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"the parlour!" said Mrs. Smith, looking first at her  
husband, and then at Henrietta.

THE WORKS  
OF  
MRS. SHEERWOOD  
Uniform Edition  
Vol. XI.





THE

LADY OF THE MANOR:

BEING

*A Series of Conversations*

ON THE

SUBJECT OF CONFIRMATION.

INTENDED FOR THE USE OF

THE MIDDLE AND HIGHER RANKS

OF

YOUNG FEMALES.

BY MRS. SHERWOOD,

AUTHOR OF "LITTLE HENRY AND HIS BEARER," ETC., ETC.

IN FOUR VOLUMES.

VOL. III.

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1860.

THE HISTORY OF THE

REIGN OF

1714

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THE

**LADY OF THE MANOR.**

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CHAPTER XXI.

*Ninth Commandment.—Thou shalt not bear false witness against thy Neighbour.*

“THE offences of the tongue, and the proper management of this little member, is the subject, my dear young people, to which we are this day led by the commandment that is now to be considered,” said the lady of the manor, looking affectionately round on her young friends, who were once more gathered about her. “This precept, viz. ‘Thou shalt not bear false witness against thy neighbour,’ is of extensive signification, and not only forbids actual falsehoods and intentional misrepresentations, but all exaggerations and careless misstatements even of the slightest facts. And hence the best of persons have found, that, inasmuch as that every one is liable to misconceptions, the safest and surest way to prevent any breaches of the ninth commandment, is, to avoid much mention of their neighbours’ concerns, and all unnecessary interferences with the affairs of others.

“The scourges and lashes of the tongue,” proceeded the lady of the manor, “have, no doubt, their use in society, and have been employed, and still are so, in checking gross evils, and bringing secret sins to light; though, at the same time, they are full as often the instruments of evil as of good; and, at any rate, they belong not to the panoply of Christian warfare thus described by the Apostle.—*Wherefore take unto you the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to withstand in the evil day, and, having done all, to stand. Stand therefore, having your loins girt about with truth, and having on the breastplate of righteousness; and your feet*

*shod with the preparation of the Gospel of peace; above all, taking the shield of faith, wherewith ye shall be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked. And take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God. (Eph. vi. 13—17.)*

“And now, my beloved young people, having briefly stated the motives which religion suggests for the control of the tongue, I shall proceed to give you some of my own views on the state of conversation in general in this country.

“It is commonly supposed, that a gossiping disposition is now confined to low life, and that the genuine spirit of it is rarely found in any higher circle than the milliner’s shop. But this appears to me an error; and although there is a certain sort of tittle-tattle which seldom creeps into polished life, yet I am of opinion that there is not a single order or denomination of men, from the courtiers who attend the royal levee, to the shoe-black in the corner of the street, which has not its appropriate gossip and its petty calumnies.

“Gossip and tittle-tattle, disguised with the cloak of pretended charity and anxiety for the well-being of a neighbour’s soul, is one of the greatest evils of the present state of religious society. The University has a peculiar style of tittle-tattle of its own, with an appropriate language. There is another sort of tittle-tattle at clerical meetings; and another where many military men are found. Persons bred to the law and to physic have each their appropriate gossip, independent of all discussions of that general kind which may be useful to them in their professions. The higher and lower, the elegant and coarser orders of females, have each their tea-table scandal. Seminaries of instruction are, in general, deeply infected with this low spirit of tittle-tattle; and the halls of the senate, and the very courts of kings, are as deeply infected with this evil spirit as the tepid atmosphere of the laundry and the workshop of the tailor. And the unconverted man, in every situation and rank of life, is nearly as incapable of refraining from this kind of pastime, as he would be to live without bread or water.”

The young ladies smiled at this assertion of their instructress; not, indeed, because they questioned its truth, but at the new view which it gave them of society—a view which brought conviction with it to all those who had seen any thing of the world. “But may I ask you, my dear Madam,” said one of the young ladies, “how you would define the word gossip or tittle-tattle?”

“Gossip is no other,” returned the lady of the manor, “than the repetition of such unimportant matters as take place in the families of our acquaintance, or as affect their affairs. This kind of conversation is always unimproving; and it is more or less sinful, according to the feelings by which it is dictated, and the spirit in which it is uttered. When retailed without excitement of any kind, and merely from the love of talking, it is inexpressibly dull; and when dictated by evil passions, which is most commonly the case, it becomes decidedly injurious to all who hear it: and, to say the best of it, if it does not excite bad passions in the hearer, it fills his mind with a sort of rubbish which leaves little room for more useful matter.

“But, inasmuch,” continued the lady of the manor, “as I have a very striking narrative by me, wherein these matters, to wit, the faults of the tongue, are largely discussed, and their sad consequences very plainly set forth, I shall say the less beforehand, but refer you to my manuscript for my further opinion on these subjects.”

The sight of a manuscript always pleased the young people; and while the lady was unfolding it, one of them ventured to say, that she thought it impossible that any character she might hereafter meet with should please her so well as that of Frederick Falconer.

“Well,” said the lady of the manor, “we shall see. But I apprise you that, though I am about to introduce you into a large society, there is but one individual in that society whose character can be at all compared with your favourite Frederick.”

She then spread the paper before her, and read as follows.—

*Clara Lushington's Account of herself; related during the course of a long illness, to a tender and pious Friend, who was her constant companion.*

"I was born in the province of Delhi in the East Indies. My father was an officer, high in the Company's service; and my mother a native of Cashmire, born of mussulmaun parents, and never, as I have reason to fear, convinced of the errors of that faith.

"From such an ill assorted union, much domestic happiness was, of course, not to be expected, neither, as I well remember, did much result.

"I do not recollect the station, at which I was born, my parents having left it while I was too young to take much notice. When I first became conscious of my existence, I was living with them at Cawnpore, an European station in the East Indies, on the banks of the Ganges, about eight hundred miles above Calcutta.

"Cawnpore is the largest station, with the exception of Calcutta, on that side of India; consisting, first of a black or native town, a barrack for European infantry, a second for artillery, a third for European cavalry, and a fourth for native cavalry; the whole forming a line along the banks of the river for nearly seven miles, the country in the rear of and between these several stations for regiments being sprinkled with gentlemen's houses, standing, for the most part, in beautiful gardens abounding with all kind of fruit and forest trees.

"My father, who held a staff situation in this place, inhabited a house situated at the extreme end of the native cavalry cantonment. The site of his habitation was on a *conca* rock, on the bank of the river; and it consisted of two *bungalows*, united by a gallery which was formed of mud, and covered with thatch, of nearly a quarter of a mile in length, and built with a gradual ascent from the lower to the upper *bungalow*.

"Of the two *bungalows*, the less, which was the habitation of my mother, was so near the precipice which flanked the bed of the river, that one of the outer *verandahs* hung in mid air, suspended on the beams strongly attached to the rock, and at such a height as to be above

the highest mast of the pinnaces and *budgerows* which passed beneath. The second *bungalow*, which was my father's especial dwelling, lay in a direction from the river, and considerably lower than the first or lesser one, he long passage before mentioned sloping considerably towards it.

"The *bungalows* in India, whether large or small, are, for the most part, of the same construction; being built of unbaked bricks and covered with thatch, having in the centre a hall, encircled by eight smaller apartments, the whole being encompassed by an open *verandah*, commonly inclosed by rails, and shut up, at times, by a kind of delicate matting, composed of rushes, and painted of various colours, by which the glaring light of the sun is excluded, although the air is admitted.

"My father's *bungalow* was furnished, according to the taste of Europeans, with branched wall-shades, carpets, and tables carefully polished. I also remember a side-board, richly covered with plate; and his equipages were as numerous and various as we should see in the establishment of a prince in Europe. Well do I remember the elephant, with his sumptuous *howdah*, on which my father went out every day before sunrise, and on which, as a great favour, I was sometimes permitted to accompany him.

"My father at that time loved pomp, and kept much company, although I have had reason to think that his whole views of life and happiness have since been entirely changed. The publicity and display in which he then indulged, formed, however, a very striking contrast with my mother's mode of life, which was so retired, and so monotonous, that a European female would, I believe, have some difficulty even to conceive it.

"The *bungalow* in which my mother resided, was as I before remarked, much smaller than my father's, though of the same construction. It was also furnished entirely according to the eastern custom. My mother herself occupied the centre apartment, which on all occasions was shut out from the others by such light screens as I have described above, these screens being covered with green silk, to render them more impervious to the eye. The walls of her room were whitewashed,



and the pavement was spread with a *sitringe*, or carpet of striped cotton, the manufacture of the country. Attached to the ceiling, in the centre of the room, was a kind of silken canopy, enriched with golden fringe, from which fell a drapery of purple China gauze, which in the day time was knotted up, but in the night opened and spread over the person beneath. On the floor, under this canopy, was a large quilt of Benares silk, spreading widely around, and, upon this, many cushions of the richest *kinquaub*. In the centre of these cushions was my poor mother's usual resting-place: and there she commonly sat, in the oriental fashion, with her *paun-box*, of burnished gold, on one side, and her *hookah*, of materials equally rich, on the other.

"On this spot she spent twenty out of the twenty-four hours, never moving from it, night or day, excepting in the cool of the evening, when she went out into the high gallery above mentioned as suspended from the top of the rock over the river. There seated, with her female servants about her, she enjoyed little variety in looking down, through the *purdah*, upon the boats passing and repassing beneath. How she spent the rest of the twenty-four hours I can give you little idea, excepting that some part of each day was devoted to the use of the *hookah*, in chewing the beetle-nut, and in sitting under the hands of the waiting-women, who expended no small labour in combing, perfuming, and braiding her hair.

"My mother never, as I can remember, discovered any very strong proofs of regard for me, excepting in case of my being ill; on which occasion I more than once recollect her displaying deep and tender solicitude: and, when I think of this parent, and consider that she died in the false belief in which she lived, I own that I have certain feelings of anguish which I cannot describe; and I am inclined to envy the poorest creature, who, having been born in a Christian country and of Christian parents, is not exercised with the painful feelings which agitate me whenever I think of her who gave me birth.

"But, amidst any circumstances, there surely must be something sweet and touching in the recollection of a

mother. Mine was a beautiful woman, though totally different from any one I ever saw in Europe. Her complexion was a clear brown, and her hair long, black, and beautifullly disposed upon her forehead. Her eyes were dark, and set as those of the oriental beauties commonly are, being somewhat long, and having a melancholy expression, but possessing an indescribable lustre. Her features were small and delicate, as was indeed her whole person, though, when she stood up, she appeared tall. Her dress was always perfectly oriental, her person being covered with a profusion of ornaments, and a loose drapery of muslin being thrown over her head. She spoke little, but was fond of being talked to, and of hearing what was passing; and those of her female attendants who could tell the most news or repeat the longest stories, were always her greatest favourites.

“Having now laid before you, my friend, the particular circumstances of our family, which I have taken the greater pains in doing, from their being so entirely dissimilar from every thing witnessed in Europe, I proceed to describe the manner in which I spent my life, till I had entered my tenth year, at which time I was removed from my parents.

“Independent of my father’s and mother’s establishments, I had four or five servants to wait entirely upon me; among these were three women, who used to follow me wherever I went, and administer to all my caprices. I was always dressed as a little native, though in the richest materials which could be procured; and I spent my time in running backwards and forwards between the two *bungalows*, talking either to the company in my father’s sitting-room, or to the servants in the *verandah*, as suited me best, and displaying my evil qualities, of various kinds, to afford amusement to the latter. I was totally unacquainted, in the mean time, with the use of a book, or of the English language, while I was too well initiated in most things that are vile and base in the Hindoostaunee language, and the Hindoo modes of life.

“I remember few anecdotes of my childhood worth recording: one day passed with me as another, while I continued to grow in stature though not in grace. One

thing, however, I ought to remember with particular thankfulness, which is this,—the frequent escapes which I had from a sudden and terrible death. The long passage, so often mentioned in the course of my story as extending itself between the *bungalows*, being in many parts illuminated only by certain air-holes, resembling the arrow-slits to be seen in the towers of old castles, was, in some places, nearly dark; and, indeed, this exclusion of light and air rendered it cool in the hot season; but, in consequence, it became dangerous, as a receptacle for venomous reptiles: and more than once in this passage, (for I think it happened as often as twice while we lived at Cawnpore,) I discerned the dreadful eyes of a monstrous *cobra di capel* glaring at me through the obscurity. On both these occasions, I was so struck, so petrified with terror, that I could not move, and should, no doubt, have stood still to meet a horrible death, if the servants had not snatched me away; for these creatures have such power of fascination, that it is seldom that those escape on whom they fix their deadly gaze.

“It is true, that my father caused these serpents to be destroyed, and search was made for their nests throughout the gallery; yet, when I think of the dangers to which, at that period, I was daily exposed from these venomous reptiles, I cannot but feel new motives for praise to Him who hath hitherto kept me as the apple of his eye.

“But to dwell no longer on this—the early part of my life, which contains not much either of sweet remembrance or of many tender domestic passages, I hasten to say, that, when I was just entering my tenth year, a cousin of my father’s, whom I accustomed myself to call my aunt, and therefore shall continue so to do, visited us at Cawnpore, and prevailed on my father to let her take me with her to Calcutta, promising, as her own children were gone to Europe, that she would receive me as a daughter, and superintend my education. This lady was the wife of a surgeon in the Company’s service, and, consequently, in a situation to live in high respectability. My father was fully sensible that my situation in his house was far from desirable; he therefore



gladly closed in with the offer, and I did not hear of any objection made to its being accepted by my mother.

“I pass over the scenes which took place on my departure. Suffice it to say, that my grief was violent when I was carried on board the boat, but it was soon forgotten; and by the time I arrived at Calcutta, I was perfectly reconciled to my new acquaintance.

“My aunt’s habitation was a superb *puckah* house, in Courcinghee Road; where she lived in a degree of splendour, of which the wife of his Majesty’s physician in Europe would hardly have an idea. Here my education was to commence; and my aunt, in consequence, taught me to read, and directed her *ayah* to instruct me in the use of my needle, so far as to make my doll’s clothes: but, as to any religious, or even intellectual acquirements, I was nearly as deficient as ever. My mornings were, in deed, occupied in the presence of my aunt, at least, some hours of them: but my evenings were always spent with the *ayah*, my aunt being continually engaged, at those times, in paying and receiving visits.

“In the society of this *ayah* my only improvement consisted in an exchange of my knowledge of Hindoostanee spoken up the country for that of the worst Bengalee, and of my acquaintance with the vicious practices of the Hindoos for that of those of the low Europeans or half Anglicised natives with whom Calcutta abounds. I should, however, add to these acquirements, a certain love and insight into the art of dress, which I derived as much from the mistress of the family as from her waiting-maid; together with such a knowledge of the English tongue, as enabled me to read it imperfectly, and to speak in that clipped and hissing manner in which the Bengalees always pronounce that language.

“Those who have been in India, will now be able to picture me to themselves such nearly as I was at that period, and will have all my tricks, and ways, and modes of life and manners, before them; but I think I might challenge the whole collected population of untravelled Britons, to form an idea of a creature at once so artful and so seemingly simple, so ignorant and yet so knowing, so truly bold and so affectedly modest, so seemingly gen-

tle and so really obstinate and imperious, as I was at that time, and as many unfortunate young people are who are brought up under such complicated disadvantages.

“When I had been four years, or thereabouts, in Calcutta, I heard of the death of my mother; a circumstance which affected me less at the time than it has done upon subsequent reflection; for to this day, after the lapse of ten years, I continually lament her death, and wish, and O how earnestly do I wish! that her life might have been spared until it had pleased God to give to her worthless daughter a sense of the value of that blessed Saviour, of whom my unhappy parent scarcely knew the name. But can the Judge of all the earth do wrong? Almighty Father, I desire to submit my will to thine! I desire to be able to say, in the fullest sense of the words, ‘Thy will, O God, be done!’ But to leave this ever-affecting subject, and to go on with my narrative.

“It was not probable that the education which I had hitherto received should, humanly speaking, make me a very amiable character. I was, in fact, what is called a very naughty girl; and some of my transgressions about this time, being brought to the knowledge of my aunt, she, in consequence, wrote to my father, proposing that I should be sent to school; adding, as a further argument in favour of this plan, that she expected her daughter from England, and should, therefore, have less time to attend to me.

“My father, in reply, said, that he much approved the plan of my going to school, but wished that I might be sent to a Mrs. Patterson, who kept a seminary of considerable note, in the Circular Road; and the reason he gave for choosing this school was, that a very intimate friend of his, a Colonel Carrisforth, of the Company’s service, had a daughter boarding in the house, a young lady of lovely manners and excellent principles, and one who he was assured, if requested so to do, would act the part of a sincere and affectionate friend, guide, and protector to me. Inclosed, he sent a letter from Colonel Carrisforth to his daughter, which I was to carry with me and deliver to the young lady when I was taken to school.

“My aunt lost no time after the receipt of this letter, in making the due arrangements with Mrs. Patterson; and one evening within the same week I accompanied her to school.

“I know, my dear friend, that you like to have every new scene exactly brought before you. I shall, therefore, endeavour to take you with me in imagination to the Circular Road, and to make you at home in Mrs. Patterson’s house, every nook and corner of which is still painted in lively colours on my fancy, together with the various figures and countenances of the numerous individuals who formed the household.

“It was a foggy evening in the month of November, about six o’clock, when I got into my aunt’s coach in Chouringhee Road, to accompany her to Mrs. Patterson’s. We passed awhile beneath the walls and gates of the many *puckah* houses in that direction; then, turning down the burying-ground road, and going through several noble streets, in which the houses appeared not united together, as in England, but standing in luxuriant gardens, and at considerable distances from each other, we entered into that part of our way which is enclosed on each side by the walls of the burying-ground. Here, for a great length of way, nothing is to be seen but tombs and monuments, of various descriptions, presenting their tall and mournful heads above the walls, and, as the carriage moves along, seeming to pass away before the eye in a long and sad procession, producing in a fanciful mind something like the perception that one sometimes has in dreams, when dark and indistinct visions of sorrow seem to flit before the eye, and that so swiftly, that, apparently, the visual ray can scarcely rest on the form of one before another presents itself. Through this mournful avenue our carriage entered upon the Circular Road, which is a raised causeway carried round the suburbs of Calcutta, and forming a very usual drive for its inhabitants. On each side of this road, at least of that part of it upon which we entered by the burying-ground way, is a variety of trees known only in hot climates, such as palm, bamboo, almond, orange, tamarind, and plaitain trees; and these, owing to the damp of the Bengal soil, growing with a luxuriance of which the in-

habitants of more northern latitudes can scarcely form an idea. In the midst of this thick foliage, but commonly thrown considerably into the back ground, appear houses of various descriptions, some being small and of dubious character, as if they might belong either to a respectable native or to a poor European; others being decidedly European; and of these last there was also a great variety, some being of almost princely construction, and others more minute and in the cottage style. Over this whole scene, the time of my making these observations being, as I before said, an evening in the month of November, there hung a thick fog, common throughout the evenings during the cold season in Calcutta, and supposed to be exceedingly injurious to the European constitution.

“Having proceeded along this road for a considerable time, we arrived at Mrs. Patterson’s gate. Her house was a handsome *puckah* building, consisting of two stories, and standing in the centre of a walled garden. On each side of the house there was a thick cluster of trees; from the centre of each of these arose several exceedingly lofty palm trees, from which the place took its name; and to the right and left of the coach-ring in front were rows of aloes, plants much admired in Europe for their rarity and singularity, but which, from their extreme formality and the deep green of their leaves, convey, to the minds of those who have ceased to look on them with wonder, an idea of all that is mournful, dark, and sad.

“As our carriage wheeled into the *compound*, we put to flight a number of young ladies, who were at that time walking in the garden. ‘Those are your future companions, Clara,’ said my aunt, smiling, ‘I hope that we have not frightened them away.’

“While my aunt was speaking, I was engaged in looking at them, as they had gathered together at a small distance. They were dressed in white, had neither caps nor bonnets on their heads, and were most of them thin and extremely sallow; a few of them were mere children, but there were also many who appeared to be women grown, and some even past their earliest youth. As I stretched my neck out of the window to look at them.

they laughed, particularly the elder ones, and spoke to each other, seemingly exciting fresh merriment by some remarks probably on me. I was a little disconcerted by this exhibition of bad manners; for, though ill-mannered myself, I was as keenly alive to disrespect in others as pride and ill-temper could make me. I had, however, only time to say to my aunt, 'How rude those girls are! I hope Miss Carrisforth is not among them!' before the door of the carriage was opened, and we were ushered into the august presence of Mrs. Patterson.

"But before I introduce you, my dear friend, to the presence of this lady, I must give you the promised description of her house, in order that you may have a view of every scene of the short, yet, perhaps, not uninteresting drama of your Clara's life; that life which I am sensible will be closed in a few months, but not, I trust, before she has been made, through the divine mercy, fit for that glory prepared for those who shall be saved.

"The school-house was, as I have already said, a large *puckah* building, encircled by open *verandahs* above and below; these *verandahs* being supported by handsome pillars. The roof of the house was flat, crowned with a parapet, the apartments were disposed into two large halls, the one looking towards the front, and the other to the garden, where a broad gravel walk, running round a stone tank, was itself enclosed at the back and sides with a thick shrubbery. On each side of these halls was a large centre room, and four smaller ones at the corners; the rooms above being laid out precisely in the same manner. The furniture of the apartments was handsome, especially that of the hall and chambers; and each young lady had her own bed, which was hung with musquito gauze. It was in the inmost hall that we first saw Mrs. Patterson: she was sitting on a sofa, conversing with a young lady of European extraction and fine exterior, who, as soon as she saw us, immediately left the room. I was hoping that this young lady might prove to be Miss Carrisforth, but was convinced to the contrary, by hearing Mrs. Patterson address her by the name of Beaumont.

"Mrs. Patterson was the widow of an officer, and had,



no doubt, had much difficulty in bringing her mind to that mode of life which her necessities had rendered inevitable. She had been undoubtedly very handsome, and she still retained much of that kind of majestic and commanding beauty which made every one who beheld her look upon her with awe. I immediately saw that my aunt was impressed with this feeling, for her usual volubility failed her in the presence of this lady, to whom she said very little more than was merely sufficient to recommend me to her care, and to request that I might, if it were perfectly convenient, be associated as much as possible with Miss Carrisforth; whose father, my aunt added, had sent by me a letter of recommendation to his daughter.

“‘Miss Carrisforth,’ replied Mrs. Patterson, ‘has also received a letter from her father on the same subject, and is prepared to be a friend to Miss Lushington. And indeed,’ added Mrs. Patterson, ‘you are happy, Miss Lushington, in having such a friend; and, if you will permit her to be your director, you will find an advantage which I could not promise you from the friendship of any other young person in my house.’

“This was much, very much, for Mrs. Patterson to say, as I afterwards found that her sentiments were in general very impenetrable. My aunt was, however, evidently pleased to hear this character of my future friend, and begged the favour to be permitted to see Miss Carrisforth.

“The young lady was, accordingly, called: and, obeying the call immediately, she won every heart by her charming appearance. She seemed to be full seventeen years old, a circumstance which made her more fit to be the director of a young person of my age than if she had been younger. Her person was lovely, her complexion being pale, without any tincture of sallowness; her eyes of dark blue were soft and expressive; her features were regular; her person was delicate; and her hair of a glossy brown. Her manner was neither forward nor bashful; it was affectionate, without being familiar; and orderly, without being dull.

“When she entered the room, and understood who I was, she walked directly up to me, took my hand, kissed

my cheek, and assured my aunt, who spoke to her, that she would do all in her power to make me happy.

“‘And good, too, Miss Carrisforth, you would say,’ said my aunt, graciously, and looking with pleasure on the lovely young creature who stood before her, ‘if your modesty did not prevent.’

“Miss Carrisforth bowed, but said no more.

“My aunt then rose, and kissing me, added, ‘Clara, I now leave you with entire satisfaction; you will let me know if you want any thing.’ So saying, she departed; and Mrs. Patterson following her to the door, I was left with Miss Carrisforth, with whom, I, no doubt, displayed, for some minutes, no small degree of that bashful awkwardness which is more or less common to all ill-bred children.

“When Mrs. Patterson was gone, Miss Carrisforth proposed showing me my room, and for this purpose she took me up stairs into a small corner apartment facing the front *verandah*, and containing two beds; the one standing close to the outer wall, and the other against a green *jalousied* door, which communicated with another chamber, but which was closed by the bed. ‘There, Miss Clara,’ said she, is your bed, (pointing to the one last mentioned,) and this is mine, (pointing to the other.) We may be very comfortable here if we please, and I trust that we shall be able in this place to devote our thoughts and conversation to improvement.’

“‘O! this is very nice!’ I answered, suddenly recovering from my fit of bashfulness; ‘and you are to be my companion! I am so glad of it. And how happy I am that my father chose this school, and you to be my friend, and nobody else! I am sure I should not have liked any one so well as I do you.’ So saying, I remember that I threw my arms round her neck, and gave her twenty kisses before she had time to extricate herself from me, which she presently did, though in a manner sufficiently gentle.

“‘O my dear child!’ she said, ‘how you startled me! Why, what further will you be able to say to me, or how will you be able to express your affection more strongly a year hence, when I have proved to you that I am really worthy of your love?’

“‘O, now, Miss Carrisforth,’ I said, ‘you are making fun of me; I see you are.’

“‘Do not call me Miss Carrisforth,’ she replied; ‘call me Amelia.’

“‘Then you won’t make fun of me, will you?’ I said, hanging on her arm, accompanying my ungraceful mode of speaking with a motion no doubt equally awkward.

“‘My dear Clara,’ Miss Amelia replied, ‘understand me once for all, that I dislike the habit of ridiculing, or, as you say, of making fun, of any one. I trust that I am too sensible of my own errors and defects, to presume to ridicule another person. If I see any thing amiss in you, my dear Clara, I will tell it you plainly and directly; and, to prove my sincerity, I shall now begin with you, and, therefore, beg you not to lavish upon me such tokens of regard as you just now did, till time has matured our friendship, and till you have more reason than you now have to be assured that I deserve your esteem.’

“‘And must not I kiss you,’ I said, ‘and call you a dear sweet creature? for, indeed, I think you so.’

“‘I don’t doubt that you now feel all you express, my dear Clara,’ she replied. ‘But I will candidly tell you, I would rather that you should prove your regard for me in another way.’

“I looked very keenly at my new friend; for I began to suspect that she was proud, or that she did not like me; but she took no notice of my sudden change of humour, and nothing more passed between us till we were summoned, by the ringing of a bell, to go down into the hall to tea. ‘I am now about,’ said Amelia, ‘to introduce you to your schoolfellows: you will be allowed to sit by me. After tea, we shall either work or draw, while some one reads to us. You will, no doubt, enjoy this?’

“‘I don’t love plain work,’ I answered.

“‘Perhaps you would prefer drawing?’ said Amelia.

“‘I am not to learn to draw,’ I replied.

“‘Not of a master, perhaps,’ she added. ‘But your aunt could have no objection to my teaching you?’

“I made no answer: for the truth is, I did not like the thought of learning any thing new but dancing. I then followed her down into one of the halls, where the



tea-things were neatly arranged. It was well lighted up, with many wall-shades and standing-shades, and the young ladies were all assembled with two teachers, a French and an English one, who were seated at the top and bottom of the table. Several *kidmutgars* were busy at the side-table, preparing the tea. There was a great buzz in the hall as we entered, which was hushed as Amelia drew near the table, when all the company turned round to look at us. Several at once left their seats and gathered round me; and among this number I particularly distinguished Miss Beaumont, (who kissed me affectionately,) and two young ladies, who were no longer, as I thought, of an age to be grouped among school-girls, although their unsettled and disorderly manners evinced more levity than those of the youngest child in the room.

“These young ladies, whom I shall call Atkins and Chatterton, were, as I afterwards found, parlour-boarders, or, rather, mere lodgers, who had the liberty of going in and out as they pleased, though at times they were obliged to submit in some degree to the control of the governess and teachers.

“How long these young ladies would have amused themselves with inspecting me, notwithstanding the entreaties of Amelia, who begged that I might be permitted to pass on to my seat, I cannot tell, had not a shrill voice from the further end of the long table reached their ears, in accents partly querulous, and partly imperious. ‘For shame, mes Demoiselles!’ said the voice just alluded to: ‘how can you conduct yourselves so impolite towards an etranger? Permit de young lady to sit down, I do pray, I do entreat. Sit down, my little Miss. Ladies, do come to your tea.

“On hearing these words, which proceeded from Madame de Roseau, a widow lady, from the French settlement of Chandanagore, who was teacher at the school, the young people all hastened to their places, and Miss Carrisforth led me on to my seat.

“For a few moments after we were seated, all was still, excepting the noise made by the servants; till suddenly a burst of laughter, which first proceeded from the two young ladies, Miss Atkins and Miss Chatterton, who

sat by Madame de Roseau at the top of the table, and which was echoed by another party at the bottom, caused us to look up, in order that we might, if possible, be admitted into the secret: 'What is dat, mes Demoiselles?' said Madame de Roseau; 'what is de joke? where are your manners dis afternoon?'

'Notwithstanding this rebuke, the laughter continued, and I perceived that all joined in it, excepting Miss Carrisforth and Miss Beaumont; and, at length, it became so violent, that Miss Crawford, the English teacher, (who did not appear to be much fitter than the youngest child present to manage a school,) was thrown off her equilibrium, and joined heartily in the merriment.

"In the midst of this uproar, an alarm was raised, that Mrs. Patterson herself was coming; on which, all instantly became silent: but, on one of the *kidmutgars* accidentally overturning a plate of bread-and-butter, the mirth was renewed, though in a more smothered way, bursting out at intervals at different parts of the table like a running fire, and mingled with whisperings, none of which I could distinctly make out.

"In the mean time, Miss Crawford, who was sensible, perhaps, that she had acted imprudently, called on those immediately about her to be quiet; and, addressing herself familiarly to Miss Chatterton and Miss Atkins, said, 'You wicked girls! you are always getting me into a scrape.'

"By this time, the tea-things were removed, and the work-baskets put into their places. 'And now, ladies,' said Madame de Roseau, 'Miss Crawford shall read. Where is de book? I desire you will be attentif.'

"The book was produced, and all was quiet for a few minutes; Miss Carrisforth having put a piece of muslin into my hands to hem. I thought it hard, however, to be obliged to sew the first evening: but I made no objection, although, instead of working with diligence, between each stitch I looked around me on one and another of my schoolfellows; and, at length, my eyes met those of a young lady about my own age, or perhaps older, though very small in stature, who sat directly opposite to me. There was something in the physiognomy of this girl, which, the moment I caught her eye,

seemed to fix and fascinate me, as the *cobra di capel*, formerly described, had done in the gallery at Cawnpore. She was evidently, like myself, not wholly of European extraction; but her features were far from bad, and her large dark eyes were wonderfully expressive. But what they expressed I did not consider: I felt myself, however, strongly inclined to look at her, and was so entirely diverted by her from my work, that Miss Carrisforth spoke to me once or twice, and the last time, as I thought, in a manner very decided, before I could resume my employment.

“Shortly after this, there was some interruption in the reading, (I forget on what occasion,) and I took this opportunity to start some difficulty in going on with my work, and to call for a pair of scissors. Amelia checked me, though gently, for speaking so loud, and had already supplied me with what I wanted, when the young lady with whom I had been interchanging looks suddenly jumped up, ran round the table, and brought me her own scissors, begging me, in the most polite manner to keep them as long as I wished.

“I was startled by Miss Carrisforth’s manner on this occasion. She suddenly turned to the young lady, and, with a look and motion of the head which I thought severe, said, ‘Gabrielle, take your scissors; I will provide Miss Clara with all she may want:’ adding, in a lower voice, and with a steady glance, under which the eye of the young lady fell, ‘Miss Lushington is under my care; I shall be obliged to you if you will not interfere with her.’ So saying, she returned the scissors, and the young lady walked silently back to her chair. And there the matter would probably have ended, though perhaps not quite so soon my astonishment, had not a part of Amelia’s address to Gabrielle been overheard by Miss Beaumont, who, reddening violently, instantly said, ‘My dear Gabrielle, lend me the scissors: I will be obliged to you, though Miss Carrisforth is too proud to lie under obligations to any one.’

“Whether Miss Carrisforth had observed what had passed between Miss Beaumont and Gabrielle, I could not discover; but it was certainly not lost upon the rest of the company, as was apparent, from every one, at the

same time, looking up from their various occupations. No one, however, spoke, and the matter would, doubtless, have rested where it was, had Miss Beaumont been disposed to allow that it should be so.

“The silence of Amelia seemed rather to have increased than diminished the anger of Miss Beaumont. She reddened excessively, her fine eyes flashed with indignation, and she further added, ‘You do not choose, Miss Carrisforth, to make any remark on what I said: but, notwithstanding your silence, I shall take the liberty of speaking my mind to you. I cannot bear to see the cold contempt with which you always treat little Gabrielle. I know but little of her, and she is nothing to me; but I hate injustice, I cannot endure to see any one ill used, and I really think, Amelia, that you are behaving very ill to the poor girl.’

“‘If you think so, Julia,’ replied Miss Carrisforth, calmly, ‘you do right to speak. But perhaps you would have done better, had you kept your remarks for my private ear.’

“‘If the whole company had not seen the insolent manner in which you treated Gabrielle,’ said Miss Beaumont, ‘I might, perhaps, have done so: but when I witnessed this public affront to an inoffensive child, I could not help animadverting upon it thus publicly. And I again repeat, Miss Carrisforth, that I think you behaved very ill to little Gabrielle just now; and I must plainly tell you, that I have more than once before been surprised at your conduct towards her.’ So saying, she burst into a violent fit of crying.

“‘Mademoiselle Beaumont is always de champion of de distressed,’ said Madame de Roseau, now thinking it necessary to put in a word, ‘de female Quixotte, de friend of de unfortunate. Who so kind as Miss Beaumont?’

“Fresh bursts of laughter followed this remark, laughter in which all joined but Amelia and Miss Beaumont, the former of whom looked grave; and the latter, getting up in haste, left the room, followed by Gabrielle.

“As soon as Miss Beaumont had quitted the hall, Miss Chatterton exclaimed, ‘Well, well, this is capital!’

this is very fine ! So the two saints—the two best friends have quarrelled : this is excellent ! It won't be Chatterton against Atkins, as it used to be, you know, Atkins, when we quarrelled about our partners on dancing nights ; but it will be Beaumont against Carrisforth. We must all take either one side or the other. I declare for Beaumont and little Gabrielle ! I will uphold little Gabrielle ! Don't you, Atkins ?

“ ‘ Yes, yes, ’ replied Miss Atkins, ‘ I am for little Gabrielle ; altogether for little Gabrielle. ’

“ New bursts of laughter now broke out on all sides, till Madame de Roseau, who looked much displeased, exclaimed, ‘ Ecoutez ; hearken, ladies ; be silent, ladies. For shame, mes Demoiselles ; what conduct is dis ? I shall tell Madame ; I shall complain. Miss Crawford, cannot you use your autorite ? What is all dis, ladies ? ’

“ The uproar now grew calm, and subsided into low whispers and smothered titters ; while the young ladies wrote little notes on small slips of paper, and tossed them over the table to each other. Thus passed the time till we were summoned to bed.

“ You may perhaps be surprised at the minuteness with which I have related these scenes : but it has pleased the Almighty to endow me with a very accurate memory, and, from childhood, I have been a minute observer of character ; while in my aunt's house this habit was confirmed, my uncle being a man of clear and penetrating insight into character, and one who did not conceal his opinions. But to return to my story.

“ As we were going up to bed, Amelia took my hand, and silently leading me through the crowd conducted me to our own room. There finding a lamp burning, she directed me to undress myself, while taking a small Bible from a drawer, she read aloud, sometimes pausing to make some short passing remarks on what she read.

“ In the mean time, a confused noise of laughing, running, and screaming, continually reached my ears from the neighbouring rooms, which made me more than once exclaim, in the midst of the reading, ‘ What are those noises what are they doing ? what can they be about ? ’



“Amelia replied to these questions, ‘O, nothing at all, Clara, never mind them: you may be thankful we have a room to ourselves.’

“‘O, but I should like to see what they are doing,’ I answered.

“‘Clara,’ she at length replied, ‘don’t be foolish; let them alone, and attend to what I read.’

“There was something in her manner which awed me, I scarcely knew wherefore, and I was silent. When she had finished her chapters, she came, and, kneeling by me, offered up a short prayer; after which, she directed me to get into bed. I had scarcely time to obey her, before the *gillmills* or *jalousies* of the door, near which my bed stood, and which opened into the next room, were raised, and Miss Atkins, whose bed was close to that door, on the other side, putting her mouth to the *jalousies*, said, ‘Amelia Carrisforth, Amelia, I say, here’s Beaumont in hysteric fits! Have you any salts?’

“Amelia looked for a smelling-bottle, and going round my bed, she gave it through the door.

“‘Won’t you come and see her?’ said Miss Atkins.

“‘I must not come into your room,’ she replied.

“‘What stuff and nonsense!’ returned Miss Atkins.

“Amelia made no answer, but returned to the dressing-table.

“I could now distinctly hear the sobs of Miss Beaumont, and told Amelia that I did so.

“‘I am sorry that she afflicts herself so much,’ she answered; ‘but I can’t help it.’

“‘But why,’ I said, ‘do you dislike that little girl they call Gabrielle?’

“‘I never said that I did dislike her,’ returned Amelia.

“‘Then why would you not let her lend me the scissors?’

“‘Clara,’ she replied, ‘if you wish to enjoy any peace in this house, or, indeed, in any other situation in this world, you must learn one important lesson, which is this—do not concern yourself with other people’s business.’

“While I was pondering on this new idea, (for it was quite a new one to me,) I heard a loud knocking at the outer door of our room, for as the season was at that time

cold, all the doors were closed. Amelia, however, immediately answering the summons, in came Miss Beaumont, sobbing bitterly, with her eyes swelled, and her whole frame in violent disorder. 'Amelia,' she said, 'you have grieved me excessively.' Then, lowering her voice, she added, 'if Chatterton, or Atkins, or twenty more whom I could name, had behaved as you did to-night, I should not have cared: but you, whom I loved, honoured, looked up to as the only Christian in the house,—to see you behave in a manner so cold, so insolent, to a poor unprotected child, I cannot bear it. Account to me, I beseech you, as a friend, for your conduct. This is not, I can tell you, the first nor the second time that I have observed your aversion to Gabrielle; but it never before broke out as it did this evening.'

"Amelia replied with surprising composure, saying, 'Do you understand, my dear, that Miss Clara Lushington has been placed under my care at the joint requests both of her father and of mine?'

"'To be sure I do,' she answered.

"'And pray, my dear,' said Amelia, still lowering her voice, 'in your zeal for Gabrielle, are you not forgetting your duty to me?'

"'In what way?' said Miss Beaumont.

"Amelia took her by the hand, and led her out into the *verandah*; where they both stood still, just without the door, which they closed.

"I immediately got out of my bed, and prompted by curiosity of the meanest kind, crept close to the door, and listened: when I heard Amelia say, 'You are weakening my influence; you are greatly injuring Clara. Cannot you see that, my dear? You are hurting her more than you are serving Gabrielle.'

"'I cannot help that,' said Miss Beaumont: 'I hate injustice.'

"'So do I too,' rejoined Amelia. 'But how do you know that I am unjust?'

"'You are unjust,' returned the other, 'unless you think ill of Gabrielle: and thus we come to the point in question. Do you think ill of Gabrielle?'

"'Are you Gabrielle's friend?' said Amelia.

“‘No,’ returned Miss Beaumont, ‘she is nothing to me; but I pity her as an orphan. I remember that you used to be kind to her: I see that you have lately neglected her, and, this evening, treated her with great contempt. She had no friend, and I, therefore, feel myself called upon to protect her. But you evade my question. Do you think ill of Gabrielle or not?’

“‘Permit me,’ said Amelia, after some reflection, ‘to answer this question to-morrow. You shall, in the morning, have a note from me on the subject.’

“‘Then I am to understand,’ returned the other, hastily, ‘that you really think very ill of Gabrielle?’

“‘I am weary of this foolish dispute,’ replied Amelia, ‘and could almost say, You may think what you please on the subject, provided you will but keep your thoughts to yourself.’

“‘No,’ said Miss Beaumont, ‘I will not keep my thoughts to myself: and unless you speak out, Amelia, and tell me upon what principle you treat Gabrielle as you do, I shall certainly continue to defend and support her.’

“‘I cannot help it,’ returned Amelia. ‘Promise me, however, only one favour, Miss Beaumont; let this matter rest till you have received my letter to-morrow morning.’

“I now, fearing lest Amelia should suddenly return to the room, flew back to my bed, and, in consequence, heard no more.

“Amelia sat up late that night, being employed in writing; and the next morning, when we were called to breakfast, she gave me a sealed letter to put into Miss Beaumont’s hand. As I was afterwards favoured with a copy of this letter, I shall give it you, my dear friend, in this place.

“‘MY BELOVED JULIA,—(for still will I call you beloved, though none either of your former kindness or confidence have been discoverable on the late occasion,) I am at a loss how to answer the question which you last night proposed to me, because it is scarcely possible to reply to such an inquiry in words which might not include either too much or too little. You ask me pub-



icily to pronounce upon a character in a case where such a decision is no part of our concern; in my so doing, you would perhaps compel me to act in direct contradiction to the precept of Scripture—*Judge not, that ye be not judged.* (Matt. vii. 1.)

“But, to leave Gabrielle and her affairs, permit me, my dear friend, to repeat here, what I have many times said to you on former occasions,—that I am convinced it would conduce greatly both to your happiness and to your permanent advantage, not only in this family, but in every other situation which you may hereafter fill, if you could bring yourself to cease from interfering with the affairs of others. I would, my dear Julia, gladly signify this sentiment by an expression which might be more acceptable; but as no other at present offers, I hope you will pardon the plainness of that which I have used. It is now not more than a twelvemonth since I lost one of the tenderest and most pious of mothers; and if, as I have heard my dear father say, there was any one quality in which she excelled more than in another, it was that peculiar and unusual control of the tongue, which rendered her at once lovely and beloved in the estimation of all who knew her—a quality which I fear is much more rarely found in females than in men.

“It was during one of the last conversations that I ever had with my poor mother, but shortly before that final and dreadful illness which, in the course of a very few hours, deprived me of the best of parents, that she, as if foreseeing the loss that I was about to sustain, urged strongly upon me the duty and advantages of self-command in this respect: and I remember that, having first referred me to the well-known passage of Scripture—*The tongue can no man tame; it is an unruly evil, full of deadly poison;* (James iii. 8,) she proceeded to remark, that that which no man could tame, might, nevertheless, be tamed by the power and grace of God. And she assured me, that wherever religion produced the natural and complete effect, peculiarly its own, of humbling the individual who professed it, of emptying him of self, of inducing him to distrust his own judgment, and to conclude that others might be right as well as himself, its consequent result would be to silence him on

those points relative to which he would otherwise be most liable improperly to interfere with the affairs of his neighbours.

“You, my dear Julia, have a knowledge of religion, a much superior knowledge to what I have, and a consequent high sense of honour, justice, and virtue; you are above every mean and low habit and custom: but you will not be offended, if I say, that you have not yet, I fear, learned to distrust yourself. And this self-confidence induces you to judge hastily and to speak decidedly on many occasions where you are not called upon so to do, and before you have had it in your power to weigh the subject on which you unguardedly venture to give an opinion: and by this haste and decision, you have not unfrequently, even since I have had the pleasure of knowing you, seriously injured those whom you have intended essentially to serve. In the moment of heat and high indignation against what you fancy to be wrong, you sacrifice, without reflection, the interest of the dearest friend; and if an improper confidence is denied you, you indignantly throw aside every pledge of former regard.

“The sin of bearing false witness against a neighbour, my dear Julia, may be committed in various ways, and is often the consequence of a hot and fiery, though a noble spirit, such as yours, as of one that is sly, mean, and deceitful; and perhaps the hasty indignation of a noble character is more to be dreaded than the most cruel arts of one that is despicable.

“O my friend, permit me, who am now in disgrace with you, still to avail myself of the privilege of your friendship, while I humbly entreat you, as you would honour your Christian profession in this house, to be more careful of what you say. Consider your youth and inexperience; not a year more advanced than my own! and consider, too, how imperfect is your acquaintance with the world, and how much more effectual would be your rebukes of whatever might be amiss, if they were given only in silence and by example.

“Depend upon it, that a blameless and lovely example is ever, in youth especially, the most effective check upon that which is really sinful, and is much more strongly felt by the sinner than is the most loud and ve-

hement expression of anger to which words can give utterance. It possesses also this valuable property, that it wounds only where it ought to wound, while its arrows play harmlessly about those whose consciences, humanly speaking, are at rest from evil.

“Pardon, my dear Julia, all that in this letter may offend; and believe me to be your ever affectionate friend,

“‘AMELIA CARRISFORTH.’

“When I delivered this letter to Miss Beaumont, she opened it hastily, and stood up to read it, while all the rest of the party were seated at the breakfast-table. It was evident, however, that she was not satisfied by its contents; for, as she again folded it up, and put it into her work-bag, she said to Amelia, over the table, ‘You have not now answered my question, Miss Carrisforth; I suppose that I must, however, rest contented with this partial confidence.’ Then, with a certain toss of her head, which was habitual with this high-spirited young lady whenever she happened to be displeased, she began to eat her breakfast with as much unconcern as if nothing unusual had occurred.

“In the mean time, the attention of the company was diverted to another subject by one of the young ladies exclaiming, ‘To-night is dancing-night!’

“‘Yes,’ said Miss Atkins; ‘and we know who is to be here, don’t we, Chatterton?’

“‘Some of your favourites, I presume, Miss Atkins,’ said Miss Crawford, laughing.

“‘Miss Atkins has many favourites,’ remarked Madame de Roscau: ‘Miss Atkins is herself also de great favourite wid de fine gentlemen. No chance for a partner till Miss Atkins is provided.’

“Several whisperings and loud bursts of laughter then followed, which were suddenly hushed, as was an uproar of the preceding evening, by the report that Mrs. Patterson was at hand; and as she actually did appear, within an instant, at the upper end of the hall, we then heard no more of the whisperings and titters.

“Mrs. Patterson came up to the table, addressed the young ladies politely, (who all for the moment rose,) and

then left the room, without descending from her usual dignity of manner.

“When breakfast was concluded, we went into one of the large side-rooms, which was furnished as a school-room. There we found our governess, and there we were employed for three hours. My station in the school-room was by Amelia, and she took unwearied pains in helping me forward with my studies.

“At twelve o'clock our liberty was given us, and as it was not the custom to go out of doors at that hour, we were presently scattered all over the house. I asked Amelia if I might play with the other children; but she said that she would walk with me in the *verandah*, near our own apartment. I was not pleased with this restraint, notwithstanding which I submitted, and went up with her accordingly.

“When we entered the *verandah*, she offered me her arm, and took several turns with me, talking to me about Cawnpore, where she had resided some time; introducing also other subjects, by which conversation she made herself so agreeable, that I no longer regretted my being restricted to her society, and I should no longer have thought of the restriction, had not Miss Beaumont again come up to us. ‘And so, Amelia,’ she said, ‘you are determined to leave me in the dark? You will not grant me satisfaction?’

“Amelia uttered a slight expression of fretfulness, as much as to say, ‘Is there to be no end of this?’ Then, turning good-humouredly to Miss Beaumont, she said, ‘What a talent you have, Julia, of making yourself miserable! Cannot you forget Gabrielle and her imaginary grievances?’

“‘They are not imaginary,’ returned Miss Beaumont.

“‘Imaginary, or not so,’ replied Amelia, with firmness, ‘I shall be obliged to you, Julia, if you will let this matter drop, and be content with the reply which I have given you; for I am resolved that I will add nothing more to what I have already written and said on this subject.’

“‘Upon my word, Amelia,’ said Miss Beaumont, ‘you are very short!’

“‘And, perhaps,’ returned Amelia, smiling ‘there are

some subjects on which one cannot be too short; especially such as relate to the concerns of our neighbours.'

"Miss Beaumont was going to reply, when a loud laugh burst from an opposite door, where, at the same time, appeared a cluster of heads, among the foremost of which I saw the faces of Miss Atkins and Miss Chatterton, which were pushed forward, with the crowd between. 'There, there they are, at it again, carrying on the war!' exclaimed Miss Chatterton. 'This is excellent! these are the pious ones! the intimate friends! the inseparables, as it used to be! There is war now in heaven, Atkins, and we may soon expect to see some of the angels falling!'

"'Julia,' said Amelia, blushing violently, 'do you hear what they say?' adding, in a lower voice, 'what disgrace are we bringing upon our religious profession by this absurd quarrel!'

"A call to *tiffin* prevented any thing, at that time, being further said on the subject; and, as Mrs. Patterson herself was present at that meal, all was orderly and peaceable while we continued at table. Mrs. Patterson left us as soon as the *tiffin* was concluded; but before we had gone from the hall, a company of *box-wallas* appeared in the *verandah*; on seeing which, all the young ladies, together with the teachers, rushed out at the front door, leaving me standing with Amelia, who had taken my hand to hold me back, as soon as the arrival of these visitors was announced.

"The *box-wallas* or *sundook-wallas* are native pedlars, who travel about, from house to house, selling a variety of European and Indian articles, and who are employed by persons of every denomination in Calcutta.

"In common with most other young people in India, I was exceedingly fond of spending my pocket money with these persons, and of looking over and cheapening their treasures even when I had no money; I was therefore a good deal chagrined when Amelia proposed that we should go up stairs, instead of joining the party in the *verandah*; nor was it till after I had for some minutes endeavoured to prevail, that I was able to persuade her that I wanted several things which I said I could not possibly any longer do without. Seeing me,



however, so strongly bent upon this purpose, she gave way and followed me into the *verandah*.

“And now it is scarcely possible for me to give you an idea of the scene of confusion that presented itself when we approached the door of the hall. There were no less than four of these *sundook-wallas* squatted on the pavement, their boxes being open before them, and their goods spread out upon the floor. The young ladies and the two teachers, together with sundry *dirges*, *bearers*, and *ayahs*, were mingled together in one promiscuous mass around them, all talking together, choosing and refusing, bargaining, scolding, snatching, rejecting, triumphing, condoling, cheating, and being cheated, some speaking in Bengalee, some in Hindoostaunee, some in broken English, some in French, and some in a compound of one or more of these different jargons. A long time elapsed before I could distinguish one voice from another; at length I heard Miss Chatterton say, ‘I wonder at you, Atkins! I am amazed! and so you don’t think I shall look well in pea-green? Why, my friend, Miss Biddy Jackson, used always to tell me that pea-green was the most becoming colour I could put on.’

“‘I wonder, Chatterton,’ returned the other, ‘that you should think of bringing forward Biddy Jackson’s opinion on matters of taste; for of all the dressers I ever saw, in all my life, she is the worst; and to tell you, with your sallow complexion, that pea-green was proper, I am sure she could have been no sincere friend.’

“‘Sallow! sallow!’ repeated Madame de Roseau; ‘for shame, Miss Atkins; Miss Chatterton is not sallow, she is only pale. Where is your politesse?’

“A violent uproar was at that moment excited at the other end of the *verandah*, by the opening of a box of artificial flowers, and, for a moment, I heard nothing but exclamations in favour of this and that flower. At length, as I was standing by Amelia, endeavouring to select a tortoise-shell comb to fasten up my hair, Miss Crawford came up triumphantly towards the place where we stood, exclaiming, ‘I have carried the day; I shall wear the rose to-night.’ And, so saying, she showed us a beautiful English rose, which she said she intended to wear in the evening.

“ ‘ Ah, la belle couleur ! de beautiful colour ! ’ said Madame de Roseau. ‘ Miss Crawford is very cruel : she means to be de belle dis afternoon. No one will have any chance wid Miss Crawford dis evening. ’

“ While Madame de Roseau was speaking, and Miss Crawford was holding her rose up in triumph, Miss Atkins and Miss Chatterton, with several others of the greater girls, came round her, and with voices so loud and shrill as to make the whole *verandah* ring, half playfully and half angrily, charged her with having forestalled their market ; Miss Chatterton actually declaring that she herself had ordered Rammohun (for so the flower merchant was named) to bring that very rose for her.

“ On hearing this, all the young people gave up their pretensions but Miss Chatterton, who attempted to snatch the rose from Miss Crawford ; when a kind of romping bout ensued between the young lady and her governess, to the great amusement of many present, and which continued till Madame de Roseau, by dint of loud scolding, contrived to restore some little order.

“ In the mean time, Amelia was endeavouring to find such a comb as I described ; but not being able to succeed, she proposed that we should go up stairs, and had actually taken my hand to lead me out of the *verandah*, when we were forced from each other by the bustle occasioned by the two ladies already spoken of, who, in their contention for the rose, pushed in between us, one of them running away, and the other pursuing.

“ In the confusion, I was, as I before said, parted from Amelia, and pushed in among a group of my young companions ; and before I well knew what I was about, I found myself standing by Gabrielle. She had not time allowed her to speak to me, before Amelia’s eye was again upon us : but, with a quickness at which I was astonished, the young stranger had caught hold of my hand, in which, drawing it behind me, she placed a small paper, containing a few almonds and raisins, at the same time stooping and kissing my hand, pressing it closely as she let it go.

“ Almost at the same moment, my other hand was seized by Amelia, who, exerting a gentle force, suc<sup>1</sup> us

an angel might be supposed to employ in order to prevent some careless sinner from committing an action that would offend his God, led me through the hall up into her own room, where, shutting the door, she sat down to work, advising me to look over my lessons for the next day.

“On her proposing this, I complained of fatigue.

“‘Then lie down upon your bed, Clara,’ she said, ‘and learn as you are resting yourself.’

“I so far complied as to lie down, taking the book in my hand.

“We remained silent for some time, the rest of the party still being below: but on a loud sound, as expressive of mirth, reaching us from beneath, I could contain myself no longer; but making use of a deception not unfrequently in the mouths of those who love sin, and yet do not wish to be thought to do so, I began to express great horror at the noise, remarking, that I had never before met with such rude girls.

“Amelia made no reply to this remark: on which, I pertly added, ‘Where is Mrs. Patterson all this time? But I suppose that she makes a point of shutting her eyes and ears when she has a mind to spare herself the trouble of finding fault.’

“There was a good deal of truth, as I afterwards found, in this observation, and most people would have smiled to hear it from the lips of so young a person: but I did not observe the least tendency towards a smile on the placid countenance of Amelia. I thought, however, that she sighed, as she thus answered me:—‘Clara, my dear, let me beg of you to refrain from these remarks. You and I shall have enough to do, and more than we possibly can do without the divine help, to conduct ourselves prudently and blamelessly in this family: and of this I am well convinced, that, if we begin to busy ourselves with other people’s affairs, we shall very shortly forget properly to manage our own.’

“Being thus rebuked, I again looked at my book for a moment, and then, yawning, and throwing it down, I said, with considerable impertinence in my manner, ‘Of all the young people I ever saw, I think you are the most steady, Miss Carrisforth. One would think you



sixty, rather than sixteen. Are you not tired of this little room and that sewing? Do come out, and walk in the *verandah*?

“Amelia made no answer.

“I yawned again, still louder than before. The idea was running in my head, an idea which had been first suggested by Miss Beaumont, (for I had sense enough to think meanly of the rest of my companions,) that there was somewhat of unnecessary harshness or strictness, or I knew not what, in Amelia; and I, accordingly, resolved to try whether I could not free myself from the restraint under which she held me. On her not appearing to notice me when I yawned the second time, I jumped from the bed, slipped on my shoes, which I had taken off, and walked to the door, which I was in the act of opening, when Amelia said, ‘Where are you going, Clara?’

“‘To walk in the *verandah*,’ I answered, decidedly, or, I should rather say, insolently.

“‘Lie down again, my dear,’ said Amelia; ‘for I cannot go with you now.’

“‘I can go by myself,’ I answered; ‘I don’t want you to come with me.’

“On this, she repeated her request previously made, that I would return to my tasks.

“‘I choose to play now,’ I answered, and was proceeding to open the door, when she calmly got up, and, with a strength superior to mine, drew my hand from the door, which she immediately closed and bolted.

“I then asked her who gave her authority to rule me.

“‘Your father,’ she replied; ‘and if you dispute my authority, I will sit down this minute, and refer the case to him. Understand, Clara, that it is no advantage to me, but, on the contrary, a considerable trouble, to be charged with you as I am. But, as I have undertaken the charge, I will go through it. I will not trifle with your father; I will persevere in what I have engaged to fulfil, the Lord assisting me, not as if I were doing eye-service, to please men, but as to the Lord.’

“On hearing this, and seeing, at the same time, her steadfastness, I threw myself down again upon my bed, and sobbed and wept violently.

“While thus occupied about my imaginary sorrows, a person came to the door, to inform Amelia that Mrs. Paterson wished to speak with her. She immediately arose, and, charging me not to leave the room during her absence, went to her governess’s apartment.

“After Amelia had left me, I remained for awhile alone, crying and sobbing violently, the noise and laughter still going on in the *verandah* beneath. At length, I thought I heard a soft step in the adjoining chamber, which sound was followed by a slight shaking of the *jalousies* near my bed. A short silence then succeeded, and I plainly saw that some one was peeping through the interstices of the wooden blinds. ‘Who is there?’ I said. and immediately the *jalousies* were thrown up, and a voice answered, ‘It is only me, Miss Clara.’

“‘And who are you?’ I asked.

“‘I am Gabrielle, and I am come to offer you a tortoise-shell comb. You were inquiring for one below, to fasten up your hair; and I have now got one for you.’

“‘O! that is very kind of you, Gabrielle,’ I answered, holding out my hand to take it, ‘very kind indeed!’

“‘Is Miss Carrisforth in your room, Miss Clara?’ whispered Gabrielle, asking a question which she no doubt could have answered as well as myself.

“‘No,’ I said, ‘she is gone down.’

“‘Sweet, dear Amelia!’ returned Gabrielle, ‘how dearly do I love her! I would give all I have in the world to be loved by her in return.’

“‘But do tell me, Miss Gabrielle,’ I said, ‘what have you done to offend her?’

“‘I cannot say,’ she answered, with a deep sigh; ‘but I am sure that, if she does not love me, it is my own fault, not hers: for she is the sweetest creature in the world, and I am not worthy to wipe her shoes.’

“‘Yes: but she should not persecute you, Gabrielle,’ I answered; ‘she ought not to hate you. That surely cannot be right.’

“‘Don’t say any thing about me to her, Miss Clara,’ I beg,’ replied Gabrielle. ‘I shall always love her: but I have been used to her coldness, and I must submit to my sad fate.’

“At that moment we heard somebody at the outer

door of the room, on which Gabrielle instantly slapped down the *jalousies*, while I as quickly took my book in my hand; and thus closed my first conversation with this girl.

“At that instant Amelia entered the room, and I was at the same time aware of the breaking up of the party below, to which a confused noise in the chambers above, and in the *verandah* all around us, immediately succeeded. It was then perhaps three o'clock in the afternoon; and from that time till five, every individual in the house appeared to be engaged in the great business of dressing, with the exception only of Amelia and myself.

“In the chamber on the left of my bed, Miss Atkins and Miss Chatterton, and several others of the elder girls, usually slept; and Miss Chatterton's bed was separated from mine only by the *jalousied* door through which Gabrielle had spoken to me. I therefore, as I lay, could hear much of what was said in this next room: and as this was a kind of amusement for which, at that time, I had a high relish, I took care to avail myself of this privilege, as much as possible, without letting Amelia know what I was about.

“In order, therefore, on the evening above mentioned, that I might hear these edifying discourses to the greatest possible advantage, and yet, at the same time, be unnoticed and unsuspected by Amelia, I pretended to be holding my book in my hand for the purpose of learning my lessons, when my ears and my heart were, in fact, on the other side of the door.

“‘O that vile Crawford!’ said Miss Chatterton. ‘Only think, Atkins, of her getting my rose; and I meant this evening to have worn it in my hair with my pink sash and beads. Well, I declare now, is not it provoking?’

“‘Why you will be forced to wear pea-green after all,’ said Miss Atkins, ‘to please Miss Biddy Jackson.’

“‘How ill-natured you are, Atkins, now!’ returned Miss Chatterton; ‘but I won't, to spite you. I shall wear my purple wreath, and you know I always look well in that.’

“Sundry whisperings and titterings then followed; out of which, however, I could make nothing, though I

listened with all possible attention : and these continued for some time, till one of the young ladies, I suppose, pinching the other, a loud scream brought Madame de Roseau into the room, to call the delinquents to order with her broken English, which always greatly amused me ; though I afterwards had reason to think, that she was more entitled to respect than many others who were in the house.

“ ‘But, I suppose, my dear friend,’ proceeded Miss Clara Lushington, ‘that you are already satisfied with the specimens that I have given you of the conversations of Miss Atkins and Miss Chatterton. I shall, therefore, in future, introduce no more of them than my narrative may actually require.

“At five o’clock, a bell summoned us down to tea, which was this evening prepared in the school-room : the two halls having been got in readiness for company ; and I found, that, on this occasion, those of the elder young ladies who learned to dance were all absent, being engaged with Mrs. Patterson and her company in the inner hall.

“And now, my friend, I am about to mention to you a custom of a most extraordinary nature, at that time prevalent in almost all the schools in and near Calcutta ; a custom, which, no doubt, in a few years hence, will be considered as monstrous and incredible. This is the practice of admitting young gentlemen, who are nearly total strangers, and without any formal invitation, to frequent the schools on dancing-nights, in order that they may form acquaintance with the young ladies.

“I had heard of this custom before, and was therefore not at all surprised, on being told that there were as many as six or eight of these gentlemen already arrived, and that it was expected they would all join in country-dances as soon as the younger children had taken their lessons.

“The only two young ladies in the house, who did not learn to dance, were Miss Carrisforth and Miss Beaumont, whose friends were, no doubt, possessed of too much delicacy to allow of their mixing in parties of such a nature as that just described. Consequently, they were

the only two elder girls who remained with us in the school-room.

“Immediately after tea, Amelia brought a pleasing little girl, one of the youngest of my schoolfellows, at the same time telling me that she had engaged little Flora to dance with me, and also expressing her desire that I would make a point of choosing no other partner during the evening. So saying, she kissed little Flora, and said, ‘You will not deceive me; I think that you never yet have done so.’

“I was then left by Amelia to follow the rest of the young people into the hall, whither the tones of violins were at that time calling us. We found the hall illuminated, the tables removed, and the dancing-master and the musicians assembled. As this was termed a public night, very few of the preliminary lessons were to be given, but we were immediately to enter upon our country-dances. Accordingly, the master had given us the orders to stand up, and I was actually placed opposite to my little partner, whom, by the by, I heartily despised, when Mrs. Patterson, elegantly dressed, entered the hall, advancing with her usual dignity, and followed by her elder pupils, together with several female visitors, and a number of young gentlemen, some of whom were military men belonging to a European regiment lying in Fort-William; others were young gentlemen from Writer’s Buildings, besides one or two officers of merchantmen at that time lying in the river.

“These young men selected their partners from among the elder ladies of the family, and I was not a little mortified to find that not the slightest notice was taken of me, although Gabrielle, who was somewhat shorter than myself, met with a partner in a little midshipman about her own size.

“And now, my dear friend, did I not think that I had already given you sufficient specimens of the follies of Palm-Grove, which was the elegant name of this house in the Circular Road whither I was sent to finish my education, I could introduce to your notice a scene of vanity which must shock every reflecting mind; especially when it is considered that similar occurrences are



daily taking place at the Upper Orphan-House, and a other seminaries for young ladies in Calcutta. But I leave you, my friend, to consider what would be the effect in any school in the world, if the young ladies were allowed, once a month, or oftener, to receive as visitors, and companions in a dance, any young men in the neighbourhood who might choose to favour them with their company.

“I did not, however, witness so many of the humours of this evening as I had wished. I heard frequently, indeed, but it was at some distance, the loud titters of Miss Atkins and Miss Chatterton; and was not unfrequently amused by the broken English of Madame de Roseau calling one and another to order.

“By the time that I had danced about four dances, Amelia sent a servant to request that I would come to her; which call I complied with, though in an excessive ill-humour. I found her sitting in her own room, reading. She immediately addressed me with much affection, ‘Clara, my love, it would be better for you now to go to bed. They will dance till it is late: and if you stay with them, you will not be fit for your lessons to-morrow.’

“I began to plead with her; on which she arose, left the room, and returning in a few minutes, said, ‘Mrs. Patterson wishes you to acquiesce in my desires. You will therefore either go to bed, Clara, or read awhile with me. I preferred doing the former, and commenced undressing in a high state of ill-temper; which I evinced, by throwing my clothes on the floor, kicking my shoes about the room, and pulling my strings into knots.

“Amelia very calmly, and as if not noticing the hidden cause of all these disorders, made me immediately correct them; and, taking up her Bible, she read to me, and prayed with me, and then directed me to get into bed. Miss Carrisforth and I had both been in bed and asleep for some time, before the company below broke up, of which I soon received intimation, by the talking in the next room, which was, at first, very loud, but presently subsided into whisperings, some of which I, however, overheard, as the whisperers, to wit, Miss Atkins and Miss Chatterton, were close to my door. These



whispers I shall repeat, because they will be found to have reference to the subsequent part of my history.

“‘Who is he?’ whispered Miss Atkins.

“‘Did I not tell you before?’ replied the other. ‘The first lieutenant of the *Ariadne*.’

“‘A very fine young man!’ returned Miss Atkins.

“‘I thought you would say so,’ whispered Miss Chatterton.

“‘And the little stout man, you say, is captain of the *Ariadne*?’

“‘Yes,’ returned Miss Chatterton; ‘the gentleman who danced with me at first. Captain Besbrook, first cousin to my friend Bidy Jackson.’

“‘And where did you meet with this Lieutenant? What do you call him?—for I have not heard his name yet,’ asked Miss Atkins.

“‘Lieutenant Gordon,’ returned the other. ‘O, I have seen him often at Mr. Jackson’s. He is always there when the *Ariadne* is in the river.’

“The young ladies then lowered their voices so much, that, notwithstanding I listened with all my might, I could distinguish nothing further; although the whispering continued for a long time.

“I have now given you, my friend, a very minute account of my first two days residence at Palm-Grove: and in endeavouring so to do, with any tolerable degree of accuracy, I have been forced to lay before you no small portion of nonsense. I wish that it were only in places decidedly vain and frivolous, such as this school of which I have been speaking, that scenes of similar description were to be met with; but, alas! I fear that it would be found, were matters closely looked into, that much vain, light and foolish, if not vicious conversation, often takes place in the families of persons making high professions: and that many, many young people in this enlightened country who would be sorry to be thought unholy, do yet allow themselves in great freedom of discourse among their chosen intimates: while, into this error, it cannot be doubted that many persons fall, who, nevertheless, desire to do well; and who, when they have yielded to this temptation, are sorely cut down, and grieved to the heart by their subsequent consciousness of the offence.

“Wherefore, then, do young people, I mean pious young people, so earnestly desire those familiar intimacies with others of their own age, which frequently urge them into this sin of unguarded and injurious communication by words? Why do they so often seek opportunities of being alone with other young people, thus administering occasion of evil both to themselves and to their companions? Why, but because they are not aware of their own weakness in this particular; they are not sensible of the great difficulty of restraining and directing the tongue; they do not recollect, or, if so, they do not understand, that strong assertion of the Apostle, who, speaking in the Spirit of the Lord, says, *If any man offend not in word, the same is a perfect man, and able also to bridle the whole body.* (James iii. 2.)

“But to leave these reflections, and return to what I was about to say. I have given you, my friend, an account of my first two days at school; and, as those days passed, much in the same way were spent several of the ensuing weeks. Of the circumstances that occurred during that time, I recollect only one or two worth mentioning. I was constantly so much with Miss Carrisforth, and so carefully watched by her, that, with the exception of one or two occasions which offered across the *jealousies*, I had no manner of intercourse with Gabrielle, although this unaccountable girl, by her fascinating and expressive glances, darted at me whenever she thought herself unobserved, had taken strong hold of my imagination. I cannot easily convey to you the impression which her extraordinary behaviour had made upon my mind. My feelings towards her were an indescribable mixture of fear and desire of further intercourse, of aversion and of attraction. I use this last term, from my not being able to find another equally expressive of my meaning. And here I would remark, that this peculiar influence of Gabrielle’s over my mind, originated in the improper interference of Miss Beaumont; and to this interference I must attribute all the consequences which afterwards followed. Here, then, is one proof, among thousands which daily occur, of the extreme mischief that is frequently done by meddling and interfering persons; a mischief which usually proves more or less ex

tensive, in proportion to the influence and respectability, in other respects, of the character thus interfering. And this, at least, is very certain, that, as we advance in self-knowledge, and as we acquire more worldly experience and further insight into the various and complicated difficulties attending on the different situations of individuals in this life, we become more backward in forming decisions upon the conduct of others.

“In the mean time, while Gabrielle was thus silently gaining influence over me, the lovely and excellent Amelia relaxed not a moment in her tender care towards me. Under her, I acquired much knowledge of various kinds, and many orderly and industrious habits. She also did for me all that it was possible for one human creature to do for another with respect to religion. She made me accurately acquainted, as far as head knowledge could go, with its doctrines and precepts. If these doctrines and precepts had no influence over my private thoughts and feelings, it was not her fault: she did what she could; and the failure must be set down to the account only of my own evil heart and my determined depravity.

“The disagreement between Miss Beaumont and Miss Carrisforth was not made up, as I well remember, for several weeks after my arrival at Palm-Grove; and, during this period, I observed that Miss Beaumont looked very unhappy, although she continually refused to meet any advances toward reconciliation that were made to her by Amelia.

“This disagreement between these two young ladies, or, rather, I may say, this ill-humour of Miss Beaumont’s, (for it was all on her side,) afforded occasion for high merriment in the family; and many of the young people diverted themselves by carrying tales, and making false representations of Amelia’s conduct and remarks, to Miss Beaumont, whereby her ill-humour was constantly kept alive.

“The wise man says, *The beginning of strife is as when one letteth out water*; (Prov. xvii. 14,) and this was truly the case in this house. Miss Beaumont and Miss Carrisforth, when they were mutually united by the cords of love, had, no doubt, been able to make a

considerable stand against sin; but the influence of them was greatly weakened by this culpable division. *If a kingdom be divided against itself, that kingdom cannot stand.* (Mark iii. 24.)

“The votaries of Satan are fully apprized of this circumstance: and, therefore, being wiser in their generation than the children of light, they are ever ready to foment and increase all petty disputes among Christians; and thus have they been enabled, by the means of these unholy discords among the children of light, to obtain innumerable signal triumphs, through every age, and in every period of the Church.

“This system of private backbiting and tittle-tattle had been upheld for a long while, and many calumnies against Amelia had, no doubt, been listened to with much complacency by Miss Beaumont, who perhaps felt that she wanted some excuse for her ill-humour, when, at length, the quarrel broke out more violently on her part, owing to the following circumstance. One night, after retiring to her room, she was provoked to say many things against Miss Carrisforth, and to utter expressions which nothing could justify, and for which passion itself could not plead any excuse. Her teasing companions having drawn from her, on this occasion, all that they desired to hear, next became solicitous to make Amelia, if possible, acquainted with what had passed; and as they were aware that it was no easy matter to get her to listen to reports at all prejudicial to any one, they were obliged to manage the affair with considerable art.

“The only person whom they could employ in this business was Miss Crawford, who, being a teacher in the family, and, as such, entitled to Amelia’s apparent respect, at least, was the only one who was thought fit for the work in hand: and, accordingly, when Miss Carrisforth and I were one evening in our little room engaged in work, she came thither to us, and, seating herself at the foot of Amelia’s bed, she said, ‘I wish, Miss Carrisforth, you would just make up this *bandeau* for my hair. I know your pretty talent at things of this kind.’

“As Miss Crawford was possessed of some authority in the house, Amelia could find no excuse for desiring

ner to leave the room, which she commonly did when any of her school-fellows came in; as it was contrary to the rules of the house for any of us to go into each other's bed-chambers, although this was a rule which, for the most part, like some old acts of parliament, had fallen altogether into disuse.

"Amelia took in her hand the riband which she was requested to make up; and while she was twisting and modelling it according to the directions given, Miss Crawford entered upon the real purport of her visit. 'La, Miss Carrisforth!' she said, 'what a passion Beaumont was in last night! what have you done to make her so angry with you?'

"Amelia made no answer.

"'But I know,' continued Miss Crawford, 'you are too pretty, Amelia, too quiet, too reserved, too delicate, to please. You will never have a female friend.'

"'Miss Crawford,' said Amelia, tossing the riband over her hands as if out of humour with it, 'how can you buy riband of this kind! It is all gum, and no substance. I hope you did not give much for it.'

"Miss Crawford took the alarm at this remark; and a long discussion then followed, about the nature of stiffened ribands, and the tricks of the *box-wallas*: after which, she returned to the point in question. 'I am sure Julia Beaumont is angry with you, Amelia,' said she, 'because you are reckoned incomparably the most genteel girl in the school: to be sure, Miss Beaumont comes next, but it is far behind; and she knows that.'

"'If gentility consists in not loving gossip, Miss Crawford,' replied Amelia, 'and I have often heard my dear mother say that this is a necessary ingredient of real gentility, I think I may venture to allow, that, in that respect at least, I have some pretensions to it: but these are pretensions which every one, if they chose, might possess as well as myself. But Miss Crawford,' she added, 'do tell me, shall I put two bows on your *bandeau*, or only one? and would you choose the ends of the riband to be notched?'

"Another discussion now followed upon the nature of bows, and the fashion of notching ribands.

"I have before remarked, my dear friend, that even at



that time I was a close observer; and, young as I was, I was so fully aware of Amelia's contrivances to divert the conversation from the subject that she disliked, that I could not help bursting into a laugh.

"Amelia and Miss Crawford both looked at me; and the latter exclaimed, 'You little impertinent thing! what are you *quizzing* now?'

"Being thus rebuked, I pursed up my mouth, and was silent, but not the less attentive to what passed.

"'Well,' said Miss Crawford, 'as I was saying, Julia Beaumont was in such a strange way last night. O how she did run on about you, Amelia! She called you proud, and cold, and distant, and insolent! Yes, she called you insolent, and said you were become so conceited ever since you had a pupil, that there was no such thing as associating with you with any comfort.'

"'Clara,' said Amelia, 'go to Madame, and borrow a little silk of the colour of this riband.'

"'O,' said Miss Crawford, 'that is quite unnecessary.' So saying, she produced a needle-book, full of ends of silk of all colours: which being done, she returned to the charge, and ran on for a considerable length, till Amelia suddenly exclaimed, 'Dear Miss Crawford, I wish you would besilent for a few minutes, for I shall spoil your *bandeau*. I have actually now notched it in the wrong place.'

"'Pooh!' said Miss Crawford, rising and looking at it, 'you have nothing now to do but to piece it under the rose; it will never be seen. But, as I was saying, Julia was shockingly out of humour, and Chatterton, who was in the room, in her funny way, (you know Chatterton's droll way,) she provoked her, and at last the poor girl became so highly irritated, that she told us of some things which I am sure you would not have mentioned for all the world.'

"'What could she tell?' said Amelia, now thrown a little off her guard.

"'O, something that she heard when your father was here, and when you spent a week with him at the fort, you and Beaumont together; something she then heard of your brother, the ensign; something he did which made your father very angry.'

"The poison now began to work, for it was evident.



as Amelia coloured, and her hand trembled: but still controlling her feelings, she asked how her brother's name came to be mentioned.

" 'O, I don't know,' returned Miss Crawford; 'I think I mentioned him first. You know I saw him once with you, and I was saying he was, like you, very handsome; and then Miss Beaumont said, it was no credit to be like Charles Carrisforth, and so the story came out.'

" Amelia was silent for several moments. At length, with an effort, which did the highest honour to her Christian profession, she arose, gave the *bandeau* to Miss Crawford, calmly saying, 'I hope it will please you,' and then taking my hand, she added, 'Clara, come with me, you have not practised your music to-day. I will now give you a lesson.' On saying which, she accompanied me to the instrument, which stood in one of the halls.

" While taking my lesson, I perceived that her cheeks were still flushed, and I saw two or three tears running down her sweet face: but these she presently wiped away; and in less than half an hour, her usual composure, the effect of habitual rectitude and humility, recovered its accustomed influence.

" O, lovely Amelia, my sweet instructress, and incomparable friend, the more I meditate upon your charming character, the more am I filled with love and admiration; and overwhelmed with shame and regret, at my own coldness and ingratitude towards you. How wonderfully did the power of grace shine forth in the conduct of this excellent young creature. As the lily among thorns, so was my Amelia among her companions.

" While we were sitting in the hall, at the time that I am speaking of, one little circumstance somewhat touched my hard and unfeeling heart. Little Flora, who was the youngest child in the school, and an orphan, passed through. Amelia called to her. She came with child-like innocence, and jumped upon her lap. Amelia kissed her, and said, 'My little Flora, you do not come to see me now as you used to do. You know I always open my door when little Flora knocks.'

" 'I will tell you,' said the child, whispering, 'Miss Beaumont will not let me.'

“The little girl, I found, was under Miss Beaumont’s protection; although she had not found in her protectress that watchful guardian which I had met with in Amelia. The tears again trembled in the eyes of Amelia, as she kissed the child; but she said no more.

“On that very same evening, just after this conversation between Amelia and Miss Crawford, there was a violent dispute, at tea, between Miss Chatterton and Miss Atkins. What was at the bottom of their difference, I could not tell; but I believe that it was some breach of confidence on the part of Miss Atkins. Be it, however, what it might, it seemed to affect several individuals of the family, as much was said about listening, and tale-bearing: and Miss Beaumont involved herself in the affair by uttering a variety of unqualified expressions against persons guilty of such practices. These censures were taken to herself by Miss Crawford, conscious, no doubt, of what she had been about in Amelia’s room; and such was the violence on all sides, that Mrs. Patterson was called in, by Madame de Roseau, to still the tumult.

“The appearance of this dignified lady, had much the same effect as that produced by the presence of Neptune, when he comes, according to the poet, to still the tumult excited by the queen of heaven and her devoted servant Eolus, the ruler of the winds:—all was hushed, and apparently calm in a moment. And as Mrs. Patterson staid with us during the rest of the evening, our reading, work, and drawing went on with their usual diligence.

“I think it was only the very day after this, that, as Amelia and myself were taking the air, in the afternoon, on the shady side of the house, we were surprised by Miss Beaumont, who, having been brought to a sense of her error, and that probably by the ill conduct and violence of her companions the night before, came up to Amelia, and, soliciting pardon for her late behaviour, assured her that she would give her credit for all that was right respecting Gabrielle, begging that she would, if possible, restore her to her affection.

“This request, which was not made without many tears, was instantly granted by Amelia, and that without the slightest reference to her friend’s breach of confidence respecting her brother.

“This reconciliation having taken place, I had an opportunity of seeing and observing more of Miss Beaumont than I had ever done before. There was, undoubtedly, no one in the house to be compared with her but Amelia. Her person was fine, her countenance animated, and her sentiments were pure. She was entirely above disguise; a proof of which she presently gave, by readily acknowledging in what manner she had been led to abuse Amelia, and betray her confidence, on a late occasion, through the violence of her passion. She lamented the heat of her temper; but still pleaded, in her own behalf, her hatred of what she considered coldness and haughtiness: ‘and I did think, Amelia,’ she added, ‘that you manifested both in your conduct to Gabrielle.’

“Amelia smiled, but it was a sorrowful, not a reproachful smile. ‘And so, Julia, you were ready,’ said she, ‘to renounce a dear friend, on the bare suspicion of her treating with apparent coldness a person for whom you had no regard. You gave me up at once, and exposed me publicly, without even allowing me a trial. O, Julia,’ she added, lowering her voice, ‘how often might I have given you up, had I weighed in a scale so nice your conduct towards your pretty protegee, that lovely child, the little Flora. Permit me to be sincere with you. You have fallen into the error of all those persons who busy themselves with concerns which are not their own. Man is a finite creature; his comprehension is narrow: in attending to one thing, he forgets another; and, therefore, it usually follows, that he who busies himself about that which does not concern him, becomes proportionably careless and unfaithful in that which does really belong to him.’

“Miss Beaumont acknowledged the justice of Amelia’s rebuke; and immediately going in search of Flora, she brought her to kiss Amelia, and added, that she hoped in future to be preserved from all such unguarded and violent expressions of her feelings as might give pain to the friend whom she most loved on earth.

“‘Rather,’ returned Amelia, ‘pray for the subjugation of those feelings: and that they may be rightly controlled and directed by the Holy Spirit of God; for *out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh.* (Matt.

xii. 34.) The tongue is but the index of the heart, and words are but the expression of the thoughts of the heart. Seek that wisdom, my Julia, which is from above; and which is *first pure, then peaceable, gentle, and easy to be entreated, full of mercy and good fruits, without partiality, and without hypocrisy. And the fruit of righteousness is sown in peace of them that make peace.*' (James iii. 17, 18.)

"From that time, Miss Beaumont and her little protegee were often with us in our room: but, as Flora was not seven years old, and I nearly fifteen, I always looked upon her as so much my inferior that I never played with her, which haughtiness of mine was probably no disadvantage to the child.

"Miss Beaumont had not the advantage of having a sleeping-apartment to herself. Amelia had therefore requested permission of Mrs. Patterson, for her to come at certain times of the day into our room; a privilege which Miss Beaumont had not availed herself of from the period of my arrival till after the reconciliation. But now she came every day, and passed a good deal of time with us.

"Ladies in India spend, throughout the greater part of the year, many more hours in their bed-rooms than it is customary so to devote in Europe. Persons who are not very strong are obliged to lie down after *tiffin*: and I leave you, therefore, to conceive what scenes of riot and confusion are likely to occur among a number of young people, lying half asleep and half awake on their beds in broad day-light; and what care should be taken, by persons who have the management of such young people, to render these seasons of refreshment times also of propriety and holiness. By pious and careful parents and teachers, Bibles, and other instructive books, are, on these occasions, put into the hands of their young people: talking is forbidden, and all are urged to convert their little resting-places into temples of the Lord. But no caution or care of this kind could be expected in a household such as was that at Palm-Grove. As long as the laughing and chattering in the several apartments at these hours were kept within such bounds as not to disturb Mrs. Patterson, no notice was taken of the

noise; and if ever the uproar exceeded these limits, then one or two of the younger children were brought forward as the delinquents, and made to suffer the punishment due in general to their elder schoolfellows, and not unfrequently to their teachers: for even madame, who was by far the most conscientious of the two middle-camps of Mrs. Patterson, would not unfrequently indulge herself in telling stories, to make her companions laugh; and then, having excited a merriment which she feared might become excessive, would be obliged to exercise her utmost knowledge of English and Bengalee, in order again to restore things to their proper equilibrium.

“Such being the state of the case, Miss Beaumont and little Flora had reason to think themselves highly privileged in being admitted into our quiet little room during the hours of rest; though Miss Beaumont, when her good humour towards Amelia and her own self-complacency were perfectly restored, would sometimes murmur because at these times Amelia insisted upon being left to read in quiet. ‘You come here, Julia, to avoid talking,’ she would often say, ‘and if we are to begin gossiping in this room, what do you gain, and what do I lose? Why, all my comfort, and all my peace of mind. I will not talk, and there is the end of the matter.’

“One day, Miss Beaumont, being in higher spirits than usual, said to Amelia, ‘What, I pray you, Amelia Carrisforth, is the use of a friend, if one must not speak to her?’

“‘O,’ said Amelia, smiling, but still not ceasing to read, ‘a friend is a pleasant thing to look at.’

“‘That depends,’ said Julia, ‘on her external appearance; I hope you don’t think yourself an agreeable object to contemplate.’

“‘Perhaps my friends,’ returned Amelia, ‘may like me well enough to think so; but do, dear Julia, attend to the book you have in your hand.’

“A short silence followed, after which Miss Beaumont said, ‘Do, Amelia, dear, put down your book for one moment: I have something of great consequence to say to you.’



“‘Indeed,’ said Amelia, ‘I have no time to listen to you, I have something to do every minute of the day; and if nothing else can be said against talking, one may say this, that it is a great destroyer of time.’

“‘I don’t see that,’ replied Miss Beaumont. ‘A great deal is to be learned from talking, Amelia.’

“‘Then,’ returned Miss Carrisforth, ‘we ought to be very clever people in this house.’

“‘Very well, Amelia, very well,’ said Miss Beaumont, laughing, ‘I see that you can say severe things as well as your neighbours; but, jesting apart, I am sure that nothing is more improving than conversation. The cleverest persons are often made so by conversation; much knowledge is acquired by it; I have even heard that more is derived from it than from the best written books.’

“‘Yes,’ said Amelia, ‘but not from such conversations as take place between school girls.’

“‘School girls!’ repeated Miss Beaumont.

“‘Yes,’ returned Amelia, ‘such as we are, young girls of seventeen and eighteen. Depend upon it, Julia, that the less we talk at present the better. And now we are on the subject, I must plainly tell you, that I never am happy when I allow myself to talk much, and that, in every instance, I find it exceedingly difficult, when forced to talk, to say what I ought, and to refrain from saying what I ought not. The wise man saith, *In the multitude of words there wanteth not sin; but he that refraineth his lips is wise.*’ (Prov. x. 19.)

“‘Well but, Amelia,’ said Miss Beaumont, ‘you ought to consider that in this house I have no friend but you, no one to whom I can open my heart on any subject, especially on the subject of religion, no one to whom I can tell a single feeling. I have——’

“‘No one, in short,’ said Amelia, ‘to whom you can talk about yourself, without the fear of being betrayed.’

“‘Oh, Amelia!’ replied Miss Beaumont, ‘what a turn is this to give my words! Talk about myself! I don’t want to talk about myself.’

“‘Then, my dear friend, of what, or of whom, do you want to talk?’

“‘O! of a thousand things!’ returned Julia.

“‘If you wish to tell me any thing about my neigh



bours,' replied Amelia, 'I had rather not hear it, unless it is necessary that I should know it.'

"I have nothing particular to tell you about any one, returned Miss Beaumont, 'for you know the people here as well as I do, and I have no doubt that you think much the same of them.'

"'It is desirable,' rejoined Amelia, 'that we should all have such an insight into the characters of those with whom we live, as to know where to place our confidence, and choose our friends. But this may be done in general, Julia, without talking much about them; for, indeed, when I consider the commandment, "Thou shalt not bear false witness against thy neighbour," I am astonished at the carelessness with which many of us, calling ourselves Christians, incur this guilt, at the very time, perhaps, when we should tremble openly and rashly to run the hazard of breaking any other of the commandments. Cannot we let our neighbours' characters alone? If they do wrong, they must answer for it to God; or, if we think we cannot benefit them, then let us to their own faces tell them of their faults.'

"'Well, but I was not going to speak of any one, Amelia,' returned Julia. 'Why are you so warm? I was speaking of conversation in general, and I was regretting that you would not allow me the common privileges of friendship, that is, the sweet intercourse of mutual confidence and interchange of sentiments.'

"Amelia smiled. 'It is a pity, Julia,' she said, 'that we cannot think of some pretty copy of verses, in which all the tender sympathies which you so sweetly imagine, relative to the interchange of sentiments between bosom friends, are described with all the pathos of poetry. How very treacherous my memory must be, not to present to me one single specimen of the kind, when there is hardly a magazine, a newspaper, or a memorandum-book, in which one might not be found. But, seriously speaking, what are these privileges of friendship, and those sweet interchanges of sentiments, but, in plain English, an agreement made by two young people to impart to each other, without reserve, things that ought not be spoken of. If you have any faults to confess, dear Julia, confess them to your God; if you have any

advice to ask, ask it of your guardians; and if you have any secrets to reveal, get rid of the need of them as fast as you can.'

" 'Very laconic,' said Miss Beaumont, laughing, 'and very saucy too! Well now, I declare, Amelia, if it were possible that I could find any thing tolerable in the shape of a friend in this house, I would renounce you, and take another to my heart. But, surely, such a pack of owls, bats, jays, crows, peacocks, parrots, and adjutants, were never met under one roof. In the first place, there's my stately governess, moving about like a peacock with its starry tail spread to its utmost extent, though, by the bye, the eyes are wanting. Madame de Roseau, dressed in twenty colours, squalling like a parouquet, and——'

" 'Stop! stop!' said Amelia: 'let me beg you, Julia, to give us no more of this.'

" 'No, no, I won't stop,' said Miss Beaumont: 'my fit's upon me; and you shall hear me out. There are Chatterton and Atkins, as vulgar and impudent as the crows in the *verandah*; and Miss Crawford, bridling and stretching her long neck, like one of the adjutants upon the gate of the burying-ground.'

" 'Julia,' said Amelia, 'I am ashamed of you. I wish, I heartily wish, that there was more humility in your religion. Surely, surely, if you had a proper view of the depravity of your own nature, it must have some effect in regulating your words.'

" 'You are angry, Amelia,' said Miss Beaumont.

" 'Yes, I am,' replied the other.

" 'I do not care what you are,' returned Miss Beaumont, 'provided you will but be persuaded to talk.'

" 'To talk?' said Amelia. 'And so it does not matter what I say, provided I will but talk? Well, then, if this is the case,' she added, getting up, and sitting down on a chair by the table, 'I will avail myself of the opportunity that you now give me, to speak my mind to you on a very important subject, and one on which I have long had serious thoughts. You are a high professor of religion, Julia, and I cannot but think that you often feel its influence. But how is it that your religion does not humble you? I have always understood, that the Holy

Spirit begins his work of conversion by convincing the individual of sin, and by showing him, that, if he is to be saved, or to be made in any degree to differ from other men, that he is in nowise to attribute any glory to himself. This is what my dear mother has again and again told me, and particularly urged on my attention; declaring, that a real work of grace will discover itself most strikingly by its producing deep humility, and cherishing an abiding sense of one's own unworthiness. But how can an habitual sense of sin exist in the individual who feels and gives way to a censorious or insolent spirit? a spirit such as you, Julia, this moment evinced, and which you would be glad to indulge every hour of the day, if I would but encourage you?"

"'You are really angry, I see,' said Miss Beaumont.

"'I am,' returned Amelia; I am angry and vexed: you have vexed me, my friend.'

"Miss Beaumont got up, and went to Amelia. 'I am sorry,' she said; 'I know I have been foolish. Pray, excuse me.'

"'O, Julia, Julia!' said Amelia, throwing her arms round her neck, 'let us either altogether cease to associate, or else let our intercourse be such as Christians should not be ashamed of.'

"Miss Beaumont again acknowledged her fault, and begged Amelia's pardon: after which, we all returned to our books, and continued engaged with them, till it was time to dress.

"The next evening, if I remember aright, Mrs. Patterson called Amelia down stairs before I was quite dressed; for we always changed our dresses, according to the Indian fashion, about five o'clock; I was, therefore, left alone in our room, the doors being open into the *verandah*, for the hot season was arrived. The rest of the young ladies were, I thought, gone down, when suddenly a tapping at the *gill-mills*, near my bed, caught my attention, and Gabrielle called to me, saying, 'Miss Clara, I have brought you a few *Aru Bochara*, which I bought on purpose for you.'

"I hastened to take these through the *jalousies*, and we then entered into a conversation, which lasted some time. She told me that she had been in the next room

on the preceding evening and had heard Amelia speak angrily to Miss Beaumont; adding, that she could not hear the occasion of the dispute, and asking if it referred to herself.

“After some solicitation, I was weak enough to repeat to Gabrielle Miss Beaumont’s foolish speech about the birds, and I continued talking to her till Amelia’s step in the *verandah* obliged us to break off our discourse.

“The next day, there was put upon Miss Crawford’s table a note, written in a feigned hand, in which notice was given of the strange liberties which Miss Beaumont, in conversation, had taken with the characters of her governesses, and of others of the inmates of the house.

“This note Miss Crawford produced in the school-room, when all the family were assembled; and reading it aloud, she excited such a tumult as I hardly ever witnessed. Mrs. Patterson looked highly offended, but preserved her composure; Madame de Roseau reddened, and forgetting her English, scolded fluently in her native tongue; and Miss Crawford burst out into a torrent of abuse, in which she was joined by the two young ladies whom Miss Beaumont had very politely compared to crows. The rest of the young ladies tittered and whispered, winking and nodding at each other behind their governesses’ backs. Miss Beaumont reddened violently, and looked thoroughly vexed; little Flora started; Gabrielle’s countenance was impenetrable; and I trembled violently, conscious of having whispered the secret through the *gill-mill*. ‘Do you confess having made use of these expressions, Miss?’ said Miss Crawford.

“‘I do,’ said Miss Beaumont: ‘I will not utter an untruth.’

“‘Insolente!’ said Madame de Roseau.

“‘At any rate,’ said Mrs. Patterson, with great composure, ‘Miss Beaumont has spared none of us: she has been impartial in the treatment of her friends.’

“‘I beg your pardon, Madam,’ said Miss Beaumont: ‘I acknowledge my fault.’

“‘This is what now alone remains to be done,’ said Mrs. Patterson, with dignity. ‘I freely forgive you, which is more, I fear, than you will be able to do to yourself. But to whom did you use these expressions?’

“‘To Miss Carrisforth.’

“‘And she encouraged you?’ said Mrs. Patterson.

“‘No, Madam,’ returned Miss Beaumont; ‘she spoke to me with more severity than she ever used before in her life towards me.’

“‘That is like her, like my Amelia,’ said Mrs. Patterson, while the tears stood trembling in her eyes. ‘Thank God, I have not hitherto been disappointed in my Amelia.’ So saying, she took Amelia by the hand and left the room; leaving us all in amazement at a compliment paid to Amelia, at the expense, as we thought, of every one else in the house, but a compliment, however, at the same time, which every heart must have acknowledged to be well deserved.

“After the departure of Mrs. Patterson, a very low and degrading scene took place among those who were left behind. This consisted of mutual upbraidings between Miss Beaumont and those whom she had offended, which ended in her leaving the room, and in the young ladies being set down to their needlework for the remainder of the morning.

“At twelve o’clock, I went to our own room, where I found Amelia. She had been crying, but at that time appeared to be calm, though sorrowful. As soon as she saw me come in, she said, ‘I hope, Clara, that it is not you who have betrayed Julia.’

“She spoke so low, that I am convinced it was impossible that she could have been heard by the closest listener without the room. You will not be surprised to learn, my dear friend, that I solemnly denied the charge, declaring that I neither had had opportunity nor inclination to betray Miss Beaumont.

“She seemed to believe me, though she evidently appeared puzzled; and took the occasion to say, that, although she blamed Miss Beaumont for her want of caution in speaking, and for her want of respect to her superiors, yet that she considered the person who had conveyed the intelligence to those aggrieved as being incomparably more to blame than Miss Beaumont: for, as the wise man says, *where no wood is, there the fire goeth out; so, where there is no tale-bearer, the strife ceaseth.* (Prov. xxvi. 20.)



“While Amelia was still speaking to me on this subject, Miss Beaumont and Flora came in. The former was in violent agitation; her face being swelled with crying, and her countenance strongly expressive of resentment. Amelia ceased to speak when her friend entered, and an awkward silence followed for some moments, Miss Beaumont having seated herself at the foot of my bed, continuing to cry violently. At length, Amelia said, ‘Julia, my dear, do not distress yourself so much. The thing is now done: let us, then, try now to repair it’

“‘But,’ said Julia, ‘to be so disgraced, so humbled, and that in the eyes of a parcel of people whom one cannot but *heartily despise!*’

“‘*Heartily despise!*’ repeated Amelia. ‘Oh, Julia, Julia! you are incorrigible!’

“‘I am not incorrigible,’ returned Miss Beaumont, angrily; ‘I am no worse than many others: but I am too sincere, too open, too unguarded, for my company.’

“Amelia replied, ‘It may often teach us a good lesson, my dear Julia, in early life, for us to be obliged to associate with such persons as compel us to be on our guard. These difficult situations and circumstances teach us self-command; and if we really possess Christian principles, the perplexities in which we become involved by our carelessness induce us to look inwards, and to inquire if all is right there.’

“‘Exceedingly wise, indeed!’ returned Miss Beaumont, with bitterness.

“‘Julia,’ said Amelia, ‘I don’t understand you.’

“‘You will then, by and by,’ returned Miss Beaumont, perhaps as well as I now do you.’

“Amelia looked with amazement, and said, ‘Why, Miss Beaumont, what is the matter now?’

“‘Mrs. Patterson’s own dear Amelia!’ said Julia, sneeringly. And, then taking the note out of her bosom, the note which had excited such tumults, ‘Whose hand is this, Amelia?’ she asked. ‘Though disguised, I see in it many lines which mark it too plainly to be yours.’

“‘Mine!’ said Amelia, her face flushing high, ‘mine, Julia! And do you actually suspect me?’

“‘I do,’ said Miss Beaumont: ‘for who else could it have been?’



“*Who else!*” repeated Amelia.

“Yes,” said Miss Beaumont, “I do suspect you; because I spoke too low, I am confident, for any one out of the room to hear me; and there were no persons present but yourself, Flora, and Clara. Flora has never left me; she therefore, is clear; and, if you can answer for Clara, the suspicion must fall upon yourself. At any rate,” she added, insolently, “the matter lies between you and your pupil.”

“Amelia looked perplexed. ‘I know my own innocence,’ she said, ‘and I think I can answer for Clara’s. I do not know that she has one single person in this house with whom she communicates familiarly. I do not think that she is capable of writing the note herself, her hand being, as you well know, wholly unformed; neither have I ever left her since the period of the unfortunate conversation, excepting for a few minutes when I was called to Mrs. Patterson, and I have reason to conclude that she was not out of the room during that interval.’

“No, indeed I was not,” I said.

“And you neither saw or spoke to any one?” asked Amelia.

“How should I?” I said. “I have no person in this house with whom I speak familiarly.”

“Amelia and Julia looked at each other; and Amelia said, ‘I think that Clara cannot be concerned in this affair.’

“Then, Amelia,” returned Miss Beaumont, “the suspicion again rests upon you.”

“I am sorry that you suspect me,” said Amelia, calmly. “You are unjust in so doing, Julia: but I cannot help it.”

“You cannot help it!” said Miss Beaumont: “what a cold expression! You do not even attempt to clear yourself.”

“Because,” returned Amelia, “when confidence between friends is once gone, no arguments will restore it. Julia,” she added, “I have borne long with you. You have often tried me; but I still believed that you loved and esteemed me. You have, however, now proved the contrary; and it would be better for us, in future, to meet only as we must meet—as common acquaintance.”

"This speech was succeeded by a pause; during which, Amelia wept, but it was gently. This pause was, however, quickly interrupted by little Flora, who, bursting into an agony of grief, and throwing her arms round Amelia's neck, said, 'O, Miss Carrisforth! and shall I then, too, be parted from you? It was not me, indeed it was not me who told about Miss Beaumont.'

"'Beloved child!' said Amelia, pressing her own lovely face against that of the little girl, 'I hope not; I hope, my sweet Flora, that Miss Beaumont will sometimes let you come to me.' So saying, she again kissed the child, and then left the room.

"When Amelia was gone, we all remained for some time in a state that was any thing but enviable. 'Little Flora cried and lamented herself aloud. 'O my sweet Amelia!' she exclaimed, 'my dear Amelia! O! I wish that Amelia was my mamma: my sweet Miss Carrisforth! my lovely, lovely Amelia!' and then she rung her little hands in an agony of grief, which touched even my hard heart, and filled me with a strong feeling of compunction, yet not sufficiently strong to induce me to confess what I had done.

"Flora continued to cry, till Miss Beaumont, turning angrily to her, said, 'You little simpleton, cease your disturbance. What an uproar you are making! I heartily wish you had the mamma you desire. Say another word, and I will turn you over to Miss Carrisforth, and she shall have the plague of you.'

"'O! will you, will you be so kind?' said the little girl 'Will you give me up, dear Miss Beaumont? I shall be so happy. Dear, kind Miss Beaumont, will you let me be Amelia's child?'

"It is perhaps impossible to conceive of any circumstance that would at that moment have been more provoking to the inflamed mind of Miss Julia than this request, made by little Flora: and such was its effect upon the young lady, that she instantly arose, and going to Mrs. Patterson with Flora, requested permission to deliver her up to Amelia.'

"'Is it at Miss Carrisforth's own desire?' inquired Mrs. Patterson.

“‘It is, I am sure,’ answered the little girl, ‘because I love her so much.’

“‘Do then as you please,’ said Mrs. Patterson. And the joyful little Flora flew to tell Amelia that she was to be her child.

“Miss Beaumont did not appear at *tiffin*, but Flora, full of delight, sat on one side of Amelia, while I took my usual seat on the other.

“Nothing very remarkable happened from the time of this second quarrel with Miss Beaumont till the arrival of the holidays. Flora, in the interim, remained under Amelia’s care, and seemed truly happy, and desirous of improvement. Miss Beaumont continued alienated from Amelia, though it was plain enough that this separation cost her much, for she was always silent and melancholy. In some respects I improved rapidly; but then it was in matters with which the head was more concerned than the heart.

“As Flora was a child of a disposition peculiarly open and ingenuous, and who would tell Amelia of every thing that she saw, she entirely put a stop to my private interviews with Gabrielle. It would have been, I found, a very dangerous experiment to attempt to corrupt her, as she invariably made a point of showing to Amelia every thing that was given to her; and if, by chance, I was ever left alone with her for a few moments, she would, when Amelia again returned, give her a minute and exact account of what had passed during her absence.

“Thus this little creature, by her extraordinary openness, was by the divine mercy enabled to be as it were a guard to herself; for it was a common saying throughout the school, ‘Mind what you do before Flora; for she will tell all to Amelia Carrisforth.’

“When the Midsummer holidays arrived, most of the family were dispersed. Amelia had made interest for little Flora to accompany her to a friend’s house at Serampore, where she was to spend the recess, and I went to my aunt’s, where I was thought to be much improved.

“About this time I completed my fifteenth year.

“When I had been at home about a fortnight, a certain circumstance, not worth detailing in this place.

obliged my aunt to take a short journey with her daughters, and I was, in consequence, sent back to school.

“On arriving at Palm-Grove, I found no one there but Miss Crawford and Gabrielle, a circumstance which proved very unfortunate for me; for, as Miss Crawford was any thing else but watchful, I was left at entire liberty to do, and say, and learn every thing to which my evil inclinations either prompted or disposed me.

“I was put to sleep alone the first night in my usual apartment; and the first person I saw, when I opened my eyes in the morning, was Gabrielle, sitting by my bedside, this girl having been from home the evening before, when I arrived.

“‘O Clara Lushington,’ she said, ‘how glad I was when Miss Crawford told me that you were come, and without Amelia Carrisforth to watch you, and cross you, and plague you, as she did. What a torment that girl must have been to you, Clara!’

“‘Why, Gabrielle,’ I said, ‘is that you? I thought you liked Amelia above all persons in the world.’

“‘O, yes, she is well enough,’ she answered. ‘But we shall have such fun now. Miss Crawford lets us have every thing all our own way in the holidays. We shall have such fun.’

“‘Fun?’ I said; ‘and of what sort?’

“‘O, all sorts. Do you know, that, the day before yesterday, we had the *putully-nautch* in the *verandah*, and I saw it over again in the *bawergee khaunah*, when Miss Crawford thought I was in bed and fast asleep. And then Fijou,—you know Fijou, the *kidmutgar*,—he tells such droll tales; and the *ayahs* and the *bearers*, we all meet together, at night, in the back *verandah*, and they amuse me so! And I have been out twice; I will not tell you where, neither: but Miss Crawford thought I was at Mrs. Sandford’s, my papa’s friend, in Tank Square. But I was not there: I was with Atkins and Chatterton.’

“‘Where?’ I said.

“‘O, what’s that to you? I’ll tell you, some time or other; but not now.’

“‘But how could you deceive Miss Crawford?’

“‘Deceive her!’ said Gabrielle, ‘deceive her! Indeed

I must be a fool if I could not deceive *her*! Why, could not I write a note in Mrs. Sandford's name, and get it brought here; and then go out in a hired *palanquin*, and go where I pleased? O, you are but a simpleton yet, I see, Lushington,' she added, laughing; 'but you will be wiser by and by. When I have told you all the tricks of Palm-Grove, you won't wonder and stare as you did when the *chit* was found on Miss Crawford's dressing-table; a *chit* which nobody wrote, but which every body read.'

"O, Gabrielle! I said, 'I always suspected that you were at the bottom of that trick.'

"How wonderful that you should have suspected me!" she added, laughing; 'how came you to think that I was so clever?'

"But enough, and too much, of this detestable conversation. Suffice it to say, that by the time that the three remaining weeks of the holidays had elapsed, I was as corrupt as such a companion could make me, and I had fully resolved, either to break Amelia's yoke from my neck, or, if I could not in any way do this effectually, to circumvent her by some other means.

"After the midsummer vacation, when we were all reassembled, I found that our party was but little varied. During the vacation, Miss Beaumont (her irritation having been no longer excited by her spiteful companions) had become convinced of the impropriety of her conduct, and had, therefore, written not only a letter to Amelia, fully expressive of contrition for the unkind suspicions that she had entertained against her, but she had also sent letters of apologies to the other ladies of the family whom she had insulted.

"In consequence of her having forwarded these letters, she was, on her return, received with affection by Amelia, and with politeness by the rest of the party; and as she now appeared humbler and more amiable than she had ever done before, her concurrence and co-operation considerably strengthened the influence of Miss Carrisforth in the family: whereas, formerly, by her want of watchfulness and self-command, she had greatly weakened that influence, as must have appeared on many occasions which I have already related.



"This assistance on the part of Miss Beaumont was certainly very seasonable: for no sooner was Amelia returned, than I plainly told her that I would not be ruled by her as I had been before; that it was well enough for her to keep such a child as Flora under control, but that, as I was in my sixteenth year, I had no notion of submitting to a person who was only eighteen.

"She replied, 'You do not consider, Clara, that when you obey me, it is not to my authority that you submit, but to the delegated authority of your father.'

"'I do not care,' I answered, 'whose delegated authority it is; I will not submit.'

"'That is your determination?' said Amelia, calmly.

"'It is, Miss Carrisforth,' I answered.

"She immediately arose, and brought me a pen, ink, and paper.

"'What's that for?' I said.

"'You will be pleased,' she replied, 'to write down on paper what you have just said: that is, if you are in earnest in saying so.'

"'To be sure I am,' I answered.

"'Then write it down,' said Amelia.

"In a spirit of insolence I obeyed, and tossing the paper towards her, exclaimed, 'There it is written: you may read it, and show it to Mrs. Patterson.'

"'No,' said Amelia, taking up the paper, 'I do not intend it for Mrs. Patterson, but for your father. To him I shall send it, and to him, as a proper person, that is, as the person who intrusted you to my care, I shall refer the case.'

"I forgot to say, that, during the holidays, I had heard from my aunt of my father's marriage to a widow lady up the country; and my aunt had, at the same time, availed herself of that occasion to suggest to me, that as my father might now have a second family, it behoved me to act with great circumspection towards him, lest I should lose his regard. And as I, in common with most other young people of my age, was by no means insensible to notions and feelings of self-interest, I was, therefore, a little startled at this proposed reference to my father, and, consequently, thought proper to change my measures on the occasion. I, accordingly, begged Ame-



lia's pardon, and promised to behave better in future, though, at the same time, I secretly resolved on doing all that I could to spite and deceive her.

"When I humbled myself, I obtained her immediate forgiveness, and all things then returned to their usual course, or at least appeared to do so: for, although I was now most carefully and closely watched, not only by Amelia, but also by Miss Beaumont, I contrived to correspond with Gabrielle by means of the *jalousies* near my bed, through which she put her notes, and through which I conveyed my answers.

"This correspondence had been carried on for some weeks, when Gabrielle, one night, slipped a *chit* through the door, the purport of which was to ask me if I could not possibly contrive to escape by the door near my bed, after Amelia was asleep; Gabrielle adding, that she would draw all the bolts, and set the door a little ajar, while the family were at tea.

"I wrote a short answer, which I put under the door early in the morning, to announce my concurrence with this plan.

"I observed, during the day, that many significant looks were directed towards me by Miss Atkins and Miss Chatterton, from which I understood that they were abettors in this scheme; and, indeed, it could not be carried into effect without their assistance; for, in going out I must needs pass between the beds of these two young ladies.

"With what impatience did I look forward to the approaching night, and how, in my own wicked heart, did I triumph and exult over Amelia.

"At length, the hour for retirement came, and my heart danced with eagerness at the prospect. I made haste to get into bed, having put my dressing-gown over my night dress, in order to be ready for my midnight excursion, whatever it was intended to be. But what was my mortification, just as I had got into bed, to see Amelia's eyes intently directed towards the door! 'Clara,' she said, 'get up, and bolt that door which is by your bed; I see that both of the bolts are drawn. Who can have opened it?' she added; what is the meaning of this? But I will take care that it shall not happen again.' So say-

ing, she forced her way into the corner of my bed fastened both the bolts, and, taking a riband from a drawer, twisted it through the openings of the *jalousies*, and tied it in twenty knots.

“‘Why, Miss Carrisforth,’ said Miss Chatterton, who was standing on the other side, ‘what’s the matter now? what are you doing there?’

“‘No harm,’ said Amelia; ‘but I will prevent the *matrantee* from passing through this door again.’

“A violent burst of laughter, in which there was more indignation than merriment, then followed from every individual in the next room; and Miss Chatterton exclaimed, ‘Amelia Carrisforth, you need not take such pains to keep us out: we are not so over fond of your company.’

“Amelia made no answer; but, turning to me, ‘Clara,’ she said, get up, and pull off your dressing-gown: you surely cannot need it this hot night.

“I arose, trembling, and not knowing how far she suspected me.

“‘Get up, Clara Lushington,’ she said, get up, you unprincipled girl: put on your clothes, and follow me to Mrs. Patterson’s room.’

“I instantly left my bed, guilt causing every limb to tremble, and, falling down on my knees before my youthful and lovely mistress, I solemnly assured her that she suspected me wrongfully, if she thought that I knew any thing of the door being open.

“Amelia turned from me with an air of that beautiful severity which we find so admirably described in the *Paradise Lost*, by Milton, who, when speaking of the rebuke given by the angel to the arch fiend, says,—

“‘So spake the cherub; and his grave rebuke,  
Severe in youthful beauty, added grace  
Invincible.’

“I pleaded long and earnestly in behalf of my innocence, and, at length, so far prevailed, that she bade me get into bed again, saying, ‘Clara, I do not know what to think of you: but I believe you to be utterly destitute of principle.’

“I was surprised and abashed. I could not utter an

other word. But Amelia added, 'Remember, Clara Lushington, that if you fall, it is not through temptation, for I have shielded you from that,—but it is because you love sin: you relish it, you delight in it, it is your element, and in sin alone you exist.'

"Hardened as I then was, I was shocked by these strong expressions; and the more so, because the habitual language of Amelia was so decidedly gentle; and, though conscious myself of my own deceitful character, I was not aware that she was acquainted with it. As I before said, I was unable to speak. I made her no reply; but Miss Chatterton, who, on the other side of the door, had been listening to what was passing, would not suffer her to go on unanswered, but, raising the *jalousies* with a motion so violent as to make us both start, she poured forth such a torrent of abusive language as surely is seldom propelled, even by passion itself, from the mouth of any being calling herself a lady.

"Amelia permitted her to proceed, unreprieved, till she was compelled to stop for want of breath; and then calmly said, 'Miss Chatterton, do not compel me to conclude that there is more in this affair than I suspected; or, at least, do not induce me to imagine that it is any particular concern of yours: as I have always treated you with politeness and respect, I have a right to require the same from you.'

"Chatterton, hold your tongue, said another voice behind, which we knew to be Miss Atkins. 'What Miss Carrisforth says is very true; she has always behaved very obligingly to you: and wherefore, then, should you meddle with what can be no concern of yours? Come away from the door.'

"At the same moment, the *jalousies*, which had been forcibly held up, flapped violently down; and we heard Miss Chatterton's voice, though not so near, exclaiming, 'But she is so provoking, so insolent, to come and fasten the door between us, as if our very breath were poison! I hate that cool command of temper, too, by which she carries all before her. Beaumont is worth a hundred such: one may do something with her.'

"Hold your tongue, can't you, Chatterton?" said Miss Atkins. 'You are so unaccountably imprudent!'

“Qu'est ce que c'est? what is all dis noise? what is dis uproar, mes Demoiselles my young ladies?” said a voice, at that instant ushering from a distant room, and every moment becoming louder, as its owner, Madame de Roseau, approached from her own chamber. ‘Is dat you, Mademoiselle Chattertone? is dat you? Well I never did see such young ladies. And what do you here, Mademoiselle Gabrielle? Did I not see you in your own room two minutes past? For shame! what an uproar is here! I shall tell Madame; I shall call Mrs. Patterson, Miss Chattertone! parquoi, wherefore do you shed tears? are you sick?’

“No,” said a young lady, who was present; ‘she has been quarrelling with Amelia Carrisforth.’

“Quarrelling!” repeated Miss Chatterton; ‘no, I have been grossly insulted by her.’

“In what way! Comment? how? expliquez,” said Madame. ‘How is dis? Miss Carrisforth est toujours, always polie. What is de quarrel?’

“Nothing at all, Madame,” said Miss Atkins; ‘only she heard Amelia, through the door, scolding Clara Lushington, and that offended her.’

“O! O! Miss Chattertone is become de female Quixote,” added Madame de Roseau, ‘since Miss Beaumont has renounced de caractere! Eh bien! very well! very good! But, ladies, you now must please to go to bed; let us enjoy de peace à present, s’il vous plait; let me hear no more of dis noise.’

“All was now hushed, and I endeavoured to sleep; but shame and disappointment kept me long awake.

“The total failure of our scheme, on this occasion, so depressed our spirits, that I did not receive even a single line from Gabrielle for several weeks; at the end of which period one of our monthly public nights arrived and Miss Atkins and Miss Chatterton were made very gay by the reappearance of the captain and lieutenant of the Ariadne, before mentioned, both of whom had been for some time absent.

“It happened, that on this dancing-night just spoken of, I overheard a conversation between Miss Atkins and Miss Chatterton, which filled my mind with strange thoughts. These young ladies were just without the

door so often mentioned, and I was in my bed; but it was evident that they did not wish that any one should hear their whisperings, as they were unusually low.

“‘The Ariadne is in the river, almost opposite my uncle Jackson’s door,’ said Miss Chatterton.

“‘When does she sail?’ said Miss Atkins.

“‘O, very soon,’ said the other; ‘her cargo is complete.’

“‘It consists of buffalos’ horns and skins,’ said Miss Atkins, ‘does not it?’

“‘Yes,’ said Miss Chatterton. ‘But what of that?’

“‘O, nothing,’ said Miss Atkins. ‘But what day does the captain talk of?’

“‘Thursday next,’ answered Miss Chatterton: ‘you know, that we can pretend to have an invitation from my uncle Jackson.’

“‘What, and go from thence?’ said Miss Atkins.

“‘Pooh, you simpleton!’ returned Miss Chatterton: ‘don’t you know that my uncle Jackson is not to know any thing about it?’

“‘Well, but is not Bidly Jackson invited?’ said Miss Atkins.

“‘To be sure she is,’ returned Miss Chatterton; ‘but we are all to meet her at Gordon’s quarters, which are just by the dock near which the vessel lies.’

“‘And Captain Besbrook says we shall have a dance, does not he?’ said Miss Atkins.

“‘To be sure he does,’ said Miss Chatterton. ‘Bidly Jackson and I were on board the Ariadne the last time she was in port: we had a supper and a ball, and came home about four in the morning. We had a charming evening!’

“Sundry whisperings followed, which I could not hear. After which, however, I heard Miss Chatterton say, ‘Captain Besbrook asked me whether I could not bring two or three more of my school-fellows: but we shall be enough without them. Besides, I don’t know whom we could trust.’

“‘Hush! don’t speak so loud,’ said Miss Atkins: ‘they say that walls have ears.’

“The young ladies then lowered their voices so much, that I could distinguish nothing more; but I had already



learned enough to render me excessively anxious to make one of this charming party.

"The next day, while we were in the school-room, Gabrielle contrived, in passing by me, to give me a *chit*, which, when I had an opportunity of reading, I discovered to contain an account of her having found out the Captain of the *Ariadne's* invitation to Miss Chatterton. She would not tell me how she had effected this discovery, although she plainly declared to me the use that she meant to make of it. 'I am resolved,' said she, 'either to be of the party or to betray them; and, if you please, you also shall accompany us.'

"I watched my opportunity, and, in a short note to Gabrielle, stated, that nothing would give me greater delight than to join this party, if she could in any way obtain my liberty for that day.

"No further communication passed between me and Gabrielle till, on the evening before the appointed day, when I was walking with my usual companions in the garden, Gabrielle again contrived to give me a short note, affirming that all was settled, and that I should have an invitation from my aunt on the following evening.

"On the morning of the Thursday, although I had a prospect of obtaining my wishes, I think that I was more uneasy than I ever was before in my life. I had a kind of horror upon my mind which I could not easily express, and which I thank God I have never since felt, and am assured that I shall never feel again; for he is faithful who has called me, and will not suffer me to fall. No, I trust that he will henceforth uphold me: *for I know whom I have believed, and am persuaded that he is able to keep that which I have committed unto him against that day.* (2 Tim. i. 12.)

"It was an exceedingly hot and oppressive day, and the anxiety of my mind was considerably increased by an evident uneasiness and restlessness which plainly appeared in the countenances of those who were to be my companions in the evening exploit. I had also two other sources of solicitude, independent of that usual dissatisfaction which is felt by all guilty persons, however seemingly prosperous they for a time may be: one of which was, lest my aunt should really send or call



for me; and the other, lest the promised invitation, which Gabrielle had undertaken to provide, should not arrive.

“At *tiffin* we heard it mentioned that Miss Atkins and Miss Chatterton were going to Mr. Jackson’s, and would not be at home till late, as a party was expected there; and it was also said that Gabrielle was to accompany them. I also saw these three very busily employed in the *verandah* with the *sundook-wallas*, as I passed through the outer hall with Amelia, to go to our own room, after she had given me and little Flora our music lessons. When I had reached our room, my anxiety became still greater. Sometimes I wished that I had never had any thing to do with the proposed scheme, and sometimes I felt exceedingly uneasy lest I should, after all, be disappointed.

“In order to conceal my restlessness, I lay down on my bed, taking my book in my hand, and I now well remember the peculiar feelings which I had as I lay contemplating the sweet and peaceful countenances of Amelia and little Flora, the one sitting writing at her table, and the other placed on a *mora* at her feet, employed in making a frock for her doll. ‘Happy little Flora,’ I more than once said to myself, ‘what would I give to be like little Flora!’

“It was after five o’clock, as I perceived by the shadows on the *verandah*, when Miss Crawford came to the outer door and said, ‘Make haste, Clara Lushington, your aunt has sent for you to meet some friends; the *bearers* are waiting below: come, come, get up. Where are your clothes? on with them in a minute!’

“I jumped from the bed; and my first question was, ‘Are you quite sure? is it indeed my aunt who has sent for me?’

“‘Why, who else should it be?’ she said; ‘who else ever sends for you?’

“This remark reminded me that I must be more guarded in my inquiries; I therefore began to dress, trembling, however, so violently, that Amelia said, ‘Clara, don’t agitate yourself so; the *bearers* can wait a little.’

“It was in vain to tell me to be composed, I was too unpractised in such awful guilt as this, to go through it

without evident agitation. I therefore continued to tremble till my dress was put on and my hair properly arranged, and then, hastening down, I threw myself into the *palanquin*, (which was a hired one, though attended, as I saw, by one or two persons looking like gentlemen's servants,) and, having drawn the blinds, was hurried away I knew not whither; neither did I know whether Gabrielle, or Miss Atkins, or Miss Chatterton were already gone out, or were left behind me at school. The motion of the *palanquin* continued for some time, but which way I went I did not know, as I dared not to look out for fear of meeting with some acquaintance. It was nearly dusk when the *palanquin* stopped, and I found myself at the door of a house, looking rather mean, though evidently a European dwelling, and in a part of Calcutta with which I was but very imperfectly acquainted.

"Being set down, I drew back the blinds, and was handed out by a very young man, who, without speaking, led me through a hall into a back room, where it afforded me some relief to find Miss Atkins, Miss Chatterton, and Gabrielle, with a number of other young people, chiefly men, who were laughing and talking with extreme volubility. All the doors and windows in the back of this room were wide open, and beyond I could distinctly discern the Hoogley, from which there was blowing into the room a fresh and cool breeze, not altogether unmixed with the unsavoury odours of pitch and tar. 'O, Miss Chatterton,' I said, without regarding the rest of the company, 'how glad I am to see you here!'

"'Why, you little fool,' was her uncourteous answer, 'I'll be bound you thought yourself lost.'

"We waited in this room as long as ten minutes, the whole party continuing to talk and laugh without any regard to prudence, (for indeed it must be allowed, that prudence, amidst such circumstances, would have been altogether out of her place,) till some one coming in gave notice that the boat was ready, upon which the party, taking the way at the back of the house, descended certain stairs leading to the river, each lady being attended by one or more gentlemen, till, on having reached the

boat, we went on board, and were rowed towards the *Ariadne*, which, as she was lying low in the water, owing to her having received her cargo, admitted of our being hoisted on board with little difficulty. And now what a scene of vanity followed! my heart sickens even at its recollection.

“It was a beautiful moonlight night, clear and serene; the ample surface of the *Hoogley* being smooth as a mirror, and sparkling with the reflected moonbeams. The town of Calcutta, on one side, presented only a confused and indistinct mass of buildings, heaped, apparently, one upon another. Beyond us, towards the mouth of the river, innumerable vessels raised their towering masts, and, like a forest, darkened the whole southern horizon; while the banks of *Alipoor*, on the west, displayed a beautiful scene of still moonlight repose; dark groves here and there obtruding themselves on the eye, with now and then the picturesque aspect of some building, reflecting, from its white porticos and majestic roof, the soft and soothing brightness.

“The deck of the *Ariadne*, on board of which we were now arrived, was entirely covered with an awning, raised sufficiently high above the sides of the vessel to admit the air from every quarter. A variety of lamps were placed in different directions, so as to cast a strong light upon the deck; and in the *cuddy*, or dining-room of the vessel, a handsome collation was laid out. The state cabins, also, were opened and illuminated, and in them we found several young ladies, who were taking tea and other refreshments. Among these we met with Miss *Biddy Jackson*, of whom you will form no very good opinion when I tell you, that she was in the *Ariadne* without her father's knowledge. I was much struck with the gay and novel scene which presented itself when first I got on board, but was, at the same time, aware of a strong and oppressive odour, which, however, I attributed to the smell of sea-water, the exhalation from which I had heard was sometimes very disagreeable, and particularly offensive to some persons; I had never before been on board a large vessel, and it was therefore not to be wondered at that I was altogether ignorant that this smell was very dif-

ferent from that which was emitted by the sea-water. The gay and busy scene, however, before me, soon diverted my thoughts from this subject. I accompanied my companions into the state-cabin, where much gay conversation (to use no worse an expression) took place between the young ladies and the gentlemen; and foolish and light as I had previously considered my school-fellows to be, I found that what I had already seen of them was nothing, in comparison of that which I was now to witness. Instead, however, of being disgusted at this display of folly, I thought that I could do no better than to show off in the same way. I therefore chattered, laughed, whispered, and gave pert and flippant answers to every one that spoke to me, in a style of which I now cannot think but with horror; and though the men who were at that time about me were, assuredly, none of the most delicate, yet I shudder to think what an impression my distinguished folly must have left upon them.

After we had regaled ourselves with tea, and other refreshments, a band of music on deck having struck up, the gentlemen chose their partners and led us out to dance, and for two hours or more we continued this exercise with much spirit: at the end of which time I began to feel a sensation for which I could not account, but which I could not help attributing to the unpleasant smell before mentioned. I tried to dance and laugh off this distressing feeling; but I danced and tittered in vain: it gradually stole more and more upon me. From one hour to another I became increasingly uneasy, neither can I well describe the nature of the feeling that oppressed me: it was attended, at first, with a slight sickness of the stomach, and with a headach, which was also slight; and these sensations were accompanied with a peculiar horror, which all the gaiety around me had no power to dispel. This horror at length became such, that every thing that I attentively looked at for a few minutes seemed to assume some dubious or portentous form. At length, being wholly unable to appear cheerful any longer, I sat down, complaining of fatigue, and endeavouring to amuse myself with looking at the dancers.

“It was after twelve before we were called to supper. I was in hopes that a little wine, and perhaps a little

food, might make me more easy; I therefore roused myself, endeavoured to eat and drink, and to appear merry; and was, consequently, enabled to carry on the deception in the eyes of my companions till we rose from supper: for I thought that it would be matter of triumph to Miss Chatterton and Miss Atkins to know that I was uncomfortable, as I had volunteered my company. But, after supper, I grew so much worse, that my partner perceiving it, and supposing that I had not been used to sit up so late, and that the present deviation from my usual course was the cause of my illness, proposed to me that I should lie down on the sofa in the *cuddy* till the party broke up.

“I was never in my life more thankful for any offer than for this, of which immediately availing myself, I found an instant though a short relief in laying my aching head on the pillow.

“And now, as I lay in this situation, in the cabin of the *Ariadne*, many reflections, of a nature very different from any which I had ever before experienced, occupied my mind. My first consideration was about the circumstances amidst which I was then placed, in a ship upon the river, without a friend, for I had sense enough to see that neither Gabrielle, Miss Atkins, nor Miss Chatterton could be called friends, among men to whom I was a total stranger, and in a situation of the greatest indecorum. ‘What would my aunt, what would my father, what would Amelia think if they could see me now?’ I said to myself. ‘O, that I were in my little room, in my little bed again, under the care of Amelia! O, how happy should I be! O, that I had never known Gabrielle.’ Then I blamed Miss Beaumont: ‘It was Miss Beaumont’s rashness that first awakened my attention towards Gabrielle. Oh, miserable creature that I am! ruined, ruined, lost by my own folly!’ These were some of my dismal thoughts.

“In proportion as I continued my reflections, my head became more and more confused, till, at length, I fell into a state of insensibility, in which I know not how long I lay; on recovering my senses, however, I still heard the sound of the music and dancing on deck, but was aware of the approach of morning, by a gleam of light shining



through the cabin window, while the air at the same time was blowing in more fresh from off the river. I sat up on the couch and looked wildly round me, hardly knowing where I was, and feeling such an increase of indisposition, as made me press both my hands against my burning forehead. At the same moment, a young gentleman came into the cabin, saying, 'Are you ready, Ma'am? The ladies are going.'

"I looked up, and perceived that this was the same young stranger who had handed me from my *palanquin*; and I then recollected that I had not seen him from the moment of his doing so to the present. The modesty and gentility of his manner seemed to strike shame to my heart. 'If he is a gentleman,' I thought, 'as he seems to be, he will despise me; he cannot do otherwise.'

"Being filled therefore with shame, I gave him my hand, and he led me silently to the side of the chair in which I was to be hoisted into the boat. As he relinquished my hand, he bowed respectfully, and withdrew.

"It was still so dark, and I was so faint, that, when I got into the boat, I could not see who was with me, but I distinguished the voices both of gentleman and ladies; and I heard Miss Chatterton say, 'Well, I don't know that I was ever taken so in my life: my head swims so, I hardly know where I am.'

"'It is the motion of the boat,' somebody remarked.

"'No,' she answered, 'I was the same way before I got into the boat. Are persons ever seasick when the ships are in harbour?'

"A loud laugh followed this remark, and the discourse took another turn: but I heard Miss Atkins whisper to Miss Chatterton, 'What can it be? for I feel half dead.'

"You may be assured that these complaints of my school-fellows tended not a little to increase my alarms; and, feeling as I then did, I fancied that we had all inhaled some dreadful infection, which would prove a horrible punishment for our offence.

"We soon reached the shore. We then got out of the boat at the same stairs by which we had descended into it, and my school-fellows and myself were led back into



the same room in which we had assembled before we went on board.

“This room was lighted by only one shade, standing on the table in the centre of the room; and, of all the ladies and gentleman who had accompanied us from the *Ariadne*, there were none with me excepting my three school-fellows and Mr. Gordon, the first mate. This officer, after having offered any thing that his house would afford, wished us good morning, saying, that he would leave us to take what rest might be possible on two sofas which were in the room, till the arrival of the hour when we could return home, which would be at sunrise, a time when all the inhabitants of Calcutta are in motion.

“As soon as the young gentleman had closed the door after him, Miss Atkins and Miss Chatterton threw themselves upon the sofas, exclaiming, with vehemence, ‘Lord be praised this evening is over!’

“‘Never in my life,’ said Miss Chatterton, ‘did I suffer more than I have done during these last two hours.’

“‘I am sure,’ said Miss Atkins, ‘suffer what you will, you cannot have been worse than I have been: and Clara Lushington looks no better than we are. What, in the name of Heaven,’ she added, with an expression of countenance and vehemence of manner which terrified me beyond measure, ‘what can have been the occasion of this? Surely, Chatterton, surely they have not poisoned us!’ ‘Then, turning to me, ‘Clara,’ she said, ‘you are very ill, I see: when did you feel the beginning of your illness? was it before or after supper? Had you tasted of any thing before you felt yourself uncomfortable?’

“‘Atkins, for Heaven’s sake, hold your tongue,’ said Miss Chatterton: ‘you terrify me to death! What do you suspect? do you think we are poisoned? I shall die with the very idea.’ So saying, she rose up, and walked towards one of the windows, gasping for breath.

“The subject then of the extraordinary smell which I had noticed, and which had been perceived by the rest of the party also, was introduced; and Gabrielle, who was the least affected among us, remarked, that she had heard that the vessel was laden with hides and horns; and perhaps,’ said she, ‘these are not properly tanned’

“‘Don’t mention it,’ said Miss Chatterton, gasping again. ‘I have heard of dreadfully infectious fevers being occasioned by less matters than these.’

“‘But the ship-officers appear quite well,’ I answered.

“‘O, they are used to many things which we can’t bear,’ said Miss Atkins.

“‘At any rate,’ I said, laying my burning head against the back of the sofa near which I sat, ‘I heartily wish I had never joined this party.’

“‘Well, it was at your own desire; you have nobody but yourself to blame,’ returned Miss Atkins.

“‘Yes,’ I replied, ‘yes, I have several to blame. I may, in the first place, blame Miss Beaumont; and, secondly, you, Gabrielle. But for you, I had now been happy in the tender love and confidence of my sweet Amelia. O, Amelia, Amelia!’ I added in extreme agony, ‘had I chosen no other friend than you, I had indeed been blessed.’

“A deep groan from Miss Chatterton at this moment arrested our attention. We all sprang up, and ran to her. She had fainted, and was falling from the sofa. We hastened to loosen her dress; and Gabrielle, running out, soon procured some water, with which we wet her lips and bathed her forehead.

“After a short time, she revived and spoke. ‘Take me home,’ she said: ‘I must go home immediately. Let me die, at least, on my own bed.’

“‘La! my dear,’ said Miss Atkins, ‘don’t talk of dying; we shall be better presently. And we can’t go home till daylight, it will make such a talk, if it is known where we have been; and if we come in at such strange hours, it will surely lead to inquiry.’

“‘Inquiry!’ repeated Miss Chatterton, ‘who cares? what do I care? Put me to bed; I pray you, put me to bed. Let me die, I say, on my bed.’

“A second fainting, more severe and lasting than the former, now took place; during which the sun arose, and Mr. Gordon sent us word that the *palanquins* were waiting.

“As Miss Chatterton could not immediately be moved, and as it was not to appear at Palm-Grove that I had been in company with the rest, it was agreed that I should be sent first. I was, therefore, put into the same

*palanquin* in which I had come, and sent forward. I drew my curtains close round me, and lay backwards, never once looking out from the time I got in till I had reached home. But I can give you no idea of what I suffered during this interval. The morning was one of those which are not unfrequently experienced in the torrid zone; not a breath of air was stirring, and the *bearers* were throwing up the dust every step they took; besides which, the motion of the *palanquin* considerably increased my disorder.

“When I arrived at Palm-Grove, the servants alone were up; the sweeper being engaged in the *verandah*, and the *bearers* just rousing themselves from sleep. The door was opened to me, and I walked up to my room; but was, at the same time, so extremely disordered, that I stood still twice upon the stairs, to rest myself, and gain strength to proceed.

“When near our chamber, I was seized with an extreme giddiness, insomuch, that for a moment I was obliged to support myself against the frame of an open window. Being, at length, however, a little recovered, I advanced to the door of our room. It was fastened within, though all the *jalousies* were open, to admit the air. I looked through them, and saw Amelia asleep in her bed, and Flora in a little cot by her side. I heard their gentle breathings, and the sweet and peaceful expression of Amelia’s face struck me in a degree which it had never done before. The room was neat and orderly, being the abode of modesty and innocence; and on the dressing-table, which was covered with a white napkin, lay an open Bible, and, by it, little Flora’s doll. I slipped my trembling hand through the *jalousies*, and endeavoured to undraw the bolt: at the noise of which Amelia awoke, and exclaimed, ‘Who is there?’

“‘It is I,’ I said; ‘Clara Lushington.’

“‘You are very early,’ replied Amelia, springing up to open the door.

“‘No,’ I answered, with as much unconcern as I could affect, ‘no; my aunt has been up some time, and is now out on the course. But do, Amelia, help me to bed, for I do not feel well: I was up late last night, and I now want a little rest.’

Amelia immediately assisted me to undress: but while she was helping me into bed, 'Clara,' she said, 'what is the matter?—you look excessively ill. How you tremble! You are overfatigued. Make haste to lie down.'

"For a few minutes after being undressed, and when lying down, I felt relieved; but this ease did not continue long. The giddiness returned; the room for an instant seemed to dance round, and a thick vapour, filled with specks of black, arose before my eyes; a violent cold sweat then broke out upon me, and I fainted.

"When I recovered my recollection, I saw several persons standing about me, but had not time to distinguish who they were, before I was taken with a most dreadful vomiting, which exhausted me so much, that, after it, I lay back on my bed without the power of motion, and felt myself too weak to utter a word.

"While in this state, I heard the persons in my room (namely, Mrs. Patterson, Madame de Roseau, and Amelia) speaking to each other. 'You have sent for Dr H——?' inquired Mrs. Patterson.

"'He will be here soon,' said Madame de Roseau.

"'She is overfatigued,' said Mrs. Patterson; 'perhaps kept up too late. If she is no better soon, we must send for her aunt.'

"On hearing this, I became violently agitated. 'No, no, no, I said; 'no, not my aunt.'

"'Why, my dear?' said Mrs. Patterson.

"'Pray do not,' I added, using an exertion which instantly brought on the vomiting again.

"'This is extraordinary,' said Mrs. Patterson, in a low voice, 'but she must not be agitated now; she must be indulged.' Then turning to me, 'Make yourself easy, Clara,' she added; 'your aunt shall not be sent for; she shall not be alarmed.'

"I now lay quiet again for some time, this second fit of sickness having left me, and Mrs. Patterson and Madame de Roseau went out of the room, leaving Amelia and Miss Beaumont with me. Miss Beaumont placed herself at a little distance, and, as I remember, was quite silent; but Amelia sat by me in order to fan me, for the morning was excessively hot. In this situation, being

comparatively easy and much fatigued I fell asleep; but in my sleep the horrible realities of the past night again presented themselves, in indistinct visions, and I suddenly awoke saying something about the Ariadne, of which I should not, however, have been aware, if Amelia had not repeated what I said, at the same time asking me, 'What, my dear, are you thinking of? what reminds you of the Ariadne just now?'

"I then recollected myself, and answered, 'I was only dreaming.'

"A short silence again followed, which was interrupted by little Flora, on tip-toe, bringing the breakfasts of the young ladies on a waiter. 'Flora,' I said, forgetting myself again, 'is it breakfast time, and Miss Atkins and Miss Chatterton not come in, nor Gabrielle?'

"On my asking this question, I saw that Amelia gave a sudden and very expressive look at Miss Beaumont; whereupon the other said, 'I don't know what you mean, Amelia.'

"Amelia made no answer, but offered me a dish of tea, as I had complained of extreme thirst. I swallowed the tea eagerly, though it had a flat and almost nauseous taste, and the consequence was a third fit of sickness, more violent than either of the former. I had scarcely recovered from this last paroxysm, and was lying in a state of great exhaustion, being hardly kept from fainting by hartshorn, when a noise in the neighbouring room caught my attention, and I heard Miss Chatterton saying, 'For Heaven's sake get me to bed! get me to bed! let me at least die in bed!'

"Madame de Roseau's broken English at the same time reached my ears, which were thus filled with repeated expressions of amazement and horror. I heard also Miss Atkins's voice in accents of complaint, though these were considerably more chastised and under control than the lamentations of Miss Chatterton. I then heard my own name mentioned by Mrs. Patterson, and this remark added, 'I cannot understand it, Gabrielle. There is more in this than I now see. Where have you really been?'

"With Miss Jackson,' returned the voice of Gabrielle. 'Really and truly?' said Mrs. Patterson.



“‘Yes, indeed, Madam,’ said Gabrielle.

“‘Amelia,’ said Miss Beaumont, who could not but hear all that was passing in the next room, ‘what is all this? Miss Chatterton ill too?’

“‘I saw Amelia put her hand upon Miss Beaumont’s arm, as a sign for her to be silent.

“‘Surely,’ said Miss Beaumont, ‘they cannot possibly have been together?’

“‘Julia, dear, be silent,’ said Amelia: ‘do not let us forget what we suffered before the holidays.’

“Miss Beaumont said no more: and a moment afterwards, word was brought that Dr. H—— was below.

“While we were waiting for the doctor, Madame de Roseau came and threw open the door so often spoken of during the course of the narrative, saying, ‘Amelia, Dr. H—— says we must give them all the air we possibly can.’

“The door being opened to its utmost extent, I then plainly saw all that was passing in the next room. I had a full view of Miss Chatterton’s bed, and beheld, with inconceivable horror, the dreadful change which had taken place in that miserable young woman since I had seen her the night before. She was stretched upon the bed, having her head supported by pillows, and lying apparently without the power of voluntary motion, at the same time gasping as if under the influence of dreadful spasms; her face changing every moment from deep red to excessive paleness, while drops of perspiration stood on her brow. On the opposite bed sat Miss Atkins, supporting her head against the bed-post, and vainly endeavouring to appear in a state of tolerable ease.

“At the foot of Miss Chatterton’s bed, and leaning against it, stood Gabrielle. Never shall I forget the impression which her appearance at that moment made upon me. The hair and complexion of this girl were exceedingly dark, and her eyes large and bright, but possessing a most singular expression, which I could more easily define by saying what were not, than what were its qualities. It was not ferocity, it was not cunning, nor was it fear; but there appeared an indescribable mixture of all these, united with a habitual air of impudence and defiance. At the sight of me, her features assumed

a bitter and scornful smile, which was instantly succeeded by a fixed and determined gravity; for I was neither able nor willing to return her smile, and thus to acknowledge that I was still of her party, or that I still had one feeling in unison with hers.

“To complete the picture that I have just given you of this girl, I must say, that her dark hair, which had not been touched since the preceding evening, was in extreme disorder, her dress discomposed, and that she still wore the ornaments with which she had decked herself for the miserable adventures of the night. The moment that my eyes met those of Gabrielle, I covered my face with both my hands, exclaiming, ‘Oh, wretched girl! would to God I had never, never seen her face!’

“The entrance of Dr. H——, who entered Miss Chatterton’s room by an opposite door, now attracted our notice. He was accompanied by Mrs. Patterson, and was first led to Miss Chatterton’s bed. After having observed her with much attention, he looked at Miss Atkins and then at me. He ordered Miss Atkins immediately to go to bed; and, turning to Mrs. Patterson, said, ‘How do you account for this, Madam? You say that they were all perfectly well yesterday, and that they all went out, and did not return till this morning? Where were they last night? Have you any reason to think that they partook of any unwholesome aliment, or underwent any excessive fatigue?’

“‘They were not together,’ said Mrs. Patterson.

“‘Not together?’ said the doctor: ‘it is surprising: the symptoms in all are the same, though more violent in one instance. You are sure they were not together? *However this may be,*’ he added, ‘no time must be lost.’

“So saying, he removed into another room, leaving Mrs. Patterson, who, after committing Miss Chatterton to the care of a young lady who was in the room, and directing Miss Atkins immediately to get into bed, called Gabrielle to follow her, and walked away.

“‘Oh, Amelia, Amelia!’ I exclaimed, as soon as I saw this, ‘it will now be found out; I am sure it will.’

“‘What?’ said Amelia, ‘what will be found out? But, Clara, my dear, if you have any thing to confess, lose no time; tell me all. Think me your friend, as I have ever

been; and be assured that all I can do for you I assuredly will, hoping that your future holy life will pay me tenfold for all my care.'

"Encouraged thus fully by Amelia, I summoned all my strength, and made a free confession of every thing that had happened during the preceding night.

"Amelia was visibly shocked: but, exerting strong self-command, she congratulated me on my confession, and, leaving me in Miss Beaumont's care, said, 'I am going, Clara, to plead your cause with Mrs. Patterson; and, if it be possible, this miserable story shall never be divulged either to your aunt or your father.'

"'Dear, blessed Amelia! lovely, lovely angel!' I said, 'may the Almighty bless you!' and I clasped my hands, and found instant relief in a violent flood of tears.

"Notwithstanding the sweet example of Amelia, and the dangerous state of my health at that moment, Miss Beaumont had not sufficient self-command to restrain her virtuous indignation at the tale that she had heard; but she broke out, with violence, against me and my unfortunate companions, exclaiming, that she could not have conceived it possible that art and want of decency could have carried any young woman so far: and she was proceeding in this strain, when I said, 'O, Miss Beaumont! Miss Beaumont! much as I am to blame, you ought to remember, that you laid the foundation of this dreadful sin of which I have been guilty, by taking Gabrielle's part as you did, when first I came to school. It was this that encouraged Gabrielle to come about me, and that led me to think of her and seek her acquaintance, thus enabling her to acquire that influence over me which has brought me to this state. I know, I feel, that I have been very very wicked; but you also did very wrong in supporting that girl, and rendering her of so much consequence in my eyes.'

"I was astonished at the effect which this remark produced on Miss Beaumont. She was instantly silenced by it, and, turning from me, sobbed and wept bitterly; when, as I was endeavouring to say something which might, in some degree, tend to soften my harsh yet well deserved censure, another attack of the spasms and vomiting coming on, I was so totally overcome, that I

lost all recollection, and was quite insensible when Dr. H——, Amelia, and Mrs. Patterson returned; neither did I recover myself till I had been copiously bled.

“I know not what medicines were given me when I was brought to myself, but probably they were exceedingly powerful opiates; for, after taking them, I soon fell into a state of stupefaction. I did not wake from this state till about noon, when, on opening my eyes, I saw Miss Beaumont sitting by me. She had evidently been weeping bitterly, and I thought that I never before had seen her look more humble and kind. I asked for something to drink. She gave me some medicine, and then some toast-and-water: after which, being refreshed, I turned towards the other room, and saw several persons standing by Miss Chatterton’s bed. I heard her call for Amelia, and I heard also Amelia’s soft voice, in answer, saying, ‘Here, my dear, here I am; what can I do for you?’

“I endeavored to raise myself a little to look at what was passing. I saw that Miss Atkins was lying quietly on her bed, but Miss Chatterton looked the very picture of death. Her eyes were sunk, and her colour was livid; and she was seized, every minute, with violent retchings, spasms, or fainting-fits. I saw several persons lift her out of bed, and put her into a hot bath, and I beheld her again laid upon her bed.

“In the mean time, I was again overpowered by sleep, and remained in that state till about six o’clock. This was the time when the family usually met for tea, and it was precisely the hour at which, on the evening before, I had received the spurious letter from my aunt, and had begun to prepare for my ill-advised expedition. ‘Oh,’ thought I, ‘what an awful twenty-four hours have I spent! And this is what the world calls pleasure! But oh, how has this pleasure partaken of the nature of pain! inexpressible and dreadful pain!’

“While indulging in these reflections, I looked to see who was with me, and found that little Flora was sitting by my pillow; and, as soon as I moved, she inquired whether she should fetch me any thing.

“While the little girl was holding a cup to my mouth, and trying to raise my head, in order that I might drink

the more easily, I lifted up my eyes to her face, and asked after Miss Chatterton.

“Shall I call Miss Amelia?” said the little girl, who had been told not to talk to me.

“I made no reply; but turned on my side, (for I was very weak,) to look into the next room, where all was perfectly still; and where I presently distinguished the figures of Amelia and Miss Beaumont, the one sitting by the bed of Miss Chatterton, and the other by that of Miss Atkins, each of them holding a *punkah*, with which, at intervals, they fanned their patients. Their fine countenances were thoughtful. But where are all the bosom friends and intimates of these unhappy young women? Had they all forsaken them, and left them, in their extremity, with those whom they considered as their rivals and enemies? Is this worldly friendship! Such were the reflections which suggested themselves to my mind.

“I looked for a while: all was silent, and I hoped that my unhappy companions might be better. At length, Miss Chatterton spoke: her voice was feeble and hollow, and her accents were peculiarly melancholy. She said several words, but I could distinguish only one: it was *death*. In reply to which, I heard Amelia remark, ‘Dear Miss Chatterton, it is never too late to apply to the Redeemer; He is ever ready to answer such as sincerely call upon Him: and though the hour may be late, he surely will not reject those to whom he has given the desire to seek Him.’

“I heard no more; for the powerful medicine which I had taken again overcame me, and I fell asleep.

“When I next awoke, it was quite dusk. Miss Beaumont was by me, and, without speaking, gave me some medicine. The gloom of evening added to my melancholy feelings, and I could not refrain from weeping. My attention was, at length, arrested by voices in the next room, and I heard Miss Chatterton speak. ‘*The Ariadne!*’ she said, ‘yes, *the Ariadne!*—she is sailing in an ocean of blood! Her masts rise higher than the clouds! Her sails are wider than the earth! There is no shore to that sea!’

“In reply to these delirious ramblings, I heard the



voice of Amelia, saying, 'Dear Miss Chatterton, think no more of the Ariadne; that affair is past. You will see the Ariadne no more; you are now sorry that you ever saw her: let us think of better things. There is a Saviour, who extends his arms to you, who calls upon you, who bids you repent of your sins and come to him: think of this dear Saviour. Think of what he has done for you; place your trust in him; and you will assuredly be happy.'

"Miss Chatterton groaned deeply; and, seeming not to have comprehended what Amelia had said, she again alluded, in some confused and horrible manner, to certain events of the past night, and then said, 'Did you see the gates of the burying-ground? They were opened wide last night. I saw them; neither could they be closed.'

"'O, Chatterton! dear Chatterton!' said Miss Atkins, her voice issuing from the other bed, 'for Heaven's sake, do not talk in this way; I cannot bear it:?' and, even at the distance where I was, I heard her sob distinctly.

"Miss Chatterton took no notice of the address of her former friend; for, being seized afresh with spasms and retchings, Amelia was obliged to call for more help. and, in a few minutes, lights were brought; and Mrs. Patterson, Madame de Roseau, and, shortly afterwards, Dr. H——, came into the room.

"Immediately on the arrival of Dr. H——, he ordered the doors to be closed between me and the other sick persons; and, as I had taken several very powerful opiates, I soon sunk into a deep sleep, which, with little intermission, continued till the next day.

"In the morning, I was still very weak, but the danger was past; orders, however, were given that I should be kept exceedingly quiet, and as easy as possible. I was surprised, however, to see little either of Amelia or of Miss Beaumont during the whole of the day, and to find, moreover, that the door between my room and that of the other sick persons was fastened; neither could I well hear what was said in the next apartment, as Dr. H—— had ordered my bed to be taken up, and removed to that end of the room that was most distant from the chamber of poor Miss Chatterton.

“As I thus could neither see nor hear any thing that might have been going forward, I was compelled to be content with the society of little Flora, who sat by me all day. But Flora had been told not to satisfy my curiosity; accordingly, to whatever questions I asked, she only said, ‘Shall I call Miss Carrisforth?’ Being, however, under the influence of laudanum, I lay with more composure amidst my ignorance than I should otherwise have done: and thus the whole day wore away.

“At her usual hour Amelia came to bed. She looked fatigued, having been up the whole of the preceding night, and it was evident that she had also been crying very bitterly. Miss Beaumont came in with her, as they intended to spend the night together. ‘Amelia,’ I said, on their entering, ‘how are poor Miss Chatterton and Miss Atkins?’

“‘I hope they are easy,’ she answered. ‘But you must not talk, Clara: go to sleep, my dear.’

“I closed my eyes, and tried to sleep; but the influence of the opium being spent, I was particularly wakeful, and amused myself as invalids often do, in watching the motions of the persons in my room. We had a light burning, which was to be continued all night; and, before the young ladies got into bed, they both went through the door between the two apartments, and staid a considerable time. Amelia came back first, and Miss Beaumont followed. Amelia called to Miss Beaumont to fasten the door, but I perceived, after they had been in bed a little while, that this had not been done, and that it had been left a little open.

“The young ladies being, no doubt, worn with fatigue, were soon asleep, and the whole house lay in solemn silence. I thought on the loud laughs and screams of merriment which had so lately resounded through the bed-rooms at this hour of the night, and was struck with the remarkable contrast; for now not even a whisper stirred in the galleries. I lay during a great part of the night awake; but, about two o’clock, Amelia got up, and gave me something to drink; and, seeing me restless, she lay down by me, and laid my head upon her bosom, talking to me awhile in the tenderest and sweetest

manner, and pointing out the blessings of religion, and the perfect peace attending it, assuring me, that, if I would now endeavour to do well, all that I had done amiss would be forgiven by Mrs. Patterson, and probably be never known to my father. And thus she soothed me: and having composed me to sleep, she withdrew; and I enjoyed a refreshing slumber till breakfast-time the next morning.

“When I then awoke, I found myself alone; little Flora, who had been left with me for awhile, having gone down to fetch our breakfast. I had quite recovered from the effects of the opium, and felt myself considerably better; for in hot climates recovery from illness is often as speedy as the progress of disease is rapid. I therefore sat up in my bed, and put on my dressing-gown; and it then occurred to me, that, as the door between the two rooms was open, it could not do any harm for me just to go through, and ask Miss Chatterton how she did: for the season was so hot, that there could be no fear of my catching cold; and, if I know myself, I had no intention, at that time, of doing this silyly, as I resolved to mention the circumstance to Amelia when she next came up.

“I, accordingly, proceeded softly into the next room, but was a little startled at finding a standing screen behind the door; by which, however, I soon made my way, and advanced between the beds. The room was perfectly silent. I turned to Miss Chatterton’s bed: it was not only empty, but the very beddings and curtains were removed. Astonished beyond measure, I turned to Miss Atkins’s bed; when, oh! conceive my horror, on beholding that miserable young woman extended upon it, a livid and putrefying corpse; for she had died during the night, and the work of decomposition was already commenced. I looked for a moment, thinking I might be deceived: the features, however, were not so altered, but that I easily recognised the vain, light, and unhappy creature who, but two days before, had been the companion of my folly. I uttered a shriek of horror; and, running back to my bed, was, shortly afterwards, found laying upon it, totally insensible.

“On having recovered from my fainting, I found my

sweet Amelia sitting by me, and administering to me all that my situation required. 'O, Clara, my dear,' she said, 'what have you been doing? where have you been?'

"'Amelia, dear, dear Amelia!' I replied, 'I have done wrong; I acted without your advice, and I went into that dreadful room.' I know not what more I said, but I cried violently, and begged to be told what had become of Miss Chatterton.

"Amelia answered, that she had died about midnight on the night subsequent to that on which she had been on board the *Ariadne*; and that Miss Atkins had lingered for twenty-four hours longer, hopes at times having been entertained of her life. She added, too, this further information, that Miss Jackson was also dead, as well as two other young people who had been with us in the ship; and that several of the ship's officers had been so seriously ill that their lives were despaired of. She informed me that the sudden deaths of so many young persons, had occasioned much talk in Calcutta; and that the medical men in vain endeavoured to account for the circumstance, some supposing it to be owing to the animal effluvia from the skins with which the ship was laden, some attributing it to fatigue, and others to some unwholesome food accidentally administered to the guests. She also informed me, that my name had, providentially, not been brought forward in the affair, and earnestly expressed the hope that I might consider this as an encouragement to act better for the future; 'for,' added she, 'such a report against a young person might ruin her reputation for ever.'

"Poor Miss Atkins was buried about eight o'clock that morning, and I was fully aware of the awful moment in which she was carried away, from hearing the heavy steps of those who bore the coffin; when I exclaimed, in agony, 'Oh, my God, keep me! Henceforward leave me not to my own counsels, but guide me by thy hand, lest I fall again, and fall for ever!'

"Amelia wept very bitterly; little Flora and Miss Beaumont united their tears with ours; and we all continued in a state of the deepest dejection during the whole course of the day.

"As the physician had ordered that the room in which

the unhappy young ladies had lain, together with those adjoining it, should be fumigated, it was necessary that I should be removed. Immediately after the funeral, I was accordingly taken down stairs, and placed upon a sofa in the inner hall.

“Never shall I forget the melancholy appearance which the house bore throughout the whole of that day; no one spoke excepting in an under tone, many were weeping, and all sound of mirth had ceased. Gabrielle was absent, but no one inquired after her; neither could I ever learn what was become of her, excepting that she was still living. I remembered the many peals of riotous mirth, and the bursts of laughter, which used to resound through the halls and along the high galleries of Palm-Grove House: but these had all ceased; and the words of the wise man became too truly verified in this place—*For as the crackling of thorns under a pot, so is the laughter of fools.* (Eccles. vii. 6.)

“I have reason to think,” continued Miss Clara Lushington, “that the banishment of Gabrielle, and the dreadful end of poor Miss Chatterton, and her companion Miss Atkins, together with the excellent example of Amelia, had a good effect on the whole society at Palm-Grove.

“From the period of these dreadful events, Mrs. Paterson became evidently more attentive; and though she was not, at that time, a pious woman, yet her very presence was a considerable restraint upon the worst characters. Much confidence also was now placed, and deservedly placed, in Amelia: and I was here first brought to see the wonderful effect produced by good examples in the elder pupils of a seminary; an effect perhaps even more, certainly not less, powerful than that resulting from such examples in the teachers themselves. Miss Beaumont also proved herself a great assistance to Amelia; the unguarded feelings of that young lady having, through the divine blessing, become effectually tempered by what she had suffered in her estrangement from Amelia, her imprudence, and subsequent disgrace, and, finally, by the awful adventure of the Ariadne, and the part which she had had in the affair. She was now become all that was lovely and excellent.



“With respect to myself, I can say but little: for though there was certainly a great change in my feelings after the deaths of my two unhappy school-fellows, yet am I well convinced, that, had I at that time been removed from under the influence of Amelia, I should doubtless have fallen again, and any second fall would probably have been worse than the first. But, after reflecting on the whole course of my life, from infancy to the present moment, I am enabled clearly to see, that amidst innumerable snares and temptations, I have been led forward by a divine hand, and by a strength and wisdom as far above the power of man as the heavens are higher than the earth; and that He who proposed my salvation, ere yet I had entered into existence, has caused every circumstance of my life to work together towards the promotion of everlasting good.

“How many, many times has my sweet Amelia laboured to make me comprehend the mighty plan of man’s salvation, as begun, carried on, and perfected, by the blessed Trinity in Unity! How often has she endeavoured to excite my cold affections, by a description of the Father’s love for perishing sinners, and by leading me to meditation on that which the Son has done and suffered for us! Of the agency of God the Spirit she also spoke often to me, and urged me to a close examination of my heart, and a strict scrutiny of my most private thoughts and actions.

“On the subject of governing the tongue, this sweet young lady, as you must already have observed, was particularly explicit. I well remember how she used to tell me, that the love of idle talking was a peculiar propensity of our sex, a propensity of which even religion seldom cures us, though it may perhaps give another direction to our discourse. I have often heard her speak, not only to me, but also to her friend Miss Beaumont, to this effect:—‘What is it,’ she would say, ‘that makes women in general more ignorant and more frivolous than the other sex, but that habit which they have of getting together and discussing every unimportant concern of their neighbours? If men meet together,’ she would say, ‘they talk at least of something rational, or something important or useful; of business, or politics, or agriculture, or

of books: but women, even pious women, can talk of nothing but their neighbours' affairs; and school-girls, my dear Julia and Clara, lose half their opportunities of improvement by this foolish habit.'

"In this manner she would often silence us, whenever we attempted to introduce any common topic of tittle-tattle; and when we attended to her advice on this head, it was remarkable what peace we instantly found.

"From the Christmas holidays which next followed after the deaths of poor Miss Chatterton and Miss Atkins, I spent two happy years at Palm-Grove, during the last of which a very decided change had taken place in the family. Mrs. Patterson having been persuaded to attend the ministry of the Rev. Mr. B——, had received such benefit from his discourses, the Lord being pleased to make him an instrument of good to her soul, that she effected, in consequence, a thorough reform in her family, having put a stop to many improper customs, introduced family worship, and determined no longer to allow either of public or private balls. She never suffered her young people to go out, unless their friends came in person to fetch them; and she increasingly devoted her time to the improvement both of their understandings and their hearts. The Almighty so greatly blessed her labours, that I was told by a person who visited the house some years after I had left it, that the little society there was become as lovely and holy as it had once been disgusting and profane.

"Having now, my dear friend, recounted to you the most important particulars of my life, I shall conclude my narrative in a few words. I left Palm-Grove when I had just entered my nineteenth year; being in a feeble state of health. I was brought to England by my father and step-mother, both of whom behaved to me with the greatest kindness.

"I will not enter into any account of my grief at parting with Amelia, Julia, and little Flora, nor of the anguish that I felt in bidding adieu to my native shores; these things are more easily conceived than described. Suffice it to say, that the memory of Amelia is blended in my heart with all that is lovely, excellent, and admirable on earth; inasmuch as it pleased the Almighty

to make her the most illustrious instance that I ever beheld of the power of religion, and of the regenerating and sanctifying work of the Holy Spirit. I heard that she left Palm-Grove soon after me, and was married to a gentleman of high rank up the country; where, no doubt, she diffuses peace and joy over all around her. She has several children of her own: little Flora, however, lives with her, and still retains a most tender place in her regards. Miss Beaumont is also married, and conducts herself, I hear, as a Christian female ought to do. Mrs. Patterson still resides at Palm-Grove, and, as I before said, is a new creature. Miss Crawford has long left her; but of her circumstances, or of those of Gabrielle, I know nothing. Madame de Roseau still lives with Mrs. Patterson, and conducts herself with propriety: but whether she had yet learned to speak plain English I have not heard.

“And now, my dear friend, I conclude my history, humbly commending myself to the divine mercy through my dear Saviour, in whom I have learned to place my sole and entire confidence; being assured, that any sinful creature destitute of this hope, can look forward, in death, to nothing but grief, and pain, and long despair.”

When the lady of the manor had concluded the history of Clara Lushington, one of the young ladies remarked, that she thought Amelia was, in her sphere, fully equal to Frederick Falconer.

“Perhaps,” remarked the kind instructress, “the example of Amelia may be more useful to you even than that of Frederick; inasmuch as there are few situations in life, wherein a proper management of the gift of speech may not be exercised with advantage. There is also another reason why you may feel an additional interest in the history that I have just read, which is, that it presents a correct view of a variety of scenes peculiar to a very remote country; and many of these scenes are such as it would be difficult for any one to describe who has not witnessed something like them. Many of our places of education, even in this country, are, no doubt, far from pure; but I fear that the horrible picture which I have given you of Palm-Grove, is but a

faint sketch of what was the state of schools, some years ago, in our settlements in India. Things, however, are, we trust, now improving; and yet, perhaps, but little can be expected in societies of which more than one half of the members pass into them from the hands of heathen nurses, if not of heathen mothers."

The lady of the manor then called her young people to prayer.

*Prayer for Grace to use our Speech aright.*

"O ALMIGHTY and most merciful Father, who givest wisdom and discretion to thy people, and hast promised to guide them, by thy counsels, through this present evil world; give us grace so to control and exercise that most excellent gift of speech, that it may be without offence to others, and not without profit to ourselves. Make us, O blessed Lord God, fully sensible of this important truth, that in the multitude of words there wanteth not sin; and give us grace, as much as in us lies, to avoid all needless occasions for much talking; whereby time may be lost, and our responsibility increased; and wherein we may be tempted to injure the characters of our neighbours, to carry tales from house to house, or to misrepresent or falsify facts. Help us habitually to cherish that distrust of ourselves which may induce us to fly, rather than to seek, temptations of this kind; and, finally, when we may really be required to speak, give us grace to utter the words of wisdom, and to refrain from all communications which may tend to familiarize the ears of our auditors with sinful and corrupt ideas.

"O, Father, constrain us, by thy love, to give thee the glory whenever praise is due; and, as we would desire to have our own ears closed against the words of flattery, grant that no vain or earthly motive may induce us to pour them into the ears of our brethren. When we would speak of those who have injured us, put thy bridle on our tongues; and when we would speak lightly or unadvisedly, do thou restrain our lips. Keep us back from all unadvised intimacies, and from all interchange of unholy confidences, by which young persons too often

irritate each other against their parents and elders, and mutually encourage and strengthen their own evil passions. Give us courage, also, O blessed Lord, to reprove that which is amiss in others, whenever it may fall under our observation; but grant, at the same time, that we may have grace to rebuke with gentleness, and in a manner becoming our sex and age; knowing, that the silent censure of an upright and holy example, ever falls with more weight than that which proceeds from the lips.

“We desire, O incomprehensible and all-glorious Trinity in Unity, to place ourselves in thy hands; and, as thou, O Father, didst prepare our salvation ere yet we had learned to lisp thy name; as thou, O blessed Son, hast provided the means of our ransom, and hast already paid the price; so we desire, through life, to be guided and directed by thee, O Holy Spirit; whose admonitions we would constantly regard, whose regenerating and sanctifying power we desire to experience, and to whom we look for that glorification which is promised to all who are enabled to cast away all self-confidence, and to seek salvation only in the promised Saviour.

“And now, all glory be to God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Ghost, now and for evermore. Amen.”



## CHAPTER XXII.



*Tenth Commandment.—Thou shalt not covet thy Neighbour's House, thou shalt not covet thy Neighbour's Wife, nor his Servant, nor his Maid, nor his Ox, nor his Ass, nor any Thing that is his.*

“AS the commandments have already engaged our attention for a considerable time,” said the lady of the manor to her young people, on the evening chosen for the consideration of the tenth commandment, “I hope to close the subject of this day with a narrative which I happen to have by me relative to the matter in hand. And, as most of what may be said on this subject is introduced in different parts of this story, I think it the less needful to make any remarks of my own on the question.”

The lady of the manor then drew forth a small manuscript from her work-bag; and, when she had read the title, a smile immediately appeared on the countenances of the young people, several of whom remarked, that they could form no idea of what kind of narrative it would be which should answer to a title so extraordinary.

The lady of the manor smilingly signified, that she was ready to satisfy their curiosity in the best manner

imaginable—by reading the story, which she accordingly commenced without further delay.

*Rich in the Kitchen, poor in the Parlour.*

On the confines of Worcestershire and Herefordshire, in a neighbourhood rendered in winter almost inaccessible through the deep roads of stiff red clay, is an ancient mansion called Stanbrook Court.

This building, which was from time immemorial the seat of a respectable family of the name of Vaughen, had been erected in the reign of William and Mary, and partook of that style of architecture which was fashionable in that period. The old gentleman who had entered into possession of the estate about the middle of the last century, had, at his death, left six children, with all of whom we shall become acquainted in the course of our narrative, although the affairs of one only will engage our particular attention.

Of these children, the eldest, a son, had been educated at home, and had spent the greater part of his youth in his father's stable and dog-kennel. At the period from which our narrative commences, he was more than fifty years of age, had been a widower some years, and had two sons, and as many daughters. He was generally denominated, in the country, Squire Vaughen, of Stanbrook Court, and was said to possess the best pack of fox-hounds in the county.

Two maiden sisters, viz. Mrs. Dorothea and Mrs. Penelope, who were nearest in age to the Squire, kept his house, which honourable station they had held ever since the death of his wife: and though they were neither of them remarkable for their good temper, yet, as their fortunes were small, and as they enjoyed in their brother's house some conveniences which they could not expect to find elsewhere, they contrived to accommodate themselves so far to his humours, that, during the course of their long residence with him, he had never actually told them to leave his house, although he not unfrequently had dropped hints which they might have interpreted to this purpose, had it suited their convenience so to do.

These ladies had all that pride and ignorance of the

world which is frequently found among persons who live in retirement and among their inferiors, and they were not without a variety of notable notions concerning that which they deemed proper and becoming in persons in a certain rank of life.

Their nieces, the Squire's daughters, whose education had been begun by their aunts, and finished at an ordinary but dashing boarding-school in a neighbouring town, were not different from the common run of young people who have been carelessly educated, and who mistake a certain air of easy confidence for gentility, excepting that they were infected with that kind of family pride and hauteur of manner which is now seldom exhibited in the world, and which would not be tolerated were such display attempted.

The second son of the old family of which the Squire was the elder, had been entered into the navy at an early age, and from that period had rarely visited his native place. This gentleman was always distinguished, when spoken of in the family, by the appellation of the Captain; and, as he was in the East India service at the time of which I am speaking, it was hoped that he would return home with some lacs of rupees; and, also, that he would then think himself either too old or too infirm to marry; as it is generally believed that those who go abroad live three years while their more quiet friends in England have added only twenty four months to their lives.

The fifth child of this family was a daughter, who having entered this world some years after her sisters, and being endowed with rather more beauty than her seniors, had been put forward to make her fortune by marriage. This lady had been seen by a young counsellor at an asize-ball at Hereford, and had been taken by him to London, where she had resided ever since, taking care to spend her husband's money as expeditiously as he obtained it, having acquired a vehement desire for the vanities and pomps of this world.

The youngest individual of this household was a son, who, having been early taken from his father's family, and weaned from the inelegant habits which there prevailed, by a pious uncle, who adopted and educated him, he, through the divine blessing, became a character as

eminently amiable as many of the other individuals of his family were forbidding. The Church had been the destination of this gentleman; and a family-living of a clear three hundred a year, together with a comfortable old house, had been deemed a handsome provision for him, being all that he obtained from his father, and which was far more, as his sisters often said, than they ever received; the aim of the family always having been to advance the eldest son at the expense of all the other children.

This last mentioned gentleman, whom we shall call Henry Vaughen, had in his youth possessed a very handsome person and a pleasing countenance; and being, as we have reason to think, a sincere Christian, it was impossible that he should retain any part of that pride which characterized the rest of the family. There was, however, one thing deserving of notice in the character of this gentleman—that at the same time that he seemed to be entirely without ambition or desire after the pomps and vanities of this world, he carefully cultivated and diligently sought, both for himself and his family, all its real elegances: not, indeed, those elegances which the milliner and goldsmith might supply; but those decorations of life which are for the most part equally within the reach of the poor and the rich, and which are frequently bestowed on those who love the Lord, without money and without price.

Among these, he enumerated all the graces of manner and of carriage, neatness of dress, the courtesies of speech, the interchange of elegant ideas, and the display of holy and amiable feelings. To these, he added a taste for literature, and an awakened perception of the beauties of nature: such as the glorious views of the rising and setting sun; and of the moon, travelling in her full-orbed splendour through the flecked clouds, or moving, as a silver crescent, over the ebon brow of night; and of distant mountains, or solemn groves; and of waterfalls, sparkling in the shadowy glade; and of flocks and herds feeding on the peaceful lawn; and of those more minute and delicate beauties which, being created by infinite power, exist among the inferior tribes of animated creatures, or lie hid within the cups and bells of the little flowers of the forest.

Such objects as these were ever pleasing to this excellent man, and excited within him feelings of love and gratitude to the bountiful giver of all good; and it was his constant aim, while he endeavoured to inspire the minds of those about him with the admiration of these purer objects of taste, to lead them from the love of those things which have in themselves no actual excellence, and which are desired only because the passing fashions of the day may have given them a momentary importance, or because they have derived a more lasting weight from the envy, the ambition, and the covetousness of human nature.

Mr. Henry Vaughen cultivated this simple taste in himself and his family not merely from caprice, but with a religious view, in order that the pride of life and its empty distinctions might have the less influence over his and their minds, that they might have the full enjoyment of all the innocent delights within their reach, and might the more cheerfully acquiesce in the want of those pleasures and possessions which the Almighty thought fit to withhold: and so firmly were his own principles settled, with regard to these subjects, that, from the time he entered on his ministry, he was enabled to reject at once and decidedly every temptation which owed its allurements to any of the false notions of pride and vanity, by which thousands in this Christian country are entirely influenced, and by which many persons professing themselves to be set apart from the world are, nevertheless, affected, to a degree of which they have little idea.

At the age of twenty-four, Mr. Henry Vaughen took possession of the living to which allusion has been made. It was situated in a village about six miles from his brother's seat, and though it lay quite as deep in the clay as Stanbrook Court, it was, in reality, less recluse, owing to the residence of two great families at different ends of the parish, both of which attended the parish church. The first of these families was that of Sir Thomas Freeman, an ancient and respectable baronet; and the second that of Mr. Smith, a country gentleman, of no high connexions, indeed, but extremely rich.

Immediatly after his induction into this living, Mr. Henry Vaughen married a young lady, to whom he had



been long attached. This lady had a lovely exterior she was pious, humble, and capable of relishing all the exalted and refined ideas of her husband; but her character by no means possessed the strength and firmness of his: and though, when supported by him, she was capable of every exertion necessary in her situation, yet, when deprived of that support, she shrunk into comparative inaction and timidity.

Now, in order to make my story plain to the comprehension of my reader, it is necessary that I should enter into a more minute description of the parsonage-house to which Mr. Henry Vaughan brought his bride than may at first appear altogether requisite: as, however, I shall employ no more detail than the subject requires, I hope that this minuteness will be pardoned.

The parsonage belonging to the family-living bestowed on Mr. Vaughan as soon as he was admitted into priest's orders, stood in a large square garden inclosed by an old wall, at the two corners of which towards the front were old-fashioned summer-houses. The garden itself was laid out with much old-fashioned stiffness, but filled at the same time, with every kind of fruit and vegetable in rich and vast abundance. From the house to the front gate which opened into the village street was a straight grave-walk, wide enough to admit a carriage, and on each side were shrubs and flowers; this being the only part of the garden devoted to the purpose of ornament. The house itself was of brick, neatly plastered, and presenting in front two gable ends, whose large projecting windows were of small casements in framework of stone. These gable ends were united to each other by a line of flat roofing, which formed the centre of the house.

The entrance into the house was in this central part, through a hall, which opened on one side into a large old but handsome parlour, and, on the other, into a kitchen of equal size with the parlour, and which, if divested of the degrading consideration usually associated with the thought of a kitchen, might have been deemed an extremely agreeable apartment, having its projecting window towards the garden. Beyond the kitchen was a second apartment for the convenience of servants, in which the more coarse and ordinary offices of housewifery were

usually performed. Beyond the entrance-hall was a large light closet, which had been used in ancient days as a store-room; but, as it contained a small fire-place, and had a glass door opening into the garden, small as this room was, Mr. Henry Vaughen instantly seized upon it as an apartment for study: and though, when he had put up his book-shelves, it scarcely contained space for a table and two chairs, yet as it commanded a view of the spire of the village church peeping over the trees of the garden, he declared he would not change it for the finest library in the royal palace. The upper apartments of this house were not much more numerous than the lower ones; but, as Mr. Vaughen often remarked, they were quite sufficient for a man of four hundred a year, which was the utmost extent of his income, even after he had come into possession of his wife's fortune, which did not happen till at the period of her father's death, about two years after her marriage.

It was in the year 1776 that Mr. Vaughen became a householder. At that period, three hundred a year was nearly as much as twice that sum is in these days; and he was enabled, in consequence, to keep two female servants, and a man-servant in a plain livery.

As the value of money became less, the man was dismissed, and a labourer was occasionally employed to keep the garden in order, for Mr. Vaughen was a lover of neatness; and, as the times continued to press, the worthy minister took into his family a little boy, the son of a counsellor in London, to educate with his own son, by this means supplying the deficiency of his income without impoverishing the little fund which he had always put by for charity, and on which he would never allow himself to encroach.

In the mean time, Mr. and Mrs. Vaughen were blessed with several lovely children. The eldest, a daughter, whom he named Henrietta, was, like her parents, exceedingly amiable in her person, and possessing a gravity and serenity of deportment which originated in a calm and happy state of mind. This disposition was partly natural, but owed its stability to the divine blessing upon the judicious management of her parents. Two lovely infants, a boy and a girl, who were next in age to Hen-

rietta, had been recalled by their heavenly Father a few months after their births ; and these trials, so bitter to a parent's heart, had been made particularly useful to Mr. and Mrs. Vaughen, in loosening their affections from the present scene, and impressing them with a sense of the shortness of this life, the uncertainty and deceitfulness of all earthly things, and the necessity of preparing for that change which, sooner or later, all men must undergo.

Not long after the death of the last of these beloved infants, their places were supplied to their afflicted parents by a son and daughter, born one year after the other, to whom they gave the names of their little departed ones. to wit, Adolphus and Emmeline ; and in the smiles of these sweet children, they lost much of the bitterness of their sorrow.

The pupil whom Mr. Vaughen received into his house and educated with his own children, was called Theodore Owen ; and, as he was an amiable boy, and seldom went home, his parents having other and elder sons with whom they seemed principally occupied, his tutor was enabled to direct his education as entirely to his own liking as that of his own children.

During the minority of their children, Mr. and Mrs. Henry Vaughen enjoyed as much happiness as ever falls to the lot of human beings, and this happiness was, undoubtedly owing, in a great measure, to the simplicity of their views and motives of conduct. For, having little of the fear of man, or the thirst of human praise, or the covetous desires of the flesh on behalf either of themselves or their children, they were set free from many cares, troubles, and perplexities, which continually enter into the families of ordinary men, and disturb their repose. But, as I have before said, Mr. Vaughen was raised above these feelings in an especial manner, and had been enabled, by the divine blessing, to inspire his wife with his own sentiments.

We must here, however, pause a moment, to remark what that is by which a man is enabled to overcome the world, and to break the seven green withes by which the world binds its votaries, and leads them in its triumphant march even up to the gates of hell, from

which, if some are saved, it is even as brands plucked out of the fire.

There are certain religious truths which cannot be too often repeated, or brought in too many views before the mind of man; and that discourse or story is defective, and should by every pious person be so regarded, which fails to express those important statements of facts by the knowledge and influence of which the whole tenor of our lives ought to be directed. That God created man in a state of innocence, is one of these important facts; but that, long before his creation, He who knew all things from eternity foresaw that he would fall, and therefore graciously provided for his restoration, is another of equal, and perhaps higher importance. The operations also of the three Persons of the blessed and glorious Trinity in the work of man's salvation, are facts of which we ought never to lose sight, lest, when we discover any thing which is good and desirable in the saints of the Lord, we should fail to give the glory to him, by whom the vile nature of man is changed, and by whom he is enabled to bring forth the fruits of holiness.

Now we are taught that the change of the heart is the especial work of God the Spirit. It is the Lord the Spirit who convinceth man of sin, bringeth him to a knowledge of Christ, and enableth him to overcome the world. It is the Lord the Spirit who cleanseth the hearts of the chosen ones from the covetous desires of the flesh, and gives them that Spirit of contentment by which they receive with thankfulness those good things which the Lord bestows, and submit with cheerfulness when the same good things are withheld. It was the Lord the Spirit who enabled the apostle Paul to say, "*I have learned, in whatsoever state I am, therewith to be content. I know both how to be abased, and I know how to abound: every where, and in all things, I am instructed, both to be full and to be hungry, both to abound and to suffer need. I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me.*" (Phil. iv. 11—13.)

It was, therefore, through the power and influence of the Holy Spirit of God that Mr. and Mrs. Vaughen were enabled to attain this state of mind so full of contentment, through which their hearts were restrained from

indulging in vain and covetous desires after that which they did not possess: neither was Mr. Vaughen so ill instructed in heavenly things as to limit the idea of covetousness, as many persons do, to the eager desire of obtaining or amassing money or other earthly possessions; but he received the command which says, "Thou shalt not covet," in a sense far more extended than that in which it is ordinarily understood. And if ever he detected himself in indulging a wish for that which was not within his reach, he instantly condemned himself as having broken the injunction of Scripture, which saith, *Let your conversation be without covetousness.* (Heb. xiii. 5.) And not only did this pious man never allow himself to utter any desire for that which he did not possess; but he also regarded it as a Christian duty to feel and profess the utmost thankfulness for that which he had; insomuch so, that he seldom sat down to a meal with his family, inhaled the odour of flowers, beheld a pleasant prospect, enjoyed the conversation of a friend, or received the caresses of his children, without exhibiting such symptoms of joy and gratitude as could not fail to shed an enlivening influence on those around him. The breakings out of sin in those with whom he had connexion, and the strugglings of iniquity in his own heart, were the occasions which alone seemed to have power to oppress him for any length of time; and thus it happened that his family was cheered by a peculiar sunshine of which few others are allowed to partake.

It has often been observed how strongly children are affected by the cursory remarks dropped in hours of relaxation by their parents, and how (humanly speaking) their characters are formed and indelibly impressed by these words thrown out, as it were, at haphazard by their instructors.

How few professors of religion are habitually consistent in their conversation! how few appear to be in any degree raised above the world! What female, for example, do we see, who, when the subject of dress is brought forward, does not betray an earnestness which must convey to her nieces and daughters, if she happen to have any, a secret assurance that she attributes a certain importance to these things beyond what Scripture autho-



rizes? And what man, when speaking of worldly fame and honour, or of the esteem in which he is himself held in society, does not betray a warmth that contradicts every assertion which he may make, or may have made, concerning his deadness to these things.

Young people are keen observers, and soon learn to distinguish the language of form from that of real feeling: they too often perceive that the one is used by their instructors when religion is spoken of, and the other when worldly matters are discussed; and the impression from these observations becomes as strong as it often proves ruinous.

This being the case, how important it is that parents should carefully regulate their most inward feelings, that they should apply to the Holy Spirit to cleanse their hearts from all earthly passions, and that they should endeavour to conform their will and affections to the word of God!—But to return to my story.

The education of the children brought up under the charge of Mr. and Mrs. Vaughen, was so well conducted, and so particularly blessed, that, while they constituted the happiness of their parents, they were admired and loved by all who saw them. At the age of twenty, Henrietta was one of the most lovely young women in the country. Her general deportment still retained the composure and gravity that I have before mentioned; but she had withal a great softness and sweetness of manner, by which she secured both the respect and love of all who beheld her. It was impossible for her to have enjoyed the instructions of her father for so many years without possessing an intelligent mind. Her views of religion were so simple and clear, that it would have been impossible for her to stray from the path of rectitude without being immediately sensible of it: and though she knew but little of the prevailing fashions of the day, her manners were nevertheless formed on such a broad basis of truth, and knowledge of human nature, that she was fit for any society. We do not mean to attribute this perfection of manner to the exertions of the young lady herself, but to the care of her father, who always maintained that simple habits, such as he loved, and such as he believed his God approved, would never appear to

greater advantage than when they were united with elegant manners, and that he therefore considered it as an especial duty of the advocates of Christian simplicity to insist upon the necessity of a courteous and elegant carriage.

Emmeline, who was in her seventeenth year when her sister was in her twenty-first, was of a less sedate character than Henrietta, yet scarcely less lovely in her way. Her countenance was so strikingly charming, that it was difficult for any one to pass her without turning again to look after her; and yet it was impossible to say what it was in her which particularly pleased. Her feelings were not under the same control with those of her sister; and yet she never fell into those excesses which might have been expected from a young person whose whole soul sometimes beamed with joy in her dark blue eyes, or expressed itself in bitter sorrow, on slight occasions, on her coral lips and mantling cheek. But this young creature cherished, by the divine blessing, a lively sense of her duty to God; for we dare not impiously attribute this best of heavenly gifts, a sense of religion, to any human work; no, not to the best directed efforts even of the most judicious parent: for it is God the Spirit who alone can change and soften the heart of man; and to him henceforward and for ever be the glory, and all the glory, given by every pious instructor, when the slightest symptom of grace appears in the wayward minds of any of the youthful sons of Adam.

Adolphus was a fine youth, and not less so his friend Theodore; and though neither of these were without faults, yet it was to be hoped, from many excellent traits in their characters, that the Almighty had begun his work of love in their hearts.

These young people resided together under the paternal roof of Adolphus, till it was thought necessary for them, as he was now nineteen years of age, to go to the University: and as Mr. Vaughen had a friend who was a tutor in Trinity College, Cambridge, of a decidedly pious character, it was thought advisable, the young men being both intended for the Church, that they should be placed under his superintendance in the college just mentioned, although the expense was such as Mr. Vaughen hardly

knew how to meet for his own son. As, however, those who had the charge of Theodore's education approved the plan, and as the young men expressed great uneasiness at the idea of being separated, Mr. Vaughen resolved to make an effort to provide for the cost, and accordingly went over to Cambridge, and placed the young people under the charge of his friend.

I shall not describe the silent sorrow of Henrietta on this occasion of her separation from her brother and his companion, whom she loved little less than she loved her brother; nor shall I enter into a minute description of the many tears shed on the same occasion by Emmeline; but proceed to say, that Mr. Vaughen now, for the first time in his life, began to feel anxiety about money, a species of solicitude which he had taken care never to feel before.

During the first year of his son's residence at Cambridge, a legacy of one hundred pounds, left by a distant relation, had set all things right, and enabled him, when Adolphus returned to spend the Christmas vacation, to pay, as far as he knew, every shilling that he owed in the world—a circumstance for which he was very thankful. The experience of this year, however, had taught him that his present annual expences exceeded his income by at least one hundred pounds; and he, consequently, foresaw, that, unless some exertion was made, he should, during his son's residence in Cambridge, involve himself in difficulties from which he might never be extricated during the rest of his life.

Mr. Vaughen was not a man who needlessly troubled his family with his perplexities; he therefore resolved not to express his anxiety, till he could at the same time propose some means for its relief.

In the interim, however, he made his difficulties a matter of special mention in prayer, and carried all his troubles to the throne of grace; determining to follow up whatever ideas should suggest themselves, after his application to his heavenly Friend and never-failing Comforter.

The first idea that occurred to him was that of taking another pupil; but, after some time, as no pupil offered, he abandoned this project, and waited a short time to see what might offer itself for his relief. But although his

mind was oppressed, it was not overwhelmed; for he reposed his confidence upon the Rock of Ages, and he felt a full assurance that this his light affliction would work for his good, and for that of all whom he loved.

About this time, while his mind was in this state of expectation, (for we cannot call it doubt,) an old lady, the daughter of his predecessor, arrived in the village, professing that it was her wish to terminate her days amidst that peaceful retirement in which she had passed her youth, and then to be buried by the remains of her parents.

Mrs. Vaughen called on her as soon as she heard of her arrival, and found her in mean lodgings, although they were the best which the village afforded. The result of this visit was an invitation, which the old lady accepted, to dine at the parsonage; and, consequently, she arrived the next day, accompanied by a cousin in destitute circumstances, a meek and dependant creature, who sustained the twofold situation of companion and waiting-maid.

When Mrs. Alice Turner (the old lady alluded to) was received into the parlour of the rectory, she seemed at first much affected, and afterwards delighted: and more than once, during the day, did she express the delight that it would afford her, could she but be permitted to finish her days in those apartments in which she had spent the earliest periods of her life.

This remark, which appeared natural enough, passed without notice by Mrs. Vaughen, though not unobserved by her husband, to whom this idea occurred—Could we by any means spare this lady this room, and the bed-chamber above, what she would pay us would supply, in a great measure, the deficiency of our income: but we have no second parlour; and could I ask my wife, who is the daughter of a gentleman, to live in a kitchen? But although this idea presented itself in a form so dubious, and apparently attended with so many difficulties, yet Mr. Vaughen would not and could not divest his mind of its influence, and so entirely did it occupy him during the whole of the next day, that his wife and daughters more than once asked him what he was thinking of. At length, the thought became so importunate, that he resolved to open his mind to his eldest daughter, and to ask

her opinion on the subject, and whether she conceived that the proposal would be altogether intolerable to her mother.

With this view, on the following afternoon, he asked Henrietta to accompany him on a walk; and when they were at some little distance from the house, he stated to her, first, his pecuniary difficulties, which statement seemed considerably to affect her; and then mentioned his plan for their relief, by which he suddenly, and much to his surprise, seemed to remove her distress.

Seeing, however, the unruffled calmness with which she received the proposition of giving up their only parlour for the use of another, he began to fear that this calmness arose from a want of consideration—"But, Henrietta, my dear, you do not consider that we have only one parlour?"

"Yes, I do, papa," she answered; "I know we have but one parlour."

"And when we give up our parlour, we must sit in the kitchen."

"And we cannot have a pleasanter room, papa," said the young lady.

"But the servants, my dear, you must sit with them."

"O, but papa," replied she, "I think we should not require two servants then: we could part with our under servant; mamma does not much like her: and I am sure that none of us could have any objection to sitting in the room with nurse."

It happened that the head servant in Mr. Vaughen's family had formerly lived at Stanbrook Court in the capacity of housemaid, and had known Mr. Henry Vaughen when he was a child, she being about ten years older than himself. She had afterwards lived as upper servant at the parsonage, and had nursed every child in the family. She was, therefore, considered more as a humble friend than a servant, by all in the house. This circumstance was much in favour of Mr. Vaughen's plan, though he had not thought of it when the idea of the proposed domestic alteration first entered his mind. "And do you think, my dear," he said, "if we take our meals in the kitchen, that you could do with one servant?"

"Certainly," said Henrietta, "in that case we should



prefer it; particularly as I and my sister would, of course, make a point of doing what we could in the house to assist nurse."

"Well, but Henrietta, my dear," said her father, "what shall we do with our visitors? You know I cannot receive more than one person in my study."

"Why, papa," said Henrietta, smiling, "we will tell all our friends and acquaintances our situation, and why we have found it necessary to let our apartment; and those who still choose to visit us notwithstanding—our poverty, I was going to say; but that word will not do, for we shall not be poor then—our degradation: shall I use that word, papa? No, that won't do; for we shall not be disgraced, though living in our kitchen—our descent—I think that word will do," added she, smiling: "those who choose to visit us, notwithstanding our descent, we will bring into our neat kitchen; and those who do not like us in our new station will, it is to be hoped, stay away—so that difficulty, my dear papa, will soon be settled."

"My dear, artless Henrietta, shall I tell you," said her father, "that there will be a third description of persons among our acquaintances?—I mean those who will neither come to see us in our kitchen because they love us, nor stay away because they dislike us; but, taking a middle course, and perhaps cherishing mixed feelings with regard to us, will come to look at us, to find fault with us, to hear what we have to say, and perhaps to ridicule us. Now these are the kind of characters whom the prince of this world frequently uses to forward his vilest purposes; and through the intervention of these instruments, which often apparently seem weak and ineffectual, he continually opposes the cause of good, and effectually promotes that of evil: by means of these mixed characters he acts upon those who would otherwise sooner suspect him, and through these he makes the worse appear the better cause.

"Now, even though I should prevail with your dear mother to concur in my plan, and I think, judging of the future from the past, I shall meet with but little difficulty in doing so, yet I feel afraid that she will suffer much from the impertinent interference of this description of neighbours and from connexions whose regard she has

hitherto desired to conciliate; and though she would, I am persuaded, never be induced by such to repent of what she may have done for her family, still her tender spirit may be wounded, and her peace destroyed; and although, on occasions of this kind, I will always come to her aid when I can, yet, as my parish duties not unfrequently call me from home, I must look to you for much assistance in this respect. Considering your age, my child, you have much composure of manner and self-command; and if you will undertake, in case of my absence, to receive such visiters as may happen to come, explain to them the motives of my conduct, receive them, if needs be, in our new apartment, and shield your mother from all unpleasant encounters of this sort, you will inexpressibly oblige your father and relieve your mother."

"O, papa, papa!" said Henrietta, "you have used the word oblige! O, how can a child oblige a parent, when, after all which can be done in the longest life, the weight of obligation must ever remain on the side of the child?"

The father's blessing upon his beloved daughter followed this remark; and the young lady, being free from care concerning what had passed, immediately introduced a new subject, and told her father that she and her sister had long been considering about the means of establishing a Sunday-school in the parish. "And now, papa," she said, "if, by letting our best apartments, and parting with our servant, we obtain a little more than the money we absolutely require, perhaps we shall be able to accomplish this desirable object."

The father entered into his daughter's scheme with an interest and delight which so entirely pervaded his mind, that no person would have supposed what had been the nature of the subject which had occupied their attention during the former part of their walk.

The appearance of a livery servant, lounging at the door of the village inn, as they returned through the rural street, was the first thing, on their approach towards home, which drew their attention from the scheme of the Sunday-school. As they passed by the inn, the servant came up to them, and informed them that his master, Sir Thomas Freeman, (who was a young man, just

come into possession of his estates and honours,) was at the rectory with Mrs. Vaughen.

Mr. Vaughen hastened home, and found his wife making tea for the baronet, who was apparently engaged in some very interesting conversation with Emmeline. Mr. Vaughen looked rather disconcerted at this appearance of assiduity on the part of the young gentleman, especially as, more than once before, the father had observed symptoms of the same kind in his behaviour towards his younger daughter. He, however, took no apparent notice of the circumstance, but, accosting his youthful visiter politely, contrived to engage him in a conversation by which he was prevented from directing any further particular address to his daughter.

In the mean time Henrietta relieved her mother of the business of tea-making, and Emmeline sat considering what Sir Thomas had been saying to her, but could not recollect any thing particularly, except that he had compared her cheeks to roses and her eyes to stars; and added, that if carried to court, she would eclipse all the beauties there. Now whether she believed what he had told her or not, does not appear, but it was evident that she was far from being displeased by the pains which the baronet had taken to please her; and by this emotion of pleasure she was but ill disposed for the trial which awaited her in a few hours.

On the day following that on which Mr. Vaughen's conversation with Henrietta and the visit of Sir Thomas took place, while this affectionate husband was sitting in his study considering in what way he could best open the matter under consideration to his wife, Mrs. Vaughen came into the room to tell him that she was about to dismiss her under servant, having discovered some faults in her conduct which could not be overlooked.

Mr. Vaughen instantly considered this an opportunity so favourable for the opening of his mind to his wife, that he ought not to let it slip, and he accordingly entered with her into a full explanation of their difficulties, and of the plans that he had formed for overcoming them.

On this occasion, the superior knowledge which Mrs. Vaughen had of the world prevented her from receiving the intelligence, respecting their circumstances, with the

same calmness with which her daughter had heard it. In the plans proposed she looked forward to a long train of difficulties, vexations, and mortifications, which Henrietta had not foreseen; and so entirely was she overcome by the prospect, that, bursting into tears, she said to her husband, "And is there no other possible means of extricating ourselves from these difficulties than that extremely disagreeable expedient which you propose?"

"Point any out, my dear," said Mr. Vaughen, calmly, "and I am ready to adopt them."

"Another pupil, my dear," said Mrs. Vaughen.

"I cannot get one," replied her husband.

"Rigid and minute economy," replied Mrs. Vaughen.

"On our present plan of living, no economy would answer the purpose," answered Mr. Vaughen; "and, if it would, such excessive parsimony would be, my dear, a state of suffering which I could ill bear: and, as far as I am concerned, I would, I assure you, infinitely rather be *rich in the kitchen than poor in the parlour.*"

"But our friends, Mr. Vaughen," said she, "our friends, what will they say?"

"Why, our friends will approve of what we do, when they know our motives."

"What! will you plead poverty to your friends, Mr. Vaughen?" said she.

"No, my dear, certainly not," he answered, "because I shall have no poverty to plead: we shall be *rich in the kitchen.*"

"But you will lay open your affairs to them?" said she.

"Yes," he replied, "to them and to every one whom it may concern."

She was silent for a moment, for she loved her husband, and had been accustomed to reverence all that he said and did; but he had now taken a flight higher than she could soar, and her eyes became dazzled and her sight confused in looking after him.

"Well, my dear," he said, availing himself of this pause, and kindly taking her hand, "am I to understand that I have your consent? Shall I put on my hat, and call on Mrs. Alice Turner, and make our bargain with her? She is a woman of fortune: we shall be sure of receiving what she undertakes to pay us."

Mrs. Vaughen grasped the hand which was placed in hers; and, looking tenderly at her husband, "For myself, my Henry," she said, "for myself I do not care where I live, or what I do; but for my daughters, my dear daughters, I do feel. Let us consider again, before we take a measure by which we remove them out of the rank of life in which they were born, into one from which they can never rise again." Here a fresh burst of tears interrupted her further utterance, and she sank upon her husband's bosom, as if quite overcome by her feelings.

Mr. Vaughen seemed hurt by this conduct, but reproved her gently; and when she had recovered some degree of composure, he thus addressed her. "How is this, my dear Jane," he said, "that you, a pious woman, as you surely are, should give way to weaknesses of which even a wise woman of the world might be ashamed? And why," inquired he, "in the first place, do you give yourself airs of heroism and of martyrdom, as it were, on an occasion which in no wise justifies it? The sacrifices which are now required of you are so small that they exist, in fact, only in imagination; and though you profess that this world is not your home or resting place, and that you desire a better country, even a heavenly one, yet, when you are requested to move from one side of your house to the other, and to consent to be waited upon by your daughters rather than by a hireling, you assume to yourself the high carriage of one who, being called to undergo some vast suffering, is willing to make a merit of it in the eyes of those who inflict these torments. But this," added he, "is one of the reigning foibles of the day, and is the effect of those modish and effeminate principles which often prevail in highly polished society. Every daughter, sister, and wife, who has not every whim indulged to the utmost, is a victim and martyr in her own house; and, rather than not appear so to the world, many of these self-tormentors will represent their nearest connexions as the worst and most unreasonable of tyrants."

"My dear, my dear," said poor Mrs. Vaughen, "you are harsh, indeed you are harsh. When did I speak of myself as of an unhappy wife, or of you as a cruel ty



rant?" Thus saying, she held out her hand, as if imploring her husband's forgiveness, saying, "You shall direct me, my love, as you have always done; in this and every action of my life you shall be my guide; and if I continue to enjoy your love, I shall soon forget whether my habitation is a kitchen or a parlour."

"Be happy, my love," said he, "be happy, and then there will be an end of all our difficulties."

"One thing only, my dear, will I ask you," said she, recovering her cheerfulness, "one thing only: satisfy me upon this one subject, and I shall then be easy.—Does it not appear to you, that, by the measure we are about to take, we may injure the prospects of our children? Our girls are handsome; Emmeline is thought particularly attractive; and I have more than once observed that Sir Thomas has paid her great attention. Her family is good, of high respectability in the country; and though she has lived in retirement, yet she has manners and a figure, as I heard Sir Thomas himself say, which might grace a court. So far Sir Thomas would not lower himself by choosing her; but after she is once become an inhabitant of a kitchen, and is known to occupy herself in servile works, the case would, of course, be quite altered, and it could then never be expected that a man in Sir Thomas's situation should ever think of her."

As Mr. Vaughen felt that he had betrayed undue warmth in the former part of his argument, he now restrained himself, though vehemently urged to speak with considerable earnestness. He, however, was enabled to control his feelings, and to argue calmly with his wife: and thus he answered her—"My dear Jane, in every case of this kind, the question is not what, according to the crooked policy and unsteady principles of worldly wisdom, is best to be done, or to be left undone? but what is the will of God? and how shall we best accommodate ourselves to the dispensations of Providence? The Almighty has said, 'Thou shalt not covet thy neighbour's house, thou shalt not covet thy neighbour's wife, nor his servant, nor his maid, nor his ox, nor his ass, nor any thing that is his.' By this command, I understand that we are forbidden to allow our thoughts to wander in

any way after delights and worldly possessions which are withheld from us by the Lord; and for these reasons, which are apparent, as well, doubtless, as for many others of which we are ignorant; namely, that we may be, in the first place, set free from those sickly longings which never can be satisfied; and, in the second place, because we cannot know what would be the effects of those things, when obtained, which we desire. For the good or evil of any earthly possession depends on so many contingencies, that no man can say this or that would be for my good, or this or that would add to my happiness. For instance: could we by any manœuvre which we might devise insure to ourselves Sir Thomas Freeman for a son-in-law, are we assured that he would make our Emmeline happy, or that she would not be a better wife to a poorer man, or that her children, if she had any, would be blessed in their father? There is One, however, who knows all these things, who has undertaken to direct every event for the good of his people, and who has also the control of all contingencies. This being the case, what madness, as well as what sin, it is in any of his creatures to attempt to take upon themselves, even in thought, the management of their own affairs in any way contrary to those indications of his divine will which he has vouchsafed to bestow upon us!"

"But may there not be such a thing," said Mrs. Vaughen, "as taking our affairs out of the hands of God by suddenly sinking under the pressure of circumstances, as well as by refusing to bend at all? I have heard you say myself, my dear, and that often, that there is sometimes as much sullenness in affecting extreme submission to the will of a superior as in insolently rising against it."

"Certainly, my dear," said Mr. Vaughen, "I have made this remark, and, as you say, often: but, attempting to accommodate ourselves to the divine will, and to moderate our desires in compliance with the dealings of Providence, can never be termed an act of rebellion, especially when cheerfully done, as we hope, by the divine grace, to do what is now before us."

"Well, my dear," said Mrs. Vaughen, "I say no more, but submit to your better judgment; and I have no doubt, that, in this case, as in many others that are past, I shall

have reason to say that your judgment is better than mine." So saying, she arose, and, smiling with much sweetness, went to seek her daughters, and to communicate to them the subject of her recent conversation with their father.

As soon as she was gone, Mr. Vaughen took his hat, and hastened to make the purposed proposal to Mrs. Alice Turner; for Mr. Vaughen was prompt in all his actions, when once he felt convinced that what he was about to do was fit to be done.

Mr. Vaughen met with all the success he could desire from Mrs. Alice Turner, and returned home to dinner in better spirits than he had been in for some months.

The traces of tears were upon the features of Mrs. Vaughen and Emmeline, but Henrietta looked, as usual, perfectly calm and serene, when the little family met at dinner; at which meal Mr. Vaughen thus addressed those who constituted the endeared little circle that surrounded him: "I feel that we are doing right, my beloved ones; I feel it, I am convinced of it, and I am happy that we are about to exchange a load of real and lasting cares for a few that are merely imaginary; and as there are some among us who seem better able to contend with imaginary distresses than others, I think those individuals must volunteer to be foremost in these encounters. What do you say, Henrietta?" added Mr. Vaughen, smiling; "what do you say? Will you assist me in receiving our visitors for the first time in our new parlour?"

"With all my heart, papa," said Henrietta, smiling. But Mrs. Vaughen and Emmeline, though they attempted to smile, were unable; for Mrs. Vaughen was busy, in imagination, in filling her kitchen with all the fine acquaintances she had in the world, and she pictured to herself a thousand sneers and contemptuous looks which we cannot suppose that any real lady would bestow on such an occasion: and poor Emmeline thought of Sir Thomas; and though she had no particular regard or esteem for this young man, yet was it exceedingly disagreeable to her to think that if ever he again honoured the family with a visit, he must needs be ushered into the kitchen; and this tormenting thought not only offered itself at that time, but was continually present with her

during the remainder of that day, and also for several days afterwards. Thus dearly did she pay for the pleasure of being compared to stars and roses; and in like manner, or in a manner not wholly dissimilar, will you be made to suffer, my young reader, whenever you have allowed yourself to hearken with complacency to the whispers of the flatterer.

Mr. Vaughen had penetration enough to discover much of what was passing in the minds of his wife and his younger daughter. He therefore accelerated his operations as much as possible, and, with the help of Henrietta, managed matters so well, that, before the next Saturday evening, the kitchen-maid was disposed of, Mrs. Alice Turner and her little attendant were settled in the parlour and best bed-room, and his wife and daughters established in the kitchen, which last apartment had undergone a thorough cleaning and white-washing, and was duly accommodated with a neat table and chairs, placed near the bow window, on a small square carpet; insomuch, that, although certain bright culinary utensils ranged against the wall, and a large grate, for the purpose of cooking, still indicated this apartment to be but a kitchen, yet order, neatness, and convenience, rendered it an abode at which the nicest taste had no occasion to revolt.

The first meal of which the family partook in the kitchen was their tea, on the Friday afternoon. The tea-things were arranged on an oak table, which had been so highly polished, that it reflected, as from a mirror, the flame of two candles placed in polished brass candlesticks. The fire blazed on the hearth, the kettle hissed upon the fire, and some excellent white bread and nice butter stood on the table, the doors were shut, the clock ticked in the corner, and nurse sat working at her own little table, at a respectful distance. Such was the state of things, when Emmeline, after some delay, was desired by her mother to call her father to tea; and while the young lady reluctantly obeyed, the tender-hearted Mrs. Vaughen said to her eldest daughter, "Your poor father, my dear, he has hitherto borne it well, but I fear he will feel a little this evening."

While she was yet speaking Mr. Vaughen followed

his daughter into the kitchen; and placing himself in the chair provided for him, looked first at his wife, then at his daughters, then at the old domestic sitting at her table: when, addressing his wife, he exclaimed, "Why, my dear, I thought we were to have been very miserable this evening!"

A momentary pause succeeded this remark, and this was followed by a burst of laughter, first begun by Emmeline, and instantly seconded by Henrietta; after which, it was found impossible even for Mrs Vaughan herself to support the least appearance of dejection. And as, when the evening meal was finished, every one was engaged in their usual employments, (the mother knitting, the father reading aloud, and the daughters occupied with their needles,) it seemed as if neither of them retained a consciousness of the inelegance of the apartment to which they were reduced.

The portion of Scripture which Mr. Vaughan chose for his comments before the evening devotion of the family, was this passage of the Lord's Prayer—"Thy kingdom come;" and he took occasion, from it, to speak of that glorious time when the reign of our Lord shall be acknowledged throughout the earth, and when simple Christian habits and principles will become universal. He took this opportunity to point out what he had often, in times past, suggested to his family—that although nearly two thousand years had already past since the coming of the Redeemer, during which time many of the kingdoms and tribes of the earth had been successively called by the name of our Lord and his Christ, and although the great men and rulers, the wise and learned of these kingdoms, have professed, for ages past, to be regulated by the laws of God, as delivered in the Bible—yet that it was his opinion, that the whole economy of society, ecclesiastical, political, civil, social, and domestic, was still pervaded and influenced by false principles, and that a very great and thorough change must take place in men's opinions, before the customs of life could be said to be modelled in any degree according to strict Christian principles. He further spoke of the harmlessness and simplicity of the Christian character, and pointed out the contrast between that and the artificial spirit,



as it were, of the worldly man, who is ever dwelling upon externals, and laying the greatest imaginable stress upon those minutiae of life which are of no importance, but which often fully occupy the mind, to the neglect and destruction of the soul and its everlasting interests.

Thus passed the first tranquil evening in the kitchen; and the next morning, while their only servant discharged the more menial duties of the household, Henrietta and Emmeline very carefully set out the breakfast-table, and garnished the brown loaf with such opening buds as the early spring afforded: neither did they neglect their own appearance, but, on the contrary, they took all possible pains to set off their plain and simple garments with the most careful neatness. These little attentions particularly pleased their affectionate father, who availed himself of the occasion to press upon his family the particular duty of neatness under their present circumstances, pointing out that there was no necessary connexion between a narrowness of income, and coarse, disgusting habits; adding, that he considered the most perfect state of society to consist in moderate desires, with elegant manners. The rest of this day passed off with great ease and comfort to all parties, and with far less confusion than Mrs. Vaughen expected.

The next day was Sunday, a day on which, from its being wholly appropriated to sacred exercises of various kinds, no reference was made by any of the family to worldly affairs; and if the circumstance of the kitchen was remembered, it was associated with no other sentiment than that of gratitude, that so easy a remedy as a mere change of apartments had been found sufficient to remove those cares with which, for many weeks past, the father of this family had been evidently oppressed.

The few days immediately following were rainy; a circumstance at which Mrs. Vaughen secretly rejoiced, as she hoped that the inclemency of the weather would be a means of keeping off those visiters on which she had not yet learned to think without many nervous apprehensions. But the Thursday morning proving remarkably fine, her trepidations were renewed, and, as she sat employed with her needle at the window, she started at the sound of every wheel-carriage, whether

barrow, cart, or wagon, which came rumbling down the village street; and at length, about noon, being told by a poor neighbour that Mrs. Smith's coach was at the door of the Shop, (by which we mean a kind of huckster's, haberdasher's, grocer's, and tallow chandler's, who supplied the country round with an inconceivable variety of necessary articles,) she fairly took flight, and escaped by the back door, taking her younger daughter by the arm, and treacherously leaving Henrietta alone to encounter the storm which was rolling towards them in the shape of a coach-and-four, with two outriders.

Henrietta, who was pursuing her ordinary studies in her own apartment, started up when she heard the carriage drive up to the door; and, without waiting to consider what she should say, knowing that she should rather lose than gain courage by delay, arrived in the hall just in time to take Mrs. Smith's hand as she stepped out of the carriage.

This lady was the only daughter of a very rich banker in a neighbouring town, a person who had been brought up to believe that all human excellence consisted in the possession of money, and of that which money can procure; and she was now actually come to investigate the truth of the report that she had just heard in the shop, namely, that Mr. Vaughen had let his parlour to Mrs. Alice Turner, and was himself living in the kitchen. As she was, however, aware that she might possibly save Miss Vaughen from the pain of some confusion, by acknowledging that she was already acquainted with this fact, she affected entire ignorance; and, having returned Henrietta's compliments with a slight but familiar acknowledgment, she pushed forward to the parlour, saying, "I suppose I shall find your mamma within;" at the same time intimating by a motion which her footman understood, that he might go into the kitchen, the door of which was open.

Henrietta was startled by this freedom: supposing it, however, to be no other than an ordinary proof of this lady's ill breeding, (of which she had before seen many instances,) she caught Mrs. Smith's hand, and, endeavouring to detain her, said, "Will you permit me, my dear Madam, to explain to you a circumstance which

has taken place in our family, and owing to which we do not esteem ourselves entitled to entertain visitors of your rank and situation in life?"

Henrietta was proceeding with her remarks, when Mrs. Smith turned round hastily from the parlour-door, on the lock of which she had already placed her hand, and fixing her eyes with unabashed effrontery on the blushing face of the young lady, she at the same time called to her powdered footman, and ordered him to wait her further commands—thus detaining him in a situation in which he could not avoid hearing every word that should be said.

Henrietta, on perceiving this, hesitated, looking first at Mrs. Smith, then at the servant, while for a moment shame and agitation almost choked her utterance; not, indeed, that she felt shame from a consciousness of her own situation, but from a sense of the want of delicacy of her visiter. She soon, however, recovered herself, being supported by the conviction that she was in the path of duty, and that she was, perhaps, at that very moment shielding her beloved mother from the insults to which she herself was exposed; and remarking to Mrs. Smith that their present situation would not permit her to enter into such an explanation as the intimacy which had long subsisted between the families seemed to require, she added, that she was truly sorry that it was not in her power to ask Mrs. Smith to sit down, having no parlour into which she could invite her.

"No parlour!" said Mrs. Smith, looking first at her footman, and then at Henrietta; "why, Miss Vaughen, how am I to understand this? But perhaps you are painting and papering?"

"No, madam," said Henrietta, calmly; "we have let our parlour to Mrs. Alice Turner."

"To Mrs. Alice Turner!" repeated Mrs. Smith: "you amaze me, Miss Vaughen! But you have surely furnished some other room for your own use?"

"No, madam, we have no other room which we could possibly devote to such purpose; we find it necessary to live in our kitchen: and as I could not think of asking you to enter such an apartment, I am altogether obliged to deprive myself of your company."

Mrs. Smith appeared as if she had some difficulty to restrain a laugh while Henrietta spoke: she, however, made no remark or comment on her speech; but, turning abruptly round, she walked coolly out of the house, stood on the step to ask her servant some unimportant questions, stepped into the carriage, ordered the door to be shut, and the coachman to drive on, and seemed scarcely to remember (just as the horses were set in motion) to say, "Good morning, Miss Vaughen;" adding this direction to the footman, who stood with his hat off at the door, "Drive to Sir Thomas's."

The carriage had left the court, and the last out-rider was out of sight, before Henrietta moved from the spot where her visiter had left her. She then turned in haste, and went to her father's study, half inclined to reproach him, in her sweet and daughter-like manner, for not coming to her assistance, when she now, for the first time, remembered that he had said, while at breakfast, that he should be obliged to be from home during part of the morning. A glass door, which her father had made, leading from the study into the garden, was open. Henrietta passed through it. She was oppressed; she felt her cheeks glow, and her heart heavy. She heaved two or three deep sighs, and took one or two turns along an embowered walk shaded by filbert bushes. She sighed again. Her limbs, which from agitation had been cold, began to be warm; the flush left her cheeks: she sighed again two or three times; and then, taking out her pocket-bible, she read a few verses as she slowly paced up and down the shadowy path; and presently she had so entirely forgotten Mrs. Smith and her powdered footman, that, when called in to dinner, not a trace of care remained on her placid countenance; and, when questioned about Mrs. Smith's visit, she did not convey the slightest idea to her parents of any thing unpleasant having occurred—a precaution by which she not only spared her mother some nervous tremours, but supported her parents' dignity, by enabling them, when next they met that lady, to accost her with their accustomed cordiality and ease.

And here let us pause, to recommend a similar mode of conduct to young people in general, who too often

Contrary to the example of the lovely Henrietta, accustomed themselves to excite and irritate the painful feelings of their parents on occasions of slight offence, thereby evidently disregarding the favour of Him who hath said, *Blessed are the peacemakers: for they shall be called the children of God.* (Matt. v. 9.)

The next morning opened with wonted serenity on the quiet parsonage; and Henrietta and Emmeline, having performed their daily studies, which they were above all anxious at this time never to omit, were recreating themselves, about noon, with making a tart of young gooseberries, the first of the season.

The father and mother had walked out together, and the nurse was also absent, being engaged in making certain marketings. The young ladies being alone in the house, had locked the front door, and had begun their operations in their neat kitchen, themselves being also neatly dressed, and exhibiting no other symptom of their occupation as cooks excepting that Emmeline had tied a clean coloured apron before her. As their minds were easy, and their spirits cheerful, they talked to each other while thus engaged; and Henrietta, whose employment it was to cut off the stalks of the gooseberries with her scissors, was laughing at Emmeline for plunging her hands quite up to the wrists in the paste, remarking, that a more elegant way would have been to have performed the whole operation through the intervention of a spoon.

Emmeline smiled at this remark, and told her that she was a mighty adept in the art of speaking on ordinary occurrences in an elegant phraseology.

While the sisters were thus innocently gay, Emmeline felt something tickle the back of her neck, and, turning round hastily, she saw Sir Thomas behind her, who had just touched her with a sprig of sweet-brier which he held in his hand. The touch of Ithuriel's spear had scarcely a more powerful effect on the arch fiend, than the harmless sweet-brier had on the lovely Emmeline, who, uttering a half shriek, reddened from her forehead to her throat, and, looking on her apron and her well-plastered hands, stood like one detected in the most atrocious act.



Henrietta, who had looked behind her on hearing her sister's exclamation, immediately arose on seeing the baronet, and politely, but somewhat coldly, asked him if he wished to see her father.

"No, fair lady," he replied, "I am not come to see Mr. Vaughen, because I know that he is from home; I met him and your mother but a minute since in the street: I therefore came with the sole view of paying my respects to you and to your sister."

"And pray, Sir," asked Henrietta, "how did you obtain admittance? The front door is locked."

"So I perceived," replied the gentleman; but happily, I knew of the glass door of the little study, and found it open."

Henrietta was silent, being really at a loss how next to act, and not wishing to make too serious a matter of what she considered as nothing more than a frolic, though not a justifiable one.

In the mean time, the young gentleman had turned again to his favourite Emmeline, and was complimenting her on her extraordinary bloom, remarking, that the natural delicacy of her hands wanted not the aid of art to add to their whiteness.

Emmeline looked at her hands, her unfortunate coloured apron, and the various bright tin and brazen implements arranged along the walls of the apartment, and was on the very point of bursting into tears, when her sister, dreading what might be the end of all this, gave her an opportunity of retreating, by hinting to her that she would do well to go and wash her hands.

The young lady instantly hastened to the door which opened into the hall, but was prevented from reaching it by Sir Thomas, who, springing towards it before her, set his back against it, and laughingly said that she should not so escape. Emmeline, again agitated and confused, stood still; and the baronet, who was dressed in black, (being in mourning for his father,) braved her to take revenge, which he said was now in her power, as she had nothing to do but to place her delicate hands on his coat.

Exactly on the opposite side of the room there was another door, and Emmeline, being directed by her sister's eye to this means of escape, turned round with a quick

ness which the baronet did not foresee, and immediately took flight, pulling the door after her with a violence which, though caused by haste, the young gentleman failed not to attribute to displeasure.

Almost at the same moment, Henrietta walked calmly to the other end of the room, and, sitting down at a table which stood in the bow window, took up her needle, and began to work.

In the mean time, Sir Thomas, being startled by the slamming of the door in his face, shrugged up his shoulders, and, looking towards Henrietta, he said, "Upon my honour, Miss Vaughen, you have a dignity of air and of manner which is totally independent of circumstances."

"That is not dignity, Sir Thomas," replied Henrietta, calmly, but sweetly, "which depends on externals; and therefore it is perhaps necessary for persons to be deprived of all outward circumstances of pomp, before we can decide upon the real nobility of their minds."

Sir Thomas (coxcomb as he was) seemed awed by her manner, and by this remark. He followed her to the table, and, sitting down not very far from her, he took up her scissors, and began cutting a piece of thread to atone, while he stammered out a kind of apology for his behaviour, saying, "Now I see, Miss Vaughen, that you are offended, and that I have vexed your lovely sister; and, upon my honour, I do declare I never intended it—I assure you I did not, not in the least, nothing could be further from my thoughts: for, of all men in the world, I respect your father; and as to your mother and yourselves, I don't know any ladies on the face of the earth of whom I think better."

Henrietta mildly replied, "I have always believed you, Sir Thomas, to be a sincere friend of my parents; I therefore cannot suppose that you meant to offend us, or to make us feel the slight inconveniences of our present situation more than is necessary. I know that it is the intention of my father to explain to you, as to a friend, the circumstances which have led him to retrench his manner of living, which he rather chose to do than to be a burden on his friends. We hope, indeed, that it may not be necessary for us to observe this rigid economy for many years; but, be the time short or long, I feel my

self perfectly reconciled to the measure, and only regret it on account of my parents, who can no longer associate with those persons to whose society they have been accustomed."

Sir Thomas stammered out that he already knew and applauded Mr. Vaughen's motives of conduct.

Henrietta, in reply, remarked, that she felt assured that no one could respect her father the less for his cheerful submission to the divine will; and she added, that she had great pleasure in knowing that his own peace was greatly promoted by the plans which he had adopted.

The baronet muttered something about great sacrifices and strength of mind, &c. &c. and added, that he believed there were few men of Mr. Vaughen's family and rank who could have brought their minds to make such a sacrifice.

Henrietta could have said that she did not see any thing so remarkable in the sacrifice; for it appeared to her pious and simple mind that it was incomparably preferable to live in a clean and cheerful kitchen for a few years, than to be constantly under the axes and harrows of perplexing cares. She had, however, discernment enough to perceive that Sir Thomas could not understand any sentiment of this kind; and she therefore dropped the subject, and entered upon others of a more common place character, with which conversation Sir Thomas seemed to be so well pleased, that he lingered till her parents' return.

Thus did this amiable young lady, by her forbearance and address, a second time disarm the malice of the world, and sustain that dignity which a more petulant conduct would have infallibly overthrown.

As soon as Henrietta could make her escape, she flew to her beloved Emmeline, whom she found weeping violently in her own room. She sat down by her, kissed her, and said, "My beloved sister, why do you weep? why do you thus afflict yourself? Had you been found doing any thing that was either disgraceful in itself, or decidedly out of your line of duty, there would have been some reason for tears; or had you been surprised in a slovenly dress, when engaged in the way of duty, there would have been a more just occasion for shame: but, as

neither the one nor the other was the case, wherefore is there any reason either for blushes or tears?"

"But I know," said Emmeline, sobbing, "I know, by Sir Thomas's manner, that he despised me, when he saw me with a coloured apron on, and my hands all covered with flour. Did you not remark his altered and forward manner? Did we ever experience such familiar treatment from him when we received him in our parlour and appeared like ladies?"

"I did observe his manner," said Henrietta, "and I disapproved of it. But why should you blush for the want of courtesy and delicacy?"

"I expected that it would be so," said Emmeline. "I dreaded his coming."

"Then you entertained a much worse opinion of Sir Thomas than I did, Emmeline; and I therefore wonder that this affair should have affected you, who have met only with what you foresaw, more than it did me, who have seen a fault in a neighbour which I did not expect to find."

"But I thought," said Emmeline, "I thought—I fancied—I had some idea, that—that—he had some regard for me."

"Regard for you, Emmeline!" said Henrietta: "then it is perhaps happy that you are so soon undeceived."

"O," said Emmeline, "I did not mean that I supposed that he really liked me: you know what I mean—only that he respected me. I did suppose he respected me."

"If respect is all that you expected from him," said Henrietta, "you will have it still, my Emmeline: no man will or can despise the dutiful daughter who submits cheerfully to her father's will."

Emmeline sighed. She had indulged other views in reference to Sir Thomas which she had hardly acknowledged to herself; and they were now, as she thought, destroyed by the hard necessity to which she found herself reduced, of living in a kitchen. She was consequently, very unhappy: and thus we are always punished, whenever we allow our wishes to outrun our circumstances, and permit our desires to exceed the will of the Almighty.

Henrietta saw, by her sister's extreme grief, that more

was passing in her mind than she had at first been aware of. She therefore spoke no more of Sir Thomas; but animadverted, in general terms, on the duty of submitting to the divine will, and on the peace which instantly follows, when the mind is brought, through the influence of the Holy Spirit, to that state of contentment which never desires any thing beyond that which the Lord bestows, be it much or be it little. She then adverted to a late discourse of her father's upon the tenth commandment, where he showed the spiritual nature of that commandment, pointing out its reference to the inmost thoughts of the heart, and the prohibition under which it lays the imagination from ever wandering after earthly goods which are not lawful objects of our desires. Much more she added on this subject, and that with so much sweetness and gentleness, that her sister insensibly became soothed, and assured her that she would endeavour to appear before her parents at dinner with her accustomed cheerfulness.

Emmeline accordingly arose, and, having bathed her eyes, went out into her garden to attend her flowers and bees, in which interesting occupation she soon lost all recollection of Sir Thomas, or only thought with gratitude of the circumstances by which her eyes had been so soon opened to his real intentions respecting her.

The next day was Sunday. Mrs. Vaughen, being ill, staid at home with her daughter Emmeline, and Henrietta accompanied her father to church. The morning was fine; but it was one of those days in spring when frequent showers drive the traveller to take shelter under some friendly tree, and when the sun is seen shining in all his glory on one side of a hill while the rain is beating on another.

In consequence of these fluctuations of the weather, the congregation was detained in the church-porch for some time after divine service, and Henrietta was during a considerable time standing near the Dowager Lady Freeman, the mother of Sir Thomas, and Mrs. Smith. These ladies were busily engaged in conversation with each other on the subject of a grand dinner which was to be given the following day at Stanbrook Court, and Henrietta supposed that she was not observed by them



She accordingly stood quite still, till, perceiving that the eyes of both ladies were directed towards her, she courtseyed, and was going to speak, when they both nodded carelessly, as to an inferior, and then, turning away from her, they proceeded with their conversation.

Henrietta coloured, but, instantly recovering herself, stood composedly till Lady Freeman's carriage drew up to the porch, and the two ladies departed together. Henrietta then, by their removal, found herself standing next to a widow, who, with her only son, had just taken a farm in the parish, and whom she had never seen till that day, as this was the stranger's first appearance at church.

This widow was still in weeds; and the sorrowful, yet pious resignation of her countenance instantly attracted the attention and admiration of Miss Vaughen. She was leaning on the arm of her son, a fine young man, of an amiable aspect, who was also in deep mourning.

As Henrietta had never been introduced to these persons, she knew that it would have been improper to speak first, and therefore she remained silent, till her father, coming out of the interior part of the church, in which he had hitherto been engaged by a christening, addressed the widow and her son with his usual ease and courtesy, and introduced his daughter to the mother.

A friendly conversation was immediately commenced between Mr. Vaughen and this lady, whose name was Etherington; and, as the rain still continued, there was opportunity for them to discourse on various subjects.—Mr. Vaughen asked the widow how she liked her farm, and expatiated on the beauty of its situation amid woods and waterfalls.

Her answer was full of piety, and expressed her desire to be willingly content in whatever situation it might please the Lord to appoint her lot. She then spoke of religion as her chief delight, and added, that the Almighty had been especially merciful to her in sparing her son to be the prop and comfort of her age.

Mr. Vaughen, on hearing this, turned to the young man, offered him his friendship, and asked him whether he had time for reading: "and if so," added he, "any book in my possession is at your service."

By this time the rain had ceased, and the party began

to walk homewards. The proposed Sunday-school then became the topic of discourse, and Mr. Etherington offered his services to assist in the instruction of the boys. The old lady and her son walked up to the gate of the parsonage with Mr. Vaughen and his daughter, but would not go in, although they promised to call soon and pay their compliments to the rector's lady; which promise they fulfilled the next evening, when they drank tea at the parsonage, giving much pleasure to Mr. and Mrs. Vaughen by their unaffected and pious deportment: and so well pleased was the rector with the young man, that he entered into discourse with him on several interesting and important subjects, and recommended to him to devote his leisure hours to a certain regular course of reading which he pointed out to him, at the same time also offering to lend him the necessary books; and taking care to convince him how compatible the cultivation of the mind is with the mode of life in which he was engaged, particularly in the case of those individuals who are not induced, from an inordinate desire of worldly riches, to undertake more than they can manage consistently with peace of mind and necessary leisure. Mr. Vaughen also availed himself of this opportunity to expatiate on a subject on which he had bestowed much thought, namely, the extensively fatal effects of covetousness, and the various forms which it assumes, together with its frequently ruinous consequence in filling the mind with distracting cares, and alienating the attention from the concerns of the soul. He also quoted several texts from Scripture that bore upon his purpose, namely—*Let your conversation be without covetousness; and be content with such things as ye have: for he hath said, I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee:* (Heb. xiii. 5.) and he remarked, that covetousness not only consisted, as many suppose, in amassing earthly possessions, but in our even desiring that which the Lord either entirely withholds from us, or renders unattainable by us without the sacrifice of better things. He, moreover, observed, that agriculture was generally considered a simple and innocent employment; but he gave it as the result of his observation, that since man, through ambition, had joined house to house, and field to field, it had become an em-

ployment as adverse to spiritual welfare as any upon earth: and, therefore, he expressed his hope, that his young friend, who professed himself to be a follower of the meek and lowly Jesus, who on earth took upon him the form of a servant, would be content with moderate gains and a simple mode of living, and would desire no more of the goods of this world than might be placed within his reach lawfully and honestly by his heavenly Father.

The young man seemed to pay great attention to the conversation of the good minister, which perhaps had not the less effect from the admiration with which he had observed the modest and elegant daughters of his pastor.

And here let me stop to make this observation, which may be useful to my readers, although somewhat foreign from the immediate purport of the story,—that whereas the influence of unholy females has not unfrequently the most destructive effect on the minds of the young men with whom they associate; the example, on the contrary, of modest, holy, and lovely young women is found to possess a peculiar power in exalting, refining, and we may say, ennobling, such young men as have the opportunity of observing them, and the sense and taste to appreciate their merits.

But we now leave these more humble scenes, in order to give some account of what passed the same day at Stanbrook Court, where Lady Freeman, her son, Mr. and Mrs. Smith, and many others of the gentry of the neighbourhood, were assembled to drink the Squire's health on account of his birth-day: and, as the Squire had lately received a present of a rich service of Worcester china, and had also been persuaded by his sisters to purchase a new and very handsome epergne, the two spinsters were in remarkably high spirits on the occasion, and displayed their exultation by a good deal of hauteur of manner, and occasional contemptuous expressions levelled against their neighbours.

It was evident to all those of the party who came from the neighbourhood of Mr. Henry Vaughen's residence, that the story of that gentleman's plans of economy had not yet reached the other side of the country; and though some of the company would have rejoiced in the

opportunity of humbling, by the relation of this extraordinary circumstance, the family at whose cost they were entertained; yet most of the party had sufficient politeness, or we should rather say self-love, to wish that the disagreeable tale might come through the medium of another.

There was, however, one person present whose feelings were an exception to this general sentiment by which the rest were pervaded, namely, Mrs. Smith, who was very glad that the tale had not yet reached Stanbrook Court, and that none of the present company chose to take upon themselves the office of informer, because she coveted it for herself, and was waiting only until she might be able to do it with most effect.

This lady had long disliked the Vaughen family, because they possessed that in which she was deficient, namely, a respectable pedigree, and she particularly hated the two single sisters of the Squire, because they had once or twice contrived to utter in her presence certain sly inuendoes upon this tender point. Mrs. Smith had heard of the new epergne; for she was one of those ladies who condescend to receive their information from the lowest source, and, consequently this important circumstance, which was intended to have occasioned a surprise to the company, was no longer a secret to this lady, and she had maliciously resolved to wait the moment of the appearance of this piece of splendour, to open her tale so abundant in considerations deeply humbling to a worldly mind.

Accordingly, when the servants had successfully fixed the sparkling pyramid upon the table, she turned to Miss Vaughen, near whom she sat, at the head of the table, and said how afflicted she was to hear of Mr. Henry Vaughen's heavy loss.

On this, the attention of every individual of the family present was instantly excited; and the Squire and his sisters exclaimed with one voice, "What loss?—we have heard of none."

"A heavy loss of property," said Mrs. Smith, proceeding undauntedly to feed herself with custard-pudding: "poor Mr. Vaughen has lately had a severe loss."

"A severe loss of property!" said the Squire, recover

ing from his alarm, "I am glad it is no worse, for," added he, with a loud voice, and in his usual coarse manner, "if Harry Vaughen were to lose all he had, the evil might soon be repaired; eh, Sir Thomas, is it not so?"

Sir Thomas laughed, and hinted that Mr. Vaughen's treasures consisted of his lovely daughters; a remark which offended the younger ladies of the family as greatly as the Squire's did the elder.

"Brother," said Miss Vaughen, "how strangely and inconsistently you talk! You know our brother has a very pretty property, besides the income of the rectory. Mrs. Henry Vaughen was, you well know, a woman of handsome fortune. But this loss, Mrs. Smith, what is it? how did it happen? and when?" The old lady then looked at her sister, and said, "Is it not strange, very strange, Penelope, that we should never have heard any thing of it?"

"But perhaps Mrs. Smith can give us some information?" said Miss Penelope, "From what quarter did the blow come?"

Mrs. Smith replied, that she did not know the particulars, nor any thing further on the subject, than that Mr. Vaughen had been obliged to dismiss a servant, let his best apartments, and reside with his family in the kitchen.

On receiving this intelligence, which was by no means softened by Mrs. Smith's manner of relating it, the elder ladies blushed and bridled; the younger ones tried to laugh; and the Squire, hallooing as if after his fox-hounds cried out, with an oath, "Nothing more than a whim of Harry Vaughen's, depend upon it, Mrs. Smith; though, by the by, it is a whim which no man in his senses would really indulge."

This remark of the Squire's, and his apparent and indeed real unconcern on the occasion, did more to disarm the malice of Mrs. Smith than the most elaborate discussion could have done; and, as he continued to turn off the whole matter with a laugh and a hoot, that lady would have considered herself entirely foiled, had not she perceived in the flushed cheeks and restless glances of the two elderly ladies the symptoms of wounded pride and smothered mortification.

When, after tea and cards, the guests had taken their



leave of Stanbrook Court, a violent family scene took place in the drawing-room, and the smothered displeasure of the ladies broke forth with more violence from their long restraint; neither was the anger confined to the aunts; the nieces were equally offended; for Sir Thomas, in the true spirit of mischief, had described to them the kitchen scene, and all the particulars relative to the goose-berry tart, not failing, at the same time, to excite the jealousy of their cousins, by asserting, what he really thought, that the elegance of these young ladies was such, as to enable them to rise above every circumstance, even those unpropitious ones of coloured aprons and hands covered with meal.

But this story of the kitchen scene, as told by Sir Thomas, and repeated by the daughters of the Squire, assumed an entirely different aspect, and tended not a little to inflame the anger of the aunts.

“What an unaccountable and degrading whim is this of my brother’s!” said the elder Mrs. Vaughen.

“In a man of his family too!” said Mrs. Penelope. “Brother, you must go over to-morrow, and expostulate with him, and persuade him to give up this strange fancy.”

“And unkennel him from his kitchen,” said the Squire, “and his lodger from the parlour. Is that what you would have me do?”

“What extraordinary language you always use, brother,” said Mrs. Dorothy Vaughen, “so extremely inelegant: now, in that respect, I cannot blame Henry, his language is always elegant; and for such a man to live in a kitchen!”

“Do you mean to say, sister, that my manners would be more suitable for the kitchen, than my brother’s? Well, perhaps it may be so; but on that very account I ought to keep clear of such situations, lest it should be said of me, that I was got into my right place at last.”

“It is very surprising,” said Miss Penelope, “that you can never be serious, brother, no not even when the family honour is at stake.”

“I am serious,” said the Squire, “for to tell you the truth, I am very angry with Henry, though I put a better face on his folly before company than you did: but I tell

you, I am angry; and, if I live as long, I'll let my brother know as much, before this time to-morrow." So saying, he withdrew to his own apartment, and the family committee adjourned for the night.

The next morning the Squire, booted and spurred, and accompanied by his servant, rode to his brother's house, and arrived about noon. Mr. Vaughen was in his study, and Mrs. Vaughen and her daughters were seated at their respective employments before the open window, when the Squire galloped up as if riding for his life, and having knocked violently at the house door, which was, however, open, walked into the hall, calling aloud to his servant to take the horses to the Lion, and stay there himself; adding, "There is no place in this house for you, John, unless you mean to sit down to table with your master."

The servant, bowing, but grinning at the joke, led away the horses, while the Squire being left in the hall, began to halloo and shout as if he had been lost in a wood.

Mr. Henry Vaughen did not leave him long to call about him, but, having finished a sentence that he was writing, came out, and expressing his pleasure in seeing him, invited him to come in.

Although Mr. Vaughen pointed to his study door, the Squire stood, looking round him, as if utterly bewildered, and at length said, "Where am I to go? They tell me you have no place fit to ask a gentleman into!"

"My study, brother," said Mr. Vaughen, smiling: "you have been in it before now, times out of number; it stands precisely where it did."

Mr. Vaughen had repeated this invitation more than once before the Squire recollected himself, or seemed to be able to make up his mind whither next to direct his steps; he then strode forward, with his hat on, into the study, where, coming to a stand, he burst forth like an old hound, who had just recovered scent which had been lost by all the rest of the pack. "Harry Vaughen, I say, here am I, and I suppose you have already some shrewd notion of the business I have come about."

Mr. Henry Vaughen smiled, and pointed to a chair; but the Squire, striking the table with his horsewhip, pro-

ceeded to this effect: "If I ever sit down in this house again—" and there he stopped, for he did not dare to swear before his brother, and he could get no further, till the oaths which were upon his tongue, were, in some sort, evaporated, if not in articulate words, in bluster and grimace—"If I ever sit down in this house again, my name is not Vaughen, and I am not the head of an old and respectable family; and now it's all out, Harry, and you may make the best of it."

"Well, brother," said Mr. Vaughen, smiling again, "and you are come all the way from Stanbrook Court to tell me as much. And may I not add, that I am glad of almost any occasion which brings a brother under my roof?"

"A brother!" repeated the Squire, trying to retain his anger, which was evaporating faster than he wished, "I never had a greater mind in my life to renounce you than I now have. Why, Harry Vaughen, you have set the whole country ringing with your fooleries! Why, they tell me, man, that you have let your parlour to some old maid, and are actually living in your kitchen."

"All of which is perfectly true," said Mr. Henry Vaughen, "and I am ready to explain my motives to you for doing as I have done, without further preface:" at the same time he pushed the chair somewhat nearer to his brother, who, by this time, had thrown off his hat, and laid down his whip, and the next instant dropped into the very chair which he had just before so vehemently renounced.

Quiet being thus, in some degree, restored, Mr. Henry Vaughen began to state to his brother the motives of his conduct; adding, that, without the knowledge of the reasons which had induced him to enter upon such measures, it was impossible for him to judge of their propriety.

The Squire was silent, and Mr. Henry Vaughen then proceeded to give the proposed statement, taking it as a good sign, that his brother never interrupted him till he had said all he wished; which he knew would have its due weight with him, as he told him that he had but one alternative, either to retrench his expenses, or to apply for money to his friends.

In reply to which, the Squire said, "Well, well, brother, if you can make yourself comfortable, we, to be sure, have no right to complain. I see now your motives; they are very honourable, there is no selfishness in them, they are gentlemanlike; and, depend upon it, the world will like you all the better by and by for your independence. But in the mean time, brother, should you stand in need of a few pounds, apply to me. Now mind you do, brother: helping a friend like you, who will exert himself, is not like supporting an idle family who don't care how much they receive from others."

"Dear brother," said Henry Vaughen, "your friendly offer is highly gratifying; because it proves to me, that I have not lost my brother. But you will scarcely believe me, when I tell you, that I am now a richer man than I have been since I was married: one hundred pounds a year was all I wanted, and by my recent arrangements I shall, at least, be the better by one hundred and thirty; thirty, therefore, will now remain in case of accident, and for charity."

The anger of the Squire was now so far evaporated, that he consented to dine with his brother, although that dinner must be eaten in the kitchen: and Mr. Vaughen now secretly rejoiced in those habits of neatness and order on which he had always insisted, and by which his kitchen was rendered as comfortable a habitation as a Christian need desire.

The Squire was greatly delighted with the reception he received from his sister and her daughters; and he declared that the mutton chops, which had not been cooled by their passage from remote offices, were the best he had ever tasted in his life. He also commended his sister for her cheerful acquiescence in her husband's measures and his nieces for their neatness and elegance of deportment; which, he said, was the more admirable, because they were sometimes obliged to stoop to menial employments.

Mr. Vaughen availed himself of his brother's good humour to press upon him the important concerns of his soul; and failed not to point out the comfort and support that he, his wife, and children, had derived from religion under their late trials.

The Squire listened, but his brother feared that conviction had not as yet reached his heart; he, however, retained his good-humour during the whole of the evening; and when he returned home to his family, he increased their irritation not a little, by endeavouring to justify the conduct of his brother.

In return, however, for their reproaches, (for they did indeed reproach him, and that with considerable bitterness for so suddenly acquiescing in his brother's views,) he told them his opinion, which was this, that his sister and her daughters, in their kitchen, managed every thing with so much quietness, order, and ease, that in the comparison, they might put many a fine lady to shame in her drawing-room.

As it was now found totally useless to attempt to engage the Squire against his brother, it was, therefore, determined that the ladies of the family should go over in a body, the next day, to Mr. Henry Vaughen's house, in order to try what they could do to induce him to abandon his present proceedings.

Agreeably with this plan, the coach was ordered to be in readiness at a suitable hour the next day, and the indignant females all set off, armed with every argument which pride and prejudice could suggest, against the simple principles and straight-forward maxims of the poor rector.

It happened, unfortunately, when the coach arrived, that no one was at home but Mrs. Vaughen and the nurse: the former was seated at work, in her usual situation, the pleasant bow-window, against which nothing could be said, but that it belonged to a kitchen; and though that kitchen was large, airy, and extremely neat, yet still it was a kitchen; and, in consequence, the smallest smoky parlour in existence would be preferred by any person whatever who had the least pretensions to taste.

Poor Mrs. Vaughen was sensible of the comforts of her kitchen, and often very grateful for them; at times, even going so far, as to profess that she should never desire a more comfortable apartment; notwithstanding which, she grew pale and red by turns as she saw the carriage approach, and wished that she had not been so near the window as to have been observed before she could make



her escape. She called out in haste to nurse to fly away with some preparations for cooking, which the good woman had laid out on a dresser in a remote part of the room, thus occasioning a bustle and confusion, which was visible enough to the ladies, who had got out of their carriage, and were waiting in the hall.

Nurse having at length removed all these offensive objects, ran in a considerable flutter to the door, and ushered the visitors into the kitchen, where they found Mrs. Vaughen, trembling, agitated, and evincing every other indication of shame and irresolution.

The agitation of this lady, of course, afforded a great advantage to the others, who, without preamble, opened the occasion of their visit, and delivered their opinions in a manner the most decisive. "You are ruining your daughters, Mrs. Vaughen," said her husband's eldest sister, "by letting your parlour, and making them, as it were, your servants, the inmates of a kitchen, the companions of servants; and by this step, which will presently be irretrievable, you sink them, for life, below the rank in which they were born, and in which their education and appearance entitled them to continue with credit to themselves and their relations."

It is a cruel thing to charge a tender parent with injuring a child, and Mrs. Vaughen felt this charge the more, as the opinion coincided with her own most private thoughts. She was conscious that her daughters were handsomer than young people generally are. She had observed Sir Thomas's passing preference for Emmeline; and she had more than once imagined, how her Emmeline would look if seated at the head of Sir Thomas's table, and possessing a right to all the honours of a baronet's lady.

In consequence of these secret feelings, she burst into tears, and taking her sister's hand, said, "But what, my dear sister, what could we have done; we were actually living far beyond our income, and should have been involved for life."

"Involved for life," said Miss Penelope, "do I not understand, that the present pressure of your affairs is owing to your son's residence at the University? It will not be necessary for him to stay longer than two or three years

more; and was it impossible for you to borrow three hundred pounds? is the sum so mighty as to involve you for life?"

"Where are we to get that sum?" said Mrs. Vaughen: "we have friends, but we could not expect them to advance it."

"Certainly not," said the other, "I am sure that neither I nor my sister could do any thing for you in that way: you know how small our incomes are; and our sister in town lives to the extent of her property, and our elder brother has a very expensive family. But you have a property of your own, two thousand pounds, I think, and consider how easy it would have been to have raised a few hundreds upon that."

The tears came into Mrs. Vaughen's eyes afresh on hearing this remark.—"But in case of our deaths, this two thousand pounds is all that our daughters will have to depend upon," she replied.

"In the mean time," said the aunt, "you are perhaps depriving them of advantageous settlements."

"And lowering them so sadly," said Miss Letitia Vaughen, the eldest daughter of the Squire: "I cannot bear the thoughts of my dear cousins being found, as they were last week, by Sir Thomas, engaged in the most menial employments."

"Poor Emmeline!" remarked the younger sister, "poor Emmeline! what must she have suffered on the occasion!"

The history of Sir Thomas's visit was then recounted at large, and represented in the most ridiculous point of view.

But we have already detailed enough of this conversation to give the reader an idea of all the rest: suffice it to say, that when Mr. Vaughen returned, he found his wife in hysterics, and the ladies chafing her temples with hartshorn.

It was not a little thing which could throw Mr. Vaughen off his guard, but, on this occasion, he was really angry, and reproved his eldest sister in a manner which he had never before manifested towards her. She was somewhat intimidated, but not driven from her purpose; for she immediately began again with him, and went over every argument which she had before used with his wife.

He allowed that, as a sister, she had a right to speak

her mind to him, but he said, that he would not suffer her interference with other individuals of his family.

She seemed offended, and had recourse to tears.

At length the family parted, but it was with such evident displeasure on her part, that Mr. Vaughen was hurt, and withdrew to his little study to recover his composure in communion with his God.

When Mr. Vaughen was called to dinner, after this visit, he found his wife still in tears, his elder daughter looking seriously, and his younger daughter as if labouring under some excessive affliction. He sat down, and, at first, said nothing: he then looked round him on the sorrowful faces which encircled his table, and addressing these beloved ones, he said, "You are unhappy, my dear wife and children, and you make me feel that I am the cause: say but the word, and I will give notice to Mrs. Alice Turner to leave the house; we will return to our parlour, and we will raise the money by an insurance on my life, or any other plan that you can devise."

The affectionate wife and children could not bear this: they flew to his arms, and melting into tears, they all said "No! no! we will remain as we are. We are very happy when the world will let us alone, and we will henceforward cease to think of the world."

Thus was the family peace by degrees restored: and when their dinner was finished they walked out together to drink tea with Mrs. Etherington, at her little farm, situated in one of the most retired and romantic valleys in the parish, and there, while they partook of the widow's cream and brown bread, they improved the time in religious conversation, and the young farmer became more and more pleased with the simple and lovely daughters of the rector; and though he had not yet acknowledged to himself which of the two he most admired, yet it appeared plainly enough to his mother, when, after their departure, he remarked, that the grave and placid countenance of Miss Henrietta conveyed to his mind a more accurate idea of an angel than any face that he had ever before seen.

"She is a sweet young lady," said the mother, in reply, "and blessed will that man be who procures her for a wife."

Several days now passed, during which all went on smoothly at the rectory, and nothing had happened to make the family dissatisfied with their new plans; but at the end of this time, a letter arrived from Adolphus, evidently penned under a state of the utmost distress of mind. The occasion of this letter was a communication which the young man had received from his aunt, in which she represented in so serious a light the sacrifices which his parents were making on his account, that it appeared to him a paramount duty to leave the University, and seek some other manner of life.

He confessed in this letter, that when he first received the communication from his aunt, he should, undoubtedly, have left the University privately, and gone to sea, (no other plan but a seafaring life occurring to him at the time,) had he not been restrained by his friend Theodore; since which, he had thought better of it, and, therefore, now wrote to his parents to request their permission to leave his present situation, and enter into some trade.

The parents were greatly hurt by this meddling interference of Miss Vaughen; and Mr. Vaughen said, "How truly it is written; *A man's foes shall be they of his own household!*" He, however, thanked God for the providential manner in which his son, through the interposition of his friend, had been restrained from any rash action; and writing to Adolphus by return of post, he requested him to make himself easy, and to take no steps towards changing his plans till the long vacation. "You shall come, my son," said the tender father, "the Lord permitting, to spend the long vacation with us; and if you find one dimple the less in the cheek of your Emmeline, or one wrinkle more in the brow of Henrietta, I will give you leave to bind yourself apprentice to any trade you please."

The letter concluded with an invitation to Theodore to accompany his friend.

The next letter from Adolphus was written in so much more cheerful a strain, that his parents were enabled to await the approach of the long vacation without anxiety; and at the time appointed, the young men arrived, having walked the greater part of the way from Cambridge.

Now these four young people being again met, extreme joy was painted on every countenance; and if the circumstance of the kitchen was sometimes remembered, it was only recurred to as a matter of merriment.

This season of holiday was chosen by Mr. Vaughen as a proper time for establishing his Sunday-school; and he told the young academicians, that he should expect much from their superior skill in modelling his boy's school. He also associated his young people with himself in his walks to visit the poor of the parish; and on these occasions the happy young party often used to take their tea and sugar with them, and regale themselves at the doors of the cottages, especially in those situations where hills and groves and waterfalls presented their assemblages of beauties to delight the eye, and captivate the fancy. On these occasions, they were not unfrequently joined by Mr. Etherington, whose sincere and ardent desire for Christian instruction, not altogether, perhaps, unaccompanied with other motives, induced him to seek habitually the society of Mr. Vaughen and his family.

Thus sweetly passed away several months, during which Mr. Vaughen would often say to his son, "Well, Adolphus, what are your thoughts of our sacrifices? Are we intolerably miserable in our kitchen? We cannot, it is certain, expect to be always as happy as we have been during these few months, it would not be best, perhaps, that we should be so; but do me this favour, my boy: if you hear of our being afflicted, and brought under trial, do not attribute it to the measures that we have taken to save money on your account; for I am persuaded that we shall never have reason to lament that step."

In this way elapsed the greater part of the long vacation: when, one evening, early in autumn, while the family were drinking tea, and seated in their bow-window, the party being augmented by Mr. Etherington, they were interrupted by the sound of a carriage, and, in an instant, the coach from Stanbrook Court came thundering up to the gate.

At the sight of this, the young men walked out at one door, and Mrs. Vaughen at another, leaving Mr. Vaughen and his daughters to receive their visiters.



The party from the Court consisted of the very persons who had visited the rectory some months before, with the addition of Mrs. Irwin, their married sister from London: they were all dressed with minute attention to display and fashion, and, on being ushered into the family apartment by Mr. Vaughen, took their seats, in great state, round the tea-table.

After some expressions of kindness on the part of Mr. Vaughen, which, however, were but coldly answered by his relations, declarations of hostility were made on the part of the ladies from Stanbrook, and Mrs. Irwin affirmed that the sole intention of her visit was to dissuade her brother from proceeding in those measures which, she said, must prove the ruin of his family.

"I am much obliged to you, sister Irwin," said Mr. Vaughen.

Mrs. Irwin looked earnestly at her brother, and said, "For what are you obliged, Henry?"

"Because," said Mr. Vaughen, "I cannot suppose that you would persuade me to discontinue those measures, which I have adopted through absolute necessity, without furnishing me with means to supply that necessity. Three hundred pounds, or perhaps, two hundred and fifty pounds will be sufficient, if it suits you to present me with it."

The calm and unmoved manner in which Mr. Vaughen spoke seemed to puzzle his sisters. Mrs. Irwin, however, instantly declared, that she never entertained the least idea of supplying her brother's necessities.

"If that is the case," said Mr. Vaughen, "you will, at least, permit me, my dear sister, to take such measures as are within my power, to make up my own deficiencies of income; and henceforth, if you please, we will wave the subject."

The ladies appeared somewhat embarrassed, but, recovering themselves, after a pause, they renewed the attack, and urged every common-place and worldly argument, which could be brought forward, and that with such obstinacy, that Emmeline retired out of the room weeping. Mr. Vaughen himself seemed fatigued, and Henrietta's placid countenance assumed an air of deep dejection. The argument was still carried on, and Mr. Vaughen was

urged to repeat the same answers over and over again; till, at length, not knowing how he could better show his displeasure, he walked out of the room, leaving Henrietta to bear alone the whole brunt of the battle.

Thus left, the young lady entreated her aunts to say no more on the subject, observing, that on the matter in question, she, of course, could have no will but that of her parents; and that, as long as they were determined on any measures which were in themselves innocent, she should think it right to encourage and assist their views.

The ladies were evidently offended at being thus forsaken; and, refusing to take any refreshment, they called for their carriage, and took their departure, leaving Henrietta in such a state of agitation, that she ran from the hall door into the garden, and there seeking the retreat of one of those old-fashioned summer-houses of which we have before spoken, she burst into a flood of tears.

While she sat in one of the window seats of this retreat, endeavouring to recover her composure before she appeared in the presence of her parents, she accidentally turned round, and perceived some one in the room with her. It was getting dusk, and she at first fancied that this person was her brother. She looked again: it was Mr. Etherington, who now presented himself before her, and told her that he could not bear to see her affliction, especially as she was not one who shed tears without a cause, but who always evinced a cheerful and pleasing manner in the presence of her friends. She thanked him for his kind consideration, and told him, that she did not weep on her own account, but on that of her father and mother, who, while they were acting the part of the best of parents, and denying themselves many comforts for the sake of their children, were despised and hated by all the world.

Mr. Etherington then brought to her recollection these words of our Saviour—*If ye were of the world, the world would love his own: but because ye are not of the world, but I have chosen you out of the world, therefore the world hateth you.* (John xv. 19.) And he added, “If we are determined simply to follow the will of God, without reference to man’s pleasure, we shall be

hated and despised; but this must not give us pain." He then ventured to take the hand of Henrietta, and to make that modest but sincere declaration of his regard for her, which others might have foreseen, but which was wholly unexpected by the young lady herself, her extreme modesty habitually blinding her to the effect which her lovely appearance and deportment usually produced on those who beheld her.

A half-uttered reference to her parents was, however, the only answer which he could obtain from her on this occasion; for she instantly arose, and walked hastily to the house.

As it is not my design to dwell long on this part of my subject, I shall merely say, that Mr. Etherington, having made his sentiments known to Henrietta's parents, and it appearing to them that the young lady was really attached to him, Mr. and Mrs. Vaughen gave their consent, and in a few months Henrietta became the wife of a farmer, and carried to her husband's house that same simplicity of habit and elegance of manner which had rendered her so lovely and valuable as a daughter, and which qualities were the more estimable, as they were the fruits of the most decided Christian principles.

But, before this event took place, the young men returned to Cambridge, Adolphus Vaughen being perfectly satisfied that neither present misery nor future ruin were likely to be the consequence of his parent's plans of economy.

In the mean time, the autumn advancing, the winter approached. Henrietta was happily married, and found great comfort in her husband and his mother. It was a part of Emmeline's daily occupation to visit her sister, and receive from her lessons of humility and piety: and the father saw with delight and gratitude to God that this his youngest darling profited by these lessons, and that her character daily became more established, and less liable to fluctuate and alter with the opinions of those among whom she might associate.

And now, as I have already been obliged to enter with considerable minuteness into many scenes of this narrative, and as I shall probably be compelled to be equally particular in relating some others which are to come, I

shall notice somewhat more slightly certain events, with which it is necessary that I should briefly acquaint my readers.

After the marriage of Henrietta, which, although it proved to be so happy a one, did not meet with the approbation of the family at Stanbrook Court, nearly three years passed away at the rectory with little change in the family circle. Emmeline was now fully grown, and was of so beautiful and engaging an appearance, that few young women in the neighbourhood could, in that respect, be compared with her, though she was not so calm, nor did she possess that self-command, which had always been so remarkable and admirable in her sister, and which was rather the effect of principle than of insensibility. Yet the feelings of Emmeline were now under considerable control; and though her countenance exhibited more frequent changes of expression than Henrietta's, still this expression was so chastened, so subdued, and so generally indicative of those sentiments which are most amiable, that by some persons her speaking features and eloquent blushes were thought to render her even more attractive than her sister had ever been.

The birth of a child to this beloved sister had awakened all her sensibilities, and afforded a sweet employment for all her hours of leisure.

In the mean time, the family were become so reconciled to the kitchen, and had derived so much advantage to their circumstances; and experienced so great a freedom from care, through the addition to their income arising from Mrs. Alice Turner's residence in the house, that, although the time was drawing very near when Adolphus was to leave the University, Mr. Vaughen entertained no thoughts of disturbing his old lodger, or returning to his former mode of living. When speaking on this subject one day to his wife and daughter, he said, "When Adolphus leaves the University, we might, with care and economy, return to our parlour and keep another servant; but minute care and rigid economy would be necessary, and we should still be poor in the parlour."

"Then, papa," said Emmeline, "if I may give my opinion, I should greatly prefer being rich in the kitchen."

"Well then, my dear," said Mr. Vaughen, "things shall

remain as they are, if your mamma approves it: and I shall the more rejoice in this decision, because hereby peace and quietness will be insured to poor Mrs. Turner for some time to come, or perhaps, the Lord permitting, for the remainder of her life."

This decision being formed, the happy family prepared themselves, for the third time, to receive Adolphus and Theodore in their neat but unfashionable apartment for the long vacation: and this happy period having at length arrived, Emmeline again found herself supremely happy in the society of her brother and his friend, and enjoyed the pleasure of their company in her daily visits to her beloved Henrietta at her woodside farm.

It will now be necessary to mention a circumstance which had hitherto escaped the notice even of Mr. and Mrs. Vaughen, namely, a growing and deep-rooted attachment between Theodore and Emmeline, of which the young people themselves seemed hardly sensible, inasmuch as this regard had gradually changed from a kind of brotherly and sisterly affection into one of a more powerful nature.

As soon as Mr. Vaughen perceived this, he took alarm: not because he did not love Theodore, and would not have preferred him for a son-in-law above all others whom he knew; but he well knew that the parents of the young man were worldly people, and he feared that the cause of much unhappiness might arise from this quarter. He also felt that he himself was to blame for want of foresight: "For how," said he, "could I have allowed two such pleasing young people habitually to associate together without anticipating what might happen."

The sense of this carelessness grieved Mr. Vaughen, and led him to humble himself anew before the throne of grace; and at length he was brought to a conviction that he ought immediately to speak to Theodore, and persuade him to leave Emmeline, and seek no further to solicit her affection.

To give pain to those whom he loved was the most severe trial to which Mr. Vaughen could be exposed; nevertheless, he shrunk not from this duty, but took an early opportunity to open his mind to Theodore.

I shall not relate the conversation between Mr. Vaughen



and Theodore at full length, but shall merely mention to my reader the principal topics on which he addressed him.

As the young man, when addressed by his beloved tutor on the subject, instantly acknowledged his regard for Emmeline, Mr. Vaughen represented to him that her want of fortune and her humble education would certainly render her far from desirable as a daughter-in-law to his parents; and proceeded to point out to him the strong duty of his submitting his will to theirs, and he urged him, as he valued the blessing of God, not to seek his own pleasure at the risk of displeasing them: and although Theodore argued and pleaded with all the warmth and eloquence of youth, yet Mr. Vaughen insisted, that he should immediately return to his parents, and that he should also entirely cease, for the present, from the use of any means of engaging the affection of his daughter.

Theodore declared, that he never should cease to think of Emmeline, and never could be happy without her.

"I will grant all this," said Mr. Vaughen, "not only for the sake of argument, but because I believe that the man who has once loved Emmeline would not be satisfied very readily to make another choice: but still, my son, still I affirm, that your advantage and comfort will be more certainly insured by a simple and entire acquiescence in the divine will on this occasion, than by any attempt which you could make to control your own fortune, or form your own plans of happiness."

Mr. Vaughen then laboured to convince Theodore, that the sum of human wisdom consisted in a simple and entire resignation of the mind to the divine will, and in bringing our desires down to such things as we actually possess. And he pointed out to him the means by which such a state of submission and acquiescence might be obtained, even by sincere application to Him in whose hand are the hearts of all men.

It was a severe trial to poor Theodore to tear himself away from Emmeline, and to leave the peaceful and happy vicarage, in which he had spent so many delightful months, and even years, in order to become an inmate of his father's gay villa at Richmond, where every

sentiment which he heard expressed, was altogether in opposition to every thing which he had admired and loved in his tutor's house.

Emmeline shed, in secret, many tears at his departure; but, as he had not made any decided avowal of his attachment to her, she never seemed to suspect the occasion of his going, or to think that there was any thing extraordinary in his leaving the parsonage to visit his parents. Still, however, she retained the sweetest recollection of him, and often said, "When poor Theodore was here, we had many pleasant walks, and read many delightful books: I wish he could have staid with us a little longer!"

About this period, an event took place which tended a little to divert the attention of the family from Theodore and Emmeline.—Captain John Vaughen, who had been absent during several years from England, or who, if his ship had touched in the port, had not found time to come home, suddenly appeared at Stanbrook Court, and informed his friends that he was come to spend some months with them.

The Squire was, in his way, as has already been seen, not insensible to the feelings of natural affection, and the old ladies possessed a considerable share of family attachment, though this was not of a character sufficiently strong to counteract and remove their prejudices and impressions concerning worldly propriety and etiquette. The arrival, therefore, of the captain was a matter of great joy at Stanbrook Court, and, during the first evening, all was unmixed and noisy merriment; till the captain, who had repeatedly asked after his brother Henry's health, unfortunately put some further questions concerning him, which so entirely disconcerted the old ladies that they could not recover their placidity during the rest of the evening.

"I am ashamed," said Mrs. Dorothy Vaughen, "I am ashamed to talk to you about Henry, brother John. He was always, you know, a man of a singular way of thinking; and, lately, he has entirely lost himself, and quite banished himself from all good society."

"Ay!" said the captain: "I am sorry to hear it, very sorry. What can have been the matter?" and he looked

from his sister at the head of the table, to his brother at the lower end, with such an expression of uneasiness and perplexity as seldom appeared in his weather-beaten face. "Poor fellow! poor Harry!" he exclaimed, "what can he have done?"

The Squire drummed under the table, and drew up his mouth, determining that he would not for once speak upon a subject which had been a matter of continual debate between himself and his sisters: for the Squire maintained, that his brother had done perfectly right to live in a kitchen, if he had not wherewithal to support himself in a parlour; while his sisters averred, on the contrary, that no circumstances ought to have induced a Vaughen to submit to such a degradation.

As the Squire, therefore, would not speak, the ladies were obliged to tell the degrading tale of their brother's having for some years past sunk, together with his family, into the lowest life, residing with his servants in the kitchen, and obliging his daughters to perform some of the meanest offices of the household: neither did they finish their tale, till they had represented the whole family as being reduced to the lowest rank.

The captain listened with amazement, taking all that his sisters said for granted, and frequently interrupting their narrative with exclamations of, "Wonderful! surprising! such a man as Harry to be so fallen! the most gentlemanly man of the family, as he was always considered, begging your pardon, Squire! such a lively man, too, so fond as he was of refined company! Well, this is incredible! But I must go over to-morrow, and see him. Perhaps his purse is low; perhaps he wants help of that kind."

The sisters took alarm at this hint of the captain's, and would have dissuaded him from going over to the parsonage, "where," said they, "you will not meet with a reception fit for a gentleman."

But the captain rejected this idea with a smile, saying, "And what kind of a sailor must I be, if I cannot put up with a sorry birth for a few hours, especially for the sake of enjoying the company of a relative whom I have not seen for so many years?"

"Well, but, brother John," said the sisters, "will you

persuade him to forsake these disgraceful whims, this low life? Do advise him to leave his kitchen, and to bring up his only remaining daughter like a gentleman's. As to the elder, she is quite ruined—sacrificed to some low man, and sunk beyond recovery."

The countenance of the captain fell again, as he heard these changes rung upon the words "low life, ruin, sacrifices," &c. &c. and he promised his sisters that he would do what he could to persuade his brother to resume his character as a gentleman, and to restore his family to their proper rank in society.

The next morning, he, accordingly, took his departure immediately after breakfast; and, as he had as strong an antipathy to a horse as most other gentlemen of his profession, he made his way over the country to the rectory on foot, anticipating, as he went along, the sordid scenes he was to witness in his brother's house: he was struck, however, on entering the garden-gate, to see the little shrubbery perfectly neat, and the parterres blooming and fragrant with roses, jessamine, and other odoriferous plants.

He approached the house, and, knocking at the front door, it was presently opened to him by the ancient domestic, whose face he instantly recognized, and whose exclamation of joy, and loud repetition of his name, brought out all his relations from their different apartments, presenting such a group as instantly changed all the melancholy fancies of the captain into visions of Eden: for whereas middle age appeared in its most amiable form in the persons of Mr. and Mrs. Vaughan, blooming youth and beauty could scarcely be better represented than by Adolphus and Emmeline, by whom the captain was conducted into the sitting-room of the family, (the unfashionable denomination of which we would willingly sometimes avoid, in respect to our more courtly readers,) and made welcome with a sincerity and affection which for a moment quite overcame the man who had been so long absent from his country and family.

"Well, but," said the captain, after he had answered some of the many questions that were put to him by his brother, "I understood that I was to see something here which was to shock even my coarse nerves? Why, bro-

ther, how is this? You have got a very bad name in the country! What have you been doing? And your children, too!—they say that you have made a kitchen-maid of your daughter! Well, it may be so: but if all kitchen-maids were like this,” he said, looking towards Emmeline, “I can guess which end of most houses would in general be thought most agreeable.”

Mr. Vaughen replied, “Brother, I have done what I thought best in the situation in which I was placed: we were compelled to lower our habits, and reduce our establishment; but perhaps this very circumstance, under the divine blessing, made us more careful in attending to our manners and the cultivation of our minds.”

This speech of Mr. Vaughen was followed by an offer of money from the captain, which Mr. Vaughen would by no means accept, assuring his brother that he had been rich ever since he had lived in the kitchen; and he added, that he had brought down his habits to his circumstances, as the best means of preventing himself from incurring the constant guilt of breaking the tenth commandment: “for,” said he, “wherever there is a continued pressure of want, how difficult is it to refrain from coveting our neighbours’ goods!”

Another turn was then given to the conversation, and Mr. Vaughen endeavoured to lead his brother’s mind to the contemplation of religious subjects; for he saw and deeply deplored his ignorance in that respect; and, with a view, if the Lord pleased, to benefit him in this particular, he pressed him not only to dinner, but to remain in his house as long as he liked, that is, if he could put up with the inconveniences of his mode of life.

It is certain, that persons who have been used to travelling, and who have seen much of men and manners in foreign countries, however elegant they themselves may be in their own department, are not so wedded to particular forms, habits, and modes of living, as those individuals who have never left their native country; and the narrower a man’s sphere of observation has been, the more stress will he lay on such minutiae as perhaps have utterly escaped the observation of those who have taken a more extended view of life. So it was with Captain Vaughen: in the enjoyment of his brother’s society, and



in the kind attentions of his brother's family, he presently quite forgot the room in which he was sitting; and though when the old servant made up the fire after dinner, and put the kettle on for tea, his eyes were fixed on her with a steadfastness which made Mrs. Vaughen rather nervous, yet, had he at the moment been asked what he was looking at, it would probably have occasioned him some reflection before he could reply.

But this easiness or carelessness about trifles which we often see in travellers and foreigners, is what the English in general cannot understand, and perhaps nothing more annoys an Englishman, returning, after a long absence, to his native country, than the necessity in which he finds himself of attending to a countless number of et ceteras, the importance of which he cannot now be made to feel. But it may well be hoped, that, when true religion universally prevails in this country, its inhabitants will cease to be occupied by this infinite variety of nothings by which their attention is for the most part monopolized.

But whether it was in consequence of the Captain's ease on these minor points, or that his brother Henry's house abounded in comforts which he found nowhere else, certain it is, that after a short residence at Stanbrook Court, he returned to the rectory, and taking up his abode in the spare room left by poor Theodore, he made his brother's house his head-quarters, and said that he hoped he should not be obliged to change them while he remained in England.

Soon after the arrival of the captain, Adolphus was ordained; and, as he was so happy as to get a curacy close to his father's habitation, he was enabled still to live at home, and daily to visit and instruct his people, which duty he performed in simplicity and Christian sincerity.

This circumstance afforded great comfort to the parents and sisters of the young man, especially to Emmeline, who sometimes still wondered that so little was heard of Theodore, and that he so seldom wrote to any of the family.

And now, having described the situation of Mr. Vaughen's family, and spoken of their numerous comforts, we will turn to poor Theodore, whom we dismissed in a very disconsolate mood, fearing that he should never be happy again as long as he lived; and we will take up

his history from the time when he left the rectory and became an inmate of his father's house.

Mr. Owen, Theodore's father, was a counsellor and a member of parliament. He had, therefore, been in the habit of associating with persons of consequence and distinction in the kingdom; and his children, of whom he had many, had all, with the exception of Theodore, been brought up with the idea that riches and honour were necessary to their well-being in society, and that they must acquire these by their own exertions.

Through the divine mercy, Theodore had been preserved from this vicious mode of instruction, by the interference of an uncle, his godfather, who, being himself a clergyman, and an old bachelor, promised to undertake the expense of his education, provided that his education was to be conducted according to his views, which were decidedly Christian. This uncle had been dead only a few months before his nephew returned to Richmond, and, when dying, he had left Theodore two thousand pounds, upon the possession of which he was not to enter till he had attained priest's orders.

As Mr. Owen had but little fortune to leave his children, although he had brought them up with habits and notions equal to the highest expectations, it will not occasion much surprise in my readers when I say, that the legacy left to Theodore was an occasion of bitter envy among his brothers and sisters, who earnestly coveted this money, blaming their uncle for partiality, and expressing the most eager and unrestrained desires for some such bequest from others of their relations in their own favour; being, in consequence, induced to look forward with impatience and anxiety to the deaths of those elderly persons in the family from whom they entertained the slightest expectation.

While the minds of the young people of the family were in this state of irritation, Theodore arrived, and was received by his brothers and sisters with a coldness which added to the dejection of his mind; though he attributed his coldness rather to the dissimilarity of their educations and former modes of life, than to any decided feelings of envy or dislike: for as he had himself thought little of his uncle's bequest, excepting as it afforded a proof of that

good man's regard, he had no idea of the feelings which it had excited in the breasts of his family. Neither did Theodore derive more satisfaction from the society of his parents than from the presence of his brothers and sisters. His father was cold-hearted and had his mind full of the world; he spent few hours at home, excepting at his meals, and on these occasions it usually happened that, at least some one or other of his youngest son's opinions or sentiments, most of which had been imbibed from Mr. Vaughen, was brought forward for the ridicule of the younger part of the family and the grave discussion of the elder.

At these times, both Theodore and his views were determinately opposed by his father, contemptuously censured by his mother, and condemned to run the gauntlet of all the fine ladies his sisters, and the men of the world his brothers. Nor was it possible for him, either by silence or other means, to escape these attacks: for whatever might be the subject of conversation, his brothers and sisters always contrived to make such a reference to him as might call forth his sentiments in opposition to those of the rest of the family, and they did this in such a manner, as generally to represent his views as utterly ridiculous; and because Theodore maintained that it was the duty of every Christian to bring his desires down to his circumstances, and rather to seek to make the best use of that which he actually possessed, than to be cager to obtain more, he was accounted by the whole family as but little better than a fool; and his mother not unfrequently said, when she was under the irritation of these occasions, that she wished his wise uncle had let him alone; for if he had laid out as much as three thousand pounds upon him, he had made him at least three thousand pounds the worse for it.

Such being the young man's condition in the family, it will not be wondered at that he rejoiced at the termination of the long vacation, although he could not look forward to the enjoyment of his friend Adolphus's society for the ensuing year, which was the last that he himself had to spend at Cambridge.

As he was about to take his degree immediately after the Christmas vacation, he was excused from visiting

Richmond at that season; but as his business at the University was completed before the long vacation, he was obliged to make up his mind to return home at that period, and to remain there until the time should arrive for his ordination, which was to take place in the autumn.

During this period Theodore had never ceased to think of the lovely Emmeline, but it was with that submission of his mind to the divine will which the most correct principles of religion inculcate: and thus, this affection, so far from tending to unsettle him, had, at once, the effect of strengthening and ennobling his mind, and preserving his heart from the dangerous influences of worldly and unholy females.

When Theodore arrived at Richmond on the commencement of the long vacation, he found the family in high glee, his elder brother being on the eve of marriage with one of two coheirresses, daughters of a city banker, and women of the first ton.

This marriage was regarded as a great thing for the family, and nothing but amusements and large dinners, parties on the water, little dances in the family, and visits to Ranelagh, and other places of summer resort, occupied the minds of the young people.

During these scenes of gaiety, Theodore, for some time, escaped, not only from ridicule, but even, as he hoped, from notice; although he not unfrequently joined such of the family parties as he considered not unbecoming the sacred character which he was about to assume. But suddenly he found himself brought forward into notice, particularly by his father, his mother, and his eldest sister: and whereas these individuals, if they had ever condescended to regard him at all, had treated him no otherwise than as a well-meaning creature who was not altogether right in his head, they now took every possible occasion to do him public honour, and to pay the highest apparent deference to his opinion. Mrs. Owen, especially, became, all at once, so fond of his company that she would not stir without her dear Theodore; and in every party of pleasure at which she was present, she declared that she had no comfort without the arm of this her beloved son. Theodore was too simple and unpractised in deception to conceive of any reason but what appeared

to him the most natural one for this change, namely, that his parents through often seeing him began to love him better; and he accordingly met their advances with the utmost respect and cordiality.

In the mean time, the marriage of the elder brother took place, and the new-married couple immediately repaired to Brighton, accompanied by the younger Miss Owen, who was a year older than Theodore: while the bride's sister, Miss Caroline Clayton, remained at Richmond with Mr. and Mrs. Owen.

It was now that the late change in Mr. and Mrs. Owen's conduct was accounted for, and Theodore was informed by his father, that there was good reason for concluding, that, if he would conduct himself prudently, it was possible, from certain hints which had fallen from the young lady, that he might obtain the unmarried coheirress, and thus share the great fortune with his brother.

The manner in which Theodore received this information was such as enabled his father instantly to discover the state of his affections, on which, he immediately charged him with having bestowed them without consulting his parents' inclinations.

Had Theodore attempted to dissemble he would not have been able to succeed; but he had no wish of the kind; on the contrary, he rather rejoiced in an opportunity of entirely opening his heart, and he therefore related the whole history of the progress of his regard for Emmeline, of the undesigning and unsuspecting character of the young lady, and the honourable conduct of her father.

It was impossible for Mr. Owen to blame Mr. Vaughen, but he was extremely irritated and angry with his son, and told him, that, as he was not bound by any promise to Miss Vaughen, he insisted, as he valued his blessing, upon his not rejecting the high fortune now offered to him.

Theodore was silent: upon which his father began to argue with him, alleging a variety of apparent inducements to prevail on him to adopt the mode of conduct which he desired. He first pointed out the perishable nature of that feeling which the world calls love, and he assured him that it would be instantly extinguished by poverty: "whereas," added he, "the comforts arising from a large fortune are as lasting as life itself." He con-



cluded by painting in the most formidable colours all the dreadful consequences of want of money, namely, duns, creditors, matrimonial jangles, mean shifts, loss of honour, and universal contempt.

Theodore replied, "That he had never seen any thing of this kind under Mr. Vaughen's roof, although the income of that gentleman was so narrow that he had been obliged to give up a servant and to let a part of his house: but never, Sir, never," added Theodore, with earnestness, "did I witness so much peace in any family as in Mr. Vaughen's, or such entire freedom from worldly care, or so much true elegance and ease of mind."

"There is an old saying," said the counsellor, with a kind of sneering laugh, "that love is blind: the story is as old as the heathen mythology."

"But, Sir," said Theodore, "is it not possible for one man to be rich with a small income, and another man to be poor with a very princely one? Does not this great metropolis furnish daily instances of this latter character? And I have often heard Mr. Vaughen remark, that poverty is not so much the effect of want of money, especially among persons in the middle ranks of life, as of want of humility and moderation: for if every necessary and comfort of life for a family may be purchased with one hundred pounds a year, what is to make the possessor of that one hundred pounds poor, excepting that he has not courage to accommodate his modes of life to his circumstances, and that he is determined to live according to some specified plan which either he or his neighbours had laid down as necessary for him?"

This remark of Theodore's was followed by a burst of contempt and anger from his father, who, using the same strain of sarcasm which Theodore had improperly begun, represented the sentiments which his son had expressed, in so many ridiculous points of view, that the young man, though not convinced, was utterly confounded, and was glad to be saved from further ridicule by the entrance of a gentleman on business which could not be postponed. But Theodore only escaped from his father to encounter a repetition of the same arguments from his mother, who, with the assistance of his sister, left no means untried to persuade him to marry a lady who

had little to recommend her but a dashing air and an immense fortune. The heads of the assertions, we will not call them arguments, urged by these ladies were as follows:—It is necessary for persons born in a certain rank of life to live in a certain way. The ladies of course considered this proposition as self-evident, inasmuch as they took no pains whatever to prove its truth.—Every person who begins life with a small income must inevitably run into debt, and be subject to all the horrors of duns, debts, and miserable resources.—A poor man must in consequence be a mean man, and of course will be despised by all the world and become the shame of his own family.

Theodore in this place ventured to assert that a man might have but a small income and yet not be distressed by poverty: a remark which was received with the utmost contempt by the ladies, and set down to the young man's want of experience.

The ladies next asserted that it was absolutely impossible but that persons living in an humble manner must necessarily be mean, vulgar, and low, and unfit altogether for refined society. And they concluded by declaring, that matches arising out of affection only, without a view to prudence, were seldom happy; these schemes being more suited for Arcadian scenery than for real life.

It was only in vain that Theodore brought forward some of Mr. Vaughen's best arguments to prove that poverty, shame, and disgrace, did not proceed so much from the want of money as from the want of prudence and firmness, in not previously modelling the mode of life in accommodation to the income, and then steadily adhering to the previous arrangements. By these arguments he only inflamed the anger of his mother and excited the contempt of his sister, and Mrs. Owen concluded her remarks by telling him, that, unless he submitted his inclination to that of his father in the case in point, he would certainly incur his highest resentment; and that if he chose to live like a tinker when settled in life, he must not calculate upon the notice and countenance of his family.

Theodore's feelings on this occasion were, no doubt, very painful, but he was a Christian, and he therefore

considered that the persons with whom he had to deal were those to whom he owed the most solemn duties. He accordingly retired to his own apartment, and, after some time spent before the throne of grace, he wrote a respectful and dutiful letter to his parents, promising, that if they would excuse his engaging in a connexion on which he could not think without the utmost reluctance, he would patiently wait their acquiescence to that union, which, he felt assured, would, if sanctioned by them, constitute the happiness of his life.

When this letter was received, the parents, judging that they might perhaps succeed better in their ambitious project by not pressing the matter further at present, affected to be satisfied, and contented themselves with holding out just so much encouragement to the young lady as might keep alive her regard for Theodore: for certain it was that she had conceived a liking for him, and allowed this fancy to be made known to the parents, a mode of conduct, however, which few circumstances indeed can justify in a female.

In the mean time, the period arrived for Theodore's ordination, after which he gladly retired to a small curacy, which he had obtained, in one of the richest but most sequestered parishes in the beautiful county of Kent. There, surrounded by orchards and hop-yards, he could almost fancy himself again in Herefordshire; and although he had not the sweet society that he had there enjoyed, yet was he not backward in cherishing gratitude for his retreat from worldly society, and for the opportunity now afforded him of communion with his God, and of pursuing those studies that are particularly necessary for one whose business it was to become the instructor of others. The salary which Theodore was to receive from his curacy was fifty pounds a year, to which income his father promised to add another, which, together with the interest of his legacy, made up one hundred and fifty pounds per annum. With this income, at that time, the young man might have lived handsomely, have dressed well, have paid for the best lodging that the village would afford, and, perhaps, have kept a horse: but it had pleased God to inspire him with other views in laying out his money than those ordinary and selfish

ones which are indulged by the natural man. He resolved as soon as he entered upon his curacy to establish himself at a rate of expenditure considerably below his income, and to devote what he thereby saved to charitable purposes. With this intention, he hired two apartments in an old farm-house, a parlour and a bed-chamber, and he engaged the old lady of the house and her maid to attend upon him. His parlour was large and duly furnished with two corner-cupboards painted blue, with a corner fire-place, over which he hung a fine old print of the crucifixion, and with a large casement window which commanded a prospect of an orchard, a hay-rick, and a cow-house, and, through an opening of the trees, a view of a black-and-white cottage standing at a corner of the hop-yard, and a distant eminence crowned with trees.

When Theodore engaged this quiet apartment, which he thought delightful, it never once occurred to him that the approach to it was through the large old-fashioned kitchen which was occupied by the family, that the tables were of oak and the chairs of walnut, that corner-cupboards were vulgar things, especially when painted blue, and that his new mahogany book-case with glass doors, which was a present from an old aunt, put all the rest of the furniture entirely out of countenance.

Notwithstanding these inauspicious circumstances, the young minister found himself more comfortable in his uncouth parlour than he had been for many months; and, soon after he was settled in his new abode, his happiness was inexpressibly increased by a visit from Adolphus, who arrived, according to a long-standing agreement, in order to assist and advise him on his first setting out in his professional career.

And now, were it to my present purpose, I could say much respecting the sweet counsel which these two young men took together, how they ordered and improved their time, how they exhorted each other to a simple and holy life, and how the elder pressed the younger to an earnest and unwearied discharge of his duties as a minister.

As Adolphus could so manage matters as to continue with Theodore one entire month, he accompanied him on his first visit to his parishioners; after which, they divided the parish into districts, one of which Theodore

purposed to visit daily in order to administer spiritual supplies to all, and temporal assistance to those that needed.

This visit of Adolphus was exceedingly serviceable to Theodore, and though the young men suffered a great deal from the separation which followed, yet Theodore felt himself much strengthened and confirmed by the timely assistance of his brother, and after his departure he pursued with the strictest regularity the plans which they had mutually formed.

While together, the young men had refrained from speaking much of Emmeline; the one from brotherly delicacy, and the other from a sense of honour: but Theodore had ventured to send her a short note by her brother, and a little drawing of the view from his parlour window, both of which were highly prized by her and placed carefully among her treasures.

It is certain that those who humbly acquiesce in the will of God, and who are enabled to do their duty in that state of life in which it hath pleased the Lord to place them, will enjoy great peace, though amidst circumstances of much bereavement of creature comfort; and thus it was with Theodore: though separated from all those persons whom he loved best on earth, and doubting whether he might ever be restored to his Emmeline, yet he enjoyed such happiness in his little curacy as the beloved of the Lord alone experience. One day passed with him much as another, in one continued round of cheerful duties: he arose at six, breakfasted early, and studied divinity till one, at this hour he dined, and then walked out to see his people and visit a school which he had established; he returned to tea at five, and read till eight, at which time he had family worship in the kitchen with all the farmer's servants, and at nine the whole family retired to rest.

As the spring and summer advanced, he derived additional pleasure from the new beauties which adorned his walks, and he often declared that he believed no region throughout the kingdom possessed such a rich variety of hill and dale, coppice, brook, waterfall, dingle, lawn, and upland, as was to be found within his little parish.

Theodore had now been more than seven months at his curacy, and had never once desired to leave his charge,



when one day, after having spent a peaceful morning and taken his early dinner, he went out to walk, as usual, to call on a poor widow who appeared to be near her end, and whose residence lay in a beautiful dingle at some distance from his habitation. She had lately occupied much of his thoughts and time, and he was returning full of joy because he thought he had discerned a saving work begun in her heart, when he was startled at the unusual sight of a post-chaise in the farm-yard, and being instantly accosted by his father's servant out of livery, he was informed that his mother and sister were actually in the house.

Theodore tried to feel and look pleased when he received this information, and, without asking himself whether he really was so, he hastened in and ran to receive the embraces of his mother.

After the first salutations were over, and the family party had taken their seats near the window, Theodore asked his mother whether she had dined, and whether he should order a mutton-chop or the tea-things.

"Neither," she replied, "on our account; we can do very well till your dinner is ready."

"My dinner!" said Theodore, smiling. "I have dined at least these four hours."

"Dined!" said Mrs. Owen; "what at one o'clock?"

Theodore now recollected for the first time the extreme melegance of such a custom, and stammering out some apology, said, "Had I expected you, Madam, I would certainly have waited."

"Me! my dear," said Mrs. Owen; "you could not expect me, and therefore I am of course out of the question; but for your own comfort I wonder you should adopt such uncouth and extraordinary habits."

"It is always the same to me," said Theodore, "when I eat; but you must not suffer for my whims;" and he immediately rang and called for what the house would afford; and while his respectable hostess was bustling to get all things ready, he made many inquiries about his father, brothers, and sisters.

"Your father is well," said his mother, coldly, "but he is not in good spirits."

Theodore was going to ask if he had any particular cause for uneasiness, but was interrupted by Miss Bell,

who said, "Theodore, I have been admiring your cupboards: they are the very pink of elegance."

Theodore looked around him as if to find out something new; and then, smiling, said, "Why, at any rate, sister, they are suitable to the rest of the apartment; you will at least allow that?"

"To be sure," said Miss Bell; "no one will dispute that point. You certainly have chosen a most elegant residence."

The necessity of a reply to this remark was precluded by the entrance of the mistress of the house, who, to do honour to her guests, came in with her servant-maid, a red-armed country girl, to prepare the table and set on such food as she had ready.

Theodore, pleased by her condescension and endeavours to set things off for the best, thought it right to speak on the subject, and said, "Mrs. Simpson, do not give yourself the trouble."

The old lady declared it was not a trouble but a pleasure to wait on any friend of Mr. Owen's. Notwithstanding this hint, the two ladies from London took no notice of the courtesy of the country dame, but as soon as she was gone out, the elder of the two remarked that there was a decent looking village in the parish through which they had passed, and added that she supposed it would afford something more respectable in the way of a lodging than the one that her son now occupied.

"O, mamma," said Miss Bell, "but you forget Theodore's taste, and the high relish he professes for low life."

"Well, sister," returned Theodore, somewhat hastily, "will you eat? perhaps you may find my food better than my lodgings."

While Mrs. Owen and her daughter were partaking of the plain but excellent fare set before them, Theodore had leisure to contemplate the expression of his mother's countenance, in which he feared that he read some expression of vexation.

Mrs. Owen had been a handsome woman; and still, with the assistance of a well-chosen dress, a fashionable air, and a slight tincture of artificial colour in her cheeks, she passed for a fine woman in the gay world. Her manner in society was lively, and she knew how to assume those smiles and

that expression of countenance which convey the idea of a person's being pleased with their company; but when off her guard, her features returned to their natural expression, which was that of discontent, disappointment, and anxiety: and at this time, though evidently endeavouring to conceal her feelings, she was extremely dissatisfied and disconcerted at the situation in which she found her son, and it was with difficulty that she restrained her emotions within those bounds, in which it was necessary to confine them, in order to promote the end that she had in view by her visit, which was, if possible, to discover the state of her son's affection, and to find out whether there was any prospect of accomplishing the family views, which were to effect a marriage between him and Miss Caroline Clayton.

It is extremely difficult, and almost impossible, for persons who are very nearly connected, and whose views are entirely at variance, to associate with each other even for a few hours without falling into argument, however great may be the forbearance on the one side and the desire to please on the other. Accordingly, this danger was felt in a very strong degree, during the remainder of the evening, both by the mother and son, and the restraint under which each of them laboured was so great, that they frequently made efforts to converse, and as often relapsed into silence; for every subject on which they entered seemed, to the mind of one or the other, connected with some point which might lead to dispute; and at length the effort to converse became so painful that they both fairly gave up the attempt, leaving all the talk to Miss Bell, who amused herself with ridiculing all that she saw in and about her brother's lodgings.

"And how long, Theodore," said she, "have you deemed a hay-stack and a cow-house such very agreeable objects? though, I believe, these things are considered more picturesque than a well-plastered house with sash-windows, and an elegant carriage at the door; and, perhaps," added she, "according to the new rage for the picturesque, a kitchen maid, with her cap on one side and a coloured apron, would be a better subject for a painter, than an elegant lady in the precincts of St. James's."

"Go on, sister," said Theodore, "I love to hear you talk."

Arabella presently remarked, that there was something very venerable in oak tables and corner fire-places: "There is nothing," said she, "in these indicative of a new family or of the upstart."

As the young lady, soon however, perceived that she failed to provoke her brother by these remarks, which he felt as in no way concerning himself, for he was only a lodger, as he observed, she became more personal, and told him that his coat was threadbare and that his hair wanted cutting, and proceeded from one thing to another till the young gentleman, calling for tea and candles, walked out into the kitchen to officiate at the family devotions, and left the young lady to recollect herself.

Thus passed this disagreeable evening, till the ladies retired to rest in Theodore's own apartment, which he gave up for the occasion.

In the morning Theodore was down some time before his visitors, and found his little breakfast-table set out with his landlady's best china, and with such a supply of white and brown bread, cream, and grass butter, as again called forth some expressions of thanks for these kind attentions: and as his mother and sister did not yet appear, he sat down to his usual studies, hoping that he should meet his friends with a better temper after a good night's rest. But in this particular he was disappointed, for his mother had commanded her temper during the preceding evening in order to feel her way previous to the commencement of a grand attack which she meant to make in the morning.

Accordingly, after a sullen meal taken somewhat in haste, Mrs. Owen began to open her mind to her son, and plainly told him all that she disapproved of in his conduct. She began her discourse by informing him, that his father was very low, and that he was the cause of his uneasiness. "We much regret, Theodore," she said, "that we allowed your uncle to interfere with respect to your education, and to insist upon your continuing so long with Mr. Vaughn, in whose family you have acquired a taste so decidedly low that the two thousand pounds which your uncle has left you will never make up for the injury that he has done you by educating you among persons of mean inclinations and habits."

Here the lady paused, and Theodore continued silent, while she thus proceeded.

“An elegant young woman of large fortune and amiable disposition offers you her hand and her heart; she is approved by your parents, and loved by your sisters: but you obstinately and perseveringly reject her, and that, because you pretend already to have bestowed your affections on a person without fortune, unknown to fashion, of low habits, and one utterly disapproved of by your parents; and you affect, moreover, a singularity in your own dress, and manners, and views, which renders you totally unfit for the society of your brothers and sisters, who are elegant and fashionable young people.”

Theodore was still silent, though his mother stopped purposely to allow him to speak, upon which she resumed her discourse with increased heat, and told him that she was now come expressly to try what might be done with him, as his father had resolved to renounce him if he did not determine immediately to comply with his will.

Theodore coloured on hearing this, and rejoined, “My father probably remembers the promise that I made to him in writing before I left Richmond, and by that I am willing to abide.”

On this his sister flamed out, but his mother pretended to be melted into tears.

Theodore had a tender heart, and his mother's tears, or seeming tears, affected him much: he, however, continued firm, and particularly stated and explained to her the motives by which he desired to be actuated throughout life. “I am,” said he, “the minister of a religion which teaches me to renounce the world, and to take up my cross daily; a religion which requires of its votaries to desire no honour but that which cometh from God, and to bestow whatever property I might be able to spare from my own necessities to supply the wants of the poor. From principle, therefore, I trust, and not from caprice, have I chosen this humble but pleasant apartment; and I wear this coat, which my sister says is threadbare, in order that I may provide a coat for him who wants one. I wish, indeed, to avoid every thing that is mean or sordid; but I am well convinced, that the minister whose



heart is devoted to vain desires, and who covets the honours, riches, or pleasures of this world, cannot be truly dedicated to the service of his God. I love Emmeline, it is true, and I admire above all things the humility and christian simplicity in which she has been educated: but, were there not such a person existing as Emmeline, I solemnly declare, that, with my present views, I never could consent to marry a gay, expensive, fashionable woman, such as Miss Caroline Clayton."

As Mrs. Owen could not understand the motives of her son's conduct, her anger was rather increased than allayed by this statement of his views and sentiments; and she showed her displeasure by ordering the chaise, and taking her departure with her daughter, saying, as she stepped into the carriage, "I am therefore to tell your father that you are determined to abide by your letter?"

"Tell him," said Theodore, "every thing that is affectionate and dutiful on my part; but entreat him not to press this one point."

"That is as much as to say," remarked Arabella, "that you will oblige your father whenever it suits you so to do, and have your own way when it does not."

Thus the relations parted: but by this short visit the peace of poor Theodore was for a time so much disturbed, that his vivacity forsook him, his cheeks became pale, and he lost his appetite; and notwithstanding the care of his good landlady, it was evident to all who saw the young man that his health was gradually declining, although the cause was not known to any one in the neighbourhood. Theodore, however, still continued to commit his way unto the hand of his heavenly Master, and he was enabled religiously to adhere to the promise which he had made to Mr. Vaughen of not seeking by any means, either open or covert, to solicit the affections of Emmeline.

In the interim, among his friends, many things were working in his favour: one was, that some persons of distinction, from town, who had been visiting at Sir Thomas Freeman's came back and brought such a report of the lovely appearance and interesting manners of Emmeline, as greatly tended to remove the prejudices of Mr. and Mrs. Owen against her; and at the same time their elder son confessed to his parents, what they had before

suspected, that his happiness was destroyed by the violent temper of his wife, as he feared his estate would be by her excessive extravagance.

These circumstances made them look the more closely into the character of the other sister; and they now perceived in her conduct improprieties which they had never before either noticed or suspected. But perhaps even these would not have been sufficient to intimidate them from the pursuit of her money, had not she herself brought the matter to a speedy issue by running off with a gentleman whom she had seen but three times before; thus proving that her regard for Theodore was a whim of short duration, and one that she had for some time ceased to indulge.

While Mr. and Mrs. Owen were under the influence of the various feelings excited by these circumstances which I have just related, news was brought to them, through a medical man in Kent, of the distressing state of Theodore's health; and the parents were suddenly made to feel, by Him in whose hands are the hearts of all men, that they were sacrificing the health, and perhaps the life, of an excellent son to their ambitious feelings. They accordingly sent for him up to town, assuring him that they would never press him to enter into any alliance contrary to his own feelings, and also informing him that they should not refuse their consent to the connexion that he desired whenever circumstances might render such a measure prudent.

Notwithstanding the joy that was conveyed to the heart of Theodore by this letter, still, when he arrived in town, he looked so ill, that his parents were excessively alarmed; and, as his illness continued, they at length made the circumstance known to Mr. Vaughen, whom Theodore had often expressed a strong desire to see, and they accordingly requested the good man to visit Richmond.

Mr. Vaughen instantly complied with the request, and was in the arms of his beloved pupil in the shortest time possible after the receipt of the letter.

On the arrival of Mr. Vaughen, Theodore revived a little; but, again relapsing, the physician advised that he should go into the country, and the young man pleaded

hard to be permitted to accompany his tutor into Herefordshire.

"Ah, Theodore," said Mr. Vaughen, "what would be more delightful! But my house must be interdicted to you, for reasons that you but too well understand."

"I will not ask to accompany you then," said Theodore, "without the approbation of my parents."

"And unless," said Mr. Vaughen, "they will be content to abide the issue of this proposed visit into Herefordshire."

Theodore pleaded the cause with his parents, and obtained their consent; at which my reader might perhaps be surprised, were I not to mention, that Mr. Owen had lately heard some rumours respecting Captain Vaughen, and his intentions towards his nieces: for the captain had, within the few last months, relinquished his official engagements, and returned to the rectory. The happy Theodore was, accordingly, put into a post-chaise, with his beloved tutor, in order that he might proceed by easy stages into Herefordshire.

When out of the atmosphere of the fashionable world, and beyond the paralyzing influence of worldly persons, the young minister seemed to breathe again, and his languid eye began to beam anew with hope and pleasure. How greatly did he enjoy the first evening that he spent on the road with Mr. Vaughen! and his paternal friend was more than once obliged to call him to order, such was the buoyancy and even playfulness of his spirit.

On the third day, in the evening, they drew near to their desired haven; and since poor Mrs. Vaughen had become an inmate of her kitchen, she had never so thoroughly relished the sound of an approaching carriage as she did at the moment when the rumbling sound of the post-chaise which was conveying Mr. Vaughen and Theodore was heard at a distance through the stillness of the night, and became every instant more loud, till the vehicle having entered the gate, was the next moment at the door of the house.

"O how comfortable does that fire-side appear!" said Mr. Vaughen, as he looked through the window of the sitting-room. "Be it kitchen, or be it parlour, it matters little, does it, Theodore. 'Tis all delightful in my eyes."

Theodore could not speak, but he pressed Mr. Vaughen's hand, and at the same moment the carriage stopped; and the door of the house being burst open, such a group appeared within as made Theodore scarcely able to keep his seat till the carriage door could be opened. Amid the foremost was Adolphus, who hastened down the steps to the carriage. Behind him, though rather in a retreating attitude, stood the lovely Emmeline, with her whole face in a glow of delight, as appeared by the light of a candle, that happened to be held near her by nurse. Mrs. Vaughen and Henrietta stood near Emmeline, and uncle John and Mr. Etherington filled up the background.

As Theodore sprang from the carriage, either from excessive joy or fatigue, his head became giddy, and his steps faltered. Adolphus was ready to support him. His weakness, however, was but momentary, yet it terrified Mrs. Vaughen and her daughters, and Emmeline especially, who burst into tears. "O my Emmeline!" said Theodore, "why those tears? I am much better than I have been, but I was overcome by joy and gratitude. Yes," he said, looking round on all the dear party, "gratitude for my present happiness: to be thus restored to all, all I love, it is too much!"

"Come, come," said Mr. Vaughen, "no more of this. My sons, you will look to the worldly goods that we have brought with us, and you, my good nurse, must supply us with refreshments." So saying, he proceeded triumphantly into that same renowned apartment of which so much has already been said; and when he saw all his family once again gathered round him, he exclaimed, "I don't know how it is, but I believe, my Emmeline, that you have infected me with your folly; for I really feel as if I should be glad to do as ladies do when they are happy, to have a hearty fit of weeping. Rich in the kitchen!" said the good man, looking round him: "yes, I am rich in the kitchen: never was a richer man! May the Almighty grant that I may be a grateful man! yes, my children, that I may be grateful, and that you may be grateful, and ever ready to praise and bless your God for every mercy."

All the company present were affected by these expressions of the father's cheerful and pious feelings. Emme-

line wept again; and Theodore took her hand, and endeavoured to speak, but was not able. The captain uttered a kind of groan, which he tried to turn off; Mrs. Vaughen wiped her eyes; and Henrietta took her father's hand, and pressed it to her lips. The bustlings of nurse, and the entrance of Adolphus and Mr. Etherington, who had dismissed the postillion, were no unpleasant interruptions to the highly-wrought state of the feelings of the party gathered round the fire: and, before the hunger of the travellers was satisfied, composure was restored to every countenance, and a serene and tranquil sense of happiness filled every breast.

In this delightful situation, and under the kind care of Mrs. Vaughen, Emmeline, and nurse, Theodore, with the blessing of Providence, presently recovered his health, and was enabled to enjoy all the charms of the opening spring in the society of her whom he had so long and so faithfully loved.

Theodore returned in the summer to his curacy, and remained there till he obtained priest's orders, at which time he went back into Herefordshire to demand the hand of Emmeline.

"And pray," said the captain, who by this time had made up his mind to live with his brother during the remainder of his life, "and pray, young man, how do you mean to support your wife?"

"I have a hundred a year of my own," said Theodore, "and my father promises to give me another: I have also a curacy."

"And I suppose," said the captain, "you expect something from me?"

"No, Sir," replied Theodore, "nothing but your regard and best wishes."

"Well," said the captain, "I will be better, then, than you expect:" and he immediately produced a deed of gift by which he presented each of his brother Henry's children with two thousand pounds, not forgetting his niece at the farm, who by this time was become the happy mother of two fine children.

Mrs. Alice Turner had for some months past grown so infirm as to be entirely confined to her apartment. On this occasion Mr. Vaughen provided her with a sofa and



table in her bed-room ; and, feeling that his circumstances were now entirely restored, he added some new furniture to his parlour, papered and painted it, and proposed that it should be taken possession of and re-entered on Emeline's wedding-day.

On this delightful occasion, while all the family were sitting at breakfast, after the performance of the interesting ceremony, the happy father thus addressed his children:—"My dear children," he said, "it is now four years, since, finding my circumstances disordered, and my income not equal to the answering of my expenses, I was led, by Divine Providence, to contract my expenditure, to dismiss one out of two servants, and to make certain other retrenchments. You well know, my children, how the world, and even my most intimate friends and acquaintance, opposed and ridiculed this measure, using arguments which certainly would have prevailed with me, had not my conduct, through the divine assistance, been regulated by those principles of justice and duty, the nature of which cannot, by any train of circumstances, be altered. I adopted the tenth commandment as my rule of conduct. This commandment saith, 'Thou shalt not covet;' and I felt, that, while living amidst circumstances in which more money than I actually possessed was necessary to supply my wants, it was utterly impossible for me even to attempt to observe this divine injunction. What then remained to be done, but to put myself, as much as possible, out of the reach of temptation ? and I had no other prospect of doing this than by arranging my plans of living so much within the compass of my means, as that I might entirely be set at liberty from cares of this depressing nature.

"How to accomplish this I knew not, and I was, therefore, for a while in strange perplexity ; but the way begun at length to be opened before me, and I was enabled to see some inches forward: one thing after another gradually unfolded itself, and presently I beheld the whole way in which I ought to walk. To be sure, the path was narrow, and, at any rate, not paved with glory, to use a favourite expression of the French historians. It appeared, however, to me to be made so incomparably preferable to the labyrinth of thorns and briars in which I had lately been involved, that

I hesitated not a moment in resolving to advance in it and was not a little strengthened in my purpose by your excellent wife here, my good Mr. Etherington, who entered on the scheme so cheerfully, that I once or twice looked to see if her eyes were wide open, or if she really was thoroughly apprized of what she was undertaking. So Henrietta and I went foremost, and her dear mother came trembling afterwards with Emmeline, who had a tear in one eye, and her finger in the other; while the enemy clapped his hands, and filled the air with shouts and clamours; and, what was worse than all, with such peals of contemptuous laughter as made the very echoes ring again. We, however, went on, and to speak after the manner of that good man, John Bunyan, 'After a while the shouts of the multitude did cease, and anon we heard nothing but the rushing of the waters of mercy, and the murmuring of the doves in the cliffs of the rocks. So we came on, and though we experienced one or two brushes from the enemy without, and the enemy within; yet after a while we came to the end of the strait, and are now arrived, as you see, at a wonderful fair and pleasant height, where we may look back on the troubles which we have passed, and look forward to the glories which are to come.' And if we are not filled with love and gratitude, I maintain that there is not one among us who deserves the name of a Christian."

No one made any reply to this speech of Mr. Vaughen's, for no one could; even uncle John was in tears. At this tender moment, however, a loud halloo indicated the approach of more company. Every one tried to look unconcerned, and in came the good Squire, roaring out a scrap of the old song, "Come, see rural felicity," and telling his brother that he should have been present two hours before, had he not encountered a badger-hunt at the ford of a river near which his way lay, which he found it impossible to leave till he had seen the issue.

"And so, brother Henry," added he, after having paid his compliments to the bride, "so you are in your parlour again; I don't know but I am sorry for it, for I have spent so many happy hours and half-hours in that kitchen, that I don't know whether I ever liked any room so well in all my life."

Immediately after breakfast, Emmeline and her husband took their leave; but the rest of the party remained to dinner.

And now, my gentle reader, having brought my history to this point, I must conclude it more succinctly.

The advice and example of Mr. Vaughen were long remembered by his children: and Henrietta in her farm, and Emmeline, first in her simple lodging at her husband's curacy in Kent, and afterwards, when residing in the neat parsonage belonging to a small living into the possession of which her husband came soon after their marriage, are still giving to the religious world the most beautiful specimens of elegant manners, united with simple Christian habits: and we hope that their examples, and that of their parents, will not be lost to the professing world, but that the time may speedily come, when such instances of self-denial will abound through all the kingdoms of the earth.

The lady of the manor having here closed her narrative, she looked at her watch, and finding how far the evening was advanced, she requested her young people to join her in prayer.

*A Prayer for simple Habits and moderate Desires.*

“O THOU MOST MIGHTY LORD, and only wise God, whose understanding is infinite, and from whom no thought is concealed; deliver our hearts; we beseech thee, by the influence of thy Holy Spirit, from all covetous, ambitious, and worldly principles. And grant that an abiding sense of thine all-discerning eye, and not the dread of the world, may influence our actions, and regulate our habits.

“Give us, in the first instance, a clear view of thy will and purposes respecting us, as far as may be necessary for our conduct in every exigency, and grant us wisdom to read and understand the tokens which thou vouchsafest unto us for the regulation of our worldly plans. Give us grace to commit our concerns unreservedly and entirely into thy hands, and that we might never attempt to counteract thy purposes either by thought, word, or deed. Ever preserve us from endeavouring to raise ourselves in life by any dishonourable, mean, or crooked dealings, by

any improper interference with our neighbour's concerns, or by any departure, however minute, from truth. Impress us with the truth that thy paternal care is extended to all men ; that thou desirest the good of all thy creatures, and that the well-being of our worst enemies need not by any means interfere with our real benefit. Convince us of the grievous sinfulness of ambition and covetousness, whereby this earth has been filled with violence from the beginning of time to the present day.

“And, instead of leaving us to the workings of these dreadful passions, do thou inspire us with that spirit of contentment by which we may be led to make the best of those possessions and enjoyments, those gifts and talents, which thou hast placed in our hands, not only for the promotion of our own well-being, which ought to be but a secondary and a far inferior consideration, but chiefly for the glory of Thee our God, and our promotion of the interests of thy kingdom on earth. Teach us to say, ‘Thy kingdom come,’ and, ‘Thy will be done,’ and deliver us from all undue desires of temporal and worldly aggrandizement. Assist us in the cultivation of humble views and simple habits. Let us not earnestly wish for any of those ornaments that are not within the reach of all the humble members of the family of God : such as gentle and courteous manners, graceful, neat, and orderly habits, a correct, refined, and elevated taste, and may we habitually cherish such sentiments and employ such language as shall at once delight the ear, improve the apprehension, and correct the principles of our auditors. Teach us how to distinguish between true refinement and the mere caprices of fashion ; and give us that humility and charity which may enable us to conclude, that if in these less important matters and forms of life, other men may judge differently from ourselves, yet they may possibly judge as well.

“In one word, O blessed Lord God, set us free from the dominion of self, and grant that our minds may be habitually influenced by this solemn truth, that man lives not by bread alone.

“And now, all glory be to God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Ghost, now and for evermore. Amen.”

## CHAPTER XXIII.



*Q. What dost thou chiefly learn by these Commandments ?*

*A. I learn two Things: my Duty towards God, and my Duty towards my Neighbour.*

*Q. What is thy Duty towards God ?*

*A. My Duty towards God is to believe in him, to fear him, and to love him with all my Heart, with all my Mind, with all my Soul, and with all my Strength ; to worship him, to give him Thanks, to put my whole Trust in him, to call upon him, to honour his holy Name and his Word, and to serve him truly all the days of my Life.*

THE parties at the manor-house, were now become so highly interesting to the young people, that they began to look forwards with apprehension to that period at which there would be an end to these their regular opportunities of instruction. The lady of the manor had reason, however, to hope that she had been made the instrument of real and lasting good to some of her youthful auditors, and she trusted that all of them were more or less benefited by her admonitions. Apart from all religious considerations, she had lately observed in the young people a certain elevation of sentiment and a superiority of manner which they had not before manifested. They were now better able to appreciate that which is truly excellent ; they were more freed from a fondness of those very ordinary topics of conversation which, under various modifications, engaged the minds of the greater part of the female sex in those societies in which the love of literature has but little influence, and where scriptural knowledge is confined merely to controversial points.

The lady of the manor was fully aware that there are

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few societies, or places of education, in England, perhaps in the world, in which the Bible is used as a source of instruction in all those branches of knowledge in which it may be legitimately employed: for the Bible is an exhaustless treasury of the best materials for general intellectual improvement; it is full of poetical beauties, correct and perfect outlines of history, views of future glory, curious notices of ancient manners, pure and wise maxims, and it possesses a language of types and shadows which cannot be understood without a correct knowledge of many of the finest works of nature and of art. The books of history and prophecy contained in the Holy Scriptures, if properly unfolded to the reader, are calculated (as the lady of the manor was fully aware) to present such views of past, present, and future periods, such a horizon, so perfect, and so correct, in the still lengthening distance, of all that has passed from the beginning of time, and such prospects of future glory, stretching in misty splendour beyond the limits of temporal duration into the boundless expanse of eternity, as all the accumulating mass of human learning might pretend to in vain. Such a whole, in short, does the Bible present, as must necessarily expand the mind in its attempts to comprehend it, and though it may be but imperfectly conceived, still it must have a powerful tendency to preserve the mental faculties from resting too minutely on present things, and being unduly occupied by the various nothings which continually press upon the senses.

It had therefore been the object of the lady of the manor, in all her instructions, to present extended and useful views of every kind to her young people, to teach them to look beyond the immediate scenes which surrounded them, to raise them above that kind of impertinent curiosity, which prompts so many uncultivated persons to occupy themselves with the concerns of their neighbours: and if she had failed, in some degree, in accomplishing all of her views, she had at least succeeded in this,—that she had been enabled to convince many of her young people of the degradation of character which is the invariable consequence of a gossiping spirit.

The young ladies had gone through the review of the commandments in general with the lady of the manor.

and as it was now necessary to proceed to other parts of the Church Catechism, the next time that the little party met at the manor-house, the lady requested one of her young friends to repeat that fine summary of our duty towards God which immediately follows the commandments; she herself having first proposed the question,—“What is thy duty towards God?”

“My duty towards God,” replied one of the young ladies, “is to believe in him, to fear him, and to love him with all my heart, with all my mind, with all my soul, and with all my strength; to worship him, to give him thanks, to put my whole trust in him, to call upon him, to honour his holy name and his word, and to serve him truly all the days of my life.”

“In your review of the Commandments, Miss Emmeline,” inquired the lady of the manor, “what judgment have you passed on yourselves? You are acquainted with the sentiments of your companions! do you stand condemned by the law? or do you plead ‘Not guilty?’”

“We all confess ourselves guilty, and that we are condemned by the law,” replied Miss Emmeline, “one and all of us. This is our general and unreserved opinion. By the Commandments we are all worthy of death; but you, Madam, have led us also to understand, that, although by the law we must perish, if confiding in ourselves, yet that, in our state as members of Christ, (supposing us to be such,) we are justified by the same law, inasmuch as we have obeyed it in the person of our spiritual Head, and, therefore, that same attribute of divine justice, by which we were originally condemned, becomes, at the moment that we are made one in Christ, and are thus constituted the partakers of his righteousness, a security for our justification.”

“You have stated the doctrine correctly,” replied the lady of the manor, “for if divine justice has accepted the righteousness of Christ, as an atonement for the sins of the believer, that justice is bound by its own perfections to deliver this believer from the eternal punishment of his sins. We have, therefore, now nothing more to do with the law that was delivered on Mount Sinai, than to regard it as a rule of life, and as an indication of the divine will in certain points; for if this were not the case,

I ask you this question, 'Why do we not keep the Sabbath?'"

"But do we not keep the Sabbath, Ma'am?" asked one of the young ladies.

"Certainly not," returned the lady of the manor; "the Sabbath is not the day that is now appointed by our Church to be regarded as sacred: the Sabbath is the seventh day of the week, and not the first. The day which is now observed by us is the Lord's-day; and though we honour it nearly as the Sabbath was regarded under the old covenant, yet it is not the original Sabbath: and, therefore, if we do not believe that the law delivered from Mount Sinai is done away with, I repeat, Why don't you keep the Sabbath?"

"But if we inculcate this opinion, that is, of the abrogation of the moral law that was delivered from Mount Sinai, Madam," said Miss Emmeline, modestly, "might it not lead to licentiousness?"

"No, my dear young lady," replied her amiable instructress, "and that for two reasons: the first, which is a very plain one, being, that the same person who fulfilled the law delivered on Mount Sinai, and who annulled its penalties, renewed every moral obligation enforced therein, though he did not renew the positive institution of the original Sabbath: for what, I ask you, were his words on these subjects?—*Think not that I am come to destroy the law or the prophets: I am not come to destroy, but to fulfil. For verily I say unto you, Till heaven and earth pass, one jot or one tittle shall in nowise pass from the law, till all be fulfilled.* (Matt. v. 17, 18.) And again: *He that hath my commandments and keepeth them, he it is that loveth me: And he that loveth me not, keepeth not my sayings: and the word which ye hear is not mine, but the Father's which sent me.* (John xiv. 21, 24.) And my second reason is this: it is actually impossible for a member of Christ to live in habitual sin, either he is not a member of Christ, or he cannot love sin. A good branch inserted into a bad stock cannot produce the same fruit as the stock into which it has been grafted. A gardener would smile at such a supposition. The lower branches of the old stock may indeed rise up from beneath the graff, but the nature of the good branch must

still continue unaltered, and *peculiarly its own*; and it is the business of the careful gardener to cut off these inferior sprouts and cast them in the dust."

The young lady looked meditatively, and then said, "One thing I hope, and that is, that what I have learned in this house may abide by me, and continue to supply me with matter of reflection through my life; at present, however, I fear that what I have heard has not taken such hold of my mind as it ought to do, if indeed the good branch has been grafted in my heart, which I much fear is not the case. The lower branches in the old stock have not yet been pruned; or if pruned, they are now, alas! putting forth again, and expanding themselves in leaves and blossoms."

The young ladies, together with the lady of the manor, now proceeded to the more especial concerns of the evening; and the latter expressed herself to the following purpose:—

"As the nature and attributes of God have constituted the subject of a previous discourse, I shall not now enter upon these points in as particular a manner as I formerly did, but shall content myself with reading to you, my dear young people, a short history, bearing a close connexion with that part of the Catechism which is to form the subject of our meditation this day.

"In this story, the horrible effects of infidel principles, and a departure from God, are pointed out in a manner particularly striking; the narrative being composed of facts, and describing scenes which are replete with inconceivable horror, but many of which must be acknowledged to be too descriptive of real life by those who have lately visited the countries in which these events are said to have taken place."

The lady of the manor then opened her manuscript, and proceeded to read.

### *La Morgue.*

Victor Louis, Comte de V——, was the representative of an ancient family, whose estates lay in the south of France. This young man spent his youth in the court of Louis the Sixteenth, and having married early, at the

time of the breaking out of the French revolution he found himself a widower, with one son of about four years of age.

When the troubles first began to agitate the capital, he withdrew from Paris to his own estates, situated, as we have just observed, in the south of France; and there he resided till the state of public affairs became such, that, in order to preserve his life, and that of his son and orphan niece, of whom he had the care, he was compelled to fly into Germany, where he continued till the reign of terror was past, and till he was enabled, with tolerable security, to return to his country.

We have spoken of a niece of the Comte de V——. This young lady, whose name was Virginie, was the daughter of a younger brother of the Comte, and she had been left, together with her brother, under the guardianship of her uncle, in consequence of the deaths of her parents. By this arrangement, she had been the companion of her uncle's flight, had continued with him during his absence from his native country, and also returned with him when he came back to France.

The brother of Virginie, though he was placed, equally with herself, under his uncle's guardianship, was, however, owing to certain circumstances, separated from the rest of the family at the moment of their flight, and he, in consequence, remained a stranger to them for many years.

At the period when the Comte found it necessary to make his escape, Clermont (his nephew) was on a visit to a great aunt, whose estate lay in a northern province of France. She was an old and infirm person; but as her family was noble, she was suspected of encouraging aristocratic principles; and her safety, therefore, being threatened, she contrived to escape in disguise to the Low Country, and from thence into Holland, where she procured a passage to England, and arrived in that happy country with her nephew, being possessed only of a little money and some old family jewels.

Madam de Rosemont, the aunt of Clermont, had long been afflicted with rheumatic disorders. On her reaching England, she was, therefore, recommended to proceed to Bath; whither she went, and on her arrival, hired



a single apartment in a lodging-house, and endeavoured to accommodate her habits as much as possible to her circumstances.

In this situation, Clermont, then between five and six years of age, was her only companion, and she was much indebted to his attentions for the few remaining consolations which she enjoyed. He was an interesting boy in person, gentle and courteous in his deportment, and still appearing with the air of a gentleman's child, although his clothes were threadbare, and he wore no stockings.

It pleased Him in whom the fatherless find mercy, that there should at that time be an old gentleman of independent fortune residing in the same house with Madame de Rosemont at Bath. The kind and dutiful attentions of the little stranger to his infirm relative at first excited the pity of this gentleman, whose name was Charlton; and as his love and pity were continually augmented by all that he observed and considered of this little foreigner, he at length resolved, for the sake of this child, to cultivate an acquaintance with Madame de Rosemont, and to offer her any assistance which her situation might require.

Madame de Rosemont was very grateful for the kind attentions of Mr. Charlton; but, with a nobleness of spirit which we have not unfrequently had proof of in persons of her nation, she seemed more anxious to interest the kind stranger in the behalf of her little nephew, than to obtain from him any relief for her own necessities.

We might here say much upon the gradual growth of mutual affection which took place between Mr. Charlton and little Clermont; but perhaps the nature of feelings of this kind is better elucidated by the mention of their effects, than by any description which might otherwise be given of them. Suffice it to say, that such was the regard with which the poor orphan had been enabled to inspire Mr. Charlton, that the old gentleman hesitated not, when Madame Rosemont died, (an event which took place about six months after her arrival in England,) to take this friendless boy under his protection, and, when he left Bath, he carried him with him to his own house, which was situated in a very beautiful district of the county of Berks.

Mr. Charlton was a bachelor; he had made his own fortune, and he had no very near relation. There was, therefore, no person who had a right to call him to account for this whim of adopting the little foreigner, for such many pronounced this measure to be: notwithstanding which, when Mr. Charlton's neighbours beheld the consistent and kind attentions of the good old gentleman to the child, and the pains which he took to educate him in such a manner as might render him a valuable member of society, they became so entirely reconciled to what he had done, that they greatly rejoiced to see the promise of much that was amiable in the little stranger, and by which they trusted that the old gentleman would be rewarded for his charitable adoption of him.

Clermont was remarkably quick in the acquirement of knowledge: insomuch that Mr. Charlton, who lived in retirement, found great pleasure in giving him instruction; and to this end he kept the boy constantly with him: he made him the companion of his walks in the fields, his visits to the house of prayer and the habitations of the poor, and his assistant when working in the garden, which was one of his chief amusements.

When the aged are pious, and willing to please and be pleased, they are particularly agreeable to children, and I have often seen a friendship as perfect, and more sweet, existing between a pious old person and a child, than between any other two individuals of whatever circumstances. For between youth and age there is not often much rivalry, and the confidence of the child is sweetly repaid by the protecting tenderness of the old man.

I could also say much of the various methods which Mr. Charlton adopted to improve Clermont, and to render him such a character as he earnestly wished to make him. Mr. Charlton was a decided Christian: it cannot therefore be questioned that he made religion the Alpha and the Omega of his instructions; and, as all the habits of the child were founded upon sound and simple Christian principles, it is fair to infer, that, with the divine blessing, the little stranger was at once humble, courteous, and contented.

Thus Clermont de V—— attained the age of seventeen, under the charge of Mr. Charlton; at which time the

worthy old gentleman, who intended to bring him up to one of the liberal professions, (as the young man expressed his desire to make England his place of abode through life,) resolved upon sending him to the University; and, in consequence, he placed him at Oxford, where he remained the usual time: when, having taken his degree, he returned to his guardian's house, intending to study for orders amidst that sweet retirement where the best and the happiest portion of his life had been spent.

In the mean time, Clermont had heard but little of his relations in France: he had, indeed, been told that his uncle had returned to his country, and that he had been restored to his estates and honours; that his sister was still living under his charge: and that his cousin was grown up, and had distinguished himself on several occasions in the army under the emperor. About the period, however, of which we are speaking, while Clermont was studying at home, after having quitted the University, a captain of an American vessel, who was a particular friend of his uncle, arriving in England, brought a very pressing invitation to the young man from his friends, and engaged that if he would confide himself to his care, he would land him safe in France, and put him in the way to reach his relatives without danger: for, as Clermont was entirely of French extraction, and could speak the language well, and as his friends were at that period in high favour with government, no doubt was entertained of his personal safety both in going and returning.

It was with considerable perturbation that Mr. Charlton heard of this proposal. On many accounts he trembled for the consequences of this journey. As there were, however, certain circumstances (which it would take too much time to enumerate at large) which concurred to render this visit desirable, the good old gentleman yielded to the surrender of his adopted son for a while, though not, as I before said, without considerable uneasiness: not that he was much disturbed respecting the danger which Clermont might personally incur from this journey; but he well knew the infidel character of the persons with whom his ward was about to associate, and he trembled lest the

pure principles of his pupil should be corrupted by the evil communications to which he must be exposed.

Many were the earnest and serious conversations which took place between Mr. Charlton and Clermont previous to this journey, one of which I shall endeavour to lay, with some precision, before my reader.

And, first, the venerable instructor discoursed with his pupil on the nature of God, that infinite and incomprehensible Being, the Creator of all things, who preserves and governs every thing by his almighty power and wisdom, and who is the only proper object of our worship;—He who exists of himself, and gives and maintains existence in all others;—He on whom all depend, who is the fountain of happiness, and in separation from whom consists the horrors of eternal death. He next proceeded to expatiate on the nature of faith, which, taken in its most simple form, may be considered as merely a dependence on the veracity of another; and he showed that his faith, even in this its most simple modification, was extremely rare as exercised by man with respect to God, and that the Creator himself was habitually denied that degree of confidence which not unfrequently subsists between man and man.

“*He that cometh to God,*” said Mr. Charlton, “*must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him.* (Heb. xi. 6.) A man who has this assurance,” continued the old gentleman, “must necessarily, though he may be no further enlightened, possess the fear of God: for, as man loves rewards, and dreads punishment, he would naturally fear him who, he is habitually persuaded, is both able and willing to punish the guilty; and thus the fear of God will become the beginning of wisdom—examples of which have been observed in persons living in heathen nations; and though these examples are rare and imperfect, yet are they sufficient to prove the truth of St. Paul’s words—*For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who hold the truth in unrighteousness; because that which may be known of God is manifest in them; for God hath showed it unto them. For the invisible things of him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being under-*

*stood by the things that are made, even his eternal power and Godhead ; so that they are without excuse.* (Rom. i. 18—20.)

“Thus you see,” continued Mr. Charlton, “that man, without any further light than that of nature, ought to entertain such fear of God, as would restrain him from that ungodliness and unrighteousness against which the wrath of the Creator is revealed.

“But in the country in which you are about to go, my son,” continued the good old gentleman, “you will not only meet with those who speak of the Christian system as a late invention, the fabrication of priestcraft, but you will come into contact with persons who are atheists both in deed and in word—persons who defy the authority of God, despise his laws, and even question his existence; and thus deprive themselves of all that comfort and support, without which the creature either must cease to exist, or if, from the immortality of his nature, he continues to exist, his being is prolonged like that of the fallen angels, in blackness, darkness, and despair.

“You remember the period, my son,” continued Mr. Charlton, “before you left me to mix with the world in the place where you have spent the last few years of your life; and you may recollect, yes, and you surely will ever recollect with pleasure, the calm and delicious manner in which our lives at that time passed away. How you then rejoiced in my society! how you regretted the least separation from me! and how often you expressed yourself as unable even to enjoy your amusements in my absence! You did not then deceive me, Clermont! you surely felt all that you then expressed! I never questioned your sincerity!”

“No, no, my father,” said the young man, his dark eyes suddenly becoming suffused with tears, and his cheeks flushing at the question, “I did not deceive you. The happiest days that I ever spent, or ever shall spend on earth, were when I lived with you, and with you only; when I knew nothing of the world, and you were my only friend.”

“Enough, my son,” said Mr. Charlton. “It was not because I questioned your sincerity, that I put the question, but in order to elucidate my arguments. A father



stands with respect to a child, and, during the years of childhood, in the place of God. Man, at best, must be a poor, a very poor representative of the Heavenly Parent; nevertheless, the authority and influence of the person who has the exclusive control of a child are such, that they afford the only image which can be found on earth of the paternal care of God towards his creatures: and that sense of bereavement and helplessness which a child feels in the absence of a tender, wise, and watchful parent, may perhaps furnish the most striking emblem of the state of a rational creature spiritually absent from the Creator. A child, whether ill or well disposed, must experience a sense of bereavement in the loss of a good parent; and I have often remarked the pathetic manner in which an orphan child seems to seek, among strangers, from some elder person, those tender sympathies of which it was deprived by the loss of its parents. How, though untaught, does such a one apply the tender name of parent to the first person who shows him particular kindness! and how do paternal and filial affections grow in the hearts of persons who by birth are strangers to the realities of these endearing characters!

“A well-disposed and affectionate child,” continued Mr. Charlton, “deplores his father’s absence, weeps and laments the loss, and, if he falls into error for want of his usual support, is restless, uneasy, and dissatisfied under the fall. But the insubordinate son at first rejoices in the removal of the restraint, and instantly sets about to plan his own happiness, and to execute the desires of his evil heart, for awhile triumphing in his liberty; till at length his lusts become his master, his punishment overtakes him, and, in his agony, he is ready to curse the cause by which the salutary restraint was removed.

“Thus, in both cases, the happiness of the child, humanly speaking, depends on the parent; and, in like manner, the true advantage and happiness of man wholly depends on his Creator, and nothing more nor less than the absence of God, is requisite to make a hell.

“While the sinner, however vile, is still under the dealings of the Almighty, severe as may be his trials, and however continued may be his chastisements, there is hope for him, and he cannot yet be said to be truly mise-

rable. But when the Lord ceases to deal with man any longer, when he leaves him to himself, then his hell begins; and if we had any faculty by which we could distinguish those who are forsaken of the Lord, though still living on earth, from those persons with whom the Lord is dealing in mercy, we should discover that the torments of hell had already begun in the breasts of the former, and that the misery of the damned was commencing within them, though outwardly perhaps they might appear to be possessing every thing with which this world could supply them. These are the persons of whom the Psalmist thus speaks—*Deliver my soul from the wicked, which is thy sword: from men which are thy hand, O Lord, from men of the world, which have their portion in this life, and whose belly thou fillest with thy hid treasure: they are full of children, and leave the rest of their substance to their babes.* (Psalm xvii. 13, 14.)

“There is a simple but a comprehensive and important summary of man’s duty to God in the Catechism of the Church of which you are about to become a minister,” proceeded Mr. Charlton, “of which you, my dear Clermont, will not think the less from your having been taught to repeat it from an infant. The words, you will remember, are to this effect:—‘My duty towards God is to believe in him, to fear him, and to love him with all my heart, with all my mind, with all my soul, and with all my strength; to worship him, to give him thanks, to put my whole trust in him, to call upon him, to honour his holy name and his word, and to serve him truly all the days of my life.’

“The mind of man before the fall, while he was yet unalienated from his Maker by sin, spontaneously produced every feeling described in this summary, just as the flowers of Eden then sprang without culture from the beautiful and uncursed earth: and when fallen man is again brought near to God through Christ, and has his nature renewed by the influences of the Divine Spirit, he a second time becomes in some degree capable of cherishing all those blessed feelings towards his Maker which Adam felt in his original state; and when he shall finally be rendered victorious in death, the love and ser-

vice of God will constitute his occupation and happiness through the endless circle of eternity.

“When you, my son, are absent from me,” continued Mr. Charlton, “you will remember this conversation, and I trust that it may be a means of guarding you against the delusions of the world. The Continent of Europe, and particularly your own native country, has lately abounded with characters of the most awful impiety; persons who, being full of self-importance, and possessing a high idea of their own intellectual powers, despise the God who made them, and utterly reject the whole scheme of salvation by Christ. Hence has arisen all the wars, and those scenes of private and public crime, which for some years past have agitated your nation; and I fear that you will see, when in France, such effects of this infidelity as at this time you are hardly able to conceive. O my son, entreat that you may be supported in this coming hour of trial. Rely on your God, rest on his strength, pray to be kept close to him. To him I devote you: may He be your Father! confide in Him as once you did in me; and let the words of the holy Psalmist form the continued subject of your prayer—*Unto thee lift I up mine eyes, O thou that dwellest in the heavens. Behold, as the eyes of servants look unto the hand of their masters, and as the eyes of a maiden unto the hand of her mistress; so our eyes wait upon the Lord our God, until that he have mercy upon us. Have mercy upon us, O Lord, have mercy upon us: for we are exceedingly filled with contempt. Our soul is exceedingly filled with the scorning of those that are at ease, and with the contempt of the proud.*” (Psalm cxxiii.)

We do not mean to enter minutely into an account of Clermont's separation from Mr. Charlton, or of his short voyage to France. Suffice it to say, that he arrived safely in Paris, from whence, having heard that his uncle and sister were residing at an estate possessed by the former about twenty leagues from the capital, he proceeded to this place without loss of time, and arrived, about noon, at the gates of the chateau, which was situated at the end of a long avenue of elms and tillenel.

It was summer time. The scene which surrounded him

was fine, and not the less imposing from its being totally different from every thing that he had been accustomed to see in England, where every object, however beautifully arranged, however rich and smiling, is on a scale so small, that it seems to convey to the foreign eye the idea of Lilliput or Fairy-Land. On the contrary, the valleys of France are wide, and the elevations, though considerable, are so removed from the eye, that they seem less than they really are. Whole tracts of country appear in almost every prospect covered with forest; from which not unfrequently the white tower of a church alone conspicuously rises, the little villages by which they are commonly encircled being wholly concealed by the surrounding trees, unless, here and there, a pigeon-house and a Gothic turret of more than ordinary elevation, peeping from above the shade, convey the idea of ancient dignity, and suggest imaginations of feudal modes of living which are now no more.

The gates of the chateau were presently opened to Clermont, whose arrival was about this time expected; and the coachman, smacking his whip with a flourish, (of which persons of this denomination in France only understand the method,) drove up immediately to the great door of the chateau, the entrance to which was by a high yet ruinous flight of steps. Had not Clermont been already some days in France, he would have augured somewhat unfavourably concerning the finances of the family from the dilapidated and slovenly appearance of every thing visible about the chateau. But his eye had been by this time so well accustomed to inconsistencies of this kind, that he drew no inauspicious conclusion from certain deficiencies which he observed in the stone parapet on the roof of the house, from the grass and weeds which grew carelessly in the gravel walks, from the want of paint on the numerous window-shutters, and from the total absence of glass in the upper windows of the roof.

As soon as the horses stopped, the young man alighted from his carriage, and having committed his luggage to the charge of a lacquey, whom he had hired at Paris, he was instantly conducted through a large vestibule into an equally spacious saloon, where he found the family party assembled, and presenting a variety of singular groups.



The lady of the chateau, to wit, the second wife of the Comte de V——, was engaged in playing at chess, before a large open window, with a young officer of the legion d'honneur, the fierceness of whose aspect, strengthened by a pair of large mustachoes, formed a striking contrast with the languishing air of his partner. The Comtesse de V—— was a woman of a certain age, and she therefore owed to her perruquier, her perfumer, (who supplied the various washes for her complexion,) her milliner, and her femme de chambre, that juvenile appearance which she still had in the eyes of those who beheld her only for the first time, and which, added to a girlish manner, rendered her precisely the figure which every one has depicted to himself of a vain woman who cannot condescend to grow old. A loud and affected laugh from this lady, intermingled with the fashionable oaths of her young adversary, were the first sounds which reached the ears of Clermont, as he entered the door. In another part of this spacious saloon, a cluster of young persons of both sexes were gathered round a harp. And on a sofa in another window, sat Virginie, the sister of Clermont, a table which stood before her being littered with materials for drawing, with which she seemed to be idly occupied; and by her side, on the same sofa, lounged her cousin Victor. In a recess, at the further end of the room, was a billiard-table, at which was the Comte himself, together with several gentlemen, deeply engaged in the game. In another part of the hall sat a young lady at an easel, employed in drawing the portrait of a stout elderly gentleman, to whom she at the same time paid her court by many artificial smiles and pretty speeches; and round her stood a group of loungers, and probably of flatterers of the elderly gentleman, who proved to be the person of the highest rank and consequence of the party, and one who, having lately become a widower, might be supposed to entertain the view of making a future choice.

The entrance of Clermont, as might be expected, had the effect of breaking up all these separate parties. The strangers rose to look at him, and pay their compliments; and his relations gathered round him, and embraced him with apparent warmth, welcomed him to



France, regretted his long absence, and Virginie expressed her hope that he was now come to finish his days with them.

It was sometime, however, before Clermont could be made to understand the variety of new relations which claimed his attention. He had indeed heard that his uncle was married again; but he was astonished and displeased at the gay and juvenile manners of the lady. Neither was his sister's appearance, nor that of his cousin Victor, more congenial with his feelings. Virginie, though three years younger than her brother, already had the air of a female who was well practised in the world, and thoroughly versed in all the arts by which some women endeavour to attract and secure the attentions of the other sex. Young as she was, she seemed to be indebted to rouge and other fashionable ornaments for the showy appearance which she made; an appearance which to some persons might perhaps be attractive, (for she was naturally beautiful,) but which, to the pure and refined taste of Clermont, was at once revolting and pitiable.

Victor was a handsome young man, having fine dark eyes, and hair which, without giving his valet any trouble, assumed at pleasure, the most picturesque or modish appearance. His carriage was animated and graceful; and he possessed together with all the fashionable accomplishments of the day, (such as dancing, fencing, and playing with skill at every game of chance,) a sufficient extent of learning to enable him to appear with credit in any literary company into which he might chance to fall. The first appearance of this young man was not altogether displeasing to Clermont. He hoped that he saw something amiable in him. He was attracted by his easy carriage and his engaging manners. But every moment's increasing acquaintance deducted a little from this good opinion, and he had reason in a very short time, to look upon him, if not with dread, at least with a degree of apprehension which soon became matured into a fearful certainty.

We have not yet particularly described the Comte de V—— himself, neither was his character so easily discovered as that of his son; for he was reserved, cold, and

guarded. Clermont was, however, received by him with sufficient politeness; and the young man felt that his uncle's age, his rank, his situation in life, and his near relationship to his departed father, gave him a title to his respect. He wished also to be able to add esteem to respect; but when any comparison presented itself between this man and Mr. Charlton, it was always so much to the disadvantage of the former, that Clermont could not help continually lifting up his heart in thanksgiving to God for the blessing which had been vouchsafed him in his being placed, during the tender years of childhood, under the superintendence of Christians. The Comte de V—— was, in fact, an infidel, and a fierce politician, though he had frequently artfully contrived to conceal his principles, and to adapt his conversation so exactly to the state of the times, that he was now high in favour with government, and had been so through the several late changes and revolutions of the state.

Thus have we described the principal characters that were then met in the chateau. Besides these were many others, who had come by the invitation of the Comte to enjoy the charms of a country situation in the Chateau de V——; a sort of rural life, of which it is the fashion to speak with enthusiasm in Paris, but which very few Parisians know how to enjoy. As the party were, however, to continue for some weeks in the chateau, it was necessary that all should seem pleased while they were together. An air of enjoyment was, therefore, assumed by every individual, and the hours of each day were filled up by such amusements as the country would afford, or as could by any means be transported from the town. Among the former were riding, archery, promenades, (as these persons would term them,) upon the water, in carriages and on foot; and, among the latter, were balls, dilletante plays, concerts, and games of chance of every denomination, multiplied and varied with a degree of ingenuity and invention worthy of a better purpose.

But to return to Clermont.—This young man had not been many hours an inmate of the chateau, before he discovered that his opinions on religious subjects were more directly opposed to those of his relations than he had hoped that, on acquaintance, they would prove. He had.

indeed, expected to find his sister a Papist, and his cousin careless alike about all religion; but he had not prepared himself to expect from the mouths of these young persons infidel, if not blasphemous, expressions: and to hear such language uttered with the utmost levity, and in the course of their most ordinary conversation, filled him with a degree of horror which he had no power to conceal, though he desired, in general, to restrain his feelings in such a way as might render his interference the more acceptable and salutary, whenever it might appear most seasonable for him to make known both to his sister and cousin the horror with which these dreadful sentiments inspired him. Other discoveries he presently made, which increased his alarm for his sister. He had been but a very short time in the family before he perceived that Victor and Virginie were distinguished by each other with an especial mutual regard, which, on the part of Virginie, appeared to be very strong, and which, on that of Victor, perhaps was not less sincere, though the extraordinary carelessness and independence of the young man's manner might sometimes have tended to mislead a careless observer. Clermont was not, however, an unconcerned looker-on, but was deeply interested in every thing which related to these his nearest natural connexions.

It was when seated at dinner on the first day of his arrival at the chateau, in the midst of a gay and brilliant assembly, that Clermont first became acquainted with the sentiments that I have already mentioned. Virginie was seated between himself and Victor, and he, therefore, overheard several little words which were whispered between them, and which induced him to form this opinion. But this discovery, which otherwise might not have displeased him, was, as before remarked, rendered particularly painful in his estimation by the observations that he was at the same time enabled to make upon the dangerous principles of the young people.

Several weeks had elapsed in the way that I have been describing, during which Clermont vainly attempted to engage the confidence of his sister: though she always appeared to be easy and unreserved with him, yet her manner was at one time the ease of a fashionable woman in

the company of strangers, and at another the unreservedness of a playful child. It seemed impossible to prevail on her to enter upon a single serious reflection; and if her brother attempted to reason with her about the impiety of her principles and her language, she would instantly reply, "But are you not a heretic, brother? and I a Catholic? How then can we expect to agree on these matters?"

It was in vain for him to attempt to explain to her that there were certain points in which a Protestant and Catholic might cordially meet, and that open profaneness must be equally unacceptable to the sincere of both parties: in consequence of which, if she were actually what she professed to be, she could not allow herself in such impious expressions as she daily indulged.

When thus pressed, she invariably evaded making a reply by having recourse to some childish or playful subterfuge. On one of these occasions she pretended to have pricked her delicate finger with the thorn of a rose with which she had been playing, and she uttered, in consequence, a thousand pitiful cries, wringing her hands, and pressing her wounded finger, or rather the finger supposed to be wounded, against her lips, in order, as it were, to deaden the pain. On another occasion, she contrived to drop her cashmere as they were walking in the avenue, and managed to entangle her foot so conveniently in it, that the thread of the discourse was entirely lost before every thing was again arranged in its due order.

For a while Clermont was the complete dupe of these tricks, and though he was vexed by these interruptions, which continually occurred in the midst of their most serious conversations, still he was far from attributing them to their real cause. He believed, indeed, that his sister was light and vain, but he did not suppose her designing; and at all events he was too deeply interested in her spiritual welfare, to allow himself to be disheartened by the trifling, though perpetually recurring, difficulties which he had hitherto encountered. He therefore formed the resolution to be more close and pressing in his discourse with her than he had ever before been. But now a new obstacle occurred: he found it every day more and more impossible to be alone with her; she continually devised some pretext for avoiding him; and thus it became

necessary that he should either speak to her in public or not at all. As her manner was, however, always apparently open and affectionate, he still did not imagine that it was intentionally that she shunned him.

In the mean time, Clermont continually witnessed a mode of life of which he had not previously formed an idea, as he never had read romances, and as nothing of real life in the country where he had been educated approached in the least degree towards what he then habitually saw.

The persons who were at that time assembled in the castle were such as divided their lives between pleasure and politics; females who made the arts of coquetry their ostensible business, while political intrigue was the real object of their lives; and men who, though they pretended to be utterly devoted to gallantry, were secretly absorbed by ambition, and by that alone.

In consequence of these hidden motives of action, there was an apparent inconsistency in the conduct of those by whom he was surrounded, which puzzled and astonished Clermont beyond measure. He soon perceived that the duties and obligations of the marriage state were but little regarded either by ladies or gentlemen in the society among which he then resided. But when he saw handsome and fashionable females sacrificing their virtues to old men, and on the contrary, when he beheld young men who seemed to be devoted to elderly and disagreeable women, he could not help thinking that these persons were sinning without motive, and bartering their reputation and honour without even the shadow of an equivalent: for, as I before said, Clermont had no idea of the secret springs of these persons' conduct.

In the mean time, the love of amusement seemed to have turned every head. No one could rest quietly within the house. Schemes were ever in agitation by which the environs of the chateau were to be converted into a second Arcadia. Nothing was here spoken of but rural theatres, concerts by moonlight, dances under the shade of trees, and other caprices of the same nature, which might have passed off better, if the parties concerned had possessed but the semblance of that simplicity which they pretended so greatly to admire. But as it was, the highly



artificial and corrupt manners, principles, and appearances, which these persons brought with them from Paris, evidently so ill assorted with the really fine natural beauties which they chose for the scene of their follies, that Clermont was filled at once with disgust, astonishment, and pity, at this excess of human folly, of which he had never before formed any conception.

It was on an occasion of this kind, namely, the fete of the Countess de V——, which was to be distinguished by a rustic ball beneath the trees, that Clermont had a conversation with his sister and Victor, which led to a fuller mutual explanation of their sentiments on both sides than had hitherto taken place.

On the evening of the fete, the comtesse had ordered a beautiful grove, in the vicinity of the castle, to be set forth with couches, adorned with garlands, and tables furnished with fruits and flowers, with cream and sweetmeats. Here were assembled all the villagers and tenants of the comte, to dance cotillions, while the musicians, placed on a scaffold of considerable height in the centre of the festive group, regulated the steps of each.

After an early dinner, the ladies and gentlemen of the chateau repaired to this scene of amusement; and those among them who were still young, or who wished to be thought so, mingled with the peasants, and became companions of the dance.

Clermont accompanied them to the grove, yet he declined dancing, though much solicited so to do; but taking his seat on one of the couches before mentioned, he continued for a length of time contemplating the scene before him. He was situated near the many groups of dancers, where the branches above his head afforded a thick and beautiful canopy, and where a short turf beneath his feet supplied as fair a carpet. To the right and left were groups of dancers, who moved in measure, as the music directed them; and who, though their parties were formed of heterogeneous orders, and persons of various degrees, exhibited, nevertheless, the same agility, dexterity, and we might almost say, the same grace. The peasants wore blue petticoats and white jackets, their hair being neatly drawn under their white caps, and their faces were flushed with health and exercise, and em-

browned by constant exposure to the open air; while the ladies of the chateau, who were fancifully dressed in a kind of rustic habit, owed the bright red, which concealed the more faded colour of their cheeks, to the rouge which no French woman is ashamed of displaying.

Immediately in the front of Clermont's seat was a long vista formed of tillenels, and terminated by a grotto from which gushed a clear stream of water; within the shade of this grotto, and bending over a small dripping rock at its mouth, there was the statue of a naiad: the whole constituting, together with the groups of dancers, and tables enriched with fruits and flowers, such scenes as inexperienced and unrenewed minds no doubt often fancy to themselves as abounding with every delight. But Clermont, though young, had, by the divine blessing on the excellent education which he had enjoyed, acquired a more correct and elevated mode of thinking and reasoning upon every subject; and this had happened according to the words of the apostle, who saith, *If any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new.* (2 Cor. v. 17.) Consequently, the reflections which Clermont indulged in reference to this scene, and also to that love of pleasure, which, in one form or other, is so remarkable in every order, degree, and description of persons in the French nation, were totally the reverse of those which would have been made by one who continued still ignorant of true religion, and of the nature of the human heart. Clermont was aware that real happiness consisted in an intimate union of heart with God; and he was persuaded that without that union every intelligent creature must be miserable, and that all attempts of men to derive happiness from any circumstances independent of God, must not only prove abortive, but must bring with them their own punishment, in the anger of the Almighty, and the consequent darkness of the soul, and confusion and horror of the spirits. He considered the state of man upon earth to be as it is represented in the Scripture of Truth: he regarded him as a fallen creature, as one who by his sins has crucified the Lord of glory; and he felt that although the Lord Jehovah hath encouraged him to look up again after his fall, and hath opened unto him

the way of salvation, yet that he permits him not to taste any true enjoyment independent of himself. And, indeed, it is in the very nature of things, that he should not, amidst any circumstances, be really happy without God.

The beautiful words of the hymn at this moment presented themselves to Clermont—

“ My God, my life, my love,  
To thee, to thee I call ;  
I cannot live, if thou remove,  
For thou art all in all.”

And while he yet repeated these words, Victor and Virginie, who had been together all the afternoon, quitted the dance, and took their seats on a sofa which was placed directly opposite to Clermont. They were both in high spirits, and expressed, by looks which Clermont pretty well understood, their contempt of the manner in which he had withdrawn himself from the lively amusements of the evening. “ And so,” said Virginie, as she seated herself, “ you still continue to act the stoic philosopher my good brother ; but are you aware that we are now in the country, among rude and illiterate persons, who cannot comprehend the merits of this high flight of human wisdom, and who would respect you quite as much for joining in the dance, and appearing cheerful, as for sitting there and affecting superiority to the whole world ?”

“ At any rate, Mademoiselle,” replied Clermont, with good-humour, “ you are not inclined to augment my self-love. How often must I repeat in my defence, that I never practised dancing ! that I do not understand your *chasses* and *balances*, and that I should only expose myself to ridicule by my attempting them !”

“ You have lived in England, Clermont,” said Victor, with an expression of contempt, which he, however, endeavoured to put off with a smile, “ till you have acquired all the insipidity of the English character. You are as cold, my friend, as the November fogs, and as sedate as the old Saxon who brought you up.” Then turning to Virginie, taking her hand, and looking at her with an expression of affection which formed a strong contrast with the cold contempt of his manner to her brother, he added, “ Had Clermont been brought up with us, Ma belle

Virginie, in the old chateau of Bellevue, the glowing sun of Languedoc would perhaps have imparted more warmth to his heart than the cold fogs of the little island appear to have done."

Clermont smiled, and thanked Victor with much good humour for his kind wish.

Victor took no notice of this reply of Clermont. The mention of Languedoc, where the former had spent many years of the earlier part of his life in company with Virginie, under the charge of a tutor and governess in an ancient family mansion of the Comte, had revived many feelings and recollections of childhood, which for a few minutes absorbed his whole mind. "Ah, Virginie!" continued the young man, as he leaned over her and held her hand, "Clermont, after all, is to be pitied, for having been separated from us. O, what happy days were those when we were at Languedoc! Do you remember the evenings of the vintage, when we danced under the great elm tree, and when the little good man, Colin, played on his violin, and directed our steps? Do you remember the little peasants Laurette and Adele? and how I offended you, Virginie, because I would dance with them on the evening of the fete of St. Roque?"

"Ah, my cousin!" replied Virginie, gently tapping his arm with a rosebud that she held in her hand, "you ever delighted in giving me pain."

"I ever delighted in the consciousness of not being in different to you, my Virginie," replied Victor.

Silence for a moment now followed, while Clermont, looking on the youthful pair before him, could scarcely conceal his feelings of pity; for he was persuaded that they loved each other; but, inasmuch as he also too well knew their principles, he could expect no happiness from such an union of hearts.

The silence was interrupted by Victor, who, as his expressive and fine countenance suddenly changed from grave to gay, exclaimed, "And do you remember, Virginie, our games of Colin Maillard in the great hall? and do you recollect how little Pauline used to shriek when she was caught, and how I was able to discover you from all the rest, though there were twenty others, and though you had blinded my eyes sevenfold?"

“O Victor!” said Virginie, “those were happy days I wish they could return! O delightful hours of early youth! O happy scenes of thoughtless infancy, now, alas! for ever gone! I should experience more pleasure in beholding once again the two frowning black-and-white gable ends of the old chateau, which stood forward into the back court where I used to feed my turkeys and gallinies, than in seeing the most sumptuous exhibition of noble architecture which the first palace in Europe could afford.”

Victor replied by singing, with considerable pathos, a part of the well-known air called, “*La Rangee du Vache.*”

“*Quand reverrons dans un jour  
Toutes les montagnes d’Alantour.*”

Both Victor and Virginie appeared much more softened and affected by these remembrances than Clermont had ever before seen them on any occasion, and seemed to feel so much regret at the departure of those days of childhood, and separation from the world, of which they spoke, that he judged the present to be a fit opportunity for addressing them upon that subject which was ever the nearest his own heart; and he accordingly embraced that season to point out to them that there was much deception in the idea commonly entertained of the happiness of childhood, and of past times in general. “In looking back,” said he, “on periods long gone by, we are apt to recollect those circumstances only which were pleasant, and to forget the many little painful events which continually disturb the peace of man on earth.” And he affirmed, also, what he felt persuaded to be the case, that man’s happiness depended not on any outward circumstances, but on his re-union with God, from whom he is naturally separated by sin. He described the appointed means of this re-union in as few words as possible, and he endeavoured to portray the peaceful, the blessed, the triumphant state of an old Christian, humbly waiting the period when his change should take place; and then he proceeded to draw a parallel between the situation of such a man and that of a child whose happiness consists in want of reflection, or that of mere men of the world, whose peace must ever



be liable to be marred by the fear of death, and by their uncertainty with respect to what must follow it.

Clermont had endeavoured to compress these sentiments in as few words as possible; but while he was speaking, he observed strong marks of impatience in the countenances of his auditors: Virginie looked down, and Victor's features became flushed with anger. At length the young man spoke, and, using an oath too common in the mouths of Frenchmen, told Clermont he was fit company only for an old monk of the Chartreux. Then, arising abruptly, and drawing Virginie after him, he added an expression of a nature so profane, that Clermont, being penetrated with horror, also started from his seat, and, leaving the public situation in which he then was, he retired to a more solitary part of the wood, where, no doubt, he unburdened his soul in an address to that God whom he had been led to desire to love with all his soul, with all his mind, and with all his strength.

Shortly after the period lately spoken of, the family of the Comte de V—— returned to Paris; and Clermont, whose departure for England could not, from certain circumstances, take place for several weeks, was compelled to witness a new mode of life which was even less congenial with his feelings than that which he had seen at the chateau.

In the country he had indeed had many opportunities of withdrawing himself at times from society, and of communing with his Maker among the most beautiful works of that glorious God. For although nature had been twisted and tortured in the most cruel manner which could be imagined in the immediate vicinity of the chateau, where nothing was to be seen but stiff parterres, trim avenues, close bosquets, grottoes, and Chinese bridges, statues of dryads, fawns, and wood-nymphs; yet beyond this region of false taste were many exquisite scenes, where nature, being left at liberty, afforded some idea of what this fine country had once been when it was peopled by its ancient Celtic inhabitants, ere yet the primeval forests had yielded to the axe of the wood-cutter, or the extensive lawn had been portioned into small patches for the use of the cottager. But when Clermont became an inmate of the Hotel de V——, in the Faux-

bourg St. Honore, he had no place to which he could withdraw where his ears were not assailed by the noise of this great city.

Those persons who have visited London and Paris must be sensible of striking and peculiar differences in the taste of the inhabitants of these famous capitals. There is a grand and noble simplicity in the plan of the former which must arrest every eye; and, though many parts of London (as of every city inhabited by the sinful race of man) are disfigured by want of cleanliness, and polluted by guilt, nevertheless, the new streets and the superior portions of that metropolis are free from mean and inferior ornaments. In them we find none of that affectation of the *rus in urbe* of which our continental neighbours are so fond, where stunted trees, parched gravel walks, leafless arbours, and trim parterres, present nature to the eye in the character of Hagar in the desert, about to expire with thirst.

Paris, on the other hand, is an assemblage of tasteless palaces and mean houses, dried and withered gardens, dirty public walks, avenues of black trees, between ranges of little shops and an exceeding variety of ornaments, in bad taste themselves, and appearing with additional deformity from being injudiciously situated.

A totally new scene is, however, always imposing and when Clermont first visited the gardens of the Tuilleries, which at that time were occupied by the emperor and his royal consort, Maria Louisa, of the house of Austria, his attention was powerfully arrested by the long reach of avenue, extending from the front of the palace, and through its stiff gardens, set forth with innumerable ancient statues, the Place Louis Quinze and the Champs Elysees, till it was terminated, at a magnificent distance, by the gateway which is situated at the Barrier de l'Etoile.

It is not now my object to enter very particularly into a description of the mode of life that is led by persons of distinction in Paris. Suffice it to say, that at the period we speak of, as in the present time, nothing is less desired in that city than the pleasures of a domestic life. In the house of the Comte de V——, the family never met at breakfast, but each lady took her solitary meal in her own apartment, and, probably, even in bed. Sometimes, in-

deed, a male or female visitant might be permitted to take this meal with her; but this was deemed an affair of so little account, that it was perhaps known only to the femme de chambre of the lady herself, or to the lacquey who ushered the person through the anteroom. The gentlemen of the family generally took their breakfasts at some fashionable caffes, where they lounged away more than an hour, in reading the public papers of the day, and inquiring after the news. Clermont expected that the hour of dinner would, of course, assemble the family; but the Comte de V—— seldom had any dinner prepared in his house. His servants were on board wages; and it was at one of the fashionable restaurateurs near the court end of the town, that the ladies of the family, sometimes in company with the Comte, and sometimes attended by other gentlemen, partook of their necessary refreshment. The evenings were always devoted to amusements, of which there was an inconceivable variety. The theatres, the opera, balls of different kinds, public gardens, &c. &c. afforded a continual excuse for not staying at home: and Clermont now found it more difficult than ever to enjoy a moment's conversation with Virginie.

At length, however, finding that she did not object to receive company in her bed-chamber, he availed himself of the privilege, which he thought might more becomingly be allowed to a brother than to any other person; and he accordingly presented himself, one morning, at the door of her antechamber. Being introduced, he found her sitting at breakfast with a young lady of her acquaintance. Virginie blushed, and seemed embarrassed at the appearance of Clermont; but recovering herself, she soon became as sprightly as usual, and, with considerable archness, thanked him for the honour he had done her.

While the visiter continued, no particular discourse could take place between Virginie and Clermont: but, on her having taken leave, Clermont obliged his sister to sit down, after which, he fastened the door, and then entered into very close conversation with her. He spoke to her of what he had observed respecting Victor, and demanded of her what her views were with respect to him.

"What are my uncle's intentions, Virginie?" he said; "I have a right to ask: does he mean to marry you to his son? You are of an age, my sister, when it is the custom, in this country, for young women to be settled; and I think that you ought now either to separate yourself from Victor, or to become his wife." Clermont concluded by offering her a home in England, and pressing her earnestly to accept it, having been authorized so to do, by his paternal friend, the excellent Mr. Charlton.

Virginie seemed to shrink with a kind of instinctive horror from this proposal; and replied, without hesitation, that she would prefer death in France to life in England.

"Such words," said Clermont, "are easily spoken, Virginie; but you, who reject the comforts of religion, should be the last to speak of desiring death."

"Clermont," returned the young lady, again repeating her old plea, "you and I are of dissimilar ways of thinking: you are a heretic, I am a Catholic: religion, therefore, had better be left alone between us."

"Were you a serious Papist, Virginie," replied Clermont, "I should be better satisfied with your state of mind: but let me tell you, my sister, that the infidel expressions which you not unfrequently utter, would be as abhorrent in the estimation of a sincere Papist, as they are in mine. A Roman Catholic avows many tenets of which I totally disapprove; and yet I am persuaded that there is no serious man of that denomination who would not shudder at the contempt of God and of the Saviour, which you not unfrequently express. But to leave this subject. My present business is to demand of you, what your views are respecting Victor."

The decided tone and manner with which Clermont spoke, forced from Virginie the confession, that she was strongly attached to Victor, and that she believed he preferred her before every other woman on earth, but that, as her fortune was small, her uncle did not desire their marriage: adding this information, that he had already taken several steps to bring about another union for his son, and also one for herself.

"And what," said the astonished Clermont, "are your intentions respecting this matter? Do you mean to sub-

mit to your uncle's wishes? What is Victor's determination?"

"Brother," replied Virginie, "wherefore do you concern yourself in this affair? Leave us to ourselves. We desire no interference. Our modes of thinking, as I said before, are altogether dissimilar: you have separated yourself from us by adopting heretical sentiments. Leave me to myself. You may make me more miserable, but you cannot contribute to my happiness, by interfering with our plans."

Clermont looked at her with a desire to read what was passing in her mind. The expression of her countenance was mysterious. "O Virginie, my sister!" he exclaimed, still gazing intently on her, "those who reject the guidance of their God, enter into dark and dreadful paths of which they know not the end. Be persuaded, my sister! my beloved! daughter of my father! daughter of my mother! companion of my early infancy! Take your God for your guide; go to him through Christ; plead your Saviour's merits in your own behalf: and assuredly you will be set right; you will find comfort, you will receive pardon."

"Pardon!" said Virginie, "for what? What have I done?"

"Done!" repeated Clermont, looking earnestly upon her, "I have no particular suspicions of you; but I well know that you partake of a sinful nature in common with all mankind; and to the sin of your nature, I know, also, that you have added that of open infidelity, and frequent blasphemy: for why should I not speak all that is in my mind?"

Virginie, during this conversation, had been violently agitated. Her countenance had varied repeatedly: and passion at length so powerfully influenced her, that, throwing herself back in her chair, she uttered a loud shriek, and fell into a kind of fit, in which her cries resounded through the house.

Clermont, grieved and astonished, rushed to the door to call for help, and in the antechamber he met Victor and the femme de chambre, together with others of the family, all of whom were alarmed by the cries of the young lady.



The first impulse of Victor was to hasten to Virginie, and take her in his arms. At the sound of his voice, she ceased to shriek, and melting into tears, laid her head on his shoulder; while he, with real anxiety, inquired the cause of her agitation: but as she gave no immediate answer, he looked furiously at Clermont, and asked him to account for his sister's distress.

"Willingly," replied Clermont; but I must have no witnesses of what I shall say:"—and, as he spoke, he directed that the domestics, who had crowded in, might leave the room.

"Perhaps," said Victor, "you would rather choose to explain this matter in the Bois de Boulogne, or some other more private place?"

"This room," returned Clermont, calmly, "is sufficiently private, Victor. I will not affect to mistake your meaning: but, take it as you will, and come what will of it, I now solemnly declare, that I never will imbue my hand in the blood of any man. So God give me grace to keep this resolution!"

"You will not refuse then, Clermont," said Victor, somewhat more calmly, "to disclose what has passed between you and Virginie?"

"Certainly not," replied Clermont; "but I would rather that our conversation should have no witness." So saying, he led the way to his own apartment, and was followed by his cousin.

Clermont was not sorry at having this opportunity, which now presented itself, for his sounding the sentiments of Victor with regard to his sister. He hoped by this means to obtain some satisfaction in the affair. But although Victor listened to all that passed with considerable calmness, he made no answer from which his determination respecting Virginie could be understood. He did not deny that he loved Virginie, and that he had always loved her; and he expressed a wish that his circumstances were such as would render it in his power to supply her with every distinction which her virtues deserved: but he would enter into no explanation of his plans, or rather, he seemed to express himself as one who had formed no plan of action, but was ready to be decided by any impulse of the moment.

Clermont, who through all these trying scenes was enabled to stand firmly to his Christian profession, missed not this occasion, on which he found Victor more serious than usual, of urging upon him the doctrines and duties of real religion: but, on the mere mention of this subject, the young man instantly became light and profane, and uttered several expressions so shocking to Clermont, that he thought it best to desist from pressing the subject any further. Thus, after having made every effort which he thought prudent with respect to his sister, this good brother was left in the same state of doubt as before with regard to her situation in reference to Victor, and he was also more strongly and painfully convinced of the infidel principles of both these his young relations.

In the mean time, Clermont beheld much in the conduct of his uncle and aunt, his cousin and sister, which grieved him. Both the Comte and Victor spent nearly the whole of their time abroad, but not together. They seldom returned home till late at night, and sometimes not till near the morning; and if Clermont by chance met them during the day, they appeared to be absorbed in some concerns which they were not willing to impart to any other person. The Comtesse was, in the mean time, wholly devoted to her own society and their peculiar amusements; and Virginie also had her chosen companions with whom she went abroad. If Clermont happened to meet with any of these his relations, it was always in a crowd, or some scene of gaiety; and they always seemed glad to shake him off, and to see him engaged with other persons, or in other parts of the apartment in which they might chance to be assembled. The Comtesse was the only person who appeared to take the least pleasure in his society; but such was the levity, coquetry, and want of delicacy in her manner, that Clermont was as uneasy in her company as his other connexions could be in his.

Thus passed some weeks: at the end of which period two persons were brought forward whom Clermont had reason to think were the individuals to whom the Comte would have no objections to unite his son and his niece in marriage. The one was an extremely rich and gay widow of about twenty-five years of age; and the other

was a middle-aged man, of no family indeed, but possessing great wealth and considerable influence at court.

The first appearance of these persons in the presence of Clermont was at a supper given at the Hotel de V——; and it was, even at this first interview, sufficiently apparent, what were the views entertained by the Comte.

During the repeated interviews which took place on various occasions after this supper, it became very evident that Madame de Blemont (the lady above-mentioned) was perfectly satisfied with the appearance and fashionable air of Victor, and that Monsieur de Saintierre appeared equally pleased with Virginie; but Clermont was still unable to penetrate the intentions of his cousin and sister with respect to these proposed marriages, though he had frequently found them in close conversation with each other, and once heard his sister say, "If fortune would but favour us, Victor, we might yet be happy."

It was in vain that Clermont solicited the confidence of Virginie; the young lady continued to avoid him: and he found that he only exposed himself to insults by attempting to enter into any particular conversation with his cousin. It might, however, be expected that Clermont, being naturally deeply concerned in the happiness of his sister, was no idle spectator of what was passing around him; and the more so, as he had few acquaintances in Paris, and none, in fact, who actually interested him.

In the mean time, the frequent and long-continued absences of Victor surprised him; and he had already begun to entertain considerable fears respecting them, when his uncle, one day, calling him aside, and addressing him with more affection than usual, said, "My dear nephew, I am very uneasy about my son. I greatly fear that he has lately taken to gamble, and that to an extent which threatens the total ruin of all his prospects."

Clermont heard this communication with more grief than surprise; and, after having expressed his sorrow on the occasion, he asked what he could do to assist his cousin.

"Watch him, my dear nephew," said the Comte: "discover his haunts. Follow him; and endeavour, when

you see him in danger, to extricate him from his evil companions, and to bring him home."

"Sir," replied Clermont, "although the service will not be an acceptable one to my cousin, I am ready to obey you, and hope that I may be enabled to be useful to him. But O, my uncle!" he added, "if I might but presume to open my mind to you, I should entreat you to seek another and a more powerful friend for my cousin than such a one as I am. I should implore you to use the influence of a father, to induce him to seek a heavenly and omnipotent guide for his youth." Clermont then, with the same Christian firmness which he had evinced throughout his whole residence in France, ventured to state to his uncle the anxiety which he felt at the irreligious state of his family, and boldly predicting that destruction would inevitably be the consequence of this contempt of the divine power, he earnestly besought his uncle to press the obligations of religion on his children without further loss of time. He also took occasion to point out to him the regard which subsisted between his son and Virginie, and to ask him wherefore he wished to separate two persons who had been so long and faithfully attached.

The Comte took no notice of that part of Clermont's address which referred to religion; but, replying to the latter part of his appeal only, he said, "Clermont, you are, perhaps, unacquainted with the state of my affairs. Though living in the style you see, I am a poor man; and it is necessary that my son should marry so as to support the honour of his family."

"Honour!" repeated Clermont, "what are earthly honours in comparison with happiness? O, my uncle! do not compel your son to make a sacrifice which, I am persuaded, is utterly repugnant to his feelings."

"Clermont, you mistake me," replied the Comte; "I use no compulsion. Victor sees the necessity of this marriage as clearly as I do: and he is entirely acquiescent in the arrangement."

"Inconceivable," replied Clermont. "These are things I cannot understand."

"Why not," said the Comte.

Clermont had long been aware that his relations pos-

essed scarcely one idea, or one feeling, in unison with his own, and that, therefore, arguments between them were always unsatisfactory: as they had no common sentiment on which their reasonings might be founded. He therefore made no reply to the last question of the Comte, but took his leave, with the assurance that he would do every thing that might be in his power to benefit his cousin in the way that had been pointed out.

In compliance with his uncle's request, when Victor was preparing to go out on that same evening, Clermont contrived to meet him at the door of the hall, and addressing him with apparent carelessness, he said, "If you are going out, cousin, I should like to accompany you; for I have hitherto lived almost as a stranger in this place, and should be glad to become somewhat more intimately acquainted with the humours of this gay city."

On hearing this, Victor laughed aloud, and replied, "How now, my good cousin? do you begin to be tired of the philosophic life that you have hitherto led? Come on, then, and I will introduce you into the world; and henceforward we shall understand each other better than we have hitherto done, I make no question."

Clermont was shocked at the turn which Victor thus gave to his request, and, upon reflection, he saw that his proposal had been an injudicious one, and that it bore with it an appearance of inconsistency, which, for the honour of religion, every Christian should carefully avoid. He was therefore at a loss what further to say, till Victor, observing his hesitation, seemed inclined to draw him forward to the carriage which was waiting in the court.

"Stop one moment, Victor," said Clermont. "On second thoughts, I find that I must not go with you. You have misunderstood me: I am not weary of the part which I have hitherto been enabled to choose; I desire still to lead an innocent life; and I pray that I may always be kept from falling into sin; and, as I daily ask of my God that I may not be led into temptation, so I am resolved not to throw myself into it. If, therefore," he added, smilingly, "if the company you keep, my cousin, is not that which you would recommend as suitable for such a philosopher as I am, I will not accompany you." So



saying, he let Victor's arm go, and the young man, laughing loud, instantly jumped into his carriage, and was driven out of the court.

Clermont, for a short time after the departure of Victor, stood upon the steps of the portico, considering what steps he ought next to take. "What," said he, "shall I do for this misguided and unprincipled young man? how am I to watch him? whither must I follow him? And yet I must not disregard my uncle's request. Am I myself able to withstand the trials to which I cannot but be exposed in seeking him through all the haunts of vice with which this profligate capital abounds? O my God, enlighten and influence my mind on this subject, and make me to know the path in which I should walk!" While uttering these last words, being perhaps directed by some secret influence from above, he descended the steps, crossed the court, and, passing under the gate, he presently found himself in the street.

Those who have traversed the capital of England at night, and have beheld it blazing, as it were, at that time with the brightness of a second day, must not expect an appearance equally brilliant at the same hour in the streets of Paris.

The Rue St. Honore is one of the principal streets in Paris; notwithstanding which, the houses are for the most part mean; and those few which are of a superior kind, stand back from the street, in courts, having lodges or gateways in the front. A few lamps, suspended in the centre from the ropes which run across the streets, shed a dim and imperfect light upon the pavement, and hardly allow the passenger to distinguish the forms of the houses on each side.

Clermont passed along this gloomy street in haste, and, taking the shortest way to the Palais Royal, he arrived at the gate at the moment in which several carriages were wheeling away from it; and among these he plainly distinguished that which belonged to Victor. He called to the coachman, but was not heard: and now, having no doubt that his cousin might be found in some apartment of the buildings which surround the several courts of the palace, he entered beneath the archway which is at the entrance of the court, and which forms a

part of the habitation of the Duke of Orleans, and from thence he proceeded, without loss of time, into the piazza on the left.

The Palais Royal, built by Cardinal Richelieu, in 1636, could formerly boast of a beautiful garden, planted with the greatest exactness and precision. It contained two lawns, symmetrically bordered by rows of trees. Between these lawns was a basin in the form of a crescent, surrounded by trellis work, with many niches, in which were placed statues. A magnificent avenue of tillenels, resembling a noble archway, encompassed the garden, and was terminated at the end by elms, so trimmed as to represent porticoes. At present, however, these gardens are entirely transformed, although a few dusky trees yet remain, and a fountain is still seen to play in the centre of the first court. Immense galleries and innumerable shops have now taken the place of the avenues of Tillenel, and of the leafy piazzas and the shadowy bowers with which it was once adorned. Neither is this ancient abode of princes more changed in its outward appearance than it is with respect to its inhabitants. To use the words of a modern writer, "The Palais Royal is now a kind of camera-obscura, in which a stranger might contemplate all Paris; for in this place there is assembled, in one point of view, every vanity, every folly, and we might add, every inducement to vice, which the mightiest capital of the earth could possibly afford. The buildings which surround the two courts of the Palais Royal are of considerable height, and consist of many stories. The ground-floor is composed of shops, or houses of restaurateurs, having before them a paved walk and open gallery; cafes and gambling-rooms occupy the second story; and a range of apartments under ground afford the like places of entertainment for persons of inferior rank. We forbear to inquire into the uses to which the upper apartments of these ranges of buildings are appropriated; for, to adopt the words of the same author whom we have just quoted, "there are, in certain pictures, parts which ought to be thrown into the shade."

Into this place, such as we have partly described it, and such as we might further imagine it to be, Clermont now

felt himself impelled by duty to enter, alone, and at that very hour when, under the covert of darkness, or by the merely dubious light of thinly scattered lamps, vice was stalking abroad, fearless and unreserved. Clermont, without any specific motive for his so doing, entered the piazza on the left, and passing on till he came to the wooden gallery which separates the two courts, he saw before him a figure which he thought resembled Victor. He accordingly followed the young man into the second court, where he disappeared through a door-way on the left. Clermont, though still at some distance, kept his eye fixed on this door-way, till, entering through it, he ascended a staircase which introduced him to a large apartment called, *Le Caffé des Milles Colonnes*, one of the most celebrated in Paris, and here he immediately discovered that the young man whom he had followed was to him a total stranger. This apartment, notwithstanding its ostentatious appellation, was small, but it was adorned with many marble columns, which, being reflected by looking-glasses, judiciously arranged for the purpose, appeared to be multiplied beyond calculation, and thus seemed to entitle the room to its magnificent characteristic, *Des Milles Colonnes*. The effect, however, of these arrangements was exceedingly bad; because the simplicity of the original idea was destroyed by several ill-judged ornaments, and various statues, in imitation of the antique, which were multiplied by the mirrors till the eye was wearied with the repetition.

But that which shocked the mind of Clermont more than any thing else in this place was a female of middle age and rather large dimensions, who was seated on an elevated chair of fine damask adorned with gold. She was placed with her back to a mirror, and had before her a marble table, on which were certain urns and vessels of gold.

This female appeared dressed with exquisite art, and the artificial rose and lily adorned her cheeks and neck. Clermont now remembered that he had heard Victor speak of this woman as being well known to him, and, therefore, revolting as it was to him to address a character of this description, he went up to her, and inquired whether she had seen the Chevalier, de V—— during the evening.

Clermont's manner and appearance were those of a gentleman, and, as such, this person thought it worth her while to try to please him. In return to his question, therefore she, assumed one of her most gracious smiles and softest cadences: but, after several coquettish circumlocutions, she was obliged to confess that she had seen nothing during that evening of the individual in question.

Nothing is more revolting to a mind agitated by strong emotions, and under the influence of virtuous feelings, than the unfeeling trifling of vicious characters. In consequence of this, it was with difficulty that Clermont could contain himself to hear her out, or even to answer with common politeness; so that, turning hastily round, he quitted this scene of vanity, and presently found himself again in the piazza.

I shall not accompany Clermont throughout all his wanderings during the course of this evening. Suffice it to say, that, at about one o'clock, he had almost determined to return to the Hotel de V——, when, at the door of a restaurateur, he met with a young man whom he had frequently seen in company with Victor. This young man was not one whom Clermont would ever have made choice of as a companion: nevertheless, he was at this time glad to see him; and now, telling him that he was come in search of Victor, at the request of his father, he begged that, if it were in his power, he would direct him where to find him.

The young man replied, that he had not seen him during that evening; but added, that he could probably direct Clermont to a place where he might be found, as it was one of his usual haunts. Accordingly, the stranger conducted Clermont into one of the buildings on the right of the second square, and, taking him up several flights of stairs, he introduced him to a very large room, where a number of persons were engaged in games of hazard.

A deep silence reigned throughout the apartment when Clermont entered, (being introduced by the young gentleman above mentioned,) which silence was now and then broken by strong and sudden exclamations, expressive of violent but half-repressed emotion. Clermont

walked quietly round the apartment, anxiously looking for Victor, who nowhere appeared; and he was just about to withdraw, eager to leave a scene which filled him with horror, when suddenly a violent altercation broke out at one of the tables, from which a young man, rising up, exclaimed, with a dreadful oath, "It is done! then I am lost!"

At the same moment, the young man who had uttered these words rushed towards the door; and, in an instant afterwards, the sound of a pistol in the passage, followed by that of a heavy fall upon the floor, struck dreadfully upon the ears of all.

Every one in the apartment immediately arose; and many sprang forward to the door, insomuch that Clermont was unable to pass through the crowded door-way; but as he stood behind the throng, he dismally heard the expiring groan of the miserable self-destroyer, and the exclamations of horror which immediately afterwards burst from every mouth.

Clermont remained in this scene of guilt and misery till he had ascertained that death had actually taken place; and then, being sick with horror, and faint with fatigue, he returned to the Hotel de V——, where his first question to the porter was, "Is the Chevelier returned? is my cousin in the house?"

Being relieved, in some degree, from his fears on Victor's account, (which were now become excessive,) by the answer of the porter, who replied, that Monsieur had already been an hour in the house, Clermont went to bed, where he, however, found not the least degree of repose till the morning had begun to dawn, at which time he fell asleep; but it was a sleep in which all the horrors of the past night were represented anew to his mind.

It was eight o'clock when Clermont awoke from his troubled rest: and then rising and dressing in haste, he resolved that before Victor could possibly leave the house, he would seek him, and make one more attempt to persuade him to renounce that mode of life, the end of which, if pursued, would, he doubted not, be similar to the fate of that miserable young man whose death he had the night before witnessed. Influenced by this resolution, he stationed himself in a centre apartment of the



hotel, through which he was aware that Victor must pass in order to go out: and there he waited for a considerable time, sometimes throwing his restless limbs on a sofa which was situated in the apartment, and sometimes pacing the room with hasty steps; his mind, during this painful interval, being incessantly engaged in prayer; but it was that kind of heartfelt exercise which those only can practise and appreciate who have lived in habitual and intimate union with their God.

More than an hour had thus elapsed before Victor appeared. He came out from his chamber in such a dress as indicated that it was his intention instantly to go out. But though he was attired with evident care, his face was pale, and there was a certain wildness in his manner which too plainly bespoke the disorder and agitation of his mind. At the sight of Clermont he started, and looked as if he would gladly have avoided him: but Clermont was in that state of high excitement which inspires the most timorous with courage, and which gives boldness to the most reserved. He instantly advanced towards Victor, on his first appearance, and entered without ceremony into the detail of all his views and apprehensions respecting him.

During the course of this history, I have found it necessary to repeat many conversations at some length. I now therefore forbear to enter into the particulars of that which took place between Clermont and Victor on the present occasion; because in so doing, I should be compelled to repeat many arguments that have been already adduced. I shall therefore content myself by simply stating the general heads of this conversation.

Clermont began by expressing his uneasiness at the habitual and mysterious absence of his cousin from home; and he stated that he was well acquainted with the fact of his frequenting gambling-houses; and he acknowledged that he had gone into one on the night before, expecting to find him there. He then informed him of the dreadful scene that he had there witnessed; and proceeded, in a manner at once exceedingly warm and affectionate, to point out to his cousin the inevitable consequences of a vicious course of conduct, both in the present world and in that which is to come.

Although Clermont's discourse was protracted to a considerable length. Victor heard him out, and seemed to be affected by many of his arguments. But at the moment that he ceased to speak, the unhappy young man arose without making any other reply than a simple declaration that he felt his cousin's kindness, and then fetching a deep sigh, he walked back to his own apartment, in which he presently shut himself up. Clermont flattered himself that he might take this action as a token for good; and new hopes with regard to his misguided cousin were beginning to arise in his breast, when his sister entered the saloon by a door at the further end; but on seeing her brother she immediately started, and seemed half inclined to draw back.

"Virginie," said Clermont, "you appear surprised and agitated at seeing me here. Will you not, however, allow me a moment's hearing? Though I am your nearest relation, you continually shun me; you look upon me as your enemy; and instead of making me the confidant of your sorrows, you shrink with horror when you behold me."

"My sorrows!" repeated Virginie: "what would you insinuate, Clermont? why do you suppose that I have any particular afflictions?"

"I have no desire," returned Clermont, "to extort a confidence which is continually refused me. But let us not now speak of our own concerns, Virginie: it is Victor of whom we must think at present."

"Victor!" she reiterated, turning pale, and trembling excessively; "what do you fear for Victor?"

"Every thing," said Clermont. "He is an infidel, and a gambler; and what may we not expect from such a one? O Virginie! my sister! you know not what dangers you incur when you reject the favour of your God! The Lord forbid that I should ever experience in my own mind the darkness and horror of infidelity: nevertheless, I can, in some measure, conceive what it is; and I never wonder at any act of desperation, however dreadful, of which such persons are guilty."

"What do you mean, Clermont? what do you allude to?" said Virginie.

"This, my sister, is the meaning of what I would say,

returned Clermont, "that unless you can discover some means of dissuading Victor from his present course of life, and unless the divine mercy interposes to awaken him from his delusive dream of infidelity, I look forward to some dreadful catastrophe, of which I dare not now even think."

Virginie became still more pale, and sunk back on a sofa, sighing bitterly.

"O my sister!" said Clermont; "better would it have been for you, and for our unhappy cousin, that you had died in your cradles, while yet you were incapable of raising your impious voices against the majesty of your Creator. O my God! my God!" he added, clasping his hands, and directing his eyes upwards, "have mercy on these young people. Open their eyes, ere it is yet too late, to a sight of the heinous crime of unbelief of which they are guilty; and deliver them, O Lord, through thy free and unmerited grace, from the sure consequences of their transgressions."

Virginie interrupted her brother in the midst of these his devout ejaculations, to ask him what were his particular fears on Victor's account. "He is now in the house," she said: "for I was told that he came in last night, and that he then appeared as usual. What then do you particularly apprehend?"

Clermont now informed his sister of all that had passed between his uncle and himself on the last evening, and he also laid before her the detail of his visit to the Palais Royal, and he particularly mentioned the dreadful scene that he had witnessed in the gambling-house.

"And why should you suppose that Victor is in danger of imitating this miserable man?" said Virginie.

"Because he exposes himself amidst the same circumstances of risk," returned Clermont, "and he rejects those comforts and restraints of religion by which alone the mind of man is soothed in affliction, and his passions are controlled in the moment of high and otherwise overpowering excitement."

Virginie, though pale and trembling, affected to smile at these fears, and said, "Brother, you alarm yourself without sufficient cause; this is not Victor's first introduction into the world; he plays with judgment; he is not rash

and I conclude, that it is more probable that he may acquire a fortune, which will set him above the necessity of the odious match that is now contemplated for him, than that he will inconsiderately become the means of his own ruin."

On hearing this remark, Clermont, who, during the last few minutes, had been pacing the apartment with hurried steps, as if thereby to relieve the perturbation of his spirits, stood still before his sister, and looking intently at her, he exclaimed, "And is it so? do I now understand this mystery? It was all inexplicable before. O miserable Virginie! The thing is then done; and you yourself will be the destruction of the man whom you love."

The argument between Virginie and her brother now assumed a new aspect, by which he endeavoured to convince her of the danger and impiety of attempting to control her own future circumstances by the encouragement of measures so unlawful. And he availed himself of this opportunity to point out the blessedness of the state of that man, who, having resigned himself, both his soul and body, into the hands of his God, is thereby delivered from every anxious care respecting his subsequent situation in life; having thus been enabled to cast all his care upon him who careth for him.

Virginie impatiently heard her brother speaking on this subject; and then she recurred to her old plea, that as he was a heretic, and she a Catholic, it was therefore impossible that they could agree on matters of religion: and though Clermont pressed her to hear what he had further to say, she arose and withdrew to her apartment.

Clermont being now again left alone, began to consider what he should next do for Victor; and contemplated with anguish the little prospect that he had of serving him effectually: for he felt convinced that if the young man was still resolved to continue in the ruinous course upon which he had entered, it would be impossible for him, either by watching him, or by any other means, to preserve him from the effects of his own rashness. He resolved, however, to do what he could in order that he might thus save himself from after reflections of self-reproach in case that which he most feared should eventu-

ally take place: he therefore continued at home during the whole of the morning; and finding that Victor did not attempt to go out, Clermont felt his mind somewhat relieved by the circumstance.

In the evening, the Comtesse was to give an entertainment: and, as Madame de Blemont was expected to be present, there was no doubt entertained that Victor would be at home.

When Clermont entered the saloon in the evening, he found it illuminated with great splendour and brilliancy, which, however, ill agreed with the real character and the well-known feelings of every individual of the family that was to receive the guests. The apartment was furnished with casolettes, which, being now lighted up, exhaled all the perfumes of the east. Several persons were already arrived. Clermont was rejoiced to see his cousin Victor elegantly dressed, standing among a group of young ladies, and conversing with gaiety. Virginie soon afterwards approached the little circle: but there was a sadness in her air which she seemed in vain endeavouring to conceal. She stood for a moment beside her cousin, and their eyes met with an expression which Clermont was destined never to forget. She then passed on; and Clermont observed that Victor looked after her as she retreated; and he thought that he sighed: but rousing himself in a moment afterwards, he resumed his seeming gaiety.

Presently the crowd in the saloon became such, that it was found desirable to disperse the circle of ladies, and to distribute them round the tables for play.

When the tables were arranged, some of the persons who were disengaged passed forward into the gallery, which also was illuminated. In this gallery they had placed a harp; and several ladies gathered themselves round this harp, while one began to play. The air which was first chosen was an English one; and the lady, on being asked to sing, confessed that she had forgotten the words, which were English.

Some one present then said, "We have an English gentleman here, who perhaps can refresh your memory: and Clermont was in consequence called. The young man was too polite to advance any objection against



complying with this call, especially when pressed by the Comtesse: but before he left the saloon, he requested that lady not to lose sight of Victor, but if he went out of the room, immediately to inform him of the circumstance.

It was some time before Clermont could persuade the young ladies who were gathered round the harp, that he was unable to assist them in recalling the song, and perhaps more than half an hour had passed before he could extricate himself from their importunities, which were particularly annoying to him at this time, when his mind was so fully engaged and agitated by other matters: but when he had returned to the saloon, he looked in vain for Victor; and was surprised to see the Comtesse so deeply engaged in play, that it was probable she had utterly forgotten the interests of her son-in-law in her attention to her own more immediate concerns. Clermont immediately applied to the servants, who were waiting in the antechamber; and being told by them that his cousin had gone out only a few minutes before, he hastened into the court without loss of time, and made the same demand of the *suisse* at the gate.

Clermont, as I before said, was fully aware of the fruitlessness of any attempts of his to save a profligate young man who was bent on his own destruction; nevertheless, he was determined (the Lord assisting him) to do what he could for him: he accordingly hastened into the street, engaged the first *fiacre* he could meet with, and proceeded to the Palais Royal.

As we have, in description, followed Clermont in his pursuits through these mazes of vice and folly during the past night, we judge that our reader will not require either a repetition of the same account, or the detail of another so little varied that it cannot be supposed to afford any additional information. Suffice it to say, that the sun was already rising when Clermont returned, fatigued and dispirited, to the Hotel de V——, having sought Victor in every place where he thought it at all probable that he might be found, though his own comparative ignorance of the town added not a little to his difficulties on this occasion.

He had enjoyed scarcely any rest during the two past nights; and when told, on his arrival, that Victor was not

returned, though he was now excessively fatigued, his slight inclination to sleep totally left him. He, however, withdrew to his apartment, changed his dress, and in much agitation devoted some moments to earnest prayer.

At eight o'clock he again left his room, and on going into the saloon, he found every thing in that disordered and comfortless state, which is usual in every mansion on the morrow after some great festivity. Chairs and tables, cards and counters, were scattered in the utmost confusion through the apartments, and a faint and oppressive odour exhaled from the vase of perfume, though the fire which had caused the exhalations on the preceding evening was now extinguished.

Clermont unclosed the shutters, and threw open a window. The fresh air being admitted into the room, dispelled the sickly odours of the exhausted perfumes. He sat down on a sofa, and presently became deeply absorbed in thought, till at length, being utterly worn out by fatigue, he fell asleep in the attitude in which he sat.

It was eleven o'clock when the Comte entered the saloon. His step awakened Clermont, and his question, "Do you know any thing of Victor?" thoroughly roused him.

Clermont told the Comte how he had spent the night; and this account heightened the father's agitation to such a degree that they both agreed to go out together immediately to seek for the young man.

As the Comte of course knew more of Paris, and of the places likely to be frequented by a young man devoted to gambling, than his nephew did, there was reason to expect that the search for Victor, when conducted by him, would be more successful.

Clermont and the Comte had visited many well-known haunts of the lovers of high play, both in the Palais Royal and in other parts of the town, before they met with the least tidings of Victor.

At length they were informed by a young gentleman, an acquaintance, that the Chevalier de V—— had been seen, at an early hour of the preceding night, in a house in the Fauxburg St. Germaine; that he had engaged deeply in play, and had suffered losses, but to what amount the young gentleman either could not, or perhaps would not, say.

This information greatly increased the alarm of the Comte, and tended also to augment the fears of Clermont. The uncle and nephew, therefore, immediately repaired to the house above mentioned, but they could gain no further information than that Victor had left it at about three o'clock in the morning.

It was five o'clock in the afternoon when the Comte and Clermont returned to the Hotel de V—— with the faint hope of finding Victor there. They found the Comtesse and Virginie in the saloon: the latter was evidently in deep distress, pale and silent: and the Comtesse was in vain endeavouring to comfort her with those common-place topics of consolation to which alone people of the world are accustomed. When the Comte informed them of the result of their search, and expressed his fears that some unhappy consequence had resulted from Victor's loss, Virginie cast a look of mingled terror and shame at her brother, and then exclaiming, "Oh, Victor! Victor!" she sunk back in a state of total insensibility upon the sofa on which she was sitting.

Clermont felt himself unable to bear the sight of his sister's anguish: and the very knowledge of the infidel and consequently utterly comfortless state of her mind rendered his feelings on her account even still more intolerable. He was already in a fever, through anxiety and fatigue; but being perfectly regardless of his own feelings, he determined to renew his search for his cousin, and to return no more until he could bring tidings of the unhappy young man.

Were we again to contemplate Clermont, in his midnight wanderings through the streets of Paris, we should only have to describe a variety of bitter feelings which occupied his mind—feelings greatly increased by the view of that thoughtlessness and vice in others, the dreadful consequences of which he already began to apprehend in all its horrors as awaiting his uncle's family.

Clermont had, during the last forty-eight hours, become better acquainted with the situation of the different houses of public resort in Paris than he would have been, according to his usual mode of living, during as many years' residence in that capital. He had once again visited all those places to which he had accompanied his uncle

in the morning, but with no better success. The morning light was faintly dawning on the city when Clermont found himself beneath that front of the Louvre which looks towards the Seine. The night air was chilly, and the mind of Clermont was in that state of stupor which commonly follows any violent emotion; a state which, in an irreligious mind, partakes of the nature of despair, but which, in a pious spirit, still retains that sweet and heartfelt confidence which enables the Christian, under the most severe trials to which human nature is liable, to say, "I know in whom I have believed."

Clermont proceeded along the banks of the river towards the Pont Neuf. It was three o'clock in the morning: the season was summer. The whole city was buried in a profound stillness; the streets were deserted and silent, and, to use the language of a modern celebrated writer, they resembled the long galleries of a funeral monument. All were asleep but those characters whose evil purposes kept them awake, and who were silently skulking amid the shadows of the night in search of their prey.

Clermont still advanced, and soon found himself in the front of a hotel of a fine appearance, illuminated as for a gala. Many carriages, belonging to private persons, were arranged within the court, and a line of hackney-coaches waited at the door. Clermont stood still near this spot, a faint hope rising in his mind that he might here find Victor. The company was breaking up, as Clermont presently observed by the motion of the carriages within the court. He placed himself where he might best examine those who went out, and he soon became persuaded that these persons had been engaged in the same desperate games of chance which, he greatly feared, had effected the ruin of his cousin. Some of them, in going out, abused their servants with bitterness; others spoke to them with that disgusting familiarity which bespeaks a mind thrown from its balance by undeserved success; others laughed aloud; and others muttered curses between their teeth.

As the carriages began to move, the noise became confused and indistinct; but Clermont, still intent on one object, watched each countenance as closely as possible

until, at length, being convinced that Victor was not of the company, he turned away, and proceeded in his search.

It was now four o'clock. Clermont entered upon the Pont Neuf, and stood a while, leaning on the parapet, eyeing with vacant gaze the outline of the buildings to the right and left of the river, as this outline appeared marked upon the horizon by the faint light of the dawning day.

From this place he could see the palaces of kings and the humble dwellings of the little merchant; and beneath him were multitudes of boats and larger vessels, whose occupants were just beginning to rouse themselves. "Oh!" exclaimed Clermont, "lifting up his eyes towards heaven, "another night of misery is past, and the sun again arises in all his glory on this infidel city! Ah, unhappy country! Oh, land of my fathers! how long wilt thou deny thy God? how long will thy sons persist to reject the fountain of living waters, and hew unto themselves broken cisterns, which will hold no water?"

Clermont then thought of his own happy and peaceful childhood, of his paternal friend in England, and of that divine mercy by which he had been made to differ from too many of his countrymen, and led betimes to understand and feel the consolations of religion. "O, my God!" said he, "what is man without thee? and what is hell but separation from thee? May I henceforth be assisted to love and serve thee with every faculty of my soul and body! May my business and my pleasure be to promote thy worship!" He ceased to pray, for at this moment a thought glanced across his mind, a thought which, though indistinct and unformed, filled his heart with comfort.—"May I not," said he, "at some future time, be in one way or another devoted to the religious instruction of my country? I have heard of David Brainerd, of Swartz, and others, who have laid themselves out for the instruction of the savages of America, and of the heathen in the East: and oh, France! Oh, my country! dost thou not need the labours of the missionary more than these dwellings of the unlettered savage?—thou who once knewest thy God and Saviour, and hast now departed from thy first love?"

For a short time, the mind of Clermont was led away



by this train of thought from the more immediate concerns which had lately occupied him: soon, however, recollecting himself, he turned from the parapet, and stood for a moment, considering whither next he should go. During this momentary period of reflection; his mind passed, as it were, over every street in the great capital in the centre of which he stood. "Victor!" he exclaimed, "I have sought thee every where among the living: art thou among the dead? O, my unhappy cousin! where shall I find thee?" A dreadful idea then shot across his mind; and, irresistibly impelled by this thought, he instantly sought La Place du Marche Neuf.

We now again proceed to quote from the celebrated author to whom we have already more than once referred during the course of this narrative.

"Of all the public establishments of this capital," says this writer, "La Morgue is that, the destination of which presents to the mind the most painful and revolting idea. The name of it even is unknown to the greater part of the inhabitants of Paris: and among the small number of those who know the situation and design of this sad inclosure, undoubtedly there are very few who have had the strength of mind to approach it. Destruction and death there present themselves wearing the most hideous aspects. There the spectator does not behold the calm and decent melancholy of the tomb, the pious, and often pleasingly mournful spectacle of the funeral ceremony; neither have we there the imposing, though terrible ideas conveyed to us which the field of battle presents to the lover of martial glory; but we behold in La Morgue the naked and sanguinary image of suicide, murder, assassination, and despair. There death appears in all its horror.

"I still remember," continues the same author, "the first impression which the view of this terrible place made upon me. I was going out from the college, and I followed a crowd of people who were passing under the vaults of the ancient chatelet; curiosity impelling me forward, as it also did my companions.

"Beneath the foundations of that gothic tower, the last remains of a palace, said to have been built by Cæsar, there is, on the left, a deep air-hole formed in the ancient building, which admits a few rays of light into a subter

aneous chamber adjoining the lower gaol. Through the grates of this aperture I was enabled to introduce my head; and there I saw the body of a young female, the extreme paleness of which detached itself as a ray of light from the deep shades which surrounded it.

“La Morgue has been transferred, for some years past, to a building constructed for the purpose, upon the Place du Marche Neuf. This edifice, which stands alone on the extremity of the Pont St. Michel, is of a form suitable with its destination: its roof presents the appearance of an antique tomb; its architecture is severe; and the distribution of its apartments simple and commodious. The entrance is through a spacious porch, which separates two halls, one of which is appropriated to anatomical investigations, and the other to the exposure of the bodies which are brought there. The first of these halls is interdicted to the public, and windows of unpolished glass render it inaccessible to the eye of the passenger. The other is shut by a cloister of glass, which admits a view into the interior. Large openings in the stone-work, which are never filled up, and yet are not observable to the eye, continually admit the air, and illuminate the building throughout its whole extent. Within the second chamber, and parallel with the windows, on an oblique plane, are placed tablets of black marble, on which the dead are exposed, while their garments are hung upon the wall. The most retired part of this building serves for a habitation of the person charged with the care of this dreadful place.”

Thus we have been enabled to introduce an accurate description of this edifice, another for purposes similar to which has yet never been known, and which we trust will never be required in any other part of the world. For let it be remembered, that until the infidel inhabitants of the capital of the French nation rejected their God and renounced their Saviour by a national decree, this superb temple for the self-murderer was not found necessary: and although in every country some unhappy individuals may have existed who have been guilty of this soul-ruining crime, still these instances are very rare, and might frequently be attributed to bodily disorder, which affecting the brain, deprives the individual of every

power of self-possession. Yet there is no country besides France, in which it is become a common practice for every person who has rendered his life burdensome to himself by his crimes, to terminate it by a violent and self-inflicted death.

But to leave these reflections, which might otherwise lead us too far, and proceed with our narrative.— Clermont had heard of La Morgue. He knew its situation and the purposes to which it was devoted. And no sooner did the dreadful idea enter his mind, that he might there perhaps find the corpse of the unhappy young man whom he had long sought in vain, than he hastened to the place, in a state of feeling which might be more easily conceived than expressed.

The part of the city to which Clermont was going, was one that he had never before visited; and as, at that early hour, he did not meet with any person in the street, who could direct him, he took a more circuitous course than was necessary; and, in consequence, did not arrive at the Place du Marche Neuf until the sun had arisen above the horizon, and it had become perfectly light.

Clermont was not long before he discovered the building that he was seeking, it being sufficiently indicated to a casual observer by its peculiar construction. He started with apprehension at the sight, but advanced, however, instantly towards the portico.

As he entered the gloomy edifice, an excessive trembling agitated his whole frame, and the violent beating of his heart almost deprived him of breath. Still, however, he proceeded, and, passing onward to the most remote part of the vestibule, he looked through the windows of the hall that was destined for the reception of the bodies of those wretched individuals who, having committed suicide, have been found by persons to whom they are unknown, and he saw with horror a corpse extended on one of the marble slabs. For a moment he looked and doubted; but the next instant produced the dreadful reality, that he had at length found Victor where he had least desired to see him.

The unhappy young man, after having spent many hours at the gambling-table, had at length thrown himself into the river, being reduced to despair by his great

losses; and though the body had been taken up within an hour, it was too late to restore life; and therefore, as Victor was unknown to those about him, he had been consigned to that place of shame and abandonment in which his cousin found him.

There are some scenes which may be met with in human life, and some emotions exercised by the mind, to which it would be utterly impossible to do justice by any description which could be given: and such were the circumstances of the present occasion, on which Clermont first became convinced that it was actually the body of his miserable cousin which he now beheld, pale, disfigured, and extended on the cold black marble within the walls of La Morgue. Such were his feelings, that a considerable time had elapsed before he recollected himself. A violent flood of tears at length came to his relief; and the voice of the *concierger*, who had been for some time addressing him, though he knew it not, was the first occurrence which brought him to his recollection.

“Apparently, Sir,” said this man, who, from his situation, was grown callous to ordinary scenes of woe, “you know that unhappy gentleman? The body has lain here for some hours. It seems he drowned himself. Though taken up soon afterwards, all life was extinct when he was brought hither.”

“May I be permitted,” said Clermont, “to go into the hall, and once again take hold of that hand which so lately was warm with life?”

The *concierger* opened the door of the chamber of death. A faint earthy smell was perceptible, and the air struck cold and damp to his feelings. The same kind of stupor which had before come upon Clermont, now again took possession of his mind; and under its influence he advanced, with apparent composure, to the side of the corpse, and stood for a while with his arms folded, and his eyes fixed on the well-known features, which were less changed than might have been expected from the manner of the unhappy young man’s death. But who would pretend to express the thoughts which engaged the mind of Clermont as he stood by the last cold couch of Victor? Yet he was, perhaps, incapable of reflection, though his heavy groans betrayed his deep distress.

In this manner I know not how long he might have stood, had he not been interrupted by several voices, in accents of terror, which suddenly broke in upon the silent scene. Clermont unconsciously turned towards the door, when, who can conceive his feelings on beholding his sister enter, followed by his uncle, while several servants appeared in the back-ground? The unhappy father, at the sight of Clermont, whose presence in that place but too certainly confirmed the dreadful report which had by that time reached the Hotel de V—— of the awful death of his only son, shrunk back and fainted in the arms of his servant. But Virginie advanced. Her cheek was coloured, not as formerly, with an artificial glow, but with the flush of frenzy, excited by that false spirit which sometimes supports the ardent mind of youth in the moment of the severest trial. Her long hair had escaped from its accustomed confinement, or perhaps had been torn down by her own hands, and floated wildly over her shoulders. She came up close to the side of the corpse, and there standing for a moment, she thus addressed it: "Ah! yes! it is my Victor! my beloved! and here, here," she added, laying her hand on that cold hand which Clermont had removed from under the sheet by which the body was covered, "here I make that vow which shall unite us for ever. For ever I bind myself to you, my Victor: for you have been my first and only love."

So saying, she pressed her lips on the damp forehead of the corpse, and again addressed it with every word which friendship and love might be supposed to dictate. Then with a motion too sudden and unexpected to allow of any interference, she drew a dirk or dagger from beneath her clothes, and struck it into her bosom.

Clermont, instantly awakened by this action from his stupor, called aloud for help, and, with one arm, catching his sister round the waist, as she was falling to the ground, he, with his other hand, seized her arm.

"Let me alone!" she exclaimed, with furious eagerness, "I will die with him; I have sworn it, and I will die!" Then, with a vehement struggle disengaging her arm, she struck the dagger a second time into her breast.

The *concierge* and the servants were now all gathered round, while Clermont was still holding her. After the



last violent effort, her hand quitted its grasp, and the dagger, which fell at the same moment to the pavement, was now, as it were, swimming in the blood which poured from the wounds.

"Help! help!" cried Clermont, as he pressed his open hand upon his sister's side, thus endeavouring to close the wounds, and stop the amazing effusion of blood. "Oh! my sister! Help! help! or she dies!"

A surgeon soon appeared, but his skill was ineffectual. Virginie had completed the work that she sought to accomplish; and before the surgeon entered, her breath had grown fainter; her pulse had nearly ceased to beat; her pale features had become convulsed, and her eyes set; and, after a few short moments more, her spirit departed with three deep sighs at awful intervals.

"Oh, Virginie! oh, Victor!" said Clermont, as he pressed his lips upon those of his sister, still warm with departing life, "now—now—now, but for religion, but that I have my God for my help, I would rush from this abhorred life as you have done, and take my place on the cold earth by your side." So saying, he hurried from the scene, passed by his uncle without seeing him, and fell senseless on the steps of the vestibule.

There were so many persons, acquaintances of the unhappy family, that were by this time gathered round this place of death, that succour was presently administered to Clermont. He was taken up and carried to the Hotel de V—; where a long illness, and a temporary derangement of intellect in consequence, relieved him from the many dreadful mental images which otherwise must necessarily have followed these miserable events.

During this illness, Clermont was often visited by Madame de V—, who showed him many kind attentions; but never once, as he could recollect, by his uncle. It was long, however, before he was in circumstances to make any particular inquiries. At length, however, having perfectly recovered his recollection, he one day ventured to ask the Comtesse after her husband, and to inquire of her concerning the state of his spirits.

"My dear Clermont," said Madame de V—, the Comte is wonderfully composed; he has endured his af-

fictions like a wise man and a philosopher; he has filled very one who knows him with admiration."

"A philosopher!" said Clermont. "Can philosophy enable a man to sustain afflictions of this kind with composure?"

"My dear friend," returned the Comtesse, with that invariable levity from which she never departed, "you do not know the power of true philosophy, nor what it enables a man to do and to suffer. The Comte has, as I before remarked, astonished all Paris; and he is at this moment more collected and fitter for public business than he perhaps ever was during his life."

"But did he not at first," said Clermont, "that is, immediately after that most horrible, most unspeakably horrible day, did he not then sink? did his philosophy then support him?"

"He felt as a father," replied the Comtesse, "as a father amidst the most dreadful circumstances in which a father could be placed. But he did not obtrude his feelings on others. He shut himself up in his own apartment, and did not appear till he could do so with that composure which on the part of his friends, precluded all attempts at condolence."

"And has he," said Clermont, "been able to maintain this appearance with any degree of consistency?"

"He has," said the Comtesse; "I rejoice to say that he has; and that he now goes through all his duties both as a private man and as a statesman precisely as he formerly did. Neither have his affairs suffered any more than a temporary derangement from the dreadful accident to which you allude."

"Wonderful, indeed!" said Clermont. "How am I to understand this? If my uncle continues happy amidst such inexpressibly dreadful circumstances, I must never again question the power of philosophy to insure the felicity of man."

The Comtesse smiled, and hinted that philosophy had often been known to do more than religion itself for human nature.

Clermont shook his head. "These things," said he, "are to me inexplicable."

“You doubt my assertion respecting your uncle, Clermont,” said the Comtesse, again smiling. “Well, be it so.” I trust that you will soon be able to leave your room, and again to join our family party. You will then be an eye-witness of the triumphant manner in which the Comte de V—— has borne himself up above the malice of fortune.”

She then proceeded to inform Clermont of their future plans. She told him that the Comte, through the friendship of the emperor, had procured a diplomatic situation at a northern court, and that it was, therefore, his intention to leave Paris in a very few weeks, in order to repair thither. She also acquainted Clermont of her intention to accompany her husband; and she spoke of this her determination to leave Paris as a mighty sacrifice which it demanded the utmost effort of female courage to make.

There thus appeared to be, in the manner of the Comtesse, such a perversion of common sense, such an evident straining at trifles, and so light a mode of speaking of the most distressing afflictions to which human nature is liable, that Clermont felt utterly at a loss how to carry this conversation any further. His heart sickened at the recollection of the dreadful scene within the walls of La Morgue; and he could hardly conceive it possible that the tombs of Virginie and Victor should scarcely be washed by a single tear. Affected with this thought beyond all power of control, he leaned his head against the arm of the sofa on which he sat, and burst into an agony of sorrow, which, for a short time, effectually put an end to the unfeeling impertinences of the Comtesse.

A few days after this, Clermont, feeling his strength sufficient for the effort, left his chamber, and made his appearance in the saloon at the moment when he knew that his uncle and aunt were engaged with company. He chose this opportunity, in order that the presence of other persons might prevent the necessity of any particular address to his uncle.

It was evening, and the party were engaged in conversation, and sitting in a small circle, when Clermont entered. At the sight of him the Comtesse uttered an expression of pleasure, and the whole party arose

Clermont was pale and thin, and still weak from the influence of his late very severe sufferings. As he advanced his head began to swim, and his knees failed him. The Comtesse ran towards him, gave him the support of her arm, and led him into the midst of the circle, where she placed him on the sofa.

In this situation, in this place, where Clermont had so often seen the miserable pair whose terrible end was ever present to his mind, the young man found himself, for a few moments, unable to speak, to look up, or to take the least notice of the compliments that were paid him on his amendment in health, by the persons around him.

"Come, come, my friends," said the Comtesse, who had observed the state of Clermont's feelings with a quickness not unusual in persons of her nation, "let us leave our invalid to himself for a few moments and talk of other things. Your kindness overpowers him. Let me see. What were we speaking of before this agreeable surprise? O! the first representation of the last new comedy! and you were saying that Talma surpassed himself in the hero!"

With the assistance of the first representation of the surprising exploits of Talma, Clermont had time given him to recover himself. He gradually looked up, and turned his eyes towards his uncle, eager to read the expression of his countenance; hoping, notwithstanding the assertion of the Comtesse to the contrary, that he might there observe some little indications of that brokenness of spirit, which, humanly speaking, often proves a kind of preparation for the introduction of better things. The Comte happened at that moment to be looking at the person who was expatiating in praise of the reigning favourite of the drama; and, therefore, Clermont had an opportunity of contemplating him for a length of time without being observed. The Comte had been handsome, and his countenance prepossessing; but, as is common with persons of his nation in middle age, his features had become strongly marked, and his complexion, which had once been a clear and glowing brown, was now grown sallow and swarthy. Strong and decisive as was every line of his face when Clermont first knew him a few months past, he at this time perceived a remarkable difference in them, and every

furrow now appeared deeply graven and fast fixed as in a figure of stone or brass. An expression of unutterable melancholy was remarkable in his dark eye; and not the slightest variation of countenance took place during the whole time in which he remained under the observation of his nephew's eye.

At length he spoke. His voice was strong and sonorous as usual, and his style clear and connected. He even seemed for a moment to grow warm with his subject, and spoke with emphasis; but still not even the slightest symptom of that animation or illumination of countenance, which commonly appears more or less in the face of every human being in conversation, was visible on the features of this unhappy man: and Clermont could not help inwardly saying, "Victor, Victor, thou art not forgotten! Whatever the careless world may think, thy ruin has sunk like lead upon thy father's heart."

After several severe struggles with himself, Clermont addressed his uncle, putting some question to him relative to the subject which happened at that time to constitute the matter of discourse of the company. At the sound of his voice, which Clermont had endeavoured to make as easy as possible, the Comte turned round, looked full upon him, and answered with perfect apparent calmness, but with a distant and polite reserve, such as a man would use towards an entire stranger.

By degrees the conversation of the company became more animated. Several persons present hazarded certain witty expressions: Madame de V—— laughed aloud; and Clermont endeavoured to smile. But no change passed on the features of the Comte. The strong lines of his face seemed set for ever, and refused to relax into the least tendency towards a smile; and Clermont felt that this unhappy man was, perhaps, likely never to smile again. "O!" thought he, "this philosophic pride will not avail; this rebellion against the chastisements of the Almighty will not succeed. How inexpressibly would I rather see this unhappy father broken down beneath the hand of his God! how much more gladly would I behold him trembling, confounded, and laid in the dust! How dreadful is this, to witness and repeatedly to see my father's brother thus sullenly, proudly, and



stubbornly, refusing to acknowledge his misery! But here I behold another horrible effect of infidelity; I am furnished with a still more striking example of that hardness of heart, and stubbornness of will, which accompanies unbelief."

Clermont continued in the saloon with his aunt and uncle till the company withdrew. It was eleven o'clock when they took their leave: and the Comte at the same time retired to his own chamber, leaving Madame with Clermont, to whom she thus addressed herself. "Well, my friend, and are you not astonished? Did I not tell you so? Did you ever witness equanimity like this?"

"If you are speaking, Madame, of my uncle's appearance," replied Clermont, "I never did, neither do I desire ever to see any thing of the kind again." Clermont then opened his mind to his aunt, on the subject of his uncle's state of feelings; but he soon found that she was totally incapable of comprehending him. He therefore abruptly broke off his discourse, and returned with increased uneasiness to his chamber.

For some days after this appearance of Clermont in the saloon, he saw his uncle at intervals, but had, nevertheless, no opportunity of entering into particular conversation with him, the Comte always appearing with that cold, formal, and gloomy air which I have already described.

Preparations were now avowedly being made for the departure of the family from Paris; and Clermont began anxiously to look for news from the person who had undertaken to secure his safe return to England. The Comte at length announced to his nephew, that this intelligence was come, and he added, that it would be needful for him to depart immediately towards the sea coast. At the same time, he presented him with a ring, and some other little valuables, which had been his sister's; and he further expressed a wish that they might meet again at some future time.

Clermont was now, by the death of the unhappy Victor, become the heir of his uncle's estates and titles: but to this circumstance the Comte made no allusion, neither was it hinted at by Clermont, who was anxious to avail himself of this, perhaps, his last particular conversation

with his relative, to enter with him on the most important subject which can engage the human mind. As the extremely cold and cautious manner of the Comte was not in the least degree likely to present the smallest opening for a conversation of this kind, Clermont was himself obliged directly to introduce it, abrupt as it might appear for him to enter into a regular argument in favour of religion, of the comfort which it is capable of administering to persons in distress, and of the danger of neglecting the means of salvation so freely offered through Christ the Saviour.

The Comte allowed his nephew to proceed for some time without interruption. Then calmly rising, he said, "These are matters of opinion, Clermont. The mere mind of man is constituted in such endless varieties, that he who attempts to make all men think alike on any given point may be compared to the tyrant Procrustes, who would insist that the persons of every individual among his subjects should be fitted to one measure; and for this purpose he prepared an iron bedstead, in order to correspond with the length of which, a tall man must needs be cut, and a short one extended. You, my good young man, have been brought up as a heretic: I am a philosopher: and the best chance that we have of being agreeable to each other, is perhaps for us never to agitate the subjects on which we disagree. So saying, he left the room.

Clermont was now, at length, convinced, that little if any hope remained of his becoming an instrument of good in his uncle's family. He accordingly anxiously turned his thoughts towards Berkshire, looking forward with pleasure to his departure.

At length the day arrived, when with a bleeding heart he took leave of the Comte and Comtesse, and, being accompanied only by his servant, quitted Paris by the *Barrier de l'Etoile*. There stopping for a moment within the gateway, and looking back from the eminence on which this gate is situated, through the long avenue which is terminated by the ancient palace of the *Tuilleries*. he was occupied for a short space with many confused and bitter thoughts, till, at length, being wholly overcome by them, he hastily turned away and, as he brushed the tears

from his eyes, exclaimed, "Oh, Victor! Victor! Oh, my Virginie! Oh, my sister!"

We will pass over the few difficulties which Clermont encountered in his voyage home, (difficulties which were principally occasioned by the state of variance in which the two countries were at that time,) and we will introduce our traveller again to the reader's notice at the moment when, having alighted from a post-chaise at Mr. Charlton's garden gate, he proceeded up the narrow gravel walk, just about the hour of twilight, on a December evening, and saw through the window his beloved old friend sitting in his study beside a bright fire, and meditating probably on some passage of Scripture which he had been reading, as an open Bible was lying on his table.

This simple and interesting picture of Christian peace, which Clermont instantly contrasted with that dreadful scene that he had witnessed within the walls of La Morgue, a scene which was ever present to his mind, was so touching to the dutiful and affectionate youth, that he speedily ran forward towards the hall, and was, a moment afterwards, in the arms of his paternal friend. "My son! my son!" exclaimed the old gentleman, as he pressed his Clermont in his arms, "now, now, may I adopt the words of Jacob—*Now let me die, since I have seen thy face, because thou art yet alive.*" (Gen. xlv. 30.)

From that period, Clermont again became a constant inmate of Mr. Charlton's house; and though he was ordained soon after his return to England, as he was so happy as to procure a curacy in the immediate neighbourhood of his friend's house, his duties as a minister produced no necessity for their separation.

The dreadful scenes which Clermont had beheld in France afforded subjects of frequent conversation between himself and Mr. Charlton: and, on these occasions, the old gentleman failed not to point out that all these horrors were the consequence of infidelity, the hardening and dreadful effects of which are such as to produce a hell in the mind of every miserable individual who gives way to it. "What then, my Clermont," he would add, "what should be our feelings of gratitude for that distinguished favour which has made us to differ from the mass of infidels with which this world abounds! For all men are naturally infi-

dels. all live in infidelity; till the Lord the Spirit convinces them of their unbelief. And though every unbelieving individual does not run to the extremes of profligacy and blasphemy which you witnessed in your own unhappy country, yet all are naturally enemies of God and haters of the light of divine truth, infidels in practice, and profligates in thought and feeling."

The last account that we heard of these persons, whose history we have given at some length, stated, that the Comte had returned to Paris, and was become, apparently, a royalist, though really he was dissatisfied at the overthrow of the emperor and the restoration of the royal family; and Clermont, with the full approbation of Mr. Charlton, was preparing to go over to France, in order, if the Lord should permit him, to fulfil the resolutions which he had made while leaning on the parapet of the Pont Neuf, on that miserable morning which fixed for ever the fate of the guilty and miserable Virginie.

There was a general sadness diffused over the countenances of the little party, when the lady of the manor ceased to read; but, as the evening was very far advanced, few comments were made upon the story, and the meeting was, as usual, concluded by prayer.

*A Prayer for an abiding Sense of the Presence of God, and for that holy Fear which is the beginning of Wisdom.*

"O THOU infinitely great, incomprehensible, and glorious Lord God Almighty, we humbly beseech thee to inspire our minds with the continual sense of thy presence. The fear of thee is indeed the beginning of wisdom; and we pray thee to restrain us by this holy fear, until we arrive at that blessed state in which it shall be crowned by perfect love.

"In our parental connexions on earth we find the emblem of that spiritual relation to thee, O our God, wherein alone consists our safety and our peace. Thou only, O Lord, art acquainted with that which is for our good: the clouds of ignorance obscure our minds, we are altogether unable to distinguish between that which is good

and that which is evil; our feet are ever prone to stray in the paths of darkness, where snares and dangers encompass us on every side. But if we keep thee as our guide, we have no occasion for fear; we are assured, that, in following the guidance of thy providence, we shall finally reach the abodes of peace, and that, if we forsake our own dark ways and uncertain paths, we shall, sooner or later, be delivered from every difficulty.

“Our vile natures and depraved affections render it impossible for us to think of thee as we ought to think, or to love thee as thou oughtest to be loved, or to comprehend and appreciate thy glorious nature and attributes: nevertheless we have light sufficient to enable us to discern our own natural blindness and weakness; and we, therefore, pray thee, for the sake of Him who died for us, to charge thyself with all our concerns. Leave us not to ourselves, O our God. Constrain us to go in the way of holiness. Uphold us by thine own right arm. Hedge our paths, though it be with thorns, to the right and to the left; and preserve us from the dreadfully presumptuous offences of those who despise thy providence, who reject thy government, and who fearlessly pursue the dictates of their own unbelieving and evil inclinations; who walk in the paths of sin, and finally receive the punishment due to their offences.

“Wherever thine inspiring presence is, O God, there thy saints enjoy their heaven. The martyr has rejoiced in thee even at the stake; and holy gladness has filled the hearts of thy children when their frail bodies have been writhing under the tortures of temporal death. But who can conceive the horrors which thy absence inflicts on those who wilfully reject thy offers of mercy? who can describe the darkness and misery of the stubborn unbeliever? In what does hell itself consist but in the eternal absence of God? and what is heaven itself more than the uninterrupted sense of his presence, parental favour, and tender love?

“Thou, O our God, art indeed every where present—*If I take the wings of the morning, and dwell in the uttermost parts of the sea; even there shall thy hand lead me, and thy right hand shall hold me.* To fly from thy presence is indeed impossible: but as the sun, which



shines on all the visible creation, exhales only infectious fogs and pestilential vapours from the putrid marsh; so, in the heart of the unregenerate man, the idea of God's authority would excite only horrors, confusion, and misery. The evil soil rejects its kindly influences: it converts the breath of morn into blight and blasting, and the rays of light into lurid vapour; and it thus perverts that which constitutes the happiness of the blessed, into the means of more terrible endless misery, despair, and eternal death. O Almighty Father, leave us not therefore, we humbly supplicate thee, to our own erroneous devices, leave us not to ourselves, either to choose our own lot, or to fabricate our own schemes of happiness. Control our wills; subdue our passions; rein us, in as with bit and bridle; leave us not, even for a moment, to our own misjudging minds; save us from the enemy who is able fully to destroy us, even from ourselves; and make us the blessed subjects of that great work of salvation which was ordained by thee ere yet the world began, with such effect, that, having been chosen by God the Father, justified through God the Son, and regenerated by God the Holy Ghost, we may be made partakers of everlasting glory in the world to come.

“And now to thee, O thou all-glorious and invisible Lord God Almighty, be ascribed all glory and honour, for ever and ever. Amen.

## CHAPTER XXIV



*Q. What is thy Duty towards thy Neighbour?*

*A. My Duty towards my Neighbour, is to love him as myself, and to do to all Men as I would they should do unto me. To love, honour, and succour my Father and Mother. To honour and obey the king, and all that are put in Authority under him. To submit myself to all my Governors, Teachers, spiritual Pastors and Masters. To order myself lowly and reverently to all my betters. To hurt Nobody by Word or Deed. To be true and just in all my dealings. To bear no Malice nor Hatred in my Heart. To keep my hands from Picking and Stealing, and my tongue from Evil-Speaking, Lying, and Swearing. To keep my Body in Temperance, Sobriety, and Chastity. Not to covet nor desire other Men's Goods; but to learn and labour truly to get mine own Living, and to do my Duty in that State of Life unto which it shall please God to call me.*

It was now the beginning of autumn, and the days were, therefore, visibly shortening. The sun was setting behind the forest trees which adorned the verge of the western horizon when the youthful party assembled again in the beloved apartment at the manor-house. The lady of the manor looked round upon her pupils with approving satisfaction on this occasion; and having accosted them in her usually affectionate manner, she proceeded to point out what was to be the subject of their discourse on that evening. "This subject is furnished, my dear young people," she said, "by that part of the Catechism which treats of our duty to our neighbour; and we will, if you please, commence our employment by repeating that clause of the Catechism which describes this duty.

“My duty towards my neighbour, is to love him as myself, and to do to all men as I would they should do unto me. To love, honour, and succour my father and mother. To honour and obey the king, and all that are put in authority under him. To submit myself to all my governors, teachers, spiritual pastors and masters. To order myself lowly and reverently to all my betters. To hurt nobody by word or deed. To be true and just in all my dealings. To bear no malice nor hatred in my heart. To keep my hands from picking and stealing, and my tongue from evil-speaking, lying, and slandering. To keep my body in temperance, soberness, and chastity. Not to covet nor desire other men’s goods; but to learn and labour truly to get mine own living, and to do my duty in that state of life unto which it shall please God to call me.”

“It is not my intention,” continued the lady, “to illustrate to you, clause by clause, that which I have just repeated; for in so doing I should necessarily go over the same ground over which we have already travelled, in our considerations of the Commandments; but I shall take occasion to exhibit to you my views concerning both what ought to be the state of our feelings towards our fellow-creatures, and also what should be the result of these feelings, under three different heads, as follows: viz. what are our duties to our equals, our duties to our inferiors and our duties to our superiors. And, inasmuch as I consider that, for the accomplishment of my object in promoting your benefit, example is better than precept, being at once more likely to be understood, to be remembered, and to be felt, I hope to read to you a short story on each of these subjects; in which several narratives I shall endeavour to point out what that especial feeling is, which operates in man’s heart as the chief hindrance of a just and proper conduct towards our neighbour.

“This feeling is no other than an inordinate love of self that is common to every unregenerate man, and by which all his feelings are excited and directed towards one object, whereby all his professed duties towards God are converted into eye-service, and his heart is rendered cold, callous, and dead with respect to the welfare of his fellow creatures.

“Self, my dear young people,” continued the lady, “is

as I have repeatedly told you, the idol of man; and it is the peculiar and special province of the work of grace to dethrone the idol, and to restore the Almighty to his place in the heart. It is easy enough to perceive the power of self in common characters, especially in cases where good manners afford no cloak for concealing its deformities; but it is lamentable to observe its influence among professors of religion, and to be constrained to confess its power in ourselves, even after the work of grace in our hearts is, we trust, begun. But, as I hope that you will find all that it is necessary to say on this subject in the narratives which I have provided, I shall proceed to read my first without delay."

The lady of the manor then, opening a small manuscript book, read as follows.

### *Eye Service.*

I shall make no apology for what I am about to do; because it is not to please, but I trust to profit, that I am induced to enter into the particulars of my history, and to relate those circumstances by which I have been brought, at the close of my days, to lift up my eyes to heaven, to bless the Most High, to praise and honour Him that liveth for ever, whose dominion is an everlasting dominion, and His kingdom from generation to generation; in comparison of whom all the inhabitants of the earth are reputed as nothing; for he doeth according to his will in the army of heaven, and among the inhabitants of the earth, and none can stay his hand, or say unto him, What doest thou? (Dan. iv. 34, 35.)

On looking back upon my past life, it appears to me that the Holy Spirit of God has been dealing with me for many years; and my reason for concluding this is, not from any advancement which I have made in piety, but because that for several years past I have had frequently and sometimes clear and unquestionable views of my sins. I therefore venture to infer that my total blindness had ceased long before any thing like the gracious fruits of repentance began in the least degree to appear. This view of the case is, however, far from being flattering to my feelings, for it is evident from thence that my growth

in grace, even if I have grown at all, has been remarkably slow; and that few persons, after having such strong convictions as I have had, ever allowed themselves to continue so long in the subsequent practice of sin. But to quit these reflections, and to leave my history to speak for itself.

It is necessary for me, in order that I might make my story clear, to give my reader some little history of my family for two generations back. My grandfather was a wealthy merchant; and, on his retiring from business, he purchased a handsome mansion-house, situated in a beautiful village in Berkshire. There he died, leaving my grandmother, with two daughters, coheirresses, the younger of whom was my mother. Both these daughters married: the elder to a counsellor in London; and the younger to a gentleman in the West Indies. And both of them also died early; the elder about four years after her marriage; and the younger when I, her only child, was about fourteen years of age.

My poor mother had brought me up with care, and had procured for me every advantage which the country would allow. I continued with my father for more than three years after my mother's death: but upon his purposing to marry again, I was sent to England to my grandmother, who had long desired to see me, and who was a person in every respect qualified for the charge of me.

I was seventeen when I arrived in England; on which, I proceeded immediately to my grandmother's dwelling, which, as has been already stated, was situated in a beautiful village in Berkshire.

Those persons who have seen England only, can form but imperfect ideas of the scenery of other countries; and, on the contrary, those who have never beheld our happy island, can have but incorrect conceptions of the perfect neatness and elegance of some of those little villages in England, near which a few refined and opulent families reside, who, by their active benevolence, and refined taste, seem entirely to chase sordid poverty and coarseness even from the dwellings of the poor. There is, indeed, no country perhaps in the world which exhibits scenery at once more beautiful and striking than the West



India Islands, where the luxuriant foliage of the tropical climate is employed for the decoration of steep hills, deep valleys, and precipices of the most abrupt and sublime appearance; where the ocean often presents a noble feature in each view; and where blue mountains in the remote distance constitute such a back-ground as the most daring imagination would hardly presume to supply.

Accustomed, however, as I had been, from my very infancy, to behold these wonders of creation, and not only to behold, but to admire them; I, nevertheless, could not help being struck with the smiling beauty of the scenery of Berkshire, and the elegant neatness of the shrubbery and the exterior of my grandmother's house, when, after having been driven along for a considerable way through a rural street, we approached the gates of her garden. I still recollect with a kind of pathetic pleasure, the scene which presented itself, while we were waiting for a moment at the gate of the garden as I was in the post-chaise in which I had arrived thither from town. It was the beginning of summer: the time was evening; and innumerable shrubs and flowers in full bloom perfumed the air with a delicious fragrance. All the windows of the large old-fashioned mansion were open, and through a wide bow-window, just opposite to the gate, I could distinguish my grandmother sitting, dressed as a widow, but a little drawn back; and before her, nearer to the window, were two young people, the one a female rather younger than myself, sitting down, and the other a youth, somewhat older, standing before her. These two last mentioned seemed speaking to each other as we drove up; and the sweet animation and artless expression of their blooming countenances are still imprinted in the liveliest colours on my memory.

At the sight of the carriage they all started up, and in a moment afterwards I found myself kneeling at the feet of my grandmother, and clasped in the arms of my cousin Lucy.

I should have told you before, that my aunt, when dying, left two daughters; the elder of whom, whose name was Selina, had been educated under her father's eye, by a governess in town, and the younger who was a mere infant at her mother's death, by my excellent grandmo-

ther. This was the little girl to whom I was introduced on my first arrival in Berkshire. Her name, as I before said, was Lucy, and such had been the divine blessing upon the pious care of my grandmother, that this young creature exhibited the finest specimen that I ever saw of all that was lovely, admirable, and desirable in youth. She was about fourteen when we first met; and there was such a sunshine of cheerfulness diffused on her countenance, such a charming composure on her polished brow, such a brilliancy and clearness of health spread over her whole face and neck, such freshness and innocence in her manner altogether, that it seemed almost impossible in looking upon her to criticise a single feature, or to inquire into the means by which she so suddenly secured the admiration of all who saw her.

It was impossible for me to behold this charming young creature without feeling that I had never seen any thing like her before: but my emotions of admiration and of love, for I could not help feeling strongly inclined towards her, were not without other feelings too often mingled with admiration; and I had scarcely risen up from my kneeling posture at my grandmother's feet, and taken my seat by her side on a sofa, before I fell into some very uneasy reflections, of the nature of which I shall take occasion to speak at a future time.

My grandmother embraced the earliest opportunity, after she had ordered some refreshments for me, and also made some inquiries respecting my journey, to introduce to my notice the young gentleman before mentioned. He had withdrawn himself to the further end of the room during the first moments of my arrival; but on my grandmother calling him, and addressing him by the name of Henry, he came forward, blushing as he drew near, and exhibiting a countenance that had much of the same unaffected, open, and cheerful expression which I had already so greatly admired in Lucy.

"Henry Selwyn," said my grandmother, naming him to me as he came up to us: "an adopted child of mine; son of a dear friend. You must love him, Caroline, as Lucy does; you must count him a brother; you have never had a brother, my love; Henry is to be a brother to you."

While my grandmother spoke, I observed Lucy's eyes sparkled ; and she looked at me as if in confirmation of all that my grandmother said, and as much as to say, "Yes, Caroline, you must love him ; it is quite necessary that you should."

This ceremony being over, and the tea-equipage now appearing, we all gathered round the table in the bow-window, and I should have felt completely happy, could I have divested myself of those detestable selfish feelings which have tormented me all my life. O, sin ! sin ! how impossible would it be to be happy in heaven itself, otherwise than in a state of freedom from sin !

It is scarcely possible to conceive any situation on earth more replete with circumstances of joy and comfort than mine was at the period of which I speak. I had just terminated a long, fatiguing, and dangerous voyage. I had indeed lost a parent some time ago ; but I had just found another, in whom I saw again all that I had loved, honoured, and cherished in my departed mother. I had, moreover, just reached a home where every comfort and every elegance were indeed assembled, and I had just found such a companion as was calculated to make my life most delightful : but in the very attractions of this companion I discovered that which embittered all my happiness.

I possessed indeed sufficient self-command to conceal from every common observer, all those feelings of envy and selfishness, which I even now at this remote period am almost ashamed to reveal to the world, although I expect that no one will read these memorials till after my death. Nevertheless, it would be very difficult to describe the workings of my mind while I sat at the tea-table on this the first evening of my arrival at my grandmother's.

I remembered that, though occupied in talking upon other subjects, I was all the time busily engaged in comparing myself with Lucy, and in balancing certain advantages which I fancied that I enjoyed, against those beauties which I too plainly perceived to be in her possession. I busied myself also in thinking how far Henry Selwyn liked her, what might be the nature of his feelings towards her, and whether it might not be possible for me to make him like me as well, or better.

My mother had not neglected to inculcate religious principles upon my mind; I therefore was not without some idea, all this time, that the feelings which I was indulging were wrong. But this idea was a confused one: and certain it is, that I then by no means saw the atrocious and hateful tendency of those selfish principles which I encouraged; otherwise, I surely should have striven to employ such means as might set me free from them. For although, sometimes, in the cases even of very advanced Christians, lest they should be exalted above measure, through the abundance of the revelations, there may be given to them a thorn in the flesh, the messenger of Satan to buffet them; yet, if they beseech the Lord, that it may depart from them, he will make his grace sufficient for them, that his strength may be made perfect in their weakness. (2 Cor. xii. 7—9.) But I do not remember that at that time I ever made any strong effort, or that I indeed used any means, to overcome these feelings: but, on the contrary, I allowed my mind to be continually occupied by myself and my own concerns, either in one way or other, till I brought upon myself my own punishment. But enough of this for the present.

I went to bed early, and slept till late the next morning. The family had breakfasted when I awoke; and, on opening my eyes, I was surprised to see Lucy sitting at the foot of my bed, sewing as busily as if she had to earn her bread by her needle. She was so intent upon her work, that, when I first opened my eyes, she did not perceive it. At the sight of her, those uneasy feelings which had subsided during the night again revived, and I again shut my eyes; but still I beheld her in fancy, dressed as she was in a simple white frock, without any ornament but her shining hair knotted on the back of her head. After a few moments I opened my eyes again, and endeavouring to seem pleased to see her, "O, Lucy!" I said, are you there? and what are you so busy about? You seem working for your very existence."

"O yes, my dear Caroline," she answered, "I am indeed in a great hurry; I have not a minute to lose. I am making a shirt for a poor old man. Henry Selwyn brought it to me yesterday, and inquired if it could be

possibly finished this evening ; because we are then going, about some other business, to the place where the old man lives. It is a lovely walk through the beech woods, only two miles."

"And so," I said, "Henry is to accompany you in this walk?"

"Yes, to be sure," she said, looking at me with some surprise, "he always goes with us when he is at home."

"Who do you mean by us?" I asked.

"Grandmamma and me," replied Lucy. "Grandmamma goes in her little pony chair, and I and Henry walk by her: and it is so pleasant!"

"I dare say it is," I answered, "very, very pleasant."

Lucy echoed the word pleasant with the utmost glee, and went on with her work. "How quickly your fingers move, Lucy!"

"O yes," she answered, "they must move quickly, or they will not have done their task. But I will fetch your breakfast," - added this sweet little girl, and throwing down her work on the bed, she was out of the room in a moment.

When Lucy returned with my breakfast on a tray, I said, "My dear, why do you do this yourself? Why did not you ring for a servant?"

"O, because," she answered, playfully, and as if it were a matter of no moment, "because I liked to wait upon you myself. But I must not lose time; I must go to my work again; and I shall be ready to run for any thing that you may want.

"She looks pretty, very pretty," I thought to myself, as I was eating my breakfast; "and though she is so simple, I never saw her do an awkward thing. But I dare say that she does not know much. I have no doubt that she has been brought up in a plain way. I dare say that she has no accomplishments." This conjecture was pleasing to me; especially as I had not many myself: the climate and the state of the country in which I had been educated not being favourable for these matters. I thought, however, that I would ask her what she knew; and I hoped to have such answers as would please me. "Lucy," I said, "have you learned music?"

Without raising her head from her work, she answer-



ed in the affirmative, adding something respecting her work, quite foreign to my question.

I took no notice of the latter part of her speech; but inquired if she had learned long, and whether she was far advanced.

All that I could discover from her answer was, that whatever attainment she had made in music, it was evident that she did not at all know how to appreciate her own merits. I questioned her then relative to some other branches of instruction: her answers concerning which still left me in perplexity; and the next idea that occurred to me was, that she wanted sense. This thought was replete with satisfaction to my envious mind: and, while full of it, I rang for a servant, was assisted to get up, and was led by Lucy to the room in which my grandmother spent her mornings. Here, in this room, which was in a retired part of the house, and which opened towards a shadowy part of the garden, I saw a musical instrument, and several music-books, several drawings of my cousin's, and a variety of other things, which proved to me that whatever talents my cousin might have, much pains had been taken with her education. Here also were many books, and several chests and cabinets, some of which, as I afterwards found, contained garments for the poor; and over the mantle-piece there was a picture of my aunt and mother when they were little children.

I sat here during some time, giving my grandmother various accounts of things that I had learned abroad, till, suddenly, Lucy proclaimed with triumph the completion of her task, and ran out of the room to perform some little jobs which she had postponed for this great work.

"You see, my dear," said my grandmother, as soon as my little cousin was gone out. "how industrious Lucy is. There is one thing, my Caroline, particularly admirable in her: indeed I might say that there are many things. But that for which I chiefly admire her is, that she appears to be less occupied by self than any young person that I ever met with. It is remarked by those who know human nature best, that there is no part of life during which persons are more selfish, than they are from that period of childhood when they have ceased to hang upon the parent with infant helplessness, until the time when

they themselves begin to feel the strength of conjugal and parental affection. Old people are often supposed to be particularly selfish: but there is scarce an old person living who does not take thought for the welfare of some son or daughter, some grandchild or nephew, some dog or cat. But young people, at the age of which we speak, often care for nothing under the sun but themselves. And hence the uneasiness and fretfulness that we see in so many children under a tender parent's roof. But your dear cousin Lucy is a remarkable instance of the reverse of all this. I never saw another young creature like herself, so invariably and continually occupied in doing good to others, without any self-preference: and that without parade and ostentation; for I have never allowed her to be praised for well-doing, and I indeed have, to the utmost in my power, preserved her from all flattery."

I was not altogether in a mood to relish these praises bestowed on my little cousin, and, as you may suppose, I endeavoured to console myself with the notion, that my grandmother might perhaps be somewhat partial to the child that she herself had brought up.

While I was meditating on this matter, and thus giving myself a vast deal of trouble to reconcile my mind to the excellences of Lucy, (which, after all, I could not help acknowledging,) I did not consider that the world is wide enough for all the creatures that the Almighty has placed in it, and that no two persons' interests would ever interfere, if each would strictly pursue the path peculiarly appointed by Providence. And, as I was thus employed, my grandmother was called down to receive some titled ladies, who were come in a coach-and-four.

These ladies had been ushered into the drawing-room, a large apartment, which my grandfather himself had furnished with great magnificence, and at the further end of which there was a fine finger-organ.

My grandmother insisted upon taking me in her hand to receive these ladies, and I must confess, that although I had always been used to good company, I was, nevertheless, somewhat abashed to find myself in the presence of real nobility. As I was not, however, called upon to speak; and as my grandmother possessed all the dignity and composure requisite for the occasion, I might have:

contrived to sit out the time of the visit with equanimity, had I been so disposed : but I was no sooner seated by my grandmother in the august circle, than my restless mind began its usual exercise, which, in the present instance, was that of comparing myself with the ladies before me ; and, as a lively state of selfish sensibility is as liable to depression as to exaltation, I fancied that I lost greatly by the comparison. I became, in consequence, agitated, confused, and ashamed : and a question being suddenly proposed to me concerning the West Indies, I addressed the lady who sat next to me by the title of Sir ; I called the east west, and the north south ; and, after making several other blunders, was obliged to leave my grandmother to finish my speech.

It now became a point of politeness to spare my confusion by not noticing me any further, and this politeness was well understood ; for a new subject was instantly started, by one of the ladies speaking of a very beautiful hymn which she had just procured from a friend, and expressing a wish that she could hear it upon the fine organ then in the room.

All eyes were immediately fixed upon me ; but, on my grandmother saying that I had not been used to an organ, and the same plea being also urged by some of the ladies present, my grandmother rang the bell, and sent for Lucy.

In a few minutes, the sweet child came in, dressed exactly as I had seen her early in the morning. She entered courtesying ; and on being informed of what was required of her, she went calmly up to the instrument, and played the hymn, which was placed before her, accompanying it with her voice in a manner equally sweet and simple : after which, being dismissed by my grandmother, she walked quietly along the room, courtesied at the door, and disappeared.

As soon as she was gone, the superior of the ladies, as she appeared to be, laid her hand on my grandmother's arm, saying, "Indeed, Mrs. Thornton, you are too hard upon us, not to allow us to say one word to your little grand-daughter for the charming treat she has given us, not only to-day, but also many times before."

Every one then present spoke in praise of Lucy, com-

mending her voice, her simple and interesting manner, her charming countenance, and her readiness to oblige.

My grandmother bowed, and seemed pleased, but said nothing: on which, the superior of the visitors remarked, that it was the unaffected simplicity of this little girl's character which rendered all her other excellencies so striking. "In the first circles," added she, "it is considered the utmost perfection of high breeding to seem artless, easy, and elegant; it is a perfection which few can attain, and which, when acquired, is irresistibly attractive. But your Lucy has it without effort; and there is a calmness and a modest dignity in her manner, together with a sweetness, which the utmost polish of art could never give her. It must, I am convinced, Mrs. Thornton, be the effect of a fine and well-ordered mind."

"It is the effect of piety, Lady ——," said my grandmother. "Lucy is an humble and pious child; she thinks humbly of herself, and highly of those about her; she is careless of her own comforts, but eager to promote those of others: and thus, without seeking happiness, she finds it, for she is the happiest of human beings. She has never been fed with praise, and therefore does not need it: and she is taught, when she has been enabled to do well, to give all the glory to God."

"Well," replied the lady, "I do not much understand your system of education Mrs. Thornton; but I admire the result of your labours above all things:" and the visitors, on her so saying, arose, and departed. After which, I followed my grandmother into the dining-room, where we found Henry and Lucy both engaged about packing a basket, in which certain articles were placed preparatory to our evening excursion.

I was surprised on finding that Lucy made not the most distant reference to the hymn, the ladies, or the organ. I expected every moment to have heard her say, "O dear, grandmamma, I was so frightened when you called me in before those ladies! I did tremble so! and I never saw the hymn before! How did I behave? was I terribly out of tune?" &c. &c. But no, not a word escaped on the subject, and Lucy seemed to be wholly absorbed in the charming prospect of the evening's amusement.

While the servants were laying the cloth, my grandmother sat down, had the basket brought to her feet, and employed Henry Selwyn and Lucy to fetch and carry what was requisite to be put into it. There was tea, sugar, bread, butter, and cream; a roll of linen for one poor creature, a little frock or cap for another, a book for another, a little wine for another; with a thousand et ceteras which I could not remember; and such running backwards and forwards, such shoving and packing by Henry, such arranging and contriving on the part of my grandmother, and such animated interest in the countenance of Lucy, that I thought I never before in my life saw three such happy beings.

At table, nothing was talked of but our intended expedition; and about an hour after dinner, the pony-carriage being brought up to the door, my grandmother got into it, and we set out with our basket.

I had been with marooning parties in the West Indies, where persons go out, and, taking provisions with them, spend a day in the woods; but these expeditions gave me but little idea of the charming liberty and interest of an excursion of this kind in England. Our way lay through an extensive beech wood. We sometimes diverged a little from the carriage-road, and stepped aside into some of the narrow wood walks; but we seldom went out of sight or hearing of the pony-carriage. Sometimes, in our progress, we came near to several small cottages, the inhabitants of which my grandmother knew by name. By these she was accosted with extreme delight; and I found that there was not a house by which we were to pass for which she had not some token of remembrance.

On the occasion of this my first walk in England, I heard the cuckoo for the first time. The notes of this bird struck me very forcibly as being something entirely different from every thing that I had ever heard before, and conveyed to my mind such an idea of tranquillity, solitude, and a rural life, as I can hardly describe.

I was rather fatigued by the time that we arrived at the end of the wood and entered upon one of those little neat greens or commons, surrounded by houses, now, indeed, so seldom seen, but formerly so general. Here,



passing through a gate in a quickset hedge, we arrived at the porch of an old half-timbered cottage, where an aged man and woman received us, and where tea was presently provided for us from the contents of the basket. But while the kettle was boiling, Henry Selwyn proceeded about a quarter of a mile further, to deliver the shirt which Lucy had made, to the person for whom it was intended, and Lucy set off another way, to visit a little school in the green, which she patronised. In the mean time, being little accustomed to walking, I sat with my grandmother till their return.

While alone with my grandmother, I recollect that she fell into some serious discourse; yet, though serious, its tendency was cheerful. "Well, my dear," she said, "what a happiness is this, to have the daughters of my children with me! I could fancy almost that I had my own beloved ones again: but I shall have them again," she added, with spirit; "they are not lost to me. When the Lord would make up to Job all that he had suffered, he gave him possessions of *twice as much as he had before*, but he added unto him only the same number of children which he had previously had; thus intimating that although the rest of his substance had utterly perished, his children still remained, and would again be restored to him. A sweet reflection this, my child, to a bereaved parent."

My grandmother remained silent for a few minutes after making this remark, and then said, "O, my Caroline, this world is confessedly a world of trials; nevertheless, it is also provided with consolations for those who will cease to make self their idol, and who can patiently and meekly rest upon the help and promise of their Saviour. How have I laboured with my dear Lucy, in order to draw her off from the love of self, to excite her feelings for others, and to render her open and sincere in all her dealings! My daughter, ever consider self as one of the worst of your enemies, and learn to rejoice with those that rejoice, and to weep with those that weep; but seek not exclusively your own happiness in this world, desire no earthly distinctions, but habitually receive and enjoy, with gratitude and humility, the blessings which are bestowed on you in your passage through life. To

morrow this worn-out frame of mine may fall to pieces and sink into the grave, but to-day will I rejoice in the visible glories of my God on earth, and I will exult in the prospect of my salvation in heaven."

In this manner the pious old lady continued to converse, and she seemed almost to have wrought my mind into her own heavenly frame, when I perceived Henry Selwyn and Lucy approach nearly at the same time, but in such contrary directions, that it appeared to me very plainly they could not have been together while absent. At the sight of each other, they seemed mutually to quicken their pace, and they met precisely at the garden-gate, on the top of which Henry placed his hand first, and held it fast while he spoke to Lucy. Their cheeks, particularly Henry's, were flushed with their recent exercise. He had taken off his hat in order to cool himself, and his brow being now bare and exposed, a remarkable degree of spirit and animation was imparted to his countenance as he stooped to speak to Lucy. "This brother and sister," I thought, "seem very fond of each other; I am sure he never will be so fond of me." At the same moment the garden-gate was opened, and Lucy came forward, followed by Henry; and they both set themselves down to the tea-table, while Lucy began to detail at length the little anecdotes of the school that she had visited; in doing which, she found so much to say, and to interest her auditors, and at the same time she looked so good-humoured and pretty, that I grew quite impatient, and thus, becoming really disordered from finding myself thrown so entirely into the back-ground, I got up from my chair, retreated to another at some distance, and bursting into tears, complained of excessive fatigue.

This manœuvre had its desired effect. The old man, who had been blowing the fire to boil the water, threw down the bellows, and stood bolt upright. The old woman lifted up her hands, and exclaimed aloud. Henry Selwyn scalded his throat by swallowing his tea in too great haste. My grandmother was distressed, and looked at every one of us as if she was unable to conceive what all this could mean: and I for my part was perfectly satisfied. Every one was now occupied with me, instead of attending to Lucy; and that was, of course, lightly

gratifying to my selfishness. It now, however, became needful for me to carry on the farce which I had begun. I therefore sobbed, held my hand to my side, complained of fatigue, and should have thought it right to find it very difficult to get home, as the pony-carriage held but one person, and as my grandmother was unable to walk, had not the old man proposed to borrow a neighbour's donkey, on which I was placed; and Henry, taking the bridle, I had the satisfaction to find that it was impossible for him to attend to any thing but me and my palfrey.

And now, my gentle reader, you may picture to yourself our cavalcade as we returned, and fancy me talking to Henry about the West Indies and other matters, while he most gallantly led me forward through the wood, which was rather dark before we had cleared it. Lucy, in the mean time, following our steps, smilingly compared us to a company of gipsies.

In this style we arrived at home; and my grandmother hastened me to bed, not at all suspecting how much of affectation and selfishness really existed under my supposed indisposition.

Thus have I described with tolerable accuracy the employments of the first twenty-four hours that I spent at my grandmother's, and I have given my reader some little insight into my own character, and those of my friends.

The next day was spent at home, in reading, working, and drawing. Henry Selwyn, I found, was fond of employing his pencil. He had learned at school, and he was teaching Lucy. My mother had given me also some instructions, but I had ceased to practise since her death. I, however, no sooner saw Lucy engaged in this employment, than I expressed a wish to join the party; a thing in itself for which no one could possibly blame me, for every effort which a young person makes to improve is laudable. But improvement was not my object: I felt that I never should draw, for I never had shown any taste for it; but I could not bear to be left in the back-ground with respect to any thing. Accordingly, I made a very humble and pretty petition to Henry Selwyn, in a sort of half playful, half petted way, begging him to teach me to draw, together with Lucy. And when seated at the table with my paper before me, and my pencil in my hand, I

made a thousand applications to him for little assistances: sometimes he was to lend me a penknife, then to cut me a pencil, then to show me where to make the next stroke; then I called upon him either to encourage or blame, laughed at my own awkwardness, uttered little cries of astonishment, or sighed and pouted; and, in short, played off all those tricks which self-conceited young people commonly employ to engross the attention of others.

My grandmother was not in the room all this time, and Lucy seemed quite engaged with her work; but Henry Selwyn, who for his age appeared to be a remarkably manly and steady character, seemed for a while to be determined to treat me with that kind of cold and distant politeness which is best suited to keep in order such a character as mine then was: but, on my making some egregious mistake in my drawing, he uttered some boyish expression of displeasure, calling me stupid, or tiresome, or something to the purpose; on which I arose from the table, retreated to a couch, leaned my head on my arm, and began to sob and cry.

On seeing my tears, and fancying that he had been the cause of them he seemed much perplexed. "Dear Caroline, he said, throwing down his pencil, and coming up to me, "I hope I have not hurt your feelings: I beg a thousand pardons if I have. Pray, forgive me."

By this time, Lucy had desisted from her work, and was looking eagerly towards us. "O," I answered, "I know that I am stupid; I know you never can teach me; I am not like Lucy; I have not had her advantages: but I will admire her at a distance, and I will trouble you no more with my incapacity."

"Caroline! don't speak in this way," he rejoined, seeing my tears; "come back to the table; if you do not wish to make me very unhappy, you will try again."

Thus he continued to plead, and with such earnestness that I arose, and was led back by him to my seat, where, in a kind of affectionate manner which he had not yet used towards me, he placed the pencil in my hand, and begged me to make another trial of my skill.

While all this was passing, Lucy was observing us; neither was I unmindful of her. At first she seemed quite at a loss to imagine what all this bustle was about; but

presently judging of things according to their appearances, and fancying that I really had serious apprehensions whether I should ever be able to learn, her countenance suddenly lost its air of perplexity, the sunshine returned, and, she running to a drawer in a bookcase near at hand, produced her first attempt at pencilling, and spread it open by mine, declaring, with exultation, that mine was better than her's, calling upon Henry at the same time to make the comparison.

I felt for a moment the sweetness of Lucy's conduct; and I could not refrain, as she stood by me, from turning towards her, and clasping my arms round her neck. She seemed startled at this motion, particularly as Henry Selwyn was by, and I thought that she desired to remind me of his presence by a certain gentle glance of her eye towards him—a glance, however, which was instantly recalled by her eyes being fixed on the drawing before her.

No occurrence worth noticing took place during the remainder of this day, which we spent entirely at home it being rainy; nor can I remember any thing very particular for some days afterwards; though I doubt not that, in the interim, I gave many evidences of my real character, which was that of habitual devotedness to self: as about this time my grandmother called me into her closet, and addressed me in the following discourse, the substance of which she afterwards took the trouble of committing to paper for my use. She began this conference, by remarking to me that there were certain traits of my character which did not meet with her approbation: "And short, my dear," she added, "as our acquaintance has been, I consider it as my duty to speak to you with plainness, though it be with the risk of of fending."

I leave the reader to imagine how I started and reddened on hearing myself thus addressed, and how I was puzzled to conceive of what offence I could possibly have been guilty, to draw upon myself so serious a lecture. I had undoubtedly heard much of the depravity of human nature, and I should not have scrupled to confess that I partook of this depravity in common with all others of the human race in general; nevertheless, I was utterly



amazed when my grandmother presumed to bring any specific charges against me: and she had scarcely ceased to speak, before I burst into a violent agony of weeping, exclaiming, in a kind of paroxysm of passion, that I considered myself as the most unfortunate creature on earth, to have offended my dear grandmmama, and that before I have been one month under her roof. I then gave vent to various other pathetic exclamations, much to this purpose,—that it was the last thought that I ever could have entertained when I left the West Indies, that I should come to England to grieve and distress my poor dear grandmother. I then apostrophized my own mother, and burst again into an agony of tears. I expected, that, on witnessing this my grief, my grandmother would have melted into tenderness, and pressed me in her arms, perhaps calling me the dear and only representative of her departed Caroline. But nothing of this kind occurred. The old lady sat perfectly still, and spoke not again till I had recovered my composure, and had fallen into a kind of sullen humour, which succeeded my agony of passion, when I discovered that all my cries and exclamations had utterly failed of the effect that they were intended to produce.

My grandmother then renewed her discourse, by setting before me a plain statement of what man's situation on earth would have been, had he not fallen from his original righteousness, and then comparing it with his present lost, undone, and ruined condition: that every faculty of the soul, the body, and the intellectual powers were become radically and entirely corrupt. "The time was," continued the venerable lady, "ere yet man had fallen from his pristine glory, when all and each of his powers were as glorious and as free from sin, as they now are corrupt and depraved; his body then was beautiful, and his mind was formed after the moral image of his Maker; he was not liable to death, and his affections were upright and holy, not having received that perverse and fatal bent, which leads the unregenerate creature to call evil good and good evil, and to delight in the ways of wickedness rather than those of virtue. The only proper, just, and desirable object of man's supreme affections, is God. He may indeed love his neighbour, but this affection

should be in subordination to that which he is to cherish towards his God. It is written, *He that loveth father or mother more than me is not worthy of me: and he that loveth son or daughter more than me is not worthy of me.* (Matt. x. 37.) We are taught that the blessedness of heaven will consist in the union of all its glorious inhabitants under one head; all being bound by one interest, all united in one common cause, all being continually engaged in one song of praise, one strain of everlasting harmony without a single discord, one eternal cry of 'Glory, glory, glory to Him who sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb for ever and ever.' In those blissful regions, where salvation shall be for ever secured to its blessed inhabitants, no one will desire to appropriate honour to himself; the brightest archangel in the hierarchies of heaven would not dare, nay, would not wish to receive the praise of the meanest of the Lord's creatures: though crowned with everlasting glory, and clad in the robes of heavenly splendour, though endowed with Godlike wisdom, embellished with eternal youth, though glowing with angelic bloom, and endued with immortal strength, yet we know that such a one would have no other thought but to bring all his honours to the feet of his Saviour, and to cast his crown before the throne of his heavenly Master. Nay, more than this, we are taught that Christ, in his character as man, takes no glory to himself, but gives all the glory to the Father.—*Jesus answered, I have not a devil: but I honour my Father, and ye do dishonour me.* (John viii. 49.) And yet presumptuous man, ruined, lost, fallen, and undone man has no fears of this kind, no dread of placing himself, as it were, in the throne of God; and whenever he does not receive the praise of his fellows, he even presumes to demand, to extort it, and he feels himself mortified, dissatisfied, and injured, if he is not an object of general attention."

In this place my grandmother paused; and I remarked, that I still felt myself in the dark, and could not see how I was to apply to myself what she had just said to me.

I thought that the old lady sighed on hearing this, but I was not quite sure. She, however, immediately replied, addressing me by my name in an affectionate manner

and pointing out to me, that when man fell, he utterly lost that love and respect for his Maker by which he had been originally actuated. "His affections then," said she "received a false direction, self became the idol of the passions; and from that period," she added, "every unconverted man continues devoted to self, eager for his own gratifications, anxious to push himself forward into such situations as he considers honourable or pleasurable, and ready to sacrifice all other interests to what he conceives to be his own."

I remember, that, when my grandmother came to this part of our conversation, I began to form some little notion of what she was about, and to dread some more home pushes than any that I had yet received. She, however, spared me these although I no longer doubted that she had made discoveries relative to my selfish and envious disposition which I should not have liked to hear mentioned, and she proceeded to speak of the change which took place in the heart of man at his regeneration. She entered somewhat largely on the plan formed by the glorious Three in One for man's salvation, and on the peculiar work and effectual operations of the Holy Spirit in changing the heart. She pointed out, that the first work of God the Spirit was to humble the new-born creature to convince him of unbelief, to empty him of self, and to restore the Almighty to his throne in the heart. She proceeded then to enter into some details on this part of her subject; and pointed out to me, that the converted man, as he advances nearer and nearer to the perfection of holiness, and is more and more changed into the image of Christ, becomes less and less occupied by self, more and more debased in his own eyes, and more tender and jealous of the honour of God.

My grandmother then proceeded to remark the deplorable deficiency of many professing Christians, in the present day, with respect to that spirit of self-abasement which appeared in some of the holy men of old time. "How few of these characters," said she, "of whom we should hope better things, prove fully able to disentangle themselves from those feelings of self-love, by which we are all so easily beset! These feelings actuate, at all times, and amidst all circumstances, many of those whom we

would wish to think the excellent of the earth. In the pulpit, in the closet, at the altar, do they betray themselves; being more or less visible to the eye of the observer, according as the individual who is the object of observation has more or less skill and presence of mind in concealing them. Selfishness," added the venerable lady, "may be frequently hidden from the eye of man by courteous manners; it may be glossed over by art and good taste; it may perhaps lie very deeply concealed, and may not be liable to excitements of an ordinary kind; it may discern the promotion of its own interests by its concealment: but while it is a living, active, and cherished principle, there is little reason to suppose but that it will, some time or other, discover its influence, to the confusion of the individual who indulges it, and the dishonour of the religion which he professes.

My grandmother then went on to say, that, upon a close inspection of my character, she had been apprehensive that the spirit of self-love natural to man reigned in my heart with unsubdued power, and that, consequently, there was reason to fear, that, although I might have attained an acquaintance with the history and doctrines of the Christian religion, I had still never experienced its power, inasmuch as where divine grace once commences an effectual work in the heart, the strong holds of self-love begin in some degree to be shaken.

On hearing this, I renewed my weeping, and asked my venerable parent (with whom, by the bye, I was at that moment thoroughly incensed) to point out to me those particulars of my behaviour on which she had founded her judgment.

She smiled, but it was with a smile of compassion, and she replied, "My dear child, I have lived too long in the world, not to be able to read, with considerable accuracy, the lines of a youthful countenance. Humility and simplicity, my Caroline," she added, "possess certain characteristic marks which can never be mistaken where continued opportunity of observation is presented; while the contrary character also has its appropriate marks, which it would be equally difficult to mistake. Life is too short, my child, and death is at all times too near, to allow us to trifle with each other. I may give you temporary pain

by my remarks, but I dare not withhold them ; nevertheless, it is very difficult precisely to point out to you the various indications by which it has become evident to me that self is your idol, that you are seldom occupied by any other object, except as that object has reference to self, and that there are few if any occasions on which you forget self, and feel so far interested in the concerns of others, as to cease from anxieties on your own account."

I blushed exceedingly on hearing these words, and felt as though my grandmother was about to lay open every thought of my heart.

The old lady observed my blushes, and made some apology for probing me so closely. "My child," she said, "my connexion with you requires me to treat you with a freedom that I am not at liberty to use to others. But do not suppose that I consider my own heart to be any better than yours : for *as in water face answereth to face, so the heart of man to man.* (Prov. xxvii. 19.) It is grace alone, my child, that makes any difference which may subsist between one and another, the free grace of God, bestowed by him according to his sovereign pleasure, without respect to the merits of the individual. And O, my daughter!" she added, clasping her hands with unfeigned fervency, "may you become the subject of this grace ! may the strong holds of self-love be overthrown within your breast ! may the idol self be torn from his throne in your heart ! and may the Almighty become the object of your supreme affections ! Then, then, my child, I shall no longer see in you those capricious and affected airs which so greatly diminish your external gracefulness ; I shall no longer see your eyes turned on all sides, as it were, to collect the suffrages of those about you : I shall no longer observe those little stratagems to obtain attention : but all will be serene within, and lovely without."

My grandmother then concluded her discourse by an animated description of that peculiar and angelic beauty habitually diffused throughout the human countenance by the triumph of grace over the natural selfishness of the heart ; a beauty that is wholly independent of the natural features, or of the tincture of the skin, yet that, when it is associated with youthful comeliness, almost conveys to the imagination a faint idea of angelic excellence.



"You are thinking of Lucy," I exclaimed, as my grandmother ceased to speak: "the description just suits her. Had I enjoyed Lucy's advantages," I added, "I might perhaps have resembled her." Thus speaking, I again burst into an agony of tears.

"I love my Lucy," said my grandmother, solemnly; "she is a blessed child; she will be a blessed child. But, Caroline, my love, the world is wide enough for you and Lucy too, and heaven is wider still."

The manner in which these words were uttered, startled and even shocked me. "What," thought I, "does my grandmother suspect?" She, however, added no more, but, rising and kissing me, withdrew to her closet.

From the time of this conversation, which had taken place after dinner, I retired to my own room, where I spent an hour in bitter tears and sobs, considering myself (and delighting in the thought) the most unhappy creature in the world.

There is in fallen man an intense desire of being somewhat extraordinary, something out of the common way. This feeling is often particularly ardent in unconverted young women, who, living at ease at home, are in want of some object with which to engage their energies. Hence are produced those countless numbers of would-be-heroines, who desire to make it appear that they are constantly the objects of persecution on account of their beauty. It must, however, be remarked, that the heroines who are persecuted for their beauty are not the only, nor, indeed, in this age, the most usual species of heroines. Those who are persecuted for their religion, and those who experience severe spiritual trials, are at present the most abundant; and it is much to be feared that the profession of religion is now more frequently perverted to the promotion of vanity, than to the pulling down of the strong holds of Satan and the debasement of self; such is the depravity of man, and such is its effect of contaminating and poisoning all that it touches.—But to return to myself.

While remaining alone in my room, I was engaged with many and various thoughts, and became convinced that I should utterly fail of being loved by my grandmother in the degree that Lucy was, unless I changed my

mode of conduct, unless I appeared to be more serious, less devoted to myself, and more zealous for the service of the poor. Self-love was not backward in convincing me of the expediency of my seeming all this, and I therefore, without hesitation, determined to adopt and pursue this alteration in my practice; neither can I say, even to this hour, how far I was conscious of the duplicity of my intentions: but I am rather inclined to think that I was not then in the least degree suspicious of myself, but that, if any one had asked me of what was passing in my mind, I should have replied, that I had been repenting in consequence of the serious lecture given me by my grandmother. To leave, however, these various perplexities, and allow my reader to judge of me by facts, I proceed to remark, that, when I heard the usual signal given for tea, I went down into the library, where we commonly took that meal, and where I had first met my grandmother and Lucy. But, before I left my room, I remember that I looked in the glass, new modelled my hair, and perceived with pleasure that only such traces of my tears remained, as gave what I regarded as an interesting languor to my countenance; that unfortunate redness having disappeared from the tip of my nose which so sadly intrudes on the beauty of all weeping females who are not of truly heroic origin.

On my entering the library, into which I walked with a languid step, I saw my grandmother seated with her usual composure on the sofa, busily engaged in her knitting, (for she supplied all the rheumatic poor in the village with warm stockings,) and Lucy and Henry Selwyn occupied about some concerns which I did not at first comprehend, but which were of such a nature that the whole centre of the room was littered by them; Henry kneeling on the floor, and exerting almost as much strength as would have enabled him to fell a tree, in packing up and closely tying in large sheets of brown paper certain articles delivered to him by the hand of Lucy, while she was continually making references to her grandmother, and giving directions to Henry, with a glee and animation which diffused over her cheeks a finer bloom than I had ever before seen in her. At the moment when I entered the door, she was offering to Henry a small parcel contained in cap-paper,

and pointing out to him where it was to be placed, when he, turning aside a part of the paper, laughed, and said, "O, Lucy, Lucy! I will betray you; I will tell grandmamma."

"No, no, Henry," she rejoined, "no, you shall not; pray put up the parcel, and say nothing."

So saying, she was trying, with a gentle violence, to take the parcel out of his hand, when he, rising from the ground on which he had been kneeling, and pushing aside his fine hair from his forehead, held up the parcel to the old lady, and exposed the flaxen head and lack-lustre blue eyes of a wooden doll; saying, at the same time, "See, grandmamma; see how provident Lucy is for the happiness of little Annia."

The old lady smiled: and Henry turned towards his young companion with a look so full of tenderness mingled with admiration, as I had never before seen expressed in any countenance. Then, without adding another word, he returned to his employment, and Lucy resumed her wonted composure, together with that sweet expression of peace, which had been only slightly disturbed by the circumstance which I have described.

The parcel was shortly afterwards completed, directed, and despatched by the hand of some person who had been waiting for it; and we were presently all seated around the tea-table, where I hoped Henry Selwyn would find leisure to observe how pale and interesting I looked. I had no inclination to inquire into the particulars concerning the parcel and the doll. As my reader, however, may not perhaps have the same motives as I had, for not desiring to dive into the particulars relating to the good works of Lucy, nor the same objection to enter into the description respecting them, I shall state, in as short an account as possible, the parcel was for the use of a little child, the offspring of a poor beggar, who, in passing through the village, had died in a barn, and left an infant of a few months old, a lovely baby, that would probably have been consigned to perish in a work house, had not Henry Selwyn, then a boy of fifteen, chanced to see it, and undertaken, with the help of Lucy, to pay a poor honest cottager to rear it. This little creature was four years old at the time that I speak of, and was then maintained by its youthful guardians, assisted by my grand-

mother, at a little simple and happy boarding-school, not very far distant.

Having thus accounted for what I had seen, I return again to speak of myself, not doubting that you, my discerning reader, are fully persuaded, by this time, that self is to be the heroine of our tale.

We had finished our first dish of tea before Henry happened to turn his eyes towards the side on which I sat: but when he chanced to look that way, I thought that his attention rested on me somewhat longer than usual, and that he manifested an air of concern; on which I changed my posture, and affected to rouse myself, and appeared to endeavour to look cheerful.

Our tea was scarcely over, when my grandmother and Lucy were called out, and I was left with Henry. He had taken up a book, and continued reading while the servants were taking out the tea-things; but this being accomplished, and the door shut, he laid down the book, went to the open window, and, gathering a sprig of jessamine from a tree which grew without the window, he brought it to me; and in a manner the most gentle, for the society of such females as my grandmother and Lucy had accustomed him to tender and humane feelings, he addressed me by my name, said he feared that I was not well, and asked if he could read to amuse me.

In return for this, I began to shed tears; for the tears of those who are devoted to self are sometimes surprisingly ready on all those occasions whereby the selfish feelings are more or less affected; and I immediately embraced the resolution to make this young man, whom I had known so short a time, the confidant of my sorrows, though I was far, very far from intending to make him acquainted with the true state of my case.

To this purpose I informed him that my grandmother had declared herself displeas'd with me, because she did not see in me that seriousness which she discovered in Lucy. I then confessed it was true that I was in every respect far, very far inferior to Lucy; that I knew I should never be equal to her, never appear like her; that I looked up to her as an angel; and that I should be fully content only to follow her steps, however far distant: but that I had been unfortunate, in having lost my

mother early ; in having been brought up in a foreign country, &c. &c. with a great deal more to the same purpose, by which I hoped I had made myself appear to be the most injured and unhappy creature in the world, and that I had represented my grandmother's conduct as unreasonable and unkind.

I had no means of judging, at that time, of the effect produced by my confessions on my young auditor, as my grandmother and cousin returned to the room immediately after I had done speaking. I saw, however, with pleasure, that he looked serious, and that he continued so during the rest of the evening.

When I retired to my apartment at bed-time, I again began to meditate on my situation, and became increasingly convinced, that, in order to obtain and secure my grandmother's esteem, it was necessary for me to accommodate myself to her tastes more than I had hitherto done. I cannot say whether I precisely indulged any reflections on the power which I supposed to be invested in my grandmother of obliging one child more than another in her will ; yet I can hardly think that this consideration was entirely without some weight upon my mind. But be this as it may, I saw that the people with whom I now associated, had decidedly avowed themselves on the side of religion ; and that they were exceedingly active in works of charity ; and I perceived that I could do nothing better than to imitate them, at least in appearance. Being thus convinced of what appeared likely to promote my interest in a worldly point of view, I endeavoured to hide my own hypocrisy from myself, by trying to remember all that my mother had taught me of religion, and then endeavouring to fancy that I really was religious, and that I had always been so.

Among the genteel families that occupied the village in which my grandmother resided, there were some, whose pretensions to strict morality were what the world would call unexceptionable ; whose manners were elegant, whose tastes were refined, and whose liberality to the poor was truly commendable. These persons, however, being ignorant of the depravity of their hearts, and of their fallen and lost condition by nature, and their consequent need of the Saviour. entertained no fear of mingling with the



world, and of trusting themselves amidst its dangerous allurements.

The chief of these families was one of the name of Stephens. The lady herself was a widow—had been a beauty; and still, when rouged, and by candle-light, she conveyed no faint idea of what she had been in the height of her bloom. She had a handsome fortune, an elegant house, and four sprightly daughters; and few persons better understood the art of making a house agreeable to visitors of a worldly character than did this lady.

My grandmother was on good terms with her, and often engaged her in works of charity: nevertheless it was impossible for these two persons intimately to associate, because they had not one single principle in common, and they were, therefore, continually liable to clash whenever they attempted to converse on any other than the most ordinary subjects. It was, however, deemed right, by my grandmother, that the families should interchange visits once or twice during the year: and it happened that one of these visits was to take place not long after the day on which I had been engaged in the above-mentioned conversation with the old lady.

During the interval that elapsed between the time of this conversation and that of the visit, I had certainly fallen more into my grandmother's habits, and accommodated myself more decidedly to her views. I had devoted some part of my time every morning to such studies as she had recommended; I had taken my drawing-lessons, together with Lucy, under Henry Selwyn; I had made some efforts to work for the poor; and I had walked once or twice with my grandmother to see the little school which she supported in the village. All these things I imagined looked well; and I was, in consequence, pleased with myself: but whether my grandmother was satisfied with me or not, I could not tell. At any rate, however, she said nothing: and, as I before remarked, I was content with myself, especially as I believed that I had been growing in the good graces of Henry ever since I had made him a kind of confidant of my sorrows. With respect to Lucy, I could not tell whether I either gained or lost ground, in her regards. She, from the first, had been

cheerful, open, and affectionate: but though I had made several attempts at what I called gaining her confidence, I could never find myself any nearer my object: and I was at length brought to this persuasion, that she had no confidences to impart; a state of mind which I could by no means comprehend without forming the conclusion, that, notwithstanding her blooming countenance, her eloquent blushes, and her animated expression, she was actually without a heart.

But while things were in this state, the day arrived on which we were to visit Mrs. Stephens. On the morning of this day, my grandmother had a slight attack of a rheumatic complaint, to which she was frequently subject, which prevented her from accompanying us to that lady's house; a circumstance which distressed Lucy very much, but which, I must confess, produced in me not the slightest regret: for since I had discovered that the old lady was so close an observer, I never had felt myself entirely at ease in her company.

I had found out, by means of the servant who assisted in dressing me, that a party unusually large was expected at Mrs. Stephens's: I was, therefore, very solicitous to appear as well dressed as possible, and I consequently felt some difficulty in forming for my appearance a plan which might reconcile my newly adopted character of the sober and penitent Christian, with my ideas of true gentility and fashion, of which I had a variety of fancies and opinions, with which I could not resolve to part.

I took the first opportunity which the morning afforded of being alone with Lucy, in order to ask her what she intended to wear in the evening. She made me repeat the question twice before she answered it, as if she really did not understand what I meant: and then, looking down upon her clothes, she replied, "We must have on clean frocks."

On hearing this, I uttered a vehement exclamation, and said, "Indeed, Lucy, I don't know what to make of you: you are the strangest creature in the world."

She lifted up her gentle eyes for a moment, and then went on with her work; and I imagined, from the long silence which immediately followed, that she was offended, till at length she herself broke the silence by making some

remark respecting our grandmother, and telling me some anecdotes of our venerable parent's kindness to her in her childhood.

Nothing was, therefore, to be made of Lucy: no ideas of what was proper, or of what might be expected in the appearance of the evening, were to be gathered from her. She was a character wholly inaccessible on these subjects. I therefore trusted to my own judgment; and as soon as I had dined, went up to my own room, summoned the servant, and spent at least two hours in curling my hair, suiting my ribbons, and arranging my ornaments; and I had scarcely finished all these preparations, having worked myself up by my solicitude to appear well, into a glow and a tremor, when Lucy, perfectly cool and unembarrassed, appeared at my door, in a clean frock indeed, but without one additional decoration to what she wore every day. I now almost wished that every ornament, with which I had been so sedulously adorning myself, was sunk in the depths of the sea. I would have given all that I possessed for the simple, cool, and unembarrassed appearance of Lucy. But there was now no longer time for delay. Henry Selwyn was waiting below; and I was obliged to hurry down stairs after my cousin, and make the best of my way to Mrs. Stephens's house.

I thought, that, when I appeared in the hall, Henry Selwyn's eye was caught with my figure: he certainly noticed me with some particularity; but what that particular look meant I could not understand. He, however, offered me his arm, while at the same time he took Lucy's hand with a kind of brotherly fondness, and placed it on his other arm; while she began to divert him with an account of some adventure either among the poor, or in her garden and poultry-yard, in which he seemed to take as lively an interest as herself.

It was rather mortifying for a young lady in the state of mind of which I was then the subject, to be associated constantly with such characters as Lucy and Henry. When Lucy was not present, I could indeed make more of Henry. But, in her company, he was quite as child-like and simple as herself, and was ready to look grave or laugh, to play or work, precisely as she took the lead.

We soon arrived at Mrs. Stephens's handsome house,

and were introduced into a very elegant drawing-room, with windows down to the ground, opening on a lawn, smooth as velvet, beyond which appeared a cascade falling from a little height into a small pool, in the centre of which was the bronze statue of a water-nymph. The heights from which the cascade tumbled were covered with trees and shrubs; and in the darkest of one of its recesses, there appeared a grotto, in which were several couches of moss.

The season being summer, the windows of the drawing-room were open, admitting from without the fragrance of innumerable flowers and aromatic plants, arranged in bow-pots on the lawn.

So large and so gay was the party assembled in the drawing-room, that the idea of a little dance being intended was instantly suggested to my mind; and I was the more confirmed in this opinion when I perceived that most of the party consisted of young persons. As we entered, the lady of the house came forward to receive us with all that ease and apparent cordiality, which an acquaintance with genteel life commonly imparts; and after giving us a few moments of her attention, she led us to a sofa, where we were permitted, in silence, to contemplate the scene before us.

I was no sooner thus left to myself, than I commenced my old employment in a new circle; which was that of comparing my own figure, such as I supposed it to be, with every other lady, young and old in the room. I do not precisely recollect the result of these my comparisons on that occasion, excepting that I hesitated a little when my eye rested on Miss Harriet Stephens, who was at that time accounted one of the most dashing young ladies in Berkshire; and in this hesitation I lost a little of my self-complacency. But I generally found that these comparisons had the effect of either depressing me, so as to render me exceedingly awkward and embarrassed, or of elating me to an extreme, which, in another way, rendered me equally ridiculous.

Miss Harriet, at the moment when my observation first rested upon her was engaged in a very animated conversation with a young foreigner, who at that time resided in the neighbourhood. She was a little woman, and

he a tall man. He stood up before her, and she was lounging back upon a sofa, and in an affected way looking up to him; but I thought her very interesting, because she wore in her ears extremely large gold hoops, which were then just come into fashion, and she could speak French with volubility. At length, while I was still looking at her, her name was mentioned, and some appeal was made to her by some person in the most distant part of the room: on which occasion, she took the opportunity of getting up, and running across the apartment, in a manner which I thought very pretty, but which really betrayed extreme affectation, she pushed herself in between two young ladies, who were seated together, and, being followed by her Frenchman, a very loud and animated discussion of some unimportant matter took place in that corner of the room, and for some time attracted the attention of all the rest of the party. At length, the loud peals of laughter, and the half-shrieks of the young ladies were somewhat hushed by the important business of taking refreshments, during which repast, we saw a party of musicians seating themselves under a tree on the lawn. "Symptoms of a dance," whispered Henry Selwyn to me, "are you a dancer, Miss Caroline?"

Before I could answer, Mrs. Stephens approached, and beckoning Lucy towards her, she said to her, in an under tone, but so loud, that we could distinctly hear her, "We are going to have a little dance this evening my dear: you have no objection, I am sure, my sweet Lucy."

"I, Madam!" said Lucy, with her usual simplicity, "How could you think of such a thing?"

"O, I am glad of it," said Mrs. Stephens; "but I understood that your grandmother is not fond of these things."

Lucy made no reply, but looked with her wonted composure and sweetness: on which Mrs. Stephens added, "Then you and your cousin will not refuse to join us?"

"I have never learned to dance," replied Lucy; "and, as my grandmamma is not here to be consulted, I would not wish to join in the amusement this evening. But I shall not want entertainment; so pray do not think of me



Madam : you know that I am always happy here ; you are always so kind to me."

"You are a sweet creature, Lucy," returned Mrs. Stephens, taking her hand, "a dear little girl, and you always were such. Well, you shall not dance ; you shall please yourself, and you shall help me to supply the refreshments."

"Yes," said Lucy, smiling, "yes, Madam ; and I will do any thing else that you may think of."

A loud call upon Mrs. Stephens, as lady of the ceremonies, put a stop to any further conversation between her and Lucy : but at the same moment, the smiling little creature was drawn away into another corner, by a party of young ladies, who, it seems, wished to introduce their brother to her as a partner.

In the mean time I observed that Henry Selwyn was watching his little companion very closely, and he then remarked to me, "I shall be surprised if those girls persuade Lucy to dance : but be assured that they will if they can."

"Well," I added, "and what harm would there be if they could persuade her ?"

Henry started a little, as I thought on my proposing this question, and then said, "But you know that Lucy has not been brought up in this sort of way?"

"Well," I said, "but do you think that there is any harm in dancing ?"

He laughed on my putting this question ; it was a laugh of embarrassment ; and he said, "O, I don't pretend to be a judge of these things."

"Then," said I, "you don't intend to dance yourself to-night ?"

He smiled again, and said something about awkwardness, and blunders, and dangers to his partner's shins.

Here a general stir among the company put a period to our discourse, and all the party crowded out upon the lawn ; during which scene of bustle and confusion I lost sight both of Lucy and Henry, but, as being the greatest stranger, I was taken under the wing of Mrs. Stephens herself, who informed me that the young people were going to form sets for cotillions, adding, that, as it was certain that a young lady of my elegant appearance

and fine carriage must be able to dance cotillions, she hoped that I would permit her to introduce a partner to me.

I now found myself somewhat in a strait, being, on the one hand, strongly urged by the desire of displaying my fine figure in the dance, and on the other, fearing that I should make a flaw in my new character, if I did not show a proper contempt for the vain amusement of dancing, the folly of which I was at that time utterly incapable of comprehending. In the mean time, however, it was necessary for me to decide on what I would do, for the critical moment was at hand in which Mrs. Stephens threatened to go in search of a partner. One idea at length fixed my wavering inclination: it was this—that if I should be tempted to dance, Henry Selwyn would then be left alone to enjoy himself in the company of his favourite Lucy, and this was a thought that I could not bear. I therefore determined to decline dancing; while at the same time, instead of alleging the simple truth, that my grandmother perhaps would not like it, I pleaded that my health was in so debilitated a state, as I was the native of a hot climate, that I never could support the fatigue of dancing.

“What a pity, my dear,” returned Mrs. Stephens, in a voice properly tuned to the key of condolence, “that you should be deprived, by the delicacy of your constitution, of this charming amusement!” So saying, and repeating her lamentations, she led me to a chair on the lawn, and then hastened to bestow another mite of her notice on some others of her guests; endeavouring, by thus dividing her attentions as minutely as possible, to make up, as much as it lay in her power, for the cold and supercilious contempt of her daughters, who were far too deeply engaged about their own concerns to think of any one else.

I had scarcely been a moment seated, before Henry and Lucy joined me, and we sat for awhile, quietly observing the scene, which was not a little amusing, as within the contracted sphere of observation before us there might be discovered almost every variety of human passion and worldly caprice. I was, however, so imperfectly acquainted with the opinions of my companions in refer

ence to amusements of the kind which we were witnessing, or of their modes of thinking respecting fashionable and gay life, and fashionable and gay people, that I hardly dared to hazard an observation, till Lucy at length spoke and remarked how beautiful and happy every thing and every person looked.

"Happy!" said Henry, "and beautiful too! Those are strong expressions, Lucy, and might do very well if you were standing before a mirror."

She either did not hear or did not understand his last words, or she was perfectly unconcerned about what he thought of her, which I could not fully believe. But, be this as it may, no change was visible in her countenance; and I, who had both heard and understood what he said, remarked, with some little ill-humour, that I wondered that she, who pretended to so much religion, could think that those persons were happy who were doing what was so improper.

She looked at me with one of those innocent and mild expressions of countenance by which she was so highly distinguished above others, but she made me no answer: on which Henry said to me, "It is scarcely a minute ago, Miss Caroline, that you asked me if I thought that there could be any harm in dancing, and now you wonder that Lucy can even think tolerably of any one who joins in a dance. May I be favoured, my dear young lady," he added, looking me earnestly in the face, "with your real sentiments upon this subject?"

"My sentiments?" I repeated: "can they be questioned? Should I be sitting here, if I really approved of dancing?"

"O," said Henry, "I thought that you came here because nobody asked you to dance."

Henry Selwyn was not nineteen, and he had sometimes a little of that unguarded and boyish manner which led him to say very blunt things, but he was generally sorry for them afterwards; and I well knew how to make him so, by bringing tears into my eyes, and assuming an air of uneasiness. As this was one of the occasions which I thought proper to work up into such a scene, I turned my face away, heaved a sigh, and looked as pathetically as circumstances would allow.

“There, now” said he, “I have affronted you, Miss Caroline. I am truly sorry for it: I beg your pardon. Pray excuse me; I did not intend to be so rude: and I am the more to blame, because I thought that you wished to dance, and really had no partner. I ought to have asked you myself.”

“Not if you considered dancing to be an improper amusement, Mr. Selwyn,” I said.

“I have no settled opinion on the subject,” he answered. “I know, indeed, that Mrs. Thornton is not fond of promoting dancing among young people; on this account she would not have us taught: but there is a great difference between a thing which is not desirable, and one that is decidedly wicked.”

“Mr. Selwyn,” I rejoined, “I certainly did understand, from what you hinted in the drawing-room, that my grandmother does not deem dancing to be consistent with the character of a serious Christian; and I certainly did believe that you thought better of me than to suppose that I would willingly do any thing that was in the least degree displeasing to my excellent parent. You ought not, therefore, to have reproached me.”

While I uttered these words, I remember that I picked a rose to pieces; and then throwing the stalk away in a kind of petulant humour, I exclaimed, “O that I had not been born so near the sun! that I possessed less of that hasty and incautious warmth of feeling and impatience which will, I foresee, ever be raising up enemies against me!” I then muttered some incoherent expressions about not being justly appreciated and little understood, &c. &c. and in this manner I went on till I had worked up the feelings of my young companion so much that he quite turned his back upon Lucy, and set himself in good earnest to console me, and restore, if possible, my peace of mind.

I had now obtained what I desired, which was to see my fair little cousin left wholly in the back ground; and my spirits, in consequence, presently became so elevated, that, had any acute and experienced observer been present, it would have been no difficult matter for such a one to read more of my mind than was desirable. In proportion to the degree to which my spirit rose, I grew talka-

tive, and began to amuse myself and Henry with comments on the dancers: for which comments he showed so much relish, that I was gradually led on to say many things which would have been much better omitted.

I cannot tell how long we had been amusing ourselves in this manner, when Lucy, who had remained for some time quite still, suddenly turned round, and whispered one or two words in the ear of Henry; the consequence of which was such a violent rush of blood into his cheeks, and such an instant change of manner, that my self-love was strongly excited, and I gave Lucy a look which, had my eyes possessed the power of inflicting wounds, would not have left her uninjured. But my angry glances were entirely lost upon her, though not so on Henry; for, having spoken her mind to her adopted brother, she became again engaged with other matters, and was looking about her with her usual expression of animation and composure.

"You wish to know, perhaps, what Lucy whispered to me just now?" said Henry. "They were only a few words, but I thank my sweet sister for them: her remark was a new instance of her pure affection, her truly sisterly love. Her words suggested the hint that it would be better for me to join the dancers than to indulge myself in unkind reflections upon them."

"Lucy," I said, "it is I who ought to thank you for this caution; and I should have done so, had you treated me with the same sincerity as that which you used with Mr. Selwyn."

"I should, my dear Caroline," she answered, "had you made the same remarks as Henry did."

"Well, I did then," I answered, half laughing, "and, indeed, much worse; but you let me alone: for you have not the same interest in me which you have in Henry."

"I am sorry that you should think so," returned the little girl, with her usual tranquillity.

I became irritated, and, therefore, broke out into some intemperate expressions, calling Lucy a strange little thing, and telling her that I did not fully understand her, but that I could not help believing that she was not quite so simple as she pretended to be.

It seems that the little girl had never been accused of



nypocrisy before, for she seemed to take my insinuation much to heart. Her delicate cheeks and neck became flushed with that fine and beautiful glow which is visible only in the most lovely complexions, her gentle eyes filled with tears; and we certainly should have had such a scene as I should not altogether have relished, and for which I perhaps should not have been able to find a very reputable apology, if Henry Selwyn had not suddenly taken her hand, and led her away towards another part of the garden, leaving me ready to bite my lips with vexation, and otherwise in no very agreeable situation, as I was sitting alone in a very conspicuous seat within the view of a set of people to whom I was almost an entire stranger.

The breaking up of the dancing parties, however, soon afforded me some relief. Every one took seats as they could be found or provided; and as the elegant Miss Harriet condescended to place herself by me, and brought with her several of her gay companions, I presently felt myself, as I thought in the very centre of attraction of the Beau Monde, and I had quite forgotten my late mortification till I found myself seated at an elegant supper-table, where, at some little distance on the opposite side, I saw Lucy sitting by Henry Selwyn, no traces of her late short-lived affliction being left on the features of the little girl excepting such as added a softer and sweeter expression to her dove-like countenance.

When I returned home, no hint was dropped, either by Henry or Lucy, reminding me of my unkind behaviour to my young cousin. But I was mortified to find that from that period I seemed rather to have gone back than to have advanced in the good graces of Henry Selwyn, at least, he appeared careful to avoid being alone with me; and Lucy, though she continued entirely unaltered in her manner, yet seemed to feel that I was as little congenial to her as she had seemed to be with me.

Thus, much in the manner that I have described, passed away the remainder of my first summer in England. In the autumn Henry Selwyn was entered at the University, he being intended for the ministry. On the day of his departure, I was secretly much vexed; but Lucy wept till her eyes were swelled, and she appeared to be really un

well, though she uttered not a single complaint. My self-love, however, was much hurt by the different manner in which Henry took his leave of me and of Lucy; for I did not consider that he was to Lucy as a dear brother, having been brought up in the house with her from her early infancy, while to me as yet he was little more than a common acquaintance.

In this manner, however, is the fallen creature, man, blinded by selfishness, in this manner are reason and common sense confounded, and the greater part of our race is thus induced to demand such tributes of exclusive attention, respect, and love, as in the very nature of things few only could possibly receive, and as, if justice were done to all, no individual ought to have. But who can tell what evils to mankind, nay, to the universe itself, have originated from this self-appropriating spirit? Hence proceeded the ruin of angels, and, through them, the fall of man. Hence have sprung all those destructions of cities, those ruins of provinces, those bloody fields of battle, with the descriptions of which every page of history, from the beginning of time to the present day, is polluted. We look back with horror on the murderous characters of those ancient princes who possessed no splendid qualities to eclipse the darker shades of their characters: but we do not consider, that whenever we desire aught of the good things of this world beyond what are bestowed upon us by the free gift of the Almighty, although we may not yet have used any sinful efforts of our own to obtain them, we nevertheless number ourselves with the Antiochii, the Ptolemies, the Cæsars, and the Pompeys of ancient days; and we may trace in our own hearts not only the seeds of all their abominations, but also the buds and blossoms of all that they ever committed.

When man ceases to receive his earthly benefits from the hand of his heavenly Father in the same dependent and thankful spirit with which the infant derives its nourishment from its mother's breast, he then begins that war with God, and enters upon that course of open rebellion, which, if carried to its utmost extent, would end in his separating himself entirely from his almighty Parent, and his uniting himself with Satan in that everlasting and awful enmity against his Maker which we are

taught to believe will continue as an example of divine displeasure throughout the endless duration of eternity.

In order to ascertain, and thus truly judge of, the real qualities of our feelings, we ought to endeavour in idea to follow them on to their probable ultimate effects. It may, in the cases of some of us, please God to check us in our mad career, it may please him, by the dispensations of his providence, to smother in embryo many of our evil designs. We may not perhaps be among that unhappy number of persons to whom a temporary success is given to all their projects; yet there is no selfish or ambitious feelings in our bosoms, however it may be concealed from others, which will not lead the person who indulges it to everlasting death, unless it be torn from the heart as a right hand or a right eye from the body.—But to return to my story.

When Henry took his leave, I was so agitated by jealousy, that I could not bear to witness the tender manner in which he soothed and consoled his weeping cousin. I could not endure to hear him say, "I shall not be far off, Lucy; I will come again; and you shall write to me, and I will answer you: and at Christmas you shall see me again, and then we will renew our pleasant walks and our drawing-lessons. Sweet Lucy, do not weep: wipe those gentle eyes: do not weep for me; I will come again." In this manner he consoled her, and he looked back at her, as she stood in the window, till his horse had carried him quite out of sight.

After the departure of Henry Selwyn, the house appeared to me to lose much of its cheerfulness. Winter was fast approaching, and this was the first indication that I had ever met with of this season in England. I had never seen in the West Indies such a complete fall of the leaf as I then witnessed; I had never seen the woods entirely bare, or the scar foliage driven about by the winter whirlwind; I had never been used to be serenaded by the hollow whistling of the freezing blast; nor had I ever before led so retired a life as that which I then spent. In short, I felt exceedingly oppressed by melancholy; and the consequence was, that, instead of my having recourse to useful and active employments for consolation, instead of laying myself out for the benefit of my fellow-creatures, I en-

deavoured to amuse myself with my own thoughts: and, for this purpose, I sought to be much alone, which it was by no means difficult for me to bring to pass; as, very shortly after the departure of Henry, my grandmother was confined to her bed by a rheumatic complaint, and Lucy, therefore, almost continually attended her.

And now, (as it was expressly in order to lay open to my young readers some of the dark windings of the human heart, and thus to hold a mirror to them which may afford them some little assistance in the arduous task of self-examination, that I attempted to write my history,) I shall endeavour to give some little account of the strange and contradictory feelings which at that time took possession of my mind.

My strongest and most prevailing sentiment was then, as it had been at all other times, the love of self, and the constant employment of my thoughts was engaged about self, and in considering by what way and how I could best promote my own happiness in the present circumstances amidst which I was placed. I had become convinced of my errors during the summer: but how far this conviction was more than the mere dictates of reason I dare not say. That religion was a matter of some consequence, that the everlasting welfare of the soul depended upon it, that I had done wrong throughout the former part of my life in living in such carelessness respecting it, and that it behoved me in future to pay such attention to divine things as might insure my everlasting happiness: so far, I think, my convictions went; and, by degrees, my mind was a little further opened, and I began to form some faint idea of the depravity of my heart: but that idea was faint indeed, and perhaps amounted to no more than might be produced by mere human reason and reflection. My feelings, however, with respect to religion, let them have been what they might, whether derived from man or God, were sufficient to lead me to the observance of certain forms, and rendered my conduct more serious in family and public worship.

In the mean time, the corruptions of my heart remained wholly unchanged, the idol self reigned within with undiminished sway; and nothing whatever either

pleased or affected, elated or depressed me, but as it referred to self. It seemed, at that period, that I had no power to forget self even for a moment; and the only promising sign which I can remember as then existing with respect to me, was, that I was conscious of this devotedness to self, and I sometimes wished that it was otherwise with me. Such, however, was the prevalence of this feeling, that I could neither speak nor move in the presence even of a servant, without thinking of my appearance. I was always fancying that I should make a fit subject for a beautiful or an interesting picture on such and such occasions; and, with a view to these my imaginary pictures, I often, in the presence of the physician, either knelt at my grandmother's feet, gently rubbing them with my hand, or hung over her pillow when the rector of the parish came to converse with her, or stood at the parlour-window extending my hand to some poor beggar when persons were passing the gate; or observed various other little acts of eye-service, which I need not describe, as one or two instances may suffice for suggesting the ideas of a thousand more.

In the mean time, I could not help envying Lucy, because I could not detect in her any symptoms whatever of this desire of display: on the contrary, every thing commendable that she did appeared to flow freely from the heart. No one even imagined, till a long time afterwards, how much this little girl did for the relief of her infirm grandmother; how frequently, when she heard her venerable parent stir, she rose out of her little bed in the night, and stood by her side, anticipating all her wants, and soothing all her pains; and I have not unfrequently seen the tear tremble in her eye when the servants have offered to relieve her from the office of taking up her grandmother's meals.

Sometimes, when I witnessed all this, I tried to think that she waited on her grandmother in this way in order to obtain from her a greater legacy at her death; but I could not long entertain so coarse an idea. Was not Lucy as obliging to the poorest creature in the village who stood in need of her assistance? How was I to solve this problem? I could not understand it; I could not then comprehend that glorious process by which the na



ture of man is entirely changed, by which he is emptied of self, by which the Almighty is restored to his throne in the heart, while holy love to God and to one's neighbour becomes the fulfilment of every law.

After having thus spent three months as gloomy as any that I had ever known, my grandmother recovered so far as to appear again below stairs, Lucy returned to her former occupations, and, to crown all, Henry Selwyn returned from the University.

We enjoyed a very pleasant Christmas: there was a great deal of hospitality, and such hospitality as is recommended by our Saviour. My grandmother also found much work for us in preparing garments for the poor; an employment in which I should not formerly have found much pleasure: but Henry Selwyn was present to read to us while we were at work, and, after the tedious monotony of the last three months, every change was delightful.

I was still, however, uneasy at the friendship subsisting between Henry and Lucy, which seemed to have grown stronger from their short separation, and to possess all the sweetest characters of brotherly and sisterly attachment.

Thus passed the Christmas, and Mr. Selwyn returned to college: in the spring vacation he, however, came again, and then my grandmother, being in tolerably good health, and, as usual, in a very sweet state of mind, I witnessed a short renewal of that peculiar kind of happiness which struck me so much on my first arrival in England.

There is something in the bursting forth of spring so congenial with the finest feelings of man, so abundant in the production of hope and innocent delight, that its appearance seldom fails of reviving the spirits even of those persons who have been in the habit of witnessing it year after year from early infancy. But I had never before known the charms of an English April; I had never before smelled the mild fragrance of the wild violet and pale primrose; and I was certainly much touched with this new world of budding beauties which surrounded me—touched, I repeat, and almost led to forget myself on the occasion, when, unfortunately, I met with a volume

of Thompson's Seasons; where finding some of his beautiful descriptions of spring, I took credit to myself for the discovery, and, from that period, I could not speak upon the subject of the vernal beauties without being haunted with conceits of my own good taste and superior discernment, by which I no doubt rendered myself as ridiculous as needs be in the estimation of those who had any insight into character.—But to proceed with my story.

I have still, selfish and unfeeling as I then was, some tender remembrances of the last day on which Henry Selwyn was with us at that period. It was one of those charming days in which all the perfumes of the spring were diffused throughout the air, and in which new life seemed to be given to all nature. My grandmother, who had not been out of doors for many months, proposed an airing in her garden chair, and we all prepared to attend her. The relief of some poor person was, as usual, to be the object of our expedition; and we spent one whole morning in our ramble, exploring scenes which, for their freshness and beauty, I thought that I had never seen equalled. Henry on this occasion was gay beyond all that I had ever before witnessed in him. He must needs dress Lucy's bonnet with primroses, and he indulged himself in that kind of playful raillery which we sometimes see in young people; and which, when under proper restraints, is neither unpleasing nor blameable. His feelings, however, were very tender; for, on my grandmother betraying some symptom of weakness in endeavouring to get out of her carriage at the door of a cottage, he indicated considerable agitation, though he said nothing.

The day following Henry Selwyn left us, but though he was absent, I still continued to think much of him, neither did I make it a matter of principle, as I ought on many accounts to have done, not to indulge myself in these thoughts; for the very excellences of this young man, which were obvious to every beholder, ought to have put me on my guard, had I possessed even common prudence: his regard also for Lucy ought to have been a check to me, even had my self-love alone influenced my conduct. But what are all considerations of

mere worldly prudence, when they are assaulted by the force of passion?

It was not long after the departure of Henry that my grandmother was again taken ill. I did not understand at that time the nature of her disorder, but I now know that it was a paralytic stroke, for she never afterwards appeared to be altogether herself.

At this time, we had a visit from my cousin Selina, (the eldest daughter of my uncle Ormond,) who was the elder sister of Lucy. My grandmother, before her illness, had expressed a wish to see Selina; and an invitation had, therefore, been sent to the young lady, who arrived at the time I speak of, her father, Mr. Ormond, having just before received a call from the Continent either on business or pleasure, it little matters which.

I had expected to see in Selina a second Lucy, and a second rival; and accordingly, when she stepped out of the carriage, and ran into the arms of her sister, I looked impatiently till she should turn her face towards me. My quick eye in a moment discerned the same soft complexion, fine hair, and lovely figure, which had so often disturbed me in Lucy; and when, at length, she came forwards to salute me, I beheld, with inexpressible sorrow, a set of features equally charming, and I could not help internally lamenting my misfortunes in having two such pretty cousins. "In some families," I said to myself, "there are twenty, thirty, nay, forty grandchildren, and not a beauty among them; and I—unhappy I—have only two cousins, and they are both charming!"

Well, but notwithstanding this severe calamity, it was needful for me to seem cheerful, nay happy, on the occasion of my meeting with my cousin; and I accordingly took one of her hands, while Lucy held the other, and led her into the parlour.

Her first question was to ask for our grandmother; when, being told of her situation, and that she could not leave her room, she shrugged up her shoulders, and exclaimed, "What, in bed? does she keep her bed? Only think of that!"

Lucy and I both looked at her, but neither of us made any reply: on which she began to give an account of her journey; and I presently found out, that in one respect

at least she was like myself, for she had a pretty strong persuasion that she could not pass any where without drawing all eyes upon her. Though she had travelled down into Berkshire in her father's carriage, driven by an old coachman who had lived in the family ever since she was born, yet, in her own estimation, she had encountered more perils by the way than have fallen to the lot of many a one who has made the tour of Christendom. At the inn where she had got out to breakfast, it is hard to say what she had suffered, what inconveniences she had endured, what alarms she had encountered, what emotions her appearance had excited. "Really, cousin Caroline," she said, "if I had had to travel into Northumberland instead of Berkshire, I would have renounced all food rather than have exposed myself to such annoyances."

I know not what reply I made to all this; but Lucy's remark on the occasion I shall never forget. "I cannot understand, dear sister," she said, "what you are talking about. Were the people rude to you at the inn? What did they say to you? Surely they would not say any thing impertinent?"

"To say any thing impertinent!" repeated Selina, laughing; "O, Lucy, Lucy! you are Lucy still, I see. Cousin Caroline, have you not found out that my little sister is the prettiest little fool in the world? I will answer for her, that if you could but persuade her that grandmamma thought it right, she would trundle an orange-barrow through every street in London, crying fresh oranges, without feeling the slightest uneasiness on the occasion."

Lucy still made no answer; and I replied, "There is nothing in the world that I covet so much as Lucy's composure. I would give all that I have on earth for her self-control. It is such a comfort, such an advantage, to be always cool and easy, like Lucy."

"Cool and easy!" replied Selina, laughing: "a pretty description of a young lady!"

"O, I meant no harm," I replied; "none in the least I was not thinking of what I said."

Another laugh ensued; after which, I found myself quite at home with my new cousin, and felt perfectly

easy in her presence, my envious feelings with respect to her being considerably allayed, though I could still discern that she had very pretty features.

During our extraordinary mirth, it may be asked what Lucy was doing. In reply to which, I must tell you, that this lovely young creature had, as usual, some work which she was desirous of finishing with all speed for the use of some poor person. This work had been laid aside at the moment of her sister's arrival, but had been resumed as soon as our conversation took the inexplicable turn above mentioned; and Lucy availed herself of the first pause in our conversation, to remind Selina of some old woman in the neighbourhood, whom she had formerly known, and to say that she was making a gown for her against Easter-Sunday: on saying which, she held up her cumbrous job, and exhibited a common chintz, of a very large pattern, and cut out after the most obsolete fashion.

Here was matter for new merriment on the part of the town-bred sister, who remarked, that she was sure that Lucy would have no objection to take a job of this kind into one of the most elegant drawing-rooms in town.

Thus have I described my first interview with my cousin Selina; of whom I readily formed this opinion, that she was what she called her sister—a pretty fool. I never, indeed, had reason to suppose her particularly wise in any sense of the word, but she wanted not art, and she was exceedingly shrewd in the promotion of her own interests, that is, as far as she understood them. She was, like myself, and like every other unconverted person on the face of the earth, a heroine in her own opinion, and desirous of being deemed so by others.

It may perhaps be asked what I mean by this assertion, that all unregenerate persons, and too many others, of whom we might expect better things, are heroes and heroines, according to their own conceits, and that all naturally desire to be thought such by others.

My answer is, that both a hero and a heroine is a person who is distinguished above the general mass of mankind by some peculiar and remarkable quality, by which the person so distinguished is rendered worthy of particular honour, love, or approbation. and thus becomes



especially liable to the persecutions of envious and designing characters.

According to the very nature of things, few persons can be heroes. But many may desire to be such: and I venture to maintain, that all unregenerate persons desire this, and that all vain persons believe that they have in some degree obtained this their object, and, however low, mean, and despicable they may be, that they are, in the eyes of some one or other, objects of admiration and envy.

It has, during many years, been the custom for religious persons to cry down the writings of modern novelists; and often, indeed, with good reason, because these works have commonly a decided tendency to encourage and foster this selfish principle of the desire of distinction. All the principal, and even all the best, female characters in the old novels, are represented as heroines, not only in fact, but also in their own opinions; and, consequently, these writings in general present a false view of life and character, by setting up individuals as particular objects of admiration and persecution, and thus inducing young people to believe that there are in society certain persons on whom the eyes of others are fixed with wonder and amazement; an idea which is generally incorrect; for the benefits and advantages of life are more equally and impartially distributed than the young are aware of, as an attentive observer will soon perceive; one person possessing one advantage, and another another; and a brilliant talent being often overbalanced by some conspicuous defect.—But to return to novels.

I do not dispute that their effects are not generally bad; but, at the same time, I wish to point out, that the same inflammatory consequences frequently spring from other sources as well as from novels and plays. There are many heroines in the world besides those who are persecuted for their beauty, and none who are in a more dangerous state than those who have made religion their stepping-stone to conceits of this kind. There are always to be met with a certain set of weak, though good people, who delight in puffing up religious persons with such ideas—in leading the evangelic preacher, who enjoys a great benefice in England, to suppose that he is an example of heroic fortitude in enduring the scoffs and taunts

of a few low-bred infidels ; in inducing the young professor to imagine that he is enduring such spiritual conflicts as none ever before experienced, and in leading such persons to talk and write continually about themselves, under the pretence of discoursing of religion ; and, in fine, in using the profession of religion (the true tendency of which, in reality, is only to humble) to inflate and excite the pride of the heart to the most dreadful extent.— But to return to my history.

I soon found that Selina was as fully alive to her own interests as myself ; that she was, in fact, a heroine in her own opinion, but one of the most common sort, a mere novel-reading heroine ; while my selfishness lay considerably deeper, and was not ashamed to assume the garb of religion. Nevertheless I was much amused by Selina, as long as her interests did not interfere with mine. I was pleased to hear her ridicule Lucy ; and, as I found that she made no effort to conceal her foibles from our grandmother, I did not fear so much from her in that respect as I did from Lucy.

Selina continued with us some time ; and we were expecting the return of Henry Selwyn very soon, when my grandmother, who had appeared to be getting better, had a second stroke ; and, about the same time, we received information, that, by the sudden death of a distant relation of Henry Selwyn, a considerable property had devolved to him which had not been expected.

Soon after this information had been communicated to us, the following dialogue took place between Selina and me.

“ Who is this Henry Selwyn ? ” said I to Selina : “ and how comes he to have been brought up by our grandmother ? ”

She informed me that he was the son of a very old friend of the family, and had been left to the guardianship of our grandmother on the death of his parents. “ And now, Caroline, ” she added, “ I have given you an account of his pedigree, it is now your part to describe his person ; for, strange to say, I never saw him. ”

I shall not repeat the description that I gave of him, but shall merely say that I concluded my description with these words : “ It does not matter, I conceive, Seli-

na, what you and I may think of him; for your little silly sister has as completely secured his interest in her favour, as I doubt not she will do in that of our grandmother."

This was said in a confidential tone: in reply to which, Selina answered in the same manner, "Why, you simpleton, don't you know that my grandmother has nothing in her power, unless it may be her gold repeater and the silver spoons, and I am sure Lucy is welcome to them, as far as I am concerned; for she deserves something for the trouble that she takes. At grandpapa's death," she added, with a childish lisp which she often affected, "at grandpapa's death, the property was settled between his two daughters; and you, Caroline, as the representative of one, will have one half, and I and Lucy the other, as the representatives of the other. Grandmamma can't help it, or I am sure I should not have sat so easy, and let Lucy wait upon her and wheedle her as she does. And I think, that if you did not know before what I have now told you, that you are a greater goose than I took you for, to give Lucy so many opportunities as you have done."

"But," said I, "I suppose that Lucy knows the state of affairs."

"I really can't tell," returned Selina, shrugging up her shoulders; "I never enter into conversation with her. I never could. She and I have not half an idea in common: and if I do but hint to her a word about grandmamma's death, she will begin to cry and sob, as you said she did at Mrs. Stephens's rout; and we have no Henry Selwyn here to take her aside and give her sugar-plums."

The entrance of Lucy put an end to our discourse: but I have reason to think that some things which then passed in our minds were not soon effaced from them.

The time, as I before said, was now coming when Henry was to arrive; a circumstance which was equally desired, I imagine, by Lucy, myself, and Selina. Just at this crisis, the fashionable and admired Miss Harriet Stephens began to cultivate my acquaintance, and that of Selina; a circumstance which rather puzzled me at the time, which I afterwards found it no difficult matter to

account for. I began, also, at this juncture, rather to wish to free myself from the close intimacy which Selina had formed with me. "Henry," I thought, "will judge of me by my intimacy with this girl; and he will form a contemptible opinion of me from this circumstance." I therefore endeavoured to encourage her intercourse with Harriet Stephens; and, as these ladies seemed to possess very similar tastes, I soon had the satisfaction of finding myself more at leisure to pursue my own caprices.

It had been only a very few weeks since Henry had left us: yet, when, at the appointed time, which was the beginning of the long vacation, he rode up to the door, and sprang from his horse, I thought that I never before saw him look so well. Whether he was really improved, or whether the few thousands that he had lately received had added fresh graces to his appearance, I know not; but certainly I blushed when he came up to address me; and I looked anxiously to see how he would receive Selina, whom I introduced to him as the sister of Lucy.

During this short moment, I had time enough to wish that he might not be pleased with her. But I had not much leisure to dwell either on my hopes or fears; for, after having made a slight bow, he eagerly inquired after Mrs. Thornton and Lucy, adding that he hoped the former was not so ill as report said.

I now recollected that it was needful for me to look serious: and I answered in as pathetic a tone as I could. "And Lucy," he said, "where is Lucy? where shall I find her?"

And he was going out to seek her, when she ran in, and flew towards him, and seemed almost on the point of throwing her arms round his neck, when, suddenly checking herself, she burst into tears, and said, "O Henry, Henry! thank God you are come again!"

Never shall I forget—I who was such an admirer of picturesque arrangement, particularly when I thought that my own dear self presented the most prominent and interesting figure in the groups—how very lovely this youthful pair appeared, as they sat together on a sofa, her innocent face being bathed in tears, and he endeavouring to console her with all the tenderness of pure af

fection, and strength of reason, and the ardour of true piety. "Grieve not, my Lucy," he said, "for our dear parent, as for one without hope. She will ever live in our memory; and we will, with the divine blessing, modify our lives to her pleasure. She, who made our childhood so peculiarly happy, shall regulate our future measures. In all that we do, we will consult her taste, even though she may be dead. Our house, our furniture, our garden, our trees, and our habitual conduct, shall be arranged and adjusted so as we think she would have wished them to be, had she lived to see them."

More he added, but it was in a low tone, and perhaps not meant for our ears. But I had heard enough, and so had Selina. We looked at each other with amazement. "Our house, our garden, our future life,"—"This language is plain indeed," I thought, "and Lucy receives it not as if it were new and strange to her."

I was truly mortified to think that things were gone so far; and I was at the same time shocked at the wish which now more powerfully than ever excited my mind, of stepping in between this happy and lovely pair, and becoming myself the object of the same pure and ardent affection as Henry professed for Lucy. And thus I argued with myself, and endeavoured to silence the voice of conscience—"Lucy's affection for Henry is but that of a sister for a brother; it is such a regard as might well subsist, even after he had married another. Should he marry me, she shall have a home under our roof; she shall never want a friend. I will be a sister to her; I will guard her inexperience, and protect her simplicity."

In the course of a few minutes, these and many more thoughts of the same kind passed rapidly through my mind; and I should have indulged in them probably much longer, had I not seen the eyes of Selina fixed upon me with a more inquiring and penetrating look than I at one time thought her capable of.

It is no difficult matter for two selfish persons to read each other's thoughts. Whether wise or foolish, they seem to possess a kind of instinct by which they find each other out: and I am sensible, that, at the moment of which I speak, Selina and I became mutually acquainted with some things in each other's minds, which we would



gladly have concealed. She, however, had either less feeling, or had been more inured to the arts of the world, than myself; she, therefore, when it was signified that Mrs. Thornton wished to see Henry, and he had left the room accompanied by Lucy, instantly began to make her comments on what had just before passed between her sister and the young gentleman; she made also several remarks in favour of his appearance, and said, that she thought we should both be great fools if we allowed that little girl to carry off such a prize.

Never was amazement greater than mine on hearing these words: and I could only say, "O Selina! you astonish me."

In reply she burst into a loud laugh, saying, "Why, I think that there is no nonsense which a human being could utter, which you would not believe. Though you pretend not so much cleverness, I do not consider you to be one bit wiser than Lucy herself."

So saying, she changed the subject, and began to talk about the fashions in a new magazine, leaving me more in doubt as to her real sentiments than I had been a minute before.

When Henry Selwyn returned into the parlour, he looked particularly serious. It was tea-time, and the tea-equipage was on the tea-table. He sat on a sofa near me, and opposite Selina. He looked round him, sighed once or twice, and then, trying to rouse himself, "I am sorry," he said, "to see Mrs. Thornton so much changed. It is painful to me, when I come home, not to see her in her usual place,"—directing his eye as he spoke, towards her chair, which was now occupied by Selina.

"Well said, indeed!" cried Selina, laughing as she spoke. "Mr. Selwyn certainly does understand the art complimenting in its last and utmost perfection. Only think, my dear Caroline, think of a young gentleman looking at a lady's chair, and regretting that it is not filled by her grandmother instead of herself."

There are some speeches which appear to be so thoroughly ill-timed and ill-placed, and which are in themselves so particularly ridiculous, that they fail not to throw the most determined gravity off its balance. Such was the remark which I have recited; and its effect was

to produce a laugh from every one present. but the laugh was painful to all but Selina; and to Henry especially so, for he immediately sunk into silence. On which, Selina, wholly unabashed, immediately introduced some other subject, and rattled away in a manner which appeared to be decidedly uncongenial with the feelings of the rest of the party. She, however, persevered, till Henry seemed drawn into something like attention, and so far roused, that he began to make inquiries respecting his old neighbours, and, together with others, he mentioned the Stephenses.

Here was a new subject furnished for the volubility of Selina, who entertained us for more than half an hour with anecdotes about her dear Harriet Stephens; and would probably have given us another half hour's nonsense of the same kind, if she had not just then remembered that she had an appointment with this young lady, and, in consequence, she took her leave for the present.

Being thus left alone with Henry, and finding that Lucy still continued with our grandmother; for the old lady, as her intellect became more feeble, expressed increasing affection for her dear child; I waited for a moment, till he should speak, and give me some intimation of his feeling with respect to the late discourse. "O, Miss Caroline," he said, as he shut the door after Selina, "and that is Lucy's sister? O, how unlike! Well, but she is gone for a short time—I wish it were a longer. And now," he said, "that we have a little breathing-time, pray tell me, when was my dear old friend taken ill? and how does our Lucy bear it? Pray let me have some rational account of these things from you."

While he was speaking, self again began to set me at work to calculate. I found that I gained as much by the forwardness of Selina, in the comparison, as I lost by the unaffected modesty of Lucy. Henry, I perceived, had conceived a dislike to Selina; and, in consequence, was favourably disposed towards me as the better of the two. "And he thus regards me," I thought, "because he deems me more serious and more sympathizing. It is necessary, therefore, for me to cherish in him this his good opinion of me."

All this passed in a moment through my mind; and I,

therefore, lost no time in giving such answers to his inquiries, as I trusted would make on him the best possible impression of my sensibility. You may perhaps ask me whether I was sensible, at the moment, of my acting an hypocritical part. I answer, that I certainly must have been: for I knew that my grandmother's illness disturbed me very little; that I had been very easy respecting either her life or death ever since I knew that I was to be a gainer by the latter; and that I never troubled myself so far as to make a single inquiry about Lucy's health, or the state of her spirits. How then can it be supposed that I was not conscious of my duplicity, when I pretended to sympathize so sincerely in Henry's feelings respecting my grandmother and Lucy?

Henry and I sat conversing for some time. At length, when it became dusk, he expressed a wish that Lucy would come down again: but Lucy not appearing, he asked me to walk with him on the gravel before the house.

It would have been very easy for me to say, "Lucy seldom appears below at meals," and to have offered to take her place, and send her down to him. But I made no such remark, nor any such offer; on the contrary, I accompanied him out of doors, and drew him on to converse, by speaking of the excellences of my grandmother, and of other subjects which I knew would be agreeable to him.

At supper, we met again. Lucy and Selina were present. Selina had much to tell us about her walk. Lucy looked fatigued and pale, and was unable to enter into conversation; and Henry Selwyn seemed oppressed by some painful recollections.

The next morning we all met again at breakfast; after which, Lucy was leaving the room as usual, when Henry, taking her hand as she passed by his chair, said, "And are you going to absent yourself all day? Cannot we walk together, or draw together, or read together, as we used to do? Cannot you spare me a little time?"

She stood still behind his chair, and looked sorrowfully down upon him, while the tears stood in her eyes. "Oh, Henry!" she replied, "it is not as it once was. Our dear grandmother cannot now go out with us; and I cannot

leave her now. But perhaps she may get better; and then we shall be happy again."

She was nearly bursting into tears, but, making a violent effort, she restrained herself, and said, "But Caroline and Selina will walk with you, and draw with you, and go with you to see the school, and the poor people. I am sure that I can answer for them."

"They are very good," replied he, coldly: "but, Lucy might not I come to see your grandmother?"

"Sometimes," she answered, sorrowfully: "but my poor grandmother,"—and she hesitated; and then added, "she cannot enjoy your company now."

"Well," said he, with a sigh, "if it must be so:" and kissing her hand, he let her pass on out of the room.

After she was gone, he sat for a few minutes silent; then, rising up, he lounged to the window, sat awhile in it, picking the jessamine to pieces, and then came back to the table, where I had settled myself to draw, though I believe that I had not previously touched a pencil since I had seen him last.

Henry was remarkably fond of drawing; and, as I expected, the bait took. He presently began to busy himself with the pencils; and, after a short time, he was as fully engaged as I could wish in the work of instructing me.

Thus we contrived to pass away this morning, and also several others. In the evening, we walked. Sometimes Lucy was of the party, but Harriet Stephens and Selina were there much oftener.

At first, when Lucy was not with us, he was restless and impatient, but insensibly he seemed to become more reconciled to her absence; and I was surprised sometimes to see how high his spirits would rise, when stimulated by the flippant pertness of Selina, and the sharper repartees of Harriet Stephens. That both these young ladies had a view to the thousands, more or less, of which he had lately become the possessor, I have little doubt; and that they had also no objection to the individual who possessed these thousands, and that we all three were alike influenced by the desire of eradicating the image of Lucy from his heart, I also am assured; and, in consequence, we played into each other's hands to a certain

degree, in order to bring this desirable end to pass: but if we agreed among each other, it was because each despised the others, and each believed that her own success would be insured, if the little rival could but be set on one side.

With these views, however, which I am persuaded we all cherished, there is no wonder that we united in one effort to amuse Henry; neither will it be a matter of astonishment, that this young man should have been a little drawn aside, when attacked by such united forces; nevertheless, though he was sometimes induced to forget himself, to forget his old habits of devotedness to Lucy, to forget the sufferings of his parental friend, yet, whenever he saw his Lucy again, the tide of his affections seemed to roll back into its former channel; and he not unfrequently caused me to tremble on these occasions, at the daring exploit by which I had attempted to vanquish affections such as these.

In the mean time, while Selina laughed and talked away, at random, and while Harriet Stephens endeavoured to carry all before her by a kind of dashing impudence, I was sensible that I was the only one of the three for whom Henry entertained the slightest respect. When he spoke on religious subjects, I alone could either answer him, or seemed to understand him; and it was to me only that he ever appeared at all inclined to open his mind.

During this time, Lucy calmly yet firmly pursued her duty by the bedside of her grandmother, who, growing more and more attached to her, and gradually becoming less and less under the influence of reason, as her intellects failed through the force of her disease, it induced this little girl to make efforts which showed themselves to be beyond her strength; as her eyes were becoming languid, her cheeks pale, and a kind of fixed sorrow was now settling itself on her face.

The change from a very healthy to a very sickly appearance was so gradual, that it would have been impossible for the most accurate observer to ascertain the precise time of its commencement. It was first observed by Henry, (and he indeed was the first who remarked it to me,) one evening, when he had been walking with Harriet, Selina, and myself. We had been in very high



spirits, there had been much laughing and talking, and this had continued on the part of some till we had actually come under my grandmother's bed-chamber-window, in which Lucy alone was visible, sitting reading by the last glow of the setting-sun.

As soon as she saw us, she came down, and, meeting us in the hall, she accosted us with one of those faint smiles with which persons often meet those to whom they wish to appear more cheerful than they really are. The faintness of her smile seemed to reproach us all with unpardonable levity; and Miss Harriet, in particular, asked how Mrs. Thornton did, expressing a hope that she was no worse.

"No," said Lucy, with a sigh, "no worse, but, still, bad enough: and she walked to the window, and leaned against the frame.

Henry followed her to the window, and spoke to her. I know not exactly what he said, but I distinguished these words: "Are you displeased, Lucy?"

"No, Henry," she answered. "Why should I be displeased?" and she suddenly turned away, and went out of the room, and we saw her no more till the next morning, when she again appeared pale and depressed; and it seemed that her appearance had communicated her uneasiness to Henry.

After breakfast, I was left alone with him; on which occasion he drew his chair near to me, and questioned me closely about what had passed on the evening before. He remarked, that he thought Lucy was much altered, that he feared that he had in some way offended her, that she was not open and cheerful with him, as formerly; in short, that something was wrong, and that he wished I would give him my opinion on the subject.

In reply, I might have said, "Lucy is indeed altered, because she is unhappy, fatigued, or unwell: she needs comfort and support from you, whereas you demand it from her." Yet I made no such answer; but rather insinuated, that I thought her behaviour on the last night extraordinary, and that I supposed that something had offended her; though I qualified this remark by saying that Lucy had in general the sweetest of dispositions, and who was there on earth that was perfect?

Henry seemed more hurt by his own fancies and my insinuations than I expected, a circumstance which proved to me the strength and ardour of his regard, and I almost repented of what I had done: but my self-interest was engaged on my side, and I therefore allowed him to continue in the mistake into which he had fallen.

Were I to point out one single proof of my selfishness more base and cruel than another, this is the one on which I perhaps might thus determine. But what self-deception often ensues, when we attempt to weigh one crime against another, or to say, that one wilful sin is heavier than another?

This action, however, which I have just described, was the first which inflicted upon my mind strong feelings of guilt. I do not remember my ever having been thoroughly out of humour with myself till this moment: my remorse, however, was not sufficient to induce me to undo what I had done; for in this contest my selfishness still prevailed, as, indeed, alas! it did, till my fate on earth was sealed, and the very hope of happiness in this world was for ever excluded.—But no more of this.

Immediately after my conversation with Mr. Selwyn, he had walked out, and, either accidentally or intentionally, he was met by Selina. In a short time, they both returned together; and Selina remarked, in her seemingly careless manner, that she had observed that Mr. Selwyn was very much out of spirits, and that, also, as Lucy had looked very sullen at breakfast, she doubted not that they had had a quarrel.

Henry shook his head, and was silent.

“Lucy is jealous of you, Henry,” said she: “I know she thinks that you have neglected her, and that you like the company of others better than hers.”

“Has she said so?” asked Mr. Selwyn.

“No,” said Selina, “she has not indeed said so much: for, to tell you the truth, she never mentions you at all; she has other objects in view at present.”

“Other objects!” repeated Mr. Selwyn.

“Yes,” replied the other, laughing; “a view to a handsome legacy, over and above what grandpapa left us.”

“’Tis false!” said Henry, in a passion, and reddening to his very forehead. “Lucy mercenary! my simple

lovely, little Lucy forming plans to get money! What unaccountable suggestions!"

A loud laugh, on the part of Selina, followed this exclamation of young Selwyn's; and she immediately remarked, as she once before said to me, "Why, Henry Selwyn, what a simpleton you must be, to suppose that I meant any thing more than a jest! If I had accused Lucy of loving a doll, and coveting a baby-house, I might have expected that you would give me some credit: but for me seriously to call that little simpleton a mercenary legacy-hunter, why, I might as well have compared her with Alexander the Great!"

"I wish, however," returned Henry, thoughtfully, "that you had said nothing about it: the palate revolts at poison as well as the stomach."

"The palate," repeated she, laughing, and tapping him on the back, "is not the only part affected: I am afraid, that in your haste you swallowed a drop or two of the distasteful potion that I presented to you. But, somehow or other," she added, "you and Lucy have certainly fallen out; and I would advise you to make it up as soon as possible, lest Lucy should take a fancy to the smart young physician (mentioning his name) who is so attentive at my grandmother's bedside."

Here was a stroke of art which even I did not expect, and which seemed to come with such a stunning force, that neither Henry nor I could for some minutes look up; during which critical interval Lucy came in, perhaps with some consciousness of having looked too serious at breakfast, and she now appeared desirous to remove all painful impressions by a cheerful expression of countenance.

As I heard her gentle step, I looked up, and never, I think, saw her appear more lovely. The rich bloom of her cheeks had indeed faded to the softest blush, the blue veins of her temples were distinctly seen, and a languid lustre beamed from her gentle eyes. As she approached, Henry also looked up, and, on seeing her, he instantly looked down. I felt a strong inclination to do the same yet anxiety and shame prevented me, and I therefore endeavoured to look on her as on one whom I had in no wise injured. But the effort was violent. Selina was the

only individual of the party who was able to address her, which she did without the least embarrassment. "Well, little lady," she said, (for it was always with a diminutive of some kind that she addressed her sister,) "how have you left your invalid?"

"Not worse," was Lucy's answer, as she at the same time tried to smile: "thank God, she has no pain."

"You look pale, my fairy queen," said Selina. "We must consult the physician about you, as well as for the old lady."

"He can do me no good," Lucy rejoined; at the same time looking anxiously towards Henry.

"O," said Selina, "you would have another story to tell if Mr. Selwyn was not present."

"Sister," replied Lucy, "I never understand above half of what you say: but this I believe that I want no physician; and, that if my heart were at ease, I should soon be as well as ever." So saying, she sat down behind the sofa on which her sister was seated, and, leaning her head against its back, burst into tears.

All ceremony was now over with Henry; all doubts, all suspicions, all piques, seemed in a moment to be washed away by this one fair shower of tears. He rose up in haste as soon as he perceived them, he ran to her, entreated her forgiveness for his coldness, assured her that she was now more dear to him than ever, and, in my presence and in that of her sister, he made a more direct and unequivocal avowal of his regard for her than he had ever before done.

She said but little to him in reply; but begged that he would not be angry with her again, and assured him that she would now be once more as happy as it was possible for her to be while her grandmamma was in a state of suffering.

Thus I beheld all my designing schemes frustrated at once, and followed by severe mortification; with which my punishment began.

The next day after this occurrence had taken place, a letter arrived from a remote part of the kingdom, requiring the presence of Mr. Selwyn, on some account which I cannot well recollect, but I think it was to attend the last illness of his only remaining relation. As Henry ex

pected to be back in about ten days or a fortnight, and as he was on such affectionate terms with his Lucy, every cloud being removed, he took leave of her with much composure, yet with a tenderness which seemed to say, "We are intended for each other, we must never more be at variance."

I witnessed this parting scene, and my own selfish feelings were again engaged in contest in my mind with justice and humanity. At this time, however, I have reason to think that there was some brighter light in my soul than I had formerly perceived; for I felt that this selfishness was extremely wrong, and that I ought not to indulge it; at the same time I could not bear to relinquish my heroic views and feelings of self-love: in consequence of which, I began to represent my case to my own mind as something very extraordinary and out of the common way. I painted myself, in my own imagination, as a second *Perpetua* or *Blandina*; as one called upon by religion to make the sacrifice of all that was dear to me on earth, and to suffer incredible trials.

By this time, having learned that it was a frequent custom with pious persons to write journals and memorandums of themselves, (a practice by no means without its use to characters whose minds are at all alive to a sense of their real state, but dangerous to those in whom the power of selfish feelings is not shaken,) I began to write such a memento myself; and I filled many pages with pathetic statements of my own case, mingled with such ready-made religious expressions and pious phrases as I had acquired by reading and conversation.

And now I began to regret that I had not one young friend to whom I could open my heart, expatiate on my sufferings and trials, and on whom I could call to pray for me; no one to whom I could state how much I was to be pitied because my cousins were handsomer than myself, or because Henry Selwyn loved his little adopted sister better than me, whom he could deem but an acquaintance of a day. Not that in a correspondence, real instead of thus ideal, I should have stated my case in a manner thus plain and straight-forward; for heroines such as I then was have a natural dislike to plain and simple statements of matters of fact.



This habit of self-delusion cannot be wondered at in persons who are in an unchanged and unregenerate state: but it is deeply to be lamented, that there should be so much want of Christian simplicity in professing characters, so much looking away from God, and so much criminal self-solicitude.—But to proceed with my story.

Having no bosom friend, no Delia or Araminta, to whom I dared to open my heart either by conversation or by letter, I was fain to content myself with writing a journal; of which I could give my reader many curious specimens, did not the mixture that it contains of sentiments apparently religious, and of feelings so selfish, render it difficult to select a single genuine passage which might not appear profane.

Henry Selwyn had not left us longer than a week, and we were looking forward to his coming back, when a letter arrived from him to Lucy, stating that he had found his relative in such a condition, that he feared that he should not be able to return so soon as he had previously expected.

Immediately after the receipt of this letter, we were one night suddenly alarmed, about midnight, by violent shrieks, which proceeded from our grandmother's room. I awoke, as well as the rest of the family, in excessive terror, and, dressing myself in haste, flew to the chamber, and found that the shrieks had been uttered by the maid, who slept in a closet within the room, and who had been awakened, as well as Lucy, by a heavy noise on the floor. They had instantly both jumped up, and found the old lady lying by the grate, apparently lifeless; and as, in falling, she had come in contact with the bars, her clothes were on fire, and she was considerably burnt.

By the time I entered the room, the flaming night clothes had been put out, and the old lady was lifted into bed, where she was gasping between life and death; while Lucy, as pale as ashes, and looking like death itself, was supporting her pillow, being herself upon the bed.

How to account for this accident, we knew not: as the old lady had never before been known to get out of bed during her illness without assistance: but we afterwards had reason to conclude that the occasion of her fall was a third stroke.

There was a medical man in the village, who arrived a few minutes, and who employed such means as relieved the old lady as far as she could be relieved. But she never afterwards appeared to be thoroughly sensible, and in fact never noticed any one but Lucy.

A considerable space of time, however, elapsed before all that was to be done for my grandmother, by the surgeon, was accomplished: during which time Lucy, as I have already described her, sat supporting her on the bed, being lightly attired, and without a cap, her head-dress having fallen off in her efforts to raise her grandmother from the hearth. Her lovely figure is still present before my mind, as she gazed earnestly on the face of the surgeon when he was examining the burn: her brown hair hanging in natural ringlets about her neck, and her dimpled features still retaining that sweet infantine expression which even sorrow could not destroy.

During this period the window was kept open, in order to assist the laboured breathing of the old lady: and I remember seeing the flame of the candle flaring in the night air, and the ringlets gently agitated on Lucy's neck. All the servants were, however, engaged in different ways waiting on the surgeon. Every one was busily occupied but Selina and myself: what Selina was doing, I do not remember; I recollect, however, hearing her exclamations, and frequent cries of "Well! I am sure I had no idea of all this; how strange! who could have thought of it! bless me, what could the old lady have been doing? dear me! I am glad that I was not the first to find her!" I can well remember, too, what was passing in *my* mind at that awful period: and I have since, from the recollection of that and other equally trying circumstances of my life, been more impressed with a sense of the dreadful depravity of my nature, than from the review of all other periods of my existence.

Instead of my being hurried away from selfish feelings, by the horrors of the scene, I can recollect, that, after the very first shock was over, all my attention was, as it were, centred in self. I envied Lucy's picturesque appearance at the pillow of her grandmother; I envied her lovely look, her apparent entire forgetfulness of self, the

charming expression of her countenance, and the un-  
studied grace of the drapery with which she was covered.  
From her my thoughts wandered to the idea of Henry  
Selwyn : and presently I became so absorbed in a flow  
of selfish feelings, that I was in fact the last person in the  
room to remark, that the least danger to any one present  
could be apprehended from exposure to the night air.

The surgeon was the first person who was aware of  
this danger, and he therefore ordered that the windows  
should be shut, and that precautions should be taken to  
prevent colds." He also observed Lucy's paleness, felt  
her pulse, bled her, and insisted on her immediately going  
to bed.

The next morning, however, when he visited the fami-  
ly, he was alarmed at her appearance, expressed a dread  
that she was more seriously injured by the alarm, and the  
exertions which she had made, than he first apprehended,  
and hinted, that he believed a few weeks would decide  
the fate of my grandmother.

It now certainly behoved me, with this accumulation  
of afflictions, to fancy myself unhappy, though I certainly  
was not so ; because I can well recollect many circum-  
stances and passing thoughts, which prove upon re-  
flection, that my mind was then quite as easy as it had  
ever been during the most happy periods of my life. I  
remember my considering what mourning I should be  
obliged to wear in case of my grandmother's death, think-  
ing, with some regret, that I should not look so well in  
sable as my cousins, for my complexion was not so fair,  
and my hair was much darker. Nevertheless, though I  
had leisure for this and many other reflections of the  
same tendency, I thought that I could not, of course,  
with propriety, do otherwise than seem very sad when-  
ever the surgeon and physician made their appearance  
and indeed I appeared to be so much affected when  
informed that they considered Lucy very ill, that they,  
on departing, sent Mrs. Stephens to us, who from that  
time was our constant visiter, and who served very much  
to keep up our spirits, by that parading and bustling  
manner for which she was far famed, and which she  
could exercise to equal advantage in regulating the cere-  
monies of a wedding and the solemnities of a funeral.

But inasmuch as the histories of egotism are tales which have no end, I shall endeavour to put a constraint upon my strong natural propensity to speak of self, and will endeavour to proceed in my tale with accelerated speed.

I could fill volumes with narrating the events only of the few days which immediately followed the accident of my grandmother, that I have related above. But I shall pass over this period, so bitter on reflection, as hastily as possible. Suffice it to say, that our lovely Lucy, from that awful night, never more looked up. Towards the evening of the next day, she was taken with a vomiting of blood, owing to the breaking of a blood-vessel; and, almost before we her giddy relations had begun to apprehend her danger, this inestimable young creature expired in the arms of Mrs. Stephens.

She died, as she had lived, perfectly serene and happy, seemingly without a doubt or a fear lest she should not find perfect peace in the bosom of her Saviour: and after her death, her beautiful remains presented an image of sleep, so lovely, so tranquil, so unchanged from what she had been in life, that, while I looked upon her, *self itself* seemed for a moment to die within me; and, for the first time in my life, I was wholly liberated from the slavery of self-solicitude.

This state of mind, however, did not long continue, as I shall have reason to point out in the sequel. Nevertheless, I cannot but believe that my first feelings on the occasion of the loss of Lucy were those of genuine sorrow.

It was no small aggravation of the grief of those individuals of the family who had any feeling, to hear the calls of the poor old lady for her child, her Lucy.

After her third fit, and sad accident, my grandmother, as I before said, never recovered her senses, and she seemed totally to have forgotten every one but Lucy. But this beloved name was ever on her lips; and she appeared to be fully aware of her absence, and lamented it in a manner the most distressing that can be imagined. "Lucy, my beloved," she used to say, "where are you? Lucy, come back to me! child of my heart, whither art thou gone?" And then the poor old lady would burst into tears, and weep till confusion and forgetfulness came to her relief

At this time, a second letter was received from Henry Selwyn, full of expressions of the utmost tenderness to Lucy, and containing the information that his relative was better, and that he was about to commence a little tour with him for the establishment of his strength. The letter, however, concluded with an expression of the hope that he should return in a very few weeks, and see his Lucy blooming again like the Rose of Sharon.

This letter arrived on the day following that of the death of the sweet little girl. And shall I confess that this was the first circumstance after that event, that awakened my selfish feelings?

The letter contained not even a remembrance to me; not the slightest mention of my name; proving, too plainly, that the giddy and boyish writer had not a thought respecting me when I was out of his sight. Such were my mortified feelings on this occasion, that I can well remember thus apostrophizing the remains of my cousin: "O, happy Lucy! What can be more blessed than a course like yours? How loved were you during your short life! and who can say how regretted in death?" Here, bursting into tears, I experienced the full force of that envious spirit which almost grudges a peaceful and honourable grave to its hated object.

I showed the letter to Mrs. Stephens, who evinced far more tender feelings on reading it than I had done, and who insisted on laying it upon the bosom of her for whom it had been intended; at the same time cutting off a ringlet from the head of the fair corpse to present to him whose regard for her had been evinced, as I then found, from his earliest youth.

Mrs. Stephens wrote instantly to Henry, to inform him of the sad event, and to urge his immediate return, in order that he might once more behold his Lucy before she was consigned to the cold earth.

My cousin's father was, as I before said, on the Continent, and could not possibly return in time for the funeral. It was therefore settled that Mrs. Stephens should take upon her the management of every thing; and the good lady was, I believe, not sorry to find some employment by which she might partly get rid of that heaviness of heart by which, to do her justice, she had appeared to



be oppressed ever since she had ceased to hope for the life of the beloved Lucy—beloved, indeed, by all those whose minds were not poisoned by envy.

In consequence of her being thus empowered to act, Mrs. Stephens failed not presently to excite such a bustle of preparation in the house, as would have suited a much gayer occasion. Every room was speedily filled with milliners, dress-makers, and venders of sables of all kinds. She summoned her daughters for consultation; she arranged and re-arranged plans for the ceremony; and at length she determined that Lucy's remains should be followed to the grave by a number of young ladies, arrayed in white, and clothed with hoods of the same. She determined, also, to make the funeral as public as possible; and therefore invited many of the neighbouring gentlemen. She also required (that which need not have been asked) the attendance of all the poor people whom Lucy had loved; and she also sent for the little orphan whom Lucy had put to school, with the intention of having her carried in the procession.

It may be asked, what effect all this bustle had on my mind, and on that of Selina. With respect to Selina, she wept a little once or twice during the first few days of our loss; but afterwards she settled into a kind of fixed demureness, her mouth being drawn up, her eyelids dropped, and her motions particularly slow and solemn, by which she appeared to be quite as unhappy as was necessary to those who were not very acute observers, but by which she never succeeded in deceiving me, who was more constantly with her, as appeared from a conversation that we fell into on a certain occasion, which I, however, have forgotten. This conversation began in the following manner:—"Hoods!" said Selina, "bless me, what frights we shall look in hoods!"

"Frights!" I replied, "why?"

"All the gentlemen of the neighbourhood are to be present too: I shall be ashamed to look about me."

"Look about you!" I said, "you must not look about you."

"O," replied she, "O, because of being unhappy: I must look down; yes, I know. But that won't hinder people from looking at me."

"How provoking it is, I thought, that this girl should make all these foolish speeches, and, as it were, thus embody the very ideas which I have been indulging ever since the funeral procession has been talked of! I answered, however, though I was angry, "Who will be thinking of you, Selina, on such an occasion as this?"

"O, I don't know," she answered; "every body. You and I shall be first, you know; and people must see us."

"Ah!" said I, (and burst into tears,) "if either you or I had died, and it had been Lucy who was to walk at our funeral, such thoughts as those which you have now expressed would never have entered into her head;" and then renewing my tears, with an emotion of real, not affected feeling, I exclaimed, "O, Lucy! Lucy! you were too good for us! you were not fit for such company as ours! No, no, you are gone to those to whom you really belonged!"

A tear started in Selina's eye, and she said, "Come, Caroline, don't cry: Lucy is happy, and then, you know, we shall be the gainers."

"The gainers!" I said: "what do you mean?"

"O," she answered, "I mean with respect to money. You know, when one's in grief, one ought to think of every thing that may afford comfort."

"A person," I replied, "cannot be in very intense grief who can think of such things as that."

"La! and why not?" she answered.

"Because grief," I said, "is an absorbing passion; and when sincere, it occupies every faculty."

"But I am sure," replied she, "I am truly sorry for my dear little sister, and would give all that I have in the world to restore her to life. But it cannot be, you know, and what's the use of fretting?"

So saying, she walked into the next room, where the dress-makers were engaged, and thus she left me to this sad reflection—that there was but little difference between myself and Selina; that we both thought and felt the same, but that she had not sense to conceal her views: and, at that moment, what would I not have given for a better and purer state of feelings! I was ready, with St. Paul, to cry out, *For I know that in me (that is, in my flesh) dwelleth no good thing: for to will is present*

*with me; but how to perform that which is good I find not. For the good that I would, I do not: but the evil which I would not, that I do.* (Rom. vii. 18, 19.) These good and humbling thoughts, however, soon left me, and I again became the prey of vanity and selfishness.

In proportion as the day for Lucy's funeral drew nearer, the ferment in the house became greater. I have seen things of this kind managed since, but I never could thoroughly understand how Mrs. Stephens contrived to excite the bustle which she did on this occasion. It was, however, her way: and I have often thought, that she had recourse to such means, to deaden her sensibilities. We deferred the closing of the coffin to the last moment, in hopes that Henry Selwyn would arrive in time to take the final look at his beloved Lucy. But it was not to be he who had beheld her in the verdure and bloom of her beauty, was not to see her in her faded and withered state. The impression that was to remain, was to be left in all possible perfection. No very great change, however, had taken place in her appearance, when I looked her for the last time, excepting that her whole countenance had then assumed an air of sadness, which it had not before presented until within the last twelve hours—a sadness which foreran that total dissolution of her earthly frame that was speedily to take place, and which formed a very melancholy contrast with the charming serenity which, while she was alive, had beamed over her lovely countenance.

The morning of the funeral arrived; and to my utter amazement, from the dawn of day, the house was surrounded by multitudes of poor people, old and young, decently dressed, and showing every symptom of sincere sorrow. The house, also, soon was filled with persons of higher rank, all anxious to show their respect to the memory of this lovely young creature.

I was much affected by the report of what was said in favour of Lucy, and by the tears that were shed on her account; neither did self seem again to take possession of me, till I was dressed in my funeral garments, and perceived that I presented a figure at once graceful and interesting. And I can now well remember, that, when informed that the moment was arrived at which the funeral

procession was to commence, I gave one last look at myself in a large mirror, and then descended into the dining-room, where, having taken the arm of my cousin Selina, I took my place in the procession, and advanced through an avenue of people, who opened a way on the right and left to admit us to pass onward to the church, which was not half a quarter of a mile from the house.

I can recollect, however, but little of this scene. My confusion, awe, and agitation being increased by the heterogeneous feelings of vanity, and the strange idea which I was continually indulging, that every one was looking at me, and that many were admiring me.

The service, however, was nearly concluded, and the moment at hand when all that remained on earth of the flower and pride of our family was to be lowered down into the vault within the church, in which our grandfather was buried, when suddenly some kind of disturbance seemed to arise among the crowd, in the porch at the further end of the church, and the throng immediately opened to the right and left, to allow some one to pass. The minister made a pause; and all eyes were turned in that direction from which the sound proceeded. I looked up, and saw Henry Selwyn! He was dressed as for a journey, yet without his hat, his hair was disordered, his face flushed as if violently heated, and he came forward with a determination evident in his countenance, which seemed to say, "I will approach; no one has a right to prevent me." He came close up to the bier, and, as he passed, brushed so near me, that I was obliged to give way. When he had reached the coffin, he stood still, and looked for a moment earnestly upon it, and then, with a motion as unexpected as his appearance had been a minute before, he stooped, as I thought, to kiss the name engraved upon the lid; and while so doing, he fell quite senseless upon the chest which contained the mortal remains of his Lucy.

What immediately followed, I cannot say, nor how I conducted myself on this occasion; for I remember nothing more than the fact of confused and hurried scenes of wo succeeding each other, till I found myself in a cottage near the church, occupied by a person who had been an old servant of the family, and where were as-

sembled also several of the young ladies who had attended the funeral, together with Mrs. Stephens, Henry Selwyn, and the surgeon. In the midst of this group, I remember observing the little orphan that had been Lucy's protegee: this poor little baby was dressed in black, and, being in the arms of the woman of the house, it was sensible of no inconvenience, and knew no sorrow.

It appeared that Henry had been for some time insensible; but having been bled, he was then recovering, though his countenance still expressed a degree of grief and horror which seemed to forbid all approach to him, and all attempts to yield him comfort. He, at length, however, recollected us all, bowed to us separately, and, rising, hastily, kissed the infant in the arms of the poor woman, said something about its never wanting a friend, and walked out of the house, followed by the surgeon. A few minutes afterwards, we saw him riding by the church-yard rails; and the surgeon returned to the cottage, bearing Mr. Selwyn's compliments to all present, and apologizing for his so hastily leaving a place with which he found so many bitter recollections associated.

It was with the greatest difficulty that I heard these messages with composure: it was terrible to me, thus, at this moment, to be made sensible of the defeat of those hopes which I had fondly cherished, that I should soon be able to console Henry for the loss of his Lucy. But here was, at once, such a death-blow to all my hopes of this kind, as I was not prepared to receive; and it was, in consequence, exceedingly difficult for me to conceal my anguish. I did, however, succeed; and I contrived to make all about me believe that every tear that I shed was for Lucy, and for Lucy only.

Events now followed each other with a bewildering rapidity. My grandmother's death succeeded her beloved Lucy's within a fortnight. Immediately after which, Selina's father arrived, and took her to London, where, being now in possession of a large fortune, she was soon married. About the same time, I heard of the death of my own father, by which circumstance I now found myself without a single home; and as I did not choose to accept my uncle's proposal of taking me to town with his daughter I therefore followed the advice of Mrs. Ste



phens, and went to reside with two elderly and respectable ladies living near Reading.

And now, my gentle reader, before I enter upon this which I may denominate the third stage of my life, I think it right to pause, and give you some account of the state of my mind, as far as I understand it, after the various severe and complicated distresses which I have described.

I can readily feel, and acknowledge, that it was not a right state. When first I came to my grandmother's, I might truly have been said to have no religion—perhaps a few notions in my head, but no grace in my heart. My grandmother's conversation, during the short time that I enjoyed it, together with the lovely example of Lucy, had, however, tended greatly to enlarge my ideas on this subject, and, with the divine blessing, to open my mind a little to the view of my own natural depravity. But this knowledge was still very incomplete, and I was altogether in darkness (even after my afflictions) on the subject of that glorious work which the Saviour had performed for man, and on man's utter inability, apart from divine influence, to do any thing for himself. I was, in consequence, still strong in the idea of my own self-sufficiency, and I was destitute of humility: I could not bear to see any one either preferred before me, or in the enjoyment of any privilege which I did not myself possess.

The horrors which I had witnessed, and the great mortality that I had seen in my own family, had, however, considerably alarmed me, by bringing death so nearly and repeatedly before me; and, like one who is in dread of a halter, I began to think it was time for me to set about something in earnest, in order to secure to myself the favour of Heaven.

These were the views and feelings that I entertained when I arrived at my new abode, of which I am now about to give the description.

Branching off from the highroad, at some little distance from the town of Reading, on the Wiltshire side, is a lane fenced on each side by a quickhedge, always kept neatly trimmed. This lane is so little frequented by any but foot passengers, that it is as green and soft under the feet as the most verdant lawn. At the distance of nearly half a mile

from the main road, this lane opens into a small common, where are a few thatched cottages, with their gardens of pinks and tulips, a small pool or pond in which geese delight to dabble, and a few black-nosed sheep which share the common with the geese.

Just in that part of the lane where it almost imperceptibly begins gradually to diverge till it forms part of the common, stood the neat, well-built, brick house occupied by the two Misses Grimshaw, my landladies.

These ladies were sisters, had always lived single, possessed the house in which they resided, and also some money; but yet they were not above adding a little to their income by receiving into their family a young lady of respectable name and fortune, and devoting to her their two best rooms.

I have before told you, that I have always had an inclination to fancy groups and figures for pictures why should I not, therefore, give you a sketch of my new abode? It was a high house, built principally of brick, and decorated with ornaments of stone. In the centre of the front was the hall door; and on each side there was a parlour, with Venetian windows. In the front was a straight walk, together with several stiff parterres; and on one side, running parallel with the lane, was a long inclosure of a garden, through the centre of which there ran a green walk, terminated by an arbour.

To this scene I was introduced by Mrs. Stephens; and as my spirits were much depressed when I came into this family, I found the quiet attentions of the old ladies very consolatory to me, and their continual old-fashioned tittle tattle was not altogether unentertaining.

These good old ladies were what I conclude more common characters fifty years ago than they are now. They entertained numerous old-fashioned ideas of propriety and impropriety, for which they could give no other reason whatever, than that some things were proper because they were proper, and that other things were neither to be done or thought of because they were improper. And if I attempted to argue with them about any of these prohibited points, which I sometimes did from mere caprice, the elder sister in one key and the younger in another, would generally take upon them-

selves to bring me to reason with arguments much to this effect: "Why, my dear, such a thing never was heard of; it stands to reason; it could not be; we are astonished how a young lady of your fortune and condition should ever think of such a thing."

Now, inasmuch as these good ladies could give no better account of the hope that was in them, (for they seemed very pious as far as they knew,) than for their having a tansy pudding at Easter, or for leaving off their flannel caps on the night of Good Friday, it is not to be supposed that I acquired much knowledge of divine things from them. I was not, however, unhappy with them; and, perhaps, the retired and inglorious situation which I occupied in this family might have been judged particularly suited, humanly speaking, to repress the envious and selfish feelings of my mind. But it did not, however, in this respect, prove so useful to me as might have been expected: for, as I was known to have a large fortune, as I was fashionable, and perhaps rather pleasing in my appearance, the old ladies became, in some degree, proud of having me for their inmate, and I was, in consequence, not a little praised and fondled by them; so that if I had but a finger-ache, I was put to bed, and treated with panada and treacle posset.

During the first six months of my residence with the Misses Grimshaw, I cultivated no acquaintance abroad, it being in the winter season, and my mind being also much depressed at the strange turn which had taken place in the affairs of my own family; but at the end of that period I began to indulge a close attachment to a Miss Letitia Arkwright, a young lady who came sometimes from Reading to visit my landladies.

This young person possessed nothing which could give umbrage to my envious spirit; none of the composure, simplicity, or angelic softness of the lovely Lucy, nor even the delicate beauty of Selina: on the contrary, her features were ordinary, her complexion was sallow, and her person coarse. But she was agreeable in conversation, insinuating and persuasive in her manners, and a high professor of religion. She was, in fact, the first person with whom I had ever associated who understood the common modes of speech and the ordinary topics of con

versation generally current throughout the modern religious circles.

This young lady had associated with some of the characters the most eminent for piety in Reading and London; she was conversant with the names and also with the various gifts and endowments of the several principal preachers in England; she could define, with the nicest accuracy, the most minute differences of opinion between every sect and denomination of Christians in the British islands; she spoke familiarly of the conversion of her neighbours, and she pronounced without hesitation on the spiritual state of every person with whom she was acquainted. She used a vast variety of phrases, which at first seemed quaint to me, but with which I gradually became familiar, and which she always employed when speaking on religious subjects; and she appeared to think very little of the piety of those who did not use precisely the same modes of speaking as herself. She was represented by many in Reading as a pattern of activity in doing good: she was said to have a peculiar facility in talking to the poor relative to the state of their souls; and it was, moreover, hinted concerning her, that she had converted many persons from the error of their ways.

Such was Miss Letitia Arkwright, the lady whom I chose for my intimate friend, and through whose means it was generally supposed that I, also, had become converted.

The good old ladies with whom I resided had a very high opinion of this Miss Arkwright, who was a distant relation of theirs: and they, in consequence, encouraged our intimacy, and took pleasure in seeing it grow, although they did not entirely agree with their cousin in all her views and feelings with respect to religion; for, as I have already stated, these good ladies shrunk with horror from the fancied contagion of any innovations, and they would, in consequence, had they been born at Ephesus in the time of the apostles, have continued to worship the goddess Diana, even in spite of St. Paul and Barnabas themselves.

But, be this as it may, these good ladies readily encouraged our intimacy, and moreover allowed their footboy, who went every day to Reading, to carry our notes back

wards and forwards: for, when Miss Arkwright had, as she persuaded herself, converted me to her own way of thinking in reference to religious matters, or, as I might more properly say, when she had taught me to use her language, she proceeded to perfect her work by a constant interchange of billets in which she communicated to me all her feelings and trials, and encouraged me, in return, to disclose all mine to her.

Where religion is of the right sort, it invariably produces two effects: the one is humility; and the other, composure, or peace of mind. It is said in Scripture, that the wicked are like the troubled sea, which continually casts up mire and dirt, being incapable of rest. Accordingly, when the work of true conversion has taken place, a peculiar peace is diffused throughout the soul; and activity itself becomes a firm and unruffled quality of the mind, being divested of that restlessness with which it is always accompanied when it characterizes an unregenerate individual. But the change which I had undergone by my associating with Miss Arkwright, was so far from rendering me more humble and more composed, that, day after day, in proportion as I lost the impression of my late sorrows, I grew more and more restless, and increasingly anxious to become an object of some importance in the estimation of my fellow-creatures.

I had no one to introduce me into the fashionable world, and I felt, in fact, some kind of superstitious dread of earthly gaieties; but I was, nevertheless, as anxious to show myself off in the front row of a public chapel, or in a Sunday-school procession, as any young beauty had ever been to display herself at a birth-night ball.

Such being my feelings, it will not be wondered at, if I inform the reader of these pages, that, before my friendship with my amiable Letitia was three months old, I joined her in all her excursions, I accompanied her from chapel to chapel in quest of new preachers, I ran with her from one sick chamber to another, I *chaproned* her Sunday-school children in and out of church, I helped her to plait straw for their bonnets, and to teach her pupils to sing in tune. I also assisted in stoning raisins for Christmas puddings to regale the children, together with sundry other matters of the same consequence, in which



I not only rendered some service to the rising generation, but also obtained for myself many pretty compliments, and gratified my love of the picturesque : for I could not doubt that my elegant person, grouped with the surrounding unmeaning figures of the infant poor, whether observed in the Sunday-school by the young minister, or in the gallery of the chapel by the whole congregation, afforded an object both lovely in itself, and highly interesting in the abstract, as it presented a proof of the power of religion in enabling youth and beauty to triumph over the world, and trample its vanities beneath their feet.

In the midst of these illusions, it certainly did occur to me to ask myself, once or twice, whether I and my friend were really doing any great good with all this parade and bustle ; and I could not help considering whether all this running from house to house, this collecting of children merely to dress and undress them, and parade them through the streets, could be counted, after all, much better than mere eye-service. But these gleams of clear light were few and very transient, and they seldom had power to disperse, for more than a moment at a time, the deep shades of selfishness which clouded and darkened my whole soul.

On subsequent reflection, I have thought that it sometimes pleases the Almighty to make use of instruments, in themselves worthless, for the advancement of his kingdom, in the same manner as he employed the ravens in feeding the prophet in the wilderness ; and those who are really anxious for the glory of God, are ready, with St. Paul, to rejoice that Christ is preached, whether it be of strife or otherwise. But the question here is this—whether, in such parading scenes as those that we have just noticed, there is aught of Christ to be found, and whether they do not too often tend to retard rather than to advance the cause of genuine religion.—But to proceed.

I know not what the more reflecting portion of the good people of Reading might have thought of me during the few years that I was with them, but of this I am assured, that, among a certain set, my praises ran high, and I was held forth as a pattern of all that was good by many excellent parents, who, at the same time, could they

have had their wishes, and have seen their daughters like me, would perhaps have wished ten times more earnestly again to see them what they were before.

Several years thus passed away, during which time I became a kind of idol among a certain circle of old women, and well-meaning but ignorant persons, in the middle classes, who constituted the greater part of our religious society; and, from my constantly hearing religious matters discussed, and my attending the ministry of various preachers, some good, some indifferent, but all expressing themselves in the same style of language, and using similar phrases, I insensibly acquired a good deal of head-knowledge of a certain kind: neither did I want the art of displaying this knowledge with some skill, and with no small credit to myself, among my own sex. But, as is common to those who associate only with one description of persons, and who have not the opportunity of seeing and conversing with others, I became very dogmatical, and deemed every one as reprobate who did not employ precisely our own peculiar modes of speech, and embrace our opinions, on the minor as well as on the essential points of religion.

Having thus described my state of mind, I leave it to any reader acquainted with Christian experience to judge whether I grew in grace while residing with my good friends the Misses Grimshaw, or whether I was not, upon the whole, in a worse state, after I had been with them some time, than when I first came to their house. As I, however, before said, I procured to myself a very good name, which, after a while, stood me in stead, in the manner which I shall explain.

I had been in England about six years, more than four of which I had spent in the neighbourhood of Reading, when, one day, as I was walking along one of the least frequented streets of that town, I saw a gentleman at a distance whose appearance struck me so much, that I trembled from head to foot. He approached, and I found that I was not mistaken in my first surmise. This person was no other than Henry Selwyn, dressed in a clerical habit, and but little altered from what I had once known him, excepting that he had become taller, and that somewhat of an air of seriousness, if not of sorrow,

appeared to characterize his entire person and demeanour. He had, as I afterwards found, just been inducted into a large living in one of the western counties of England, and he was then come to Reading to settle some business which could not be transacted in his absence.

It seems, that he had imagined I was returned to the West Indies, as he had not heard of my father's death; and he was quite as much surprised to see me, as I was delighted to meet with him.

I might now fill a volume with portraying the immediate effects of this meeting, and in giving a description of the various scenes which followed it; but egotism the most barefaced would shrink from a task like this. The remembrance of past happiness is always bitter, but there are some circumstances on the recollection of which it is agony to dwell. Amidst all my vanity and selfishness, I was really attached to Henry Selwyn, and I cannot remember the time when I ever sincerely regarded another of his sex. My reader will not, therefore, wonder to find me confess, that, after many meetings with Henry in the Misses Grimshaw's parlour, after having spent many hours in hearing him talk of Lucy, I was by no means sorry to discover symptoms of a transfer of his affections from her from whom he was separated by death, to one who still lived, and who possibly might reconcile him to life.

But, to make my story short, after a suitable time employed in courtship, we were married. I handsomely took leave of the good old ladies, my hostesses; and, taking Letitia, who had been my bridesmaid, with me, we proceeded with my dear husband to the home that was in waiting for us.

We travelled slowly, and arrived, on the evening of the second day, at a spacious and venerable-looking parsonage-house, situated in the centre of a considerable market-town, where my husband would have been regarded as a sort of bishop, had there not been, unfortunately, another parish in the town, and, consequently, another rector, another rectory, and another church. At that time, however, I was too happy, far too happy, to think of matters of this kind, although afterwards they proved a source of great trouble to me. Indeed, I had then of late been so

forced out of my ordinary mode of speaking and thinking by the strong influence of other feelings, that I had forgotten, for a time, all the religion, whether real or pretended, which, as it were, belonged to myself, and I had no other thought beyond my desire to speak and act just as my Henry wished. In this state I must, therefore, have appeared to him quite different from what I really was; and that not so much from my having any plan to deceive him, as from the strength of my regard for him, which absorbed, for the time, all other considerations, and left me no higher gratification than that of making myself agreeable to the object of my attachment.

Thus the harshness and selfishness of my nature, my vanity, my love of display, my natural coldness and deadness of heart, my pride and ambition, were for a time concealed from him whom it most behoved to know them.

At the close of the second day after our marriage, we reached our habitation, which was a noble old parsonage-house, standing in a garden, and opening towards the street. The garden at the back of the house was beautifully adorned with forest trees, and laid out in parterres of flowers, in such a manner, that, although in the centre of a large town, we beheld immediately around us nothing but what was elegant and agreeable, and we were regaled with the chirpings of the linnet and the robin, while our near neighbours heard nothing but the din and buzz of the crowded city. Besides two large and handsome sitting-rooms, the parsonage-house contained a good study, with a bow-window, which opened towards the most lovely, retired, and well-arranged part of the garden.

After having shown me the other parts of the house, which were all, in their way, complete and admirable, my beloved husband led me into his study; and there, placing me upon a sofa near the open window, (for it was summer-time,) "My beloved Caroline," he said, "this is my sanctum sanctorum: I admit no company here; but to you it is at all times accessible."

We then entered into conversation; and Mr. Selwyn disclosed to me at that time many of those private feelings respecting his views of religion and the state of his

own heart, which proved how deeply he was interested in the cause of his God.

We had continued for some time conversing in this happy way, waiting the summons to a late dinner which we had ordered on our arrival, when Mr. Selwyn was called out on some business, and I arose, at the same time, to examine the books which were ranged in large cases around the room, when I perceived, hanging on one side of a book-case, and in a remarkably good light, a small painting set in a deep black frame. I approached it, little suspecting, however, what it was, and found, with astonishment, that it presented a most exact representation of Lucy, at full length, though of a very small size. The little figure was dressed in a white frock, such as Lucy had commonly worn; while her fair hair appeared hanging in charming ringlets round her face, and upon her polished neck. A beautiful landscape, rich with woods and water-falls, filled up the back-ground of the scene: and in the front, at the feet of the little figure, lay a beautiful fawn, whose meek and tender eyes were raised up to its gentle companion, only more love'y and interesting than itself.

My first emotions, on seeing this representation of her who was the prototype, in my mind, of all that was admirable in her sex, and whose early death had, as it were, impressed an indelible seal upon her excellences, was a burst of tears, unaffected, sincere, and affectionate tears. But self was not thus to be put off: this discovery of Lucy's picture in the sanctum sanctorum of my husband was not so easily to be passed by; it was not natural to me habitually thus to feel for others, without reference to myself; this had never been my practice; and now was not the time when it was probable I should begin so to do, just in the acme of my bridal glory—at the moment of my finding myself at the summit of my wishes. Prosperity is not favourable to the improvement of a selfish character: not that I mean to say, that adversity can effectually amend it; on the contrary, distress frequently has a tendency to harden it. No; there is nothing short of divine power which can soften the heart of stone into the relentings of a heart of flesh.—But to proceed.

My first emotion, as I before said, on seeing my late



lovely cousin's picture in my husband's study, was of an amiable and salutary character; but other thoughts speedily arose in my mind. "And is it thus," I said to myself, "that he who pretends to be entirely devoted to me, reserves in his heart an idol, to which his secret devotions are paid? O Lucy!" I added, aloud, "happy, happy Lucy! most happy in thy grave: O that I could change places with thee! that I could lay my head on thy cold pillow!"

Envious and jealous feelings are, as I have before remarked, very shy of obtruding themselves. Even when compelled by their own strength to come forward, they will choose any name but their own, and they will attempt to impose themselves under any other appearance than that which is natural to them.

This being the case, I was anxious to conceal every emotion of jealousy from my husband. I accordingly hastened from the study, and did not appear before him again till sunshine was restored to my countenance.

Notwithstanding this circumstance of which I have spoken, nothing occurred to interrupt our peace during the first few months of our marriage. Few men, perhaps, were ever more formed to contribute to the happiness of a wife than was the man who had fallen to my lot. He was pious, humble, tender, cheerful, full of information, and he possessed the ability of communicating his sentiments in a manner the most agreeable, perhaps, of any person with whom I ever met. More than this, he was the man of my choice; the only one whom I had ever loved: and could I but have forgotten that I was not the object of his first love, I should not have had a wish ungratified—I fancied, at least, that I should not. But the evil that assailed me was not from without: no possible combination of circumstances could have made me happy in the state of mind in which I then was; for I was entirely devoted to self, and wholly influenced by the merest selfish feelings. But, as I before remarked, no unpleasant occurrence, during the first few months of our marriage, had any power to disturb our comfort; for my husband was evidently devoted to me, and as I was newly arrived in the town, a bride, and supposed to have a large fortune, much respect was paid to me, and self

was, in consequence, as highly gratified as it could well desire.

Several events, however, in the mean time took place, which I shall relate as succinctly as possible. I have already informed my reader, that our town consisted of two parishes; that in the lower part of the town being in the charge of my dear husband, and the other in the higher part being under the care of a certain rich old gentleman, who had but lately become a widower, and without children. The two parish churches were called the high and the low; not so much with a reference to the particular situations of the buildings, as to the characters of their respective rectors; the one being a man of the old school, a great stickler for the honour of the cloth, and the other, which was my beloved husband, one in whom all views of self-exaltation were absorbed by the earnest desire which he cherished of promoting the glory of God.

But, notwithstanding the very great difference that existed between these two ministers, namely, Mr. Selwyn and Dr. Delaney, when I was introduced into this society, there was a very good understanding subsisting between them, and the doctor seemed very willing to allow the views and doctrines espoused by my husband, on consideration of some little acts of kindness which he was ever ready to perform for him; such as now and then reading prayers for him on a week-day, &c. &c. and sending him his first peas and finest peaches and apricots out of his garden. In return for which, the old gentleman, as I before said, permitted Mr. Selwyn to think for himself on matters of divinity, contenting himself with speaking of him, not only behind his back, but also in his presence, as a good man, but one whose head on some subjects was not altogether sound.

Dr. Delaney was, however, a man of family, and prided himself on making a good figure in a drawing-room. He, therefore, on my appearance as a bride, immediately came to see me, failing not to pay me every compliment which is thought seasonable on such occasions, and he was indeed so assiduous in his attentions, that it appeared as if he wished that something more than common civility should subsist between us.

I had always used myself to the habit of indulging in strong likings and aversions; and I had not unfrequently taken a dislike on much slighter grounds than that on which I now did for the doctor: but the old gentleman had scarcely been twice in my company, before I expressed an utter abhorrence of his sentiments to my husband, and asked him what could induce him to bear with the haughty insolence with which he treated his understanding.—“Why, my dear,” I said, “I see it as plainly as I now see you, that the old gentleman looks on your divinity as not only unsound, but absurd.”

“Well, my Caroline,” he replied, “and if it is so, what harm does that do me?”

“And what good,” I answered, “is there in allowing yourself to be thus treated?”

“Much, very much,” he said. “In the first place, I render my religion amiable and acceptable in the estimation of my brother, and I do all that in me lies to promote the peace of the town; and you will oblige me much, my beloved,” he added, “if you will henceforth forward this my desire of living in peace with the doctor.”

I bowed in apparent compliance, although certainly not with the best grace; but it was early days with us yet, and I had not yet ventured to show my husband that I could assume a cloudy as well as a bright appearance.

As I did not alter in my manner to the old doctor, he still continued to visit us: and though the oftener I saw him the less I liked him, yet I refrained for some time from mentioning him again to Mr. Selwyn; but I was not so cautious with respect to what I said of him to my bosom friend and bridemaid, who had kindly promised to spend the first six months of our marriage with us.

Letitia, at first, heard my remarks on the doctor with the same kind of encouraging smiles with which she received all my other communications; but, after a while, I perceived that she hearkened to them with more reserve, and, at length, acknowledged that she thought, if she must speak her mind, that I did not fully understand the old gentleman, and that she believed him to be a very worthy man, though, certainly, rather dark on some points.

“Dark, Letitia!” I repeated, “dark as pitch! His is indeed a palpable, an Egyptian darkness!”

Letitia made me no answer, and I felt both offended and surprised; for this was the first time that my bosom friend had presumed to offer an opinion contrary to that avowed by me. The reason, however, of our present difference was soon explained; for, before the expiration of Letitia's six months, Dr. Delaney solicited and readily obtained the honour of her hand; and I thereby suddenly saw my quondam humble friend exalted to be the first lady in the town, while I was obliged to content myself with the second place. I was, however, fully sensible that the indulgence of uneasy feelings of this kind was so decidedly vulgar, that I would rather have died than avow them. I therefore endeavoured to disguise them with the semblance of satisfaction, and I failed not to say, in every company, "Well, nothing that ever happened to me has given me more pleasure than this marriage of poor dear Letitia Arkwright's. She will make the old gentleman such a comfortable wife! such a good nurse! Well, I had no idea of her ever doing so well, for the poor girl had no fortune, and though I call her a girl, she is not so young either. I have known her for these six years: and she looked as old when I first saw her, as she does now."

Thus I used to run on about her; not, indeed, in my husband's presence, for I feared his penetration: and, as I have had repeated occasions to remark, such feelings as I then cherished, and as I fear I am not now free from, though I trust they are somewhat subdued by the divine power, are exceedingly shy of discovery, and desirous of disguise.

In the mean time, while I was going about uttering my congratulatory panegyrics, every thing appeared to be upon the most friendly footing between me and the new bride. We often met, and she expressed the pleasure that she felt in the consideration that we should not now be compelled to part, but might live and die in one town.

Fond as I had always fancied myself, and affected to be, of Letitia, it is now very evident to me, that my apparent regard proceeded only from the gratification that I found in the assiduous court that she had paid to me. She had, either unintentionally or through design, found out my weak side, and she attached me to herself by flatter

ing that weakness. But now that she presumed to consider herself as my equal, and to treat me as such, I felt my heart withdrawing itself from her; and I now thought that I perceived even in her praise, a coarseness which filled me with disgust. But, on my expressing to my Henry these newly awakened feelings of dislike to Letitia, he, to my great amazement, confessed that he had never regarded her in any other light than that in which I then beheld her, and that he had not been without surprise at my having selected such a companion and bosom friend.

“And why then,” said I, indignantly, “did you allow me to choose her as my bridemaïd, and to bring her here?”

“Because,” he added, smiling, “because, my Caroline, I thought, that in the choice of your female friends you had a right to please yourself.”

Notwithstanding this sweetness of his manner, I felt almost inclined to quarrel with him for not checking this intimacy, which I now began so sincerely to regret. I, however, now said no more, finding that my complaints only turned against myself.

In the mean time, as I had but little encouragement to open my mind to any one on the subject of my dislikes, I kept up my appearance with my old friend, and the two rector's ladies were, no doubt, considered as models of the most perfect and unreserved friendship.

Still, amidst all my uneasiness, my self-love was, nevertheless, much gratified in possessing such a husband as my Henry. Independent of his excellences in private life, I had the pleasure of witnessing the admiration which he excited whenever he appeared in public. His person and countenance were remarkably fine, his voice was deep and melodious, his elocution peculiarly good, and his doctrines were truly evangelical. Hence it cannot be questioned that he never preached without exciting admiration, and that many souls were won by his ministry. The most humble woman might, therefore, have found it difficult not to be proud of such a man; and it will not be questioned that I, who never have been humble, was exceedingly elated at hearing his praises from the congregation as I passed from my pew after



the sermon on the sabbath-day; neither was I a little delighted when I saw by what crowds he was followed, and as I heard, at the same time, of the emptiness of Dr. Delaney's church.

I can now recollect, with a degree of anguish which I should find it difficult to express, how, during the first few months of my bridal happiness, I used to hasten towards the vestry immediately after service, and return exulting through the congregation, hanging upon the arm of this elegant and accomplished man, proud of my husband, proud of his appearance, proud of his religion, proud of his talents, and proud of his popularity! O, vanity! vanity! how mistaken are those who expect to detect thine influence only amidst scenes of worldly pomp and pleasure! The unregenerate heart finds fuel for self-love in every situation of life, and, I might almost say, in death itself.

There was, however, a certain something, which for a long time restrained me from acknowledging to my husband the pride that I felt in possessing, as my own, a man so admired. It happened, however, that my vanity was so strongly excited on one occasion, that I could no longer repress the expression of my feelings.

A certain pious nobleman and his lady were visiting in our neighbourhood, and, on one Sunday, during afternoon service, they drove up, in their coach-and-four, to the church-door, and, proceeding up the aisle, were ushered into the rector's pew, in which I was sitting. My husband preached, as usual, his manner being so wholly unchanged, that I supposed he was not aware of the honour done to him by the presence of the noble strangers. I, however, had my eyes almost immoveably fixed upon them, and I read with delight, the eager interest evidently painted on their countenances. After service, they bowed to me with the utmost politeness; and, perhaps guessing who I was, expressed their highest sense of the gratification that they had received, not only praising the matter, but the manner of the sermon.

We parted with bows on both sides, and I instantly hastened to join my husband; to whom, as soon as I found ourselves alone, I began to relate all that had passed

in the church, and commenced with asking him whether he had seen Lord and Lady D—— walk up the centre aisle.

He answered calmly in the affirmative.

“I thought,” said I, “that you had not seen them.”

“And why, my love?” was his reply.

“Because,” I answered, “you never changed countenance.”

“Changed countenance!” he reiterated; and such a glow and flush arose in his cheeks as I had never seen in them before, neither could I then understand what had at that time excited it, for he did not speak, but seemed absorbed in meditation.

Presuming however, that he was not displeased at what I had said, I proceeded to give him some account of Lord and Lady D——’s remarks on his sermon, and the admiration which they had expressed. But, suddenly interrupting me, “O my Caroline!” he rejoined, “my dear Caroline! if you love me, if you desire my spiritual welfare, beware of polluting my mind with the sound of human praise. If there is any one thing for which I have prayed more than for another, it is this—that I might be blessed in my ministry with a single eye, and that I might never be led to seek any glory but that of my crucified Saviour.

“What, my beloved wife,” he added, tenderly taking my hand, “what, humanly speaking, has rendered the visible Church a barren wilderness, excepting this spirit of self-love, which has more or less pervaded many of its ministers and teachers, and this spirit of idolatry, which has possessed such numbers of the people? Every man either sets himself up as an idol, or exalts his teacher to the same impious elevation. But I have prayed, I have prayed earnestly to be kept from this sin; and, if you value my happiness and welfare, Caroline, you will never more repeat any thing which you may hear of me, be it good, or be it evil; for I consider myself, in my character as a minister, as accountable to my God alone, and, by the help of his approval only do I desire my services to be prompted.”

So saying, he left me alone, in no very comfortable state of mind; for I both feared that I had offended him

and I was, also, thoroughly mortified by his too evident superiority over myself.

It was in my husband's study that this conversation had taken place, and when he left me, I was sitting exactly opposite to the little picture of Lucy which I have before spoken of. While I was deeply engaged in the comparison between Mr. Selwyn's state of mind, as he had described it but a moment previous, and my own, such as I had ever felt it to be, (for I never could remember the time when my exertions were not influenced by the spirit of eye-service,) my attention was suddenly arrested by the sweet portrait of Lucy, as the reflected light of the afternoon sun shed over it a rich glow, by which it appeared in the most striking point of view. The painter had been particularly happy in preserving the holy and gentle expression of the original countenance, and the dovelike eyes of the little girl seemed, at that instant, to be fixed upon me with such an expression of holy harmlessness and entire freedom from passion as we sometimes see in lovely infants when they appear to be looking unconsciously upon the angry contests of the elders of the family.

Lucy had ever been to me an object of the keenest envy, and that baleful passion again rekindled within me at this moment; insomuch so, that I burst into tears, turned from the picture, and, in a fit of excessive ill-humour, withdrew to my chamber, where, for a long time, I indulged myself in bitter weeping. But, as my husband had been suddenly called from home on some parochial duty, I had leisure to wipe away my tears before his return. For I was then just in the humour to consider myself a heroine; and it is a part of that self-exalted character to weep in secret, and to appear all beautiful resignation in the presence of the fancied tyrant. Thus my afflictions continued to be, for a time, unobserved by my husband, who came in, at a late hour, somewhat fatigued with the duties of the day, and with his mind full of the distresses of some sick person by whom he had been praying.

The little cloud in this way blew over; and, during the course of the same week, we were invited to dine at Dr. Delaney's, to meet Lord and Lady D——, who I found were remotely connected with the old doctor.

Mrs. Delaney evidently considered herself to be indeed in her glory on this occasion, though she made me blush for myself many times, when I remembered that this woman had been my chosen and most intimate associate.

During dinner, she talked without intermission, addressing Lady D—— with the most servile and yet familiar flattery, and treating me as a kind of upper servant; at the same time interlarding all her discourse with a sort of ready-made religious expression, and a peculiar set of phrases which are in the mouth of all professors of a certain rank in life.\*

After dinner we withdrew to the drawing room: and then Mrs. Delaney began to open her mind, as she called it, to Lady D——, or rather, to detail before that lady, who, little as I saw of her, appeared to me a truly pious and elegant woman, the account of her own experience, of the rise of her friendship for me, (a part of her story of which I now began to be ashamed,) of her present happiness with Dr. Delaney, and of her plans for advancing the cause of true religion in the town.

On this last topic, she expatiated very largely, told the lady of all her schemes, and finished by carelessly adding, that she was sure of my co-operation in all that she desired; thus assuming to herself a pre-eminence which I was by no means inclined to yield her: for I had not yet learned to say, with St. Paul, *What then? notwithstanding every way, whether in pretence or in truth, Christ is preached; and I therein do rejoice, yea, and will rejoice.* (Phil. i. 18.)

But it may be said in my behalf, that I did not see aught of Christ in all this parade and talk. Certainly I did not: nevertheless, there can scarcely be any question that benefit is derived to some individuals from every public charity, however ill contrived, however deficient in point of spirituality, however blended with evil; and on this account I ought to have rejoiced in the proposal of any plan by which the slightest good might be effected.—But to proceed.

I returned home that evening in a very mortified state, plainly perceiving that I should become a mere cipher in the town, unless I exerted myself in promoting some pub

lic work before Mrs. Delaney's active spirit began to set itself in motion.

The doctor and his bride had resolved on taking a journey to Bath, and they were to set out on the following Monday, to be absent for some weeks. I waited only, therefore, for their departure, and, when I thus saw the coast clear, I set to work to establish a school of industry in the centre of the town, which was to receive the children of both parishes.

Mr. Selwyn, as soon as he heard of my plan, gave me the greatest encouragement, and placed a fifty-pound note in my hands for helping forward my purpose. I also met with the most flattering support from many of the ladies in the town and neighbourhood; and, in short, all difficulties were so soon and so easily overcome, that, before my bosom friend returned, I had procured a large room in the situation that I wished, I had assembled nearly two hundred children, and had set them all to spin and knit, and read in the primer, and I had enjoyed the pleasure of seeing them parade to and from church in a uniform of my own choosing. I had also the satisfaction of receiving many congratulations on the subject, and of hearing myself called a mother in Israel by many well-meaning people, who knew less of me than I did of myself.

It was on the occasion of the first appearance of the children at church, that I had a very serious and affecting conversation with my husband. It commenced by my expressing myself pleased with what I had done, and asking him if he did not think that the little ones appeared to advantage.

"My dear Caroline," he answered, "so far every thing is right. But I wish you to consider the proper end of all charities of this kind; and to observe, that if the grand object is not habitually kept in view, no divine blessing can ever be expected upon the work.

"There is often much, too much, of self-seeking in all undertakings of this kind; too much of the pharisaical spirit of desiring the praise of men. Hence proceeds much parade, much bustle, much cleansing of the outside of the cup and platter, but at the same time little if any of that simple spirit which induces the Christian teacher



constantly to aim at directing the eye of his pupil towards the Saviour.

“These establishments, of which we are speaking, my beloved,” he said, “are only valuable in the proportion in which there is the knowledge of the Saviour found in them; in proportion as faith and holiness, Christian humility, and, in short, as true religion abounds. When these are wanting in the manager, or when the well-meaning directors fail either in diligence or watchfulness, it is a question with me, whether he who collects and associates a number of children together is not injuring rather than benefiting mankind.”

It might surely have been expected, that, having such a faithful monitor at home, I should employ every possible exertion to render my services in my school pure and unalloyed by worldly motives. But although I loved and honoured my husband above all human beings, yet my self-love was even greater than my conjugal affection: and, when I was out of his sight, and acting with a view to the observation of others, my vanity wholly overpowered me; in consequence of which, though I visited my school on most days, I consider that I did really nothing when there—that is, nothing that was calculated to promote the spiritual good of the children. It is true, that I bustled from room to room, I changed the plans, scolded the teachers, displayed my own knowledge, gossiped with the other visiters, reproved the children in a language that they could but half comprehend, bestowed rewards on the pertest of them, set the elder ones among them to tyrannize over the younger, caused all of them to sing certain hymns without their understanding the meaning of a single sentiment contained in them, and procuring long prayers to be said in the hearing of the little ones, of which they did not understand a syllable; in short, I occasioned a general stir, while I was wholly prevented by my self-love from observing that I was not made the means of bringing any thing to pass which could be deemed in the least degree spiritually good.

After awhile, Mrs. Delaney came home; and (as I was soon told) expressed great anger at my establishment, although she did not decline taking the place which had been reserved for her in our committee.

And now, from this time I may date the subsequent contest which openly began to discover itself between me and Letitia. It first arose at a meeting of our committee, in which she opposed every thing which I suggested, though under the cloak of friendship, calling me, at the same time, her dear, good friend, her kind Caroline, &c. &c. But, after this period, I observed that these endearing epithets gradually became less and less frequent, as did our visits, till at length we had become declared rivals, and, as is usually the case with rivals when they occupy situations of equal influence, we had each our avowed partisans, and divided the town between us.

This animosity at first appeared to be unobserved by Mr. Selwyn, who continued his visits to the doctor, adding, also, various other acts of kindness; till at length Mrs. Delaney became so violent against me, that I could no longer conceal from my husband, what I supposed he had never noticed, viz. our little jealousies.

He smiled when he heard my confession, and calmly said, "My dear Caroline, when will you rise superior to these things? have you not a husband who loves you above all the world? have you not an ample fortune, and a happy home? and what then signifies what is said of you?"

He then again took occasion to point out the danger of our inordinately either desiring human approbation, or dreading human censure; adding, "Let us pray, let us pray without ceasing for that meek and holy spirit whereby alone we may be enabled to follow the Lamb whithersoever he goeth, and to fulfil the law of love towards our neighbour. O for that spirit of self-denial," he added, "which elevates its possessor above the tempestuous skies of this lower world, and enables him to press forward in the path of duty, without deviation, and without pause! Visit your poor people, my Caroline, and lead them to your Saviour. Ever keep the same object in view with regard to your school; and suffer neither the praises nor the censures of your fellow creatures to reach beyond your ears."

"I am, then," I said, "to bear all the indignities with which my enemies choose to load me? and I am to understand that you refuse to declare yourself displeased with those who injure your wife?"

"I desire, my dear Caroline," replied he, "to live in peace; and I wish that you could resolve to do the same."

I was sullen, and acknowledged that I had not been pleased with his continued kindness to Dr. Delaney, when he knew, at the same time, how disrespectfully his wife treated me.

He stated to me the importance of his maintaining a friendship with his brother rector for the good of the town.

"The town!" I said; "and so you love the town better than your wife?"

He answered me with warmth, charged me with selfishness, and left me in anger.

I was irritated at this charge; and from that time I gradually became less anxious to conceal my ill temper from him: for I never could wholly divest my mind of the idea, that, had Lucy lived, he would not have married me; and the feeling which arose from this thought habitually dwelt upon my mind, and excited increasing irritation within me.

I have now brought my history down to the second year of our marriage; at which period I gave birth to a daughter, who promised to possess no small degree of oveliness.

It had been my desire that this child should be named after myself; and when she was about a week old, I hinted my wish to my husband; but I was surprised to find that he gave me a slight answer, and turned off the discourse to another subject.

It is common for parents to think their own offspring beautiful, let them be ever so plain. But my child was counted lovely by all who saw her, and that almost from the day of her birth. Her features were small, her complexion was exquisitely fair, her eyes were dark blue, and sparkling with intelligence, and her head, before she was half a year old, was adorned with the most abundant ringlets of the richest auburn hair.

When this lovely little creature was about six weeks old, the day of her christening was appointed; and my self-love was not a little wounded, at that time, by a request from Mr. Selwyn, made with some hesitation, that she might be called Lucy. "I think, my Caroline," said

he, with some perturbation of manner, "that she will be like our Lucy."

"Do as you please," I replied, very coolly, "name her what you will."

"You have no objection, then?" he said, looking earnestly at me.

"None at all," I answered, endeavouring to suppress my feelings; but adding, at the same time, "no one will accuse you of inconstancy. It appears that death itself cannot disunite some characters."

"And why should it?" he answered, with emotion. "Why should death eradicate our love for those with whom we hope to spend a blessed eternity?"

Mr. Selwyn was at that moment called away, which occurrence was well for me, as, otherwise, I should probably have occasioned one of those scenes with which those who are powerfully actuated by self-love sometimes diversify the ordinary routine of domestic life. As I, however, saw no more of Mr. Selwyn till the hour of the christening arrived, the little girl received the name of Lucy without further question.

And now, with a husband, such as Henry Selwyn, with whose character my reader can now be no stranger, and a child such as Lucy, whose budding excellences rendered her from day to day increasingly fit to be regarded as *a mother's joy*, it might be concluded that I was one of the happiest of women: and so indeed I was when I calmly sat down to the reasonable consideration of all my blessings; nevertheless, in the midst of all these blessings, I was in a state of constant uneasiness and agitation.

After some months, I got tired of my school of industry, and allowed it gradually to fall into the hands of hireling teachers, while, however, I still desired to be considered as its manager. Thus I laid aside this toy, and began to play with another, which was the establishment of female clubs, which met every week, and at which we talked, and subscribed, and borrowed and lent books: for I do not distinctly recollect whether any thing else was done, excepting that some took snuff, and others groaned, whenever funerals or weddings were spoken of. As, at Christmas, however, I regularly gave a very handsome dinner to my old women, and as I provided a tea-drink-

ing for them at Midsummer, I was excessively popular with them, and was therefore greatly offended when I heard that Mrs. Delaney had set up an adult school at her end of the town, and that she not only made her hours correspond with mine, but had actually drawn away some of my partisans. I grew excessively angry on becoming acquainted with this hostile conduct, and I allowed my anger so warmly to betray itself before the members of my club, that all that I said on the occasion was repeated to Mrs. Delaney, whose displeasure was, no doubt, greatly inflamed by the disclosure: in consequence of which, on the next day, her husband came to complain to mine of the manner in which I had spoken of her.

On this occasion, my husband offended me very greatly; for, giving his hand to Dr. Delaney, he declared his determination of never quarrelling with him, advising him to make up his mind, as he himself had done, to leave their wives to themselves, and assuring him that there could be no question but that much had been added to what I had unguardedly said.

The old doctor, who was a good-natured man took Mr. Selwyn's offered hand with much cordiality, and promised him that in future he would leave the ladies to fight their own battles.

As I was in an adjoining room at the time that this conversation took place, I was violently agitated with shame and displeasure; and when I next met with Mr. Selwyn alone, I gave utterance to my anger in a manner which I had never before indulged in his presence.

He tried to soothe me: but I would not be composed, telling him, that he had spoken of me, and of my sex in general with contempt, and that in the presence of a man whom I hated and despised.

To all this he made but little answer; only telling me, that he had resolved never to espouse my quarrels, and expressing his wish that I would rather confine myself to my hemming, than engage in undertakings abroad which I had not temper to manage: and, thus speaking, he left the room.

In this way, and by the frequent repetition of such scenes, and various other proofs of my selfishness, I gra-



ually chilled the affections of this best of husbands, and thus prepared my own punishment.

In the mean time, as Mr. Selwyn's affection to me evidently became cooler, his love for his little daughter grew increasingly fervent. As months glided away, she became more lovely, and the likeness of her lamented namesake was increasingly striking. *Ah! my baby, ah, my Lucy!* how happy might I not have been when I possessed thee and thy father! Thy beloved father was still spared to me for a while: and still do I behold thee in fancy's eye, sitting on thy father's knee in his study, where he often retained thee with him for hours, with thy soft and beautiful deep-blue eyes raised towards thy father's face, and thy sweet small mouth and pouting lip embellished with a thousand dimples. O what a tender friendship subsisted between this father and his infant daughter! Oh, miserable wife and mother that I am! my self-love has indeed met with its deserved punishment!

I have now, I think, furnished my reader with sufficiently numerous and varied evidences of my selfishness, and I shall, therefore, now proceed to the last topics of my unhappy story which are worth recording.

A year and a half had rolled along since the birth of Lucy, and the little fair one was now able to trot about the garden with her father, and sit by him, and take her meals with him, and she was, therefore, in fact, his constant companion when he was at home. Often have I heard him, on his entering the house from the street or garden, call aloud for his Lucy, when she would answer him, in lisping accents, from her nursery: even when he was studying, she would be contentedly sitting by him on the sofa, or artlessly playing on the carpet at his feet. She was a child of an uncommonly mild and tender disposition, and, when hastily addressed, she would often appear terrified and tremble: her eyes would then fill with tears, and her coral lip would quiver, while a pink and beautiful glow would entirely suffuse her face and neck. But no rough or hasty word was ever spoke to his dear child by her amiable father, and often have I seen her sleeping on his bosom as he sat engaged with his book.

While this tender friendship was continually growing

between the father and daughter, my mind was occupied by other matters. Though my husband would not vindicate me in dispute with Mrs. Delaney, I was not backward in asserting what I deemed my own rights, and in maintaining, that I considered myself much injured in the affair of the club and the adult school. I told my story; Mrs. Delaney told hers: the old doctor laughed at us both; and my husband appeared never to take any interest whatever in the subject, though he was far from being careless respecting the promotion of my religious undertakings in general.

At this time, that is, when my daughter Lucy was about a year and a half old, Dr. Delaney was attacked by a slight paralytic, which disabled him from attending to his public duty, in consequence of which, it was necessary for him to have a curate; and on this occasion Mrs. Delaney was heard to say, that she would move heaven and earth, but that she would get one who should empty Mr. Selwyn's church.

When informed of this speech, I hastened, full, of wrath, to repeat it to Mr. Selwyn, who heard the news without a change of countenance; and, to my great surprise, he remarked, that if the kingdom of Christ were thereby to be promoted, he should not care if every preacher in England were to draw more souls than himself.

"What!" I said, "and would you lose all your popularity?"

"Caroline," he replied, "have you lived with me so long, and not discovered that I desire not to regard these things?"

The curate was obtained; and, after his first appearance in the pulpit, I was told that he was young, handsome, wore a diamond ring, and had a delightful voice. During his first Sunday, our church was very empty, which I observed to Mr. Selwyn: but he took little notice of my remark. Another and another Sunday came, and the new minister continued to attract multitudes, while many of our pews continued void.

Whenever we returned from church, I remarked this circumstance to Mr. Selwyn, repeating it in his presence on every possible occasion; but he still persevered in

turning a deaf ear to my suggestions, and he pursued his usual round of duties with unabated and unaltered diligence. At length, he put me out of all patience by inviting Mr. Montague (for such was the name of the new minister) to our house, and treating him there with the utmost cordiality.

“O, Caroline,” he replied, when I had spoken to him on this subject, “how happy might we have been, could you but have been contented to give up for me and for yourself the admiration of the world and the desire of popularity!—could you have submitted to seek to do good with a single eye to the glory of God, not seeking the praise of men, not caring for their reproaches, nor desiring to be deemed more praiseworthy than your neighbours! For, as your excellent grandmother used to say, the world is wide enough for us all, and heaven is wider still.”

So saying he dropped his face upon the head of his little girl, who was sitting on his lap, and I thought that he sighed. But though I thought so, I persisted, and said a great deal about his allowing every body to impose upon him, and take liberties with his name, adding, that such pusillanimous conduct might not only be injurious to his family, but also hurtful to the cause of religion. “If you lose your popularity, Mr. Selwyn,” I remarked, “you will lose your usefulness. A man, in order to do good in society, must possess influence; and in order to have influence, he must be known: but you neither desire influence nor popularity.”

“And what then would you have me do?” said he, sighing again, and more audibly.

“Do?” I said: “in the first place, you should not have suffered your wife to be insulted with impunity by such a low character as Letitia Delaney and her old husband; you should not have put up with the sneers and taunts of the doctor in all companies, as you have done; you should not have let every fool take the lead, as you do, in all public meetings.”

“Nor let my wife find fault with me at home,” he added, cutting me short, with some quickness, but much good-humour. “And now, my dear Caroline, let me have some tea: and, if you please, we will drop this subject.”

On this I burst into tears, and my husband left the room. I saw him, but a few minutes afterwards, carrying his child about the garden, and perhaps thinking how happy he should have been, had Lucy been her mother—at least my selfish and jealous heart told me that these were his thoughts.

It was now summer time, and the weather was extremely hot, and the town and neighbourhood were very full and very gay. Lord and Lady D— were again among us, and our bishop, also, was come to confirm, and to spend some days in the town. While his Lordship was with us, he was invited to dinner at the nobleman's house where Lord and Lady D— were visiting, and all the clergy in the town and neighbourhood, together with their families, were also asked to meet him.

After the cloth was removed, and the servants were gone out, our discourse turned upon religious subjects, and to the great exertions which were then being made in the kingdom for the promotion of religion. His Lordship then took occasion to compliment Mrs. Delaney on her activity in the schools; and, to my great amazement and high indignation, he addressed not a word to me on the subject; a circumstance which was attributed solely to his want of information, but which gave me extreme pain and mortification, such as I had no power of concealing from those who intimately knew me.

From this visit I returned in such a state of violent mental agitation, that, as soon as I alighted from the carriage, I fell into a strong hysteric fit, shrieking with all my might, and refusing to hear reason from any one. When I became a little more calm, I reproached Mr. Selwyn for his tameness, and angrily asked him why he did not enter into an explanation with the bishop, and inform him that it was not Letitia Delaney, but his own wife, who had been the only active person in the schools.

"Because," said he, "such an explanation could not, with propriety, have come from me."

"And why not?" I said.

"Because," he replied, "it would have been opposed to every principle on which I have hitherto acted. Was it for vain glory that you established your school, Caroline? God forbid that I should have such a thought of

you. And if, on the contrary, you did it for the glory of God, then you ought not to be disturbed by any misapprehensions of his Lordship on the subject."

I had for some time past failed to receive my husband's gentle rebukes in silence, and, on the contrary, I indulged in the habit of contending and disputing with him on every point; a habit into which all persons are prone to fall, who are lovers of self, and tenacious of their own opinions. I therefore suffered not this matter to rest, after having once expressed my sentiments with respect to it, but I returned to it again and again, always ending with this declaration—that I saw that we were losing our influence in the town, and that no doubt we should do so more and more, if Mr. Selwyn did not assert his dignity, come forward in society, and take the lead more decidedly on public occasions.

The consequence of these frequent disputes was, that Henry withdrew himself increasingly from me; and as he seemed resolved not to quarrel with me, his manner became cold, restrained, and distant.

And now I draw near to that most dreadful part of my history, on which I cannot, even at present, after the lapse of years, reflect with a tranquil mind. The season, as I before remarked, was intensely hot, and a kind of intermitting fever had attacked many persons, and carried off several. I thought that my husband had appeared low for some days, that is, when I had thought about him at all; for, as usual, my mind had been in a ferment respecting some foolish report or other relative to myself; when, one day, I was summoned into Lucy's room, her nurse being alarmed to find her flushed and feverish when she went to take her up in the morning. I had observed her in the garden, in her father's arms, only on the preceding evening, as I was sitting talking, in my drawing-room-window, with one of my gossiping neighbours; I had seen him pluck a rose, and put it into her bosom; and I remembered that she had laid her head upon his shoulder in a manner which led him to think that she was sleepy. All these occurrences rushed into my mind in a manner peculiarly affecting, as I stood by her bed, and beheld with trembling apprehensions, her flushed and fevered cheek, and other indications of severe



illness. I sent immediately for medical assistance, and despatched another servant for my husband, who was, I knew, gone from home.

Mr. Selwyn soon returned; but never shall I forget his evident agony when he saw the state of the child, though it was plain that he endeavoured to the utmost to appear composed.

I have particularly enlarged in many parts of my narrative, but here I cannot. The scenes which followed this melancholy morning, though indelibly graven on my mind, would baffle all description. Suffice it to say, that my deep-rooted selfishness was itself eradicated by the poignancy of my own sorrows, and by the view of the unutterable, silent, and subdued distress of my husband. After seven days illness, our child expired; and, had Mr. Selwyn then possessed a wife to whom he could have turned with comfort and satisfaction, he might himself perhaps have survived. But he had now caught the fever which had destroyed his child, and, being in a low state of spirits before the sickness of his beloved little one, he was unable to contend with the disease, and he therefore survived her only a few days.

But before he took to his bed, while our little darling one was lying unburied, he never left her side; and one day, when I had stolen upon him unawares, I heard him thus address the remains of his infant: "Ah, Lucy! child of my heart! no more do you meet your father's voice with those gentle glances and sparkling smiles which were wont to delight my happy heart! Ah, lovely one! sweet companion of many a solitary hour! I shall never more enjoy thy presence on earth, but I shall soon rejoin thee in a better world!"

Then kissing her dimpled hand, and having fallen on his knees, he presented before the throne of grace an address so solemn, so full of hope and confidence in redeeming love, so entirely free from all trust in self or in his own good works, so full of gratitude for that which had been done to secure his own and his child's salvation, that I was about to step forward and kneel by him, when I heard him proceed in a humble strain of supplication for me. His voice was low, but I could distinguish all that he said. He entreated for me an entire change of heart.

as for one who was yet in the bondage of sin; he requested that my afflictions might be sanctified to me; that I might sacrifice all my appetite for earthly glory and human praise; that I might be wholly emptied of self, humbled, and brought low, in order to my being finally exalted; that my motives might be purified, my labours blessed, my activity rightly directed, and the very thoughts of my heart sanctified. Then suddenly looking on his child, and breaking out into fresh agonies, "O my Father my Father," he said, "bless, bless the mother of my Lucy!"

So saying, his head again sunk on the bed; and I hastened away, not to make a display, as on many former occasions, of false and affected feelings, but to conceal my deep and genuine sorrow.

My beloved husband survived his child only fifteen days; and he was, by his own especial desire, buried in the same grave with her. And thus the solemn tomb closed over all that was near to me on earth: and from that time I think I may presume to date the change of heart whereby I received, as it were, a train of feelings entirely new, which rendered me as unlike what I previously had been, as if I had undergone another birth.

After my husband's death, I lay for a long time as it were stunned by the blow, stupified, and scarcely capable of appreciating my dreadful loss. But with returning reason I felt so bitter a sense of the sins of my past life, that I was made to abhor and loathe myself as the vilest of vile creatures; and to see, that during my whole life, I had been under the dominion of the most cruel and selfish passions. My envy of my lovely cousin, my neglect of her during my grandmother's illness, my violent rancour against Letitia, my desire of human praise, my want of fidelity in those things committed to my charge, my eye-service, my jealousy, my tormenting temper to my beloved husband, who was now no more, my frequent neglects of my child, all, all now rose before me, and I was made to see with detestation, that love of self, which had precluded my rightly discharging a single relative duty. I was made to see, that he who would love his neighbour, must first begin by moderating his self-love; or rather by seeking help from him who alone is able to

dissolve the heart of stone, and to impart a heart of flesh in its stead. In short, all my strong holds of self-love and self-righteousness were overthrown, and I was made to see that self-love is the natural tyrant of the heart; that it had hitherto reigned in my heart, to the exclusion of all that was truly good; and that the work of grace never advances while this tyrant retains its undiminished influence.

Twenty years are now passed since Lucy and her beloved father have been in glory; and during that period I have been a mourner, not only in outward appearance, but also in heart. My retreat has for some years past been in the house of a respectable farmer, who married the little orphan girl, who had been the protegee of my dear husband, and who was well educated and endowed by him. In her I have found a daughter and a friend; and in Mrs. Stephens, whose family are now all dispersed, I possess an affectionate neighbour, in whose spiritual welfare I have a lively interest. I have been justly condemned to many melancholy hours. Nevertheless, I have found much peace since my mind has been reconciled to the loss of my beloved ones; but my peace has not been of this world.

And now, having concluded the painful task which I had undertaken, I trust that my example may prove a warning to others, and that my youthful reader may be led, by my narrative, to discover that it is possible to give up the gay world, and what are called its pleasures, without any real relinquishment of pride and selfishness; and also that my example and my history, so full of sorrow, is an indubitable proof that where selfishness remains unsubdued, it is impossible that we can rightly fulfil our duty towards our neighbours, even in the most inadequate degree; for the social duties are allowed, even by the heathen, to consist in a renunciation of self for the good of others; and certain it is, that where self remains in force, whatever profession of religion may be made, there can be, really, no true conversion, or change of heart. The finest example which can be conceived of the entire absence of selfishness, is in Christ our blessed Saviour; and the more we contemplate his character, the more ought we to deplore our own extreme hardness, selfish-

ness, and cruelty, and to lie humbled and subdued under the conviction.

But now, inasmuch as it appears that it will not long be permitted me to remain separated from my husband and my child, since severe disease is making deep, though hitherto silent inroads on my constitution, I conclude my narrative, humbly entreating you, my young reader, as you value your present and eternal happiness, to beware of self-indulgence, and remembering the golden rule, *Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself*, learn to deny thyself, in order that thou mayest have wherewith to comfort thy brother.

The lady of the manor having finished her story, which had occupied more of the evening than she had expected, called her young people to prayer without loss of time.

*A Prayer for that State of Mind which may enable us to feel and act towards our Fellow Creatures with the Sincerity of perfect Christian Charity.*

“O ALMIGHTY FATHER, who alone art acquainted with the windings and deep intricacies of the human heart, impress us with a due sense of our extreme depravity; make us to know and feel that all which proceeds from self alone, every desire and impulse, every thought and motive of action which originates in the unrenewed heart, is utterly vile, corrupt, and abominable; and give us grace, O blessed Lord God, to regulate the inclinations of our own wills with reverence and holy fear; teach us to loathe the workings and suggestions of our unsanctified natural affections, and enable us to submit ourselves entirely, and on all occasions, to the guidance of thy Holy Spirit. Set us at liberty, O righteous Lord God, from the desires of the flesh, which work all manner of abominations. Help us to dethrone the idol self, and to set up thine image in its stead. Let all self-seeking be held in abhorrence by thy servants. Grant that our charity towards our fellow creatures, and especially towards those with whom we are familiarly associated, may be ardent and christian-like. Teach us to rejoice with those that do rejoice, and to weep with those that

mourn. Enable us, through all the diversified scenes of this life, to interest ourselves only about the glory of God, and the real good of our neighbours. Enable us, by faith and heavenly wisdom to discern our own advantage in the promotion of thy glory, and in the extension of thy kingdom on earth. Teach us to cast our cares on thee; and give us that singleness of eye, and sincerity of heart, whereby we may be enabled to walk steadfastly forward in the way of duty, keeping our hands clear from the gain of ungodliness, and our minds free from any desire of encroaching on the rights of others. Empty us, O blessed Lord God, of all proud and ambitious feelings, all desires of supplanting others, or of obtaining advantages over them. Teach us to glory in the excellences of our brethren, and to rejoice in their prosperity; and grant, that, under the pressure of affliction, we may be humble and resigned, submissive to thy holy will, and prepared to await thy time of our deliverance, in patience, and hope, and firm faith, that all will work together for our good, through Him that loved us and died for our salvation.

“And now, O holy Father, we confess and bewail all the offences of our carriage during our past lives; we acknowledge and deplore the numberless envious, malicious, and cruel suggestions of our wicked hearts, and those various acts of eye-service wherewith we have mocked our God, and endeavoured to deceive our fellow-creatures: and we pray thee to grant, that we may never again be left to listen to the vile insinuations of our evil hearts, but that henceforward we may be wholly devoted to thy service, that thou, the Great and Mighty God, mayest in all things be glorified by us, through Jesus Christ.

“And now, O blessed Lord God, to thee be all honour and glory, at this time, and for evermore. Amen.”



## CHAPTER XXV.



*Second Conversation on our duty towards our  
Neighbours.*

## ON OUR DUTY TO INFERIORS.

“MY dear young people,” said the lady of the manor “when last we met, I entertained you with a narrative by which I endeavoured to trace out and expose to you many of those intricate and hidden feelings, and springs of action, which too often embitter the comfort of our domestic circles, and poison the fountains of family love, causing the hearts of those who, in their infancy, have hung upon the same breasts, to swell, in their advancing life, with rancour against each other, polluting every source of joy, and withering the innocent and natural delights of youth. It is my intention now to attempt to set before you a view of those feelings which too frequently mar our charity towards our inferiors; and, for this purpose, I shall read a short narrative to you, wherein that sweet spirit which suffereth long and is kind, is displayed in a simple and yet, I think, a very attractive form.”

The lady of the manor then drew out a small manuscript, and the young ladies prepared to hearken with their usual complacency.

*The New Millennium Hall; or, The History of Laura.*

There is a book, now very scarce, called Millennium Hall, which gives an account of a society of ladies, who lived together, in a place of retirement, about the beginning of the last century, and who devoted their time to a variety of acts of charity and benevolence.

It happened a few years ago, that a middle-aged lady, the sister of a baronet, a person possessing a handsome, independent fortune, was paying a visit in a country house, where, one rainy day, the scarce volume containing the history of the ladies of Millennium Hall was placed in her hands.

This lady, whom we shall call Mrs. Dorothea Oldfield, had from the age of sixteen, entered with avidity into all the moderate pleasures of the world, and had sufficiently experienced their emptiness, although she had not yet been led to know where to seek for satisfaction more solid than they could afford. She was therefore precisely in that state of mind the most likely to be amused and persuaded by a book, which described, apparently, an attainable Utopia, such as a system similar to that which obtained in Millennium Hall seemed to promise. The old lady was, therefore, resolved to have a Millennium Hall of her own; and, being wholly unacquainted with the doctrine of man's depravity, and with the existing necessity of a something more effectual than the common restraints of good manners, to preserve a number of people, dwelling together in one house, in that kind of order and agreeable harmony which is described as having prevailed in Millennium Hall, she determined immediately to take the requisite steps towards forming an establishment which should resemble and even eclipse this pretended paradise itself.

And here it should be remarked that few books do more injury than those foolish and irreligious works which abound in every circulating library, and in which books the Christian virtues are represented as existing in various characters and situations in society, altogether unassociated with Christian principles. In works of this kind, the more pure the morality that is inculcated, the greater is the deception and consequent danger, and the more likely they are to produce destructive effects; and this, in the same degree, and on the same principle, that Socinianism is more to be feared in the present state of society than the disgusting idolatries of the Hindoo.

On this account, it is to be feared that those writers, both male and female, who have, as it were, robbed Christianity of her high and perfect morals and holy principles

to deck those very characters that deny her doctrines, will eventually find that they have been guilty of conduct more offensive in the eye of God, because more hurtful to man, than that of Belshazzar, when he commanded to bring the golden and silver vessels which his father Nebuchadnezzar had taken out of the temple which was in Jerusalem, that the king and his princes, his wives and his concubines might drink therein.

But, that I might not digress too far from my story, I remark, that Mrs. Oldfield was not at a loss to fix upon a suitable situation for her establishment. There was on her brother's estate, in one of the most beautiful counties of England, a spacious old mansion, which had been deserted for some years past by the heads of the family; and, as it happened at that time to be vacant, she found no difficulty in obtaining it on very moderate terms.

This mansion stood in a small park, where a variety of trees, of very ancient growth, disposed in groups and clusters over an exceedingly irregular surface, presented, within a small compass, a considerable variety of umbrageous glade and breezy lawn; a running stream, which traversed this piece of ground in various directions, and which assumed all the caprices of a classic stream, by rushing precipitately from the higher grounds, and meandering gently through those which were more level, added not a little to the charms of this place.

The house itself, which had stood during a century or more, was built of small brick, now grown brown or rusty by time. It was low, considering the number of stories, and three of its sides were facing a court, which was laid out with gravel walks and parterres of flowers. Behind the house there was an old-fashioned garden, inclosed by a high wall, and at each corner of the garden was a summer-house. The number of chambers in this ancient mansion offered the convenience of a variety of separate apartments, and a noble dining-room and drawing-room promised accommodation for a very large family.

But, not to dwell on too many particulars of little importance, suffice it to say that Mrs. Dorothea Oldfield found little difficulty in persuading several young ladies, whose fortunes perhaps scarcely equalled their birth and

pretensions, to join her little society, in which she failed not to give them the promise of their certainly finding all those enjoyments with which her own warm imagination had flattered her.

Among the young ladies who had been persuaded by Mrs. Oldfield to take up their abode in her beautiful retreat just mentioned, were two who were distinguished above the rest by the agreeableness of their persons, and, we may add, also, by their accomplishments. They were both descended from very respectable families, though in nowise related to each other. The name of one of these was Belinda, the name of the other Laura. Belinda was one of those characters, specimens of which are to be found in every society, characters that cannot rest contented in any situation until they have formed to themselves a number of partisans who continually follow their steps and applaud their actions; while, on the other hand, Laura was of a modest and retiring carriage.

It was the rule of the house, that the young ladies should occupy the mornings in their own apartments, and meet together at dinner, and, if they pleased, also spend their evenings together.

On those occasions when the members of the family were met, Belinda seldom failed to take the lead in the conversation. Before she had been a month in the house, she had made every individual in it acquainted with her whole pedigree; and no one could relate any fact or piece of news, but it reminded her of some parallel case either in her own experience, or in that of some one of her connexions. As her countenance, however, was agreeable, her manner cheerful, and her address easy, and as polite as egotism would permit it to be, she was generally liked, and her company, in consequence, much sought after.

The society in this New Millennium Hall had little notion of vital and experimental religion; but its members submitted, nevertheless, to all the exterior forms which our Church enjoins, and several little schemes of benevolence were already in agitation in this young society, when somewhat of a revolution was effected in the sentiments of the family by the death of the former minister of the parish, and the introduction of another. The old

minister had been a person from whom little was to be learned; but his successor, whom we shall call Francis Woodfield, was a young man who knew the truth, and preached it consistently, though he failed in practice, not altogether in points of strict morality, but rather in that gravity and strict decorum becoming a minister of Christ.

It would have been well if he had visited but seldom in the house of Mrs. Oldfield, and then rather on distant than on more intimate terms. But the society of the hall afforded too many charms for a young man living in a solitary village, to permit him to resist its influence in his own proper strength; and he therefore tried to make himself believe that he could not employ his time more profitably than in endeavouring to convert the ladies of the Hall. He therefore visited them continually, and religion was constantly made the subject of discourse over the tea-table.

Mr. Francis Woodfield as I before said, understood his Bible; at least he possessed much head knowledge, and perhaps was not without the desire of living up to what he knew: but much, certainly, was wanting to his being what might be wished; otherwise, he would not have attempted to undertake so great a work as the conversion of many souls in a manner so light as that in which he presumed it might be effected, namely, in lively chitchat over a dish of tea.

Mr. Francis Woodfield's views of religion were, as I before said, strictly scriptural; it was not, therefore, to be supposed that these new doctrines should be received by the ladies of the hall without considerable opposition and animadversion. But as the young rector was a great favourite, the opposition was more tempered than it probably would have been, had an older or a rougher faced man broached the same doctrines in their ears.

In cases of dispute, Belinda was in general the spokeswoman of the party, and showed much liveliness and readiness in argument. After a decent time, however, the fair disputant commonly gave way, and professed herself convinced of the importance of religion; and in a short time Mr. Woodfield flattered himself that the greater part of the sisterhood were in a way to be converted



About this time, the society having lived together nearly a year, during the summer months many of the young ladies went abroad to see their friends, and the family was, in a manner, broken up for some time.

When the party was re-assembled, it was found that several of the fair individuals had, during their separation, met with opportunities of hearing good preachers; but through the mismanagement of their first teacher, who had brought them on too rapidly, and led them to think that they were somewhat advanced Christians, when as yet they had probably not taken one step towards the way of salvation, they had been unable to derive real profit from what they heard; and, having been called to listen to sermons intended for converted persons, they had been puffed up by this strong meat, and were, therefore, almost in a worse case than before they had heard the word of salvation.

The individual who begins his Christian career in any other way than by humility and self-abasement, may go on fairly for a time; but let him be assured that he has deep waters to go through before he can attain the end of his course.

Thus the young party went smoothly on, supposing that they were in a fair way soon to reach Mount Zion. But, like Ignorance in the "Pilgrim's Progress," it is to be feared that many of them wanted their certificate; for, though they could talk well on most points of doctrine, yet they never felt the plague of their own hearts, and, of course, but imperfectly knew their need of the Saviour.

Of Belinda it might be said, that, as some fine ladies play with chemistry, botany, and even with deism and atheism, in order to render themselves singular, she became professedly pious upon the same false principle, and not only pious, but benevolent; and busied herself in establishing day-schools and various other institutions, in order, one would think, that she might have something to talk about, and appear conspicuous among her companions. And, in deducing this inference, we do not wrong her; because it was evident to every acute observer, that she felt no pleasure in any of these works of charity, unless she herself took the lead in them; nei-

ther did she rejoice at any thing which she had been enabled to do, because it was likely to conduce to the glory of God, but simply because it had been brought about by her own successful exertions.

But now to refer to Laura, of whom we have not spoken for a long time. This diffident young person had listened with considerable attention to the conversation which had passed between Mr. Woodfield and Belinda, and she had constantly, in private, consulted her Bible, in order to convince herself that the arguments which Mr. Woodfield used were consonant with Scripture.

Laura's apartment was one of the most remote in that wing of the house which was almost entirely appropriated to the use of the young ladies, and her window opened upon a part of the garden much secluded from the rest by trees and shrubs, many of which were evergreens. She had an opportunity, therefore, of frequently sitting to read and meditate at the window, unobserved by any of her companions; and she was led, by divine grace, habitually to influence and animate her meditations by solemn and earnest addresses to her Maker. She began, as it were, to feel her way in the dark; but the Lord was leading her by a way that she knew not, and, ere she was aware, He set her feet in the road to Zion.

It is not to our present purpose to enter into the particulars of Laura's conversion. Suffice it to say, that it was a gradual, silent, and unobtrusive work, wholly disregarded by those under whose eye it was passing, yet, nevertheless, it was effectual, because it was of God.

Laura had always been a modest and retiring character, but she had possessed much natural pride; and perhaps it was even to this feeling that she at first owed the dignified reserve and decorum of her deportment; for where no better principle is found to exist, pride itself has not unfrequently kept females within the bounds of prudence: but, like all other false principles, its effects are but partial, and, in instances where it may seem to have a salutary influence over one part of the life of the individual who may possess it, it brings shame, disgrace, and contempt, upon that very character, amidst other circumstances.

But the first and immediate effect of religion upon

Laura was, to make her humble; and her humility instantly diffused a softness and sweetness over her manners, which they did not before evince.

That person who has at once a clear view of his own depravity, and of what he consequently owes to his Saviour, will necessarily become humane and tender towards his fellow creatures. Accordingly, Laura's religion speedily produced this effect, and she began silently but seriously to consider in what points she had hitherto failed in her duty towards her neighbours.

As I before remarked, she presently found occasion to reform her manner with respect to her equals, and especially towards Belinda. She felt that she had hitherto allowed herself in unwarrantable irritation, on account of the overbearing forwardness of this young lady, by which she attempted to make every one submit to her caprices, and left little room for others even to venture an opinion.

Laura was now made sensible that she had been guilty of as great an offence against christianity, by her cold disdain of Belinda's conduct, as the young lady herself had committed by her over-forwardness. Laura, however, now lost no time in repairing this offence; availing herself of every opportunity of behaving with a marked politeness and attention towards Belinda, which politeness the other received with a smiling kind of condescension, of such a nature as, to a proud spirit, would have been less welcome than rudeness itself.

When Laura left Millennium Hall, at the same time with the rest of the young ladies, she went to visit a family, one of the sons of which, a young clergyman from the University of Cambridge, was decidedly pious, and withal, more discreet and watchful than is common even for religious young men to be.

Laura was much benefited by the conversation of this young man, and her eyes were thus opened on many subjects which she had not before considered, though she never had any private discourse with him. And after her return to the hall, she felt that she was not acting as a Christian, if, when she saw her companions in an error, she did not endeavour to set them right. Accordingly, she took occasion, one day, when she heard her young friends speaking with what she deemed too much confi-

dence of the progress which they had made in the good way, to point out the necessity of deep humility as the groundwork of all true religion.

In reply to this, Belinda took her up warmly, but not in a way of contradiction: on the contrary, she told her that she wondered why she should take so much pains to prove what every person in the company knew so well, and always acted upon; and appealed to those who were present to witness her assertion. "Are you not all, my friends," said she, "thoroughly persuaded of the importance of humility in religion? and is not the whole of the Christian system exemplified by this one single truth, that *They that are whole need not a physician, but they that are sick*; and, if so, how can any one be accounted a Christian, unless he knows himself to be a sinner?"

Belinda then proceeded to give the company an account of several things within her own experience, which she thought bore upon the point in question; and she would fain have made it appear that John Bunyan himself had not suffered more from conviction of sin, and dread of being found to be a vessel fitted only for destruction, than she herself had done. Thus was Laura quieted on this occasion; and in a manner somewhat similar was she silenced on every other, whenever she endeavoured to give utterance to any of her ideas on religious subjects before any individual of the family. She therefore determined to leave them all to themselves, and to seek for objects out of doors, on which to exercise her benevolence and love.

But, as the ground was pre-occupied near the hall and in the village, and as she, therefore, found, that she could not exert herself in those quarters without continually coming in contact with some of her sisterhood, with whom, as I before said, her ideas did not assimilate, she therefore resolved to go further abroad, in order to seek suitable objects for the exercise of her humanity. Neither was she long at a loss; there being, in the next parish, about a mile distant from the hall, a portion of what once had been a royal forest. The greater part of this forest had been cleared and cultivated; but the residue, which still remained a wood was occupied by a few poor

wood-cutters, well known, at least by report, in the neighbourhood, for their petty depredations and other scandalous habits.

As these poor creatures resided at a considerable distance from their parish church, they lived in the habitual neglect of divine service; and as their appointed pastor was not one of those shepherds who search the sheep and seek them out, (Ezek. xxxiv. 11,) they had hitherto been allowed to continue (though dwelling in the midst of one of the most enlightened countries in the world) in a state of the grossest heathen darkness.

Laura, therefore, conceived that this benighted spot of the country might afford her an ample field for many works of Christian charity; and she resolved at least to make the attempt to do these people some good: and although it required no little courage to introduce herself among these savages, (for such in fact they were,) yet she did not doubt that she should find means to render her visits to them acceptable. She accordingly made choice of a girl of about fourteen years of age, the daughter of a cottager in the neighbourhood, to accompany her in her walks to the forest; and, with this little escort, she set forth on a fine morning in autumn, soon after the re-assemblage of the party at the hall.

It was precisely at that period of the year when the leaves having changed their colour, still continue to hang on the boughs which they had adorned through all the months of summer. A thick dew, which had been touched by the frost, stood glistening on every blade of grass; and the more distant landscape was covered by a bright mist which gradually vanished as the sun arose higher in the heavens.

Laura was led by her youthful companion along a narrow and retired lane for the distance of three quarters of a mile, till suddenly she was brought out upon a heath, over one narrow corner of which she saw the forest above mentioned. The cottages of which she was in quest appeared like so many thatched huts scattered among the trees; and as the ground upon which they stood was very irregular, they formed altogether a very picturesque, and to Laura, who beheld them with an eye of Christian love, a truly interesting scene.



As Laura had expected, she found but little difficulty in introducing herself among the woodmen and their families. She had furnished herself with several little presents for the wild and half-naked children, who were playing at the cottage doors; and through their means she found ready access to the hearts of their parents.

The time would fail me, were I to enter into the particulars of all which Laura did for these poor people. She established a little school among them, which she visited regularly two or three times a week. She provided warm petticoats and cloaks for two or three of the oldest women. She frequently collected one or two families together, and read the Scripture to them; for there were few among them who could read themselves. She visited and prayed with the sick, and made clothes for the infants.

Laura had visited this little society in the forest for several weeks, and, as she supposed, had become acquainted with every family belonging to it, when, one day, happening to go to a cottage which was situated further in the wood than the rest, she saw beyond it, a pool which lay in a kind of valley or dingle, and which was closely grown round with flags and other water-plants. Beyond this pool she distinguished an old cottage, half hid by the pool-dam, built with timber, painted black, and with white stucco, and altogether presenting a ruinous and forlorn appearance. Owing to the leaves having now fallen, this cottage had become visible from the other side of the pool; for, when the trees were in full leaf, it was entirely concealed from the view of a person so situated.

Laura expressed some surprise at the sight of this dwelling, and asked who lived in it; for she perceived, by the smoke which ascended among the leafless trees, that it was inhabited.

In reply to this question, she was informed that nobody lived in it but the widow and her lodger.

“And who,” said Laura, “is the widow?”

In answer to this inquiry, a very disastrous story was unfolded to the ears of Laura.—“A few months ago, a farmer’s servant, a parish girl, and, consequently, a poor, friendless creature, had married a young woodman, and

retired with him to this cottage, where they had lived in great happiness, till, on one miserable day, he was brought home dead, killed by the fall of a tree. From that time," said the relater of this story, "the poor body has been almost crazed; and it is more the pity, as she expects, in a few months, to bring into the world a poor fatherless babe."

Here was a tale of woe indeed, which brought tears into the eyes of Laura, who immediately hastened to see if any comfort might haply be imparted to the unhappy creature.

According to the affecting tales often furnished by works of fancy, the weeping widow still looks beautiful, notwithstanding her weeds, and cleanly, though in a state of the utmost poverty and helplessness; but in real life, poverty and helplessness are naturally accompanied by want of cleanliness, and the furrows and swollen features produced by tears mar all the freshness and beauty of youth.

Thus, when Laura had traversed one side of the edge of the pool and had descended by a narrow pathway, strewn with decayed leaves, round to the door of the cottage, which stood with its back to the pool, she was struck with the air of desolation and wretchedness of every kind which evidently pervaded the whole dwelling; and, as she put her hand upon the top of the half-door to open it, she shrunk back involuntarily, and was obliged to summon her Christian principles to her aid in order to prevail on herself to pursue an adventure which promised nothing, at first view, but circumstances of disgust and horror.

The house itself was so thoroughly ruinous, both within and without, that in many places the plaster had fallen from the wall, presenting the bare laths to the eye, and leaving chinks through which there was ready entrance for many a winter blast. The floor was of clay, and two or three mean and worn-out pieces of furniture bespoke the extreme poverty of the inhabitants of this wretched dwelling. A miserable-looking old woman sat spinning in the wide chimney, and at the same time watching a pot, which was simmering over a few half-burnt sticks. But the object which most forcibly arrested the attention

of Laura, was the wretched widow already mentioned. She was sitting at the foot of a crazy bedstead, which stood in one corner of the room. She appeared pale and even ghastly, her eyes stared wildly around, her ragged clothes scarcely covered her, and every thing about her person indicated a feeling as if she had ceased to take thought for any thing which might befall her, either good or bad. At her feet there lay a bundle of sticks, which she had been gathering in the wood, and which she had thrown down, as if weary of her work, of herself, and the whole world.

I shall not enter into every particular concerning the manner in which Laura introduced herself to this unhappy person. Suffice it to say, that her gentle and tender manner had sufficient influence, even during her first visit, to draw from the poor mourner a flood of tears, the first that she had shed for many days; and when Laura, after having given her a little present, promised to return and see her again, she expressed a desire that she would come very soon.

Laura's visit to the poor widow was soon and often repeated; and her attentions produced, undoubtedly, the most happy effect which could be desired: for though she could not excite her to take any interest in the things of this world, for which it was evident that she had lost all concern, nor induce her to the observance of more cleanly habits, although she supplied her with many comforts of clothes and linen, yet she was exceedingly successful in bringing her to the experimental knowledge of her Saviour. The soul of this poor widow became as the soul of a weaned child, and surely she behaved and quieted herself as a child that is weaned of its mother. (Psalm cxxxi. 2.) In her husband she seemed to have lost all that had reconciled her to a life of poverty and labour; and the circumstances of his death had given her a shock which proved too violent for her constitution, she probably never having been a strong woman.

When Laura first visited her, she seemed to have lost every object of affection on earth; and her ignorance was such, that she had scarcely even an idea of the Saviour. She looked forward to death as very near; for, from the time of her husband's fatal accident, she had invariably

maintained the opinion that she should not survive the birth of her child: but she viewed the probable approach of her dissolution with that kind of stupid hopelessness which often characterizes persons in a dark and ignorant state.

But it pleased the Lord so greatly to bless the pious instructions of Laura to this poor and forlorn creature, that she acquired an exceedingly accurate knowledge of the Gospel dispensation with wonderful rapidity; and, as the term of her earthly existence fast waned away, her love of the Saviour became more fervent, and her self-humiliation more sincere and earnest. But as she could not read herself, and as she was continually desirous to hear more and more of the holy Word of God, she became extremely importunate to Laura to come more frequently to see her and read to her; and as her house and her person were still, notwithstanding the care and the presents of this excellent young lady, in a state of disgusting disorder, it might certainly be deemed an act of severe self-denial for a young lady of her refined habits to spend, as she did, many hours in such a place and with such company. But the true Christian charity of Laura rendered her superior to all minor feelings; and, as she saw the poor widow's health gradually decline as the period of the birth of her child approached, she became increasingly attentive to her, and endeavoured to edify her with instructions that were more and more spiritual.

It is written, *He that watereth shall be watered also himself.* (Prov. xi. 25.) Accordingly, Laura, in endeavouring to bring forward this poor woman, made also a rapid advance herself, in the divine course. But of this advance no one could be less sensible than she herself was; for, as her views of the Gospel light grew increasingly clear, she became also more and more sensible of the depravity of her own heart, of her want of faith, and of the coldness of her love towards God: and thus as the Sun of Righteousness shone more brightly into her heart, its dark corners and secret channels, together with all their abominations, became more and more conspicuous to her, and she saw, with increasing clearness, that nothing less than the incarnation and death of God himself could have saved her soul from hell; for sins as great as

her own, and transgressions infinite and countless as hers had been, required, she sensibly felt, an atonement of infinite value: and thus she was at length brought to the humble conviction, that, had every individual of mankind, excepting herself, been faultless in their obedience, and wholly without sin, still, Christ must have died to save her only. Thus she was made sensible that she had been as guilty of the death of Christ, through her sins, as the wicked Jews were, who cried out, "Crucify him, crucify him;" and thus, having been led to consider the part that she had taken, as it were, in the death of Christ, she began, also, to feel her peculiar interest in its glorious benefits: and thus, through faith, she was led to consider Christ as her own peculiar and invaluable Friend. Thus, gradually, the whole scheme of salvation was unfolded to her, and she was progressively enabled to see the Father, through the Son, displaying his everlasting love for his creatures, and in the Son the Spirit also revealed himself, till, at length, the entire outline of the mystery of redemption appeared to her, and her hope of salvation was rendered complete.

Whatever were the discoveries made to Laura on this subject, she endeavoured to impart them all to the poor widow; and she was surprised to find, that many things, to the attainment of which she had arrived by long and intense meditation only, were instantly comprehended and received by this poor creature, whose mind was, evidently, on every subject but that of religion, dark and feeble in the extreme.

Laura had seen no preparation made in the house for the reception of the expected infant, and she mentioned the subject to the mother. "Alas!" answered the poor woman, "when my husband was brought in dead to me, I well knew that I should never live to nurse and tend my child. But I have provided a square of flannel to wrap it in; and I know that, if it lives, it will certainly be taken care of."

"By whom?" said Laura, wishing to hear what she had to say.

"I have no kin," replied the poor woman, "and I never knew my parents; and there are none belonging to my poor husband living in this country. But I trust



to you, dear Miss," added she, looking eagerly in Laura's face; "I know that you will take the babe, if God spares it, and nurse it for God."

Laura knew not what answer to make: she felt the awfulness and responsibility of such a charge, and she hardly had an idea how she should be able to fulfil it. But still she could not bring herself to say that she would not undertake the trust; and she was, therefore, silent.

The poor widow laid her emaciated, discoloured, and unwashed hands on Laura's delicate arm, and, construing her silence and hesitation into an assent to her proposal, she thanked her for her kindness, and said that she now should die in peace.

Laura procured for this poor creature the advice of a neighbouring medical man; but he gave her little hope of the mother's long surviving the birth of her child.

Laura had thought seriously of the request made to her by the widow, and she saw all the inconvenience which might attend her compliance with it. And first, the expense struck her: she had no house of her own in which to receive the child, and her income was limited. "If I take this child under my protection, it cannot," she considered, "cost me less than fifteen or twenty pounds a year; for I must place it out to nurse, and I should certainly desire that it might be well brought up, and well taught in a humble way; and this cannot be done without money."

These reflections were made by the young lady as she sat in her own room. "Twenty pounds a year," she repeated, looking in her desk for her last half-year's account-book: for since Laura had become pious, she had been very exact in keeping her accounts: "Twenty pounds a year," she continued, talking to herself, "that is, ten pounds for half a year will be requisite for the child's use. I must, if I take this baby, save ten pounds every half year, and from what can I save it?"

She now took a blank sheet of paper and her pen, and began to set down the articles in which she thought she might save, calculating according to her last half-year's expenditure. And first, she wrote down, lace, twenty shillings; five shillings for ribbon; a ring, one pound; a lace veil, fifteen shillings; a row of beads, five shillings;

copies for drawing, new music-books, &c. and a new publication, one pound. "All these things," said Laura, "I can do very well without; but still they do not all amount to the half of ten pounds. Laura continued to look on a little further, and she saw no article of expense which she could decently dispense with, till she came to the following entry. My journey to and from —, eight pounds ten. At this article Laura demurred. "My journeys," she said, "if I were to deny myself the pleasure of journeys, that sacrifice would make up the money in the summer, and also assist towards the next half-year. But I cannot wholly give up the idea of going out."

Here was another demur. "I found the opportunities, while I was out, so profitable to me," thought Laura, "to my soul, to my religious state; Mr. —'s society is so very valuable, his conversation so pleasant, he is so agreeable, and his countenance so fine!"

Laura's conscience now smote her: she threw down her account-book, and falling on her knees, "O my Saviour, my Saviour!" she exclaimed, "assist me to overcome this temptation!"

Laura was assisted; for she rose up determined to adopt the poor widow's baby.

The moment that Laura had made up her mind on this subject, she became much more easy and happy than she had previously been; for she now had a very sweet and interesting object to engage her thoughts. And thus, having fully resolved to adopt this baby, she began, like a good mother, to provide for all its little wants, even before it was born.

And who can tell how busy and happy she now was while converting her own fine old linen into little caps and shirts, and arranging them in a drawer in delicate order?—And more than this, she took the precaution to engage the cottager before spoken of, and who herself had an infant nearly a year old, to nurse her little charge for her, in case its poor mother should die; and thus she arranged every thing with a solicitude and secrecy which did her great credit as a Christian; for she had not forgotten her Saviour's injunction, *Let not thy left hand know what thy right hand doeth.*

Laura was an orphan; she had no parents nor near

connexions, and she was, therefore, at liberty to act, and to manage her little property, as she pleased. Young women who have friends and guardians, would do well always to consult them with respect to the acts of charity which they may meditate, and no doubt they would often find themselves benefited by the judicious and prudent advice of godly friends. But Laura had none to consult except her Bible and her God; and it pleased the Lord to inspire her with that wisdom which is superior to all earthly knowledge.

Laura had occupied all her spare hours during more than a month in making preparations for the child, which she might soon be called upon to adopt, when, one day, immediately after dinner, a little boy arrived from the forest to request Miss Laura to come immediately to see the poor widow, who, he said, was very ill, and called for her.

Laura promptly obeyed the summons, and, calling by the way at Mary Hill's cottage, in order to take up her usual company, she renewed her agreement with her, that she should take the infant if required.

When Laura reached the widow's cottage, the scene which presented itself to her susceptible mind was truly distressing. The infant which she had prepared herself to adopt had been born about two hours, and was lying, wrapped up in a blanket, upon the lap of the old woman who lodged in the house with the widow, a poor, feeble, and decrepid old creature, whom a long course of sin and misery had accustomed to contemplate woe with a heart unmoved. Accordingly, she sat, holding the newborn infant on her paralytic and trembling knees, without either evincing or feeling any other sentiment than that of a kind of stupid wonder at what might be the end of all this, supposing that the worst which was apprehended should happen, namely, the death of the poor mother. The nurse and two neighbours were standing by the bed of the suffering widow, with looks which instantly conveyed the strongest apprehensions to the mind of Laura.

Laura, on entering the cottage, first cast a pitying glance towards the infant; then, approaching the mother's bed, she looked first at the dying woman, (for dy-

ing she indeed was,) and then at the persons standing around. "We have done all we can," whispered the nurse: "we are giving her the wine that you provided; but nothing can save her."

"Where is Miss Laura?" said the expiring woman in a hollow voice.

Laura spoke, and took the hand of the poor widow: on which, she lifted up her dying eyes towards heaven, and said, "My Saviour, I thank thee that thou hast heard my prayer!" She then made an ineffectual effort to raise herself, and endeavoured also to speak, but she could not express herself clearly. Upon this, she became agitated, and strove to make herself understood by signs. But these failing of their purpose, she again attempted to speak, and made Laura comprehend that she wished for her to take the infant in her arms.

Laura, though trembling, never having touched so young an infant before, took the baby from the lap of the old woman, and brought it to its mother's bed; on which, the dying parent expressed full satisfaction, and said, "Take it, take it; keep it; it is yours."

On hearing the words of this awful bequest, Laura stood for a moment unable to speak; for she felt the high importance of the charge, and her heart was sensibly touched by the many affecting circumstances of the infant's case. As her mind, however, had been previously made up on what was to be her conduct towards the child, she inclined herself forward towards the dying woman, and said, "I accept your bequest, and, God assisting me, I will be a mother to your baby."

The poor woman had barely strength to say, "I thank thee, O my God!" and from that moment she seemed lost to all earthly concerns.

While Laura stood beside the bed of the poor woman, several changes passed upon her. She soon became unable to swallow the wine which the nurse put to her mouth, and she was now breathing her last, when Laura was awakened, by the cries of the infant, to other and more pressing concerns than the hopeless task of watching by the bed of the dying. The child still continuing to cry, she opened the blanket to give it more air. It had been hastily dressed in the clothes which Laura had pre-

pared for its reception. Laura gazed on it till a tear dropped from her eye on its little unformed and tender cheek. It was now in want of food, and, by a natural instinct, it had therefore conveyed its little sprawling hand to its mouth, and was sucking it greedily.

The last sigh of the mother, and the words of the nurse, who, as she closed the mouth of the corpse, exclaimed, "Ah, poor soul! thou art happy now! thou art with the dear Saviour on whom thou calledst so earnestly all the live-long night in thy trouble!" just reached the ear of Laura, as she again cautiously covered up the babe.

"Poor creature!" said Laura; "and did she call on her Saviour in her trouble? She is then happy: for *the Lord is nigh unto all that call upon him, to all that call upon him in truth. He will fulfil the desire of them that fear him: he also will hear their cry, and will save them.*" (Psalm. cxlv. 18, 19.)

Laura then, still holding the babe in her arms, cast a farewell glance at the poor corpse, and, as if it could hear her, she repeated her assurance that she would never forsake the babe; and then, pathetically bidding the lifeless body a long adieu in the name of the infant, she wrapped her shawl around the baby, and walked out of the cottage followed by her little attendant.

The baby was hungry and Laura was anxious to put it in the arms of the nurse before the evening set in; and as the little thing was so exceedingly young and tender, she carried it herself, and could not think of intrusting it to the charge of her little handmaid.

The road along which Laura had to go, in order to convey the baby to the poor woman who was to nurse it, was very unfrequented. Laura had hitherto never met any one in it but poor working people. She therefore now concluded that she should pass unobserved, as on former occasions. But herein she was mistaken; for she had scarcely entered that part of the lane which ran under the park before mentioned, when she saw Belinda coming towards her, with three or four of her young companions, accompanied by the young clergyman of whom mention has been already so often made.

The first feeling of Laura was that of shame at her be-



ing thus discovered in such a situation, and she made a motion to consign the infant to the arms of her little companion; but, as she opened the flannel to see whether all were well before she surrendered it, strong emotions of love and pity again excited her heart, and a something which she could not define rose up to her throat, and produced a slight sensation of suffocation. The little helpless one had opened its eyes while under the shade of the shawl; but when that was removed, it closed them, as unable to bear the light, and presented such a picture of utter defencelessness and imbecility, that Laura drew it again closer to her bosom, and said within herself, "No, I will not part with you, my poor infant, but to place you in the arms of one who is better able to administer to your wants than I am." Her mind then reverted to the poor pale corpse that she had just left; and she was thus prepared, as she trusted, with some confidence to meet her companions. Nevertheless, as they drew near, she felt her cheeks begin to glow, and this glow was, doubtless, not a little increased, when Belinda, who was leaning on the arm of Mr. Woodfield, called to her while still at some distance, saying, "Why, my dear Laura, where do you come from? and what can you possibly have got there wrapped so carefully under your shawl?"

"I will explain this to you another time," replied Laura, affecting an ease which she did not feel, and attempting to pass onward.

But Belinda and her companions took sufficient care that she should not escape before they had satisfied their curiosity; for they all gathered themselves close round her, and so entirely intercepted her way that it was impossible for her to advance.

Laura was now compelled to listen to all the inquiries and remarks of her companions, who, by slightly raising the shawl, had satisfied themselves that she was actually carrying an infant in her arms, as they had at first suspected. Laura, however, though she endeavoured to appear undisturbed, was much vexed at being thus delayed and, finding that her inquisitive young companions would not otherwise be satisfied, she promised that she would explain every thing to them when they met at supper, if they would now let her go without further molestation.

and thus they permitted her to proceed. Before, however, she was quite clear of them, she heard Belinda say to Mr. Woodfield, "That Laura is a dear good girl; but she has such odd ways, that one does not know what to make of them."

Laura was a little disconcerted by this remark: but she soon forgot this and every other selfish feeling, in the joy that she experienced when the kind cottager received the little baby into her bosom, and administered to her that nourishment which new-born infants so eagerly desire, and which thus furnishes an emblem of the pure doctrines of the Gospel, which the regenerate soul receives with such ardent appetite and sincere relish.

Laura had now leisure to contemplate her little adopted charge. She rejoiced much that it was a girl, and that it gave the promise of health and strength: and no tender mother could have been more lavish in assurances of her rendering ample satisfaction to the nurse, if she succeeded in rearing the child, than Laura was to Mrs. Hill.

Laura staid to see the baby well fed, and laid, in a sweet sleep, in a large wicker cradle, which had enshrined all the cottage children in succession, to the number of seven, before she thought of returning to the hall.

The party were just assembling for supper, when Laura, full of the important events of the evening, and expecting that she should be called upon for an explanation of all that had befallen her, entered the supper-room. But, instead of this explanation being required, her appearance was scarcely observed by any one, and when she sat down, not a single question was put to her.

The cause of this apparent unconcern about Laura's adventure was, that her young friends had already made themselves acquainted with all they wished to know, and they were at this time engaged in discussing sundry proposals for a female club, of which Mrs. Oldfield was to be lady patroness, and Belinda president.

During the greater part of the time allotted for supper, Belinda warmly held forth in recommendation of this club, which, she said, if arranged according to the plan that she advised, would extend its benign influence to the removal of every distress, which money could relieve, in the parish. In corroboration of this assertion, she pro-

duced a printed volume, containing an account of an establishment of this nature which had been instituted somewhere else, and representing the astonishingly good effects which it had produced. And, after supper, she called for pen, ink, and paper, and insisted, that Mr. Woodfield should lose no time in writing down the resolutions of the company on the subject.

While the young gentleman was thus occupied, one of the party proposed an amendment of some of the rules, and this introduced new discussions; during which, the secretary sat, with his pen in his hand, listening for the decisions.

In the mean time, Laura, having ascertained that her opinion was not likely to be asked, had, in imagination, wandered away from the present company to the orphan baby, which she hoped was sleeping in the arms of its nurse, and her thoughts led her, still further, to the cottage on the brink of the pool where the corpse of the poor mother lay, perhaps at that moment deserted and forgotten by all the world. From this mournful scene, her mind, by a natural connexion, began to mount on the wings of faith, to the Saviour, the hope of the pious dying, and the joy of the holy dead: and she was endeavouring to picture to herself the happiness of the redeemed spirit, set free from this mortal body and admitted into the glorious presence of the Lord, when, suddenly she was recalled from this train of interesting reflection by Belinda, who, addressing her in a voice of much self-importance, said, as if in connexion with something which had gone before, "And if our plans succeed—and they will be sure to do so, if the excellent prospectus which I have had the pleasure of laying before the company is adhered to—we shall very soon be able to relieve you, my dear Laura, from the charge you have so laudably taken upon yourself; and, at any rate, we shall not, on any account, allow the whole burden to lie upon you. I must insist upon being allowed the pleasure of assisting you; and I am sure that there is not one in the present company who will not put in her claim for the same privilege."

Laura thanked her young friends, and was about to embrace that opportunity of explaining how the infant

came into her hands, an explanation which she considered due to the company in general, and to Mrs. Oldfield in particular; but before she had made up her mind how to begin her statement, Belinda had diverged from the point, and had commenced a story, in which she gave an account of her having been present at a death-bed scene, somewhat similar to that of the poor widow, and then she entered into an explicit description of her own acute feelings on the occasion.

Laura now perceived, by the connexion between Belinda's story and the death which she herself had witnessed that evening, that the greater part, if not the whole of her adventures were already known to the company, but by what means they had become so, she knew not. This circumstance, however, accounted for the apparent want of curiosity which she had wondered at in her young friends. She therefore concluded that she might now be spared all further explanations: and, as the discussions on the subject of the club continued to be carried on with great warmth, she contrived to withdraw to her repose.

You may rest fully assured that Laura did not forget her baby that evening in her prayers; and the next morning, by daybreak, she was risen, and had made up a small bundle of clothes to carry to the little orphan.

Her heart beat when she drew near the cottage-door, fearing that she might not find the little tender creature alive; but, on her entering, its nurse gave her an excellent account of its night's rest, and introduced Laura into her little chamber, in order that she might see it still asleep in the warm corner in which Mrs. Hill had left it.

There are some moments of life, in which the believer has a kind of foretaste of almost heavenly joy. Laura had a perception of this peculiar delight during the whole of the time which was employed in her walk back from the cottage to the hall, after she had seen her baby lying so sweetly asleep. Many exceedingly transporting reflections were vouchsafed to her during these moments: and she was favoured with a clear and a most reviving manifestation of the love of the Saviour to his sinful and distressed creatures, and especially of his goodness towards the poor widow and her orphan baby, in providing the

one with the means of becoming wise unto salvation, and the other with every supply requisite for her present wants.

When Laura met her young friends at breakfast, she inquired whether any thing had been settled concerning the club; but she was put off with a very vague reply.

Belinda was writing at a side-table, from which she arose in a few minutes, to communicate her ideas. "I have been thinking," said she, "that it would have a most beautiful and elegant effect, Mrs. Oldfield, if we were all to wear a kind of uniform. For instance, if we all wore chip hats, decorated with white satin, and mantles trimmed with the same."

This idea, on which Belinda enlarged considerably, was received with great eclat by the company at large. Laura, however, looked grave, and even ventured to say, that if money were spent on things of this kind, their charitable plans must be greatly abridged.

Belinda and several others of her companions had much to say on this subject. "Benevolence," said she, "must not run into excess. The benefit of trade is to be considered, and if the higher orders cease to dress conformably with their station, there will be no indications of rank, and all distinctions in society will be confused and lost."

Belinda then particularly cautioned Laura against excess in her charities and against the appearance of oddness, and peculiarity, which, she said, commonly proceeded from pride; and Mrs. Oldfield advised her seriously to deliberate, before she burdened herself with the charge of an infant, which she might hereafter find a very heavy and painful weight upon her.

Laura pleaded, that throughout Scripture there was a blessing pronounced upon those who befriended the fatherless and the widows; that she had done only what she considered herself called upon to do in common humanity; and that she trusted in God, if he saw that her motives were pure, that he would never give her occasion to repent of her conduct; but that, if he saw that there was aught either of pride or selfishness in her actions, he would do well to try them in the fire of affliction and persecution.



Mrs. Oldfield replied, that Miss Laura spoke like a young woman who did not know what persecution and afflictions were, and added, that the advice which she now gave her proceeded only from friendship. She informed her, that the parish to which the infant belonged might be compelled to keep it, and that, if Laura forsook it, it still would not be left to starve.

Laura replied, that she had been in the habit of spending greater sums on luxuries, trinkets, and trifles, than would supply the poor child in question with more than it could want, as she meant to bring it up in the condition to which it was born; and that she hoped that her kind friends would, therefore, not blame her for sparing from herself what she could so well do without.

Mrs. Oldfield still persisted in affirming, that whatever she might choose now to do, she still did wrong in undertaking what might hereafter prove a burden to her.

Laura might have answered, "The present time only is all that a mortal being can say is actually at his command, and let him, therefore, take care to fill up each passing hour with such good works as may be in his power, leaving the rest to God;" and, further, she might have added, that the ability of the liberal man is generally enlarged in a degree equal to that of his faith, and that persons seldom find that their past charities lay them under subsequent burdens. Laura was, however, young, and, had she been able to adduce such arguments on her own side, she probably would have done as well to receive, as she did, the rebukes of her companions in humility and comparative silence. As it was, however, though she was not convinced by the arguments employed against her, yet she was silenced by them, and was, therefore, glad to embrace the first opportunity of escaping to her own room, from whence she soon afterwards proceeded to pay a second visit to her baby.

Time would fail, were I to attempt to bring before you an account of the various acts of kindness which Laura exercised towards her little adopted one, and how she delighted in discovering every step that the infant took towards improvement. I forbear to say how pleased she was when it first followed the light of a candle around the cottage with its eyes of dark blue, and how

she exulted when those eyes were first lighted up with a smile which threw intelligence into every dimpled feature.

It was so ordered by Providence, that the infant was remarkably pleasing, and the delicate yet humble state of neatness in which Laura kept it added not a little to its infantine attractions. All, therefore, as far as the infant was concerned, was agreeable and encouraging; and Laura had hitherto found her self-denial more than repaid by the smiles of the little orphan by which, in fact, she was so much attracted, that she insensibly became almost entirely absorbed by them, and she, therefore, began to loose all interest in every other charitable duty, excepting the visiting of the poor in the wood.

This spirit by degrees alienated her from her companions, and she thus acquired, without knowing it, a kind of contemptuous disregard of whatever they either proposed or actually performed in the way of doing good: for she could not but remark a circumstance which is common with respect to those who act in societies, that the good effects produced were not commensurate with the trouble and bustle excited, and she was now become weary of all that parade, which brought forth so little fruit; and, consequently, she allowed herself to treat all their proposals with uniform and perfect indifference: and thus, whatever weight and influence she might possess in the society, was used by her to the hindrance of that which was right and useful rather than to its promotion.

And in this place we may well take occasion to remark that in whatever degree selfishness operates in the conduct, it obstructs usefulness in an equal proportion. The truly humble Christian should always be ready to assist in every work of kindness and charity, without considering how far that work either may or may not conduce to his own particular credit or advancement. Blessed are they who seek the honor which cometh of God rather than that which cometh from man. There are, however, but few characters which are not biassed in their conduct towards their neighbours by selfishness, or by that which differs only from absolute selfishness in a very slight degree. When a selfish spirit, or a party spirit, which is

only a particular modification of a selfish one, *ελευθερία* its any work of benevolence, that work will either be grievously marred in its very appearance, or wholly deprived of its vitality and usefulness, even though its appearance may continue to be imposing; and it may often be remarked, that a selfish and narrow-minded character, though in the main desiring to act well, as often obstructs the good intentions of his neighbours as he promotes his own schemes, and thus, in the long run, he adds very little to the common stock of human happiness.

The various ways in which usefulness in general is obstructed by a selfish or party spirit cannot here be fully enumerated and explained; but we will, however, take occasion to point out some few of them.

There are many instances in which characters are, individually, so wedded to their own peculiar modes of doing good, that they either hinder or oppose the exertions of every other person whose operations of charity do not exactly coincide with their own; and thus much mischief is done, or, rather, much good is prevented. Could a well-meaning but selfish individual of this character only examine an accurate calculation of all the good of which (humanly speaking) he had been the prevention by this narrow spirit, the awful total would perhaps drive him to despair.

When one minister or teacher has, through jealousy, weakened the influence of another, whom he knows to be upon the whole a godly man, though differing from him on some minor points, he is, in a certain sense, accountable for every soul which (humanly speaking) might have been benefited but for his interference.

When a minister or teacher aims to display his own eloquence, learning, or talent, rather than to promote the glory of God, his instructions fail of the only end to which they ought to lead, and he thus obstructs his usefulness in the most material point. He may, indeed, procure to himself admirers and followers, but he is awfully accountable for the souls which he leads, not to the worship of the living God, but to the service of a perishing idol.

Wherever, in minor points, an individual, through an

overweening regard to self, neglects to add whatever degree of influence he may possess to any undertaking of his neighbour, the tendency of which is to promote the glory of God and the advantage of his fellow creatures, he must consider himself accountable for all the good that he may have thus prevented: and it is scarcely credible how much injury is in this way done in society by well-meaning persons, and that through a spirit of selfishness or of party, of which the individual principally concerned is perhaps by no means aware; so true it is, that *The heart is deceitful above all things*. How wantonly often in common discourse do we cast our own individual influence into the scale which weighs against the projected benevolent designs of some friend or brother in Christ! thereby subjecting ourselves to a responsibility which we are not able to bear. For if I prevent my brother's usefulness in the least degree, I am bound to make up every tittle of that loss to my fellow men; and the more important the point in which I have thus wantonly interfered, the more serious is my weight of responsibility.—But to return to my story.

It was not long before Belinda, who had all along regarded Laura as a kind of rival, or, at least, as one who chose to assert her own independence, discovered this flaw in Laura's charity, and therefore took occasion to represent to her the error into which she had fallen; for Belinda was very keen-sighted and accurate in discerning the faults of others, though, in common with many, she was very blind to her own. "My dear Laura," she said, "you do a great deal of good, and are very kind, I know, and so forth, and the poor people in your wood are very much obliged to you. But we have nothing for which to thank you; for you take no pleasure in any of our plans and pursuits, and, indeed, by your grave and reserved manner, you throw cold water on all that we are doing."

This was very true, and Laura felt the rebuke to be just. She withdrew to her own apartment, and meditated upon it. For a time, her mind rose against conviction; and she buoyed herself up with the idea, that, though she was not discussing and planning acts of charity with her companions, she was, nevertheless, much

better employed, and that she herself, singly, and without help, had done more than the whole body of them together had accomplished. But it pleased God, by the power of his Holy Spirit, after a while, to cast down these high thoughts, and to quicken her to a just sense of her fault; and now she clearly perceived that a degree of pride and self-complacency had insinuated themselves into her works of charity, and threatened presently utterly to destroy them.

On making this discovery, she first humbled herself before her God, and, next, went to seek Belinda, to whom she, at once, candidly acknowledged her error, and besought her forgiveness, promising, that, by the divine help, she would endeavour to reform her conduct in the point on which she had failed.

Belinda, who possessed a considerable share of generosity of disposition, was touched by this expression of humility in Laura; and from that time a better mutual understanding grew between these young ladies, although there still continued to be a material difference in their characters.

Laura thenceforward deemed it necessary to put a constraint upon herself, and to give more time to the society of her young companions, and to enter with a more lively interest into their works of benevolence; and though there was much in what they did which vexed and fatigued her, yet she considered it a duty to bear with them, not only with patience, but with apparent pleasure, and she was thus enabled sometimes to influence their discussions to the advancement of the glory of God.

In order to spare time for her companions without abridging the hours usually devoted to her baby, and to other poor people, Laura was obliged to encroach on those periods which she had previously set apart for her own private amusement and improvement; and hence she was compelled to the observance of a continual course of self-denial, which, by the divine help, added to the strength and graciousness of her character.

In this way four years rolled along, without any considerable change having taken place in the affairs of the family at the hall, excepting that, from the time when Laura had changed her reserved and retiring habits



for a more courteous and accommodating course of conduct, she had become increasingly loved in the society, and had acquired a gentle and persuasive influence, by which she had been enabled to do much good among the sisterhood.

But here I think it necessary to make some remarks on the term, "accommodating," lest my youthful readers should mistake me, and suppose that I am giving countenance to the pernicious idea, that it is requisite, in order to do good, to be conformed to the world: which idea is directly contrary to the instruction of the apostle, who saith—*I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service. And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect will of God.* (Rom. xii. 1, 2.)

We must, therefore, as Christians, be especially careful not to accommodate ourselves, in the least degree, to the sinful fashions of the world; and we are, as such, doubtless, required to make a much more entire renunciation of its pomps and vanities than most of us are inclined to admit. But there are certain points which rather affect the whims, tastes, and peculiar feelings of our neighbour, than either his religion or morals, in which a Christian ought to exercise a considerable degree of forbearance and courtesy. But, owing to the pride and depravity of our nature, these are the points on which men, for the most part, contend with the strongest vehemence: and that for this reason, that the whims and humours of our neighbours are more apt to interfere and clash with our own, in our common intercourse with them, than are those qualities on which may hereafter depend either their everlasting joy or misery.

Having thus, I trust, sufficiently guarded the word "accommodating" from being wrested to an injurious purpose, I proceed.

At the end of the time above-mentioned, the brother of Belinda, whom we shall call Eusebius, a young man of respectable character and fortune, came to see his sister, and to spend a few days with her. He was much

pleased with Laura, and, after a suitable time, he made to her proposals of marriage.

It is difficult for a young woman to form a correct idea of the man who is paying his addresses to her. The time of courtship is a period during which the minds of both parties are under strong influence, and therefore a man may then seem to be what he is not, without actually intending to play the hypocrite. Hence appears both the wisdom and the safety of our referring the subject of marriage to the Lord, and, in fact, of our entirely committing this concern especially into the hand of Him by whom the thoughts of all hearts are *understood even afar off*.

In this respect Laura was not wanting in her important duty. She prayed that she might be directed, and she was led to accept Eusebius, who was a character which, upon the whole, promised happiness in such a union with him, though he had by no means those clear and exalted views with which Laura was blessed.

When Laura was first deliberating about taking the widow's infant under her charge, she had, as I have already intimated, a short conflict in her mind concerning a young clergyman in the house where she had spent some months during the foregoing summer.—By her appropriating the money which she had usually allotted to her journeys to the use of the child, she had apparently precluded every chance of her seeing this young man again; and though she had continued for several months to remember him from time to time with some partiality, yet she had struggled against the feeling, and had also been led to see the kindness of Providence in having induced her so to do; for, before many months had elapsed, she received a letter from his sister, informing her that he was likely to enter speedily into the marriage state with a young lady to whom he had been attached for some years.

In this instance, Laura was thus made to feel the kindness and wisdom by which the Lord had diverted her thoughts and affections from that object, which would have proved only a source of mortification to her, to one in which she had hitherto tasted nothing but pure delight.

And here, if my reader is not already wearied with my

digressions, let me proceed to point out the superior state of that young person whose affections are not engaged by self, and self-gratification, to one whose object is self in any degree or under any modification. With what freedom does the one walk through all the numerous and varying scenes of life! with what dignity and ease of manner and carriage, compared to the other! and, finally, to what a variety of afflictions and mortifications is that young person exposed whose feelings are centered in self, in comparison with the individual who, forgetting self, seeks to serve her God with all her heart, and to love her neighbour as herself!

But this blessed state of mind can in no degree be attained but by those who seek deliverance from the bondage of their selfish feelings in the help and power of the Lord; according to the language of the prophet Isaiah: *Hast thou not known, hast thou not heard, that the everlasting God, the Lord, the Creator of the ends of the earth, fainteth not, neither is weary? there is no searching of his understanding. He giveth power to the faint, and to them that have no might he increaseth strength.* (Isaiah xl. 28, 29.)

Laura had, therefore, long ceased to think of the gentleman above alluded to, and she was, in consequence, at liberty to consider the merits of Eusebius; but before she accepted his hand, she made a point of informing him of the charge that she had undertaken in the care of little Sally, and she also gently hinted, that she had determined to enter into no engagement whatever, unless she might be permitted to continue her protection of this poor orphan.

Eusebius was too much attached to Laura to deem this a consideration of any difficulty, and he therefore answered, in a lover-like manner, that her will would be a law to him for life, and that her pleasure would ever be his delight.

This, however, did not quite satisfy Laura, who possessed a sober mind, which looked to actions rather than to words, and she, therefore, insisted upon entering into particulars. "This infant," she said, "has hitherto cost me about fifteen pounds a year; and I should be sorry to place myself in any situation in which I could not con-

tinue to do as much for her as I have hitherto done. May I then trust that you will hereafter allow so much of my property to be devoted to this purpose?"

"Yes," replied Eusebius, "and, did you require it, twice and thrice as much."

"I hope," replied Laura, "that my moderation will prevent your ever having reason to repent of this indulgence."

Laura now being made easy on this head, and hoping that she should even be better able to serve the child effectually in a house of her own than if she continued single, accepted the proposal of Eusebius, and was married, and taken to his house, which was an agreeable and commodious habitation, situated about half a mile from a small market town, and standing in a pleasant garden.

Before she went from the hall, Laura gave a large Bible, and a liberal present in money, to each of the poor families in the forest. She also handsomely rewarded little Sally's nurse, and promised to make her an annual present, and she took little Sally with her in the carriage which conveyed her from the church.

It was settled that Belinda should make her brother a long visit on his marriage; an arrangement with which Laura would gladly have dispensed, as Belinda was of an overbearing spirit, and her profession was destitute of that simplicity which Laura considered as essential to the Christian character. Laura, however, had learned from no man, for she had no human teacher, but by the Holy Spirit himself she had been taught to consider herself as little as possible in every arrangement; she therefore did not oppose the intended long visit, which ended in the final establishment of Belinda in her brother's house, and she took scarcely any notice of any little disagreeablenesses which might proceed from the overbearing manner of Belinda, so long as her interference did not obstruct the interests of religion.

Laura made her instruction and management of Sally a matter of much prayer and reflection; she considered, that if she altogether left her with the servants, she would be liable to be ill used, and perhaps to learn much that was amiss. She therefore intrusted her to the care of one

particular servant, and allotted her a little play-room, where she placed her bed, and a few shelves well stored with play things, and she herself devoted to her all the time that she could spare when her husband was otherwise engaged. Thus she would often leave Belinda's side to go up to Sally's closet, and spend hours with her, teaching her, and dressing her doll, and telling her Scripture stories.

Sally was like all other children: she had the same feelings, arising from the same natural depravity. She fixed her affections on Laura in the same manner that she would have done on her own mother: she would run to meet her, jump on her lap, throw her arms round her neck, and lean her whole weight upon her; she would also have her fits of naughtiness, passion, sulking, untidiness, and greediness. All these things Laura had been prepared to expect; and she considered that it was her business, as the adopted mother of this infant, to direct and regulate, as much as she could, her affections and habits, and to lead her to God. But her own regard for the child, she considered, was not to be habitually influenced by its infantine faults, any more than the love of Christ for his people suffers variation from their wayward and inconstant frames. He is, therefore, truly styled, *Jesus Christ the same yesterday, and to-day, and for ever*; (Heb. xiii. 8.) and they among the children of men who most nearly approach towards the heavenly pattern are the least liable to be influenced and to vary according to events and external circumstances.

Laura, having once obtained the leave of Eusebius for the admission of little Sally into the family, never troubled him any further with her concerns, and every thing relative to the child passed on smoothly for some months. If Sally appeared before Eusebius, it was on proper occasions, and when she was neatly dressed, and directed how to behave. He was never teased with any little private difficulties concerning her; and Laura would often take occasion to thank him for the protection that he afforded the child, and for the kindness that he extended towards her. Thus all went on well, till Belinda, whose natural and indulged love of self occasioned that restlessness which selfishness always produces, began to pry



into the management of little Sally; and, seeing Laura one day look pale, after having corrected the child for some misdemeanour, she began to admonish her sister-in-law on the subject. "My dear Laura," she said, "you devote too much of your time to that child; and I do not think that the behaviour of the child towards you is that which you have a right to expect: she is your inferior and she therefore has no right to take those liberties with you of sitting on your lap, and putting her arms round your neck, which might be permitted in an equal. Yet this, I grant, might be borne, being only an excess of laudable feelings: but what can be said in extenuation of her fits of naughtiness and obstinacy? what return is this to you for all your kindness? What would have been her situation had you not taken pity on her?—what but a workhouse, or perhaps an early grave?"

Here Laura interrupted her sister, saying, "And pray, my dear Belinda, how would it be possible to make a child of little more than four years of age comprehend what she owes to me? Were she four times four, she could have but a very inadequate idea of these obligations; and perhaps she must wait, not only till she is a mother herself, but till she has opened her eyes upon a state of disembodied existence, before she can form an idea of what she owes to her heavenly Father, who has made use of me as a humble instrument to rescue her from the vice and misery of a workhouse; and I shall think nothing of it, even though she might never thank me till that time."

"Upon my word," said Belinda, "your views, my dear sister, are very singular."

"And wherefore?" asked Laura. "Let us judge only from what we see among children with respect to their natural parents; and then point out to me, if you can, any young people who are properly sensible of the duty and gratitude that they owe to those who gave them birth. And, to go a step higher, who of us has a proper sense of our duty to God, and of the gratitude which we owe to him?"

Belinda seemed to be staggered, for a moment, by this reasoning, and to have nothing to say. But presently she recovered herself, and added, "My dear Laura, your ar-

guments do not bear precisely upon the subject in question, because they refer to the relative duties between parents and children; and I grant that mutual forbearance must be exercised in these relations. But, because parents must put up with their children's faults and infirmities, does it ensue, that you are to endure, in the same degree, the defects and perverseness of a little child whom you have taken in for pure charity? Think to what self-denial you have subjected yourself, in order to support this babe in ease and comfort for several years past, and how you still devote all your leisure time to this same object; and is it reasonable that you should continue so to do, without your having even the reward of seeing gratitude and a desire to please you in the object of all your care? It was but half an hour ago that I heard the child cry out with passion, because you compelled her to perform some little task."

"And you also saw me," replied Laura, "administering the rod to her, which presently put all to rights; and what, my dear sister, is remarkable in all this transaction? Should it please God to give me children of my own, I shall expect sometimes to have scenes of this kind to encounter again."

"But such obstinacy," said Belinda, "from an orphan, a child reared by charity; and such ingratitude towards the kind friend who has been more than a mother!"

"I repeat, my dear sister," said Laura, "that this child is utterly incapable even of understanding what she owes me. And do we not know, that every child of Adam is born under the dominion of Satan, and must be expected, till grace has advanced its work, even to break out into strong irruptions of sin?"

Belinda still continued to assert that there was in Sally an unwarrantable degree of what was very wrong; and Laura, as soon as possible, made her escape from the debate into her own room, where a gentle flood of tears relieved her heart from oppression.

As Laura aimed to avoid, as much as possible, all occasion of dispute with respect to Sally, and as, when her little ward required correction, she administered it as privately as she could, after the contest above mentioned every thing concerning the child passed on very quietly,

till the prospect presented itself that Laura herself would eventually become a mother. The hope was a pleasing one to all the family, and Laura took great delight in preparing for the little stranger.

She was one day thus employed when little Sally was playing by her side; and the child, seeing a small garment, and not knowing for whom it could be intended, very naturally asked if it was for herself.

"No, my dear," said Laura; "it is for a baby whom you are to love when it comes."

"Was not I a baby, ma'am, when you took me first?" said Sally.

"Yes," said Laura, "a very little baby."

"And did you love me then, ma'am?" asked the little girl.

"Very, very much," said Laura.

"And will you love me when the other baby comes?"

"Yes, my dear child," replied Laura: "why do you ask?"

"Because," replied Sally, "I heard somebody say, that when you have another baby you will not love me."

"Those were very wicked words," returned Laura, taking the child in her lap. "I always shall love you, my little Sally, as I have loved you from the time that you were first put in my arms."

The little child put her arms round Laura's neck, and kissed her, and then, being perfectly satisfied, went to play. But Laura could not so easily forget this circumstance. "I see," she said to herself, "what the world expects of me: when I have a child of my own, it is concluded that I shall cease to love this orphan. And why is such an expectation entertained? Because such conduct is in unison with the general experience of the depraved nature of man. Should not this be a warning to me to watch against my own weakness? and should it not lead me to prayer, that I may be strengthened to resist this temptation, and that I may be enabled, amidst all circumstances, to persevere in this work which I have undertaken?"

Laura then reflected on the various instances which had fallen under her own observation, of persons, who having undertaken works of charity, and having gone

on for a time with great warmth and zeal, had afterwards gradually grown weary in well-doing, and who had apparently found reason to prove that it was become their duty now to desist from their good works. She, however, prayed that she might be endued with that charity which suffereth long and is kind; (I Cor. xiii. 4.) and it will eventually appear that her prayer was heard.

Soon after this conversation, Belinda again proceeded to busy herself about the subject of Sally, and that in the presence of her brother, a circumstance which much surprised Laura. This excellent young lady endeavoured, however, to be upon her guard, and to answer calmly, though she was much vexed.

"It is a pity, my dear sister," said Belinda, "in your present state of health, that you should fatigue yourself so much with Sally as you do. You look pale; and I really think that ~~it is owing to you~~ confining yourself for so many hours every day in that little hole which Sally occupies."

Eusebius immediately sanctioned his sister's words with evident alarm, and added, "Laura, my dear, I must insist upon it that you do not sacrifice your health to that child: she would do very well under the care of the housemaid."

"I promise you, my love," replied Laura, "that I will do no more for Sally than is quite agreeable and easy to me. So do not in the least disturb yourself on that head."

"You are fond of the child," rejoined Belinda, "and therefore do not know how much you are engaged with her every day, my dear sister."

Eusebius repeated his injunctions, that Laura should not fatigue herself; and there the matter rested for the present.

But Belinda again introduced the subject in the course of a few days, and again shortly after, till, in fact, she had excited a kind of soreness on the point in the mind of her brother; insomuch so, that when by chance he heard Sally's voice, whether in play or otherwise, he would utter some exclamation of displeasure, or send some angry message, desiring that the child might be kept out of his hearing, and this in the presence of

Laura, who feared to interfere, lest it should make things worse.

Now Belinda, after all, was not, upon the whole, an unfeeling woman. She entertained no dislike against the child, and she cherished a general wish to do good and to be pious. But she was selfish: she regarded her own reputation rather than the glory of God; and she could not enter with cordiality and pleasure into any good work in which she had not a conspicuous part. She was not properly sensible of the finite nature of the capacity of man, and consequently, not aware how little his mind is able to grasp at once, and she fancied that she could do every thing better than it was done by others. She was, therefore, constantly meddling with the concerns of those about her; and it is inconceivable what mischief is done by persons of this character.

When we are required to assist, in a subordinate way, in the promotion of the objects and undertakings of others, it is a very difficult attainment for us readily thus to co-operate, and it requires as much wisdom, and more self-denial, to forward the good works of others, than to originate and to apply plans for the beginnings of doing good.

There are some children of a particularly quiet and manageable disposition, children that, when they are put into a room to play, will continue there from morning till night without being heard. But this was not Sally's character: she was a busy, enterprising little creature, constantly trying experiments, and as regularly doing mischief.

Many a time, since her marriage, had Laura concealed the little unlucky accidents which Sally had met with; and though she privately corrected her for her misdemeanors, she was careful in having them repaired unknown to any one. But when Laura was confined, many of these little misfortunes were brought to light; and Laura, more than once after the birth of her baby, was affected even to tears by the cries of Sally, when Belinda was chastising her, and she felt that the utmost noise which Sally could have made in her play, would have disturbed her much less than the cries of distress of the poor orphan.



It is an old saying, that those persons who do not love children have no right to correct them; and Laura now sensibly felt that no one besides herself had a right to correct Sally. She, however, said nothing, but, as soon as she was again able to get about, she established her little Sally in the nursery with the nurse and the baby; and, as she herself spent many hours of each day in the nursery, she had an opportunity of seeing that justice was done to Sally.

It happened that the nurse employed by Laura was a woman of right principles, and correct judgment, and she satisfied her mistress in her conduct with respect to Sally, observing the judicious medium between indulgence and harshness.

It is not my present business to give a particular account of Laura's family management. Suffice it to say, that she was a good mother, and she had a numerous family. She devoted much of her time to her children, and they were at once her occupation and delight.

Sally, as she advanced in years, had her proper station appointed her in the nursery, where every thing was taught her by which she might be rendered a pious, well-informed, and useful woman, for that line of life in which she might probably be called to move: but while Laura endeavoured to prepare her for a humble state of life, she still treated her with all the affection and tenderness of an own child. Sally told all her little complaints freely and candidly to Laura. When oppressed by grief, she would run and weep in her bosom; and when pleased, she always looked for Laura to share her joys with her. Thus she grew up in the exercise of all those feelings which a child ought to cherish for a mother; and the influence which Laura, consequently, had with her was such as a parent possesses over a daughter.

In the mean time, Sally, by a happy concurrence of circumstances, was protected from the annoyance of Belinda's busy spirit; for Belinda's apartment was distant from the nursery, which was Sally's habitual scene of action; and Eusebius seemed to have forgotten that such a person as Sally existed, excepting when he occasionally saw her; and this his apparent indifference about her

arose not from any unkindness, but because his business lay in another line.

Thus the poor orphan at length attained her fifteenth year, at about which time Laura was taken so ill, that it was found necessary for her to leave home, and go to Bath, for some months. As she was to be received in the house of a friend, it was impossible for her to take more than one child with her; and that child could not be Sally, because in this friend's house there was no place between the parlour and a kitchen, full perhaps of profligate servants, where this poor child might expect to find an accommodation. Laura was obliged, therefore, to leave this poor orphan, together with her own children, under the care of Belinda, who was to superintend the concerns of her sister-in-law's house during her absence.

The tender mother felt no further uneasiness on account of this separation from her own children than what was natural in her parting for the first time for several months from them. She knew that Belinda loved her little nephews and nieces, and that she would, at the same time that she corrected them, if they did wrong, treat them with all proper consideration, and that, in case of any misdemeanor, she would make every desirable allowance for them. But she dreaded lest Belinda's meddling spirit should be excited to the injury of Sally; for Belinda had, in her own estimation, a variety of notable sentiments and expressions concerning persons of inferior conditions; and though she exerted herself much in actual works of charity, she, nevertheless, was entirely destitute of that spirit which suffereth long.

Laura could find, however, no alternative. She must go, and she must leave Sally, whose tears and sobs, when she bade her farewell, did not a little add to her apprehensions. She did not, however, think it judicious even to hint to Belinda, that she had her fears lest she might prove unkind to Sally; for, well knowing Belinda's high and independent spirit, she was apprehensive that such a hint might only excite in her a feeling still more unpropitious to the welfare of the orphan.

Thus Sally was left, and she soon felt the want of that

solicitude which had hitherto preserved her, with all the tenderness of maternal love, from those rubs which unprotected youth must ever experience in the world at large.

Sally felt, from a kind of never-failing instinct, that the sentiments of Belinda towards her were very different from those of her dear mamma, as she always called Laura, when she dared, abridging the last letter on occasions when she thought that the less familiar term of ma'am would be better received. She spent the first two days of Laura's absence in her little closet, in which her bed had stood from the time of her having first become an inmate in the house, creeping out only to get her meals at those times when she thought that she should be least observed. But, soon growing weary of this secluded life, and feeling the weight of three shillings, which Laura, on the eve of her departure, had put into her hand, an intolerable burden, she planned an excursion to the neighbouring town, in order to relieve herself of them, and silencing her conscience, which was not altogether easy on the occasion, by saying, "If my dear mamma was here, I am sure she would let me go, because once she did send me alone to the town," she put on the very best clothes that she had, and sallied forth in triumph. She reached the town in safety, and laid out half of her money in rose-coloured ribands, and the other in playthings for the children. She was returning, delighted with what she had done, and had got nearly half way home when she met Belinda.

She was at that moment just thinking how happy the children would be as they received the playthings, when her joy met with a sudden check at the sight of Belinda.

She reddened violently, and, had it been in her power, would have run another way to hide herself, but this was impossible.

"And is that you, Sally?" said Belinda, "walking out at this distance from home and alone? And pray, whose permission did you ask?"

Sally was silent.

"You have been at the town?" said Belinda.

Yes, ma'am," replied the orphan.

"And pray, of whom did you ask leave?"

"I thought that my dear ma'am would not have been angry if she had been here."

"But she is not here, and it is to me that you are now to apply," rejoined Belinda. "Return home immediately and be assured, that if you are ever again guilty of a thing of this kind, I will make you sensible that you are not to take the liberties with me that you do with my sister. You trespass on her kindness, Sally, and always have done, and you never have had a proper sense of her goodness to you."

"Indeed, indeed," said Sally, bursting into tears, "I do love her, and I think that I could die to please her; and I know that I never shall be happy till I see her again."

This last expression offended Belinda, and she said, "Why should you suppose that you will not be happy while under my care, unless you are determined to go on as you have begun, in endeavouring to do every thing which you can think of to displease me?" Belinda then bade Sally instantly to return home, while she slowly followed, planning sundry reformations in the management of the orphan, to be entered upon immediately.

While pondering these plans abounding with circumstances destructive of the comfort of Sally, Belinda met her brother, and without loss of time she set before him an aggravated account of Sally's delinquency. She might have added, that she herself had allowed two whole days to pass since the departure of his wife, without once inquiring where Sally was, or how she was employed; and that the misdemeanor of the young creature might justly be attributed to her not having properly assumed the reins of her authority over her; but she withheld this important part of the story, and thus she made Sally's conduct appear to be an act of open rebellion, though it was really no more than a hasty and foolish measure.

There are certain points, on which men in general are usually very tender; they cannot bear to be troubled with the vexatious minutiae of household affairs; nor, in fact, do these belong to their province; and when they happen to be disturbed by these trifles, they often indeed drive away the tormenting flies, but then it is with a

blow which, like that of the bear in the fable, leaves the face of the person thus relieved all covered with blood. Eusebius was evidently much displeased with Sally by Belinda's representation of her conduct, and he, therefore, expressed himself strongly against her in sweeping terms, as a young person who had no sense of gratitude and affection.

Sally had many faults; still, want of affection was no trait of her character: on the contrary, her feelings were warm; and for Laura and her children, and even for Eusebius, she cherished a regard which could not have been stronger had she actually been their own child.

The next day Belinda began to execute her scheme of reformation. She had always considered Laura as being too indulgent to Sally, and she therefore thought that she should be actually performing a laudable work by changing the plans of management with respect to her. Her first step, therefore, was to order Sally to take her meals in the kitchen, and to assume a larger share in the discharge of domestic duties. Laura had endeavoured to qualify Sally to get her bread by needle-work, and in many other ways to act as an upper servant; but Belinda insisted upon it that an inferior mode of servitude would be quite as good for her, and, with this view, she took immediate measures to fit her for this new way of life; and thus, by associating her with a style of company to which she was previously a stranger, and by inuring her hands to hard labour, she put her entirely out of the way in which Laura had educated her.

Amidst these altered circumstances, Sally became dissatisfied and restless. She often hurried through the tasks that were allotted to her, and then she crept into the nursery to play with her old companions, or rather to weep with her friend the little Laura, who was an amiable child about five years younger than herself. But if fretting and weeping had been the only ill effects of Belinda's injudicious and unfeeling management, it would have been well: but unhappily young people of fifteen do not weep long in any circumstances amidst which pleasure offers itself, in however coarse and undesirable a form.

The family establishment consisted of several ser-



vants, men as well as women; and though Laura, and even Belinda, endeavoured to select and regulate this family of servants according to the best Christian principles, it would, nevertheless, afford matter for great wonder, if, in a kitchen containing seven persons, something was not now and then said and done which Laura would much have wished for her dear Sally neither to see or hear.

Sally had acquired such a nice sense of delicacy, that she was at first shocked with the coarse jokes of the footman, and refused to take any part in them; but her delicacy having nothing to encourage and support it, soon gave way, and she, being a very lively girl, soon learned to joke with the other servants, and perhaps to be the first to throw the dregs of a jug of beer at the maids and then to run screaming away if they attempted to return the joke.

Belinda having now placed Sally in the situation in which she maintained that she ought always to have been brought up, turned her busy mind to other works of benevolence, as she called them, in which, however, it is to be hoped that she evinced the exercise of a better judgment.

We have no opportunity of tracing any other professed good works of Belinda; but if they were not better planned and performed than were her avowed kind intentions towards Sally, it may well be affirmed with respect to her nearly as it is said of the wicked, "The tender mercies of the selfish and meddling are cruel." For Belinda, in all that she did, aimed to make it appear that she was wiser and cleverer than other people, and in seeking to exalt herself she failed to consider the feelings of others, the consequences of which indifference were that she not unfrequently broke the bruised reed, and extinguished the smoking flax.—But to return to poor Sally.

Eusebius was more than once roused from the perusal of an interesting book while sitting in a retired parlour at the back of the house, by loud peals of laughter proceeding from the offices, which laughter was always traced to poor Sally; neither was she wronged when accused of beginning and leading the uproar which had disturbed the master. Belinda on these occasions always

aggravated Sally's offences, and added to the general irritation by sharp and severe reproofs to the unhappy girl herself in the presence of the other servants.

And now poor Sally usually consumed her time in weeping in private for her beloved mamma, as she fondly called Laura in her moments of tender sorrow, in making resolutions of amendment and reformation, and in scenes of hard labour and idle mirth. She wondered why she could not abide by her determinations of behaving well as formerly; and she could not conceive how it was that religion had not the same influence over her that it once had: while she often summed up all her reasonings on this strange alteration in herself by saying, "When my dear, dear mamma was at home things were not as they now are."

As it might well be expected, the conduct of Sally lowered her more and more in the estimation of her protectors, if the heads of the family who were at home now deserved that name; and the unpromising state of the poor young creature at length became so evident to Belinda, who thought of nothing less than taking any blame to herself on the occasion, that she proposed to Eusebius that Sally should be sent from the house, and placed to lodge with a woman in the neighbourhood who took in washing and ironing, "and there," said Belinda, "this young person will be in her proper place; and we may hope," added she, in a voice of compassion, "we may hope that she will then do better."

Eusebius rather started, however, at this proposal, on account of Laura, for he knew full well her affection for the girl; neither was he himself wholly without regard for her, and he was sensible how much his own children were attached to her: he therefore resisted the proposed measure for a while, but at length, on his seeing that Sally would infallibly be ruined if she continued where she was, he consented that she should be removed; although he expressed strong apprehension that his dear Laura would suffer much when she heard of the necessity that there was for such a removal; he also acknowledged himself greatly surprised at the sudden depravity of the young creature, and asked Belinda how it was possible to account for it. To which Belinda replied, that she had no

doubt that her sister, out of false tenderness, had hitherto kept the faults of the poor girl from their knowledge; for on no other supposition could she account for her suddenly appearing to have deviated so very far from the course of rectitude. Whether Belinda was herself conscious that she had erred in the management of this poor young girl, we know not; for she was strongly actuated by that self-love which blinds the eyes and hardens the heart: but this is certain, that she invariably had said but little to Eusebius of the various changes which she herself had made in the situation and employment of Sally; and she represented her as having herself forsaken the nursery and preferred the society of the kitchen.

When Sally was told that it was settled for her to leave the house of her hitherto kind protectors, the information seemed to rouse every feeling that was tender and amiable in her nature.

“Oh, my mother! my adopted mother! my dear, dear ma’am!” she exclaimed, “when will you come back? I have behaved ill, but I know you will forgive me—you will be sorry for me, and you will take me to your dear heart again.”

This exclamation was uttered in the presence of Belinda, who represented to her, that, after her very bad behaviour, she must not expect the return of Laura’s kindness.—Sally looked at her with an expression of countenance which seemed to say, that she was assured that nothing on earth could finally separate her kind protectress from her poor child, and the look was one which Belinda understood, for she reproved her sharply, and asked her, if she could deny her having behaved very ill during the absence of her mistress.

“I have behaved very ill, it is true, ma’am,” said Sally, “I never behaved so ill before; I do not know how it has happened: my heart I know is very bad, and I hope I shall behave better where I am going; I will try, and then, perhaps, I shall be forgiven and brought back to my dear, dear home, and to the dear children.” She then broke out afresh into tears, and begged to be permitted to kiss the children. But Eusebius had gone out with the children, in order, no doubt, that he might be out of the way on this painful occasion; and poor Sally

was obliged to walk away carrying a bundle of some of her favourite possessions from the house, which had long afforded her so happy a shelter, to become, a second time, the inhabitant of a cottage.

The Lord is jealous for the widow and the orphan, and He often overrules for their good those events which are planned by the enemy for their destruction.

Thus it proved with respect to Sally; for in the retirement of the cottage she recovered in a short time her former composed state of mind. The good lessons of piety which Laura had habitually given to her, began again to resume their wonted influence; and though she grew coarse and comparatively negligent in her person and external appearance, her affliction was, nevertheless, producing a good work within her, and she was become far more sensible than she had ever previously been of all the numberless advantages which she owed to her more than mother.

Thus three quarters of a year were elapsed since Laura had left her home, and the time for her returning thither now approached. Her health, which had been fervently prayed for many times by the afflicted Sally, as well as by several others, was restored to her, and the day for her return was at length fixed. The meeting between Laura and her affectionate husband, was as tender as might be expected. Eusebius went to meet her some miles on the road, and all the happy children, with Belinda, were waiting to run into her arms as she stepped out of the carriage—Laura wept, and smiled, and wept again. But many minutes had not passed before she asked for Sally, and an evasive answer being given, (for nothing had been mentioned to her by letter of the affairs of the poor orphan,) her attention was diverted for a time to some other darling object newly restored to her sight. Sally, however, was too near the heart of Laura, for her to continue much longer without repeating her inquiry after her, which she did to her little daughter, bidding her, in a whisper, call her dear Sally to her; but then considering that the parlour might, perhaps, have been interdicted to the orphan, she took the little Laura's hand, and said softly, "We will now go, my dear, and find our dear Sally."

The young Laura went out with the mamma, and had reached the nursery in company with her before she dared to utter a word; at length bursting into tears, she said, "Dear mamma, poor Sally does not live in the house now."

Laura, truly astonished, now recollected that for some months past even the name of Sally had not been mentioned in any letter; a circumstance which she had hitherto attributed to forgetfulness, and she now eagerly inquired of her little daughter, the reason why she had been removed.

The little Laura explained the matter to her mamma as well as she could: but it was doubtful from her statement, whether she thought that Sally had deserved to be sent away or not; for she gave such a confused account of her being among the servants, sometimes saying that it was by her aunt's orders, and sometimes laying the blame on Sally herself, that her mamma was by no means satisfied with what she had told her, and she was altogether so shocked by the circumstance, that she burst into a violent flood of tears, and was found weeping when Belinda came to call her to tea.

It was Laura's desire, on all occasions, to act from reason and principle rather than feeling; therefore, although she was thoroughly distressed at what she had just heard respecting poor Sally, and although she had reason to suspect some grievous mismanagement on the part of Belinda, yet when called to join her assembled family at tea, she wiped away her tears, and endeavoured to appear cheerful. Notwithstanding her efforts, a cloud of sorrow, however, rested on her brow, and as she caressed her youngest child, who sat on her lap, she thought much of Sally, and recollected many little circumstances of her infancy, which now filled her mind with emotions of bitter anguish.

She, however, preserved her self-possession till after tea, and till the children had retired to bed, when her husband tenderly taking her hand, on observing a tear start in her eye, requested her to explain the cause of her sorrow which was too evident, and which seemed, as he said, extraordinary, on an occasion so joyful as that of the restoration of a wife and mother to her husband and children.



Laura could now restrain herself no longer, and said, "I am grieved to interrupt the joy of my friends by my impertinent sorrow, but I must confess that the sad news which I have just heard of my poor Sally has greatly afflicted me."

Eusebius, who was not at all conscious of any intentional unkindness to Sally, entered into an explanation of the whole affair, as he had himself seen it, and heard it represented by his sister, in a manner so cool and dispassionate, that Laura knew not what to think, or whom to blame, though she still felt almost convinced that had she continued at home, nothing of this would have happened. She prayed, however, that she might be preserved from yielding in any measure either to angry passion or unreasonable feeling, and that she might be directed to act as a friend of the fatherless, and as a peace-maker to all parties.

When Laura awoke in the morning, which was not till rather later than usual, she found her two little daughters watching by her bed-side, and when they had kissed her, and expressed anew their joy at her return, they put into her hand a small soiled and ill-spelled note from Sally. "It is from Sally, mamma," they said, "our own poor Sally, and she gave it to us at the garden-gate this morning, and nobody saw us."

"Nobody saw you, my children!" said Laura, "and have you learned to do things slyly? Remember that you used to tell me every thing that you did."

"And so we shall again, mamma," said the little girls, "and we have begun to do it; but our aunt would have been so angry if she had seen us with Sally!"

"Well, well," said Laura, "I hope that all will be set right now, and though our poor Sally has been naughty, I trust that you still love her and pray for her."

"Indeed we do," said the little girls, "and little Arthur, whom our poor Sally used to love so much, he even prays for her every day; and you cannot think how he cried when she was sent away."

Sally's note, which was written on a blank leaf torn out of some book, was full of joyous expressions for the return of her dear, dear mamma, as in her ecstasy she ventured to call Laura; it also contained many confes-

sions of her faults, but no complaints of any one, and concluded with an earnest request that she might be taken in again.

Laura was much affected, not only by the letter itself, but also by the many indications that it contained of the neglected and desolate state of the child whom she had hitherto preserved with so much tenderness. The paper on which the note was written was dirty, the hand almost illegible, and the words were ill-spelled. "And is the downward road," thought Laura to herself, "so easy, so very easy? is the labour of years so soon defeated? Oh, my Sally! my Sally! better would it have been to have seen thee in thy grave, than to see thee thus cast out! thus abandoned!"

It was in vain that Laura strove to seem cheerful at breakfast, but she at least succeeded in appearing gentle and good-humoured.

After breakfast she examined some old writings, and found a slip of paper on which was written these words: "On such a day, in such a year, it was promised me by Mr. E——, &c. that he would permit me, if I became his wife, to adopt as my own, Sarah ——, and afford her every protection and kindness which a daughter might require of a mother." Laura inclosed this paper in an envelope, and sent it by her little daughter to her husband, who spent most of his mornings in his study.

Eusebius was affected by the sight of this memorandum, which had been written in his presence, and signed by himself: it reminded him of the early stage of his connexion with his beloved Laura, and induced him to take a swift review of all those excellences which had rendered his life, as a married man, more happy than is commonly experienced in the conjugal state.

His first wish was immediately to oblige his dear Laura, and at all events to recall Sally. But it must be remembered that his mind was thoroughly poisoned with respect to this young person, whom he believed to be a truly depraved girl; and he felt that, as the father of a family, he should act with a blameable weakness if he allowed his wife again to introduce such a character as an inmate of his house. He thought it, therefore, his duty, to say that Sally must, for the present, continue

where she was, or at least in some other suitable situation, apart from his children; he was desirous, however of signifying to Laura, as tenderly as possible, his opposition to her wishes. He, therefore, instead of returning a written answer to her note, himself went into her dressing-room, and, accosting her with the utmost tenderness, he expressed the pain which he felt in refusing her any thing that she could desire; but he, nevertheless, declared that such had been the depravity of Sally's conduct, that he must still continue his refusal to admit her into his house as the companion of his children.

Laura heard this decision with grief evidently sincere. She even ventured to advance several arguments. But Eusebius was not to be shaken; and therefore, all the success that she could meet with was to obtain permission to preside over Sally at a distance.

Laura's mind was so far subjected to the control of Christian principle, that she was enabled patiently to yield to this trial, and she resolved to do so, if possible, without showing the least resentment towards her sister: for, from her inquiries among the servants and children, she had now become fully convinced that Sally's misfortunes were owing to the indiscreet and unfeeling management of Belinda. While, however, she was considering how, in this affair, she ought to act as a Christian towards her husband and sister, she did not lose sight of her duty to Sally. She addressed to her a tender and affectionate letter, wherein she stated her own willingness to overlook all that was past, and again to receive her to her heart; but she added, that those on whom she depended not having the same regard for her, could not be prevailed upon to pass over her faults, or to re-admit her into the situation which she formerly occupied in the family.

She also represented to her, that she owed this affliction entirely to her own evil conduct; and she failed not to state, that, if she had preserved her prudence, the Lord would then have been on her side, and no one could have injured her. "Had you," she said, "been discreet, my beloved Sally, and not fallen into those disgraceful faults with which every one charges you, I should have been enabled to maintain your cause against the whole

world. But you have, by your own folly, at once stopped the mouth and tied the hands of her who loves you with a mother's love, and we must both abide for a while the painful consequences of your conduct."

Laura then proceeded to point out to Sally the important doctrine of man's thorough incapacity and utter weakness to do well, and she failed not to show her where, in future, she must seek assistance under trials and distresses. She concluded by assuring her that she should never cease to labour and pray for their reunion, adding, that nothing would so much conduce to it as her good behaviour in the situation which she now occupied.

When Laura sent this letter, she forwarded with it a basket containing a variety of little presents and comforts, such as, for the most part, only a mother would have thought of; neither did she without tears deliver the basket and letter to the person who was to carry them.

On further inquiry Laura became increasingly sensible that Sally owed all her afflictions to the pragmatism of Belinda, and for a short time this conviction filled her mind with resentment. But Laura was a Christian not only in word, but also in spirit, and she habitually bore in mind the instructions given by our Lord to Peter concerning an offending brother—*Then came Peter to him, and said, Lord, how oft shall my brother sin against me, and I forgive him? till seven times? Jesus saith unto him, I say not unto thee, Until seven times; but, Until seventy times seven.* (Matt. xviii. 21, 22.)

The object of this story is, to show wherein true charity consists. It does not consist in splendid and momentary acts of heroism, or in any sudden extraordinary exertions in the behalf of a fellow creature: other motives besides Christian charity may induce persons to works of this kind. As St. Paul saith—*Though I bestow all my goods to feed the poor, and though I give my body to be burned, and have not charity, it profiteth me nothing.* (1 Cor. xiii. 3.) But true charity consists in an abiding, unostentatious preference of a man's neighbour before himself: neither does such charity consist with that headlong and vehement spirit which leads a man to pa-

tronize one individual at the expense of all the rest of the world; but it consists in a careful and tender regard to the various feelings of others, in an earnest solicitude to promote their welfare, especially in a spiritual sense, and in an habitual disposition to make all due allowance for the weakness and infirmities of our neighbours, and that without partiality or respect of persons.

And herein appeared in an especial manner the charity of Laura; for while she was secretly and severely wounded by the injuries which she had suffered in the person of her dear Sally, she endeavoured to make every possible allowance for Belinda, and she never broke out into murmurs or complaints with respect to her in the presence of her brother, nor did she alter in any degree the sweetness of her carriage towards her, although she took every care to keep her from again exerting the same busy spirit in the family by which she had so greatly injured Sally.

Laura had submitted, indeed, to the pleasure of her husband with respect to her beloved orphan; but her heart still yearned after her eldest child, as she called her, and she continually, yet gently attempted to restore her to the good opinion of Eusebius: and, as Sally behaved well in her seclusion, Laura found the less difficulty in bringing back his mind to the point at which she aimed.

Thus passed away four months after Laura's return to her home, and she had never yet seen Sally once since, because her husband had carefully made it a point that she should not, although she had scarcely allowed a day to pass without sending her some token of love, or some little memorial by which she might encourage her to persevere in well-doing.

It happened at the close of this period that as Laura was walking one evening with her husband and sister, at an abrupt turn of a narrow lane, she was suddenly met by Sally, who was carrying a basket on her arm, and who presented a certain negligence in her appearance which touched her adopted parent to the heart.

No sooner did these two persons, whose reciprocal affection was so sincere, thus meet, than they ran into each other's arms and Sally, sinking upon her knees, broke



out into such an agony of mingled grief and joy, that the heart of Eusebius was quite melted, and he readily gave Laura permission to receive her adopted child once again under her roof.

Thus did the gentleness and patience of Laura under this trial, triumph over the prejudices of her friends. She thanked her husband for his kindness with tears of joy, and giving Sally a handsome present to carry to the poor woman who had taken care of her during her banishment, she directed her immediately to return to her home.

I cannot convey even an idea of the joy which diffused itself throughout all Laura's little family when Sally appeared, and was reinstated in all her former privileges, being restored to her old companions and her little chamber. She seemed to have no desire whatever, to renew her frolics in the kitchen; and this circumstance Laura regarded as an especial token for good: as when a young person has once been led to indulge a relish for improper society, it is much to be feared that she may never again lose the taste for it.

It always remained a matter of doubt in the mind of Laura, whether Belinda was at all conscious of the great mistake of which she had been guilty with respect to Sally; if, however, she was at all sensible of it, still she was by no means humbled by it, for she always cherished the same self-confidence which led her to the commission of this error. She had no idea of putting herself in imagination in the place of another, and of entering into the feelings of that person; and therefore, even when on the whole she was desirous of doing well, she often offended, and always wounded; and actually, as we have clearly seen on one occasion, she often did a great deal of mischief to those persons with whom she interfered.

In every view which she took of life, it might be said of her, that self was the most prominent object, and every other was, in consequence, presented to the eye of her understanding in a false and unfavourable point of view. She valued characters only on account of their particular bearings or relations with respect to herself, and she allowed herself in different modes and principles of calculating with reference to herself and with reference to another.

Those who lived with her had, in consequence, much to bear; and as whatever was done for her always fell short of the sense which she had of her own deserts, she could, of course, have but few feelings of gratitude.

She was, at the same time, a strong professor of the Christian religion, and she was not without certain good qualities; but, as the foundation of Christianity must lie in deep humility, it cannot be expected that real piety should ever dwell with allowed and habitual pride.

Laura persevered in the same even and lovely course, till the end of a long and comparatively peaceful life. She saw several of her children happily married, and she embraced her children's children on her knees.

Sally, who, from the time when she was brought back to the house of Eusebius, had conducted herself with great propriety, was married, at a suitable age, to a mechanic in the neighbourhood, a pious young man; and Eusebius gratified his beloved Laura by providing the complete furniture of their little dwelling, and adding the present of ten guineas on the wedding-day; which last gift he annually repeated.

When Sally became a mother, and not till then, she fully felt the value of what Laura had done for her, and her consequently lively sense of gratitude induced her ardently to seek the gratification of her adopted parent in every action of her life. Thus the influence of Laura over Sally daily increased, and Laura availed herself of it to lead her more and more closely to her Saviour.

Notwithstanding the difference of their conditions, a sweet and tender friendship also continued to subsist between Laura's children and Sally, and they frequently visited her in her humble little dwelling; and in times of sickness and distress these friends were ever ready mutually to console each other.

Thus Laura set before the world an example of persevering and invariable kindness and benevolence; pursuing one object through a course of many years, opposed by various hindrances and obstacles, amidst objects of disgust, in fatigues, and under the frowns and reproofs of friends, and proceeding with unwearied constancy till she had completely effected the point which she had at first in view: while Belinda, who was continually talking

on the subject of charity, and professedly forming plans for the good of her neighbours, was enabled to bring little or nothing to maturity; because, whenever her own ease or her credit in the eyes of the world came in competition with the fulfilment of her plans for doing good, she took offence, and desisted from her purpose. But Belinda walked in her own strength, while Laura went on in the strength of the Lord.

Here the lady of the manor closed her manuscript, and, promising the young people her third story on our duty towards our neighbours on the occasion of their next meeting, she called them to prayer with her before they separated.

*A Prayer for our due Behaviour towards our Inferiors.*

“O ALMIGHTY LORD GOD, thou King of kings and Lord of lords, who nevertheless for our sakes didst condescend to take upon thee the form of a servant, and, being in the likeness of a man, to endure every infirmity of our nature, though thou wast yet without sin; we humbly beseech thee to endue us with that spirit of charity which suffereth long and is kind, which beareth all things, which endureth all things, which seeketh not her own; that, feeling that the poorest creature is our fellow-creature, we may be enabled to persevere in our course of duty without looking for reward, without yielding to disgust, and without stumbling at reproach. Teach us, while we hate sin, to compassionate the sinner, to pity his helplessness, to administer to his wants, to bear with his ingratitude, to endure his obstinacy, and to love him in spite of his loathsomeness.

“Grant, O blessed Lord God, that our charity may be sincere and fervent, that it may not seek its reward from men, but be content to await it from God, and that it may not be chilled by circumstances, or by any apparent want of success. And grant, O gracious God, that we may not be ostentatious in our charities, but that we may be carefully observant of our Saviour’s injunction—not to let our left hand know what our right hand doeth; and whenever we may act either in or for any charitable society, may we be preserved from that spirit which too

often excites an individual to seek his own glory, to the great injury of the good work in which he may be engaged. Divest us, O God, by thy sanctifying and renewing Spirit, of self-seeking of every description. May the praise of man be an abomination in our eyes; and may our every action be influenced by the desire of promoting the glory of Thee, O God, and of Thyself alone.

“And now to God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Ghost, be all glory and honour, now and for evermore. Amen.”

## CHAPTER XXVI.



*Third Conversation on our Duty towards our Neighbour.*

ON OUR DUTY TOWARDS OUR SUPERIORS; OR THOSE PERSONS WHO HAVE THE ADVANTAGE OVER US IN WORLDLY MATTERS.

THE lady of the manor having again assembled her young people, proceeded to read to them the third narrative which had been promised, prefacing her lecture by the following remarks:—"In the last two narratives which I have read to you, my dear young friends, as well as in that which I am about to read, it is possible you may perceive what will have the appearance of unnecessary repetition,—a frequent reference to the great and important principle of humility. But let it be remembered, that this virtue is the basis of all our relative duties, whether to equals, inferiors, or superiors; and therefore the possession of such a quality, and the means of obtaining it, namely, by the operation of God's Spirit upon the heart, cannot be too seriously impressed upon us; the more especially, as the baneful evil of selfishness will lose its power in proportion to the influence which this lovely grace shall exercise over us; while the fruits of love, and



joy, and peace, will obtain, in the place of those malevolent passions that injure and disgrace us."

The lady then took up the manuscript, and read as follows.

*The Dominion of Envy.*

It was precisely at the period in which I entered my eighteenth year, that I was indulged with the pleasure of accompanying my parents in a long projected visit to a friend residing in Westmoreland.

We left our home in the month of June, and as we proceeded northward, we were regaled in every valley and on every plain with the breath of new-mown grass, and with the songs of village maidens, who appeared to rejoice in their escape from the distaff, and in the permission to dwell awhile amidst the green fields, and to taste the delights of rural life.

It is not, however, my present purpose to trouble my readers with an account of the various adventures which we encountered in our transit over at least two-thirds of the green and fragrant disk of our little island; nor to tell how my mother and I were terrified by a baker's boy, whom we mistook for a highwayman, not having at first observed his panniers through the gloom of twilight: but, passing these things over as unimportant, I shall take the liberty of conveying my friends, without further preface, to the end of our journey.

The persons for whom all these labours and terrors of the journey had been encountered by my mother, were an ancient couple without children, and the last of a highly respectable family, the ancestors of whom were traced as far back as the reign of Elizabeth.

The mansion in which they resided, was nearly coeval with the first of the family, who had risen from the obscure mass of the ignoble vulgar; and, from the period of the first erection, had undergone few external changes. This building was a perfect specimen of that irregularity of architecture, in which our ancestors seemed to delight, no two rooms or two windows being in a straight line with each other, various gable ends and little turrets appearing in different directions, starting, frowning, and jutting forth towards all quarters of the compass.

and suggesting an idea rather of a number of old buildings joined together, than of a single house. The composition of this edifice was of oak timber, with lath and plaster; the timbers were all painted black and curiously carved; and the large masses of chimneys, which shot up spirally towards the heavens, were decorated at their bases with fancy work in brick, and were now blackened with smoke. This edifice was surrounded with a garden, encircled with a high wall, which entirely excluded the prospect, beautiful as it was, (for the estate was situated in one of the finest valleys of Westmoreland,) from all the lower rooms; but, in exchange for the more distant beauties which were excluded, it formed a protection for the rich abundance of fair and fruitful trees which enriched the parterres of the garden.

Four summer-houses, with pepper-box turrets, adorned the four corners of the wall; and these, together with a lofty cupola at the top of the house, containing a clock, whose bell might be heard at a very considerable distance, were accounted, by my father's old friend, as the most distinguishing ornaments of the house.

It was at the period of life in which the imagination is commonly stronger than the judgment, that I was introduced into this scene, and I was not a little delighted at finding myself suddenly surrounded with objects of a nature so entirely different to all that I had ever seen in the little town in which I had been brought up, and where my father had been considered a man of importance, because his grandfather had built the house in which we lived, and had inclosed the court in its front with handsome iron railings, and placed a stone figure, of some magnitude, in a niche above the hall door! But how did all ideas of my father's dignity and the antiquity of my family shrink into nothing, as I was led to my sleeping-room, the first night, through a long gallery, where all the possessors of Inglewood Hall (for such was the name of the mansion of which I am speaking) were ranged in long order against the wall on each side; every patriarch, or head of the family, for the time being, accompanied by his help-meet, and, in many cases, by a numerous progeny of sons and daughters, all portrayed with more or less skill, but in the fashions of the times,

and in some instances possessing fine features and noble physiognomies.

Late as it was, and weary as I was with my journey, I could have lingered long in this gallery, had not the lady of the mansion, who would on no account dispense with the form of showing me to my chamber the first night, requested me to postpone my curiosity for the present, promising to take me over the house the next day, and show me all that was worthy of regard within it. It was necessary to submit to this decision: I accordingly went on with my dignified companion, and having threaded many mazes, and passed through many wide chambers, I shortly found myself in a comfortable room, hung with tapestry, and containing a small bed in an alcove. Being left in this place, I soon fell asleep, but awoke with the dawn of day, and found my spirits in a state of too much excitement to sleep again.

Having explored my room, and examined the figures on the hangings, which were of the finest Gobelyn, though considerably faded, and which represented ancient halls and castles, knights in armour, ladies and squires, I was proceeding to take a view through the stone-framed window at the end of the chamber, when my attention was arrested by a glimmering light, appearing through a part of the tapestry, where I presently discovered a door, nicely fitted into the wall, and greatly concealed by the general covering.

Here was a new subject for my curiosity: but much as I desired to see what was beyond the door, I might, perhaps, have been better pleased had I met with some difficulty in opening it. However, this was not to be. There was a wooden button on the frame, which I had scarcely touched, before the mysterious door yielded to my hand, and the next moment I found myself in a large light closet, hung also with tapestry, having a fireplace with a massily carved chimney-piece, and containing an old harpsichord, a little book-case, standing on claw feet, and inclosing several volumes, a round mahogany table with a ledge, several chairs, and a few old music-books neatly ranged upon this instrument. But what chiefly attracted my attention in this little chamber (which, though not so mysterious a one as I could have

wished, I doubted not, had some peculiar history belonging to it) was a portrait which occupied a great portion of one side of the room. This painting represented a lady dressed in black, and in the fashion which prevailed about the middle of the last century, before the ill-fated Queen of France had introduced those preposterous forms of dress which produced a total revolution in the human form. The figure was a fine one; the face had been remarkably handsome, though the lady I should judge to have been considerably advanced in years before the resemblance was taken.

When I first looked at this picture, I thought I observed considerable sternness in the countenance, but on further examination I rather changed my opinion, and fancied I observed the lines of sorrow traced on the features, together with a degree of tenderness, which seemed, as it were, to contend with natural strength and sternness. The hand which wrought this portrait was, undoubtedly, a skilful one.

I looked for awhile on the picture, and then on every surrounding object. "This lady," I thought, "probably, when alive, occupied this chamber: those were, perhaps, her books; that might have been her musical instrument; she, perhaps, used to sit on that chair, and spread her work on that table;—but where is she now? Where are those with whom she associated—her neighbours, her friends, her servants? For whom did she wear that black dress? Whom did she love? whom did she regret? What were her thoughts? what were her acts?" There is something very affecting in being brought into close contact with the dead. It is possible to reflect without powerful emotion on the destruction of whole countries by an earthquake—on the sinking of whole fleets at sea—on the dying away of generation after generation—on the depopulation of ancient cities, and the extinction of the noblest families;—but who could have visited Herculaneum, and entered into the very domicile of the ancient Romans, and contemplated the skeleton of the mother embracing that of the infant, without deep and lasting feelings of sympathy and tenderness?

Having gazed on every thing within the room, I walked to the window and opened the casement; for I felt a

faintness, which I partly attributed to a confined air which is often found in old buildings, in which the work of decay must necessarily be going on, however slowly, and partly to the feelings which had been suddenly excited within me; and there, what a wonderful, what a glorious prospect opened to my view over the garden wall and trees!

Between the wall and the bottom of the valley, was a lawn or sheep-walk, scattered over with flocks, and beyond this a clear and beautiful lake, inclosed on the opposite side by a range of hills, the lower parts of which were richly variegated with trees, and studded with little thatched cottages and small farms, and the higher regions of which, though the hills were of inferior magnitude when compared with the height of the Himalayas and the Andes, or even of those lofty Alpine regions where an eternal winter reigns at the distance of eight thousand feet above the level of the sea, nevertheless were, in fact, above the clouds, their blue summits appearing at that time higher than the morning mist which had ascended from the lake at sun-rise, and was becoming condensed as it rolled upwards.

My mind had been previously led to serious reflections by the objects on which I had been meditating, and now the beautiful works of creation which opened before me gave a pious turn to my reflections. The shortness of man's life, even when compared with other works of the Creator, in this sublunary state, particularly impressed me. "No doubt," I thought, "the lady whom I have been looking upon loved and admired this scene. That lawn and lake, those woods and hills, were often gazed upon by her. But the eye that beheld these beauties shall see them no more: her place knoweth her no longer. *Man cometh forth like a flower, and is cut down; he fleeth also as a shadow, and continueth not.—As the waters fail from the sea, and the flood decayeth and drieth up; so man lieth down, and riseth not: till the heavens be no more, they shall not awake, nor be raised out of their sleep.*" (Job xiv. 2, 11, 12.)

And here, if it be not irrelevant, I will pause to make some remarks on the effects which are frequently produced on an enlightened intellect by a contemplation of



the beauties of nature. A fine prospect, when first beheld, always conveys the idea of happiness; we cannot imagine that the inhabitants of a picturesque region can be low or miserable: and hence, no doubt, in a great measure, proceeds that peculiar kind of fascination which we often experience in travelling through a beautiful country, with whose inhabitants we are unacquainted. The imagination conceives that what is so outwardly fair must be productive of happiness; and thus it amuses itself in a kind of elysium of its own, till awakened from its dreams by reflection and experience. In our ideas, however, of moral beauty and perfection, we are greatly assisted by our associations with the beauties of nature; and much more frequently, no doubt, should we make use of such aid, were it not that our minds are alienated from the subject by the influence of sin. The things most lovely in creation are used by God as emblems of such perfection, and of the rest and glory of the latter days. We are warranted by Scripture to look into the Book of Nature to find the pictures of the happiness and consolation of the believer in the resurrection. As water to the thirsty lips, so are the promises of God; and blessed is he, who cannot walk forth into the woods, or contemplate the distant mountain, the fertile valley, the dripping rill, the airy sheep-down, or the opening bud, without an enlargement of those views of future glory which are held out to the lowly disciples of Christ. In the sparkling jewels which adorn her birth-day suit, her blazing coronet, and chains of gold, may not the royal and noble lady, if she be a child of God, behold the symbols of those ornaments with which the heavenly Bridegroom will, at some future period, adorn the members of his Church? In the spotless robe she wears, may she not find the type of that robe of righteousness in which the Lamb will array his bride? In the richly ornamented pleasure ground, the shadowy grove, the open lawn, and the perfumed garden, which surround her dwelling, may she not see a lively representation of what the earth will be when the banner of the cross shall blaze as a beacon on the heights of Zion, and all nations shall flow unto it; when showers of blessings shall be shed on every valley; when the wilderness shall blossom as the rose,

and gushing fountains shall be heard in every dell; when wild beasts shall cease from the land, and the people of the Lord shall dwell quietly in the wilderness, and sleep in the woods?

But perhaps I may be dwelling too long on this subject. I therefore hasten back to my narrative, and shall proceed to say, that while I was still considering the beautiful scene beheld from the closet, I was made aware, by the sound of a bell, of which I had been apprized, that breakfast was ready, and accordingly hastened down stairs, resolving to make myself better acquainted, if possible, with the history of the lady who had engaged so many of my thoughts.

Upon inquiry I found, that the unmarried name of the person respecting whom I was so inquisitive, had been Matilda Vincent, that she had possessed the estates of Inglewood for some time, and had been dead more than forty years: it was further added, that she had been a singular character, and had shown her singularity by leaving behind her written memoirs of her life, in which she had taken so little care to guard her name from the ill opinion of her successors, that she had made a full, true, and perfect confession of many parts of her life with which no one could have been acquainted, and which, certainly, set her in no amiable point of view; "though," remarked our dignified hostess, from whom I received this account, "if you, my young friend, are willing to read, and even to copy these memorandums, you will find nothing in these confessions which can be injurious, in any way, to your mind. I only wonder at this, that any lady should have taken pleasure in leaving behind her any memorials of her own errors."

My father replied, that probably the lady in question left this narrative in somewhat the same spirit in which a benevolent navigator would like to publish an account of an unfortunate voyage—in order to warn others against the rocks and shoals upon which he suffered shipwreck.

"It may be so," replied the old lady, "and if your daughter chooses to read the manuscript, I will deliver it into her hands as soon as we have inspected the house; and she may, if agreeable, retire to her closet to peruse

it: for," added she, "it was in that very closet in which it was written, and which, out of respect to the writer, we have left precisely in the state in which we found it; no article having been removed from it since her death."

I could say much of the delight with which I received this permission; but having already said more of myself than I at first intended, I will now withdraw into the back ground; and introduce my readers to other persons more worthy of their notice.

*The Memoirs of Matilda Vincent.*

"It having pleased the Almighty Ruler of all things to call me, the chief of sinners, to come into his gracious presence, and to receive his free grace and pardon, which were obtained for me by the precious death of his beloved Son, I have thought it right, at an advanced period of my life, lest I should be led impiously to take credit to myself for that which has been wrought for me by God alone, to note down certain circumstances of my life, on which, should my memory fail, I may look, from to time, and be reminded of those sins of my life, by which I truly deserve to be called the chief of sinners.

"I had my origin from a family of credit in this country. My grandfather, who possessed large estates in this vicinity, with this spacious mansion in which I now dwell, had one son and two daughters. The elder of these daughters, who was my mother, married, and went to reside at a distance; but the second remained at home till my grandfather died and her brother was married, at which time, or soon after, she was united to one in very low circumstances, who presently spent all her property, and left her, but whither he went, or what became of him, was never known. My father left his wife shortly after my birth, and my mother did not long survive his desertion of her, in consequence of which I became a needy orphan in early infancy. I was not, however, suffered to know pecuniary distress—for my uncle came in his coach-and-six, and brought me with my nurse home to his house, and there I remained till I married.

"The modes of education then were very different to

what they are now. Boarding schools were little frequented, and the governesses appointed to take care of young ladies at home were little better than upper servants. However, my uncle did for me as for his own offspring, for he had but one child, a daughter, about my own age. We were brought up together in one nursery till our days of babyhood were expired, and then, as my aunt was dead, (for she died soon after the birth of her daughter,) we were placed under the care of a governess, who exercised us in needlework, and in playing on the harpsichord, a talent but little cultivated in those days.

“My uncle made little difference, in his manner of treatment, between me and my cousin, (who, being christened Agnes, was called by the servants, according to the custom of those days, Mrs. Agnes,) excepting that he sometimes took her out with him in his coach, to visit a neighbour, when, on some pretence or other, he would leave me at home; and though this seldom happened, it gave me great offence. On one of these occasions, when I could not have been so much as ten years of age, I remember listening to a conversation between my governess and the housekeeper, as they were drinking tea together in the housekeeper’s room, and who supposed that I was amusing myself with my painted baby. They were speaking of the high fortunes which little Mrs. Agnes had a title to, and of the great match which she would have a right to expect; and then they spoke of me; and the governess said she had reason to suppose my parents had not left me a sixpence.

“‘But,’ said the housekeeper, ‘you may be sure her uncle will not forget her, but will give her something considerable out of his vast property.’

“‘When gentlemen have children of their own,’ replied the governess, ‘they are not always so ready to give fortunes to other people.’

“‘True,’ said the housekeeper; ‘but I shall think it cruel if poor Miss Matilda is quite cut off from her grandfather’s property, and that for the sake of a girl only.’

“‘Why, true,’ replied the governess, ‘had it been a boy who stood thus in her way, it would have been quite a different thing.’

“These wise persons then proceeded to discuss our respective merits with regard to beauty; and as, upon the whole, the advantage was decided to be on the side of my cousin, I found myself excluded in every instance, and, young as I was, I was strongly sensible of the mortification. I was still reflecting upon what had passed, my doll lying disregarded on my lap, when my little cousin returned, and entered the housekeeper’s room, whither she had come in pursuit of her governess and me.

“I remember, to this moment, her dress and general appearance on that occasion. She wore a full slip of rose-coloured taffety, with an apron of the finest lace; on her head was a small round cap, with an artificial flower on one side; a row of pearls adorned her neck, and bracelets of the same, her arms.

“She was generally pale, but the air and exercise had given a blush to her cheeks, and added much to her beauty. She came forward to me with much affection in her manner, and kissing me, she presented me with a small paper of dried sweetmeats, which she had brought from a lady to whom her father had introduced her during their airing; but I have no doubt that I received them with a very bad grace—for nothing makes a person so awkward as being under the influence of the mean passion of envy.

“These first feelings of envy which had been excited within me by the injudicious conversation of the governess and housekeeper, were not permitted to die away, although my cousin always conducted herself towards me with the most invariable sweetness, and evidently had no suspicion of the dispositions which I indulged towards her; but, as I was continually exposed to hear the same kind of discourse, envy of my cousin’s more distinguished lot at length took such effect upon me, that I became secretly very unhappy, and, as I advanced in age, these sentiments held such entire possession of my mind, that it became materially injured and polluted by them.

“Those who are not acquainted with the depravity of the human heart, will plead, that the perversion of my mind on this subject was entirely owing to the injudicious



and evil suggestions of the persons with whom I dwelt; but I answer, that these cruel suggestions would have failed in producing such effects, had they not met with a mind in me prepared for their reception.

“There are, perhaps, no evil passions which are so carefully guarded from the eyes of the world, as those which proceed from envy. Whoever is envious of another, confesses his inferiority to that person in some one point of view or other; and, to a proud and worldly character, how painful is a confession that we are outshone in any one particular in which we wish to excel! So painful, indeed, were these feelings to which I was subjected, that I would not even avow them, if I could help it, to myself, but, on the contrary, I endeavoured to persuade myself that I loved my cousin; and was careful not to omit any mark of outward respect and affection, by which I might evince to the world, and to Agnes herself, the strength of my regard, and of my devotedness.

“In the mean time, I continually indulged myself in that pernicious pleasure to which the selfish and indolent are invariably addicted, and which, being within the reach of all, is, perhaps, more widely fatal than almost any other evil practice—that is, in the formation of airy visions of happiness, by which self is placed in that situation where the evil desires of the heart have every opportunity of gratification. These are the chambers of imagery into which unregenerated persons enter, in the dark hours of night, to commit abomination with their idols, saying, ‘*The Lord seeth us not; the Lord hath forsaken the earth.*’ (Ezekiel viii. 12.)

“In these views of fancied happiness and triumph, I was myself, of course, the first object—I was then put in full possession of all the estates and honours of my cousin. I was clothed in her most superb dresses—was adorned in her jewels—and received the homage of her dependants. On these imaginary occasions, she was excluded; while her interests and welfare were entirely remote from my mind. But how this had been effected, was a part of the picture which I ever left in shade, being unwilling to unveil, even to my own eyes, the murderous tendency of my wishes. Oh! how deeply wicked

and deceitful is the human heart! how dreadful the designs of ambition! and how closely allied is envy to the foulest crimes of which our nature is capable! Yet man is formed with an insatiable thirst for happiness; and if he has been taught to consider that happiness consists in earthly possessions and distinctions, all attempts to make him cease to covet them, or to hate those who seem to stand in the way of his possessing them, must be fruitless, without such an interference of the Divine favour as shall change entirely the current of his affections.

“The desires of the natural man are, undoubtedly, ever inclining towards earthly objects; nevertheless, his ambition, and, consequently, his feelings of envy towards his superiors, may be inflamed on the one hand by indiscreet conversation, and, on the other, may be greatly diminished, even in the minds of unregenerate young persons, by a frequent recurrence, in their presence, to the concerns of a future life, and suitable comparisons between the things of eternity and those of the present state of being.

“There is, perhaps, no study which conveys such adequate ideas of the instability of human greatness, as that of history; especially when we connect with it a view of prophecy, and of those representations which the Scriptures give us of the kingdom of Christ, where the true glory is exhibited; in comparison of which, all the pomp and pride of earthly things appear but as the painted toys and baubles of early childhood. The feeling which I have described above, continued rather to increase than to diminish, till I was nineteen years of age; but I have no reason to suppose that my real character was ever suspected by any one about me.

“At this time my uncle said to us, one morning at breakfast, that he expected a young gentleman to visit him in a few days, the son of a respected friend, whom he had not seen for many years; adding, that he hoped we should be prepared to make the house agreeable to him.

“‘And what are we to call him?’ said my cousin Agnes, smiling; ‘for it would not be polite to seem ignorant of his name, when he bestows upon us the honour of his company.’”

“‘Clarence Fitzgerald,’ replied my uncle; ‘he is the son of my old friend, General Fitzgerald, of whom you have often heard me speak.’

“My cousin, who had great simplicity of mind, received this command of her father’s, as she did every other, without making any comment upon it; but I began instantly to consider whether there might not be something more in this proposed visit than my uncle would have us suppose, and, after turning the matter over and over again in my own mind, I at length made out that this Mr. Clarence Fitzgerald was the intended husband of my cousin; and then my imagination went to work to embellish this chosen youth with all the desirable qualities of a partner for life for one so highly gifted and endowed as my cousin Agnes; and, when I considered the matter for awhile, I became more and more inflamed with envy, and more and more ready to inveigh against the justice of Providence towards myself.

“While these things occupied my mind, my cousin Agnes, who never enjoyed very good health, was taken ill, and was obliged to confine herself to her room, and when the idea recurred to me, that I could not advance my own interest more effectually than by availing myself of the opportunity, which I hoped to have, of securing the young gentleman’s affection to myself—should fortune so far favour me as to continue the illness of my cousin for some time after the arrival of the expected visiter. I say *fortune*, in order to accommodate myself to the mode of thinking I then indulged; for I did not then consider that there is no such thing as chance, but that such affairs are ordered and regulated by the Almighty Ruler—without whom, not even a sparrow falleth to the ground.

‘I was sitting alone in our common parlour, when I was apprized, by a loud ringing at the outer court, of the arrival of Mr. Fitzgerald. Persons who are full of projects and views of self-interest, are ever liable to fearful apprehensions, which persons of more simplicity are not troubled with. Now the moment approached which I had so long desired, I began to tremble, and looked around me in haste, considering what would be the effect of the first *coup d’œil* which was to break upon the

young man on his entering the room. The parlour was, for that period of time, an elegant apartment, being large and high, and wainscoted with oak, having a cornice composed of a running pattern of the same wood, whereon were represented many delicately-shaped birds, resting on leaves and branches of trees. The floor was brightly polished, and the furniture covered with fine chintz; a large folding glass door was open to the garden, and on each side of this door were couches, with tables before them, on which I had scattered my drawings, my books, and some specimens of fine needle-work. I contrived to seem engaged with my guitar at the instant in which hasty steps in the hall advertised me that the visiter was near at hand, and I only laid it down at the moment when Mr. Clarence Fitzgerald entered the room, and presented a figure which more than answered all my preconceived ideas of him.

“I had perhaps never seen a young man who so entirely answered my notions of the perfect gentleman, as the person who then entered the room; he was, moreover, particularly well-looking. But all this ought not to have influenced me as it did, persuaded, as I was, that he was the intended husband of my cousin.

“I affected some surprise at seeing him, apologized for my uncle’s absence, (for he happened not to be at home,) called for refreshments, and did all in my power to render myself agreeable to my guest.

“I was soon aware that the young gentleman took me for my cousin, and I resolved to keep him under the delusion as long as circumstances would admit. I saw that, from time to time, he looked at me with a particular interest, and I had some pleasure in thinking that he seemed far from dissatisfied with my appearance. Refreshments were spread before him, but he was too much occupied to partake of them; and, when the servants were withdrawn, he removed from his seat by the table to one on the sofa by me, and, looking me full in the face, (though in a manner sufficiently respectful,) he spoke of the anxiety he had long felt to see me, adding something highly gratifying to my vanity, relative to the perfect satisfaction he had derived from the sight of me. I passed this over, pretending not to hear all he said, and we

fell into an easy discourse on indifferent subjects, in which I flattered myself that I did myself much credit; at least, I plainly saw that I succeeded in interesting my auditor, and was fully aware, that, if my unhappy cousin was out of the way, there would have been no objection made by Mr. Fitzgerald to have taken me in her stead: for, in case of her death, I was the rightful heiress to her father's estates.

"Mr. Fitzgerald and myself had been together for more than two hours, and no explanation had taken place, when my uncle came in from his ride. He welcomed the young gentleman with much cordiality, adding, 'I hope that my niece has done the honours of my house in my absence, as she ought to have done.'

"'Your niece, sir!' said Mr. Fitzgerald, evidently much discomposed, and blushing up to his very forehead.

"'Yes,' returned my uncle. 'Why, who did you take her for?'

"'Your daughter, certainly,' replied the other.

"'My daughter! Why, Matilda, how could you?' said the old gentleman.

"'I was not aware of the mistake,' I replied.

"'But did you not tell Mr. Fitzgerald that poor Agnes is ill?'

"Mr. Fitzgerald had a book in his hand, which he dropped at that moment, and he leaned down to pick it up. It was natural that his face should be highly flushed after having stooped; notwithstanding which, I had reason to hope, that there was some other cause for this violent glow besides that which was apparent.

"At dinner our party was augmented by a visiter, whose habit it was to sit long over the bottle. I, however, left the dining room soon after the table-cloth was removed, and, having visited Agnes, who inquired after Mr. Fitzgerald with as little interest as she would have done after any other stranger, I took a turn in the garden, where I had not been many minutes before I was joined by Mr. Fitzgerald, who had made his escape from the dining-parlour. He proposed a walk in the park, having carelessly, though politely, inquired after the health of my cousin.



"It was a lovely afternoon in the beginning of summer, and we prolonged our walk till the sun had set, concluding it with a visit to the mount which faces my closet-window, where we sat down for awhile under the shade of yonder elm, whose leaf still flourishes with undiminished verdure, although generations have passed away since first it formed the glory of the forest.

"During our walk nothing particular had passed between me and my companion, although I thought that his manner had been attentive and even tender; but when we were seated, and all the lovely prospect seen from those heights was spread before us, while our senses were regaled with the odour of thyme and marjoram, and other fragrant herbs; after we had remained silent for a time, he suddenly turned to me, and taking my hand, said, 'Tell me, fair lady, is your cousin like yourself?'

"'No, sir,' I replied, 'not in the least. Agnes is fair, and I am, as you see, brown as a nut.'

"'Brown!' said he, 'no;' and he passed some high compliments on my complexion, my hair, and eyes, and again said, 'But does not Agnes resemble you in any one respect?'

"'No, sir,' I replied, 'I do not presume to resemble Agnes in any thing. Her very delicacy of constitution gives her a beauty, to which I, who am all rude health, cannot aspire.'

"'And how long, my charming Matilda,' he answered, 'how long have you been in the habit of considering sickliness a beauty?' and I thought he sighed.

"I remember little more of this conversation, but it was not interrupted till the old clock in the turret tolled the hour of nine, which, being my uncle's supper-time, we hastened back.

"When we withdrew to rest, our old housekeeper, who had known me from a child, came up to receive some orders from me, and, before she left the room, 'Miss Matilda,' said she, 'that Mr. Fitzgerald is a fine young gentleman, and I am glad of it for my dear young lady's sake.'

"'Your young lady's sake!' I said; 'and what has she to do with Mr. Fitzgerald?'

“ ‘Why, do you not know, Miss,’ replied she, ‘that this Mr. Fitzgerald has been destined to marry Miss Agnes from her infancy?’

“ ‘What! whether she likes him or not?’ I asked.

“ ‘And why should she not like him? I am sure he is a very fine young gentleman.’

“ ‘But, perhaps, he may not like her,’ I rejoined.

“ ‘Not like her! not like our sweet Miss Agnes!’ she exclaimed, lifting up her hands and eyes, and giving me a searching look. ‘But, however, Miss, I have told you what has been planned by the old gentlemen on both sides, and now you know it.’

“ ‘What then?’ I asked.

“ ‘Why, you will know how to behave to the young gentleman,’ she replied.

“ ‘And do you think I did not know that before?’ I said.

“ ‘How should you, Miss?’ returned the housekeeper. ‘If you were not informed that he was bound in honour to another, you might, very innocently, have set your heart upon him; and so I thought, as you have no mother to give you a caution, there could be no harm in my just telling you how matters stand.’

“ ‘So saying, she wished me good night, leaving me to my own thoughts, which were, perhaps, never more painful.’

“ ‘The housekeeper had done her duty, and, in so doing, had set before me all the error of my ways; and it seemed to me, at that moment, as if new light had broken in upon me, showing the vileness of my intentions in their most prominent point of view. But I was ambitious; and in that one word, *ambition*, all that is hateful, and all that is cruel, mean, and despicable in the human character, is contained. It is in our dealings, not with our inferiors, nor with our equals, but with our superiors, that the passion of ambition is excited.’

“ ‘The golden rule, in all intercourse with our fellow-creatures, is this—to do unto others what we would they should do unto us. But how can this be done? it may be asked. I reply, only on the supposition that our own desires are reasonable, moderate, and just. An ambitious man, an envious man, or a covetous man, can never do to others what he would they should do unto

him, because his desires and expectations are immoderate: he would have all his neighbour's wealth or all his honours. The golden rule, therefore, can never be attained by him, for his own covetous desires will ever weigh down the scale of justice to his own side. But, in the degree that he becomes humble and moderate, in that degree he becomes better prepared to fulfil this law of love, and more and more able, as well as ready, to do to others as he would they should do to him, under like circumstances and on like occasions.

"This golden rule was exemplified, in the highest perfection, in the man Christ Jesus, who, feeling for us as for himself in our circumstances, did precisely for us what he would have desired should be done for himself had it been possible that he could have been in our situation. And, in the degree that a Christian approaches nearer and nearer to the example of his Saviour, he is the more enabled to observe the golden rule.

"Had my situation and that of my sweet Agnes been reversed, I am fully sensible she would have felt that all had been done for her which she could possibly have required: she would have desired no more, nay, she would have been contented with less. And thus, in weighing her own moderate desires with her duty to others, she would have found it easy to have balanced the account, and brought her actions down to the rule of justice.

"I hardly know whether I have expressed myself clearly on this difficult point; but this is the result of what I would say—that he who is most free from ambition, most humble and moderate in his own desires, is the person who can best fulfil the duty of doing to others what he would they should do unto him. And, most assuredly, if this be allowed as a truth, it will serve to remove the supposed insurmountable difficulty of obeying our Lord's injunction.

"I was kept awake several hours by my meditations on what the housekeeper had said to me; and the result of my meditations was this, that I would endeavour to be more cautious in my conduct towards Mr. Fitzgerald, since the eyes of one of the household, at least, were

upon me. But I purposed no improvement of character for I was not the subject of a change of heart.

“It was more than a fortnight after the arrival of Mr. Fitzgerald before my cousin was able to leave her room, and, during that period, I was not wanting to myself, but used every means I could think of to secure his affections, and, in so doing, as might be expected, engaged my own feelings in the cause, in such a way as I had not foreseen, but which was a very proper and natural consequence of my sin. In proportion, however, as my regard for Mr. Fitzgerald increased, my dispositions towards my cousin partook more and more of the feelings of hatred; and such was their nature, that even her excellences and her kindness towards me, rendered her more and more the object of my aversion. I particularly envied in her a freedom from those passions which made my life so miserable; but I gave her no credit for this freedom, but, on the contrary, used often to say to myself, that her composure of mind was owing to her singularly happy situation, and to her being in possession of all that could make life desirable. It never occurred to me, that the equanimity of her mind proceeded from piety. She had been nursed by a pious woman, who still continued to live with her in the character of a waiting-maid; and by this simple means she had been brought, through the divine blessing, to seek her God in the days of her youth. Hence proceeded that calmness of mind and sweetness of manner, which rendered her the object of the love and admiration of all who saw her, with the exception only of myself.

“During the time of her confinement to her room, while Mr. Fitzgerald was in the house, I of course frequently visited her in the chamber, and generally found her reading some serious book, or cutting out garments for the poor; but, as I avoided mentioning Mr. Fitzgerald’s name, she seldom asked me any questions about him, and it was evident that her thoughts were not occupied concerning him. Her illness, though short, had an alarming tendency; and it appeared, as she afterwards told me, that the impressive views of death and mortality given her at that time, had much loosened her affections from the world, and had operated

as a suitable warning to prepare her for an early departure. The time, however, at length arrived, when she was to leave her room; and my uncle, one morning at breakfast, announced to Mr. Fitzgerald, with great glee, that he hoped he should have the pleasure of introducing him to his daughter at dinner. The young gentleman coloured on receiving this information, but I could not exactly interpret this symptom; I was, however, so violently affected, that, as soon as I possibly could, I withdrew to a summer-house, which was built on the wall in a distant part of the garden, and there, for a time, gave free and uninterrupted vent to my tears.

“I endeavoured to suppose that these were tears of sweet and amiable sensibility, when, on the contrary, they were nothing but the effusions of selfishness and passion. My heart and affections had not been taken by surprise by Mr. Fitzgerald; on the contrary, believing that the parents had intended a marriage between him and my cousin, I had formed the selfish project of disconcerting their plan. And if, in the pursuit of my object, my own feelings were disturbed and injured, it was, as I have before said, no more than might have been expected, and no more than I deserved.

“I continued weeping in the summer-house till I heard some voices near the wall on the outside of the garden. The wall was skirted by a small coppice, which was intersected by several narrow pathways; but these were so seldom frequented, that they were almost overgrown with moss. I had scarcely time to withdraw from the window at which I had sat weeping, with my handkerchief at my eyes, before Mr. Fitzgerald and my uncle appeared.

“My uncle was earnestly engaged in conversation, and did not see me: but not so Mr. Fitzgerald. He perceived me, and, no doubt, remarked my dejected appearance; for, although he took no notice at the time, but passed on with my uncle, in less than a quarter of an hour he returned to the summer-house, by the way of the garden, and entered without ceremony.

“He at first took no notice of my tears, but asking permission to sit down by me, he entered into a conversation, in which he frankly told me, that it was the wish



of the parents on both sides that a marriage should take place between him and my cousin ; and observed, that as he was entirely dependent on his parents, he had no choice but to submit to their desires. He hinted how much he had been disappointed, when, after our first conversation, he had found that I was not the daughter of his father's friend ; and he added, that he could have little hope that he should find in my cousin any qualities which could make him cease to regret his disappointment.

“All this was very fine to the ear, but it was decidedly wrong, and it was what I ought not to have listened to for one moment ; but it pleased me, because it flattered my vanity, though, as he had not yet seen my cousin, it could hardly be said to lower her. We were disturbed in this unprofitable discourse by the necessity of appearing at dinner.

“It may be supposed that I was exceedingly anxious to observe the first effect of the appearance of Agnes on Mr. Fitzgerald, thinking that I should be able to read in his countenance, on this occasion, whether I had any thing more to expect from his regard to me. But I found, with dismay, sudden and strong expressions of admiration, on his part, when she appeared ; and the artless simplicity and sweetness of her manners seemed every moment to gain increasingly upon him.

“From that moment he shunned every occasion of being alone with me ; and, as there were no prudential obstacles in the way of this marriage, it was hurried on by the parents, and I had the mortification, in a few months, of assisting at it, in the character of bridesmaid.

“It may be supposed that the ill success of my plan with respect to Mr. Fitzgerald, who was the only man in the world for whom I had ever entertained any preference, did not render my feelings towards my cousin, who was become his happy wife, more agreeable than they had been before. In short, I became so uneasy in my own mind, that I rejoiced to receive the addresses of a young officer who was quartered in the next town.

“My uncle behaved very handsomely to me on my marriage, and presented me with six thousand pounds, and my cousin added some very expensive presents.

“As my husband had what is called good interest in

the army, we entertained no thought of leaving the course of life he had chosen. We accordingly joined our regiment, and accompanied it into different parts of England, Scotland, and Ireland.

“Although my husband had nothing more than his pay, yet the interest of my fortune enabled us to live in a style quite superior to any other married officer in the regiment. But we were not satisfied with this. Although we had all we could reasonably desire, yet our anxiety for promotion was the same as if our very existence depended on it; and I have often recollected the glee with which my husband would proclaim the death of a superior officer, and how frequently he made ‘speedy promotion’ his toast.

“All this, which is too frequently practised in the army, is counted but a *facon de parler*, and it is pleaded, that those who use this language use it without thought, and without the smallest wish to injure a brother officer, or to see him injured. But what does Scripture say on this subject? *A good man out of the good treasure of his heart bringeth forth that which is good; and an evil man out of the evil treasure of his heart bringeth forth that which is evil: for out of the abundance of the heart his mouth speaketh.* (Luke vi. 45.) And we may judge of the nature and tendency of these speeches, when our dearest friends, our husbands, and sons, are made the subjects of them. Ask what the bereaved mother or widow would feel were she to hear the death of her beloved one made the subject of such jests as these; and could such a one, I ask, be brought to think that there could be any excuse for speeches of such a cruel tendency?

“With regard to myself, if I reproved this kind of language in my husband, it was in such a careless, laughing manner, as rather encouraged than checked him; and, as he knew that I was as eager for promotion as himself, he took no pains to conceal from me his failings of the nature above mentioned.

“But promotion in the army was not the only interesting subject of discourse between myself and my husband: he was continually calculating the chances which I had of coming into my uncle’s estate; and in this man-

ner he would often express himself. 'Your uncle is old and paralytic; he has had two strokes already—a third is generally fatal. In case of his death, there is then only one life in your way, and that is your cousin Agnes's. She is not healthy; she always, I have heard you say, was of a consumptive habit.'

"Sometimes I would reply to this, 'She may have children.'

"He would then calculate upon the chance of this, remarking that she had been married two years or more, and had no prospect of the kind. We then, not unfrequently, proceeded to calculate the value of the estate, and to talk ourselves almost into the belief that we had it already in possession.

"Had we entered upon this kind of conversation in a serious manner, we might, perhaps, have been more easily aware of its horrible tendency. But it was all carried on in a gay, rattling style, and in a kind of cant language, such as is commonly used by young spendthrifts, and generally over a bottle. My husband was the chief speaker; but, although I did not join with him in the strange expressions which he used, and, indeed, often affected to reprove him, yet he was very well aware that my reproofs did not come from the heart, and, therefore, was not checked by them.

"The first event which seemed to bring me nearer to the desired estate, was the death of my uncle, which my husband announced to me with the utmost *nonchalance*, although he owed to this good man nearly all the comforts of his life.

"This circumstance was soon followed by the less welcome intelligence that Mrs. Fitzgerald was in expectation of an increase to her family. We were then in Ireland; and my husband was evidently in low spirits on the occasion for some weeks.

"The intelligence of the actual birth of the child, with an account of its well-doing and that of its mother, seemed to remove the desired estate to such a distance, that my husband began to murmur at the smallness of my fortune, and to rail at my uncle for not having named me in his will. He now never spoke of my uncle but in terms of disrespect.

“Soon after the birth of little George, the son of Mr. and Mrs. Fitzgerald, our regiment was ordered to England, and I received a kind invitation from my cousin to visit her.

“I found Mr. and Mrs. Fitzgerald in good health, strongly attached to each other, and living in perfect harmony and love. The little boy, whose existence I had so often deplored, was about half a year old, a lovely baby, possessing all that soft and amiable expression of countenance which rendered his mother so pleasing to every one who saw her with an unprejudiced eye.

“The babe was always dressed with that elegant nicety which is so frequently bestowed on a first child, and was the constant delight of his affectionate parents, who, when they had wearied his little tender frame with play, would sooth him to sleep in their arms, and afterwards, laying him on the cushion of the couch, would watch him till he awoke again.

“I can give you no account of my feelings during this visit, but that they were so wretched, that I did not dare to look into them. After a time, I returned to my husband, and was, soon after my return, followed by a very melancholy letter from my cousin. This letter contained an account of the sudden death of Mr. Fitzgerald, by a fall from his horse, and presented a lively picture of the distress of the afflicted widow.

“While I was yet considering whether this event tended towards the advancement of my prospects of the estate or otherwise, (for all my feelings were now nearly swallowed up by ambition,) my husband came in, and I imparted the news to him. What I only thought upon the subject, he, with less delicacy, spoke, and said, ‘Had it been Fitzgerald’s wife instead of himself, it would have been a fine thing in your favour, my dear; but as it now stands, the widow may marry again, and then we shall be no nearer than we were before.’

“I had the decency to check him, and said, ‘Why my dear, should we, on this melancholy occasion, be thinking of ourselves?’

“‘Because,’ said he, ‘it is natural so to do:’ and he turned on his heel, and went out.

“Whether it was his roughness on the occasion—whe-

ther it was a recollection of the former circumstances which had taken place between myself and Mr. Fitzgerald, or the late scenes of happiness I had witnessed, which were now so cruelly and suddenly marred—I know not; but I burst into tears as soon as he was gone, and wept violently for awhile, and thus eased my mind for a time with respect to the hardness of heart of which I now began to suspect myself.

“I now pass over, in my narration, some months of my life, till the time when I received a summons from my cousin, (who had always believed me to be her most sincere friend,) begging me to come to her immediately, as her child, her only earthly stay and support, was dangerously ill.

“We were at breakfast when I received the letter, which was couched in terms expressive of the utmost affliction. I handed it over the table to my husband, and watched his countenance while he read it with the deepest attention. His cheeks flushed high as he perused the letter, and when he had finished it, he broke out with an expression of exultation, and said, ‘Upon my word, I believe we shall have it at last!’

“‘Have what? my dear,’ said I, affecting not to understand him.

“‘Why, the estate, my girl! the estate!’ he replied, springing from his chair. ‘But you must go—you must go, on all accounts.’

“I did not care to trust my lips with one word in reply, for I was afraid that I should betray my feelings, whether willing or not so to do.

“I was soon prepared to undertake my journey, and, before the middle of the next day, found myself at the gate of the court of my late uncle’s house.

“I was ushered in, and invited up stairs to the nursery, where the widowed mother was watching over her afflicted baby. She viewed me with a silent burst of tears, and led me to the side of the cradle.

“The baby was much changed. I have his little image still before me. He was become exceedingly pale; his eyes were half closed; and on his delicate wrist was a black patch, which was laid over a place where a vein had been opened. I saw death marked on his sweet face,



and I saw it with a feeling of pleasure. I witnessed the anguish of his widowed mother, and I did not wish the cause removed!

“Here I pause for a moment, to ask if mine was a singular case? Are there many hearts, among those who desire to be exalted in this world, as hard and cruel as mine? Let every ambitious or covetous person ask himself what his feelings would have been on a like occasion; and if his conscience bring him in guilty, let him instantly apply to that Holy Spirit who only is able to cleanse him from those feelings which render man little less than diabolical.

“The baby died, and I assisted to lay out his tender limbs, now cold in death, and to place, for the last time, his flaxen curls around his marble brow.

“I strewed the fairest flowers upon his little corpse, and in each dimpled hand I placed a rose; and I did all this without feeling one regret at his early death, or forming one tender wish that it had not been so. I was glad, however, in the bustle of preparation for the funeral, to find some excuse for being absent from the mother and was happy to devolve the task of comforting her upon another.

“The pious woman I have before spoken of, who had been my poor cousin’s nurse, was still living with her, and she now became her only earthly consolation. I was, however, ostensibly, her best friend, and continued with her till, worn out by sorrow preying on a constitution naturally tender, she died, and left me in possession of that inheritance which I had long so ardently coveted.

“My cousin, I have reason to think, had been enabled, during her illness, to receive all the consolation which religion could give her, and her last address to me convinced me that she died in the most desirable state of mind—that is, with entire confidence in the death and merits of her Saviour.

“My husband was in such haste to take possession of the estate, that he could scarcely wait till the remains of the late owner were laid in the dust, before he began to form plans of alterations and improvements.

“I was now placed in that situation which I had

ardently coveted for years. We established ourselves in a great style of magnificence, and our equipages, &c. were unrivalled by any in the country. A continued round of company and visitings occupied all my leisure time, and my husband provided himself with hounds and hunters, and entered most fully into all the delights of the chase.

“In the midst of all our pleasures, a prospect was held forth to me of speedily becoming a mother; an event which only, as I thought, was wanting to complete my felicity.

“In due time my boy was born, and was, at least in his mother’s eyes, a very lovely infant. The old nurse, who still lived in the house, paid me the compliment of saying he was very like dear little master George, who was now no more; and, as he advanced in age, the likeness became more apparent.

“On the day on which my little son was christened, the bells in all the neighbouring churches were set in motion; an ox was roasted whole in the park, and every kind of testimony of rejoicing displayed.

“In the midst of our gayeties, a shabby conveyance was seen driving through the park, from which two females alighted whom I had never seen before. These persons, who, from their likeness, were evidently mother and daughter, had a thin and meagre appearance, and were not less shabby in their appearance than the carriage in which they had travelled.

“They soon made themselves known to me as the only surviving descendants of my grandfather, the elder being a daughter who had disgraced herself by a very improper marriage, and the younger the only child of that marriage. I had heard of these persons, and knew that my uncle and Agnes had always assisted them; but, as they were sunk very low in point of property and habits, I had made up my mind not to take any manner of notice of them. However, they came at a propitious moment, and found me in high good humour; and, as my aunt pretty well understood the art of bending to a haughty spirit, she somehow or other induced me to invite her into the house, where she and her daughter made themselves so useful, and submitted themselves so

entirely to all my caprices, that their visit was protracted from day to day, till at length I found that I could not do without them, and consented to their remaining under my roof, on condition that they worked as upper-servants, received no wages, and were admitted into the parlour only when we were alone.

“A long continuance of what the world calls prosperity followed the day of my boy’s christening, during which period my heart became more and more hardened, and all my feelings of affection centred in myself and my son. As to my husband, my regard for him had never been strong, and having found that he was making to himself a private purse out of my property, I let him know my suspicions, and from that time, though we lived in the same house, we treated each other with a polite and distant coldness. In the mean time, our son grew up, and, notwithstanding the very improper indulgence with which he was treated, and the gross flatteries lavished upon him by his aunt and cousin, he was an amiable young man, and dutiful to both his parents, and I was actually looking out for some young lady for his wife, when he was seized with a disease, which, notwithstanding every exertion of human art, at length brought him to the grave in the very bloom of life!

“My son had had a tutor who was a pious man; and although this tutor had been sent away in disgrace through my caprice, yet the lessons of piety which he had given the youth had sunk so deeply into his heart, that I doubt not they more or less affected every part of his conduct while in health, and, undoubtedly, afforded him much and true comfort in his last hours.

“My beloved son was very near death before I could be induced to believe it probable that I was to lose this darling child. In my calculations on the events of life, it had never entered my head to suppose such an event possible; and when the assurance, that it was not only possible but very probable, burst upon me, I was like one distracted.

“My aunt and cousin came to me to comfort me; but as these persons were the next heirs to the estate, it suddenly occurred to me that they were perhaps secretly rejoicing in an event which was the death-blow of all

my hopes. I thought I saw a kind of concealed joy in their sharp faces. I judged of them by what I had experienced in myself; and the horror I felt when they spoke to me, or came near me, is beyond description.

“And now the similarity of circumstances brought to my mind those events of my life which had taken place nearly twenty years before, when I had rejoiced in the death of the only child of my cousin—a cousin with whom I had been reared, and who had always treated me with the utmost tenderness. I remember one night, in particular, I had sat on my son’s bed, till, overcome with fatigue, I fell asleep, and in a dream, I thought I was standing by the cradle of little George, and hearkening to his hard and laboured breathing; that his mother, pale as a corpse, and clothed in widow’s weeds, stood by, and looked at me with an expression which pierced me to the heart, and was uttering at the same time the most dreadful groans. I awoke in agony, and, raising myself up, found that it was the slow and laboured breathing of my son, the sound of which, reaching me in my sleep, had excited the dreadful vision I have just described.

“Every mother who has lost an infant must know, that such grief is difficult to bear; but when remorse of conscience, or the remembrance of having injured that child, or the child of another, either in thought, word, or deed, mixes itself with the natural grief of the occasion, oh! it is more than human nature can endure.

“‘And did I wish the death of Agnes’s child?’ I said to myself; ‘was not such a wish murder? And what could tempt me to so horrible a thought? The estate! the estate!’ and I groaned to think how contemptible I felt the estate to be at that moment, and how utterly incapable all my large possessions were of giving me one moment’s comfort.

“While I still gazed on the emaciated form of my sleeping son, meditating at the same time on these dreadful recollections, and wondering what new light was breaking in upon me, my aunt, in her night-dress, put her sharp face in at the door, and said, in a whispering tone, addressing the nurse, ‘And how is he now?’

“I did not hear the nurse’s reply, but the low accents

of my aunt in return again met my ear. 'Asleep, you say; well, I am glad: but this heaviness is no good sign, I fear. Nature is wearing out, to be sure.'

" 'Nature may be refreshed by it,' said the nurse; 'but you had best be going: ' and I saw the nurse giving her a signal to be gone. But the signal was not taken, and she stepped further into the room.

" 'Heaven help the poor soul!' was her next exclamation. 'How hard he fetches his breath! how he labours! The Lord deliver him from his troubles!'

"I saw the nurse, as I looked through the curtain, motion to her again to leave the room; but the signal was not observed, and she came still forwarder.

" 'I must just look at him,' she said, 'the poor dear boy. I wish I could hear him breathe more easy; but I thought him changed yesterday—did not you, nurse?'

" 'He is sleeping very easy now,' replied the nurse, 'and you will be sure to disturb him. Pray go back to your bed.'

" 'But I hope you watch him,' replied my aunt. 'I have seen many die; and death sometimes comes on when'—

"She was proceeding, when I burst out upon her from behind the curtain, and, putting the worst interpretation on my aunt's predictions, believing that she spoke but what she hoped, and remembering but too well at that moment, that it was her interest my child should die, 'Aunt,' I said, 'you may forbear your horrid forebodings. Remember, if my son dies, I may still outlive your daughter; so spare yourself the guilt of wishing my son's death.'

"The old lady was terrified at my sudden appearance and dreadful expressions, and hastened back to her own apartment.

"My son had heard what I said to his aunt, and he thence took occasion to entreat me to seek a superiority over the petty strivings and animosities of this world. He pointed out to me that a better inheritance, eternal in the heavens, was prepared for those who were willing to leave all and follow Christ; and he urged me to take thought for the everlasting welfare of my soul, and to have less concern for the perishable things of this world.



His last request to his parents was, that a considerable church-living, in the gift of our family, might be presented to his beloved tutor, in the instance of its becoming vacant.

“My grief for my poor boy was long and violent, and showed itself in a thousand extraordinary ways. For awhile I confined myself entirely to my own apartments, and spent my time, not truly in religious duties, but in a variety of gloomy forms, which I called religious, having a confused notion that the Almighty Ruler of all things was offended with me;—but I had so little understood what my beloved son had said to me upon his death-bed, that I had gathered no correct idea from him of the Saviour. I therefore strove to work out my own salvation by the deeds of the law, in a laborious and fatiguing course of duties, and by a cheerless and austere manner—by which I rendered myself and my religion hateful to every one.

“While I was in this state of mind, the incumbent of the parish died, and I then thought of the promise I had made my beloved son. We sent for his venerable tutor, and presented the living to him.

“This excellent man was soon aware of my state, and of the mistake into which I had fallen, of endeavouring to procure justification by the works of the law; and he took great pains to convince me of the spiritual and extensive import of the commandments, and to show me that no mere man had ever kept the law of God, or ever could be saved by it. He declared to me the nature of the ten commandments, explaining them one by one, and pointing out their purity and spirituality, and proved to me that they extended, not only to the outward actions, but to the very thoughts and intents of the heart.

“When we came to the consideration of the sixth precept, I found myself condemned, absolutely condemned before God, as a murderer—an idea which had before arrested my mind, but in a manner so slight, that I had contrived to free myself entirely from the conviction. But soon the persuasion of my guilt occupied my heart with renewed force, accompanied with a sense of that anger which drank up my spirits, and I cried out in agony—‘What shall I do to be saved?’

“This was the state of mind which my faithful pastor had been endeavouring to produce in me, and he was ready with an answer to my sincere inquiry—the answer which St. Paul gave to the jailer—*Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved, and thy house.* (Acts xvi. 31.)

“I was no sooner brought to the knowledge of Jesus Christ, by the persevering and affectionate labours of my minister, through the power of the Holy Spirit, than I saw the depravity of my character, not only in my breach of the sixth commandment, wherein I had been especially guilty, but in innumerable other instances. Nay, I perceived that I had been, from my earliest infancy, living as without God in the world, and that the description in the epistle to the Romans was in many points applicable to me. *Being filled with all unrighteousness, fornication, wickedness, covetousness, maliciousness; full of envy, murder, debate, deceit, malignity; whisperers, backbiters, haters of God, despiteful, proud, boasters, inventors of evil things, disobedient to parents, without understanding, covenant-breakers, without natural affection, implacable, unmerciful: who, knowing the judgment of God, that they which commit such things are worthy of death, not only do the same, but have pleasure in them that do them.* (Romans i. 29—32.)

“Thus was I convinced deeply of sin, while many and painful were the convictions and struggles which I had to pass through, before I could exercise such faith in the Saviour as brought me peace; and when at length I was enabled to do this, my pastor taught me that it was necessary I should show the evidences of faith, in all good works. He urged me to seek a hearty reconciliation with my husband, and aunt, and cousin, the latter of whom I had chased from my house in disgust after the death of my son. He was the means of bringing me, also, to a regard for the spiritual and temporal welfare, not only of my relations, but of my servants, and of all those who in any way depended on me, and were influenced by me.

“Twenty years are now passed since my beloved son entered into glory, and more than forty since I followed Agnes and her little George to their graves. My worthy

pastor and father in Christ, has, also, since that time, been removed from the present evil world, and my husband is now approaching rapidly to the grave. Thus passes away one generation of mankind after another; and among those who have departed, how great is the satisfaction and pleasure in reflecting upon the state and character of such as gave decisive evidence that they were the chosen of the Lord!

“During the last twenty years of my life I have lived in great retirement; and the world has ceased to possess any charm for me. All ambitious desires passed away from my heart when I lost my son; and every earthly possession, from that time, seemed to be marked in my view with the characters of mortality. But, during the latter part of that period, ever since I was brought by grace to the reception of my Saviour, the violent passions of pride, envy, and ambition, which had taken up their dwelling in my breast, no longer have exercised the same dominion over me. By gazing on my Saviour, I, who had been wounded unto death by sin, was healed. All within me became calm and serene, and I now more vehemently desired the spiritual life of my connexions than I had ever desired the death of those who stood in the way of my worldly advancement. In the court of Christ there is no rivalry: the riches and honours of his kingdom are inexhaustible; and he that most earnestly desires the exaltation of his brother, will himself be most highly honoured; for our Lord saith, *He that is least among you all, the same shall be greatest.*

“It has pleased the Lord to impart his spirit to my husband and other relations, and thus abundantly to pour out his salvation upon his servants, who were unworthy of the least of all his mercies.

“During the retirement of my chamber, to which I have been confined for some months past by sickness, I have taken a review of my life, and have been led to consider that there are many events in it, which, if properly stated, might be useful in warning others as to the dreadful effects of ambitious feelings.

“The tendency of these is, undoubtedly, neither more nor less than to murder; while the feelings of humility lead to life, health, and peace. Perhaps it would be

impossible to sum up the total of human wisdom in a smaller compass than to say, that it consists in that pious acquiescence in the will of God which induces a man to keep in his own proper station, and there to avail himself of every opportunity of testifying his reverence towards God and his love of his fellow-creatures.

“Varieties of rank, and station, and outward circumstances, are ordained of God in the present state; but true honour consists not, necessarily, or independent of true virtue, in any of them. He that does his duty best, be it in a palace, or be it in a cottage, is, undoubtedly, the most honourable character; and he that conforms to circumstances with the most humility, is, undoubtedly, the most dignified person. There is a meanness, a littleness, a poorness in ambition, of which even the subject of it himself is conscious, though he would not have it known—for who would not blush to acknowledge those feelings of covetousness and envy, of which this passion is composed?—who dares to avow them openly, or to reveal them even to his bosom friend? Is not envy ever accompanied by shame? And who would not prefer the reputation of rising above such covetous and envious passions, to the gain, the polluted gain, of ambition?”

“But the divine will say, that such evils of the heart cannot be overcome by reflections or reasonings of this kind. I grant it. Nevertheless, it is a desirable thing to understand the real nature of ambition, that restless and guilty feeling, which has hitherto supplied a theme to every heathen writer, and which is extolled by some professing Christians, while it has been clothed by genius in the most brilliant robes which fancy could devise: for until we are brought to know the mischief of such feelings—until we know the deep depravity of this state of mind, which the world too much approves—we shall not be disposed to seek the only remedy for our moral defects; that remedy which is found no where but in religion, and in no religion but in that of the Scriptures, where the love of the Father, the death and merits of the Son, and the sanctifying influences of the Spirit, are exhibited with attractions as various as they are wonderful, and by representations as beautiful and familiar as the flowers which enliven the meadows, and

the fountains, groves, and valleys, which diversify the face of Nature.

“O how blessed was I when the glorious scheme of human redemption was unfolded to my mind! when I was endued with the power of discerning spiritual things! It was *then* I awoke as from a dream, and wondered at the hopes, the fears, and the desires which had hitherto occupied my mind, and filled every faculty. Then, indeed, was my house swept and garnished, but not left empty, to the reception of a worse spirit than that which had occupied it before; for love, and joy, and hope, were now admitted there, and for ambition and covetousness, envy and rancour, there was no room. Those benevolent persons, therefore, who are anxious to remove the authority of such tormenting passions from the minds of others, must present to them superior objects for their affections. It is useless to say, ‘Love not the world, nor the things of the world,’ to him who knows nothing beyond the world.’ The warm affections of the heart must have an object. The infant who grasps a toy may be tempted to relinquish it by the prospect of seizing some more grateful possession; but if you remove the object of his delight without affording him gratification in another, you exasperate him to his own injury, and he will extend his hand to seize whatever may next come in his way.

“To young people, therefore, my reader, commend not the world, or that which belongs to it, but endeavour to draw their attention and excite their affections towards the objects which are beyond this present state of things: fill their hearts as much as in you lies, with hopes respecting future and eternal realities. Spread before them the types and emblems of things to come. Unfold the volume of Nature before them, and teach them to read the language of the heavens—*for the heavens declare the glory of God*: and if you can (with the divine blessing) bring them to love and to desire those things which are above, you will have afforded them the best protection from those low and envious, covetous and ambitious feelings, which render man impatient towards his inferiors, unkind to his equals, and meanly servile or cruelly envious towards his superiors.



“And now, my reader, I take my leave, having accomplished the design of setting before you my history. May the effect be, to urge myself and you to press towards the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus !”

The history of Matilda Vincent being concluded, the lady of the manor requested her young people to join her in prayer.

*A Prayer that we may be liberated from all envious, ambitious, and covetous Desires of the Heart.*

“O THOU eternal and mysterious Three in One, thou blessed and glorious Lord. God, we entreat thy mercy and pity on account of our many transgressions, and those peculiar sins of our vile nature which lead us to look enviously on the advantages enjoyed by our fellow-creatures.

“Give us, O blessed God, an impressive sense of the emptiness of worldly possessions, and impart that faith which may enable us to look beyond the present life to that blessed state in which there will be no poverty, no tears, no biting scorn, no pride or envy ; and where the Lord’s flock shall feed in a wide pasture, and enjoy for ever their resting places.

“We know, O Lord God, that we cannot free our hearts from improper worldly considerations, unless thou, in thine infinite mercy, shouldst condescend to fill them with better things, and to excite our affections towards those which are above. To this end, O Almighty Father, grant unto us a clear and saving view of all that thou hast done and prepared for us. Lead us to perceive how thou, O Father, didst purpose our salvation ere yet the world began, making us the objects of thy electing love ere we inhabited the earth ; how thou didst provide for our justification through thy Son, and how thou suppliest us with the means of regeneration and sanctification through the gift of thy Spirit.

“Deign, O Lord, to explain to us thy promises of future happiness ; not those only which refer to the latter times, when the primeval glory of creation shall

be renewed, and the triumphant reign of Christ shall commence, but also in that more remote period when the heavens and the earth shall pass away, and there shall be no more sun. And grant that the view of these dazzling glories may make the glimmering splendours of the present scene pass from our view, and retire into the darkness in which they must all presently be involved. And thus, O Almighty God, now, even now at this present time, make us more than victorious over all worldly passions and earthly desires; so that, while present in the body, we may yet be present with the Lord, living by faith and not by sight, and ever ready to depart with joy when our appointed time may come.

“And now to Thee, O everlasting Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, be all praise, honour, and glory, from this time forth for evermore. Amen.”

## CHAPTER XXVII.



CATECHIST. *My good Child, know this, that thou art not able to do these Things of thyself, nor to walk in the Commandments of God, and to serve him, without his special Grace, which thou must learn at all Times to call for by diligent Prayer. Let me hear, therefore, if thou canst say the Lord's Prayer.*

A. *Our Father, which art in Heaven, hallowed be thy Name. Thy Kingdom come. Thy will be done in Earth, as it is in Heaven. Give us this Day our daily Bread. And forgive us our Trespases, as we forgive them that trespass against us. And lead us not into Temptation, but deliver us from evil. Amen.*

Q. *What desirest thou of God in this Prayer?*

A. *I desire my Lord God our heavenly Father, who is the Giver of all Goodness, to send his Grace unto me, and to all People, that we may worship him, serve him, and obey him, as we ought to do. And I pray unto God, that he will send us all Things that be needful both for our Souls and Bodies; and that he will be merciful unto us, and forgive us our Sins; and that it will please him to save and defend us in all Dangers, ghostly and bodily; and that he will keep us from all Sin and Wick- edness, and from our ghostly Enemy, and from everlasting Death. And this I trust he will do of his Mercy and Goodness, through our Lord Jesus Christ. And therefore I say, Amen, So be it.*

MANY and happy had been the meetings between the lady of the manor and her young people; and the young party began to look forward with apprehension to the time when the cause for these frequent and delightful in-

interviews should cease to operate. The bishop was expected to pay his visit early in the autumn, and the lady of the manor also expected her sons and their tutor to return about the same time: but while the affectionate mother anticipated with delight a reunion with her beloved children, she felt some regret at the idea that she should not then be able to give so much of her attention as she had lately done to the beloved young people, who had for some months past occupied so much of her time and so many of her thoughts. But the recollection that her labours with respect to them were now approaching towards their termination, only animated her zeal, and rendered her the more anxious to perform her task effectually.

The part of the Catechism to which the lady of the manor had brought her young people was that which treats on prayer; and accordingly, when the party assembled again, she caused one of the young ladies to repeat the following questions and answers.

“*Catechist.* My good child, know this, that thou art not able to do these things of thyself, nor to walk in the commandments of God, and to serve him, without his special grace, which thou must learn at all times to call for by diligent prayer. Let me hear, therefore, if thou canst say the Lord’s Prayer.”

“*A.* Our Father, which art in heaven, hallowed be thy name. Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done in earth, as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread. And forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive them that trespass against us. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. Amen.”

“*Q.* What desirest thou of God in this prayer?”

“*A.* I desire my Lord God our heavenly Father, who is the giver of all goodness, to send his grace unto me, and to all people, that we may worship him, serve him, and obey him, as we ought to do. And I pray unto God, that he will send us all things that be needful both for our souls and bodies; and that he will be merciful unto us, and forgive us our sins; and that it will please him to save and defend us in all dangers, ghostly and bodily; and that he will keep us from all sin and wickedness, and from our ghostly enemy, and from everlasting death.

And this I trust he will do of his mercy and goodness, through our Lord Jesus Christ. And therefore I say, Amen, So be it."

"My dear young people," said the lady, after having hearkened to this repetition, "I trust that it is not now necessary to use many arguments to prove to you that you are utterly helpless and dependent on God, and that you are of yourselves incapable of doing any thing well, or even so much as desiring to do well, without divine help."

All present replied, that they at least understood the helplessness of fallen man was a doctrine not to be controverted, though they were by no means so sufficiently impressed by a sense of this truth as they ought to be: "for we all, at times, feel proud and self-confident," they added, "and are always very ready to take to ourselves any kind of praise or flattery which those who do not know us will bestow upon us."

The lady of the manor smiled, and advised them to remember good Mr. Eliot, and shun the vice of human praise; "which," added she, "is far more dangerous than that of the syrens of ancient fable." She then proceeded to the consideration of prayer in general, with its nature and obligations.

"Prayer," said the lady of the manor, "has always been misunderstood, not only by the heathens, of whom our Lord said, *They think that they shall be heard for their much speaking*, (Matt. vi. 7,) and by those who only bear the name of Christians, but also by many really excellent persons among the children of God, who load the duty of prayer with so many formalities, and so many painful circumstances, that they frighten some entirely from it, and drive others to it in a spirit of superstitious terror, which is very far from the temper of the child who feels he is addressing a wise, a holy, and a tender parent.

"In speaking of prayer, and recommending the duty, many things ought to be considered; and one of these is, that all persons are not capable of a long and deep attention to any one subject, which those who insist on very protracted attention to this duty seem to require. The human mind, in different individuals, varies also in



the quickness of its conceptions, and the most active minds are perhaps the least disposed of all others to dwell on any single object for a length of time. The mind of youth, in general, is exceedingly rapid and vague in its motions; hence, those persons who, contrary to the advice of our blessed Saviour, would weary young people by very long prayers, betray their ignorance of the human mind, and either excite a rebellious spirit in them on the subject of their religious duties, or accustom them (which is perhaps still worse) to a hypocritical habit of praying with the lips while the heart is otherwise engaged."

"O, Madam!" said one of the young ladies, "how much, by these remarks, you have relieved my mind! There is nothing which I have lately been so troubled about as upon the aversion I felt to long prayers. I used to think, that, when I began to love our Saviour,—and I think I do begin to love him, though not as he deserves to be loved,—I should never think any prayers long, that I should never be tired of hearing sermons, and that my thoughts would never wander during divine service as they now do."

"Your mistake," said the lady of the manor, "my dear child, was a natural one, and arose from that confusion which exists in the minds of most persons, respecting the difference between regeneration and sanctification. Granting, for argument's sake, that you are regenerate, still your sanctification, though begun, is not complete; too many sinful infirmities, not only of the spirit, but of the flesh, still remain with you, connected with bodily and mental weakness, which render it impossible for the soul to take long and continued flights amid the regions of spiritual things.

"This incapability of a continued enjoyment of high devotional duties, is one of the circumstances most to be deplored by the saints on earth; and this evil can only be relieved by an endeavour (with the divine help) to keep the mind in that pious frame, that it may be ever prepared to raise itself to God, in short ejaculations, or in holy meditation. In the same Scriptures where we are told not to make long prayers, we are also admonished to pray without ceasing: hence, we should be prepared

to direct our hearts to God as a little child turns its eyes to its mother ere yet the tongue has learned to frame the first word of recognition. This is the disposition which our Saviour loves, the child-like simple spirit so precious in his sight. He loves a heart that glows with gratitude to him on an occasion of joy, however small, and confesses its sorrow and contrition on the slightest deviation from the right way—a heart sanctified by himself, and which continually acknowledges its connexion with him, and dependence upon him, which sighs to be delivered from the bondage of sin, and looks only for perfect bliss in the enjoyment of his presence through an endless state of being.

“Such a spirit as I have described,” said the lady of the manor, “is ever rising upward, as the sweet incense which burnt on the golden altar in the court of the tabernacle, and being presented on that altar which Christ by his merit has provided, becomes a sweet and acceptable offering before the throne of the Almighty.

“But while this more latent prayer and thanksgiving should be continual,” said the lady of the manor, “still the outward forms of prayer should by no means be neglected; and because the cares of this world are ever pressing upon us in this state of being, and the mind may be injured and depressed by them, it is necessary that every child of God should prescribe to himself certain seasons for private devotion, and for family prayer, and that he should also conform to the rules of his own peculiar church in public worship; and he ought to consider it as one of the greatest privileges afforded him, that he is permitted to approach his God, without fear, through the merits of a dying Saviour.

“If I adopt a poor child, and grant permission of access to me at any and every moment with its little complaints, I am justly offended if that child, when under trouble, pines in secret, and refuses to open its heart to me; and yet, my dear young people, how little do we feel the privilege of being admitted into the presence of God; what a burden do we think it to be obliged to devote even the shortest period to his duty, and how ready are we to be diverted from it by the most unimportant avocation! Ah, Lord God, how infinitely sinful are we

in this particular! surely if one part of our conduct and feelings is more hateful than another, I should say that it is this perpetual disinclination to prayer."

The lady of the manor here paused a moment, and the young people looked down, every one feeling herself self-condemned in this particular, as, no doubt, every one will do who may hereafter honour this little volume with his attention. The lady, however, did not enlarge upon this part of her subject, but proceeded to observe, that prayer was not a mere uttering of so many words by the lips, but a spiritual intercourse with the Lord Jehovah, graciously permitted by Him in love to his sinful creatures, through the merits of Christ our Saviour; while the subjects of this spiritual intercourse are as numerous as the wants of human nature, and as various as its hopes and fears, its joys and sorrows.

The lady of the manor then proceeded to point out some of those texts of Scripture which enforce the duty of prayer:—*Ask, and it shall be given you.* (Matt. vii. 7.) *And he spake a parable unto them to this end, that men ought always to pray, and not to faint.* (Luke xviii. 1.) *I will therefore that men pray every where, lifting up holy hands.* (1 Tim. ii. 8.) And having so done, she went on to make some comments on the model of prayer left us by our blessed Saviour. "Not only by this prayer," she added, "are we taught what we must desire, but we receive an assurance that all we ask therein shall be granted to us; for even a wise and good earthly parent would never put a petition into the mouth of a child, which he did not mean to answer; hence, whole volumes on this beautiful prayer could not, in my opinion, unfold its meaning so clearly and so touchingly, as by justly supposing the answer to each petition given by the Almighty himself, in the very words of the prayer."

"And how could this be done, Madam?" said the young ladies.

"Nearly to this effect, my dear children," replied the lady of the manor. "My children, who dwell on earth, my name shall be hallowed, my kingdom shall come, my will shall be done on earth as in heaven. I will give you day by day your spiritual nourishment. As you, through Christ have forgiven all those who have offend

ed you, so will I forgive you. I will free you from every temptation. I will deliver you from all evil. For mine is the kingdom, the power, and the glory, for ever and ever. Amen."

When the lady of the manor ceased to speak, the young people, with one accord, expressed their delight at the very powerful impression which this mode of explaining the Lord's Prayer made upon their minds. "This prayer," said Miss Emmeline, "now appears to me to be an assemblage of the sweetest promises and assurances. I fancied," she added, "while you were speaking, Ma'am, that all the glories of the latter times were unfolded to me, that I was already in the visible presence of my Saviour, and that he was calling me his child, and showing me all he had prepared for my happiness. O that these delightful feelings might return whenever I hear this prayer! but, alas, I fear that it will not be so, my heart is so hard, and my mind at times so dull and worldly." Some other remarks were made to the same purpose, after which, the lady of the manor made the following observation:—"I have always avoided," my dear young people, "dwelling too long on that kind of discussion which might weary you, and for this forbearance, I have lately been repaid by the attention you have always given to those parts of my discourse, or of the stories which I have related or read, that have been more serious than others. At the same time, my acquaintance with the nature of the youthful mind urges me to avail myself gladly of the pattern of Scripture wherein precept is united continually with example, and where parables and allegories are frequently used, as the means of conveying the most sacred and solemn truths to the mind of man.

"I shall therefore now select a little narrative, from several which I have by me, illustrative of certain passages in the Lord's Prayer, and wherein the dreadful consequences of a captious and unforgiving temper, are shown forth in a strong, though, alas! not by any means in an exaggerated point of view; for who can calculate the number of direful evils which have desolated the human race, by the prevalence of that spirit which leads to a resistance of trivial offences, and allows the smallest matters to excite angry and revengeful feelings?

“The purport of this little tale is to mark the growth of hatred in the heart from its first rise till its consummation, and to show how much of our happiness and well-being depend upon our being able, not only to forgive the gross offender and the flagrant trespasser upon our rights, but to repress all those minor feelings of irritability which we are less guarded against, because we are less aware of their tendency, than of those of a stronger and more dreadful nature.”

The lady of the manor then produced a manuscript, and read as follows.

*Agnace Roquafort, or the Growth of Hatred.*

“It is now many years since I became an alien from society, and ceased to occupy myself with the world and its fluctuating concerns. My reasons for seeking such retirement will hereafter appear: it was in a moment of disgust and horror, in a time of overwhelming grief and disappointment, and at a season when my society was no longer sought by my own family. But I have little doubt that, as time softened my afflicted feelings, the world would have again obtained its influence over my heart, had it not pleased the Ruler of all the earth to compel me, by severe corporeal sufferings, to continue in that state of seclusion which I had first chosen in a spirit, I doubt not, of rebellion against the Divine will.

“These sufferings were protracted, and my spirit rose so impiously against them, that I not unfrequently was tempted to ask, ‘Wherein have I offended so much as to deserve these afflictions? is not God unjust? has he a pleasure in the miseries of his creatures?’

“Though born in France, I am of the Reformed Church, and to me, therefore, the Holy Scriptures were allowed, and it was for me a blessed occasion, when I was led by my domestic chaplain, to seek a reason for my sufferings, and to know the design of God, by some passages in the Lamentations of Jeremiah: *For the Lord will not cast off for ever: but though he cause grief, yet will he have compassion according to the multitude of his mercies. For he doth not afflict willingly nor grieve the children of men.* (Lam. iii. 31—33.)



“It was by these tender and affecting truths that the first dawn of light broke in upon my benighted soul, and I was led to discover that all my afflictions, with the exception only of those lightest of all, the mere infirmities of the body, had sprung from the neglect and breach of this divine petition and injunction contained in the Lord’s Prayer,—‘Forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive them that trespass against us.’—And now I was convinced, that had I made the Bible my guide, and permitted the words of Christ to sink, as they ought to have done, into my heart, I had avoided those inexpressibly bitter circumstances which might have blasted the whole of my life.

“O that the words of Solomon were written on every heart, that they were graven as on a rock! *The beginning of strife is as when one one letteth out water ; therefore leave off contention before it be meddled with.—A fool’s lips enter into contention, and his mouth calleth for strokes.* (Prov. xvii. 14. xviii. 6.)

“But enough of this. Let me now proceed to the task which I have appointed myself, and if the warnings contained in these disastrous memoirs should prove in any degree advantageous to those into whose hands they may hereafter fall, and more especially to him to whom this manuscript shall be my last bequest, I shall have reason to praise Him, who out of evil knows how to extract the greatest good.

“And let him who questions this power of the Almighty to overrule evil, look to the general history of man, and especially meditate on the mighty work of redeeming love, by which the malice of Satan was made the means of displaying the divine attributes of mercy and truth, in a point of view, in which without it they never could have appeared. But not to enlarge on this subject, which is, without doubt, the most important that can occupy the mind of man, I proceed immediately to my history.

“I was born in a valley of the Pyrenees, not very distant from the ancient city of Bigorre, now called Tarbes. The situation of this city, in a temperate climate, under a pure sky, in the midst of a fertile plain, watered by two rivers, and partially encompassed by a chain of the Pyrenees, is one the most beautiful in the earth.

“Some of the delightful circumstances of this town, are the streams of pure water, which, pouring through the streets, convey a pleasing freshness, and contribute to health.

“Not very far from Tarbes, one of the tributary streams of the Garonne descends from the mountains into the champaign country, with a precipitancy and deafening force that seemed to threaten destruction to the little thatched cottages which occupy the shelving sides of the rock on either side of the cataract, and the mighty masses of forest trees whose roots seem to be grappling with the broken masses of stone, for ever threatening to fall together from their aerial heights as the Rock and the Elephant of oriental fable.

“But this stream, having reached the valley, loses its turbulent character, and winds its way in a line with the chain of the hills from whence it derived its source, and then turning more towards the north, hastens to disem-bogue itself into the Garonne. Not very far from this cataract, and still within the sound of its fall, is a narrow defile of the mountains, a pass which, in the more savage days of yore, led to a haunt of freebooters. High amid the mountains, and directly opposite to the gorge, is a ford of the river, which, though so lately was little else than a mountain stream, has acquired a depth which renders it impassable in any other place than this ford. The place was therefore important, and my ancestors, who were possessed of a very large domain on the south of this stream, erected a castle many ages back, between the gorge and the ford: and thus, any enemy approaching either the one way or the other, might be reached from the battlements; and as these enemies seldom came in large or orderly bodies, the very sight of the castle was generally sufficient to insure their quiet behaviour.

“This castle of which I speak, resembled, as to its architecture, many of those edifices which we see represented in ancient tapestry, through whose wide portals the knights and esquires of ancient story are sallying forth on their prancing coursers in quest of new adventures, while the fair ladies and their damsels appear in the high gallery above, waving their handkerchiefs in the view of those who are departing. The mixture of

Gothic and Saracen architecture in these edifices, carries back the imagination to the heroic days of Roncevalles, so famed in romantic story.\*

“Such was my father’s castle and my birth-place; and though the days of civil feuds were then nearly passed away, yet much of feudal magnificence was retained within our walls, and such was the number of my father’s retainers, that, wide and extensive as the castle was, few parts were left unoccupied.

“It is now many years since I visited this place of my nativity, this seat of early, I would I could say of happy youth; and yet my youth was comparatively happy comparatively peaceful: for I remember with a lively and abiding pleasure the charming scenes which encircled my father’s castle.

“O! who can have seen the Pyrenees, who can have wandered among their charming valleys or climbed their meanest summits, without retaining an impression of delight and admiration? Where else on the face of the earth are the poetic images of Arcadia so perfectly realized, or, to rise in my comparison, where could we find a more glowing picture of the renewal of nature in the latter days, as predicted by the inspired poets? Where can the traveller find such variety of enchanting objects, such gentle undulations of the surface, amidst flowery meadows, and interspersed with cottages shaded by clusters of the fairest trees? Where shall we find in any other part of the world, such innumerable little hills giving rise to so many sources of clear water, which fall in cascades, pouring through grottos of marble wrought by their continual dripping, and flanked by such lofty heights, that appear to float above the clouds.

“Never, never indeed, can I forget the impressions made in early life, by the charming scenery which presented itself: but whatever the philosopher may pretend, the admiration of nature and the love of God are not the same, for I was an admirer of nature when God was not in all my thoughts.

“I have mentioned above, that immediately opposite the Castle of Roquefort (for my father took his title of

\* See Don Quixote.

marquis from certain lands denominated Roquefort, at the foot of the higher Pyrenees) was a ford; now on the other side of this ford was a beautiful farm, which for many years past had been occupied by one family, who had become rich, like the Patriarch Abraham, in flocks and herds, cattle and corn. The house itself was immediately on the other side of the river; and beyond it, spread the fields of its opulent owner, white with flocks, and gay with fields of corn, orchards, and pasture-grounds. The farm-house was a respectable mansion, built with timber, and lath and plaster. It fronted the water; and a balcony, which was extended before all the windows of the upper story, faced directly towards the castle, and at so small a distance from that range of apartments occupied by me when a child, that I could see all that passed in this balcony or open gallery almost as distinctly as if it had been in my own chamber.

“My father married early. His first lady, who was my mother, was the daughter of a noble family in Pau. She was of the reformed church, as was my father, and as many of the nobility of the southern provinces of France still are.

Her name, which I inherit, was Constance, and she was a woman of superior accomplishments; but I have no recollection of her whatever, as she died when I was only a few months old.

“My mother inherited a small fortune, with an expensive manner of living; hence, she left my father in such circumstances, that it was desirable, if he married again, that he should choose a woman of fortune. And as his honours, and the larger part of his estate, were entailed on the male heir, it was also equally desirable that he should have a son.

“At this time, it happened that Farmer Anselm de Xeres (for such was the name of our opposite neighbour) had an only child, a daughter, whose beauty and sweetness of manner were spoken of far and near. The riches, too, of her father, had also been justly appreciated; and, in consequence, my only parent, though Marquis de Roquefort, was tempted to overlook the difference of birth, and to seek the hand of the beautiful peasant. It was not to be expected that he should sue in vain; and, ac

cordingly, before I was a year old, he had married a second time, and Blanche, the daughter of Farmer Anselm, was become my stepmother.

"I have no recollections of this lady but what are pleasing. Her countenance was lovely, and her voice inexpressibly sweet. She never seemed to pride herself on her elevation, but always sought retirement, and spent most of her time in working embroidery, in a chamber which looked towards her paternal mansion, being surrounded by her maidens, some of whom she constantly employed in reading to her.

"My stepmother had one daughter only, who was born a year after her marriage, and was, of course, only two years younger than myself. She was called Eglantine, from the fact of these flowers being in blossom at her birth; and as, from that time, there was no prospect of any addition to the family, my father adopted his younger brother's son, who was an orphan, and some years older than myself, with a view to my becoming his wife in due season.

"These arrangements being made, my father seemed at ease with respect to his children, as Eglantine was richly endowed with her mother's fortune.

"In the mean time, while Eglantine was educated by her mother, I was placed under the particular charge of my aunt by my mother's side, who was a widow, and in narrow circumstances. This lady lived in the castle, where a suite of apartments, and a suitable establishment were appropriated to her and to me; and as she was an accomplished woman, she certainly omitted no endeavour to render me equally so.

"Such were the circumstances of our family during the early periods of my life; and the only variation of the scene which we experienced was, when visitors arrived at the castle, or when we were permitted to visit Anselm de Xeres, to be present at the feasts of the harvest or the vintage, or to see some of the old servants of the castle, many of whom were established around us in neat and lovely cottages, scattered amid the valleys on our own side of the river.

"I saw less of Eglantine during our early life than might be expected, as she was constantly with her mo-



taer, and I with my aunt; but I often met with Xavier, my cousin, who was educated by my father's chaplain: and the effect of these frequent meetings was, that we neither hated nor loved each other, but grew up with a sort of indifference, which never at any time kindled into a warmer feeling, though it at length changed into one of more decided aversion.

"Xavier was naturally a rough character. With a female companion of another temperament, he might perhaps have been softened, for the roughest men are not unfrequently most alive to the influence of female tenderness; but I am conscious that I was not the woman fitted for him, and certainly not the one he would have chosen had his choice been free—but I am now anticipating.

"I was early taught to look on my sister as my inferior, and to consider that my father had degraded himself by his connexion with her mother; but this feeling of contempt, though deep, was not such as ever affected my conduct in early youth; indeed, I scarcely know that I was aware of it myself: it, however, prevented me from envying, or even observing, the superior attractions of my young sister, who was, without doubt, as lovely a little creature as ever appeared in this world of imperfection. She united all the simplicity generally attributed to the peasant, with the grace and dignity of the polished female. Her person was beautiful, and her calm and innocent countenance was capable of being illumined with the sweetest smiles I ever saw—such smiles as indicated the most delightful vivacity, and an unalterable gentleness united with a highly cultivated intellect. Her character was particularly artless. She thought no evil, and mistook the courtesies due to her as the daughter of the lord of the land as so many indications of real friendship and esteem. She was, therefore, little fitted for grappling with the pride and envy of her fellow-creatures, and, as it afterwards appeared, was sometimes led to do things by which she incurred censure, though, by the divine mercy, she was preserved from that corruption which is often the consequence of indiscretion in smaller matters. But want of discretion is too severe a word to use in this place, though I have looked in vain for one more appropriate: perhaps unguardedness, that sort of

unguardedness which consists in supposing all around one to be well-intentioned, would be more descriptive.

“In short, my sister Eglantine was a lovely character:—humble, without meanness; lively, without boldness; gentle, without weakness; and generally dignified, without pride. Can we then suppose that she was only in name of the reformed church? No; I believe that the pious lessons of her mother had, with the divine blessing, wrought that change on her heart which such lessons seldom fail of producing.

“But although I saw less of Eglantine than might be supposed, yet we had some mutual enjoyments, and were sometimes permitted to ramble together among the hills. It happened that we had been both nursed by the same person. This excellent woman, whom we called Marguerite, lived in one of the most beautiful cottages, in a glen of the mountains, that I ever did or ever shall see. To visit Marguerite, and spend a day with her, was the greatest delight we could experience; and this pleasure was generally allowed us three or four times a year. Marguerite lived with her old husband and her son, who was my foster brother. She kept two cows and a few sheep on the fragrant pasture which surrounded her cottage.

“The golden age seemed to have returned in the charming environs of this humble dwelling; for indeed, as far as the eye could extend its vision, nothing appeared but what might have suited that delightful period. Here were numerous little glens, shaded with trees, in the cool recesses of which sparkled the purest rivulets; flowers innumerable, of every shade, and emitting every variety of perfume, were scattered over this charming region; and though the shepherds, which fed their flocks on these balmy uplands, were, in fact, little resembling them of whom the poet said,

‘Their words were simple, and their souls sincere,’

yet many of them had fine dark countenances, and as they were accustomed to amuse themselves with a kind of flute, it needed only a little indulgence of the imagination to complete the scene.

“I often visited my nurse in company with my sister,

and particularly at those periods when the hills abounded with wild strawberries; but of all those visits, I remember one only with distinctness, and that, I suppose, took place when I was about ten years of age.

“It happened that some little occasion of disagreement had arisen between myself and my sister. We had been gathering flowers, and were making garlands, as we sat on the door-sill of the cottage. Our heap of flowers lay before us on the turf. From this heap we were selecting for our garlands; and, while I was musing upon other things, my sister adopted all the best, and left me the refuse. This was certainly an encroachment upon my privilege; for we were to be equal sharers in the flowers. It was therefore a trespass, and I was never disposed to put up with trespasses, however slight. My spirit rose immediately in high disdain: I threw away the garland I had commenced, and ran crying to my nurse, who was occupied with her knitting within the cottage.

“Marguerite was of the Reformed Church, and had long been a reader of the Bible: and by this means she became a very superior woman for her situation in life. She heard my complaint, she called my sister, and required her to make restitution.

“‘O but, nurse,’ she replied, ‘I cannot: the flowers are wrought into my lovely garland, and it is for mamma.’

“‘But you have done wrong,’ said the nurse: ‘you have taken more of the flowers than were your just due. Here,’ said she, ‘are all the roses, the eglantines, and the white thorn, and you left none for your sister.’

“The little girl was immediately convinced of her delinquency, and, with a lovely smile, (for I remember it now,) she expressed her sorrow, and offered me her garland.

“I pushed aside the dimpled hand that held the garland to me. I did more: I seized the garland, and in anger threw it on the little fire which the nurse had lighted for warming the coffee, with which she was about to regale us. In a moment the glossy petals of each flower were shrivelled and blackened in the smoke, and their beauty passed away for ever. Eglantine looked for a moment on the destruction of her work, and then,

bursting into tears, she concealed her face on the bosom of her nurse. I well remember the moment: the good Marguerite passed one arm round the waist of the little girl, and, extending the other towards me, she reprovèd me, in her way, with considerable displeasure, at the same time inviting me to draw near, and be reconciled to my sister. I, however, remained stubbornly fixed in the place where I was standing, till she caught my arm, drew me to her, and then, embracing us both, addressed me in a very serious manner upon the nature of the disposition I had evinced.

“This excellent woman had often taught me to pray; and it was then that she took occasion to explain to me that clause in the Lord’s Prayer—‘Forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive them that trespass against us.’ She represented to me, that the heart of the natural man, so powerfully inclined to sin, is incapable of that clemency which leads to the forgiveness of an injury. ‘The unconverted man,’ said she, ‘may forget an offence, may also cease to feel its smart, or he may be influenced by another and a stronger feeling, which may lead him from the pursuit of revenge. This is the utmost the natural man can do; but he cannot forgive: for mercy is an attribute of pure and undefiled religion; it is a quality or principle of action bestowed only by grace, and is never possessed in any perfection but by those persons who, having been justified by Christ, are reconciled to the Father, and are at peace in their own minds. Thus we perceive the force of the prayer; and thus do we apprehend that our own forgiveness, and our forgiveness of others, are so connected, that the one is like the root, and the other the production, of the self-same tree.’

“I do not pretend to give the exact words which my nurse used on this occasion; but whatever words she might select, she undoubtedly contrived to convey the sentiment above expressed to my mind, to which she added some further remarks, which I also remember, but which, alas, have profited me little through life. She pointed out to me how it must happen that little offences would be given by one person to another in this world, and how much better and felicitous it was to pass over these offences, than to render them of importance by re-

sentiment ; repeating the words of the wise man, to show from whence this resentment springs ; *Only by pride cometh contention : but with the well advised is wisdom*, (Prov. xiii. 10.) and reminding me, how, in the present instance, from the smallest matter fierce anger had arisen between two children, brought up on the same knees, and fostered on the same breast. This scene concluded by a gush of tears from every eye, and the cordial reconciliation of all parties.

“And here I must pause, to make a few remarks respecting the propensity of human nature to take offence on trivial occasions. A word, a look, the neglect of a salutation, a smile out of place, have often produced a rancour among the dearest friends ; and the very same persons who, from Christian principles, would not dare to revenge themselves on a declared enemy, allow themselves to nourish uncharitable feelings, perhaps for years together, against an individual of their own families or their nearest neighbours ! *These things ought not so to be.* (James iii. 10.)

“I recollect but few other scenes which passed in my infant days worthy of record. When Xavier was fifteen years of age, he was enrolled in the army ; and the same year my aunt died suddenly : on account of which my father took me to Paris, where he placed me as a pensioner in a Protestant school, to be perfected in those accomplishments which have long been thought indispensable to the lady of quality.

“It would have been well if I had learned nothing else but how to embroider flowers and play on the harp in this situation. But, alas ! the society into which I was introduced in this school was corrupt in the extreme ; and it was there that I formed a connexion which has shed its baneful influence over my whole life. This connexion was with a young woman, named Florence de Castres, who was some years older than myself, and who was one of those needy and ambitious persons who, having been brought up above their means and rank in society, are induced to exercise their craft and subtilty to support such pretensions.

“Florence was without beauty, and even without elegance or dignity ; she had few acquirements, and no su



perior talents; and yet she had a remarkable influence over the minds of those whom she had once found means to draw within the circle of her fascinations, though her influence was generally greater with her own sex than with the other, which might perhaps be attributed to her want of personal advantages.

“This young woman soon found means to make herself almost necessary to me while I remained at school. She first patronized me as junior and a stranger. I had a slight illness, and she paid me the most indefatigable attentions, even greater than the occasion needed. When I was a little better, she sat with me in my room, and embraced the opportunity to give me the history of every individual of the family, managing so artfully her short and animated recitals, that she contrived to set me against every person in the establishment, without leaving me at all aware that she was thereby entwining her snares more and more firmly around my heart.

“At the end of two years, I was to return home, my father having engaged to come for me to Paris; and by this time I was become so deeply attached to Florence, that I had applied to my father for permission to bring her back with me, and make her my companion.

“This permission was granted by my indulgent parent; and Florence, who had no home and little fortune, heard of it with unfeigned delight, although she was careful not to let me suspect that this had been the object for which she had been manœuvring ever since I had become known to her.

“When my father arrived, I was much struck with his appearance, which indicated a great failure not only of health but of spirits. He accounted for these symptoms, by informing me that my stepmother (to whom he was tenderly attached) was in a languishing condition, and that he feared he should soon be deprived of her. Accordingly, when we arrived at home I saw an awful change in her appearance: death had already set his signet on her lovely face: and within a month we followed her to her grave.

“Though every means had been used by my own mother’s family and their adherents to prejudice me against this engaging lady, yet I must have had a heart of stone,

had I not loved her ; and therefore my grief at her death was sincere, though neither deep nor lasting.

“Persons of the strongest feelings are not always the most useful on occasions of sickness and death in families ; while, on the other hand, those who neither can feel nor appear to feel, excite only disgust and irritation. But Florence was neither of the one nor the other of these descriptions of persons. She undoubtedly had no deep feelings for any one but herself ; but, on the other hand, she could seem to feel, she was active where exertion was wanting, and ready in dispensing her assistance when it suited her interest so to do. At this time, therefore, she made herself useful and agreeable, and won considerably on the affections of the family, although my nurse, who was with us at the castle for some months during our affliction, plainly told me that she did not like her, and advised me not to give her my confidence, or to submit myself too much to her influence. ‘I wish,’ said Marguerite, ‘that I did not see this violent attachment between you, Mademoiselle, and Mademoiselle de Castres. Have you not a sister much nearer your own age, and as much superior to Mademoiselle Florence, as the rose to the thistle ? and yet you forsake your natural friend, the friend appointed by God, and unite your affections to a stranger, to one who may appear to be sincere, but of whom you can have no assurance.’

“I did not say that this very superiority of Eglantine was the real cause of my not seeking her friendship ; for it was not only to Florence that I believed her superior, but, as I feared, to myself. However, I made no such confession as this to my nurse, nor indeed to myself ; for those who are most subjected to feelings of an envious nature, are most backward in acknowledging them to their own hearts.

“There is, perhaps, no passion of the human heart which brings its own punishment more directly than envy. Where admiration exists without envy, it acts with a kind of magic influence (if I may be permitted to use the expression) on the admirer’s mind, and the admired object soon begins to reflect its real or fancied glories in the character of its admirer. Hence, we often find the effect of female excellences reflected on the husband

or the brother (for envy of females is rarely met with in the other sex) in a most remarkable manner, while the same sweet influence is lost upon the sister, who looks on this superiority with an eye less free from the tinge of jealousy. Here, then, envy brings her own punishment, by preventing the happy influence which the contemplation of lovely objects very frequently insures, and by inducing the envious person to mingle with inferior society, he shuns the examples best suited for his imitation.

“If such, then, my reader, is the nature of envy, let me supplicate you to look into your heart, and seek the divine help to exterminate that enemy which made heaven itself a place of torment to the fallen angels, who were unable to contemplate the glory of God himself without such feelings of malignity as rendered it necessary that they should be plunged from their high estate into endless ruin and eternal wo.

“I am sorry to add, that my nurse’s admonitions had little effect on me, though they drew me to a more minute consideration of the character of my sister, which, in proportion as her deep grief for the loss of her mother wore away, unfolded itself more and more to my view. She was, undoubtedly, remarkably lovely in her outward appearance; but her mind had a simple, delicate, and infantine character. She was not deficient either in dignity or elegance; still she had an ease and courtesy, a cheerfulness and openness of manner, which might subject her intentions to be misunderstood: but it was unaffected artlessness, and resulted from her unacquaintance with the world, and a freedom from all suspicion.

“Eglantine had a delicate feeling, and would have felt a degree of horror at appearing imprudent. She was awake to every reproof which was kindly given, and ready to correct any error. She therefore most needed a guide at the very time she lost her prudent mother; for though her grief operated for many months as a restraint on her too lively feelings, yet, as I before remarked, at the end of twelve months she resumed in a great measure her natural vivacity.

“She first began to exercise that vivacity by breaking in upon my private conversations with Florence. She would sometimes steal into my room while we were

working together at one piece of embroidery, and more than once gently pushed our heads together, saying we were not intimate enough, and were not close enough to tell secrets.

“It was impossible to fix upon her an idea that we were offended on these occasions: when I expostulated gravely, she always laughed, and told me I was getting old, affirming that she already saw an incipient wrinkle, many of which wrinkles, she affirmed, were completely established in the face of Mademoiselle de Castres; a sort of jesting which pleased neither of us, and which we were indisposed to attribute to the thoughtlessness which dictated them.

“She now began to make frequent visits to her grandfather, Anselm de Xeres, who was become an old man, and doated on his dimpled and smiling grand-daughter; and there she would amuse herself with a thousand freaks, some of which Florence and myself were eye-witnesses of, as we sat in our balcony, which opened from my chamber, and almost projected over a part of the river.

“On one of these occasions, she dressed her grandfather in an old court suit, which had belonged to the Marquis de Roquefort in the days of Henry the Fourth, stiff with gold and silver; and, tying his hair in a queue with a bag, and placing his sword on his side, she handed him into the gallery or covered walk which encircled the first story of the farm-house, where she tutored him to make his bows to us, the ladies of the castle, who were plying our needles in the opposite balcony.

“I well remember a conversation which passed between me and Florence on this occasion, and could repeat it word for word.

“On seeing Eglantine and her grandfather, we both laughed heartily, and undoubtedly did all that the distance would admit to encourage her gambols. But, as she led the old man off, I said, ‘Well, Mademoiselle, and what do you think of all this?’

“She smiled, shrugged up her shoulders, and said nothing.

“I pressed her for an answer; and she then said, ‘All this is very well for Anselm de Xeres’s grand-daughter.’

“But do you think there is any thing really wrong or imprudent in these things?” I asked.

“*Wrong! imprudent!*—these are hard words,” replied Florence. “Why should we use them? Your sister is a pretty little thing; why should we find fault with her?”

“But you think her a little rustic, do not you, Florence?” I asked.

“She has never been in Paris,” returned my confidant, “and she is Anselm’s grand-daughter; and yet she is well enough. She has few awkward ways; she might even pass for a second Fleurette. It is almost a pity that she is the daughter of a marquis, and entitled to an immense dowry.”

“Immense!” I said, “whence is it to come?”

“From old Anselm,” she said. “She is his only child, though he might marry again, and have another family. But, setting this possibility aside, she will be heiress of multitudes of flocks and herds, to stores of wool and flax, with barns and vineyards, orchards and extensive lands. And then,” added she, “there is no Salic law, no deed of entail, to stand in her way.”

“I endeavoured to repress a sigh, and said, ‘But do you really think that Eglantine has any thing of the peasant, that she has any thing of her mother’s family about her?’”

“‘Why should you ask me?’ said Florence; ‘cannot you see yourself? Was it not but yesterday that she went off to Marguerite’s cottage with a basket of cold pies which she had stolen or wheedled from the maitre d’ hotel—that she carried it herself, although her maid went with her—and that we met her, on her return, with the same basket filled with flowers on her head, which she balanced as nicely as if she had been accustomed to carry eggs to market ever since her sixth year?’”

“‘I remember it,’ I said; ‘indeed, how could I have forgotten it? for I thought I never saw her look so lovely as she did at the moment we first saw her; for the branch of wild roses which hung down from the basket was quite eclipsed by the charming bloom of her cheek.’”

“‘She was then in her place,’ replied Florence; ‘and every thing and every person look best in their own place. Some persons,’ she added, glancing at me, ‘are



born for courts, others for camps, and others for a rural life. Each situation requires a different kind of talents: but there is this difference, that those who are born for shepherds and shepherdesses would make but poor figures in the royal presence; while, on the other hand, that female who could shine in the presence of majesty would add a grace to a crook and straw hat, and to a basket of flowers borne on her head, which the country person could never display.'

"'Then you really think,' I asked, 'that there is a sort of rustic coarseness about Eglantine?'

"'Not more than might be expected,' she replied, 'considering her retired education.'

"'Still, however,' I added, 'still, however, you think that it is so?'

"'Only fancy her,' replied Florence, 'only fancy your little wild sister at court, at Versailles, for instance, in the presence of majesty, laughing, as she did but now, first on one side, then on the other, of the old beau which she had made, and courtesying as she did to him in mock politeness; only fancy it, Mademoiselle Constance, and then tell me what you think.'

"'But she was at play just now,' I answered.

"'Well then, watch her when she is not at play. We expect your cousin Xavier soon, with several of his young friends: observe your sister in this company; and if you do not detect a thousand rusticisms, I shall say that you have not that delicate tact which I give you credit for.'

"Thus terminated our conversation, but not so its consequences. I had never so plainly displayed my sentiments with respect to my sister at any former time before Florence, and my conscience censured me for having so done at this time: I was therefore dissatisfied with myself, and could not help feeling that I had done wrong as it respected Eglantine; and I felt that I wanted something to reconcile me with myself, and this something I desired to find in Eglantine's conduct. I therefore began to search eagerly for failures in her behaviour, that I might justify my censures of her; and thus I was prepared to rejoice in her blunders, and to magnify them. My conduct resembled a certain man, of whom I have

somewhere read, who, having professed great joy on hearing that his neighbour's son was hanged, was asked by one present wherefore he was so glad, and if the young man had ever done him an injury. 'No, to be sure,' he said, 'never, that I know of: but I always predicted that he would turn out ill, and now, you see, it is come to pass.' Accordingly, I had intimated that my sister was an ill-bred little peasant, and now hoped soon to see myself justified in the assertion.

"A few days after this conversation, Xavier arrived, and brought with him several young officers; among whom was a remarkably pleasing young man, the younger brother of a noble house, called the Comte de Perouse. Had I been left to my own choice, I should, no doubt, have preferred the Comte de Perouse to my cousin; but I had such an estimation of the advantages I was to derive from a marriage with Xavier, that I made no objection to my father's proposal, that it should be celebrated within a month after his arrival. And when my father's death took place, an event which happened within the first year of our marriage, I had reason to be thankful that such an establishment had been secured to me.

"My sister was exceedingly affected at the death of our father; and being invited by her grandfather, and not pressed on the other hand by me to stay in her paternal mansion, she left me immediately after the funeral solemnities were performed, and took up her residence at the farm, some of the apartments of which were newly furnished and beautified for her accommodation.

"My sister remained single till the year of mourning for our father had expired; after which, she married the Comte de Perouse, who, being in possession of a very small patrimony, gladly settled in the house with his lovely young Comtesse and her grandfather, and there enjoyed, as I have reason to think, more happiness than often falls to the lot of man.

"In the mean time, although I had by no means met with a devoted husband, I was not unhappy: I adopted my own pleasures, and was left at liberty to enjoy them; and my husband interfered the less, because my habits were domestic and economical, although I supported the ancient customs of the family, and suffered them not to

degenerate from their former magnificence. I was exceedingly fond of needle-work, and delighted in ornamenting the apartments of the castle. I had great delight in occasionally giving a grand entertainment to my country neighbours, in displaying my superb equipage in the little towns in the vicinity, and in hearing the gossip of the country from my friend Florence de Castres; and I possessed at that time so little relish for any thing better, and so much indifference to all other things, that I never regretted the frequent absence of my husband, who, after his marriage, became more devoted to a military life, and often acknowledged that he felt himself more at home in a camp than in his own house.

“I must now pass over several years of my life, which were marked by no other special events than the births of my children and those of the Comtesse de Perouse. Two only were given to me: the eldest, a son, to whom we gave the name of Bertram, is the present Marquis de Roquefort; and the younger, a daughter, my ever-beloved and lamented Agnace. The Comtesse de Perouse, on the other hand, had many children; some of whom died in infancy, but a large proportion of this charming family are still living. Her eldest son was called Charles, after his father, and resembled his mother more, in my opinion, than any of her children. She was one of the most beautiful women I ever remember to have seen, and he was, undoubtedly, a most rare instance of external perfection in the other sex. Oh! how readily, in this connexion, I could give utterance to feelings which overwhelm my heart almost to distraction—but I forbear, and proceed with my narrative.

“While our children were in infancy, I lived on no disagreeable terms with my sister. We did not often meet, for our habits were dissimilar, but when we did, it was with apparent cordiality; and our intercourse was the more agreeable from the presence of the Comte de Perouse, whose highly polished manners always kept me and my companion Florence in some awe, and in a degree compelled us to treat his lady with the respect and affection due to her birth and character. In short, his presence was commanding, and kept us in order, putting a restraint upon that disposition to *persiflage*

which was so prevalent in my companion, and for which I had so high a relish.

“Old Anselm de Xeres died when his eldest great-grandchild was about ten years of age, and was sincerely lamented by his grand-daughter, who, with her husband, followed him to his grave.

“Such were the leading events of the first fifteen years of my married life and that of my sister; during which time, we always lived in apparent friendship, which was, undoubtedly, more cordial on her side than on mine, for Eglantine ever retained her sincerity of character.

“In the mean time, there was a free intercourse between our children, and scarcely a day passed wherein they did not meet. Though a domestic character, I was a careless mother. My children were entrusted to a tutor and a governess, who gave them their lessons at certain hours, but relinquished the care of them at other times. My son was naturally of a violent temper, with a considerable degree of pride, which was fostered not only by me, but by Florence, who no doubt supposed that she was gratifying me, and successfully accomplishing her own purpose, when, in my presence, she inflated my son's mind with high ideas of his birth and consequence in society. His chief delight was in rural sports, in climbing the mountains, and pursuing the game among the wilds and over the heaths, in company with the servants and tenants: in consequence of which he left his sister much alone; and, as I was too much wrapt up in my artful companion to afford myself leisure for cultivating the society of my child, it could not be wondered at if she were led to seek companions among her cousins.

“My Agnace was, from infancy, a lovely child. It is difficult to give a description of the sort of beauty which she possessed. The rose, the lilly, the violet, and the tulip, have been used as emblems of female beauty; but, were I to compare the attractions of my Agnace to any flower of the field, it should be to the anemone, which, as the poet tells us, sprang from the blood of the dying Adonis.

‘Still here the fate of lovely forms we see,  
So sudden fades the sweet anemone!’

The feeble stems to stormy blasts a prey,  
 Their fragile beauties droop and pine away ;  
 The winds forbid the flowers to flourish long,  
 Which owe to winds their names in Grecian song.'

O my Agnace ! I endeavour to sooth my misery by describing thy beauties, and attempting to place thy excellencies before others. But the effort fails ; the flower is faded ; and the sad assurance that thou art lost to me for ever excludes all earthly comfort ; the balm of Gilead only can staunch a wound like this.

"Charles de Perouse had from infancy selected my little Agnace as his favourite companion. He was brave and strong, and she was the reverse. She was timid, and easily depressed ; and he was ever ready to observe the tear on her cheek, and wipe it away. At the period when I first observed this action, he could not have been more than six years of age, and she was little more than three. They were both playing in the room where I sat at my embroidery with Florence. She had fallen down and hurt her foot : he took off her shoes, rubbed her uncovered foot, and wiped her eyes with his frock, for he still wore the first dress of childhood.

"When they were a few years older, the chief delight of this youthful pair was to wander together in the charming environs of the castle, to lose themselves in the little valleys of the mountains, where no sound vibrates on the ear but the rush of waterfalls and the murmur of the turtle-dove, and to enjoy renewed pleasure amidst the thousand grottos formed by the rocks of marble, with which those lovely hills every where abound.

"I indulged the prevailing opinion entertained by most careless mothers, that so long as their children associate only with those of their own degree, no harm can accrue to them from such intercourse. My dear child might have suffered by such neglect on my part, but it was so ordered by Providence, that in this particular instance, my little Agnace was uninjured in the society of her cousin : but this safety, humanly speaking, was owing more to the care which his parents had taken in his education, than to any caution given by me. The Comte de Perouse was a truly pious man, and, as such, it cannot be supposed that he should have neglected the religious in-



struction of his children. His labours to benefit Charles, as afterwards appeared, had been blessed; and I have reason to think that my sweet Agnace derived most of her ideas of true religion from the intercourse above described. For Charles, it seems, had certain portions of Scripture given him for his daily study; and as he often devoted the hours spent with Agnace to this study, he frequently employed her to examine him in his lessons, and thus led her to a more serious consideration of Scripture than she might otherwise have been inclined to make. Independent of his allotted tasks, the young de Perouse was a lover of reading, even from a child: this induced him to visit the old library of the castle, which, in my time, was suffered to remain much neglected; and there, having found a ponderous volume of romance concerning the Heroes of Roncevalles, it became the constant companion of his walks with Agnace, when she was about ten years of age, amid that very line of hills which had witnessed so many actions of those renowned personages.

“A celebrated writer of the present day has remarked, that romance is less injurious to the harder than the softer sex; and this may well be, as the kind of feelings excited by such productions have a tendency to meliorate the character where it is inclined to harshness, and to enervate it when inclined to weakness. The present age is, however, not an age of romantic feelings; the state of society inclines not to this error; and our present works of imagination partake very little of the eccentricities and overstrained yet heroic sentiments with which our ancient romances abounded. These provinces, however, in which our children were educated, had not as yet departed so far from the spirit of the heroic and romantic times. There was scarcely a character of modern taste and manners among us, if we except Florence, and myself, rendered so by her influence; although it may appear marvellous to any one who is not a close observer of life, to consider the degree in which I had fallen under the dominion of this artful woman, and to what extent she had rendered herself necessary to me.

“In the meanwhile, years passed on with little variation. My children grew up about me, and my husband

at intervals returned to his home, but always appeared restless when with us, and anxious to return to the camp. When Bertram was fifteen, he took him with him to his regiment, where he purposed to initiate him in military affairs; and this same year a chasm was made in our little circle by the sudden death of the Comte de Perouse, by which calamity Eglantine became a widow, and for a season she appeared inconsolable, and perfectly incapable of rousing herself from the paralyzing influence of so painful an event.

“I was not so insensible as not to feel for her on this occasion; and as I found that she was much consoled by the presence of Agnace, I suffered her to be continually with her, and thus administered further opportunities for her associating with Charles, who, by the death of his father and grandfather, had become the stay and support of his widowed parent and the younger children.

“By the death of the Comte de Perouse, whom it was impossible not to honour as a gentleman and a Christian, and whom a person of duplicity must fear as a man of great discernment into character, it appears that a restraint had been suddenly taken away from the tongue of Florence, who, not long after his death, began to utter certain insinuations against the Comtesse, for whom, it seems, she had always felt that kind of dislike which low-minded and envious persons commonly feel for their superiors.

“I remember the occasion on which this feeling first began to display itself, after the death of the Comte. It was one summer’s afternoon, and the season was particularly sultry. I was sitting with Florence in my own apartment, which opened by folding-doors into a balcony which hung over the water. The doors were open, and we had a full view of one front of the opposite house, with the extent of gallery which extended round the first floor. For some time we heard not a voice, and saw not a human being belonging to the family; and Florence remarked that there was a great stillness on that side of the house since his death.

“‘Those apartments just before us were his,’ I replied, ‘and that balcony his favourite spot.’

“‘True,’ she answered; ‘and I doubt not that the wi

dow cannot yet bring her mind to visit this her husband's favourite haunt. But time does wonders in drying up the sources of grief: your sister used to have a wonderful flow of spirits, and great elasticity of mind; she is yet young, and I doubt not but that she will console herself by and by.'

"There was something in the tone of her voice which made me look up as she spoke; but she was bending over her work, and I could not perceive the expression of her countenance. I therefore replied, 'Undoubtedly there is no grief which time does not alleviate. If we suffered in continuance what we feel at first on any trying occasion, life would become a burden too heavy to be borne.'

"'Truly,' she answered; 'for, generally speaking, there is no grief more deep than that occasioned by the loss of an affectionate husband, and none for which a remedy is sooner found by a rich and handsome woman.'

"'Why surely, Florence,' I said, 'you do not think that Eglantine, with her eight children, will marry again?'

"'I was speaking in a general way,' she replied, 'and by no means with a view to the Comtesse.'

"At that moment a door opened in the opposite house. It was the door of the late Comte's apartment, and Agnace appeared, leading out her aunt, who seemed to be weeping. There was a sofa in the gallery: to this Agnace led the Comtesse, and they sat down together. Eglantine then evidently wept, and my daughter appeared to be consoling her. Though so remote, I fancied that I could discern every change in the well-known countenance of my charming daughter.

"'A pretty scene,' said Florence, as she looked on the lovely pair; 'but I am rather surprised that none of the Comtesse's own daughters are with her. However, I presume that she considers Mademoiselle Agnace as already her own.'

"'How so?' I said.

"'She is, no doubt, assured that the charming daughter of the Marquis de Roquefort is destined for her son.'

"'What,' I said, 'without her parents' acquiescence?'

"'She has, probably, no idea that they will not acquiesce,' she replied.

“‘At any rate,’ I answered, colouring, ‘the thing should be ascertained before she is too confident.’”

“‘She probably considers,’ returned Florence, ‘that the young people are equals in rank, and that there can be no question but that the parents will consent.’”

“‘I do not understand how she can think so,’ I answered; ‘for the daughter of a Marquis must be superior to a simple Comte: and it ought ever to be recollected that no vulgar blood flows in the veins of my children. However,’ I continued, ‘the marquis will, I suppose, arrange this matter; only I would counsel the Comtesse not to be too confident. Nevertheless,’ I added, ‘I can have no objection to Charles, for he is all that a mother could desire for a son-in-law.’”

“‘It was probable that Florence had now found out what she had been endeavouring to discover, namely, my sentiments respecting a union between Charles and Agnace; for she immediately turned from the subject, and asked me some question about our needlework; and then, looking through the open door, she directed my eyes to the gallery on the opposite side of the water. Charles had entered it at that moment; he was bearing in his arms an infant sister; he brought it up to his mother; he held it to her to kiss; and then, setting it on my daughter’s lap, he sat down by his mother, and took one hand of hers within his.’”

“‘Whether this action of her son reminded her, at this moment, too pathetically of her departed husband, or from what other cause, I know not; but my widowed sister, at that instant, became so affected that her head sunk against the breast of her son, and she seemed almost fainting. He passed his arm round her, and supported her, bending over her with an air of the tenderest compassion, and appeared to be talking with her, till, by degrees, she lifted up her head, and her manner became more composed.’”

“‘This was a scene which might have touched the hardest heart, and surely would have affected mine, had I possessed any other companion; but the comments of Florence wholly destroyed the effect, and, like the chilling winds of the north, froze the very tears which gushed

from my eyes. 'Tis well,' she said, 'that we know that handsome young man to be the son of the Comtesse.'

"And wherefore?" I hastily asked.

"I have been thinking how a stranger would interpret the scene before us; for the Comtesse, notwithstanding her mourning weeds, looks more like the companion than the mother of the youth.'

"And pray," I ask, 'what would a stranger think of the pretty young creature on the right hand of the widow?'

"O," replied Florence, 'we will leave her out of the picture; she is one too many in the group.'

"O, Florence!" I said, 'you indulge in a dangerous kind of wit.' But I smiled while I wished to reprove.

"Before you, my dear friend," she replied, 'I say any thing which comes uppermost. You know my heart, and I know that you will not misinterpret my meaning. I love you and all that belong to you: to you I am devoted; and though I have smiled at the scene before me, yet I love and honour your sister, because she belongs to you.'

"Time softens the acutest pangs, and heals the deepest wounds. The Comtesse de Perouse was now at the head of a large and very young family. It was necessary for her to exert herself. She did so, and activity brought its own reward by gradually restoring that cheerfulness which was natural to her character. She was also a woman of piety, and was well assured of the everlasting happiness of her husband; but I have reason to believe that the thoughts of a second marriage never entered her mind.

"I was accustomed from time to time to see her during this period, and Florence never failed to make remarks upon her, to this effect:—'Are not you glad, my dear friend, to see your sister so composed? I always believed that she possessed much strength of mind. It would have consoled the poor Comte on his death-bed, could he have foreseen how his widow would be supported under her trials. The Comtesse, I am rejoiced to see, is recovering her bloom. She appears rather like the sister than the mother of her eldest daughter.' And then again she would say, 'Did your sister marry from affec-



tion, or was it a match of convenience? The Comte certainly loved her sincerely, and was devoted to her. I almost wonder that she is not more depressed by the loss of those attentions which he so continually paid to her; but minds are variously formed.'

"'Why, surely,' I said, 'you do not mean to insinuate that my sister did not love her husband?'

"'I!' she would reply, 'I insinuate such a thing! Where, my dear marquise, where is your usual discernment? Do you not know that I have the most sincere affection for your lovely sister?'

"While things were in this state, the marquis and my son returned to Roquefort, and remained with us during the whole winter. The intercourse between the families at this time seemed to be friendly, although much conversation passed between me and Florence in private, similar to that of which I have just given a specimen; the consequence of which was, that I began to feel a degree of dissatisfaction in the presence of the Comtesse, which I never before experienced.

"However, as I before said, every thing was specious to the eye; and my husband, who was an upright and honourable character, never seemed to suspect that I was not as sincerely attached to my sister as I pretended to be.

"It was during this visit of the marquis at Roquefort, that Charles, now Comte de Perouse, made his wishes known respecting Agnace; and the youthful pair were rendered happy by receiving the parental sanction of their intended union, which it was proposed should take place when the young gentleman was of age.

"I cannot precisely say, that I was not consulted on the occasion. The marquis undoubtedly mentioned the matter to me before he gave his consent; but not, indeed, until he had made up his own mind: but, as I had no rational objection to make, I was induced to acquiesce, although I certainly wished the thing to be otherwise, yet I scarcely knew why.

"The thing, however, was done; the promise made to Charles, and imparted to Agnace; and all within the period of one hour, during which I had been engaged in my husband's apartment, when Charles and Bertram

were present. In the mean time, I had left Florence at her embroidery frame in my room.

“I had, by degrees, so entirely submitted to the influence of Mademoiselle de Castres; and she had exercised what she called her rights of friendship with so much vivacity, that I was almost afraid of taking any step of consequence without her concurrence; and on this occasion, I felt really uneasy, when I came up to my chamber and found her colour heightened, and displeasure marked on her features.

“It may be asked, how this indigent and dependant person could have obtained this power over one in my situation. I answer: Because I had hearkened to her flatteries, and made her the depository of my secrets. I had made complaints to her respecting my husband. I had entrusted her with my most secret thoughts. I had made her acquainted with all my hopes and fears, my jealousies and triumphs. I had betrayed all my weaknesses to her; and I dreaded that tongue, which had been allowed to scourge all my nearest connexions with the utmost freedom even in my presence. And, more than this, I had a deep and unaccountable dread of her, which had lately increased upon me with a power which I could not describe, but which others no doubt have felt who have suffered their affections to be fixed on unworthy objects. ‘Where may you have been so long Madame?’ said Florence, as soon as I was seated; ‘apparently you have had a very interesting conversation with the marquis.’

“‘And wherefore do you think so, Florence?’ I asked.

“‘From your countenance,’ she replied, speaking confidently, and looking me full in the face. ‘It would be strange, if I, who have known you so long, could not read your countenance.’

“‘I tried to laugh, and answered, ‘I never doubted your skill in physiognomy, Florence.’

“‘Indeed!’ she replied; ‘and you really give me credit for penetration. And pray,’ she asked, ‘what might have been the subject of your discussions?’

“‘Suppose it should happen to have been some secret of the marquis’s, Florence, which I am not at liberty to reveal?’

“‘Suppose,’ she added, with a laugh, which had more of malice than of merriment, ‘It should have related to your daughter’s marriage with Charles de Perouse?’

“‘And what then,’ I said, ‘would be the wonder?’

“‘And you have given your consent?’ asked Florence.

“‘Have you any objection?’ I asked.

“‘I have not been consulted,’ was her reply; ‘when I am, it will be time enough to give my opinion.’

“‘What has offended you?’ I asked: ‘you look displeased?’

“‘By no means,’ she replied; you are at liberty, no doubt, to arrange your own family. The ties of friendship are but imaginary with some persons. They are but ropes of sand with the world generally. I know that I am enthusiastic, irrational on these subjects. My feelings for you and your family are of that kind which reason would not justify. You cannot believe that I have the same feelings for your daughter that you yourself have—I cannot expect—no,’ she added, ‘no, I cannot expect that you should understand this.’

“So saying, she either melted into tears, or made me suppose that she did; and this scene terminated with an hysterical affection on her part, and many exaggerated and tender expressions on mine.

“After this, we were reconciled, and a new subject supplied for our private discussions; viz. the intended marriage, with its advantages and disadvantages, among the latter of which she enumerated the transfer which she foresaw of my daughter’s affection from her own mother to her more lively mother-in-law.

“‘Lively!’ I would say on these occasions; ‘but Eglantine is not lively now.’

“‘If she is not,’ she would reply, ‘have I not already seen the sun breaking through the cloud? have I not already observed the wonted smiles from beneath the widow’s veil? O, my friend, how small is your discernment? did you mark her at such and such times; where were her tears on this and that occasion?’

“‘But would you have her always weeping, Florence?’ I said.

“‘Here again,’ replied she, ‘I am reminded of my

false notions of inviolable constancy, never-changing affection, the devotion of the heart, and the never-failing flow of tears.'

The news of the parental sanction being given to the union of Charles and Agnace was presently conveyed to our good old Marguerite, who was really that disinterested friend of the family which Florence feigned to be. This good creature had grandchildren; but I scarcely think that she loved any of these more than mine and my sister's children. Yet she had her favourites; these were Agnace and Charles; and she was so delighted at the intended connexion, that she appeared next day at the castle, and came up to my apartment to congratulate me.

"I dare not give utterance to my feelings and sentiments, which are ready every moment to break forth while I record these circumstances; I would rather compel myself to relate my story just as it happened, and to point out the rocks and shoals on which I have been shipwrecked, without permitting myself to mingle too much on my own painful feelings with the narration. The tears which have fallen from my eyes, as I have been thus engaged, have in many instances blotted the names of Agnace,—my lovely Agnace,—of Charles, of Eglantine, and Marguerite: but these stains will not appear in the work of the copyist, and my aching heart will probably have ceased to beat before these records shall have passed into other hands.

"I was, as usual, sitting alone with Florence when Marguerite came in. 'And what, my good Marguerite,' said I, 'has brought you here to-day?'

"'To speak of the good news,' she replied; and immediately commenced the subject with that sort of vivacity for which my countrywomen are celebrated. She had proceeded for some time, and had declared her determination to throw away her staff, and dance at the wedding, when Florence interrupted her, and said, 'My good woman, one would almost think that you were a young girl, and were to be bride's-maid, by the excessive joy you display.'

"Marguerite was the only person in the family who had accurately understood the character of Florence, and had I been guided by this truly wise and excellent wo-

man, I had never fallen into the snares laid for me by my artful companion. The good nurse had never been able to judge with any thing like complacency of Florence; and, as she was no courtier, she could not be civil to her even to please me: hence, when addressed by Florence in this manner, she affected deafness; a thing which she always did when not pleased; and, moving her head nearer to the lady, begged she would condescend to repeat her words again.

“Florence, who disliked Marguerite quite as much as she was disliked, repeated her speech, with some additions.

“‘Did you say that you wished to be bride’s-maid?’ said the nurse.

“Florence again repeated her speech, on which Marguerite, affecting to take it in, said, ‘O, now I understand you. O, you would have me dance at your wedding, would you? Well, and I should do it with the greatest pleasure, provided—’

“‘Provided what?’ asked Florence.

“‘Your husband was a foreigner,’ said the nurse.

“‘And what do you mean by that?’ returned Florence.

“But Marguerite was deaf again, and was busily engaged in speaking of the proposed happy alliance.

“Happy alliance! Ah! it would have been happy—it might have been happy, if——: but I must not anticipate. O, my Agnace!

“In the beginning of that same summer, my husband and son left home again; and then we were soon conscious that we needed that influence which an honourable man, of whatever degree, always diffuses over the minds of wives, daughters, and sisters, given to gossip and low intrigue.

“Soon after the departure of my husband, I went with my daughter and Florence to Bagneres, under the pretext of benefitting by the waters; for I had lately chosen to suppose that my health was delicate.

“We were visited at Bagneres several times during the six weeks of our residence there, by the Comte de Perouse; and there my Agnace enjoyed some happy hours, no doubt, with the object of her most warm affec-



tions, while wandering with him among the numerous sources of pleasure near the fountain of Thermals.

“We returned from Bagneres at the end of the vintage. Charles was to have met us on our way, but he did not appear; a circumstance which evidently caused much uneasiness to Agnace, and some entertainment to Florence, who failed not to hint that she hoped this non-appearance of the Comte was not owing to any inconstancy in his feelings.

“‘I have no suspicion of the kind,’ replied Agnace, ‘I esteem the Comte: but my esteem would be little worth the possession, if it were liable to vary with every accident.’

“‘You are displeased, my dear Agnace?’ said Florence.

“‘No,’ replied my daughter, ‘I am not; I have been too long accustomed, Mademoiselle de Castres, to your modes of expressing yourself respecting your friends, to be in the least affected by them.’

“‘Florence coloured, and Agnace proceeded; ‘Young as I am,’ continued she, ‘I have been led to observe, that there is a way of speaking of our absent connexions, which has a powerful tendency to extinguish every charitable feeling. There is scarcely a human being, however amiable, whom one might not first learn to despise, and then almost to hate, by the indulgence of this kind of discourse; and I have therefore not unfrequently made it a subject of prayer, that my heart and tongue might never be suffered to become mutual tempters of each other to such a practice.’

“‘Explain yourself a little further,’ said Florence, looking keenly yet steadily at her.

“‘With all my heart,’ said Agnace. - ‘Are you not aware that out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh? The heart then dictates what the mouth speaks, Mademoiselle de Castres; and it does more than this: for when the tongue, by the suggestions of an evil heart, has spoken unadvisedly, it endeavours to furnish that tongue with excuses, and it feels an exultation when such excuses are provided by the object which it is conscious of having injured.’

“‘Mathematically demonstrated!’ exclaimed Florence  
And so you do not allow that there is such a thing as

uttering with the lips what does not proceed from the heart?"

"No," replied Agnace, "I allow of no such thing.—*Doth a fountain send forth at the same place sweet water and bitter? Can the fig tree bear olive berries? either a vine, figs? so can no fountain both yield salt water and fresh.*" (James iii. 11, 12.)

"Very well!" said Florence. "But what is the object of this discussion? for whom is it intended? and to whom do you wish to apply these remarks?"

"My remark," replied Agnace, "will admit of general application."

"And particular application also?" added Florence.

"No doubt," said Agnace, "each individual of our fallen race may apply it personally."

Florence gave her another searching look, and then, turning to me, she congratulated me on having a daughter who possessed so deep an insight into the human heart.

"It was very late when we arrived at Roquefort. The first inquiry of Agnace was after her aunt's family: but the servants could give us no further information, than that the next day was the feast of the vintage; that the Comtesse had given permission to her tenants to dance; that there were some visitors at their house; and that the Comtesse had sent several messages to the castle to request my presence at the feast, if I arrived in time.

"O," said Florence, "the feast of the vintage. It was in the beginning of the vintage that the Comte died last year. Well, the widow has fulfilled her year of mourning. We cannot say but that all has been done decently."

"We were ascending the great stairs of the castle, while Florence uttered these words: Agnace did not hear them; but they were not lost upon me.

"You would do well," said Florence, "to have your daughter's bed prepared in your closet: you have no husband or son to protect her now; and, no doubt, now that the father is dead, and the mother has recovered her spirits, the young people at the farm will not be under the strictest guidance. I therefore think that you can not be too careful of Agnace."

"Surely," I replied, "you do not doubt the prudence

of my sister ! and her eldest daughter is, without question, a most discreet and amiable young creature.'

—“I have nothing to say against Mademoiselle Rosa mond,” replied Florence. ‘I have given my opinion merely as a friend ; and you are at liberty, of course, either to follow it or to reject it.’

“We had by this time entered the range of my apartments, where we found preparations made for our supper. It was here where the folding-doors opened into the balcony. Agnace, on entering the room, had stepped immediately into the balcony, and was looking towards the house of her aunt. Florence and I followed her. It had been a sultry day, and the cool breezes which played upon the smooth surface of the water were particularly refreshing. The moonbeams rested on the whole scene, and shed a faint, soft light on the surrounding landscape, the outline of the old turrets of my sister’s house being distinctly marked by the glow on the horizon in the background, where the last rays of day still lingered on the summits of that range of the Pyrenees which were visible in that direction. The rippling of the waters, and the distant bark of the watch-dog in the court of the farm, alone disturbed the perfect stillness. Agnace was leaning against the parapet of the balcony, and Florence presently detected the silent tear which was stealing down her cheek. ‘Your daughter is weeping!’ whispered she to me: ‘she is vexed because she can see none of the Comte’s family this evening.’

“‘Vexed!’ I replied ; ‘and cannot she exist a day without some intercourse with these people ? I now plainly see what you have so long predicted, namely, the entire transfer of my daughter’s affections.’

“And it was certainly true that Agnace loved her aunt more than she did her mother ; but there had been no transfer of affections, for, though ever dutiful, she had never loved me as she might have done, because I had not sought her love. I had been an indolent nurse, a careless guardian, and a disagreeable companion, to this my lovely and only daughter : and I now expected to reap grapes where I had planted thorns, and figs where I had planted only thistles ! On the other hand, my warm-hearted sister had lived only for her husband and

children. Their happiness and good were her perpetual object; and even now, in her widowed state, she would not suffer her own sorrows to embitter the young days of her beloved ones. If Agnace, therefore, loved her more than she loved me, it was but the natural course of things for though the affections of the heart may and ought to be controlled and purified by religion and reason, yet reason and religion do not produce effects equally beneficial and extensive upon all; for where the powers and affections of the mind have been previously neglected and unguarded, the character, even under the influence of godliness, will shine with diminished rays.

“The last expression I had used in speaking to Florence had been heard by Agnace: on which she hastily brushed her hand across her eyes, and turned round, but did not speak. ‘On what are you meditating, Agnace?’ I said.

“‘I was thinking of my aunt,’ she simply replied, ‘and feel almost afraid that all is not well with her. Shall we not send to inquire?’

“‘To-morrow may do as well,’ I answered.

“‘Supper and bed is what we must think of now,’ said Florence. ‘And in the mean time, what orders shall I give’ (addressing me) respecting Mademoiselle’s sleeping apartment?’

“‘Do,’ I answered, ‘take the trouble off my hands, and explain the arrangement to Agnace.’ So saying, I withdrew to my chamber, waiting till supper was prepared.

“Had Agnace been trained, from infancy, to feel enjoyment in her mother’s presence, and had she been taught that it was a privilege, at any time, to share her bed, she would now have heard of this plan with pleasure. But ah! those days of infancy were gone, past recovery gone, and no such impression had been made; and thus had her natural feelings been neglected.

“I know not how she received the information that she was to be enclosed at night within my chamber; but, no doubt, with dutiful and discreet self-command. Nevertheless, when I returned, I found Florence with a flushed complexion, and Agnace looking exceedingly pale.

“I felt myself depressed as I sat down to supper; on which occasion Florence began to exert those powers of

amusement which she certainly possessed to a high degree. The subject which she chose for our conversation was the company we had lately left at Bagneres, where multitudes of strangers were assembled to pay their devotions to the naiad of the place. She talked and talked, till insensibly I became interested and amused; but all this while not one smile illuminated the features of Agnace. 'You do not laugh, Mademoiselle?' said Florence, 'you do not even smile?'

"'I am fatigued,' replied Agnace: 'may I be permitted to go to rest?'

"'Do so,' I said, 'since our conversation does not amuse you.'

"She sprang up hastily, and was moving to her chamber, when I called her back. 'You do not kiss me, Agnace? you do not embrace your mother?' I said.

"She returned to me; she came close to me; she put her arms round me, burst into tears, and at the same time dropping on her knees, 'Bless me, my mother!' she said, 'bless your child! O, why, why has this coldness subsisted so long between us?'

"I could not but be affected by this; and as I returned her embrace, 'Agnace,' I said, 'don't give me reason to think that you love others better than me.'

"'Ah, mamma!' she answered, and shook her head.

"'What means my Agnace?' I asked.

"Her gentle eye glanced on Florence, and she said, 'Do you hold it impossible, mamma, that the heart can contain only one object of regard?' Then hastily rising, she kissed me again, leaving some of her tears on my cheek, and hastily quitted the room.

"At the same moment, Florence rose, and taking up a candle, was walking out of the room, haughtily pronouncing her 'Good night.'

"I had done well to let her go, and to have taken no cognizance whatever of her airs; but I called her back, and, trembling at her anger, I asked her what had grieved her; and those arms which had so recently embraced the lovely Agnace, were the next moment clasped around this dangerous, most dangerous of women.

"Such conduct and feelings, evinced by me, may excite astonishment; but I fear I may appeal to many as



proofs of such bewitching influence, obtained over them by an artful and fascinating woman, in whom they had reposed, too hastily, the confidence which is due only to the sincere and worthy: the pages of history, the secrets of courts, and the affairs of many families, if known by us, would disclose and illustrate the debasing fact.

"Thus closed the evening; and when Agnace came out of her closet in the morning, she found me in my bed, and Florence pouring out my coffee by the side of it.

"Agnace sat down with Florence without being bid, and while we were breakfasting, a note was given to Agnace. She coloured on receiving it. It was written by the young Comte, but was very short.

"And what says Charles, Agnace?" I inquired.

"How does he excuse himself for his neglect yesterday?" asked Florence.

"The old shepherd," replied Agnace, 'fell down in a fit early in the morning, and Charles, instead of coming to meet us, went on his swiftest horse to procure assistance for him. But he is now recovered.'

"And you are happy?" said Florence. 'No more tears!'

"No, not quite happy," replied Agnace; for Rosamond has sprained her ankle.'

"O what a misfortune!" exclaimed Florence. 'Would not this be a good occasion for another touching scene like that of the past night?'

"No, no," replied Agnace, smiling, and looking cheerful. 'However, I am sorry for Rosamond, because she will not be able to dance to-night. But Charles was here this morning, and you saw him, Mademoiselle de Castres, and told him that we had a particular engagement which would prevent our receiving him if he called after breakfast.' And she looked inquiringly at her.

"I gave him that answer," she replied, 'by the order of Madame la Marquise, because she wishes you to keep yourself quiet this morning, that you may be fitter for the evening.'

"Agnace acquiesced in this plan without a murmur.

"In the evening, we crossed the little river, and passed over to the farm, and, going through the garden without

seeing any of the family, we proceeded to the vineyards, which lay at a short distance, and there, on a green platform beneath the shade of a rocky eminence, we saw the party assembled. It was a beautiful spot, richly skirted with trees, while a clear water, which fell from the heights into the valley, added not a little to the interest of the scenery.

“There, on the grass adorned with many flowers, sat the Comtesse, the younger part of her children being gathered round her, while some of the elder ones and several young ladies and gentlemen of the neighbourhood were dancing together; the peasants of the place were there dressed in their holiday garbs, and the musician was placed on a kind of stage in the centre of the dancing parties. In another part of the rural place of assemblage, a simple repast, consisting of fruits and cream, garnished with flowers, was set forth beneath the shade of several tall trees. Near this were gathered some of the elders of the village and household, among whom I distinguished the venerable Marguerite and her husband.

“The moment we appeared, Charles was at the side of Agnace, and was leading her to her place in the dance. As Florence and I advanced towards the Comtesse, I remarked that the scene was gay and pretty.

“‘True,’ she replied; but at the same time sighed.

“‘Why do you sigh, Florence?’ I asked.

“‘I am thinking,’ answered she, ‘of the poor Comte, the father and husband of some of these now assembled, and I have been calculating that it is now scarcely thirteen months since he was committed to the dust.’

“I could make no reply, for the Comtesse had risen to meet us; but the ideas which Florence had suggested were so grating, at that moment, to my feelings, that I could not answer the salutations of my sister with that agreeable manner which the circumstances of our meeting seemed to require.

“‘I hope,’ said Eglantine, embracing me, ‘that you are well, dear Constance?’

“‘Perfectly so,’ I answered.

“‘But you look so serious!’ said my sister; ‘I trust you have heard no bad news?’

“None,” I replied; but I felt embarrassed.

“That is well,” returned Eglantine. And being at that instant addressed by some newly-arrived visitors, she turned from me, and I was again left with Florence.

“There were many persons present with whom I was acquainted. Several of these presently joined us, and we sat down at some distance, to look at the dancers and converse with each other.

“At length Florence, touching my arm, directed my attention to the other end of the lawn, where the Comtesse had again sat down with her youngest child on her knees, and the next in age standing by her. An elderly lady had been conversing with her, but she was moving away, and her vacant seat, close to the Comtesse, had been taken by an exceedingly fine young man, who was engaged, apparently, in some very interesting discourse with her: ‘Do you see that?’ said Florence in a whisper.

“I do,” I replied; ‘What can it mean?’

“And now,” said she, ‘he bends down his head close to hers. What can be the subject of their discourse?’

“We still looked earnestly at what was passing, and presently we saw Sophie, the youngest but one of my sister’s children, run away from the place, and hasten towards the old nurse, who took her on her lap.

“Ah,” said Florence, ‘do you see that? The Comtesse does not wish the child to hear what is passing. Little Sophie, we all know, can both see and hear. Stay where you are, Madame,’ added she, ‘and I will go round by those bushes, and endeavour to find out what all this imports.’

“Florence did so, and I continued in conversation with the ladies who sat by me.

“In the mean time, one set of the dancers had moved their place, and by this means had entirely concealed the Comtesse from my sight.

“In about half an hour, Florence returned; but there was no opportunity for communication: we were surrounded with company, and were immediately afterwards called to supper.

“I scarcely know how the remainder of the evening passed. Charles accompanied us home, and it was not till Agnace was in her closet that I could procure the

information I desired from Florence. 'Well, my friend, I said, as soon as the door was shut after Agnace, 'what have you heard? what have you seen? Am I to prepare myself to receive another brother-in-law?'

"Florence drew her chair closer to mine, and then told her tale; which, after being divested of all amplifications, was simply this, that she had made her way through the trees to the back of the Comtesse's seat, and that she had there heard very strong expressions of regard proceed from the mouth of the young man, which were received in such a manner by my sister, as to occasion his most enthusiastic acknowledgments; that these expressions had drawn tears from the Comtesse, and that the whole scene had been concluded by the gentleman taking her hand and kissing it with the semblance of the utmost devotedness.

"'And you really think,' said I, 'that the widow is so absurd as to favour this suitor, who is young enough to be her own son?'

"'I do,' said Florence, triumphantly; 'and do you not here see a confirmation of my conjectures? I knew how it would be when the year of mourning was over. But you would not believe me, marquise—you could not believe me.'

"To this effect we conversed for a long time; and, making the conjectures of Florence our foundation, we did not retire to rest till we had built upon it such a fabric as few gossips are capable of rearing who have not a large portion of malignity and envy in their composition.

"It was one hour after midnight when we retired to rest, impatient to know from Agnace the name of this handsome stranger who had been the subject of our conversation.

"In the morning, when Agnace joined us at breakfast, she informed us that this young man was a distant relation of the family of Perouse, and was denominated the Baron de Montauban, but more respecting him she could not tell us. This same morning, as I was writing to Bertram, I failed not to relate our conjectures concerning the Comtesse; inserting in my letter some of the

witticisms, on the inconstancy of widows, which had been suggested the last night by my friend.

“Two days passed after this, during which this second marriage of the Comtesse, which we had chosen to fabricate out of our own heads, afforded a constant subject for the sneers of Florence. On one occasion, her sarcasms were so plain, that Agnace, the gentle and simple Agnace, understood them, and, with more spirit than I had often seen her display, asked Mademoiselle de Castres, how she could venture to entertain me by touching the reputation of my sister. Florence coloured very high on receiving this reproof, and for once, perhaps, felt that she had proceeded too far; for she made some sort of apology, confessing that she sometimes allowed herself to speak without premeditation.

“Agnace seemed willing to take the excuse, but as soon as she left the room, Florence remarked, that we must be careful what we said before Mademoiselle de Roqueforte; adding, that her devotion to the family of Perouse rendered her wholly blind to the faults of every individual belonging to it.

“It was in the afternoon of the very day in which Mademoiselle de Castres, had received the above rebuke from Agnace, that we were visited, unexpectedly, by the Comtesse, who, entering with her usual graciousness and sweetness of manner, though I cannot but suppose that she must have seen and felt the indifference towards her which had increased in our behaviour for some time past, informed me, in the presence of Mademoiselle de Castres, that she was come to tell me some news which would please me, as it had done her. She then told me that her daughter had been solicited in marriage by a young man every way worthy of her, viz. the Baron de Montauban; adding, that his first declaration had been made on the evening of the feast of the vintage.

“I was so confounded at this information, that I could not look at Florence, or so much as lift my eyes from the ground. Any other woman but Eglantine would have thought my embarrassment on this occasion unaccountable, but Eglantine was every thing but suspicious. And when she had told her story she changed her subject,



and began to say something to Florence on her needle-work, and to compliment her on her industry; passing speedily from this theme to another, and telling us of the affairs of her farm and dairy, her bees and flocks: for her old grandfather had inspired her with a relish for these innocent pursuits. 'My old shepherd,' said she, 'is becoming very infirm, and I have promised his place to the Baron de Montauban, and that of the management of my cows and dairy to my dear Charles and your sweet Agnace, when you can spare her; and then I think my household will be well appointed; for Rosamond has taken charge of the bees, and Eleanor of the poultry, and in time I shall have an office for all. And think you not, Mademoiselle de Castres, that we shall be a very busy family? Yes,' she added, though with a suppressed sigh, 'and a happy one: for I cannot but be happy when my children are so.'

"'And yet,' said Florence, 'you must have some sad remembrances?'

"'And some sweet hopes to balance them,' replied my sister, turning aside and wiping away a tear. 'Yes, Mademoiselle, I have some sweet hopes also, for my beloved husband placed his confidence where it is never placed in vain.' Eglantine then audibly sighed, and could repress her tears no longer; she therefore rose in haste, embraced me, and a moment afterwards was in the boat which was to waft her to her own house, leaving me and Florence to make the best we could of our own mortified feelings.

"'For my part, I confess, that when my sister left me, I was so thoroughly confounded and ashamed of myself that I could not speak one word, and a silence ensued, during which I became more and more confused, and, no doubt, should have been long in recovering myself, had not Florence suddenly broke out into a burst of merriment, saying, 'This is excellently well done indeed, perfectly well got up.'

"'What can you mean?' I asked.

"'Why,' said Florence, 'do you not see how it is? The good Comtesse had supposed that all the Baron's professions had been intended for herself, and, when undeceived, she has judged it necessary to come here with the

purpose of making us think that she never thought of the young man in any other light than as a husband for her daughter.'

"I endeavoured to laugh at the turn which Florence had given to this affair, but with a very ill grace. I was really ashamed of myself and of my companion; and, I have no doubt, that I showed I was so: for, from this time, Florence never brought forward the name of the Baron in connexion with my sister.

"Now I began to feel an indifference towards Florence which I had never before indulged; but unfortunately, immediately after this, I became ill, and, during that illness, which confined me to my bed during the autumn and winter, Florence entirely recovered her influence over me, and made me feel her power again. For I thoughtlessly talked to her without reserve of family matters: complained to her of my husband, who, most certainly, was very careless of me; explained certain ambitious views I had for my son; lamented that a higher match had not been thought of for my daughter: and ridiculed my sister, her bee-hives, and her flocks and herds; and expressed my desire to go to Paris and see a little of the *beau monde*; in short, there was not a secret of my heart, which, at this time, I did not lay open to this dangerous woman.

"The effect of this was, that I was more than ever burdened with the consequences of my folly. I was still in a state of convalescence, when Florence one morning came into my room, and said, with much exultation, 'Now, my dear marquise, I have a piece of news for you.'

"'Of a pleasant nature, no doubt,' I replied, 'from the expression of your countenance.'

"This question seemed rather to make her recollect herself, and she rejoined, 'I don't know why I laugh; but I am apt to do so when agitated: it is a kind of nervous feeling, I believe. But the Comtesse your sister, my dear marquise, has been doing so silly a thing, it was impossible not to smile when I was told of it; still, I am very angry with her. Yet it was no more than I foresaw would happen. I knew that she was a woman who could not conduct herself prudently as a widow.'

"'What! has she really been imprudent?' I asked.

“‘Yes, really,’ said Florence, ‘extremely so—ridiculously so. You shall hear it all.’ And then, sitting down on the foot of my bed, she told me a long story, the outline of which was this—that the Comtesse and her children had been at Pau for a few days, a thing which I had known before; that the Comtesse had there met with an old acquaintance of her husband, the Vicomte Desterres; that he had renewed the intercourse with the family; that the Comtesse had invited him to her house without considering his character, which was extremely bad; and that he was now at the farm on the most friendly terms with the whole family. ‘And yesterday,’ said Florence, ‘he drove out your sister in his landau, and is profuse in his compliments and attentions: there is no doubt but that he has a view to her dowry, as she has to be a sharer of his title and distinctions in the *beau monde*.’

“‘And there is no question but all this is true,’ said I, with glee, for I had already advanced to that degree of malevolence towards my sister, as made me rejoice in hearing of any evil respecting her; and I had brought myself to this improper feeling, by indulging in the vicious habit of speaking ill of her, first in a light and playful way, and then in a serious manner.

“During that day, Florence and I watched our neighbours as with the eye of a basilisk, but we saw none of the family, though we once heard the sound of laughter in the interior of the house, from which circumstance we formed very hasty conclusions.

“Agnace, during my illness, had been often at the Comtesse’s; but this day, having an engagement elsewhere, she did not go. Florence, however, had her spies, and by these she learned that the Comtesse had walked in the avenue with the Vicomte for near an hour with no other company than her two youngest children; and that, after dinner, she had sat near to him, that is, in the next chair, for more than half an hour, and was addressed by him more than once in a tone so low that it might be almost called a whisper.

“The next day, as it was understood that I was sufficiently recovered to entertain company, I had several visitors: these were ladies of distinction in the neighbourhood. It was natural for us to speak of the Comtesse;

and shall I confess my wickedness, (for I can call it by no other name,) shall I acknowledge that I took this occasion to insinuate all that was base and degrading respecting the conduct of my sister, as it related to the Vicomte, and that I did this under the mask of friendship, and as if I bitterly deplored the errors I was compelled to acknowledge?

“The tale of slander presently took wing, and gathered strength in its course; and my name was pleaded in confirmation of the scandal. My heart stung me immediately for what I had done, but it was too late: the wound I had inflicted was never to be healed; and the uneasiness of my mind was so apparent, that Florence, after our early dinner, and to divert my attention, invited me to walk out with her.

“Agnace had walked that morning to see Marguerite, and had not returned; but, as she often stayed some hours with the venerable woman, I was not uneasy at her absence. I was weak from my late illness, and could only reach a little elevation just above the castle, and not far from the entrance of the pass from which some part of the little winding path which led to the cottage might be easily perceived. On this elevation was a convenient seat formed by a piece of rock which had fallen from the superior heights; and there I sat down with Florence in that sort of temper which inclined me to find fault with all I saw and all I heard. The rugged heights through which the pass was cut were behind me, and so near that I could lean against a part of their base, and before me was spread a region so charming, so various, and so adorned with the fresh verdure of returning spring, that one would have thought it impossible to have looked upon it without enjoying tranquillity of mind. But my heart was at that time the seat of the most malevolent feelings, and even Florence had little power to make me forget my misery even for a moment. Florence, however, pretended not to notice my low spirits, and went on talking as usual, varying her subjects with no small degree of ingenuity. ‘I am tired,’ said I at length to her, ‘of being always shut up in the country; I am resolved that I will go to Paris, and introduce my daughter into the world: I have done wrong to remain so long at Roquefort.

“ Florence approved the idea, and recommended me to press the point when the marquis should come again to Roquefort, which we supposed would soon happen, as he had been longer absent than usual.

“ This visit to Paris was a pleasing subject, and we dwelt upon it for some time; till suddenly we distinguished two persons moving along the valley in the direction from Marguerite’s cottage. These were Agnace and Charles. She was leaning on his arm, and they were moving slowly, like persons who wish to protract the time in each other’s company. At length, approaching a water, which, gushing from the rocks above, poured its crystal stream over the pathway, Agnace sat down on the trunk of a fallen tree, while Charles left her for a few minutes, and climbed up the rocks to the source of the stream, from which he presently returned with a wreath of early roses, which I afterwards saw fastened round her hat. For some time he stood before her as she sat, and then, placing himself beside her, took a book from his pocket, and began to read. All this was indistinctly seen because of the distance; but I doubt not that the book which these young people had chosen for their studies was the sacred Scriptures, in which they took a delight which indicated the comparative purity of their minds, and the accordance of feelings which existed between them. O, my sweet Agnace! how brightly dawned thy early days! How happy mightest thou have been, had thy mother been worthy of thee! But, alas! my Agnace! in vain do I now lament thee: the tears that bedew thy grave cannot restore thee.

“ I became impatient on beholding this lovely pair; and I expressed my impatience to Florence, saying that I wished it were yet possible to separate them.

“ ‘ And why should it not be possible?’ said Florence. ‘ Take Mademoiselle with you to Paris, and she may see others who may find means to make her forget the son of your sister.’

“ ‘ The son of my unworthy sister,’ I said: ‘ yes, it shall be done; and you and I, Florence, will prevail, no doubt, at last.’

“ I then returned to the castle, whence I sent a servant in haste to tell my daughter that I was impatient of her



long delay ; and the servant, finding her seated where I had seen her, brought her from that valley wherein she had spent so many happy hours, and which she was never again to enter.

“This very evening we were surprised by the return of the marquis. He informed me that he had passed through Paris in his way from the frontiers of the Low Countries, where his regiment was in garrison, and had left Bertram there, in a house which he had hired for a short time in the Place de Vendome.

“‘Then,’ said I, ‘I hope that you will allow me and Agnace to join my son in Paris when you return.’

“‘For what,’ asked he, ‘should you desire to go to Paris?’

“‘For a little change of scene, and in order to let Agnace see a little of the world.’

“‘I would rather she should see it after her marriage,’ answered my husband ; ‘but we will speak of this matter at another time.’

“My meetings with my husband were not always the most joyful occasions, for we had learned to do without each other ; but, as I had at this time a certain end to accomplish, I endeavoured to make myself as agreeable to him as possible.

“On the morning following the arrival of the marquis, while I was taking my chocolate in bed, a custom which I had long used, Florence came into my room, and, throwing herself on a chair, ‘I know not what is the matter with me,’ she said, ‘but I have had such horrible dreams as I never before experienced. I was thinking of your journey to Paris, and I had the most strange apprehensions respecting it. I do not think I shall go with you.’

“‘Wherefore?’ I said : ‘do you suppose that I would consent to be separated from you?’

“‘No,’ she answered ; ‘and yet I don’t think that I shall go with you.’

“I looked earnestly at her : there was a wildness in her eyes which surprised me, and a crimson suffusion in her complexion which alarmed me. I asked her if she was well. ‘Yes,’ she answered, ‘very well, I believe ; but you rather surprised me yesterday by speaking so

freely respecting your sister before Madame R——. Did you not know that she is intimate with her?

“‘I only repeated the story which I had heard from you; I did not exaggerate.’”

“‘Well,’ returned Florence, ‘you did, I suppose, as you judged right; but I have had strange thoughts about this conversation in the night.’”

“‘You seem,’ said I, ‘to have had many strange thoughts last night.’”

“‘Yes,’ returned Florence, ‘I feared once that I was near suffocation. Was the the night very hot?’”

“‘Hot!’ I replied, ‘no—cold.’”

“‘Ay, cold,’ she answered, ‘yes, I thought it very cold.’”

“I looked at her again, and in my eagerness to understand her I spilled my chocolate, on which she laughed, and then, placing her hand on her forehead, complained of a headach, and retired.

“I had no time to reflect upon all these strange things, for I wished to see my husband before he went out, and I knew that he would be impatient to reconnoitre his domains after so long an absence. I therefore arose, and dressed, and, having had a short conversation with the marquis, returned to my own apartments, where I sat down in my usual place, expecting every moment that Florence would join me; for Agnace, I well knew, was with her father.

“After having sat a short time, endeavouring to divert myself with my needle-work, one of my women came to inform me that my sister was at the castle, and desired to see me. She had scarcely delivered her message, before Eglantine entered. Her manner was serious; it was evident that she had been weeping. She came near to me with a hurried step, and stopping short a few paces from me, she burst into tears, and seemed unable to restrain a kind of hysteric affection, by which every feature was distorted. ‘What does all this mean, Eglantine?’ I said.

“‘It means,’ she replied, ‘that you have grieved, and wounded, and sorely afflicted your widowed sister. O Constance! my dear Constance! never, never could I have thought it possible that you should have injured me

as you have done, had I not been assured you have done so by a person of the strictest integrity.'

"She then, with much self-command and great steadiness of manner, required me to explain all I had heard and reported respecting her.

"My conscience condemned me; I was confounded, yet enraged; and my feelings at first wholly deprived me of the power of utterance. I hesitated, stammered out a few incoherent sentences, and then, bursting forth, asked her how she, a younger sister, and in other respects an inferior, should dare to come and catechise me thus in my own house.

"By the right of a younger sister, dear Constance, by the right of a friend, and the right of that affection which I ever felt for you. Perhaps I may have been imprudent in inviting the Vicomte Desterres to my house. I have myself had some apprehensions on the subject, and was well pleased, therefore, that he did not propose to stay longer than three days. He left us this morning, and, as my son was at home the whole time, and as the Vicomte was a friend of my beloved husband, now no more, I never could have supposed that even my worst enemies could have considered this visit of the Vicomte in any other point of view than as an act of common friendship—a visit which, perhaps, had better never have taken place. But that you, my sister, should have given such a turn to the affair, is almost incredible. O Constance! dear Constance! have you acted in this instance like a sister, or like a Christian? Even granting that I had done wrong, ought you not to have counselled me apart? and if you found that I would not hearken to your counsels, it might then have been time enough to expose the faults of a widowed sister in the ears of strangers.'

"In this part of her discourse, Eglantine wept bitterly, and I remained silent beneath the overpowering conflict of my feelings. Which of us might have spoken first again I know not, but we were interrupted by the abrupt entrance of Florence, whose disordered head-dress conveyed the idea of a person just risen from the bed of sickness; in other respects, she was dressed as usual.

"It was a large room, and she came towards us with a firm step, carrying herself particularly erect, her hand

being raised in a kind of menacing form. Never shall I forget the fierce expression of her countenance, or lose the impression of that frightful wildness of her eyes, and the angry appearance of her complexion. It was like the glare of some devouring flame bursting forth at midnight and threatening speedy destruction. Her eyes were not indeed fixed on me, but they were directed with fiery rage at my sister: for the moment was arrived, though the occasion was as yet unknown to me, in which this miserable woman was to be permitted no longer to dissemble, but to be given up publicly to the influence of those malevolent passions which she had so long covertly indulged.

“The Comtesse looked up as she approached, and ceased to weep, but, firm in conscious innocence, waited with much composure till she should speak.

“‘And so,’ said Florence, (addressing Eglantine,) ‘you are come to persuade your sister, that you are still an afflicted widow—inconsolable for the loss of your husband—dead to the world—and having all your affections buried with the father of your children?’

“A horrible laugh terminated this address; after which she stood for a moment, as if waiting my sister’s reply. Eglantine, however, made her no answer; but rising, said, ‘Sister, pardon me if I have spoken harshly; let the events of the two past days be forgotten, let us love each other as in former times; I know that I am hasty and impatient, but I soon forget an injury, and, with the Almighty’s help, I will never more revert to what is past.’ Thus addressing me, she stepped forward, and was offering to embrace me, when Florence seized her arm and held her back: ‘Deceitful woman!’ she said, ‘why seek to embrace one who has ceased to love you?’ And then she broke forth into renewed insults with a vehemence of manner which perfectly confounded me. I endeavoured to check her several times, but without the smallest success; and I was indeed so much confused by the truths that she uttered respecting me, and my feelings and conduct towards my sister, that I could not exert myself as I might otherwise have done. My sister seemed also equally incapable either of speaking or moving, and we both stood, the one on the one side and the other

on the other of this miserable woman, till suddenly her voice became thick, her complexion varied from red to livid, and from livid to a deathlike paleness, and she sunk in strong convulsions on the floor. The shrieks which my sister and I uttered were so violent that they soon brought the servants round us, by whom the unhappy woman, still in strong convulsions, was taken up and carried to her bed. Eglantine hastened to her house, and presently sent back her shepherd, a venerable old man, who was well skilled in medicine, that he might give some immediate assistance, while we were waiting the arrival of a physician from a town at some leagues distance.

“I was too much overcome by my own feelings, to be able or willing to follow Florence to her chamber. I was truly terrified at the state in which I had seen her, and could not help attributing her conduct and manners to some dreadful disease which had caused sudden derangement: but in this derangement she had evinced so dreadful a spirit, and had exposed me in a way so offensive, that I trembled at the idea of continuing to live with her on such intimate terms. Her death appeared to me a most desirable event, and this I so earnestly wished for, that when one of my women came to inform me that the shepherd had bled Mademoiselle de Castres, and that she was better, I could not help feeling a degree of regret. My disgust of my sister had, in the mean time, increased by the events of the morning. I had been mortified, humbled, and brought to shame before her, and I felt that I never could look up in her presence again. ‘She must despise me,’ I said, ‘but I will not be despised; I would rather choose to be hated. And she would teach my daughter, my Agnace, to despise me: but I will prevent this—Agnace shall never enter the family of Eglantine if I have power or art to prevent it.’

“Thus resolving, I sat motionless where my sister had left me, and in one short hour, during which I was alone, suffered the pain of years.

“The physician had arrived before the marquis and my daughter returned; and when he had considered the case, he informed me that he entertained no doubt but that her complaint would prove to be the small-pox.



“I had the small-pox in infancy, I well knew, and had nursed my son and daughter through the disease; I had therefore no well-grounded fears respecting contagion. But no sooner did the physician express his apprehensions, than the idea occurred to me that I might avail myself of this occasion to promote my wishes of carrying my daughter to Paris. As soon therefore as my husband and Agnace came in, which was before the physician had left me, I began to act upon what I had planned; and when I had informed him of the sudden attack of Mademoiselle de Castres, I proceeded to say, that out of the house I must and would go, for I felt that, if I remained where I was, I should certainly take the infection.

“‘But you have had the disease, Madame,’ said Agnace.

“‘And you nursed your children through the complaint,’ remarked my husband.

“‘I know not,’ I said, ‘whether I have had it or not, but of this I am sure, that I shall die if I stay here, if it be only from terror and anxiety.’

“My husband and daughter both reasoned with me, but in vain; and at length it was decided upon that we should leave the castle the following morning, and proceed without delay to Paris. My husband was not brought to this determination without much persuasion; and Agnace received it with a degree of discomposure which circumstances did not seem to justify. She turned pale as death, and appeared to have some difficulty in keeping herself from fainting. When left by the physician and the marquis, she rose in haste from the chair on which she had been sitting, and, throwing herself on her knees before me, ‘O, my mother! my mother!’ she said, ‘do not yield to this panic, and leave your friend in this abrupt and hasty manner. The world has been offended at your attachment, but it will be more offended by your forsaking your friend. O! listen, dear mother, for once listen to your child!’

“‘Rise, Agnace!’ I said, with high indignation. ‘You insinuate that my conduct is not consistent: but what can be more inconsistent than that abasing posture, and those insulting words?’

“‘No, my mother, I will not rise,’ said Agnace, ‘till you consent to stay and take care of Mademoiselle de Castres.’

“‘Do you desire my death, Agnace?’ I replied.

“‘You have had the small-pox, dear mamma,’ she said, while her eyes streamed with tears: ‘you would run no risk by remaining here. O! I entreat you, hearken to your child,’ she added, (and she clasped my knees with her lovely arm,) ‘and stay with your poor friend; or, if not, leave me with her. I will attend her—I have no fears.’

“‘You stay!’ I said. ‘Artful girl!—yes, you would willingly stay, I doubt not, and Charles de Perouse would assist you in your labour of love. You change colour!—Are you not ashamed to be thus detected? Rise from your knees; and understand, that, though you may deceive others, you cannot deceive your mother.’

“She arose at my bidding, and her face, which had been pale as death, was covered with deep blushes. ‘You are ashamed, I see, Agnace,’ I said.

“‘I am,’ she answered, ‘but not——’ and she hesitated.

“‘Not because you are detected?’ I asked.

“‘No,’ she replied, ‘for heaven is my witness,’ and she lifted her lovely eyes towards heaven, ‘that at the moment I offered to stay and attend Mademoiselle de Castres, I had not a thought of Charles.’

“‘Then why those blushes?’ I asked.

“‘They came unbidden,’ she answered, ‘but not without cause.’ She sighed and wept, but said no more.

“I was engaged during the whole of the evening in making preparations for my journey, and Agnace was not with me; neither did I inquire after her, nor see her, till the morning, when she joined us at our early breakfast, with a countenance of such deathly paleness, that her father and I were both alarmed, and we hastened our departure, in hope that the change of air and scene might restore and enliven her.

“The unhappy Florence had, as I learned by making the inquiry, a miserable night, and continued to rave, with little intermission, from midnight. The farce which I was playing would not permit me to go to take leave of

ner; but as I was passing along the gallery to descend the stairs, her groans reached my ears, and went to my heart. I never heard her voice again. Dare I hope that she is now happy? Oh, miserable Florence! Oh, ill-fated intimacy! would it had never been!

“Agnace wept bitterly till we were some leagues distant from Roquefort, after which she fell asleep; and the extreme heaviness of her sleep, notwithstanding the motion of the carriage, first suggested to me the idea that she had been up all night with the unhappy invalid. The suspicion was agony to my mind, for it filled me with fresh reason for self-reproach; but I was then too much hardened in sin to listen to the dictates of conscience. The head of Agnace, as she slept, reclined on her father’s shoulder. He turned to her with a look of tenderness, and, placing his arm round her, held her till she awoke. They sat opposite me in the coach, and presented an affecting scene, which has since forced itself upon my recollection, producing reflections of the most painful nature.

“I shall not say much of our journey to Paris: in proportion as we became more distant from Roquefort, my spirits rose, and Agnace became more composed. At Paris we found Bertram, whom I had not seen for two years, and who was become a very fine youth in appearance and manner; but I soon perceived that he had a lofty and unaccommodating temper, with that species of sensitiveness on all points of honour which disposes young men to avail themselves of every occasion of discord.

“On the day succeeding our arrival, we received letters from the south. There was one for Agnace, which was not perused without many tears; and another from the intendant of the castle of Roquefort, to say that the disease had broken out in Mademoiselle de Castres with such symptoms as placed her life in the greatest peril.

“I will not do myself the injustice to say that I did not feel much on the receipt of this letter: but Bertram, who was present, and who had always at once hated and despised poor Florence, soon turned my better feelings into ridicule, and insisted, that I should amuse myself with the gaieties of Paris, and endeavour to exclude

all painful sensations by the introduction of pleasurable ones.

“‘That plan may do with me, Bertam,’ I said; ‘but it will not answer, I assure you, with Agnace.’

“‘What!’ he observed, ‘do you mean to say that she will not easily be made to forget Charles de Perouse? Wait a little, dear mother, wait till she has seen something better. Your ideas of female constancy differ much from mine, if you suppose that Agnace will continue to admire De Perouse when she sees some of our first and noblest Parisian youths at her feet; for I do not doubt but that this will soon be the case, as I am persuaded my sister Agnace will be found the brightest star which has appeared for months in the hemisphere of fashion.’

“‘I am glad that you think so, Bertram,’ I answered; ‘but I do not approve your ideas of female inconstancy.’

“‘I judge from observation,’ replied my son. ‘The time was, when I should have said that nothing on earth could have separated you from Florence de Castres: but’—— and he smiled; then turning to a mirror, busied himself in arranging his cravat.

“Bertram had always been my favourite child, and, as I knew that I should be dependent on him in the event of his father’s death, I had always made it my object to secure his affection to myself: for my selfishness was at that time excessive; and if this feeling does not now operate so powerfully with me, it is to be attributed to the efficacy of grace, by which I have been led to feel and lament the sinfulness of my nature, and to desire above all things that I may never again be left to my own propensities.

“By the suggestions and importunities of Bertram, we were soon involved in all the gaieties of our great capital, through which we conducted our lovely Agnace as a lamb prepared for sacrifice, and adorned with garlands of flowers.

“As Bertram had foreseen, she was soon sought in marriage by several persons of superior rank; among whom was one who, from his distinguished birth, superior fortune, and estimation at court, was precisely the son-in-law which an ambitious mother might desire.

“ This gentleman was the Marquis de C——, who, notwithstanding the little encouragement she gave him, was so fixed in his attachment to my daughter, that he held out every possible inducement to me and my son, to insure his success.

“ Not one of these suitors of Agnace had the least chance with her father, for he dashed their hopes at once by stating that his daughter was already engaged to another. But, unfortunately for my endeared Agnace and all connected with her, when we had been in Paris little more than two months, he was obliged to leave us; and then my son contrived to renew the hopes of the Marquis de C——, a thing which there is no difficulty in doing when the heart of a lover is truly devoted. And who, that was capable of estimating character, could avoid preferring my Agnace to those flimsy persons with which the gay world abounds! for she was a true Christian, and had all the gentleness, modesty, courtesy, and simplicity of that character.

“ But I should have said that, long before this time, we had heard of the death of the miserable Florence: and what affected me more deeply than the death of this poor creature, whose tyranny I had long suffered with much impatience, was, that my sister had attended her to the very last, and had endured with unwearied patience all the loathsome circumstances attendant on this disease, wholly separating herself from her young family, lest she should convey any kind of contagion from the chamber of disease; and that she had availed herself of every interval of reason to bring this unhappy woman to a knowledge of her Saviour and to true repentance.

“ It might have been expected that the knowledge of this truly Christian conduct of my sister would have made me ashamed of my evil feelings respecting her: but, alas! by giving me another cause for admiration, it increased my hatred of her; especially when I considered that it was more than probable that Florence had, either in delirium, or in seasons of repentance, laid open to her the subjects of our former conversations, which I was most anxious she should not know. But one month, or more, had passed since I had heard of the death of Florence, and my mind was then too full of ambitious pros-



pects for my children, and schemes of hatred and revenge, to permit me to feel the event as I have since done.—

“Things were in this state, the marquis still absent and my son using every means in his power to promote the suit of the marquis de C—— with his sister, when, one morning, as I was sitting alone, my children having rode out together towards the Bois de Boulogne, my nephew Charles de Perouse unexpectedly arrived. He appeared to be in violent agitation, although it was evident that he endeavoured to restrain himself and to accost me with some appearance of cordiality.

“‘What! Charles de Perouse!’ I exclaimed, ‘and at Paris!’

“‘Yes, Madame,’ he replied; ‘I am come to Paris with my sister, Rosamond, who is lately become the wife of the Baron de Montauban, and we lodge at a very little distance from hence.’

“‘Indeed,’ I said, with great coolness, ‘I did not expect that this marriage would taken place so soon.’

“‘And where, Madame,’ said he, ‘is Mademoiselle de Roquefort?’ And he looked round him impatiently. ‘Might I not be permitted to see her?’

“‘She is not within,’ I replied, still preserving a perfect indifference.

“My indifference seemed to irritate the young man more than any manner I could have possibly adopted; and, in consequence, after various struggles with himself, his feelings appeared quite to overcome him, and he caused me to understand that he was fully acquainted with the measures I was taking to separate him for ever from his beloved Agnace. The deep groans which he uttered would have melted any heart but mine; he even shed tears while he assured me that his soul was bound up in his Agnace, and he offered to take her without the smallest fortune. ‘O my aunt!’ he said, ‘give me but my Agnace!—my Agnace, whom I have loved from my tenderest infancy—and loved without a rival—yea,’ he added, ‘and must love till death!’

“‘And well,’ I answered, ‘well you may love her. Do you count it a merit to have selected the most lovely young woman in France, and one who is your superior in rank, and entitled to a noble dowry?’

“‘Oh, aunt!’ he replied; ‘and this from you!’

“‘Yes,’ I said; ‘and now, since the time is come for speaking the truth, permit me to say that I have always thought you presumptuous in aspiring to my daughter, and only regret that I have allowed so long a time to pass without making you acquainted with my opinion on this subject.’

“‘I scarcely know what answer the Comte made to this speech, for he was driven beyond the bounds of prudence; and he, undoubtedly, not only used some very harsh expressions, but insinuated that he had heard me spoken of as I then appeared, but had ever before believed that I had been misrepresented.

“‘Misrepresented, Charles! and by whom?’

“‘It matters not,’ he replied; ‘sacred be the memory of the dead! But O, my Agnace!’ he added, striking his hand on his forehead, ‘I cannot, will not part with my Agnace. May I hope, Madame, that you will tell her I have been here, and that I live only for her?’

“‘And that you came only to insult her mother?’ I replied. ‘But depend upon it, De Perouse, you would do well to give up all thoughts of my daughter, for she has now another connexion in view, and one much more suitable than that which you propose.’

“‘’Tis false, Madame!’ he replied, almost in a frenzy of despair.

“‘Very well, sir,’ I answered; ‘what more can you add after this? Since you cannot behave with the respect due to your aunt, you must permit me to say that I can no longer acknowledge you as a nephew.’ I then walked out of the room into an adjoining apartment, where, as I stood at a large window which opened into the street, I saw the injured young man leaving the court; and, within a quarter of an hour afterwards, I saw my daughter with her brother and the Marquis de C— enter.

“‘I had been considering what measures I should take to prevent the renewal of the intercourse between Agnace and Charles, and was still unable to determine on what should be done, when the young people came in. My children instantly perceived that I had been agitated, and Bertram asked the occasion, but I waved a

reply; and as the Marquis had been invited to dinner and the hour was at hand, I sat down to converse with the young gentlemen while Agnace changed her dress. I expressed a hope that they had enjoyed a pleasant excursion.

“‘The day was fine and the prospects beautiful,’ replied the Marquis; ‘but your sweet daughter, Madame, had a cloud on her brow: she seemed to be offended at my joining the party, and plainly told me that I might spare all trouble on her account, as she considered herself as not being at liberty to bestow her hand on any man but the one chosen by her father.’

“‘Upon my word,’ I said, in high displeasure against Agnace, ‘she treated you with some freedom!’

“‘She did so,’ replied the Marquis; ‘and I only wish I could cease to think of her.’

“‘But I trust,’ I said, ‘that you will not give her up. Her obstinacy shall be overcome: the young man to whom she is attached is unworthy of her; his mother has used me ill, and he has treated me with the greatest indignity.’ I would have added more, but the entrance of Agnace compelled us to change the subject.

“Agnace appeared perfectly composed during dinner; and when the Marquis addressed her, answered with ease, supposing, no doubt, that she had entirely put an end to his expectations respecting her: but Bertram appeared flushed and angry, and, while forcing himself to appear easy, drank a much larger portion of wine than usual.

“About eight o’clock the Marquis took his leave; and we were no sooner left by ourselves than Bertram broke out, and, though in my presence and his sister’s, uttered some of those imprecations, which are too often in the mouths of fashionable young men, on his aunt and her whole family; adding, ‘I am sure from your manner Madame, that some disagreeable circumstances have arisen from this quarter since the morning.’

“‘You have conjectured truly,’ I replied; and then gave him the account of Charles’s visit, exaggerating to the utmost all that had been rash and unadvised in the conduct of the young man, and adding, that his mother had made use of her opportunities with Florence de Castres to obtain a knowledge of every secret of my heart.

“As I proceeded, Bertram became more and more inflamed, and gave utterance to his passion by more awful expressions, while Agnace implored me with tears to refrain from further mention of these subjects.

“‘And De Perouse insulted you!’ said Bertram, ‘and his mean mother has basely obtained a knowledge of your secrets! By heaven!’ and he added other and more daring oaths, ‘I will make the man who can insult a lady to feel that he is not to do so with impunity!’ So saying, he started from his seat; but Agnace, quick as thought, had seized his arm, and was imploring him to have patience, to take a moment for reflection, and to hear what she had to say. He shook off her hand, and called her low-minded and base: but she, falling on her knees, clasped her arms around him, and would have drawn him down to his seat. ‘Hear me!—only hear me, Bertram!’ ’tis of no use that you attempt to interfere between me and Charles de Perouse, for here, here I solemnly swear, that I will never, never marry any man but him; and his death, no, not even his death shall separate us!’

“‘Frantic girl!’ I exclaimed, ‘hold, hold! refrain your impious oaths!’

“‘I have uttered them,’ she replied, ‘they are registered in heaven. And now, Bertram, do your worst: but no, no, my brother! do not let your anger burn against the friend of your childhood! O, my brother! if ever I was dear to you’—She would have added more, but he tore himself away, and rushed from the room.

“All this was but the work of a minute, and left me no time either to reflect or act.

“Bertram had scarcely closed the door after him, when Agnace falling into a deadly swoon on the floor, demanded my immediate attention. I shrieked aloud, the servants rushed in, they lifted Agnace on a sofa. We bathed her temples, and applied volatile spirits; after which, she revived, uttered a deep sigh, and then looked around her: but seeing me, she started up, and, with a wildness of expression which terrified me, she exclaimed, ‘Well, have you done, barbarous woman? unnatural mother!—Yet now, now!’ she added, springing from her couch, ‘it may not be too late! Stop him! Stop him! Hold his hand!’ and was then hastening towards the door, when my female

servants, clasping her in their arms, prevented her from rushing into the street in this condition; and being thus restrained, she burst into tears, and seemed to recover herself a little.

“All this time I was so blinded by prejudice and passion, that I actually had not yet foreseen what was most likely to be the consequence of what I had done, in allowing my son to seek his cousin in such a state of irritation and intoxication; neither did the terrible idea occur to me, till Agnace, being a little restored, was able to speak connectedly, and to entreat me, without losing a moment, to send after Bertram, and prevent, if possible, a meeting between him and Charles.

“‘What do you apprehend?’ I asked.

“‘Murder!’ she replied, with returning wildness; ‘and then you will have well done, in forsaking the woman’s part, and thus acting the incendiary in your own house.

“‘O Agnace!’ I exclaimed, with horror, ‘and this from you!’

“‘What have I said? What have I done?’ and she put her hand to her forehead. ‘Have I insulted my mother? O, my reason! my reason! Is it gone for ever? Lay not what I have said to my account, O my God!’ and she wept again, at the same time imploring me to send some one to call her brother.

“‘I was by this time thoroughly terrified: the idea of a duel between the young men had never occurred to me, and I now became as anxious to recall Bertram, and tranquillize his mind, as I had before been to excite him: I therefore sent every man among my domestics to seek him.

“When this had been done, Agnace became more calm, though she continued to weep without intermission.

“It was now dark, but the windows were left open. Such was the confusion and disorder of the family, that one solitary light only was burning on the table. All was silent within the house and offices, which were almost empty; the females, with the exception of my own maid, having, by my desire, betaken themselves to the porter’s lodge, to be ready to admit Bertram as soon as he should appear.

“My maid, whom I had brought from Roquefort, and



who had been long in the family, was standing by Agnace, and was holding her head on her bosom trying to console her ; and I sat at a distance, suffering within a short space of time the troubles of years.

“It was then, at that dreadful, most dreadful period, that I was first convinced of the long course of sin in which I had indulged ; and now that the dreadful consequences of my wickedness began to appear, I was filled with a degree of horror and remorse which admit of no description.

“Till that miserable moment I had believed myself an exemplary character, a self-denying, economical, and domestic wife ; but I was then occasioned to perceive that the individual who in retirement nurtures uncharitable and angry feelings, is often more guilty in the sight of God, than those trifling or profligate characters, whose errors are open to the whole world.

“Two miserable hours passed in these sad reflections, during which time the sobs of Agnace had become less audible, and I had almost hoped that she had fallen asleep on the bosom of the faithful servant.

“At length the clocks of various steeples in the neighbourhood announced the hour of midnight, and a moment afterwards a noise was heard below. Agnace started up, and uttered a faint shriek ; at the same instant, Bertram rushed into the room, pale, disordered, and wild, and coming up to me, ‘Now, Madame,’ he said, ‘you are revenged, and I trust that you are satisfied. And would to God,’ he added, as he ungirt his sword from his side, and threw it to the further end of the room, ‘would to God I had also died !’

“Agnace had risen as her brother entered, her fair hair dishevelled and wet with the water which had been applied to her temples. She had stepped swiftly up to her brother, and stood looking at him with a fixed and dreadful calmness ; and when he uttered these words, ‘Would to God I had also died,’ she turned to me, and said, ‘I knew it ; I have long known it ; I have been long prepared ; it has been working on to this for many long years, and now it is complete. I well knew where I should keep my bridal day ; but you will not be present, mother’

“ ‘Agnace!’ I exclaimed, ‘Agnace, my child!’

“She took no notice of me, but turned to Bertram. ‘Brother,’ she said, ‘I would have spared you this guilt, but God give you repentance and forgiveness. And now,’ she added, ‘finish your work, take up your sword and shorten the hour of separation; the time for lingering here; for I must go.’

“Bertram was unable to speak: he had thrown himself on a chair, and his groans were more dreadful even than the unnatural composure of Agnace. I would have taken his hand, but he drew it from me. ‘You are my mother,’ he said, ‘else I could,’—and then he paused. ‘But I was mad,’ he added; ‘I was intoxicated; and you, my mother, you provoked me.—But, my Agnace, my sweet Agnace!’ and he looked with ineffable tenderness towards her, and seemed as if he would have embraced her, but recoiled, as if unworthy.

“Agnace still stood in one posture, becoming more and more pale, and fixed like some lovely marble figure. At length, heaving a deep and long-drawn sigh, she fell slowly back, her eyes, which were directed upwards, becoming, at the same instant, fixed as in the instance of a dying person. The arms of her brother received her as she fell, and I, the miserable, thrice miserable mother, stood a silent witness of this terrific scene.

“My unhappy daughter was no sooner laid on the couch, than her limbs began to be agitated by convulsive motions, and it was necessary to seek a physician. Bertram still held her as she lay; but there was a fixed and dreadful expression of sorrow in his countenance, which I could never forget. I again addressed him, but he refused to answer me; and when the physician entered, he, without hesitation, accounted to him for the dreadful condition of his sister, by informing him of the crime he had rashly committed.

“ ‘And is the young man actually dead, sir?’ inquired the physician.

“ ‘I know not,’ he replied: ‘I left him fainting and bleeding with his companions, while I returned to boast of what I had done where I thought my boastings would be acceptable;’ (and his fiery eyes were fixed on me;) and yet I blame no one, sir, but myself,’ he added. ‘I

was intoxicated; I was irritated. I went out to seek the Comte; and I found him but too soon. I insulted him; I drew upon him. He was compelled to do the same in self-defence. I wounded him—I believe I killed him—murdered him, though he was my friend—my brother. And now that I am sobered, that my unjust anger is evaporated, I am left to the effect of my own precipitation. I shall be presently seized by the arm of justice, and shall be condemned to death.’

“This was more than I could bear. I shrieked aloud, but no one attended to me. The physician was giving directions respecting Agnace: he had ordered a surgeon to be sent for to bleed her, and the operation was performed during a stupor into which she had fallen. A large quantity of blood was taken from her before she opened her eyes. The physician and maid then spoke to her, but she made no answer. I then addressed her with every endearing epithet I could think of, but she took no notice. The physician administered a cordial to her, and desired her couch might be taken nearer a window which opened into a garden which was flanked by the lofty groves of the Champs Elysees.

“That unhappy morning was beginning to dawn, and the birds were commencing their flutterings in the boughs; the gales were enlivening, and laden with the fragrance of flowers; but my Agnace was never more to revive by the freshness of the morning air, which she was wont to inhale with so much delight on the acclivities of her native hills.

“The surgeon was gone, and the physician began earnestly to persuade my son to conceal himself from justice.

“‘No!’ said my son, sternly; ‘I value my life so little now, that I am ready to give it up, if justice requires.’

“‘But for my sake, Bertram!’ I said.

“He looked down, but made no answer.

“‘For your father’s sake!’—

“He looked fiercely at me. ‘Don’t mention him,’ he said; ‘we should have thought of him yesterday.’

“Agnace sighed. We were a little withdrawn from the couch and returned to it again on hearing this sigh. ‘Sweet Agnace,’ I said, ‘are you better?’

“ ‘My father, did you say?’ she answered; ‘my poor father! tell him’—

“ ‘What, my child?’ I asked.

“ ‘Tell him,’—and she hesitated—‘tell him his Agnace is happy: yet not happy. Charles was a Christian; how could he return your injuries, Bertram?’

“ ‘He did not, my beloved Agnace; he did not, my sweet sister; the fault was all mine.’

“ ‘Thank God!’ she said, lifting up her lovely eyes: ‘but O, Bertram!’ (and she looked at him,) ‘have you quite forgotten God?’

“She then seemed to be unconscious, and, closing her eyes, we hoped she was sleeping, till informed by renewed convulsions that this repose was not natural and refreshing. The physician applied other remedies, after which the convulsions left her, and she became tranquil; but, after this second attack, her countenance became appalling: death appeared, to me, to sit on every line of her lovely face; yet the physician gave us some hope.

“The morning was now broken, and never, perhaps, shone on a more miserable family. The noble countenance of Bertram was scarcely less changed than his sister’s, and the disorder of his dress was rendered more dreadful by a few spots of blood which were discernible upon it. ‘And will you not resolve upon something, Monsieur Roquefort,’ said the physician, ‘or will you empower me to go and inquire after the young man whom you left bleeding in the street? He may not be dead; and then you will be relieved from one source at least of wo.’

“While we were hesitating on this proposition, (for Bertram seemed to dread to receive a confirmation of his cousin’s death,) we heard a noise below; and the next instant, the door of the room being opened, we were fixed in amazement by the entrance of young De Perouse himself, pale indeed, and having his arm in a scarf, but far from bearing the appearance of a man desperately wounded.

“Never, never shall I forget the moment when the two cousins, rushing into each other’s arms, cancelled all past offences by one cordial embrace, from which they did not relax till they had sworn a friendship which from that day to this, has never known a variation.

“Then all might have been well, if the arrow shot from the envenomed tongue had not wounded in a direction where it had least been intended. But I bow beneath the decrees of the Almighty; and if my punishment is only to be coeval with this life, I shall have reason to praise redeeming love through all eternity.

“Bertram, in hastening to meet Charles, had intercepted the view of the couch where Agnace lay from De Perouse; but no sooner had this cordial reconciliation taken place, than he asked for Agnace, and was directed to the spot by the expressive glances of every individual present.

“He turned pale as death as he approached the couch, and then exclaimed, with an expression of horror such as I had never before seen, ‘Oh, my Agnace! Can this be Agnace?’

“At the sound of his voice she opened her eyes, and the last faint glow that ever reddened those lovely cheeks was diffused over her countenance. ‘Agnace, my beloved!’ he repeated in a tone of tenderness; ‘my sweet Agnace, I am come.’

“‘I see you, my beloved,’ she answered; ‘I have been expecting you; we shall not be separated, though now we shall have another object of purer and holier affection. My heart is preparing for this higher love.’

“‘My lovely one,’ he said, sitting down on the chair by her couch, ‘I do not understand you. What has brought you to this state? Was it terror? Was it grief? Do you not still love your Charlés?’

“‘Yes,’ she replied, trying to raise her head, ‘no mortal ever rivalled you in my affection. I may say it now for temporal things are past. It was you that first led me to the knowledge of those things which now constitute my happiness, as we walked amidst those beautiful valleys, by the murmuring streams. It was there you taught my infant tongue to lisp the praises of the Redeemer. But the memory of my native hills is passing from my view; and new scenes of glory have caused the past to fade away. Do I not now behold the Everlasting Hills?’ She then made a new effort to raise herself; on which he passed his arm under her head. Of this, however, she seemed unconscious; but, clasping her hands, and then suddenly relaxing her grasp, her head sunk back on his



arm, and she expired, leaving her mother, her brother, and her beloved Charles, incapable, for a length of time, of receiving any consolation.

“That grief and terror should so soon have deprived so young a person of life remained a matter of astonishment to the physician, till he ascertained that an important blood-vessel had broken within, by which, in fact, she had been suffocated, never having been able to throw up the blood, though she had more than once evidenced those symptoms which attend persons who are burdened by sickness.

“But what relief could it bring, although thus enabled to ascertain the way in which death had effected its dreadful work! Our Agnace was no more;—this unhappy truth could not be disputed; and I had been the cause of her death. The indulgence of my own evil passions had robbed me of a daughter, and of such a daughter! O, my Agnace! my lost, my lovely one! But now my courage fails me; my pen refuses to record the scene which followed, when it was ascertained that our beloved one was really departed, or to enlarge upon the sufferings of her affectionate father.

“I must needs hasten over the remainder of my story. After the death of my invaluable daughter, my husband refused to be reconciled to me. I therefore withdrew to a house he possessed in Pau, and there have lived as a widow to this day, though twenty years are passed since the remains of my lovely child were committed to the dust in the funeral vault at Roquefort.

“The Marquis and Bertram continued to pursue the profession of arms till within the last ten years; at which time they returned to Roquefort, where my son was united to Sophia, the only daughter who was then unmarried of my sister. This amiable young lady used her influence so effectually to produce a reconciliation between me and my husband, that he consented to see me at Pau a little before his death, (for he is now no more,) and we were then cordially reconciled.

“My son has been blessed with four sons, and a second Agnace has at length been granted to the family; and their infant daughter promises to bloom with all the external beauties of my long-lamented offspring.

‘ Charles de Perouse has never forgotten his Agnace, nor ever formed a second attachment. After the dreadful scene in Paris, he returned to his widowed mother, and devoted himself entirely to console her, to educate his younger brothers and sisters, and to promote the happiness of his dependents.

“ My sister was long before she could endure to see me after the death of Agnace, who was so greatly beloved by her : but time having worn away all painful impressions, she now frequently visits me, and her warm heart glows, I have reason to think, as formerly, with tender affection for her only sister.

“ I have never again visited Roquefort ; but, through the divine mercy, and in a life of religious seclusion, I have obtained some tranquillity of mind, and I dare not endanger it by the review of scenes so dear and fascinating to me. It is enough for me to behold the Pyrenees from the window of my old-fashioned mansion, which is situated just without the walls of the venerable palace of the ancient kings of Navarre. It is not here that the mountains have their greatest elevation, or that their snowy summits seem to pierce the clouds ; but it is here that they have the greatest variety in their forms, and the beautiful lake which spreads at their feet, adds not a little to the charms of the prospect.

“ The remembrance of time past among these hills, of my visits with my sister to the cottage of Marguerite, and the gambols of my infant children in their early days, often impress me, as I view the lovely prospect before me : filling me occasionally with bitter remorse ; but as these painful reflections are connected with the pleasing hopes, inspired by redeeming love, which are afforded to me, they are the means of diffusing a tender melancholy over my heart, and of making me more eager for that time in which faith and hope will be swallowed up in the fruition of everlasting glory.”

When the lady of the manor had concluded her history of Agnace Roquefort, she explained to her young people the lesson which they were to learn from the sufferings of the marquise, and her deserved punishment. “ We all, my dear children,” added she, “ know, that, as Christians

it becomes us to forgive others their trespasses as we would hope to be forgiven, and there are none here present who would not look on an act of revenge with horror; and yet, who among us is guiltless of the sin of resenting petty affronts, or of allowing ourselves to indulge an uncharitable feeling towards our neighbours, whenever they appear less devoted to our service, or less attentive to pay us the respect to which we think we are intitled? Females especially are, I believe, disposed to inflame and irritate each other against their neighbours by empty and unmeaning gossip, which takes place too often when the fingers are plying the needle. Hence the advantage of literary conversation in society, and the very great difficulty which is found of amusing large parties, and even smaller ones, from which professedly worldly amusements are banished: for, in instances of a mixed society, of different ages and sexes, (allowing each individual to be pious,) religious conversation is apt to degenerate either into flatness on the one hand, or asperity on the other; and if the leader or head of the company is not endowed with very rare and peculiar talents for promoting suitable conversation, such meetings are seldom agreeable, and still more seldom profitable."

The young ladies agreed with this remark, and asked the lady of the manor if she could propose any thing which could be substituted in society in the place of the cards and dancing, which the religious world had rejected.

The lady of the manor replied, that many substitutes might be adopted, were young people properly educated: "but," added she, "this is a difficult subject; and as I am not now prepared to give my opinion upon it, I will defer it to another occasion. At present I would satisfy myself by endeavouring to impress, in the most solemn manner upon your minds, the sin of that unprofitable and injurious gossip, in which our sex are too much disposed to indulge: to say the least on such a subject, it is a waste of precious time; but it is often productive of more baneful consequences, in the degradation of character, and in the destruction of all the principles of domestic and of individual happiness."

The lady then called upon her young people to join her in prayer.

*Prayer on the Subject of Forgiveness of Injuries.*

“O SAVIOUR of Mankind and Prince of Peace, who, through the sacrifice of thyself once offered, hast restored peace to a fallen world; grant unto us that charity which is greater than faith and hope. Enable us continually to bear in mind, that as we are polluted ourselves, so also are our fellow-creatures; and that no intercourse can be carried on with them, without mutual occasions of offence. Enable us, therefore, O blessed Redeemer, to forgive as we would be forgiven; and, whereas an uncharitable spirit is apt to arise in our hearts, give us grace to resist the first motions of unkindness which may be felt towards our neighbours. Help us to acknowledge the danger and sin of such feelings, and place a restraint on our tongues to prevent the utterance of any unkind expression. Endue us, blessed Lord, with that knowledge which may lead us to be thankful for the smallest act of kindness; and impress us with the conviction that even of *these* we are not worthy. Divest us, O blessed Lord, of that selfishness which is inherent in our fallen nature, and which mixes itself even with our religious duties. O deliver us from a party spirit, and make us more and more anxious for thy honour, and zealous only for thy glory. Let it be the constant subject of our thoughts, not so much how we are treated by our neighbours, as in what manner we may best promote their happiness and comfort, and how we may devote our time and talents to their service and thy glory. Thus enable us to await the time, when true Christians shall be for ever one, and no disunion shall be found among thy members.

“To God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Ghost, be glory now and for evermore. Amen.”



















