the heavy, but noble mass of building now before them could not have excited; for it was rather formed to inspire awe than delight. Like all ancient structures, it was magnificent, but gloomy. Its antique battlements, its long and narrow windows, its gothic entrance, with a part of the east wing in perfect ruin, and decay, all tended to confirm Angelica in the idea. She now saw some of the castles she had read of; and when she heard Lord Devaynes shut himself up in his castle, or abbey, she thought him a very extraordinary man.

They entered by the back part of the mansion, which led them to the housekeeper's room, where Mrs. Martin and Mr. White gave them a very cordial reception. Shortly after their arrival, a bell summoned them into a large and ancient hall where a table was spread with hospitality and profusion, for the Earl's tenants; and the repast was conducted with much order, and good humour, by the butler, and housekeeper.

Angelica spoke little; her attention was engrossed by the novelty of the objects around her. Mrs. Martin observed her with pleasure. She had spent forty years in the Earl's family, and had acquired a softness and gentility of manner seldom met with in common life. In Angelica's countenance too, there was something so peculiarly striking, as to raise a tender interest in the bosom of Mrs. Martin, who fixed her eyes so anxiously upon her. Agatha remarked it.

"You seem much taken, ma'am, with our Anne," said she; "indeed she is a very good girl."

"I never," returned she, "saw such a likeness! Your daughter is nearly as beautiful as the lady was whom she resembles."

"She certainly is comely for her age," replied Agatha; "but I hope she will never be vain of good looks.—What lady is she so like?"

"A beloved mistress of mine, who is now an angel in heaven, perhaps," continued Mrs. Martin, next addressing Angelica, "you would like, my dear, when dinner is over, to see the house and pleasure grounds.—Will you trust yourself with me?"

"Most willingly."

They soon after arose, and went through a long passage which led into a spacious hall. The top was covered with a fine painting, representing the wars of Charlemagne. The floor was paved with variegated marble; and beautiful Roman statues adorned the different

recesses. They now ascended an handsome stone staircase, gloomily lighted by high and narrow windows of stained glass, which conducted them into a large gallery, hung with innumerable portraits; and extended to the separate suite of apartments. The first they entered, completely arrested Angelica's attention. It was hung with landscapes, done by the most eminent Italian artists; and the colouring was so exquisitely fine, that on the sun's throwing his last rays into the room, the pictures had the mild refulgence of animated nature. Here Angelica would have remained, heedless of time, had not Mrs. Martin reminded her there were other apartments to see; she then followed her into the lower ones, consisting of the dining and breakfast parlours, together with the library. The latter abounded with a choice collection of books, prints, maps, telescopes, &c. and the sashes, which fell to the ground, opened into the lawn. They went across it, and in a few minutes were in a delightful grove, filled with beautiful and fragrant flowering shrubs. The conservatory was uncommonly fine; and the hot-house was stored with a collection of the rarest plants, which particularly engrossed her attention.

"My lord," said Mrs. Martin, "is very fond of this place. So used my dear lady to be, before she married and went abroad. Your liking flowers puts me so in mind of her. I mean the lady Angelica."

"Angelica," interrupted she eagerly, "that is my name."

"Your name," returned she, surprised, "is Anne, how can that be?"

"My father and mother call me Anne, because they say Angelica is too romantic for such a poor girl as I am. But do, Mrs. Martin, tell me about the lady you say I remind you of.—Who is she?"

"My lord's sister. The sun never shone upon a lovelier creature. Then she was so good. Indeed so was Lady Georgiana; but if angel ever dwelt upon earth, Lady Angelica was one."

"You interest me greatly," cried Angelica, "in this description. Oh! how I should have liked to have known such a lady! And you say I resemble her: that is very flattering; although I am not vain enough to believe it. I don't mean to be impertinent, Mrs. Martin, but is it true that Lord Devaynes never sees any company?"

"He does not: he never was fond of the society of what he called the world: and possessing every happiness in the bosom of his own family, he knew how to estimate it. His wife was the most amiable lady in the universe, and his sisters equally accomplished and deserving. The Countess died after giving birth to a son, and left him quite inconsolable. Both his sisters married while she was alive; and when he lost her, he gave up all his time to the education of his child, who seemed his only comfort, and who has turned out nothing but an affliction to him. Disappointed and unhappy, my Lord for some years has lived in perfect solitude. He sees no company, and devotes his whole time to acts of benevolence. It is his chief pride to keep up this place as it used to be in my lady the Countess's life time; and he continues to preserve every thing in the same state, because she used to take such delight in it." Mrs. Martin here ended her account, and they proceeded to the house, where Agatha had for some time expected them. The remainder of the evening was spent in a rural dance.

CHAP. IV.

IT was not the magnificent mansion, the beautiful park and pleasure grounds Angelica had seen, that elevated her mind. It was the account Mrs. Martin gave of the family belonging to that mansion, that excited her interest beyond common curiosity. Her life had been distinguished by no variation. Her heart was a stranger to the ties of kindred affection, except in the persons of Gerard, and Agatha; and the little narrative Mrs. Martin gave her of ladies who seemed not more conspicuous for beauty than goodness, raised a melancholy regret that it had not been her happy lot to have known them. She dwelt much on the personal resemblance that had been traced between her and the Lady Angelica; but she knew no other than her foster parents; she had no recollection of the sad loss she had sustained in her early childhood, therefore any affinity to that lady was impossible. Her ideas, however, by this single visit to Graffington Abbey, were more expanded. She reflected, with surprise, on the magic power of genius she had beheld in the paintings, the perfection which cultivated talents could attain. She saw in the extensive library the successful labours of Intellect, the History of Knowledge, and the Records of Taste; whilst the elegant needle-work of the ladies, in the furniture, displayed a spirit of industry, and a species of amusement totally new, interesting, and delightful. Pained as she was, at the humiliating sense of her own ignorance, it did not impede her efforts; and she resolved to improve those abilities with which Providence had blessed her, to the utmost of her power; and for this end to avail herself of the society of Mrs. Martin, who had a softness and pleasantness of manner than was highly agreeable. She had promised to spend a day in the ensuing week with her, and the prospect of so soon seeing her was the first wish of her heart.

Gerard and Agatha, in the mean time, perceived the increased anxiety with which she looked forward to her visit to the abbey; and, averse as they were from restraining it, were afraid it would only lead to ambition and discontent. When Angelica, with smiles of anticipated pleasure, and cheeks rosy as a Hebe, prepared for her second excursion, her mother said to her, "What use is it, my dear Anne, your going to the abbey: it will only make you dislike home, and become a fine lady? You will then scorn our humble fare, and take up with strangers, who will not love you half so well."

"Indeed you mistake, you wrong me, my dearest mother. I should be ungrateful in the extreme could I for one moment cease to love you, (she flung her arms affectionately round her;) but when I grow up, how can I endure to become a burthen to you in your old age? No! allow me to gain all the instruction I can, than when years steal on you, I may then be able to support you with comfort, and myself, I hope, with credit." "Dear child," exclaimed Agatha weeping, and pressing her to her bosom, "if you are happy, and provided for, I shall die content."

Angelica again comforted her; after which she mounted her little poney, and was once more at Graffington Abbey. Mrs. Martin received her with much cordiality. She felt a great desire to see Lord Devaynes, from the different anecdotes she heard of him; and that desire, by a singular accident, was gratified. His Lordship happened to be surveying some alterations going forward in the park, when the housekeeper and Angelica, from the direction they had taken, were obliged either to turn back or pass him. He observed Mrs. Martin, and called to her, to ask her some question; while Angelica, who blushed extremely, dropt him a curtsy. When he had done speaking to Mrs. Martin, he turned with good humour to Angelica, and said, "where, my sweet little maid, do you come from?"

"I come, my Lord," she replied, "from yonder cottage at the foot of the hill, belonging to your lordship's tenant, old Gerard."

"What are you?"

"His daughter Sir."

Lord Devaynes looked at her earnestly.

Angelica had never appeared more lovely: her pale auburn hair, discomposed by the wind, fell in natural unrestrained curls over her forehead and bosom—a little straw hat, tied under her chin with pale blue ribbons, had fallen so far back as to display her countenance to the greatest advantage. He seemed minutely to examine every feature; and as he did so, several times changed colour. “Did you never, Martin,” at length cried he, “hear the tones of that voice before, never before look on such a countenance?”

“I have my Lord. The first time I saw this young person, I was surprised like your lordship; it must, however, be accidental.”

“True,—yet never was resemblance so great. My sister’s voice speaks from the very grave—just so too she looked when a girl, she hung in these very woods, on my arm.” “What is your name my dear?” cried he, turning towards Angelica, greatly agitated.

“I am called Anne, my Lord, but my father says I was christened Angelica.”

“It is very extraordinary,” said he, “she should not only so strongly resemble my sister, but bear her name also—are you sure, Martin, this young person is the daughter of Gerard the serjeant?”—

“Very sure, my Lord.”

“Well, well,” replied he, “there will be no harm in seeing this Gerard. I must have some conversation with him—in the mean time do you, Martin, entertain your young guest in your best manner, and convince her she shall always be welcome at Graffington Abbey.”

“What a pity,” cried Angelica, after they had separated, “Lord Devaynes should be unhappy. He seems so good, so tender in his manner, I am already disposed to love him. Oh! that I had known the sweet lady you both think I resemble.” Mrs. Martin’s thoughts were too deeply engrossed by the foregoing discourse of Lord Devaynes to attend to Angelica, who, observing her lost in reflection, became equally silent, recurring likewise to the mysterious conversation of the day. She shortly afterwards took leave and returned home.

CHAP. V.

Take her my lord—in truth she is a treasure
More worth, than all the riches of the East:
 So sweet her disposition
You'd say, that mercy, charity, and peace
Were come from heav'n, and lodged within her
 breast.
My child, my child, thou art my child no more,
Yet don't forget that once you call'd me father!
 SHAKESPEAR.

THE Earl of Devaynes was in his fiftieth year. His figure was lofty and commanding, but his face retained none of its former animation; it was shaded by melancholy; and those eyes, once filled with all the fire of youthful vivacity, were now become dim and languid, and none of their interesting expression remained, except that of the most perfect benevolence. A few grey hairs strayed over his forehead, and his voice bespoke the tones of sorrow. In early life he had married a lady of rank, who united with all the accomplishments of a polished education, every winning endowment of nature. The luxuries of life she enjoyed only for the purpose of dispensing good. Gentle and sincere, her actions were regulated by the nobleness of a mind not formed long for this world. At the age of twenty-three she was taken from it, after giving birth to a son, leaving the earl to deplore a loss he never recovered. From that period, he renounced society wholly, and took up his constant residence at Graffington Abbey. He directed his thoughts to the only comfort now remaining, the education of his child. That comfort proved, alas! fallacious. Lord Graffington early shewed an arrogance of temper, a dislike to instruction which the tenderness of a father could not contend with; and after every vain attempt to bend his disposition to mildness and virtue, he relinquished the effort with a broken heart; and sent him (on his quitting Westminster) abroad with a tutor, where he had now been six years.

Lord Devaynes had two sisters, Lady Georgiana and Lady Angelica Graffington. They each married soon after himself. The eldest, to the marquis of Fitzalleyne, an Irish peer; the other, to the honourable Mr Carteret, brother, and next heir to the Earl of Aberville. Shortly after their union they went to the East Indies, where they remained several years before they had any family. It was now near eleven years since his lordship had received any intelligence of them. The last letters brought the mournful account of the death of his beloved sister, who had fallen a victim to the climate, leaving a child whom her husband (now Earl of Aberville) was returning to his native country to take possession of his title and estates: "*Hoping soon,*" he said, "*to present a blooming little niece to his lordship.*"—and that he intended to take his passage in the ———— *Indiaman*. It was wrecked, and every soul perished. Lord Aberville was not among the list of passengers who were lost; but of father or daughter, Lord Devaynes never heard more, forming a thousand conjectures what could have become of them.

On comparing every circumstance with the age of the girl he had just seen, whose air and person bore so exact a similitude to his lovely sister's, he could not dismiss the fond, yet romantic idea, (he cherished) that some wonderful chance had thrown her under the protection of Gerard; and that on inquiry, Angelica might prove to be his sister's daughter. She had the same sweet expression of countenance, the same transparent fairness of complexion, the same silver-toned voice, which "*stole its melody from heaven*"; and the more seriously he thought about her, he resolved, if Gerard would part with her, to adopt her entirely. He consulted Mrs. Martin on the subject; who, delighted with the idea, persuaded

him to send for Gerard, and propose it to him. He did so, and when he arrived, his lordship said, "I have, my good friend, taken a fancy to your sweet daughter, I want you to part with her to me. I will give her an education suitable to my rank, for I will cherish and provide for her as a daughter; and I will take care of you during the remainder of your life." Tears flood in the eyes of Gerard, he endeavoured to dissipate them, while he replied, "It goes very hard with me, an't please your Lordship, to part with Anne, she is the sweetest creature that ever lived. I could not love her better were she my own child, and I am sure it will break the heart of my poor wife to have her taken away. Yet I would not wish to prevent her being so well provided for. I have often thought she was born to be a great lady."

"Did I hear you right?" interrupted Lord Devaynes, much agitated. "You said, *were she your own child, you could not love her better*; is she not then your child?"

"No truly, my Lord, she never looked as if she was; God knows to whom she belongs. She was left with us at four years old, without a friend to own her. Her father, poor gentleman! died beneath our humble roof. It was in a heavy fall of snow ten years since."

"And could you never trace to whom she belonged? Was there no letter, no name to lead to a discovery?"

"None, my Lord, except a watch, some seals, and a miniature picture. I fancy from the little girl's imperfect account they came from abroad; but she was too young for me to discover from her infantine prattle, who her father was, and I could only find out that she was called *Angelica*."

"Lose no time, good Gerard," interrupted he, eagerly, "in shewing me the things you have. I am interested,—you know not how much interested in the event!"

Gerard returned home, and brought all the things he had in his possession. He presented them to the earl, who, when he had looked at the miniature, exclaimed, "It is indeed, my sister!—Loveliest Angelica! it was then your child I was ignorantly going to adopt, and who, but for these benevolent people, would have been left to a pitiless world. Well might I feel the powers of sympathetic tenderness fill my bosom, when I beheld your sweet girl! I require no further proofs," continued he, "than those you have already shewn me, to convince me she is my niece: as such I will acknowledge her to the world: I will immediately take her home and proclaim her what she is, *Lady Angelica Carteret*, the daughter of my sister,—the heiress of her father, who, when he died, was Earl of Aberville. The title is extinct, but the fortune descends to the female issue, and she, by right, inherits his noble estates in Westmorland."

The heart of Gerard was full. He loved his Anne dearly; and, rejoiced as he was at her good fortune, knew not how to part with her; and gave a sorrowful consent she should accompany Mrs. Martin (who was to fetch her) to Graffington Abbey, the following day. When Gerard returned to his cottage, he flung himself on one of his wicker chairs, and sobbed aloud. Angelica, who beheld his emotion with alarm, tenderly approached him, and took his hand: "You are going to be a great lady, Anne," said he, "my Lord Devaynes has undertaken to provide for you; we love you too well to prevent it."

The aerial castles she had formed of happiness, of grandeur, in a moment vanished at this declaration. Her rustic home, her simple fare, never seemed so dear as now, when told she must quit them for ever; for in their warm guileless bosoms she had experienced the most tender indulgence. Bathed in tears, she replied, with much emotion, "Indeed, indeed, I cannot leave you! Surely you will not part with your Anne, whom you have always loved?—To go to Graffington Abbey for a few weeks—a few months, would have been delightful but to leave you for ever—to see you no more—Oh! no—it is impossible!"

"If you don't like Graffington Abbey, my dear child, come back again. This place is no longer proper for you, and you will find ties where you are going to wean you from us."

"What do you mean?"

“I dare not speak plain; yet believe me, my lord will treat you like his daughter.” Gerard now seriously urged to her the advantages she would derive from the goodness of Lord Devaynes, and as she dried up her tears, went and prepared her little wardrobe, to depart the ensuing morning.

Chawton House Library

CHAP. VI.

WHEN Mrs. Martin arrived in the carriage, the heart of Angelica, as she hung on the bosom of Agatha, was too full for utterance, and she departed without a single adieu. The cause of her sorrow was too amiable to be interrupted by the housekeeper. Her face, when she reached Graffington Abbey, was pale and melancholy, and her eyes were clouded with tears.

Mrs. Martin conducted her into his Lordship's library, and as she approached with timid steps, he kindly took her hand, while he addressed her by saying, "Welcome to the abbey, my dear child. Consider it as your future home, and may you do as much honour to the rank you will fill, as I hope you will prove a joy to me. To-morrow I will explain fully to you my motive for inviting you hither. In the mean time Mrs. Martin will accompany you into the drawing-room, where she will remain with you till dinner. "Martin," continued he, "take care of your sweet charge."

They withdrew together. Angelica, astonished at all she heard, waited in a sort of breathless suspense, wondering greatly what was next to follow. Mrs. Martin, informed by the Earl of her consanguinity to him, was no longer free and talkative, but preserved, with the utmost attention to amuse her, a distance and restraint, which instead of delighting, petrified poor Angelica, who in vain attempted to discover the cause of a change Mrs. Martin was not at liberty to explain; and she found grandeur and happiness by no means synonymous terms. When they met at dinner, Lord Devaynes behaved to her with a tender freedom that would have banished reserve, had not Angelica felt, by her novel situation, abashed and dispirited. The ostentation of high life surprised her. She sighed at the remembrance of her rustic home, whither her thoughts perpetually wandered, as she pictured Gerard and Agatha mournfully seated at their humble repast, weeping her departure. She retired at night to her spacious and elegant chamber, dejected and uneasy; nor did sleep befriend her till the sun threw his morning rays into her chamber.

Lord Devaynes took the opportunity at breakfast, of introducing a subject so highly interesting to his fair guest, as a discussion of the motives that had induced him to adopt her. "Mrs. Martin told you, my dear," said he, "how greatly you resembled a sister of mine. Look at this picture, (presenting the miniature Gerard had given him,) and judge yourself of the likeness."

With infinite emotion she rejoined, "I am, my Lord, sensible of the likeness: but how you flatter me by the comparison. If that lady was as good as she was beautiful, you were, Sir, happy in calling such a one your sister."

"She was lovely, Angelica, as that picture. Every virtue was enthroned in her mind. Such was my sister!—such was your *mother*!"—

"My mother, said you!" exclaimed she, turning pale, as, trembling violently with contending emotions, she sunk on a chair.

"Yes, thou living image of Angelica Graffington, in me behold the brother of your lamented parent, who takes you to his protection, who will cherish you as a daughter, and from henceforth declare you to the world his niece. Take then the respected name of your father; a man of worth—of integrity, and glory in it. I am sure *Lady Angelica Carteret* will do it honour."

"If I am indeed so happy," cried she, bathed in tears, "to call you my uncle, O Sir, may I ever prove grateful for so inestimable a blessing. Nor shall my first, my humble friends be forgotten. No! Gerard and Agatha I shall always remember as the kind preservers of my helpless years. And may I, my Lord, so conduct myself in that exalted sphere you have raised me to, as to ensure your love and approbation." She pressed his hand to her lips, and requested permission to withdraw, to acquire some degree of composure.

Now, indeed, she became reconciled to her change, and young as she was,

contemplated with wonder and gratitude, the dispensations of Providence. No longer she beheld herself of birth obscure; the associate of people whom, although she loved, she knew herself to be unlike; nor sighing for accomplishments she had not power to attain; for now she was the acknowledged daughter of parents whose excellence did honour to the rank they held, and the niece of a respectable nobleman, proud to acknowledge her. Almost overwhelmed by sensations so new and pleasing, she met her uncle at dinner with sentiments of the most filial affection. She was proclaimed, in presence of all his domestics, daughter of the Earl of Aberville and his sister Lady Angelica Graffington, whom they all remembered and highly respected. The intelligence, soon spread wide. By some it was deemed authentic, by others a romantic tale, though no one dared dispute its validity.

Chawton House Library

CHAP. VII.

ORDERS were immediately dispatched to a capital warehouse in London, for every sort of dress becoming Angelica's age and rank. A governess was likewise obtained from a neighbouring county, who had the most favourable recommendation from the family she had just quitted. Mrs. Devereux was indeed highly accomplished. She was perfect mistress of the French, Italian, and her own language. In the pencil, few excelled her; and her judgement and taste for music were allowed to be exquisitely fine. She had learnt the most delicate and beautiful needle works in the convents abroad, which she displayed in the natural elegance of her fancy. The vivacity of her youth, blunted by sorrows, had given a melancholy and reserve to an appearance always extremely plain, not naturally her character. Her manners were graceful; and her conversation had an energy in it which some would stile enthusiasm, although qualified by strong sense, and the justest observation. She was the widow of a Welch officer; by whom being left at the age of forty, in very reduced circumstances, she was compelled, at that season of life, to seek for a provision for herself, which for the last ten years she had done in the capacity of a governess, with credit and respect.

Such was the person to whom the fortunate Angelica was consigned. Lord Devaynes took upon himself to instruct her in those literary pursuits he wished her to acquire, and found a source of delight in cultivating the mind of his amiable niece, to which he had long been a stranger: while the sweetness of her temper, the winning affability of her manners, made her universally beloved and respected. Sensible of the years she had lost in her education, she applied with an avidity that knew no interruption; and her uncle delighted with the rapid progress she made, found each day new joy in her society and conversation. He wrote to his sister the Marchioness of Fitzalleyne an account of the niece he had discovered, and of his intention to claim for her the estates of her father. By some fatality the letter was lost; and piqued at obtaining no answer, he did not address her again.

For several weeks after Angelica's arrival at the Abbey, those hours not devoted to instruction, were spent in visiting the extensive suite of magnificent apartments she now had leisure to explore; and her curiosity was strongly excited to know why a part of the Abbey had been suffered to fall into such total decay as to be entirely shut up. She perceived a long gloomy gallery led to that wing. But on enquiring why it was neglected, every domestic wore such a look of dismay, it was not till near three months after her residence at the Abbey, she discovered from the conversation of the servants, there were many extraordinary stories connected with the ruin. Little as she knew of the world, she knew that supernatural beings were always believed by weak minds to be inhabitants of old mansions; and while she smiled, was not surprised at their credulity. She imagined Mrs. Martin superior to so absurd an impression. To her, therefore, she imparted the wonderful tales she had heard. Mrs. Martin listened to her with a very serious countenance; and then replied, "You may laugh, my Lady, but I assure you it is very true; the chapel has not been open for these twenty years, on account of the statue that is there which was the death of poor Leval. Mr. White can tell you the same if he pleases. My Lord's own valet died with the fright of a blow he received from it, at the time I mention, as he was returning from the funeral ceremony of my lady the Countess, which was performed by torch light, in the chapel—it has been shut up ever since—the statue, my Lady, if you will believe me, struck him to the ground. It had such an effect upon him, that fit after fit succeeded; and he died in less than a month. The circumstance at the time excited such universal terror, every servant in the Abbey left it in alarm, except Mr. White and myself."

"Have you ever, Mrs. Martin, seen this wonderful statue?"

"Above thirty years ago, when it was first brought over and placed in the chapel."

"What does it represent?"

“Pray don’t ask me any more questions, my Lady,” replied she, “for the very idea of it makes me tremble.” Here the conversation ended.

That the valet might have received a blow from something he imagined the statue, she could credit; but that it could move she knew to be utterly impossible: she could only smile, and resolved to take an opportunity of exploring this terrific chapel.

From her uncle’s never having spoken of either the chapel or the figure, she did not venture to mention the subject to him. But to Mrs. Devereux she related all she had heard; and expressed her curiosity to see what had excited such consternation, and alarm. While Mrs. Devereux strengthened her opinion of the impossibility of the truth of such a story, she advised her by no means, to attempt going to the chapel, for fear of offending Lord Devaynes, assuring her when a favourable opportunity offered, she would herself accompany her thither. Anxious as Angelica was, she promised to wait for a proper time, and the matter dropt for the present.

Chawton House Library

CHAP. VIII.

The meeting cliffs each deep sunk glen divides,
The woods wild scatter'd cloth their ample sides.
Th' outstretching lake embosom'd 'mong the hills,
The eye with wonder, and amazement fills.
The lawns, wood fring'd in Nature's native taste,
The hillock dropt in Nature's careless haste.
The sweeping theatre of hanging woods,
Th' incessant roar of headlong tumbling floods.

BURNS.

TWO years of Angelica's residence at Graffington Abbey, had now revolved, when she entered her seventeenth year. That period had done much for her, in every mental and personal acquirement; but still, not sufficient perfectly to satisfy Lord Devaynes, who wished to complete her education by some London manners. After Christmas, he wrote to a person in town to procure him a house in Devonshire Place, being informed it was an airy, and not a public situation. He was likewise anxious to take proper measures to secure his niece's title to the estates of her father, previous to her coming of age. Before they set out, Lord Graffington made large demands on his father, his liberal stipend was squandered in every sort of vice, and dissipation. This displeasing demand, was followed by a letter from his tutor, to inform the Earl of his dismissal.—Lord Devaynes was so greatly hurt at the circumstance, that when the period was fixed for his journey to London, he was in such indifferent health and spirits, that Angelica's anticipated pleasure of a visit to the metropolis was sunk into despondence, as she watched the languid countenance of her uncle.

They set out in a morning about the middle of January, and reached Devonshire Place late in the evening of the same day. The bustle, the gaiety of London, the magnificence of its streets, the elegant regularity of its houses, charmed not Angelica, whose anxiety on account of Lord Devaynes' ill health, increased to such an height, that Mrs. Devereux prevailed on him to send for a physician. When he arrived, his grave looks told what his benevolence, in speech would not betray; that without apprehending any immediate danger, he thought him in a very weak low state, which, if not overcome, would be followed by dissolution. Lord Devaynes, solicitous for the future establishment of his niece, lost no time in applying to the first counsel. But having nothing to produce the assurance of her being really the Earl of Aberville's daughter, except the watch with the coat of arms on the seal, (he had neither letter or memorandum) though firmly persuaded himself of her identity, he had the mortification to receive in answer, *"that the person calling herself Lady Angelica Carteret, must establish by authentic proofs, her claim to the name, and her title as lawful heiress to the late Earl of Aberville, whose fortune and estates she could not inherit until she came of age; and which on enquiry, had been claimed some years since by a distant branch of the family; who was at present in the actual possession, and residing at the family mansion. That gentleman's legal title must therefore be first annulled, before any measures could be taken."*

Lord Devaynes was advised to take the young lady to Aberville Castle; and if by a personal intercourse with the present possessor, nothing could be done, then throw the affair into Chancery, if, with what proofs he had of her identity, he was disposed to bring forward her claim.

Such being the issue of the counsel he had taken, he resolved to use every exertion in his power, and to lose not a day in going to Aberville Castle. He wrote to Gerard to desire he would come to London, that he might first lay before his council the circumstances of Lord Aberville's arrival at his house, and his death, with every other particular, tending to establish

his niece's right; and then accompany them into Westmoreland.

The next day brought Gerard to London, and the following they began their journey to that abode which, for centuries back, until the last few years, had been Angelica's ancestors. It was an interesting one to her, and every mile that brought them nearer its end, excited increased emotions. The weather, although only the end of February, was particularly favourable; it was clear and mild; a genial thaw having succeeded a deep snow, of which only partial traces were to be seen; while a lively verdure clothed the vallies, where the early flowers of spring were beginning to blow. As they approached within a mile or two of Aberville Castle, by an opening vista were now exhibited the enormous fells that surround the lake of Windermere; while in long perspective the snowy summits of distant mountains, towering one above another, exhibited a grandeur, so awful, and sublime, as Angelica had never before witnessed. In the low lands, the pastoral scenery was enlivened by herds and flocks browsing in the meadows; while the venerable, though leafless woods, that spread along her domain, (which she now entered) spoke the noble extent of the place.

The park commanded in front the magnificent lake, whose transparent bosom sparkling in the sunbeams, reflected the deep shadows of the surrounding woods. Its cultivated island, one particularly so, which even at so unfavourable a season, she pictured not less beautiful than that of Calipso's, was rendered highly picturesque by the half-seen mansion, which arose upon it, and might have proved a residence for that goddess. On a vast promontory, in proud pre-eminence stood the Castle of Aberville, whose lofty turrets and ancient battlements, now sinking into decay, and not less gloomy than sublime, were seen rising above the venerable woods which embowered them, and which sloping to the valley, extended for a considerable distance. They approached by an avenue of oaks of great antiquity, whose spreading boughs in summer wholly excluded the sunbeams. The edifice, which was of stone, covered a considerable extent of ground, and the large court they entered by an immense portcullis opened upon a wide lawn; large gothic windows, overhung with ivy, gave obscure light to the spacious hall into which they were admitted, whose high arched pillars, formed of the granite of the country, gave it a very noble appearance. The walls were covered with paintings, which seemed to be taken from ancient history; and they were shewn by a venerable domestic through a heavy folding door, richly carved, which led to the great staircase that ran at the end of the hall. The venerable old man, whose silver hair, and respectable appearance spoke the faithful domestic of former years, stood suspended, gazing in silent respect on the strangers. "I wish to go through the castle," said his Lordship; "by whom is it shewn?"

"The family, Sir, are all down here at present, and are very particular about admitting strangers."

"Your appearance bespeaks you long acquaintance here, therefore I will be open with you, and tell you my business. I want first to shew this young lady the castle, and then I shall introduce myself to Mr. Carteret."

"I will take any message, Sir, for you to Mr. Carteret. I dare not let you in without you send your name. He is not like my late Lord, who used to be proud to entertain all travellers that came here, with true old English hospitality. The present possessor is a very distant branch of this noble family."

"So I am informed. You are a faithful fellow, I'll answer for it. I knew your late Lord; he was worthy your remembrance."

"Did you, Sir?" rejoined the old man, with a look of enthusiastic delight. "I would not wish to be inquisitive, but did you ever hear, Sir, what became of his daughter? it has always been a matter of surprise in these parts."

"I will have some conversation with you, my good friend," replied he, (wishing in the presence of Angelica to change the subject)" before I depart. In the mean time, go to your

master and inform him, the Earl of Devaynes waits upon him.”

“Sir!—my Lord!—I beg your pardon—my late lady’s brother? I thought I had seen your face before. Then heaven has heard my prayer, and granted me a sight of some part of that blessed family once more before I die. I will go, my Lord, to Mr. Carteret, directly. I will do any thing, only promise me, Sir, you will allow me to talk to you a little before you go away. It is a joy I have not known for many a tedious long year!”

“I cheerfully promise you,” returned he; “now shew me to Mr. Carteret.”

They were conducted into a grand saloon, the walls and ceiling of which were adorned with paintings Angelica imagined to be a story from ancient history, from the transient view she had of it. After ascending a noble stair-case, they were ushered into a spacious drawing-room, which looked so dreary as not to have been occupied for a length of time. The windows, half-closed, were obscured with dust. The chairs and sofas, composed of crimson velvet richly gilded, were torn and dirty; and the heavy massy looking glasses fixed in the piers could not have reflected the human figure. Every sort of ornament seemed to have been displaced: and when Angelica viewed this spot, as once the scene of festivity and joy, she shuddered as she gazed on it.

Mr. Carteret soon joined them, Lord Devaynes introduced his niece to him; and the gentlemen withdrew together. Left to herself, she approached the window. She drew up, with difficulty, the sash. The adjacent scenery naturally soft and lovely, was now wild and neglected. The tender verdure of the park yielded neither food nor repose for the deer as formerly, but was now turned into pasturage for sheep and cattle.

Lord Devaynes immediately informed Mr. Carteret of the motive of his visit. He related to him all Gerard had told him, who was called in, and repeated the same story. He then produced the watch, and coat of arms, and requested him to compare the miniature, he next shewed him, to a full length portrait of Lady Aberville, now in the castle, to both of which his niece bore the strongest resemblance: and he went on by assuring him how fruitless it would prove to dispute a claim that must be given against him. Mr. Carteret was not to be convinced. “I beg you, my Lord,” he returned, “to recollect that twelve years are now elapsed since my residence at the castle. In all that period no account whatever of the late Earl or his daughter have reached any person, and his loss was so universally known in the —, East Indiaman, I was at once allowed an undisputed title to my present possessions. They are of too much consequence to be given up on the slender pretence of having found the rightful heir, whom any stranger may attempt to personify. Your lordship is therefore at liberty to act as you please, to take what measures you please, for nothing but the decree of law shall induce me passively to relinquish this place.”

“Remember, sir,” replied Lord Devaynes, “Lord Aberville’s name was *not* among the list of passengers who were lost in the — —, Indiaman; we have no other proof his Lordship was on board that ship, than his intention, by letter, of taking his passage in her; and it is evident, from Gerard’s account, he must have come in another vessel. The date of time is the same within a few weeks; as well as the age of Lady Angelica, to say no more of her similitude to the pictures.”

Mr. Carteret, deaf to all arguments, was not to be persuaded; and the two gentlemen separated with the coldest formality. Lord Devaynes resolved immediately to throw the matter into Chancery.

CHAP. IX.

Sweet smiling village, loveliest of the lawn,
Thy sports are fled, and all thy charms withdrawn;
Amidst thy bowers the tyrant's hand is seen,
And desolation saddens all thy green.
One only master grasps the whole domain,
And half a tillage stints thy smiling plain.
No more thy glassy brook reflects the day,
But choak'd with sedges works its weedy way.
Along the glades the solitary guest,
The hollow sounding bittern guards its nest.
Amidst thy desert walks the lapwing flies,
And tries their echoes with unvaried cries.
Sunk are thy bowers in shapeless ruin all,
And the long grass o'ertops the mouldering wall.
And trembling, shrinking from the spoiler's hand,
Far, far away thy children leave the land.

GOLDSMITH.

THE old servant was waiting with the utmost impatience in the hall, the return of Lord Devaynes. Bowing respectfully as he joined them, and viewing Angelica, he asked with an earnest inquiry, if that sweet young lady was his daughter. "For," added he, "she puts me so in mind of my lady, the Countess, when she first came down here, a bride, so blooming and so beautiful, I have been thinking of her ever since, and it makes my old heart all in a flutter. Had her daughter been alive she would have been much about her age, and Heiress to this fine castle. I shall never forget the day, which is eighteen years ago, the young couple left this place, there was not a dry eye in the house. It seemed, indeed, a foreboding they were never to come back again. In five years after they went to the East Indies, we had the news of the Countess having got a daughter. My master, the late Earl's brother was then alive, who made feastings and rejoicings; he kept open house for a week, he was so proud of his niece. In three years after we heard of the Countess's death; and in a few months from that time my old Lord died also. But, Sir," continued the venerable domestic, "you must know all this, and I am troubling you with a long story, only for the sake of talking about them. I humbly crave your pardon."

"Your fidelity and regard," replied his Lordship, "are truly praise-worthy; I would, however, converse with you alone. Go my love," now addressing Angelica, "with Gerard down that avenue to the park, and I will follow you."

She accompanied Gerard. Her uncle, who remained with the domestic, told him his attachment to his former lord and lady, now induced him to acquaint him, it was believed the rightful owner to the castle was alive. The account of Lord Aberville and his daughter having been lost in the — —, had never been proved authentic. Some extraordinary circumstances had occurred to lead to a discovery of the existence of his child, whom he had just seen in the young lady with him. And to prove her identity and claim, was the purport of his visit to Mr. Carteret.

"Thank God! — thank God!" cried the old man, clasping his hands together. "I told you the young lady was the picture of the Countess; I saw her again before my eyes the moment you came in."

Lord Devaynes, fatigued and agitated by the conversation of the day, declined seeing

the castle, and after presenting the domestic with some gold, ordered his carriage and joined his niece and Gerard. They left the park in an opposite direction from that they entered by, and as they quitted the lodge, Angelica perceived a range of buildings about half a mile in extent, which seemed to form a sort of hamlet, all desolated and shut up. It had the appearance of having been once the asylum of the industrious poor. Most of the cottages were fallen to ruin, their windows either broken or closed, and their roofs unthatched, while here and there was seen an odd one with a solitary wretched inhabitant, or a few tattered children playing at the door. At the threshold of one of these forlorn dwellings, she observed an old woman leaning on a crutch. She intreated her uncle to stop the carriage, and inquire of her what had occasioned such sad devastation in this little spot. Lord Devaynes complied with her request, and asked the woman to whom the cottage belonged, "Ah! well a-day!" exclaimed *the sad historian of the pensive plain*, "to no one, your honour. It is now a terrible ruinous place, as you see. It was not used to be so, I assure you, — twenty years ago it had a very different face. These were all clean comfortable alms-houses for the poor. Here we lived in peace and plenty. Every face had a look of joy, for we were all supported by that blessed, blessed lady, who is now a saint in heaven! It was called the Hamlet of Aberville, after yon great Castle, you may see through the trees. But she went to foreign parts with her Lord, and since his honour, Mr. Carteret, came here, he would give us nothing; we might all starve for him or madam. So, Sir, my poor neighbours have gone, and gone by degrees, till there is hardly one left, except such old bodies as myself, who, God help me! am not able to walk, so must even stay here and die."

"God help you indeed!" returned his Lordship with emotion, putting some money into her hand. Angelica did the same. The old woman wept with gratitude and surprize, and they were followed by her blessings until out of sight. Angelica was perfectly overwhelmed with the scene before her. Here stood the monuments of her mother's virtues. In these solitary abodes, mouldering alike in decay, as the hand that reared them, were the emblems of her mother's virtues, whose charities were recorded with love and reverence by those few left to bear testimony of them. "Blessed spirit of my sainted parent," exclaimed she, clasping her hands with fervency together, "Oh! here, in this spot where your goodness is consecrated, look down upon your daughter! and shed your benign influence upon her! Should it ever be her happy lot to claim these domains of her father's, may she walk in your steps, imitate your virtues, and be the restorer of prosperity to this once peaceful village!"

The occurrences of the day took possession of her mind. Her uncle did not attempt to draw her into conversation, and saw the amiable disposition of her heart with delight.

Lord Devaynes's visit did not yield much satisfaction to Mr. Carteret; who, having for the space of twelve years had the uninterrupted possession of the noble estate of Aberville, did not now look for any lawful claimant, was taken most disagreeably by surprize in seeing the just inheritor when Angelica was introduced to him. All that Lord Devaynes had advanced carried the appearance of truth with it. The person of the young lady, on comparing it with the picture of the Countess, was very like; and the coat of arms on the seal was that belonging to the family. Although he was sensible if her title was made good he must resign the estate to her, and hopeless as he now was of retaining it, he notwithstanding resolved not to do it passively, and if it must be given up to await the decree of chancery: such being his resolution he did not inform his wife and family of the unpleasant visitors he had had. Lord Devaynes and his niece reached the metropolis at the end of four days without his being sensible of much fatigue. Mrs. Devereux heard the account of Angelica's journey with the most friendly solicitude for her future welfare and prospects. Gerard already saw her the great lady he always prophesied she would be, and gave Agatha a wonderful description of her magnificent Castle in the north.

CHAP. X.

“Are these the beings who are called polite?”

H.MORE.

ILL health as well as taste precluded his Lordship from all company, except of a morning. For Angelica, he was so choice of acquaintances, that, despising the levity of the present day, he would have withheld her from society wholly, had he not known that it was only by a proper intercourse with the world the mind and manners are fashioned; and that with every accomplishment to adorn her station, which he flattered himself she would fill as a rational individual who could find it possible to exist at home; yet that station was too elevated to sink into seclusion with youth, beauty, and fortune to support it, and the natural taste and hilarity of her age forbade it. He therefore determined to take an early opportunity of introducing her to his old friend Lady Winfield, whose daughters would make her pleasing companions. He already had procured for her the most eminent masters in town with whom her time was almost wholly occupied.

The first week of February Lady Winfield arrived at her house in Grafton-street and a few mornings after Lord Devaynes took his niece to wait on his old friend. They found her at home; and Angelica was led by her uncle into her drawing-room. The name of Devaynes, though amidst a numerous acquaintance, and a lapse of years, she heard with pleasing surprise, and rose cordially to bid so long and esteemed a friend welcome. “I rejoice, my Lord,” said she, “to see you. May I ask to what cause (knowing you have renounced society) I am to attribute this happiness?”

“To the amiable young creature, Madam, before you. Allow me to introduce you to my niece, Lady Angelica Carteret, who will be honoured by your countenance and good opinion. She is the daughter of my youngest sister who you remember married Mr. Carteret, afterwards Earl of Aberville.”

Her looks were now directed towards the elegant girl before her; whose countenance was expressive of intelligence and sweetness. Her eyes, like two beaming stars, were filled with the mildest lustre; enchanting dimples played round her mouth; while her pale auburn hair covered a forehead and bosom of the most polished whiteness.

“As your niece,” returned the Countess, “Lady Angelica requires no other introduction to obtain a favourable reception from me. Allow me, my dear (to Angelica) to present my daughter, Lady Alecia Verral, to you, who will prove a more desirable acquaintance for you than such an old woman.”

Her daughter, who had not before noticed Angelica, now half rose from the sofa she was indolently lolling on, in conversation with a young man who sat opposite to her, with both his elbows on the table; she muttered something about the pleasure of her acquaintance, and then continued to talk in a loud whisper to the person beside her.

“You remember both my daughters,” cried Lady Winfield to the Earl, “Maria is married. I rejoice she is happily settled; but her loss is irreparable.”

“So I should imagine,” returned he, with peculiar emphasis.

“You are just come out of the country,” said Lady Alecia, to Angelica, surveying her with her glass, “I suppose you have not been introduced yet?”

“No, Madam, and I shall regret the time spent in this metropolis as the spring commences; the country has far more charms for me.”

Lady Alecia smiled contemptuously; and, turning to the gentleman, exclaimed, “true rustic ideas! She will be wiser when she has lived here longer. Pray, Jackey, have you been in Bond-street to day?—It is the centre of fashion. I hardly can exist out of it a morning at this

season of the year. Neither can our little friend Aimwell; what a fashionist he is, with all his deformity. He flutters about like a mere butterfly, and I believe is as harmless. He is reckoned clever—I never perceived it—He don't stay long enough in a place to discover his repartee if he really possesses any, and it has been my amusement to observe him at the opera and theatre—I verily believe in less than half an hour he is in every different box in the house.—apropos, what is become of your friend Martin?"

"Quite done up," replied he, yawning violently. "He was a rare bird, one of your famous dashers. He sported curricles, horses, dogs, with not an hundred pounds in his pocket. He has now got a snug birth in the King's-bench. Upon my soul I am very sorry for the poor fellow, for he had a generous spirit. Won't you take a drive this morning," continued he, "it is horrid quizzzy work sitting here."

"How can you be so wicked to ask me," said her Ladyship, "don't you see I am half dead. I have walked all the way from hence to Curzon-street, and shall not recover the fatigue for this month to come."

A sigh that escaped Lord Devaynes drew the attention of his niece towards him, for he was looking at her with the most earnest solicitude, to observe what impression the conversation of these fashionable people made on her. The little he had seen of Lady Alecia Verral shocked and disgusted him. The discourse of the young man recalled, with poignancy, the remembrance of his son. Having no wish to prolong a visit that abounded with disappointment in seeking for society for his niece, he rose to take leave; not however without being compelled to give a reluctant consent Angelica should dine in Grafton-street on Saturday week, and accompany Lady Winfield to the opera. Having once solicited her notice, he was too polite wholly to withdraw his niece from it.

CHAP. XI.

ANGELICA, new to what is called *life*, was full of the scene she had witnessed; from Lady Winfield's being her uncle's friend, delicacy prevented her making any observations to him, but she was less reserved to Mrs. Devereux; and when she asked if she had acquired a pleasant acquaintance, she shook her head, and replied, "you will laugh at my ignorance, perhaps, of fashionable manners, as well as my want of taste, when I tell you I disliked the whole party. Would you believe it, Madam, Lady Winfield's daughter, a young person of not more than one or two and twenty, was extended on a sofa, doing nothing but playing with an ugly little French dog. Beside her, sat a gentleman, with both his arms on the table, who had a constant stare and smile on his countenance. His dress, had you seen it, would have excited your wonder. His coat looked like a postilion's jacket, and over it he had a dark blue one, that hardly reached the bottom of his waist. His chin was enveloped in a quantity of muslin, and his black hair, without powder, was cut close to his pole. He wore Nankeen trowsers that came down to his heels; and in short was the oddest figure I ever beheld. O! one thing I had forgot—he had a black ribbon round his neck, to which dangled a glass, rudely pointed every half minute at me. Lady Alecia, I observed, wore the same.—Neither was she," continued Angelica, "a better figure. She wore such a quantity of paint, she looked just like a doll; and her large dark eyes gave her a very bold appearance. Her clothing was so thin, and so little of it, I absolutely blushed for her. Were the people in Westmoreland to see her, they would certainly imagine it was some mad creature escaped from Bethlehem. Their conversation had neither spirit, information, nor anecdote, but the mere *chat* of the day. One had squandered an income he never possessed; but, notwithstanding, was a *famous dasher*. Another, a poor little deformed creature, was yet a perfect fashionist. And Lady Alecia was fatigued to death, with only walking from Grafton-street to May-fair. If this is cultivated society, and refined manners, we surely possess them in a purer state at Graffington Abbey."

"The picture, my sweet young friend," returned her governess, "is, I am concerned to say, painted to the life, of what is called *ton*. Luxury, and dissipation of late years, have made such rapid advances, that even those, whose fortunes cannot reach it, affect the *new* manners, and *new* stile. Dashing away, as they justly term it, in a perpetual whirl of gaiety and folly, until the attendant consequences pursue them; poverty and disgrace. While our Nobility set so depraved an example, how can little people be blamed for treading in the steps of those who ought to dignify, instead of debasing the higher orders of society. Were they indeed to set their standard higher, to view the amiable part that surround and adorn our throne, then would moderation with liberality elevate society, and luxury be known only for the purpose of dispensing good. A young woman of the present day, is committed to the care of a governess whose principles are seldom minutely inquired into; and who takes as little care of her principles, giving her an education the most superficial. She has the example probably before her, of a mother who is never at home, except at the hours of the morning, devoted to sleep, or her toilet; for the hour of dinner, now converted into night, generally proves misses bed-time; consequently she knows less of her parent, than the most menial domestic about the house. Thus years steal on, with impatience by the young lady who, at the delightful age of seventeen or eighteen, emerges from the nursery, to join mamma's delightful parties. The mother, afraid to be thought old, (there are no *old* women in this age, my dear,) dresses as juvenile as her daughter, and at a distance it is scarcely possible to distinguish which of the two are the most youthful. Nothing but operas, plays, balls and routs are thought of, they come in constant succession, until her little head is turned with folly and admiration. Perhaps a large fortune is an attraction to some half-ruined man; and in this manner, my dear Lady Angelica, the world goes on now a-days.

“Nor are the boys,” continued Mrs. Devereux, “better educated. Westminster is the school of vice, and initiates them in the science of it long before they acquire useful knowledge. While mere children, they drink, game, swear, and are complete jockeys; and no wonder, in being so early brought forward, they are ending life, when it ought not to have long began. Thus have I endeavoured to account for the prevailing manners you will continually see, while so little care is taken to inculcate morality and virtue. Lessons of virtue instilled in childhood, if also impressed by example, are seldom effaced in virtuous minds; on such, the allurements of fashion, and the arguments of folly will have little effect: whereas, on the character naturally weak, unfortified by precept and the society of the worthy, every temptation will be found irresistible, and they will be carried down the vortex of dissipation and vice without a struggle.”

“This conversation, dear Madam,” cried Angelica, “will, I hope, make a lasting impression on me. You, at least, are unlike those you have been describing, and, while blessed with such a one for my guide, I shall not wilfully err.” The conversation ended.

Chawton House Library

CHAP. XII.

LORD Devaynes, determined that his niece should be no very frequent guest at Lady Winfield's, where he was too ill to attend her when the day of her engagement arrived, sent her in his coach with Mrs. Devereux, who left her, and she was ushered into the drawing-room, filled with a gay assemblage of company. Lady Winfield, after introducing her, placed her beside her daughter, who condescended a nod, and then went on with her discourse to two gentlemen who were hanging over the back of her chair. "I am half ruined," continued her Ladyship, "I had no luck at pharo last night—how did you come off, my boys?"

"Cursed bad," said the tallest of them, "had the tables turned from me in favour of you, I had been content. Don't, however, be distressed, I am rich enough to prove your banker still. Fortune is a vile jilt, but I hope she will learn to mend her manners."

"I do believe I must relinquish play altogether," cried Lady Alecia, "if luck does not soon change. Fortunately I am independent of my mother, or I should be bored with nothing but moral sermons from morning till night."

"Have you been riding to-day?" interrupted a lady, who sat in the corner, "the weather is so charming, half the world were out."

"I never care about the weather," exclaimed the other gentleman, who stood by Lady Alecia, (in whom Angelica recognized the same young man she had described to her governess,) it is equal to me whether it rains all day, or whether the sun shines or not, I see so little of that luminary. I don't rise till near dinner time, (I mean till all the gay folks are out,) and don't go to bed till the morning. Upon my soul I was not up two hours before I came here. I shall sit down indeed with you when you go below, for the sake of being sociable—but my dinner hour is *midnight*."

"Not dine till midnight? Mr. Cautherby," cried all the ladies at once; "then pray, when you frequent public places, how do you contrive to dine at all!"

"O, the easiest thing in nature. I either order it to be ready for me at home, or go to a tavern, where I get every thing as nice and as snug as possible. If I am at an assembly or ball, when the company take refreshments, I order a side table, put up with a few whispers and stares, for which I don't care a d—, am called a queer dog, for every body knows me, but it is knowing to be thought odd in these odd days."

"What do you do with yourself," interrupted another lady, "when all sober people go to bed?"

"Do! go to Brook's or White's, to be sure. A man in London need be at no loss what to do with himself."

"I wish, Jackey," interrupted Lady Alecia eagerly, "you would give us a dinner some night.—Do, there's a dear fellow; I should like it of all things.—What a comical animal you are."

"Don't," exclaimed Lady Winfield, "consent Mr. Cautherby, to any thing so perfectly absurd. I wonder, Alecia, you can make such a request."

"Why not, madam? I like every thing out of the common way. This plan is so charming, so whimsical."

"And shall be adopted at your Ladyship's pleasure," replied he.

She bowed; and the dinner was fixed for the Thursday se'nnight following, at twelve at night. They were now summoned to the Countesses more *rational* hour of six o'clock. At nine all the party adjourned to the opera house. The wondering Angelica, who could not have conceived any thing half so brilliant as the fairy palace before her, was lost in admiration and silence, till the powers of speech were recalled by the provoking voice of Mr. Cautherby, who placed himself by her, and entered into conversation. "You will honour my dinner with your presence; without it the day would lose half its charms."

"The night, rather, Sir" said she, smiling.

"True. Yet it is my day you know. Now tell me, is not this elegant luminary of wax candles far more pleasing than the garish sun; scorching, with a heat in summer, that makes a person look as if they worked in the gallies."

"You are so strange, Sir, in your ideas, pardon me for saying, that really I, who have always been accustomed to admire nature, must not only dissent from you, but turn you over to Lady Alecia Verral, more competent to judge on a subject, on which I have no doubt she will agree."

"Where, my sweet little rustic, have you imbibed such barbarous notions.—In the country, people merely vegetate, not live. The very idea of green fields and green trees, would turn me melancholy mad. Then what a sin for your Ladyship to hide such charms in a place where only a set of insensible boors can look at you."

Angelica laughed, and said, "they at least will not offend; for while they are simple, they are devoid of flattery."

"You are severe," returned he, "but for all that, I don't admire you the less. I must, however, now go and pay my devoirs to a Duchess in the next box, and then quiz the rest of the people. Adieu. Remember my dinner, on the 26th."

Glad was she to get rid of Mr. Cautherby, whom she was surprised to find, every body coveted and admired. But yet more surprised to find, in a place where music was in the highest perfection, it was paid the least regard to; and that nothing was considered so shocking as to give it attention, unless it was any particularly favourable air. The opera might, therefore, be more justly styled an Italian *converzationi* than the *comédie*. One gentleman in the next box was in a profound sleep, while those in Lady Winfield's were so oppressive with their chat, it was but seldom she caught distinctly some of Banti's sweet notes, in the beautiful opera of Elfrida, or the more masterly one of Vigannoni's. When the ballet commenced, wonderful as the airy and elegant movements of Hillesburgh and Madam Rose were, there was a want of decorum and propriety in their attire, that surprised her extremely, and which was remarked by an elderly gentleman in conversation with Lady Winfield*, "It is a disgrace," said he, "in a kingdom that prides itself upon decorum, such a spectacle should be permitted on an English stage. The young men of the present day want not attractions for depravity; and the young women, whose cheeks ought to be tinged with the blush of modesty, appear to be following so close in their imitation, I imagine their dress will soon outdo Hillesburgh herself."

— *This was written before the Bishop of Durham's excellent reform at the opera house.

Lady Alecia, who believed this speech partly levelled at her, conscious she deserved it, said, "we only expect lessons of morality from the pulpit. I suppose you would have us ruffled up like good queen Bess. That might do very well, Mr. Sydenham, in her old fashioned days—we are got a little more refined now."

"Refined indeed," exclaimed he, "to the very perfection of refinement."

"Come, come," replied Lady Alecia, as the curtain fell, give me your arm, Jackey, (to Mr. Cautherby,) let us get away from this man, who may harangue for the next hour with my mother, if he pleases, only don't let me hear it, for he always gives me the vapours. I declare he makes me quite low spirited."

They adjourned to the great room. Shortly after, Lord Devaynes' coach was announced for Angelica. Her uncle had retired before she came home, and she immediately withdrew to her own room.

CHAP. XIII.

THE following day a ticket was brought to Angelica; who, after having looked at it, exclaimed, "this is for Mr. Cautherby's wonderful dinner," at the same time presenting it to her uncle. When Lord Devaynes had looked at it, he said, very seriously, "do you mean to go, my dear?"

"As you please Sir, I care little about it."

"To what absurdity and folly," cried he, "will not the age arrive! a midnight dinner! it is a reflection on a sober person to see such a card in his house; and a far greater would it be, to allow any one in their senses to partake of so ridiculous a repast. No! my child—It is not in feasting and revelling you will taste either health or contentment. It is only in the delightful repose of innocence and virtue. The amusements of rural pastime—where fashion has not yet corrupted the country—where vice has not yet destroyed rational understandings. Such a man ought to have a fool's coat on his back, but there are so many now-a-days to wear one, he would not be distinguished for his folly! His Lordship threw the card into the fire; and not any thing more passed on the subject.

Before eleven o'clock the family always retired for the night. It was some time after that hour, when they were alarmed by a thundering knock at the door. Angelica, roused out of her first sleep on the knock being repeated, rose and went to the window, when she heard a footman say, "I fancy, my Lady, the family are all gone to bed."

On which the lady laughed violently, and exclaimed, "Impossible! they can never be so gothic.—It is really horrid.—They are like dormice, sleep all the winter away.—It is quite provoking, for I meant to have sat half an hour with the little rustic before I went to Mrs. Bertault's rout; I shall be a hundred years too early, for you know she keeps later hours than any body in town. Well, Jackey, tell the coachman to drive on." Upon which Mr Cautherby spoke to the footman, and they departed. Poor Lord Devaynes, who never expected to have visitors at so late an hour, rose in the greatest terror, imagining the violent knocking at the door could only be occasioned by the alarm of fire; and was not a little displeased that the tranquillity of his family should have been interrupted by such idle dissipated people. Angelica would have been amused at the whimsicality of the circumstance, if she had not understood, from her maid who came into her room, than her uncle was very much displeased at being disturbed so late.

The next day about five o'clock Lady Alecia Verral again made her appearance in a low phaeton, drawn by four greys, in which she acted as coachman. After alighting, she said, as she entered the room, with a loud laugh, "I hope, my dear, you had a comfortable nap last night?—you were all in a deep sleep when I honoured you with a visit. If you are now released from the arms of Morpheus, for you stare as if you were stupid, and have a mind for a dash through the park in my phaeton, now is your day."

"I am much obliged to you," she replied, "but I am just going to dinner; neither, I am sure, would my uncle approve of my going alone with you."

"Really, my dear," exclaimed her Ladyship, "you have such gothic notions, you must be laughed out of them, or you will be set down as the most perfect country dowdy, and be quizzed in all parties."

"Your Ladyship," interrupted Lord Devaynes, with the utmost gravity, "is so little accustomed to the sentiments of such an old fashioned man as myself, that I know not how to apologize for the freedom I am going to take; yet as the daughter of a friend whom I highly respect and value, (though I feel I may only, perhaps, create a smile of contempt) I cannot avoid simply saying, where I had hoped to have found a mind congenial with your excellent mother's, I meet one shaded by the flimsey veil of fashion."

She looked astonished, and not deigning to reply, after a momentary confusion, she

turned to Angelica, and said, "you will go to Cautherby's dinner? he has sent you a ticket."

"Angelica," replied his Lordship, "goes not. A taste for fashionable pleasures is too soon acquired, if once given into. Could she by midnight visits comfort the afflicted, or relieve the indigent, were even her health to prove the sacrifice, it would be in a noble cause. Were she to accept this engagement, it would be followed by another and another; till no leisure would be left for serious reflection or virtuous employment. Her mind would become unsettled; her thoughts dissipated. No! it shall be my endeavour for Angelica Carteret to be among those few women of rank who can find happiness within themselves. If her character should prove uncommon, I hope it will be conspicuous only for good."

Lady Alecia, who sat yawning violently, then said, "My Lord, you are only fit for heaven; therefore, as my society is at present confined wholly to terrestrial beings, I will take my leave." She rung for her servants, and departed.

Lord Devaynes, greatly shocked at the manners of Lady Winfield's daughter, said, after she was gone, "In her I see a convincing proof of the error of those misjudging fathers who, leaving their children independent of their mothers, take from the surviving parents, not only all respect and control, but allow young people the power of squandering fortunes they know not how to use, and teach them to despise the very source from which alone their comforts ought to spring. Oh! my dear Angelica, never make such a woman as the one you have seen this morning, your companion or friend." Poor Lady Winfield!" added he, "she merited a better daughter."

For several weeks after this visit of Lady Alecia's, Lord Devaynes would not allow his niece to go to Grafton-street. Her time was wholly devoted to her masters, under whom she made rapid progress; and the little leisure she had from them, she spent rationally at home.

CHAP. XIV.

“As the world leads we follow.”

SENECA.

AS spring advanced Lord Devaynes's health so gradually declined it was judged necessary, after a consultation of physicians, he should return to his native air, and four days from the present period were fixed for his departure from London; previous to which, he permitted Angelica (as it was for the last time) to attend one of Lady Winfield's *private* parties, consisting of about three hundred people.

At ten o'clock a few stragglers made their appearance, but it was eleven before the rooms began to be filled. They were decorated in a style of airy elegance Angelica had never beheld. The floors were painted in groupes of sportive figures. Large transparencies adorned the windows, and variegated lamps were intermingled with wreaths of flowers, which, in a fanciful manner, decorated the rooms. The gaiety diffused around, to which novelty added a thousand charms, amazingly exhilarated her spirits. Most of the company as they entered (to whom Lady Alecia Verral assisted in doing the honours of the evening) formed themselves into parties at the card tables: and while Angelica stood conversing with the elderly gentleman (Mr. Howard) she had seen at the opera, Lady Winfield advanced with a very elegant young man, whom she introduced by the name of Mr. Hamlyn, and said “there is dancing below, Lady Angelica, if you prefer it to a chat with my friend Mr. Howard, who, though very good, is, I think, too grave for you. This gentleman (presenting Mr Hamlyn) requested I would solicit the honour of your hand for him.”

Angelica blushed, and curtsying, said, she was disengaged.

“Then may I flatter myself,” returned Mr. Hamlyn, “your Ladyship will grace the dance with your presence?”

“I have no claim,” replied Mr. Howard, “as an old man, to monopolize you; and as dancing is more natural to your age, than serious conversation, I, fair lady, (bowing) resign the honour to this gentleman.”

“An honour I am duly sensible of,” cried he, his fine dark eyes sparkling with pleasure. Mr. Howard left them, and they immediately joined the dancers in the long room below. When they had gone through two or three reels, and were seated, her partner exclaimed, “Who would endure the *ennui* of a card table, where nature has pointed out so rational a mode of spending time; but few are happy enough to have a Lady Angelica Carteret for their partner.”

“Ah! Sir,” returned she, smiling, “you are like all the great world, I find, given only to compliments. But do tell me (pointing to a lady) who that is; she really ought not to dance; look how she hobbles along. How few people are sensible of their infirmities, she appears quite lame*.”

“I am delighted, Madam, to find, while you censure in the strongest manner, the affected style of that *poor* lady, as you call her, you do not adopt it. She is not lame, but has such a passion for absurdities, as to display them on every occasion; and this mode of hobbling, is so far introduced by her, that you will see many imitators. Her name as a fashionist, is so high that she has a thousand devotees.”

*A fashionable mode of dancing some years since.

“Who is this singular person?”

“Her name is Bertault. She lately married a silly man of fortune; who, charmed with her whim, married her for her *whim* only. She is young and pretty, money was to him no object, and he is delighted to see her so universally followed and admired.”

"Is Mr. Bertault in the room? I should like to be shewn him."

"What a question! I perceive you are indeed a novice in modern life. O! never expect to find a fashionable couple together. I suppose nothing would tempt, or shock Mrs. Bertault so much, as to be seen in company with her husband."

"She would have suited Mr. Cautherby," exclaimed Angelica, "for he is the very soul of whim." She was prevented saying more by his approach.

"Sweet Lady Angelica," cried he, after pointing his glass at her, "how do ye? I thought you had been transplanted long ago, into the barbarous country. Why were you not at my dinner, at Willis's rooms? I assure you it was a dashing thing. We did not separate till nine o'clock the next day."

"How did you contrive, Sir," said Mr. Hamlyn, "to pass so many hours in only a dinner party?"

"Upon my soul, it required no contrivance at all. The ladies, faith, enjoyed the repast better at midnight than the soberer hour of six o'clock. At two we had coffee; and at three adjourned to the ball room, where we danced till we separated, with only the refreshment of ices, lemonade, &c.—Now tell me Lady Angelica," added he, "why you did not come?"

"Because my rustic hours so ill accorded with your fashionable ones. And, until a total reform of mind and manners takes place, my Lord Devaynes will not allow me to make one in such a meeting."

"Absolutely brutal! Will you give me leave, however, to introduce you," said Mr. Cautherby, "to my gallant friend here, Lord Aimwell; he will soon make you a convert to ton."

A deformed little figure now advanced, dressed in the extremity of fashion, who poured forth a profusion of compliments in her ear. After which, he adjusted his dress at a large mirror; and while he was surveying himself, the lady, who before had excited Angelica's notice, approached, and gave him such a blow with her fan, the poor little man perfectly reeled. "Vain creature!" exclaimed she.

"Pray, my dear," turning to Angelica, "do you carry a rouge box? if you do, I think some of it would improve this dear fellow amazingly."

"Really, Mrs. Bertault," he replied, somewhat nettled, "you were rather abrupt. I was not aware of the honour of your being so near me just then."

"Or, I hope, you mean to add, you would rather have admired me, than yourself. Now confess is it not so, Aimwell?"

"Certainly, Madam."

"You are ignorant," said Mrs. Bertault, again addressing Angelica, "I reign chief goddess in the palace of fashion; therefore, my friend Aimwell, in worshipping me, is paying his devotions to that being, who next to himself, is his perfect idol. He is one of my principal votaries. The region I live in, is so enchanting, it reduces even some of the wisest. Fashion is a capricious being, and we owe more to the variety she displays in promoting commerce, than the most sagacious heads could invent in Europe. I saw fashion so powerful in her sway, I determined, not only to tread in her steps, but by all the absurdities I could invent, adopt her for my own. I have, within these last two years, almost exhausted invention; for her forms, her modes, must be perpetually moving into new systems, and without I increase my vagaries, I shall be obliged to relinquish my plan. Will you become a convert to me, my sweet girl?"

"Heaven forbid!" she exclaimed.

Mr Cautherby now said, he must inquire at what hour Lady Winfield gave her *petite soupée*, because he would endeavor to accommodate his appetite to that hour, with the aid of a sandwich, which he very composedly rang for. In a few minutes some were brought him. Angelica was not a little surprised and amused, to see him very quietly seat himself in a chair

beside her, and begin to eat. "Will you partake?" cried he, handing them to her.

"O! no," she replied, "if you are so very hungry, it would be cruel. Do tell me, if it is the mode to use a friend's house like a tavern, and call for what you please?"

"Certainly—free and easy is the style now-a-days."

"How much have I yet to learn; I will not say of the customs (such cannot be the customs) of this great town, but the oddities of it, which, till used to, must perpetually excite my wonder. I am, however, content to remain a novice in them all my life."

"May you ever!" cried Mr. Hamlyn, with warmth. "For were Lady Angelica's natural simplicity converted into follies even custom cannot sanction, she would still be charming; but not under the attractive form she now wears!"

"Hush, hush," said Mrs. Bertault, "you will mar every thing." "Come," added she, to Lord Aimwell, "to the other end of the room, I want to take the tambourine from that fellow, he don't know how to play it. I have just introduced it for ladies, it takes remarkably well." His Lordship laid hold of her arm, and they departed.

Angelica expressed a desire to take a peep into the card rooms, for she had never seen any games played; her uncle neither admitting evening company nor cards. She therefore went thither, attended by Mr. Hamlyn, and Mr. Cauthery, the latter of whom said, "he did not wish to sit down as there was no pharo table; and Lady Alecia was employed in doing the honors of the house, but he should like to see what was going on." She was not a little amused at the youthful appearance of the old tabbies who were seated there, whose grey locks concealed by unpowdered wigs, and their wrinkles by the aid of pearl powder and rouge, they, happily for themselves, imagined, defied the depredations of time; while in a sensible mind, it only excited pity and contempt; and young as she was, she could not avoid drawing a comparison between that of her excellent governess's dress and the people before her; the former most becoming to respectable years, the latter only suited to fifteen. She was much disappointed to find neither pleasure nor good humour portrayed in their countenances; contention and discontent seemed universal, and she could not understand how it happened, where pleasure only was intended, it seemed wholly banished at this end of the house. She staid but a few minutes, and then went in search of Lady Winfield, and in the next her carriage was announced. She had promised not to stay supper, and therefore allowed Mr. Hamlyn to hand her to it. "What two singular characters," said she, as he did so, "are Mr. Cauthery, and Mrs. Bertault: pray, in parties where good breeding and decorum are preserved, how do they happen to be admitted?"

"Because each are so attractively strange, as to be universally courted. Those persons whose houses they frequent are so accustomed to their oddities as not to consider any thing ill-bred they do; else, I assure you, these freedoms are by no means customary."

"It rather astonishes me, sir," replied Angelica, "a woman of Lady Winfield's propriety, should admit such guests into her house."

"You may be naturally astonished from what you have seen of them. Yet while nothing exceptionable appears in their characters, Lady Winfield is too blindly partial, to shut her doors against any acquaintances of her daughter's, merely because they are fashionable.—The exception then would be so general in high life, were every one to make it from that cause, we should have no society at all."

She now reached her coach, where, as usual, she found Mrs. Devereux waiting. Her partner, as he took leave, cried, with infinite gallantry, "To know Lady Angelica Carteret is an honour, which in long wishing to obtain, I well knew was attended with danger, but till this evening, I was not sensible of how much. Many may rue your acquaintance; one only can be rendered happy by it."

Angelica, young and beautiful, was not invulnerable to flattery. To seek it, was remote from her heart; but, like most of her sex, when coming under the form of elegance and

good breeding, it was not displeasing to her.

Lord Devaynes, who thought her late, though it was only one o'clock, was waiting with infinite anxiety for her return; and when she entered in great spirits, her eyes sparkling with delight, and her cheeks glowing with animation, he said, "I need not ask, my dear, if you have had a pleasant evening,—you look as if you had been happy : but," added he, "I should be sorry to see my Angelica make a good rake."

"I hope, my dear uncle, I shall never do that. I have, however, had a charming dance, and a charming partner, and saw some of the oddest people in the world. The characters, from what I have heard of a masquerade, could not be more motley or disguised, than those I have seen to-night. Some of the rooms were so crowded, it was hardly possible to pass through them. In others were a number of old women playing at cards. In a third was dancing. Then such a noise and confusion! some perpetually going out, others perpetually coming in, whose names were proclaimed from one footman to another all up the staircase; and I verily believe, many people did not speak to, or even see, Lady Winfield."

"You are an excellent describer, my love," said Lord Devaynes, "but I am fatigued, and will retire."

Angelica soon after did the same.

Chawton House Library

CHAP. XV.

She was his care, his hope, and his delight
Most in his thought, and ever in his sight.
Next, nay beyond his life, he held her dear,
She liv'd by him, and now he liv'd in her.

DRYDEN.

MR. Hamlyn, Angelica's partner on the former evening, was captivated with the unstudied grace of her manner, and the easy freedom of her conversation. Her face, her form, at a distance, he had long admired. He lived with his mother in Devonshire-place, and had often observed Angelica when she took her usual walk there with her governess, and had as often wished for an opportunity of being introduced to her. He now determined, although the custom of the present day did not sanction it, to avail himself of having danced with her, as an apology for presenting himself at Lord Devaynes's the next day. As soon, therefore, as London hours permitted, (which by no means kept pace with his impatience) with infinite anxiety he inquired whether Lady Angelica Carteret was at home. He was fortunate in being admitted, and introduced himself by saying, "he did himself the honour of calling to inquire after her ladyship's health, having had the pleasure of dancing with her on the former evening."

Lord Devaynes entered into conversation with Mr. Hamlyn with pleasing affability; but told him, his niece was at present engaged with her masters, and he therefore hoped he would excuse him from interrupting her; at the same time thanking him for his polite inquiries.

He replied, with a look of infinite disappointment, "his mother proposed waiting upon Lady Angelica, and hoped for the honour of her acquaintance."

The Earl answered, "he regretted their quitting town in two days must prevent it. He should be sorry to begin an agreeable acquaintance without a prospect of its continuance; for he now intended to reside wholly in the country."

Mr. Hamlyn, deeply mortified, imagined every evil star prevented his acquaintance with Angelica; and finding there was no prospect of seeing her, soon took leave.

She heard from her uncle, with some concern, of his visit. She had been pleased with Mr. Hamlyn, and would have been glad to have seen him again. Lord Devaynes, particular in his ideas, did not choose any young man to form an acquaintance with his niece, without first knowing what was his family and connections: nor would he even then have given him the privilege of intimacy in his house, without being certain of his views; convinced that the reason half the young women he had known remained unmarried, was, from the want of judgement in parents, who admitted idle young men to come, with no other intention than to trifle away their own time, and what was worse, the peace of their daughters.

The day previous to their leaving London, Lord Devaynes took Angelica to pay a farewell visit to Lady Winfield. Lady Alecia, who was in her dressing-room, sent for Angelica, and while she was absent, the Countess expressed her admiration of her to her uncle, and the pity she thought it was, he was going to take her out of town, it having already so considerably improved her.

"For myself, my dear lady," returned he, "I feel it of little consequence where I end my days, now that I find them nearly closing, but for this sweet child, I consider it full time to withdraw her from this alluring city; I have shewn her enough of it to refine her manners, without corrupting her heart, the seat of purity. Had I staid longer, how could I promise the event, when one night's amusement only intoxicated her young mind with delight. She is to me a creature so precious, for her sake I have ever valued life; and the education I have given

her, with goodness and sensibility for its foundation, will, I flatter myself, carry her through the world, possessing the friendship and approbation of that amiable part of it, with whom only, I wish her to associate. Her rank, and the fortune to which she is heiress, will entitle her to an high alliance. I hope she will be wise enough to choose goodness before riches, and to value the latter merely as the happy means of practising benevolence and charity. Should Angelica come under the protection of my son, dissipated as he is, I cannot doubt but he will shew that respect to the memory of a father, whom, alas! he hurries with sorrow to the grave, as to protect and support his cousin, until she comes of age.—No! on that subject I feel easy; for who so proper as Lord Graffington, who will then be the representative of his father.”

The return of Angelica with Lady Alecia, interrupted the conversation, which now became general till they departed; nor was it without a promise from Lady Winfield to visit them at the abbey the ensuing summer.

The remainder of the day was spent in packing and preparing for their journey. Angelica had not seen enough of London very seriously to regret quitting it. The weather was remarkably fine, and she looked forward with pleasure to the different pursuits and amusements the country affords. It was a morning in the beginning of June when they set out. As they left the metropolis enveloped in a cloud of smoke, the balmy freshness of the air proved peculiarly grateful to Lord Devaynes; nor had Angelica ever been so sensible of the sweet repose of a summer morning, distant from any large town. The soft warbling of the birds, the verdant pastures covered with sheep and lambs, the lively green of the trees, rising in distant woods in the landscape, all formed so strong a contrast to the scene she had lately lived in, as to inspire her with new admiration and delight. After they had travelled a few stages, Lord Devaynes said to his niece, “How welcome to me is this sweet, this gentle breath of summer! Already I find my health and spirits renovated. When, my dear child, I look at these beautiful works of the creation, on that glorious sun, than sheds its warmth on every object, and by its genial influence revives all nature into new beauty and new life; it carries my thoughts to that immensity of subject, to that great, that gracious God, who in like manner, will re-animate his creatures to life perpetual.” Angelica took the hand of her uncle—she was affected by his conversation, and wept. “I mean not,” continued he, kissing her tears away, “to make you weep, my dear Angelica. No, I would rather exalt your thoughts to that hereafter, where, when this earthly scene is closed upon us, we shall have no more winter. And when I view the finger of God stretched in such beautiful profusion over the simplest of his works, it lifts the soul with pure devotion beyond the tumultuous scenes of this world; and it is happy to repose on the simplicity of nature, “and Nature’s God!”

Lord Devaynes chose to rest one night on the road, and the next day, when Angelica once more discerned, through a partial opening of the thick woods that embowered it, the lofty turrets of Graffington Abbey, and the fine piece of water, now seen, now lost, sparkling in the sun beams, her heart dilated with pleasure. “Now, Sir,” cried she, to her uncle, “you will, I trust, taste health and pleasure. I never behold the abbey but with emotions of gratitude, and love. Well do I recollect when, destitute to me of its present endearments, how I was transported with delight, with its romantic beauties.—And there too, dear Sir,” continued she, extending her hand from the carriage window, her eyes filling with tears, “is the peaceful cottage of Gerard. Do observe how pretty it looks from the brow of the hill. Yonder too, is the large tree, now in full leaf, with the bench under it, where Gerard sits and smokes his pipe, and beneath whose shade I have also sat, many a time, with a book, when Agatha used to come and tempt me in, with some pretty thing she had to shew me. How affectionate, how good they were!”

They shortly after reached the abbey. Lord Devaynes, fatigued with his journey, withdrew after dinner. Angelica and Mrs. Devereux, left to themselves, spent the evening in rambling over the pleasure grounds and woods. Not a breeze sighed among the trees, and

nothing was heard except the melancholy note of the nightingale, or the distant tinkling of a sheep bell, to break that universal repose that breathed around.

Chawton House Library

CHAP. XVI.

—— The deep recess of dusky groves,
Or forests where the deer securely roves,
The fall of waters, and the song of birds,
And hills that echo to the distant herds,
Are luxuries excelling all the glare
The world can boast, and her chief favourites share.

COWPER.

ANGELICA arose with the dawn; and as she lightly tripped over the tender grass, covered with a thousand wild flowers, and viewed the beautiful repose that dwelt around; as she enjoyed the refreshing shade of the trees, tasted the balmy fragrance of the flowers, wet with the early dew, and saw the newly-risen sun, reflecting its burnished tints on the water that gently crept at the foot of the woods, a pure and elevated delight sprung to heart; for from earliest years, she had imbibed a taste for the charms of pastoral scenery, which, a life hitherto secluded from the world, and spent amid its simple scenes, had tended to inspire and augment. She visited her most favourite walk; selected the most lovely of the flowers to adorn her rooms; and had full employment, during the first part of the day, in arranging a plan for her future rural amusements.

Lord Devaynes, who thought himself considerably better, in the evening proposed to take a ride with Angelica, as far as Gerard's; it was a proposal highly agreeable to his niece, and she enjoyed a cheerful conversation with him till they reached his cottage. They found Gerard smoking his pipe under his favourite tree, and Agatha knitting beside him. "My good friends," said Angelica, with emotion and pleasure, "you know not how happy I am to see you again."

"God almighty bless you," said Agatha, with a tearful eye, "my dear, sweet young lady; it makes my heart dance with joy to see you here again, and to see, with all your beauty and gentility; you are just as humble, and as good as you used to be. Only look, Gerard, what a fine tall lady she is grown— heaven reward your sweet heart, I should not have known you. Forgive my freedom, (she saluted her) indeed I am very proud you should visit this poor dwelling."

"Did I not tell you," interrupted Gerard, eagerly, "when I came from London, and had been down at her great castle there in the north she was not the least altered. No airs, no pride, as you say, but a face smiling and lovely as a May morning."

"You are very kind, and very partial my dear friends," returned Angelica, "but tell me, Gerard, if my little garden you used to dress for me flourishes as well as it did formerly?"

"Yes, truly, and if you won't think me too free, my dear young lady, in asking you to take a walk with me, I will shew it you."

"I shall be happy to accompany you." They accordingly set out, and reached a neat green railing, which inclosed a piece of ground, divided into small beds, where grew every flower the season afforded; a hedge of sweet-briar terminated the garden, at one end of which an arbour was formed of woodbines, now grown wildly luxurious, and in it was a rustic seat covered with moss from its being so long deserted.

"Sweet spot," exclaimed Angelica, as she surveyed it, "dedicated to early childhood, for ever shall ye live in my remembrance, for here have I spent many an happy hour."

"Allow me to present you with a few flowers," said Gerard, "they are not so pretty as when they were of your cultivation, but they smell as sweet."

She took them; and when she returned to Agatha, was surprised to find a clean white cloth on the table of her little parlour, on which she had placed a large bowl of curds and

cream. "You used to praise my curds and cream," said Agatha, "and to relish them; I hope you will condescend to sit down, and eat some now."

"Willingly," she replied, and tasted of a repast she had often partaken of with them. When she had finished, she requested to visit the small chamber she used to occupy, which she wished once more to see; and found precisely in the same state she had left it; the walls decorated with numberless detached drawings she had done when a perfect child, and the chimney-piece adorned with fanciful little works, such as butterflies stuck on paper, seaweeds and dried leaves of flowers, &c. She took an opportunity, before she quitted the place, to leave on the drawers a purse, on which she had labelled, "*The memory of the heart*,"—as a gift for Agatha, who, with sensations of pure gratitude, found it after her departure.

Angelica, in the quiet the country afforded, returned to her studies with renewed application, wishing each day to acquire fresh information. Her uncle, for the last two years, had improved her understanding by the most watchful care. He had given her a partial knowledge of the sciences, and a thorough acquaintance with the most elegant and sublime authors; he encouraged her botanical taste, which she again renewed; and himself delighted of an evening, when he was well enough to accompany her to the wild and retired walks, where a reflecting mind has leisure to contemplate the sublimity of nature with wonder and delight, mingling at times with their contemplations, serious and instructive conversation. Oppressed with the various afflictions life abounds with, he taught her to endure its slight evils with cheerfulness and composure. To resist the pressure of misfortune, when it deprives us of all we hold dear on earth, he knew to be impossible; but he knew, even under that mournful form, there was a meek resignation becoming a Christian, required from us to God. Such sentiments he wished to instill in her mind, feeling, perhaps, a melancholy presage, he might be taken from her. He endeavoured also to convince her of the folly of dissipation, where in the scenes she had lately shared in, no real joy or satisfaction could be found; and that when the mind pants after society, it is only among the enlightened few society proves grateful and charming. The different conversations of Lord Devaynes made a deep impression on her; she felt how invaluable his sentiments were, and treasured them up in her heart.

CHAP. XVII.

How transient is the bliss that life bestows,
What cares perplex it, and what griefs attend.

PETRARCH.

A few weeks after their return to Graffington Abbey, Mrs. Devereux received a letter with the intelligence of the death of a sister, who had left her a small property in Wales. She requested permission of Lord Devaynes to go for a short time and look into it, to which he readily consented on condition of her returning as soon as she conveniently could. Angelica parted from her amiable governess with much concern; she felt the value of her society and instruction, and although the separation was to prove transient, she was sensibly affected by it. A month passed on without her, and she was now shortly expected back; when one day after a very cheerful dinner, the footman brought in a letter to Lord Devaynes, delivered, he said, by a special messenger from London. To the hand and signature he was equally a stranger; but Angelica saw, with dismay, its contents were of alarming import; for before her uncle had perused three lines, he turned pale, and trembling, violently exclaimed, "Poor boy!—long lost in error—sunk, I fear, in vice. My eye-sight fails me, my dear," continued he, "you must read me this fatal letter." He covered his face with both his hands, and fell back in the chair. Angelica's whole frame shook—she uttered not a word—and endeavouring to gain some degree of composure, read as follows:—

To the EARL of DEVAYNES

Mount-Street, Coffee-house,
August 2, 179-

My Lord,

It is with infinite concern, I am under the necessity of informing you, your son, Lord Graffington, after losing very large sums at play, has quitted the continent with me, who, for some time, have been his too credulous and deluded companion, and am now plunged in ruin through his means. I have not only lent him hundreds, but he is, at this moment, under a debt of honour to me of five thousand pounds. The fulfilment of his payment, he told me, must come through the medium of your Lordship. A sense of shame, (if such he can feel,) prevents, I imagine, his addressing you himself; for the money, faithfully promised a week ago, is not yet remitted. In constant terror myself of being arrested, I must request the favour of you, Sir, to give me an immediate draught on your banker, addressed to W.D. at the Mount-street Coffee-house.

I have not seen Lord Graffington for some days, and am ignorant where he lodges. I remain,

Your Lordship's

Most obedient, humble servant,

WILLIAM DENHAM

"It is enough!" cried Lord Devaynes, with a look of assumed resignation, as Angelica closed the letter, "this blow is decisive!—one feeble effort more, and then the scenes of this world close on me for ever!" He rose with calmness and rang the bell. "Yes," added he, "I will endeavour, at least, to recall my poor deluded son. I will go—I will seek him out—on my knees, even, will I attempt his reformation. He is still young—he will, perhaps, see his error, before the judgments of heaven overtake him. Providence, I am persuaded, will support me in this trying interview. If he is not hardened indeed in vice, he will not be proof against the entreaty of an old and feeble parent, borne down by sorrow. The tears of a father he surely

cannot withstand. The money," continued he, "he shall have, if that will make him happy, were it double the sum. I will repay this stranger, who shall not suffer by a child of mine."

"Oh! my dear, dear uncle," exclaimed Angelica, sobbing aloud, and falling on her knees, while she pressed his trembling hands to her lips, "take comfort; you will live, Sir, yet to see your son become a blessing to you. Your generosity will overwhelm him. Go then, Sir on the arduous journey; and may heaven bless and sustain you in the undertaking. I would accompany you, but perhaps it is best you should be alone. The interview between a father and son, admits not, on such an occasion, I fear, of a third person."

"No! my love, remain where you are; and believe, Angelica—fondest daughter of my affection—dearer to me than the air I breathe—even in this sad moment, when my heart is almost bursting with the anguish that oppresses it, I cannot be quite unhappy, whilst such a blessing is yet my own!—Farewell." He folded her in his arms, and tenderly embraced her.

There was something so peculiarly affecting to Angelica, in the farewell of her uncle, as to deprive her of every pleasure in existence, and gave a despondency and melancholy almost too big for endurance. The most mournful presages hung about her heart. She saw her uncle undertake a journey of the most distressing nature, while he was worn down by grief and ill health, which his shattered constitution was not equal to contend with; and she shuddered at the too probable consequence. These sad reflections, diffused over the Abbey an aspect it never before had worn: it appeared desolate and gloomy. The large vacant rooms, as she passed through them, seemed to echo with her footsteps. She sat down in that which they usually occupied, and tried to read, but she started at every sound; even the servants passing to and fro in the great hall every moment, filled her with alarm. Unable to account for a weakness she was ashamed of, yet could not conquer, she at length shut herself up in her own room, and at an early hour, found a temporary relief in that repose, which nature seldom refuses to the unhappy, when they are virtuous.

CHAP. XVIII.

Strange things the neighbours say have happen'd
here,

Wild shrieks have issued from the hollow tombs,
Dead men have come again, and walked about;
And the great bell hath tolled unrun, untouched.
Such tales their cheer at wake, or gossiping,
When it draws near the witching time of night.

BLAIR.

LEFT in the most perfect solitude, to banish from her mind in some degree, the painful reflections that crowded upon it, Angelica determined to gratify that curiosity which so often had been excited, but never indulged, (from Mrs. Devereux always opposing it) and visit the ruinous part of the Abbey, containing the wonderful statue she had heard described. She had not naturally a spirit for enterprise, but her curiosity lent strength to a mind, not only firm, but void of idle fears. She did not request any of the domestics to accompany her, confident their timidity would only weaken the courage she was inspired with; and she chose a clear morning, instead of the shades of evening, when no midnight witching, with its spells could influence the powers of imagination, ever creatively alive at that gloomy period. She knew not a step of the way to the desolate and neglected spot she was going to explore; but supposed there was in the Abbey some private passage that led to the suite of apartments that were shut up; although the extreme dismay of all the domestics, when the chapel was spoken of, prevented her having gained any information. She remembered a large gallery in the east wing, which probably was connected with the chapel; and judging she was less liable to interruption by endeavouring to gain access from the inside of the Abbey, rather than from that ruinous part which terminated in the park. She reached the gallery by what had formerly been an handsome staircase of dark mahogany. Before she proceeded, she paused to survey its forlorn aspect, only dimly lighted by high, old-fashioned windows, which admitted not the cheering sun-beams. In the corners of the different landing places, stood figures in fine sculpture, demolished and broken; while those on the tapestry, equally terrific, with which the gallery was hung, seemed almost to move from their canvas. She shuddered as she passed them; proceeding with hasty steps towards two large folding doors, carved in fret work, which she strongly supposed led to the neglected apartments. The rusty lock and hinges gave assurance of the doors not having been opened for a length of time, and having no key, she was afraid all her efforts to open it would prove ineffectual. After cautiously examining it, she thought the lock, by some accident, seemed to have given way; she pressed the bottom of the door forcibly with her foot, it yielded to the pressure, and heavily creaking on its hinges, stood open before her, followed by an echo that vibrated through the gallery. A wide passage now presented itself, with several doors of mahogany richly carved. Uncertain and irresolute which to enter, she approached the nearest; it was not fastened, and timidly she burst it open. It was no chamber, but an oratory. Never having heard any of her family were of the Roman catholic persuasion, she was filled with astonishment at what she now saw, and more curious than before, she entered the oratory. It was lighted from the top with painted glass, exhibiting scriptural pieces: high Roman candlesticks were placed on the altar, on which lay some books and a crucifix: over it was a picture of the virgin. Having from the inside of the door, surveyed these surprising objects, half obscured by dust and cobwebs, she approached a few steps further, when an object presented itself beside the altar, which transfixed her to the spot—a death-like chill came over her whole frame, and when sufficiently recovered from the faint sickness she endured, she flew out of the oratory, pursued by the idea of the fair vision

she had beheld there; with difficulty, having acquired sufficient strength to reach the habitable part of the Abbey. When she did so, and got to Mrs. Martin's room for some drops, wholly overcome by what she had seen she fainted away. The housekeeper alarmed at her sudden indisposition, could she have guessed what had occasioned it, and where she had been, would, indeed, have been appalled; but Angelica, incredulous before, was now bewildered in horror and surprise; and while she was prudent enough to remain wholly silent, was not without very strange surmises. She had often thought it odd Mrs. Martin had not spoken of that part of the building, and was afraid some dreadful story was connected with it. She hoped to acquire sufficient courage to visit the chapel, certain it could not contain any thing half so alarming, so interesting as what she had seen in the oratory; and resolved if possible to explore it the ensuing day.

A native strength of mind and resolution supported Angelica under those apprehensions, naturally arising from the spectacle she had seen. Her slumbers, indeed, were sometimes disturbed; but her firmness was unshaken, and she took the dawn of morning to explore the mysteries contained in the chapel. To enter again the oratory, indeed, she had no wish; for the vision which there met her eye, whether imaginary or real, was of too awful a form to encounter once more, and she determined to attempt a way which led through a gloomy cloister, which she had frequently observed from the park towards the chapel. She pursued her road by an unfrequented path, overgrown with long grass, till she reached the ruin, prevented from falling by the heavy arches which supported it, and opening into a sort of cloister, presented an old-fashioned portal, she found it would not be possible to open. She stood for some minutes in doubt, whether to return or not; at length she resolved to do so, and request the key from Mrs. Martin. She heard her with dismay. "Sure you are not in earnest, my Lady," said she, "or you know not what you ask; for if you go, you will not only see the statue I told you of, but what is more terrifying, the ghost which wanders backwards and forwards from the oratory to the chapel. I would not enter either of those places for the world. When you first came here, my Lord charged me never to mention that part of the building to you, or any thing connected with it. I kept my word, and it is only your extraordinary idea of going to see the chapel, that makes me warn you against it."

"Why, Mrs. Martin, did my uncle wish you to be so secret; surely there was no harm in my seeing that part of the Abbey?"

"I don't know that there was any harm, my Lady, only that I suppose my Lord thought the strange sights there would frighten you; for I am sure they would the stoutest heart, if all I have heard be true."

"What is the statue in the chapel to represent?"

"I never saw it, and hope I never shall."

"But you will not object to give me the key; I am resolved to see what his wonderful statue is made of, and what it represents. You spoke also of a ghost," continued Angelica, not without a sensation of horror. "What troubled spirit wanders about this Abbey?"

"It is not for me, my Lady, to spread reports, therefore I hope you will excuse my telling you who they say it is. It is enough for me I have never seen it; that part has always been closely fastened where it walks, and none of us have had courage to go that way."

"Surely, Mrs. Martin, it is a very uncommon ghost to be restrained by locks of any description; aerial spirits, you know, burst all boundaries. But if you have any inclination to see this moving statue, fetch the key and we will go together."

"I would sooner die. However, if you, my Lady, are determined to throw yourself into danger, I will ask White for the keys, who always keeps them; and God, I hope, will protect you,"

Mrs. Martin left her, and in a few minutes returned with White who wore a countenance of terror. "Surely, my Lady," said he, (almost breathless) "you cannot be serious

in wanting the key of the chapel. I shall never forgive myself, in letting you have it, if any harm befalls you. Do allow me to persuade you not to attempt going."

"I shall certainly attempt it, if you will be so obliging as to open the door for me; I understand you have the key."

"I hope, my Lady,—I humbly beg you will not be offended, if I say I cannot go with you. But here is the key, (presenting it) if you are resolved."

Angelica took a large rusty key from him, and said, as she left him, with a smile, "If I meet with any of the wonders I have heard related, you may expect a true and particular account on my return; for at present I confess myself incredulous. White and Martin lifted up their hands and eyes in prayers for her safety, as she departed.

When she reached the spot, she had great difficulty in opening the lock, which yielded after much force; and when she had done so, what a scene of woeful desolation presented itself! Scarcely had she courage to look upon it. A complete film or cobweb prevented her seeing distinctly; while numberless birds flitted over her head and sent forth the most melancholy and piteous sounds. She endeavoured to pierce the film which covered the place; and as she did so, observed a gallery which ran along the chapel covered with crimson velvet, but whose torn and faded appearance, scarce bore a trace of what it had been. A small organ, nearly demolished, stood at the bottom of the chapel; opposite to it was the altar, over which were some fine paintings.—The centre piece was a crucified Saviour; the one on the right side was the Virgin, over which was suspended a broken lamp; and on the other side was our Lord's Ascension. On the altar stood high Roman candlesticks; a chalice, and golden censers for incense; likewise a cross, with some mystic instruments, which seemed to have been for torture. After examining these different articles with a degree of awe, mingled with surprise, she turned from them, and advanced up the aisle of the chapel, paved with black marble, until arrested by the mysterious figure, which was placed in a conspicuous part, and now stood before her. She paused, she trembled—cold drops stood on her forehead, and a death-like sickness came over her.—The statue was exactly opposite to her: a devout solemnity was in its appearance, that while it inspired her with awe, seemed to take from the horror she felt on the first view of it. She slowly advanced nearer, persuaded it could not move; and while with a chilly fear she contemplated its august aspect, was now persuaded it was intended to personate some Saint, and had been placed there for a subject of religious idolatry.—Cheered by this conviction, she next turned towards two beautiful monuments on the other side of the chapel. One was inscribed to the memory of her aunt, the late Countess of Devaynes; the sculpture was uncommonly fine, and represented an elegant female figure, rising from the tomb, and borne by cherubs into the heavens. The subject of the other monument was extremely singular:—on a low marble pedestal, was placed a coffin, on which was extended a figure, whose close drapery resembled that of a nun: one hand held a cross to the bosom, while the other was raised in the act of devotion. At the top and bottom of the coffin, were beautiful marble figures, whose robes bespoke them of the same order as the figure they were bending over. Angelica, lost in conjecture, by so uncommon a design, was highly interested, and stood in motionless surprise for some time; she knew not what to imagine, for there seemed to be a mysterious connection between the chapel and the oratory; and the next moment she was convinced it was so, for the breathless marble was intended to personify that form she had seen in the oratory, and which had inspired her with a terror that even now, on recollection, made her shudder. Curiosity, however, made her peruse the inscription on the tablet, but from it she could gain no information; it was simply to the memory of Constance Devaynes, who died in the year —, in the thirtieth year of her age.

Angelica, who now began to be sensible, almost to fainting, of the cold chills which ran through the place, determined to remain no longer in the chapel, perfectly satisfied with all she had seen there. When she reached the house, she summoned White and Mrs. Martin,

to whom, with an assumed cheerfulness, she delivered the key.— They, with wonder, congratulated her on her safe return, asking, at the same time, a thousand questions, for her palid cheek was not unobserved by the housekeeper. Angelica evaded them as well as she could, answering those she judged proper, with freedom and truth.

She withdrew early at night; but her thoughts wandered from the oratory to the chapel; of the form she had seen in the oratory, and the singular monument in the chapel. But time must unravel the story of each; for she was sure, to mention the subject to her uncle, who had always so cautiously avoided it, would offend him highly; she therefore determined to remain silent.

Chawton House Library

CHAP. XIX.

————— The grief that does not speak
Whispers the o'er-fraught heart, and bids it break.
SHAKESPEAR.

SAD, though rapid was the journey of Lord Devaynes to London. Ill and fatigued, he reached his house in Devonshire Place, from whence he immediately dispatched a messenger to the Mount-street Coffee-house, to inform Mr. Denham of his arrival in town, and requested to see him; shortly after he came. He was a tall, pale, thin young man, of a fashionable appearance, and not unpleasant address. His countenance was shaded by a melancholy, that seemed more the effect of disappointment than misfortune. When he beheld the emaciated appearance of the Earl, worn down by sickness and anguish, he looked greatly shocked, and a faint blush spread over his cheek, as he stammered out a sort of apology for addressing him.

"Sir," said Lord Devaynes, "I am come to town to pay you the debt of Lord Graffington: had the money been obtained in a more honourable cause, it would have been cheerfully given. Accept it as a last proof, I hope, of my son's imprudence. And to you, young man, may it be a serious example of the sad effects of gaming. If you have parents, I can feel for them—oh! how deeply as a parent!—If you have none, they are spared the pang, that their child should lavish sums which might have been better used, than in supporting the extravagance of a companion, who, perhaps, owes his destruction to you; for it is rarely young men are generous enough to lend large sums, without some interested motive."

Mr. Denham was not hardened in vice. Early in life he had been left the uncontrouled master of his own actions; and by the death of his parents, when very young, on coming of age, inherited a large fortune. Pleasure led him into Germany, where he met with Lord Graffington; gay, volatile, and good tempered, he soon became an easy prey to his Lordship's dissipation, who found his open purse a convenience he could not well relinquish. He gave Mr. Denham a taste for play, who soon gained large sums from Lord Graffington; and finding those sums become necessary to his future convenience, insisted on being paid. Lord Graffington, anxious to return to England, promised to apply to his father, and for that purpose, accompanied Mr. Denham to London. But when the moment for application arrived, his resolution forsook him, and he abruptly quitted his friend, who saw him no more. Mr. Denham lost all patience, and determined to write to his father, in consequence of which, the Earl gave him the present meeting. Mr. Denham now produced Lord Graffington's memorandum: his father knew his hand, and promised immediate payment.

"Before you leave me, Sir," cried his Lordship, "be so obliging to inform me where Lord Graffington is to be found?"

"I know not, my Lord: I have never seen him since we came to town: but, added he, if you will take the trouble of enquiring at some of the gaming-houses, or some of the hotels about St. James's, I have no doubt you will hear of him there." Mr. Denham bowed, and took leave.

Lord Devaynes, perfectly exhausted with fatigue of body and mind, found himself too ill to go out that night and was obliged to be immediately put to bed. His sleep proved so disturbed, he awoke in the morning unrefreshed and languid, to an alarming degree, and not till after several efforts to rise from the couch, was he able, till the evening, to be assisted by his servants to his sedan chair, which he ordered to St. James's-street. When he came there, he stopt at the door of each of the gaming-houses, where enquiry was made after Lord Graffington, but no such person was to be found. This intelligence was a sort of relief to his Lordship, who next was carried to the Thatched House. There, after some hesitation from the waiters, he heard of his son; and was at length conducted up stairs to him, stopping every

now and then for respiration. He now found himself at the door of an apartment, which, on being thrown open, did, indeed, present his son to him. He was seated in one corner of a spacious room, gaily lighted with wax, and on the table beside him, stood several bottles of wine. Paleness and disorder were in the looks of Lord Graffington; his hair was undressed, and his eyes, sunk and bloodshot, were fixed on the ground, till raised towards the object that presented itself. "Oh! God, my father!" exclaimed he, starting up, "or is it his pale image that is come hither to reproach me?—Yet even now it frowns not on me; but has that same look of gentle benevolence he always wore."

Lord Devaynes, already exhausted, and overcome with the feelings of nature, sunk on a couch beside his son, in a sort of stupor, without having uttered a word.

"Merciful heaven!" cried Lord Graffington, in a tone of frantic despair, "What a sight is this!" vainly endeavouring to raise his father, who continued insensible. "Oh my father! in pity, speak one word of comfort to your wretched son, e'er your spirit wings its flight from hence. Say I have not murdered you!—that my folly has not destroyed you quite!—but that you forgive and bless one who dares not solicit that of which he knows himself unworthy.—Will you not hear me, my father?—have you no tender smile to bestow—or must the curses that are the destiny of the wicked, light on my head?—and is this awful visitation to tell me so?"

Callous as Lord Graffington had long been to every sentiment of filial affection, absorbed in dissipation and vice, the unexpected sight of his father, pale, and dying, at a moment when he was overwhelmed in ruin, and sent as it were into his presence, as an awful warning to him yet not permitted to breathe blessings or forgiveness, was an idea so dreadful, as to overcome him with dismay and horror. He struck his hand with violence against his forehead, walked up and down the room in the greatest agitation, then knelt down, and took his father's hand, which seemed once more to awaken him to a sense of recollection; and observing Lord Graffington supporting him, he said in a feeble accent, "My poor Harry—my dear child!

"Blessed God! you speak once more. Oh! my father—you reproach me not—this tender pressure of your hand assures me of your forgiveness. This moment, as a dagger to my soul, shall be the beginning of my repentance."

Lord Graffington vainly attempted to raise his father from the couch, who now again grew worse, and he rang the bell for the nearest medical assistance that could be procured. Lord Devaynes cast his languid eyes on his son, whom, with affectionate tenderness he several times embraced; and to whom he said in a low voice, "Come home with me, my dear Harry: your presence will soothe, will restore me. I shall be happy—happy once more in the son of my sainted Fanny. Angelica too—sweet daughter of my love—my adoption. What hours of bliss will await my declining days, in my two children. And will you repent, my dear Henry?—Will you, indeed, be my future solace, my future joy?" Overcome by this short conversation, he again fell back on the couch, and a succession of fainting fits came on. It was with difficulty the surgeons got him home, wither Lord Graffington attended him. He was put to bed, and every possible assistance administered: he lingered a few days, but nature was exhausted—it ebbed, it flowed—and then sunk into a repose eternal.

CHAP. XX.

“For hope of better days attends the good,
And virtue, like the wild bee, can extract
Even from the bitter of adversity
Sweet solace”—————

From the Mine, a Drama.

TO a mind even the most depraved and dissipated, death strikes a sort of religious awe, not in a moment to be overcome by all the gaiety and grandeur of the world. More particularly so, when it comes home in the person of a parent. This solemn visitation of Providence, was, to the profligate Lord Graffington, singularly awful. The father, whose tender affection had watched over him, not only from infancy to manhood, but in all his heedless extravagance, with candour and indulgence, he now beheld dead before him, the victim of his unfilial conduct, and cold neglect; and his soul, for the present, recoiled at the idea of enjoyment, in the acquisition of new honours and large fortune, when obtained by such a sacrifice; too surely convinced, by the bitterest remorse, he could not recall from the grave, the parent he had wantonly destroyed, whose eyes were now closed for ever on all the penitence he could offer.

Perhaps there are few sensations more painfully corroding to the human breast, than the recollection of injuries we have no longer the ability to repair by repentance and regret; and fleeting as such sensations proved in the breast of Lord Graffington, yet there were solitary moments in his life, when they stole on him with a poignancy he could not shake off.

Not such were the feelings of the helpless Orphan, left at Graffington Abbey, whose sorrow, untinctured by self-reproach, displayed itself in that meek resignation; that silent melancholy which gave not way to unavailing despair, or loud lamentation. Her uncle's death struck a pang to her heart, that seemed to annihilate every joy in life. It was grief beyond the relief of tears; but she looked with confidence up to her Maker for support; and while she remembered the comforting lessons of her beloved uncle, she found consolation under her heavy trial and affliction. The tearful sorrow of the domestics, touched her deeply, and, glad to escape from such a sight, she retired to her own room, to meditate on what ought to be her future destiny.

The death of her uncle had reached her through the medium of an express. In one little moment, she found every hope, every happiness snatched from her. She beheld herself an orphan, driven destitute from her home. Titled, yet unknown, and devoid of a single friend, whose pity and protection she could claim. To remain now at Graffington Abbey, she knew to be improper, and impossible, even were the young Earl of Devaynes good, generous, kind as her late uncle. But a name once so dear, a name in which every joy was centered, became her abhorrence, when she reflected how unworthy so honourable a one was to its present possessor. Her heart recoiled at the bare idea of Lord Graffington; the monster who, she believed, had destroyed his father; and she exerted all her resolution immediately to quit for ever the abode where every happiness had sprung. Yet whither could she go?—No home was open to receive her—no tender parent, relative, or friend, to take her to their bosom, except the only ones she had ever known, Gerard and Agatha. She felt she had no claim to encroach on their humble liberality; yet theirs was the only asylum she could go to, trusting, the same roof which had sheltered her infant years with tender affection, would still be open to protect her, until she could resolve on some future mode of life, proper and respectable for her to pursue. In one little week she found herself from the summit of earthly bliss, deprived of every source of joy; of home, of friends, of fortune,—and she could not regard her situation without considering it singularly distressing; for, from being at once the object of admiration

and envy, she was sunk into even an abject state; confident, however generous her uncle's intentions were toward her, they would either place her dependant on her cousin, or entirely in his power; and to resist so great an evil, she determined, by avoiding him wholly. She was now sensible of the peculiar blessing of the very liberal and solid education Lord Devaynes had bestowed on her, affording her, at least, the means of a respectable subsistence. It appeared to her, on reflection, the most prudent plan to drop her present name, and assume that of her foster parents; where, as *Miss Gerard*, she could reside in any remote spot, in the capacity of governess, till Providence pointed out some guide to direct her how to claim her title with honour, and her fortune as her just right. She wrote immediately to Mrs. Devereux an account of the melancholy change that had happened, and solicited her advice, informing her of the plan she thought of adopting, which she could, perhaps, put her in the method of fulfilling; and concluded, by saying, she would retire to Gerard's until she had her answer. She next dispatched a note to her foster parents, signifying her intention to return to them for a short time the ensuing evening; and the personal assurance Gerard gave her of the tenderest reception, although it could not render her happy, proved highly grateful to her, under her present calamity.

Chawton House Library

CHAP. XXI.

The memory of those we love,—of times for ever
past,—

In such an hour as this steals on the mind.

MRS. RATCHLIFF.

DURING the time Angelica was packing up her things for her departure, the following letter, with this curious direction, was put into her hands by one of the servants who had rode post from London.

“To the Lady, residing at Graffington Abbey.

“Madam,

“I am informed by my domestics, my father found in you a niece, who has resided with him for these last few years, I therefore think it incumbent on me (as no doubt, you have some expectation from him) to acquaint you that you are not mentioned in his will, except in a legacy of all my mother’s jewels, and trinkets, your title to which I shall not dispute, although I think it very strange, I have never heard him speak of a niece bearing the name of Carteret, who had any claim to his protection; and I cannot forbear smiling at the romantic tale of your discovery, he, poor man, was credulous enough to give in to.

“I beg my having succeeded to my father’s title and estate, may not hurry you from Graffington Abbey.

I remain, Madam,

Your obedient humble servant.

DEVAYNES.”

How did her heart swell with indignation, on the perusal of such a letter: not at the destitution of her lot, but the insulting style her cousin addressed her, the disrespectful freedom he presumed to treat her with, in the offer of her remaining at the Abbey. The half-expressed doubt of her relationship to his family, all tended to excite her anger, and deeply wound that just pride, conscious innocence and dignity of birth inspired. The tender indulgence of his father, the respectful conduct of this most menial domestic, the affection of his look, his manner,—all, all recurred with the most afflicting poignancy to her recollection; she felt they were gone for ever; and as she drew the sad comparison of her former and present situation at Graffington Abbey, of the days she had spent there, now terminating, not merely in sorrow, but cruel reproach, with the prospect of her future ones so dreary and forlorn, her fortitude intirely failed her, and she burst into an agony of tears. The mournful legacy her uncle had bequeathed her, she considered as the most precious testimony of his love, knowing how valuable to him was every memorial of his wife; and she regarded these things as the most sacred gift he could bestow.

The late Lord Devaynes had not, indeed, noticed Angelica in his will, except to this purpose, too firmly relying on the generosity of his son, and merely said in a codicil to his will, “To my beloved niece, Angelica Carteret, I bequeath no money, because, before she comes of age, I hope to secure her title to the inheritance of her father the late Earl of Aberville, which will be most considerable, and in the mean time, should I die, I depend on my son, Henry Lord Graffington, providing for, and honourably protecting her. But the jewels and trinkets of my wife, Frances late Countess of Devaynes, I bequeath to her.”

Such was the codicil to the Earl’s will, which on opening, first brought to Lord Graffington’s recollection, his father’s having spoken, in his last moments, of some person of

that name, with a tender affection, which during the agony of his own mind, had not impressed him. But he now felt curious to know who she was, and listened with incredulity and surprise to the account the servants gave of her adoption and discovery. The transient shock of his father's death was soon dispelled by the prospects that opened of a splendid fortune and renewed consequence; and of the forlorn mourner at Graffington Abbey, he thought not as an object whom he had any right to protect or support; and that all such hope might be abandoned, he wrote her the letter she had just perused. The account of her sweetness of disposition, and her uncommon beauty, he believed exaggerated by the servants; having seen during his life, too many lovely and elegant women, to be captivated by a description of her. He was, indeed, a little curious to see Angelica, and intended to avail himself of some favourable opportunity, when he went into Hampshire, as it was not probable she would have quitted the neighbourhood in so short a time; and felt perfectly satisfied in the way he had fulfilled his father's wishes, which he considered idle and romantic in the extreme.

Not an hour did Angelica now linger at the Abbey; she had sent her cloaths, books, harp, and the rest of the things belonging to her, in the morning to Gerard's. The melancholy group she was to pass through, who had placed themselves in the hall to take a last look, and invoke a last blessing on their young lady, touched her extremely; she mingled her tears with theirs; and although she could not utter her good wishes in return for the blessings which pursued her, the tender dejection of her countenance told how grateful she was for their affection; Mrs. Martin was particularly grieved at her departure: but, herself a dependent, she had no power to detain her, and with swimming eyes, and a thousand kind adieus, she accompanied her to the carriage. Unable to endure so trying a scene, sensible of the irreparable loss they had all sustained, Angelica covered her face with both her hands, hurrying with tottering steps away; nor was it till far distant from the house, she ventured to raise her eyes to the window. The sombre shade of evening lent a pensiveness to the landscape, in unison with her feelings. The Abbey was lost in the twilight, and it was only by the dark luxuriance of the woods, waving their tops in the air, she could trace the exact spot where it rested. When Agatha saw her alight, she ran out to meet her. She took Angelica's hand; she sobbed aloud.—"Woes me," exclaimed she, "who could have thought we should so soon lose our noble patron, when only a fortnight ago, he came here so cheerful and chatty. My heart aches for you, my dear, dear young lady—well may you cry, for we shall none of us see his like again. It was a melancholy thing, his going off so suddenly."

An exclamation, or rather groan, made Agatha look round, and she beheld Angelica sunk on a chair in a fainting fit. This conversation had perfectly overwhelmed her. Agatha put her to bed, gave her some wine, Mrs. Martin had taken care to send for her, and left her a little more composed. Angelica having found relief in tears, fell into a gentle slumber.

CHAP. XXII.

With me retire, and leave the pomp of Courts,
For humble cottages and rural sports.

VIRGIL.

THE next morning she arose, with pale cheeks, and a face of woe. The breakfast Agatha prepared for her of new milk and fresh-churned butter, spread on a nice table cloth, would have remained untouched had not her intreaty prevailed on her at last to swallow a cup of tea. She had no inclination to eat, and the open air seemed the only place in which her bursting heart found relief. There she gave an unrestrained flow to those sad recollections that crowded on her thoughts. The honest people respected her too much to intrude on her, and she was left to the melancholy freedom of her conduct, and disposal of her time; a visit from Mrs. Martin was the first consolation she tasted. In her friendly sympathy, she found a temporary relief. She informed Angelica (that news had that morning come down) the late Earl was to be buried in the family vault with his wife the Countess, in the chapel which had not been opened for twenty years, and it had created such consternation and terror throughout the whole house, she did not know what would be the consequence, for every domestic declared, they would rather quit their places than enter the chapel. "My poor master," added she, "is to be brought to the Abbey to-morrow, and interred in the evening; some of the undertaker's men are already come, and the young Earl has sent word he shall be here the beginning of next week. From the character I have heard of him, we need not expect much comfort in him."

Angelica told Mrs. Martin she only waited for a letter from Mrs. Devereux to quit Hampshire, which she now expected every day; for having already met with every indignity from her cousin, she wished to be gone before his arrival. She assured her of her good wishes, and Mrs. Martin respectfully took her leave.

The intelligence that her uncle was to be interred in the chapel belonging to the Abbey, gave her infinite satisfaction: for she immediately determined, when deserted and alone, he was laid in the mausoleum of his ancestors, unawed by what she had seen in the chapel, to steal thither, amid the shades of evening, and invoke his departed spirit to hover over, guide and protect her, in her forlorn pilgrimage on earth; and she would herself have attended him to his grave, with all that mournful respect his memory inspired, could she hope to have escaped wonder and observation.

The next morning's post brought her the following letter from Mrs. Devereux.

"To Lady ANGELICA CARTERET.

"Green Wood Cot. August 25.

The contents of your letter, my dear Lady Angelica, have filled me with grief and astonishment. I hasten immediately to reply to it. I seek not by common place sympathy to palliate the irreparable loss you have sustained, yet I would fain persuade you, when time and fortitude have a little abated the keenness of your sorrow, there are still numberless blessings held out to you, which in being sensible of, will tend to meliorate the bitterest suffering. I am aware your situation is not more singularly strange than distressing. I highly approve of the plan you intend to adopt, of dropping your name and rank, and affirming the humble one of Gerard, which, from the character of the new Earl of Devaynes, is the most prudent measure you can take, until you discover whether he is disposed to properly support and protect you; in which case, your residence can easily be traced: if not, your best security against him is the most perfect retirement. Youth and health are before you—life is just dawning upon you, and it is but seldom strewed only with thorns, to the amiable and deserving. The cottage of

Gerard, simple, and abounding with hospitable warmth, although it sheltered your infant years, is no longer a proper asylum for you: it is too near Graffington Abbey. The retreat I have chosen for myself will, I hope, prove to you a comfortable home; come, and share it with me. It is a perfect hermitage: yet I think you will like it. It will not afford you the luxuries you have been accustomed to, but I have endeavoured to instil into the mind of my amiable pupil, that contentment springs not from situation, and is created by the mind alone. My house, if such it can be called, is embosomed in the Welch mountains. Its white-washed walls are now covered with a profusion of the eglantine, which has crept over the lattice of the small chamber I have allotted for you. The house stands in a pretty garden, and beyond it is a rich meadow, watered by a clear stream, which flows in a natural cascade from the adjacent hills, covered with luxuriant woods, whose wild walks are very romantic and beautiful. I cannot promise you society; but I know you can find happiness without searching for it among the dissipated and idle and are one of those very few, who find it possible to exist at home. There appear to be some families in the neighbourhood, if I may judge by the few seats scattered around. Of what order of beings they are, I know not, nor have I any curiosity on that score. My dwelling is half a mile from the town of Builch; it is detached from the road, or any other, except two or three cottages, which are scattered on a little green, joining the field that leads up to it, and resting in the vale, is embowered in large trees, which extend along the foot of the hills. This sweet little Arcadian spot, was left me by my sister, and on receiving your letter, instead of letting it, I determined to fix my future residence here. A Welch girl is all the domestic I have yet, but she is simple and obliging, and will do her best. Come, then, my dear Lady Angelica, to the arms of a sincere friend, who regards you with the affection of a parent, and whose house, she flatters herself, will render you a comfortable home.

“CHARLOTTE DEVEREUX.”

“P.S. The only subject that gives me uneasiness, is your travelling alone. Come in the Bath coach from Southampton, where I will endeavor to meet you.”

Angelica, charmed with the contents of her letter, read it over several times, with emotions of the most lively gratitude and pleasure, determined immediately to go to a place where happiness was offered under the simplest and most pleasing form. She answered Mrs. Devereux, by saying, she meant to set out in two days from the present one, only waiting now till the funeral of her uncle had taken place.

CHAP. XXIII.

But o'er the twilight groves, and dusky caves,
Long founding isles, and intermingling graves,
Black Melancholy sits, and round her throws
A death-like silence, and a dread repose.
Her gloomy presence saddens all the scene,
Shades ev'ry flow'r, and darkens ev'ry green.
Deepens the murmurs of the falling floods,
And breathes a browner horror on the woods.

POPE.

UNDAUNTED in her resolution, the evening after the funeral of her uncle was over, Angelica, by the falling shades of twilight, proceeded with mournful steps from Gerard's to the chapel. She took the same unfrequented path she had before gone by, which led to the great door that opened into the cloister. She carried a small lantern in her hand to guide her; for although the evening was moonlight, the moon was at times covered with heavy clouds, that enveloped it in darkness. The wind, too, sighed in hollow blasts among the trees, hourly increasing in violence. She trembled exceedingly, when she reached the chapel door, and found herself so faint, that had she not been ashamed of her weakness, she would have returned.—While pausing, irresolute what to do, she now first recollected she had not got the key, and it was most probable the door might be locked. She, however, tried it, and found it was not fastened. She therefore entered, with a desperate sort of resolution. The moon, which had now burst from the cloud which obscured it, shone with a partial splendor into the chapel, awefully illuminating one part, whilst the other remained in dark shadow; but none of the objects were distinctly visible except the mysterious statue, whose extraordinary appearance nearly appalled her. It seemed a shining mass of something so horrible, she had not courage to approach it; and while one moment it was lost in darkness, the next it reassumed its former terrible aspect. Her very footsteps, lightly as she trod, echoed on the pavement; and the deep hollow wind, as it swept along the woods, shook the building to its base: it was followed at intervals, by a low solemn tone, resembling that of music, which seemed to proceed from the demolished organ in the gallery. She listened, almost breathless. The tone ceased, but with every breeze it returned, in indistinct sounds, that ended in a soft melancholy cadence. Her fears now were so greatly augmented, that finding her spirits sinking to an alarming state, she proceeded as fast as possible into the park, where the refreshing air soon restored her. But too much depressed to pass alone through the large gloomy wood that led to Gerard's, she determined to proceed to the Abbey, and request White to accompany her to the cottage. She went in by a private door, that led to Mrs. Martin's room; finding no one there, when she reached it, instead of waiting, she immediately proceeded to the large room, which opened into the lawn, where there was a full length portrait of her uncle. She was surprised, when she entered, to find a table spread with delicious fruits, ices, and different wines, and the room brilliantly lighted. She would instantly have retreated, but a momentary surprise seemed to fix her to the spot, and she stood for some minutes to recover her scattered spirits. Her eyes insensibly wandered to the picture of her uncle, and she gazed on that benignant countenance which so often had beamed on her with the most tender indulgence; a flood of tears seemed to relieve her.—She threw herself on her knees to invoke his departed spirit to hover over, and protect her through life; and when she did so, so powerful had her imagination been raised, she thought she perceived a figure resembling him, glide the next moment into the room. She started from the posture she was in, and turned towards the object. It was the young Earl of Devaynes, who stood before her.

Her surprise and agitation rendered her immoveable. He was equally astonished. He had inquired, on his arrival, what was become of the young lady, and was informed she was gone. Great, then, was his amazement, when he beheld, in a most graceful attitude, before the picture of his father, an elegant figure, clad in deep mourning, bending in anguish before the lifeless canvas, with a countenance resembling that of a weeping angel. He found all praise fall short of the description he had had of her; and viewed her with silent respect and admiration. Angelica, greatly hurt, and confused in being found at the Abbey, on the Earl's arrival, coloured highly, and said to him, "had I known, Sir, of your being here, believe me I should not have intruded; you will, I hope, pardon my having done so, and do me the justice to be assured it was by accident." While she spoke, she moved towards the door.

"Whether by accident or not, Madam," cried he, approaching her, "I cannot consider it an intrusion. This house, I understand, has been your home for some time—it is still equally open to your reception. I, as a young, and single man, am not, perhaps, warranted to say so; but Mrs. Martin can take proper care of you, until you have obtained another residence. Permit me to hand you to a seat; do not let my presence frighten you away."

"I would not wish you to imagine, Sir, that it does so; yet you will excuse my immediate departure, and permit me to bid you a good night."

"You will allow me, then, the honour of attending you to that residence you have chosen; it is too late for you to go any distance without protection; neither, Madam, can I suffer you to depart before you take some refreshment."

He attempted to take her hand, and lead her to the sofa beside the table. Angelica, who felt distressed by his intreaty, replied, with as much ease as she could assume, "You must pardon, my Lord, my declining your polite services. If you will give Mr. White leave to accompany me home, I shall consider myself greatly obliged."

"That is impossible. Do you suppose White shall deprive me of so exquisite a pleasure? No! lovely stranger, (for I know not your name) I will conduct you to wherever you are going."

Angelica, whose distress increased by his vehemence of manner, said, "You will not then Sir, suffer me to be obliged, by Mr. White's attending me? Your Lordship's doing so, you must be sensible, is quite improper and impossible."

"Well then," cried he, with apparent assent, "White shall go with you, if you will only be prevailed on to take some refreshment; that you will surely not refuse me, as consistent with the common rites of hospitality."

Angelica now began to be extremely uneasy. Lord Devaynes was the last person she wished to discover her residence. She was too, at present, in his house, without any of the servants knowing she was so; and there was an earnestness in his manner which she was afraid to resist; while the vehemence of it, in some degree, alarmed her; to seem so, however, or to attempt to escape out of the room, would be extremely wrong; therefore, when he again endeavoured to take her hand, she said, "I mean not rudely, my Lord, to decline your hospitality, and will take this peach, (reaching one from the table.) But as the evening is already closed, I shall take the liberty to ring the bell, that Mrs. Martin may know I am here, who will provide some one to conduct me home."

As she approached the bell, he seized her hand, and eagerly pressing it to his lips, exclaimed, with warmth, "Why this haste?—Why this cruel solicitude, to fly from the presence of one, in whom you already have excited the highest admiration?—and who will devote every hour of his future life to render the solitude of Graffington Abbey worthy your residence, for by heavens, your transcendant loveliness, much as I have heard of it, exceeds all description, and must lead captive the hearts of all who see you."

"This, Sir," returned Angelica, colouring with displeasure, "is a language as new, as incomprehensible, and if you will not suffer me quietly to depart, I shall not scruple to alarm

the family.”

“Doing so will answer no end; for recollect, no one here dare dispute my commands. But,” added he, (for Lord Devaynes saw he had gone too far,) “think not I mean forceably to detain you a prisoner in a house you were formed to command, against your inclination, and if you will only consent I shall attend you home, I will cease my intreaties.”

The increasing energy of his manner, and language, wholly overcame Angelica. She was sensible no servant, greatly as they respected her, had power to protect her from any insult he might choose to offer; therefore, finding she had not spirits to contend with him, she formed a determination no less quick than decided. While Lord Devaynes walked to the other end of the room, she glided out of it, and darted along the great hall, through which he instantly pursued her; but swift as an arrow she reached the top of the staircase which led to the deserted gallery before him; and he soon left her in the intricacies of the different passages, from his being a stranger to the Abbey. Her only refuge she knew was in the chapel, but to reach it she must pass through the oratory, from the direction she had taken. The form she there had beheld she sickened at the idea of again meeting; it certainly had the appearance of being human; but if so, why remain in a spot distinct, neglected, shut up from all the family, if not confined there by some extraordinary circumstance? And if it was not human, never had vision worn so fair, so angelic a semblance; although the peculiarity of its dress, its attitude, had, and did now, appall her. She had, however, no alternative; and, fearful as it was, she resolved to encounter it, rather than again be liable to meet Lord Devaynes. The light from the great staircase had hitherto guided her; but as she proceeded towards the uninhabited part of the Abbey, she found herself in total darkness, and obliged to grope her way. Not long, however, did she remain so: a vivid flame crossed her, which illuminated the whole gallery, followed by so tremendous a peal of thunder, as shook the very ground she stood on. Angelica was not naturally a coward; but, before dispirited, she now sunk on the ground, where she remained some minutes nearly insensible, until recalled by the sound of distant footsteps. She instantly started up, and no longer required a lamp to guide her, for the blue lightning, in awful brilliancy, played before her, while the thunder rolled in deep and lengthened peals over her head. The door of the oratory was open, as when she last quitted it. The painting on the top was brightened with the richest hues, from the illuminated firmament, and likewise reflected its light on the figure at the altar, which Angelica, after a momentary contemplation, determined to approach, for she now really believed it was human. With uplifted eyes to heaven, it held a cross to its bosom, a thin veil shaded a face, pale, but touched with the most pious resignation; while the light white drapery which clothed it, fell in graceful folds to the ground. Angelica, on tiptoe, was advancing, when the sound of the footsteps she before had heard, prevented her.—she paused to listen—the sound was nearer, and a light, which seemed to proceed from a lamp, was reflected on the wall. She gave a scream, and rushing impetuously forward, descended a flight of stairs that led out of the oratory, and in a few minutes she found herself within the chapel.

CHAP. XXIV.

Away, ye goblins all,
Wont the bewilder'd traveler to daunt;
Whose vagrant feet have traced your secret haunt
Beside some lonely wall,
Or shatter'd ruin of a moss-grown tower,
Where at pale midnight stillest hour,
Thro' each rough chink the solemn orb of night
Pours momentary gleams of trembling light.
Away, ye elves, away:
Shrink at ambrosial morning's living ray;
That living ray, whose power benign
Unfolds the scene of glory to our eye,
Where, thron'd in artless majesty,
The cherub Beauty sits on Nature's rustic shrine.

MASON'S ELFRIDA.

THE thunder was now more distant, but the lightning still continued, at short intervals, to illuminate the whole building, accompanied by a torrent of rain. Angelica thought, if she could take advantage of a bright flash, to reach the gallery, she could there watch the storm till it abated, and by the first dawn of morning, quit her present melancholy situation. The chill damps of night crept through her whole frame, and the horror of the spot she was enclosed in, she found more than all her attempted firmness could combat. With these sensations differently affecting her, and ignorant in what exact part of the aisle she now trod, her steps were instantaneously arrested, as if by some invisible power, for she perceived no object near her—all was silent and death like, as the monuments around her; but yet a hand did certainly cross her, and impede her way, with a cold touch, which, although momentary, could not be the effects of imagination. She shrieked aloud; but entombed, as it were, in a living grave, the echo of her own voice, with the deep and low tone of that music which still swelled from the organ, with every breeze that swept along the trees, she was quite insensible to, having sunk into a fainting fit, from which, it was some time before she recovered. When she did, it was not immediately she recollected either where she was, or what had happened. Her ideas were scattered, and she seemed rather to awake from a dream, than to a reality of her situation.

The storm, wholly dispersed, was now succeeded by a cheerful serene moonlight, whose welcome beams befriended her, and she quitted a spot of the most gloomy solemnity, determined to wander in the park during the remainder of the night. The beautiful stillness which pervaded over the whole scene, the moonlight sleeping on the grass, the sky, succeeded by heavy clouds, to a tender blue, were objects so sweetly soothing, after the awful ones so lately contending in the elements, her soul, in an instant, was elevated to God, with sensations of rising gratitude and composure, and she exclaimed to herself in the words of Milton,—

“These are thy glorious works, parent of good!
“Almighty, thine this universal frame,”

going on with a degree of enthusiasm, with the whole of that sublime hymn.

To avoid the wet grass, she took a broad pathway that conducted her to a small rustic temple, where she used, in former days, to take her books and harp; in this temple, lately

dedicated to happiness, she now spent the remainder of the night. It was so built, as to defend either the heat, or damp from penetrating; and she found herself perfectly comfortable in so safe and tranquil a retreat. To avoid taking cold, she did not sit down, but from the window observed the approach of day, and with cheerful sensations, beheld, at length, Aurora gently unfold her mantle in the east, and

“Jocund day
Stand tiptoe on the misty mountain’s top.”

How tranquil, how lovely, was the park! The dew drops of early dawn glittered on every flower, which breathed forth the most delicious fragrance. The woods, no longer obscured in gloomy shadow, were tinged with the gayest hues, and the newly waked birds hymned the sweetest melody through the groves. The deer bounded on the verdant grass, and the soft, the delightful repose that dwelt around, all, all inspired in her new vigour, and new life. Angelica, fond as she was of the country, had never before felt, to so full an extent, those grateful sensations which fill a grateful mind with a proper sense of the innumerable beauties which a contemplation in the divine works of the creation affords, at an hour when the busy scenes of the world are thrown aside; when sorrow is lost in the sublimity of a subject which lifts, for a time, the soul to that heaven, it seems already to have attained. She pensively directed her steps towards the cottage of Gerard, and when she reached it, she found the good couple in the utmost consternation and alarm, at her sudden disappearance.—“Thank God, thank God,” they both exclaimed at once, “you are returned safe. My sweet young lady,” continued Gerard, “I gave you up as lost; I went to the Abbey about eleven o’clock last night, when you did not come home expecting to find you, but there I could hear no tidings of you; for Mr. White and Mrs. Martin assured me, over and over again, you had not been there; they were in as great a fright, too, as myself, for the whole house was in confusion and alarm. They told me their young Lord, who was just come down, had ordered the whole house to be searched, for a person he found in the large room, which disappeared on his entrance. From the description he gave them, they imagined it was you, until they all declared you had not been there. Every corner was searched; nay, the young Lord was not content with that, but pursued this ghost all through the unfrequented part of the Abbey, till he came to a place with some out-landish name, I don’t know what they call it, where, sure enough, he did see a spectre, which soon stopped him from going any further, and my Lord returned faster than he went. I, in the mean time, wandered for an hour in the thickest of the storm, up and down the park, expecting every instant to find you dead there, for in all the years I have lived, I never saw such a one before. Now tell me, my dear lady, where you have really been.” Angelica related to them her having gone first to the Abbey, where she met with the Earl; and that wishing to avoid him, she had been the spectre he had really pursued through the deserted gallery, and informed them till morning she had taken refuge in the temple, in the park. She did not think it prudent to recount to them her fears, or the mysterious events of the night. They heard her with amazement, truly rejoicing in her return. She, after taking some refreshment, went immediately to bed, to seek that repose of which she stood so much in need.

The unexpected sight of Angelica to the young Earl of Devaynes, had indeed to him, rather the appearance of a beautiful vision than a reality; so sudden, so transient had it proved. But the impression was deep and indelible. To what spot she could have vanished, he could not form the smallest conjecture; every servant in the house was sent to search for her, when he lost her in the mazes of the passage; and on the search proving fruitless, nothing could convince them he had not seen a spectre, which they imagined had proceeded from the chapel to where he saw it, and had returned thither again.

Lord Devaynes, when he retired to rest, thought only of Angelica. A stranger to every sentiment of pure affection, he formed a thousand different schemes how to get her into his power; judging, from the little he had seen of her, it could only be accomplished by the most artful management. Mrs. Martin pretended not to know what became of her after she left the Abbey; but he was more successful in his application to the other servants, and easily traced her to the cottage of Gerard. The alarm she had shewn on the former evening, he was afraid would prevent her admitting him, and to break in upon her abruptly, would defeat his end. He therefore determined, after infinite consideration, to write her a note, requesting permission to deliver the casket of jewels bequeathed by his father, which he could not intrust with a servant, and he would not intrude on her time above ten minutes.

Angelica, when she awoke after a refreshing sleep, and collected her scattered ideas, resolved immediately to go to Mrs. Devereux; and request Gerard to accompany her as far as Southampton, where she meant to take the stage to Bath. She was not vain enough to conceive she had made the smallest impression on the mind of Lord Devaynes, but she shrunk from the freedom of his conduct, the insulting offer of his protection and services, and wished to withdraw herself from the chance of a renewal of them. Such was her intention, when his note was brought her. It threw her into great consternation; scarcely did she know what to do. To refuse to admit him, would deprive her of the legacy her uncle had bequeathed her; and averse as she was to see him again, she reluctantly consented, rather than lose so precious a memorial belonging to her family.

Angelica rose and drest herself to meet her cousin, who shortly afterwards entered. His appearance threw her into some agitation: Lord Devaynes, elegant in figure, handsome in person, insinuating in manner, so strongly resembled his father, particularly when he spoke, that tears swelled in Angelica's eyes as she stood up to receive him.

"I have availed myself, Madam," said he, "of your permission to break in upon your retirement, to present to you my father's legacy. And I thank you for this opportunity of intreating your pardon, for the alarm I caused you last night. Allow this casket (drawing it from his pocket) to seal my forgiveness, and accept it as a testimony of my father's regard."

Angelica held out her hand to take it, while a blush suffused her cheek. "I am sorry, Sir," replied she, coldly, "you have given yourself so much causeless trouble. Yet I confess this last proof of my beloved uncle's affection, is most grateful to my heart, and will be considered invaluable."

"My father, I understand, had a sincere affection for you. Why will you not permit it to be renewed in his son? As I told you last night, Graffington Abbey is as open as ever to your reception."

"But, in being so," returned she, "permit me, Sir, to ask whether Graffington Abbey would now prove a proper, or respectable residence for me? I will not, my Lord, do you so much injustice, as to mistake your intended hospitality for premeditated insult, and therefore I thank you for it."

"Yet surely, Madam, you imagined I intended last night to offer you one, when scarcely had I recovered the surprise your unlooked for presence excited, scarcely looked on a countenance so lovely as never to be forgotten, e'er you fled from me with a swiftness nothing could pursue; nor would any domestic in my house credit my assertion of having seen you."

"I fled, my Lord, because you wished to detain me, when you saw it was unpleasant to me, and because, when I did go, I found you would have attended me hither. I chose neither. I therefore had no alternative but to leave your house abruptly, and as I could. I will even now be candid enough to say, this visit is wholly against my inclination—this place is not a proper one for Lord Devaynes."

"Neither is it for you, Madam," returned he. This present obscurity is very different

from the ease and magnificence you have been accustomed to in my father's house. Let me then persuade you to quit it; and if you will not return to Graffington Abbey, allow me to place you in a situation more like that you have been used to, and where, as your guardian, and friend, I may have access to see you are properly treated."

"Permit me, Sir, to ask, without intending to offend you, how you can pretend to claim the title of guardian, or friend, over a person whom, so lately, you disowned as the niece of your father. No! my Lord; having once disowned me as your relation, all authority over me, all interest in my welfare, is at an end. Angelica Carteret, it is true, is now poor and destitute, but not so much so, as to forget what she owes herself."

"You are severe in your judgment of me," replied her cousin, with a respectful softness in his manner, "I will not, therefore attempt a right to direct your conduct, until I have gained your confidence and esteem; although my father wished me, by his will, to protect you till you come of age."

"But," cried she, with dignified spirit, "did your father, my Lord, wish you to doubt my alliance to your family?—to doubt I was the daughter of his sister? Once having done so, you have forfeited, by all law, any power to regulate my conduct, which now I must consider I have an uncontrolled right to govern myself."

Lord Devaynes, who perceived by the justice and sense displayed in Angelica's conversation, he must artfully obtain her good opinion by seeming to confess the late error of his conduct, though to avow her alliance to his family, he meant not, as that would effectually destroy his plan of retaining her in his power, cautiously replied, "Were I to attempt to retract what I certainly questioned it would, I fear, prove equally insincere to you, as my present endeavour to convince you of my ardent wish to be beneficial to you—of the warm interest I take in your welfare. I will not, therefore, press the subject farther at present, but trusting to your viewing me more favourably hereafter, assure you, that I believe the loveliness of your person can only be equalled by that of your mind; and flatter myself with the hope you will do me the honour of admitting a visit from me again."

At once to put a negative on his future visit, Angelica thought would only create distrust, as well as danger to herself. She, therefore, remained passively silent, and he took leave, firmly persuaded she was safely lodged at Gerard's for some time.

Angelica had penetration enough to discern beneath the elegant address of Lord Devaynes, the art with which he avoided acknowledging her by name; and while he held out his proffered protection, it was not to the niece of his father, but to one whom he considered an indigent young woman, wholly in his power. She deeply resented his specious conduct; and immediately engaged Gerard to take her in his little tax cart in the dusk of the evening, to Southampton, to be ready for the stage the ensuing morning. He and Agatha heard, with grief, of her intended departure; but sensible their humble roof was not a suitable home for her, she readily obtained their promise never to divulge where she was gone to, and they preserved the most inviolable secrecy.

CHAP. XXV.

I care not fortune what you me deny,
You cannot rob me of free nature's grace.
You cannot shut the windows of the sky,
Thro' which Aurora shews her bright'ning face.
You cannot bar my constant feet to trace
The woods and lawns by living streams.
Let health my nerves and finer fibres brace,
And I their toys to the great children leave,
Of fancy, reason, virtue, nought can me bereave.

THOMPSON.

IT was with feelings the most poignant, as Gerard drove her in his little cart towards Southampton, that Angelica lost sight of "*loved scenes, loved friends,*" which were now lost to her, as though they had never been. Gerard waited until the next morning, when he attended her to the coach, in which were already two passengers. The sorrow of his heart displayed itself in his guileless countenance, as he uttered a faint "God bless you," while she, melting into tears, as the vehicle drove away, found herself, for the first time in her life, in the society of individuals, who could not regard her but with the most perfect indifference, and journeying far from her earliest home, without a single friend who could offer her their sympathy and consolation. Her fellow-travellers consisted of a decent elderly woman, and a genteel young man, who had placed himself in one corner, and seemed to have fallen asleep. Lost in the most melancholy reflections, she determined, if possible, to banish them by turning her eyes and thoughts towards the beautiful scenery that presented itself. The morning was clear and lovely, and the novelty of the country, through which they passed, soon engaged her attention, when she had resolved to direct it to the objects before her.

It was not till they stopped to breakfast, the gentleman opened his eyes, and then, indeed, found little inclination to close them again. He beheld Angelica with infinite surprise, and regarded her with a degree of curiosity, which, without being absolutely impertinent, was by no means polite. She discovered from his air he was military, uniting, with a handsome countenance, an expression of good humour.

"Allow me, Madam," said he to Angelica, "the honour of assisting you," jumping out of the coach, and taking her hand, and afterwards helping, with much good nature, the elderly woman.

"What an insensible fellow," cried he, as he placed himself at the end of the breakfast table, "must I have been, to sleep as I have done. I sat late last night over a bottle or two, with some brother officers, from whom I could not get away, and it has given me a stupid headache; yet my rudeness is a just punishment for a loss, I hope, may still be made up to me, if fortunate enough to find my companions are proceeding with me. Are you, Madam, going to Bath?"

"Beyond it, Sir."

"So am I. I came to Southampton on a recruiting party: it is over, and I am now on my way to my father's, in Brecknockshire, to be in time for the shooting season, for I expect some friends to meet me."

"To Brecknockshire, Sir, did you say you are going?"

"Yes. Are you travelling thither too?"

"I am going within a mile of the town of Builth."

"Then for once I am lucky: it is the very place in whose vicinity my father lives. Owen manor-house is not two miles from thence."

Angelica now, in her turn, felt curious to know who the stranger was; his name, his family, his connexions; whether he had any sisters, half wishing he had, who would prove good neighbours. Captain Owen (so he was called) was about five-and-twenty; he was sensible, captivating in his manner, with a degree of well-bred gallantry, that rendered him a general favourite with the fair sex.—He danced charmingly, sung an excellent song, and had the air of a fashionable man.

“It is two or three years,” continued he, “since I was at Owen manor-house. You were not surely then residing in its neighbourhood. It is impossible I could forget its being graced with so lovely an inhabitant. Such a face must leave an indelible impression.”

Angelica coloured at his compliment, and said, “I never, Sir, was in Wales before.”

“Then I hope it will prove sufficiently agreeable to render you a permanent inhabitant.”

“I have heard it is a sweet country, beautifully romantic, and richly diversified with woods and water.”

“It does, indeed, present a variety of lovely prospects. I would not exchange my father’s old manor-house, for all the finest villas in the south of England. A soldier, it is true, has more to do with a camp and a drum, than Arcadian scenes; yet I own myself a perfect enthusiast in the charms of nature; when worn out in the cause of my king and country, I shall make an honourable retreat into some little spot, on one of my native mountains.”

In Captain Owen, who had travelled the road before, Angelica found a very entertaining companion. He pointed out the different places, told her their names as they passed through them, with many agreeable observations. He in return, was delighted with Angelica. He seldom had seen so interesting a face—he had met with more beautiful ones, but there was an animation in her’s, that reached the heart, and he could hardly restrain the eager desire he felt to know what chance had thrown her, unprotected, into a vehicle by no means corresponding with her general appearance; which was elegant, commanding, yet easy and unassuming. As they approached the city of Bath, the elegance of its structure, with its streets romantically seated at the foot of those beautiful hills that surround it, excited her warmest admiration. The houses of white stone, gave it a grand, yet light appearance; and the salubrious air, fanned by the zephyrs of the west, she conceived, must be highly grateful to invalids.—They put up for the night at the White Hart. Having discovered the elderly woman, who was the other, and only passenger, was journeying like wise to the town of Builth, it was agreed by the whole of the party, to take a postchaise the next morning, among them, on to that place. Indeed Angelica had felt rather distressed in what way to pursue her journey, having left Gerard’s too abruptly, to inform Mrs. Devereux what day to expect her, and considered it highly fortunate, so creditable a woman happened to be going the same road. She determined, when she reached Builth, to dispatch a messenger to her, to inform her of her arrival, and wait at the inn till his return. Such being the arrangement for the ensuing day, she pleaded fatigue as an apology for retiring, and withdrew immediately to her room.

CHAP. XXVI.

EARLY the next morning the travellers pursued their journey. The road from Bath to Bristol was truly picturesque; but the dirty bustling town of Bristol disappointed Angelica, who had conceived it a very different looking place. They soon crossed the Channel, and were immediately after surrounded by Welch mountains.

Before they entered the town of Builth, Captain Owen, who had several times displayed infinite curiosity to know what place, and to whom Angelica was going, now asked her with much earnestness, "whether she would allow him the honour of conducting her in safety to her friends, which he would be happy to do."

Angelica, alike a stranger to the country, and the exact spot where Mrs. Devereux resided, would, perhaps, have been induced to have availed herself of his offer, had she not, from the eagerness of his manner, penetrated into his motive; and convinced, Mrs. Devereux would not approve of her introducing him into her retirement, refused, by saying, "she intended to wait at the inn, until she sent a messenger to the lady to whom she was going, who would meet her there."

He politely assented, whilst his countenance expressed curiosity and interest. When they arrived at the inn, Angelica wrote a note, and requested the waiter to procure a person to take it to the place it was directed.

The messenger quickly returned with an answer from Mrs. Devereux to Angelica, who said she would meet her without delay, at the inn, and desired her to remain until her arrival.

Angelica could not prevail on Captain Owen to leave her before he saw her safe under the protection of her friend, whose relationship to his fair travelling companion he was anxious to find out.

Joy beamed in the eyes of Angelica, as she received the tender salutation of Mrs. Devereux; but when the hurry of meeting was over, she turned a look of enquiry towards Captain Owen, and eagerly asked who the gentleman was. Her young friend introduced him, by saying, "I am much indebted, my dear Madam, to this gentleman for his care and politeness to me."

Mrs. Devereux now turned towards the Captain, to whom she curtsied, while he replied, "I should, Madam as a soldier, be wanting indeed, in gallantry, not to tender all my services to any lady who wants them. This lady must command them."

"Miss Gerard," returned she, "is much obliged to you. In her name, Sir, (and my own,) permit me to thank you."

Again he looked at the party; and while Mrs. Devereux, who seemed little disposed to enter into conversation with him, rang to order a chaise, he felt more inquisitive than ever to know who they were. He was certain the lady was not the parent of the younger one, though, from the joy and affection mutually displayed in their meeting, there seemed to be a relationship between them. It required little penetration, from the cold manner of the elderly lady towards him, to see, she rather wished to avoid, than form any acquaintance with him, for she was hurrying away as fast as common politeness would allow. Soon after the orders were given, the chaise was announced. The Captain acceded not to his own inclination, in not offering to accompany them; but he was too proud to have his services rejected, therefore with an air of gallantry, as he handed her into the chaise, he said, "now to offer, Madam, my escorte, would, I perceive, be superfluous; I have, therefore, merely to assure you of my good wishes for a pleasant journey, and bid you adieu." He bowed and departed.

When Angelica was alone with Mrs. Devereux, she informed her of her motives for having undertaken her journey without giving her previous notice of it, and then spoke of the polite attention she had met with from her travelling companion.

“Who,” said Mrs. Devereux, “is that young man you introduced me to, and where did you meet with him?”

“At Southampton: his name is Owen, he lives in this neighbourhood. He was extremely polite and friendly to me.”

“I am glad, my dear, you found a pleasant travelling companion in this stranger; but always avoid casual acquaintances; we can neither know their worth, nor who they are. To young women, they are sometimes attended with much inconvenience and danger; for, from the nature of them, our judgement must always be uncertain, and not unfrequently delusive.”

Angelica thought Mrs. Devereux rather severe in her remark, although she did not dispute the justice of it. But of Captain Owen she only thought as a passing acquaintance. Their short journey was soon accomplished; for in less than a quarter of an hour they were at Mrs. Devereux’s door.

Chawton House Library

CHAP. XXVII.

Yellow sheaves from rich Ceres her cottage had
crown'd,
Green rushes were strew'd on the floor,
Her casement, sweet woodbine crept wantonly
round,
And deck the sod seats at her door.
SHENSTONE.

ANGELICA, as Mrs. Devereux had described, found her residence literally a cottage. The house consisted of only one story, the roof was thatched, and the walls, washed with white, were covered with a profusion of woodbines and roses. The ceilings of the two small sitting rooms were low, but the beams that crossed them were tastefully concealed by a bordering of oak leaves, which likewise went round the paper of the apartment. The latticed window had a square projection in the centre, through which, inwardly, Mrs. Devereux had artfully trained the eglantine; and in this projecture stood a large bason of beautiful gold fish. The walls were decorated with some of Angelica's elegant drawings; not enclosed in gilt frames, but in a simple oak bordering. The curtains, of the purest white, were fancifully tied up with knots of green ribbon, and the floor was covered with a painted matting. The general air of the place had, to Angelica, more the appearance of an Arcadian hut, than an English cottage; and she expressed, in the warmest terms, her surprise and admiration. The room was decorated with a variety of beautiful flowers, in vases, and a rich profusion of them were scattered along a small gravel walk, in the centre of which, was a little green, that spread before the house. A wooden bridge, nearly concealed by boughs of trees, which hung pendant over a clear stream, separated her garden from the meadow, which yielded pasture to her cow. Beyond it, arose a range of Welch mountains, whose aerial tops swelled to the clouds; while their base was clothed with rich woods, whose uniformity was broken by the soft scenery scattered along the beautiful borders of the river Wye, where, amid the little hamlets, the poor found comfortable dwellings. The flocks that grazed the hills, constituted the occupation of many. Luxury had not crept in among them. They were simple, as the herds they tended, and the language they breathed to each other, was that of honesty, and national affection.

The reception Mrs. Devereux gave Angelica, was tender and consoling.—Without abating any of that respect she had formerly shewn her, as Lady Angelica Carteret, she now treated her with an affectionate familiarity, a pleasing confidence, that set her at perfect ease under the obligation she had conferred, in receiving her with so much friendly hospitality beneath her roof; which, without the magnificent ostentation of high life, was simple and elegant, as the mind of its benevolent owner. The chamber she occupied was very small, but it was very neat, and filled with the delicious fragrance of the woodbine, which strayed in at the window. In a light closet off it, were arranged her books, drawings, shells, birds, &c. Her governess had procured a small piano-forte for her, which, with the harp her uncle had formerly given her, stood in the parlour. This excellent woman, who considered the mind of her fair pupil, though dawning into maturity, by no means formed, made her devote the whole of her mornings to her, in those useful studies she hoped would be beneficial to her hereafter; convinced, that without the solid foundation of every moral virtue, a young woman, standing alone in the world, requires an uncommon share of prudence and good sense, to pass through it free from blemish. She was shocked and alarmed, at the conduct of the young Earl of Devaynes towards her, and foresaw she had nothing but insult to expect from him, should she ever again fall in his way. She beheld her too lovely, not to attract general observation, and from the cloud of mystery that involved her present destiny she

considered her surest safeguard was retreat; till time, or some unforeseen event might develop her future fate. In the look of searching curiosity Captain Owen wore, she saw, how dangerous it would be to introduce her into promiscuous society; where, without being known, her accomplishments and sweetness must shine forth amid all disadvantages of her retired situation; and expose her to the wonder and surmise that prevails in all country places, where the exact genealogy of every inhabitant is not known. Even should her beauty, by an accident, draw forth the offer of an alliance with some country gentleman, which from her apparent sequestered life, might prove desirable, it would be derogatory in Lady Angelica Carteret to accept; nor was it probable, with nobility she could be at present allied; for the days of romance being now ended, the noblemen of the present age were no longer ashamed to ally themselves, for convenience sake, to opulent tradesmen's daughters, who were able to repair their broken fortunes, nor think it a disgrace to mix their blood with those of plebeians.

Such being the just observation of Mrs. Devereux, in regard to her interesting young friend, she devoted her whole time to her improvement, blending every innocent recreation with those hours which were past in the most perfect seclusion. The mornings, as they had been at Graffington Abbey, were devoted to reading and needle-work. They dined early, that the afternoons might be spent in reading, music and drawing; when the evening closed in, with those rural and sweet walks, the romantic beauties of Wales afforded. Thus passed the days of Angelica, in her new and tranquil abode, unmarked by any incident. The death of her uncle, at times came over her with the most poignant reflection; but time had softened them gradually, into a remembrance, she rather, when alone, loved to invite.

Chawton House

CHAP. XXVIII.

CAPTAIN Owen, whom Angelica had left at the inn, was not long in reaching his father's house, where he did not fail to make immediate enquiries of his sister whether she knew Mrs. Devereux, and spoke of his fellow-traveller in terms of praise and admiration. From Miss Owen, however, he could not gain the least intelligence. The retirement Mrs. Devereux lived in, as before observed, prevented her being known, except to the poor peasantry, who believed her a guardian angel, lately sent among them, to comfort and relieve them in their distresses. Captain Owen, in rural sports, and the society of his friends, lost all impression of the fair Angelica. Not so, Lord Devaynes: who had paid a second, a third unavailing visit to the cottage of the faithful Gerard; who, he swore at most unmercifully, for allowing her to go without his permission, and returned home enraged, at the obstinate silence he maintained, for neither threats nor bribes could draw from him the smallest intelligence of her.

Angelica had been about six weeks with Mrs. Devereux, when one morning they had been induced to go out to visit a poor sick woman, to whom it was necessary without delay to administer a medicine. She was anxious to give it herself; and they were returning through a copse adjacent to their house, when a pointer swiftly passed them, immediately followed by the report of a gun. "I should guess," said Angelica, "some gentlemen are shooting near us." Hardly had she spoken, before she saw two advancing in sporting dresses, with their dogs. One of them, as they approached, she could not help imagining she had seen before, yet thought it impossible; but on coming close, she recognized her travelling friend, Captain Owen. Angelica was in a morning dress, and had a basket on her arm, in which she had carried some provision for the poor woman's children, and had now filled it with flowers. A straw hat, in which she had fixed a bunch of wild honey-suckle, she just plucked from the hedge, half shaded her face, over which a few locks of her pale hair had strayed; and she, perhaps, had never looked more lovely than in the present moment, as the blushes mantled in her cheek, at the approach of the gentlemen. He had almost passed her, till a sudden recollection seemed to cross him, and then turning hastily back, he stopped, exclaiming at the same time, with a look of delight, "Is it really possible I see Miss Gerard? It is a pleasure I have long indeed wished for, but till now dispaired of." He next paid his respects to Mrs. Devereux, and seemed wholly to forget the gentleman who was along with him, who had been, though a silent, not an uninterested spectator of all that had passed.

"You are very selfish, Owen," cried the stranger, "to engross the pleasure of these ladies' conversation to yourself. Will you not allow me the honour of an introduction to them?"

"Faith, I beg your pardon. Allow me, ladies, to present my Lord Trevelyan. My Lord, this is Mrs. Devereux and Miss Gerard; in the latter of whose countenance, if you have read Lavater, I am sure you will find an index to her mind. Short as the honour of my acquaintance has been, I proved it so, I assure you; therefore, if you are not well fortified, the artillery of her charms will make sad havock."

The nobleman, with a good humoured smile, replied, "You do well, Owen, as a brother officer, to point out the danger, but who would here seek a retreat?"

"I assure you, gentlemen," interrupted Mrs. Devereux, very gravely, "we are not used to such flattery here; nor do the guileless manners of the country sufficiently arm the female mind against it. You must have mistaken this field for the drawing-room of St. James's, and I request you will talk more soberly."

Their compliments had, indeed, raised the blushes in Angelica's cheeks, who was covered with confusion. "When," answered the Captain, "we find such an assemblage of loveliness, who can avoid expressing admiration? Least, however, Madam, you should take alarm, we will have done. Now permit me, Miss Gerard, to ask how you like Wales?"

"To me it has been productive of such enjoyment, I should be ungrateful, were it even less beautiful, did I not like it."

"If," interrupted Lord Trevelyan, "this young lady has been accustomed to a London life, when the beauty of the present season fades, I am afraid she will find the country dull. Few people like it during the whole year: though, in my opinion, it ever breathes a repose which, at all times, is charming. Have you a good neighbourhood, Owen?"

"Yes, such as it is; consisting of mere country dowdies."

"Then, Sir," said Angelica, "you consider the polish of London absolutely requisite to render people agreeable?"

"Not absolutely," answered the Captain, "a little of a town residence, I think an advantage, to correct that awkwardness people otherwise imperceptibly acquire."

"That," exclaimed his Lordship, "is not my objection. Natural manners, without even the polish of refinement, are not to me unpleasant; and where by nature they are elegant, no seclusion can destroy them. My only objection to a country residence is that confined to large provincial towns. There, the society, without being select, runs so much into the same circles, people acquire insensibly an illiberal way of speaking and thinking; and, even when that is not the case, card playing is so universal, as to form the principal happiness of life, and the very children seem trained to it from their cradle. In small villages, that cannot be. Those who reside in them, are chiefly peasants, or individuals, who give them the preference for their very seclusion. Large towns are mostly filled with low-born, low-bred, opulent people. No doubt there are exceptions, but they are very rare."

Mrs. Devereux, who looked delighted with Lord Trevelyan's sensible discourse, now reached her garden gate, to which the gentlemen had accompanied her and Angelica. Captain Owen took a brace of birds from his net, which he requested the former to accept of; after which, both gentlemen bowing respectfully, took leave, and were out of sight in a minute.

"I did not much like," said Mrs. Devereux, "those gentlemen knowing where we lived; yet I could not civilly shake them off, for even with a gallantry, mingled with their behaviour and conversation, it was respectful and polite. I admire that young nobleman extremely."

"I think," returned Angelica, (who had followed him with her eyes,) "he is the most elegant man I ever saw. I suppose he is on a visit at the manor-house. I really was glad to see Captain Owen again; for though he pays me a thousand ridiculous compliments, he is pleasant and good-humoured."

Mrs. Devereux made no reply, and the conversation dropped.

"Well!" cried Captain Owen, as he returned home with his friend, "what do you think of my travelling companion? did I not tell you she was a divinity? Faith she looks handsomer to-day, in that simple straw-hat, than the first time I saw her."

"She is lovely," replied Trevelyan, warmly, "beyond any thing I could have conceived from your description, animated as it proved. I confess I was taken by surprise; but were you not rather abrupt and rude in your address to her; and then at the expence of her blushes, in guarding me from charms that are almost irresistible?—Who is she?"

"I cannot tell; but simply that her name is Gerard. I suppose she resides with the elderly lady we met her with, and who lives in the most perfect obscurity, so much so, that the poor thing, when she arrived with me at Builth, we could not trace her residence, which threw her into the greatest distress. She came unprotected with me from Southampton, and curious, as I confess I am to know who she is, every enquiry has hitherto proved unsuccessful; neither my father nor sister ever heard of such persons; and I do not wonder, from the retirement they live in."

"Yet," cried Trevelyan, eagerly, "did you not perceive what an enchanting little spot the garden was; and the dwelling, though rustic, was not that of an ordinary cottage in

appearance. Miss Gerard's air too, her manners so elegant, her deportment so easy, if I greatly mistake not, displays an elevation which informs me she has not always moved in her present obscurity. I never yet, Owen, saw any one who has so warmly excited my interest, my admiration, as this beautiful stranger."

"Perhaps she is some Princess in disguise," said his friend half laughing.

"Or rather a Princess undisguised; for in disguise I consider them when dressed for court."

"Well, Clara shall visit her," interrupted the Captain, "that I am determined; whoever she may prove to be, she will obtain a pleasant acquaintance."

They now reached the manor-house, and the conversation ended.

Chawton House Library

CHAP. XXIX.

Un jeune homme comme il y en a peu.

MARMONTEL.

LORD Trevelyan was the only son of an Earl, who, unlike some noblemen, thought it requisite every young man should take an active part in life, and with this view, placed him, at an early age, in the army, where already he had been promoted to the rank of Colonel, after having served during the present war, in a distinguished manner on the Continent.

There was in the address of his Lordship, something peculiarly captivating. To a figure, elegant and dignified, he united a face, which, without being strictly handsome, was wonderfully interesting; his eyes had all the fire of youthful vivacity, blended with the most melting sensibility. The expression of his countenance was manly and dignified, and the tones of his voice were of uncommon sweetness. His mental qualifications had an equal share of pre-eminence. Lord Trevelyan had an understanding refined by every polite accomplishment; and without abating any of that strength of mind, for which he was distinguished, he was brave, generous, and humane. His heart ever alive to the calls of benevolence, which was portrayed in the mild benignity of his countenance. He was an excellent son to most excellent parents. His father was the most respected of men, his mother the most admirable of women. But Trevelyan, with all his worth, felt he was only human, and as such, subject to foibles. He possessed not a single vice; but he was somewhat subject to impulses of pride and impetuosity, two faults he had, with some success, endeavoured to correct.

When first he entered the army, he was in the same regiment with Captain Owen; he afterwards had removed into the Guards; but having known him from almost a boy, the habits of intimacy, then formed, had, without a perfect similarity of taste or sentiment, remained unshaken; which had induced him to accept his invitation to meet him on a shooting party, for two or three weeks in Wales. Trevelyan had never before seen the Captain's father, or he would have declined his visit; for he found him a man, whose morals he not only disliked, but whose general conduct and mode of living, he highly condemned.

On their return home, Captain Owen took an early opportunity of mentioning Angelica to his sister, at the same time expressing a wish she would visit her.

"With pleasure," replied she; "I heard some time ago, an elderly lady was come to reside in Jones's old cottage, and that she was very good to the poor. I have seen her frequently at church, and should have waited on her, for I want neighbours sadly, but understood, she chose to live quite retired. The young person you speak of will be a great acquisition to me.—I will call on her to-morrow."

Miss Owen was an open-hearted, generous girl, without an idea of refinement, either from natural sentiment, or elegant education. She was delighted at the prospect of this new acquaintance and easily prevailed on her brother and Lord Trevelyan to accompany her to Mrs. Devereux's, taking at the same time, a domestic along with her, with a large basket of game.

Mrs. Devereux and Angelica, who were sitting at work, were surprised to observe so large a party riding up to the gate, but soon discovered who the gentlemen were; and, little as Mrs. Devereux wished for their future acquaintance, she was, notwithstanding, too well bred to retire.

Captain Owen introduced the lady, by saying, "My sister, Madam, wishes so much for an introduction to you and Miss Gerard, I hope you will allow her the honour of your acquaintance."

Miss Owen, not used to the cold politeness of the fashionable world, accosted Mrs.

Devereux and Angelica with the air of an old friend, affectionately saluted them, expressed much pleasure in finding out such neighbours, and pressed them to accept her presents, with an earnestness so cordial, that it was impossible, without incivility, to refuse."

"How beautiful is your garden," cried Trevelyan, delighted with all around him, which he eagerly surveyed. "This sequestered spot is so charming, it would almost make one in love with solitude."

"I should be moped to death," cried Miss Owen, "in this solitude, as I am sure you justly call it; and I confess I am curious to know how Miss Gerard contrives to pass her time without any variety."

"You surely need not ask that question," returned his Lordship, casting his eyes around the room, (which the whole of the party had before done,) when we see so much elegance and taste displayed."

"Yes, this place is very pretty," interrupted Miss Owen, "I could never have dreamt old farmer Jones's cottage could have been metamorphosed into so tasty a place. Don't you remember, brother, when we were children, we used to come into this very spot we are now sitting in, (which was then a kitchen,) to see nurse Winifred? After farmer Jones died, I never heard to whom it belonged."

"I remember the circumstance," said the Captain, "but that this Arcadian spot was what you describe it, I can hardly imagine."

"If you are fond of riding, Ma'am," exclaimed Miss Owen, to Angelica, "I shall be glad of your company sometimes; I go out all weathers. But I suppose you are bookish, (looking towards some painted shelves, which were filled,) I hate reading and work. The former sets me to sleep, the latter makes me melancholy. Now hunting has quite a contrary effect, it exhilarates the spirits so much, I generally sing and dance after it the whole evening. You play, I perceive," striking the chords of her harp which stood beside her. "This is a famous country for harps, have you heard any of ours?"

"They, I am sure," cried Trevelyan, "are far inferior to the one you have just touched; and when we have the pleasure of a further acquaintance with Miss Gerard, she will convince us it is so by a comparison. Every recreation to instruct and amuse the mind, seems centered here."

"Have you seen many of our walks?" interrupted Captain Owen. "The copse we met you in the other day, leads to some beautiful woods. If you will venture yourself with Clara and us, we shall be happy to shew you the country."

"You are very polite; but my time of a morning is devoted to Mrs. Devereux at home, and of an evening we walk together."

"Not always," added he, half smiling, "was it not of a morning when we met you, and had you not then been on a ramble?"

"No, indeed, we had been to visit a"—she had no occasion to explain to Captain Owen where she had been, she stopt—blushed—and hesitated.

"I don't mean to ask," interrupted he quickly, "I know young ladies love secrecy sometimes; therefore let the secret rest; I wish neither to penetrate into it, nor to be impertinent. But when young ladies attire themselves with the simplicity of shepherdesses of old, and live in Arcadian cots, they cannot wonder, if curiosity is awake from so novel a circumstance, among a set of Welch peasantry."

"I find," said Mrs. Devereux, "where people live in the hope of escaping observation, they are sometimes unfortunate enough to excite the most; for I had considered Angelica and myself were too insignificant not to pass through the world in that quiet we sought in this retirement."

"You take up the matter seriously," cried the Captain, "when I meant only badinage, and although retirement is your choice, I hope you will not be cruel enough to renounce

society wholly; my sister waited on you, Madam, for the express pleasure of finding a future acquaintance in you and Miss Gerard.”

“You are very kind,” replied Mrs. Devereux, “and Miss Gerard shall certainly avail herself of your sister’s acquaintance.”

The party now arose to take leave. Miss Owen gave both ladies a very pressing invitation to the manor-house, which, without rudeness they could not decline. After they were gone, Mrs. Devereux said to Angelica, “I think it wrong to banish young people wholly from society. We were formed by nature to enjoy it among the amiable and enlightened; and if not fortunate enough to meet with such people, we must not entirely withdraw from it, because they are not always to be found. Miss Owen, though unpolished in manners, seems obliging, therefore I would have you cultivate her acquaintance. No doubt her family are respectable.”

Mrs. Devereux was rather uneasy to find, in the taste she had displayed to adorn her humble dwelling, she had excited the curiosity and wonder of the neighbourhood. Since the Owens had discovered her retreat, to avoid the appearance of singularity, she now resolved to visit them, and the clergyman’s family.

Chawton House Library

CHAP. XXX.

“Ask me no more where Jove bestows,
When June is past, the fragrant rose,
For in your beauty’ orient deep
These flowers, as in their causes sleep.

“Ask me no more whether doth haste
The nightingale, when May is past,
For in your sweet dividing throat,
She winters, and keeps warm her note.

“Ask me no more where those stars light,
Which downwards fall in dead of night;
For in your eyes they sit, and there
Fix’d become, as in their sphere.”

THE Owen family were neither respected nor liked by the neighbourhood in general. Mr. Owen senior, had acquired a large fortune by gambling and horse-racing. For many years he attended Newmarket with considerable success; and of an evening, he was usually to be seen at Brooks’ or White’s, where he dealt for the pharo tables, and saw fair play, at the premium of £—. He was allowed to be the first connoisseur of horses in the kingdom, and frequently rode his own at the races he formerly had attended. The woman he married was the daughter of a celebrated musician at the opera house, and her beauty was her only dowry. She died when her children were infants; and his son, as he advanced to the age of manhood, disgusted with the profession of his father entered the army; while his sister, for want of a proper education, acquired a taste for those masculine amusements she had ample leave to indulge in, and she became better acquainted with the sports of the field, than the more elegant and feminine accomplishments. Had Miss Owen been under good tuition, she would have made an amiable woman; but lively, and unused to controul, she had acquired an indifference of the world’s opinion, and where her inclination took the lead, she never studied propriety. Her figure was, by nature good, had she taken proper pains with her person, but she dressed badly; her complexion was coarse, and her colour high, from being constantly exposed to the air. Her manners were unpolished, her voice loud, her gait lounging; and in her visit to Angelica, she had discernment enough to perceive she was very unlike her.

In a few days after her visit to Greenwood cot, an invitation was sent to Mrs. Devereux and Angelica, to dine at the Manor-house on the following Thursday, which reluctantly was accepted by the former. When the day arrived, Angelica found a secret pleasure in the proposed visit she could not account for, and spent more time than usual at her toilet. Her sable dress admitted of little display of taste, but the jet beads she drew through her pale hair, were uncommonly becoming, and her black robe set off her complexion to the greatest advantage. Even Mrs. Devereux, who saw her every day, thought she had never looked so lovely, and could hardly avoid telling her so, repugnant as she was to pay her the shadow of a compliment. Mr. Owen sent his carriage for the ladies, and they reached the Manor-house at four o’clock. The paddock that surrounded it was very beautiful, and commanded an extensive view of the country; but the house was old-fashioned, and not a very comfortable dwelling. Mr. Owen had given himself no trouble in adorning it; and of neatness or taste, his daughter had no idea. They were ushered into a large drawing-room, very ill furnished. The chairs and sofas of yellow damask, were torn and dirty, and the dark

wainscot gave the room a very gloomy aspect. The wide chimney was filled with a wood fire, before which, lay half a dozen dogs, who on their entrance, gave them no very favourable reception. Miss Owen received them with as much politeness as she was capable of, and introduced them to her father, a little, thick, odd looking man, with a morose countenance and sharp black eyes. He conversed with them for a few minutes, and then continued his discourse with a young man, who, Miss Owen informed them, was an opulent gentleman farmer in the neighbourhood.

Captain Owen, who had kept Lord Trevelyan out later with his gun than he wished, now made his appearance, accompanied by his friend; the former, in a very polite manner, bade the ladies welcome, while the latter seated himself between Mrs. Devereux and Angelica, conversing with much pleasantness on general topics, until the dinner was announced. He then handed Angelica through a room, resembling an armory, into the dinner one, where she found every thing set out with profusion. But the dogs, who were never excluded from any place where there was plentiful fare, pushed themselves in between the chairs, and were ready to snatch every thing off the plates of the guests.

"Upon my soul, father," said Captain Owen, "it is not paying much respect to our friends, to allow these troublesome animals to be here," observing the ladies were much incommoded by them.

His father replied, "those who visit me, Ned, must put up with my ways, I am too old now to change them."

Trevelyan, who seemed rather hurt, whispered Angelica, "I will endeavor to prevent their approaching you. Elderly people have the privilege of being indulged in their whims; and we younger ones ought to yield to them, because it is too probable, when years steal on us we shall naturally imbibe some favourite prejudice."

"Your observation is true," replied Angelica.

Little conversation passed during dinner. Soon after the cloth was removed, the ladies withdrew. About eight o'clock they were joined by Trevelyan and the Captain. Mr. Owen, and the two other gentlemen had adjourned to the billiard room. The ladies refusing cards, music was proposed. Angelica was asked to sit down to the harpsichord, which she declined. Captain Owen then eagerly came up to her, and said, "Do not have the cruelty to refuse. I saw, Miss Gerard, a harp and pianoforte in your house, therefore you have no excuse; positively I will take none, for Clara is uncommonly fond of music."

"The countenance of Miss Gerard," interrupted Trevelyan, "proclaims her a stranger to any thing but harmony; and if I mistake not greatly, she is quite a proficient in music."

"To refuse," returned she, diffidently, "would appear to value my trifling performance so far beyond its merit, I certainly, gentlemen, will immediately comply." The Captain handed her to the instrument, to which she was just going to sit down, when Miss Owen, taking a violin out of a case, said, "she would be happy to accompany her."

While the astonished Angelica, doubting whether she understood her, exclaimed, "What did you say, Madam?"

"Do you play any of Hayden's grand pieces," continued Miss Owen, "here is a beautiful one if you will try it."

Angelica, who considered the violin a most extraordinary instrument for a woman, was, notwithstanding delighted, for her performance, wild as it was, displayed a most singular degree of genius. The eyes of Trevelyan were fixed with admiration on Angelica, whose brilliant finger was alone surpassed by the delicacy and feeling she displayed, and convinced him of what he before imagined, that she had not spent all her days in a Welch cottage, for with the sweetest manners was blended a dignity nothing could hide. She possessed none of the awkward bashfulness which young women acquire, who have lived always in the country.

"You must have good instruction," said Miss Owen, when they had finished the piece, "I never heard it so well performed."

"Your praise, then, Madam," returned she, gracefully, "you must bestow on Mrs. Devereux; I had the honour of her instruction."

"You surprise me, surely you must have had some other."

"I had a few finishing lessons in London, last winter."

"Then you have been in London," interrupted Captain Owen, eagerly, and with a look of the most searching curiosity. The eyes of Trevelyan, also, were fixed on her with a degree of anxious enquiry.

"Yes," exclaimed she, with a half-suppressed sigh, "I spent last winter there."

Every word increased their desire of knowing more of her, but Mrs. Devereux immediately changed the subject. Soon after, Trevelyan prevailed on her to sing, and she accompanied herself in the beautiful air of "*Luangi del caro beni*", so perfectly adapted to the melodious tones of her voice. Trevelyan was passionately fond of music, as well as a perfect judge; and he was quite enchanted with the touching sweetness of her performance, which was so correct, yet simple. The two gentlemen, when she had finished, joined her in some catches and glees, and the latter part of the evening went so quickly, it was twelve o'clock before the party separated. Captain Owen conducted Mrs. Devereux to his father's carriage, while Trevelyan, delighted to lead Angelica, took her hand, and as he bade her good night, gallantly exclaimed, "If I were wise, Madam, I should wish to see you no more; for where good sense is united to a loveliness so attractive, a man must be invulnerable indeed, who is not in danger of being wholly subdued." He bowed, and left them.

Mrs. Devereux conversed with Angelica till they reached home of the family at the Manor-house, while Trevelyan spoke to his friend in such terms of admiration of Angelica, as led him, with little penetration, to discover what was the probable state of his heart.

END OF THE FIRST VOLUME.

THE
NOBILITY OF THE HEART.
VOL. II

Chawton House Library

THE
NOBILITY OF THE HEART:
A NOVEL.

BY *ELIZABETH ISABELLA SPENCE*,
AUTHOR OF *HELEN SINCLAIR*.

For Fortune can depress, or can advance;
But true Nobility is of the mind,
Not giv'n by Chance, and not to Chance resign'd.

DRYDEN.

IN THREE VOLUMES.

VOL. II

LONDON:
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1805

THE NOBILITY OF THE HEART.

CHAP. I.

CONSCIOUS there were many objections against forming an intimacy with the Owen family, when Angelica reflected on the vulgarity and ignorance of the young lady, and the want of respectability in her father, she could not avoid lamenting it; for she had never spent a more agreeable day than that she passed at the manor-house, which she would openly have expressed to Mrs. Devereux, had she not perceived she was inclined to discourage a further acquaintance with them. She was, indeed, conscious that pleasure had been promoted by the preference of Trevelyan. His conversation was elegant and refined, united with manners which on so slight an acquaintance had abounded not merely with good breeding, but the most flattering attention: it had stolen upon her insensibly, and in having once seen him, she deeply regretted she should probably see him no more. Mrs. Devereux's secluded mode of life precluded her receiving visitors, and she had, she was sure, too strict a sense of propriety to admit young men, had she even been on terms of intimacy with Miss Owen. The captain, however, was too much a man of the world to consider the precision he had from the first moment of introduction to Mrs. Devereux observed in her, and in the course of the week called with his friend at Greenwood cot, but Angelica unfortunately had gone out to walk; she on her return saw their cards with a disappointment very visible in her countenance. Miss Owen, fully engaged with the chace, she had not seen, except passing on horseback with the hounds, since she had dined at the manor-house; and thus elapsed the next fortnight without the smallest intercourse.—The following Sunday at church Angelica beheld, not without emotion, Lord Trevelyan, Captain Owen and his sister enter, just as the service had began. When it was over they waited, and joined her. After the usual compliments had passed, Miss Owen said to Angelica, "You must come and dine with us to-day? I have been so much engaged, I have not been able to call upon you. His Lordship and Ned go on Wednesday; therefore I shall not take a refusal. I hate ceremony; and I think you have too much sense to use it."

"We have indeed," interrupted Captain Owen, "been wretched neighbours; but the blame rests wholly with Clara. We did not dare violate what would be deemed decorum, by venturing to pay you a second visit after being so unfortunate to find you from home, else Trevelyan and I would have been guided by our wishes, in again seeking the society of the lovely recluse of Greenwood cot."

"Whose sweet strains," cried Trevelyan, "I can never forget; and, whose society is too inviting not to wish renewed. May I not then have a voice in the invitation of to day?"

"Miss Gerard," replied Mrs. Devereux, "never dines out on a Sunday."

"What nonsense," interrupted Miss Owen, laughing, "I declare I should take you both for Methodists, from such preposterous strictness."

"Mrs. Devereux," exclaimed Trevelyan, "thinks so properly on all subjects that to dispute her will, would be to forfeit her esteem; yet, if for once they might be laid aside, it is needless surely to say, the happiness it would give to all the party."

"Miss Gerard," returned she mildly, "shall do as she pleases. So far am I from wishing to restrain her, when so kindly intreated, I think she ought not to refuse."

"Come, come," cried the Captain, "we have gained a victory, and Miss Gerard is our prisoner for the day; but shall we not have, Madam, (continued he, to Mrs. Devereux,) the pleasure of your company also?"

She declined it, (feeling too much indisposed to spend the day abroad,) the party, therefore, after attending her home, proceeded with Angelica to the manor-house. During their walk, Trevelyan, who kept by her side, engaged her in the most lively and entertaining conversation on various subjects. He was in high spirits; and the vivacity of his mind, shone conspicuously in the animation of his countenance and manners.—Angelica lost that seriousness which had of late been habitual to her; and insensibly reassumed the natural cheerfulness of her disposition. She talked with reserve; and Captain Owen was not a little surprised to observe the rich cultivation of her understanding. Once or twice he endeavoured to trace her family and connections, but Angelica, constantly on her guard, waved the subject to general topics. At dinner the pleasure of the day was banished by the arrival of company. The party consisted of a neighbouring gentleman farmer with his wife and two daughters; ill-bred and assuming young women who engrossed the conversation wholly with Miss Owen. They spoke in the broad Welch dialect, blended with bad English. They talked of the conquests they had made at the assemblies given at Builth, of the neighbouring families, whose characters, and occupations they described with an ill-natured avidity which astonished Angelica. Now and then the young women addressed Trevelyan and the Captain; but neither of them were disposed to listen to, or discourse with them, and they vainly sought an attention they could not obtain.

This was a species of society and conversation wholly new to Angelica. The little she had ever mixed in, was entirely confined to high life; and if it had abounded with flattery and nonsense, was so happily blended with good breeding, as not to create disgust. She was shocked to find how readily such mere girls indulged in a turn for scandal; with what malignity and spirit they defamed each other and although a stranger to any of the parties they spoke of, she was infinitely hurt. She turned to Trevelyan, who was sitting beside her, and said, in a half whisper, “Do you remember, my Lord, the observation you made the first time I had the pleasure of seeing you?—how just it was!—for at this moment it is verified.”

“I do not remember to what you allude; will you repeat it?”

She did. “More flattering,” returned he, “must ever be to me the impression so trivial a comment has made upon you; but not any thing escapes the observation of a mind like Miss Gerard’s.”

“I hope then,” returned she, blushing, “I shall profit at least by the observation.”

The afternoon passed very insipidly when the ladies adjourned to the drawing room. Miss Owen fully engrossed with her other guests hardly noticed Angelica, while their curiosity, now exhausted in the looks they had bestowed on her, seemed even to forget she was present. The tea was followed by the entrance of the gentlemen, and in the course of the evening Angelica was prevailed on to give them some of Handel’s music, which she executed, and accompanied with her voice, in a very masterly style.

CHAP. II.

Some are never strangers,
But soon as seen, the soul as 'twere by instinct
Springs towards them with resistless force, and owns
Congenial sympathy.

MISS OWEN had informed Angelica in two days Trevelyan and her brother were going. Had she seen him now actually for the last time, or would he call? would he offer her his good wishes before his departure! Lost in the most painful conjecture and solicitude all Monday passed away; but on the following day he came. She was seated alone in the parlour, deeply engaged in finishing a group of figures in crayons, when he and his friend entered without observation, and they had remained some minutes before she perceived them standing beside her. The Welch girl, unused to the ceremony of announcing people, had left them at the door, which was open, and Angelica conceiving it to be Mrs. Devereux, continued her employment without looking up. The two gentlemen were too much engaged in contemplating the beauty of the artist to interrupt her. Angelica's auburn hair, in the attitude of stooping, had escaped from the ribbon that usually confined its luxuriance, and now fell in natural ringlets over her face and bosom, which they in part concealed: blushing deeply when she saw them, she rose in hasty confusion, begged them to be seated; at the same time rung the bell to inform Mrs. Devereux there was company below.

"By Jove," said the Captain, "if I were an artist, I would not loose a moment in placing Miss Gerard in the beautiful group she is painting. Do you not think, Trevelyan, she would be an animated addition to the painting?"

"Not only an animated, but an invaluable group," returned he, "to those who were fortunate enough to possess it."

On Mrs. Devereux's entrance, the gentlemen, after paying their compliments to her, told her, they could not think of quitting Wales, which they were to do on the morrow, without tendering their good wishes, and had therefore taken the liberty to call; for they each perceived the cold reserve of her manner towards them.

Angelica changed colour at the confirmation of their early departure, and felt a concern she could not disguise; while Trevelyan said to her, "If, Madam, you have any commands to honour me with, I shall be proud of the commission."

"Perhaps," interrupted the Captain, "as winter approaches Miss Gerard will be tempted to escape from the dreary Welch mountains, and pitch her tent for the season in London."

"I have," exclaimed she, (while a not unobserved sigh, and tear escaped her,) "bid long, perhaps an everlasting farewell to London, and with my departure to all the happiness I experienced there, and I have not a wish to pass beyond the limits of this country." She felt she had said more than she ought, or intended, and suddenly recollecting herself stopt; for Trevelyan was looking at her with a sort of tender inquiry, that called the blushes again into her cheeks.

"I should grieve indeed," cried he, with much softness, "if the metropolis has been productive of any painful circumstance to prevent your gracing it with your presence in future; nor hitherto exempt from actual misfortune, (glancing a look at her black dress) you, my dear Miss Gerard," added he, (with infinite emotion) "have already tasted of these sad calamities, human nature is ever subject to; and which, I ardently hope, you will be a stranger to in future."

This speech was too much for the already weak spirits of Angelica, who burst into tears.

“Faith,” said Captain Owen, “your Lordship has moralized to some purpose. Do not mind him, (to Angelica); he was always a sad sermonizing fellow.”

The gentlemen now rose to take leave. “Have you no friend, no *favorite*, Miss Gerard,” cried Captain Owen, with a penetrating look, “to send your remembrances to; or are they to be found among the Welch mountains? I hope,” added he, (taking her hand), “you will not, however, forget, you possess some at Owen manor-house, who will always be happy to see you. If it is long before I have that pleasure again, I shall expect, in the mean time, to hear, you have taken captive some of our swains; and if I mistake not,” continued he, (glancing an arch look at Trevelyan) “we now depart with a heart confessedly in bondage.”

“Then beware,” interrupted his friend, colouring highly, “least too great an affectation of liberty be not, Owen, too nearly allied to your own captivity. But,” added he, “this I must say, Miss Gerard has fixed an impression no time can erase.” He kissed her hand with respectful tenderness, and after again repeating his adieus, they both departed.

“Every time I see that nobleman,” cried Mrs. Devereux, “he rises in my estimation. Without the disgusting gallantry of Captain Owen, he is sensible, spirited and high bred.”

Angelica saw not—heard not—every idea was absorbed. She sat with her eyes fixed towards the window, and her hand which supported her cheek rested on the table while a heavy sigh, (which startled Mrs. Devereux,) escaped her. Shocked at her own weakness, on observing the eyes of her maternal friend fixed with surprise and solicitude upon her, she arose, in hasty disorder, and left the room. The gallant, the tender address of Trevelyan had subdued her; she could not believe she was wholly indifferent to him. His looks—his words contradicted it; and that hope, although they might never meet again, consoled her under his departure. Mrs. Devereux flattering herself so sudden an impression would not prove lasting, took no notice of it; and when they met again, she conversed on indifferent topics.

CHAP. III.

A man he was to all the country dear,
And passing rich with forty pounds a year;
Remote from towns he ran his godly race,
Nor e'er had chang'd, or wish'd to change his place.
Unskilful he to fawn or seek for pow'r,
By doctrines fashion'd to the varying hour;
For other aims his heart had learn'd to prize,
More bent to raise the wretched than to rise.

GOLDSMITH.

While Lord Trevelyan and Captain Owen once more mixed in the busy scenes of London, where the former did not even amid its gaiety, lose the impression Angelica had made on him, she found a not unpleasing recreation, as the long winter evenings were fast approaching, in the chearful company of the guileless inhabitants at the parsonage; whose society Mrs. Devereux of late, had been anxious she should cultivate. Mr. Evans possessed an excellent woman for his wife, and was blessed with an engaging young family; his manners were drest alone in the simple guise of goodness and benevolence; and the lessons he taught were those he practised: they flowed from a chearful, yet pious mind: a mind pictured in the open serenity of his countenance. His stipend was very small, yet large enough with œconomy to supply the moderate wishes of his family, and dispense a portion of it to the poor. Mrs. Evans was plain in address, but it was untinged by vulgarity. She was a tender mother, and an excellent wife: their children were always clean and neat, healthy in appearance; and were docile, lively, and obliging. Mrs. Devereux, who respected them extremely, shewed Angelica the possibility of finding in the humble walks of life, good sense without the refinement of a polished education, where it has virtue and benevolence to adorn it. They frequently met at each others houses during the christmas festival, when the evenings were spent in those innocent recreations a rural life affords. Mr. Evans's three little girls were extremely fond of Angelica, for she good-humouredly sung to them, danced with them, played at the various sports which delight children. Kitty, the younger one, a lovely child of about five years old used often to say to her, "I do love to hear you, my dear Miss Garard, much better than the old harper, I do, for your music is much sweeter." In such simple pastime, were many of Angelica's days now spent.—She still visited at the manor-house, but Miss Owen oftener visited her, for the hunting season had so fully engrossed her, it was only by a formal invitation, which was seldom given, she went there. Miss Owen returned home to a late dinner, after which she went early to bed, from the fatigue of the day's amusement.—Angelica never liked her, and now less than ever, from her having once very coarsely rallied her about Lord Trevelyan, on her venturing, soon after his departure, to enquire after him and her brother; therefore the want of her society she did not lament. There were, indeed, many hours when she felt the loss of an amiable female associate of her own age, to whom she could freely communicate her thoughts, the destitution of her situation, which delicacy prevented her lamenting to a woman who was liberally affording her a comfortable, a respectable asylum. Often, when alone, was her mind absorbed with the strange occurrences of her life, which, short as it had been, had hitherto abounded with incidents so singular, and her future destiny seemed involved in a mystery not even time perhaps could unravel. At the present moment she was hanging a dependant on a person in whom she had no claim, and becoming daily more attached to, she could not bring herself without anguish to think of leaving. Yet young, in the vigour of life, and health, what right

had she to encroach on the benevolence of Mrs. Devereux, when talents were given her to procure a subsistence for herself. But whether could she go, forlorn, unprotected as she was, without the danger of throwing herself in Lord Devaynes's way, who from what she had seen of him she was persuaded would take every opportunity were they to meet, not merely to affront, but perhaps vilify her. She was possessed of a title, which instead of doing her honour she was under the necessity of burying in obscurity, and was deprived of a munificent fortune for want of friends to assert her claim to it; she could not avoid considering her lot as peculiarly distressing, on recurring to all these circumstances. Next would her ideas wander to the sweet delights, the beautiful retreats of Graffington Abbey, her late happy name. But with those ideas were associated the recollection of the last horrible night she spent there, at such perfect variance with that soft repose that used to reign there. When the very elements were in such a tremendous conflict. The mysterious statue too—the oratory—the phantom at the altar, seemed all as if the awful scene were again before her. Turning from these painful images, she then would picture the tender fondness of her uncle, who was now no more. His instructive conversation, his indulgent conduct, his meek resignation; and when she felt it was all passed away as though it had never been, the most mournful sensations hung about her heart. Nor was Lord Trevelyan forgotten in the various subjects which floated in her mind. Short as her acquaintance with him had proved, that fine manly sense which accompanied the elegance of his conversation, she retraced with a melancholy delight; she wished to know who were his family and connections; who the happy beings he could claim kindred with! But any questions on such a topic she dared not trust herself with; therefore only lamented in having seen him, it was probable she might see him no more. With these reflections, did Angelica too frequently indulge herself when she was alone. Her excellent governess beheld with a mournful pleasure those graces that adorned her person and mind, now almost ripened into maturity; for the future destiny of her young friend, was a subject of the most serious anxiety to her. The more she contemplated her loveliness, the more firmly she resolved, while life was spared her, not to trust her under any other protection than her own. That Lord Trevelyan had received a favourable impression of her, from the whole of his conduct, she did not doubt; but the obscurity, not to say apparent mystery, that hung about her was such a disadvantage, that, greatly as she wished to promote an alliance, she knew sufficient of the world to be certain, a sensible prudent man would not be so rash to unite himself to a young woman seemingly without fortune, and in rank so much beneath him.

CHAP. IV.

O prima vera gioventu de l'anno,
Bella madre di fiori,
D'erbe novelle e di novelli amori;
Tu terni ben, ma teco,
No tornano i sereni
E fortunati di de le mie gioie

GUARINI.

Spring now approached with the most pleasing aspect. It was a season Angelica had always greatly delighted in. She loved to watch the natural progress of the flowers—to rear them with her hand—to wander along the margin of the banks decked with primroses and violets and to listen to the soft sweet note of the blackbird. But now alas! all these beautiful objects, bursting forth into renewed life, and gay with the most lovely tints, and breathing the most delicious perfume, lost all their former charms: as she mournfully gazed on them she remembered that not one spring had yet revolved since she had been deprived of her uncle. She remembered with what transport she had with him returned to Graffington Abbey, at the close of the former. How luxuriant its beauties!—how sweet the repose that dwelt there! How many delightful walks and rides they had enjoyed together in the long summer evenings:—but above all, she was deeply impressed with the instructive force of his conversation, so blended with tenderness and good advice, as never to be forgotten. She endeavoured also to call to mind the firmness he wished to inspire her with: and as these mournful recollections pressed upon her, she tried to call that energy forth; she felt it a duty to exert, and as she endeavoured to do so, she did not fail in the attempt.

Three months passed on without incident, till one morning in the end of July, Miss Owen, whom Angelica sometimes visited, entered in a hurried manner; she was in high spirits, and informed her she had just received a letter from her brother, who intreated her father, and self, to join him at Swansea in a few days, having a short leave of absence. “Now,” continued Miss Owen, “it is such dull work going with only my father, I cannot think of it. I am therefore come, Miss Gerard, to desire you will pack up all your finery, put on your best looks, and accompany us. I positively will not take a refusal. I am sure it will do you good; for here you would sit mope, mope, I verily believe for ever.”

“You are extremely kind, my dear Madam,” returned she, “but indeed gaiety has no charms for me.”

In that she said true; yet notwithstanding had a wish to go, from a faint hope Trevelyan might be of the party.

“O! none I dare say,” replied Miss Owen, looking incredulous at her declaration. “Mrs. Devereux,” (now for the first time addressing that lady) “Why don’t you lay our commands on her?”

Mrs. Devereux who was the last woman to deprive a young person of a proper gratification, yet now so wholly disapproved of her accompanying Miss Owen to a watering place, she gravely replied, “If I can participate in the inclination of Angelica, I think I may venture to put a negative on your invitation at once; she is notwithstanding much obliged to you.”

“Why a negative?” cried Miss Owen, in a disappointed tone, “I am sure Miss Gerard is not like other young people, if she does not prefer seeing a little of the world to being buried alive here.”

The why, and wherefore, it was not necessary to give Miss Owen, whom, if the truth was told, Mrs. Devereux did not consider a proper escort for her juvenile friend. She knew it

stamped a consequence, and a respect on a young woman, nothing could do away, what society she was seen in. This being her opinion she said no more, while Miss Owen continued; “perhaps you do not think I am old enough to take care of her; and are afraid Ned will bring some dashing fellow with him who will run away with her? I assure you my father will take care of us both. You must allow her to go, for you can have no good reason to refuse me.”

After more than an hour spent in vain argument and intreaty, she was obliged reluctantly to depart, much offended at Mrs. Devereux’s perseverance.

In the mean time, Angelica experienced a disappointment she was ashamed to own, and in vain endeavoured to look chearful; whilst Mrs. Devereux, extremely hurt to refuse her, still conscious of the propriety of it, maintained her resolution.

The two days previous to Miss Owen’s department, Angelica, at her earnest intreaty, spent wholly at the Manor-house, in assisting to equip her to some advantage. It was on the morning of the last one, it occurred to Mr. Owen to go himself, and request Mrs. Devereux, with Angelica, to join their party. So many intreaties were used, that unable longer to contend with them, she at length gave a reluctant consent, and prepared with an ungraciousness, not natural to her, to accompany them all to Swansea.

“I go Angelica,” said she, to her, “by no means with that chearfulness I wish to attend every enjoyment you are to share. But it is so generally thought people in advanced life abridge the gratifications of the young, that without being sensible I deserve the character, I no long withstand such urgent intreaty. After all that has been said on this intended excursion, were I still to refuse, your thoughts perpetually wandering to Swansea, would picture joys too often existing only in imagination, and when possessed, replete with disappointments. But we will go my love. While you are under my care, Miss Owen shall not lead you into any thing wrong.”

The creative fancy of Angelica was like that of most girls under eighteen, somewhat tinctured with romance; and in this instance she did injustice to her governess, in considering her rather severe in her judgment. After making some necessary preparations for their journey, they slept at the Manor-house, to be ready to set out with the family in the morning. They were however not much pleased with the travelling plan. Miss Owen, who affected to despise ceremony, and was a stranger to good breeding, said, she could not endure to be stifled up in the carriage, and should accompany her father on horseback. Therefore Mrs. Devereux and Angelica were packed in with the maid, and two French dogs in the coach. Mrs. Devereux only smiled at the little respect paid to them, while Mr Owen, as he bid them adieu, said, “You will excuse Clara, who prefers riding with me, and be so good as to take care of her dogs.”

They found the journey from Builth to Swansea very pleasant; travelling through that part of Glamorganshire so richly cultivated as to be esteemed the garden of Wales; and with the little journey Angelica was extremely delighted. They reached Swansea to a late dinner, and on arriving at the inn, found Mr. Owen and his daughter waiting for them. The next morning they all went in search of a lodging.

CHAP. V.

Mr. Owen, immediately on his son's arrival, subscribed to the assemblies, and put all their names down at the library; a form Angelica would have dispensed with, had she been permitted. From the Captain's being in the army, they had more of the military for their society, than Mrs. Devereux altogether liked. She always detained Angelica at home of a morning, when Miss Owen would have her riding about the country; which she constantly did, with only the officers. Mrs. Devereux was sure the less young girls were seen abroad, the more highly they were thought of; she knew, indeed, that fashionable manners, and fashionable conversation were by the gay considered as a first-rate qualification. But when individuals sought for domestic comfort, for rational society, it was not in the path of dissipation; they were pleasant enough to trifle a few light hours away; but the one of solid happiness was only to be found where simplicity of heart, and simplicity of manners prevailed.

Miss Owen was all gaiety, all spirits; and had not Mrs. Devereux been a sort of restraint upon her, she would not have been very choice of the society she formed; for a watering place frequently supplies that which is by no means eligible. Mr. Owen, senior, they seldom saw except at dinner; the captain, however, was very polite in his attention to the ladies; constantly attending them in their rides and walks. His conversation was lively, and agreeable; the more so, from not being so profuse in his compliments to Angelica as formerly. His gallantry, however, did not escape the observation of his associates, who rallied him on his *belle passion*, and declared, that old, ugly Duenna (meaning Mrs. Devereux) was wise not to trust so beautiful a young creature alone, under so dangerous an escort.

In seeing Captain Owen, Angelica had cherished the hope of obtaining some intelligence of Trevelyan; and strange she thought it, he seemed intentionally to avoid mentioning him, as if he did it on purpose to tease her. She had indeed imagined it possible he would have accompanied his friend to Swansea, but so far from his doing so, not the most remote mention was made of such a plan, and she now reluctantly gave up all idea of his coming. The evening now arrived fixed for the assembly; when Miss Owen more gaily, than becomingly drest, proved an excellent foil to Angelica; who, having laid aside her mourning, had more opportunity to display her taste in the simple attire which adorned her. Her luxuriant tresses had not been spoiled for the sake of fashion, and were confined in a fanciful manner by strings of pearl. Her gown, of the finest muslin, was trimmed round the bosom with a broad lace, which was thrown back in a becoming manner; the only ornament she wore was a small miniature of her uncle, set round with brilliants. Several gentlemen requested the honor of her hand; but that honor Captain Owen reserved for himself, leading her in triumph up to the dancers. When they had reached the bottom of the set, where she stood laughing at the compliments her partner was paying her, on her divine looks this evening, and declaring it was a pity some favoured lover was not present, she by an accidental glance at the door, to her utter amazement, beheld Lord Trevelyan enter. The deepest glow suffused her cheek, as she involuntarily exclaimed, good heavens there is my Lord Trevelyan! at the same time he advanced towards her with a countenance of delight. "I need not," said he, "ask if I see Miss Gerard in good health, for I never saw her look so well, nor so lovely."

"I expected you all day, my Lord," interrupted the Captain, (who had written to invite him, but had not mentioned it to his family) "faith, I am glad you did not come before, for I should have contended with you for the hand of this fair lady."

"Captain Owen," cried Angelica, "was very sly, my Lord, not to tell us of the pleasure we were to have in your company."

"And," replied he, with much animation, "could I flatter myself you really thought it

one, I should be apt to be a very vain man; for who would not wish to be ranked in the number of your friends?"

The dance now broke up. Angelica requested to go in search of Miss Owen, whom she found talking in a very loud voice, and laughing most violently, surrounded by several gentlemen, and so much engaged as not to observe Angelica on her first approach. She looked surprised, and vexed when she saw Trevelyan, who now advanced to pay his respects, and said in a loud whisper to Angelica, "where, my dear, did you pick up his Lordship, I cannot say, I am very glad to see him—he is so grave that I dare say he will damp all our amusements. I shall trim Ned well, if he has been so confoundedly silly as to ask him here."

"Your amusements," returned she somewhat drily, "and my Lord Trevelyan's are so very opposite, I do not suppose they can at all interfere."

"They shall not, that I promise you."

The conversation here broke off. The party shortly afterwards prepared to return home; Miss Owen having engaged some gentlemen to supper, who now joined them. Angelica regretted it extremely. She could not now with politeness retire; and the conversation was noisy, and uninteresting; while the attentions of the half-intoxicated men, with whom the Captain had been dining, was extremely disgusting to her. Unable to enjoy Trevelyan's enlightened discourse, she was glad at a very late hour to escape from them. When she was alone, she ruminated on the unexpected appearance of Trevelyan, who, she thought met her with delight; and whose flattering address led to an idea so pleasing. His visit to Swansea had been prompted by the information from Captain Owen of her being there. The favourable impression she had made on him, which time had rather augmented than subdued, rendered him unable to withstand his friend's invitation. He had travelled post from London. On his arrival at Swansea, he found them all gone to the assembly, where, after changing his dress, he immediately joined them.

Mrs. Devereux saw him not without emotion on account of Angelica, whose regard, she knew, well as she had directed it, would prove a source of much future uneasiness to her from the apparent distance of rank between them, knowing, where people become inmates of the same house, an easy familiarity insensibly increases; and Trevelyan took up his residence with them.

CHAP. VI.

From this period time fled on rapid wings. Miss Owen, who disliked his Lordship, always shunned his society; and no advice of Mrs. Devereux's could dissuade her from constantly spending her mornings abroad, either on horseback, or lounging about at the library. Her brother had too much regard for her reputation to suffer her to go without him; consequently, the party left at home was, Mrs. Devereux, Angelica, and Trevelyan. While the ladies worked he read to them; a similarity of taste, a clearness of judgment, a delicacy of sentiment, displayed themselves in the observations of Trevelyan: and he, in return, was filled with admiration and surprise at the elegant mind, the cultivated understanding of Angelica, who each day rose in his estimation. When they walked he was their constant companion, and he had always some entertaining remark to offer, blended with good sense and instruction. His attentions now became so pointed it was impossible to mistake them; and the young heart of Angelica, alive to that exquisite good breeding, that polished conversation, which, since the death of her uncle she never found till now under so attractive a form, yielded to their seducing impression, without being sensible of it; attributing her regard for Trevelyan, rather to his exalted character, than to any tender impression. In the evening, if she was not inclined to walk, he too would stay at home, and read to her. During his visit he went through several of Shakespear's finest plays, Thomson's Seasons, Beattie's beautiful Minstrel, Burns's Poems, (so natural, so wild, yet so original) with a pathos and elegance of delivery, not met with in the *new* readings of the present day. When she walked, he gathered some marine plant for the subject of her pencil, or pointed out, as they sauntered on the smooth sands which spread along that shore, the enchanting scenery of Glomorganshire, with the Bristol channel, the tall cliffs of Somersetshire, the distant vessels gliding on the broad expanse of water, with their white sails flitting in the sun beams, as all creating new and sublime subjects for her pencil, which he requested her to employ, while he took charge of her apparatus. If the evening was to be spent in gaiety, even then he did not quit her, but shewed he had a taste for innocent amusements. Sometimes they made little fishing parties out at sea; at others they went to a small theatre, filled up by a company of strollers; and sometimes they formed a musical party at home.

In this delightful manner past the first fortnight of Trevelyan's residence with them, when Angelica's happiness was destroyed by a very unlooked-for circumstance. The night of the second assembly arrived, when Mrs. Devereux attended the young ladies; but it so happened, the gentlemen were engaged out to dinner; it therefore was agreed, as soon as they could get away, they would follow them, and they went with only Mrs. Devereux for their chaperoon. They had not been seated long, when three young men came up the room in a careless lounging manner; two of them Angelica immediately recognized as having formerly seen at Lady Winfield's. She felt very uncomfortable in the fear of being noticed by them; one was Lord Aimwell, the other Mr. Cautherby. They were hanging on each others arms, all drest in a very conspicuous way, and were using glasses, which they rudely pointed at the company, at the same time talking so loud as to attract, by their singular appearance, general observation and wonder. Angelica had hardly time to congratulate herself on their having passed her, before Mr. Cautherby turned back, and advancing towards her, exclaimed "Lady Angelica Carteret as I live! I thought I could not be mistaken, near sighted as I am, which prevents my discerning objects, and almost prevented my discerning you. What odd mountain in this barbarous part of the world have you emerged from to grace this wretched place with your presence? No ton—no company. But even London, that centre of gaiety—of elegance—of every thing that is charming is now deserted, and when I return I expect to see the grass growing in the streets. Who are you with—why are you not dancing?"

Angelica, extremely distressed by Mr. Cautherby's notice of her, coldly replied, "I

came here quite by accident,” and, changing the subject, added, “When did you see Lady Winfield?”

“Never inquire after old women,” returned he; “no one minds them in this enlightened age. Lady Alecia Verral, her daughter, is here, with the divine Bertault, in whose train I am. She loves to surprise, and will astonish the Welch boors with her singularity. She took this place in her way to visit some relations in its vicinity. Now allow me the honour of introducing my friend Maynard to you. None of your sober quizical parsons of the last century—Hay my boy?”

Angelica, every minute more and more embarrassed, rose, and said, “she was going in search of a lady belonging to her party (Miss Owen had left her, before Mr. Cautherby had addressed her), and would therefore wish him good night.” She whispered Mrs. Devereux, who, a stranger to these gentlemen, and Angelica’s knowledge of them, had viewed them in silent wonder.

She was just going to accompany her to the other end of the room when Mr. Maynard exclaimed, “With your permission, Madam, we will attend you.”

“Right,” cried Lord Aimwell, “Lady Angelica is not dancing, therefore we will join her. You are acquainted with Mrs. Bertault? She will be here soon, then we can all adjourn to the card-room together, if there is so sensible a place at this assembly—Really it is not worth while to be at the pains to dress to come here, for there is nobody to admire one, nobody who can be a judge of fashion.”

“O do not say so, my dear fellow,” replied Mr. Cautherby. “The admiration of the women must be excited to see three such fine dashing bucks as ourselves. And how often are we in raptures with things we are not the least judges of?”

Angelica, who found it impossible to get rid of them, and saw the eyes of all the people in the room upon her, perplexed more and more, now judged it wisest to sit still; and therefore, in a stammering accent, replied, “she believed it would be better to wait where she was for the lady.” She dreaded to encounter Trevelyan, and Captain Owen. What a distressing situation was she placed in! What a party to be seen in! Yet how to escape from them before it was too late, she knew not, and she dreaded the very idea of being called by a name none of the friends she was with knew her by. While in this painful dilemma, the door opened, and Mrs. Bertault entered alone. Instantly the three gentlemen advanced to meet her, leaving Angelica somewhat relieved by their departure. The singular air and attire of that lady, together with her undaunted manner, created in an instant the general buzz of, “Who is she?—was ever any one so drest!”—and the whole room seemed to be thrown into a momentary confusion. She wore a pair of pink sattin pantaloons, over which was thrown a transparent dress of muslin. The sleeves, of Circassian, were looped up with a diamond nearly to the shoulder, to display the whiteness of her arms to advantage, for she wore no gloves. Her head-dress was a large Spanish hat, with two ostrich feathers. She was highly rouged, but her bosom, extremely exposed, was of the most polished whiteness, and she wore round it a gold chain, to which was suspended a small French watch. The figure of Mrs. Bertault was by nature so slight and elegant, that it did not require such singularity of decoration to set it off.

Angelica was not suffered long to remain alone. With infinite surprise she saw Mr. Hamlyn, (the elegant young man who had been her partner at Lady Winfield’s,) coming towards where she sat, with evident pleasure. “It is so long,” cried he, (when he joined her,) “since I had the happiness of seeing your Ladyship, I supposed you had taken a final leave of London, and the delight of this moment, in meeting you here is inexpressible; will you not dance?” (continued Mr. Hamlyn,) “do allow me once again the honour of your hand!” Any thing was better than sitting still, to be in danger of Mrs. Bertault, and her party joining her, she therefore consented. She expressed her surprise in seeing him at Swansea; he told her he

was on a pedestrian tour through Wales; that the pleasantness of the place had arrested him for some days, and having met Lady Alecia Verral in the morning, she had invited him to join their party for the evening; but he understood, from Mrs. Bertault, her Ladyship had been kept at home with a violent headache—"Now Lady Angelica," added he, "may I ask to what fortunate cause I owe this encounter with you?"

"I came to Swansea with Mrs. Devereux, and some other friends, merely to pass a few weeks on a pleasurable party."

When the dance was ended Mrs. Bertault, who had been sauntering up and down the room to her infinite confusion, saw, and knew her; and in a minute she was surrounded by the whole party. Miss Owen, who was standing at a short distance, came up to her in astonishment, and drawing her aside, inquired eagerly who that odd looking lady was? "She amuses every one," continued she. "Some of the officers know her, and say they must be introduced, for she is a woman that takes the lead of fashion in London—Is she an acquaintance of yours?"

"I have seen her once; and would now give the world to get away, for I dislike her extremely?"

"I thought she was too dashing, as it is called, to please you; but since you are acquainted I am determined you shall introduce me. The men too, that are with her, seem to be charming fellows."

"I introduce you!" cried Angelica, retreating, "not for the world."

"You will give us your company for the rest of the evening," exclaimed Mrs. Bertault, to Angelica, as she endeavoured to get away. "Do those two ladies belong to you?" observing Mrs. Devereux and Miss Owen.

"Yes, Madam," said the delighted Miss Owen, "we do, and shall be happy to join you."

"What ugly witch," whispered Mr. Cautherby to Angelica, "is that you have got with you?"

Before she could ask him whom he meant, Trevelyan and Captain Owen entered the assembly room. In trembling expectation had she waited their arrival; at length the moment was come; and she was overwhelmed with uneasiness and confusion. At first Trevelyan did not discover Angelica, little expecting to find her in so gay a party, and for some minutes stood fixed by surprise. It was evident she was acquainted with the group before him, who were too distinguished characters not to be known by him in town. That the amiable, the correct, the retired Miss Gerard, should associate with Mrs. Bertault, and such dissipated young men, he could not comprehend. He was walking away hurt and shocked, when Mr. Hamlyn (to whom he was slightly known) bowed, and spoke to him. Angelica's colour rose high, as he cast a penetrating look upon her; she was ready to sink, and intreated Mrs. Devereux would go home with her, for she was unable to stay longer.

"Angelica (said Mrs. Devereux to Miss Owen) finds herself unwell. I hope therefore you will have the goodness to allow us to go home?"

"You can if you like; the party is too agreeable for me to leave it, just as I am entering into the spirit of the evening. I shall accept Mrs. Bertault's invitation; my Lord Trevelyan, or Ned, will order the carriage and see you to it."

"You are not going, Lady Angelica, I hope?" cried Mrs. Bertault.

"Upon my soul" interrupted Mr. Cautherby, "we cannot dispense with your company. You cannot be ill, and look so divinely; it is only Lady Alecia Verral who has the vapours."

Angelica, sick at heart, when addressed by her real name, could not reply. Miss Owen absolutely stared with astonishment, while Trevelyan wore a look of the most anxious enquiry. *Lady Angelica!* What could such a title mean? Was not Gerard then her real name? and what other was annexed to that Christian one, he certainly had always heard her called

by. Nor did the rapid variation of her countenance escape him. But his surprise soon gave way to the tenderest solicitude: she grew sick nearly to fainting, and was obliged to be led to a seat. When sufficiently recovered Mrs. Devereux and Trevelyan conducted her home, and he returned no more to the ball that night, too much astonished, grieved, and perplexed to be in a state to rejoin company. When Captain Owen returned, he repeated to him what had happened; but he, a little elated with wine, only laughed at him, and replied, "*Did I not always tell you she was some princess in disguise?*"

The moment Angelica reached her own room, she related to Mrs. Devereux all the circumstances which had so much distressed her, and poured forth her uneasiness in her kind bosom. She advised her, as the wisest plan, to decline going any more into public, while she remained at Swansea; as it might lead to a more full discovery who she really was, (which, from the accidental and unfortunate mention of her title, could now only be conjectured,) and merely excite idle wonder and curiosity under her present obscurity. To Trevelyan and Owen something might be said, if not to convince, to apparently satisfy them. The events of the evening kept Angelica awake during the whole night. What must Trevelyan think to meet her in the society of a woman so drest, so notoriously incorrect as Mrs. Bertault!—She dared not trust herself with the reflection of what might be his opinion, and she rose in the morning so much indisposed as to determine her to keep her chamber.

CHAP. VII.

At an early hour the next morning Miss Owen abruptly entered Angelica's apartment.

"I am delighted," said she, without enquiring after her health, "with your Mrs. Bertault. She is so gay, so fashionable, so full of spirits. No wonder all the men admire her. Then, that Cautherby, I think you call him, how odd he is; but none of her party talk, dress, look like any people I ever saw before. I only wonder how so demure a being as yourself became acquainted with them."

"Pray do not call them my acquaintances, I only have met them once or twice."

"O, I forgot to ask your *Ladyship*," cried she, "such is your title I find, how long you mean to remain in cog? I really did not know I was in such illustrious company."

"In pity forbear your jokes, Miss Owen," interrupted Angelica almost weeping—"for, indeed, I am too ill to endure them."

"Well, when you are better perhaps you will tell me who you really are; in the mean time, suppose I send Trevelyan to keep you company, as Mrs. Devereux says you intend to remain in your chamber for a day or two."

"And do you imagine," added she, half smiling, "my Lord Trevelyan's company is an infallible cure against indisposition? allow me to remain quietly where I am, and when I feel equal to society I will come below."

Miss Owen now left her. Immediately after breakfast Mrs. Devereux came and spent the morning with Angelica, when they talked over the events of the former evening together; and it was determined she should not go abroad until Mrs. Bertault had quitted Swansea. Delicacy prevented either Trevelyan or Captain Owen from speaking of the occurrences of the night before, although each knew not what to conjecture; and the former became wretched and uneasy at her temporary absence. The following day, to avoid singularity, she appeared at dinner.

"I congratulate you, my Lord," said Miss Owen, "as he placed himself by Angelica at table, on Miss Gerard's return below. I hope you now mean to be better company."

"We must surely all," cried he, somewhat embarrassed, "rejoice in Miss Gerard's return below, for we seldom know how to value our pleasures until deprived of them; and if happy enough to have them restored, how highly ought we then to prize them."

"You mean, I hope, Miss Gerard," interrupted Miss Owen, "to go with me to Mrs. Bertault's party to-night?"

"Certainly not," returned she (taking this opportunity of giving her opinion of her); "you have before heard me say I disliked Mrs. Bertault's character, her mode of life, and her company. Therefore I should be unpardonable were I voluntarily to enter into what I profess to condemn and despise?"

"By the way," exclaimed the Captain, "Mrs. Bertault is the oddest woman in the world. I met her this morning in a sociable with Lady Alecia Verral, Cautherby, and Lord Aimwell, actually with a table before them, all playing at cards; Maynard for their coachman. She stopped to ask me to her *petite soupee* to-night, and to request me to attend the poney race to-morrow, which I understand is to take place between Maynard and two other jockeys. Mrs. Bertault is so damned fashionable there is no resisting her. Do be persuaded, Miss Gerard, (turning to Angelica,) for once to join my sister, and go."

"It is in vain to request her, Ned," replied Miss Owen; but pray, continued he, now addressing Mrs. Devereux, "will you, Madam, answer me one simple question. By *what* name am I to call that young lady? (pointing to Angelica.) I should be sorry not to pay her all due respect."

Angelica coloured, and waited, in trembling confusion, her reply; for the eyes of Trevelyan were involuntarily fixed on her.

“By what other name would you call her than the one she was introduced to you by?”

“Nay, I don’t know. I asked for information. The night before last there appeared some mistake.”

“Then know her, Miss Owen, by none other than that of Gerard, until you hear from me she has assumed a different one. Young ladies rarely change their names, but from a matrimonial cause.”

Mrs. Devereux’s reply silenced Miss Owen, and relieved Angelica from her embarrassment. Mr. Hamlyn, whose partiality for Angelica was not diminished, availed himself of an early day to wait upon her. But at a loss by what name to enquire for her, he first examined the subscription book at the library, where being set down as *Miss Gerard*, by that he determined to enquire for her. That she should have dropt her title he thought very singular; yet when he called to remembrance the secluded manner her uncle had formerly lived in, the particular reserve of his conduct towards him, when he had waited on him in Devonshire place, (it escaped him at the present moment Lord Devaynes was dead,) he thought it possible his Lordship had now chosen this adopted name for her, that she might not attract that notice and distinction ever attendant on nobility in a little watering place. Mrs. Devereux he knew again. She was decidedly under her care, and thus he reconciled in his own mind her change of name, and appearance.

When Mr. Hamlyn was announced, Angelica received him with much confusion. While Trevelyan, to whom his visit proved very irksome, scarcely spoke to him at all; and he found his reception so cold he soon took leave.

Shortly after he was gone the footman brought in three cards, one for Miss Owen, her brother and Trevelyan. “These came, Madam,” said he, as he delivered them, “from Mrs. Bertault. The man who brought them was going to leave another for Lady Angelica, somebody, I forget the name, he insisted lived here; but I told him over and over again no Lady Angelica lived here, or any such person, it was quite a mistake, so with much ado he took it away with him again.”

Angelica was ready to sink during this speech, and turned as pale as death. Miss Owen was not in the room, but Trevelyan, who saw her change colour, exclaimed, “You are ill, I am sure you are; had you not better go into the air?”

“I am rather sick,” returned she, approaching the window, which she threw up. “I will remain here a few minutes.”

“Go into the other room,” said Mrs. Devereux observing her distress. “You are more likely, my dear, to remove your faintness, by changing the air.”

Angelica took her advice, while Trevelyan, at a loss to renew the conversation, took up his hat and went out, more and more uneasy and perplexed at the mystery which seemed to envelope Angelica; and that Gerard was not her real name, he was now convinced. Angelica was rallied by Captain Owen, on her new passion for staying at home. No intreaty could make her go out, and, severe as the penance was, it was preferable to the risk of encountering Lady Alecia Verral, who had not the most distant idea of Lady Angelica Carteret and Miss Gerard, Miss Owen’s friend, being one and the same person; for although Mrs. Bertault had now invited her to her public breakfast, she never intended her the condescension of a call.

Miss Owen, since her introduction to Mrs. Bertault, was, with her father, a constant attendant at her card-table. But her extreme ignorance in all games soon made her a considerable loser; and many of the poor military were compleatly fleeced by the two fashionable ladies. The scene of dissipation closed with the public breakfast; and the gay party, consisting of Mrs. Bertault, Lady Alecia Verral, Aimwell, and Mr. Cautherby, took their departure from Swansea, to the infinite joy of its peaceful and more rational inhabitants. Angelica was delighted when she heard they were actually gone. She longed to regain her

sweet walks on the sea-shore, to inhale once more its refreshing breezes, to gaze on the beauties of nature. The pleasure however promised to be short-lived. Mr. Owen, vexed at his daughter's losses at play, talked of soon going home; and the Captain every day expected an order to return to town, whither Trevelyan would accompany him.

Chawton House Library

CHAP. VIII.

Mr. Hamlyn still lingered at Swansea in the vain hope of again meeting Angelica, and at length, as there appeared no prospect of seeing her, he resolved to address her, to make a tender of his hand. He was lately come into a large fortune, to share it with her was the fondest, indeed only, wish of his heart. He almost despaired of success, yet the attempt was worth the making; and he sat down and addressed her as follows.

To Miss Gerard.

“Madam,

“If you were surprised at my presumption in waiting upon you, I am afraid you will be still more so at this address. Urged by a passion, as respectful, as it is ardent, (though with little confidence of your favor,) yet I cannot quit Swansea without declaring what my sentiments of you are. Permit me, Madam, to make an offer of a heart and fortune devoted to you; which if you will condescend to receive, it shall be the future study of my life, as I value it as heaven’s best gift, to merit. If you honor this proposal with an acceptance, I will immediately refer your friends to my family whom they will find truly respectable, and who will duly estimate such an acquisition to it as yourself. I am, Madam,

“Your devoted, humble servant,

“E. HAMLYN.”

“Swansea, October 6.”

The letter was instantly dispatched. Angelica and Mrs. Devereux were sitting at work, Trevelyan reading to them, when it was brought in. “A letter for you, Miss,” said the footman. She took it, but a stranger to the hand, enquired where it came from. “Mr. Hamlyn’s, Miss. The servant said he did not know whether it required an answer.”

In a moment Angelica was covered with blushes, she did not open the letter but sat silent and confused. Trevelyan observed the variation of her countenance with emotion, and construed it but one way, that she loved Mr. Hamlyn. He knew his presence was at this juncture a restraint, and withdrew. Angelica when he was gone broke the seal, and read the contents with surprise and concern.

“Your letter, my dear,” said Mrs. Devereux, as she closed it, “whatever may be its import, does not seem to give you pleasure.”

“Indeed it does not,” returned she, with a heavy sigh. “Its contents afford me very serious concern. I am hurt at the idea of giving Mr. Hamlyn pain, after a declaration so honourable, so disinterested, as he has made me. Would to heaven his regard had been placed more fortunately!—On one who could have rewarded his generosity!—have properly estimated his virtues, I alas! cannot—read this letter, Madam, and give me your opinion of it.”

When Mrs. Devereux had finished it, she wore a look of the most tender concern. After remaining a few minutes silent, she said with infinite gravity, “you have not I am sure, my love, well considered the advantages of such an alliance by a hasty determination; you have often acknowledged you thought Mr. Hamlyn an amiable man. His family you have been told were highly respectable, and his fortune even beyond the wishes of any reasonable woman. He assures you of the possession of his unbounded affection, what then can you require more?—God forbid I should advise you rashly to take so important a step without deeply considering the chance you have for happiness; or that I should persuade you to bestow your hand on a man who would be insensible of your merit. No! for too often have I seen the sad consequences of alliances, formed by ambition where the heart had no share, to induce you, for the sake of a permanent establishment, to set at defiance the sweets of

domestic bliss.”

“But I am no friend,” continued she, “to romantic attachments, which, above all things, I would guard you against. A lasting one cannot be formed on the partial decision of a hasty and warm impression. It must be built on a more solid foundation to make it endure. On the congeniality of mind, of taste, of temper; long tried by personal intercourse, by which the foibles, as well as the virtues of the human heart will have leave gradually to unfold themselves, and the passion of romance by that means has time to sink into sober reason, and well founded affection.”

“I am not,” (she added,) “for your immediately uniting yourself to Mr. Hamlyn. For, as I have just observed, you are as yet too great strangers to each other, to insure happiness by so doing. But I would not have you reject him, since his regard appears sincere, disinterested, honorable. Your prospects in life, my dear Angelica, are uncertain. And should it be the will of Providence to take me from you, often do I think what might happen with your youth, and inexperience of the world. Oh! could I see you respectably allied to a man of worth, how chearfully should I bid adieu to a scene I have long mixed in with indifference; and the greatest joy I should have would be to sink gently to rest in your arms, after committing you to the care of such an husband as would prove a protector—a friend—one who would guard you from the insults of Lord Devaynes—one who might restore you to your fortune—your family—your title—and who would not love you less as Anne Gerard, than Lady Angelica Carteret.—Do, my child,” continued she, earnestly, “reflect on all I have now said, and yield so far to my wishes at least as to encourage Mr. Hamlyn.”

This speech of her excellent governess touched her very soul. She did not merely weep, she sobbed aloud. “Alas! Madam,” cried she, deeply penetrated, and in a mournful accent, “you require of me, what I cannot do. I will open my whole heart—I will pour forth all its weaknesses into your benevolent bosom, and then permit you to condemn me as you like; I will endure it all. After the sentiments you have declared, I blush, indeed, to confess my affections are not mine to bestow. Had I never seen Lord Trevelyan—had I never heard those pure, those noble sentiments of his, which alone can flow from an enlightened and cultivated understanding—had I never enjoyed, as of late, for days together his society—so formed to charm, to secure the affections—then perhaps I could have listened to the addresses of Mr. Hamlyn; and have been sensible of his excellence—his regard.—Now it is, indeed, impossible!—It is true I see not the smallest prospect of an union with Lord Trevelyan, yet in pity, Madam, spare your solicitude; for I cannot listen to it.”

“This declaration,” replied Mrs. Devereux, “has not surprised me, too long have I guessed your sentiments of Lord Trevelyan. He was just the person to win the affections of a mind like yours. I will even go so far as to add, just the young man I would have chosen for you as most likely to render you happy, had he discovered the smallest intention of seeking an alliance with you. But situated as you are, I have long considered his society as dangerous; a bane to your peace, which in destroying he attempts not to heal; and now proves your greatest misfortune. Had you, as you truly say, never seen Lord Trevelyan, then might you have listened to the addresses of Mr. Hamlyn; and have been the wife of an amiable, respectable young man, whom now you cannot regard. Could I with propriety have taken you from Swansea, have withdrawn you from the company of his Lordship, I had done so long ago. I would not have you deceive yourself in expected professions or proposals from him, of which he has not given you the most distant hope; for most probably he has formed connections and attachments long before he knew you, of equal rank and fortune with his own, agreeable to the wishes of his family. Cherish not, therefore, as you value your future peace, a romantic partiality built on a hopeless foundation, for nothing excites the contempt of the world so much as a love-sick girl.”

“Gracious heaven,” exclaimed Angelica, “what a picture you have drawn of my

regard for Lord Trevelyan—never, Madam, shall he know my sentiments of him! Never shall he triumph in my unrequited love!—I will see him no more!—I will tear myself from his presence.”

“That would be folly indeed—exert your fortitude and natural good sense, in considering him as an agreeable friend and companion, during the short time you remain here. By such a conduct you will draw on yourself neither singularity nor blame. With respect to Mr. Hamlyn, I cannot direct you after the declaration you have made. He has a claim to your whole heart, if he merits the opinion I have formed of him; and as he cannot possess that, it would be unjust indeed to give him encouragement. I grieve at his disappointment. I grieve for you both.”

Mrs. Devereux left the room, and Angelica withdrew to write this answer.

To Mr. Hamlyn.

“Sir,

“Accept my sincere acknowledgments for the very high honor you confer on me, in your disinterested and generous proposals. But I should consider I was doing injustice to the merits of Mr. Hamlyn, were I to accept an alliance where gratitude is all I can bestow: that, Sir, is your own; and with the warmest good wishes, I remain,

“Your obliged,

“Humble servant,

“ANGELICA.”

“Swansea, October 7.”

Her own name she would not venture to claim, that of Gerard was repugnant to her to sign, she therefor sent it without any.

Mrs. Devereux did not object to the propriety of her letter; although she felt more concern than she expressed in the decided refusal it contained. To Mr. Hamlyn it was so serious a disappointment, he immediately on receiving it quitted Swansea.

After Angelica had dispatched it, she began to reflect very seriously on the late conversation with Mrs. Devereux; and of the impropriety and misery of cherishing an hopeless partiality for a person who never had made the smallest declaration to her. She endeavoured to call some fortitude and spirit to her aid, to conquer so unfortunate a regard. With this resolution she determined to meet Trevelyan, though not with assumed coldness, with an attempt to avoid his particular notice, and all conversation, except in the general society of the family. Her attempt, did not escape his observation; he was greatly hurt at it, attributing it, together with her late seclusion, to a preference for Mr. Hamlyn, as it was only since she had seen him, her conduct had undergone so extraordinary a change.

One morning on being left alone with him, she was going to quit the room, when he said, “how unfortunate am I always by my presence to drive you away—yet that will not be intruded on you much longer—to-morrow we leave Swansea; and then will you, Madam, forget, and forgive my having sought a claim to your regard, I had no title to expect, although presumptuous enough to hope for.”

“Really, my Lord,” returned she, “I do not comprehend you?”

“To explain myself were now in vain. Therefore I will only assure you of my ardent good wishes for the choicest blessings to be showered on you; and to believe, that should we meet no more, you have fixed an impression on the heart of one, who can never forget Miss Gerard! Circumstances—honour—claims—forbid almost this declaration. But invulnerable as you are towards me, I may now make this avowal without injury to any one—without offending, I hope, that delicacy I know you possessed of, for I may never have such an opportunity again.”

At a loss to understand what he meant, she was wholly silent, and he was just going on when they were interrupted by the entrance of Miss Owen, who said, "Ned, tells me, my Lord, you are both going to-morrow morning. Well, since all our gay folks are gone, the place is become so dull, I don't care how soon we leave it either; what say you, Miss Gerard?"

"Whenever your father pleases to return, I can have no objection."

The rest of the day was spent in silent dejection by Trevelyan, and Angelica, who each dwelt with sorrow on the separation the ensuing morning, from the uncertainty of when they should meet again.

Chawton House Library

CHAP. IX.

The hour of their departure arrived early the next day. At eight o'clock the chaise was announced. "God bless you," cried Captain Owen, jumping up from the breakfast table, "Mrs. Devereux, take care Clara is not run off with by any of the mad fellows in this place. Dear Miss Gerard, all health and happiness attend you." He respectfully kissed her hand. Trevelyan next approached to take leave. He changed colour, and in a faltering accent said, "May you, sweetest Miss Gerard, know only happiness, and in the form you most wish!" He pressed her hand with fervency—he seemed to wish to add something more, but greatly agitated he hurried out of the room, followed by his friend Owen.

"Good bye, Ned," cried Miss Owen after her brother, "I hope you will go and see Mrs. Bertault, and procure me an invitation."

Angelica, glad to escape while the parlour door was open, went immediately to her own room, where she vainly endeavoured to recover her spirits and appear at dinner with some degree of composure. Her swollen eyes, and dejected aspect did not pass unnoticed by Miss Owen, who, with a laugh, as she seated herself, exclaimed, "Pray, Mrs. Devereux, look at Miss Gerard's eyes, she has absolutely been crying herself blind after that mope Trevelyan. What an idle girl you are not to bestow your tears on a better subject."

"Pray, Miss Owen," interrupted Mrs. Devereux, with some severity, "do you not think it possible, Angelica may have other causes for her tears, if indeed she has been weeping, besides the one you mention?"

"I am sure I don't know, nor care; only, if I guess right, she ought to be laughed out of it."

"You, Clara," cried her father, "will, I am sure, never weep on that or any other subject; therefore you had better spare Miss Gerard. A little seriousness would well become you, after your late losses, you have not only drained your purse but mine; and our wisest plan is now to return home."

This speech of Mr. Owen's effectually silenced his daughter, and the rest of the day was spent in sullen gloominess by her.

Shortly after the departure of Trevelyan, and the Captain, Mr. Owen became tired of Swansea, and proposed going back to the Manor-house, which was cheerfully agreed to by all the party. It was not without some regret Angelica bade adieu to Swansea. To her it had abounded with incidents; and although some of them had not proved of the pleasantest nature, it had afforded her more of the society of Trevelyan, than any other circumstance could have produced. They reached home without accident. Mrs. Devereux and Angelica, spent the first night of their arrival at the Manor-house, after which they were happy to return to their own quiet little dwelling. The moment Mr. Evans's children heard of their arrival, they came with countenances of joy to bid them welcome; and clung round Angelica, contending who should caress her most. "I have brought you, my dear Miss," said the eldest, "a basket of nuts I gathered in the wood, on purpose for you." "And I," interrupted little rosy Kitty, "held out the basket to catch them for you."

"Sweet innocents," replied she, kissing them, "I will accept your present, if you will stay and assist me to eat them." Angelica walked back with them to the worthy parson's to prevail on him to allow the children to spend the day with her. She found him employed in his garden. "I am happy, my dear Miss," said he, "to see you come back among us. My little ones have asked a thousand times what was become of you. We have missed your sweet company sadly: and the poor have sadly missed you likewise, for the good lady you live with is so kind to them. My wife too, will be so glad to see you; if you will condescend to step into the little parlour, where you will find her very busy; for to tell you a secret she makes a number of cordials at this season for the poor people, which we find very useful. Few of them

can afford to buy medicines; and it is only a Christian duty to assist one another.” Angelica charmed with the benevolence of Mr. and Mrs. Evans, after conversing some time with them, departed with her young friends, on whom were laid many commands to be good children; and their innocent prattle for a time beguiled her thoughts from other subjects. But the ensuing day, every succeeding day, they wandered to Swansea. The walks she there had enjoyed with Trevelyan—the beautiful landscapes he had pointed out, of which she had taken several sketches—the books they had read together, with his just observations upon them, all deprived her, as she took them up, of ability, as formerly, to enjoy them, and recalled only the idea of him. He had first taught her those pleasing sensations that arise, “where thought meets thought,” where to a similar taste is insensibly united that of the most tender regard; and she found on examining herself, an apathy to every thing she blushed to acknowledge. The late conversation with Mrs. Devereux, she dreaded a repetition of. She took every opportunity of being alone, for the effort she made to converse in her presence was so irksome, she was glad to escape her penetrating eye, fixed with a earnestness and solicitude upon her, which gave her infinite pain, conscious she was to blame in not having acceded to that excellent woman’s wishes in giving her hand to Mr. Hamlyn. To rouse herself however she began to believe an absolute duty, and feeling an indifference she could not conquer for her former avocations, she resolved to adopt new ones. She therefore proposed to Mr. and Mrs. Evans, while the weather allowed their children to walk over to her, to send them every day when they should commence her pupils. They were delighted with the plan; while the little girls charmed to have such an amiable instructress, were so regular in their visits, as at length to become a real pleasure to Angelica. Mrs. Devereux was extremely pleased, and she put her on so good a method to teach them, as to render Angelica extremely fond of her new employment.

Miss Owen, whose society at Swansea she became more and more disgusted with, she now rarely saw. She ridiculed her making the little Evanses her companions, and because one day Angelica refused coming to the Manor-house, she was offended, and withdrew herself almost entirely; she had been hurt also at Angelica’s reserve *at Swansea, convinced*, from the conversation of Mr. Cautherby, Gerard was not her real name; and she thought, from the numberless obligations she had received, more confidence ought to have been placed in her.

CHAP. X.

Her kindly melting hear,
To every want, and woe,
To guilt itself when in distress,
The balm of pity would impart,
And all relief that bounty could bestow!

Not only good and kind,
But strong and elevated was her mind.
A spirit that with noble pride
Could look superior down
On fortune's smile or frown.

* * * * *

Such was -----

Death came remorseless on, and sunk her to the tomb.

Lord LITTLETON

Not long was the temporary calm Angelica enjoyed on her return from Swansea, which was interrupted by one of the heaviest calamities that had ever befallen her; and called for all the fortitude and resignation her excellent governess had so often instilled among her pious admonitions to her. Mrs. Devereux was seized with a violent pain in her head and sickness, which baffled all assistance; at length it terminated in a most malignant small-pox. She imagined she had had the distemper, and caught it in going to visit a poor woman. The agony of Angelica's mind, when she knew the extent of her danger, is not to be described; and the fatigue she underwent nearly overcame her. She quitted not night nor day the bed-side of this excellent woman, whom she watched with unceasing care, administering everything she took herself, for Mrs. Devereux had now lost her sight; the disorder ran so high she was quite delirious, and at the expiration of ten days died, universally lamented, in the arms of her afflicted young friend. Angelica's distress of mind, together with the fatigue she had suffered, threw her into a nervous fever, from which she slowly recovered by the kind attention of the worthy Mrs. Evans, who was constantly with her; and from the pious discourse and fatherly tenderness of her husband, Angelica first tasted consolation under her very sad misfortune.

Miss Owen, like every common acquaintance, in whose inquiries there is neither interest nor friendship, sent every to ask how she did, but she gave her no invitation, on her recovery, to the Manor-house, nor ever came near her.

It was more than three weeks after the death of Mrs. Devereux before Angelica was well enough to quit her chamber. In the interval, Mr. Evans kindly superintended the affairs of her departed and lamented governess. Who having no surviving relations had bequeathed this last mournful testimony of her affection to Angelica, and, by will, she was found sole possessor of all the little property her cottage contained; but her income, which was an annuity, died with her. This tender proof of Mrs. Devereux's friendship quite overwhelmed her. She found twenty pounds in bank notes in her bureau, ten of which she immediately presented Mr. Evans as a grateful return for his services; whom, with infinite entreaty, she prevailed on to accept it. Her wardrobe she gave to Mrs. Evans, first selecting some of her common wearables, which she packed up in a trunk and sent to Agatha. The house went to a distant relation. To Angelica every scene around her became now so painful she was determined to quit the place as fast as possible. Yet whither to go she knew not—in the death first of her uncle, now of her maternal friend, the grave seemed to have robed her of all she held dear, of every tie she had upon earth. Whom to apply to, except Mr. and Mrs. Evans, for

an introduction into the world she could not tell, nor were they likely people, living in such perfect obscurity, to be able to assist her. Lady Winfield indeed she remembered was the friend of her uncle; she was respectable, and good: but she was averse to apply to her, from the occurrences at Swansea. The plan she thought of adopting was that of still retaining the name of Gerard, and procuring the situation of governess or companion, for at least a short time, till she could meet perhaps with some kind friend who would give her proper advice how to proceed in endeavouring to obtain some insight into her affairs, involved, she feared, in a mystery impenetrable. Standing alone in the world deserted and destitute, who would credit her amazing tale, who would not imagine her a mere adventurer, or impostor. She informed Mr. and Mrs. Evans of her plans. The latter agreeably surprised her by saying, she had a sister that was married to a linen-draper in London, and as he served many great families, it might be in their way to recommend her; but until she was fixed, she was sure she would be very welcome to be at her house. Mrs. Evans immediately, with the consent of Angelica, wrote to Mrs. Green, who returned an answer, "She would be happy to recommend the young person if she was able, and would be glad to see her in the meantime." Angelica, grateful and pleased as she was, yet felt her heart sicken when it came to the period of leaving Greenwood cot, that happy, humble home—where the benignant smiles of her invaluable friend met her each day, and under whose guidance her manners—her mind had been formed. She prepared with the utmost reluctance to leave Wales; but before she did so, considered it an irksome duty to pay a last visit to the Manor-house, to thank Miss Owen for former civilities: although she thought them more than cancelled, in the money she had borrowed from her, to pay her gaming debts at Swansea; and which she did not now choose to ask for.

Miss Owen received her with coolness. Angelica informed her of her intention to quit Wales immediately, and expressed her acknowledgments for her attentions.

"And pray where are you going?"

"To London."

"To some relations then, I suppose. What was Mrs. Devereux to you? It was a silly way, poor woman, she got her death: there is always some infection in those low houses! I would as soon go where the plague raged as enter one of them."

Angelica wept. "She died in a noble cause," said she, "doing good."

"Well, you are a strange romantic creature, I always thought you so; particularly of late, it was such an odd fancy to teach Evans's beggarly brats."

"What I did, Madam, for Mr. Evans's sweet children, was a pleasure and amusement. The kindness of their father I can never repay; and I have found the purity of his doctrine a true display of a mind abounding with benevolence."

"Come, don't treat me with an eulogy on a poor Welch parson, but tell me something about your plans and where you are going."

"I before said, to London."

"But to whom? perhaps, if your friends are agreeable, I may come and see you."

"I cannot arrange my plans until I get there—I—I hardly know—"

"I see," interrupted Miss Owen, "you love mystery—therefore, as you won't give me a direct answer, I shall set it down you have some appointment with Trevelyan, and the first news I expect to hear, is, that you are married to him."

"Really, Miss Owen," cried the offended Angelica, "you astonish me. I hoped you had known me better than to believe me capable of such a conduct."

"You know Trevelyan is a dear fellow, and that were he to ask you, you would not refuse him. However I won't distress you any more. If you see Ned remember me to him, and if you come into Wales again, I shall be glad to see you here.—For though I again repeat, I think your conduct has been very odd of late, I really have a sincere regard for you, and am truly sorry for your loss. I would have asked you to the Manor-house, but I knew you

preferred living with the Evans's."

Angelica coldly thanked her, and took leave as soon as she could.

Chawton House Library

CHAP. XI.

Ye happy fields unknown to noise and strife,
The kind rewarders of industrious life,
Ye shady woods where once I used to rove,
Alike indulgent to the muse, and love;
Ye murm'ring streams that in meanders roll,
The sweet composers of the pensive soul,
Farewell—the city calls me from your bowers.
Farewell—amusing thoughts, and peaceful hours.

GAY.

The morning at length arrived when she took a final leave of Wales. How did she envy the contentment displayed in the family at the parsonage; whose good wishes accompanied her, with their tears, and those of their little ones, until she lost sight of that lovely spot, where in the bosom of friendship, she found a lenient cordial under her former affliction in the pure affection of an amiable woman, whose newly covered grave she paused at, to bedew with her tears. The church-yard was only separated by a wall from Mr. Evans's garden, which was shaded with cypress and yew trees.—The grave of Mrs. Devereux was easily distinguished from the others, for, according to the custom of the country, it was decorated with newly gathered flowers, such as the season afforded; and as in silent anguish she bent over the spot, and viewed the tasteful yet mournful disposition of the garlands which partially concealed the earth, one of the beautiful stanzas of Collins's dirge occurred to her, which she repeated:

“The red breast oft at ev'ning hours
Shall kindly lend his little aid,
With hoary moss, and gather'd flowers,
To deck the ground where thou art laid.”

“And,” continued she, as she gave a last look, and heavy sigh,

“Each lovely scene shall thee restore,
For thee the tear be duly shed;
Belov'd till life can charm no more;
And mourn'd, till Pity's self be dead.”

As she passed too the foot of Mr. Owen's paddock the happy hours she had spent at the Manor-house with Trevelyan arose to her remembrance with a melancholy regret, that awakened all her tenderness; especially when she believed they had now parted for ever; since, in quitting Wales, she lost all possible traces of him in future. The curate drove her in his chaise cart as far as Brecknock, where she took the stage; and proceeded with sad reluctance to the metropolis, having obtained a letter of recommendation and introduction to Mrs. Evans's sister.

It proved a satisfaction in the present state her spirits were in to have the coach to herself. In the evening of the third day she arrived in London. She did not know a step of the way to Cheapside, where Mr. Green lived, nor did she ever remember having been in the city. Indeed London now wore so different an aspect to what it formerly did, she could hardly credit its being the same place. She saw no wide, magnificent streets. They were overhung by an impenetrable fog, and were dirty, full of confusion and not such a thing to be seen as a private house. Every avenue was crowded with shops of all descriptions, which gave her a

new idea of the immense traffic and wonderful opulence of that part of the town; but on comparing her present with her former arrival in London, then blessed with the most tender and indulgent of uncles, now destitute, and forlorn, she burst into tears as she stepped into the hackney coach, which conveyed her to Mr. Green's. They were prepared for her arrival; and when she alighted, Mr. Green bustled up to her, and said, "My wife and I were just 'a looking for you, Miss. I talked of going to see if the stage was come in, when from the window I saw a coach stop, so says I, I lay you a vager that is Miss Thinginbob. Sure enough I was right."

Angelica, by no means delighted with this elegant address, was notwithstanding too well bred to decline his leading her to the dining room, which he did, by a stair case that descended into the shop, so dark, and winding, she stumbled once or twice. Mrs. Green received her very civilly; she, like her sister Mrs. Evans, was a plain, good sort of a woman. She had none of the vulgar smartness of her husband who affected to be a city beau, and very gallant to the ladies: all supper time she was persecuted with the teasing civility of Mr. Green and his partner, a plain, forward young man. Overcome by fatigue Angelica could not eat any thing, and requested to have a glass of wine and water, in preference to any thing else "I am surprised," my dear, said Mr. Green to his wife, "you did not get a chicken for the young lady's supper, these here weal cutlets are too strong for her. Vell, Miss, since you von't eat, you must hob a nob with me, in a glass of vine. If you don't mend your appetite I shall say, Miss, you are in love, and have left your heart in the country. Vat say you, my buck, (clapping the young man on the shoulder,) to joining us."

"No objection at all, my dear Sir," replied Mr. Watson, "always happy to drink with the ladies, particularly so pretty a one," smiling in Angelica's face.

"You never, Ma'am, I presume was in London before," continued he; "how do you like it ma'am?—yet you are so very smart in your appearance, I should have thought you had lived here all your life."

"Suppose, my dear," interrupted Mr. Green, "till we get the young lady to her liking, as to a sitivation, I mean, without she will settle with a husband which would be settling something like, I was to take you all a little about or so. How be you disposed; let me see, to-morrow you might go and see the wild beasts at Exeter Change, and in the evening you shall go to the play. Sadler's Vells is shut up, but Dibdens is open, if Miss prefers it. Watson shall go and take care of you, and I will come after shop is shut up; business must be minded you know, Miss."

"I will take care of you, dear Ma'am," replied Mr Watson.

Angelica, who resolved no power should induce her to be seen with these people, positively declined it; pleading fatigue and the recent death of her friend, as an excuse.

"The young lady," said Mrs. Green, "must not be compelled, against her inclination."

"Vell, vell, my dear, we vill talk of that to-morrow. I never knew a young lady but by a little coaxing might be persuaded, so I hope Miss vill."

"You cannot, Ma'am," interrupted Mr. Watson, "be so cruel as to refuse."

"Miss Gerard looks fatigued," cried Mrs. Green, "and I dare say will be glad to retire."

"Indeed I shall," replied she, rising.

"Pleasant dreams, Ma'am," exclaimed Mr. Watson, tossing off a draught of porter.

"Ah! pleasant dreams, Miss," echoed Mr. Green. "Think of your sweet-heart, for I am sure you have one some where, only you like to be sly."

Angelica answered him not. His wife appeared much vexed, and as she lighted her to her chamber, said, "Mr. Green jokes with every one in his own way, without considering whether it is agreeable or not, I therefore hope, Madam, you will excuse his freedom."

When Angelica was alone, she was extremely hurt and shocked at being situated where she was; and determined to use every exertion to hear without delay of some family in

which she could become an inmate, willing to submit to any thing rather than such coarse familiarity.

Chawton House Library

CHAP. XII.

Two days passed on in a most irksome manner, during which time Angelica confined herself wholly to the house. At the end of a week Mr. Green heard of a situation for her with a Mrs. Gubbins, as governess to her daughter, who at once engaged with Mr. Green to take her. Angelica had not seen the lady, from her being indisposed; but she was to go to Finsbury-square on the Monday following. Tormented every day to accompany the Greens to the play, and always withstanding the most earnest intreaty, she found with so ill a grace, she could not continue to refuse people who so essentially had served her; she at length yielded a reluctant consent to go to the pit at Drury Lane theatre, to the play of the Stranger. She had often wished to see Mrs. Siddons, and Kemble, in characters fame spoke so loudly of, and the impossibility of being seen in some measure reconciled her to the plan.

"I told you, Miss, didn't I" said Mr. Green, rubbing his hands, and smiling with exultation, "you only wanted a little coaxing. And if you staid with us a short time, you would change your mind. Second thoughts are best—as in the present case—ben't they?"

Angelica, vexed to be thought so capricious, replied, "I go, Sir, merely from your constant solicitation, that I may not appear rude, and ungrateful for your favours."

The party now proceeded to the theatre, and from being early obtained excellent seats; for Mr. Watson had forcibly taken Angelica's arm, and dragged her through the croud. Much as her pride was piqued in being with her present party, yet when the curtain drew up every idea was absorbed in the admirable performance of Kemble and Mrs. Siddons, whose overwhelming powers drew tears from all the audience. The energetic, yet melting tones of Mrs. Siddons's voice and manner it was impossible to resist; they took the heart by surprise, as well as force, even in a piece where the moral is so very exceptionable; and Angelica's feelings were alive to a most painful, nay, even agonizing degree.

When the play was over, her eyes insensibly wandered round the house in search of some one she knew; although she neither wished nor expected to see any one. But when her eye rested on the stage box, on the right hand, she there indeed beheld Trevelyan. Her countenance changed to a deadly pale, although in so great a croud it was impossible he could distinguish her. She again looked towards the box. He was standing by two ladies. One was rather in advanced life of a very dignified appearance; the other was young, beautiful, graceful, and with smiles of pleasure was attending to his conversation. Beside him was placed Captain Owen. She neither heard nor saw the magnificent Romance of Blue Beard. She felt the most painful curiosity to know who the ladies were he was with, and nothing could call off her thoughts to other objects. Before Angelica quitted the pit, she saw Trevelyan lead out the young lady, Captain Owen the elder. Mr. and Mrs. Green, Mr. Watson, and Angelica, now proceeded to the theatre door, and they were just stepping into a hackney coach, when, by the light of a flambeau that passed them, she discerned Captain Owen quickly crossing the pavement, but being prevented getting on from a carriage drawing up, he was the next instant at her elbow. Dreading to encounter him, with her present party, she was pushing forward, when Mr. Watson seized hold of her, and cried, "Miss Gerard—dear Madam—you will be run over." The exclamation of a name so well known, made Captain Owen instantly turn towards her. "Is it possible," said he, in a tone of pleasure and surprise, "I see Miss Gerard here?—May I ask, what happy, what unlooked for chance has conducted you to London?—When did you come?—How is Mrs. Devereux?—where are you?—I am asking a thousand questions in a minute; but I am so amazed I can hardly credit my senses."

"I only came to town," returned she, in the utmost confusion, "a few days since. Business brought me."

"Then you are not with Mrs. Devereux?"—regarding with an eye of infinite curiosity

the party she was with.

“Alas!” exclaimed she, bursting into tears at the mention of her name twice in a minute, “you know not then I have lost her!”

Captain Owen, who had a feeling though volatile heart, was so much shocked, he remained some seconds wholly silent, and then added, with infinite tenderness, “Amiable Miss Gerard!—to tell you how deeply I sympathize with you is impossible; you have indeed lost an invaluable friend—for the world I would not thus have pained you, could I have guessed what had happened.”

“Come,” said Mr. Watson, rather impatiently, “we shall be pushed down in the croud if we don’t get on. You had better, Ma’am, step into the coach.”

“You will allow me,” cried the Captain, as he handed her into the carriage, “to call on you?”

“My stay is uncertain—I would not wish”—she hesitated, and stopt, not liking to say where she was.

“We shall be glad, Miss, to see the Genman, in Cheapside,” interrupted Mr. Green; “if he will do us the favour to pop in and take a dish of tea without ceremony.”

“I shall avail myself of the invitation,” returned he, “if you will permit me. I have a thousand things to say. I have just parted from Trevelyan. I had an engagement at the other end of the town, which now led to the pleasure of meeting with you. But your Coachman is impatient, so adieu.” He kissed her hand, and was out of sight in a minute.

“Is the gentleman in the regulars?” said Mr. Watson, mortified at his attention to Angelica, and her reception of him.

“In the regulars, or not,” interrupted Mr. Green, “I can see he is a bit of a favourite of Miss’s. Did I not say she was a sly one, and had a sweetheart some where or another. Young ladies never lose their appetites, and colour for nothing. I am sure, my man, you have a bad chance with Miss Gerard; that fine young buck cuts you out and out all to nothing.”

“Really, Sir,” replied Mr. Watson, quite nettled, “I don’t understand you as to thinking of the young lady—no offence, Ma’am, matrimony is what I have not yet—not yet I say, taken into consideration.”

They now stopped at the door. Angelica immediately retired to her chamber, where she spent a sleepless and tedious night. She thought only of Trevelyan—wretched herself—he seemed well, and happy—he seemed also in a society in which he took pleasure.—He might so.—The elderly lady had a face (as well as the transient view allowed) of benignity and goodness. Enchanting smiles played on the countenance of the younger one, who appeared lovely as an Hebe.—Captain Owen told her he had much to say to her; was it of Trevelyan he was going to speak—was it to inform her he was become indifferent to her—that was indeed unnecessary, for she already saw it. Tormented with a thousand vague conjectures, she arose in the morning ill, and confused.

CHAP. XIII.

Affected, aukward, romping, and yet prim,
Labouring she tries to catch the easy swim.
The wond'rous magic that by sweet surprise,
From look, from motion, and from silence rife.
The eloquence that wins without a sound,
And the soft charm in gentle manners found.
The step of breeding, and the port serene,
The educated air, and fashion'd mien,
But, ah! 'twixt ladies born, and ladies made,
Less wide the line 'twixt buckram and brocade.

PRATT.

From the recommendation of such a man as Mr. Green, Angelica had not formed a very favourable impression of the lady with whom she was going to live. But perfectly weary of the coarse civility she had met with during the fortnight she had been in Cheapside, she was glad when Monday arrived, and soon after breakfast requested to have a coach called to take her to Finsbury-square.

"I shall attend you, Miss," said Mr. Green, "after dinner (which they always sat down to at one o'clock), Mrs. Gubbins never rises till that hour, she turns day into night, as the saying is; you vill, I assure you, keep quality hours there." On this information she quietly seated herself in the window, employing her thoughts, until the hour of her departure, in no very pleasant manner. They were, however, often interrupted by Mr. Watson, whose persecution she was glad to escape from; for she was quite disgusted with his impertinent familiarity. To Mrs. Green she expressed, with a grace all her own, her thanks for her hospitality. At two o'clock Mr. Green attended her to Finsbury-square. A footman, dressed in a livery almost as crimson as his cheeks, and loaded with rich silver lace, opened the door. Mr. Green, having handed out Angelica, said, with a familiar sort of nod, "I suppose my good fellow, your mistress a'nt more than a stiring, be she?"

The man replied with a grin, "I believe she is at breakfast, if the young woman will follow me, she may wait in the parlour till I go see."

Angelica, colouring highly, said she would wait with Mr. Green until the lady was ready, and they both, after walking past two idle fellows in the hall, were shewn into a large dining parlour. The style it was furnished in did not give her a good opinion of the taste of the owner. The side-board was loaded with plate, and in the room was hung about a dozen immense portraits, she guessed the whole family of the Gubbins's.

"I see," cried Mr. Green, mistaking in her look of surprise for that of admiration, "you are taken with these here fine pictures. I suppose, Miss, you be a judge of paintings. That is Mr. and Mrs. Gubbins, and all his family."

"And ancestors," interrupted she, with a smile. A violent ringing of bells interrupted the conversation, and in a few minutes the same red faced footman came back, and said, "his mistress was ready to see the young woman, and shewed her up an handsome stone staircase, into a back drawing-room, where Mrs. Gubbins was seated at breakfast. Beside her was placed a very plain child of about eight years old, who was stuffing muffings most unmercifully. Though Angelica was too well bred to adopt an absolute stare, she had almost insensibly fixed her eyes on the figure of the lady before her, whose bloated complexion, aided not merely by rouge, but white paint, made Angelica think her almost hideous, though her features were really handsome. She wore a black wig, concealed by no headdress. She was very short, and fat; yet a perfect fashionist, and the slender cloathing she had on, quite

shocked Angelica. She affected to be near-sighted; and putting her glass to her eye, which she pointed at Angelica, said to Mr. Green, as she rudely regarded her, "Is this the young woman you mentioned?"

"Yes," returned he, "and I hope, Mrs Gubbins, she will suit?"

"I shall be glad, young woman," cried she, "if you answer. I hate changing. But you look sickly, child (she had lost all her colour since she came to town). If you are ill, you won't do for me; so say so at once, for I hate sick people in my house." Tears stood in the eyes of Angelica, at this unfeeling speech, as she faintly replied, "I have, Madam, been ill, but I am now quite equal to my present undertaking."

"Where did you live last?"

"With a friend," returned she, "vainly endeavouring to suppress her tears."

"You will find mine, young woman, I assure you, a very easy situation. You have only Miss Gubbins to take charge of. Lucinda, my love, (to the little girl,) shall you like this person for a governess?"

The child now turned round and gave Angelica a broad stare: then said, "Yes, if she will let me do as I like; for I won't be *snubb'd* by her."

Angelica's reluctance alone to return to Mr. Green's prevented her declining to stay in Finsbury-square. She therefore took Miss Gubbins good naturedly by the hand and spoke to her. The child seemed pleased, and in a minute or two exclaimed "La, Ma, how can you say Miss Thingimbob looks as if she was sick, it is a great story, for she is prettier than you are."

"This little minx," cried Mrs Gubbins, in an angry tone, "grows quite impertinent. Leave the room this moment till you learn better manners."

"I know why Ma says so," continued the child, undaunted; "so she may scold as long as she likes, I won't tell no fibs to please her."

"You must excuse Miss," said Mr. Green, "she knows no better."

"What am I to pay you, young woman?" interrupted Mrs. Gubbins. "Twenty pounds is the common price, I will give no more."

The sum Angelica considered of little consequence, resolved, from what she had already seen of the family, not to remain long in it. She therefore agreed to take the sum that was mentioned, and after the matter was settled Mr. Green departed. The family Angelica had entered into, consisted of Mr. and Mrs. Gubbins, and an only daughter. Mr. Gubbins was a merchant: but having within the last few years met with considerable losses, he had been induced to marry a rich tradesman's daughter, out of the city, whose money proved her sole attraction; and too late he found there were numberless other ones, necessary to render the married state happy.

CHAP. XIV.

Before Angelica withdrew to the room allotted for her, Mrs. Gubbins said, "you may dine with us to-day, because we have no company; but when we have, I shall not expect you below. Miss Gubbins always sits at table; it teaches young people to be well bred." (Yes, thought Angelica, after the specimen I have just seen.) "You may now," continued she, "go; I have done with you, and my maid shall shew you the way. When the dinner bell rings, I shall expect to see you more drest than you at present are."

Always attired with elegance, though simply, Angelica was surprised. She however so far acquiesced as to throw off her hat, and laid her lovely pale hair in a fanciful manner, fastening it up with knots of black ribbon. She attended the summons to the dining parlour at half past five o'clock, when she was introduced to Mr. Gubbins, a little mean looking man, who however seemed good natured; he spoke very civilly to her; but she soon discovered he was one of those easy characters, who are considered as nobody in their own house. The dinner was served with much state, and abounded in high made dishes. The lady tasted of all, and seemed a perfect connoisseur in the science of eating. Angelica, who in her uncle's house had always been accustomed to a plain elegant table, had from habit acquired such a preference to simple food, she was almost starved in the midst of luxury and profusion. Two servants in rich liveries, with the butler, waited on them, and as soon as the desert was removed, coffee was brought in. Afterwards the ladies adjourned to the drawing-room, and Mr. Gubbins to a club of which he was a member.

"Miss Gubbins" said her mother, to Angelica, "will stay with you till her bed time. I hope, Lucinda, you now will keep out of the kitchen. I am going to a rout, and therefore you may stay in the drawing-room. If Miss Gerard can play, she will find a piano forte in the other room to entertain you." She then rang for her woman, and withdrew to dress, soon after returning in a blaze of finery and diamonds, and walked up and down the room before a large mirror, where she could survey herself at full length, until her coach was announced.

Miss Gubbins soon left Angelica to her own reflections; who, had she been in tolerable spirits, would have been much amused at the whimsical family she had entered into. At present it proved a source of infinite disquiet, for she was persuaded her situation could be neither permanent nor happy. Resolved, however, if she was to have any authority over the young lady to exert it, she rang the bell. When the footman came she asked, "Where Miss Gubbins was?" and desired him to send her up stairs. The man smiled. "I may as well, ma'am, attempt to bring the square to you, if she don't choose it, for Miss will have her own way; however, I will tell her."

Soon after Miss Gubbins came running into the room, with a beautiful muslin frock torn to pieces. "What do you want with me?" she said to Angelica. "It is not proper for young ladies to be with servants. I beg, my dear, you will stay with me."

"But I like to play with John, and Thomas. If Ma will go out and leave me here by myself I must have some amusement, not be moped in this stupid drawing-room." "I shall be glad of your company, if you will sit with me. I came here on purpose that you might not be alone."

"I can't stay now. They are all waiting for me in the great hall. We are playing at blind man's buff. It is such fun; so good bye till supper time."

"You don't eat suppers, I hope?"

The child stared. "Yes, but I do. And why not?"

"Then you must sit up very late; that is bad for such a little girl."

"Not very late. I go to bed before eleven o'clock, and what does it signify, for I never get up till ten or eleven the next day; and if I did sooner, I should have no one to speak to. Pa goes into the city, and Ma is never up of a morning till one o'clock. The old housekeeper is

so cross she won't let me come near her; and then the servants are so busy they often turn me out of the kitchen. I then don't know what to do with myself, I grow so tired before the day is over you can't think. I shall like you, (kissing Angelica,) if you will be good natured to me; only I'll tell you what, you are too pretty for my Mamma to like you long. For with all her painting (I see her paint her face every day) she is not half so handsome as you are." Miss Gubbins now ran away, and a little before ten they were summoned to a boiled fowl and oyster sauce. Angelica sat down for form's sake, along with the child; and when she went to bed, she retired also for the night. It was almost noon the following day before Angelica could get any breakfast, and with difficulty at ten o'clock she obtained a fire in a solitary parlour. Accustomed as she had been to early hours, she found it in vain here to expect either regularity or comfort. At nine ever shutter in the house was closed; and it was not till after two attempts to descend to the parlour, she found the housemaid to light the fire; even then, cold and cheerless, she spent the early part of the morning alone; when the young lady made her appearance, she was so rude and noisy, Angelica found it impossible to manage her; and the only idea she now indulged was to get released from so disagreeable an habitation as soon as possible.

In the midst of these reflections she was interrupted by Mr. Green, who called, he said, to enquire how she liked her new situation. To tell him her candid opinion she deemed ungenerous, after the trouble he had taken, therefore, merely replied, "she had not had much experience yet," and changed the subject.

"Do you know, Miss" interrupted he, "you had not been gone half an hour from my house yesterday, when the young officer you see at the play called on you. I fancy Watson looked somewhat black upon him, for I asked him if he had not given him your direction, as no doubt you would be glad to see him; however, as good luck would have it, I met him just as I was stepping in at the shop door, so I told him where you was gone, and I was sure you would be glad to see him, for you took it mightily to heart after you parted with him; I joked him I promise you about you, so he said he would call soon in Finsbury-square." "Gracious heaven," cried Angelica; "what, Sir, could tempt you to talk so strangely? You will drive me wild by this conversation; what an opinion must Captain Owen form of me?" "Nay, don't vex, I assure you he looked quite pleased. But I must now bid you good bye, for this is my very busy time." Mr. Green then departed, leaving Angelica greatly hurt, and mortified at his inconsiderate conduct.

Mrs. Gubbins, before she went out in her carriage, informed Angelica Mr. Gubbins had invited some gentlemen to dine with him, therefore she might spend the day as she liked, for her dinner would be sent to her own room. To be banished society so little to her taste, proved rather a relief than punishment; and degrading as she felt the treatment, she submitted without repining. It was now she felt the loss of her books, her harp, her piano forte (she had left them under Mrs. Evans's care), those delightful resources to annihilate painful recollections; and taking up two or three loose pamphlets, she went with them to her own room. Loud and repeated knocks announced the guests; but she was suffered to spend some hours alone; for they had not only omitted to send her any dinner, but seemed to even forget she was in the house, until nine o'clock, when she was roused from the reverie she had fallen into by Miss Gubbins bouncing into her chamber. "You must come down directly," said she, "Papa desires it. There has been such a fuss about you, you have no idea, Ma is quite in a passion, and looks as red as the red Lion of Brentford, because Pa asked where you was, and if any dinner had been sent you. He said it was a shame you were not at table; and I am sure so I thought, and so I told Ma, which put her in a greater passion than ever. I should not like to be shut up in this dismal hole by myself; I would run away with some of the footmen, I'll be hanged if I would not, if Ma was to serve me so. Come," continued the child, "don't look so dull, I am sure you have been crying."

Angelica amazed at all she heard, intreated she might be excused going down, and was remonstrating, when the footman knocked at her door, and begged her to come immediately. "If you don't, ma'am, I am sure my master will come himself and fetch you; I never saw him interfere with my mistress before."

Angelica, now afraid of creating a serious dispute, most reluctantly followed Miss Gubbins to the drawing-room. Conscious innocence attended Angelica, who shrunk not into that silly bashfulness little minds possess, but with modest dignity she joined the party. As she entered, Mr. Gubbins, with a look of complacency, approached her, and kindly led her to a chair. "I am sorry, Miss Gerard," said he, "we had not the pleasure of your company at dinner, owing to some mistake of Mrs. Gubbins's. Allow me, gentlemen," naming each, "to introduce this amiable young lady to you, whom my daughter is so happy to have for a governess."

Every eye was now turned upon her, and under the disadvantages of a morning dress, pale cheeks, and eyes swollen with weeping, the men were all surprised at her uncommon loveliness and crowded round her, entered into conversation with her. Mrs. Gubbins, who sat swelling with anger, took not the smallest notice of her, and seized the first moment that offered to engage the company at the card table: only one young man was left out who tormented Angelica with his silly compliments and conversation. The beauty of Angelica was too attractive not to render her an object of jealousy and envy to Mrs. Gubbins, who courted admiration and made flattery her very idol.—In her presence, conscious she could only be a secondary object, she resolved to banish her wholly from the drawing-room when she had company; which circumstance her good-natured husband thought so cruel to a young person, he determined for once to exert his authority and insist on Angelica's coming below. His little girl not only seconded the proposal, but unfortunately said, "If Miss Gerard was not so pretty, Ma would let her come down," which so highly offended Mrs. Gubbins that she immediately ordered the child to bed, and rebuked her severely. For offensive truths are most galling when they proceed from the sincerity of young minds, as yet unlearned in disguise, and not unfrequently cause the object of our affection to appear in an odious light.

Before the party separated, Angelica took an opportunity to withdraw, afraid to encounter the displeasure she observed in the face of Mrs. Gubbins; and being the following day better prepared for the attack, she endured it with infinite patience.

CHAP. XV.

Several weeks passed on, in Finsbury-square, in a most disagreeable manner. The Lady Mayoress's rout, which was to take place now, engrossed all Mrs. Gubbins's thoughts and attention. A vast quantity of finery was purchased for the occasion; and Angelica was much surprised when Mrs. Gubbins said to her, "I mean to take my daughter and you along with me. You go that you may take care of Lucinda, for I shall be so much engaged with dancing, she really must have staid at home, if you had not been here." That Mrs. Gubbins should go to the rout did not surprise her, but that with her figure she should think of dancing, created a smile she could hardly conceal. To accompany her was a plan so repugnant to her inclinations she requested she might be excused.

"You have more modesty than I expected," replied she, mistaking her. "Therefore, if you have not any thing proper to wear, for in your situation I suppose you have not much change, I will be at the expence of hiring a dress for the night, rather than you should disgrace me."

"My reluctance to go, Madam," returned she, with spirit, "proceeds not from want of proper attire, but from my extreme dislike to going into public at all."

"Very extraordinary ideas, I must say, young woman, for one in your capacity. I see it was pride, I mistook for humility. It is however my pleasure you should go; and I repeat, have you any thing fit to wear?"

"Yes, Madam, perfectly so."

"Let me see it is so, when to-morrow arrives, or depend upon it I will hire a dress."

Angelica greatly hurt, could not refrain from tears at this humiliating conversation. The next day she surprised Mrs. Gubbins when she appeared below, attired for the rout, in a fine muslin dress thickly spotted with silver (a gown lady Winfield had formerly given her), and a turban of the same with two beautiful ostrich feathers. "Where, young woman," said Mrs. Gubbins, fixing her eyes with malignant envy upon her, "did you get such a dress?—It did not cost a little sum of money, I am sure?"

"I have endeavoured, Madam, to decorate myself to your wishes, not my inclination, and this gown was the gift of an invaluable friend in happier days."

The conversation was broken off by the entrance of Mr. Gubbins, who told them it was time to go, and handed them each into his coach.

At nine o'clock they reached the Mansion-house, and had Angelica been in spirits, the extreme novelty of the scene would have entertained her much. The brilliant appearance of the coloured lamps, entwining the pillars of the saloon, with numberless others, hung in the Egyptian-hall, the fine band of military music, which met her as she entered, the crowd of motley figures, the stately appearance of the Lord and Lady Mayoress, seated under a canopy at the upper end of a long room, where numbers were dancing, all conspired to excite her wonder, and she was almost giddy with the gay confusion of the scene. Mr. Gubbins, immediately on their entrance, joined some gentlemen of his acquaintance, shortly after, Mrs. Gubbins and her daughter were led to the dancers, by the partners they had previously engaged. Angelica now found herself in a most uncomfortable and distressing situation, for she was left in the midst of a large crowd, wholly deserted and alone. Every one stared at her as they passed, for her beauty was too attractive to be unnoticed, and to the whisper, of, "who is she?" and the reply, "I don't know!" She was thrown into embarrassment and confusion. She had indeed many solicitations to dance, but declined them all, considering her greatest security from losing her party, was to sit quietly still where Mrs. Gubbins had left her. She saw not a creature she knew, and the evening proved the most fatiguing, and irksome, she had ever known. Happy was she when it closed, and she was suffered to retire to her chamber on her return home.

The unpleasantness of her situation daily increased, by the marked attentions of Mr. Cooper, the young man, who had tormented her with his conversation the evening she had been called from her chamber to the drawing-room, and he so often dined in Finsbury-square, as at length excited the jealousy of Mrs. Gubbins towards Angelica to a most painful degree, and she resolved to adopt the plan she formerly had been so averse from, that of applying to Lady Winfield; preferring any thing to what she now suffered from the negligence, and vulgarity of Mrs. Gubbins. She was strengthened in the determination from the following conversation, after Mr. Cooper was gone. "I find, young woman," said Mrs. Gubbins, "with all your affected prudery, you have no dislike to the men. Nor does one, either, content you, it appears. This morning I received a visitor of yours."

"A visitor of mine, Madam, surely you must be mistaken."

"O yes, no doubt you know nothing at all about him; Is Captain Owen no acquaintance of yours?"

"Captain Owen," cried she, colouring, "Yes, Captain Owen. So you would pretend ignorance. He had the assurance to call at my house on you, but I soon gave him to understand such guests were not agreeable, so the gentleman departed, I don't think he will come again."

That Captain Owen should not only know her residence, call on her, and meet with such a reception, was so vexatious an event she could not conceal how greatly she was hurt. What an account to go to Trevelyan. How strange—how contemptible must be the opinion he would form of her. Shocked beyond measure she made no reply to Mrs. Gubbins, resolving the next day to wait on Lady Winfield.

Captain Owen surprised at meeting her in town, was led as much from curiosity as a desire to see her to Mr. Green's; and afterwards from his odd conversation was determined to go to Finsbury-square. There, the servants announced him to their mistress, who, when informed he came to see Miss Gerard, told him, in no very polite manner, while she was in her house she permitted no gentleman to visit her, upon which he reluctantly took leave. Trevelyan, being suddenly called out of town the day after the play, he had not seen, or he would have related to him the singular account he had to give of Angelica, of whom he formed various conjectures under these unfavourable impressions.

CHAP. XVI.

Angelica took the opportunity of the following dry fine morning, when Mrs. Gubbins went out a shopping earlier than usual, to walk to Grafton-street, which she reached about three o'clock. To the simple question of, "is Lady Winfield at home?" From being unattended, although perfectly well drest, she received a blunt, "*No*," with a broad stare from the footman. Colouring highly with indignation and disappointment, she next enquired whether Lady Alecia Verral was, which was followed by another, *No*. Wholly disconcerted she drew a card from her pocket and gave the servant. He had the curiosity to look at it, and on reading the name of *Lady Angelica Carteret*, (which on this occasion she was obliged to assume) he immediately changed his manners to the utmost civility, and said he would inquire if his Lady was within if her Ladyship would walk into the drawing-room. He disappeared in a moment, but soon returned, and informed her Lady Winfield was at home, and conducted her into the dressing-room, where she had the pleasure to find her alone. Her reception of Angelica was so extremely flattering and kind as to render her quite satisfied with her visit; and she related without reserve all that had happened from the time of her leaving London with her uncle, until the present moment, except her acquaintance with Trevelyan. The Countess heard her with the tenderest solicitude and concern; and promised to endeavour to obtain another residence for her which she had great hopes of succeeding in. "For," added she, "I know a very amiable lady who has recently lost her husband, and who wishes for some pleasant accomplished young person for a companion to her. Now, my dear, you so entirely answer the description, I flatter myself it will prove an acceptable plan to each; the Countess of Vallency is distinguished for benevolence, and goodness. "Your having," continued she, "sunk your own rank into an humble one, I commend, as you have no means to support or assert your title. I am sorry to say, from so dissipated and depraved a young man as the present Earl of Devaynes, you have little to hope for. He sometimes visits here. When he first did, I never failed to enquire after you, wondering a thousand times what was become of you. But he always replied, with a smile, "was I so silly, also, to believe the romantic tale his father had attempted to impose on his family?" Once, when I argued the point with him, and spoke of the suit which had commenced in Chancery against Mr. Carteret, now residing at Aberville Castle, to which you, and you only are sole and lawful heiress, he answered, "he had on the late Earl's death been applied to by his counsel to carry it on, but had put an immediate stop to it, as in the first place he had no money to spare, and in the second he had seen and conversed with Mr. Carteret, who had advanced so many known truths in his own behalf, he was fully convinced of what he always believed, it was a romantic story raised merely to impose on his father in his dotage. Therefore, Lady Winfield," continued he, "talk to me no more about it. The girl, I suppose, is returned to her original obscurity, the properest place for her.

"Shocked, and disgusted," proceeded her ladyship to Angelica, "I should no more have admitted Lord Devaynes into my house, had not my daughter given him that general invitation she does to all whom she pleases, and who I receive against my better judgment; from the sad alternative of being obliged to either wholly banish them, or her, from my house: for she has repeatedly told me if I did not admit her friends, she would find a home of her own, where she might have full liberty to see them uncontrouled; nor have I a doubt but she would, were I to oppose her. Alecia's fortune is very large; and from her being above age, neither her guardians, nor I, have any influence over her. Such, my dear Angelica, is the state of your affairs, such the sad situation of my family."

"Of my own affairs, Madam, I have had no hope since my uncle's death. From the character, the conduct of his son, I was aware the Chancery suit must drop, for I had no means to carry it on. Therefore, I was sensible my only chance of rising above actual

indigence, deserted, and alone in the world, since deprived of my respected, my maternal governess, was to seek the dependent mode of life I have done."

"You have judged most wisely for the meantime. Had I known what was become of you, I should have written to your aunt the Marchioness of Fitzalleyne all that her brother related to me of your discovery. But to acquaint her with a tale, the subject of which I knew nothing of, seemed so ridiculous, and romantic, I gave up the idea, till I could find out where you really were. Now, I understand she is to be in town in a few months; I would, therefore, until that period arrives, advise you to remain quietly with Lady Vallency, whom I have not a doubt of fixing you with. The Marquis of Fitzalleyne I understand is a generous man, and he will I hope undertake your cause with a spirit and interest, which I trust will crown it with success." Angelica poured forth her thanks with tears of gratitude, and then proposed to take leave.

"I would insist," said her Ladyship "on your making my house your home, did I not fear you would be uncomfortable under the caprice and insolence, it is too probable you would meet with from my daughter. Therefore I shall not make you the offer; but you may depend on hearing from me in the course of a few days." Lady Winfield, then insisted on one of the footmen attending her home. "For," added she, "I don't think it proper for young ladies to walk alone."

"Nor did I know," returned Angelica, with a smile, "until to-day how absolute an appendage a servant is to obtain admittance into a great house."

She now departed elated with the success of her visit, the graciousness of her reception, and with the faint glimmering that dawned on her of brighter days.

Such were her cheerful reflections, when she was interrupted in them by Mr. Cooper, who met her in the street and joined her. She in vain endeavoured to get rid of him; he would attend her; and to add to her vexation, Mrs. Gubbins from the window saw them walk down the square together. At the door he took his leave of her.

"Pray, pretty Miss," said Mrs. Gubbins, "where have you been? I insist upon knowing. Fine doings indeed! So I cannot go out without your running away to meet young fellows."

"Mr. Cooper," replied she mildly, "I met accidentally five minutes ago—his joining me I assure you was very disagreeable." "So you'll make me believe you met him by accident. That won't do, young woman, these plots and assignations. It will never get you a husband. I insist on knowing where you have been."

"That, Madam, you must pardon my absolutely declining to tell you. But your insinuations are wholly unfounded." "Very well, since you choose to be secret you may go elsewhere, I don't allow such doings in my house."

"I shall abide, Madam," returned Angelica, as she left the room, "by your desire, in seeking another residence as early as possible."

She went immediately to her chamber, where she turned her thoughts to the more pleasing plan of Lady Winfield's for her.

CHAP. XVII.

Lady Winfield proved as good as her word; the next day while Angelica and Miss Gubbins were gone out an airing in the coach, a note came for her from Grafton-street. The servant, as he delivered it to his Lady, informed her it was for Miss Gerard. Mrs. Gubbins, whose curiosity was insatiable, and who expected nothing less than an assignation, made no scruple of opening it; and to her utter disappointment read as follows:

To Miss GERARD.

"My amiable young friend,

"I rejoice to communicate the agreeable intelligence of having succeeded in my wishes of placing you under the protection of the charming Lady Vallery; who, from the account I have given her of you, waits with impatience for an introduction; and is prepared to receive you with much kindness. Quit then, my dear, without delay the people you are with, and hasten early tomorrow to Grafton street, when I shall have much pleasure in conducting you to your new home. The best substitute I can find to supply the irreparable loss you have sustained in the death of my respected friend, the late Earl, your uncle.

"Your ever affectionate,

"ALECIA WINFIELD."

"Grafton-street, 2d April."

Mrs. Gubbins, overcome with confusion in having opened the note, rang the bell violently to know who brought it, and where it came from.

"My Lady Winfield's footman brought it," replied the man, "from Grafton-street."

Still more perplexed, as well as mortified, to find Angelica was going to leave her so abruptly, she was walking up and down the room, fanning herself with the letter when she came in. "Miss Gerard," cried she, in a tone between weeping and anger, "you have used me very ill. So, you meant to leave me without any notice. I have not deserved such treatment from you. Who you are I don't know; but if you had told me you was the niece to an Earl, I should have shewn you more respect, and why you came to me in the disguise of a governess is beyond my comprehension."

Angelica looked aghast. She understood not to what she alluded, and enquired her meaning.

"That I opened your letter. I thought you were going to meet that fellow Cooper, and I wished to see; I find I have blamed you unjustly."

She gave Angelica the letter; who saw Mrs. Gubbins so completely mortified and humbled, she merely informed her, she should leave her on the morrow, without adding a single reproach. Angelica was delighted with the contents of her letter, and immediately set about arranging her things for her departure.

When they met at dinner, Mrs. Gubbins was still so extremely disconcerted, her husband observed it, and enquired whether any thing was the matter. She replied, "Miss Gerard, without any previous notice, was going to leave her, which she must say was not very civil."

"I hope," interrupted Mr. Gubbins, with a look of concern, "Miss Gerard may yet be prevailed on to remain with us. I should be very sorry were she serious."

"You are extremely good, Sir," returned Angelica, "and be assured it was not my intention to rudely quit your house; for I meant to signify my intention this day at dinner. Could I by remaining have rendered any advantage to your daughter, it would have been an inducement. But an offer so eligible is held out to me from an old friend, I should lament declining it."

"If that is the case, my dear Miss Gerard," replied he, "I would not for the world detain you; and, believe me, I shall rejoice to hear you are in a situation less dependent than your present one."

"How she came in such a one," cried Mrs. Gubbins, "I can't comprehend. I have discovered Miss Gerard is the niece of an Earl, and is going to live with a Lady Vallency; did you ever of her, my dear?"

"I have not only heard of her Ladyship" returned her husband, "as one of the most exalted characters this country boasts, but I once had the pleasure of seeing her. I was a little acquainted with her husband; he was a man of strong sense, and elegant manners. I read his death very lately in the papers; but the title is not extinct; he has an only son, who, I have heard, inherits all the virtues of his parents, and Miss Gerard must take care of her heart, for he is uncommonly handsome."

"If Miss Gerard," said Mrs. Gubbins, "had told me who she was, I would have treated her better; it is her own fault."

"Let it then," replied Mr. Gubbins, "be from henceforth a lesson to us, my dear, not to arrogate too much to ourselves, but to estimate excellence when we meet with it, however veiled by humble life; riches cannot exalt worth; for while many of the amiable part of mankind possess them not, how frequently do we see them bestowed on those who cannot properly feel their value, while they confine them to selfish gratifications only, esteeming merely those who have them, and despising others for those very misfortunes which ought to excite pity, instead of contempt." The entrance of tea put an end to the conversation.

When morning arrived that she took a final leave of Finsbury-square, the little girl cried violently, for Angelica had entirely won her heart. Mr. Gubbins insisted on conducting her in his carriage to Grafton-street; she had taken a cold leave of his wife the evening before. "Lucinda," said Mr. Gubbins mournfully, "will now I fear be quite lost. Poor child!—with a natural good disposition, she has been spoiled with indulgence; and her education has been wholly neglected."

"Might I," cried Angelica, "take the liberty to give an opinion, I would advise you to send her to school.—The society of servants will deprave her mind. With low company, low ideas must associate."

"Most true, and it is my only alternative." The carriage now stopped in Grafton-street, where she took leave of Mr. Gubbins with expressions of interest in the welfare of his daughter, and good wishes to himself, and family.

CHAP. XVIII.

Angelica was immediately shewn to Lady Winfield. She entered into pleasant conversation with her, and informed her she intended to accompany here at five o'clock to a family dinner at Lady Vallency's, when she should have the pleasure of being presented to her friend. It was not till some time after Angelica was seated, she saw Lady Alecia, who always breakfasted alone at twelve, and who now stalked into the room in an elegant dishabille. She affected not to see Angelica, whose dependent mode of life she had heard from her mother.

"Alecia, my dear," said Lady Winfield, "you keep Lady Angelica standing, (she had risen when she entered,) nor have you bid her welcome to my house after her long absence."

Lady Alecia, not at all disposed to know Angelica in her humble situation, returned haughtily, "pray, Ma'am, be seated," and humming an air, walked to the window.

"I blush indeed for my daughter," exclaimed the Countess, greatly hurt, "nor can I lament the loss of your society, which you do well, Alecia, in giving me so little of, if you cannot behave better."

Lady Alecia, who by no means liked this rebuke from her mother, walked immediately out of the room saying, as she shut the door, "don't wait dinner for me, Madam, it is uncertain whether I shall be at home."

Angelica, scarcely less hurt than Lady Winfield, made no comment on what had passed; and for some minutes each remained quite silent. At length the Countess cried, "I am sorry my daughter has displayed her arrogance of temper before you. She despises the influence I wish to exert, and, not less proud than giddy, is civil to none but those she likes. Oh! may it be a lesson to fathers how they make girls independent of their mothers, if they wish them to be respected and obeyed." At four o'clock Lady Winfield's coach conveyed them to Lady Vallency's house in Park Lane. They found her Ladyship alone, who with graceful dignity advanced to meet them as they entered. "I presume, my dear Madam," exclaimed she, to her friend, "this is the young Lady you kindly promised me for a companion. Her countenance is indeed the herald of much future pleasure to me, if I mistake not greatly."

"Believe me," replied Lady Winfield, "it is the herald of intelligence, and goodness only. And you must allow me to present Miss Gerard to you, not simply as a companion, but as an amiable young lady, whom, I hope, you will soon consider your friend." Angelica, overwhelmed by so flattering an introduction, curtsied, while blushing deeply, she said, "To prove worthy the approbation and esteem of Lady Vallency will be the first pleasure I can taste." It seemed too likely to be so; for she was captivated with her appearance. Elegant and commanding, she united all that delicacy and winning softness of manner, which the heart cannot resist; and which at once takes the affections by surprise. The sable dress she wore perhaps rendered her more than commonly interesting, from the melancholy shade diffused over a countenance which still wore the traces of former loveliness; and, Angelica, as she insensibly gazed on her, could not help imagining she had seen her before, conscious as she was, Lady Vallency was a perfect stranger to her. In the expression too of her fine dark eyes, there was a penetrating sweetness familiar to her; while the tones of her voice were of such melting harmony, that every word she uttered sunk into her heart with the most pleasing and favourable impressions."

The dinner, unlike any she had seen in Finsbury-square, was conducted with order and elegance. The conversation flowed in an easy familiarity, so perfectly tinged with good breeding, and fine sense, that, deprived as she had long been of such, it was only now her spirits began to re-animate, and the reserve so congenial to her temper insensibly to wear off. When they adjourned to the drawing-room, Lady Vallency said, "I hope, Miss Gerard, you are musical. I have a piano forte, a harp, I make little use of, and keep for the amusement

of those young friends who visit me. Lady Winfield told me you liked reading; allow me the pleasure of shewing you the small dressing-room, I have fitted up for your use." She then conducted her through a very handsome bed-chamber allotted for her, into another apartment decorated with much taste, and hung with some beautiful prints. It contained likewise a book-case filled with a collection from the best authors; and a small piano forte. "I am determined," continued her Ladyship, "you shall become a constant inmate; I have prepared for your reception accordingly."

"I hope, Madam," returned Angelica, "by this generous indulgence you will not spoil me; but rather teach me to estimate the happiness I am likely to feel, in having become one of your family."

"I like young people," cried Lady Vallency. "Youth is the season for enjoyment. When the enthusiasm which attends it is over, and half its pleasures are found delusive, yet, even then, its season is remembered as a delusion so sweet, that age delights to behold those who are only now beginning life, treading in its flowery paths in like manner."

"Young persons are rarely morose, splenetic, frailties too often prevalent in advanced life from some cause or another; and, I am sorry to observe, yet, I think the observation just, that after the meridian of life is past, while time steals something each day from the external appearance, it deprives us also of that vivacity, that diffusive sweetness so enchanting; and the longer we live, the more discontented we feel with the objects around us. Without having a contemptible opinion of my own sex, I confess I consider the society of sensible men more pleasant; because they do not descend to the idle tattle, the low envy, the malignity of ours. If women when they met would make literature, and the arts, the topic of conversation, how many reputations would be spared, and how far more rationally would they be employed." "How true," answered Lady Winfield, "is your observation. And how often have I wished other modes of spending time could be adopted than the present fashionable ones."

Just before tea was brought in, a young Lady was announced of the name of Grenville, who seemed on terms of friendship and familiarity, for she entered with her work bag on her arm.

"I came, my dear Madam," said she, "with an intention to spend the evening with you, not guessing you was so agreeably engaged;" curtsying to Lady Winfield, to whom she spoke.

"I am agreeably engaged it is true, my dear Henrietta," replied her Ladyship with a complacent smile, "but you I am always happy to see. This young Lady and you (presenting Angelica) are at present strangers; but I introduce Miss Gerard as one you will consider an inmate of mine, and whom I am sure will be an additional inducement to bring you to my house."

The very kind and delicate manner she presented Angelica, flattered her extremely; while Miss Grenville, who beheld her with infinite sweetness and affability, went up to her, and said, "to have the pleasure of Miss Gerard's acquaintance, will, I am persuaded, be an inducement, as Lady Vallency observes, to lead me to her house." The appearance of Miss Grenville was wonderfully prepossessing. She was not absolutely handsome, but her countenance was fine, and uncommonly engaging. Her complexion was so delicately fair as to indicate imperfect health. And this added considerably to her loveliness; and the tender rose which spread its palest tinge over her cheek diffused an interesting softness in the expression of her dark eyes, which beamed with sensibility, and goodness. The neatness of her dress set off the graces of her person, slight, and elegant, to an advantage that was perfectly captivating.

With Lady Vallency she appeared more than a favourite. There was a degree of tender affection, such as is displayed from a mother to a darling child, in her manner towards her; and Miss Grenville, instead of restraining, enlivened the evening's conversation. Her carriage

was announced at an early hour; and when she was gone, Lady Vallency said to Angelica, "I hope you will like Miss Grenville, for she is often with me; I have the highest opinion of her heart, and understanding. A proof of it, you will allege, when I inform you, I hope one day to call her my daughter. She was a ward of my husband's, who, without wishing to controul her choice, saw, with pleasure, her rising partiality for my son, and he has not forbid me to hope for the alliance."

Lady Winfield had told her, her Ladyship had a son, a very handsome, amiable young man, whom, with a smile, she cautioned from admitting into her heart. A caution she heard with the most perfect indifference, feeling, too sensibly it was devoted only to Trevelyan. "Miss Grenville," exclaimed Lady Winfield, "appears in very delicate health."

"She has a trifling cough," replied Lady Vallency, "which I intreat her to take care of, and trust the spring will remove. Were it to be serious, Vallency would be wretched."

"You expect his Lordship soon in town?"

"Not for two or three weeks. He is at present engaged in the melancholy office of arranging his family affairs at Averly Park, on taking possession of it." The Countess's eyes were suffused with tears, and a subject so painful to her was dropt. Lady Winfield, on taking leave, congratulated her young friend on her agreeable new abode, and promised to see her soon. When they separated for the night, Lady Vallency's maid, an elderly, respectable looking woman, shewed Angelica to her comfortable chamber, which she took possession of, with a cheerfulness and satisfaction she had not experienced since the death of Mrs. Devereux; and she soon sunk into undisturbed repose.

CHAP. XIX.

Lady Vallency kept very regular hours. At ten o'clock the family met in the breakfast room, where Angelica found every thing set out with a comfort and neatness, she had long been a stranger to. Her Ladyship disliked ostentation, or the idle form of many attendants; and without either, contrived to preserve that consequence her rank demanded. She preferred comfort to shew, and had sense enough not to discard old fashions, for the lighter and more showy ones of the present day. Her rooms were hung with damask, her furniture was of the same, richly gilded. Her plate was of old massy silver and gold, and beneath the marble slabs stood large jars of fine India china. Nor had she banished her respectable ancestors into the garret; but allowed many valuable family pictures to remain in her suit of apartments. Every domestic (except one young girl whom she was bringing up) was grown grey in her service; and were perfectly devoted to their excellent Lady.

Lady Vallency met Angelica in the morning with smiles of complacency. "I hope, my dear," said she, "by your looks I guess right, that you have rested well, and a strange and new abode has not frightened sleep from you?"

"Indeed, Madam," returned she, with a cheerful voice, "you have guessed right. I already feel so happy in the indulgence you favour me with, as to consider myself at home."

"I rejoice to hear it; for in that little word, *home*, ought to consist our chief enjoyments in life. For, Thomson justly says,

"Home is the seat of Love, of Joy, &c."

"Ah! most true," exclaimed Angelica emphatically, while a tear started in her eye, at the remembrance of what her's had once been. Lady Vallency observed her emotion, but, without seeming to notice it, went on: "I am so unfashionable as to preclude all morning visitors, except my very particular friends, who, knowing I prefer those hours to myself, kindly indulge my whim. From the constant interruption a town life subjects me to, I should else be for ever broken in upon. I have before told you my dislike to common-place acquaintances, and common-place conversation. I therefore avoid the persecution of a set of idle, insignificant people, who spend all their hours in driving from door to door, from shop to shop, for the sole purpose of killing time. I pass mine in what half the world would call a very stupid way. After breakfast, I generally devote an hour or two to reading, but now I shall put the book into your hands, I hope for the entertainment of each; at two o'clock, I order the carriage. Unable to walk, I find air and gentle exercise absolutely necessary for health. Don't, however, imagine I shall be selfish enough to confine you, when you wish to go out, a servant shall always attend you.

"The evenings," continued her Ladyship, "I devote to my friends. I have a great objections to large parties, and therefore never go to, nor give routs, for which I am called a very stupid old woman: but I have no idea of conforming to fashion, against my better judgement; convinced, that neither sense, nor enjoyment, can consist in jumbling two or three hundred people together, most of whom are strangers to each other, for no one reason, but because all that are called the world do so. I sometimes go into public. I like a good old play; and disapproving, as I must, the bad moral tendency of some of our modern ones, yet while the stage, even in its present state of degeneracy, possesses such performers as Mrs. Siddons, and Mrs. Jordan, it cannot be wholly without attraction. I am grieved to see the immortal Shakspear laid by; but the rage for novelty is so insatiable, that the most unnatural story is well received, if decorated with a magnificent spectacle.

"This spring," she added, "I shall have neither spirits nor inclination to go abroad; which on your account I regret. Indeed so little desire have I for a London residence, I should

on the death of my Lord Vallency have retired wholly into Somersetshire, had it not been on my son's account. He prefers the society of his mother, excellent young man, to a solitary establishment of his own, and has prevailed on me to continue in the town house. And looking forward, as I do, with the most ardent hope to his early alliance with Miss Grenville, I shall remain where I am till then. Afterwards, my dear Miss Gerard, if you can endure the seclusion a country life must afford, and will be prevailed upon to accompany me thither, I shall then, indeed, consider I have not only found a valuable companion, but a second daughter in you."

The strong sense displayed in this little conversation of Lady Vallency's, which rose superior to the idle prejudices of the world on all occasions, where her judgment accorded not, raised her highly in Angelica's opinion. She admired her sentiments, together with the good breeding which accompanied her general conduct, in which also was mingled a tenderness that seemed gradually to heal her wounds, so lacerated by sorrow. She sometimes felt a curiosity to see Lord Vallency, the favoured lover of Henrietta, whose eyes told he was not indifferent to her. Angelica felt satisfied her heart was invulnerable, and that consciousness lulled it into security.

Lady Vallency was equally pleased with her young friend, whose beautiful person she was surprised to find exceeded not the elegant cultivation of her mind, and had not good breeding restrained her Ladyship, her curiosity would have tempted her to inquire what misfortune had thrown her into humble life, formed as she was to adorn a higher. Her family, Lady Winfield had told her was respectable; but having wished to decline naming it, she had not urged particulars, perfectly satisfied her air and manners bespoke the gentlewoman.

CHAP. XX.

Preserve from such Apostles oh ye mitred heads
Preserve the church!—and lay not careless hands
On sculls that cannot teach and cannot learn.

COWPER.

Miss Grenville was a constant guest at Lady Vallency's. The more Angelica saw of her, the more solicitous she became to cultivate the growing friendship and affection she felt towards her; she never hitherto had met with any person of her own age, where her wishes inclined to that intimacy young minds form with each other till introduced to Miss Grenville, and it was an intimacy the Countess took pleasure in promoting the cultivation of, for Angelica had made rapid advances in her good opinion, and there was not an indulgence she did not feel delighted to gratify her in. Lady Vallency, as she said, did not see large parties; her's were select, and only afforded rational enjoyment. The evenings, in most great houses devoted to cards, were spent either in conversation or music. Angelica had once dined at Miss Grenville's, and this day was to be spent at Lady Winfield's. The behaviour of Lady Alecia Verral, the last time she was in Grafton-street, had so much disconcerted her, that could she with propriety have declined going, she would have done it; but the fear of offending Lady Winfield obliged her to accompany her Ladyship, and Henrietta, whom they took up in their way. It was to be only a family party, and it proved no other; for they had merely the addition of a Mr. Howard, an elderly gentleman, a relation of Lady Winfield's. Lady Alecia did not appear till within a few minutes of dinner, and then it was drest for the Opera. She slightly curtsied and spoke to Lady Vallency, and Miss Grenville, but took not the smallest notice of Angelica. Instead of being desirous to entertain her mother's friends, she was out of temper, found fault with every thing; and after dinner, when they returned to the drawing-room, she drew the sofa to one side of the fire, which she threw herself on, and remained perfectly silent. About nine o'clock, Mrs. Bertault, Mr. Cautherby, and Mr. Maynard, the clergyman Angelica remembered to have seen with them at Swansea, were all ushered in. Lady Alecia, who for the last hour seemed half asleep, now sprung up in a moment. "Dear Mrs. Bertault," exclaimed she, "I have expected you these thousand ages. I am rejoiced you are come."

Angelica's confusion, in the idea of being addressed, and known, was soon removed. Her story, which Lady Alecia had related, prevented her being noticed. Mr. Cautherby rudely walked past her with his glass at his eye, and turning on his heel, began humming an Italian air, while Mrs. Bertault remained in close conversation with Lady Alecia; Lady Vallency would have taken leave on the entrance of these gay people, but her friend intreated her stay, assuring her, they would soon be gone.

"Won't you, Miss Grenville," said Lady Alecia, "accompany us to the Opera?"

"No, I am much obliged to you."

"Do, Madam," interrupted Mr. Cautherby, "not sit hum drum here. It is a divine piece to-night, we shall be just in time for the first ballet. The house by this time will be beginning to fill." "So then, Sir," replied Henrietta, "you go, not to hear the music, but to see the ballet and the company. Neither of which I should consider a first inducement."

"O, horrid! I did not imagine, to look at you, you had been half so gothic. Who would attend the Opera till ten o'clock?"

"Don't you know, Jackey," cried Lady Alecia, "Miss Grenville's ideas are at least an hundred years old—therefore, you may as well attempt to make a convert of my mother, as of her."

Miss Grenville smiled, and Mr. Cautherby continued, after a violent yawn. "I am quite ennuie with only the Opera, the same dull thing week after week, year after year. Do,

you divine creature, Mrs. Bertault, invent something new."

"Who, I! Already I have wearied invention," replied she, "and now mean to leave it to others to plan, if possible, something new."

"You complain, Sir," interrupted Mr. Howard, "of dearth of amusements, how can that be, when the town overflows with more than it can support? Have you not two Theatres, the Opera, Concerts, Masquerades, Ranelagh, and Vauxhall?"

"True, yet what then?—only the Opera is the ton, a man of real fashion likes rarely to be seen at any of the places you have named, except it were just to shew his face for a few minutes in one of the side-boxes at the Theatre, as the piece is near closing. As to concerts, they chiefly are filled with professors of music, not people of consequence, and masquerade tickets are become so cheap, and so common, who would think of attending them? Ranelagh and Vauxhall are totally exploded, and I would as soon attempt being seen at some of the petty assemblies about town, I should be equally an object of ridicule. Therefore pray, Sir, tell me, what places are there left to choose?"

"Certainly none, Sir," replied Mr. Howard with a contemptuous smile, "from your account. I remember, indeed, when the Theatre proved the mirror where virtue and morality were represented; and although in what I am going to say, I prove only an echo to a subject so ably handled by others, yet I cannot but with them, deeply lament, it is no longer the case, and that I have lived to see a German author, with most original talents, introducing pieces where vice is pictured under so alluring a form, that our women of fashion behold a very sanction given them to the line of conduct too many of them have of late pursued; and that our dress, expences, and luxuries, are treading so closely in the steps of a neighbouring country, its natural consequences cannot be too deeply deplored."

"You," continued Mr. Howard, turning to Mr. Maynard, who was playing with Mrs. Bertault's fan, "spend your time in a very different way in the country; no doubt you study a great deal?"

"Study, Sir, study," returned he quickly, "Oh yes. The masters under whom I most improved were grooms, the places I most frequented were stables, and the books I most read, is the Racing Callendar, the Sportman's Journal, and Taplin's Farriery. The intenseness of my application, when I do study, requires proportionate exercise, in consequence of which, my horse at times is scarcely ever unsaddled, and I scarcely ever off his back."

"Allow me, Sir, to ask then," interrupted Mr. Howard, "how you managed to obtain your degree?"

"A small pocket edition of Euclid, and an abridgement of Lock, I contrived to peep into unobserved, did the business; so as not only to obtain it, but to obtain it with some eclat. Egad, you see I am not the first person, my dear fellow, who has got credit for abilities not his own, and stamped the character of idleness with the shew of industry. I experienced," continued he, "considerable satisfaction on arriving at my parsonage, to find it so advantageously situated for the sports of the field; and the first thing I did was to purchase a pack of hounds. In consequence, you may imagine, I lead a life highly agreeable to me. One only inconvenience I suffer, from the farmers who are grown fat and opulent by a series of rapacity, exceeded by their indolence, and perverseness, and some petty gentlemen, whose manners are as confined as their domains, are continually threatening me with prosecutions for destroying their fences, and coursing over their grounds. It was only last winter, that in leaping a five barred gate, hounds in full cry, all of us eager for the sport, I had nearly dislocated my neck, when a farmer, who was by, cried, "Damn the fellow, I wish he had broke his neck," and coming up, hinted he would get redress by law, because I had escaped destruction on his grounds."

"With your time so advantageously filled up," retorted Mr. Howard, "for the improvement and example of your parishioners, you must have no leisure to compose your

sermons. How do you accomplish that? I am really curious to know, for the benefit of the other young clergy.”

“I’ll tell you,—nothing so easy—an advertisement frequently meets my eye in the newspapers, “*May be had a collection of original sermons in MS,*” which I immediately avail myself of, and purchase up, for the price of an old song. When Sunday arrives, the sermon is delivered, as new to myself, as to my congregation, in alternate tones of vehemence, and pathos. *Manner*, Sir, manner is every thing now a days, *not matter*, from the pulpit. I took some lessons of oratory from a celebrated player, and the very circumstance of being puzzled to decypher the blotted, and almost illegible characters in some parts of my discourse, I by a little dexterity turn to my reputation, by the sudden display of a white handkerchief; and to give a sanctity to my appearance, when I preach, I always put on a large cauliflower wig.”

Lady Alecia, and Mrs. Bertault, who seemed highly amused by his description, now arose, and said, “although you are such an entertaining creature, Maynard, we must be gone;” and the next minute the whole party took leave.

“What a coxcomb,” exclaimed, Lady Winfield when they were gone, “is that Mr. Cautherby.” “Ah! Madam, what you say is true,” cried Mr. Howard, “but characters such as Mr. Cautherby’s are harmless, comparatively to that other young man’s; he is a disgrace to the church. The mischief such people do, is not calculable. It is not one mind they corrupt, but every order of society. And till the sanctity of the primitive church is restored, we may in vain look for orthodox preaching, and orthodox manners. The very peasantry it affects with its poisonous contagion. They cannot respect a man whose very example, were they to follow, would not lead them to heaven, but destruction. They cannot reverence him; because he adopts that levelling principle of manner, that precludes it. And instead of assisting their wants, healing their distresses, pouring balm into their afflictions;—he is the very person to lay waste their industrious labours.—When he addresses them from the pulpit, they cannot understand him, and his congregation naturally go away disgusted, and unimproved. Yet, thank God, amidst all the depravity of the age, we have still remaining some good, pious Bishops, whose names will not disgrace the earliest annals of Christianity.”

The rest of the company assented to Mr. Howard’s very sensible and just observations; and at eleven o’clock Lady Vallency, Miss Grenville, and Angelica, took leave. Angelica was much hurt at the rudeness of the whole gay party. She resolved, if possible, to shun them in future; and found now by experience, that to excite notice it was necessary to be *great* herself, for poverty and dependence was now considered the worst of faults.

CHAP. XXI.

“S’amor non é; che dunque é quel ch’i’ fento?
Ma s’egli amor; per Dio che cofa, e quale!
Se buona ond’e l’effeto aspro e mortale?”

PETRARCH.

Angelica had spent three weeks in the agreeable house of Lady Vallency, who every day expected the return of her son with the utmost impatience and anxiety. She was now to meet him, as the representative of a fond and lamented husband, whose name he had assumed, and whose family mansion he was gone to take possession of; which she no longer owned, and from her child alone could be derived the future happiness of her life. Even his own paternal fortune, noble as it was, she knew hung on an uncertainty that made her tremble; for in the will of the late Earl was so singular a clause, that on his marriage day he forfeited his patrimony for ever, if he allied himself contrary to his father’s wishes.

Miss Grenville, by the earnest intreaty of Lady Vallency, spent every day in Park-lane; an intreaty she would have declined, for her mind shrunk from the idea of seeming to intrude herself in the presence of Vallency, who she knew was hourly expected; although the tender hurry of her spirits whispered his return was not a matter of indifference. Lady Vallency had a letter announcing his intended arrival in the course of the day. And it was soon after they adjourned to the drawing-room, and were sitting in a sort of twilight, the rattle of a carriage which the next moment drew up to the door, gave notice of his arrival. In a few minutes afterwards Lord Vallency was indeed in the room. He immediately approached his mother, with the most respectful tenderness. He inquired after her health, with an earnest solicitude that displayed all the son in his conduct. He, then, with unaffected pleasure advanced to Henrietta, and taking her hand which he pressed to his lips, said, “How good are, you dear Miss Grenville, sweetly to beguile the hours of my excellent mother, by the indulgence of your company. I am always happy when she has the society of her Henrietta whom she delights in.”

Wholly engaged in this interview with a parent he perfectly adored, he had not yet observed Angelica, who seemed in the general bustle and joy of meeting to be quite overlooked; till turning his eye towards the window, he, by the deceitful light that prevailed, discovered an object insensible to every thing that was passing; and when on approaching, he found it to be no other than Miss Gerard, he was transfixed to the spot, and gazed on her with a silent astonishment, that banished utterance; while the Countess, and Henrietta, were too deeply engrossed in restoring the senses of Angelica, to observe the look of dismay he wore.

Angelica, now somewhat recovered, said in a low voice, “pardon, Madam, the interruption I have given to this moment of joy.—Permit me to retire—a sudden sickness—a faintness came over me—I will withdraw to my own room.”

She rose, supported by the compassionate Henrietta, the innocent cause of all that had happened; but she trembled so excessively, and turned so sick, and pale, she was obliged to remain a few minutes longer, and then was led up stairs by Miss Grenville, while Vallency suffered her to depart with a look of anguish and tenderness he could not repress.

On reaching her chamber, she earnestly intreated to be left alone. She assured Henrietta she was better, who appeared quite alarmed at her illness, and at length was with difficulty prevailed on to leave her. When alone, Angelica gave an unrestrained freedom to the feelings that overwhelmed her, by a shower of tears. In Lord Vallency—in the destined husband of Miss Grenville, she beheld not a stranger—but her own, her loved Trevelyan, who in a thousand instances at Swansea had displayed his attachment to her, without descending, indeed, to professions; and who, it was evident, while he thought of her no more,

had plighted his faith to another, and met with a tenderness undisguised.

The surprise an interview so strange—so unexpected—of which she had not the most remote idea, conspired to overcome her, and struck a sickness so deadly, she had not power to escape from. She was, however, resolved not to be betrayed into the like weakness again, and sent an apology for not appearing at supper.

A thousand circumstances rushed at once into her memory, which fully explained the resemblance Lady Vallency bore to some one whose face was familiar to her. The tones of her voice also had struck her; and she now remembered his mother and Miss Grenville were the persons she had seen with him at the play. These reflections were greatly embittered by the necessity of either leaving an abode, only a few hours before promising every happiness, or else endure the society of a man whose presence was become so distressing. For it was impossible to see him without assuming a reserve and frigid coldness foreign to her heart. These ideas banished sleep, and she arose in the morning with a determination to meet Vallency, as a person to whom she was an absolute stranger.

If such were Angelica's sensations, those of Vallency were equally painful. The wonderful, the unexpected appearance of Angelica in the house of his mother, when he had left her residing in Wales, who herself had told him, "*she had bid a long, perhaps an everlasting farewell to London,*" was an incident so extraordinary as to occupy all his thoughts during the remainder of the evening. He had not the vanity to attribute to himself her indisposition, but he was sensibly grieved at it, and at her suddenly withdrawing herself from them. He became so silent, so absent, neither his mother nor Miss Grenville could engage him in any conversation; for if he answered them at all, he did it with incoherence. Henrietta, he esteemed as an amiable woman whom his mother, with fond partiality, had selected for his choice, as likely to render him happy in the married state. His father, he was sensible, ardently wished for the alliance—Influenced, therefore, intirely by the desires of each, he, with filial duty, promised to accede to their wishes, ashamed even to think of what he considered a romantic attachment to a young woman whom no one knew, and whose sequestered mode of life carried with it a sort of mystery he could not comprehend; although it was evident from her acquaintance with Mrs. Bertault, she had moved formerly in the fashionable world. When then his mother's solicitations in favour of Miss Grenville were earnestly renewed, so sensible was he of her excellence, he resolved to think no more of Angelica; but render happy that parent who rested her fondest hopes on him. But what were his sensations when he beheld Miss Gerard, though not indeed in all her former blaze of beauty, even more lovely and interesting than before, and evidently possessing the tenderest care of his mother, who spoke of her, not merely with approbation, but with an affection in which her looks accorded!

Angelica, since the nervous fever that had attacked her on the death of Mrs. Devereux for want of country air, together with the depression of her mind, had retained a weakness which subjected her to faintings, therefore, now happily escaped the observation this one would have excited; and it passed over as not an unusual thing.

"I am concerned, Vallency," said the Countess, "not only on our own, but on your account, at the indisposition of this sweet girl. Miss Gerard would have added to our evening's enjoyment, by her presence. She is extremely accomplished and pleasing."

"How long, Madam," interrupted he, stammering violently, while his face was overspread with a glow, "has the young lady been with you?" "Only a few weeks. She was introduced and recommended to me by Lady Winfield. I have found her so charming an acquisition to my family, I hope we shall never part."

"Who are her connections?" inquired he, with increased earnestness.

"That I am ignorant of. Miss Gerard is, as you will find on an acquaintance with her, not more lovely, than well informed, amiable and well bred. But as Lady Winfield seemed to

wish to avoid the particulars of her connections, I did not urge it; satisfied, she would introduce no one improperly allied into my house. Yet, I confess, I sometimes am curious to know more of a young person who has excited my warmest esteem."

Vallency more and more surprised at all he heard, was hurt at the idea of her dependent state even beneath the roof of his mother, whose tender conduct he knew would scarcely allow her to feel it; and solicitous as he was to know what event had caused her separation from Mrs. Devereux, (he had not seen Captain Owen since the death of his father,) he judged it wisest to appear before Lady Vallency, perfectly unknown to her. With these resolutions, therefore, the only two people who seemed formed for each other from congeniality of taste and affection, were to meet as beings wholly indifferent, and strangers to each other.

Vallency rang early for candles, and withdrew. "Excuse me, Madam, excuse me Miss Grenville," said he, "I have got a violent head-ache; and am so conscious of my inability for conversation, that," added he, with a forced "smile, you will be better without me," "I never," exclaimed Henrietta, when he was gone, "saw my Lord Vallency such bad company, he has lost all his spirits."

"My son," interrupted the Countess, "has so much sensibility as to be still deeply affected by the late melancholy visit to Averley, upon the death of his father; also, on his return now to a home, where no longer his smiles can welcome him. But he has youth—vivacity, to conquer it; advantages age never experiences in adversity. The afflictions of life, as they increase, take away all desire to live, for,

"As those we love, decay, we die in part,
String after string is sever'd from the heart,
Till loosen'd life at last—but breathing clay,
Without one pang is glad to die away.
Unhappy he, who latest feels the blow,
Whose eyes have wept o'er every friend laid low;
Dragg'd lingering on from partial death to death,
And dying, all he can resign—is breath."

"Such, Henrietta," continued she, "is the true picture, in the above lines, of those who survive to an advanced period; and happy for them when the scene closes altogether. My son is only emerging into life. He has a noble, generous spirit, tempered with a softness so congenial with your own, that when they are happily united, I trust I shall see you each possessing felicity unmixed. To-morrow his spirits will be better, you must spend it with me, I am persuaded Vallency will expect it."

"Excuse me, Madam" returned the blushing Henrietta, "I came to-day because you wished it; but indeed I cannot come to-morrow; for surely it would then seem, I rather sought the society of Lord Vallency than he mine. You would not wish your Henrietta to so humiliate herself."

"Indeed you mistake my son—I shall, however, for once indulge what I must call an idle whim—since I would not for the world give you pain."

Miss Grenville now saluted her Ladyship, and bade her good night. She then went to the chamber of Angelica, whom she found better: therefore on taking leave, said, with a half laugh, (for Angelica asked when she should see her again,) "I really don't know. As Lord Vallency proved so ungallant a lover as to withdraw himself soon after you left us, I mean to resent it, by not coming again. So, my dear," added she, "if you wish to make a conquest, you have not merely my permission, but a fair chance, and a fair opportunity; for he was very curious to know who you were, and where you came from."

Angelica scarcely knew what to make of this speech of Henrietta's; and had it not been delivered with the most artless raillery, she would have considered it bordering on jealousy from some discovery she had made; that, however, was not the case. Miss Grenville was piqued, indeed, at the negligence of Vallency, but any idea of his having seen Angelica before was so remote, that only for the sake of a joke, she had made this speech to her friend, whom she now took leave of, with much affection.

Chawton House Library

CHAP. XXII.

Vallency, obliged to be early on duty, had breakfasted and gone out before the family assembled in the morning. Angelica who dreaded, yet expected to meet him, was relieved from much embarrassment when she came into the room and found it empty. Lady Vallency inquired with the tenderest solicitude after her health; and observing her still pallid countenance, prevailed on her to take a walk.—The open air considerably refreshed her, and she came home in better spirits. She was going to her chamber to change her dress, when she was informed Lady Vallency wished to see her in the dressing room. Angelica, who expected she was alone was thrown into infinite confusion on finding her son sitting with her in apparently earnest conversation. She was hastily retiring with an apology, but the Countess said, “don’t go, my dear, you will not interrupt us, I wanted to see you, when you came in, to tell you we are going to spend the day at Mrs. Grenville’s; and to know whether it will be agreeable to you to accompany us; for I think,” added she, “you are too much an invalid to venture out.”

Angelica understood the hint, given as it was in the most delicate manner; that it was to be a family party, and her presence was not desired. Therefore, with a faint smile, returned, in a voice scarcely audible, “you are very good, Madam, I had, indeed, rather decline going, and will take the liberty of troubling you with my excuses to Mrs. And Miss Grenville.”

Vallency, who was hardly able to stand, had risen, and offered her a chair; but she coldly replied, “she was going immediately,” and, without once venturing to look at him, left the room. His mother, who had not a conception they had ever seen each other before, attributed her son’s conduct to the natural reserve of his disposition; and Angelica’s to that diffidence she knew her possessed of; while Vallency, who had never taken his eyes off Angelica, during the time she remained, was inexpressibly shocked to observe the sweet bloom she used to have, entirely fled. Her countenance was pale, and the brilliancy of her eyes was succeeded by a languor expressive of ill-health, and latent sorrow. Vallency prepared, indeed, for their visit to Grosvenor-street, because he would not disappoint the wishes of his mother, who, with an earnestness he could not resist, had intreated him to go; at the same time, that he foresaw he was creating his own wretchedness by giving into the plan laid out for him; and he entered the house of Mrs. Grenville, pursued by the pale image of Angelica, to whom alone his heart, and in whom alone his happiness was devoted. The day was spent in the most painful restraint. Henrietta had found herself hurt at his conduct the former evening, and was silent, and reserved; while Vallency vainly attempted a cheerfulness he could not command. He had returned to town with the full intention of offering his hand in a few months to Miss Grenville, whose excellence, beauty, and accomplishments he was not insensible to; but Angelica had gained an ascendancy over his heart; this unexpected meeting had revived, and had now overthrown every purpose, as well as engrossed all his thoughts.

Angelica, left at home alone to the freedom of her own reflections, recovered her serenity so far, as to join Lady Vallency and her son the next day, with some degree of composure; and even forced herself to take a share in the conversation that passed. Fortunately the military life of Vallency called him much abroad; but wretched in the presence of Angelica, he formed engagements for absenting himself, and his mother complained she had never had so little of his society; for, except at the hour of dinner they seldom saw him. If by accident he remained at home of an evening, Angelica and he so sedulously avoided each other, that two persons who had conceived the most invincible prejudice could hardly be more distant. If by accident they were left alone, Angelica disappeared the next minute; while Miss Grenville, who with his mother were equally ignorant of their secret attachment, could not often avoid wondering why they should be so uncommonly reserved to each other. Sometimes Henrietta thought it too studied to be

perfectly accidental, and once or twice rallied Angelica on the subject; but she always looked so evidently distressed, and confused, she immediately changed it.

In this way several weeks passed. Captain Owen in the interval had often called; sometimes he dined with them. The first morning he came, Angelica was greatly embarrassed by the recollection of the reception Mrs. Gubbins had given him, together with the conversation between Mr. Green and him; and when he was announced, she coloured so highly Lady Vallency perceived it. The Captain looked much surprised at finding her in Park-lane; but, notwithstanding, addressed her with his usual easy freedom; and expressed infinite pleasure in meeting with her again. When he was gone, her embarrassment was augmented, by her Ladyship's saying to her, with a good-humoured smile, "I did not know Captain Owen and you were old acquaintances, you seem too, my dear, a favourite of his; and if I may judge by the becoming colour in your cheeks, the partiality is mutual. Do you know any of his family?—I understood from Vallency he has a father and sister. He was down with the Captain in Wales, on a shooting party last year."

At the mention of Wales—of Vallency—she again changed colour, and answered in a voice hardly audible, "I know little of the family—they are all mere acquaintances."

"Well, well," interrupted her Ladyship, observing her increased emotion, "I did not wish, my love, to ask what your acquaintance with them was, (attributing her embarrassment wholly to her partiality to the Captain) nor to be impertinent; yet, believe, I take the truest interest in your happiness and welfare; and surely, when two young people meet together who are amiable, it is not unnatural to draw inferences."

Vallency was absent during this call, and when his friend related to him his surprise in meeting with Angelica at his mother's, also, his former interview with her in the street, his visit to Cheapside, the rudeness of Mrs. Gubbins, together with the death of Mrs. Devereux, Vallency concluded that sad event had occasioned her present precarious mode of life; and while he laid open his heart to Owen, requested him not to take the smallest notice of his former acquaintance with Angelica in Wales, having, during her residence in Park-lane, conducted himself as a perfect stranger towards her. He told him his distressing situation in regard to Miss Grenville, whom in honour he was engaged to marry, and the amazing coldness of Angelica, who so constantly shunned him, he had no opportunity to explain to her how he was circumstanced; which had determined him to persevere in appearance to his family of being till now wholly unknown to her. Owen, when he heard the state of Vallency's heart truly sympathized with him; while he deeply lamented Angelica's unforeseen residence in his mother's house, which would be the means of cherishing so unfortunate an attachment.

CHAP. XXIII.

It is not enough, that your designs, nay your actions, are intrinsically good; you must take care they shall appear so; if your inside be never so beautiful, you must preserve a fair outside.

FIELDING.

In the coldest reserve between Angelia and Vallency weeks past on, till one morning when Angelica was left alone in the drawing-room, and so much engrossed by the book she was reading, as not to hear Vallency who had entered and now stood in a dejected posture before her. She immediately rose to go; but he advanced, and taking her hand, which she vainly attempted to withdraw, said, in a voice of mournful tenderness; "why, sweet Miss Gerard do you fly me thus for ever?—If you knew only my internal wretchedness—if you could only guess what the unkindness of your conduct—your haughty coldness makes me suffer—so unlike the gentle sweetness you used to wear—surely you would not regard me with a severity so unlike yourself—Tell me to what I am to attribute this wonderful change?—a change I am unconscious of having merited from you."

"Attribute it, my Lord," returned she, abating none of her coldness, "to yourself alone."

"Myself!—good heavens!—what have I done—how have I offended?—Is it thus we meet after the days of friendship we passed together at Swansea?"

"The friendships, Sir, that are formed on visionary impressions are unworthy to be considered as such;"—she went towards the door to quit the room.

"I would not, Madam," cried Vallency, greatly hurt, "detain you against your inclination—yet if you will suffer me to explain myself—to tell you."

"It would be an unnecessary trouble," exclaimed she,—"believe me, though the opinion I had formed of Lord Vallency was, that he rose superior to a double conduct, yet so far from being offended by it, I have long endeavoured to be sensible of the error I formed in my first opinion of him—which like all hasty ones too often prove erroneous."

"A double conduct!—In mercy explain yourself—torture me not with a suspense so painful." "Were I to do so, it could prove of no consequence—suffer me now my Lord to depart."

"Impossible!" cried he vehemently "Now you must hear me—it is of more than consequence, it is necessary to my future peace, it is necessary to re-establish me in your regard."

"Of that no more, Sir," returned she with dignity.—"The man who on a first acquaintance displays an attention to one woman, so pointed (you will now forgive a frankness you have drawn from me) as to create observation, and on a second meeting, when under the eye of a parent, chuses so far to forget her, as to make that parent believe he never saw her before, must consider her acquaintance not merely degrading, but disgraceful. Yet, even considering it as such, he takes every opportunity when alone with her, of endeavouring to insult her with professions of regard, although betrothed to the most amiable of women."

Vallency looked shocked and dismayed, but assuming a voice of composure interrupted her by saying; "when first, Madam, I saw you in Wales, you then, without living the high life, seemed to possess every comfort the most elegant simplicity could afford. I mean not to flatter you by adding, the loveliness of your person could only be equalled by the accomplishments of a mind, I found on a further acquaintance, abounding with every excellence; and the residence with you at Swansea subdued a heart, which no resolution could prevent being taken captive. I made not proposals to you; for although then under no actual promise to Miss Grenville, my parents from infancy were so zealous for my alliance

with her, that, to sacrifice even my inclination to their wishes, I judged an absolute duty. There were moments, indeed, when I determined to open my whole heart to them; yet to acknowledge an attachment to a lady whose acquaintance was so recent—to whose connections I was a stranger—whose obscure residence so little accorded with her appearance, whose very name was doubtful, wore so romantic an aspect, I blushed at the injustice I was doing to the merits of Miss Grenville, whose graces of mind and person were unexceptionable. Such, Madam, being the case,” proceeded he, “on my return to London, I was not proof against the earnest solicitude of my family. I promised my hand to Miss Grenville: I endeavoured to forget (oh difficult task!) I had ever known Miss Gerard. I became sensible of the sweetness of Henrietta’s disposition, and determined to make her such an husband as I flattered myself would render her happy; at this dangerous interval, while struggling to conquer an attachment to you, I had almost overcome, you appeared before me. In my mother’s house too—loved—admired—caressed by her, and by my destined wife. From your own feelings—your own surprise at this astonishing meeting, perhaps you may judge of mine; and of the agonizing sensations that oppressed me, when fainting you were carried from my sight. Intending the most honourable conduct to Miss Grenville, whose heart I know favoured my pretensions to her, my only safe-guard was to meet you as a stranger—with a coldness I could not feel, and to shun you as much as possible.—Such is the plan I have pursued, such is the plan that has rendered me more miserable than laying open my heart, my prior engagement to Henrietta—and the blame you attached to my conduct, I hope, lovely Miss Gerard, you will now acquit me of.”

“Oh! say no more,” exclaimed Angelica, greatly affected, and bursting into tears—“Noble Vallency!—you have indeed acted like yourself!—like the opinion I had formed of you—now do I see the propriety of our meeting as strangers, which must ever be.—Henrietta is the most amiable of human beings—she is worthy of you—she must—she will render you happy—and I must add, if you are not so with Miss Grenville, you deserve not the possession of so valuable a woman. I love her not more, than I greatly admire her. My friendship is of a tenderness as I should feel for a sister—may we be ever friends!—and may you, my Lord, be happy together!—Happy, as I truly wish you!”

“You will destroy me by this tenderness,” said Vallency, tears flowing down his cheeks. “This conversation is more than I can support. Yet this believe, excellent Miss Gerard, that as my hand is promised to Henrietta, to fulfil that promise is my sacred intention. I mean not to offend your delicacy by speaking what my admiration of you is—how highly I think of your exalted mind. No! From this moment I shall annihilate, what might have been my selfish wishes had I never known Miss Grenville, and henceforth think only of her to whom my faith is plighted; and if the happiness of an angel can attend an angel’s virtues upon earth, then will you possess it!”

Vallency abruptly quitted the room, leaving Angelica overcome by the nobleness of his conduct, the generous frankness of his discourse. She felt unfit for company, and went immediately to her chamber, where she began to reflect on the impropriety of continuing in the immediate presence of Vallency, each secretly cherishing so unfortunate an attachment, but his mother’s partiality for her, and the increasing indisposition of Henrietta, who was never happy when she was a day absent, and to whom she was fondly attached, enfeebled every resolution to quit her present abode; particularly as they were soon to go to Averley Park, whither Vallency was not to accompany them.

CHAP. XXIV.

“Her words were not as common words are ment,
To express the meaning of the inward minde,
But noisome breath and poisonous spirit sent
From inward parts with cancard malice lined
And breathing forth with blasts of bitter winde,
Which passing thro’ the ears would pierce the heart
And wound the soul itself with grief unkind.
For like the sting of asps that kill with smart
Her spiteful words did prick and wound the inner part.”

SPENCER’S FAIRY QUEEN.

Only two days had elapsed after this conversation between Angelica and Vallency, when her astonishment was excited by seeing Mr. Watson (Mr. Green’s partner) enter the lesser drawing room with a parcel of goods under his arm, while the footman told him his lady was coming presently. Angelica was in great hopes he would not recollect her. She was mistaken; for he immediately said in an affected simper; “dear Ma’am, how do you do? we were all a wondering what was become of you—I declare I was never more—I say never more greatly surprised than to see you here; but you ladies like to be so secret—there is no finding you out.”

Angelica gave him no answer, but waving the subject civilly inquired after Mrs. Green. While Mr. Watson, who did not seem to think it necessary to stand in her presence, sat down, and drew his chair close to hers. Hardly had he done so, before the door opened and Vallency abruptly entered. He looked much surprised. “I thought my mother,” said he, “had been here; I beg your pardon;” and was going, when Mr. Watson jumped up: “I just made free, Sir,” cried he, “to sit down; it is a long way out of the city to this end of the town; and I thought it no harm, as Miss Gerard and me are old acquaintances.”

Angelica, whose colour before rose high, was covered with confusion; while Vallency replied, as he regarded them both with astonishment, and waved his hand to Mr. Watson, “resume your seat, Sir, don’t let me interrupt you. Excuse, Madam,” continued he, to Angelica, “my accidental intrusion, I knew not you were here—this person I understood was waiting with goods for my mother. I knew not—how indeed could I guess he was an acquaintance of yours.”

“Nor is he, my Lord,” eagerly interrupted Angelica. “I assure you it is an entire mistake—I—I hardly know him at all.”

Vallency, who perceived the extreme distress of Angelica, and was hurt at it, replied, in a softened tone, “whatever may be Miss Gerard’s acquaintance with that person, no doubt it has been founded on a laudable motive; therefore I am grieved you have judged an apology necessary”—Vallency then quitted the room.

Mr. Watson, much nettled at the hauteur of Vallency, said, when he was gone, “a mighty proud sort of a gentleman.” He had not time to add more, for Lady Vallency now made her appearance to the infinite joy of Angelica, who immediately left them together. She was greatly hurt at this accidental meeting with Mr. Watson; much afraid Vallency would really believe him an acquaintance of hers; that, however, could not be explained, without entering into the particulars of her precarious life within the last few months, which it was wisest to let alone; and leave to chance what now might be his opinion of her.

This was, however, to prove a day of mortification and distress to Angelica. Lady Winfield was expected to spend the evening in Park-Lane; and, as it was in a friendly way, she came soon after the family were assembled in the drawing-room, from dinner. She

entered in evident agitation, which she vainly endeavoured to hide. A few minutes after she was seated, she said to Lady Vallency, “you will, Madam, have more visitors presently. My daughter told me she was to follow me with Lord Devaynes, who dined in Grafton-street; and I could not with politeness decline his accompanying her.”

“Gracious heaven!” involuntarily exclaimed Angelica, turning extremely pale, and sick, “is Lord Devaynes coming here?”

Her sudden ejaculation, excited the immediate observation of Vallency, who with trembling anxiety beheld her death-like countenance, while Lady Winfield also noticed it, and requested a few minutes’ conversation with her; and they withdrew together. She told Angelica, “to have forbid her daughter to come to Park-Lane, would have proved of no avail; and to conceal her residence from her cousin was impossible, as Lady Alecia had disclosed it; therefore she could only set out before them to prevent the surprise and consternation Lord Devaynes’s appearance would have thrown her into. All she had to do was, to be composed and indifferent before him; as she was happily under protection he had no power to withdraw her from.” They now returned to the drawing-room, which Vallency was pacing in a sort of breathless impatience, eager to know what was next to happen; while Angelica, hardly less agitated, in a few minute beheld Lady Alecia enter, followed by her cousin; he with her Ladyship paid his compliments to Lady Vallency and her son, but took not the smallest notice of Angelica, who now was introduced to Lord Devaynes, as *Miss Gerard*.—He looked extremely confused, and slightly bowing, walked to the other end of the room. Slightly as he bowed, evidently as he shunned her, Vallency in a moment saw that Angelica and his Lordship were not strangers. The former, pale and trembling, could not recover her composure; while the latter, although he would not acknowledge that he knew her, notwithstanding gazed on her with the most eager admiration; and the impenetrable mystery that hung over Angelica seemed hourly to increase. After tea Angelica was requested by Lady Vallency, to sit down to her harp. She pleased a violent head-ache; still she was intreated, and at length complied. She began a little plaintive air—but her hands trembled on the chords—her voice faltered, and she burst into tears—shocked at her weakness of mind, she made an apology to the company, and quitted the room. A sudden faintness overcame her, and she went into the dining-parlour for a glass of water. She seated herself to regain some degree of composure, for she was unusually agitated by the occurrences of the day; and she had remained near half an hour when she saw Lord Devaynes enter. On his unexpected appearance she would have fled, but he took hold of her hand, and forcibly detaining her, said, “After two years fruitless search and enquiry we part not thus easily, believe me. I mean not to frighten, or alarm you by this declaration, therefore sit down quietly and hear me; for by heavens if you attempt to ring the bell you will compel me to detain you.”

“This high language, my Lord,” returned she with spirit, “will not frighten me into compliance to listen to you. I am now in a house where no rudeness will be listened to with impunity—I shall have instant redress.”

“Shall you?—then, by your all-attractive loveliness, you have had power to subdue the cold, the insipid Vallency. And he, you mean to say, will prove your champion. I dread not so tame a rival.—You love him—I see it by your countenance—but trust not to his professions, for he is betrothed to another. Hear, therefore, the most sincere of your admirers, who unaccustomed to make declarations, yet will confess to you, most charming of human beings, that from the first moment I beheld you at Graffington-Abbey, I was wholly subdued—followed by your angelic figure worshipping the lifeless image of my father, I, after beholding you once, sought to behold you once more. You allowed me that gratification. It was too transporting a one not to wish again and again renewed.—But you deceived me, and had fled. I hovered in vain about your retreat. No one knew whither you had gone—every search, every inquiry for two tedious years proved fruitless till now, when the kind

compassionate Lady Alecia Verral, for which I shall ever thank her, conducted me to you.”

“That she has done so,” cried Angelica, “I, alas! could not prevent: but although she has been accessory to our now meeting, it shall be my own fault if it occurs again. For I repeat, it is not more ungenerous than unbecoming in Lord Devaynes, to address me as he has done.”

“Ah! sweetest of women, linger not a life of dependence here—trust to my generosity, to my love—hear the most passionate of your admirers (falling on his knees)—who here swears to devote the remainder of his life to you—you who—“ the door opened and Vallency stood before them. He was immediately withdrawing greatly shocked, and surprised, when Angelica called after him, “my Lord, Lord Vallency—go not—disengage me from this gentleman.”

He hesitated how to act, and, much agitated, at length approached, while in an inarticulate voice, he said, “what would Miss Gerard have me do?”

“Oh! save me from Lord Devaynes. If you pity—if you regard me, let me pass.”

“You would not, Sir,” cried Vallency, with spirit, “detain this lady against her inclination?”

“Madam,” (disengaging her hand) “you are free to return to the drawing-room.”

“By what title, my Lord,” interrupted Devaynes fiercely, “do you interfere?”

“By the title of this lady’s having an immediate claim to my protection, while she is an inmate in my mother’s house.”

Angelica was so extremely terrified she was unable to go, and stood trembling in silence. “Miss Gerard, allow me to conduct you,” exclaimed Vallency with dignity—he led her to the door, and she, happy to escape, went immediately to her own room.

The two gentlemen were now left together. For some minutes they remained silent. Lord Devaynes first spoke, “by what authority, my Lord, I repeat, did you interfere?”

“I have given you my reasons. Were any other lady in a similar situation, I would do it again, even at the hazard of my life.”

“You speak warmly, my Lord—but Miss Gerard, as you call her, may have a claim I am unacquainted with.”

“What claim, Sir,” cried Vallency, “can she have, but a loveliness and virtue that ought to secure her respect. And I should rather ask while she is in this house, how you, my Lord, have presumed to detain Miss Gerard without being convinced it was agreeable to her?”

“And are you sure it was not?—Females sometimes affect a prudery and reserve not natural to them. I had the pleasure of Miss Gerard’s acquaintance I imagine, before she knew your Lordship.”

“Only satisfy me your intentions towards her are honourable—that the address, in which I surprised you on your knees, was not displeasing, and I have done—but, till assured of that, called upon as I was to interfere, I shall demand such an explanation as becomes a gentleman on an occasion like the present one to give.” “I am not accustomed, my Lord,” replied Devaynes resentfully, “to be answerable to any one for my conduct. To you, Sir, I never shall, and therefore I wish you good night.” He turned on his heel, and abruptly left the house.

This scene had occasioned such a tumult in Vallency’s bosom, he did not return to the drawing-room, until his mother sent to inquire what was become of him. He then joined the party; but forgot the errand he had been sent on, which was to search for Angelica; who sent an apology from her own room for her non-appearance, pleading a violent head-ach. Shortly after, Lady Winfield, who was uneasy and surprised at Lord Devaynes’s sudden departure, and Lady Alecia, took leave; as Vallency handed the latter down stairs, she thought it would be an excellent joke to poison his mind towards Angelica, whom she extremely disliked, and

therefore carelessly said to him, "I am surprised, my Lord, your mother is so much attached to Miss Gerard, who is a mere adventurer; she has appeared in more characters than one, and under more names than one. First, she lived at Graffington-Abbey with Lord Devaynes—then with some old woman in an obscure part of Wales, and now is with your excellent mother; besides pretending alliance with a noble family." That Lady Alecia uttered some truth he knew; although the extent of it he almost dreaded to believe. From the moment of Lord Devaynes being announced he saw the emotion of Angelica; and that her increasing distress obliged her to leave the room; which shortly after his Lordship did also. He intended not meanly to pry into this mysterious acquaintance of either; and only by the desire of his mother, had gone to enquire after her when the servant informed him Miss Gerard was in the parlour, and he found his Lordship and her together.

Vallency, unfit to converse, immediately withdrew to his own room. He flung himself in a chair in the bitterest anguish. He was conscious, however exceptionable the conduct, the real character of Angelica might prove, intending as he did to view her only as an indifferent person, and to devote his hand where it already was promised, it could be of no consequence to him; yet the events of the day were so extraordinary he could not drive them from his remembrance; and to be obliged to alter his opinion of a person of whom he once thought so highly, gave him the deepest concern. Never till now had he seen any thing exceptionable in the conduct of Angelica, and when he recollected the strict propriety of it, under the eye of Mrs. Devereux, he could not at all reconcile it with what he had just heard. Yet to doubt the truths which carried so clear a conviction with them was impossible, inclined as he was to consider her with the most favourable partiality. Had not Lady Alecia Verral asserted, she formerly had lived at Graffington-abbey with Lord Devaynes, and had not his Lordship told him they were formerly acquainted? nor was it likely a stranger would be on his knees before her. Mrs. Devereux certainly did reside in a very secluded manner, shunned all society, and avoided all mention of where the early part of Angelica's life had been spent. Her acquaintance too with the vulgar man he found her conversing with in the morning was very strange; but had not Lady Alecia proclaimed her a mere adventurer? That the very name she bore was not her own? And it now rushed into his remembrance her embarrassment at Swansea, her acquaintance with Mrs. Bertault, whom, with Lady Alecia, she so carefully avoided, with various mysterious circumstances he could not at the time account for. One was particularly striking, Mr. Hamlyn's evident surprise on hearing her called, Miss Gerard, and her distress when a card was sent under the name of Lady Angelica something, which had been much talked of amongst the Owen family at Swansea, a circumstance Mrs. Devereux had avoided all explanation of. Yet how could she be titled and living on the bounty of his mother was impossible,—and the more he reflected on every thing, the more he was bewildered—yet to caution her against the art of Lord Devaynes, as she had herself requested him to free her from him, he intended the first opportunity to do as a friend.

CHAP. XXV.

It is the capricious state of love to be attended with reproaches, suspicions, enmities, truces, quarreling, and reconciliation. TERENCE.

When Angelica was forced from the persecution of Lord Devaynes, she went immediately to her room, where in tears and uneasiness she spent the whole night. Although satisfied of the rectitude of her own heart, and conduct, she was shocked to think what must be the opinion Vallency had formed of her, from the strange occurrences of the day, which were most unfavourable in their appearances; one moment she resolved to thank him for his friendly interference, and to inform him of her relationship to Lord Devaynes. Yet that would lead so naturally to every event of her life, her name, connections, and history, all of which had so carefully been concealed; that on mature deliberation, she determined to leave to future accident the explanation, as whatever now might be Vallency's unfavourable impression of her, it was of little real importance, since so soon he was to be the husband of Miss Grenville; and in two or three weeks they would be separated, by his mother's going into the country.

After a sleepless night Angelica met the family at breakfast. Vallency's countenance told he had rested no better. His mother enquired with the tenderest anxiety after her health; whilst he, as if afraid to trust himself to speak, merely bowed to her, and took the earliest opportunity to quit the room. Before dinner Angelica accompanied Lady Vallency to visit Henrietta. What delight would it have given Angelica to have opened her whole heart to her. In her gentle, her affectionate bosom to have reposed all her sorrows. And strange was it, the only kindred mind she had ever met with, she was restrained by the most peculiarly distressing circumstance from claiming confidence in. Fondly did Angelica love Henrietta; and greatly did she shew the exaltation of her own mind, in sincerely desiring her alliance with Vallency. She knew her prior claim—she knew the tenderness of her affection for him, and therefore hoped to see them united. But she saw in her pallid cheek, her languid eye, her health was daily declining, and that not even Vallency's visits which were now more frequent, could restore the rose to one, nor the lustre to the other.

In the evening Lady Vallency having letters to write, left Angelica to pursue her own amusement, and recover in some degree her scattered spirits; she had recourse to her harp, which stood in the drawing-room, and she sung in a low plaintive voice the last stanza of this very beautiful ballad, the exquisite composition of a Lady; and gave all the energy to the music which it naturally possesses.

“From sweetest airs I sought relief,
And hoped from music cure for grief.
Fool that I was, the thrilling sound,
Served only to increase the wound:
And while for rest I fondly strove,
Forgot that music strengthens love.”

The melancholy tone of her mind gave a peculiar charm to the feeling with which she accompanied the air. Ere she closed it, she was startled by a deep sigh which seemed

to issue from the further end of the room, and she beheld Vallency leaning in a dejected posture against one of the folding doors, which was thrown open, and separated the two apartments. He had returned early from dining with Captain Owen, and going immediately into the drawing-room which he found empty, had remained there lost in thought till roused by the thrilling tones of Angelica's voice which had attracted him to the spot where he seemed immovable, and when she ceased, clasping his hands together, he exclaimed, "Why, Ah! too lovely Miss Gerard, thus charm every sense till I am lost in incredibility at the amazing tale I have heard. And can it be true," cried he, approaching her, with a voice of the tenderest sensibility, "that Lord Devaynes is not unknown to you? that while you solicited my interference you favoured his address?—Forgive a freedom which only the purest friendship—the most earnest solicitude in your welfare, tempts me to take—and believe, while I would not for worlds offend that delicacy of character I have ever thought you possessed of, I must now caution you to shun Lord Devaynes—he is the most dangerous—the most dissipated of men.—His fortune is squandered at the gaming table—his hours are passed in riot and intemperance—your ignorance of this, could alone have induced you for a moment to have listened to him."

"So far," cried Angelica, astonished, "from listening to Lord Devaynes, whose conversation, whose society is hateful to me, did I not intreat you, Sir, to free me from him; which you kindly did." "Most true, and while I read only in your countenance those virtues which have hitherto regulated your conduct, I will not credit the malicious tales of the world—but believe, from my soul, what I have always thought you, not more lovely than good, and possessed of a heart, and mind, filled with every excellence."

"Oh! My Lord," said Angelica, deeply penetrated and melting into tears (too sure some malicious story had been fabricated against her) "were it permitted me to tell you what my acquaintance with Lord Devaynes is—how nearly in kindred we are allied, then would you, I trust, think of me not merely with your usual candour, but with a more favourable impression. But as there are circumstances in my hitherto unhappy life, which I am not at liberty to disclose, suspend your judgment: and if an unfortunate orphan, (thus far will I be unreserved,) deprived of her inheritance—friendless—and unprotected since the death of Mrs. Devereux, has any claim to your compassion, then will it be shewn to the object before you."

"Enough" cried Vallency, greatly affected and taking her hand, "thus let me, (pressing it to his lips,) seal my forgiveness, and intreat your pardon—sweetest Miss Gerard, think not I mean to pry into the affairs of one whose happiness will be ever dear to me, and I may add dear to my Henrietta.—Henceforth we shall I trust be the tenderest of friends—I will withdraw myself from your society a while, (that I must do for my own peace,—in justice to that purity of attachment I ought to feel for Miss Grenville, before I finally give her my hand,) then I flatter myself I shall meet you only under that character, and we shall be true *Friends*. Till then farewell!"—Vallency retired.

The next morning at breakfast his mother informed Angelica her son was gone for a week to Averley-Park, to arrange matters for her taking up her residence for the summer there. Angelica knew the reason of his departure, and greatly as she admired it, was sensibly grieved her presence was the cause. But on reflecting maturely on the cruelty of her cousin, in not only defaming her character, (whom other could it be?) and endeavouring by so doing to draw her from the protection of her present friends, she determined not to pass over his conduct in silence, and therefore sat down and wrote him

the following letter.

To the Earl of DEVAYNES.

“Park-lane, June 10.

“My Lord,

“As the Son of your late dear and lamented father, I would fain spare you the censure you must be sensible you merit; nor should I now have intruded on you this address, had you not made free with the reputation of an unprotected orphan, whose near alliance to you ought to have been an invulnerable shield from malice so unprecedented. I write not, Sir, however, to reproach you. Simply to request, if you do not know me as the niece of the late Lord Devaynes, the daughter of his sister, you will not know me either by any borrowed name, since the one I have been painfully necessitated for the present to assume, you certainly have no right to believe the validity of; and perhaps will some day credit the one I scruple not to sign to you of

“Your cousin,

“and humble servant,

“ANGELICA CARTERET.”

She was satisfied with what she had written, and got an opportunity of dispatching it to Devonshire-place.

The evening Lord Devaynes visited Lady Vallency, he had been conducted thither by Lady Alecia Verral, as he told Angelica. The impression she had made on him when first he beheld her at Graffington-abbey, had never been erased. He then thought her the most lovely creature he had ever beheld, and only the suddenness of her departure, together with the hopelessness of discovering her retreat, had prevented his making the most vigilant pursuit. By the will of his father he certainly had a right to consider he had some authority over her. She had been consigned to his immediate protection. But if he asserted that authority he was called upon not only to protect her honourably, but also support her until restored to her natural inheritance, which he was to proceed in recovering. Thus situated, and by no means inclined to act according to his father's wishes, as he could not obtain her on his own terms, he endeavoured in the dissipation of London to forget her.—What then was his surprise to hear from Lady Alecia, (after for two years losing all traces of her,) she was residing so near him. Transported with the idea he intreated Lady Alecia to take him with her to Lady Winfield's; and to gratify his Lordship for one evening, relinquished her usual parties and conducted him to Grafton-street. What there was his astonishment to find the improvement two years had made on her person and manners—and all his former passion returned with an ardency he could not conceal. He observed the emotion and uneasiness his presence excited; and he observed also the ascendancy Lord Vallency had gained over her affections.—He watched with the utmost impatience an opportunity to converse with her alone, and was favoured in it by Angelica's indisposition, which compelled her to withdraw and he was fortunate in finding, that instead of retiring to her chamber, she had gone below. The spirited conduct of Lord Vallency, who had surprised them together prevented his using force, which he intended, to get her out of the house, and vexed and dispirited in his plans, he resolved to wait some more favourable opportunity which he was not without hope would soon occur.

Such was the state of his mind when Angelica's Letter was brought him. Ignorant of all Lady Alecia Verral had told Vallency, Lord Devaynes knew not what to make of it, but sat down and answered it as follows—

To Miss GERARD.

“Devonshire-place, June 12.

“While, loveliest of women, you claim one name and assume another to the world, which of them am I to believe you are really intitled to bear? This however believe, that so far from ever attempting to sully your spotless name, I think you the most beautiful and perfect of human beings. I therefore ardently wish to place you in a state of affluence and independence, which you must be a stranger to where you are at present. Graffington-abbey, whose sweet retreats you once delighted in, I again offer for your reception. There amid its deep retirement you may defy the malignant whispers of the world.—There

“Love free as air,” &c.

will be divested of idle forms, and undisturbed I shall have leave to pour forth the eternal vows and constancy of

“Your devoted

“DEVAYNES.”

Angelica, who credited not Lord Devaynes's assertion, was so much shocked and aggrieved at the contents of his letter, she tore it in a thousand pieces, and endeavoured to forget she had ever received it.

END OF THE SECOND VOLUME.

THE
NOBILITY OF THE HEART.
VOL. III.

Chawton House Library

THE
NOBILITY OF THE HEART:

A NOVEL.

BY ELIZABETH ISABELLA SPENCE,

AUTHOR OF HELEN SINCLAIR.

For Fortune can depress, or can advance;
But true Nobility is of the mind,
Not giv'n by Chance, and not to Chance resign'd.
DRYDEN.

IN THREE VOLUMES.

VOL III.

LONDON:
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PATERNOSTER-ROW.
1805.

THE
NOBILITY OF THE HEART.

CHAP. I.

By nature to compassion mov'd
We feel the griefs of those,
Whose hapless destiny has prov'd
The touch of kindred woes.

A sympathy the heart constrains,
To pity the distrest,
When by our own, we judge the pains
That rend another's breast.

METASTASIO.

LADY Vallency prepared to go the ensuing day to Averley Park in Somesetshore, when the following note was brought to her from Mrs. Grenville:—

“My dear Friend,

“The indisposition of my Henrietta makes such rapid advances, as to cause me the most serious alarm. I would fain have persuaded her to take an airing this morning, but such an universal languor and debility steals over her frame, she finds herself unequal to the exertion. She therefore begs me to request you will allow Miss Gerard to come and spend the day with her.

“If the physician thinks it right, I intend to carry her to Bristol hot-wells, without delay. Send, my dear Lady Vallency, your young friend, to be with my daughter; and in pity come yourself, and, if possible, pour consolation into the bosom of an afflicted mother, who, I am sure you sympathize with,

“M. GRENVILLE.”

“Grosvenor-Street,
Monday.”

“How, in a moment,” cried Lady Vallency, with a countenance of sorrow, after she had perused the letter, “are our plans overthrown. And how unprepared is the heart, elated with joy to-day, to meet the sudden reverse of fortune to-morrow! Sweetest Henrietta! Child of my most darling hope; so lovely, and yet so fragile.”

This pathetic exclamation was not lost on Angelica, who truly shared in her grief, and delayed not a moment in accompanying her to Grosvenor-street.

They found the fair invalid in the drawing-room, where she was laid on the sofa. She extended her hand to the Countess, while she said, with a faint smile, “How good you are to visit the sick.—And you too, dear Angelica. Surely such society must, in some degree, restore me.”

In a short time, the two elderly ladies withdrew together, for Mrs. Grenville was anxious to have Lady Vallency's opinion of her daughter, and the two younger ones were left alone. Angelica, shocked inexpressibly, as she gazed on the emaciated countenance of her friend, could not collect her spirits for some time, and, after a long silence, asked, if by reading, or music, she could amuse her?

"No, thank you," cried Henrietta, "I wish to converse with you a little." She paused a while—and then went on. "If I did not know your mind superior to the weakness of most of our sex feel, in being in the house of sickness, I should not have requested to see you here. I would not for the world, causelessly alarm my beloved mother; but I wish she were more prepared, for I am sensible I cannot live.—I feel as Miss H. Lee beautifully describes it,

"That life but feebly flutters o'er my heart,
E'en as a wounded bird upon her nest."

"Once, indeed, I thought this world promised me years of bliss so pure, that perhaps, had I tasted it, I should then have beheld this approaching hour with dismay. Oh! how different now is its appearance!—All the regret I experience, springs only for those who tenderly grieve to part with me. My complaint is hereditary to my family. Vallency, it is true, may lament me for some time; but what a woeful gift should I have presented to him. Now, I hope, how ardently! his happiness will be of a brighter hue. If he has eyes—susceptibility—there is a lovely inmate in his mother's house, whose sympathy of soul, whose kindred virtues, will surely direct him to seek happiness more permanent than Henrietta could have promised him!"

The words of Miss Grenville, so delicately couched, and which conveyed more than she chose to disclose, covered Angelica with the deepest blushes and confusion; and when she sufficiently recovered herself, she replied, "After the generosity, noble Henrietta, you have displayed, I now consider myself called upon to open my whole heart to you,—a heart, not guilty at least, although weak in the extreme. You have often rallied me on the subject of Lord Vallency. It was a subject you had too much penetration not to easily discover, gave me infinite embarrassment and pain; and when you perceived it, you delicately desisted. It was my fate to see Lord Vallency in Wales, when he bore the name of Trevelyan.—Accident so threw him in my way, we spent hours, and days together. To you, who are well acquainted with him, it is needless to describe the graces of his person, the fascination of his manners, or the excellence of his heart. They were irresistible: and with his departure fled my peace. The retirement I lived in, I pleaded as an excuse for the omission of those vows he never offered me, and which I judged myself entitled to, from the tenderness of his behaviour,—ignorant he had a heart so gentle, a person so beautiful as Henrietta's to claim alliance with him. From the unfortunate introduction to him, as Lord Vallency, with his new title, died all my regard. I viewed him, from henceforth, as I considered him, a perfect stranger to me; under that character, I have conducted myself towards him, and think not the worse of him, sweet Henrietta, that I once loved; for his heart is too pure, his regard for you too securely founded on your virtues, to believe that I can injure its rectitude. And so invincible was my resolution to bury my attachment in my own bosom, not any thing but this subsequent conversation should have drawn this confession from me. Justice to you—to myself, now require it."

"After such a one," interrupted Miss Grenville, "how do I rejoice, two hearts so congenial will come together. It is, then, as I long have guessed: Vallency loves you, and is beloved again. Often did I think I saw it through the flimsy veil of pretended reserve; and was afraid Vallency, in his restrained addresses to me, was sacrificing to mistaken honour, his own substantial happiness and peace. Had we been united, I might have expected every thing from his rectitude and virtue to promote our domestic comfort. But should I not have made him the melancholy possessor of a shattered constitution, and, instead of proving a companion and joy to him, would not his very affection for me, be the source of his future misery?"

"Oh, talk not thus," cried the weeping Angelica, "you will yet be well—yet be happy!"

"Never well," returned Henrietta, with infinite composure, "but I trust happy. And now, my dear Angelica," continued she, "you must give me your sacred promise, as the last request I have to make, that you will wed Vallency, should he ever make you the offer of his hand."

"Gracious heaven!" exclaimed Angelica, "what a request.—No, Henrietta, that is impossible!—Do you think me so callous to every sentiment of delicacy, and feeling, as to make such a promise? For if length of years is not permitted you, (as I trust they will be,) think you Vallency could so soon forget you, as to crown his nuptials with another at your tomb?"

"This is romantic in the extreme: your fulfilling my wishes, is only permitting me the participation of felicity; and if the spirits of the departed are permitted to hover around those embodied, then will I whisper you joy on that event."

Angelica was prevented from replying by the return of the ladies. They found Henrietta, though apparently fatigued, in better spirits, and the remainder of the day was spent in tolerable cheerfulness by the whole party.

After the physician had paid his usual visit, Mrs. Grenville prevailed on Lady Vallency to give up, for the present, going to Averley Park, and accompany her, instead, with her daughter and Angelica, to Bristol hot-wells; a plan she readily consented to, when she found the pleasure it was likely to give them.

Vallency, who was expected in town this evening, arrived, and was surprised, when the footman told him his lady was from home, and asked if he would have candles in the drawing-room.

"Where is my mother?" returned he, "I will go and fetch her."

"At Mrs. Grenville's, my Lord. I believe my Lady went rather unexpectedly, for dinner was ordered at home, and in an hour after, the carriage was sent for to take her to Grosvenor-street."

He took up his hat and went out. The mention of Mrs. Grenville, brought the fair Henrietta to his recollection, with the most painful sentiments, and all the tenderness of his nature yielded to a retrospect of a conduct he so greatly blamed himself for, that he returned from Averley with the full determination to urge their marriage without delay. He remembered her as claiming only two years since his first affection, blooming in health, filled with vivacity, and not less beautiful than the object of his recent love. When he arrived at Mrs. Grenville's, greatly was he shocked, for wholly was he unprepared for so melancholy a scene, (he had not seen Henrietta for the last three weeks,) extended on the couch of sickness, dissolving all ties between them, not in unkind reproaches, but

with meek and patient resignation, sinking into an untimely grave. On one side of her sat her disconsolate mother; and by her, his own parent, wearing a countenance of woe; whilst Angelica, with one arm was supporting the lovely invalid, whose faded cheek rested on her bosom. A hectic blush stole over the face of Henrietta, as Vallency entered the room. He stooped short, and uttering a deep sigh as he viewed the mournful group, walked quickly to the window, to conceal the violence of his emotion.

"You did not expect," said his mother, (not noticing his distress and surprise,) "to find me here?"

"I heard at home, Madam, on my arrival, where you were. I followed you thither, to pay my respects to Mrs. Grenville and her daughter; little, indeed, prepared to find the latter so much indisposed. Surely, I need not say, how truly I grieve on this occasion." (his voice was hardly audible, and tears swelled in his eyes.)

"I shall soon be better, my Lord," returned Henrietta, with a faint smile, "soon, I hope, quite well, I wish my good friends would not grieve for me, they quite distress me by their kindness."

"Not grieve!" cried Vallency, with warmth, "who, that has once known Miss Grenville, can see her thus, and not feel the deepest sorrow!"

"Ah! my Lord, you flatter."

"No, Henrietta," interrupted Lady Vallency, "my son is not a flatterer: be but well, my love, and then you shall be convinced, all you deem compliment now, is not expressive of half the regard he has for you—is it not so my son?"

Vallency looked confused—he hesitated for a reply, and at length said, "My friendship for Miss Grenville—my early acquaintance with her—her known excellence, has certainly long—very long, claimed my highest es—esteem."

Angelica trembling, yet wondering what would be his reply, was relieved and delighted with it. Soon after they all took leave.

Vallency was thoughtful and dejected. He spoke little, and his countenance was expressive only of sorrow, and the severe shock Miss Grenville's illness had excited; although it was a subject he seemed to wish to avoid entering upon. Neither was it one Angelica dared trust herself to speak on. So few had been her attachments through life; so few the friendships she had been disposed to cultivate, that she was inexpressibly afflicted at the early fate of a young woman nearly her own age, and could only by silent grief, give testimony of what were her feelings on the occasion. She drew a comparison between her own lot and that of Henrietta's; who with youth, beauty, affluence, and tender friends, was snatched from them all. Whilst she, unprotected, forlorn, and poor, was spared to combat with a world in which she had hardly known a resting place. "Thus, oh God!" exclaimed she, to herself, "dost thou portion out the lot of mortals, with such mysterious destination, that we should be almost tempted to murmur at thy wise decrees, did not a reliance on thy divine wisdom, teach us, that thou alone knowest what is wisest—best for us!"

CHAP. II.

Approach sweet maid, thy melancholy mien
Speaks thy compassionate and feeling heart;
'Tis a grave lesson for thy blooming years,
A scene of dissolution,—But when death
Expands his pinions o'er a bed so holy
Sure he's a welcome guest.

LORD ORFORD.

LADY Vallency informed her son she intended to set out for Bristol hot-wells, in two days, with Mrs. Grenville, her daughter, and Miss Gerard; and asked him, at the same time, if he would be one of the party. "For," added she, "I shall not go to Averley till this sweet girl is better."

To encounter such another scene as that of the former evening, Vallency found himself unequal to. He beheld a lovely young creature falling a sacrifice to ill health; and he beheld a still lovelier watching over her sick friend, with the tenderest solicitude, pale, dejected, and languid, from the gentleness and humanity of her nature. Yet to desert Henrietta, at such an hour, when his society might yield her a transitory pleasure, when it might comfort and soothe the grief of his mother, seemed cruel in the extreme. Had not her health drooped so rapidly, he would have solicited their nuptials immediately to take place, and himself have accompanied her on this painful journey, while he insisted on his mother going with Angelica to Averley Park. But such a proposal now, was not more wild than impossible; and while her illness filled him with the deepest anguish, he resolved rather to appear insensible to it by remaining in town, than witness her melancholy and gradual decline.

The two days before their departure, Angelica spent her time so constantly in Grosvenor-street, Vallency, who wished to avoid her society as much as possible, scarcely ever saw her; and on the evening previous to their setting out, he took the opportunity, when she returned home to pack up her things, of offering his good wishes to Henrietta.

At such a moment, when a mournful presentiment hung about his heart, it would be, perhaps, the last time he should ever see her, he would not insult her by speaking (should she recover) of what his intentions were. But with a tenderness, Henrietta had never before witnessed, he bade her farewell. He pressed her hand to his lips, which he bedewed with his tears. He poured forth the most fervent wishes, prayed for her renewed health, and perfect recovery.

Henrietta, who, at this affecting separation, melted into tears, would fain have told him how ineffectual were his wishes, and have requested him, if he made a future election, to think of the lovely inmate in his mother's house. But after the confession Angelica had made, she did not judge it right to violate her confidence, or betray her tenderness for him. She therefore merely in an emphatic voice, said, "God bless and render you happy, my Lord—happy as I ardently wish you!—happier far in your destiny through life, than Henrietta could have made you. Mine is hastening to a close, and I rest my hopes in brighter prospects than I could have enjoyed, Vallency, even with you."

He was too much overcome by this speech to reply, and on the entrance of Mrs. Grenville, he hastened out of the house as fast as possible. He informed his mother he had taken leave of Henrietta, and begged to be excused attending her to Grosvenor-street on the morrow.

When Lady Vallency and Angelica reached Mrs. Grenville's, they found her prepared for the journey, and impatiently awaiting their arrival. Henrietta was considerably worse, and obliged to be supported to the carriage.

Vallency, to avoid taking leave of Angelica, went out to breakfast, and when they were gone, he felt so dispirited and wretched, he sent for Captain Owen to spend the day with him.

In the mean time, the travellers slowly journeyed towards Bristol, which they reached on the third evening, and immediately took up their quarters at the York hotel, at Clifton, for the night. The next day Lady Vallency obtained a very desirable lodging on Zion Hill, whose airy and beautiful situation seemed to give flattering hope towards the recovery of the fair invalid. Angelica, whose health and spirits had long been on the decline, found them renovated, as she first beheld from her chamber window, the sublime landscape nature presented, gaily illuminated by an unclouded sun. The absolute rock on which the house stood, was clothed to its base with a hanging wood, whose uniformity was broken by masses of huge stone, variegated by the richest and most sparkling colours. On the opposite side, were others of the like description, separated only by the river Avon, which gently flowed between them. To explore their beauties, to wander over their wild walks, or to saunter on the green margin that wound along the foot of them, would be a source of much future enjoyment. And if Henrietta should only recover to partake of them with her, then would her pleasure be unalloyed indeed. The morning was so favourable, the air so soft, that Miss Grenville, by the aid of her arm, reached the upper pump-room, not more than an hundred yards distance; and for the first time, tasted of that salubrious spring that gave life to numbers, who drank of its pure fountain. These wells were even more picturesque than the lower ones, from whence they commanded a full view of the sweetly romantic scenery with which the hot-wells abounded. But even the lower ones she found extremely beautiful, sheltered by rocks that encompassed them; while the feathered green of the woods, sloping to the margin of the river, formed a pleasing relief to their awful rudeness; and the windows of the pump-room were almost washed by the river. Never had Angelica beheld scenery more enchanting; not even the landscapes in Wales could exceed its picturesque beauty; and she gazed on them with a transport, such as a person feels, who, long deprived of the pleasures they have been accustomed to, finds them at once restored. In the bosom of such scenery, had the days of Angelica, till of late, been spent; and she was now soothed and elevated by the sight.

Miss Grenville returned to dinner, somewhat revived by the mild air, and gentle exercise she had taken. But days, nay, even weeks, had little effect in restoring her health; and the gradual decay of nature, yielded not to human aid, nor the tenderest attention. Angelica constantly accompanied her sedan chair, when she could walk no longer to the pump-room; and the faded cheek of Angelica, told how inwardly she suffered from the melancholy office she was engaged in. Each hour Henrietta was preserved to her, endeared her so much to her heart, by the cheerful resignation she displayed, by the sweetness of her manners, the fineness of her understanding, she found herself as much unprepared for the melancholy loss that awaited her, as if it had come upon her by

surprise. Sometimes of an evening, when Angelica could escape from her friends, she would saunter amidst the falling shades of twilight, on the green path at the foot of the river, where she might have liberty to weep alone, for her heart was unusually oppressed with sorrow, and with sadness. Lady Vallency, in whose affection and admiration she rose daily, from the feeling and tenderness she had shewn towards Henrietta, began to be very uneasy on her account; for she saw her inward struggle to appear chearful in company, while her faded cheek, and mournful expression of countenance, spoke how deeply she suffered; and had she not seen the crisis of Henrietta's fate was approaching, she would have taken Angelica away.

Chawton House Library

CHAP. III.

From that blest earth in which her body lies,
May blooming flowers with fragrant sweets arise.
May myrrha weeping aromatic gum,
And ever-living laurel shade her tomb.
Thither let all th' industrious bees repair,
Unlade their thighs, and leave their honey there.
Thither let fairies with their train resort,
Neglect their revels, and their midnight sport.
There, in unusual wailings, waste the night,
And watch her by the fiery glow worm's night.

But let the sighing doves their sorrow bring,
And nightingales in sweet complainings sing.
Let swans from their forsaken rivers fly,
And sickening at her tomb, make haste to die,
That they may help to sing her elegy,
Let echo too, in mimic moans deplore,
And cry, with me, —— is no more.

CONGREVE.

MRS. Grenville expressed so much chagrin and displeasure, that Lord Vallency came not to see her daughter, his mother wrote and desired him to hasten to Bristol without delay, if he did not intend to offend Mrs. Grenville for ever,

The only consolation Angelica tasted in her present distress, was his absence. What then was her emotion, (when the same day the subject had been again discussed, and she fancied of late had observed a coldness of manner in Mrs. Grenville towards her,) the drawing-room door opened, and Vallency stood before her. This visit had been most unexpected to himself, and was made in consequence of the reproach contained in his mother's letter, for wholly absenting himself.

Angelica was sitting alone, writing to Lady Winfield, when he came in; for Henrietta had laid down, and the other two ladies had withdrawn together. She changed colour when she saw him; whilst he, pale, confused, and speaking so fast, she could hardly understand him, said "How is Henrietta?—Where is my mother?—I have rode post from London in consequence of her letter.—I—" he stopt short, and fixing his eyes steadfastly on her, continued, "You look pale—you look ill.—Ah! amiable Miss Gerard, if you too are unwell—"

Without observing his disorder, she rose, and said, "I will let Lady Vallency know, Sir, you are here. How will she rejoice to see you." At the same time she quitted the room, where he remained unmoveable.

Before Lady Vallency (whom she found dressing) could hasten down, Miss Grenville, having found herself considerably better, was, by her own request, led into the drawing room, where the sudden surprise of seeing Vallency there, proved too much for the weak state she was in, and when Angelica returned with his mother, they beheld Vallency, the image of despair, supporting the lifeless form of Henrietta in his arms. In

vain they tried to recover her; she was carried to her chamber, where fainting fits so long continued, that even after she was in some degree restored, it seemed only to the promise of a transitory existence. The general confusion this incident occasioned, it were in vain to endeavour to picture. Angelica, who from the horror of Vallency's countenance, as she pressed the cold hand of her friend, could hardly support herself, and trembled so exceedingly, Lady Vallency's maid was obliged to assist her to her chamber, while Vallency attended the lifeless Henrietta to hers; nor did he quit her until the physician, who had been sent for was announced. He found her so weak and languid, as to give little hope of her surviving the night; and Angelica, who, on coming to herself, pined to be with her dying friend, was absolutely forbid, by Lady Vallency, to quit her chamber, which she made her promise to remain in for the rest of the night. When she went to repose at night, her rest proved so broken and disturbed, it was not till morning she fell into a quiet sleep, from which she awoke not till eleven o'clock. She drest herself quickly to hasten to her friend's room.—But already the morning had dawned with sorrow on them all, except Henrietta, whose pure spirit had ventured to that heaven to which it belonged; and she awoke no more, but to scenes of bliss and immortality.

Angelica in her way, was met by Vallency, who was coming out of his mother's dressing-room; he was weeping, and the paleness and sorrow of his countenance struck her with dismay.

"My Lord Vallency," cried she, in a faltering accent, "say—oh! in pity tell me what has happened?—How is Miss Grenville—I am this moment going to her chamber."

"Oh! go not there," returned he, putting his hand on her arm, "it is not a place for Miss Gerard.—I will conduct you to my mother."

"Then Henrietta is dead!" exclaimed Angelica, clasping her hands together, and bursting into tears. "Is it not so?—do not deceive me."

"Say not dead," cried Vallency, extremely distressed, (yet thinking it best to tell her) "translated only to that felicity which spirits, pure as hers, are sure to taste."

"Sweet suffering angel!—peaceful as innocent were your days on earth—gentle has been your passage to heaven!—Oh!" continued she, (in an agony of mind) "that I had been permitted to have accompanied you thither. Then should I meet my sainted uncle—my kind, my generous Mrs. Devereux!—The tender admonisher of my youth—my friend, my guide, my protector!—Ah! sweet Henrietta; had but the wretched Angelica been permitted to have been your companion to those blissful regions whither ye are gone, what regret, what anguish had ye spared me!" Angelica sunk into a chair, overwhelmed in tears and sorrow.

Vallency was not so wholly absorbed, as to be insensible to this tender apostrophe of Angelica's. He approached her—he took her hand—he addressed her.

"Sacred be your sorrow, sweetest Angelica," cried he, "not for worlds would I disturb it. That you mourn the generous and the good, I cannot doubt, since the two amiable beings you so pathetically lament, I, like you, knew the worth of. Yet since it is the will of the Almighty to call them to himself, allow me to assure you, that beneath my mother's roof you will always find a kind, a respectable home, for she thinks of you with the highest love and admiration."

"Your mother," returned she, sobbing, "is all goodness.—I am sensible of it; let me go to her, for how will she weep the loss of Henrietta."

“We all do that,” interrupted Vallency, mingling his tears with hers. “Miss Grenville was the pattern of female excellence. Her mind was not more beautiful than her person; every grace and virtue were seated there. But I will now hasten to my mother—first, let me lead you to your room, for your sudden presence might surprise and distress her.”

Angelica reluctantly consented. Vallency then proceeded to his mother, whom he found with Mrs. Grenville, seated on each side the lifeless form of Henrietta, who lay extended on the bed, for they had not allowed the usual offices to be done for the dead, till the surgeon had seen her, vainly hoping that she might awaken from her sleep eternal.—Shocked, but not appalled by the spectacle before him, Vallency approached. He took her clay-cold hand, he kissed it, he gazed on her countenance, in death still lovely, for it was placid, it was angelic. He then threw himself on his knees before his mother, who was weeping; he took both her hands, which he pressed to his lips, and exclaimed, “Stay not here, oh my mother!—allow your son, who with truest sympathy mourns this sad event, to lead you from this scene of sorrow;—and you, dearest Madam,” (to Mrs. Grenville,) “ought not to remain.”

Mrs. Grenville, who had considered her daughter slighted by Vallency, even in this moment of sorrow, coldly replied, “Your services, my Lord, came too late here: I would not, however, have your mother remain in this chamber, but go with you, for I must beg to be excused coming below to-day.”

The physician and surgeon, who, by the desire of Mrs. Grenville, had been sent for, now entered, only to confirm the melancholy fiat; while Lady Vallency, in the mean time, withdrew with her son.

The remainder of the week was spent in silent sorrow by them all. Angelica, dejected and ill, was glad to indulge alone her mournful reflections. The increased coldness of Mrs. Grenville, which hurt her extremely, she was glad to escape from, as well as the presence of Vallency, who spent those hours not devoted to his mother, not less painfully than Angelica; for it was determined, until the funeral was over, they were all to remain at Clifton.

Angelica, after viewing, for the last time, the lifeless form of her lamented friend, over whose cold remains she shed tears of the deepest anguish, returned to her chamber, which she never left till the funeral had taken place.

It was on the evening of the sixth day, that as she watched, with streaming eyes, the mournful procession slowly moving along, and heard the solemn bell calling her friend to her last home, she indulged her taste for poetry in the following lines:

Hark! I hear the sullen toll,
Slowly ling’ring on the gale;
Oh! be hush, my anxious soul,
Sorrow cannot now avail.

See! the milk-white plumes appear,
O’er the mountain’s awful steep,
Now beneath the torches glare,
Mark the sad procession creep.

Luckless maiden! long farewell!
Tears of truth begem thy bier;
Virgin sighs their grief shall tell,
For they knew thy love sincere.

Spotless, as the lilies pale,
Strewed along thy fun'ral way,
Late thy bloom adorn'd the vale,
Swift, like them, thy blooms decay.

All devout, on Seraph's wing,
Strains are borne to soothe my heart,
'Tis thy requiem now they sing,
Ere the virgin train depart.

O'er the sod that wraps thy clay,
Sweetest flowers shall claim their care;
Each noxious weed be pluck'd away,
Nor nettle shall be suffer'd there.

Chawton House Library

CHAP. IV.

THE day after the funeral it was agreed, Lady Vallency, her son, and Angelica, should accompany Mrs. Grenville as far as Bath, on her way to London, and from thence, the rest of the party were to proceed immediately to Averley Park. Angelica, for some time, had observed a gradual coldness in the manner of Mrs. Grenville towards her, which had considerably increased since Vallency had joined them; and she was not sorry, when informed she was going to leave them. Mrs. Grenville, who of late had suspected an attachment between Vallency and Angelica, told his mother so in a private conversation before they separated at Bath, assuring her she had long observed it, and vehemently accused Miss Gerard as the cause of his Lordship's indifference to her daughter, which, she was persuaded, had been the occasion of her death. Her Ladyship's good opinion of her son was too stedfast to listen to so ungenerous a surmise, with her usual mildness of temper; and the two ladies separated with less cordiality than was consistent with the former friendship.

The journey from Bath to Averley, was through the richest part of Somersetshire, abounding with a diversity of beautiful scenery. At short distances were scattered rural villages, whose cottage orchards presented in profusion the riches of Pomona. It was an object perfectly new to Angelica; the groups of rosy children and peasants who were employed in stripping their loaded boughs, while the laugh, the rustic song, at intervals met her ears, and her attention was arrested from sadder subjects by the simple joy displayed in the scene before her.

Averley Park was situated between the town of Taunton and Bridgewater, on one of those fine eminences, which, joining the lofty Quantock hills, takes in an amazing extent of prospect. In front, it commanded the bay of Bridgewater and its shipping, while a little to the left, beyond the Bristol channel, stretched in wide perspective, were seen the aerial and blue summits of the Welch mountains. Towards the right, the country spread into the softer diversity of pastoral landscape; green meadows were seen, which, sloping to the vallies, and crowned with hanging woods, were covered with sheep and cattle, while cottages, often only peeping through a partial opening, closed the scene. Never had Angelica beheld a more enchanting landscape. She was contemplating it in silence, when Vallency, who for some time had remained lost in thought, exclaimed, with infinite emotion, "There are the Welch mountains!" She imagined, in this speech, what had been the subject of his reflections, and coloured highly. On them they had first met: over them they had often rode, and walked together. At Swansea, first the congeniality of their taste, their sentiments had been displayed, before she knew Henrietta. A thousand ideas crowded on her imagination as intently Vallency gazed on her; but she appeared not to understand him, although the tears swelled to her eyes, and she merely replied, "They add much to the beauty of the scene."

They came now to the entrance of Averley Park. "This is a spot," exclaimed Vallency, "I have ever loved. It was the abode of my childhood; a circumstance that insensibly attaches. I may say my affection for it, grew with my growth, and strengthened with my strength. It is, too, my paternal home; as such I delight in it, when I remember all the fond indulgence bestowed on me by my mother, who, I hope, will always add those comforts I cannot taste were she absent, by making it still her home."

Lady Vallency was particularly gratified by this speech of her son's. Averley Park now belonged to him; it was the first time of her going there since the death of her husband; and she felt the delicacy and tenderness of his conduct, more than words could express.

The park, though abounding with luxuriant woods, was so happily grouped with clusters of trees in various parts, as to have a very cheerful aspect. The house stood on a verdant lawn, and the approach to it was by a handsome stone-bridge, thrown over a fine piece of water, which spread itself in front of the building. It was of modern architecture, having only a few years since been built by the Earl. Stately pillars supported the lower part of the edifice, which reached to a noble balcony, filled with a variety of flowers and shrubs, which sent forth the most agreeable fragrance, when the Victorian windows of the drawing-room, were thrown open. The rooms were large, lofty, and elegant; the ceilings were covered with beautiful paintings, and the furniture was alike tasteful and elegant.

Lady Vallency bade Angelica welcome to Averley, with a grace and kindness all her own; she conducted her to a spacious chamber, and adjoining dressing-room, which commanded an extensive and lovely view of the surrounding country. She next shewed her the library, well stored with a choice and valuable collection of books, in different languages, all of which she begged her to make use of as freely as if they were her own. Angelica gratefully thanked her for all her goodness; but her mind seemed dead to all amusement, and insensible to the enjoyment of the society of the friends around her. Henrietta's death threw a depression on her spirits neither time nor change of scene appeared to remove. The colour returned not to her cheek, and not even the tender assiduity of Lady Vallency, could recall that fleeting happiness she once believed herself possessed of. The beauties of Averley, now drest in all the full glow of autumnal splendour, so rich—so luxuriant—so varied in their tints, she considered but a picture of her fate. She saw their vigour, their charms decay: each hour robbed them of some beauty, and soon, very soon, not a trace would be left of all that beauty, which was gone as though it had never been. Such were her prospects in life—gay and promising in early dawn—now blasted, cut off, and withered.

Vallency also, was absent and melancholy. Some dreadful conflict seemed passing in his mind. He excluded himself almost wholly from the society of his mother and Angelica. When, indeed, he met the latter, there was always a mournful tenderness in his manner that affected her extremely, and though he did not rudely shun her, it was evident he preferred being alone.

CHAP. V.

“Alas! how various and dreadful are the miseries of war! What horrid infatuation impels mankind!—They days upon earth are few, and those few evil. Why then should they anticipate death which is always near?—Why should they add bitterness to a life already bitter?—

FENELON.

VALLENCY, who found the strength of his attachment daily augment for Angelica, from his constant residence with her, determined to tear himself away from so dangerous an object, and to quit Averley without any formal adieu, leaving a note for his mother on the breakfast table, with an apology for the abruptness of his departure; alleging as an excuse, his dislike to personal farewells. He knew greatly as his mother loved and admired Miss Gerard, yet her pride would be deeply offended, were he to seek an obscure alliance with one to whose birth he was a stranger, and who seemed void of all connections or friends; he therefore had but one alternative, to hasten from her presence, since absence alone could prevent his soliciting her hand.

Lady Vallency, who attributed the whole of his melancholy to the loss of Henrietta, from observing he rather avoided than courted the society of Angelica, was pleased in being spared the pain of a formal separation; though somewhat surprised at his sudden departure. She was perusing his note when Angelica came into the breakfast room; “My son is gone,” exclaimed her Ladyship, “he tells me he had not the courage to bid us farewell. Perhaps it is best in the present state of all our spirits; this leave-taking is always an unpleasant thing.”

Angelica looked astonished, hurt, and grieved. Her pale cheeks were crimson in a moment. That Vallency should go without tendering her one good wish, one sentiment of regard, after all his expressions of friendship, was so strangely inconsistent, she hardly could credit what she now heard; and had never found herself more aggrieved in her life.

From the general expression of her countenance, Lady Vallency now, for the first time, suspected the truth of Mrs. Grenville’s information, and saw with surprise the evident disappointment Angelica discovered from the sudden suffusion of her cheek, and the sudden expression of her eyes, though she vainly endeavoured to carry it off, by replying, with a forced smile, “my Lord Vallency was kind to be so considerate;” but so faintly did she utter it, her Ladyship did not hear her, and would have asked what she said, but in pity spared those feelings she was shocked at beholding.

The breakfast passed in silence, and the moment it was over, Angelica, unable longer to contend with the trial of Lady Vallency’s penetrating eye, fixed, not in anger, but with the tenderest enquiry on her, withdrew; and, when alone, burst into a flood of tears. Lady Vallency with surprise, contemplated the events of the morning.

During Angelica’s residence with her, she had insensibly won her affections. Often had she thought how happy she would have been in such a daughter: but to obtain one by her alliance with her son, was of all things most remote from her thoughts. She had always considered Vallency devoted to another: now he was free, from an event she so sensibly deplored, was true, and Angelica was all the fondest parent could require;

lovely in person, elegant in manners, good, sensible, and accomplished; but she was destitute, and friendless:—a misfortune, not a fault:—and her birth might disgrace the alliance. She deemed domestic felicity the first blessing under heaven; she wished not hereafter to direct the choice of her son, if at variance with his inclination; but she determined not to encourage a preference for her young friend, without first discovering who her family and connexions were, and therefore allowed the subject to rest, until an opportunity offered of making enquiries about her from Lady Winfield.

Angelica, left alone to ruminate on Vallency's sudden and extraordinary departure, was the more perplexed to guess what had occasioned it, as not the smallest mention was made of her, except in compliments, in his note to his mother. One moment she imagined her Ladyship had observed their attachment, and rallied him upon it, which had displeased and hastened his going. Then she attributed it to the delicacy and tenderness of his feelings towards her; and thus at a loss what to suppose, she teased herself with vague conjectures.

Not many days, however, had elapsed after he left Averley, when the following letter arrived from him, to his mother:—

To the COUNTESS VALLENCY.

“Park-Lane, Aug. 20.

“My dear Madam,

“You will scarcely be surprised after the embarkation of so many of our troops for Holland, to hear I am commanded on a secret expedition, and that immediate preparation is making for our departure. Let the alacrity I feel in the undertaking be your comfort and support amid the chances of war; for it is my glory as a soldier, and a man, to be called forth on this occasion; yet, before I go, I come to implore your blessing, under heaven’s, and to pour forth once more, my filial affection in your bosom, assuring you, with what tenderness and respect I am,

“Yours, while

“VALLENCY.”

This letter spoke to the heart of his parent. She admired his spirited address, and had fortitude not to sink under weak affection, though tears obscured her eyes as she perused his lines. Angelica, who was sitting at work beside Lady Vallency, waited in trembling expectation to know what had happened, for as the letter was delivered, her Ladyship said, “It is from my son.” On closing it, she exclaimed, as she wiped her streaming eyes, “This is an unlooked for trial, indeed! Vallency is going abroad. He is coming down, he tells me, merely to solicit my blessing, before his departure. Excellent young man!—How ardent are my prayers for his preservation!—how maternal my affection!—not springing merely from maternal ties, but drawn down upon him for his exalted goodness: read, my dear, how he writes to his mother, it does credit to his heart, it does honour to his brave spirit.”

With a shaking hand, Angelica took the letter, and read the contents. But her attempt at composure was vain; she returned it to her Ladyship, and hurried out of the room. Vallency now, thought she, is coming to take a mournful, perhaps an eternal farewell of his parent, his home, for ever; and to his absence was added all the horrors of war, in whose fate thousands were not merely sacrificed, but thousands made widows and orphans. At the idea, a death-like sickness came over her, while tears flowed unrestrained from her eyes.

CHAP. VI.

VALLENCY was expected, and came to dinner. To meet him with dignity and composure, was an effort almost beyond the weak spirits of Angelica, whose tenderness and sympathy were all awakened from the mournful cause of his journey. When he met her in the drawing-room, as he paid his compliments to her, he marked the languor of her eye, the depression of her spirits; for Angelica, with all her affected heroism, was unfortunately not sufficiently an hypocrite to be able to assume a countenance which was not an exact index of her heart.

"I greatly fear," said Vallency, as he took her hand, "I have not the pleasure of seeing you in that perfect health so essential to the happiness of all who know you?"

"I am very well, thank you, my Lord," replied she, "except a slight head-ache."

The whole party were out of spirits; and little conversation passed during dinner, except the situation of public affairs, which Vallency's departure led to.—Soon after the cloth was removed, and Angelica thought she could with propriety escape, she rose to withdraw.

"I hope," said Vallency, mournfully, "we are not going so soon to lose Miss Gerard's company?"

"You are very good—but I—"

"Retire, my love," interrupted her Ladyship, "if you wish it. I was this evening going to solicit your excuse, and request you to amuse yourself, for I have much to say to my son, and I know you are never void of resources within yourself."

Ah! thought she, you little guess at this moment how much I am so.

The whole of the evening she spent alone, and early withdrew for the night. Vallency's visit was short and decisive; for at breakfast he spoke of departing the next day. It was evident he sought an opportunity of conversing with Angelica alone; nay more, he seemed to have something important to divulge; but notwithstanding, she judged it wisest to avoid him; he was not however to be repulsed; for the first moment Lady Vallency left the room, he drew his chair close to hers, and said, "May I flatter myself Miss Gerard will sometimes remember—think of me—when far distant. For victory I must feel anxious—for life, you know not how indifferent, were it not for my beloved mother's sake. But you, too, lovely Angelica, will, I hope, prove to her a daughter.—Oh, that you were so indeed!—by ties that would secure you for ever. With those attractions you possess, which I have found so irresistible, numbers will claim the honour of your alliance, and long, very long before I return, you may be lost to me for ever."

"I should be ungrateful, indeed," exclaimed Angelica, "were I not in all my actions, to endeavour to prove a daughter to your excellent mother; and scarcely could I love her better were I really so."

"Charming Miss Gerard!—but you are all goodness—all tenderness!"

"Cease to praise me, my Lord," replied she, "you overwhelm me by flattery so unmerited."

"Were I to speak of you as I think, I should be deemed almost an idolator," cried he, with renewed energy. "Now but deign to hear me, for I must go on. The present moment is the only one I may ever have to pour forth my vows before you; and though I

fear greatly to alarm you, my sweet friend, by the proposal I am going to make, yet if you will listen to me with patience, you will obliged me much."

"Alas! Sir," returned she, "of what avail the regard you honour me with, but to cherish an hopeless address, which I will not encourage, without the approbation and consent of your mother: an address, she had not the most remote idea of, and were she even to guess at, I am persuaded would not sanction, while such a cloud of obscurity hangs over me."

"Oh! say not so," interrupted he, warmly, "allow me to hope every thing from your sweetness; from a sentiment of tenderness I have the vanity to think you feel for me; and before we part, let that sentiment be established by an union no circumstance can dissolve."

"Such a proposal," answered she, colouring with indignation, "ill becomes Lord Vallency to make. And it is one, Sir, I will not listen to. What!—meanly consent to enter your family without your mother's approbation."

"I knew my proposal would offend your delicacy—I knew it would alarm your pride; but peculiar situations," added he, (half smiling,) sometimes admit of peculiar conduct. Heaven knows how repugnant to my nature it is to suggest a plan I knew too well at such perfect variance with your sentiments, and which only present circumstances can forgive. Judge not then—condemn me not, unheard—and listen to me with your usual goodness and candour.

"The opinion my mother has formed of you," continued Vallency, "is not higher than your merit entitles you to. Her very happiness seems to depend on your presence; and if formerly she admired you, your tender humanity on a late occasion, has now claimed her unbounded affection. Such being the case, I am sure her first delight would be to call you her daughter. But my mother, like most women advanced in life, is very nice in her punctilios; and were I, so early after the death of Miss Grenville, to propose an union with you, she would be filled with displeasure at my having such an idea; though, in fact, there is nothing in it further than custom does not sanction. I do no injury to the lamented shade of Henrietta, sacred as ever in my heart. I commit no crime, except an indecorum in the world's eye, whose opinions, were we to make ourselves absolute slaves to, would for ever dash our cup of happiness here, without compensating for that peace which is sacrificed for what—for idle prejudice. Yet think not I mean, by this declaration, to say, I would not rather study its opinion than otherwise—assuredly I would. I think it necessary to reputation, to self-approbation; but there are moment when, to be wholly under its influence, were idle in the extreme.

"My wish for an immediate and private union," proceeded he, "I only now propose from my unexpected departure to the Continent:—to call you mine by the fondest of all titles, would soften the pain of absence, and render me the happiest of men; and though I read by the displeasure this moment on your brow, I have little to hope, still I must urge you to give my request a few hours consideration, before you finally determined my fate."

Angelica felt more than she dared disclose, and found her scruples gradually abate, though she had not courage to yield her consent to what she knew so entirely wrong, and she was deeply affected by the generosity of Vallency, who could forgo, for aught he knew, fortune, rank, nay, every thing for her sake; and could not help replying to him, with a softness such as he had never before seen, blended with tears. "I am highly

sensible, Sir, of the honour you confer on me in your election; for unguided by interest, it would be indeed my pride, my glory, under any other circumstance, to merit the affection of my Lord Vallency. But alas! what ought I to say?—to consent to any clandestine actions, is not only so repugnant to my nature, to every principle my excellent Mrs. Devereux instilled into me, that were I to yield, I should be afraid nothing but misery and disgrace would attend me. How could I meet the eye of your mother, after deceiving her so greatly; how deservedly must I fall in her estimation, how greatly in my own.—No, Vallency!—it cannot—must not be—urge me no longer; for with so eloquent a pleader, I cannot say how far my resolution would stand unshaken.”

Charmed by her reply, he gratefully said, “think not I would meanly take advantage of your generous goodness, by urging a subject, only, as I before assured you, my unlooked for absence would have tempted me to have done, so soon after Miss Grenville’s death; for I revere her memory too highly to be intentionally guilty of a shadow of disrespect to it; but perhaps I go to return no more, and to have had the felicity to have called you mine by an union death only can dissolve, is all I wish for here. Then I should leave you under the protection of my mother, by the first of ties, the wife of her son. The daughter he has selected for her, who, should he fall, she will then fondly cherish, and bless his memory for having presented her with so inestimable a child. If, on the contrary, Providence smiles on us with victory, I shall conceal my marriage till I present my laurels at your feet. Tell me, then, sweetest Angelica, if you will deign to bless my choice by becoming mine?”

“Suffer me, my Lord, to retire for the present,” cried she, greatly agitated, “I am unwell—I am oppressed by the conversation; to-morrow I will answer your decidedly: but,” added she, with a faint smile, “don’t expect too much.”

He poured forth a thousand thanks, and after pressing her hand to his lips, suffered her to depart, for she was so faint, she trembled every step in the way to her own room.

CHAP. VII.

Oh how the spring of love resembleth well
The uncertain glory of an April day,
Which now shews all the beauty of the sun,
And by and by a cloud takes all away.

SHAKESPEAR.

HAPPILY a violent shower of tears came to Angelica's relief, and throwing herself on a chair, she meditated on the surprising conversation of Vallency's, containing so full an avowal of sentiments she long had believed herself no stranger to, though a declaration of them she did not expect; and reconciled herself to his departure with a forced heroism, in which the tenderness of her heart took no share. In wedding Vallency, she considered not his rank, his fortune; they were indeed unexceptionable. Yet they were not superior to her own, were her natural rights and inheritance possessed; but it was those solid virtues that tend to promote and endear the happiness of life, that in him were to be found. Henrietta, she knew, had ardently wished for the alliance; and she was sensible of the force of his argument, in regard to the opinion of his mother, were proposals so early after her death to be made public; and that in consequence of it, she might banish her from her house for ever. She therefore saw but one alternative, either relinquishing Vallency at once, or consent to what her sense of propriety recoiled at, immediately becoming his. Yet to wed Vallency, to be united by a tie which one only power could annihilate; to call him by the fond, the endearing name of husband, and as such, to share in all that might befall him; to participate in his joys, to soothe his sorrows; not only to pass the spring of life together, but that declining season when the yellow leaf is illumined by the setting sun, was a picture so touchingly congenial to her wishes, she found the objections she had formed, gradually die away, and was at length, determined to yield to the persuasions of Vallency.

At dinner, for the first time since she had become an inmate in the family, did she meet the penetrating eye of Lady Vallency with conscious shame, and confusion, and received her kindness with infinite pain. Little, indeed, did her Ladyship guess the real cause of her pale cheek and faltering accent, so much did it favour indisposition, and she readily persuaded Angelica to retire, who, glad to escape, said, "she would try what the air would do for the head-ach," and hastened into the park, above whose woods the moon was just rising. Vallency soon found an opportunity to follow, and immediately joined her.—"Take my arm, loveliest Angelica," said he, "and allow me to anticipate in this walk, the many, many happy ones I hope to enjoy with you, when I may call you by the fondest of all titles. I will not apologize for breaking in upon you; moments are too precious to be lost. We must act, not deliberate. God forbid, by a seeming want of delicacy, I should hurry you into a determination, I hope not unfavourable to my fondest expectation, yet I must intreat you at once to declare what that determination is. If, indeed, propitious to my wishes, oh! may I know how gratefully to estimate so rare a blessing,"—he paused, and regarded her with the most anxious expectation.

"To keep you, Sir," returned she, with dignity, mingled with sweetness, "in doubt, when no longer in any myself, were only to display a trifling conduct, unworthy the honour you confer on me. Yet surely, my Lord, disinterested, generous as your proposals are, (which I feel sensible of, from the uncommon delicacy with which you have declared

them,) you must be *curious*," added she, smiling, "to know *who* it is, you purpose to wed—how can you be sure I am not ignobly born?—You always have seen me under an apparent cloud—of late in a dependent state, and it is natural from thence to conclude, you may be degrading yourself by a connexion with a person not only portionless, but low born?"

"I seek not fortune," returned he, warmly, "in Miss Gerard; and whatever her birth, her connexions, although they are in the humblest walks of life, her person, her virtues, her accomplishments would do honour to the highest; which surely she would tend to exalt, not debase. The excellent lady, beneath whose roof I first had the happiness of seeing you, claimed a respect, and esteem that can never be erased from my heart, and from whatever event I first met you in my mother's house, I must be selfish enough to believe it the happiest of my life. To know your parentage," added he, "I have never been curious, but to know how Lord Devaynes is your cousin, and what your acquaintance with him, I confess I am, if you will not consider the question impertinent."

"My real name," replied she, "is not Gerard; and too well does Lord Devaynes know the injury he has done me, in not supporting and asserting for me the right and inheritance of my family."

"Think no more of him," returned Vallency, with spirit; "he is unworthy the name of a relation. I will assert your title whatever it is, in the name of a husband, a protector, a friend.—Accept them then—they are yours for ever!"

"Noble Vallency!" exclaimed Angelica, weeping; "good, generous, and kind. How shall I ever thank you—how deserve tenderness so unmerited. If, indeed, I am to become yours—know then, you marry one equal to you in birth, in name, in fortune. The Earl of Aberville was my father:—the title died with him; but I, *Lady Angelica Carteret*, his only, and lawful child, am, on coming of age, sole *heiress* to his fortune and estate of Aberville Castle.—Lord Devaynes is my first cousin, by the wife of the late Earl, whose sister, Lady Angelica Graffington, was my mother."

Vallency saw not—heard not—he let fall the hand of Angelica, which he had hold of, and stood a statue of horror, and despair. A cold damp covered his face, pale and wild in its expression; while Angelica, aghast at what she beheld, had only power faintly to say, "For mercy's sake, tell me what has happened.—Say, what sudden illness has come over you?"

He started from his deep reverie at the sound of her voice—a heavy sigh escaped him—and striking his hand to his forehead, he exclaimed, "Oh happiness! fallacious phantom; already art thou expiring on that altar so newly raised to love and friendship!—Leave me, in pity," added he, "my very brain is on fire with the sensations that overwhelm me!—Oh, my mother!—it must not—it shall not be!—Yet to give her up, at the very moment my joy was beyond the summit of human perfection!"

Angelica was quite alarmed, and believed him seized with some sudden frenzy; but she replied, in a dejected voice, "I will go, if you wish me; only allow me to lead you to a seat—you are faint and ill."

"I shall be better," returned he, with assumed composure, "leave me till then, dearest Angelica."

She could not bring herself to depart while she beheld the anguish pictured in the pale countenance of Vallency, but withdrew to a little distance, not more shocked than surprised, at the sudden and wonderful change a few minutes had made, for she thought it

impossible any thing she had uttered, could be the cause. Yet to what to attribute it she knew not; bewildered and distress, she retired from his presence, to a spot where she could see him unobserved.

Little, indeed, could Angelica guess the internal struggle and wretchedness that passed in his mind, when she made herself known under the title of *Lady Angelica Carteret*, a name that came like a thunderbolt across him; that in one moment drew forth such various emotions, as to be almost beyond support; seeing before him a train of sorrow in the alliance, which, wholly unprepared for, he had not the fortitude and courage to meet. Vallency had a strong mind; but his passions were violent, his sensibilities keen: he was not, in the common sense of the word, a passionate man, for he was neither hasty, nor irritable; but he felt so deeply, that reason sometimes was almost in danger of deserting her throne, so exquisitely fine were his sensibilities.

The late Earl of Vallency was the most amiable of men. In his first marriage he was peculiarly unfortunate. At a very early age he fixed his affection on a beautiful girl of fashion, Lady Lucy Stacey, and for two years he believed himself loved and happy. It was not less a shock to his reason, than a dagger to his heart, when he found himself the most injured and deceived of husbands. His Lady eloped with his footman.

It was not till many years after her death, he recovered his health, and was restored to society; he had long abjured alliances with all women of fashion, and indeed, avoided all intercourse with them. Travelling through a sequestered and romantic part of England, providence happily brought him acquainted with an amiable young lady, the daughter of a venerable clergyman, who gained that heart long estranged to tenderness, and the first year of his marriage with the present Countess, on the birth of Lord Vallency, he made the following unfortunate will.

“It is my desire, if by any unforeseen event, my son, Augustus Vallency, is prevented from marrying Henrietta Grenville, he shall marry none but the daughter of a plebeian; for on his allying himself to any woman possessing a title, or the daughter of a parent who bears one, the aforesaid Augustus Vallency shall, for disobeying my will, forfeit, on the day of his marriage, all claim to the noble estates of Averley Park, which I then bequeath to my next lawful heir, Charles Seymour; and my aforesaid son, Augustus Vallency, shall have only the slender portion of one thousand pounds per annum, besides his pay, to subsist on.”

Such was the calamity that now met him. Had Angelica been Miss Gerard, poor, friendless, but virtuous, as he thought her, then had every wish of his father's been fulfilled; and most religiously did he imagine he was now obeying him, in the offer he had made her. But to find her titled, though unknown—an heiress without present possession, (for she wanted two years of being of age,) were calamities so distressing, and unforeseen, that he knew not how to combat with him. To involve not merely himself, but his family in poverty and disgrace, and drive his mother from that home she loved—she so long had been accustomed to, and which so lately he had offered her as her future asylum, was dreadful. To be compelled too, himself, to quit, as an alien, his paternal abode—cruel alternative!—Yet to give up Angelica, to whom only a moment before his faith was plighted, was distraction—was impossible!—While these ideas were floating in his mind, half frantic at the necessity of so absolutely disobeying a parent,

whose memory he revered, and destroying the comfort of his mother, on whose happiness his very existence hung, he was one moment going to declare to Angelica the cause of his distress, till the certainty she would the next moment relinquish him for ever, if such was to be the dreadful sacrifice. He therefore determined to bury in his own bosom the fatal clause, rather than lose her altogether, and urge with redoubled ardour their private marriage.

Angelica in the mean time, in infinite distress, now ventured to approach him, and as she did so, he held out his hand. "I am afraid, my dear Angelica," said he, "I have alarmed you by this illness, which so suddenly seized me, I had not power to conceal it even from you. It came, indeed, like a dark cloud, over those joys often so fair in promise, to shew how uncertain, how fallacious our brightest prospects are."

"Say, rather, Vallency, it comes as an awful correction, for presuming to do any thing so sacred, unsanctioned by your parent. Let us then, before it is too late, profit by it, and if we cannot be united but under the veil of concealment, let us wait till unclouded sunshine dawns upon us."

"Ah! that will never be," cried he, mournfully. "No! my lovely friend; I shall learn of you to estimate the choicest blessings of life, and if such a blessing be mingled with those inevitable thorns that strew our sweetest paths, you will teach me to forego with resignation, those local gratifications that exist more in name than reality. Withdraw not then a consent already given; be mine, and think no more of an indisposition now dissipated. If my countenance acknowledges not this invaluable obligation, and I am at this moment a bankrupt in smiles, allow something for a sensation that came over me, and seemed to annihilate every joy in existence."

There was a mystery in Vallency's conversation, a horror in his countenance, which Angelica knew not to what cause to attach. But suffering hardly less than he appeared to suffer, and dreading to ask an explanation of the meaning of his allusions, from what he had just uttered, under the apprehension of renewing his indisposition, she yielded a reluctant consent, on condition that he would immediately return home. He did so, and went to his study, from whence he sent his mother word, he was engaged for the evening, and begged to be excused waiting on her at supper. Feverish, and almost distracted, he judged it prudent to retire early to bed. The next morning he remained considerably indisposed; the look of despair that remained in his countenance, was observed by his mother, who was quite alarmed at his illness; he endeavoured, however, to rally it off, and assured her he had only a slight cold; but she was too uneasy to suffer him to return to London alone, and ordered their coach, that she and Angelica might accompany him.

CHAP. VIII.

Let reason teach, what passion fain would hide,
That Hymen's bands by prudence should be ty'd,
Venus in vain the wedded pair would crown,
If angry fortune on their union frown.

LYTTLETON.

AS soon as the breakfast was removed, Lady Vallency withdrew to give some orders previous to their departure, and it was then her son had first an opportunity of addressing Angelica. He took her hand, and pressing it to his lips, said, "Let not this precious pledge of our affection, which so soon I am to claim at the altar, be given me without your smiles, I intreat, sweet Angelica, (she was weeping) for those tears are the heralds of no joy from a heart so feeling; and would tempt me almost to chide you, for blighting my happiness with showers so ungenial."

"Pardon me, my Lord; I acknowledge my weakness. But your illness last night, from which you appear not yet recovered, overcame me. I was not prepared to see you with such looks of languor and depression, as you retain this morning. But were the reproach which accompanies the acceptance of my hand, only taken away, then would you find how pure my joy is. Alas! Vallency, conscious how wrong I am acting, can I meet you in perfect smiles, when my very deeds are at variance with my conscience?—So deeply do I feel they are so, before it is too late, I would fain, persuade you to defer this union, which not one circumstance seemed to favour and encourage."

Vallency, sensible of the truth of what she advanced, appeared greatly hurt, and affected; he changed colour, struck his hand to his forehead, and walked up and down the room in visible agitation.—Angelica saw it, and, terrified she had said something to offend him, exclaimed, as she approached him, "Think not I mean to recal my promise—oh no!—I am yours, Vallency, by ties of the purest affection, and when those are ratified at the altar, it will be the pride and pleasure of my life to tell you so continually."

The entrance of his mother prevented him from replying. The coach was soon after announced, and they reached Park Lane at the end of the third day.

The journey did Vallency so much good, his indisposition was entirely gone, and he lost no time on his arrival in town, in arranging by what means their marriage was to be accomplished; for to fulfil it he saw would be attended with infinite difficulty and danger. It was necessary, in the first place, to preserve the most inviolable secrecy. To acquaint his mother, would be to drive her at once from Averley Park, to throw Angelica entirely on her support, at the moment he was taking from her the means of doing so. Since from Angelica he had heard the particulars of her story, he found by taking an active part in it at present, and renewing her suit in Chancery, would only be to expose himself to the immediate loss of his own property and estate; at all events, therefore, he resolved to conceal their marriage, could they but be united, till he returned from abroad; and in case of falling, in the chance of war, to leave a letter in her hand addressed to his mother, recommending her to her peculiar tenderness and care, in the character of her daughter, and his wife. That in the mean time, Lady Vallency should continue to reside at Averley Park; and on his return he would not merely declare his marriage, refund the next possessor for having illegally retained the estate, but take such immediate steps as would

proclaim Angelica lawful heiress to Aberville Castle, which they, with his mother, would retire to. Such were Vallency's plans; but how were they to be fulfilled? To obtain a special license, as Angelica wanted two years of being of age, was impossible. A Gretna-Green trip next occurred to him, that seemed equally impracticable, even could he prevail on her to accompany him, which he very much doubted, for she had no plan to leave the house of his mother, even for a few days; and to leave it without one, would infallibly prevent her return. One only alternative was left—that was a sad one—it was attended with a hazard he dreaded to think of, and even before the fulfilment, he might be ordered away. It was to give their names into the parish church, where it was probable, as Augustus Vallency, and Angelica Carteret, they might pass unknown. This was Saturday: but three Sundays must inevitably pass ere their union could take place. Angelica gave a most reluctant consent to this plan; she, however, saw no other, and Vallency's anxiety made her say less on the occasion than she felt. Each hour, too, he lived in terror of being called on duty; not a day but some of our troops were embarking, and he was ordered to be in readiness to attend the detachment, which, happily for him, did not set sail so soon as was expected.

At length the propitious morning arrived. It was arranged between them the evening before, Angelica should go out as usual, to take her morning walk before breakfast, and that he should meet her in a hackney coach at the top of Oxford street, which was to convey her to St. George's church, where the ceremony was to be performed. Vallency had previously engaged his friend, Captain Owen, to come and give her away, and also to bring a respectable maiden lady, an aunt of his, along with him, to be a sanction to the bride.

Angelica rose with the dawn, to prepare for a destiny she so long had wished for. That of becoming Vallency's, seemed once a happiness so far beyond her reach, that when she formerly had viewed it as one of those wild hopes in which reality has no existence, she scarcely could credit the certainty of now calling him her husband; but that certainty, alas! was so tinctured with sorrow, as to leave only a shadow of that felicity she had pictured in the visions of youthful imagination. She stole from her chamber down the great staircase, where she met no one. The door was already free of access, by which she guessed Vallency had gone out; and with trembling steps she reached Oxford-Street, where he had been waiting some time, and flew to meet her.

"Sweet angel," exclaimed he, "bride of my earliest, dearest affections!—teach me to estimate as I ought, so choice a blessing."

She was too much agitated to reply, but she pressed his hand in silence, as he conducted her to the hackney coach, where, he told her, Captain Owen and his aunt were waiting, and handed her into it, that they might not excite observation. She felt confused at the idea of meeting the Captain, and dreaded his raillery; but he was too warmly attached to his friend not to preserve the most friendly conduct and delicacy towards her.

The clergyman, who met them in the vestry, now conducted them to that altar, where, in the most solemn manner, the ceremony was performed, and their vows plighted for ever. When they returned to the vestry, and Angelica renounced in the name of Carteret, as she recorded it, a name she had hardly ever known, she was persuaded on accidentally looking at the clergyman, she had seen him somewhere before; but as he did not recognize her, by addressing her, although from his manner she was sure he knew her, she took no notice of it, uneasy as this incident made her. Vallency now, in terms of

the warmest gratitude, thanked her for the tender title she had conferred on him, while she, not without tears, allowed him to fold her in his arms. She next was congratulated, and saluted by Captain Owen, and his aunt; they were, however, obliged to immediately separate. Vallency conducted his bride part of the way, when it was agreed he should not return home until the hour of dinner, and he accompanied his friend to his lodgings.

Chawton House Library

CHAP. IX.

But pleasures are like poppies spread,
You seize the flower, its bloom is shed.
Or like the snow-fall in the river,
A moment white—then melts for ever;
Or like the borealis race,
That flit e're you can point their place;
Or like the rainbow's lovely form,
Evanishing amid the storm.

BURNS.

ANGELICA returned immediately to Park-lane, and passed on to her chamber unobserved. Lady Vallency had not yet come down to breakfast, and when they met no notice was taken of her son's absence. The remainder of the morning she was suffered to spend alone, for her Ladyship was engaged with some people on business, previous to Vallency's departure, and the hours passed on till dinner in various reflections on the step she had taken. No rejoicings, no festivity, no pleasing congratulations had crowned her nuptials with Vallency:—yet he was her's, by ties no earthly power could dissolve. She was the partner of his joys, of his sorrows—the sole object of his choice; and, although her happiness was embittered, even in this hour of felicity, which had given him to her under auspices so unpropitious, yet she knew felicity unmixed was not her portion here, and therefore, with cheerful gratitude, she thanked heaven for the blessing she now enjoyed. She endeavoured, also, to view events with the fairest prospect. She flattered herself, before she came of age, she should be introduced to her aunt, the Marchioness of Fitzalloyne, who would facilitate her recovery to the inheritance of her father, and that when Vallency presented her to his mother, in the character of his wife, it would not be as the late obscure Miss Gerard, but as one nobly allied as himself—heiress to a vast fortune—who valued it only as conducive to the comforts of each. When she further reflected, that no sooner had she become a wife, than she was to be separated from her husband, the consolation of calling him by that fond title, took from her the anguish their separation would otherwise have excited.

When Vallency met her at dinner, the look of tenderness that diffused itself over his countenance, conveyed more than language the most eloquent; and without an opportunity of conversing with him alone, she saw the grateful feelings their union had excited.

The following day, when Lady Vallency left them together, he said, "How have I longed, how have I sought this opportunity, sweetest Angelica, of pouring forth the gratitude with which my heart overflows, for the blessing you yesterday conferred on me. And why, alas! at the moment I do so, am I destined to tell you the hour of separation is fast approaching. Yet let us rather rejoice it has not arrived before, than lament a misfortune we cannot shun. That I deeply deplore it, at such a moment, I surely need not say. It requires more than common fortitude to forego the blessings of domestic happiness in any situation of life; but to forego them in their earliest dawn, when scarcely possessed, ere they must be withdrawn, is a trial almost beyond my fortitude to attain. Yet, cowardly to shrink at this moment—I will not add of danger, (since surely the same

Providence guards us in the field of battle, as on the smiling plains of peace,) were to display a want of magnanimity, that would render me unworthy the wife who has honoured me with her choice, while the most important duty demands me from her arms. It is by your fortitude I shall now preserve my own. I know my Angelica possesses no childish weakness, but with that firmness of mind, she unites with the tenderest sensibilities, all the nobler virtues of her sex.”

The tears flowed from her eyes during this speech. But she saw what Vallency expected from her, and was resolved he should not be deceived. He went on. “I leave you under the protection of my mother; would to heaven I dared disclose by how tender a name you are entitled to it, as well as her fondest affection. Yet to inform her of the event of yesterday, would be attended with so painful a circumstance, that in so doing, I foresee only difficulty and danger. When, hereafter, I explain to you, why, in the only event of my life, I have withdrawn from the confidence of my mother, you will not, I flatter myself, think less favourably of your Vallency than ever; but be convinced, no interested motive guided my union with you. Ah! had you been portionless, with what rapture should I have exclaimed you mine. It was not a woman of titles—a rich heiress, I sought in Lady Angelica Carteret.—No! it was the amiable sensibility, those rare accomplishments, which first excited my admiration, and was followed by my love. For I have generally found high birth and affluence were at variance with true happiness and the genuine affections of the heart.”

Angelica, who embraced Vallency with the most grateful emotions, interrupted him by saying, “You will almost teach me to be vain by such praise; yet to deserve my husband’s, is so congenial to my wishes, I shall at least endeavour to profit by it, and not weakly deplore a separation I cannot prevent. I shall remain quietly with your mother till your return, when, if Providence renders it propitious, I shall consider it but the beginning of our joys.”

“Let us think of that period only, my love,” replied Vallency,—

“And all these woes shall serve
For sweet discourses in our time to come.”

SHAKESPEAR.

And endeavour to forget, my sweet Angelica, I am at this very moment bidding you farewell. In the next few hours I shall be separated from my bride, my mother, and my home!—But I look with the most cheerful expectation for my quick return. Let that expectation, therefore, sustain you, oh! my wife; and receive in this tender adieu, all those wishes for every comfort heaven can bestow, from an husband whose affection almost borders on idolatry.”

Vallency’s firm soul was shaken by the conflict of this moment; he covered his face with his handkerchief, and abruptly quitted the room; while Angelica, wholly overcome, sunk lifeless on a sofa, where she knew not how long she had remained, for on her recovery, she found herself laid on her bed, with Rose, Lady Vallency’s maid, sitting beside her.

Vallency, when he left the room, went immediately to his mother, of whom he took a most filial and tender leave. He informed her the evening before of the orders he had received, to be ready the next day to embark. He fain would have recommended

Angelica to her care, but he judged it wisest not. He would not trust himself with another interview with his wife, (ignorant he had left her in a fainting fit,) and forced himself at once to depart from his mother's house.

Lady Vallency, on returning to the drawing-room, discovered Angelica's indisposition, and rang for her maid, who conveyed her back to bed. When she came in some degree to herself, she prepared to appear at dinner. Lady Vallency, who guessed the cause of her sorrow, (though little, that she was married to her son,) had too much consideration to notice her pale cheeks, and swoln eyes, and did all she could to cheer her, nearly as her own heart was breaking by this trying separation.

Chawton House Library

CHAP. X.

Much of my life has been already spent,
And fed on nought but unavailing hopes,
An orphan, unsupported, weak and friendless.
SOPHOCLES ELECTRA.

ANGELICA remembered her late conversation with Vallency, and endeavoured to attain a cheerfulness foreign to her heart. War, with all its desolating appendages, was before her; and when she thought her husband might be engaged in the heat of action, where youth, elegance, talents, were all levelled impartially; where humanity was driven from her throne, and blood was the only tribute accepted to satisfy the sanguinary multitude, for whom thousands were doomed for sacrifice, her spirits died away, and she was unequal to the struggle. Lady Vallency appeared little less than depressed herself. She complained not, indeed; yet her countenance had an air of such meek resignation, blended with so much woe, as told how inwardly she suffered.

Two days after Vallency's departure, his mother had a letter from him, dated Deal; and Angelica had another, which Captain Owen took an opportunity to deliver himself, and was as follows:—

To the COUNTESS VALLENCY.

“On board the Amethyst, Deal,
Sept. 8.

“How sweet to me is the new, the tender title, under which I now address my Angelica, wife of my fondest affection, of my only choice. It is true, indeed, every hour now bears me further from your arms; every sail is spread to waft me to the desolating plain of war. But when its hostilities are ended, I hope to return to the laurels of victory, entwined with the olive of peace. And although the scene before me is at variance with every softer sentiment of love and friendship, yet, by those vows I have so recently pledged to you at the altar—by the joyful sadness of this hour—my ardent affection for you—by the fond hope of my return—by all these sentiments, that alternately thrill my bosom, I now offer you, my loveliest Angelica, my everlasting gratitude of the blessing you have conferred on me; and put up my prayers with the most fervent devotion, that heaven will restore me to my country, and to you.

“VALLENCY.”

“P.S. I send this inclosed to my friend Owen, on whose fidelity I am sure I may rely.”

It was on the perusal of Vallency's letter, Angelica felt, for the first time since his departure, the pleasure of an union that no longer forbade the sentiments of kindred affections being avowed; and the tenderness that breathed through every line of this heroic letter, checked the rising sigh, as she observed the undaunted intrepidity of a conduct that abated none of its natural softness, in those parts where the warrior was laid

aside, and while she trembled for the dangers that surrounded him, she scarcely wished them lessened, so greatly was he exalted in her imagination.

His mother, equally delighted with his address to her, became more cheerful; and proposed, as the weather was still charming, returning to Averley Park for the remainder of the autumn. Angelica liked no place so well, and it was agreed they should set out the next day, when they were prevented by the following letter, which was delivered to Angelica from Lady Winfield:

To MISS GERARD.

“Grafton-street, Friday.

“My dear Angelica,

“I delay not a moment to communicate to you the pleasing intelligence of the arrival of your aunt, the Marchioness of Fitzalleyne in town. Come, then, and spend the day with me, that I may introduce you to her. That the meeting may prove favourable to my wishes, and emerge you from the obscurity you so long have lived in, is the sincere wish of,

“Your affectionate friend.

“ALECIA WINFIELD.”

“My daughter is at Brighton with Mrs. Bertault.”

Her Ladyship likewise addressed these few lines to Lady Vallency.

To the COUNTESS DOWAGER VALLENCY.

“Will my good friend spare Miss Gerard for one whole day to me on business of importance?—Its purport shall hereafter be revealed if propitious. I have only to add, it concerns her future welfare, in which I am sure your Ladyship is interested.

“A.W.”

At length, then, thought Angelica, as she closed Lady Winfield’s letter, is the crisis of my uncertain destiny approaching; while Lady Vallency said to her, “Go, my love, to Grafton-street; and may all felicity await you in an event, of which, although ignorant, I am highly interested in, if conducive to your future happiness.”

With a beating heart, Angelica prepared for her visit, and, for almost the first time in her life, endeavoured to render her dress as becoming as possible. The hope of fairer prospects had thrown an unusual lustre into her eyes, a colour into her cheeks, where only the lily of late had dwelt, and she seldom had looked more lovely than at this moment. Lady Winfield received her with open arms, and congratulated her on the happy prospects before her; she added, “I expect your aunt every moment, and shall introduce you as a young friend of mine, for I wish to surprise her, should she be sensible of the resemblance you bear to your mother; I have never seen you look so like her as to-day.”

Angelica had used some art to do so. For the fashion of the present times varied so little with the simple dress her mother wore in the miniature, she attired herself as like it as possible, earnestly wishing, while she did so, she might be successful in the attempt.—Few had been the relations who had survived her parents; and among those few, by only one had she been acknowledged. To be presented to this one, was an eventful circumstance in her life, and she waited the Marchioness's arrival with impatience. At length she came—at length she was announced.—She addressed Lady Winfield with a graceful dignity, so blended with softness, as to discover at once the amiableness of her temper, while, in the mildness of her blue eyes was pictured the tender benevolence of her heart. Angelica was obliged to withdraw to the window to conceal her emotion, for she could scarcely refrain from bursting into tears when she heard the same pleasing tones her uncle had, only mellowed into feminine softness. Her general air bore a family resemblance to her brother's, and a flying likeness could be traced to the picture of Lady Aberville. But Angelica had hardly time to contemplate her person before she was called from the window by Lady Winfield, who said to the Marchioness, while she took Angelica's hand, "Allow me, Madam, to present this young friend of mine to you. Nay, more, I must secure her an interest in your heart and affections. She has long possessed mine."

"Most readily," replied she, good-humouredly, "if you wish it;" at the same time turned towards her to take her hand; the next moment, however, she as hastily withdrew it. She started—changed colour—and remained wholly silent.

"Will you not," interrupted Lady Winfield, perceiving her emotion, "allow her the honour of your acquaintance?—you hesitate, and look surprised. You will find her deserving your warmest regard."

"Will I?"—exclaimed the Marchioness, greatly agitated. "Oh! Lady Winfield, I can, at this moment, hardly refrain from folding this lovely girl to my heart, and calling her by the endearing name of sister, of friend, of Angelica Graffington, who so long has been an inhabitant of heaven, and now in the image of this lovely young creature, again re-visits the earth!"

"Is she, then, so like your sister?" cried Lady Winfield, "I have sometimes imagined there was a resemblance."

"It is not imagination," exclaimed the Marchioness, warmly, "look at this picture," (drawing a bracelet from her arm,) "this was painted thirty years ago. It has the same juvenile appearance as this young lady, who is now exactly what my sister then was."

"If, indeed, Madam," interrupted Angelica, bathed in tears, "you think so—if the resemblance is no delusion, and surely it cannot be, when in happier days I have traced it, have an Angelica still; and although you cannot call me by the endearing title of sister, and of friend, oh! as the daughter of her whom you so fondly loved, allow an orphan unknown, unprotected, to claim the honour of a new alliance to you; take me to your bosom, as the daughter of your sister, love me as such, for at this moment you behold her before you."

"To disbelieve," said her aunt, "what my eye proclaims the truth of, I cannot do; and the delusion is so pleasing (if it is delusion) to my heart, I will cherish it till compelled to discard it; for so wonderful is this eventful and happy moment, I know not what to credit, what to think. Come, however, to my arms," continued she, (raising

Angelica, who had fallen on her knees before her,) “sweet daughter of Angelica Aberville; and be assured, the likeness you bear to your mother, will not render you less dear to her surviving sister.”

Angelica wept for some time on her bosom without interruption. When the Marchioness and her niece had in a degree recovered from their mutual agitation, the former requested an explanation of the extraordinary events that must have occurred, together with Lady Winfield’s knowledge of Angelica.—Her Ladyship related in as few words as possible, all Angelica’s history, beginning from her first introduction to her, by Lord Devaynes, as given in the Earl’s own words; nor did she omit his having, with much chagrin, spoken of no answer being received to the letter he had written to his sister on the discovery of his niece, and the measure he had taken to prove her identity, as well as her title to the estates of her father, which suit he had thrown into Chancery, and after the Earl’s death could not be carried on, owing to the want of money, and the conduct of Lord Graffington, his son.

Lady Fitzalleyne, now in her turn, said, “a coldness had subsisted for many years between her brother and husband, from the bad opinion the latter had of Lord Graffington, and all correspondence had been withdrawn; but the letter her Ladyship alluded to, had never come to hand, or she would immediately have answered it. “I uniformly have entertained the highest opinion of, and affection for my brother, whose death, when I read it in the public prints, filled me with the deepest sorrow.” She went on by saying, “my sister Angelica was perfectly adored by them both. Shortly after her marriage, she accompanied her husband, Mr. Carteret, to the East Indies, where she gave birth to a daughter, and died three years afterwards. That in a short time from that period, Mr. Carteret came to take his title, and wrote her he had taken passage in the —— Indiaman, which was lost, and every soul perished; though at times,” added the Marchioness, “I have cherished a vague hope, as they were not among the list of the passengers, some happy circumstance had preserved them, although from that day I have never heard any thing of Lord Aberville, and his child. Fortunately I have a letter of my sister’s, so particularly describing her little girl, as I am sure must prove her identity. In giving up this darling infant of her’s, I trust she is now restored to me in this interesting young woman, whom, without the ties of consanguinity, I am already disposed to love.”

Angelica next related to her aunt her visit to Aberville Castle, accompanied by her uncle, who, also maintained, her father’s name was *not* among the passengers who were lost in —— . That for herself, she was fully convinced of being Lord Aberville’s daughter, from many circumstances she had heard; and promised the next day to shew the Marchioness the watch, and seals, belonging to her father.

When the Marquis of Fitzalleyne joined them at dinner, his lady withdrew with him into an anti-room, to relate the strange occurrences of the morning, and prepare him to receive Angelica as his niece. He heard her with surprise; but the circumstances were too striking to admit of the doubt he at first entertained; and when they returned to the drawing-room, he met Angelica with much kindness and cordiality. The Marquis, though by nature haughty, had an excellent heart, and was ever generous and humane in his conduct, when those virtues were called into action. And when he saw before him an interesting, lovely young woman, whom he viewed as the orphan niece of a wife he fondly loved, his warmest compassion was excited. She had been deserted—deprived of her inheritance—living at this moment on the bounty of strangers—he saw, and

determined to redress her wrongs; and generously promised to take immediate steps for that purpose.

The remainder of the day was spent in the most delightful manner, by both parties. When the hour of the Marchioness's departure arrived, she would fain have taken her niece home with her to the hotel, but that she declined; and Lady Winfield agreed it would be improper for her at present to quit the hospitable roof of Lady Vallery. She embraced her aunt with much tenderness, and promised to spend the following day with her.

Now in a moment, as Angelica laid her head on her pillow, did a thousand aerial castles of felicity arise in her imagination. Already she saw herself the possessor of the wide, the magnificent domain of her father. She was sharing its luxuries with the husband of her choice. Averley Park they would resign wholly to Lady Vallery; but the doors of Aberville Castle should be thrown open with its former hospitality, its ancient grandeur restored; its sweetest walks return to the softest cultivation; and Vallery would endeavour, with herself, to contribute to the comfort of its lowly inhabitants; distributing with liberal hands, those gifts of pity the poor and indigent ought to claim from the rich and ennobled. Already did she see those simple inhabitants reared by the hand of her mother, repopulated; the deserted village smiling into fertility, while peace, blessings, and festivity crowned her board. The picture was so alluring, so congenial to her wishes, it only faded from her eyes as she sunk into repose.

CHAP. XI.

LADY Winfield agreed with Angelica in the propriety of informing Lady Vallency of this unexpected change in her affairs, and of her real name and connexions. She therefore, the next morning, related the whole of her history to her, concealing only her attachment to, and union with her son. Her Ladyship heard her with the deepest interest and attention, exclaiming, when she had done, "that you are nobly born I am not surprised at; your air, your manner, your education, are such as are rarely to be found in humble life. I cannot love you better as Lady Angelica Carteret, than Miss Gerard; but I must always admire that exalted humility, which, with so much propriety, could descend to a dependent state; and I am persuaded the one you are now going to fill, you will do with equal grace and honour."

Immediately after breakfast, Lady Vallency sent her to Albermarle-street, where she was received by her aunt and uncle with renewed affection. They proceeded without delay to business.—Angelica shewed them the miniature of her mother, done by the same artist as the one the Marchioness had. She also shewed her the watch and seals, bearing the Aberville arms. Her aunt next produced her sister's letter, which ran thus:

"You ask if she is pretty? in my eyes she is a perfect cherub—did a fond mother ever think a darling child otherwise? Take a description of her, and judge for yourself. She is, with skin transparently fair, blooming as a new-blown rose. Her eyes, dark blue, are mild, and animated; and she has the loveliest ringlets of pale hair falling over her neck and forehead, you can possibly imagine, while a thousand dimpled smiles play round her beautiful mouth. Her figure is light and slender, set off to the greatest advantage from the thick cloathing of the country. She has but one defect, if a defect it can be called; that is, a scar on the right side of her forehead, occasioned by a fall, which a curl of her pretty hair, artfully placed over it, will always conceal.—Her temper is docile, and affectionate in the extreme, for her tender years; she is not yet three; she displays a good understanding, and a retentive memory. Such Georgina is my Angelica. May I some day present to you this sweet, this blooming little girl. If I should not (for I feel my health daily declining,) oh! my sister love her for her own sake, and if she at all resembles me, love her for her mother's."

"This was the last letter," proceeded the Marchioness, "I ever had from my sister; she died shortly after."

Angelica read the letter, which she pressed to her lips, and bathed with her tears, with the tenderest emotion, and as she returned it to her aunt, said, "I am, indeed, her daughter!—look, Mada, here is the scar," parting her hair, which fell over it not ungracefully.

"No difficulty can now occur then," returned her aunt, "to prove your identity. The business must be immediately brought forward in a public court; Mr. Carteret must resign his claim. When do you come of age?"

"Not for these two years."

"That don't signify. Your title will be made clear, and you will become a ward of Chancery."

As Angelica gradually unfolded the elegant accomplishments she possessed, together with her fine understanding, her aunt could not avoid expressing her surprise she had not engaged the affections of some amiable man. Angelica blushed deeply, while she

mentioned, in much confusion, her rejection of Mr. Hamlyn; but when the Marchioness proceeded to ask of what Lady Vallency's family consisted, she was so infinitely embarrassed, and changed colour so often, Lady Fitzalloyne in a moment guessed the state of her heart, and smilingly said, "Think not my dear niece, I mean to be impertinent by my questions; you have hitherto discovered, in all I have seen of you, a mind too exalted to be guided by an imprudent attachment; and if you have made a choice, I have no doubt it will do you honour."

"Ah!" thought she, "while cruelly compelled from my promise to conceal that choice, how am I rejoiced to think it will indeed do me honour."

She promised, at the request of the Marchioness, to introduce her to Lady Vallency the following day.

The ladies, when they met, were mutually pleased with each other, and the Marquis and Marchioness spent a very agreeable day, by particular invitation, with the Countess and their niece, in Park-lane. When they found Angelica and Lady Vallency had been prevented by their arrival from returning to Averely Park, they insisted on their niece accompanying her thither the ensuing week for the next fortnight, when, in the mean time, the Marquis would see Lord Devaynes, and Mr. Carteret, and then proceed, on her return to town, with her affairs; and as they meant to look out for a house, Angelica was to become their guest.

Among the various subjects of discourse that occupied the Marchioness and her niece, during the few remaining days she was in town, Angelica did not fail to touch on the very interesting one which so often had engrossed her thoughts, of the mysterious figure in the chapel at Graffington Abbey. She told her aunt "her curiosity had been excited to visit that wing of the building, from the various stories she had heard related, and which, at that moment, she gave not the smallest credit to. She then minutely described all she had seen there; the awful figure in the oratory, the melancholy of its countenance, the devotion of its attitude, the singularity of its dress, the paleness of its countenance, so touched with sorrow; how greatly it had first appalled her, and then excited her deepest interest. She next described, not without shuddering at the remembrance, the horror of the last evening she had spent at the Abbey, her interview with her cousin, the freedom of his conduct, his pursuit of her, her retreat into the chapel, and the cold hand which had impeded, and crossed her; adding at the same time, a similar circumstance had happened to Leval.

"And now, my dear Madam," continued she, "you, and you only, do I now rely on for an explanation of all those wonderful circumstances I have a thousand times vainly endeavoured to account for; and which have not merely excited my curiosity, but interest.—That the form in the oratory was human, I at length began to think probable. Yet, from what motive any being should be inclosed as it were, in a living monument, was a circumstance so inconsistent with the natural goodness of my beloved uncle, I discarded so wild a conjecture; for he delighted only to spread happiness on those around him. Satisfy, then, I intreat you, a curiosity, which for these last three years has been unbounded."

"In doing so, my dear niece," replied the Marchioness, "I must recur to the painful recollection of the sufferings of one of the best and tenderest of parents—such was my mother!—such the being connected with the mysterious objects in the chapel. The particulars of her history, short as it was, I shall not now give you, for it was written by

my father, and I will obtain it for you from Graffington Abbey, where it is. Not, however, to keep you in suspense, in regard to what you there saw, I must inform you, my mother, who was of a French family, was brought up in the most rigid principles of the Roman Catholic persuasion; and from that cause, it was, you saw the now ruinous chapel retain reliques of that religion; for it, and the oratory, were appropriated wholly to her use. The statue which created you so much terror, was intended to personate St. Augustine. My father had it from Rome, to indulge a fancy she had, that by doing severe penance at his shrine, she should be absolved from a crime which filled her with melancholy, almost, at times, bordering on madness, and which nothing, she imagined, alas! could wipe away. Let me, however, in justice to my parent, say, guilty as she thought herself, her life was that of the most spotless innocence, and she was not more pure in her heart than in all her actions. It was after her death, which was the most cruel sacrifice to Roman catholic rigour, my father penned a sort of memorial of her life, which, with some papers, connected with a small property he had in France, he gave into the hands of my brother, and shortly after he followed to the grave his sainted martyr. When the late Earl of Devaynes became heir to the estate, which is now near forty years since, shocked at the melancholy fate of his mother, he caused not only the chapel, but that wing of the abbey to be shut up, and had a secret spring fixed in the statue, which was so connected with a small board in a part of the aisle near it, than on treading on that board, it raised the arm of the figure, (which you and Leval, unknowingly must have done) and had you had courage to have searched further, you would then have discovered a small aperture in the figure, in which he placed every paper connected with the family estates and her story, disclosing only to my sister, and me, where they were to be found, in case of our choosing hereafter to claim the property in France. From that period the chapel has been shut up, and there was little fear of its being entered into from the natural superstition and fear such places excite in weak minds."

Angelica heard with surprise, all her aunt had related, and eagerly interrupted her to ask what was the object she beheld in the oratory.

"No ghost, I assure you. But I shall leave your curiosity at present ungratified, for we must take an early opportunity of going to the abbey, that you may obtain those papers concealed in the figure, relating to the French property; your mother's portion you are entitled to, should you like, in more peaceful days, to travel into that country and lay claim to it."

"Do you remember your mother?" said Angelica.

"Never," cried the Marchioness, emphatically, "shall I forget her. I was only twelve years old when she died; but the heavenly expression in her eyes was that of two radiant stars beaming with the mildest lustre; her complexion was dark, yet clear, and I have heard my father say, her smile was irresistible. I alas! seldom remember to have seen her smile; for the dimples which played round her mouth, where a thousand Cupids used to ambush, were lost in a mournful, yet tender expression. Your mother was thought like her; but you have only stolen that smile, which Lady Devaynes possessed, and struck me to the heart the moment I beheld you."

The conversation was here broken off, by the entrance of company.

CHAP. XII.

We enter here as strangers, and unlook'd for;
Each busy face we see with wonder starts,
And seems amaz'd to see us.

ROWE.

PREVIOUS to Angelica's going to Averley Park, the Marquis of Fitzalleyne waited on Lord Devaynes. His uncle informed him of his determination to enter, without delay, into the affairs of his niece; that he intended to see Mr. Carteret, and lay her claim before a public court, that she might be put in possession of her lawful inheritance, to which, from all he had heard, he was sure she was justly entitled. Lord Devaynes endeavoured to make an awkward apology to the Marquis for not having fulfilled the wishes of his father; and assured him the lady had so entirely withdrawn herself, he was deprived of all power to act. His uncle heard him with haughty coldness, and then took leave.

Lord Devaynes, surprised at the Marquis's visit, and his zeal in Angelica's cause, now that he no longer saw her the deserted, destitute orphan he wished to consider her, and assured of the success of her appeal, at once determined to take a bold step, which was, before she actually became the rich heiress she had the prospect of being, to make an offer of his hand. His heart had long been devoted to her, and so lovely a creature, with so splendid a fortune (greatly as he disliked the shackles of matrimony,) was a prize too valuable not to attempt to attain. He therefore sat down and wrote her the following letter, which he dispatched to Park-Lane.

To LADY ANGELICA CARTERET.

"Devonshire-Place, Thursday.

"MADAM,

"It is possible you will hardly credit my assertion, when I assure you it has given me unfeigned pleasure to be informed of the prospect you have of being restored to your natural right and inheritance; and that I rejoice, my uncle, the Marquis of Fitzalleyne, has so nobly undertaken your cause. Your having, on the death of my father, voluntarily thrown yourself, not only from my protection, but into the most perfect obscurity, under a feigned name, you must be aware, effectually prevented my coming forward in your interest and behalf, as I should have been happy to have done. But while my presence seemed not merely to excite detestations, but terror, from even the first moment of introduction, when you flew from me as from an enemy, you deprived me of all power to ascertain what really was your name, your relationship to me, or how I could possibly serve you. The very last time I saw you, and was, with all the fervency of the most sincere adoration, pouring forth my vows at your feet, you again took alarm, and had I been inclined to have drawn my sword, from the ill-timed interference of my Lord Vallency, one of us must probably have fallen.

"Still, Madam, though you have been so long resident beneath the same roof with his Lordship, you are free. Still are you, I will not say Miss Gerard, (I acknowledge my mistake) Lady Angelica Carteret. Will you then, now listen to the most devoted, the most

ardent of your admirers? Will you condescend, with that sweetness you possess, only equalled by your loveliness, to accept the offer of a heart, which, from the first moment I saw you, had been yours, and yours alone. Oh! my amiable cousin, make me the happiest of men, and deign to bless me with your hand.

“I shall not again intrude into your presence, but wait with impatience a reply.

“DEVAYNES.”

Angelica, extremely displeased at the temerity of Lord Devaynes address, answered him thus:

To the Earl of DEVAYNES.

“Park-Lane, Thursday.

“SIR,

“I will not make any comments on your letter. The sincerity of the declarations contained in it, I leave to your own heart to determine. The possession of your friendship and regard, from the close relationship between us, I should, my Lord, a few years since, have not been more proud, than happy to have possessed. These, with an honourable protection, would then have been of importance to me. The offer of either now comes too late. Though, be assured, my very sincere wishes will accompany you through every period of your future life, as being the son of that respected ancestor of mine, to whom I owe every obligation.

“ANGELICA.”

Angelica informed her uncle and aunt of the offer she had had from Lord Devaynes, and shewed them the letters; they extremely approved of her spirited refusal.

Lord Devaynes, vexed and disappointed, when he received her answer, tore it in a thousand pieces, cursing his evil destiny. His affairs were in a desperate state, for he had just lost Graffington-Abbey in a gambling debt; and now that he had no hope of retrieving his broken fortune, by marrying his cousin, he determined to form an alliance, the first opportunity, with some rich heiress, about whom he was perfectly indifferent.

Greatly was the Marchioness shocked, when she actually saw, in one of the morning papers, Graffington-Abbey put up for sale, by the new possessor. She shewed the advertisement to her niece, who shed many tears on the perusal.

“No time,” cried the Marchioness, “is now to be lost in going into Hampshire, to possess ourselves of the papers I mentioned to you. Most probably this dissipated, unworthy nephew of mine, had long since discarded all the old servants, but we can readily get admittance, under the semblance of strangers, who are come to view the premises; and I am sure no one will intrude on us, while we are in the chapel. It is only a day’s journey from hence; we can sleep in the neighbourhood of the Abbey, and get into the chapel in the night time.”

The plan was not sooner spoken of, than settled. Angelica told Lady Vallency she was going out of town with her aunt for two days; and the next morning early they set out on their journey.

Angelica felt very sorrowful as she approached Graffington Abbey. The last time she had journeyed thither was with her beloved uncle, whose conversation, whose presence would never delight her more. That his son should have squandered his fortune, and be obliged to part with his paternal inheritance, shocked her inexpressibly, when she remembered how strongly his father was attached to it; how greatly he enjoyed its beauties, which he had heightened by the taste and pleasure he displayed in the cultivation and improvement of them. But mournful as these reflections were, how was her distress augmented, when, on her approach to the park, none of the old majestic trees tossing their branches proudly in the air were to be seen. "Gracious heaven!" exclaimed Angelica, "what is become of the noble avenue of oaks, am I in a dream!"

They had all be cut down, and sold for ready cash. The place looked wild, and desolate: the lovely walks were overgrown with weeds; the shrubbery was become a wilderness; the windows of the abbey (which had not till now been opened, that the premises might be viewed) were obscured with dust, and many of them broken. The change was so heart-piercing to Angelica, she burst into an agony of tears. The Marchioness wept also. She had not seen Graffington Abbey since she was a very young woman; but a thousand busy recollections crowded on her mind.—When they entered the hall, they looked in vain for faces familiar to them. All the old servants had long been discarded, and only one poor man, and his wife, whom Angelica did not know, kept the house; though several persons, who had come from town, to arrange the things for the sale, were scattered in the several apartments, and taking inventories. Angelica turned from so painful a scene, and requested her aunt to leave the house and go to Gerard's, for at the Abbey they could gain no information that was satisfactory; and it was Angelica's intention, from the first moment of coming into Hampshire, to visit her foster parents. When the chaise stopt at Gerard's, and the old people saw the dear child of their adoption alight, Agatha actually screamed with surprise and joy. Angelica had never ceased to write to them; but during the last five months the extraordinary events of her life had so wholly engrossed her, they had not heard from her of late. The Marchioness, who did not think it necessary to conceal from them her relationship to Angelica, in a very handsome manner, accompanied with a present, thanked them for their kindness to her niece. She told them, "as she found Graffington Abbey was to be sold, they each had a desire to visit it before it was disposed of." Angelica next inquired what was become of Mr. White, and Mrs. Martin.

"Both gone," replied Agatha. "Sad doings, sad alterations, my dear young lady, at the Abbey since you knew it. It makes my old heart ache when I think of it. I wonder what your worthy uncle, the noble Earl would say, if he could look up, and see all his fine place turned topsy turvy. And then to cut down the old trees which have stood there these hundred years! Why they were as natural to him as so many children!—I am sure I loved to see them; and many a-day have sat under their shade, to rest myself. I wonder, as I say, what the young Lord expects: for some judgment will come upon him; and if the place is haunted, as I've heard over and over again, I hope the ghosts will rise up and torment him, if he ever attempts to shew his face in these here parts again."

Angelica, depressed as she was, could not help smiling at the spirit of Agatha.

"Where does Mrs. Martin now live?" said she.

"With some great family, near Southampton."

"And Mr. White?"

"He lives hard by. He was too old to seek new service, he said, so he has taken to farming a little; and with what he has saved does very well."

"Will it be possible to see him?"

"Dear heart, yes; and he will be so happy to see you, my sweet young lady, for he often asks after you. Go, Gerard, and fetch him directly."

"I should like to walk to his farm," said the Marchioness, "he is an old acquaintance of mine; if your husband will be so good as to shew us the way."

Gerard was proud to accompany them, and they set out together. Although the brow of White was now become furrowed, and his hair silvered over with age, the Marchioness immediately recollected him, and the interview between them was very affecting. She took him aside to acquaint him with her desire to go into the chapel; he gave up the keys to her, and promised to accompany her to the exterior of the building.

About midnight the party set out, guided by the light of a lanthorn, reaching without difficulty the chapel. Angelica stood beside her aunt, not without terror, when she thought of the former evening she had spent there; while the Marchioness, undismayed, approached the statue. She pressed the board with her foot, which yielding to the pressure, immediately raised the arm; and while her foot remained on the spring, she took the papers from within the figure, and on her removal the arm returned to its former position. Angelica, when she saw the simplicity of the device, blushed at her own credulity; and proposed now to go to the oratory; but the Marchioness expressed, and shewed so much distress in seeing the figure, her niece did not urge it, on being assured the papers her aunt immediately put into her hands, would fully explain what it was. The two ladies were reconducted by White to Gerard's cottage, where they found a comfortable bed provided, and the next morning returned to London, followed by the blessings of their rustic friends.

CHAP. XIII.

“Often together have we talk’d of death,
How sweet it were to see
All doubtful things made clear;
Such as the cherubim,
To view the depths of heaven.
Oh! thou hast first
Begun the travel of eternity.
I gaze amid the stars,
And think that thou art there
Unfettered, as the thought that follows thee.
And we have often said, how sweet it were
To watch the friends we loved,
We did not err.

“Not to the grave, not to the grave, my soul
Follow thy friend beloved.
But in the lonely hour,
But in the evening walk,
Think that she companies thy solitude;
Think that she holds with thee
Mysterious intercourse.
And if remembrance wakes a tear,
There will be joy in grief.”

THE following Monday, as it was agreed, Angelica took leave of her aunt, and attended Lady Vallency to Averley Park. How different did this journey prove to the former one! then, indeed, Vallency had accompanied them thither, but it was under the most painful restraint. She was labouring to conquer an attachment she believed most unfortunate, whilst he was reflecting how to accomplish an union his whole soul was bent upon, from the prospect he had of being called on distant and immediate duty. That union had now taken place, and she was going to a spot endeared to her by that circumstance. Yet the owner of it was not there, and she was the rightful mistress of the two places she at present had no title to claim or acknowledge herself the possessor of. Nor did the entombed Henrietta escape her memory. The remembrance was now indeed softened into the tenderest ideas. She viewed her, not as an inhabitant of the grave, she was now an angel in heaven. The hope that departed friends were permitted to hover over those they had left on earth, with approving smiles, had often been a subject of discourse between them; and they had each cherished the idea with an enthusiastic delight that prevented her from now banishing the delusion. Many a time, in her lonely walk, in the still hour of evening, when Angelica strayed from her chamber to the rocks at Clifton, embowered by the woods that cloathed them, did the image of the dying Henrietta accompany her solitude; and while the remembrance of the conversation with her when she so ardently desired her to wed Vallency, and now she really was his wife, recurred to her, tears came to her eyes; but they were not those of remorse, assured she would, as she once had said,

approve, and smile on their union. Deeply did she mourn; deeply did she regret her; her heart was formed of the finest texture, and in losing Henrietta, felt that all future intimacies were indifferent to her; and that she would rather cherish the sad, the pleasing remembrances which time awakens in the heart, than banish her from it, by any new substitute. Neither change of rank nor fortune made any change to Angelica in Lady Vallency's conduct. It uniformly had been tender towards her; she knew that true nobility was of the mid, that those accomplishments which adorned Miss Gerard, were less conspicuous in Lady Angelica Carteret, and that her beauty would not prove, as formerly, her only attraction. She would soon be proclaimed to the world what she really was—an *heiress*—single, disengaged, therefore open to the voice of those solicitations that would pour in on her from all quarters. She trembled for the wise election of her young friend. "Ah!" thought she, "had she but been untitled, how happy should I have been to claim her for my daughter. Vallency was not unworthy of her, and in a thousand instances she had lately perceived his fondness of her. Now," continued she, to herself, "it is impossible they can be allied. How could I propose a child to act in opposition to a father's will: an act of disobedience that would for ever sully my character to encourage; and one, that were he to effect clandestinely, must for ever excite my abhorrence, and contempt, in setting wilfully at defiance the dying commands of his father, and giving up his paternal, his natural inheritance; for no tie, however dear, can take from him the reproach of such a conduct. "Yet," thought she, "how wild the idea; Vallency has never deviated from filial duty; why should he now, in the only instance where his fortitude is called forth?" Alas! little did his mother reflect, that the flowery paths of love are often embowered in labyrinths so wide of duty, that those who once unwarily have ventured into its boundless mazes, are compelled to pursue its seductive tract, nor discover thorns, so artfully mingled with its roses, they can only recede, when too late they perceive they are irredeemably wounded.

Vallency was very regular in writing; but this regularity did not remove Angelica's anxiety and apprehension for his safety. The papers were filled with dire accounts of the killed and wounded. The content was awful. It was, however, thought, from the complexion of affairs, the Duke of York would return before the winter, and with him she hoped Vallency would return also. The concealment of her marriage gave her the most painful sensations. How could the recovery of her property be conducted under a false name, and how would she fall in the estimation of the Marquis and Marchioness, by the discovery of so clandestine an action? Their arrival in England on the eve of her husband's departure, had filled her with a transient and pure delight. But at Averley, in its remote seclusion, she had full leisure for reflection; and without actually wishing to recall her promise to him, of concealing their union, she was so wretched under it, as to resolve in her next letter, by stating the unexpected change in her affairs, to obtain permission to disclose their marriage to his mother and her family. Feeling somewhat easier in this determination, when she retired at night to her chamber, she sat down and opened the papers her aunt had given her; when she read the following memorial of her grandfather's to his children.

"My beloved children,

"The following memorial of your mother I have been induced to pen for your future benefit, should you wish to depart from the Protestant faith, in which I have

hitherto educated you; for you will here read an awful lesson in the fate of a parent who was brought up in that unnatural superstition which tinctures a monastic life; and which, having deviated from, against the laws of her religion, and country, she unhappily imagined, could not be absolved by all the penitence she could offer.—Oh miserable force of misguided prejudice! sufficient to embitter the brightest moments of a felicity which else would have been unparalleled in the married state!

“I saw your mother when she was then in her noviciate, in the convent of ———, she was only in her seventeenth year. There was a playful simplicity in the expression of her countenance, which spoke the vivacity of a mind at contrariety with the strict discipline of a monastery, beneath whose melancholy cloister the remainder of her days were devoted to be spent. The clear brown of her complexion was set off by the dazzling lustre of dark eyes, filled with the most captivating sweetness; while arch smiles played round a mouth adorned with beautiful dimples. The luxuriance of her chestnut hair fell in unrestrained ringlets over her forehead and bosom; her dress had all the tasteful debonnaire of the French, and displayed her elegant figure to the happiest advantage.

“This description I have given you of your mother, because the melancholy cast of her mind latterly, entirely changed the expression of her countenance, and the figure I have taken of her, is only the mournful representative of that deep dejection which shaded so strongly her after-life.

“The residence of the Count de V——— was on the beautiful borders of the Rhone. I had a letter of introduction to him, being then on my travels. The Count received me with all that courtesy that distinguishes the French nation, and entertained me with the warmest hospitality. The Count was of high birth; he loved ostentation, but he was not rich, and his pride and spirit had been wounded by that circumstance; for his family were numerous, and he could not support them with that magnificence he thought his rank demanded. From that unfortunate idea, his three young daughters became devoted victims—a monastery was to receive them for ever. Two of them had already taken the veil. Constantia was, at the period of my introduction, only a novitiate. She had always declared how averse she was to enter into the holy order, and as the time approached of her being admitted, it so visibly affected her health, her native air was judged necessary, and she was permitted to return home. The Count presented, among the number of his children, his daughter Constantia to me. She blushed deeply, for she had seen few men, and knew little of the world. I was not long insensible to a loveliness so captivating. Perhaps a mournful sympathy in the fate of a young creature who was so soon to become a devoted sacrifice, first endeared her to me. She saw from my countenance, my manner, my heart took no indifferent share in her future destiny; for hers became allied to mine with an affection that admitted not of separation. I had, on my arrival, been received by the Count as an inmate for a few days, which were lengthened to a few weeks, until he had penetration enough to discern I loved his daughter. If he had only considered my rank and fortune, he would not have objected to the alliance—but I was an *heretic*. He took the alarm, and without the smallest notice, sent Constantia in the dead of night, back to her convent. To Constantia the surprise, the separation was so sudden, she had no time, no opportunity to see me; and could only leave the following billet with her sister Magdalen:

“I leave you, Devaynes, for ever!—my father has devoted my future days to the holy sanctuary—forget therefore you have ever seen—ever known me; and in the lively scenes of that world, which is only opening upon you, may you taste every happiness.”
“CONSTANTIA.”

“Almost distracted, I abruptly quitted the chateau of the Count, but not before I had procured from the faithful Magdalen a direction to the convent that inclosed her sister. How I got admitted I can hardly tell. Suffice it however, to say, I gained an opportunity of not only seeing, but, after infinite ingenuity, of stealing her from thence. I wrapped her in a large cloak to conceal her nun’s dress, and purchased cloathing for her at the first town we came to, which we reached without interruption; we immediately took shipping for England, and on our landing at Dover, I sent instantly for a clergyman to join our hands. But Constantia, not satisfied with our ceremony, interested a priest might also unite us; which he did.—From Dover we proceeded direct to Graffington Abbey. The flight of Constantia from the convent, the rapidity of our journey, the succession of ideas that floated on her mind, were too much for her quick sensibility; and although united to the husband of her choice she was seized with a frenzy fever, which I was afraid would have terminated her life. She had violated the religious sanctuary she had been bred in; she had broken her vows; and worse than all, she had married a heretic. Not even the tenderness with which I treated her, the consoling discourse I offered, could appease the anguish of her mind; which was visible at times, though she upbraided me not, but in my presence tried to smile away her sufferings. I gave her the assurance I would not only leave her to the freedom of her own religion; but I had the chapel at the abbey fitted up for her use, with a room, which I converted into an oratory. Yet her conduct lay so heavily on her conscience, than no concession, nor the priest who resided in the house, seemed to afford her comfort; and she imagined (strange infatuation of Roman catholic superstition) that only by severe penance at the shrine of one of their most pious Saints, she could obtain absolution. I therefore obtained a statue of St. Augustine from Rome, which I had placed in the chapel. Even under the cloud of all these unhappy prejudices, the sweetness of Constantia’s disposition, the goodness of her heart, shone so conspicuous as to render her the most amiable of wives. My three children, Graffington, Georgina, and Angelica, seemed at first, to remove gradually, that settled melancholy of her mind; the shade in time dispelled, and if not succeeded by eternal sunshine, our days, at times, were brightly gilded by it.

“Thus passed the first ten years of our union. She often used to talk with the most filial tender affection of her father and sisters. She imagined it would console her to write to him, to intreat his blessing and forgiveness; to present her children to him, to be once more enfolded in his parental embrace. What an answer followed!—would to God I could forget it!—It broke my Constantia’s heart!—He told her no penitence, no prayers could absolve her from the heinous crime she had committed. That to marry a heretic must be followed by *perdition*!—The priest, (who was really a good man) now could afford her no consolation. She shut herself up in her oratory—she used the severest discipline—she fasted, she prayed, and was found, after an inclement night in the oratory, with clasped hands, supporting the cross on her knees before the altar, a lifeless saint. Her pure spirit had winged its flight doubtless to that heaven which her unnatural father had told her was closed against her.

“I had, by some strange accident, no picture of my wife. To lose all traces of her, I could not support. I sent immediately to London, and procured a person who modelled her in wax, in the very attitude she died. I cloathed the figure in a nun’s habit, which I had in my possession, and placed it at the altar; and the figure bore so mournful a similitude to that sacrificed angel, that I found an agonizing satisfaction in visiting each day this sad memorial of my wife. She was buried in the chapel where I have erected a monument to her memory.”

Angelica shed many tears over the affecting memorial. The other papers merely contained her title to her mother’s share of the French property, which the late Earl of Devaynes had made a present to each of his sisters, his father having come into the whole of it from his wife’s father, the Count de V ———, dying without male issue.

Angelica now retired to bed, but not to sleep, for her thoughts were wholly occupied with what she had just read; which so fully explained all those mysterious circumstances that formerly had filled her with such terror.

Chawton House Library

CHAP. XIV.

What I have heard, permit me to relate.

VIRG. Æn.

A WEEK had been spent at Averley Park, when one morning Lady Vallency's woman came in great haste to Angelica, and said her lady wished to speak to her in the dressing-room. Angelica waited not to ask any questions, but immediately went pale and trembling; for the first idea which struck her, was, that something had happened to her husband; nor was her terror abated when her Ladyship, who was sitting with an open letter in her hand, said, in a low but steady voice, "I sent not for you to reproach you; reproach and displeasure now come too late, and what we cannot recall, we must submit to with resignation. I know you are married to my son. I know Vallency has violated the commands of his father, that he has forfeited his inheritance, that he has forgotten, in setting at defiance filial obedience, he has entailed endless reproach and sorrow on you and himself. I was, indeed, unprepared to meet this blow, proudly imagining, from the high character of my son, he would have been capable of taking such a step; and would rather have resigned the joy which an union of minds so congenial must inspire, than set aside the request of a father, whose single wish he ever held as sacred law. His not having consulted me, and withdrawing a confidence which he ever seemed zealous to possess, I cannot wonder at; for he surely knew, when he made the offer of his hand, it was not Miss Gerard he was going to wed, but Lady Angelica Carteret, whose rank and name proved the sole bar to an union I must otherwise with joy have promoted, had she moved only in humble life, when informed her parents were virtuous, and of a respectable family."

Angelica petrified at what she heard, knew not how to reply; but at length said, "since, Madam, you are not ignorant of our union, I will not attempt to palliate the secrecy with which it was conducted; a secrecy repugnant to my wishes, and your son equally felt the impropriety of, and which he persevered in it, deeply lamented the necessity of such a conduct. But what you besides allude to, I know not."

"Then you knew not," interrupted her Ladyship, "that Vallency in marrying a lady of title, forfeits for ever this noble estate. That Averley is no longer ours, and that his pay, with only one thousand pounds per annum, is his whole subsistence. It is not the loss of fortune I lament in this action—I would rather see him happy than affluent. But so willingly to part with his birthright! so cruelly to delude his mother!"

"Now then," exclaimed Angelica, emphatically, "is his never to be forgotten conduct explained—his looks of wildness, his contending emotions, when I disclosed to him my name, and family; nor could I erase from my mind the impression some hidden circumstance was the cause of such extraordinary emotions. From that moment I would fain have prevailed on him to defer our union, under auspices so unfavourable; but he would not listen to me, too well knowing, if I were acquainted with the insuperable bar between us, no earthly power could have prevailed on me to have given him my hand."

"No!" cried his mother, "Vallency had gone too far to recede: his honour was engaged—his faith was plighted—then to have relinquished you, would have made him, already miserable, even more so, than in disobeying a father whose voice could not rise from the grave to reproach him, and therefore the lesser evil must inevitably be his

choice. The channel through which I have heard this intelligence, is from the person who claims the immediate possession of this estate. To-morrow I shall leave Averley Park for ever—read this letter, and then be so obliging as to favour me with the plan Vallency and you had laid down to retain a property of which he is not the lawful possessor, and when your marriage took place?”

To dispute the evidence of her marriage, were Angelica inclined to do it, she knew would be impossible; she therefore at once laid before Lady Vallency the whole of her acquaintance with her son, together with the secrecy with which their union had been conducted.

Her Ladyship heard her with candour and mildness, and resigning herself to a step she could not avert, prepared with fortitude to quit Averley immediately. “Pride, as well as simple justice,” exclaimed she, “would have prevented my trespassing for a moment on the property of another, could I have guessed what had happened. Little, indeed, did I imagine Vallency would have exposed his mother, in her declining age, to the cruel indignity of being driven as a usurper, from an asylum, which, until now has proved her home. But read the letter I this morning received.”

Angelica took it from her, it was as follows.

To the Countess Dowager VALLENCY.

“Madam,

“You are not ignorant of the will of your husband, the late Earl of Vallency, your son, the present Earl, for ever forfeits the estate you are now residing on, by marrying a *titled lady*. That he has done so, on the 5th of September last, I must now take the liberty of reminding your Ladyship, as your son is not only gone abroad, but retains a property to which I am the next rightful heir, and wish immediately to possess. I have employed a lawyer to take proper measures in this business, and you will oblige me by as early a removal as is convenient.

“You will find, on inquiry, his Lordship’s marriage with Lady Angelica Carteret is registered in the parish church of St. George, Hanover-square, where I read it.

“I have the honour to remain.

“Your Ladyship’s

“Obedient humble servant,

“CHARLES SEYMOUR.”

“Harley-Street, 28th Sept.”

Angelica, inexpressibly shocked and distressed at what she had read, yet could not conceive how the next heir to Averley Park could have discovered, from the secrecy their marriage was conducted with, she bore a title; till in a moment it crossed her recollection her recognizance of the clergyman who had joined them, and doubted not he had been the betrayer of their unfortunate union.

As she guessed, was true. Mr.— who was a very amiable young man, visited her uncle frequently, and she had by him been introduced, as Lady Angelica Carteret. Not until he had united her to Vallency, and they returned to the vestry, was he certain of her being the same young lady; convinced afterwards of it, he happened accidentally to speak of the very lovely couple he had joined, adding, with a smile, he was afraid it was a

stolen match. The person to whom he said it, was no other than Mr. Seymour, who immediately examined the register, saw Vallency's name, and after consulting his friends, having heard nothing, but accidentally, of Vallency's union, wrote to his mother, who little, indeed, was aware of the blow that awaited her.

Angelica advised Lady Vallency to defer her removal until the return of her son, persuaded no law could compel her to quit Averley until the proper forms of resignation were gone through. His mother, however, felt too deeply hurt and offended to listen to her; and while she forbore to reproach Angelica, she sat down and addressed Mr. Seymour to this purport:

To CHARLES SEYMOUR, ESQ.

"Averley Park, Sept. 30, 1799.

"SIR,

"I am now aware of being at present resident on an estate to which my son had no more a claim; and while I perceive your little delicacy in not waiting the return of the Earl of Vallency, I inform you, Averley Park is, from this day, open to your reception.

"I am, Sir,

"Your humble servant,

"M. VALLENCY."

The next step her Ladyship took, was to put her seal on every thing, and prepare for her instant departure. She did not choose to relate to her servants the extraordinary circumstance that had occurred, but desired them all, as she was obliged suddenly to leave Averley Park, except the housekeeper and butler, to prepare for their departure the next day. They heard their lady with sorrow, and surprise; but they expressed no impertinent curiosity, for they all loved and respected their mistress.—They saw she was unhappy, that Angelica was, if possible, more so; and, as if in sympathy, became so likewise.

Angelica withdrew to her chamber, and wrote, with a breaking heart, as follows, to her husband.

To the Earl of VALLENCY.

"Averley Park, Sept. 30, 1799.

"How am I, my beloved Vallency, in addressing you under the most endearing of all ties, to say, I do it with the bitterest sensations; for in possessing you, I supposed every felicity under heaven was to attend our steps; that with you, for my husband, my protector, my friend, I should defy every evil that could possibly assail me. I knew not under what sad auspices such titles were obtained. I knew not at the moment, *disobedience* was a fault of such mighty magnitude, that those who had courage to brave its terrors, would be inevitably followed by the punishment it denounces. That moment is arrived. I can no longer withhold the intelligence from you, for nothing could avert the blow you too generously concealed from me, and which, by the most extraordinary

circumstance is come to light. My tears mingle with the information I must give you, that we are preparing to leave Averley Park *for ever!* And have you, Vallency, forfeited that inheritance for me?—For me violated the commands of a father?—Now is explained the anguish you suffered on the disclosure of my name and family. You would not then recall your offered hand. Ah! Vallency, it was noble, but it was ill judged. It has struck, I fear, a death blow to your mother; for Averley is now claimed by the next possessor. We know he has no right to enter until your return; but your mother, deeply hurt, will not remain, and she is hastening immediately from hence.

“Oh Vallency! that this cruel war was ended!—that you were restored to my arms! that on our knees we might implore the blessing, the pardon of your admirable mother. She reproaches me not; but such looks of mild resignation beam from her eyes, as pierce my very soul. Were you but here, all would yet be well. Believe my prayers for your safety, each day are offered at the throne of mercy, and that I think of you without ceasing, with that grateful affection, the sacrifice you have made would entitle you to; not to say any thing of the tenderness my heart ever felt for you.

“ANGELICA VALLENCY.”

CHAP. XV.

State laws may alter, nature is the same.

DRYDEN.

THE carriage, at an early hour in the morning, was at the door. Lady Vallency and Angelica slept at Salisbury the first night, and reached London the second evening, after a melancholy journey.

When Angelica found her marriage was so public, to conceal it from her family she could no longer have a plea for, and blushed at the impression her aunt must form of her duplicity towards her. She determined therefore to wait on Lady Winfield, lay the whole of her acquaintance and marriage with Vallency before her, and prepare the Marchioness to receive her cordially, after being informed of her union.

She found Lady Winfield at home, and alone. She immediately disclosed the whole circumstance to her in as unembarrassed and distinct a manner as she could. When she had ended, her Ladyship said, "had I not known my Lord Vallency's engagement to Miss Grenville, of which you were apprised, from the first day you became inmate of his mother's, I would have prepared you against this invincible young man. He was just the character to subdue the heart of any amiable female, not already engaged. Brave as aspiring, elegant as attractive, he united every heroic virtue with a person few could rival.—When, therefore, Miss Grenville ceased to be an obstacle, I knew so well the insurmountable clause in his father's will, I was lulled into the most perfect security, when he discovered who you were. I imagined Lord Vallency would rather forego the most endearing wishes of his heart, than under such circumstances, make you an offer of his hand. I have often thought he viewed you with the fondest admiration. But to mention it to you, was only to offend the natural delicacy of your mind; judging, while the obscurity and origin of your connexions remained secret, his pride would be his surest safeguard."

"Yet after all," continued her Ladyship, "on reflecting this matter coolly over, what real misfortune can arise from your union that is not imaginary? In rank you are his equal. In inheritance his superior. His mother is a woman of too strong sense to give way to those idle prejudices at variance with the happiness of her son; which prejudices had he yielded to, would have destroyed his peace for ever. Think not, my dear Angelica, I mean to either countenance or encourage disobedience. It is the most heinous of all crimes. But my Lord Vallency's faith was plighted, ere he knew he tendered his hand to Lady Angelica Carteret. He thought you the humble, the destitute Miss Gerard. He could not from the fond regret his mother still cherished for Miss Grenville seem so soon to forget her, by proposing you; and the peculiarity of his destiny, on the eve of departure to the theatre of war, alone induced him, in such a moment, to set at defiance the strictest sense of duty. When you disclosed your name, it was too late, in honour, to recede." Lady Winfield then told Angelica of the first unhappy union of the late Earl, which had caused him to make such a will.

"Ah! Madam," cried Angelica, "Vallency needs not so powerful an advocate to plead for him. Eloquence itself, personified in him, wanted no persuasion to listen. How powerfully can I recall to my mind the agonizing struggle between contending duty and affection. Duty to his mother—tenderness to me. Nor can I ever enough admire the

silence he commanded, when his soul was almost bursting with the various emotions that overwhelmed it.”

“Noble Vallency!” continued she, enthusiastically, “you have obtained me in opposition to those filial sentiments that govern your heart. May it then be my part to recall them! They cannot be fled. No!—they were only dormant, and will soon again spring into action.”

“I shall instantly,” interrupted Lady Winfield, “call on your aunt; she has frequently questioned me, particularly, on your attachments. The Marquis said, it was proper you should be nobly allied, and he wished you to be eligibly married before you came of age; that on taking possession of Aberville Castle, you might have an honourable protector, who, as a husband, would reflect credit on your choice, which he did not wish to controul, and he had too high an opinion of your understanding not to believe you would choose wisely.”

“So I have,” cried Angelica eagerly. “They will love and admire Vallency.”

She returned to Park-lane, comforted by Lady Winfield’s kindness, who promised to conduct her on the morrow to the Marchioness.

Angelica’s uncle and aunt were somewhat offended and displeased with her, when they first heard she had been married some weeks without informing them of it, after the solicitude they had expressed for her future establishment in life, and in allowing the Marquis to begin a process under a false name. When, however, they saw the sorrowful anxiety of her countenance, for the absence of a husband whose life hung on the most cruel uncertainty; when they heard that for Angelica’s sake, he had relinquished his paternal inheritance, they were so much struck with his generosity of conduct, as to look with anxiety for the return of this noble, disinterested young man, whom they longed to claim alliance with, charmed at the prospect of restoring him to a fortune so superior to the one he had foregone. They condemned highly the absurd prejudice of his father, in making so unnatural a will, and who would sacrifice his happiness to those prejudices, rather than trust to his own selection of a woman worthy his choice. The Marchioness was extremely hurt to observe the Dowager had imbibed the same ideas, and was actually to appearance sinking under the shock she had sustained, on the discovery of his clandestine marriage; although so far from repining, she treated Angelica with the utmost maternal tenderness. But it was not Angelica with whom she was displeased; it was the disappointment she had sustained, in finding Vallency did not reach those ideas of perfection she thought would have burst forth into action; and she felt cruelly hurt, cruelly mortified. The struggle between her anxiety for her son’s safety, and her resolution not to shew how greatly she was hurt, inwardly impaired her health; and a slow, but consuming fever, hung upon her, which daily increased.

By this marriage had the misery of the whole family been created; and, as it too often happens, that misery originated in themselves, not from the visitation of Providence. First, it had arise from the force of *Prejudice*; next, from the misery of *Disobedience* and *Concealment*; and lastly, from the blind partiality of a mother, who vainly imagined human frailties were not admissible in her son; and while they all deeply deplored their follies, from the first source they were alone to be traced. A lesson, that no parents should blindly controul the choice of their children, when that choice is not foolishly romantic, or disgraceful.

CHAP. XVI.

One sacred oath had ty'd
Our loves; one destiny our like shall guide,
Nor wild, nor deep, our common way divide.
PRIOR.

THINGS were in this state after Lady Vallency and Angelica had returned to London, when day after day passed on without a letter from Vallency. Public intelligence was all the information they obtained of him, and in that was blended all the tortures of uncertainty and suspense; when, at length, the following paragraph met the ever eager eye of his wretched wife:

“From the continuance of the late action, and the obstinacy with which it was contested, the victory has not been gained without considerable loss. The British army have to regret the loss of Colonel Lord Vallency, whose severe and dangerous wounds, leave small hope of the recovery of one of the bravest officers in his Majesty’s service; and whose gallant, and highly distinguished services. on this memorable night, it is impossible to do justice to the merits of.”

The account was clear and decisive. Vallency then was mortally wounded, in the dire engagement of the fourth October, expiring in a foreign country, unblessed with any friend to close his eyes, unprovided perhaps with those common aids that render the termination of existence easy. Even already he might have finished his noble and glorious career; exposed and trampled on by that sanguinary multitude who had helped to destroy him.

“Oh God!” exclaimed Angelica, in an agony of despair, and clasping her hands together, “that it had been thy will to have taken me also. Is this the bliss that awaited me?—This the joy of wedded life Vallency promised me!—This the olive branch of peace he held out!—No, no!—it is sprinkled with blood to the happiest who receive it, and will provide a deathful gift to me, when preceded by such fatal sorrows.”

Lady Vallency, in this unexpected blow exerted her fortitude, established on the purest principles of religion, to a degree of heroism that surprised Angelica, knowing how much she idolized her son. She was from that circumstance strengthened in the romantic plan she immediately formed, of following her husband to the continent. “If, indeed,” cried she, to herself, “he is yet alive, oh! what mournful joy to watch his couch, to administer his cordials, to remove his mental anguish by my presence. Yes,” continued she, “I will go.—I will brave every danger—I will conquer the terrors of the battle—the uncertainty of the sea; for they will lead me once more to the arms of my husband!”

To communicate her wild scheme to his mother, was only to render it abortive. She therefore determined to remain silent. But ignorant of the route she was to take, and expose herself to the perils she might encounter, the natural timidity of her nature shrunk from; resolved as she was, to follow the destiny of Vallency, On maturely considering the difficulty of her plan, she dispatched a hasty note to Captain Owen, the only person she judged capable of advising her on the present occasion. He was not merely the friend of Vallency, but he had been his confidant, the witness of their nuptials, and knew every

circumstance related to each, she had likewise been consigned to his immediate protection. Who then so proper to advise with as Captain Owen? She requested an immediate conference with him on business of importance; and he, without delay, followed the messenger.

He guessed the subject she wished to speak to him on, for in the public prints he saw the sad accounts of his friend's misfortune. At the moment Angelica's note was brought, he was hesitating whether he ought not to prove the medium through which the intelligence should reach her. The sincere sorrow Owen felt, was pictured in his countenance; it was pale and melancholy.—He stammered in an inarticulate accent, his concern, "hoped the account was exaggerated, but trusted she was prepared." The last word died on his lips; and he withdrew to the window to conceal his tears.

Angelica, who had sat with folded arms the image of despair, from his first entrance, seemed now only to be sensible of his presence. "I make no apology," at length, exclaimed she with a heavy sigh, "for sending for you; I see by your countenance you know what has happened. You know, that ere this I am, perhaps, deprived of my husband—that Vallency is mortally wounded.—You, who so lately beheld me at the summit of all earthly bliss, in one little moment to find me the most wretched of women!—Oh! Captain Owen, the agony of this moment is too mighty for endurance!"—She sunk back on her chair, overwhelmed with the anguish of her mind; happily a shower of tears came to her relief; she grew more composed, and at length continued: "I sent for you, Sir, that you might advise me of the best way to reach the continent. Wild, impossible as may seem the plan, I am resolved to go thither immediately."

"I have," returned Captain Owen, mournfully, "read the list of the wounded in the papers. Vallency is of the number. The account may be, I hope is, exaggerated. Wait, then, my dear Madam, until further information reaches you, before you fulfil a plan attended, not merely with so many difficulties, but dangers. How can you travel unprotected, and alone? To speak sincerely, it is a scheme I cannot approve, nor would I wish to advise you in."

"How unkind," interrupted Angelica, "to thwart, instead of directing me! Surely Vallency would rejoice to see me in an hour of suffering! If so, what are ten thousand perils, if they lead me at last to him. Ah! Captain Owen, when you joined my hand to that of Vallency, you knew not what an husband you gave me, or you would not be so cool a reasoner. I will even admit of your considering me one of those romantic females, who believe the higher they soar in enterprise, the greater heroines they become; if you will only tell me how I am to proceed; every hour, every moment is precious to me."

"If you are absolutely resolved," cried he, "I will certainly do my best to advise you. It is a very serious plan to put into execution." After reflecting a few moments he continued. "As I before said, you cannot travel alone. I will promise to conduct you as far as Deal, where you must embark, and I will see you put on board the packet; but you must have some female domestic with you, and even then, I am afraid you will find yourself greatly distressed how to reach a spot abounding with hostility and danger. The frame and beauty of Lady Vallency are ill able to contend with the confusion, not to say ferocity, it is too probable she must meet with, where arms are the only cry. Neither are our troops stationary. Vallency, disabled from action, will be in sick quarters; nor am I certain where those quarters are. What then is to become of you?—If overcome by seasickness, and anxiety, you should be unable to reach him, and you are detained in a

strange land, at the mercy of strangers. Indeed," added he, earnestly, "I would fain advise you not to go."

"I am aware of all you have advanced; and however true, not any of the evils I can encounter, can prove half so trying to me as this cruel separation. The plan you have laid down I am thankful for; nor will I decline it, if you are serious. I shall take my own servant with me. She is one Lady Vallency brought up, and who has been in my service since my marriage was discovered. From Rose's particular attachment to me, her lady insisted on her devoting herself solely to my service: on her fidelity I am sure I can rely."

"Be it then as you wish," cried Owen, "you may command my services, whenever you choose to claim them."

"I believe you," replied Angelica, "and I will attend you to-morrow at any place you will please to appoint, if you will have a chaise in waiting. I make no apologies," continued she, "for this trouble. You are the friend of my husband, as such I claim your services; and consider you too much a man of honour to violate that friendship. I indeed blush, that my conduct, from a strange peculiarity of circumstances, should deviate so far from those strict principles of candour and openness I am sensible it is the duty of every woman to pursue; and while I abhor any thing clandestine, I have, in not one instance only, but now in a second, am going to act in opposition to the dictates of my heart. So true is it, that if we incautiously plunge into one error, at variance with the judgment, a thousand others inevitably follow."

"How incompatible," added she, "Have I found happiness, and Vallency; when I gave him my hand, I knew not under what dark auspices my marriage was celebrated, and that with the misfortune of forfeiting his paternal estate, by marrying an Earl's daughter, I had planted in his bosom the corrosive thorn of disobedience. I can restore him riches three-fold: but alas! can I pluck out the fester than rankles there?—Oh no! widely did I err in consenting to a private union, and widely do I err, in concealing from his mother, and my friends, this intended journey. Were I to tell them, they would detain me, therefore to-morrow I will be ready."

The plan was soon arranged, and Captain Owen took leave.

CHAP. XVII.

Lo! now the clarion's loud voice I hear,
Its threat'ning murmurs pierce my ear;
And in the lines, with brazen breath,
The trumpet sounds the charge of death.
Now, now the flash of brandish'd arms affright
The flying steed, and mars the rider's fight.

FRANCIS'S HORACE.

THE following morning Angelica desired Rose to pack up some of her cloaths in a small trunk, and informed her she was to accompany her out of town for a short time, requesting her not to mention it to any of the family, as she was going on a matter of business. She dared not trust herself to take leave of Lady Vallency, and therefore wrote the following letter, which she placed on her dressing-table.

To the Countess Dowager VALLENCY.

"To desert you, Madam, in the hour of such heavy misfortune, may no doubt at first appear not merely unnatural, but unkind. My mind, bent on the plan I have formed, was not to be thwarted by any argument you could offer; and the only way to resist it, was again to act clandestinely. When these lines meet you eye, I shall be some miles on my way to your son. To the husband my heart has so long selected; for I feel the only solitary joy remaining is to be with him, if it please God to restore him to my arms.

"I would fain, Madam, implore your blessing. I would fain speak of the tender affection with which my heart glows towards you; but it is a subject I am at this moment unequal to dwell on, and therefore I will bid you farewell.

ANGELICA VALLENCY."

She next addressed a few lines to her aunt, and Lady Winfield. Each she knew would have opposed her project, she therefore was compelled to act as she had done.

Through the interest of Captain Owen, she obtained a passport; he was waiting for her at his lodgings, and accompanied her to Deal. From the liberality of her aunt, the Marchioness, Angelica was in no want of money.

When they reached Deal, they heard what the papers had signified, that it was supposed the troops would soon embark for England, and they were expected there very shortly. Angelica was not, however, to be shaken from her purpose by this intelligence, and the next morning, the wind proving favourable, Captain Owen saw her on board the packet. Fortunately for her, they found a messenger on board the same packet, to whose care Captain Owen consigned her, and who kindly promised to take charge of a letter from her to the General of the same regiment to which Vallency belonged, and to whom dispatches were going.

Captain Owen advised Angelica when she landed at ———, to go to the first hotel there, and remain until the messenger returned with an answer what was the actual situation of Vallency. "For," added he, "for you to proceed through such plains of carnage and hostility, would not only be highly improper, but attended with imminent

danger. I cannot remain with you, having with infinite difficulty now obtained leave of absence. To offer services I cannot render you, would be an idle compliment. If you pursue the plan I have pointed out, and remain patiently and quietly in your own room, I do not foresee any thing unpleasant can happen to you. So now God bless and preserve you, my dear Lady Vallency." He shook hands with her and departed.

Angelica's spirits sunk to a state of the deepest dejection when Captain Owen left her. His kindness had solaced her, and she now felt herself a stranger, and alone in the theatre of war; in pursuit of a husband who, perhaps, already was numbered with the slain; and she must wait, in the most lingering and painful suspense for some days, till any tidings could reach her.

The conduct of the messenger was extremely respectful and humane. Captain Owen informed him who Angelica was, and her present undertaking; on landing, therefore on the coast of Holland, he procured her tolerable accommodation. She easily learnt where hostilities were going forward, for war was the only subject of conversation; and although little was spoken but high Dutch, yet she gathered enough to find the battle was desperate. Angelica was only on the borders of the scenes that were going forward, but the bustle, the confusion of the place, looked at variance with peace, and she shuddered when she thought how near she was to the scene of carnage. She seemed, in her imagination, to hear the dreadful trumpet of war sounding in her ears; she saw the armies rush on to battle, she beheld the wounded and slain. Her soul sickened when she remembered Vallency was among them, and she felt nearly overwhelmed at the agony of suspense and fear. Her heart beat high and agitated, when the messenger returned, and produced a letter. Its contents might be of the most direful import; trembling, with apprehension, she broke the seal, and read as follows.

"Lieutenant-Colonel Lord Vallency, disabled for further service, has requested permission to return home.--His gallant and brave conduct claimed every indulgence, and two days ago he proceeded in a litter for England."

"Then he is alive!" exclaimed Angelica, in an agonizing burst of joy; "thanks to heaven for having spared him! I will, with wings swift as love speeds with, fly to him immediately."

She again embarked on board the packet; but not with the like success as she landed in Holland, was she wafted back to the coast of England. A tremendous wind arose, which proving contrary, made the vessel beat about the sea in a dreadful manner. Angelica, ill before, from the sufferings of her mind and spirits, thought she should expire under the terrible sickness that came on; and when they landed at Deal, after the most imminent danger, instead of being able to proceed to London, she was so wholly exhausted as to be obliged to be immediately carried to bed. Rose, who was afraid her lady was dying, sent for a physician, who perceived such rapid approaches to a low nervous fever, he informed her if they attempted to move her it would be at the risk of her life, and the only chance of restoring her lady, was to keep her perfectly quiet. Angelica's uneasiness and impatience at being detained, augmenting every hour, likewise augmented the fever; and it was not before her recollection and her senses failed, her attempts to rise could be prevented. By the most skilful management, and the watchful care of her faithful domestic alone, Angelica, at the end of three weeks, was restored sufficiently to be

allowed to undertake a slow journey to London. Rose, during her illness, knew not how to act, and prudently forbore to write to Lady Vallency, persuaded when he son was carried home, if the news of her young lady's danger reached them, it would be his death; and waited in silence till she saw the event of her illness.

Chawton House Library

CHAP. XVIII.

For thee I lived, for absent thee expired.

HOMER'S ODDYSSEY.

WHILE Angelica remained in this state at Deal, Vallency had slowly proceeded in a litter to England. All the agonizing suffering he endured from his wounds, fell infinitely short of those mental ones he experienced on his arrival in London. When he stopt at his house in Park-lane, the windows were all closed, and the hatchment on the outside was to him the herald of the death of his mother. A thousand poignant sensations rushed in a moment into his bosom. His fatal *disobedience*, in violating the commands of his father, had perhaps, with the tidings of his being wounded, all conspired to accelerate the death of his mother. What a scene for Angelica, whose gentle nature ever alive to sentiments of the purest affection for his parent, had now been left alone, without one friend to comfort her in this mournful interval. Such were the thoughts, which, rapid as lightning floated in his mind in the space of a few seconds. Davis, when he saw the litter stop which bore his respected master, came to the door, but utterance seemed denied him. He turned pale, and, bathed in tears, stood wholly silent.

"I ask you not," cried Vallency, in a voice of the deepest affliction, "what has happened—O my mother!—tenderest, most indulgent of parents, you, indeed, are spared the pangs of witnessing my bodily sufferings, yet surely all you could have felt was nothing compared to the mental agony I endure at this moment! Tell me," continued he, "when this melancholy event happened?" darting a mournful glance at Davis's black coat.

"Soon after you went," replied he, "my lady began to droop. She did not complain, but she grew very thin, and the doctors said she had a constant slow fever upon her. Your marriage, my Lord, with Miss Gerard, seemed to surprise and hurt her a good deal. She said nothing about leaving Averley Park, which my lady would not stay another day at, when she heard she had no right there, but every one thought, from that time, she grew worse and worse. When the news came, Sir, of your being so dangerously wounded, my lady still endeavoured to keep up, but it would not do; she soon after took to her bed."—Davis did not like to go on, he was afraid to shock his master with the account of Angelica's having left the house, and was gone, (though he had heard in pursuit of his Lordship) yet he knew not the certainty of, as they had not returned together.

Vallency groaned in agony, at this narration, and the surgeon, who had more than once forbid Davis to go on, now commanded him to leave the room.

"If I expire," cried Vallency, firmly, "during the remainder of Davis's account, he shall proceed. In all his narrative he has not once mentioned my wife. Does then some hidden, some other dreadful calamity yet remain to be told?—I will hear it all—think you I am not a man?—and that I shall cowardly shrink from those awful trials which seem to await me?—Proceed, then, for I am not to be deceived."

There was a wild sort of resolution in the tone and manner of Vallency, that frightened Davis—he immediately replied, "the young Lady Vallency, with Rose, left this house the day after the news came, my Lord, about you, unknown to your mother. I heard the housekeeper say she was gone abroad after you; but she has not been heard of

since, and my Lady Dowager, who almost directly took to her bed, died in less than a fortnight afterwards.”

This intelligence was too much for the most collected fortitude to support. The excruciating pain of his wounds in his shoulder, united to his inward sufferings, were beyond what humanity could endure. That Angelica, young, beautiful, tender, delicate, should set every thing at defiance;—to follow him to the field of battle, expose herself to all its dangers, was an instance of heroic affection that touched him to the very soul; and in the present state of his feelings overthrew every finer faculty, and left him in that sort of state, which, without wholly suspending recollection, left, while every pulse was throbbing, a scattered sensibility that displayed itself in the most affecting delirium.

Davis advised the medical people about him, to send for Captain Owen, who, with all the warmth of his friendship, hastened to his bedside. Vallency was not in a state, alas! sufficiently collected to be informed his friend had accompanied Angelica to Deal, and it was judged best to delay all information until he was able to hear it. But Vallency, who had caught a glimpse of Captain Owen, before he could retire, eagerly grasped his hand, and while he gazed intently on him, as if he would fain recollect him, at length exclaimed in a pathetic tone, “you look gentle—you look kind—you resemble some one I have seen before.—Yes,” added he, reflecting a moment, “it was the friend of my soul; but he, like the rest, is gone from me—they are all, all lost!—Well may you frown upon me, (imagining he changed countenance,) for I killed her!—What a deed!—and such a mother!—Oh! it was indeed inhuman to break a heart that overflowed with tenderness; it was linked to me, not merely by the ties of nature, but those of the most perfect confidence and love. And was I monster enough to violate those—to drive her, in old age, and widowhood, from her home!—instead of cherishing her with my supporting arm, soothing her dying pillow, and wiping with filial tenderness, the tears of sorrow from her eyes. Well might the wound I inflicted prove fatal. It was a poisoned dagger that pierced her heart; it rankled there until it destroyed her. It was not the thunder of cannon, though hurled against her son, that appalled her.—No, no!—it was his disobedience!

And had she no one,” continued he, sighing heavily, “with her in her last moments, to ask a blessing for her son? Did Angelica desert her at so awful an hour for me, to whom she was wedded and alienated at once?—No parent’s smile dawned on the morning of our nuptials—no rejoicings awaited the marriage-day—it was an union sealed with my blood, and crowned with hostility. And are the desolating plains of war a place for the tender, the lovely Angelica?—Oh!” continued he, turning earnestly towards Captain Owen, and pressing his hand, “prove a ministering angel to me, and if amid the dreadful carnage you will seek a fair, forlorn, and lovely wanderer, bring her home. Why do you weep?” proceeded he, quickly. “Is my wife, too, numbered with the dead?—Would not one heart suffice to break, must her’s bleed also?—Heavenly shades of my mother, and my wife, now, oh now! hover round my couch, and with one benignant smile, light on my pillow, and in this eternal sleep, which I feel coming on, conduct my spirit, under your kindred wings, with your pure ones, to that heaven where ye already are.”

The composing medicine the physician had given Vallency, began to take effect, and he sunk into a deep and profound repose.

Captain Owen, greatly shocked and affected, by the scene he had just witnessed, suggested the plan of going to Deal in pursuit of Lady Vallency, persuaded the sight of

her, if prudently managed, would tend sooner than any thing, to accelerate his recovery. The plan was approved, and he immediately set out.

Captain Owen met Angelica half way on her road to London. He, with much prudence and tenderness, informed her of Vallency's safe arrival at home, that he was likely to recover, and then prepared her for the news of his mother's death, which he broke in the gentlest manner. The contending emotions, grief for her loss, and joy to find her husband really alive, had again nearly overwhelmed her; but Captain Owen's friendly attentions conduced to compose her mind, and some hours after they met, she was able to accompany him to London.

The delirium that had seized Vallency, had almost ceased from the medicine that had been given him, and on his again enquiring for his wife, it was judged right to prepare his mind for her reception, and he was told Captain Owen was actually set out to bring her home.

To describe the mournful joy of the meeting, were vain. The pallid and emaciated countenances of each—the sufferings they had endured—the dangers Vallency had in sharing, yet in some degree escaped—the heroism which Angelica had displayed—all conspired to fill their separate bosoms with sensations no pen can paint, and therefore imagination must conceive the scene, if such ever existed on the real stage of life.

CHAP. XIX.

Alas! by some degree of woe,
We every bliss must gain;
The heart can ne'er a transport know,
That never felt a pain.

LORD LYTTLETON.

VALLENCY soon recovered from the fever that had been caused from the fatigue of travelling, and the pain of his wounds, which slowly and gradually healed. The mental anguish he had endured by his private marriage with Angelica, together with the death of his mother, and the loss of Averley Park, were in a great measure softened, by the following letter, Mrs. Green, the housekeeper, delivered to him written, she said, by her lady, a few days previous to her death.

To the EARL *of* VALLENCY.

“I would fain, my darling, my only son, soften the shock I know you will sustain in my death; I would fain soften the sorrow you will feel, by giving you my tenderest blessing, ere I depart from hence. The filial duty, obedience, and confidence, which in every instance, save one, has regulated your conduct to me through life, will in that one instance recur with a pang of your heart, it is my wish not merely to mitigate, but heal; by assuring you that your noble, brave, and heroic services as a warrior, and a man, while they have struck a death blow to my frame, has elevated my spirit with a sentiment of proud admiration, such as I cannot describe. If it please heaven to prolong your noble career on earth, may you be blest and happy in the wife of your choice. Believe me, Vallency, on my knees, with all the fervency of a mother I put up that prayer. May you both taste the purest felicity here! You are each deserving of it. Angelica is worthy your fondest affection; for you marry not merely a rich heiress in her, but the most amiable and perfect of women.—May the assurance that I think so, crown your meeting with joy; and when you each with tears of reproach, think of me, wipe them away, in reflecting, it is not in the prime of life I am taken from you, but, mature in years, I sink into the grave.—Farewell!

“MATILDA VALLENCY.”

In about three months after Vallency's return home, he was so far recovered as to be able to set about the arrangements of his affairs. He gave up his final resignation to Averley Park. It was true he did it with some degree of remorse and regret; yet the possession of it was a comparative happiness, when put in competition with the felicity he tasted by its resignation. In the loss, however, of his personal property, he found his finances so limited, he next disposed of his magnificent house in Park-lane, and took a lesser one in Stanhope-street, May-fair. He like-wise hired an elegant, but small villa, on the banks of the Thames, in the vicinity of Richmond, as a summer residence for Angelica. She fitted it up with the utmost simplicity and taste. To it they retired, where, in the most domestic harmony and seclusion their time passed. Angelica saw no company, except a few select and amiable friends. She gave no dinners, went to no parties,

consequently had not any at home. So young, so beautiful, her gothic mode of life at first excited much wonder and conversation, among the gay circles of fashion; but when the wonder had ceased, she was allowed quietly to pursue a style of living which was entirely her present taste and choice. She knew, when she came of age, her ample fortune, would then require her mixing more in the world, and till then she declined being introduced at Court.

Her affairs did not stand still. The Marquis of Fitzalleyne took a very active part in bringing her title forward, and proving her identity, which was with little difficulty ascertained. Providentially, the Marquis met with a gentleman who came in the same ship from Bengal with the Earl of Aberville, who had not sailed in the one he intended, and it was believed he had, from his affairs not being so soon arranged as he expected. The gentleman, who knew Angelica again, and related the person of the Earl, his declining health in his voyage, proved so strong an evidence in her cause, the court gave a unanimous decision in Angelica's favour, and she was declared lawful heiress to the immense property and estates of her father, which amounted to thirty thousand pounds a year; but as she wanted a year and some months of coming of age, she still made Richmond her residence.

When she presented Vallency to her uncle and aunt, all displeasure at her former conduct died away, so highly did they approve her choice, so highly respect and admire the character of her husband.

Early in spring the Marquis and Marchioness returned to Ireland, whither their niece and Vallency accompanied them; and they spent some months with them in Dublin, which fine city Angelica was much delighted with.

The period of her minority swiftly glided away. So perfectly was Angelica satisfied with her present mode of life, while every comfort that heaven could afford, seemed her own, without any idle or worldly parade, she viewed with indifference the prospect of her future splendid establishment. She dreaded the cares, the anxieties, it might produce; and, happy beyond the general lot of women, she found riches by no means essential to promote it. The only pleasure she derived from the idea of her wealth, was, the satisfaction of restoring to Vallency that property he had so generously foregone for her sake. The remembrance of it, together with his mother's death, sometimes came over her mind like a dark cloud, which now and then obscures the brightest sunshine; but the tender affection of Vallency dispelled it, and when she thought of his mother, she endeavoured to emulate her virtues.

OF THE HEART.

CHAP. XX.

And she herself, as beauties sovereign queene,
And eke the graces seemed all to sing
Hymn to hymn, dancing all around,
Whilst freshest Flora with her ivy garland crown'd.
SPENCER'S FAIRY QUEEN.

At length the morning dawned that proclaimed Angelica heiress of Aberville Castle. On the claim being proved just, Mr. Carteret had immediately left it, and it had undergone a thorough repair. The very heavens seemed to smile on her. Not a cloud floated in the blue and brilliant sky. The sun shed its cheerful beams over the woods, the castle, and the park; every feathered songstress joined in the happy harmony of the day. The morning was ushered in by the ringing of bells from the adjacent village. The castle doors were thrown open at an early hour to two or three hundred tenants, and people. Music sounded in the ancient hall, and the children of the peasantry, all dressed in white, bore baskets of flowers on their arms, while a natural chaplet encircled their heads.

By the particular desire of the Marchioness of Fitzalleyne, Angelica did not come home until she was of age; and when her carriage arrived within sight of her castle, the tenants took off the horses and drew her to the gates, amid their blessings and rejoicings. What a scene of happy festivity presented itself to her eye as she passed through the park! Tents were scattered in various parts, where the peasantry were regaling themselves. Oxen and sheep were roasting, barrels of ale were flowing, and distant music, with shouts of joy, resounded in the air.—Angelica was conducted by her husband into a magnificent saloon, hung with garlands of flowers, where her family and select friends were waiting to receive her; consisting of the Marquis and Marchioness of Fitzalleyne, Lady Winfield, her married daughter, Lady Maria T——, with the Bishop, her husband, Captain Owen and his sister, with the worthy Mr. Evans, his wife and family; also Gerard and Agatha were in the number of those whose respect and diffidence would only mix with her superior domestics.

It was twelve o'clock when the castle received its lovely owner. She entered the saloon, where an elegant *dejunée* was set out, attired in a simple morning dress of the finest muslin, and bearing in her arms an infant cherub of a girl, whose redundance of fair hair a beautiful young peasant requested leave to encircle with a wreath, in honour of the day, while on her knee she presented one to the little Lady Matilda's mother, who graciously received it.

The breakfast was succeeded by a concert, after which Angelica withdrew to dress in honour of her guests, as the dinner was to be followed by a ball, for all the neighbouring nobility and gentry who chose to honour the castle with their presence. A long table was spread for those who like to dine in the ancient hall, while the banqueting room, no longer deserted and gloomy, was occupied by Angelica and her guests. Vallency gazed with transport and delight on his wife, as he led her once more to the saloon. But beautiful as she appeared in her robe of silver muslin, and the strings of

Diamonds that encircled her hair, it was not her dazzling exterior, nor the rich heiress of Aberville Castle, who excited his admiration.—No, it was her condescending sweetness, blended with a becoming dignity, her amiable humility, that charmed him; and that while she with a grace, all her own, went through the honours of the day, she was not weak enough to be vainly elevated by all the adulation she received.

The ball in the evening was crowded with company. People had come miles to be present on the occasion; and the castle was kept open for a week with ancient hospitality. Money was distributed to those who wanted, with liberality; every stranger who came was admitted, and were entertained worthy the noble owners. None went away that wished not to return again. The praise, the blessings, the admiration Angelica received, would have over-thrown even the firmest mind, but hers was grateful, not elevated by it. Her happiness centered where it ought, in her husband and child.

Chawton House Library

OF THE HEART.

CHAP. XXI.

And all the tenor of their after life
No day discolour'd by domestic strife,
No jealousy, but mutual truth believ'd
Secure repose, and kindness undeceiv'd;
Thus heaven, beyond the compass of his thought,
Sent him the blessing he so dearly bought.

DRYDEN.

When the festivities at the castle ceased, Angelica began to set about her domestic arrangements, determined to renew all the comfort and hospitality which had reigned there in former ages. She established her household on such a plan, as to render the lives of her domestics easy, by its order and regularity. From her excellent governess she had been taught, by such a plan alone, she secured respect and value from those around her. She made Mrs. Martin happy, by taking her again into the service of her family, who with tears of joy came to the young Countess. Angelica next visited the depopulated hamlet of Aberville. She gave orders for the buildings that were not quite fallen into decay to be repaired, and an extent of new ones to be added. She filled them with the feeble, and aged. She established a school for the children, over whom she placed a proper instructress. She cloathed them all in a simple habit of brown stuff, she employed them in working for those old people who were become helpless. She had them taught to read and write, and on the anniversary day of this establishment, when they all dined at the castle, she rewarded those who had done best. Angelica presented the excellent Mr. Evans with a living, not far distant from the castle, and thither he retired with his happy family; and she likewise made him her domestic chaplain. Her benevolent friends, the cherishers of her infant years, were gratefully remembered by her. She could not prevail on them to leave their quiet little dwelling in Hampshire, but she settled an handsome annuity on them, and continually sent them valuable presents.

The amiable Lady Winfield, bore with Christian fortitude, the sorrows that tintured her after-life, in the unworthiness of her daughter, Lady Alecia Verral, who took up her residence with the fashionable Mrs. Bertault; whose parties were the most dissipated, whose tables the most crowded with gamesters of any private house in town; and it is most probable their old age was ended in sickness, care, and remorse; which sooner or later will pursue the giddy, and depraved.

Lord Devaynes disappointed in allying himself to Angelica, married a rich, ugly old maid, who only lived to torment him.

Mr. Hamlyn was fortunate in being united to a woman no less pleasing than lovely; and Angelica had the satisfaction of forming a lasting intimacy and friend-ship with this amiable couple.

Captain Owen still retained his freedom. The goodness of his heart, and the steadiness of his regard for Vallency, had long rendered him a valued and beloved friend in Vallency's domestic circle, where all his vacant time was spent. Angelica's invitation

to his sister, at the castle, where she passed some months, gratified her extremely; conscious her rude conduct on her departure from Wales, did not merit such kindness.

The future years of Vallency and Angelica were spent in as much domestic retirement as their elevated rank, and magnificent fortune permitted.—They mixed in the society of the great world two or three months only in the year. And when the public station of Vallency called him away from his beloved wife, she retired to Aberville Castle with her lovely young family, whose education she superintended.—She had not, indeed, a Mrs. Devereux to instruct them, but her sentiments, her virtues were engraven on her heart, and she instilled them into her children. Angelica tasted as large a portion of happiness as is the share of any individual: but to acknowledge her lot was untinctured by sorrow, would be placing her beyond the ordination of Providence. She lost her eldest son at that engaging age when every hope was reaching her fondest promise. But she had been taught to bow with submission to the dispensations of heaven, and with pious resignation she pressed to her heart her remaining children, grateful they were spared her. She had, too, married a *soldier*. The rank Vallency held in the army was too elevated to make him seek a retreat. The claims of his country he held sacred, consequently there were moments when Angelica deeply felt

“That life’s bright sun is dimm’d by clouded views,
“And who have most to love, have most to lose.”

H. MORE.

And although she anticipated not sorrow, she dreaded, and had experienced the sad reality of it. Every temporary absence of Vallency’s on duty, created a vacuum in her heart. But to part with him for ever, heaven spared her the agony of experiencing; and as she had fondly wished, “*they not only passed the spring-time of life together, but that declining season when the yellow leaf is illumined by the setting sun.*”

THE END.