

TALES OF TO-DAY.

BY

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AUTHOR OF

“ARIEL”—“ELLA ST. LAURENCE”—

“WANDERINGS OF FANCY,—

&c. &c. &c.

IN THREE VOLUMES.

VOL. II.

CONTAINING

CONTINUATION OF

THE HEIRESS OF RIVERSDALE

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THE

HEIRESS OF RIVERSDALE.

CHAP. XX.

A RECOGNITION.

THUS passed several months of seclusion ; Eloisa's mind as well as frame daily gained strength—she had long ceased to regret the scenes of pleasure to which she had once devoted her time and thoughts, but there was one subject she had not ceased to regret ; for never did the remembrance of Henry Percival occur, without the bitter reflection, that by her own conduct she had lost ~~his~~ esteem. His

character had risen higher than ever in her estimation, since she had become sensible of the faults in her own.

But the subject was prohibited—never even to Rosalba, whose faultless bosom was the chosen repository of her most secret thoughts, from her conviction of her tried worth—never even with her, would she converse on this early object of her first affection, for that he was lost to her for ever she was convinced; and to conquer the weakness that still lingered in her heart, so far as to prevent its effect on her present conduct, was her firm resolve.

“No,” thought she, “the virtues of the great and good Lord Avonmore I may, and ever shall love and revere, but the affection, the attachment of Henry Percival I must learn to forget.”

The newspapers of the day were a luxury Eloisa still permitted herself, and by this means they learned the elevation to which the wisdom and integrity of Percival had led him. The Parliamentary de-

bates gave often specimens of his persuasive eloquence, that went to the heart of Eloisa, and that he occupied a high post in the Ministry soon reached them. His popularity was daily increasing, and his character was the theme of universal admiration.

Often in their charitable rambles, had Eloisa and Rosalba remarked the high towers of a nobleman or gentleman's seat, the only dwelling superior to the poor huts of the peasantry in the vicinity of the castle; it appeared to be about the distance of a mile, and it was some time before Eloisa recollected to enquire of old Hubert, who was its possessor; but how greatly was she surprised when she heard, that it had descended within a few years to General Morland, from a distant branch of his family. Lady Evelina had been resident there during the time the General was abroad with the army, and her humanity of disposition had made her name revered in the neighbourhood.

Letters from Mr. Godfrey, in a few weeks after they had been settled at Llangmoryn, had conveyed to Eloisa intelligence the most satisfactory. Her active friend had visited Riversdale; he had in the course of business found occasion to apply to Mr. Stanley, who, generously discarding all resentment towards Eloisa, had lent Mr. Godfrey his ready aid in her affairs. Eversley had been overtaken, seized, and compelled to surrender great part of her property; but the complicated state of her affairs in general, from neglect and villany, he said, would render it a work of time to arrange them.

This Eloisa was not inclined to regret; she wished not to return to the gay world, and she had soon another subject to think and to hear of. General Morland's family arrived at Mount Conrad, and the servants at Llangmoryn were eager to relate the event; but not from her own domestics only did she learn the intelligence—in every cottage to which her humanity led

her, she was destined to hear the praises of Lady Evelina Morland, her extensive benevolence, her winning affability, her exemplary piety, were the themes of every tongue; and this amiable woman was the cherished friend of Lord Avonmore.

Rosalba's fervent imagination delighted to dwell on the hope, of seeing Eloisa introduced to this charming woman, but her friend seemed to shrink from the idea.—

“Oh no, Rosalba,” said she, “Lady Evelina must have learned to despise me. The world has, doubtless, exaggerated every error, and a character so faultless as hers, would revolt from intimacy with one so borne down with frailties, so weak, so erring.”

Eloisa, however, knew little of Lady Evelina, as the event proved; and soon was she compelled to add her testimony to that of the voice of report, which so loudly proclaimed her Ladyship's worth. The inhabitants of one humble cottage in the

valley, had been for some time the pensioners of Eloisa ; an aged peasant and his infirm wife, with a married daughter in a lingering decline, and five infant grandchildren, in extreme penury, had strongly excited her compassion. The unfortunate young woman had reached the last stage of her melancholy disease, and Eloisa visited the abode of sickness on a fine morning in the summer, just at the moment when a frightful paroxysm induced the terrified relatives to believe her in the action of dissolution.

By the active exertions of Eloisa, she was recovered from a fainting fit, and while she was in the act of supporting the head of the poor invalid, and gently exhorting the afflicted parents to composure and resignation, Rosalba was nursing the baby, and drying the tears of the terrified children. Just at this period a stranger entered the hut ; it was a female so plainly dressed, that in England she would scarce-

ly have been recognised as belonging to the higher class.

Perceiving the general distress, and the need of assistance to aid Eloisa in her humane exertions, she pressed forward, assisted in administering the restoratives, giving the invalid air, and keeping the children from the bed of their dying mother, which in spite of Rosalba's entreaties they clamorously thronged. Inattentive to aught but her humane office, it was not till the poor invalid began to revive, that Eloisa perceived she was indebted to the assistance of a stranger, and raising her eyes they fixed on a soft, interesting countenance, which though in part shaded by a veil, it immediately occurred to her was not wholly unknown; but the confused recollection she retained of the person of Lady Evelina Morland, in the transient interview she had formerly had with her, was too imperfect to recognize her in the person of the stranger; but her Ladyship waited not for an introduction.

“ I have, I believe,” said she, “ the pleasure of seeing Miss Riversdale. You will pardon this unintroductory address, but we are neighbours, and here, if any where, we may surely dispense with the forms of etiquette.”

Eloisa answered with the sweetness natural to her, and expressed the strong desire she had long felt, for an opportunity to acknowledge, in person, the obligations she owed to her attention. Lady Evelina would not suffer her to allude to the subject.

“ You do not know, Miss Riversdale,” said she, “ that you have a very sincere admirer now at Mount Conrad.” Eloisa blushed deeply, though she scarcely knew why, and Lady Evelina added: “ I assure you, General Morland received an impression in your favour, the first time he ever beheld you, which continues unabated. Consider it then, pray, as a great effort of magnanimity in his wife, to say, that not even he will receive you there with greater

pleasure than I shall ; but we will together solicit your company, if you will receive a morning visit from us to-morrow."

Eloisa most readily assured her, that she should think herself highly honoured, and she returned home enchanted with Lady Evelina, and too happy in reflecting that now, at least, her choice of associates would not be disapproved by Lord Avonmore.

On the following morning the General and his Lady paid their promised visit ;— the former told Eloisa, that the pleasure of her society was not wholly unexpected, for that in all the letters of Lady Evelina's relation, Mr. Godfrey, he had spoken much of her, and had particularly mentioned her present residence. Gradually, the intimacy between the possessors of the adjoining estates became greater.

In Lady Evelina Morland, Eloisa found realized all her most sanguine ideas of perfection. Neither romantic nor sententious, neither violently elated nor fantastically

depressed, her Ladyship's manners and temper preserved that happy medium, so calculated to produce her own felicity and that of all around her. She soon discovered the extreme susceptibility of Eloisa's disposition, she saw her rare endowments, and the superiority of her talents and understanding, and she felt an interest in her fate, sufficiently powerful to induce her to exertions, that might tend to a restoration of the peace which self-reproach and disappointment at present estranged from her bosom.

By degrees, she obtained the entire confidence of Eloisa relative to her own affairs; and having, in the absence of the General, accustomed herself to take an active part in the management of her own estate, she was enabled to advise with and assist her. A letter from her cousin, Mrs. Dorien, about this time contributed much to the revived comfort of Eloisa; the excellent Harriet reproached her severely for not informing her of her late distresses,

which on their arrival at Worthington Hall she had heard from Mr. Stanley.

“ How I was shocked,” she added, “ I need not I am sure tell you. Oh my beloved Eloisa! what misery has that vile Lady Harcourt caused you! But for her pernicious counsels, never would you have plunged into errors so widely extensive in their consequences; but Mr. Stanley assures me, that your affairs will be all finally arranged to your satisfaction, and that chiefly by the interference of a friend, whom I must not, I find, name. Our good Mr. Godfrey, I understand, has also been an able and valuable assistant. Droop not then, my best Eloisa—your really valuable friends are as much so as ever;—think no more of the despicable set whom you formerly honoured with that appellation.

“ Mr. Dorien bids me say, that his best services are yours; he has already discussed your affairs with your other active agents here, so that no doubt all will be

right at last.—You will wish me to say something of myself and my *cara sposa*; I shall therefore only add, that we both appear as happy as, considering the innumerable blessings we enjoy, we ought to be; but observe, it is a rational sort of happiness, not the love-sick nonsense of a boy and girl. Come and witness it, my beloved Eloisa, for though I boast of my felicity to you, who have always known the few secrets I ever had, I may acknowledge that it will not be quite perfect, till you are once more reinstated at Riversdale, and Oh with what joy will you be received there by

Your fondly attached

HARRIET DORIEN.

“Who then is it,” thought Eloisa, “who thus lends his active aid in my affairs?”—her heart suggested a name her lips could not utter, and the hope that she was right was a balm to the wounds of her self-reproving mind.

An intimacy founded on congeniality of tastes, pursuits, and disposition, was rapidly formed between Eloisa and Lady Evelina Morland. Rosalba having been present at their first interview, could not avoid being also known to her Ladyship, though the same dislike to being introduced to society still manifested itself, even in this remote part of the world, in the deportment of the mysterious Italian. Lady Evelina, waving all ceremony, frequently visited them, and one morning in the absence of Rosalba, after enquiring for her—

“ You must excuse me, my dear Miss Riversdale,” said she, “ if I am solicitous to make some enquiries of you respecting this interesting foreigner. That she is a dependant on your benevolence I hear from the voice of report, propagated probably by your servants, but her appearance is so extraordinary, her manners so superior, and every look and action so loudly

proclaim high birth and education, that I cannot help feeling more than usually interested on the subject."

"And such did she appear to me, and such were my feelings," said Eloisa, "when in penury and illness I first beheld her." She then succinctly related her first meeting with, and subsequent adoption of Rosalba, to which Lady Evelina listened with undivided attention.

"She strongly reminds me," said she, "of the family of Altieri at Florence. They are all remarkable for a particular cast of countenance, and the Signora's features appear to me strongly to resemble those of the Marchese Altieri. Pray," added she, "did your affianced friend St. Edmond, never mention in his letters any thing relating to the family of Altieri?"

"Never," said Eloisa; "I do not recollect having till now ever heard the name."

"He knew them well," said Evelina;

“ but it is now too late for conjectures— we will therefore drop the subject,” and she instantly reverted to some other topic; but her words dwelt on the memory of *Eloisa*, and the first time she was alone with *Rosalba*, on something occurring in conversation relative to *Italy*, she could not forbear saying—

“ There is a question, my dear *Rosalba*, which I have often wished, but scarcely dared to ask you ; do not however answer me, if it should revive in your mind aught painful to recollect. Yct, I acknowledge some words that this morning escaped *Lady Evelina*, by reminding me of my early engagement, have raised again an often suppressed curiosity to ask, whether during that period of your life passed in *Italy*, chance ever personally or by report brought the family of *St. Edmond* to your knowledge ?”

She ceased, and for a moment *Rosalba* was profoundly silent, then turning her

dark eyes on Eloisa, in a tone of strong emotion she said—

“ You once promised me, never to enquire aught relating to myself or my former life. Oh, generously pardon me for reminding you of that promise, and never again may any subject be introduced, on which I cannot, dare not give you full and entire satisfaction.”

“ Be satisfied,” said Eloisa, “ that you shall never be urged to be more explicit on any subject, than your own inclinations prompt you to be, and forgive, my dear Rosalba, the incautious curiosity I have displayed.”

“ Ah, it is I who ought to solicit forgiveness,” said Rosalba, “ for it is I who am the offender ; but dire necessity alone impels me to err against the dictates of a heart, overflowing with gratitude.”

Here the conversation terminated, with a resolution on Eloisa’s part never again to revert to a topic, that from some inexpli-

cable reason, seemed to give such pain to her more than ever, dear Rosalba.

Often had Eloisa felt a strong curiosity to know the particulars relating to St. Edmond; and as she learned from Lady Evelina's words she was acquainted with them, in their next interview she reverted to the subject.

“Though I was a considerable time at Florence,” said her Ladyship, “I never knew Mr. St. Edmond personally, but I have frequently seen the Marchese Altieri, at whose house I know he was intimate.—If you are however desirous to know his history, and it is certainly natural that you should wish to learn the circumstances relating to a man, with whom you were to be so nearly connected, I have no doubt I can procure you the information you wish from his friend the Chevalier Morlini.

“Rely on it, whenever an opportunity occurs I will do it. I rather think his

short life was marked with events, produced by his singularly romantic disposition."

Eloisa rejoiced in having obtained a promise to know particulars, which had often occupied her thoughts.

CHAP. XXI.

RESTORED PEACE.

“MORLINI,” said Lord Avonmore, as they sat at breakfast a few days after the prorogation of parliament, “I have a great mind to indulge your wish of making a tour through some part of our island. I must relax a little. What say you to a run over the Welch mountains?”

The Chevalier was charmed with the scheme; it was immediately put in execution; they travelled *incog*, and were thus enabled to enjoy the privacy both so much delighted in. The Chevalier, who, ever since the accident of Eloisa had made her an inmate of Lord Avonmore’s house, had been the confidant of his thoughts on

that subject, had been most anxious to promote the felicity of his friend, by a union with the object of his early attachment.

Of Eloisa, he had from his first knowledge of her judged correctly; he had been an attentive though a silent observer, and he was assured that the passion of his friend was returned. Her errors, he was convinced, were not those of the heart, and her striking talents and amiable manners had filled him with the warmest admiration. He knew she had sought a retreat in Wales, and he hoped, and began to believe, that she was the magnet who attracted Lord Avonmore there. He could not forbear alluding to her residence near Mount Conrad.

“ You guess the object of our excursion Morlini,” said his Lordship, “ and I acknowledge I go with a hope, that it may prove successful, and restore long estranged peace to my bosom. Miss Riversdale is resident in the immediate neighbourhood

of Lady Evelina Morland, and from a passage in one of the General's letters, I suspect they are become acquainted. On Lady Evelina's judgment I can rely. Oh! should I find that late events have had a salutary effect on a mind by nature formed noble and amiable, happiness may yet be mine;—of the dreaded reverse, I cannot, dare not think."

The arrival of the Earl and his friend at Mount Conrad, was hailed with sincere pleasure by the Morland family; but Lord Avonmore's mind was occupied by one subject, and he longed, yet dreaded to introduce it. It did not occur till after dinner, when as the Chevalier was surveying the mountainous prospect from the window, and remarking the insulated situation of the mansion, from which no human habitation was discernible, her Ladyship said—

"But pray, Signor, do not suppose we are quite excluded from all society; we

have human habitations and human beings very near us, I assure you."

"Yes," said the General, "and rational beings too, and not only rational but beautiful. Why Evelina," he added, turning to his lady, "we have not yet told Avonmore of our acquisition at Llangmoryn Castle."

"Ah, my Lord!" said Lady Evelina, casting a penetrating look at the Earl, "your old friend Miss Riversdale is our nearest neighbour, and I think I may add our friend, for a few months have created an intimacy which I trust will be permanent."

"Yes," said the General, "she captivated me in town, and she has completed her conquest here."

Lord Avonmore listened anxiously to the eulogium that followed from Lady Evelina, and the delighted Chevalier was transported with joy. Little did Eloisa conceive who was an inmate of Mount Conrad. A long walk with Rosalba had

fatigued her, and she had seated herself at the piano, in the dusk of the evening, with no light but that the window admitted, when the sound of voices reached her.— Not expecting, at such an hour, that the Morland family would visit her, and having no other visitors to expect, she continued to play on; Rosalba had left the room, and she concluded the piece she was singing, before she discovered that she had auditors.

Lady Evelina's voice first aroused her, and startled, she arose to receive her; she perceived several other figures, but the dusky hue of twilight would not allow her to distinguish their persons.

“ I bring you, my dear Miss Riversdale,” said she, “ in a visitor of mine, an old friend who is desirous of paying his devoirs to our fair recluse of Llangmoryn.”

At the name of Lord Avonmore, the varying tint of Eloisa's complexion would have betrayed her confusion, had not the friendly twilight concealed her agitation.

To Lady Evelina, who held her hand, it was sufficiently revealed, and she kindly gave her an opportunity of recovering her composure, by requesting her not to order lights immediately. When they were seated, a lively conversation ensued. Eloisa welcomed the Chevalier with unfeigned pleasure, for with her he had always been a favourite.

They prolonged their visit till the moon arose to light them on their return, and Lady Evelina obliged Eloisa to promise to spend the following day at the Mount.—With an agitated heart Eloisa prepared for her visit, but no solicitation could prevail on Rosalba to accompany her, and Eloisa saw with regret, that a gloom the most extraordinary had overspread the countenance of her companion. At times the wild stare, which had more than once before terrified her, betrayed the mind of Rosalba to be ill at ease; and when dressed for her visit, Eloisa bade her adieu, she grasped the hand presented to her with eagerness,

and, pressing it to her lips, and to her heart, exclaimed—"Go, dearest friend! go and enjoy the happiness you merit; but never once think on Rosalba. Oh! let not one sigh for her, intrude on the felicity marked out for you!

Then, shuddering convulsively, she dropped the hand she held, and fled to her chamber with frightful precipitation. The surprize and alarm of Eloisa, almost induced her to remain at home, so anxious was she to soothe and calm the perturbed spirits of her friend; but, ignorant of the cause of her disquietude, and well knowing, that, when in such a frame of mind, she invariably sought solitude, and, not even from her, would admit of intrusion, she only waited to be assured, that she was quiet in her apartment; and then, with a mind not a little depressed, by the strange perturbation of her *protégée*, she set out to Mount Conrad.

The promise of secrecy, that Rosalba had, more than once, extorted from her,

only prevented her relating the foregoing scene to Lady Evelina. She felt how greatly she wished for some advice, relative to the extraordinary Italian; and she determined to return, at an early hour, to satisfy herself of her restored composure. Within a short distance of Mount Conrad, she met the General and the Chevalier, coming to meet her. They conducted her to the saloon, where she found Lord Avonmore and Lady Evelina, in close conversation.

To his Lordship, even Eloisa's entrance was an intrusion; for it related to herself. He had opened his whole heart to his friend, who, much as she had wished for his alliance with her niece, was too anxious for his happiness, and too sincerely the friend of Eloisa, to withhold her real sentiments. She spoke of Miss Riversdale in the highest terms.

“The confidential communications, with which she has honoured me,” said her Ladyship, “have convinced me, that

late incidents have had such an effect, as they could only have on a mind and understanding of the first class.

Sir William Riversdale, though a good man, appears to have had no great knowledge of the human heart. To contract his daughter to a man she had never seen, and to rear her in habits of intimacy with *another*, seems to have been a plan, precisely calculated to disappoint his wishes.

“ At a time when she most needed a mother’s care, she seems to have experienced most neglect; and, with no kind monitor, but an adviser the most fascinating and dangerous, that beauty and talents, such as she possesses, should have led her into error, could only be expected by those, who know the strong attractions of the world to youth and inexperience. Let me, however, add, that the resolution and firmness she has displayed, in quitting, voluntarily, the scene of temptation, with her virtuous efforts to retrieve her past faults, submitting to deprivation

and self-denial for the better regulation of her affairs, discovers an innate superiority which no misfortune can degrade."

The glowing countenance of Lord Avonmore spoke his rapture, and Eloisa at once regained her full empire over his heart.

"To you, my dear Lady Evelina," said he, "I shall leave the opening of my cause. She has given you her confidence on other subjects, you must solicit it on this, the most important; and you must ascertain, from your own observations, whether she actually retains, for her early companion, such sentiments as will form the future felicity of us both."

"It is certainly the first commission of the kind, with which I was ever entrusted," said Lady Evelina, laughing; "but, as I sincerely wish success to the cause, my best endeavours shall be exerted in your behalf."

After dinner, when alone with Eloisa, she introduced the subject of Lord Avon-

more ; she spoke of his high qualities, the consideration and eminence to which they had led him, and she carefully marked the effect of her words on her young auditor.

“ We have,” said she, “ given the greatest proof of the excellent opinion we have of him, by our wish to see him united to our dear Henrietta ; but it was not to be ; and we have now ceased to hope for such an event.”

The heightened colour, the glistening eyes of Eloisa, betrayed her emotion ; but she could not utter a syllable. Conscious error induced her to fancy, it was now impossible to raise her expectation so high, and the reflection overpowered her with sadness.

Lady Evelina saw her confusion, but, forbearing to notice it, reverted to the active part his Lordship had taken in the regulation of her (Miss Riversdale’s) affairs.

“ You are, indeed,” said she, “ under no small obligations to him, I find, for

his exertions in your cause." Feeling now compelled to speak—"O I am sensible," she cried, "too sensible of all I owe him. My liberation from an early and forced engagement, could not have been ascertained, to my satisfaction, but for his generous interference."

Lady Evelina smiled.—"But did it never occur to you, my dear Eloisa," said she, "that his generosity was not wholly disinterested? Did you never," she added, archly, "suspect, that he had an inclination to supplant St. Edmond himself?"

Eloisa hid her blushing face with her hand; and, bursting into tears, exclaimed, "Oh! Lady Evelina, do not lower me in my own estimation, still more than I am already fallen, by such suggestions. If those were once Lord Avonmore's sentiments, my own conduct must, long since, have obliterated them."

Lady Evelina was shocked that she had caused such agitation; but, ere she could

answer, the subject of their conversation was himself at the feet of Eloisa.

“ No, beloved friend of my earliest years,” said he, “ never, never can the attachment I imbibed, in the loved shades of Riversdale, be obliterated; it survived even the extinction of hope, and now anxiously awaits your own decision.”

“ Oh Lady Evelina!” exclaimed Eloisa, reproachfully.

“ Let me, my dear Miss Riversdale, exculpate myself,” said Lady Evelina.—“ For your mutual happiness, I was anxious to ascertain your real sentiments; but, believe me, I by no means planned this impetuous greeting; and, with all the fine qualities with which, in our partiality, we have invested his Lordship, I find he possesses no small portion of the impatience of human nature. Be advised, dear Eloisa, and punish him for his impertinent intrusion, by all the harsh things you can find in your heart to say to him.” And,

so saying, she laughingly quitted the apartment.

Left to plead his own cause, he found Eloisa not inexorable. Grateful for that warm attachment, which not even conduct he so wholly disapproved could efface, which had led him to the most strenuous exertions, when uncertain whether she regarded him with even the friendship of her childhood, how could she resist making the acknowledgment he solicited, that it had never ceased to be mutual?—But scarcely had the avowal escaped her lips, ere the recollection of her diminished fortune, her deranged affairs, recurred to her memory, and, with an altered countenance, she cried—

“ But Oh, my Lord! how can I, almost a bankrupt in fortune, in fame, how can I hope or expect”—He hastily interrupted her—

“ Only suffer me to hasten the period when your interest will be mine, and leave to me the arrangements to which you

allude. All is in a fair way of being completed. The united efforts of my good friends, Mr. Godfrey and Mr. Stanley, have happily succeeded."

"And your Lordship,"—added Eloisa.

"I thought our candid Harriet could not keep a secret," said he, smiling; "but it is now no matter. So deeply interested, I had little merit in any exertions I was induced to make in your cause. Your house in town is disposed of; but your villa, and the monuments of your taste each contained, I could not resolve should be dispersed; they are all mine, and will, I trust, once more be your's."

When joined by the rest of the party, the significant looks of the General rather disconcerted Eloisa; but Lady Evelina's gaiety relieved her; and when, at an early hour, she pleaded Rosalba's indisposition, as a motive for returning home, the General, taking her hand, said—

"If Lord Avonmore had not been an old friend, I should have resented his mo-

nopoly of your society to-day ; but, of course, you had the sports and amusements of childhood to descant upon ; or, as he has a fertile genius, he might possibly hit upon some *other* subject, as interesting ; so, I believe, I must forgive him, and suffer him to escort you home."

In a frame of mind the most enviable, Eloisa reached Llangmoryn Castle, and was proceeding to make anxious enquiries for Rosalba, when she was met by Norman, who informed her, that the Signora had quitted the Castle very soon after her departure, and was not returned. Inexpressibly alarmed, she ordered an immediate search, but it was in vain : Rosalba had completely disappeared, and no traces of her could be discovered. In indescribable anguish, Eloisa visited her apartment. Here, on her dressing-table, appeared a folded paper, directed to herself. She unclosed it, and read these words :

“ To Miss Riversdale.

“ A strange fate pursues me ; I must leave you ; I must fly from you,—accuse me not of ingratitude, it is far from my heart, and Oh ! I conjure you, seek not to discover my retreat, and still I adjure you, preserve my secret inviolate. Should the period ever arrive, in which I dare to reappear, believe that with joy, with transport, you shall again behold

ROSALBA.”

Eliosa doubted not, on re-perusing this epistle, that her desertion had been decided on, when she appeared so agitated in the morning—greatly shocked, that she was alone and unattended, in a country where she was a stranger, she felt extreme uneasiness for her fate, but the injunction of secrecy, and her own promise so repeatedly given to preserve it, still induced her not to entrust Lady Evelina, with the mysterious conduct of her *protégée*. When her absence was observed,

therefore she evaded naming the cause, and informed the servants that the Signora had satisfied her, by the note she had left, as to the reason of her departure.

The loneliness of her mountain castle would now have been severely felt had not her now happy prospects given her a subject to meditate on that employed all her thoughts.

Lady Evelina reminded by the Chevaliers's presence of her promise to enquire for Eloisa particulars relative to St. Edmond ; solicited him to give them in writing. He presented them himself to Eloisa.

“ They are all,” said he “ now necessary to be known of my friend, and may account for what may have appeared mysterious in his conduct, to a family with whom he once expected to be allied.”

Eloisa read the memoir alone—it was as follows:—

“ Till the death of St. Edmond's father my friend's life had been passed princi-

pally at Florence, at the palace inhabited by the noble family of Altieri. Reared in total ignorance of the engagement formed for him in England, he had contracted an early attachment which marked his short and eventful existence, with unmitigated suffering. The beautiful and accomplished daughter, of the Marchese Altieri was the friend of his childhood and youth; devoted to each other, no dread of the future intruded, because both were alike ignorant that there existed any obstacle to their union.

“The mother of St. Edmond had with her last breath requested, that her son might be educated in the faith she professed, and her husband unable to resist her supplications, had acquiesced, thus every thing conspired to promote a passion which was not even suspected by the friends of St. Edmond. The Signora Altieri as she approached maturity, became celebrated for her beauty and talents, and the first of the Italian nobility

sought her alliance, but she was insensible to the allurements of grandeur, and lived only for St. Edmond.

He happy in her society, feared no coming storm, till it burst on his head; recalled from Florence by the indisposition of his father, he was at once made sensible of the sacrifice required of him, his English engagement was made known to him by his parent, on his death bed; how in the awful hour of near approaching dissolution could he declare his own inability to fulfil it? The fatal moment rapidly approached, and the emotion, the hesitation, the anguish, of St. Edmond was attributed to grief for the loss he was about to sustain. When death had deprived him of a father, he still hesitated how to act, his health was injured by the state of his mind, and an evasive letter to Sir William Riversdale, he fancied, would give him time to deliberate, but in the mean time intelligence of his

forced engagement had reached the Palace Altieri.

The distress of the Signora had betrayed all, and the Marchese, doating on his daughter, insisted on an explanation from St. Edmond. With high ideas of his own rank and consequence, the Marchese was a man of strict honour, he had lost his wife soon after the birth of the Signora, and in this, his only child, were placed his fondest hopes—he wished to see her united to some family of birth and wealth equal to his own, but the early attachment she had manifested to St. Edmond, though as yet unsanctioned by him, would have induced him to yield his own inclinations to her happiness, especially as he was perhaps a too fervent admirer of St. Edmond himself.

A candid acknowledgement from St. Edmond, revealed his actual situation, to the Marchese, but it was accompanied with a solemn protestation, that he would

never fulfil his forced engagement, unless absolutely compelled to it.

“And will not honour compel you to fulfil it?” said the Marchese; “ah, Chevalier! what stronger tie can bind such a heart as yours to the performance?”

“I will travel,” answered St. Edmond, “I will at least take time to deliberate.”

“No,” said the Marchese, “my daughter shall never be the means of inducing you to disobedience, to entailing on your conscience endless remorse. Go Chevalier, ratify your early contract, and find your happiness in the approbation of your own heart.”

Deaf to all farther solicitations, the Marchese obliged his daughter to retire into a Convent, till St. Edmond had quitted Florence, but he went not as they imagined to England; he merely made a journey to his friend Morlini, who resided at some distance from that city; to consult with him on what measures he should

adopt. Here he learned the death of the Marchese Altieri, and the succession of his brother, to his title, and the guardianship of his daughter.

Unlike his predecessor, the present Marchese was proud, ambitious, and unfeeling; he had children of his own, and intelligence soon reached him, that he had destined the Signora Altieri for his eldest son, the heir of his house; but though St. Edmond was lost to her—she had resisted all the solicitations of her uncle, and no persuasions could induce her to leave the seclusion of the convent. A new persecution was now commenced, she was told she should be compelled, either to take the veil, or to marry the Heir of Altieri, lest she should be led to dishonour her noble ancestry, by an inferior alliance.

The Marchese had discovered that St. Edmond was yet in Italy, and he was in hourly apprehension lest his niece, should escape his vigilance, but he knew not the

mind of Celina, she was too well convinced the honour of St. Edmond was pledged to the English Lady, to allow him for her sake to incur the danger of its forfeiture. She wrote to him, to this effect, in answer to an address which he had found means to convey to her in the convent. The distraction of St. Edmond's mind brought on some constitutional complaints; he left Florence, to return to it no more, but ere his disorder had terminated fatally, the heart-rending intelligence, of the total disappearance of the Signora Altieri, was conveyed to him.

Wearied, it was supposed, by the persecution of her relations she had quitted the convent and no information of her route could be procured. Perhaps this blow accelerated the fate of St. Edmond; every search and enquiry had been diligently made, by his friend, the Chevalier Morlini, but all proved alike unavailing, and the retreat of the Signora was as yet

undiscovered, when news of St. Edmond's death reached Florence.

It was generally believed that she had been conveyed to some more secure confinement by her ambitious Uncle, in order to elude the pursuit of St. Edmond, and prevent all farther communication; but if it were so it remains unknown. The Signora Altieri had not reappeared in the circles of Florence, of which she was once the brightest ornament, when Lord Avonmore and the Chevalier Morlini quitted Italy, and she, perhaps, like her hapless lover, was the victim to the ambition and prejudices of her family.

Eloisa perused the foregoing narrative with deep interest, it gave birth to a suspicion, which yet filled her mind when the Chevalier appeared; he was sent on a commission by Lady Evelina, but seeing Eloisa engaged in the memoir of his friend he begged he might not interrupt her, and as he stood by the instrument, he looked over some music, that laid scattered upon

it. Suddenly he started, and a gastly paleness was diffused over his countenance as he exclaimed—

“ Whose writing is this ?” holding in his hand an Italian song written and composed by Rosalba. Eloisa answered that it was the writing of the Lady who had lately left her.

“ Lady,” said he in a hollow voice, “ The Signora Altieri then is in England, and under your protection. This confirmation alone was wanting, from Lady Evelina Morland I have heard the rest.”

The suspicion had certainly occurred to Eloisa, as she read the narrative of St. Edmond, from the Chevalier’s words, she had no longer a doubt that Rosalba was the Signora Altieri. The interest and agitation which the Chevalier manifested, led her to believe he had been the rival of St. Edmond.

“ Where great God ! where is she now ;” he exclaimed wildly.

“ I know not,” answered Eloisa, “ she

has withdrawn herself from my protection, and most truly should I rejoice could I be assured she was in peace and safety."

"Have you no clue by which to seek her ;" said he in a voice of anguish.

"None," said Eloisa "the only persons to whom she is known in England, are the Nuns at——, in whose society she once passed the time, during my absence from town. Of them I purpose to enquire."

"Leave to me that task," said he, "once convinced she is in England, rely on it I shall discover her retreat, and Oh Celina! never again surely wilt thou avoid my sight."

He passed rapidly from the presence of Eloisa, but returned to conjure her, to be silent, on all that had passed to their friends, particularly to Lord Avonmore, from whom he said, for the present he was most anxious to conceal it.

"When next we meet," said he "I

may have much to explain. Oh ! may it be in an happier hour."

She promised secresy, and he disappeared ; but her curiosity was more than ever raised. That there had been some connexion, in the fate of the Chevalier and Rosalba, she had before been inclined to believe, from the agitation the latter had betrayed, on hearing he was in England ; and on meeting him in Mr. Godfrey's boat, but she determined to wait with patience, and secresy, the result according to her promise.

CHAP. XXII.

DOUBTS AND PERPLEXITIES TERMINATED.

LORD AVONMORE now proposed Eloisa's immediate departure for Riversdale, where he earnestly wished to receive her, at the altar, from the hand of Mr Stanley; and Lady Evelina Morland was easily persuaded, to afford her countenance and protection on a journey, which was to decide the fate of her friends. No delay would be admitted of. All necessary preparations, Lord Avonmore said, should be made, previous to their arrival at Riversdale; and he departed, for this purpose, with the Chevalier, to town, leaving Eloisa to accompany General Morland's family,

who had intended to quit Wales about this time.

Far different were the feelings of Eloisa, as she quitted her mountain residence, to those she had experienced on her arrival there; and the strange ambiguous fate of Rosalba, seemed now the only subject of real regret left on her mind. By Lord Avonmore, she had written to Mr. Stanley, warmly thanking him for the friendship he had manifested towards her, and soliciting a return of the favour she had once forfeited, by her neglect of her early friends.

Unable to retain resentment against the daughter of Sir William Riversdale, he was at the Manor, ready to welcome her return to her paternal mansion. The emotions of Eloisa were violent, as she drew nearer the beloved abode of her youth; and, when she saw Mr. Stanley, ready to assist her in alighting from the carriage, tears obscured her sight, and she tried in vain to articulate her joy, at again

beholding one of her first and best friends ; but, ere she reached the drawing-room, a delightful surprise awaited her, and she found herself encircled in the arms of her beloved Harriet.

“ Could you think,” said she, when the first expressions of joy were over, “ that I should not be the first to hail your arrival ? Till now, my happiness has been incomplete ; but to see you once more in our old haunts, and” (she added, archly) “ with the *same companion* too, Eloisa seems to restore all its old delights to the Manor.

Lady Evelina, who had much admired the frankness and goodness of heart she had discovered in Miss Worthington, during her attendance on Eloisa at Lord Avonmore’s house in town, (after the accident which made her a temporary resident there,) was pleased to renew the acquaintance ; and Harriet declared, she must leave Dorian and his friends to dine alone, and amuse one another ; for she

could not find in her heart to be separated from her cousin, on the first day of her restoration.

A letter, from Lord Avonmore, had informed Harriet of recent events ; and, with a glow of real pleasure on her countenance, she congratulated Eloisa on her now happy prospects.

In visiting Mrs. Stanley, Sir George and Lady Worthington, and all her old friends, the first few days, after Eloisa's return, fled rapidly ; and the arrival of Lord Avonmore, completed the happiness of the party assembled at the Manor.

He brought Sir Edward Erville with him ; but the Chevalier had, greatly to the surprise of his friend, declined attending him, and had departed from town on some expedition, of which he had evaded declaring the object.

Such had been his Lordship's expedition, that every preparation was now completed ; and Mr. Stanley's benediction was alone wanting to complete his felicity.

city. It was delayed by no unnecessary scruples on the part of Eloisa. To return to the world, as the wife of Lord Avonmore, was the first wish of her heart; and to enjoy its pleasures in moderation, in future, her fixed determination.

The nuptials were celebrated as privately as a numerous circle of friends would permit. General Morland gave her to Lord Avonmore; and the lately depressed, humbled Eloisa, beheld herself reinstated, at once, in affluence and rank, and united to the first and long-loved possessor of her affection.

On one of those evenings, when the towers of Riversdale once more re-echoed with the sounds of mirth, and general hilarity prevailed, a carriage was observed to stop at the great gates. Eloisa saw from the window two figures alight from it; a shriek of joy escaped her; and, darting forwards, at the door of the drawing-room received to her arms the lost Rosalba; no longer the depressed, mys-

terious Signora Violetti, but elegantly habited, her eyes beaming with pleasure, and restored to all the grace and animation natural to her character. She was followed by the Chevalier Morlini, who was as warmly greeted by the Earl. Disengaging Rosalba from the embrace of Eloisa,—

“ Permit me,” said he, “ to introduce, to the Earl and Countess of Avonmore, the Signora Altieri, who is anxious, as I am, to offer our personal congratulations.”

The Earl received her with his wonted grace. — “ Your presence, my friend,” said he to the Chevalier, “ was alone wanting to complete my happiness.”

“ May it not be less,” cried the Chevalier, “ from knowing that *St. Edmond* lives to witness it. Behold him here!—In the forlorn, isolated being, distinguished by your friendship, honoured by your protection, you view that *St. Edmond*, who, you once thought, was destined to be the

obstacle to your felicity ; and, in the favoured *protégée* of Miss Riversdale, (whose humanity rescued her from misery and death,) behold her, for whom he died to the world, and would have consigned his name to oblivion.”

“ What wonders have you to relate to us !” said Lord Avonmore. “ Believe me, however, by whatever name I am to address you, the esteem I felt for the Chevalier Morlini, will not be diminished for Mr. St. Edmond.”

The astonishment of Eloisa may be better conceived than described ; and it was some time before the numerous questions and answers, the congratulations and rejoicings, at this re-union with their friends, would allow of the following recital :—

The disappearance of the Signora Altieri, convinced St. Edmond, that her ambitious relatives had intentionally secreted her from his knowledge ; and, shocked to be thus the cause of, perhaps,

a dreary, solitary seclusion, to her whom he could never cease to adore, he long meditated how to effect her relief. Fully resolved on never being guilty of such injustice, as to present to Miss Riversdale his hand, while his heart was devoted to another; yet, aware of the indignity of a refusal from him, he sought, once more, the counsel of his friend, the Chevalier Morlini, who was in a bad state of health. He, too, had been ordered to travel; and they commenced a wandering life of some months.

In a village, near the feet of the Appennines, the friend of St. Edmond was seized with a paroxysm of his disorder, which proved fatal. As he leaned over the pale corse of his friend, and, in the anguish and perplexity of his mind, almost wished the same blow had terminated the existence of both, the idea of assuming the name of Morlini, and reporting his own death, first occurred to him. A conviction that he was no more, might at once induce

the relatives of Celina to restore her to society, and obviate all dread of communication.

To Celina he could, if she were again at liberty, find means to reveal himself; and, above all, he should by this plan liberate Miss Riversdale from her engagements to him. She would probably make another choice, and Celina might yet be his. In a will, which he now executed, he bequeathed his whole property to the Chevalier Morlini; in whose name, by a trusty agent, (servant to his late friend,) he secured it; and, retiring to his solitude in the Appenines, determined to remain there, till he learned, by means of the same confidant, the return of the Signora to Florence. But this was intelligence he was never destined to receive. All enquiry proved fruitless; and he was, at length, compelled to believe, that the revenge or avarice of the Marchese, had led him to immure her for life in some remote cloister.

A prey to all the anguish of despair, he was found in this state of mind by Lord Avonmore; but, resolute never to compel Miss Riversdale to fulfil her engagement, (which, judging by himself, he imagined must be repugnant to her wishes,) he scrupled not to confirm the tale of St. Edmond's death.

The strong attachment he conceived for his Lordship, and his own curiosity to behold the woman destined for him, were his inducements to accede to Lord Avonmore's persuasions to visit England.

His Lordship's attachment to Eloisa, soon betrayed itself to the observant eye of St. Edmond. Astonished, himself, at her attractions, and charmed by her beauty and talents, he felt anxious to promote the union. He judged her not with the severity of Lord Avonmore; he saw, in her vivacity, only the sprightliness of youth; and his high opinion of his Lordship led him to believe, a marriage with him would correct her love of dissipation,

and render her all he wished her to be.— How did he now rejoice, when Lord Avonmore disclosed to him his real sentiments, that his own supposed death had removed the great barrier that divided them, and, with greater care than ever, was his secret preserved!

For the sake of his friend, he noted the conduct of Miss Riversdale with a minuteness she little suspected; and, in the baleful counsels of Lady Harcourt, he soon learned to trace the origin of her faults.— The decided aversion he conceived for that Lady, produced a severity in his manner towards her, which disgusted the Marchioness, and the dislike became soon reciprocal. On the eventful night of the masquerade, he had traced her Ladyship in more than one disguise; and, at length, overheard an appointment with Sir Eustace Etherington, to give him ocular proof, in a letter she had that day received, of the ruin awaiting Eloisa.

Desirous to unmask her perfidious

friend, in his friar's habit, he contrived to make her an unseen witness of their meeting. Amidst the confusion that ensued, he quitted the house, and bore to Lord Avonmore the first appalling intelligence of what had occurred.—His subsequent conduct has been related.

The Signora's tale was now recounted.—Resolved equally against a marriage with her relation, or suffering St. Edmond to violate an honourable engagement, she formed a resolution to fly into Normandy, and to seek the protection of a friend who was educated in the same convent with herself. She thought her absence, and a conviction that she was lost to him, would induce St. Edmond to comply with the wishes of his late father; and, to preserve his honour unsullied, she determined to sacrifice her own hopes of happiness.

With precaution and secrecy, she effected her escape from the convent, and reached Normandy in safety; but what intelligence awaited her there? The fa-

mily of her friend had become the victims of revolutionary horrors, and had quitted their residence! A cottage sheltered her, till she procured intelligence of the asylum they had sought. After waiting long and anxiously, she received information, that they had found refuge in England.

A forlorn wanderer, not daring to return to the power of her persecutors, and equally dreading to seek shelter in a convent in the Italian territories, lest she should be forced from her retreat, and compelled to a hated marriage with the son of the Marchese, she resolved to pursue her friends to the retreat they had chosen. Through innumerable difficulties and dangers, she effected her journey to England; but the vessel, in which she at length procured a passage, was overtaken by a storm, in which several of the crew perished; and the small baggage of the unfortunate Celina, containing the few resources she possessed, was lost.

Harrassed, distressed, and almost pen-

nyless, she reached London; but no intelligence of her friends greeted her arrival. That they had returned to France, was all the information she could obtain. And now, the idea that Sir Edmond might be in England, that she might be seen and recognised by him, that he might imagine she pursued him to Great Britain, incessantly harrassed her; and, till she was assured his marriage had actually taken place, she determined on a strict concealment.

By the labour of her hands she supported herself, till agitation of mind, the unwonted fatigue of sitting up half the night to work, in order to procure a subsistence, combined with the yet unrecovered effects of her long and calamitous journey, threw her into that fever, which first introduced her to the notice of Miss Riversdale.

“ Never,” said Cclina, “ Oh, never be the moment forgotten, when, in the form which to me appeared an angel of mercy,

sent from heaven to my succour, I discovered her, who was destined to form the happiness of St. Edmond. With unutterable agony, I learned the report of his death; but it appeared not, to me, properly authenticated; and, till I heard of the arrival of the Chevalier Morlini in England, I persevered in discrediting it.

“ From the Chevalier, I felt compelled to hide myself. I knew him well from infancy. His ideas and opinions were singular and strict. I dreaded lest he should advise me to return to Italy, and to misery. To many of the English nobility, who had occasionally visited Florence, I was personally known, in my early days of happiness; and, humbled and degraded as I felt, from my own rank in life, a prey to secret despondence, I dreaded recognition; but all my secret sufferings, previously, were light, when compared with what I felt, on the night I was prevailed on, with my kind protectress, to enter a boat on the Thames, with some friends of

her's ; in one of whom, though altered by sickness and sorrow, I instantly discovered St. Edmond.

“ In silence and dread, I quitted the party. Miss Riversdale had addressed him as the Chevalier Morlini, and I perceived immediately, that he was unknown to her, and that he was intentionally concealed from her.—What could it mean ?—Still to preserve my own secret, till I knew the views of St. Edmond, was my determination ; resolved that no discovery of myself should prevent or interfere with any plans he intended to adopt. Perhaps his disguise might be assumed, in order to become acquainted with the woman destined for him, while yet unknown himself ; and, Oh, could such attractions fail to banish Celina from his heart !

“ With assiduity I avoided his presence ; and, till he arrived in Wales, I felt secure of concealment. But then the late questions of Lady Evelina Morland, her scrutiny of me, and the suspicions she

had evidently imbibed, convinced me, that I was no longer safe from discovery. I resolved on an immediate retreat, and, once more, sought refuge with the good nuns at ——. Here St. Edmond traced me ; I learned, with wonder, that he had discovered me ; and an event, to me the most surprising, had at once raised him to the height of happiness.”

St. Edmond added, that an immediate union was the only expedient to enable him to become the protector of the Signora ; and now, that Miss Riversdale's fate was decided, it had been his determination to disclose himself to the friends, whose generosity of mind, and exalted benevolence, had raised him from the horrors of despair, and her (far dearer to him than life) from the depth of ruin and misery !

THE fate of the principal personages of the drama being now decided, it only remains to add, that experience had had the

most salutary effect on the mind of **Eloisa**. A conviction of former errors prevented their recurrence ; and she became, once more, an ornament, and at the same time a model, to the fashionable world.

Lord Avonmore's high talents, worth, and integrity, conducted him to the height of honour and popularity ; and, in his domestic happiness, he found a relaxation from the cares of greatness, that amply recompensed him for the toils of public life.

St. Edmond and **Celina** visited Italy, in order to secure their joint property ; and then returned to the society of their English friends, to fix their permanent abode.

The excellent **Harriet** preserved, thro' life, the same character of candour and disinterestedness she had ever manifested ; and, by judiciously yielding her own tastes and pursuits, in some points, procured the full indulgence of her husband, in those most necessary to her happiness. **Mr. Dorien** exactly suited her ; and they

enjoyed (to use her own favourite expression) all the comforts of a rational existence.

In the circles of fashion, Eloisa was again destined to encounter Lady Harcourt; but, unsupported by the fortune she had assisted to squander, she found her means very inadequate to her expenses; and a tour to the continent, with Sir Eustace Etherington, banished her at once from the society Eloisa frequented; and saved her the pain of frequently meeting with a character, now become so despicable in her eyes.

Could Eloisa have known the sensations of her ladyship, when her marriage with Lord Avonmore first reached her ear, she would have felt herself amply avenged; so true is it, that evil passions are sooner or later their own severest punishment.

Adelaide Belcour, disappointed of Lord Avonmore, continued to flutter about in the world of gaiety, setting her cap in various directions, and still in hopes of final

success; though unconscious, that dressing, dancing, and flirting, unaccompanied by more powerful attractions, fitted her rather for the partner of an evening, than a companion for life.

Lady Riversdale continued to reside at Bath, and to find her chief happiness at the card-table, and in the adulation of Miss Danderville. As the Countess of Avonmore, Eloisa experienced from her more attention than she had ever before shewn her; and, as the widow of her father, her Ladyship ever found, from her daughter-in-law, more respect than her conduct entitled her to anticipate. From regard to the memory of Sir William, she was invited to Avonmore Castle, where she regularly paid an annual visit.

In the society of friends, whose approved worth, and warm attachment to herself, experience had confirmed; adored by her Lord, and diffusing around her the blessings which wealth and power enabled her to dispense to others, the Heiress of

Riversdale, at length, found as much happiness as human nature is fated to know. She ever acknowledged, with candour, her early errors, which had taught her the insufficiency of youth and inexperience to form its own judgment, unaided by the counsel of mature age; and the dangers attending an inordinate ambition, to rise superior to the world in general.

With talents and acquirements the most brilliant, with an understanding of the first order, and a disposition peculiarly amiable, Miss Riversdale might have become a victim to folly and dissipation, had not Providence mercifully interposed, and, by the lesson of adversity, taught her, that when in the zenith of her fashionable career, and surrounded by applause and adulation, in the words of a celebrated moralist—“ Many had applauded, in the hopes of reward; and the giddy multitude, however zealous, were not always judicious in their approbation.” But the attention paid

her at her own fire-side, the smiles which exhilarated her own table, were the genuine result of undissembled love; and that *home* was the only secure haven in the tempestuous voyage of life.

THE END.

JULIET.

A TALE.



CHAP. I.

A STAGE COACH.

A STAGE COACH may be considered as a world in miniature, where each individual is intent on the business which is the object of his journey; save when curiosity, to know that of the other inmates of the vehicle, occasionally diverts his thoughts for a time from his own concerns. Chance, by this means, brings together people of all ages, ranks, situations, and countries; and those whom

les usages du monde would keep eternally separated, are jumbled together in this conveyance, till distinction is dropped, and a communication succeeds, which makes the parties temporary acquaintance, and renders, in the stage coach phrase, “the journey agreeable.”

On a fine autumnal morning, in the year 1800, the —— stage coach set out from Gracechurch-street, laden inside and out with a set of reserved passengers, who seemed to vie, which should most perseveringly maintain a profound silence, till they reached a village nearly eight miles from town. The supercilious inmates of the vehicle (for such, by their profound taciturnity, they would seem) consisted of six persons; three of whom bore nasal testimony of being comfortably under the dominion of Morpheus; which will account for the dearth of conversation that prevailed, during the first part of the journey. The silence was first broken by a ruddy, healthy-looking man, in a brown

bob-wig, and a suit of bright sky-blue, who, awaking from his slumber, with a facetious smirk on his countenance, addressed a smart-looking girl opposite him, (who had also been quietly reposing,) saying,—“ Well, Miss, I llope you are all the better for your nap.”—She smiled, good-humour’dly, and said, “ she was very well.”—“ I can’t say that quite, myself,” continued the first speaker. “ In my mind, nothing’s no more *disagreeabler*, than to be routed out of bed before one’s time. I must say, a comfortable night’s rest is a very comfortable thing ; and next to it, is a good breakfast ; and I shan’t be sorry to see one presently ; for what’s life, without a good meal four times a day, and a luncheon besides ?” The young person, to whom this was addressed, seemed strongly inclined to laugh out ; but, with some restraint on her risible faculties, she contrived to bite her lips and be silent.—This was not the case with an elderly female, who appeared to be the travelling

companion of the young one; a little, thin, shrivelled figure, who, squeezed up in the corner of the coach, could scarcely have patience sufficient to listen, ere she said,—“ Four times a day! Four meals in one day! I never heard such a thing in my life. A breakfast and dinner, and a bit of bread and cheese for supper, to be sure, is enough for any body in the world.”—“ Excuse me, Ma’am,” answered the man, “ if I am of a different way of thinking. I always makes a point of catting a good breakfast, by way of laying a foundation; and then I can go on, pretty well, till eleven or twelve o’clock; but I can’t do without a snap then; and as to my dinner, few people relish it better. Then, at tea-time, I’m fond of a good plate of buttered toast, or a hot cake, and of being a little sociable; and, as to supper, it’s then I most enjoy myself. I don’t like your mean ways of going shivering and starving to bed, upon a bit of bread and cheese. A good veal-cutlet, a

mutton-chop, a red-herring, or something of that sort, I always find agreeable, and I can go to bed, and sleep eight or ten hours after it, with all the pleasure in life.”—“ Then, Sir,” said the old lady, “ you seem to live only for eating.”—“ Indeed, Ma’am,” said he, “ you are much mistaken ; I am fond of seeing my friends, and enjoying company ; though I do like to keep a good house, I own ; for of all things I hate stinginess, and I dare say, Miss,” turning to the young lady, “ you are of my way of thinking, though your mamma, or aunt, or whatever she is, may differ from us.”—“ No, no, Sir,” said the old lady, “ I hope I have brought her up, not to be quite so extravagant. I trust I shall never see any daughter of mine eating five meals in a day.”—“ Pray, Miss, what may your opinion be on this subject ?” said he, addressing one of the passengers who had not yet spoken. This was a young lady, whose form, delicate even to fragility, formed a striking con-

trast to the rude health of the inquirer. Her reply was short; and though a very faint smile played round her mouth, the words were articulated in a voice so low, as to be almost unintelligible. Opposite her, enveloped in a great-coat, with his hat drawn over his face, sat a gentleman, whose eyes had, for the last half-hour, been fixed on his fair neighbour; but absorbed by her own reflections, which were apparently not of the most cheerful kind, she seemed not to have remarked his observation, nor did he once speak, nor appear to hear, what was passing in the coach, till the attention of its inmates was attracted to the delicate stranger, who, dropping her head on the shoulder of the young person that sat next her, seemed to have fainted. With some exertion, and the aid of hartshorn, which one of the passengers produced, she was recalled to animation; and the most active person in giving assistance, was the hitherto silent traveller. Very soon after her recovery,

the stage stopped to breakfast; and the good-natured girl and her frugal mother, accompanied the young invalid to a bed-chamber, where she was prevailed on to lie down while the passengers took their breakfast.

Mrs. and Miss Malcolm, were the widow and daughter of an apothecary in the country, who had been on a visit to town, and were on their return home.—Eliza Malcolm was good tempered, friendly, and obliging. She was greatly struck with the interesting appearance of the young stranger, and humanely offered to sit by her while she attempted to procure some sleep; but she so earnestly intreated to be left alone, that they complied, and descended to join the other passengers.—Here they found all, except the gentleman in the great coat, and he, it was understood, had desired to have a room to himself.—“ For my part,” said the former orator, “ I don’t never like no concealments, nor no person that practises

them. I never had a secret in my life, nor never intends it, for I tells them all to every body.”—“Excuse me, friend,” said a Quaker, who was the sixth passenger in the stage, “if I think that no great sign of thy wisdom.” “Very like, friend,” answered the blue-coat gentleman; “but, for my part, I set no great store by wisdom, being, that I never was reckoned to have any, and I have got through the world very well without it. What’s the use of wisdom, if one can get nothing by it?” Here Miss Malcolm’s risibility was again excited, which the speaker observing, said, “Ah, you may laugh, Miss, but it’s all true. Few men have pushed their way better. I have got a clear two thousand a year, a good house, plenty of land, and neither wife nor children to plague me.” “Why then you have nobody to inherit all your riches, Sir,” said Mrs. Malcolm. “No, Ma’am, nor never wishes for nobody, in the way of relationship. A wife and children makes a deal

of trouble and noise in a house. Now, I loves to have every thing my own way. I keeps an old deaf housekeeper, that can't hear a word I say; but then she knows all my ways, so she wants no talking to, and she's an excellent cook, which I think the principal thing. I've a very good gardener, because I chooses to have every thing early in the season; but as to more servants, they are of no use; for so as my dining-room is in order, I don't much care about the rest of the house."—Miss Malcolm now quitted the parlour, to inquire after the invalid; and having ascended the staircase, was approaching the chamber where she had left her, when, to her great surprise, she saw the door unclose, and the traveller, who had chosen to breakfast alone, issue from it. His great-coat was thrown back, and his hat now raised, showed more of his face, and discovered him, though not young, to be handsome, but of a countenance stern and forbidding. He did not perceive her, but

turning down another passage, disappeared. At first she hesitated, whether she should enter, but recollecting the coach would soon be ready, she opened the door gently, and drew near the bed. The young stranger was yet in a profound slumber, but her complexion was flushed and feverish. She heaved, even in sleep, convulsive sighs, and her eye-lids were moist with tears. While the compassionate girl stood surveying her, she awoke ; and, extending her hand, she faintly thanked her for her attention. Miss Malcolm requested she would take something, and at length prevailed on her to have some tea brought up, which she fetched from the parlour. She forbore to mention the visitor whom she had met, concluding he must at least be a relation. The coach was soon ready, and the same party proceeded on their journey. The stranger in the great-coat was as silent as before ; and the desultory conversation that was held, was principally supported by Mrs. Mal-

colm, the blue-coat gentleman, (whose name, he told them, was *Hobbleton*,) and the Quaker; the latter seemed greatly amused with the oddity of his travelling acquaintance. Towards evening the coach entered a road, that wound by the side of some thick woody plantations. Most of the travellers seemed well acquainted with this part of it; and Mr. Hobbleton, pointing to a wood they were passing, said,

“ Now that is a pretty spot; it is called The Hermitage. Did you ever hear of it, Miss?” to Miss Malcolm.

“ I think I have heard,” she answered, “ that the proprietor is a very extraordinary character.”

“ Extraordinary, indeed!” said Mr. Hobbleton. “ Why he’s the queerest, odd kind of a sort of a hunk I ever heard of. Why the whole country rings of him, and they tell the most unaccountable stories of him.”

“ What are those stories?” suddenly ejaculated the hitherto silent travel-

ler. "Have the goodness to repeat some of them."

"Oh, no, Sir, I thank you," said Mr. Hobbleton, starting suddenly round, at the unexpected sound of his voice; "I really can't remember any just now. Perhaps—perhaps, Sir," he added, looking suspiciously at the stranger, "you may know the gentleman."

"Perhaps I do," was the answer; but scarcely was it uttered ere the coach stopped, and the stranger alighting, leaped over the railing into the thickest part of the woody plantation that skirted the road, and was out of sight in a moment.

"Well," said Mr. Hobbleton, "I must say, I am not sorry he's gone; for nothing is no more disagreeabler, in my mind, than to see a person sit as if he was dumb."

Every one joined in the sentiment, however coarsely expressed, except Miss Malcolm, who, still prepossessed with the idea, that the stranger was, in some degree, con-

nected with the young lady, forbore to utter what she thought.—The evening now closed in, and the coach had a very few miles farther to go. Each was enquiring of the others, their place of destination, when the vehicle once more stopped, and the coachman, coming to the window, asked the young lady whether this was the part of the road that she meant ?

“ I am an entire stranger here,” she answered, “ but I wish to be set down as near to *Harvey Lodge* as possible.”

“ That gate,” said the coachman, “ leads directly up to the house then.”

The young lady now took leave of her fellow-travellers, with a countenance of the strongest dejection; and with a very small parcel in her hand, alighted from the coach. She was followed by the Quaker, who said his road lay by *Harvey Lodge*, and that he would shew her the way.

“ Well Miss,” said Mr. Hobbleton, shaking her delicate hand roughly, “ I wish you safe to your friends ; I am sorry

to see you look so unhappy like, and if you are come to stay in this here part of the country, and will give me a call at Hobbleton Hall, I'll make you as welcome as a princess, and not send you away without as good a dinner as ever you sat down to."

Mrs. Malcolm, too, seconded the invitation her daughter humanely gave the sorrowing traveller, to visit them at the village of Hazlewood, a few miles distant, and curtseying her thanks, for her heart was too full to speak, the grateful object of their attention stood gazing at the coach till it was out of sight. Then entering the gate that led into the plantations surrounding Harvey Lodge, she was proceeding slowly forwards, forgetting the Quaker was her attendant.

He was a good-looking man between thirty and forty, and his countenance wore an air of peculiar benignity and mildness; his manner had much of the stiffness and formality peculiar to the sect, but the look

of benevolence diffused over his fine features, greatly prepossessed a beholder in his favour. For some minutes he quietly followed the steps of his young companion, till observing that her handkerchief was held to her eyes, and that she sobbed violently, he advanced, and putting his hand gently on her arm, he said—

“Thou art in trouble, friend.” The only answer he received was a fresh burst of tears. “I would not distress thee,” said he, “but I would give thee either comfort or assistance, if I could.”

“You are very good, Sir,” said she falteringly, “I am ill and fatigued at present, but if I can once reach Harvey Lodge I may be better.”

“I marvel not,” he resumed, “at thy unwillingness to answer a stranger; it is becoming the diffidence of a female, but thou mayest believe me when I assure thee, I mean not to be impertinent or officious.”

“Oh no,” she answered, “I have no

fears of that sort, and thank you for your humanity." At that moment the high chimnies of a lofty mansion came in view.

"There is Harvey Lodge," said the Quaker. "Tell me, for I am much interested for thee, is that thy home?"

"I hope I shall find one there," she faintly answered, "at present I have none."

"I hope thou wilt," said her companion, "but shouldst thou not, and this world abounds with disappointments, that card," and he forced one into her reluctant hand, "will point out to thee an asylum." They had now reached a wicket gate, which by a winding path led to the mansion.

"This," said the Quaker, pointing to a carriage road that passed it, "is my way, and we must part. Suffer me to wish thee happiness. I have much of this world's goods, as well as some experience in its ways. Thou perhaps hast little of either. Let me avail myself of the privileges they confer,—and now farewell."

As he spoke he placed a folded paper on the small parcel she held, and ere she had time to speak or to remonstrate, he had disappeared.

CHAP. II.

HARVEY LODGE.

HARVEY LODGE was a modern and elegant structure, built on the scite where the ancient mansion formerly stood. The latter, with a large unincumbered estate, had descended from a long line of ancestors to Sir Edmund Harvey, who had levelled it with the ground, and erected the new building, which was esteemed a model of architecture, and the admiration of all who viewed it.

The Baronet, at an early age, had married the only daughter and heiress of a man of high rank, and Lady Ellinor Harvey had long been celebrated as one of the first constellations in the hemisphere of

fashion. The birth-day was over, and Lady Ellinor, declaring the town was now intolerable, hastened as fast as six horses could whirl her to Harvey Lodge; not to admire the beautiful scenery around it,—not to inhale the pure breezes of the country, or to enjoy the comforts of retirement—but merely to change the scene of gaiety. She took a large party in her suite, and every apartment in the mansion was filled with company.

“ Really a wet evening in the country is a dreadful bore,” said her Ladyship, though all the rain that had fallen was a mere summer-shower; “ do, Sir Henry, order the backgammon-table, and see if I can win back some of my money.”

Sir Henry obeyed, and the Baronet sat down with her Ladyship to backgammon. There was a concert in the music-room adjoining, for though her Ladyship never played, she entertained a long list of performers, who were indispensable appendages at Harvey Lodge, because by at-

tracting company, they could assist in the disposal of a commodity that often hung heavy on her Ladyship's hands—time.

“Do look at Sir Edmund,” said Lady Ellinor, pointing to the superb ottoman on which her liege lord had thrown himself; his book had dropped from his hand, and he had sunk into a quiet sleep.—“What happy insensibility!” said she, “is it not?”

“I know not,” answered Sir Henry, “how far insensibility may be an object of envy. That any one can feel it in your Ladyship's presence, must at least excite wonder.”

Lady Ellinor smiled; she was gratified even by the gross flattery of Sir Harry Colville, whose attentions to her had been a subject of animadversion to the world. Lady Ellinor was now in her fortieth year, and though still extremely handsome, and wearing the appearance of being much younger, the decay of her personal charms must have been evident, had not the hand

of art been called in to supply the ravages of time and dissipation. Her *tete-a-tete* with Sir Henry Colville remained undisturbed, till the sound of "A reel, a reel;" from the concert-room broke on their ear, and in the next moment, leaning on the Baronet's arm, she entered the adjoining apartment, where the company were tripping it

"On the light fantastic toe."

Just at that moment a servant entered the room, inquiring for Sir Edmund.

"Oh, pray do not disturb Sir Edmund from his repose," said her Ladyship sneeringly, as the man was about to enter the room where they had left the Baronet.

"A person below wishes to see Sir Edmund, my Lady," said the servant.

"What person?" asked her Ladyship.

"A young lady," answered the man, "who refuses to give her name, and begs to see Sir Edmund."

"Shew her up," said Lady Ellinor.—

“ Suppose, Sir Harry, we see her first. Some *protegée* of Sir Edmund, I suppose,” she added with a sarcastic laugh; “ it would be a pity to disturb him from his nap.”

“ Oh, by all means,” said Sir Harry, and the servant instantly disappeared.— The reel was kept up with animation, the spacious apartment, filled with company dispersed over it in different parties, was brilliantly illuminated, and the dancing, music, laughing, and talking, rendered it one scene of gay confusion.

Such was its appearance, when, ushered in by the servant, the delicate form of the fair traveller appeared at the door of the music-room. Little expecting what she was destined to behold, she started back in dismay. Lady Ellinor advanced, and fixing her large dark eyes on the pallid countenance of the stranger—

“ You wish to see Sir Edmund Harvey I understand,” she said.

“ I have a letter to deliver to him,” was

the answer, in a very faint voice, "which I wish—I would prefer—" and she hesitated.

"The young lady does not choose to deliver her credentials to your Ladyship," said Sir Henry, "she wishes for an interview with Sir Edmund." A loud laugh from most of the company, who had gathered round the young stranger, completed the effect which the sudden glare of light, the noise and confusion, had already taken on her exhausted frame.

A delicate state of health, extreme fatigue, abstinence and anxiety, all combined with the recent cause of alarm, to subdue her mental, as well as corporeal powers, and with a look of the most piteous distress, she dropped senseless on the carpet. All were now active in giving assistance; the gentlemen, attracted by the uncommon beauty of the stranger, flocked around her. Her hat was taken off, and a profusion of auburn hair fell from under it over her black dress. The delicacy of

her appearance declared her to be of no vulgar class, and the gazers seemed lost in amazement.

She was conveyed by Lady Ellinor's order to a bedchamber, and was attended by the house-keeper, while the letter, which had dropped from her hand when she fell, was delivered to her Ladyship by Sir Harry Colville, at the moment that Sir Edmund, aroused from his sleep by the noise, walked yawning into the music-room. The recent incident was related, and the beauty of the young unknown praised by the men and criticised by the women.

“Who can she possibly be, Sir Edmund?” said Lady Ellinor.

“Upon my honour, I know no more than your Ladyship,” he answered, “but the letter, I suppose, will explain.”

It was opened, and these words only met his eye:—

“To Sir Edmund Harvey.

“In the hour of death I claim your

promise. Oh Edmund receive, and protect the orphan child of your once loved sister.

EMMELINE MONTEITH.

Sir Edmund, in spite of his natural apathy, started and closing the letter, retired followed by Lady Ellinor, who insisted on an explanation. It was given, but far from appeasing the stormy passions of her Ladyship, it called forth all the malignity of her heart. She had then beneath her roof, the daughter of her early rival, one, whom she had never ceased to hate, many as were the years since all personal communication had ceased. The tale is short.

Emmeline Harvey, the only sister of Sir Edmund, was the early friend and associate of Lady Ellinor. At the house of the Earl her Ladyship's father, she became acquainted with a young dependant on the family, a youth of the name of Monteith for whom her Ladyship had long felt the

strongest partiality. The attachment he soon evinced for Miss Harvey, blighted all her hopes, and she disclosed the secret of her friend to the Earl her father, but her treachery was severely punished. Monteith eloped with Emmeline, whose parents never forgave the rash step. Her husband entered the army and she accompanied him abroad. From this period no intelligence of her had ever reached her own family, except that the regiment had been ordered to the East Indies; till within three years of the time at which this narrative commences, when Sir Edmund, being then at his house in town, received a few incoherent lines, requesting him to visit his sister in a remote part of the metropolis, which the letter pointed out. He obeyed the mandate, and found the once beautiful Emmeline apparently far advanced in a decline. She told him that she was a widow with one child, who at her death must be destitute of fortune or protection. All she asked was,

that he would promise to befriend her daughter, when she was no more.

Sir Edmund readily gave his word, and from that time had heard no more of his sister, and such was his apathy of disposition, that though, for the moment he had felt hurt at perceiving the alteration, that time and misfortune had made in the elegant form of Emmeline, it is probable, that when he had once left her, the subject recurred to his memory no more, till recalled by this claim on his humanity.

“Where is Miss Monteith?” said Sir Edmund abruptly. The name grated harshly on the ear of his Lady, for though for many years it had never reached her, though long as was the period that had intervened since her disappointment, still had it ever dwelt on her memory, and never had her first attachment been forgotten.

“The young lady is quite insensible still,” said the housekeeper. “Some

body must be sent for, or she'll certainly die."

Sir Edmund, notwithstanding his extreme absence and indifference, was not deficient in humanity, when once aroused from his habitual apathy. He ordered immediate assistance, and his niece began at length, slowly to recover the combined effects of sorrow, fatigue, and alarm.

She retired to the bed prepared for her, but declined the offer of the good house-keeper to sit up with her, saying she had no doubt that she should be better after a quiet night's sleep. The house-keeper, however, thought her far more of an invalid, than she believed herself to be, and so she told Sir Edmund, whom she met in the passage with his lively ward, Lady Clara Melgrove, leaning on his arm.

"I wish, Sir Edmund," said her Ladyship, "you would suffer me to visit your *protégée*. I am no despicable physician, and an uncommon good nurse, as you know.—Now do let me go with Mrs. Al-

mond, and between us I have no doubt we shall bring her round," so saying she slipped her arm from Sir Edmund, and taking that of Mrs. Almond. "Come goody," said she, "lead the way, if this pretty stranger be half as sick as she is beautiful, she must die inevitably."

"She is very handsome to be sure," said the house-keeper, "and the very picture of her poor mother."

"Her mother! why who was her mother?" said Lady Clara "Oh do goody tell me the whole tale for I am dying to know what all this bustle is about."

Mrs. Almond repeated what she knew, and Lady Clara's interest for the poor orphan was increased. Their patient had just fallen into a doze, and was unconscious of their entrance. Lady Clara seated herself by the bed and surveyed the interesting countenance of the invalid, she took her hand and found it hot and feverish. One cheek was flushed and indicated illness and agitation. "I am afraid she is

very ill," said her Ladyship, "and I am determined to sit by her all night goody— We wont tell that illnature'd Lady Ellinor, bless me I am so apt to forget myself when I talk of the mother of my lord elect, but I know goody you are too prudent not to be silent."

Mrs. Almond smiled, she knew the marriage of Lady Clara with the only son of her guardian, Sir Edmund, had long since been arranged, and it was reported they were only waiting for the period of his coming of age, to celebrate the nuptials.

"The Lord bless your Ladyship for your humanity," said Mrs. Almond "I am sure Mr. Harvey would love you all the better, for your goodness if he heard you now."

"There now goody," said Lady Clara "you shall go and get something very nice, and comforting to give this poor thing, when she awakes, and I will remain with her in the mean time."

Mrs. Almond obeyed, and Lady Clara

retaining her station by the bed, sat watching the broken slumbers of the invalid, who, heaving deep sighs, seemed even in sleep to be suffering under mental anguish.

Lady Clara remained by the poor stranger during the greatest part of the night. Often the latter started from her doze, looked fearfully round her and again sunk into an unquiet slumber, but towards the morning they perceived she had fallen into a sound sleep, and as her ladyship betrayed evident signs of fatigue, Mrs. Almond prevailed on her to retire—in about three hours the patient awoke.

“ I have had a long repose I believe,” she said, “ and such sweet dreams, but they are gone,” she added, sighing as if to herself.

“ I hope you are better ma'am,” said the kind hearted house-keeper.

“ Much better,” she answered, “ and much indebted to your care. It was your kindness I believe, that prompted the sweet visions, that hovered over my pillow, for

I have all night, fancied an angel in the form of a beautiful young woman, was watching over me."

Mrs. Almond smiled, "pray compose yourself," she said, "and I will procure you some breakfast;" seeing the weak state of the invalid, she ventured to beg Lady Clara would forbear visiting her, for the present, and carried Sir Edmund a good account of her successful attendance on his niece, with the highest eucomiums on her manners and beauty.

"It is all very well Almond," said he, "I am going to-day to Edgeford races—you will take care of her, and when I return I will see her."

Revived by sleep Miss Montcith declared herself anxious to rise, and was dressing, when the sound of voices reached her ear, she looked from the window, and beheld several carriages which a large party was preparing to enter. One female figure among the company, particularly attracted her attention, she was elegantly,

though simply habited, and as she turned her face, and directed her eyes to the window, where *Juliet* stood, she disclosed a countenance, which, it instantly occurred to her, she had seen before.

“ Oh it is the same sweet vision that hovered over me in my sleep,” she cried, and Mrs. Almond, at that moment entering, she pointed to the court-yard, and entreated to know who it was.

“ That,” said Mrs. Almond, “ is Lady Clara Melgrove, and you are right in thinking you have seen her before, for she did, indeed, sit by your bed, the whole of last night.”

“ And who,” said Juliet is this angel of humanity ;

“ Sir Edmund is her guardian,” said Mrs. Almond, “ and she is very soon to be married to his son. Mr. Harvey is one of the best and finest young gentlemen in the world, he will be of age soon, and then I suppose the wedding is to take

place." She then added that the party she had seen was going to Edgford-races, and would not return till the next day. "So you will have time to recover yourself before you see Sir Edmund," she added.

Juliet was glad of the reprieve for she could not feel much respect or affection for an uncle who had treated her beloved mother with such cruel neglect.

She thought it was shocking, that neither he or Lady Ellinor should ask to see her, before they set out, but she was inured to mortification and disappointment and resolved to hope all would yet be well. As soon as the party was gone, she determined to taste the fresh air, and accordingly descended to the plantations which almost surrounded the house, but she had proceeded a very few yards, through a close serpentine walk, before she almost repented, for she fancied she heard voices near her, but soon after, they seemed to die away, and she proceeded. Her

heart was heavy and she sighed deeply.—
“And this,” thought she, “is my reception at the seat of my ancestors, the spot I have so often heard my mother describe. Ah, my dear father! when, on the plains of India, thy soul was wafted to immortal regions, how little didst thou suspect, what thy child was destined to encounter; tears for a few minutes obscured her sight, and when again she raised her eyes, they rested on a tall elegant looking man, who was advancing towards her.

Involuntarily her head was averted, and she would have passed, but to her utter astonishment he prevented her. The moment he spoke, she recognised him as being a gentleman, who had accosted her in town while walking with her mother, who, without assigning any reason had cautioned her to avoid him, should she ever see him again. After this they had discovered that he had lodgings near them, and she perfectly remembered, that he had, more

than once afterwards, attempted to enter into conversation with her.

“Is it possible Miss Monteith,” said he, “that you do not recollect me? Good heavens! how little did I expect to meet you here—surely the tale I have heard of your bearing some affinity to this family cannot be founded in truth.”

“To a stranger sir,” she answered, “either that or any other circumstance concerning me, can be of little moment, and I request you will suffer me to proceed,” but ere she had time to pass, he had seized her hand and detaining her by force—

“From the first moment I beheld you”—he began but he had scarcely uttered the words, ere a female figure burst suddenly upon them, from an abrupt turn in the walk, “and is it possible Sir Henry,” was pronounced in no very gently tone. The hand of Juliet was in an instant liberated, and hardly knowing what she

did, she fled with the rapidity of lightning, towards the mansion. Here panting and breathless she sought the apartment she had so recently left, and sunk on the first seat she reached. She had remained there a very short space of time, when Mrs. Almond entered.

“Have you been in the plantations Miss Monteith,” she asked.—Juliet gave a brief recital of what had just occurred.

“How unfortunate that you should meet my lady,” said she, “her Ladyship is to follow the party, with Sir Henry Colville, in his curricle in an hour. I can’t bear that Sir Henry, but tell me, what do *you* know of him.” Juliet now related all she knew of the young Baronet, when just as she had ceased speaking, one of the servants entered, with a summons for the young woman as she called her, to her lady.

Poor Juliet followed him tremblingly. She found Lady Ellinor in a superb dress-

ing room, her features were distorted by rage, and turning haughtily towards her she said.

“Whoever you are, who by some unaccountable imposition have obtained admission into this house I beg you will understand, the fraud is discovered, and immediately quit this place. I shall order one of the servants, to conduct you without the confines of the park, and you may be thankful for the lenity, which suffers you to depart without punishment.”

Juliet would have remonstrated but her faint tones were drowned by the loud voice of her Ladyship, who arrogantly bade her be silent, nor provoke her resentment farther. Fearful and dejected, Juliet retired from her presence in the hope of seeing Mrs. Almond, and convincing her at least how greatly she was injured, by such injurious suspicions, but this consolation she found was denied her. The good house-keeper had orders not to see her.

Collecting therefore the contents of her small parcel, she followed the man, who was deputed by his lady to conduct her into the road, and once more became a forlorn wanderer.

CHAP. III.

A PEEP INTO THE WANDERER'S HISTORY.

JULIET MONTEITH had, from the period of her father's death, been struggling with all the miseries and inconveniences of poverty and sickness. A very small pittance, the gift of a beneficent friend in India, was all the reliance of her mother and herself. To add to it, Juliet employed herself in fancy works, whenever she could get an hour's leisure, and by the bed side of her sick parent, pursued with indefatigable perseverance, an employment that might enable her to procure this beloved object of her anxiety, the assistance she stood so greatly in need of.

At the shop, where she disposed of her works, she had more than once noticed an elegant young man, who seemed to observe her with particular attention, and one evening, there being a riot in the street, he had humanely come forward and attended her through the mob. From this time a sort of acquaintance commenced, but the manners of the stranger were so soft and respectful, that Juliet had no cause for apprehension.

Suddenly he disappeared, and several times she had visited the shop without seeing him; when on returning home one morning, her mother delivered her a letter which she had received by the two-penny post. It contained these words—

To Mrs. Monteith.

“An unknown friend takes this method to request Mrs. Monteith will use the inclosed for the relief of those necessities, which pecuniary aid can supply.—All attempts to return it, or to discover the au-

thor of this will be vain.—A total stranger to her person, though not to her character; compassion for her misfortunes has dictated a step, which to have taken more openly, might have been deemed insult.”

Juliet instantly fancied that she could in every line read the sentiments of the elegant stranger, and so firmly was she persuaded, that he had learned their situation from the people of the shop, and had taken this method to relieve them; that with her mother's concurrence she took the inclosure, (a bank note of considerable value,) in her pocket, in the hope of meeting him, with the resolution of returning it in her next visit to the shop, but in vain; the stranger was seen no more, and though she summoned courage to make inquiries concerning him; all she could learn was, that he was very fond of drawings, and often frequented the shop to purchase them.

But though Juliet beheld him not again,

his image remained imprinted on her memory, and his benevolence was remembered with never ceasing gratitude; it had enabled her to procure the attendance of a physician, and many necessary comforts for her mother till her death.

The increasing indisposition of Mrs. Monteith prevented her attending the shop in future, and all traces of the generous stranger were completely lost. The last injunction of her parent had been to lose not a day, after her interment, ere she sought the protection of her uncle, Sir Edmund Harvey, so greatly did she dread the trials to which the youth and extreme beauty of Juliet might expose her. Tho' possessed of an excellent understanding, a well informed mind, and the most amiable heart, she was totally inexperienced in the ways of the world. The early years of Juliet had been passed in India, in a spot the most secluded, for Monteith was too poor to support his wife in affluence,

and therefore chose that she should be concealed from the knowledge of his friends: yet even here, she was seen and recognised by some of the officers, whom she had known in England; one in particular, from whom she would have wished to hide herself for ever. He had been one of her first lovers, but Emmeline, above all disguise, had frequently acknowledged to Colonel (then Captain) Aveling, her attachment to Monteith, and from that hour made him her inveterate enemy.

He no sooner discovered her retreat in India, than the wife became the object of his pursuit in private, while the husband was that of the most bitter rancour in public.

A series of insults, so artfully contrived, as only to be discoverable to those for whom they were intended, sunk deep into the mind of Monteith, embittered all his domestic happiness, perpetually irritated his temper, and at length, in an

unfortunate moment, threw him so completely off his guard, that, provoked beyond endurance, he defied the offender publicly, he was immediately put under an arrest, and brought to a court martial, and such was the power and influence of his enemy, that, though generally beloved and universally pitied, he was dismissed the service.

“ A wounded spirit who can bear.” The fortitude of Monteith was not proof against disgrace; a settled melancholy took possession of him, he spoke little, lost all relish for society, and in a few months sunk into an untimely grave.

The widowed Emmeline and her child were, from motives of humanity, received into the family of General Marsden, then resident at Calcutta. The general knew and esteemed Monteith, he admired the bravery of his character, and he truly commiserated his fate.

Here, beneath the superintendance of

Lady Ann Marsden, a woman of high birth, sense, and talents, the young Juliet rapidly improved. With the General's children she partook of the instructions of an accomplished governess, and her natural abilities became apparent.

Till she was seventeen, she knew sorrow but by name, save at her father's death; but just as she had attained that age, her patroness died suddenly. The General himself went into active service, and his family were dispersed amongst their mother's relations.

Mrs. Monteith and her daughter, now of necessity sought that part of the globe, where they hoped to find friendship, and took their passage for England.

The foregoing circumstances, Juliet had often heard from her mother, but the earlier history of her father, she had altogether been unacquainted with, till after her death, when amongst her papers, she found a sealed packet directed to her daugh-

ter, it contained two or three posthumous letters, on different subjects, written as occasion offered. In one of them she read the following words :

“ In the world to which you must now be introduced, my dear Juliet, it may be your fate to meet with all that remains of your father’s family. It is therefore right that the particulars, relating to his birth, should be made known to you.

He was the natural son of Sir George Aveling, a rich Baronet, and his mother was a beautiful girl of good family, but small fortune, his birth cost his unfortunate mother her life, and he was reared in privacy and seclusion. Sir George married, and had one only son, that Colonel Aveling whose implacable hatred of poor Monteith, embittered his days, and finally shortened his existence. While resident in the cottage of his nurse, Monteith, then a fine boy of twelve years old was noticed by the Earl of Oglethorpe, the father of Lady Ellinor Harvey, who with

his lady, an only son and one daughter resided at the manor-house in the same neighbourhood; his extraordinary beauty of person first attracted the Earl's attention, his son was a sickly child of melancholy habits and manners and to amuse the young heir, Monteith was permitted to play with him, and soon became such a favorite, that he was taken into the house and brought up as a dependent on the family.

Lord Oglethorpe's son died young, but he had made the Earl promise, to provide for his favourite Monteith, who was retained for his sake at the manor.

Here young as he was, his misfortunes began, young Aveling the only son of Monteith's father by his lady, was a frequent visitor at Oglethorpe house, where our family were also intimate. It was my fate to win the young heart of Monteith, and Aveling declared himself his rival.

Lady Ellinor found she was neglected,

and her secret partiality for Monteith, led to all the consequences that followed.—Aveling, though he knew the affinity of Monteith, would never acknowledge it, but dreaded lest his talents and virtues should induce his father, if he once became known to him, to own and adopt his elder son; but Sir George was too anxious that the whole tale should be consigned to oblivion, to realize his apprehensions, and in one of the few interviews he had with Monteith, he obliged him to give a solemn promise, that he would never avow the relationship. Thus consigned to neglect, by his natural friends; on Lord Oglethorpe was Monteith's only reliance.

Alas! indignant and wounded in his feelings, by the unworthy treatment he experienced from his only parent, with me he sought the sympathy, I was too ready to give to his sorrows. Watched by Lady Ellinor, persecuted by Aveling, and devotedly attached to Monteith, I

had no adviser, no kind monitor to warn me of the consequences of error.—Young, rash and imprudent, I eloped.—The rest you know. Let my fate be a warning to my child and I shall not have lived and died in vain.”

EMMELINE MONTEITH.

Long had Juliet wept over the recital of her parent's sorrows, but she possessed a well regulated mind, and an understanding naturally strong; it had been cultivated with care, and enabled her to judge accurately and impartially.

She saw that her father had acted wrongly, and that the misfortunes, she bewailed, had been incurred by his desertion of his first benefactor, Lord Oglethorpe, and his rashness in making Emmeline the companion and partaker of his imprudence.

“But such,” thought Juliet, “are the consequences of wilful error. Innumerable are the evils entailed on us by indis-

cretion—Oh! may I, in recurring to the sad history of my parents, learn to distrust my own heart, and by due consideration, to allow reason and prudence, to counteract the suggestions of passion and inclination.”

Dreadfully had her father been punished, for his early deviations from right, and humbly she trusted in their final expiation. The principles, of the Christian religion, had been impressed on her ductile mind, by her penitent mother, as well as by her kind instructresses in India, and the consolation she now derived from the purest source, enabled her to support with some degree of firmness and hope, the loss of her natural protectors, and the melancholy reflection of being alone in the world.

The depression of her spirits during her journey from town in the stage, seemed an omen of the disappointment and humiliation, that awaited the unfortunate orphan, and once more driven forth to seek

a home, her fortitude seemed to have forsaken her.—Her faculties were suspended, and she mechanically followed the servant without knowing whither she meant to go, and utterly unconscious of her own calamitous situation.

Recalled to recollection, by the man saying, they were now without the park, and that he was there ordered to leave her; she was just collected enough to ask where the road led to. To Henwood and Rushdale was the reply and in a moment she found herself alone.

Trembling and distressed she tottered to a bank, and seating herself, a violent burst of tears seemed to relieve the weight on her heart. She cast a despairing look towards the road, and “Whither now must I direct my steps?” was the question on her lips, when the name of Rushdale, to which the servant had said the way led, suddenly occurred to her.—“Rushdale!” thought she; “surely I have seen that name!” and hastily search-

ing her pocket, she drew from it the card of the benevolent quaker. *Edward Morden, Rushdale*, was the address, and he had assured her of an asylum, if she should fail to find one at Harvey Lodge. Vague and uncertain as was the plan, it was the only one she could form ; besides, she had resolved to find the quaker, if it were only to return the bank-note he had forced on her acceptance at parting ; and as fast as her tottering feet and delicate frame would suffer her, did she hasten forward. “ At least,” thought she, “ I am getting farther from the lodge, where only cruelty and derision awaited me. But no ; the good house-keeper, and the angel Lady Clara, must always be remembered with tender gratitude.” More than one finger-post convinced her she was still in the right road, yet the way seemed inexpressibly tedious. Some houses on a green, forming a scattered village, at length met her eye. “ This, oh this is Rushdale,” thought she, with delight ; for she was

faint for want of food, and overcome with weariness ; but here, alas ! she was disappointed : Rushdale was nearly three miles distant.—“ I must rest here, however,” said she, dropping on a seat at the door of a small public-house.—“ Better walk in, Miss,” said a fat, good-humoured looking woman, who appeared to be the landlady. Juliet readily acquiesced, and desired she might have some provisions. Some cold meat was brought her, but she found herself intolerably thirsty, and discovered, that though faint and exhausted, she had no inclination to eat. The horrid idea of illness, in a situation so utterly destitute, rushed with bitterness on her mind, and again the wish of imploring the assistance and advice of the Quaker, impelled her to hasten, while she was yet able to totter on, to Rushdale.—“ Lauk, Miss, you are quite ill ; I am sure you can’t walk so far,” said the talkative landlady.—“ Oh, yes, if you can only hear of any person going that way ; I am not accustomed to

walk alone," said Juliet.—“ No, indeed,” said Mrs. Weldon ; “ besides, it’s a lonely walk, over the heath and through the wood. I’ll go ask a neighbour ; they often send over to Rushdale,” and away she ran.— Poor Juliet sat, during her absence, as if she were stupified ; her colourless lips quivered with apprehension, her thirst increased, and her head burned violently. The landlady returned in a few minutes, with the welcome intelligence, that “ little Tom, her neighbour’s son, and his donkey, laden with earthen-ware, were going to set off for Rushdale in half an hour.— “ Well, sure this is lucky,” said Mrs. Weldon : “ Tom is a good-natured boy, and if you are tired, a chance but he’ll let you ride.”—Had Juliet been in health and spirits, she would have smiled at the thought of riding Tom’s donkey ; but, as it was, the hope of reaching an asylum was all that possessed her mind, and she could only thank Mrs. Weldon, and express her anxiety to set out. A very short

time had elapsed, when intelligence was brought, that Tom and his donkey were ready, and Juliet, with her little parcel, once more sallied forth; but, at the door, they were stopped from proceeding, by a hallooing and shouting in the street. It appeared to be caused by a handsome curricie, containing a gentleman, and attended by several servants, round which had gathered a mob of rustics. At sight of the curricie, Mrs. Weldon almost pushed Juliet down, in her eagerness to put on a clean apron, and then hastening back as quickly, "Stop a minute, my dear," said she, "you can't go on yet;" and then, to the surprise of Juliet, she joined the mob in their shouting, curtseying at every word, as if desirous to draw the attention of the gentleman in the curricie, which proceeded slowly through the village, its inmate bowing on each side of him, to the people as he passed. But what were the feelings of Juliet, when, in the glance of curiosity, which she threw

on this apparently popular character, she discovered the benevolent young stranger, whom she had so often met at the fancy-work shop. The colour that had so long forsaken her cheeks, in a moment tinged them with the deepest red, and was succeeded by a hue, livid as death. She trembled violently, and dropped on the bench in the little porch. The curriole, in the mean time, passed; and the transports of the landlady, having, in some degree, subsided, she observed Juliet.—“ Don’t he look delightfully?” said she; “ An’t he a sweet youth?”—“ Who then is it?” asked Juliet, in an almost inarticulate tone. “ Who is it?” cried Mrs. Weldon; “ Why where can you have come from, not to know the dear young ’Squire, Sir Edmund Harvey’s son? To be sure, he is coming down to celebrate his being of age, and joyous doings we shall have. Twenty years was I head laundry-maid in the family, and never does he pass without a bow to Jane.”

“ Sir Edmund Harvey’s son !” repeated Juliet, looking inquisitively, but wildly, at her informant.”

“ Yes, Sir Edmund Harvey’s only son and heir,” replied Mrs. Weldon; “ the best and *most amiablest* young gentleman in the world. He is to be married to Lady Clara Melgrove, and she’s as amiable as he is, more *amiabler* she cannot be.

But, lauk, I’ve a good mind to walk over to Rushdale with you, and tell my sister Bridget the news. Bridget was cook there, while I was laundry-maid, and she married the shop-keeper at Rushdale, and she loves the very sight of the young ’Squire.

Yes, it’s a fine afternoon. Tom can wait half an hour, I dare say, while I get a bit of dinner, and then I’ll leave ’em to finish the ironing, and step over to Rushdale with you.”—Though Juliet was not sorry to have an addition to their party, in the lonely walk to Rushdale, she deeply regretted the delay; but she had no alterna-

tive. Mrs. Weldon must get a bit of dinner, she said; and it was not till after four o'clock, through many difficulties and delays, that they set out on their expedition.

CHAP. IV.

MORE DISASTERS.

MRS. WELDON was large and bulky in her figure. To walk fast was, therefore, impracticable ; but she was in no particular hurry, she said ; for her sister's husband, the shop-keeper, kept a tax'd cart, and would drive her home. Besides, luckily there was a moon. All these sources of consolation to Mrs. Weldon, were, however, little comfort to poor Juliet, whose strength, which had been fast receding from the time she left town, seemed to fail her at every step. "Lauk, how you totter, child," said Mrs. Weldon, leaning her whole weight on the slender arm of her companion. "Miss is tired,"

said Tom ; “ she may ride a bit, if she will ;” but Juliet had never been on a donkey, and was afraid to mount it. “ In truth,” said Mrs. Weldon, “ I am rather tired too, and I don’t know whether I won’t mount myself, for a little way or so.” This hint, however, received no encouragement from Tom, who looked at the figure of Mrs. Weldon, and then at the donkey, as if he had too much regard for the animal to press the matter. They were now more than a mile on their way. It was a dark lowering evening. They had nearly crossed the heath, and were approaching the wood.—“ Well, it don’t signify ; I am so tired,” said Mrs. Weldon, “ that I must ride, if its only a few yards ; so come, Tom, help me up.” Poor Tom scratched his head, and, as he passed Juliet, muttered, in an under voice, “ She’ll kill the donkey, and break all the pots, I count.” But there was no appeal ; and now the great difficulty was, how she was to mount. The united

strength of Tom and Juliet appeared quite inadequate to the task of assisting her, though both willingly lent their little aid, and they were vainly trying to heave her on the back of the poor ass, when a phaeton, with two gentlemen in it, attended by one servant, came in view. The grotesque appearance of the groupe instantly drew their attention, and almost as instantly excited their laughter. The phaeton stopped, and reiterated peals of mirth burst upon their ears, from the inmates of the vehicle, at witnessing the awkward attempts of Juliet and her assistant to seat their unwieldy companion on her steed.—“What are them there sparks a grinning at, I wonder?” said Mrs. Weldon.—“At us, I count,” said Tom, grinning in his turn.—“They had better mind their own business,” said she, “than sit there, making fun of people.” Then, observing the servant, “Come here, young man,” said she, “and just lend a hand, will you.” This drew forth a fresh burst

of laughter. Juliet was terrified. She turned her head away, and tried to conceal her face; for she had almost immediately recognized Sir Henry Colville; but it was too late. Her mourning dress made her too remarkable not to be known, and the baronet had in a moment leaped from the phaeton, and was at her side.—“Again are you mine,” said he, with a look of undaunted arrogance. “This is unexpected indeed; yet, you are the very person I was in search of. The devil a creature would I tell me, at the lodge, which way you were gone. I have been wretched about you, since my ill fate brought that poor lady Ellinor forward, at the very moment I would have told you—” A loud scolding from Mrs. Weldon here interrupted him. She had overset the two panniers of crockware, and had thrown poor Tom under the donkey, by the mischievous connivance of Sir Henry’s servant. Juliet flew to the assistance of the poor boy; and Mrs. Weldon, in a violent

rage, was boxing the footman's ears. Sir Henry pursued Juliet, and assisted in raising Tom unhurt.

“ For God's sake, how came you here with such a party !” said the baronet ; “ but we are losing time. Suffer me to offer you my protection. My carriage and servants shall immediately convey you to an asylum, where all that wealth can give shall be your's,” and he seized her hand, with a look that terrified her.

In as firm a voice as she could command, she unhesitatingly rejected his offers, entreating him not to insult her by a repetition of them ; but she was condemned to hear them repeated with the most insulting additions, till suddenly little Tom coming up to her, said, “ Here's the waggon coming ; it is going to Rushdale. Now, Miss, if you wants to get away from that there gentleman, you had better go in it.” “ Oh, gladly, thankfully,” said the almost exhausted Juliet.— “ Ah, do, child,” said Mrs. Weldon, “ and

I'll go with you; for I am bruised to death, and so stiff that I can't move, and I'll stay all night with my sister, if it's only to go before a justice, and get that there fellow put in the cage." "You may go where you please, certainly," said Sir Henry; "but excuse me, if I insist on taking care of this young lady. She is the niece of a particular friend of mine, from whom she has eloped, and I shall make a point of restoring her to her family." "No, no," said little Tom, (who, in the mean time, had interested the waggoners in Juliet's cause,) "we know better. Miss shall go in the waggon, if Miss likes. You said nothing about all this at first; did he, Miss?" "For heaven's sake, protect me from him!" said Juliet, looking piteously at the waggoners. "Indeed I have not eloped, though I am very friendless." "Are you friendless?" said one of the men. "Why then you shan't be friendless no longer; and if you want to go to Rushdale, you shall go in the wag-

gon, and welcome ;” and he caught Juliet up in his arms, and, bearing her off triumphantly, seated her in the waggon, where the other man had already placed Mrs. Weldon. “ Take care you don’t break it down, mistress,” said the saucy footman, and ran grinning away at his own wit ; while his master, enraged and disappointed, was obliged to return to his phaeton, and drove off, swearing furiously that he would be revenged on the waggoners : of whose athletic forms, it was evident, he was in some apprehension.

Juliet and her companion drove slowly on in their heavy vehicle, and it was late in the evening when they approached the village of Rushdale. Mrs. Weldon bitterly complained how much she was bruised and hurt by her fall ; and was so absorbed by her own complaints, that she paid little attention to her unfortunate fellow traveller, who, pale, faint, and exhausted, reclined against some large packages, with which the waggon was laden,

scarcely conscious of her own calamitous situation, and with the image of Harvey, the benevolent stranger, constantly before her mental sight. Suddenly raising herself, just at the entrance of the village—“ I never thought of it before, my dear,” said Mrs. Weldon, “ but pray, who may you be going to see at Rushdale ?”—Juliet showed the Quaker’s card.—“ Oh, Morden, the Quaker !” cried Mrs. Weldon.—“ Do you know him ?” asked Juliet.—“ Oh, every body knows him,” she answered, “ and a worthy good creature he is, by what I hear of him, and does more good than all the country besides.”—Juliet wished to hear more concerning him, but extreme weakness and emotion seemed to have totally overpowered her faculties, and when the waggon stopped, she was borne lifeless from it into the inn.

Mrs. Weldon was much alarmed, and forgot all her own complaints, in her assiduity to recover her unfortunate young companion, which she had no sooner ef-

fectcd, than she said, " Well, my dear, if you are able to walk, I'll go with you as far as Mr. Morden's house, for I am sure you are not fit to go by yourself."

Juliet thanked her, and clinging to her arm, they proceeded along the village.— " Yes, yes, I'll not leave you till I see you safe," said the good-natured creature; " though that good-for-nothing fellow has almost killed me; and besides, I am so tired, I am ready to die. I am sure every bone aches, I am so shook with that tumble." At any other time, Juliet must have smiled at the ludicrous distress of the poor woman; but now, her own melancholy thoughts and fearful anticipations engaged her whole mind; and when they stopped at the door of a handsome house, she trembled so violently, that Mrs. Weldon was obliged to exert all her strength to support her.

The door was opened by a maid servant, who, in answer to Mrs. Weldon's enquiry, whether Mr. Morden was at home? said,

“ No; Ma'am; my master and his sister are gone into Yorkshire. He only came home last night, and found a letter, that obliged him to set out this afternoon.”—
“ Why, here's a pretty job!” cried Mrs. Weldon. “ What's to be done now, I wonder?” “ God knows,” said the sinking Juliet; “ for now, indeed, I have lost my only hope.” “ No, no,” said Mrs. Weldon; “ not so bad as that, neither. Come, you shall go with me to my sister's; she is a good-natured soul, and there we can talk about what you shall do.”

They now turned back, and Juliet, roused to exertion by a view of her dreadful and forlorn situation, summoned resolution to give Mrs. Weldon the outlines of her story.—The good woman listened to her attentively, but had hardly patience to hear the whole before she exclaimed—
“ Why, I never heard any thing so shameful and unnatural in my life. I only wish I had known this sooner. Ah, poor thing! I see how it is. Nobody

knows Lady Ellinor Harvey better than Jane Weldon. You are not the only person she has treated ill. However, cheer up, my dear; Sir Edmund is a good man, though he is rather odd, and suffers my lady to manage him so; and when he knows the truth of the story, he'll make it all up to you, depend upon it. And as to Mr. Harvey, he is neither more nor less than an angel."

Juliet assented, with her whole heart, to this declaration; but she forbore giving her companion reason to think, that she had any other knowledge of him, than *that* she had obtained from her.

They soon reached the shop kept by Mrs. Weldon's sister, whom they found at tea with her husband. They were a vulgar, good-natured couple, who listened, with staring wonder, to the tale Mrs. Weldon volubly related of her own adventures and misfortunes, and those of her young friend. A share of Mrs. Weldon's bed, for that night, was offered Juliet,

who, from utter distress, was compelled thankfully to accept it. She retired early to rest, and after a night of repose, which her extreme fatigue of body and mind rendered necessary and acceptable, she arose much refreshed, and her mind far more tranquil than on the preceding day. She had been considering, whether it would not be prudent to write to Sir Edmund, relate her little tale, and refer to her mother's papers, for proof that she was actually the niece, to whom he had promised his protection. That she might put this plan in execution, she thought it would be desirable to continue in that neighbourhood; and she could devise no more eligible scheme, than to ask Mrs. Weldon's sister to receive her as a lodger for a short time, till she could procure an answer from Sir Edmund.

She was on the point of mentioning her wishes, as they sat at breakfast in the little parlour behind the shop, when suddenly

Mr. Muggen the shopkeeper jumped up, and exclaimed—

“ Why sure here’s our landlord,” and Juliet observed through the glass door a man on horseback. “ Yes, it is he sure enough,” repeated Mr. Muggen, “ Bridget, look about you, and put away the litter; he’ll walk in, for he is come about the lease of the shop.”

“ I will walk up stairs,” said Juliet.

“ No, Miss, no,” said Mrs. Muggen, “ You need not go away, for though he is a very rich man, Mr. Hobbleton is not in the least proud.”

Juliet heard the name with surprise, but had no time for inquiry before her stage-coach acquaintance entered, and immediately recognised her.

“ Well, Miss, this is odd enough,” he exclaimed. “ Here it’s only a day or two ago, that I parted from you at Sir Edmund Harvey’s Park Gate, and who would have thought of meeting you so soon again in

Mathew Muggen's shop, of all places in the world."

The tears stood in Juliet's eyes, and Mrs. Weldon, who, to do her justice, had much humanity in her disposition, made no ceremony of endeavouring to interest this rich man in the fate of the poor orphan, by plainly relating the reception she had met with at Harvey Lodge, and the nature of her claims on Sir Edmund. Mr. Hobbleton listened with great attention.

"Well, Miss," said he, "I am sure I am very sorry for you, and I do not know as ever I see a young person before, as I was so much took with. You know I told you I should be glad to see you at Hobbleton Hall, and you shall be welcome there directly to stay as long as you choose.

"I can't say as I ever was fond of having women in a house, they make a deal of chattering and noise, but I'm mistaken if you are not quite of a different sort; besides I have had a sort of a misfortune happen to me, and that is, that a brother

of mine is dead, and has made me the guardian to his daughter, and there I've been forced to take her home, and she is a sad plague to me, for she is as wild as any colt in the world. I wanted her to go to school, but she said she did not like school, and so I let her have her own way. She is a good-natured thing as can be, and really very droll and funny, but she wants taming; besides, she'll have a fine fortin, and ought to learn a little, so I am thinking, Miss, if you could learn her to behave quiet and well, as you do, instead of jumping over sticks, and riding about upon donkies, why it would be doing me a service, and you would have a comfortable home at Hobbleton Hall, till Sir Edmund and his lady choose to behave like relations as they ought."

"There," cried the delighted Mrs. Weldon, "I'm sure I never heard any thing so lucky in my life. Well, this will quiet my mind about you."

"You are a very good kind of woman,

Mrs. Weldon," said Mr. Hobbleton, "and for your good-nature and care of this poor thing, you shall always be welcome to Hobbleton Hall."

It was now Juliet's part to speak, and she thanked Mr. Hobbleton with all the fervent gratitude she felt for the offer, and declared herself ready to evince it, by shewing every attention to his niece.

"I have never," said she, "undertaken the office of tuition, but I shall gladly exert myself to recall what I have been taught, that I may benefit Miss Hobbleton by my instructions."

"I dare say, Miss," said Mr. Hobbleton, "we shall do vastly well, and the sooner you come the better, for that young thing turns the house topsy-turvey, because there is nobody to keep her within bounds."

"Why, then, suppose you go in the course of to-day, my dear," said Mrs. Weldon.

"Yes," said Mr. Hobbleton, "and I'll

go home and send my *chay* for Miss, and when you have a mind to come and see her, Mrs. Weldon, pray do; for I like people that shew kindness to one another."

All was now soon arranged; Mr. Hobbleton settled his business with the shopkeeper, and rode off, and in about an hour and a half, a handsome one-horse chaise was driven up to the door, by a servant in a plain livery; he inquired for Miss Montcith, and Juliet, taking a kind and grateful leave of her friends, set forward for Hobbleton Hall.

CHAP. V.

HOBBLETON HALL.

JULIET arrived, after a short drive, at the house of Mr. Hobbleton, where its owner was ready to receive her. He welcomed her with his usual good-humour, and introduced her to his niece, Lydia, a very fine, handsome girl, about sixteen, who in the dress and with the manner of a child, was amusing herself with sliding down the balustrades of a staircase, that descended to the hall; she looked alarmed at first sight of Juliet, and hanging down her head, pouted, and muttering some saucy speech, suddenly darted away, and fled towards the stable.

“Come back, Liddy,” cried her uncle,

with a loud voice of extreme anger ; but she was quite out of hearing, and turning to Juliet, " Pray, Miss," said he, " don't be daunted by her. To be sure she is a sad saucy jade, but I hope you'll mend her manners, for really, at present, I have no peace of my life. It is surprising what an expense her pranks have been to me in the little time she has been here. She lamed my best horse only the other day, with galloping it till she threw it down and broke its knees, so I was forced to buy her a donkey in my own defence, and it is not long ago that she spoiled me a very good coat and hat, and an excellent wig as good as new, by going dressed up in them to Barford fair, and coming home in a thunder storm. I am for ever obliged to pay for her breaking down hedges, and throwing her ball at people's windows."

Juliet could not forbear smiling at this list of grievances, and readily promised her utmost endeavours should be exerted, to tame the hitherto incorrigible Lydia. He

now led Juliet to the parlour, which was small, and communicated with a dining-room rather larger. The whole house was indeed in miniature, but it seemed constructed and furnished for the peculiar ease and comfort of the possessor. There were large easy chairs in every room in the house, that Mr. Hobbleton might take his nap after dinner comfortably, wherever it happened to suit him.

The old deaf house-keeper, a dirty girl, a cook, a gardener, 'Tim the footman, and a boy, were all the members of the household, in which there was no regularity and little comfort, except at meals, when, as the servants knew that their places depended on their attention, every thing was done in order, and the table constantly spread with the choicest luxuries, four times in a day, according to the favourite system detailed by Mr. Hobbleton in the stage-coach.

At dinner, which was served about three o'clock, Miss Lydia made her appearance,

but still with a most terrific scowl on her naturally fine features. Juliet endeavoured, by some trifling good-humoured attentions, to render her less forbidding, but she found there would be no small difficulty in accomplishing the task of civilizing the little rustic.

The dinner consisted of the choicest delicacies, of which Mr. Hobbleton and his niece eat so voraciously, as to astonish Juliet, whose naturally small appetite was rendered more delicate by indisposition and anxiety. Neither of these causes, however, operated to prevent her companions from indulging their favourite propensity, and during the whole meal, not one word was spoken, save the necessary invitations, refusals, and acquiescence. It was a maxim with Mr. Hobbleton, never to talk while he was eating: he said "it hindered business." This he gave Juliet to understand, and she was glad to be spared the task of conversation.

The moment the cloth was removed,

Miss Lydia started up, and was running out of the room, but her uncle calling her back, insisted on her re-seating herself, which with a great deal of pouting and several saucy answers, she was at length obliged to do.

“ Lydia,” said Mr. Hobbleton, “ this young lady, Miss Monteith, is kind enough to come here on purpose to teach you a little, and make you a genteel young lady like herself.”

“ I don’t want any body to teach me,” said Lydia, “ so she need not give herself any trouble.”

“ Nonsense child,” said her uncle, “ I tell you she is come on purpose.”

“ Well then, she may teach you if she likes it,” said Lydia, “ she shan’t teach me, I can tell her,” and she was again endeavouring to make her escape, but her uncle would not suffer her to depart.

“ Presently,” said he, “ I shall take my nap, and then you can take a walk with Miss, and shew her the garden,” and turn-

ing to Juliet, he added, "and pray Miss do just as you please here. I give you free leave to be your own mistress, and I turn Liddy quite over to your management."

So saying, he arose from table, and seating himself in his arm chair, adjusted his cushion for a nap. "There now, the old gentleman is nodding, we may go," cried Lydia, and without farther ceremony, she darted past Juliet, and flew out of the room. All traces were now lost of her; Juliet, however, resolved to be patient and persevering, and try to conciliate the young romp by the most gentle means in her power. After having been some time in her own chamber, she descended, and in the hall met one of the maid servants, of whom she inquired for Miss Hobbleton. "Oh," replied the girl, "God knows, but most likely playing at trap ball with Tom in the orchard."

Thither Juliet proceeded, but no Lydia appeared; and as she returned to the house she beheld her pupil galloping across the

heath on which the house stood, on a donkey, without a saddle. She leaped from her steed when she came to the door, and calling to the foot-boy—"here Tom," said she, "take care of Jenny, for I shall often have a ride on her, in spite of all the governesses in the world," and she looked saucily at Juliet, who made no answer, but quietly asked her, if she was not afraid to ride without a saddle and alone? Lydia looked surprised at the gentleness of her manner, and answered with more civility, than she had yet spoken.

Juliet hailed the favourable symptom with joy, and claimed the permission Mr. Hobbleton had given her, to see the garden.—Lydia, who seldom walked, ran forward towards the folding gates, and opened them; it was extensive, and inclosed with a high wall.

Every vegetable luxury was cultivated in the greatest profusion, and the choicest fruits covered the walls, which the young lady, *sans ceremonie*, devoured in silence,

till suddenly turning round, and seeing Juliet intently observing her, she said—

“ Why don’t you eat some apricots too, instead of standing staring there?”

“ I will take one if you will have the goodness to gather it for me,” answered Juliet.

“ One!” said Lydia, “ La, I eat forty in a day—I would not thank you for less than ten at a time.”

“ I am sorry to hear it,” said Juliet, calmly.

“ Why?” asked Lydia, fixing her large black eyes full on her face.

“ Because it is by no means an elegant or an amiable habit to eat voraciously,” she answered.

“ Oh, you need not give yourself the trouble to lecture me,” said her pupil, “ for I shall never attend to you—I have always been used to do as I like, and I shan’t be forced now to do any thing against my will.”

“ Believe me,” said Juliet, “ I have no

intention of *forcing* you to do any thing.”

“ Then what did you come here for ?” asked Miss Lydia.

“ Merely in compliance with the wishes of Mr. Hobbleton,” answered Juliet. “ I am ill and unhappy, it therefore would not suit either my health or spirits to use great exertion. In gratitude to Mr. Hobbleton, I shall afford you every assistance in my power; but assure yourself, however desirable such a situation may be, I shall never give myself the trouble to force any one whom I find incorrigible, simply because I shall not think you worth the undertaking.”

“ La ! I am very sorry you are ill,” said Miss Hobbleton, and an involuntary look of pity was immediately visible on her handsome countenance. “ But I dare say if you would ride my donkey, and eat as much fruit as I do, you would be better.”

“ I should have no objection to ride your donkey,” said Juliet, smiling, “ pro-

vided you would suffer me to have a saddle."—"And will you let me ride it too?" asked Lydia.—"Certainly," said Juliet, "and will accompany you whenever you please."—"Why then, I really think I shall like you at last," said the thoughtless Lydia; "but you must not make me read and learn lessons, and all that stuff." "On the contrary," said Juliet, "I will only require you to make the trial; and if you find you prefer ignorance to knowledge, I will even join in soliciting your uncle, never to oblige you to learn any thing."

Juliet would not have yielded thus, if she had not felt an internal conviction that, though she had much to struggle with, she should yet finally conquer.—The countenance of her young charge beamed with intelligence; nor was it a false index of her mind. Her understanding was naturally good, and her talents quick, but she was wholly uncultivated. She had been reared in ignorance of the most common acquirements; and having only

associated with servants, her manners were rude and unformed. Her uncle was greatly surprised to see her enter quietly with Juliet to tea, when the dinner scene was acted over again. After which, Mr. Hobbleton repaired to his club, which he frequented every evening, and Juliet was again left alone.

There were no books, nor musical instrument, in the house, and she had some difficulty to find employment for herself; for Miss Lydia saved her all trouble on her account, by disappearing immediately after the departure of her uncle, saying she should be back presently. Juliet would have stopped her, but that was impossible; she was out of the house and on her donkey in a minute, and (with Tom running, shouting, and hallooing by her side) galloped off towards Barford, the nearest market town. She returned in about two hours, and said she had only been to buy a ball for Tom, because she had lost his, by throwing it at a stage-

coachman the day before, as he drove along the road, for clanging his whip at her, and calling her a tomboy.

Juliet forbore, for the present, to remonstrate; and when Mr. Hobbleton returned to supper, she ventured to ask if some books might be provided?

He desired she would order any thing she liked; and she availed herself of the permission, to send for such publications as might be useful, and a piano-forte, from town. The latter was a great acquisition for herself at present; all attempts to instruct her pupil, she was aware, would be vain; but the regular good-humour and firmness of temper, which she evinced towards the wild Lydia, soon began to have the desired effect. At first she only yawned, or went to sleep, when her uncle insisted on her remaining in the room while Juliet read or played; but at length she began to listen, particularly when Miss Monteith sung; and Mr. Hobbleton was so much delighted, that he ac-

tually requested she would favour him, now and then, with a tune or a song.

Her mild and amiable deportment, greatly won on her good-hearted, though vulgar benefactor, whose kindness and indulgence were unbounded; particularly when he began to discern an evident alteration in the manners of his hitherto incorrigible niece.

One evening, when Mr. Hobbleton returned, at his accustomed hour, from his club, he said—"I have met with something very odd, to-night, that I don't much like. The whole way from the crown, I saw a man following me, wrapped up in a great-coat; and I am very much mistaken if it was not our silent stage-coach acquaintance, Miss, who, I dare say, you remember."

Juliet did indeed remember him; and she asked whether the stranger had spoken, or appeared to recognize him?

"No, not he," said Mr. Hobbleton; but he passed me twice, and I lost sight

of him by the copse yonder. I do not much like his lurking about here ; for if he is the person I suspect, he's more than half crazy, as people say. You heard how oddly he answered me, when I just mentioned the owner of the hermitage was such a queer character. Now, to tell you the truth, I have a strong suspicion, that it's the very man himself, Mr. Deumore, as he is called ; and some say, that is not his true name, neither."

She farther gathered, from Mr. Hobbleton, that this eccentric personage had taken possession of the estate called *The Hermitage*, a year or two before. The late possessor had been dead more than ten years. He had no family, and it was not publicly known to whom his property had devolved, till this person suddenly appeared, taking possession as the heir of the deceased ; but where he came from, or who were his connexions, remained unknown. He associated with nobody, had never returned the visits of the neigh-

houring gentry, and was seldom seen beyond the precincts of his own domain.

Juliet could not help connecting the strange behaviour of the traveller in the stage with Mr. Hobbleton's present relation, and involuntarily felt a degree of alarm, for which she could scarcely account.

The next day, when Mr. Hobbleton came in to dinner, "Well, Miss," said he, "all our stage-coach acquaintance seem to find us out. I have met with the quaker-gentleman to-day, and we have had a long conversation about you. He was quite pleased to hear of you; for Mrs. Weldon came up while we were talking in the market place, and told him all about your trouble at finding him absent when you went to his house, and I dare say he is a very good kind of man; so I told him, if he had a mind to come and see you, he'd be welcome at the Hall; for though I don't much like your *yea and nay* broad-brimmed folks in general, yet I thought, as

he was so kind to you, it was but right to be civil to him."

Juliet thanked him fervently, and felt happy in the thought of having an opportunity of acquitting herself of her obligation to Morden, by returning the bank-note he had so humanely and delicately put into her hand at parting.

"Should not you like to go to Rushdale to see him?" said Lydia.

"Indeed," said Juliet, "it would, I believe, be only right for me to wait on him, now that I know he is at home; for, the very reason why I wish to see him, may prevent him from coming here, conscious as he is of his own benevolence."

"Well, then, you can go to-morrow," said Lydia, "and I'll drive you."

"Yes," said her uncle, "and turn her into a ditch, and break her neck. No, no, none of your pranks; Tim shall drive Miss, when she wishes to go."

It was therefore decided, that Tim

should drive Juliet to Rushdale on the following morning ; and as Lydia insisted on going also, and her uncle had never been in the habit of contradicting her, the dokey was prepared for her to be of the party.

CHAP. VI.

A VISIT, A FAIR, AND AN ACCIDENT.

AT the appointed hour, the party set forward to Rushdale, and drove to the same door, where, a month before, Juliet had experienced the disappointment of finding Morden absent. No such disappointment now awaited her. Mr. Morden was at home; he was reading alone in a neat parlour, where every thing corresponded with the unassuming appearance of the owner. He arose on their entrance, and a glow of pleasure was diffused over his benevolent countenance at the sight of Juliet.

“ I rejoice to see thee, friend,” said he,

“ and to observe that thou appearest in better health than when we last met.”

Juliet thanked him; and being seated, she entered on the subject of her visit.—
“ It was due at once,” said she, “ to express my thanks for your humanity to a stranger, and to return the only part of the obligation in my power. Since that time, I have been so fortunate as to meet with a friend in Mr. Hobbleton, who, by giving me employment, and an asylum in his house, has enabled me to rely on my own exertions in future.”

So saying, she would have placed the paper, containing the bank note, on the table, but he prevented her—

“ Thou wouldest not, I am persuaded,” said he, “ hurt the feelings of any person.”

“ Oh, not for the world.”

“ Then keep this trifle,” said he; “ and when thou meetest a fellow creature who needs such aid, bestow it as thy heart and thy judgment shall direct.”

Juliet could no longer refuse to replace the note in her pocket, and Morden immediately left the room ; he returned in a few minutes, and introduced to them his sister. Anna Morden, in the dress and with the manners of a rigid quaker, was a beautiful young woman of four and twenty. She took Juliet's hand, and with a smile of benevolence said—

“ I have heard of thy meeting with my brother, and have felt so much interested for thee, as to regret very sincerely the journey which was a source of disappointment to thee. Most gladly should I have received and welcomed thee to my brother's house, but I rejoice to hear thou hast found an eligible asylum.”

Juliet warmly thanked her, and stated the terms on which she was at present an inmate with Mr. Hobbleton ; “ I fear,” said Miss Morden, “ that thy health and spirits are not quite adequate to the task assigned thee ; but a mind, anxious to secure independence by its own exertions, and

that providence which seldom fails to assist the good, will enable thee I trust to proceed without injury to thyself."

While the fair quaker spoke, the large dark eyes of Lydia were fixed on her face, with a saucy stare, that alarmed Juliet; and when she ceased, and Edward Morden had arisen, and was saying something in a low voice to his sister, she was utterly discomposed by Lydia suddenly putting her mouth close to her ear, and whispering, "I shall take a run while you stay here, I can't stop to hear all their *thee* and *thou* preaching."—And before Juliet could answer, she had darted out of the room, and fled out of the house, banging all the doors after her.

As soon as she had disappeared, Miss Morden, who had quietly noticed her boisterous departure, said, "I pity thee for the constant command of temper which thou wilt be called upon to exert with thy pupil, and fear it will be a heavy tax on all thy best feelings, to witness the impropriety of her general deportment."

“ I should indeed be quite discouraged,” answered Juliet, “ if I did not think that there is a foundation to build on, but from several circumstances that have occurred, I feel assured that her heart and understanding are both naturally good. She is, I understand, heiress to a large fortune, and has no maternal friend. This appears to me precisely the period, by timely exertion, to save her from ruin. Her mind, though wholly uncultivated, has not been vitiated ; she has only associated with children, and the few old servants of Mr. Hobbleton. Her loud and boisterous manners are the consequence of having been left to run wild, and her mischievous propensities proceed from never having been taught any thing useful, or rationally amusing. By not violently opposing her, and by judicious methods, I think it will be possible to reform her manners ; indeed, within the last few days, she has been so much tamer, as to give me great hope of ultimate success.—At all events, I feel

bound by gratitude to her uncle, to make the trial. Towards me, he has shewn genuine benevolence of heart, and a disinterested kindness, that amply compensate for an unpolished exterior."

"With such a motive for thy endeavours," said Anna Morden, "I must think that thou canst not fail of success; but shouldst thou find them unavailing, my brother and I shall be ever ready to afford thee an asylum."

Juliet was again expressing her acknowledgments, when a servant entered the room, to say, that a boy had called to request Miss Monteith would call at Seward's the shoemaker, at the end of the village, for Miss Lydia, for that she should not return to Mr. Morden's house.

Juliet felt alarmed, lest her pupil's desertion should bring her into some unpleasant dilemma, and hastened to take leave of her respected friends, who united in requesting to see her as often as she had leisure and opportunity to visit them.

Her alarm proved to be not unfounded. Lydia was no where to be seen, she had called at the shoemaker's, staid a few minutes, and said she would take a walk till Miss Monteith called for her.

Juliet was now seriously perplexed, and as she cast her eyes over the heath, on the borders of which stood the village of Rushdale, and saw no traces of her fugitive pupil, she almost regretted having undertaken a task, so harrassing, as the charge of the incorrigible Lydia.

Timothy, the only man servant of Mr. Hobbletou, who had alighted from the chaise to make the necessary inquiries at the shoemaker's, a raw, awkward, red-headed youth, now suddenly exclaimed—
“Lauk, Miss, I remembers now it is Henwood fair. Ten to one but Miss Lyddy is gone there, for she told Hannah before she set out, that she would go; but Hannah says, says she, ‘ Ah but Miss Monteith won't let you, you know you've got a governess now,’ says she, ‘ and

you must do as she bids you,' 'Ah but I'll match her there,' says Miss, 'for I'll get her to go to Henwood to call on that old Mrs. Weldon, or some excuse or other; and if I can't persuade her I'll get away, and go by myself,' so she's off, Miss, as sure as can be."

Upon enquiring farther of the shoemaker's family, it appeared that Lydia had proceeded directly across the heath.

"Ah she is gone to the fair," said Tim, "as sure as can be, for that's the strait road to Henwood, and now we shall have a fine chace. Suppose I drive you home, Miss, and then go back and look for Miss Lyddy."

"Oh no," said Juliet, "I cannot think of returning without her, we must pursue her steps, and endeavour to find her." She remembered her own walk from Henwood to Rushdale with Mrs. Weldon, who had told her it was three miles distant, and she now determined at all events to

drive there and bring Lydia home with her.

Tim whipped on, and half an hour brought them to Henwood—no trace of Lydia appeared on the road, but Tim said it was no wonder, for that she always rode as fast as the donkey would go.

The village was in all the bustle and and confusion of a fair, and Juliet in vain looked anxiously around, the object of her search no where met her eye; but the motley assemblage she beheld, contributed to augment her alarm for Lydia. She ordered Timothy to alight, and carefully explore the busiest part of the fair, while she sat in the chaise; but in vain, she was not to be found, and Juliet every moment grew more anxious, particularly as she perceived that she and her companion were objects of general attention to the groupes that continually passed and repassed.

The grotesque appearance of Timothy, his red head, and odd dress, excited their

laughter, and the fine form and face of Juliet, though concealed beneath a close pelisse and veil, could not be so entirely hidden as to escape observation.

Suddenly an exclamation from Timothy, as, with his eyes and mouth wide open, he was staring around, directed her to notice two smart footmen, at a short distance, standing at the back gates of of what appeared to be the stable yard of a large mansion; they were laughing immoderately, and one of them held by the bridle a donkey, with a side saddle, which Timothy recognised to be Lydia's. Delighted to hear his assertion that, "for sartin it was poor little Jenny," she desired him to accost the footmen, and enquire for Miss Hobbleton.

Timothy's address only increased their risibility; but when it at length subsided, they told him that the young lady was within—"Captain Hardington and Major Barfield brought her here," said the man, "out of the fair, where she had got

into the mob, and was frightened, and she is now in the drawing room with my mistress."

"And who is his mistress?" asked Juliet, when Timothy repeated to her this conversation.

"Bless you, Miss, a very great lady indeed," answered Timothy, "the *Right Honorable Mrs. Soment*, I forgets what; and however Miss Liddy could get into such a grand house I can't think, for my part."

"Well go instantly," said Juliet, "and desire the servant will inform Miss Hobbleton, that Miss Monteith is waiting in the chaise for her, and requests she will come immediately."

The footman obeyed, but presently returned with his mistresses compliments, and she desired the lady would walk in, for that Miss Hobbleton was just then particularly engaged."

Fearing she scarcely knew what, Juliet found herself obliged to comply, and

dreading lest Lydia was exposing herself, in some wild frolic, she followed the servant into a spacious elegant mansion, and as he conducted her up a noble staircase, she heard loud shouts of laughter, and the voice of Lydia in noisy mirth. Her native timidity made her shrink, from proceeding farther, but recollecting all she owed to Mr. Hobbleton, she exerted her utmost courage, and followed the servant into a magnificent drawing room, where the first object she beheld was Lydia, with her long hair, which had escaped the comb's confinement, streaming over her shoulders, in her usual romping manner, playing battledore and shuttlecock with a gentleman in a military uniform, who, with several other officers standing by, appeared to be in convulsions of laughter at her loud and boisterous manner. Ladies were dispersed in different parts of the room, and the attention of all seemed equally engrossed by the eccentric Lydia.

On Juliet's entrance, silence suddenly reigned through the apartment; and Lydia, who had caught a view of her in the mirror opposite, and evidently was unprepared to expect her approach, dropped her battledore, and stood in staring surprise.

Once more, loud peals of laughter burst from the company, and had nearly induced Juliet to return precipitately the way she came. Such a reception was not calculated to relieve her apprehensions; but by alarming her pride, it fortunately restored her self possession, and summoning all her courage, she turned to a middle aged lady, who was seated near the entrance, and would have requested to know to whom she was to apologize for her unintroductory intrusion but the lady was deaf, and heard not a word she uttered; and at this moment a young officer, ceasing from a violent and noisy laugh, approached her, and with a ludicrous gravity of countenance, bowed profoundly. Juliet had been little accustomed to the mo-

dern amusement of quizzing, she was therefore unfeignedly surprised, when with pompous solemnity, this young son of Mars addressed her.

“ I am superlatively, and inexpressibly happy, madam,” said he, “ to have had the supreme felicity of rescuing your lovely, amiable, and gentle pupil, from the profane hands of a daring mob, and to restore her safely in all her natural and acquired graces and beauties, to your protection and maternal care.”

This speech, uttered with the most affected gesticulations, convinced Juliet that it was spoken in derision. She quietly answered, “ if you mean Sir, to inform me that you have saved Miss Hobbleton from insult, I am sure, were he aware of it, I should be authorised to offer you the thanks of her uncle;” and then turning towards Lydia, she requested her to accompany her home immediately, lest Mr. Hobbleton should be alarmed by this long absence.

Lydia pouted, and seemed unwillingly to raise her hat from the carpet, on which she had thrown it. She was saved the trouble, by the officious attentions of the young officer, who though somewhat disappointed by the calm, grave, and elegant manners of Juliet in his first intention of "quizzing the *governess*," was by no means inclined to lose the former subject of his mirth, and when Lydia, still pouting, suffered him to put on her hat, with an air of ridiculous and assumed gravity he exclaimed.

•• "Oh how she roll'd her charming eyes in spite,
And look'd delightfully with all her might."

Again peals of mirth shook the room, which the undaunted Lydia, far from resenting, heartily joined; but Juliet, feeling unconscious of meriting insult, determined no longer to be exposed to it; and gravely, but firmly taking the arm of her pupil, led her from the room, and with some difficulty had conducted her half down

the staircase, when a voice behind them, the voice of a female, solicited their attention, and entreated them to stop; but Juliet could not voluntarily be persuaded to return to the scene she had just quitted; she felt it wholly incongruous with her feelings; and quickly saying, "pardon me, we are in great haste," she still drew the half reluctant Lydia towards the chaise, and felt no small relief when she saw herself and pupil once more seated in it.

Prudently she forebore any expostulation, or reproof to Lydia before the servant; but merely asked how she encountered the party with whom she had found her.

"Oh," replied Lydia, "such good fun! I went into the fair, and was going in to see the wild beasts, when a man gave me a push, and I tumbled down the steps. The people all laughed, and I only gave a saucy boy a box on the ear. I was trying to get away from him, and a woman (his mother I suppose, only see how she has torn my

frock) when those two gentlemen came up and took me away, and brought me with them to Mrs. Clermont's, the honourable Mrs. Clermont she is too, and she was so polite, and they were all so droll, and I was so comfortable, till you came in; but somehow, I am glad too, that I've got away, for they were to be sure rather rude at last, and every word I said they laughed at."

Juliet made no answer, she was resolved on a serious remonstrance when she reached home, and thought it better till then, to be silent on the subject, but she was not destined to reach home so quietly, as she had hoped; for now Tim discovered that in their haste to get Lydia away they had left the donkey behind. Miss Hobbleton vehemently declared, that she would not go home without it; and Juliet in vain assured her, that she would procure her uncle's permission, to send the servant over for it that evening or the next morning, and in the mean time, that it

would doubtless be safe at Mrs. Clermont's. Lydia raved, cried, and then pouting declared, that she would run away the very first opportunity, after their return home, and go back to Mrs. Clermont's for it.

Juliet too well knew that she would put her threat in execution, and began to consider how it was most prudent to act. While they stopped, and she rapidly reflected, Tim suddenly exclaimed, "good luck Miss, here's one of the chay wheels just off." This was indeed a serious evil, and Juliet now determined to alight, and walk back to Henwood, where at the house of Mrs. Weldon, she would solicit an asylum, till the chaise could be repaired, and in the mean time, Tim might go to Mrs. Clermont's and fetch the donkey.

Lydia was too well satisfied at returning to the fair to object, and they proceeded immediately to the little public house, where Juliet had first rested, after her inhuman dismissal from Harvey Lodge.

In the midst of bustle, with a house full.

of that description of people who frequent country fairs, they found Mrs. Weldon; she had scarcely time to tell Juliet, that if she could find a corner in the house to put her in, she should be welcome to stay as long as she pleased; and drawing from her pocket the key of her own bed-chamber, she advised her to find her way to it. "For you won't like to be crammed in among all the fair folks," said she—Juliet thankfully received it, and still keeping Lydia's arm, explored her way up stairs, where in a small confined bed-chamber, she established herself and pupil, determined to await patiently the return of Tim, whom she had sent to endeavour to get the chaise sufficiently repaired, to enable them to reach home and procure the donkey from Mrs. Clermont's.

These various delays had detained them till three o'clock, and Lydia began to exclaim she was hungry.—With some difficulty refreshments were provided, and Juliet had to listen to the saucy remon-

stances of Miss Hobbleton, on not being permitted once more to walk into the fair; but Juliet dared not again incur the danger of encountering the Clermont party.

Suddenly a knocking at the chamber door announced Mrs. Weldon, she came in a great hurry to put on a clean apron, for some of the great folks from the ledge had called—and Juliet as she sat pensively by the window, beheld indeed Mr. Harvey and Lady Clara Melgrove, in an open carriage, amusing themselves with viewing the fair.—Involuntarily she shrunk back, though not till she had gained a distinct view of his features, which, as those of the benevolent stranger, were indeliably imprinted on her memory.—Lady Clara looked gay and happy, and Harvey was pointing out to her observation the different objects around.—Juliet sighed deeply, and soon the curriole drove on.

Lydia had gratified her hunger, and Juliet had partaken of what Mrs. Weldon

had kindly provided for them, and they were now in momentary expectation of the chaise; but Tim had met some of his acquaintance, and was in no hurry to return to them, and the hours rolled by, and yet he did not appear.

Juliet began to be alarmed; it would soon be dark, and they had six miles to go; her fears every moment increased, and she at length ventured from the room, to beg Mrs. Weldon to send some person to inquire for him.

He was with much difficulty found, but the chaise, he said, could not be mended, for there was nobody to do it; however, he had got it tied up, so as to carry them home; and as to the donkey, the Lady had sent word as how she would send it home the next day.

It was very evident to Juliet, that Tim had been regaling with his friends; he looked red, and grinned at every word; he seemed, however, tolerably capable of con-

ducting them, and once more, just as it grew dark, they ascended the chaise.

“ We must go very slow, Miss, or we shall get a tumble,” said Tim, with a facetious grin.

Juliet felt more fears than she chose to avow, but prudently suppressing all appearance of alarm she tried to calm the terrors of Lydia, who continually exclaimed,

“ I know we shall all be killed, and it will be your fault, Miss Monteith.”

The very slow pace they went, delayed their procedure so long, that it was quite dark before they had gone three miles. Tim, who had been half asleep, suddenly started, awakened by a jolt of the chaise, and addressing himself to Lydia, said, “ I say Miss, we shan’t get home to night at this rate,” and smacking his whip, the horse quickened his pace, the injured wheel immediately gave way, and in an instant they were all laid prostrate in the road.

CHAP. VII.

THE ACCIDENT LEADS TO AN INTRODUCTION.

IT was quite dark, and a drizzling rain began to fall.—“Here’s a job!” cried the now almost sobered Tim, “what’s to become of us now?”

“Oh, I’m kill’d, I’m kill’d!” cried Lydia, to the great joy of Juliet, who, though she felt herself injured by the fall, was assured by the loud exclamations of Miss Hobbleton, and the agility with which she sprang from the ground, that she had received no material hurt. They were however three miles from home—it was a wet night, and she feared her own arm and foot were at least sprained, from the difficulty she found in raising herself.

More distressed than she had yet felt, during this unfortunate and eventful day, poor Juliet was now completely dismayed; and her joy was indeed great, when the sound of an approaching carriage broke on her ear.

Lydia's loud screams soon drew the attention of the travellers; and a chariot, with lamps, containing two gentlemen, was stopped. Enquiries were made, but from Juliet no answer was received; for the pain of her foot was now become so excruciating, that a sensation like fainting had assailed her. She felt herself raised from the ground, and the words, "I trust you are not much hurt," reached her ear. She could not discern the features of the person who spoke, but the voice was sufficient. It was the voice of Harvey himself, and he instantly recalled her to recollection.

The other gentleman and the servants were examining the chaise, and declared it could not again receive its inmates; but

having learned from Lydia their place of destination, the chariot was offered for the accommodation of the ladies, and Juliet, supported by the arm of Harvey, was led towards it. The light of the lamps flashed on her pallid countenance; Harvey started,—the view was momentary,—but it was sufficient to convince her, that he was not unknown. Timidly she shrunk from his observation, and in silence he lifted her into the carriage. Lydia sprang in after her.

“ I fear,” said Harvey, “ that I too must intrude; my friend will mount the box, and we will leave Thomas to assist your servant in conveying the chaise home.”

All was soon arranged. Juliet, in a tone almost inarticulate, uttered her thanks, and her regret to cause this inconvenience to strangers.

“ We are not strangers,” said Harvey; “ our respectable neighbour, Mr. Hobblton, is well known to us; and it is part

of his family, I understand, to whom we have been so fortunate as to render assistance."

Juliet could make no answer; she felt subdued by all she had encountered; but Lydia volubly told him, that Mr. Hobbleton was her uncle, and that Miss Monteith was her governess, and then ran on with the story of having been detained at Henwood by the breaking of the chaise wheel, not noticing the silence and abstraction of her two companions.

From the moment that the name of *Monteith* met his ear, Harvey had not spoken; and the face of Juliet was again completely enveloped in her veil, which had fallen back in the overturn of the chaise, and had thus disclosed her countenance to his view.

They soon reached the residence of Mr. Hobbleton; and Harvey, alighting, again gave his arm to Juliet. She was quite unable to stand, and he carried her into the house. Mr. Hobbleton was not returned

from his club, and the gentlemen were shown into the parlour. Juliet would have repeated her acknowledgments, but Harvey interrupted her.

“ You owe us no thanks,” said he. “ Do not, I conjure you, waste time by uttering them, but let your foot be examined. I fear you are seriously hurt; and suffer us, on our return, to call at Rushdale, and send a surgeon from thence.”

Juliet assured him, that she believed the sprain would prove but trifling, but she did not raise her veil, though Harvey stood anxiously contemplating her. His companion was listening, with good-natured attention, to Miss Hobbleton’s account of their disasters; and seeing them fully engaged, Harvey ventured, in a low tone, to say—

“ I cannot be deceived; it is Miss Montcith whom I have so unexpectedly met; she whom, for many days, I have vainly sought.”

“ Sought!” exclaimed Juliet.

“ Yes,” he answered, “ with anxiety have I sought her. Recent incidents at Harvey Lodge have reached my ear. Oh! could I convince you of what I have felt, on hearing such a recital! but I must not be so selfish as to detain you now. To-morrow, I trust, I shall see you.”

“ But, Sir Edmund—Lady Ellinor!” said Juliet, in a trembling voice.

“ To-night,” interrupted Harvey, “ you must not talk on any subject; we will postpone it till the morning, when I shall have the honour of inquiring after you.”— So saying, he hastily drew away his friend, and retired.

With the assistance of the old house-keeper and Lydia, she reached her chamber, bound up her sprained foot and arm, and then retired to rest. Lydia shared her room; but she was so completely tamed by the late accident, which she had just reflection enough to know was owing to her own frolic of going to the fair, that

she was silent, from fear of her uncle's displeasure.

Juliet refrained, that night, from any expostulations. Her spirits were unequal to the effort; she felt ill, and in extreme pain. Her meeting with Harvey had recalled every scene to her memory in which she had formerly beheld him; and the sorrows, the trials of that beloved mother, whose loss she could never cease to deplore, rose afresh to her mind. A slight degree of fever, the effect of fatigue, anxiety, and pain, produced a sleepless night, and the morning found her seriously indisposed. She was surprised and gratified to see, that Lydia did not, as usual, run out of the room immediately on arising, without speaking, but, coming to her bed-side, she took her hand, and said—

“ I am afraid you are very ill, Miss Montcith, and I know it is all my fault; but if you will forgive me, I will try to be more like you in future. Shall I go and send you up some breakfast ?”

Juliet thanked her, but said she would try to arise; for she was unwilling that, penitent as Lydia appeared, she should have to encounter Mr. Hobbleton's re-proofs alone.

“ I am sure you are not well enough to rise,” said Lydia; “ besides, why should you ?”

“ Because,” said Juliet, “ Mr. Hobbleton will need an explanation of the reasons that detained us yesterday, and of course he will be extremely angry when he hears them. I am now sure that you regret having been the cause of our accident, and it may be in my power to moderate his resentment.”

“ And would you really rise, ill as you are, and unable to walk, only for that purpose ?” demanded Lydia.

“ Certainly I would,” answered she.

“ Well, then, I am sure you shall not do it,” said Lydia; “ for I would rather bear the most terrible scolding he could

give me, than that you should suffer from your good-nature."

Juliet was delighted at this proof of improvement in her pupil, but she persisted in rising, and though still lame, accompanied Lydia to the parlour. Her gentle and sensible manner in recounting her tale, had its wonted effect on Mr. Hobbleton; and though he told Lydia that it was only a wonder that she had not broken her own neck and Miss Monteith's too, he was easily appeased, particularly when, after Lydia had left the room, Juliet related her behaviour of the morning.

"Well, come, it is to be hoped, then, that she will turn out something better than a mere tomboy," said he; "but it will be all your doing, Miss; and I am sure I am much obliged to you for your kindness."

After her uncle had quitted Juliet, Lydia returned, and, with more pliability than she had ever before shown, consented to begin learning music. They were en-

gaged in the business of instruction, when the door was suddenly opened, and the maid appearing, said, "there was a heap of grand folks at the door, with Miss's donkey," and before Juliet could issue any orders, as to their being admitted, she was followed into the room by the same gentleman who had addressed her at the house of Mrs. Clermont, on the preceding day, accompanied by a young lady, fashionably dressed, and a gentleman. He began in the same florid language, to say, that "he and his friends had been irresistibly inapelled, by the interest they felt for her and her lovely pupil, to enquire concerning their safety, and to deliver, in person, the young lady's steed, which his servant had brought."

Mr. Hobbleton, at this moment, to Juliet's great relief, entered, and pointing to him, she said gravely, "that, Sir, is Mr. Hobbleton." The sky blue coat, and red waiscoat, his general costume, instantly encreased the before half suppressed smile

of derision on the countenances of the gay party, and the orator immediately repeated his words, adding that, “the superlative beauty and interesting simplicity of his amiable niece, must be his apology for this intrusion.”

Mr. Hobbleton, to whom the word apology was the only intelligible part of the speech, in his usual blunt way said—“I am sorry, Sir, that I can’t say I rightly understand you, for you talk too fine for me; however, I dare say you mean it all very civil, and I thank you for bringing my niece’s donkey home, though Tim could very well have fetched it.—Won’t you be pleased to be seated, Miss?” he added to the young lady, who evidently, with an effort, suppressing her inclination to laugh, took the chair offered her, while the other gentleman, a fashionable looking man about thirty, said in a low voice to Juliet—

“To you is *my* visit. I believe you thought we all behaved very ill yesterday, and I wish to assure you that *I* at least”—

Juliet interrupted him by saying aloud "I am sorry, Sir, you should take the trouble to apologize, it is quite useless and unnecessary,"—and she moved away, for she felt the visit to be an additional insult, and she thought it right that they should understand she considered it as such.

The gentleman looked surprised; he did not intend a word should be heard by Mr. Hobbleton and the rest of the party; and his companions, who had remarked his address to Juliet, now unrestrainedly laughed aloud at his discomfiture.

Mr. Hobbleton stared at them, and then at Juliet; "lauk!" said he, "this is strange manners, to come into one's house to laugh at one; however, Miss Monteith, you that know more of polite company than I do, can perhaps tell what it all means, so I beg you will do as you please, and order any thing you like, for I suppose they are your company. You'll excuse me, being that it is not agreeable to stay to be

laughed at," and he arose and quitted the room.

The strangers arose also; the rebuke they had received, seemed to have abated the courage with which they had undertaken to quiz the governess and her pupil, and they made a hasty retreat; the tittering damsel who accompanied the gentlemen purposely to ridicule the whole set looking embarrassed, though trying to assume an air of fashionable *nonchalance*.

Juliet felt keenly all the difficulties, insults, and mortifications, to which a situation so forlorn must necessarily expose her, but she remembered her mother's admonitions; they had been perpetuated, in one of her posthumous letters, which as soon as she was alone she drew from her desk, and once more perused, as she had accustomed herself to do in every embarrassment. Her eye rested on these words :

“ That humility, which I have with satisfaction observed in your disposition, my

dear Juliet, will I trust secure you from numberless distresses, to which a mind more aspiring might, in your dependent state, continually subject you.—Yet, is it, I trust tempered with proper spirit and fortitude.—A mother's eye can pierce the veil of futurity, and whether admitted as a permanent resident beneath Sir Edmund Harvey's roof, or merely allowed by him a subsistence in obscurity, foresees a host of trials, which it will require all the prudence, sense, and religious adherence to right, which I have laboured to inculcate, to endure with conscious self satisfaction.—But be not dismayed; to every trial of mere temper, I have no doubt, you will rise superior; and to those which may more nearly affect your peace, oppose the consoling reflection, that all here is temporary, and that to support our part well, is to ensure a final termination of woe, and an eternity of bliss. Be this your consolation, my Juliet, as it has long been that of your parent.”

By the perusal and re-perusal of this valued transcript of her beloved mother, Juliet sought to strengthen her mind against the trials yet in store for her. Of Harvey, of his benevolence, and his promised visit, she thought with gratitude, and throbbing delight. To him, to his humanity, she owed the few comforts with which her mother's death-bed had been attended. "Should fate ever ordain that you should again meet this generous stranger, my dear child," she said a few hours before she breathed her last, "tell him that with my dying breath I blessed him, and that I am thankful, there is yet so much benevolence in a world where I am destined to leave my Juliet."

"Ah! how little did she suppose," thought Juliet, "that it was her nephew she blessed, the son of that brother who had so cruelly neglected her."

All the morning passed, in the vain hope of Harvey's promised visit; he came not, and Juliet felt more disappointed

than she dared acknowledge even to herself.—The whole day elapsed, and yet no Harvey appeared. Her sprained foot was better, but still too weak to allow her to walk on it.

Lydia, however, did not avail herself of her lameness; she remained quietly with her, began to learn music, and was even prevailed on to read aloud. In the evening, Juliet suffered herself to be placed on the donkey, and Lydia led her in triumph round the meadow. As they returned to the house, they saw a servant in livery at the door; he had a letter to deliver to Miss Monteith, which required an answer. In much surprise, Juliet read the following note:—

To Miss Monteith.

“The honourable Mrs. Clermont requests premission to wait on Miss Monteith, at any hour she will appoint tomorrow morning.”

What could it mean? Was some other jest intended? To return a decided negative was her first impulse, but such readiness to credit implied insult, she thought was an unworthy feeling, and she wrote the following answer.

To the honourable Mrs. Clermont.

“Miss Monteith will be at home, to receive the honour of a visit from Mrs. Clermont, the whole of to-morrow.”

So anxious, so disappointed was Juliet, on the subject of Harvey, that Mrs. Clermont and her purposed interview were alike unthought of. She could not sleep so well as usual, for the accents of Harvey vibrated on her ear, and his figure was constantly present to her mental sight.

“Why,” thought she, “should I thus continually think of him, when it would be better for me if I could wholly forget him?”—but this was not so easily effected, and she arose in the morning, anxious

and unrefreshed. She was not kept long in suspense as to Mrs. Clermont's visit, for at an early hour for a woman of fashion, her gay equipage appeared at the door.

“The Lord help me,” cried Mr. Hobbleton, “here's some more of them fine folks! I wish they would keep away, I am sure, for I suppose they are only come to laugh at us again.”

Then seeing Juliet look distressed, he kindly added—“but pray dont vex yourself, for I assure you I don't think it is your fault, it is all along with that wild jade's tricks that we are plagued with them.”

Juliet now informed him, that Mrs. Clermont had sent to announce her visit the day preceding, from which she concluded she had some business with her.

“Oh it's all very well, then,” said he, “and you had better receive her in the other parlour.”

Juliet readily availed herself of this permission, and in a few minutes was in the presence of Mrs. Clermont, a beauti-

ful woman about five and thirty. She advanced hastily towards Juliet, and taking her hand, said in a voice of uncommon sweetness—

“ In what words shall I solicit Miss Monteith’s pardon for this intrusion ? It is best to relate the truth at once, and tell you that I have been indescribably shocked, at hearing the reception and treatment you met with at my house, and still more so at the impertinent visit of yesterday. In neither, I entreat you to believe, had I any share ; nor could I rest quietly till I have compelled you to credit me when I aver, that I never yet could find amusement in wounding the feelings of others ; but the fact is that I, like Mr. Hobbleton, have a niece, and she, like your pupil, needs a Miss Monteith to guide her.— I was absent from home when Miss Hobbleton was brought there, and my niece and her friends had possession of my house ; and she it was who, with the same wild, unfeeling love of frolic and ab-

surdity, accompanied the gentlemen here yesterday perfectly without my knowledge."

The grace with which Juliet received her apology, seemed to add greatly to the prepossession Mrs. Clermont had already conceived in her favour.

"I was delighted beyond expression," said she, "at the spirit with which you repulsed that pedantic Captain Hardington, and the impertinence of Major Barfield; and you must allow me to add, that having heard the particulars relating to your late visit to, and hasty departure from Harvey lodge, I cannot help feeling much interested for you. Observe I wish to make no inquiries that you are unwilling to answer, pray do me not such injustice, as to imagine that my disposition resembles those of my guests. When you know me better, I flatter myself you will acknowledge I am right, and till then, I ask not for your confidence; but in the mean time, I must tell you the immediate motive for this vi-

sit, which, from the treatment you experienced under my roof, I should scarcely have felt courage to make, had I not been authorised by a friend of your's, your cousin (for so I understand he is) Mr. Harvey."

At the name of Harvey, Juliet's colour rose high, but Mrs. Clermont did not appear to notice it, and went on—

"Mr. Harvey," said she, "called on me yesterday morning; he told me all he knew relating to you, and he supplicated me to see you, and to deliver a message from him. He is an excellent young man, and has fortunately inherited all the best qualities of his parents, without the alloy of their defects. He related to me his accidental meeting with you the other evening, and his intention of seeing you, according to his promise, yesterday; previous to which, he rather rashly sought an interview with his father, but he found him so influenced by the representations of Lady Ellinor, that an altercation ensued, which

ended in a positive injunction from Sir Edmond, not to see you, till your claim to the protection of his family has been properly investigated. Mr. Harvey desires me to assure you, that he needs no farther conviction of your identity, and he conjures you to remain in the situation you have so meritoriously accepted, till more favourable prospects open to your view ; but in the mean time there is nothing to prevent you from visiting me.—“ And now there are my credentials.” So saying, she delivered into Juliet’s hand, a note which she had that morning received from Harvey ; it contained these words—

To the Honourable Mrs. Clermont.

“ My kind friend has not, I trust, forgotten her engagement for this morning. Repeat to my amiable relation my regret that I am prevented seeing her, by the commands of one whom I have never yet disobeyed, and the anxiety with which I

shall persevere in securing her the protection of those friends, whose strange prejudices have compelled her to seek refuge with strangers. Till I have effected my purpose, assure her I will not relax in my exertions. I need not tell you, that till I have accomplished it, peace will be estranged from the mind of

E. HARVEY."

"There, my dear," said Mrs. Clermont, when Juliet had read it, "you must not call yourself destitute of friends, while you have one so anxious for your welfare."

Juliet could not speak; in the note of Harvey, though evidently written in haste and agitation, she again recognised the hand writing of the benevolent stranger. Her heart was full, but trying to calm her feelings, she no longer hesitated to confide in Mrs. Clermont, whose lively benevolent manner was calculated to win the regard of the warm hearted Juliet.

She related all she knew of herself, and when she had finished—

“Well, my dear,” said her new friend, “yours is a strange story, and with no small share of the romantic in it. It has, however, increased the interest I before felt for you, and as I have a considerable portion of chivalric enterprise in my disposition, I shall certainly take up your cause. I rather think I must be a descendant of Palmerin of England, or Amadis de Gaul, for I inherit much of their love of chivalry, and particularly that part relating to the relief of distressed damsels: seriously, I abominate that lady Ellinor Harvey; I knew her well in early youth, and I know the motives for her hatred of you—a hatred so deep, that it will effectually exclude you from Sir Edmund’s protection, unless the influence, of some active friend is exerted in your behalf.”

Juliet gratefully thanked her, and then Mrs. Clermont asked if she might not see Mr. Hobbleton, to apologize to him

for the rudeness of her friends. Mr. Hobbleton was at home, and obeyed the summons. Mrs. Clermont was one of those really well-bred women, who can adopt their conversation to those with whom they converse; and her easy, good humoured manners, highly pleased Mr. Hobbleton. She availed herself of the opening thus made, and requested his permission for Miss Hobbleton and Miss Monteith to visit her. He answered with his usual good nature—

“That he left it all to Miss,” adding, “for though she has been here such a short time, she has made a strange difference in Liddy already; and she is so steady and well behaved, that I shall never forget her kindness; and all I wish for is to make her her happy, and forget her troubles.”

“The goodness of that man’s heart,” said Mrs. Clermont as he left the room, “will over-balance all the politeness in the world. Let us love genuine benevo-

lence, under whatever form we may find it, my dear Miss Monteith, for it is so rare to meet with it, that even a blue coat and red waistcoat should not induce us to depreciate its value."

Mrs. Clermont departed and certainly left Juliet a happier being than she found her, for she had met one person who professed herself interested for her.

"How ungrateful should I be to repine," thought she; "when Heaven has raised me up such friends as the excellent Harvey, the amiable Mrs. Clermont, and the kind hearted Mr. Hobbleton."

"Mrs. Clermont availed herself of the permission Mr. Hobbleton had accorded, and the following morning, wrote a note requesting to see Miss Monteith and Miss Hobbleton to dinner; and saying that her carriage should fetch them, at any hour they would appoint.

Delightedly, Lydia heard her uncle say, that he left it all to Miss Monteith, for she was the best judge.

Juliet was not long in forming her determination, but she thought it right to represent to Lydia, before her introduction to Mrs. Clermont, the impropriety of her manners, and deportment in her last visit to the house of that lady.

Lydia listened quietly to all she said, and when she had finished, springing towards her, and embracing her with her usual violence—

“ Well, now, my dear Miss Monteith, I do promise to be very good ; and really you have been so kind to me, and I begin to love you so much, that I intend to try to be as much like you as possible.”

“ When you have seen more of the world,” said Juliet, “ I hope you will find a better model, but till then only conduct yourself quietly, and observe the difference, between your late mode of behaviour, and that of women in genteel life in general. Mrs. Clermont is an elegant sensible woman, and it would give me real satisfaction that she should see

you have good sense enough to act with propriety."

In the utter neglect to which Lydia had been consigned from infancy, it was no wonder that her morals, like her manners, had suffered. Juliet, during the short time she had been with her, had taken infinite pains in this respect; she endeavoured to impress on her unformed mind, the necessity of attention to her religious duties. She had compelled her to hear her read the Scriptures, and had carefully explained to her the great truths of the established religion. Even since she had been resident there, she had made her join regularly in prayer, and she taught her to believe the inefficacy of reliance, for hope or comfort on any other support than that of the being she addressed. Her instructions were given in the simplest and plainest language she could adopt; and though she could not flatter herself with having made any rapid progress in the great business of reform, the good effect, of her

admonitions was evident when she attempted to inculcate the great duty of self-denial, and the positive necessity of refusing ourselves many gratifications within our reach, the task became more difficult; but trifling obstacles could not check her perseverance. Stimulated by gratitude to Mr. Hobbleton, and a strong sense of right, she resolutely suppressed any indulgence of her feelings, withdrew her thoughts, as much as possible, from her own affairs, and dedicated them conscientiously, to the improvement of her pupil.

CHAP. VIII.

THE WANDERER ACKNOWLEDGED.

JULIET and Lydia were received by Mrs. Clermont, with cordality and politeness. She was alone, in the library, on their arrival; and she told them, that she had chosen this day in particular for their visit, because her niece and the rest of the party were absent, and would only return to a late dinner.

“Charlotte,” said she, “was placed under my especial care by a dying mother, and it is only my regard to her anxious request, which has induced me to keep her constantly a resident in my own mansion. She is lively, even to a reprehensible extreme, for laughter ac-

tually seems the business of her life ; and so that she can find subjects for her mirth, she cares little of what nature they are. Her temper is good, and her abilities by no means despicable ; but the same never ceasing thirst for sport, which keeps her constantly on the alert in search of amusement, by occupying her time and thoughts, has prevented the acquisition of more solid attainments. She finds a great source of entertainment in the pedantry of Capt. Hardington, as indeed she does in every absurdity of all her acquaintance, and is well disposed to make the most of them. I certainly am interested for her, as the daughter of a brother, to whom I was strongly attached ; but I own, her manners are so volatile, that I regret I cannot find in her the companion I had promised myself."

Before dinner, Mrs. Clermont showed them a part of the grounds and plantations. They were not extensive, but tastefully laid out. Lydia, whose ideas had seldom

wandered beyond the straight gravel walks, and neatly-clipp'd yew hedge, of her uncle's garden, was enchanted with every thing she saw, and ran frolicking through the serpentine paths, with all the wonder and playfulness of a child. While she explored the place, Mrs. Clermont renewed the conversation of the preceding day.

“ I fear,” said she, “ I must have appeared at first intruding and romantic ; but I am sure you will pardon me, for the sake of the motive by which I was actuated. I certainly dislike Lady Ellinor Harvey exceedingly ; for I know her too well to esteem her. Though very young, when that implacable hatred, which influences her conduct to you, was excited, I well remember the circumstance ; and the interesting form of your then beautiful mother, is strongly impressed on my memory.”

“ Did you, then, know my mother ?” asked Juliet, with emotion.

“ I have frequently seen her,” she an-

swered. " I was too young to be on intimate terms with her ; but I recollect, she was always my model of female beauty ; and well do I remember the grief I felt, when her elopement subjected her to the displeasure of her friends, and made her a general topic of conversation in this part of the country."

She then proceeded to say, that she had again seen Mr. Harvey the preceding evening, who had desired, that Juliet would lose no time in addressing his father ; that she would transmit all her mother's letters, with every document she could collect, which might bring conviction to Sir Edmund, of the ill-founded surmises of his lady.

" Though," added Harvey, " I believe, in reality, he has very little doubt ; and that his hesitation in doing right, proceeds more from uncertainty how to act, so as to satisfy his own conscience, and to avoid farther dissention, than from a disbelief of the truth."

“ How much it is to be lamented,” said Mrs. Clermont, “ that Sir Edmund does not possess a little of his son’s firmness of character. Always wavering and undecided, and detesting every thing that gives him trouble, or that tends to rouse him from his natural apathy, he yields implicitly to his lady ; more because it saves him the fatigue of thinking and acting for himself, than from any natural deference to her judgment.”

At the hour of dinner, Mrs. Clermont and her guests were in the dining-room, ready to receive the party on their return; but they appeared not ; and after another hour had elapsed, Mrs. Clermont, determined to wait no longer, sat down to table with only her two young friends and the old deaf lady, whom Juliet had addressed on her first visit to the house. Before the cloth was removed, the carriages drove up to the door ; and the loud laughing and talking that succeeded, declared the return of the company. As they were not aware

whom they might find, great was the surprise of all, when they beheld what guests were seated at the table. Miss Hartley, (the niece of Mrs. Clermont) was the first to enter, laughing violently, with a long chaise whip in her hand. She ran into the room, and was approaching her aunt, to apologize for their delay, and an assurance that it was all Major Barfield's fault, who had nearly broken her neck in the phaeton, when she was suddenly stopped by fixing her eyes on the countenance of Juliet. Mrs. Clermont smiled at her wonder.

“ This is Miss Monteith, Charlotte,” said she, “ a valued young friend of mine ; *that*, I believe you know, is Miss Hobbleton ; and now hasten to your apartment, and I will order the dinner up again.”

Captain Hardington was the next who entered. He also expressed astonishment by his looks ; but it was evident he stood in awe of Mrs. Clermont, who was highly amused at the awkward embarrassment his

countenance displayed. Dinner was once more served, and Juliet was pleased to observe that Lydia bore her admonitions in mind, and was perfectly silent while they were at table ; and after the ladies quitted the dining-room, Miss Hartley took an opportunity to commence an acquaintance with Lydia, which seemed to promise great food for sport.

“ I am so glad my aunt invited you here,” said she ; “ for I understand you are always shut up at home with your governess. *I* was, once ; but I got rid of her a year ago, and it was a joyful day ; for governesses are a shocking bore ; don’t you think so ? They are fit for nothing but to quiz.”

“ Yes,” said Lydia, archly ; “ perhaps your’s might ; but mine *is* fit for something else ; for she is fit to teach me what I don’t know.”

Though lively, good-natured, and fashionable, Miss Hartley was far from equal to Lydia in understanding ; she was shal-

low and vain ; and her talents extended no farther, than to ridicule every body and every thing, in whom she could find food for laughter : but though Lydia was uninformed, she had much natural good sense ; and though wild and uncultivated, it taught her at once to discern Juliet's superiority, and to treat Miss Hartley as she deserved. The behaviour of the gentlemen of the party was widely different from what it had been in Juliet's former interview. Both Captain Hardington and Major Barfield were scrupulously polite, and the former particularly attentive to Lydia, though he seemed cautious, not as before, to expose her to ridicule ; but Lydia had conceived a dislike to him, from his laughing at her uncle, and openly repulsed all his assiduities with the bluntness which, independent of her ignorance of the world, formed a trait in her character.

The visit, on the whole, was agreeable to Juliet ; it was a relief to associate, once more, with the well-bred and well-in-

formed ; and she felt that the occasional society of Mrs. Clermont and her friends, would tend to make her feel more *at home*, in the situation she had undertaken.

A few days after the foregoing visit, Mrs. Clermont called in her carriage, and requested Juliet and Lydia to accompany her in an airing. When they approached her own mansion, she said—

“ You wished to see some prints I mentioned to you, the other day, Miss Monteth ; they are now open in the library. Suppose I set you down, and leave you to look over them, while Miss Hobbleton and I prolong our ride.”

She spoke in a tone, which convinced Juliet she had some hidden meaning. She acquiesced, and being set down, proceeded immediately to the library—where, reading and alone, she found *Harvey* !—The friendly intentions of Mrs. Clermont were now explained.

With a countenance all joy and animation, he approached her.—“ At length,

my dear Cousin," said he, " we are permitted to meet. I am allowed to hail you as a relation. My father admits your claims, and bids me say, that he will consider of some method for your permanent establishment. Would that he could receive you into his own family circle; but you are aware, dearest Juliet, of the unhappy obstacles that exist to prevent it. But no, you cannot be aware of all."

He paused and hesitated; he seemed agitated; and the fine glow on his face changed to a paleness that alarmed Juliet.

" How good, how kind you are!" said she; " but what may I not expect from him, who, while unknown, and in obscurity, pitied and relieved our distress."

" Ah, do not allude to any remote circumstances," he answered. " I dare not investigate my own motives. But no more of this; our thoughts must now be devoted to placing you in a more proper situation."

“ At present,” said Juliet, “ I am perfectly content where I am. I entreat you to assure my uncle, I have no wish to disturb his domestic peace ; and that, having succeeded in convincing him of the truth, I beg to leave the rest to him, and shall be perfectly satisfied with any arrangement he may choose to make. I would not, indeed, wish to quit Mr. Hobbleton abruptly. It is not vanity, I hope, to say, that I am sure it would distress him if I were to do it. He thinks I have, in some measure, succeeded in my endeavour to improve his niece ; and he is so kind and good-hearted, that I should be shocked at the thought of doing any thing that might hurt his feelings.”

Much conversation ensued. Harvey entered into all the particulars of her mother's illness and death. He acknowledged how often he had traced her steps from the fancy-work shop, and how frequently, when he had heard her situation from the people there, he had been de-

tered from addressing her, by a fear of appearing presuming or impertinent.

The interview, which to both had appeared short, was terminated by the return of Mrs. Clermont; and Juliet returned home, with a mind certainly relieved, as to Sir Edmund's doubts, and with increased admiration of Harvey.

“Is it possible,” thought she, “that he can be the son of Lady Ellinor?”

From this time, frequent meetings with Harvey, at the house of Mrs. Clermont, contributed to establish their friendship. Sir Edmund wrote to his niece, but he was too much under the influence of his lady to visit her. He informed her, that it was his intention to make a suitable provision for her; and that, in the mean time, till he could make some necessary arrangements in his pecuniary affairs, he inclosed a sum for her present expenses; desired she would consider where she could be most comfortably and advantageously situated; and assured her, she should hence-

forth find in him a friend and guardian, though particular circumstances prevented him, at this time, from affording her his personal protection.

Juliet felt much satisfaction from this letter. Though the inveteracy of Lady Ellinor still must estrange her from her nearest relation, she rejoiced that he at least was convinced of her claims on him, and was ready to allow them.

She informed Mr. Hobbleton of all that had passed, and of Sir Edmund's intentions towards her.

“ Well, Miss, better late than never,” said her good-humoured friend; “ and I approve of it all, except your going away from us; but if your uncle does not choose to receive you at his own home, I hope he won't prevent your staying at mine.— You've really made the Hall so much more agreeabler to me, and you manage old Hannah, and all the rest of them, so well, and your pretty tinkling music is so pleasant of an evening, and altogether we

are so comfortable, that I would not lose you on no account; beside, what should I do with Liddy? No, no, Miss, you must stay with us. You shall be quite your own mistress, and do just as you please. I am rich enough to do quite as well for you as your uncle would, and I am sure I have quite the mind; so pray don't say a word about leaving us, for I can't think of losing you no how."

Till some permanent arrangement was formed, Juliet was satisfied to remain where she was; and hesitated not to assure Mr. Hobbleton, that she should be happy to acquiesce in his wishes for the present; but though now happier in the prospect of independence, she relaxed not in her endeavours to complete the change which she had so happily began in Lydia, and with real pleasure beheld her gradual improvement; by degrees her wild and vulgar habits were relinquished, and, tho' lively to excess, and retaining much of her original bluntness of manner; she grew

daily more refined. Her talents were remarkably quick, and, when once persuaded to apply, she learned, with uncommon quickness, every thing Juliet attempted to teach her.

Captain Hardington and Major Barfield were stationed with their regiment at Mexfield, a town four miles distant ; and their intimacy at the house of Mrs. Clermont, obliged Juliet and her pupil often to meet them there. The Major was a very fashionable man. His attentions to Juliet, and his evident admiration of her, were by her uniformly discouraged, and she involuntarily felt a decided dislike to his friend. His countenance was dark and designing, and his manners were so profoundly respectful and attentive, that Juliet was sometimes tempted to think they were again the objects of his ridicule. To Lydia, in particular, he seemed anxious to recommend himself; he sat by her at table, compelled her to take his arm if they walked, and appeared desirous to ef-

face all recollection of their two first interviews. This was particularly observable one day, when Juliet and Lydia dined at Mrs. Clermont's. The next morning, when Mrs. Clermont called at Mr. Hobbleton's, she made some excuse to speak to Juliet alone.

“ I wish,” said she, “ to have a conference with you, to which your pupil must not be admitted, for reasons which you will soon understand.”

She then added—“ It will be necessary, my dear Miss Montcith, to premise, that I am aware your little volatile pupil is the undisputed heiress to a large fortune, which she must take possession of whenever she marries. You are so new to this wicked world, that it is improbable you should be fully conscious of all the dangers to which this circumstance may, and must, expose her; but I know them too well, not to conceive it a duty to put you on your guard. I saw you observe Captain Hardington's attentions to her; it is possible

they might merely be the effect of unmeaning gallantry, or a desire for temporary amusement ; but that he is indigent, a fortune-hunter, and a man whose principles are not very correct, is certain. I am sure you will believe, that the caution is given merely to warn you, and to secure you from any future distress on this subject—your own prudence will, I have no doubt, insure Miss Hobbleton's safety."

Juliet was petrified : she had always disliked the manners of Captain Hardington, and had uniformly been distant and reserved in her deportment towards him, for she could not easily forget his insulting conduct in their two first interviews. To her he was now almost obsequiously respectful, but to Lydia his attentions were glaring. They had hitherto been received with careless good humour, and without any apparent readiness to encourage his particularity ; but she felt that there was reason to dread the effect of an insinuating address, and a perseverance in the

most flattering attentions on the mind of one so young, so unreserved, and lively as Lydia. Not a moment was to be lost; she determined on keeping the strictest watch over her pupil, and should she notice any circumstances to alarm her, to acquaint Mr. Hobbleton immediately with her apprehensions. Whether the cautions of Mrs. Clermont were judiciously given will soon appear—

The anxious endeavours of Juliet to accomplish the task she had undertaken in the reformation of Lydia; received soon a desirable assistance in an acquaintance she formed with the inhabitants of the vicarage at the small village adjoining the Hall. The family consisted of Mr. Wilmot, his son, and one daughter; the former was a venerable clergyman far advanced in the vale of years, his countenance indicated the holy calm within. Undisturbed by passion or discontent, the placidity of his temper, his real charity, and unostentatious piety, endeared him to

all his parishioners. Henry, his son, was at college; but his daughter was his constant companion, and the delight of his age. Rosa Wilmot was gentle, amiable, and affectionate; she was greatly struck with the manners and appearance of Juliet; and though they had never before been on terms of any intimacy with Mr. Hobbleton, they now encouraged the friendship; and Rosa, Juliet, and Lydia, became almost inseparable. Mr. Wilmot admired Miss Monteith, and respected the motives for her perseverance with Lydia in spite of the discouragement which the education she had hitherto received must have given to any hope of a radical reform.

Mrs. and Miss Malcolm were friends of the Wilmots, and frequently visited them, and they seemed pleased to renew their stage-coach acquaintance with Juliet; though the frugal Mrs. Malcolm often gave hints of her dislike to Mr. Hobbleton, which the detail he had given of

his extravagant and epicurean mode of living had created. In their little parties at the vicarage Juliet's talents were properly appreciated.

Mr. Wilmot, in early life, had been a fervent admirer of her unfortunate mother. Presented to the small living of Eldon, by the father of Sir Edmund Harvey, he was in the habit of frequently visiting at the lodge, where he received the first impression of a hopeless passion, that for many years embittered his happiness. The young and beautiful Emmeline, in the zenith of her charms, was a dangerous object for a mind inexperienced and enthusiastic like that of Wilmot. He found his heart devoted to the daughter of his benefactor, but no hope illumined the prospect; and in the deepest recesses of his own breast he buried his griefs—Not till some years after her flight with Monteith, had he married a distant relation, whose domestic virtues secured to her his affection; but though he ceased to deplore, he could

never forget the idol of his first attachment. Mrs. Wilmot died when her children were in their infancy, and in educating them, forming their minds to virtue, cultivating the talents with which nature had liberally endowed them, and attending scrupulously to the duties of his office, he found that tranquility which is the best earthly reward of the good.

With such society as the vicarage and the house of Mrs. Clermont offered, Juliet found her situation greatly improved. Mrs. Clermont was a great favourite with Mr. Wilmot—A widow with a large unencumbered estate, she had the power of being extensively useful; and Mr. Wilmot was appointed her almoner; he rejoiced that Juliet had secured such a powerful friend; for her mother's sake he felt interested in her fate and for her own merits he loved her. Her musical abilities afforded general amusement, and much as Mr. Hobbleton had formerly been averse to company, he suffered his niece to invite

the Vicarage party whenever she pleased, Miss Malcolm, he said, was a great favourite with him because of her *good-naturedness* to Juliet when they travelled, and though he could not say he much fancied the *stingy old lady* he should not object to any body Miss Monteith chose to invite.

Henry Wilnot arrived at the Vicarage to spend the long vacation, and was a desirable acquisition; he was sensible, and studious; and he joined his sister and her friends in their walks and amusements with avidity and delight.

CHAP. IX.

LONDON VISITORS AND A DISCOMFITTED CAPTAIN.

THE remainder of the summer and part of the autumn fled rapidly. Juliet's health was once more re-established: the removal of the Harvey family to a fashionable watering place, took lady Ellinor from her vicinity; but Lady Clara Melgrove, whose interest had been powerfully excited by the appearance of Juliet, during her short but eventful visit to the house of her uncle, contrived to see her at Mrs. Clermont's. Fain would Juliet have avoided the interview; she had a nameless dread of meeting lady Clara, which she dared not acknowledge, even to herself; but she found she could not evade

it, and she was stimulated to subdue her own repugnance, by observing the singular expression of Mrs. Clermont's countenance, when she informed her of her Ladyship's request. Harvey was present, and turned to the window during the conversation. He did not join in it, but when Juliet again met his eyes, she observed that he looked so pale, that she fancied he must be ill. His manners towards Juliet, from the hour in which he met her, as a relation, had been uniformly kind and affectionate. In their interviews at the house of Mrs. Clermont, he was cheerful and animated while he conversed, played, or read with her, and yet his brow wore

“The pale cast of thought,”

And the half suppressed sigh would have betrayed, to a minute observer, a mind not perfectly at peace. Juliet had often noticed his momentary gravity, and wondered. She knew his marriage with Lady Clara was to take place soon,

and she heard such high encomiums of her Ladyship from every mouth, that she was surprised at the small share of happiness his countenance proclaimed; but it was a subject which she wished never to reflect on. She accustomed herself to think of him as the affianced husband of Lady Clara Melgrove; and she thought that the chagrin his mother's conduct caused, and the pusillanimous acquiescence of his father to all her Ladyship's wishes, might create that shade of melancholy, which certainly at times was visible in his countenance. Little did she suppose that she herself had planted a thorn in the bosom of Harvey, which no resolution could extract. His early engagement to Lady Clara was planned by their mutual friends. She was pretty, lively, and amiable, and Harvey was too young to have considered the subject seriously. Thrown continually into her society, it was natural he should love her as he would have loved a sister; he had never seen a woman

he could prefer to her, and he yielded a ready assent to his father's proposal.

During his stay at the university, he was too much engaged by his studies to spend much time at the lodge; but at every vacation he was received with the same delight by Lady Clara; who, according to established rules, and with all the experience and stability of eighteen, was of course deeply in love. It was Harvey's duty to be in love also, and so he was, or at least fancied himself so. His heart was excellent; he was studious and reflecting; but he had a tinge of romance in his disposition, which gave the colour to his future destiny. Young and enthusiastic, he thought that because Lady Clara was beautiful and goodnatured, that she must necessarily possess every requisite to form his happiness, but in thinking thus, he ill appreciated himself. Lady Clara was his equal, only in personal advantages; her mind was by nature a blank, she had no depth of thought, no varied talents;

the superficial acquirements which she had attained from her governess, sunk no deeper than the surface, and rendered her by no means a suitable companion for the susceptible, the enthusiastic, the discriminating Harvey. As he grew in years he could not be quite blind to her deficiencies, but beheld himself bound in honour to fulfil his engagement, and he tried to think as little as possible on the subject.

Such was the state of his mind when he first saw Juliet at the fancy work-shop—an interest greater than he had ever felt for any human being, was excited by her appearance; he heard her situation from the people of the shop, he traced her home, and he discovered her indefatigable endeavours to support and comfort the decline of her mother's life. He knew his father had a sister, but he had never heard her name or situation; little, therefore, did he think he was administering to the necessities of a relation, when he trans-

mitted pecuniary relief to Mrs. Monteith, in the anonymous address which had so powerfully excited the gratitude of Juliet and her mother.

The time approached when his marriage with Lady Clara must take place ; he had accustomed himself to think of it as inevitable, and he even fancied he was highly culpable in indulging for a moment a half-formed wish, that it might be postponed for a year or two. He returned to Harvey Lodge, after some months absence, determined to agree to the wishes of his family ; but what were his feelings, when the strange tale of Juliet's sudden appearance, and as sudden departure, reached his ears.—In vain he remonstrated with his father against his injustice ; Lady Ellinor's influence was despotic, and she had persuaded Sir Edmund to investigate the proofs Juliet could adduce of her affinity to him, before he acknowledged her as his niece.

Exasperated beyond his usual forbear-

ance at such determined malignity, when Sir Edmund, urged by his Lady, desired his son to wave the subject and to devote his thoughts to preparations for his nuptials with Lady Clara.—He declared his resolution to defer his marriage, till his father was brought to do justice to his injured niece.

“ For that you know she is such, sir, I am persuaded,” added he, “ by every body I am told of the striking resemblance she bears to her unfortunate mother—her father was a brave man. Often have I heard the name of Monteith and the tale of his injuries most feelingly related by an eye witness of the circumstances which destroyed his peace, and ultimately brought him to the grave. Severely was he punished for his early errors, and never shall I cease to lament my ignorance, that the deserted widow and daughter, whose situation, accidentally heard, so forcibly excited my compassion, were the sister and niece of my father. Not then should the

destitute relict of a brave officer have breathed her last in poverty and obscurity, while her nearest relations were surrounded by wealth and luxuries."

"You are wonderfully warm in the cause of this young person, Edmund," said Lady Ellinor, "really, your extreme anxiety and your previous acquaintance with her, has a suspicious appearance. I should not advise you to betray this interest for a stranger in the presence of Lady Clara."

"If Lady Clara had a mind so contracted as to harbour the illiberal and unjust suspicions to which your Ladyship alludes," answered her son, "her opinion would be a matter of indifference to me; but I know her to be so amiable, as rather to join me in pleading the cause of a deserted orphan, than to be ready to suspect aught injurious to the honour of him whom she has distinguished by her favour."

The mention of Lady Clara again led

to his marriage, and Sir Edmund intreated Harvey to delay it no longer.

“ It depends on yourself, Sir,” said his son, “ whenever you choose to acknowledge Miss Monteith, and to make a suitable provision for her, as your niece, I am ready to ratify the vows already pledged to your ward.—Till then, I will not listen to any persuasions—Never will I sanction injustice and cruelty even in a parent.”

“ This is strange language to a father, methinks,” said Lady Ellinor; but Harvey had left the room, and the impression his remonstrances had left on the mind of Sir Edmund had roused him from his wonted apathy, and stimulated him to exertion.

The letters and papers of her mother, transmitted by Juliet, were incontrovertible proofs of the veracity of her tale, and determined him to act as has been related. And now that Harvey could no longer plead his father’s pertinacity, as to his

cousin for an excuse, his immediate marriage was again urged ; he knew the sacrifice must be made, and he resolved that whatever might be his secret reluctance, to his own breast it should be confined. He wished Juliet was in a situation where her talents and understanding could be better appreciated than in the family of Mr. Hobbleton, but he saw that her health was delicate and that

“ Her modest virtues loved the shade,”—

and he trusted the time would come when he should be empowered to assist in bringing her forward to notice. Mean time he felt it was best that she should not be an inmate of the lodge. He and Lady Clara must probable sometimes visit it, and reason told him, that the less he in future saw of his cousin, the greater would be his chance for happiness.

One consequence which had neither been foreseen or wished for, attended the

introduction of Juliet to her friends at the Vicarage. Henry, born with the same enthusiasm of temper as his father, seemed also to have inherited in one instance his father's fate.

The unassuming manners and beauty of Juliet at first fascinated his attention, and his parent, who watched every emotion in the minds of his children, quickly discerned a degree of admiration which endangered his peace. He had marked the varying countenance of Juliet, whenever her cousin, Mr. Harvey, was mentioned; and he feared that she, too, was destined to hopeless love; but he had studied her character, and he was assured that her own bosom would be the repository of her secret, and that her naturally strong understanding would exert all its powers to overcome any sentiment inimical to right; but the peace of his son was at stake, and to remove him immediately from the scene of danger appeared the most judi-

ous step to be taken ; but to mention the subject was not so easy.

The path leading to Mr. Hobbleton's house seemed the only spot that attracted the steps of Henry ; he had a taste for music, and he would for hours lean over the piano to listen to Juliet's melody, and sometimes accompany her's with his flute ; but unconscious of her own influence, Juliet imagined it was merely the charms of her music that drew him a constant visitor to the Hall. Wholly unsuspecting that she had formed any prior attachment, he deluded himself with thinking it probable, that Sir Edmund's neglect of his niece might ultimately be a favourable circumstance to himself ; and that as she was not received into his own family, he might not reject the son of a village clergyman. By his own exertions he had made great progress in his studies : he was designed for the church, and had already received promises of preferment, but from this dream he was awakened by the remon-

stances of his father, who in the calmness with which Juliet received the attention of his son, saw the fallacy of his hopes, and he urged Henry to finish the vacation with some friend at a distance, that he might not by too long indulgence render the task of a conquest over his present feelings too difficult to overcome. A change which at this time took place in the fate of Juliet, rendered the projected removal of Henry, for the time, unnecessary.

Lady Clara accomplished her wish for an interview with Juliet; it passed in kind assurances of regard and favour from the former, but the deportment of the latter was in spite of herself restrained and embarrassed.

The sweet and winning manners of Lady Clara were calculated to encourage and embolden the timid, but the sight of her Ladyship revived in the mind of Juliet all the terror and mortification she had suffered at Harvey lodge, and she felt depressed and unhappy.

Infinitely was Juliet relieved when she departed, and on her return home she was surprised to find the whole house in a bustle. Mr. Hobbleton's only sister, who was married in London, had unexpectedly arrived with her husband, Mr. Harrowby, a rich citizen, and Lydia, and old Hannah were running about in all directions to make arrangements for their guests.

Juliet was immediately introduced to Mr. and Mrs. Harrowby, and Mr. Hobbleton requested she would just give the necessary orders to Hannah. The judicious management of Juliet had introduced some degree of order into the household, and insensibly Mr. Hobbleton had felt its good effects. Without assuming authority, she had quietly regulated the little establishment, so as to produce comfort to the family; and by the sweetness and affability of her manners, had won the regard of the servants. Every thing was conducted with so much neatness and regularity, that Mr. Hobbleton could not

forbear expressing his approbation, and declared to his relations that he had never been so comfortable in his life, as since Miss Monteith had resided with him.

The sister of Mr. Hobbleton was illiterate, and ill bred, but she had married a rich citizen, who, attracted by a pretty face and a good natured simplicity of manner, had made proposals to her, during a visit to a friend in the country, when Ellen Hobbleton was only seventeen. From the retirement of a village and a residence among vulgar relations, she was transported to a good house in the city, and to the enjoyment of all the comforts riches can bestow; but early habits, and a naturally shallow capacity, prevented improvement, and Ellen remained the unenlightened being she had ever been. Mr. Harrowby was much older than herself; he admired her beauty, and suffered her to do as she pleased. The wealth of her husband procured her numerous acquaintance of her own stamp, and Mrs. Harrowby's

whist parties were as well and as merrily attended as she could wish ; but not all her polite city friends could refine the unsophisticated Ellen, and beneath her gaudy and expensive habiliments, her obscure origin and want of education might still easily be traced. Mr. Harrowby was fat and good humoured, and attended his evening club as regularly as his brother-in-law Mr. Hobbleton. He had been on business to a town twenty miles distant from Hobbleton Hall, and had yielded to the intreaties of his wife, to visit her brother, in their way home. Mrs. Harrowby declared herself highly pleased with Juliet. “ She has no pride at all,” said she, in answer to some of Mr. Hobbleton’s observations on Juliet, “ and she is so pretty and genteel, that I should be *wastly* fond of her company at my parties. Suppose, brother, you let her and Liddy go back to town with us, and see a little of the world.”— Mr. Hobbleton said he would consider of it, and Lydia, enchanted at the prospect,

had flown to Juliet's apartment, to communicate her hopes and wishes, when looking from the window, she uttered an exclamation of surprise at seeing Captain Hardington walking alone towards the house. They heard him enquire for Mr. Hobbleton, and he was shown into the parlour. He staid a very short time, and as soon as he was gone Juliet was summoned.

“ Well, Miss,” said Mr. Hobbleton, “ Here's as curious a thing as ever I knowed. That fine spark of a Captain, has been here to offer himself to Liddy ; but I think I have given him an answer.”— From Captain Hardington's attentions, Juliet was not very much surprised, and she listened with interest to the account Mr. Hobbleton gave her of the interview. It appeared that Hardington had felt little doubt of his proposals being accepted ; without embarrassment or hesitation, he had declared his admiration of Lydia, and solicited her uncle's permission to ad-

dress her : Mr. Hobbleton listened in silence to all he said, and when he had concluded, “ pray Sir,” said he, “ are not you one of that there company that brought Liddy’s donkey home, and entertained yourselves with laughing at me, in my own house ?”

“ I assure you Sir,” said the unabashed officer, “ you are very much mistaken. I certainly was of that party, but Miss Hartley was the only person who was guilty of that breach of good manners.”

“ Well Sir, its all one to me,” said Mr Hobbleton, “ you are quite welcome, as I told Miss Monteith at the time, to laugh at me if you please, but I should not have thought you would so soon afterward have come upon such an errand—however, to tell you the truth, Sir, I have not no great opinion of your red coats, and besides, you are quite a stranger to me, so I beg to be excused, and I wish you a good morning Sir.”

Captain Hardington here stoped him,

spoke of his family and expectations, and referred him to several officers in his regiment for any particulars respecting himself.

“Oh its all very well Sir,” said Mr. Hobbleton, “but I shall have no occasion to trouble them, for I shall never give my consent to no such thing. Liddy is a mere child yet, and if she was older, in regard to you Sir, it would be just the same; so you’ll excuse me, Sir, as I said before,” and again he moved to leave the room.

“But Sir,” said Captain Hardington, preventing him, “may I not be permitted to speak to the young Lady herself?”

“That would be no use in the world, Sir,” said Mr. Hobbleton, “for as she is such a child, she can’t go to choose a man old enough to be her father, for I suppose, Sir, you are forty, or thereabouts.”

“No Sir,” said the Captain, reddening, “I am not forty, and”—

“Well Sir,” interrupted Mr. Hobble-

ton, as I said before, it's all one to me—my mind is made up not to give you my niece, and the sooner you take your leave the more agreeabler. Excuse me for giving you the hint.”

“ Sir,” said the Captain, assuming a fierce air, “ you have treated me extremely ill, and only the regard I have for your niece, should induce me to forbear resenting it.”

“ I wish you a good morning, Sir, as I said before,” repeated Mr. Hobbleton, and deliberately quitted the room, leaving the discomfited officer to depart at his leisure.

Juliet could not resist a smile at this account, but she felt glad the proposal had been made to Mr. Hobbleton, and hoped his decided rejection would effectually prevent the Captain's farther attentions to Lydia ; but where advantage was the object, Captain Hardington was not so easily discouraged, as Juliet soon discovered.

CHAP. X.

A JOURNEY TO LONDON.

A FEW days after the proposals to Lydia had been made, as Juliet was walking with her and Mrs. Harrowby, in a wood, at a short distance from the house, they were surprised by the appearance of Captain Hardington and Major Barfield, with a gentleman in whom Juliet recognised a French Count, in the habit of visiting Mrs. Clermont, and an intimate friend of Hardington. They immediately joined the ladies; and Juliet observed, that the Captain stationed himself by the side of Lydia, and that he several times attempted to address her in a low voice.— Embarrassed and anxious, her mind filled

with a recollection of Mrs. Clermont's cautions, she proposed returning; but Mrs. Harrowby, never very acute or discerning, unsuspecting that one of the fine gentlemen was the rejected suitor of her niece, was so delighted with the fine compliments and florid language of the *Count de Brisac*, that she seemed not at all inclined to return; and Lydia was so much amused with the broken English of the foreigner, and the droll stories of Major Barfield, that, though in compliance with the injunctions of Miss Monteith she had refused the Captain's offered arm, and even turned a deaf ear to his whispers, she was not averse to prolong the walk.

Assured that such a party would not meet the approbation of Mr. Hobbleton, Juliet, determined to get rid of their escort before they approached the house; and wishing the gentlemen a good evening, proposed returning home by a gate that led immediately to the grounds round the

Hall, but Mrs. Harrowby was too well pleased with her company to agree.

“ La! it is such a fine evening, Miss Monteith,” said she, “ do now let us walk a little farther. The green trees, and the birds singing, is quite a treat to me, that am always shut up in Crutched-friars. I suppose, Sir,” she added, turning to Major Barfield, “ you know Crutched-friars.”

“ I have not that felicity, Madam,” he answered, looking significantly at Captain Hardington, “ but I shall be happy to explore it, if I have the honour of your permission.”

“ Oh dear, Sir,” said the simple Mrs. Harrowby, “ you are very polite. Mr. Harrowby is always glad to see gentlemen, that is, if they are real gentlemen, like you, Sir; and I assure you, our card parties are very genteel; we keep the best company in the city.”

Juliet's distress increased. Captain Hardington, availing himself of his friend's ad-

dress in amusing Mrs. Harrowby, was evidently trying to draw Lydia's attention to himself. Juliet was roused to exertion.

“ It grows late, Madam,” said she, addressing Mrs. Harrowby, “ and Mr. Hobbleton will expect us.” Then, in a low voice, she added—“ It is Captain Hardington! Pray, let us go home.”

“ Oh lauk !” exclaimed the thoughtless Mrs. Harrowby, “ you don't say so !” adding aloud,—“ Come Lyddy, child ; we must go home. Besides, I am so tired ; being always used to ride in my own coach, I can't walk much. Good night, gentlemen ; thank you for your *obligingness* ; but you need not give yourselves no farther trouble about us. Miss Monteith knows best, she is so clever and so prudent-like, as my brother says. Come, Liddy, walk on ; don't creep so. I wish you good night, gentlemen ;” and then, bustling on, she pressed towards the gate, much to the amusement of the party they

left, who, however, did not attempt to follow them; and Mrs. Harrowby, keeping fast hold of Lydia's arm, soon effectually distanced them.

This meeting convinced Juliet, that Captain Hardington's designs on Lydia were not wholly relinquished. She imparted her suspicions to Mr. Hobbleton, who said,—

“ Why then, Miss, I don't see what you and Liddy can do, better than accept my sister's invitation to go back with her to town, till the regiment has left Mexfield. Ten to one that this spark don't meet you at every turn and corner whenever you walk out; for I suppose he has heard of Lyddy's fortune; and as my brother was foolish enough to settle it so, that she takes possession of it when she marries, why he thinks he shall have it all his own way; however, I am not such a fool as that.”

Though by no means anxious to visit town with such a *chaperon* as Mrs. Har-

rowby, Juliet could not avoid seeing, that it was desirable to remove Lydia from the vicinity of Hardington, and determined to consult Mrs. Clermout on the subject. That lady lamented that she had it not in her power to give them her own protection; but she was engaged to visit a friend at Brighton, whither, in a week, she was to convey Miss Hartley.

“But my stay there,” she added, “will not be long, and willingly will I abridge it to receive you and your pupil in town. By the time I leave Brighton, your visit to Mrs. Harrowby will probably have been of sufficient length, and you may then show Lydia something of the gay world under my auspices.”

This was precisely what Juliet wished. Mr. Hobbleton yielded a ready assent, and it was decided that they should accompany their city friends to town the following week.

Before she quitted the country, Juliet visited her acquaintance at Henwood and

Rushdale. The good Wilmots deeply regretted her departure. Rosa was their constant companion till the hour of separation arrived, and Henry's dejected countenance too plainly told his feelings.— From every body Juliet heard of Harvey's near approaching marriage. Mrs Weldon was voluble on the subject, and Juliet in vain endeavoured to lead to any other. The benevolent Morden and his sister parted from her with reluctance; she had been a frequent visitor to them, and, in their society, found much relief from the depression which, but for her own virtuous exertions, would have often weighed heavily on her mind.

The evening preceding their journey, Rosa having, as usual, passed with them, they all walked through the wood with her on her return home. Mrs. Harrowby was tired, and turning back with Lydia, Juliet, who was in conversation with Rosa, said she would overtake them in a few minutes. They were immediately after-

wards met by Henry, who was coming to the Hall, to conduct his sister home. It would be the last time, for a long period, that he might see Juliet, and, notwithstanding his father's remonstrance, his fortitude was not proof against the suggestion. Rosa and he seemed to have but one heart; her presence, therefore, was no obstacle, and he dared to disclose what he felt. Juliet was unprepared for the declaration, but she knew she could never return his partiality, and, with her wonted firmness, though with gentleness, she requested that he would cease all importunity, and candidly acknowledged she had no heart to bestow. Henry heard her with despair; for not all the mildness of her manners, nor the force of self-delusion, could blind him to the irrevocable decree she had pronounced, and he quitted them without speaking.

Rosa, who idolized her brother, could not restrain her tears.—“ Is poor Henry's fate, then, quite decided, dearest Juliet?”

said she, as she pressed the hand of her friend at parting; — “Is the sentence final?”

“We must never more revert to the subject!” said Juliet. “Adieu, beloved Rosa! May we meet again in happiness!”

Long after she had quitted Rosa, the mind of Juliet was depressed by the consciousness of being the cause of uneasiness to friends she so greatly esteemed and respected, and she took several turns in the wood before she could sufficiently compose herself to return home.

It was a fine calm evening; no breeze moved the leaves of the forest-trees, and yet she had several times heard a rustling amongst the bushes. The underwood grew very thick around, and, on the sound being repeated, she turned back to direct her steps homeward; deep in thought, her eyes were cast on the ground, but they were raised as a shadow crossed her path, and fixed on a figure who stood exactly

before her. It was that of a man, and one glance sufficed to discover her mysterious fellow traveller in the stage coach. A strange indefinable terror thrilled to her heart; she felt almost powerless to proceed, but the stranger stood by, to let her pass; and as she went close to him, he put his head under her hat, stared fiercely and wildly in her face, and, uttering a sort of discordant groan, plunged amidst the underwood and disappeared.

Impelled by fear, Juliet sprang forward, nor paused till, breathless and exhausted, she reached the house, where her interview with the stranger excited universal wonder and alarm.

“ Ah, sure enough,” said Mr. Hobbleson, “ it is Mr. Denmore himself; they say he is always wandering about the wood: it is very odd they can’t confine him at home, like other mad folks.”

The horrid idea that he was insane, made Juliet thankful for her escape, especially as she remembered, that she had

seemed to be the object of his particular scrutiny in the stage coach.

On the following morning Mr. Hobbleton bid Juliet and his niece farewell with real affection, and assured them he should be happy to see them back again. Lydia's joy and delight on entering town afforded great amusement to her friends. On Juliet, the sight of London had an effect far different. It brought afresh to her mind the suffering and sorrow she had endured there, and the smile which her young companion's extacy had raised, was chased by the bitter tear of sad remembrance. The mother she had idolized, had here breathed her last in grief and obscurity ; trembling for the uncertain fate of her orphan child, and oppressed by indigence.

Mr. and Mrs. Harrowby were not very well calculated to enter into her feelings, but they good-humouredly afforded her consolation in their own way, and Juliet's natural gratitude induced her thankfully to accept it, and endeavour to assume the

cheerfulness which she could not feel.— How different town now appeared! the noise and bustle of the city almost deafened her. She had been accustomed to a quiet street at the West-end of the town, and had formed no idea of the busy scene now passing before her eyes.

Mrs. Harrowby was bent on shewing them all the sights—her husband during the day was generally shut up in his counting-house, and left his wife to amuse herself and her visitors. In shewing the lions, Mr. Harrowby had an auxiliary in a young man of the name of *Metsome*, a frequent visitor to the house, and the son of an intimate friend. She assured her two young friends that he was the child of very rich parents, and moreover a *city volunteer*, and a great wit; but not all these united advantages could recommend him to Juliet, to whom he appeared pert, forward, and disagreeable; and she was careful to impress her own sentiments on the mind of Lydia, for she considered the

fortune and expectations of her pupil, with her person, and the accomplishments and endowments she yet hoped to see her possess, entitled her to expect superior offers. Lydia certainly improved rapidly. Juliet had obtained Mr. Hobbleton's permission for the attendance of masters in music and dancing, while they were in town, and she lost no time in securing them.

The first month of their London residence, she offered no engagements to infringe on the time dedicated to lessons, and she had the satisfaction of perceiving her cares were rewarded. Every day seemed to add to Lydia's refinement, and to take from that rusticity of manners which she had acquired from neglect.

Juliet heard from Mrs. Clermont; she mentioned her intention of being in town soon, said the regiment had left Mexfield and were now at Brighton, and added—

“ I believe Hardington has made up his mind to his disappointment; he wears the willow with a very good grace, and bears

quizzing on the subject of the *Rustic Beauty* extremely well."

Juliet was glad to hear he had so quietly relinquished the pursuit, and flattered herself that after a short visit to Mrs. Clermont they would return to the serenity of the country without farther fear from him.

In few days afterwards she received by the post a second letter from Mrs. Clermont, announcing her arrival in town; but Mrs. Harrowby would not hear of their quitting her at present—and the distance between Crutched Friars and Brooke's Street had prevented them yet meeting, when a party to the theatre was proposed and put in execution. To Lydia it was exquisitely delightful, but Juliet anticipated the evening with no particular pleasure. Mr. Melsome was to be their only male attendant till the business of the day was concluded, and enabled Mr. Harrowby to quit the counting-house and join them.

CHAP. XI.

ADVENTURES AT THE THEATRE.

THE theatre was crowded, and Lydia in ecstasy contemplated a scene so different from any she had ever before witnessed. It was an amusement Juliet had seldom attended, and had therefore even to her, the charm of novelty. Mrs. Harrowby, gaily dressed, was always pleased with company and bustle, and in high spirits, talked so loud and so fast as to attract more eyes to the box than suited the retired manners of Juliet, whose appearance, as well as that of Lydia, was well calculated to engage admiration. Mr. Melsome the young *city wolunter*, as Mrs.

Harrowby termed him, was more attentive and witty than ever, and often annoyed Juliet by trying to withdraw her attention from the stage to himself and his witticisms.

Between the first and second act, Juliet saw a gay party enter an opposite box, amongst whom Lady Ellinor Harvey shone conspicuous. Sir Henry Colville was one of the gentlemen who accompanied her, and soon she discerned Lady Clara and Harvey.—Sick at heart, her eye turned from them, and she involuntarily shrank back, but it was improbable she should be recognised amongst the crowd, and sad and dejected, the stage seemed no longer to possess the power to charm. Suddenly an exclamation from Lydia drew her attention, and she saw that Mrs. Clermont had just entered one of the front boxes, with a large party, amongst whom was the Count De Brisac. By the direction of an opera-glass, and the smiling recognition that succeeded, she had reason to believe

that they were discovered by Mrs. Clermont. At the end of the fourth act the box door opened, and the Count De Brisac appeared on an embassy from their friend; he was commissioned to conduct Juliet and Lydia to her. Mrs. Harrowby recollected him, and remembering the cautions Juliet had given her respecting him and Captain Hardington, observed great distance in her manners. She drew herself up, coolly bowed, and would not enter into conversation.

“Miss Monteith,” said she, “you can go with the gentleman, but my niece had better stay under my care.” Mrs. Clermont, the Count said, had particularly requested to see both the Ladies.

“Oh, very well Sir,” she answered, “take hold of Miss Monteith’s arm then, Liddy, and don’t stare about you, it is so country like, and be sure don’t let go of Miss Monteith. I really think Mr. Mel-some had best go too, to *scort* you back again.”

The Count, with much gesticulation, assured her, the Ladies would be perfectly safe with him, and that he should attend them back himself.

“Oh very well Sir,” she replied, “only we are rather *particklar* about Liddy; but Miss Monteith is so careful-like, that to be sure any body may be trusted with her.”

The Count, who seemed to think his gallantry impeached by the implied doubts of Mrs. Harrowby, would have entered on his defence; but Juliet, who was anxious to put an end to the scene said—

“We are detaining the Count, madam,” and accepting his offered arm, they quitted the box.

In passing through the lobby, a crowd of gentlemen almost prevented their procedure, and they had some difficulty in reaching the box where Mrs. Clermont awaited them. She received Juliet with the most flattering politeness.

“ But where,” said she, “ is your young friend ?”

Juliet looked round, and with dismay discovered that Lydia had not followed her into the box.

“ Do not be alarmed,” said Mrs. Clermont, “ the Count has probably taken her to view the theatre ; but she added, in a low voice, “ it may be as well to make some inquiry, for I know Hardington is in the house.”

Juliet was petrified, for she saw an indefinable expression in the countenance of Mrs. Clermont that terrified her.

“ Have the goodness to lend me your protection, Sir George,” said she to one of the gentlemen of her party, “ and we will see where the Count’s gallantry has conducted her. Remain here quietly till my return,” she added to Juliet, “ I am well acquainted with the house, and doubt not we shall easily find her.”

So saying she took Sir George’s arm and quitted the box, leaving Juliet so

overcome with terror that she felt motionless. In breathless alarm she awaited the event, and the fifth act of the play was nearly concluded ere Mrs. Clermont again made her appearance, but she was accompanied by Lydia, and Juliet's fears were dispelled.

“ I have had some difficulty in rescuing our *protégée*,” said Mrs. Clermont, “ she has a most determined admirer in Captain Hardington, who had actually found means to conduct her to a private room, but I fear the Count aided his wishes. What has passed she will herself relate.”

“ Let us now return to Mrs. Harrowby,” said Juliet ; “ she will be quite distressed by this long delay.”

“ But when can I see you ?” asked Mrs. Clermont, “ I am going to a villa that a friend has lent me near Windsor, and perhaps Mrs. Harrowby will suffer you to pay me a visit there for a few days.”

“ I will at least solicit her premission,” said Juliet.

“ Do,” answered Mrs. Clermont, “ this is Thursday ; on Monday I will send the carriage to meet you at Hounslow, if she will suffer her’s to conduct you so far.”

Juliet and Lydia gave a willing assent, and, attended by *two* of Mrs. Clermont’s friends, hastened back to Mrs. Harrowby, who was impatiently expecting them.— Juliet related the cause of delay, and Mrs. Harrowby was vehement in expressing her indignation.

“ Who would have thought of that *for-rin* gentleman, and his broken English, playing one such a trick,” said she— “ Liddy, my dear, I desire you never walk without taking hold of me, or Miss Monteith, while you are in town. Why what would my brother have said if we had lost you ?” Juliet would not question Lydia as to what had passed with Captain Hardington till they had reached home, and, in a whisper, desired her to be silent

before Mr. Melsome. When once in their own apartment, she learned that the Count had offered to show Lydia some of the decorations of the theatre, in which she had thoughtlessly acquiesced; that they were immediately afterwards met by Captain Hardington, who, taking her arm from that of the Count, had hurried her on till they reached a room, where, throwing himself at her feet, he had declared his existence depended on her, and urgently solicited her favour in spite of the prohibition of her uncle. The Count had quite disappeared.

“I was so frightened,” said Lydia, “that I hardly know what I said; but I remember I could not forbear laughing out, when he began to talk of dying and shooting himself, if I would not accept him; and, in the midst of his fine speeches, Mrs. Clermont and Sir George came in, and I ran off with them as fast as I could.”

From the perfect ingenuousness with which she recounted every particular, Ju-

liet was gratified to find, that, insidious as Captain Hardington was, he had failed in his endeavours to make any favourable impression on the heart of Lydia, and she anxiously anticipated their return to the country, where she now thought they should be more secure from him than in town.

Mrs. Harrowby had agreed to their going for a few days to Windsor, and a note from Mrs. Clermont had settled the time and place for her carriage to meet them. During their visit, Juliet determined to consult Mrs. Clermont as to Lydia, and to request she would expostulate with Captain Hardington, and represent to him the inutility of his pursuit, which even the object of it was disinclined to favour.

Monday arrived, and the Ladies set forward on their excursion in Mr. Harrowby's carriage, attended by one servant. A few miles from town the coachman, suddenly stopping, said, that one of the horses was ill; but as it was only what he was sub-

ject to, he would soon be better, if they would suffer it to rest a short time. Though vexed at the delay it would cause, Juliet thought there was no alternative, and driving up to a lone Inn on the road, they quietly awaited the recovery of the animal. It was, however, an hour before they again ascended the carriage, and apprehensive of keeping Mrs. Clermont's equipage waiting, Juliet requested the coachman to hasten; he assured her that the sick horse must not be hurried.

“We had better then take a post-chaise,” said Juliet; “Mrs. Harrowby will not, I am sure, object to the footman going on with us till we meet Mrs. Clermont's servants;” but the coachman answered, that the horse was very well able to reach Hounslow if they did not go too fast, and they again proceeded, but so slowly, that Juliet was several times tempted to adopt the first expedient, and take a post-chaise. At length, near two hours later than the time appointed, they

drove into the inn at Hounslow, where the plain elegant chariot of Mrs. Clermont was awaiting their arrival. One of the servants who attended it, Juliet recollected was the same she had seen in her first memorable visit to his mistress's house at Henwood, when she had pursued Lydia to the fair. She said she was afraid they had made them wait : and the man looked at his watch, said they must make haste, or they should not reach home in time for dinner. In a few minutes they were on the road, and proceeded with such velocity that Juliet consoled herself with hoping they might yet reach Windsor before Mrs. Clermont's general dinner hour.

The road was quite unknown to her, but she began to think the distance was greater than she had suspected. The coachman whipped on the horses with the same speed ; and after waiting till her patience was exhausted, she was on the point of stopping the carriage, to inquire

how much farther they were from Windsor, when she discovered that the glasses which were all up were fastened, and no effort could remove them.—She called loudly to the coachman, but he seemed not to hear her. They were on a wide barren heath, on which stood one lonely inn. They drove briskly up to it, and Juliet was astonished to see four horses brought out, and that they began to unharness the pair which had brought them thus far. Again she called loudly to the servants, for a vague alarm had seized her mind, and Lydia repeated her calls with violence; but no person from the house appeared, and the attendants were deaf to their screams. Juliet determined to alight, but the doors, like the windows of the carriage, were too well secured, and they felt that they were prisoners. Still it was Mrs. Clermont's carriage. Surely there could be no treachery intended, and Mrs. Clermont a conniver; but whatever were the real terrors of Ju-

liet, she carefully concealed them from Lydia. She saw no hope of an immediate solution to the mystery, though she continued to repeat her exertion ; for the men seemed purposely to keep at a distance from the carriage ; and while the horses were putting to, they were joined by two more, and kept up such an incessant talking and laughing, that it was impossible the soft voice of Juliet could be attended to.

The delay was very short. With greater speed than before, they again set forward ; and the alarms of Juliet every instant increased. It grew dark, and still they pursued their road. Lydia asked a thousand questions ; screamed out whenever Juliet screamed ; but seemed to have no idea of real danger.

Soon after the sun had gone down, and a dusky twilight only enabled them to discern the objects they passed ; Juliet, as she intently listened, heard the sound of more horses feet, and saw, through the back window, that they were joined by

two outriders. Her heart beat violently ; a too well known voice at that moment reached her ear, and she sunk back immoveable.

CHAP. XII.

MORE ADVENTURES BY SEA AND LAND.

HORROR-struck, and motionless, the truth at once flashed on the mind of Juliet, and she felt that they were in the power of Captain Hardington. The cautions and predictions of Mrs. Clermont now occurred to her; but, though shocked beyond description at the conviction, she now felt that this was certainly the case. When a little more composed, she had the consolation of reflecting, that to her no blame could be imputed. She had been particularly cautious respecting Lydia, and had uniformly preserved a great degree of distance in her deportment towards Captain

Hardington, which his behaviour and her suspicions had authorised.

It was too dark for Lydia to see the dismay expressed by her countenance, and she was careful not to alarm her till she had considered and reflected. But what availed reflection? The object of Hardington was the fortune of Lydia; and to get possession of it, he had not hesitated at means the most violent and unjustifiable. What, therefore, had they to hope or expect, but that he would pursue his plans till they were accomplished? To resist him, however, and to save the innocent young creature committed to her care, if possible, from becoming the legal victim of his avarice, was her fixed determination.

To effect this, she was aware that her utmost firmness and resolution would be required. She was assured that Lydia had no particular predilection in his favour, and trusted to her proper resentment for assistance in subverting his purposes.

Not for one instant would she consent to be separated from her, and she earnestly prayed for the divine aid and support to her exertions.

Fortunately, the regular life she had led since her residence at Mr. Hobbleton's, together with the country air, had considerably restored her health, and enabled her to encounter, with greater fortitude, the trials to which she must now be necessarily exposed.

Whilst she revolved in her mind the extraordinary incidents of this eventful day, and wearied herself with anticipating the fearful consequences, Lydia had actually cried herself to sleep, and, in a corner of the coach, was sunk into a profound slumber. Juliet could have envied her the unconsciousness which suffered her thus to enjoy repose in the midst of danger, while her own mind, harrassed by a certainty of present evil, and a dread of the future, would not, though almost sinking with fatigue, allow her for a mo-

ment to forget her terrors; and a long dismal dark night was passed in wakeful watching, without a gleam of hope to cheer her.

They stopped twice to change horses, but the windows and doors of the carriage were both so firmly secured, that there appeared not the smallest chance of relief, though Juliet endeavoured to make herself heard, by shrieking loudly for help, whenever a cessation of the motion of the carriage gave her a hope that strangers might be within the sound of her voice; but all in vain; and the hours fled on, and still they continued to travel with the same rapidity.

Day at length dawned, to the inexpressible delight of Juliet, who, with the return of light, felt hope once more arise in her bosom. Lydia still slept on; she had been overcome with weariness, and she was ignorant of the extent of the danger that threatened her; but long she could not continue so, and, in trembling expecta-

tion of the event, Juliet listened to every murmur that reached her ear.

Soon after the dawn of morning, they alighted at a house that stood alone, though Juliet could perceive they were near a large town. She instantly addressed the servant, who let down the trap, with an inquiry of where they were? but, to her surprise, they received no answer. They were both hurried into the house, and shown to an apartment up stairs, within which was a bed-chamber; but not one word of reply was given to their questions, nor did any female appear. Some refreshments were brought in by a strange servant, and a note was delivered to Juliet. It contained these words:—

“ Miss Monteith is at liberty to depart from this place whenever she pleases, but it must be *alone*. Miss Hobbleton will embark with Captain Hardington, for the continent, in three hours from this time.”

The paper fell from Juliet's hand, her ideas were confus'd, and she dropped on a

chair. Lydia seized the note, and read it.—

“ So he may think,” said she, “ but he’ll find himself mistaken, I assure him. No force shall take me from you, I am determined ;” and she began to sob and scream with violence.

Juliet tried to pacify her, assuring her, that whatever might be her fate, she would share it ; and that, voluntarily, she would never be separated from her. She desired an interview with Captain Hardington, intending to remonstrate with him, and to try to discover his immediate intentions, with regard to Lydia ; but the only answer she received was, that Captain Hardington did not wish to trouble Miss Monteth, but that, if she chose to return to town, a chaise should be ordered to attend her, at any hour she would appoint.— She wrote, on a slip of paper, an earnest request to speak to him, but it was not complied with ; and her dread lest Lydia should suffer from fatigue and want of rest,

induced her to insist on her lying down. She sat by her, and watched her till sunk into a quiet slumber; then, going to the window, she opened the casement and looked from it. It presented a view of the sea, which was perfectly calm; but no living object was in sight. Her mind was in tumults; to resist force, seemed vain; and to go willingly from the kingdom, would appear like acquiescence in Hardington's schemes. But little time was allowed her for consideration.

Notice was given, by Hardington's servant, that Miss Hobbleton must accompany him.

“Miss Hobbleton goes no where unaccompanied by me,” said Juliet, in as firm a voice as she could command.

“Well, then, you must go too, I suppose,” answered the man, who was followed into the room by another, “but we had no orders about you,” and they advanced to seize Lydia, who, screaming

loudly, threw herself into Juliet's arms, and dared them to touch her.

“ Then come quietly,” said one of the men, “ or we shall carry you off, in spite of your squalling.”

In the hope that some opportunity might occur, of procuring relief, Juliet persuaded Lydia to go, holding fast by her arm; and both, surrounded by their conductors, (now increased to six,) were conveyed to the coast. Here they found Captain Hardington and the Count de Brisac.

“ Miss Monteith,” said the former, “ this is really an honour I did not expect. Suffer me to persuade you to consign your charge to my care, with a perfect assurance of her safety.”

“ Oh! do not add insult to violence” said Juliet, “ but allow us both to return to our friends.”

“ My dear Madam,” said he, “ I have only one question to ask,—Are you decided on visiting the continent in my party?”

“ I am certainly decided on not being separated from Miss Hobbleton,” said Juliet; “ but surely Captain Hardington will not, by force, compel her to accompany him; and, voluntarily, he cannot expect it.”

“ We are losing time,” said he, impatiently; and making a signal to his men, they again advanced to bear off Lydia; but, after struggling and shrieking violently, overcome with the unusual exertion, she fainted in the arms of Juliet, to whom she still clung. Deprived, by terror and her efforts to support her, of all power of resistance, Juliet and her helpless charge were together borne into the boat, and from thence into the vessel, which apparently waited to receive them. Lydia revived from her fainting fit to sickness and languor, and Juliet was herself too ill to afford her much assistance; yet it was a comfort they were together, and that Captain Hardington did not molest them during their voyage.

So securely had his plans been laid, and so judiciously had the whole been arranged, that they had quitted England before their flight could be suspected. Mrs. Clermont's appointment for her carriage to meet them at Hounslow, had been heard by an associate of Captain Hardington's, who repeated it to him; and the scheme, which had before wavered in his imagination, was now matured.

He was, as Mrs. Clermont had said, a man of desperate fortune; and he knew, from good authority, that Miss Hobbleton was entitled to the whole of her fortune as soon as she married. The blunt rejection of Mr. Hobbleton, and his well-known character, convinced him that he had no favour to hope from him, nor did his insidious attempts with Lydia herself succeed better. The desperate expedient of carrying her off, therefore, only remained. Her minority rendered a marriage impracticable in England, but his friend, the Count de Brisac, offered his assistance,

and proposed an asylum, where, should he meet resistance to his wishes, he could place her in safety.

An excursion to France was precisely what Captain Hardington would like. • A cessation of hostilities presented a favourable opportunity, and he could easily obtain a leave of absence long enough to suit his purposes. It was no part of his plan to make Juliet a party in their continental journey : but as it was necessary to detain her till they should have embarked for France, he concluded on conveying her with Lydia to Brighton, from whence they were to proceed to Dieppe.

The usual effects of a voyage, together with extreme anxiety of mind, reduced Juliet to such weakness, that Captain Hardington and his friend actually believed their cares respecting her would soon be terminated. A death-like torpor seemed to have benumbed her faculties ; and after suffering violently for many hours, she lay in a kind of stupor, Lydia hanging over

her, and making the vessel resound with her screams and lamentations.

Attracted by her cries, Captain Hardington and the Count approached the miserable confined bed on which she reclined; and, when Lydia beheld them, pointing to her friend, she said, sobbing,

“ There! now I hope you are satisfied. You have killed my dear Miss Monteith, by dragging her away in this barbarous manner; and if she dies, I hope I shall die too.”

“ No, beloved Lydia,” said Captain Hardington, advancing; “ you will live, I trust, to form my happiness and your own,” and he attempted to take her hand; but, to his astonishment, he received from it a violent box on the ear, which forced him to retreat, and, with an execration against the little vixen, as he called her, he followed the Count, who, though strongly tempted to laugh at the reception his friend’s assiduities met with from Lydia, could not help feeling indescribably

shocked at the appearance of Juliet. She revived, at length, in some degree, before they landed at Dieppe; but was still so weak and ill, that Lydia concluded she must be dying, and loudly lamented her misfortunes. Juliet assured her, that when once more on shore, she had no doubt she should be better, and intreated her to be more moderate in her repinings.

Arrived at Dieppe, when Lydia found herself again on land, her joy was extreme, though she bitterly lamented that it was not England instead of France; and as she did not understand enough of the French language to comprehend what was said, she amused herself with laughing at the French servants, and their gestures of surprise at her manners. The females had a private room; but as Juliet rapidly recovered, they were not suffered to remain unmolested.

Captain Hardington sent to desire to speak to Miss Monteith alone, and Juliet

resolved to have a full explanation with him. Lydia would only retire into the bed-chamber, which was within the dining-room, and the Captain was admitted, For his reception, it appeared that he was fully prepared. He approached Juliet with a grave and determined countenance, while she, in repressed agitation, awaited his communication.

“ Miss Monteith,” said he, “ I am desirous of conversing with you on the circumstances which have thus, unintentionally on my part, brought us together. Doubtless you are well aware of my motives; and though taking you from your friends, and compelling you to join us, certainly formed no part of my plan, yet, as your own resolution not to be separated from your friend, has placed you under my protection, and made you a sharer in this adventure, I think it right to explain to you my determination. The means which I have used to make it appear, that Miss Hobbleton’s elopement has been voluntary,

will, I should think, suggest to you the propriety, and indeed the necessity, of an immediate marriage. Unintentionally you have contributed, beyond my hopes, by your presence, to confirm my report. Regard, therefore, for your pupil's character, will, I conceive, induce you to acquiesce in my wishes. As to yourself, Lydia's gratitude will of course be proportionate.— You are, I understand, your own mistress. You have, therefore, no person to consult as to your own actions, and may account for your absence from England in any way that may best suit your interest and inclinations."

He ceased, and Juliet firmly and gravely answered—

" My interest and inclination have hitherto been subservient to those principles of duty, in which I have been educated, and by which my conduct will, I trust, ever be guided. I wish not to deceive you, Captain Hardington. When Mr. Hobbleson committed his niece to my care, it was

with the most perfect confidence in my integrity, and it shall be my care to show him that it was not misplaced. Had I ever been inclined to favour your addresses to Miss Hobbleton, an outrage, so daring and unprincipled, would certainly have caused a total change in my sentiments; but as I am decidedly averse to a marriage, which I feel assured can never promote her happiness, and is in direct opposition to the wishes of her friends, rely on it I shall not forfeit my own good opinion, and incur the never-ending torment of self-reproach, by consenting to a measure, which renders *you* amenable to the laws of your country, and will stamp my name with the blackest ingratitude."

"Such then is your determination, Madam?" he demanded, with a look and voice intended to intimidate; but Juliet felt she was acting right, and she quietly but firmly answered in the affirmative.

"Then, Madam," said he, "you will, I hope, make up your mind to the conse-

quences. If you had agreed to my wishes, I intended to celebrate my nuptials here, and return to England as soon as we found it convenient; but as you prefer a protracted absence, be it so. Miss Hobbleton revisits her native country no more, till she returns to it as my wife; and you, of course, must not be permitted to direct the pursuit of her friends. An insulated residence, amidst rocks and mountains, impervious to discovery, and admirably suited to encourage your lofty and heroic sentiments, shall henceforth seclude you both from society, till your own inclinations shall prompt you to accede to my proposals. Till to-morrow I leave you to consider of them. Fain would I reconduct you, in splendour and happiness, to Great-Britain, but you know the alternative."

"I should hope, said Juliet, "that you, too, would consider, and know your own temporal and eternal interest better, than to incur the guilt of an action so unjustifiable. Suffer us to depart. Restore us to

our friends and country, and I will readily enter into any engagement, to make no farther disclosure relative to our forced Journey hither, than is necessary for my own justification, and none that can in any way implicate or injure you in the opinion of the world."

"My dear Miss Monteith," he answered, "I did not undertake this enterprise without due consideration, and a resolution which no remonstrances nor intreaties can shake. All your rhetoric, therefore, will be unavailing; you had better use it with your ward, who, I am convinced might be wrought upon by you to act as you please."

"My influence," said Juliet, "will never be exerted to lead her from the path of duty. Enormous indeed would be my guilt, could I so far deviate from right, as to corrupt the mind of innocence by counselling her to disobedience. Greatly, Sir, have you mistaken my character, if you have supposed it possible, that I could for one moment hesitate on the subject."

Finding altercation useless, and that the firm integrity of Juliet, alike, resisted threats or entreaty. Captain Hardington at length quitted her, and the half-distracted Lydia alternately weeping and lamenting, required all Juliet's attention for the remainder of the day. When she heard the particulars of the late scene, she only clung closer to her kind friend, vowed she would never be separated from her, and that she would die sooner than marry Hardington.

It appeared that the disposal of his charges required no small consideration, by the long conferences which he held with his friend the Count on the subject. He knew that no time was to be lost, and to compel Lydia to an immediate marriage seemed the only expedient; but for this Juliet was prepared, she felt assured that at all events it would be attempted, and her powers of resisting violence seemed to acquire strength with the necessity for exerting them. She counselled Lydia, to

be firm, without being loud or desperate, but gentleness formed no *trait* in Lydia's character, and Juliet found much difficulty in restraining her angry passions at the bare idea of force. They were informed that the gentleman would wait on them in the evening; Juliet had no doubt, but that this was to be the grand trial, and when she saw them enter the room, accompanied by a third person in the dress of a clergyman, it was rather a confirmation of her apprehensions than a surprise.

Lydia anticipated any remonstrance she might have meditated, for clinging as usual to her, she forbade them to approach her, shrieking vehemently for help, protesting she would never marry Captain Hurlington, and again declaring she would die first.

Staring at such violence, the whole party stood aghast, the clerical gentleman however, who appeared to be in some measure prepared for resistance, entreated her to be composed, and Hurlington advancing, said—

“ Miss Hobbleton you are aware that all this will avail nothing, be advised and let the ceremony be performed.—Happiness awaits you if it be not your own fault, but beware how you urge me to severity.”

Lydia would have spoken, but Juliet interfered—

“ Your threats, Captain Hardington,” said she, “ are equally cruel and weak.—You well know that you have no right to utter them—Though unfortunately in your power at present, that power being illegally obtained, cannot be permanent. To this stranger I appeal from it. As a man, and a christian, he cannot refuse to assist in an act of justice.”

The timid retiring manners of Juliet had widely misled Captain Hardington as to her character, he had fancied she would be easily intimidated, and that all opposition from her would speedily cease, when his determination to complete the marriage immediately became known; but when he saw the resolute and firm resis-

tance of a superior mind in every look and action, when he beheld her not agitated and trembling, but cool and collected prepared to refute his arguments and dispute his authority, even he for the moment was embarrassed.

The clergyman was evidently discomposed, and seemed inclined to shrink back he was indeed astonished at all he saw.—The youth and beauty of Juliet, the dignity and elegance of her manner, all spoke in her favour, and great as had been the pecuniary temptation held out to him he hesitated. Captain Hardington soon recovered his momentary discomfiture.

“ This is all trifling,” said he, “ have the goodness to proceed,” and he attempted to take the hand of Lydia, but it was fastened round the neck of Juliet, and a loud scream was all the notice she vouchsafed him.

“ Pardon me,” said the clergyman, “ I cannot proceed where there is such an evident appearance of violence.—I fear

Sir," he added, "you are wrong in wishing me to attempt it.—Allow the young Lady to compose herself."

"Sir," said the Captain, "I did not request your presence as an adviser, be so good as to continue your office—" And he put a book into his hand.

The Count De Brisac who had hitherto stood an inactive spectator, now approached Lydia and taking her hand—

"Ma chere Mademoiselle," he began, but forcing her hand from his grasp, in a tone of derision she desired him to keep his distance, and when he would have repeated the effort, in order to draw her towards his friend and the clergyman, the well powdered toupee of the Count felt the weight of her arm and sent forth a cloud of perfume. He only shrugged up his shoulders and retreated, exclaiming—"Oh Mon Dieu de lioness be tame in comparison." The clergyman seemed to be of the same opinion and in spite of the reiterated

adjurations of Captain Hardington persisted in quitting the room.

Relieved from immediate alarm, Juliet now ventured again to remonstrate with Hardington, but she received no answer and he retired with the Count. The result of their deliberations was an immediate removal, and their Captives were informed that they were to proceed the same evening on a journey of some length. The few clothes which they had brought with them for their visit to Mrs. Clermont fortunately supplied them with necessaries. They had for the last two days been attended by the Captain's own servant, the saucy footman, who had formerly lived with Mrs. Clermont; he had changed her service for that of Hardington and had thus enabled the latter to avail himself of the circumstance, to promote his scheme of getting Lydia into his power.

The door of their apartment was secured without, and they saw no person but

the same servant till the hour of their departure. The inconvenience of French travelling has often been described, and the crazy vehicle in which the two friends accompanied by the Count De Brisac, now sat forward, seemed in Juliet's opinion to threaten, them with an overturn at every step.

It was some relief that Hardington did not attend them, though they understood he would soon rejoin them. Had the mind of Juliet been in a frame to enjoy the beauties of nature, or to be amused by fine scenery, how highly might she have been gratified by the journey she was now obliged to make, and even uncertain as she was, as to the destiny marked out for them, and anxious as she felt to escape from the Count and to trust to chance for the means of returning to Great Britain, still could she not be insensible to the beauties of the country through which she travelled, and often was memory for the time beguiled by that natural taste, which

led her to admire the sublime and beautiful in all situations; but Lydia could not in this respect copy her, she could not restrain her indignation within the bounds of prudence, and annoyed Juliet by continual quarrels with the Count, and her incessant inquiries of where are they going; and when she could obtain no satisfactory answer she vented her anger in tears and lamentations. Her loud remonstrances with the half English, half French replies of the Count, which she constantly ridiculed; altogether, rendered the journey one scene of dissention and often forced the interference of Juliet, whom the Count, invariably treated with the utmost deference and respect.

On finding they were left to his sole care, she had attempted to expostulate with him on the office he had undertaken, and to persuade him at once to relinquish it, and promote their restoration to their friends; but her entreaties were unavailing. Whatever was the tie by which he

was bound to Captain Hardington, it appeared to be proof against the claims of justice or pity, and his unceasing vigilance allowed them no chance of an opportunity to elude it.

At the end of the third day's journey, as they entered the yard of a small inn by the road side (for the Count invariably selected the most retired places in which to pass the few hours dedicated to necessary rest,) they observed a gentleman leaning over a stump of an old tree, that had flourished and decayed, in a sort of green-shady lane opposite the little *Aubergé*.—The Count did not notice him, but ever anxious for aid in the hopes she still harboured of escape from his power, Juliet instantly saw him; she remarked that he viewed them with an appearance of curiosity and interest, and that he leaned forward as if to obtain a more distinct view of their persons. The Count hurried them into the house, conducted them to a private apartment, and as usual, stationed

a servant without the door, who maintained his post during the time they rested and resumed it at the next place where they stopped.

The window of this room fortunately opened into the very green lane which the incognito had chosen for his lounge, while he waited for horses, and their appearance at the little latticed casement was hailed by looks of earnest inquiry. The precautions with which the Count guarded his charges, his care to prevent their speaking or being spoken to by strangers, and the mystery that seemed to pervade every action of the party just arrived at the *Au-berge*, had struck the young traveller (for such he was) as he watched their arrival, and the subsequent deportment of the Count and his servants.

The slight view he had caught of the elegant form of Juliet, and the beautiful face of Lydia, perhaps stimulated him to closer observation; and he continued his lounging position till he observed the small

lattice gently removed, and two females appear at the open window.

Juliet, quick in determining, and as rapid in executing her plan, wrote with a pencil these words in French, and below them the same in English.

“Stranger, is it in your power to aid two distressed females?”—Uncertain of what country he might be, though his whole appearance proclaimed him English; her heart beat with apprehension and her lips uttered a fervent prayer for success, as carefully looking round after being assured that the unknown only, was in sight of the window, she extended her hand containing the slip of paper—She saw him dart forward, she dropped it and retired.

A few minutes elapsed, she again ventured to glance from the window, the stranger had disappeared and she remained in a state of suspense for near an hour. Refreshments were brought, but neither partook of them, the hope, however slight,

of relief prevented all inclination to eat. The Count joined them and advised their return to rest early that they might rise with the dawn.

He had no sooner left them than Juliet again took her station at the window. The unknown was in sight and had resumed his position on the stump of the old tree. He looked eagerly at the window, and in a few minutes sauntered towards it, he seemed to look fearfully around, Juliet leaned her head forward, he came immediately under the window; and the welcome sound, "I am English," met her ear, Attentively listening, she waved her hand, and the stranger added. "I go to procure the means for your relief expect me soon as midnight has sounded, in this spot."

"I will," said Juliet, and her new friend, as if afraid of being observed instantly disappeared and they saw him no more. Darkness soon spread its, for once welcome veil over the face of the earth;

before it was dispersed, Juliet began to indulge a hope, that Providence would enable them to escape from the power of the Count and their threatened imprisonment; but though the hour of retiring was passed, she could not sleep; and Lydia, though overcome with weariness, could not be prevailed on to rest without her. Close seated by Juliet, with her head leaning on the shoulder of her friend, she had sunk into a quiet slumber, when a bustle in the house attracted the watchful attention of Juliet. Quick steps were heard approaching the chamber; a rap at the door succeeded; in a tremulous tone she demanded who was there, and was answered by the Count himself, who desired they would instantly prepare to depart.

“Not before the morning, surely,” said Juliet.

“Immediately,” he answered, “in ten minutes the carriage will be ready.” All then is discovered, thought Juliet, “and

thus ends our illusive hopes of relief from the stranger's interference."

The Count's attendants were too numerous to render their feeble powers availing, and again were they forced to continue their route. It was evident that the Count had either obtained a knowledge of the stranger's intentions, or had imbibed some suspicions concerning him, though he gave no explanation of his motives for the sudden alteration in his plan; but was more than usually taciturn. Lydia was sleepy, and Juliet's thoughts were with the generous unknown.

CHAP. XIII.

THE CHATEAU.

THE Chateau de Brisac was situated on the borders of France, embosomed in the stupendous Pyrenees, amidst trackless and almost inaccessible mountains. It was large, antique, and ruinous, and its high turrets and broken battlements proclaimed it to be of no modern architecture. It was an ancient seat of the Brisac family, and had descended to the present possessor in regular succession from his ancestors. Seldom visited, marks of neglect were soon discernable, and at length it was almost wholly deserted.

During the horrors of war, its remote situation had alone saved it from devasta-

tion, it had escaped absolute pillage, but the hand of time had destroyed its splendour and left scarcely a vestige of magnificence. The scenery around it was wild, beautiful, and romantic. The lofty Pyrenees, their shadowy recesses, variegated rocks and valleys, and intricate passes, formed a view, bold, picturesque, and surprising to the traveller, and presented a scene of complicated grandeur and wildness.

This then was "the insulated residence, amidst rocks and mountains," with which Captain Mardington had threatened his captives. So Juliet concluded, as the first view of the Pyrenean Chateau met her sight, while they wound up the woody side of a steep, above which the embattled towers seemed to frown over the neighbouring valleys.

Lydie, who never scrupled asking any question that occurred to her, abruptly demanded of the Count, "what place that was before them?"

“It is,” said he, “the Chateau de Brisac, and your future residence.”

She seemed horror struck, for the lofty walls and clustering towers made a most formidable appearance, from an angle in the mountainous road which they were now ascending, and in spite of all her assumed courage, she burst into a violent fit of crying.

The Count coolly added, in French, “that she might quit it whenever she pleased.—She had only to accede to the terms of his friend, and the next day should see her at liberty to leave Brisac.”

She made no answer, for she seemed completely dismayed, and Juliet tried to soothe and divert her from dwelling on the fears which the tremendous appearance of the edifice created; but all in vain, she gave way to the most bitter invectives and reproaches.

The cool answers of the Count only more provoked her; she was lifted from the carriage into a high, walled, paved yard,

before their angry dispute was terminated by the appearance of Captain Hardington, who was awaiting their arrival. However expeditious had been their journey, it appeared, that he had preceded them, and when they entered the prison-like building before them, and heard the echo of their steps on the ancient marble pavement, even the fortitude of Juliet seemed to forsake her.

A female appeared.—An old woman, of a forbidding appearance, but she was English; and as the friendly accents met her ear, Juliet could not help feeling soothed by the welcome sounds. A stranger to all that related to the Count and his family, she could not account for finding an English woman in his household, for that he was the master here appeared evident.

After some refreshments had been served, Susan was summoned, and the Count leading the way, while the servant, bearing a light, attended the Ladies, were led

through a wide passage, terminated by a gothic staircase ; it ascended to a spacious gallery, at the end of which they stopped.

The Count unclosed the door, and motioned for Juliet to enter ; but when Lydia would have followed, he prevented her, and Juliet with dismay saw herself alone in a large dreary chamber, and heard the dismal sound of a heavy iron bar closed on her. The shrieks of Lydia too, reached her, and she joined in petitioning for at least being suffered to accompany her, but she was unattended to, and the screams of Lydia sounded on her ear, till she was borne away by the Count. Long she heard their steps, but the closing of the intervening doors seemed to shut her out from every human being, and in unutterable distress she sunk on a couch near the door. A lighted taper stood on the table, and the room had evidently been recently prepared for her reception. She looked at the gothic gloomy bed, with dark velvet hangings, and felt an insur-

mountable repugnance to enter it. In terror inexpressible for the fate of Lydia, more than herself, the night wore slowly away. She could not rest, nor did she attempt to undress, and the first gleams of morning found her traversing her chamber in all the horrors of uncertainty and the most dreadful anticipation.

From her melancholy meditations, she was aroused, by a tremendous noise of violent blows. A door seemed suddenly to give way, and in a moment, fleet steps, succeeded by the voice of Lydia at her door, made her heart palpitate with anxious hope. The heavy bar was removed, and Lydia appeared; she rushed into the chamber, her eyes swelled with crying, and a large rusty poker in her hand.

“Thank God I have got to you once again, my dear, dear, Miss Monteith,” said she, throwing her arms round her, “and never again shall they separate us.”

“How, my dear Lydia,” said Juliet,

“have you been able to obtain your liberty?”

“How?” cried Lydia, interrupting her—
“why, by breaking the door open.—
There have I been shut up all night, and expecting to be eaten up by the rats and the ghosts, for never did I hear such noises; as soon as it was light, I resolved I would be confined no longer, if I could find any means of getting out; so I rummaged about and found this old rusty poker, almost as big as myself, and when I looked at the old crazy door, I was sure I could soon burst it open; so before that old witch could come again, I set about it; and I have brought the poker with me to serve another time, and now let them take me from you again if they dare.”

Juliet inquired how she had been treated—

“Oh,” cried she, “I have seen nobody but that ugly old witch; what horrid faces she will make when she sees the broken door, and finds I am gone; but never

mind, I don't care for her, now I am once more with you."

Though rejoiced and thankful to find her in safety, Juliet was not sanguine in her expectations of their being permitted to continue together, for she had no doubt that it was a part of Hardington's plans to separate them.

Alarm and want of sleep had altered Lydia so much, that she felt assured she was ill, and her fears were soon confirmed; she complained of thirst and a violent pain in her head. Juliet persuaded her to rest on the bed she had not yet entered, and sat by her, till she heard the sound of approaching steps; when old Susan, with looks of evident dismay, entered the room, followed by Captain Hardington. Though indignant, that he should think himself authorised to enter her apartment, Juliet now wished to see him. The exploit of Lydia had been discovered by Susan on going to the room where she had left her; for the great distance from the generally

inhabited part of the Chateau, and the numerous doors between, had prevented the noise being heard by them, and she immediately alarmed the Count and his friend. They concluded what had really happened, that she had found her way to Miss Monteith, and as her separate confinement had probably been suggested only by a wish to intimidate her, they merely laughed at her desperate attempt to resist them. Juliet assured Hardington, that Miss Hobbleton was seriously ill, and conjured him to allow her to remain where she then was.

“I wish to believe,” said she, “that, unjustifiable as has been your conduct, you are not destitute of common humanity. Let me then appeal to it, and implore you not to add to our sufferings by another separation.—Accustomed, as she has been, to domestic comfort and indulgence, the life of Miss Hobbleton will be endangered by severity; and as it certainly will be required at your hands, it will

surely be better, as well as more humane, to permit my attendance on her."

However ill disposed to listen to any reasoning from Miss Monteith, he seemed not disinclined to accede to her wishes; for he saw, by Lydia's quick breathing, and the feverish tinge of her complexion, that she was really ill; and he at length consented to retire and leave her to Juliet's care.

A bolt on the inside of the door, which she now discovered, secured them from any more unwelcome intruders. Breakfast was brought them, and Juliet found ample employment in attending to Lydia, and in endeavouring to reconcile her to her present fate.

She grew worse, and for several dismal days Juliet was terrified by the most fearful apprehensions. The fever was at times extremely high, and affected her senses, so that she scarcely knew her kind attendant. Her ideas wandered to far distant scenes, and in her delirium she raved con-

tinually of the friends and the home from which the ocean divided her. Susan was the only person who visited them, and from her they learned, that the two gentlemen were generally absent during the greatest part of the day.

When Lydia grew rather better, and was once more composed in mind, and Juliet could sufficiently collect her thoughts to converse, she questioned Susan respecting her employer, and found that the mother of the Count de Brisac was an English woman, who had married young, and that Susan, an orphan, who had been brought up in the family, had accompanied her to France.

Her dear Countess, she said, had been unhappy in her married life; the Count was a dissipated man, and had lived always at Paris. Her parents were dead; and after the birth of her second child, she had retired to this Chateau, where she died.—The present Count and his sister were

their only children ; and they had continued at the Chateau till the death of their father ; since which the young Lord had seldom been there.

“ And is his sister living ? ” asked Juliet.

“ Ah, I wish I could answer you,” said Susan.—“ The Lady Angela has been lost to us for many years, and if her brother knows her fate, it is more than any other person does.”

“ What, did he murder her then ? ” said Lydia.

“ Oh, no indeed,” said the old woman, her sallow countenance becoming paler at the suggestion ; “ I did not say that, but my late Lord was too gay to be rich, and the poor Lady Angela was to be forced into a convent, that the young Count might be better provided for.—Poor thing ! she resisted as long as she could ; but she was torn away from us at last, by force, and I suppose took the veil, for we never heard of her afterwards.”

“ I dare say the Count murdered her,” said Lydia, “ for he is wicked enough to do any thing.”

Susan looked all astonishment at her boldness, but made no answer.

“ Was Lady Angela handsome ?” asked Lydia.

“ I thought her so, because I loved her,” answered Susan ; “ she looked as she really was, gentle and sweet tempered, and never even when she was unhappy, breathed a word of complaint or reproach against her brother.”

She went on to relate many circumstances of the story of the Lady Angela, and seemed much inclined to converse with her young charges ; except in not suffering them to escape from their confinement ; she was attentive and kind to them. She said she was quite ignorant of the reasons of their being brought there, and as it was no business of her's to question the propriety of her master's

conduct, she should not interfere. All she had to do was to obey her Lord's orders. She seemed to be wholly dependent on the Count, and in great awe of him.

Lydia slowly recovered from her indisposition, and it was some weeks before returning health restored the naturally vivid bloom of her complexion; but the anxiety of Juliet was at length relieved, and she saw with real comfort that every day added to her strength. When she was well enough to leave the room, Captain Hardington desired to converse with her alone, but no entreaties or threats could separate her for a moment from Juliet, and he at length agreed, that Miss Monteith should accompany her to the apartment, where he and the Count usually sat. Here again he explained his views and wishes, and urgently solicited Lydia to suffer the ceremony to be immediately performed, offering either to make a tour on the continent, or to conduct her back

to England, he agreed that she should retain her friend Miss Monteith to reside with her if she wished it : in short there were no concessions which he would not grant if she would comply, but all in vain, Lydia would only answer, that she hated him, and would never marry, and not all Juliet's previous admonitions to forbear exasperating him, could avail to restrain her impetuosity.

Finding all entreaty useless, the Captain proceeded to threats. He assured her, she should never quit the chateau but as his wife, menaced her with close confinement, and an entire separation from Juliet ; and advised her to consider, whether a marriage with him would not be preferable to a life passed in solitude and imprisonment. Terrified, and almost disheartened, poor Lydia sunk into the arms of her friend with hysteric sobs ; and Juliet, dreading lest her youth and inexperience, unable to endure such a prospect, should be wrought upon, by the artful repre-

sentations of Hardington, to accede to his wishes, here interfered. She pleaded, that Lydia was unequal, from the effects of her late illness, to encounter severity, or to reason on the subject; and she requested he would allow her at least time to recover her health, before he urged a measure to which she appeared so averse.

Knowing how entirely they were in his power; Juliet felt that the utmost prudence on their part was requisite, and that violent opposition might only provoke him to precipitate the fate of poor Lydia; she exerted all her courage to enable her to prevail on him to defer any farther conversation with Lydia till her strength was restored.

Whether he thought Miss Monteith's manner of speaking betokened less resolution to oppose him than formerly, or whether he had devised any other plan, remained unknown; but it is probable the former was the case, and that, by allowing them time and opportunity to consider the

alternative, they would finally yield ; for they were permitted to return to their apartment ; and, the next morning, they understood from Susan that the Captain and his friend had quitted the Chateau for some days, and that she had received orders to guard them closely in their absence. A sufficient number of servants was also left, to prevent the possibility of their departure ; though of this, Hardington well knew there was little fear. Entire strangers to the country, it was impossible that two unprotected young females would attempt an enterprise, attended with such difficulties and dangers ; and doubtless he felt perfectly secure of their safety till his return, when urged by the Count to exchange the dreary loneliness of the Chateau for an excursion, to visit some friends with him at a distance, and, at the same time, to leave his captives to meditate on the alternative offered them.

Relieved, by their absence, from the hourly dread of persecution, Juliet's

thoughts were now turned on the possibility of quitting the Chateau before their return, of reaching the nearest town, and there openly to apply to some person of consequence and power for protection; but, in the mean time, she endeavoured to alleviate the evils of confinement by every means in her power.

She inquired of Susan if there were any books in the Chateau, and persuaded her to bring them a few from some old book-cases in a remote part of it.

Too soon she was convinced that her hopes of escape, unassisted, were vain. They were too well guarded to find any opportunity; and even if they could, the massy fastenings forbade all chance of effecting their purpose. The profound retirement in which they lived, and the rigid confinement they endured, were, however, favourable to Juliet's wishes and intentions with regard to Lydia. The few books they had, she read with and explained to her. All her own store of know-

ledge she endeavoured to recall, that, while the person of her pupil was thus unjustly detained, her mind might be gaining improvement.

By a steady perseverance in resistance, she had no doubt of ultimate emancipation; and she was ardently desirous to return some part of the vast debt of gratitude she owed to Mr. Hobbleton, by restoring his niece to him better informed, and more fitted for the situation she was destined to support in life. Her hopes were not unfounded. Lydia seemed daily to improve in mind and person; and her increased attachment to Juliet, with the docility of her temper, and the quickness of her abilities, seemed to promise the realization of Juliet's most sanguine expectations.

She took an opportunity of impressing on Lydia's mind, a conviction of the ill effects of improper conduct in any situation; and when she saw her give way to repining at her confinement, she reminded

her, that their misfortunes were the consequences of her own imprudence. Her excursion to the fair had introduced her to Captain Hardington; and the levity of her manners had encouraged him to believe, that from her he would meet no opposition to his unwarrantable plans.

One of the few amusements of Juliet was to view the mountainous scenery from one of the windows of the apartment, to watch the different effects of the glare of day, the decline of the sun, and the sober twilight on the rocks; some of which, richly clothed in moss, and some bare, rugged, and stony, presented a variety of hues, as tinged by the different shades of light. Lydia was too young and too volatile to enter into Juliet's feelings; she had never been taught to admire the beauties of nature, as a source of wonder, awe, and gratitude, to view them with the eye of reflection, or to mark their astonishing variation. No careful parent had suggested the idea of the Creator, as inseparably

connected with his works; nor bade her learn to adore him, while contemplating the wondrous bounties lavished on the globe formed by his hand! but to Juliet such meditations were familiar, and she sought anxiously to render the mind of Lydia more deeply impressed, by subjects of higher importance, than those which had hitherto merely glanced over the surface.

To her inexpressible satisfaction, she found her, not merely grateful for the exertion, but desirous to retrieve her past errors by making a better use of her time. Insensibly she grew less boisterous in her manners; and though still lively and droll, by degrees acquired more gentleness and propriety of deportment, than Juliet had ever dared to hope she would possess. She would sometimes, with her wonted humour, laugh at the alteration she was conscious of in herself.

“ Oh, if ever we should be restored to dear England,” said she, “ how my good

uncle will stare at the change there is in me, and what wonders will not be attributed to you. He always thought you a model of all that is good ; and now I really think, the least he can do will be, to offer himself to your acceptance, out of pure gratitude for the benefits you have conferred on his niece."

END OF VOL. II.

