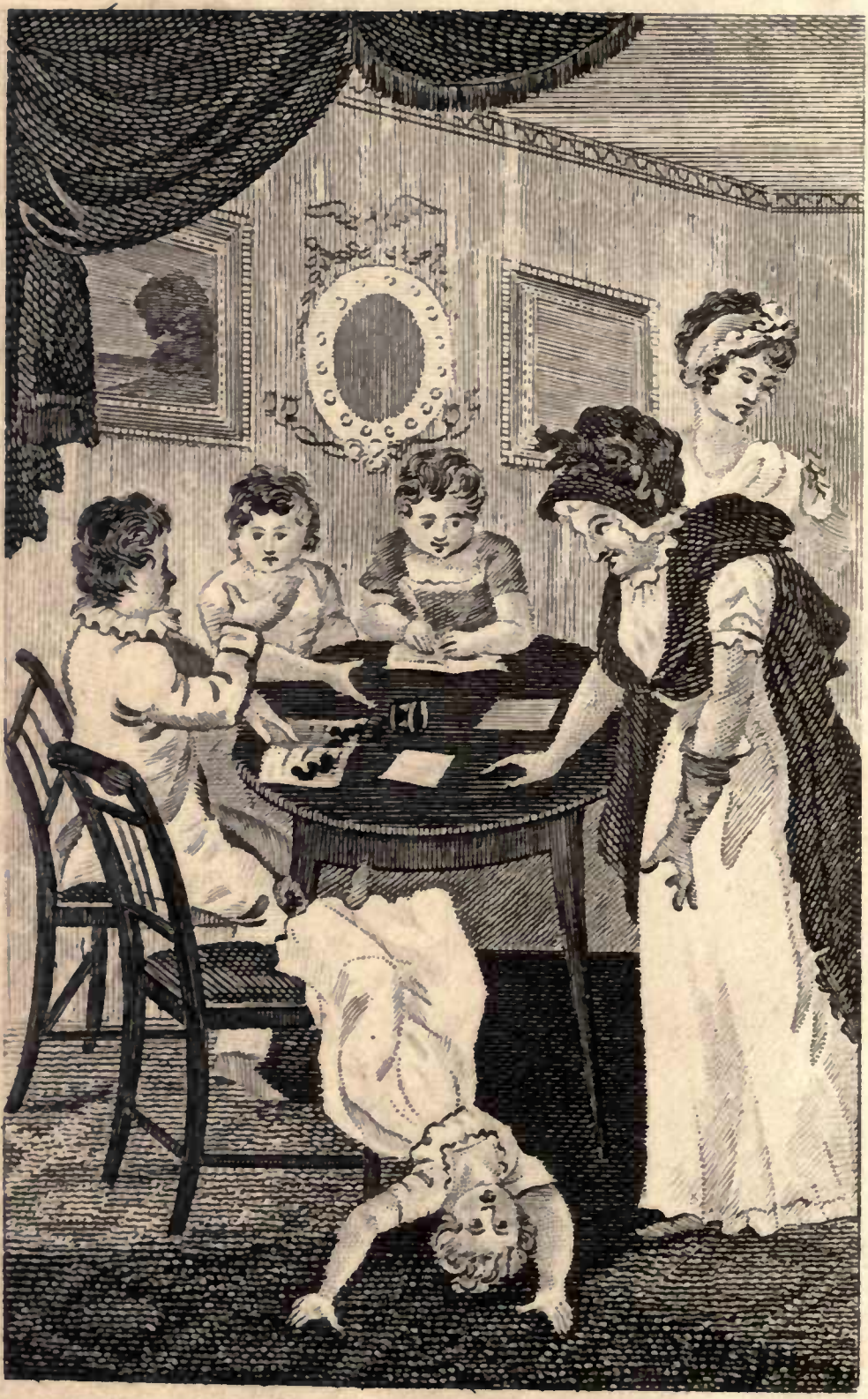

"I cannot kiss you just now Grandmama," said Lucy, for I am writing to such a funny old Woman about my new Doll."

THE

JUVENILE SPECTATOR:

PART THE FIRST.

BEING

OBSERVATIONS

ON THE

TEMPERS, MANNERS, AND FOIBLES

OF

VARIOUS YOUNG PERSONS;

INTERSPERSED

With such lively matter as it is presumed will amuse as well as instruct.

By ARABELLA ARGUS.

SECOND EDITION, IMPROVED.

"Teach me to feel another's woe,
To hide the fault I see;
That mercy I to others show,
That mercy show to me."

LONDON:
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The principles we imbibe, and the habits we contract in our early years are not matters of small moment, but of the utmost consequence imaginable. They not only give a transient or superficial tincture to our first appearance in life, but most commonly stamp the form of our whole future conduct, and even of our eternal state.

ARISTOTLE.

PREFACE.

It is not a *serious preface*, to which I invite my young readers to devote five minutes of their precious time; I understand the general characters of children: a preface is a part of a book, seldom perused by them; and, I am almost certain, that the *title* of this little volume, will, to many, appear very dull. "A Fairy Tale," "Amusing Stories," &c. &c. never fail to charm; and I have seen the eager eyes of many an amiable child, intent on the *marvellous* part of a story, while the *moral*, if it contained any, was wholly overlooked.

In order to make truths as pleasant as I can, permit me to tell my own story.

I am an old woman, but not an *old witch*, nor yet a *fairy;* yet, I will endeavour to prove to you, before I finish my book, that

I am a very comical old woman, and the many *facts* that I shall relate, will, I am persuaded, make some of you think that I have wonderful powers. Such *secret* information as I shall set forth, under the terms of "*Nursery* Anecdotes," "*Parlour* Foibles," "*Garden* Mischiefs," and "*Hyde Park* romps," will lead you to suppose, that I possess that wonderful *cap* of which you have all read, and am able to be in all places *unseen*.

But as I am determined not to deceive you, I must, like an honest old woman, repeat,—my means are perfectly consistent with nature and truth. It is now twelve months since I was invited to eat my plumb-pudding with my grandchildren; I obeyed the summons with much delight, hoping to pass the Christmas season agreeably in their society. I was disappointed: I saw them all in health, and with every comfort around them; but their manners and dispositions were by no means suited to the happiness of their situation. My *spectacles*, which are remarkably clear, proved of great service to me on this visit. I had become an inmate of their

house, to partake in the festivities of the holidays; of course I did not feel at liberty to interrupt what *they* called their days of pleasure: but my *reflections*, when I returned home, were given to the subjects of their errors and little contentions, and I resolved on committing my thoughts to paper. For this purpose, I imparted my intentions to a *few* friends, who have occasionally helped me with information from various families. One lady suggested, that if I would permit the epistles of children to be inserted it would greatly assist my plan. I complied, and accordingly many letters from young persons of both sexes will be found in this volume. I am *yet* in doubt how my book will succeed, and have, therefore, received *all* papers through the hands of my friendly agents, addressed to "*Mrs. Argus,*" the name by which I choose to be known.

It will be highly gratifying to me, if they should prove as interesting to my young readers, as they were to me. I can assure them, I have *smiled* at many that will be found in these pages; have shed tears over a *few*;

and, though I have been forced to *reject* one or two rather *intrusive* epistles, I yet hope I have retained sufficient matter to engage the attention of a liberal *young* public, to whom I beg to subscribe myself,

their sincere friend

and well-wisher,

ARABELLA ARGUS.

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THE

JUVENILE SPECTATOR.

CHAP. I.

A Consultation.

MRS. BENTLY, who is my most intimate friend, and a woman whose judgment I reverence, was of opinion, that it was highly necessary she should announce me as a watchful observer of children. "Though unknown, I can transact a great part of your business," said my excellent friend, "and the children, when convinced you are not an *imaginary* being, will be more sedulous and guarded in their conduct." I readily assented to her proposal, the result of which has more than answered my expectation: for my grandchildren, whose happiness I am most anxious to promote, are amongst my correspondents. I have no doubt that many of my young readers could testify to the tenderness and indulgencies bestowed upon them by their grandmothers. I believe, nay I am assured, that I love mine most sin-

cerely; but, as I wish them to be esteemed by every body, and know that they will not always remain under the eye of their parents,—that they will mix in the world, where a variety of characters and dispositions will contend for what each considers his right, I would wish them to cast aside all frowardness of temper, that selfishness which the fond circle called *home*, is often ill calculated to suppress.

A quarrel in a nursery, decided only by an indulgent and too partial nurse, will be no precedent for what the same child shall meet in a school. "Sugar-plumbs" and "kisses" are not the plaisters for a fall, or a rough blow, among school-boys; they meet upon equal terms. And though I would not infer that happiness is not to be expected in schools as in other places, yet I am desirous of impressing on the minds of sensible children, that life, even from infancy, is subject to rebuffs, and that in fact these oppositions are highly serviceable to them. Which of you, but upon reflection, can remember to have heard your parents express some disappointment, some regret? And what are you, that you should expect to pass through life exempt from them?

"To bear and forbear," is the duty of every person, whether young or old; but as I shall have occasion to speak at large on this subject, I will drop it for the present.

Mrs. Bently, in a very pleasant letter addressed to me some months since, expressed herself very sanguine in the good to be effected by my plan.

"I have been greatly amused, my dear Bella," said she; "all the little folks with whom I have spoken on the subject of the 'Juvenile Spectator,' are curious to know 'What sort of person you are?' 'Whether you are really an old woman?' 'Where you live?' 'If you walk the Park?' 'What dress you wear?' &c. to all which inquiries I am uniformly silent, only promising to transmit any letter or note to Mrs. Argus, which they choose to entrust to my care. I was present," continued my friend, "at a consultation in one family which amused me very much. Charles Osborn declared, that he knew Mrs. Argus. 'It is the old woman in the red cloak, who walked round the Serpentine last Thursday; don't you remember, Charlotte, she looked very cunningly at us, and told me I was a thoughtless boy to walk so near the water?'

"Charlotte looked very wise, yet somewhat ashamed. 'I hope *she* is not the Spectator,' replied Charlotte Osborn, 'for I remember I laughed at her, and said you were big enough to take care of yourself.' 'I will stare at every old woman I meet,' said Charles, 'and if I see the same person again, I will take off my hat, and say, 'How do you do, Mrs. Argus?'

"I warned them not to make an attempt so rude," continued Mrs. Bently; "and after awakening their curiosity, and impressing them with respect for your character, took my leave. The next morning I received a letter from Charles Osborn, which I forward to you; your

own discernment will lead you to a just understanding of his disposition from the little I have said. I am a stranger to the contents of his address, and am now, as I shall continue to be, only my dear Arabella's agent in this, her kind interest, for the rising generation."

I own to you, my little friends, that I was rather curious to peruse this first appeal, under my new title of Spectator. I broke the seal, and read as follows:

"To Mrs. ARGUS.

A friend of my Mamma's says, that you are very clever at finding out the faults of children, pray tell me mine; for if you are as cunning as she says you are, I need not mention them to you.

I am certain I know you; don't you walk in the Park sometimes? I am sure you do though, and you have a very long nose; my sister Charlotte and I remarked it; you know when I mean, so you need not deny it. Mrs. Bently says you are very good natured; do you ever make presents to children you like? Charlotte and I hope you will answer this directly, for we are in a great hurry to be satisfied about you.

Your's,

CHARLES OSBORN."

I laid this letter on my writing-table, and was musing on its contents, when my servant delivered a very

neatly folded note, which I immediately unclosed. It ran thus:

"To Mrs. Argus.

Madam,

A lady, who is my godmother, assures me that you are very fond of children, and will give your advice to all such as address you on the subject. I have many questions to ask of you, but do not know how to begin; and, as I am twelve years of age, I am afraid you should think me childish in my inquiries. If you would be so good as to say what I *may* ask, I shall be much obliged to you. Till then I remain,

Madam,

Your obedient Servant,

Sophia Wilmot."

The modesty and propriety of Miss Wilmot's note claimed my immediate notice. I took my pen, and addressed the following in reply:

Mrs. Argus will be happy to receive Miss Wilmot's communications on any subject which she shall think fit to communicate. To a young lady who expresses herself with so much becoming timidity, Mrs. Argus will have great pleasure in offering her advice; nor is it necessary that she should add, that the *age* of Miss Wilmot does not place her *above* childhood; as such, the inquiries which she hesitates to think proper because childish, are perhaps the more essential

to be made; as at all ages a love of inquiry leads to wisdom; and a habit of thinking correctly is only to be derived from forming our opinions on those principles which experience has sanctioned. Mrs. Argus will not think any question too trivial which shall help to establish the happiness of a young lady, whose well-written note, has impressed her with the most favourable opinion of the juvenile writer.

ARABELLA ARGUS.

I soon discovered that my character of Spectator was generally known, and rejoiced that my person was screened from notice. For on going to my daughter's one morning, I was compelled to smile internally, such a scene met my view; but I will describe it for the amusement of my readers. My four grandchildren were seated at a large book-table, each scribbling according to their abilities. "I cannot kiss you just now, grandmamma," said Lucy, "for I am writing to such a funny old woman about my wax doll. Harriet wants me to let her nurse it sometimes, but I am determined she shall not; so I shall ask Mrs. Argus if I have not a right to do what I please with my own doll." I was on the point of replying, when Harriet overturned the ink-stand, which unfortunately defaced the half-finished epistle of William, who, enraged at the accident, turned in great anger to his sister, and in reaching his hand to give her a slight chastisement, threw his elder sister, who was sitting on one *corner* of

a chair, on the floor: in a moment all was confusion; my daughter, whose weak state of health, makes her incapable of that exertion so requisite in a young family, was so alarmed by Fanny's accident, as to be near fainting. I united with William in quieting her fears, and a small piece of gold-beater's skin being applied to Fanny's wounded elbow, tranquillity was in a few minutes restored. The interference, which, at any other period, I should have considered necessary, would now have proved superfluous, as I purposed to reprove them under my fictitious character. Drawing their attention, therefore, to the blotted letter, I simply asked, "if they did not mean to prosecute their intention, and write to the Spectator?" William, who is an intelligent and clever boy, but rather thoughtless, instantly took another sheet of paper, declaring he would tell the old woman the exact state of things; "that he had begun a letter to her, which was interrupted by the carelessness of Harriet." "Do not omit to name Fanny's custom of sitting on the corner of her chair," said I, "nor yet your brotherly attempt to strike your sister." "Must I do all this," said he, pausing. "Certainly, my dear," I replied, "for as I suppose, you mean to ask the advice of this invisible old woman, it is impossible she can reply to you, unless you state facts exactly as they occur." "Then we will all join in the same letter," said Fanny, "and each of us speak of ourselves." This pro-

posal meeting general assent, they proceeded with their epistle, and I entered into conversation with my daughter.

It had long been my wish that William should be sent to a public school; his mother had resisted my importunities, not equal to the idea of a second separation from her family; for I should apprise my readers, that Captain Mordaunt, my son-in-law, had attended his wife to the Continent, her health requiring a southern clime. They were absent nearly three years; in which time the children had been under the care of the captain's mother, who, from a mistaken tenderness to her grandchildren, had indulged them to excess. William, whom she always pronounced a *hero*, was warm-hearted, but self-willed. Fanny, gentle and affectionate, yet so inattentive as to appear indifferent to the wishes of her friends. Harriet, a lively little romp, always doing mischief from mere thoughtlessness. Lucy, a pet, with a strong inclination to selfishness. My own retired way of life, which until the return of Mrs. Mordaunt, had been uniformly passed in the country, made me an almost stranger to my grandchildren. I would willingly have received them into my care during the absence of their parents, but the captain's mother would not be refused; and being unwilling to interfere in a domestic arrangement, I yielded my right. I had good reasons for supposing that my daughter would have determined otherwise, but Captain Mordaunt was fondly

attached to his mother, and had, besides, a strong prejudice in favour of the advantages of a metropolitan education. The children, however, had had little done for them in point of learning. Masters and instructresses *innumerable* had been engaged to attend them daily, but from their instructions, however well qualified to teach, it was impossible they could derive much, as a *sight* always superseded a lesson, the teachers often being dismissed, because the fatigue of an evening passed at Sadler's Wells, made the young votaries of pleasure incapable of *study* on the ensuing day. Thus, an immense sum of money had been expended to very little advantage.

The death of old Mrs. Mordaunt, which happened immediately after my daughter's arrival, consigned the children to their disappointed mother. I had hastened to London to meet them *en famille*, and too soon perceived that their parents must experience much uneasiness before the effects of unlimited indulgencies could be eradicated. I could not conform to the noise and continued dissensions of these little squabblers, and therefore provided myself with a small house contiguous to their dwelling. Even the few weeks which they termed holidays, because the masters were discontinued, were, as I have before related, so unpleasant to me as to cause me much uneasiness; and I had no sooner retired to my own peaceful dwelling, than my present plan of "Juvenile Spectator" occurred to me. After this, my family introduction,

I presume my young readers will follow me through my miscellaneous subjects with more interest.

It really required some self-command on my part, when, after an hour spent in the composition of this letter by several hands, I heard the footman desired to go to Mrs. Bently's with it, and beg that she would send it as soon as possible. It would be impossible to describe all the varieties of disposition that were displayed during its composition. Fanny thought William said too much, and would not leave room for her; yet, when it was presented for her addition, she seemed wholly at a loss what to say, declaring that she did not know how to begin; she wished her mamma or grandmamma would just tell her the first sentence. Harriet wished her turn was come, for she had a great many thoughts in her head just at that moment; while Lucy said, she did not want a subject, as Harriet was always wanting her things, and she was sure the Spectator would agree with her, that "every body ought to be contented with their own."

As I entered my parlour, after a day of some fatigue and many regrets, I perceived two or three juvenile epistles waiting my arrival; their contents must make the subject of a new Chapter.

CHAP. II.

"For he that loveth not his brother, whom he hath seen, how can he love God whom he hath not seen? And this commandment have we from him, that he who loveth God, loveth his brother also."

NEXT morning at breakfast I entered on my voluntary office of "Spectator." Though I could partly guess the purport of William Mordaunt's address, affection prompted me to read his letter first: I will transcribe it faithfully.

"TO MRS. ARGUS.

I hear that you know Mrs. Bently; she is a very nice lady, and we, that is, myself and my sisters, are very fond of her; yet she is rather particular,—but then, she tells us very pleasant stories, which I believe she makes out of her own head, for they always make some of us blush, because they explain our faults. She told us the other day, that you would give us di-

rections how to be good and happy, and I suppose you know that all children have faults. Pray, what ought I to do? I am often very passionate, and I cannot help it, for my sisters are so provoking. What ought I to do? I really love them very much, but just now Harriet turned the ink-stand over a letter I had almost finished, and meant to send to you. I was going to give her a thump of the head, and by accident threw Fanny off her seat; but, to be sure, she was only sitting upon the corner of her chair, and I was sorry afterwards, as it alarmed mamma, who is not well. Give me some directions, if you please, ma'am, and I shall much be much obliged to you. I must leave off now, as Fanny wishes to say a few words to you.

WILLIAM MORDAUNT."

"I am so stupid at writing letters, that I am afraid you will not have patience, with me, madam. William has said enough to let you know that we do not agree so well as we ought. I have a habit of sitting on the corner of my chair, and though I am often told it is wrong, I always forget what is said. Yet, I can assure you, I love my mamma dearly, but grandmamma Mordaunt never used to notice it, so I did not know it was wrong. How shall I break myself of this custom? I am very desirous of pleasing my mamma: be so good as to tell me how I shall begin to correct this fault. I have many others, I believe, but this happened to frighten my mamma, who thonght I was hurt

by my fall, and it has convinced me that I ought to strive to get rid of it.

FANNY MORDAUNT."

"Pray, madam, is there any harm in being a romp. I hope not, for I am such a giddy little thing, that I am always in mischief; the worst of it is, I am for ever getting tasks from my masters, and the governess who come to hear us read, for I never have my lessons ready; so they give me more to do, though I have not time to learn what they set me. I used to get off with my other masters when grandmamma Mordaunt was alive, for she said I looked so pretty when I laughed, that it was worth a thousand lessons. But now, it is quite a different case: my mamma is not pleased if I don't please my teachers, and they are cross; and grandmamma Harley always looks so disappointed when I cannot give a good account of myself, that I am quite ashamed to meet her. She is such a nice old lady, and so wise, she can always tell by my looks if I have done well, that I should like to please her almost as well as mamma; but I really don't know how to begin, and I hope you will not say that I must give up play, for that is impossible; however, I will be sure to mind what you say—good bye.

HARRIET MORDAUNT."

"None of them will let me see what they have written to you ma'am. I dare say it is all about me, but I don't care, for, as nurse Jenkins says,—one story

is good till another is told." But Miss Harriet did not tell you that she is always undressing my doll, though it is my very own. She knows she broke hers the second day after she got it; and because she has given away all her pocket-money, she wants me to let her have mine to give away too; but that I shall not do, for I have rubbed mine till they are so bright, they are quite like a looking-glass, and I mean to keep up all I get till I am a woman, and then I shall be quite rich. Pray have not I a right to do as I please with my own things? I am sure you will say yes, and I hope you will write to us soon. I have nothing more to say at present.

LUCY MORDAUNT."

Had I been a stranger to my young correspondents, the preceding letters would fully have explained their dispositions, and I owned a very great degree of satisfaction in perceiving that their method of expressing themselves was so natural. There was evidently much to be done away, much improvement required, before they could either be a comfort to their parents or happy in themselves. For it is an invariable truth, "that to be good is to be happy." As my readers are acquainted with my consanguinity to these little folks, they will not wonder that their's was the first letter to which I replied this morning.

To Master William Mordaunt.

I lose no time in answering your ingenuous epistle. I should consider myself very culpable indeed if I suffered a day to elapse without writing to you, and this, simply from one word in your letter: you avow yourself passionate. It is a most dreadful and degrading trait of character;—dreadful, because in one moment of passion we may forfeit the peace of our future days, and make ourselves unworthy of the protecting care of heaven: degrading, because passionate people are obliged to make concessions of the most humiliating sort. All human creatures are liable to err, and to confess our regret for a fault is at once noble, and must disarm the anger of those whom we have offended. But in cases of passion we have assumed a right inconsistent with our place in society. We are not to avenge even what we consider a wrong, much less become aggressors. I presume that all those with whom I shall have the honour to correspond under the title of Spectator, have made some advances in the best of all histories, "sacred history." As such, let them reflect on the Son of God: his sufferings, the indignities to which he was subject, owning in himself all the virtue and purity of a Saint, he submitted to insult, cruelty and pain: yet he, though reviled, "reviled not again." Reflection, that noble distinction between the human and animal creation, was bestowed upon us to be exercised. If you consider

yourself offended, avow it; let your language be moderate, and the *time* which your explanation will necessarily require, will subdue this unfortunate propensity, which is, in fact, a *temporary* madness.

That incident, to which your letter refers, appears trivial; but, had your sister fallen against a table, or any other piece of furniture having sharp corners, it might have occasioned instant death. *You* have no right to chastise the faults of your sisters. Representwhat you feel to be offensive; and even this should be done with tenderness. You are of a sex born to protect females, and, as I doubt not that you wish to be thought *manly*, I must beg to tell you, there cannot be any thing less like *courage* than an act of this sort. I hope you will consider this in a just point of view, and continue to give me your free communications. You may observe, that I address you as a boy of sense, and the *head* of a young family. You say, your mother was alarmed by your disagreement, let this likewise have its weight. Your remark, that "all children have faults," is in part just, perhaps; yet I hope, and indeed I have the pleasure to know some, who are very dutiful in every respect.

I will trouble you to acquaint your sisters, that I will answer their questions by to-morrow's post, having two or three *prior* favours, to which I must reply.

I remain,

Your sincere Friend,

ARABELLA ARGUS.

I dispatched this letter with all possible haste, and the hand-writing, or rather the *scrawl* of Master Osborn catching my eye, I felt it indispensible to give him a few lines. I took my pen, and wrote as follows:

To Master Osborn.

Sir,

In my assumed character of "Spectator," I must necessarily *receive* all letters addressed to me; this avowal is by no means an acknowledgment that I shall *answer* all of them. Your's happened to be the *first* epistle, and it is on this account I devote a little time to you.

I pretend to no particular *cunning*, the term is inelegant and offensive to me; I have no *personal* knowledge of you, or your sister Charlotte, nor am I conscious that my *nose* is remarkable in any way. With respect to presents, I have never considered that good children require rewards; the pleasure of doing our duty, in any situation, and at all periods of our lives, conveys more real delight to the heart, than all the treasures of the East could bestow; and excuse me, Sir, when I add, that the manner and style of *your* letter would not, (if I had ever purposed to dispense rewards,) entitle *you* to such a distinction. I mention this to you with candour; nor do I wish to repress your inquiries, if, after this, you feel disposed to make any. On the contrary, you will rise in my

opinion, if you make the attempt. I have taken some time to consider your letter before I replied to it, and must ingenuously confess that I have written to some of my young friends previously to answering yours, and this, merely to prove to you that I do not attend to peremptory commands. Yet I am your sincere friend, and the friend of all children.

ARABELLA ARGUS.

My young readers will observe, that in addressing Charles Osborn, I was careful to treat him with a *certain* respect; I was induced to this from my strong disapprobation of *his* very familiar and bold manner. It is a general fault in youth, and indeed in more mature age, to cast aside *decorum*, when they mean to be clever, witty, &c. These qualities are, in themselves, very inessential, if not detrimental to their possessors; and unfortunately, many persons esteem themselves brilliant in these points, who are in fact wholly destitute of such talent. But, as I am speaking of children, I cannot forbear observing, that it has often given me sincere concern, when I have heard the smart answers, and wise sayings of children, related in their presence; it is a most injudicious mode of shewing our affection; a love of praise is a feeling predominant in the infant mind, and it is part of a parent's duty to bestow it; but it must be administered with caution, not lavished on slight occasions: the child who conquers a bad habit, or confesses

an error, should meet all the encouragement which the *just* exercise of their reason demands. But, where an act, the simple effect of that affection which should ever bind us to our kindred,—where we behold the mere yielding of *one* to the comfort of *another*, I can see no reason in such a case for exalting the deed. Convince them that they have performed a *duty*, and that it will make the happiness of their future days certain, if in their youth they acquire the habit of considering their *duties* indispensible.

I am led to think more seriously on this subject, from having been present at a very unamiable contention some months since. I was making a morning visit to an old friend, whom I had not seen many years; she was surrounded by her family at my first entrance: after a general introduction, the young folks withdrew to their respective amusements in different corners of the room. Mrs. Barlow and I had recurred to some serious circumstances, which wholly engrossed our attention, when a loud shriek startled us; I turned to discover from whence it came, and beheld a scene which astonished me:—the two elder girls were struggling for a book, which the younger of the two claimed as *her* property; and, in order to attain her object, she had twisted the wrist of her sister so violently, as to occasion the shriek which had alarmed us.

"How can you teize your sister, Helen," said

Mrs. Barlow; "tell me, my love, what has she done to you?"

"I want that book which Eliza has been reading; it is my own, and I won't let any body have it."

"Why do you take your sister's books, Eliza?" said my friend: "you see how it vexes the child,—have you not books of your own?"

"Yes, mamma," replied Eliza Barlow; "but I have read all my own; this happened to be upon the table, and Helen did not want it, for she did not know it was in the room; but as soon as she saw I was reading it, she said, she was *just* wishing for *that* book; and I only asked her to let me finish the story I was reading, and I would then give it to her; but she snatched it out of my hands, and hurt my wrist very much."—

"Well, I cannot take your part," said Mrs. Barlow; "you know I have bought each of you books for your own use, and if you will encroach upon your sister's property, you must take the consequences."

I happened to think differently from my friend, and owned a wish to discover whether Helen really *wished* to read the book in question, or whether she asked for it merely to deprive her sister of it.

"Helen," said I, "what is the title of that book, of which you seem so fond? Helen coloured, and glancing her eyes to the back of the volume, she replied, "O! I see, it is Cottage Tales."

"Then you did not know what book it was till

now," said I, "and could you deprive your sister of a pleasure in your power to confer, and that without a reasonable excuse for such unkindness? Indeed I cannot consider this as the act of a sister. I see you are sorry, and I am glad of it."

Helen burst into tears, and giving the book to Eliza, begged she would read it through.

"There spoke my dear Helen," said Mrs. Barlow, "she is a little hasty, and Eliza knows this, and should be cautious in her manner towards her; but, my dear friend, you have no idea what strong feelings that child has; I am forced to encourage her when she shows any self-command. You are a very good girl," continued Mrs. Barlow, addressing her favourite, "I am very much pleased with you, and to-morrow I will get you some new book, which shall be entirely your own."

I believe I discovered my disapprobation of such misapplied praise by my countenance, for Mrs. Barlow looked disconcerted, and I soon after took leave; I had already commenced my career as a Spectator, and in consequence gave a portion of the ensuing evening to reflections on the scene I had witnessed in the Barlow family.

It is absolutely necessary that I should here make a short digression.—If I am to be believed *sincere* in my wishes for the rising generation, it is a part of *my* duty to trace the *causes* of many of those errors which attach to children. And it is impossible to do this

without throwing a *partial* censure on *some* parents; but here let me be understood.

Tenderness, mistaken indulgencies, and blindness to the faults of their children, are in themselves amiable weaknesses, as originating in that *natural* affection implanted in the human breast towards these immediate dependants on our care; and, though a thousand instances might be adduced to prove, that the happiness of children is not *increased* by such methods, the *motives* of parents yet remain in an amiable point of view; they are to be pitied in the disappointments they too frequently experience; and at the same time we may reasonably *lament*, that many very amiable mothers, from *excess* of tenderness, abridge their *own* happiness, and greatly diminish that of their children.

In the case before us, I trust all my young readers will perceive, that in bestowing praise upon Helen Barlow, her mother was *injudicious*; but Helen was not only ungenerous, but ungrateful.

Helen Barlow, from infancy, had been delicate in her health; her mother had devoted herself to the comfort of this child with an assiduity highly praiseworthy. It pleased God to restore her to health, and at the period I name, Helen was ten years of age; consequently, an action so wholly inconsistent with kindness, so *unreasonable*, and destitute of good feeling, was very unpardonable.

In the first place, Eliza was her *elder* sister; the book in question had no charms for Elinor, for when *she contended* for its possession, she was unconscious of its *title*. What but a selfish and ungenerous feeling could induce such conduct; and to a mother who had provided these *rational* resources for her children, how *ungrateful* was that disposition, which converted her beneficence into a cause for dissension.

I have no doubt, but Helen would be greatly shocked to hear her conduct treated so seriously:—she would be hurt if I was to say, that she may have *learned* her catechism by *rote*, but that she is a stranger to its meaning. Let her repeat her "duty towards her neighbour." Let her dwell on that benevolent and *ever*-applicable sentence, "Do unto all men," &c. and then let her ask her heart, if *she* would choose that Eliza should retaliate her unkind treatment,—assuredly not. It was perfectly evident to me, this selfish little girl knew her power over her mother, and that, in consequence of this knowledge, she presumed. My friend's partiality for Helen at once grieved me and excited my pity. But having since learned that this young lady's health is equal to all those indispensible exertions of *mind* and *body*, that are peculiarly requisite in youth, I have used the freedom of suggesting to her mother the propriety of calling them into action. She received my sincere professions on this head with all the warmth of real

friendship; and I have reason to believe, that the Miss Barlows will soon be my correspondents.

If it should happen, that the incident just related should apply to any of my young readers,—if they *recollect* having exerted an *authority* of such sort towards a brother, sister, or companion, though a *book* should not have been the bone of contention, but a toy, a pencil, or a *seat*, I entreat of them to reflect, to mark, how odious an act which took place in a moment of irritation, appears in description; and, that the most unfavourable conclusions might be drawn from such conduct, if witnessed by strangers. For my own part, the scene was not entirely new to me; I had more than once seen the Mordaunts engaged in these *dumb* battles, and they had awakened in me the most uneasy sensations; for if actions of this kind occur amongst brothers and sisters, how very imperfectly they must comprehend the nature of their duties, and the commands of that God who has blessed them, in bestowing upon them the greatest of all comforts, *natural* relations.

I have always observed, that an only son, or daughter, laments the want of these endearing ties, while those who possess them, in *many* instances, seem deaf to the voice of nature.

The anguish that such dissensions must occasion parents, may be more easily imagined than described.

And that such conduct is contrary to the will of God must be obvious to the meanest capacity.

I refer my readers to the motto prefixed to this Chapter, and I beg them to give it their serious consideration.

CHAP. III.

An Adventure.

HAVING promised to visit a friend in the neighbourhood of Kensington, next morning, I confined myself to answering the little Mordaunts before my departure; and to convince my young friends that I am not partial, even where I may be *supposed* to feel an affectionate interest, I insert my letter.

TO MISS MORDAUNT.

I do not consider you so deficient in the art of writing a letter as you seem to consider yourself; you were perfectly right in suggesting, that your brother's address would apprize me, that you do not *agree* as brothers and sisters ought. This is, indeed, a cause of deep regret to me, and, if I did not hope that your

confession was to be followed by a sincere desire to correct this unamiable conduct, I should not feel in the least disposed to class you amongst my correspondents.

The habit, to which you particularly refer, is certainly very ungraceful; it is more the manner of an infant than one of your age; and, as I conclude, that some expenses have been incurred in having you taught dancing, (which is more essential in the effect it produces in the manners, and straightness of the figure) than in the *gestures* and agility of the science, I must, even in this point, consider you ungrateful. The most trivial expense into which a parent enters for the advantage of their children, calls upon them for a due exertion of their attention while learning, and a resolution to retain, as far as in their power, the instructions given.

Amongst the rules laid down in dancing, I do not remember such a *position* as that which you have acquired; to advise a girl of *your* age how to conquer such a foible, is simply to tell her it is wrong,—that her parents must regret that their purposes are defeated by the *inattention* of their child, and that *all* habits of the sort are injurious in a great degree, as while children are growing, they are liable to contract a stoop, if not a crookedness, which may remain during life.

I persuade myself, that though favoured with your future correspondence, I shall have no occasion to

revert to this subject again,—and as I cannot doubt your sincerity, that you *wish* to please your parents, I can assure you, a desire to do *well* is usually followed by the power to effect the same; the tranquillity of your own mind, in an attempt so laudable will fully compensate for any little difficulty that may at *first* appear formidable to you, for though all silly habits are easily acquired, they are not so immediately done away. God blesses the endeavour of all such as seriously apply themselves to wisdom, and that you may be worthy of the divine favour, is the wish of your sincere friend,

ARABELLA ARGUS.

P. S. Will you be so good as to tell your brother, that the word *thump* which occurred in his letter, appears to me an expression unworthy of a well-educated child; but, as I trust the action will not be repeated, I have no doubt but the *word* will become obsolete with him.

To Miss HARRIET MORDAUNT.

Though a romp, at *your* age, may be a very well-meaning little girl, it is by no means necessary to your happiness that your days should be devoted to play.

I regret that you are not *punctual* in learning your lessons, and am sorry that those who teach you have been so liberal as to consider you *wiser* than you

really are. In fixing the length of your lessons, their *experience* led them to give you such portions as are usually given to children of *your* age. It appears they were mistaken in your capacity, and I would advise you to shew them this letter, which may induce them to adopt a new plan, by placing you in a *lower* class of studies. Your love of play will be greatly indulged by these means, but I hope you have ingenuity sufficient to amuse yourself, for I should be sorry to hear, that at those hours devoted to business, you could find a *companion* in your own family.

The extreme indulgence of your grandmamma was most likely occasioned by the absence of your parents; (you see I know your family affairs,) she doubtless overlooked many of your little foibles on this account, but, as you are now under the protection of your mother, and express yourselves anxious to please her, I know no method so likely to procure her approbation, as a regular performance of your duties. Your grandmamma Harley will of course share in this satisfaction, as you seem to intimate that she takes much interest in your education; but if this attempt should appear difficult to you, I request you to adopt the following plan:

Give up *all* lessons for a *week*, and be careful to quit the room in which your brother and sisters are engaged in theirs. Devote yourself entirely to play, and give me your opinion freely at the end of that time.

Be very particular in describing your feelings, and believe that I am interested in your happiness.

ARABELLA ARGUS.

P. S. Your *beauty*, (of which you seem to think much,) will be greatly increased by a whole week of play; do not omit to name this at the end of the term which I have proposed to you.

To Miss LUCY MORDAUNT.

I hope that you are a *very* little girl; indeed I should be glad to hear that you were an inattentive child; one who had not *sense* enough to listen to the voice of reason, or how shall I find a way to excuse the numberless faults which your letter exhibits.

But first let me observe, that the writing and spelling is excellent, and the sense clear; it is the sentiments which are objectionable. You are not, perhaps, conscious of the character you have given yourself.

I will explain it for you; you have avowed yourself *suspicious*, *ungenerous*, and *miserly*; and you justify these qualities, by vainly imagining that others will approve of them. Your nurse may be a good-natured and indulgent woman; but she is not retained to teach you how to express yourself. All *sayings* are vulgar, and consequently beneath the adoption of well-instructed children. I would always inculcate the necessity of kind and affectionate treatment to-

wards the servants of your family, and indeed to all servants, but their language is by no means an imitation desirable. If you suspect that all persons who write or speak in your presence, make *you* their subject, you add *vanity* to suspicion, as if a child of your age could be of such general consequence. When you refuse to a sister the trifling gratification of occasionally playing with your doll, your selfishness is evident, and this makes you unworthy of the future indulgence of your parents. In hoarding your money, you are guilty of a great fault, and are depriving yourself of the only blessing of riches, "the power of assisting the unfortunate." Are you *certain* that you shall *live* to spend all your *bright* money? and when you are rich, and a woman, to what purpose do you propose to apply this money? Be so good as to answer these questions in your next, and likewise tell me if you have never read any book in which *charity* is named, as well pleasing to God.

Your brother and sisters have received my sentiments already; I have spoken to them with equal candour. I doubt not but they will shew you my letters; let me have the pleasure of discovering, in your next address, that you have compared *your* foibles with *theirs;* and then tell me, like an ingenuous little girl, that you perceive your errors, and will receive my advice and instructions for your future happiness. Until I am assured of this, it would be

useless to say more, than that I am sincerely your friend,

ARABELLA ARGUS.

Dispatching these letters, I proceeded towards Kensington, when just as I had reached the garden-gate, I met William Mordaunt, walking with two of his sisters and their nursery maids. I thought I perceived William's colour heighten as I approached, and in a moment the cause was explained; for the nurses both expressed their pleasure at meeting me. "Master Mordaunt is so troublesome, ma'am," said Jenkins, "he runs away from us, and will go in the horse-ride, and is, besides, so thoughtless in throwing stones, that I am sure he will do somebody a mischief."

"How is this, William," said I, "I thought you were the protector of your little sisters."

"I hate to walk with nurses," said William; "it is making quite a baby of me; I wish mamma would let me come out by myself."

"Yet you do not appear very fit to be trusted alone," said I; "but I will take this young rebel out of your charge for the present." I continued, addressing myself to Jenkins, "Tell your mistress that Master Mordaunt will accompany me to Kensington, and that I will send him home early in the evening." William was delighted at the proposal, and the little girls, with a chearfulness that was highly pleasing to me, took leave of us.

Being rather fatigued, I proposed resting in the gardens a little while, a rheumatic complaint to which I am subject, made me prefer one of the enclosed seats; we entered one, in which two children, a boy and girl, with a lady, were sitting. The usual courtesies having passed, I owned an unaffected surprise in hearing my grandson call the children, by the name of Osborn. "Here comes the old woman, Charlotte," said Master Osborn; "now see how I will quiz her." An elderly lady was walking slowly down the path. "Pray don't speak to her, Charles," said the little girl, for if *she* really is the *Spectator*, I should be quite afraid of her; she is such a cross impertinent thing." "Indeed, but I will," said Charles Osborn; and he ran across the path to intercept the stranger.

"Your brother Charles is a rude child," said the young lady who had charge of Miss Osborn, "I well know that my word would not influence him to behave better, but he shall not walk with me again."—"But if my *mamma* says he may," returned Miss Osborn, with all the authority of a presuming little girl, "I suppose *you* will not say he shall not come."

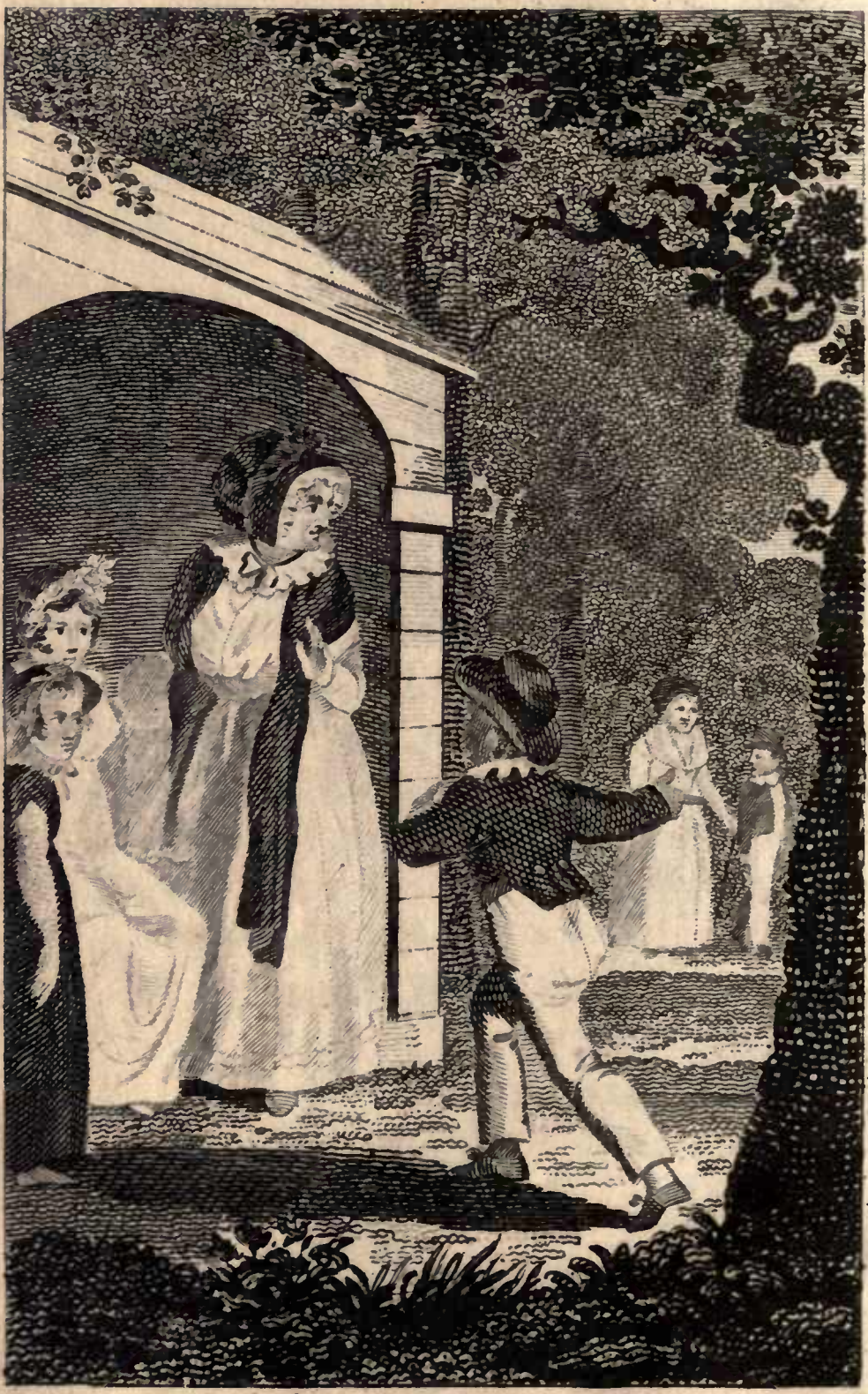
"Do not trouble yourself to think upon the subject," said the governess of Miss Osborn; "you are too young to offer an opinion."

"I will tell mamma, directly I go home." replied the arrogant little pet; "I wish I had my own good-natured nurse again."

The young person appeared much hurt by the manner of her ungracious pupil, and, looking towards me, she said, "This lady is a *Spectator*, Miss Osborn, and I think your manners will not fail to make an impression on her mind, not much to your advantage."

I felt myself inclined to humble the pride of this unamiable child, and, turning to her governess, I asked if her pupil could read. "Very indifferently," was the reply. "I thought so," continued I, "for she appears to me, very uninformed." "Pray what age is she?" "Miss Osborn, is nine years old madam."—"Poor child," said I, "I pity her friends." The countenance of Miss Osborn was instantly suffused by blushes; she looked at me for a moment; and, in the next, throwing her arms round the neck of her governess, she burst into tears. "Let us go," said she, in a half whisper, "and pray don't tell my papa that I have been rude to you."

"I will not name it, unless I am asked," said the young person. "I am persuaded," said I, extending my hand to the young culprit, "that this little girl, has not been long enough under your care to know the happiness and advantage of having a companion always ready to assist her pursuits, and encourage her when she really deserves it." "Miss Watson has only been with me a week," replied Charlotte Osborn. "You see I judged truly," I continued. "Little girls, who have not been used to a regular performance of



"O Grandmama," said William, "Charles Osborn has got into such a scrape;—but here he comes, and the Lady with him."

lessons, and who have unfortunately been indulged by their nurses, are very unfit to judge for themselves; and, unless they feel their own ignorance, and are desirous, as well as willing, to gain knowledge, they will never find a governess, who will continue with them any time."

"You won't leave me?"—asked the child. "Certainly not, if you behave well, and are attentive," said Miss Watson. "Indeed, I will try," said the now-subdued Charlotte.—"And I am sure you will succeed," said I, at the same time offering one of my lozenges to my newly-acquired friend.

I was rising to look after my grandson, when I saw him advancing; he seemed heated and out of breath, "O, grandmamma," said William, "Charles Osborn has got into such a scrape;—but here he comes, and the lady with him. I knew she would, though he did not believe her when she said so." In a moment, the same venerable looking female, who had passed some time before, approached the seat. Does this young gentleman belong to you, madam?" said she, addressing me. I replied in the negative, and Miss Watson explained that he was under her care, and the son of General Osborn.

"I thank you, madam," said the stranger. "I have the honour of knowing his excellent father, who, I am well assured, would severely reprehend the impertinence of his son's conduct, if known." "Why,

what have I done?" said Charles, in a timid tone of voice, "I did not think you knew my papa."

"And is this an apology?" said the lady; "or rather, does it not add cowardice to rudeness?—I see you are alarmed, but I must remind you, Sir, that this is not the first insult I have received from you; when I warned you, a week or two ago, that you were in danger of being drowned, by walking so near the water, you then evinced much vulgarity and ingratitude. I passed over this, because I considered that my caution clashing with that which you esteemed an amusement, might make you less guarded in your answers, than was consistent with good-breeding; but to-day there is no such excuse. I did not mean to recognise you when you boldly stopped me in my path, called me, 'Old Spec, Long Nose,' and 'Cross Patch.' Even this was too vulgar to excite any other than silent contempt; but when you caught the walking-cane, which assists my lameness, and were so insolent and cruel as to throw a stone at me, which has grazed my ancle, I felt that I should be equally criminal with yourself, if I concealed such disgraceful conduct from those who may be supposed to have some authority over you."

"Make my compliments to the general, madam," said the stranger, with a grave, but resolute countenance, turning to Miss Watson, "and have the goodness to say, that Lady Liston will do herself the

honour of calling on him to-morrow-morning;" and, with a graceful curtsey, she retired.

"I saw fear strongly depicted in the features of Charles Osborn. I took my leave of Charlotte and her governess, and as I proceeded on my way, was careful to discover if William had taken any part in the late disgraceful transaction.

"God forbid, grandmamma," said my little companion. "No, indeed, I was ashamed of Charles Osborn, and begged him not to throw the stone at the lady; but he laughed at me, and said he hated old women, and he was so certain she was the old sly Spectator, that he was determined to vex her. The lady could not understand what he meant by 'Old Spec." continued William, "but indeed, grandmamma, I do not wonder that Charles Osborn is mortified at the letter he has got from the Spectator, it is quite different to the one I received."

"I rejoice," cried I, "that there is a distinction in this particular, for I should certainly blush to own as a relation, a child who could bear the least resemblance to Master Osborn, and I doubt not but your manner of addressing this invisible friend, was as distinct as her reply. Lady Liston, will, I trust, persevere in her resolution of waiting on General Osborn, who, from what I heard his little girl say, is too fond of his children not to reprove their faults. I have taken a fancy to Miss Osborn, who appears rather an indulged

than an unamiable child; yet I hope you are not in the habit of visiting these little folks, for in their present characters, they are by no means desirable acquaintances." William assured me they were only *Park* friends, having met occasionally in their morning rambles.

I imagine that it is almost unnecessary for me to explain to my young readers, why my opinion of Charlotte Osborne on a sudden became so favourable, that I should avow I took an interest in the child. Least I should be accused of whimsicality, I must simply state, that the real shame, so evident when I inquired her age and capacity of her governess, convinced me that she possessed feeling; and the earnestness with which she expressed her intention of *endeavouring* to act by the directions of Miss Watson, was a proof that she saw her errors; I know no greater mark of wisdom, than that which a confession of our faults illustrates. No encouragement should be wanting where this disposition is observable, and I really regretted that I did know the mother of this little girl, whose indulgence has, I fear, been the principal source of her children's very inelegant manners. I resolved, however, to use my pen in the service of Miss Osborn, at a period not very distant.

My grandson and I reached the house of my friend, where we passed a very agreeable day. There were no children to bear William company, but I was gratified

by observing, that he seemed at no loss for amusement. The house was large, and a very fine garden, in high cultivation, was at once a new scene, and a great pleasure to a boy, accustomed only to see a few weakly plants arranged in a balcony during the spring season, and consequently an almost stranger to the thousand beauties that a living garden owns. So many *little* indecorums had met my eye, when mixing with the Mordaunt family, that I freely confess I was strict in observing the manner of William, when we first walked round the garden. I trembled least he should, from thoughtlessness, destroy any of the flowers; I watched to see if he regarded the fruit with that sort of attention, which should compel my friend to offer some to his acceptance; and it was with infinite pleasure I remarked the propriety of his conduct in both these particulars. Few things could have been more painful to me, than to have had *occasion* to reprove him; in fact, there cannot be a more degrading thing, than that very erroneous, but general remark, "that it is *natural* for children to wish for fruit when they see it, and that it is impossible not to give them some." On this principle, I suppose, grown persons, who have outlived their *puerile* fancies, are to be gratified by attaining a house, carriage, or any thing which may happen to suit their taste; such a system would be equally proper, with that of indulging children in these points. I consider it of

infinite advantage, that children should, at *times*, be present where such luxuries as are now in general use are admitted—that they should have forbearance sufficient to refrain from *asking* to partake of them; and that the limited portion which the judgment of their parents should deem it proper to allow them, should never be a *regular*, but an *occasional* indulgence. Of all indulgencies, that of the palate is most disgraceful to *reasonable* creatures; and to make nice fruit tarts, or cakes, *rewards* to children who have performed their lessons well, is to level them with irrational animals. A very little reflection is necessary to establish my remark.

If a cat catches a mouse, (and the act is an important *accomplishment* in the *education* of a cat) we reward her by the dainty morsel; while to the dog, who sets up and begs, we throw the half-picked bone. The rewards are in these cases appropriate, for neither of the animals would understand us, if we expressed our approbation of their conduct, by *moderate* praises.

I intreat my little friends, however, not to imagine that I include Mother Hubbard's cat amongst the unenlightened of that species. I entertain the most perfect respect for *genius*, wherever it emanates; but, at the same time, must avow, that while I can hope to be serviceable to a higher class, in the persons of *children*, I shall never feel disposed to shew more favour to animals, than that which humanity dictates.

The behaviour of William Mordaunt, during our visit, was so well regulated, that in our ride to Town, I took occasion to express my approbation of his manners. My grandson seemed gratified by my praise. "Indeed, my dear boy," said I, as the coach drew up to the dwelling of my daughter, "if I had not heard you cast an indirect censure on your good mother, by disputing her right to send you out with female servants, I should have made a memorandum of this day in my *red* letter book. I shall say nothing of throwing stones; Master Osborn has given you an opportunity of judging that error, without my enlarging on the subject."—"My dear grandmother," said William, as he kissed my cheek, at parting, "I do think you would make the best *Spectator* in the world."—"God bless you, my child," said I, as he descended the steps, "it is for thy happiness, and that of thy dear family, I have undertaken the arduous task; may the attempt prove successful, then may I proudly own, that I have not been an useless *Spectator*."

CHAP. IV.

"O, let th' ungentle spirit learn from hence,
A small unkindness is a great offence."

On arriving at home, I found three or four letters on my writing table. The first that engaged my attention was one, the superscription of which was ill written, and worse spelt; but on opening it, my surprise was superseded by the subject it contained; while, to the well-meaning writer, every allowance for the inaccuracy of its style was as instantly given. It ran thus:

Too Missus HARGUS.

If you please Marm, I ope you wont be hangry with me for the liberty I take in riting to you. but Hi ham a nursery maid in a Gentlemuns fammerly, and

hi likes my Missus very much, but the Yung Ladys, are not hover kind to me. you see they have comed from the hindies, and ad black slaves about um, and so they think we Engleish are slaves, they are so passernate, and want so many things at once, that hif I ad seven pair of ands I could not do hall they wish. hi ham very willing to please them, but I do not think they ave any rite to strike me, and call me creter, hand fool. Miss Louise run a pin hinto my fingers the other day, becaus hi did not ear when she ringed the Bell, and they say hi speak so bad, and make fun of me, but hif I dont know Grammur, that his not my faut, hi speaks has the peepel in my village do, hand has hi, never calls them names, but ham always sivil to um, I dont think they ave any rite to treat me so—I hurd one of them say, she would rite to you about sumthing, so I thort you might praps be a survants frend has well has a Ladys. I hope you will hexcuse my boldness, and beleve me your

umble Sarvant

JENNY BENNET.

P. S. direct for Jenny Bennet hat Missus Murdock's Cavendish squere.

It was evident to me, Jenny Bennet was in a situation for which she was not qualified; but this was no apology for the illiberality and cruelty of the Miss Murdocks. I turned to the remaining letters, hoping

that I should find one of them to be the production of Miss Murdock. I was not disappointed: a very ill-folded and irregularly written epistle came next under my consideration.

Mrs. ARGUS,

I know a young lady who has *writ* to you, and I have seen your answer; I mean Miss C.— She is satisfied with what you say to her; but as I have quite different things to think of, I hope your answer to me will be very unlike what you *send* her. Mamma is very indulgent to us to be sure, but not quite so much as she used to be when we were *at* India; and indeed altogether the people here are not so respectful as what we met when we were *in* Bengal; and the servants in particular are monstrous impertinent, they do not obey us at all. We have got such an ignorant country girl in our nursery, that there is no beating any sense into her; she uses the *h* where it should not be sounded, and where it should be used, she is sure to leave it out. I don't think she ever heard of grammar in her life: now you know this is very provoking, as we have masters coming every day to us, and it makes me quite nervous to listen to her. And as to English servants being so active, it is quite a mistake; they are so slow, and so proud, if one calls them hastily, they seem ready to cry; and really when one is in a hurry, it is almost impossible to bear with

them. Louisa happened to run a pin into our maid's hands, and if she had been a lady she could not have made more fuss about it, which is certainly very odd, for if we may not have some power over of them, we might as well be without servants. Mamma is thinking of having a governess for us, but I hope she may not find one, for I am certain I should hate her, and indeed I know two or three young ladies, who tell me that it is the shockingest thing in the world to have a governess, and I am sure it is true, and I have no notion of there being thought so clever, for you know when you pay people, and keep them in the house, what are they but servants? We have told mamma about you, and she does not object to *my* writing to you; so any hint you choose to give about governesses would please us very much, as Miss C— is such a favourite of mamma's, that she thinks you must be a proper person, because *she* speaks well of you. Pray write *against* governesses, for Louisa and *me* are quite dreading the thought of them.

I remain yours,

CAROLINE MURDOCK.

Cavendish Square.

The evening being far advanced, I confined myself to the perusal of the two remaining letters; and as I glanced on the next in order, I felt an involuntary regret, that the address of my amiable little friend Miss Wilmot, should have remained so long unno-

ticed. I broke the seal, and with an interest, suited to its artless contents, perused it more than once. But I submit it to my readers, many of whom will, I trust, share in my opinion of its merits.

To Mrs. Argus.

Madam,

After having solicited your advice, and been obliged by your very kind answer to my letter, I fear you will think me rude in not having used the permission granted to me; I will endeavour to explain my reasons, and must trust to your goodness to excuse my seeming inattention.

My dear mamma has been dead nearly four years; she had suffered so much that my papa taught me to thank God that she was released from her pain. Yet he always approves of my talking of her, and wearing her picture, and indeed we now frequently speak of the happy days when she used to be so cheerful, and so good in teaching me, for my papa is the best papa in the world.

Since that sad time to which I refer, I have been under the care of a governess, whom I love very much; she is almost like a mother to me, and my papa approves of her in all respects. It seems quite ungrateful in me to say that I am unhappy, for I know there must be many children who have not such friends as I possess; but indeed, madam, I hope I am not wicked

in saying, that I cannot bear the thought of a new mamma; and I am told my papa is going to marry a lady, whom I used to think one of my best friends, but my nurse tells me, that she will make my papa forget me, and that I shall not make his breakfast, nor walk out with him as I do now. She says that all mothers-in-law are spiteful; indeed, she has frightened me so much by what she has said, that though I really like the lady, and used always to be glad when I was allowed to visit her, I now prefer remaining at home, rather than going to her house.

Nurse was very careful of me when I was a little girl, and my dear mamma, I remember, bade me take care of her as I grew up. Of course I am careful to shew her every kindness in my power, yet I am very sorry she has explained so many sad things about mothers-in-law, for I am certain I should have loved Mrs. Dalton as a mamma if she had not done so. But what really troubles me most is, that she has begged me not to name what she has told me to my governess. I never could tell why, but certainly nurse Jones does not like Mrs. Arnold, and I recollect she used to say that I should find her very cross, which I am sure is wrong, for she is the kindest of friends. Pray, madam, give me your opinion; do you think Mrs. Dalton will be fond of me? And say if I ought to keep what nurse Jones has told me a secret from my dear Mrs. Arnold? I am so used to tell her all my

thoughts, that I find it very difficult to be reserved with her. She has found me crying once or twice, and was so affectionate in enquiring the cause, that nothing but my *promise* to Jones made me silent. And this morning, my papa, while we were walking together, observed my looks. "I thought," said my dear papa, "that my Sophia loved her father; indeed, I was going to treat her as a friend, but I find she does not wish that I should consider her so wise."—"O, my dear sir," said I, "I should be very happy if you"——And here, ma'am, I am afraid you will think me wrong, but I could not speak another word, my heart was so full; all I know is, that my papa pressed me in his arms, and declared he loved me as I deserved, and that I should ever find him the tenderest of fathers and of friends.

I am so unhappy since this, and feel so sure that I have acted wrong, that I am most anxious for your advice and opinion. I beg you, madam, to remember my *promise* to Jones, but hope you will give me some directions, that shall enable me to explain every thing to my papa, and Mrs. Arnold.

I am, dear madam,

Your respectful and obliged

humble servant,

SOPHIA WILMOT.

The remaining letter made me smile. The gentleman was a perfect stranger to me. He may, however, be known to some of my young friends, and should any of his remarks suit them, I hope they will endeavour to correct their foibles. Though there is certainly some asperity in the manner of my new correspondent, I must confess, that his censure is, for the most part, just.

MADAM,

Though I heartily wish you success in your laudable attempt, I can scarcely hope that you will attain it. The children of the present day are as distinct from those with whom my youth was passed, as boldness and modesty can make them. I beg your pardon for the force of my expression, but I am absolutely enraged at all I see and hear in families whose sense and respectability are unquestionable. I am an old bachelor, and have much delight in neatness, whether applied to the person, or the apartments in which I visit or reside. My acquaintance is extensive, and I have many invitations to dinner; but I really believe I must give up all ideas of society, for nothing can equal the inconveniences to which these dinner tickets subject me. Permit to explain a few of those unseasonable introductions of which I complain. One, and not the least serious, of my vexations occurred about a week since, where a very interesting and rational conversation was interrupted by the lady of the house calling our united attention to a recitation, or rather

what I should call a downright *murder*, of Cato's Soliloquy. We waited some time, while the boy grumbled out his "noes," and "indeeds," but all he could say, had no effect. His mother declared Jackey would be a second Pitt. I groaned internally at this presumptuous assertion. Jackey thumbed his buttons, scratched his head, &c. &c. At length he set off; Gilpin himself did not travel with more expedition than our orator gabbled, and like that famous jockey, who, when he got to the calender's, turned about his horse, and began his journey to London with equal speed: so Jackey, once put in motion, had no mercy on us. Speech succeeded to speech: the ladies declared he was quite a genius, while one or two men, in a voice scarcely intelligible, said something about "good memory." For my part, I was silent. The orator was introduced at the dessert, and here, again, his genius was called forth. He was to construe a Latin sentence, which had been used by a very intelligent young man. The dictionary was exhibited, and we, one and all, were obliged to refer with Jackey in order to establish the fact of his amazing capacity. Madam, there is no man more willing to do justice to youthful talents; I honour them wherever I meet them, but I cannot bear to see children thus forced into notice; it is spoiling them and destroying the purposes of society: an applicable remark or correct reference that grows out of the present conversation is worthy of commendation, but, to the obtrusive interruptions of

children, I can neither give my time nor my approbation.

Another source of unspeakable inconvenience to me, was the introduction of a very fine boy, a few evenings since, whom all the party denominated a "*Pickle*." I happened, unfortunately, to be the only man in the room who wore a queue. I was leaning back on a stuffed sofa, when my attention being suddenly called to observe a lady who was just rising to take a seat at the piano, I made a motion to follow and assist her in arranging the music-book, when I felt a shock inexpressible. Master "Pickle" had fastened my hair ribbon to the sofa-cover. I was not sufficiently master of myself to disguise my feelings, but in very plain language expressed my dislike of such jokes. The ladies, who love a little *innocent* mischief at the expence of an old bachelor, smiled amongst themselves, but to me it was no laughing matter. I really suffered much pain from this young gentleman's frolic. "Tell me, Ned," said the mother of 'little Pickle,' "why did you fix on Mr. Testy for a joke." "Because I thought his queue was false," said the boy. "I wish your conjecture had been just," said I, "it would have saved me much pain." I saw half a dozen highly frizzled heads in the company, who seemed amused at my disaster, and confess I was one who joined in a laugh, which was general, an hour or two after, when a wig a la Brutus was brought to the carpet by our young "Pickle," who had dared the

gentleman to an unequal sparring contest, and when vanquished by the one hand of his enemy, took revenge on his wig.

I have already intruded on your time most unmercifully, but let me beg of you, my good Mrs. Argus, to represent the folly of these ridiculous introductions. I do not agree with the old adage, "that children should be seen but not heard;" but I must condemn all forwardness: it is very unbecoming, and unless there is some reform in this particular, I shall be compelled to give up a great many friends whom I esteem, and henceforth take my meals at home and alone.

I am, Madam,

Your obedient servant,

TIMOTHY TESTY.

P. S. If I have not tired you let me know, and I will give a few more examples of my miseries.

This gentleman's complaints appeared to me too well founded to be disregarded; and I, in consequence, resolved on assuring him of my attention to his communications; but the night was now hastening to its close, and I, with the permission of my little friends, will here close my chapter.

CHAP. V.

"Children, like tender osiers, take the bow,
And as they first are fashioned, always grow."

THERE is scarcely a more important step in the formation of the youthful character, than that of inculcating the necessity of order in all their undertakings. I am persuaded, that more of our happiness in advanced life depends upon this, than on any other or more shining quality. The subject, however dull it may appear upon a cursory view, is capable of much enlargement; and among those observations which my present character has led me to make, I feel certain, that the greater part of the foibles, errors, and

misapplication of talents, which I have so often deplored, proceeds, in a great degree, from a want of method,—from a total disregard of our most valuable, yet most fleeting possession, *time*.

The thousand dangers to which delay subjects us, it were an endless task to enumerate. A few of those peculiar to children, who are in themselves free from intentional error, shall suffice in this place. What excuse can be made for a girl, who, after the age of eight, is not able to find those articles of dress called *walking things?* who must disturb the servants from their dinner, to help her to find her shoes, hat, and pelisse. How can it happen that such things are mislaid? The answer is simple. When the young lady comes in from her walk, she leaves her shoes in one place, her gloves in another; and how is it possible that *she* should seek into such matters. Does not her mamma keep servants to attend to such things, and what are they for? It is not in reason to expect that servants will be very anxious to administer to the comforts of such arbitrary little despots. A sense of their duty may lead them to a slovenly performance in some particulars, but these juvenile tyrants will certainly experience some mortifications. For instance, I was present a few days since, where a young lady was told to put on her pelisse, &c. and she should take an airing with her mother and myself. Mary Woodgate ran away "to get ready," as she said. I heard the nursery-bell ringing incessantly, but I was

not sufficiently intimate to inquire into causes. The carriage arrived. Mrs. Woodgate and I were ready, and as we opened the drawing-room door to descend, my friend called to her daughter, saying, "she could not wait." "What an ill natured thing you are," said a voice which I instantly discovered to be Miss Woodgate. "Indeed Miss Woodgate," said the servant, "you would make any body cross. Your mamma has repeatedly told me not to put away your gloves or bonnet, and as I always have your shoes ready, I know I have done my part." "Dear me, I have got odd gloves," said Mary. "Run Sally, look in my drawers or my box, and you will find one." We had reached the carriage and were seated. My friend, who is at once a tender and a judicious mother, leaned forward, and regarding her daughter who had now made her appearance—"My dear Mary," said Mrs. Woodgate, "you have forfeited your airing this morning. I heard you speaking very intemperately to Sally. You look out of humour. Your clothes are not put on with neatness, and your gloves are not suited; when you are careful to put these things in their proper places, you will always know where to find them. I could not think of introducing my daughter to a very old and esteemed friend, when so visibly unfit for company." This gentle, yet praiseworthy reproof, had its full effect on the humbled Mary, who retired into the house, evidently much affected by her disappointment. I could not refrain from expressing my

approbation of my friend's conduct. "My dear Mrs. Harley," said Mrs. Woodgate, "I am fully sensible of the bounty of Providence in making me the mother of a healthy little family; but as they are not *entirely mine*, as their happiness, in a great measure will depend upon their self-government, I am most anxious to impress on their infant minds, the necessity of *humanity*, *activity*, and *obedience*. Mary possesses many excellent qualities, but a little thoughtlessness of character, at times, overshadows these good properties. I have so often expressed my wish, that she should regularly fold and put away certain articles of her clothes which I have specified, that were I to overlook her inattention, she would consider that I had no motive for such an exaction; and as I never ask my children to perform any thing but from a strong conviction of its conducing to their happiness, I cannot submit to have my commands disputed. There are many persons who object to wounding the feelings of children; but where they evince intellect, I must consider it the most effectual method to address them through the medium of reason: to a child of weak capacity, a system more lenient should be observed: but really, my dear friend, when I reflect that all my care and assiduity, blessed by the protecting favour of Heaven in their lengthened lives, is ultimately to fit them for situations that must remove them from my fostering arms, the necessity of making them amiable seems more than ever essential. If I can discover a

speck, what would less tender arbiters discern? And has not it been enjoined us, to 'Train up a child in the way he should go.' Surely then, that system which religion dictates and nature and reason sanctifies, must be at once the model for parents, and the bliss of their offspring."

I left Mrs. Woodgate with increased respect and esteem. A contrast of the most striking sort presented itself in my next visit.

On calling at Sir George Aston's, I entered the drawing-room at a moment of extraordinary confusion. A boy of twelve years old was crying in so loud a tone, that he nearly stunned me. Lady Aston was coaxing him to moderate his grief, while Sir George rang the bell, and ordered Mr. Spencer to be told that "he wanted him." "My dear Mrs. Harley," said Sir George, "I am ashamed you should have arrived at so unfortunate a season; but allow me a few moments for investigation, and I will then attend to friendship." I had scarcely acquiesced by a bow ere Mr. Spencer appeared. "Pray, sir," said Sir George, "why do you refuse Master Aston his half holiday:" "For a very simple reason," replied Mr. Spencer, "he does not deserve one." "How is this, George," said the baronet, "did not you tell me that you had performed your duties to the satisfaction of your tutor." "No—yes;" said George, "but Mr. Spencer is so particular, and expected more of me to-day

than usual, only because he knew I wanted to go to my cousin's as soon as possible."

I saw the countenance of Mr. Spencer crimson with honest indignation. "Sir George," said the offended tutor, "your son is so little advanced in his studies, that were he as zealous as boys of his age usually are, it would be many months before he could acquire the necessary spur to learning, *order*. He is seldom ready for me, and if any recreation is in view, his manner of saying his lessons is slovenly: he presumes to compromise the matter by avowing, that he will do better to-morrow, but that to-day he is going out, or expects visitors. These frivolous excuses have been offered to me three times this week: when I express my disappointment, he accuses me of particularity, &c. The freedom is improper, as addressed to his teacher, and if he cannot make his business perfect before he takes his pleasure, he will never prove himself worthy of indulgence, or do credit to those who have the charge of him." "Very just," said Sir George, "your statement is exactly what I expected, nor should I have drawn you from your study but to gratify Lady Aston, who is unfortunately but little skilled in the modes proper to be used with boys." Mr. Spencer bowed coolly, and was retiring, when Lady Aston, with an imploring accent, begged Mr. Spencer would forgive George this once, and she would answer for his being a good boy to-morrow." "My power over this young gentlemen is at an end, Madam," replied

the tutor; "he has thought proper to arraign my motives; if I am capable of a meanness so contemptible, I am unfit for the charge reposed in me by Sir George; and permit me to add, that where I cannot excite esteem, I should consider my instructions lost;" and with a respectful bow he withdrew.

The baronet, whose vexation was evident, turned to his son, and with much acrimony arraigned his ignorance and stupidity, declaring, that he should not leave the house for a month; nay, it was very probable, he would seek some cheap school, at a distance from London, to which he would send him, until he had conquered his baby-like follies. Lady Aston now joined her tears with those of her pet: I was awkwardly situated; but while I was hesitating how to depart, Sir George bade his son go to his room for the remainder of the day. "Do advise with Aston," said her ladyship, "he loves the dear boy just as well as I do, but he has no fixed plan for him as yet."

"If this charge is just," said I smiling, "I wonder what excuse ye *grown* babies have to offer for yourselves." "None," said the baronet, "we are the most mistaken pair in the kingdom; but it is *chiefly* Lady Aston's fault; if the boy remains a *whole* morning with his tutor, she takes fright at the pallidness of his looks when he makes his appearance in the drawing-room; and again, when she meets children, his junior by some years, who are intelligent, and do credit to their instructors, she is full of regrets."—

"My dear Sir George," retorted her ladyship, "it is you who are impatient; have you not frightened the poor boy by telling him that he is to be a counsellor, and that you expect he will study morning, noon, and night, till he has got through all the books in your library; and between ourselves, Mr. Spencer is very harsh; George's nerves are delicate, he cannot bear contradiction."

"My dear madam," said I "though the age and appearance of your son might justify the belief that he had made some proficiency in his learning, I am tempted to think that you have engaged a tutor for him somewhat too soon: unless you could reconcile yourself to yield your right in all that relates to the privileges of a tutor. When men of character and science undertake a task of this sort, they are *accountable* for the manner in which they acquit themselves; they are in the situation of an author, who gives a work to the world, which is to tarnish his name, or carry it down to posterity with honour. And, though some *few* instances might be adduced of pupils dishonouring the care of their early guardians, I trust, and believe, there are thousands who look back to this happy period of their lives, and these kind friends of their youth, with feelings that do them honour. But, if you are only *now* beginning the education of your son, forgive me, if I say, that much caution is required to make learning appear, what it ever should be, a pleasure. I am unacquainted with the causes

that have delayed his improvement; and, though I would recommend every gentle incitement to be offered that can rouse a love of knowledge, and would recommend such books as exemplify the uses and advantages of emulation, I would by no means dismay, by the vastness and profundity of abstruse learning."

"All this is true," said Sir George, "we have delayed the matter too long; but his mother has always been so full of fears; he was too delicate to bear reproof;—in short, she has suggested so many obstacles to all my plans with regard to our son, that I am at this moment wholly undetermined how to act by him,—what would you advise?"

"Dismiss the idea of sending your child from home," said I; "a school, though eminently calculated to inspire emulation in a *prepared* mind, would, in this case, prove the tomb of intellect. Humiliations innumerable would assail him in such a situation. Keep him under your eye, but consign the task of tuition to one in whom you have implicit confidence, and to that person give *discretionary* power of acting. It is by no means necessary that you should be restrained from interfering in every particular which relates to you son, but it is rarely, if ever, requisite, that *children* should be a party in any of the opinions, objections, or purposes, that may naturally result between parents and instructors. One of the most prominent traits in the infant character is that of *imitation;* and they are generally ob-

served to shape *their* manners, and express their sentiments, by those of their parents; thus, the teacher, who, it is but natural and reasonable to suppose less esteemed by them, falls into disrepute on the most trivial expression of disapprobation that the parent shall utter. With Master Aston I should recommend very lenient and conciliating measures; his lessons should be short, but frequent; his rewards, uniformly your *moderate* approbation. Visiting, presents, or toys, would break in upon the application so necessary to his advancement; and I must believe, that to confine the happiness of children to home, to that meed which it is always in the power of parents to bestow, is not only the most judicious method, but also the most effectual way of binding children to their parents, and teaching them to value their favour as it should be valued."

Sir George and his lady appeared to coincide in my sentiments, and before I took leave they had resolved on committing their son to the care of Mr. Spencer, with all the requisite privileges that could assist his education. In my drive home, my reflections fully established the remark used in the preceding part of this chapter.—What, but want of *order* had produced the lamentable deficiences of George Aston? Want of health in infancy may, and does frequently retard learning, but the earliest season of convalescence should be seized by the watchful parent, to make a good impression; however slow the progress

the seed should be sown, and the culture attended to with the nicest care. The intellects of children vary, one shoots out luxuriantly, almost spontaneously; another produces rare and superior fruit, by slow and progressive care; while a third starts prematurely into society, bearing, even with its blossoms, the rankling weed: of how much consequence, then, is an early attention to order, an uniform regard—to the time present. Yet even with some, who have imagined themselves actuated by this essential principle, there are many instances of vanity. I have heard children go through their regular business with all the order that had been suggested by their teachers, and have heard them exact some promised indulgence, when, in fact, their exertions have been of a sort to claim no such distinctions. To repeat a number of lessons, in a slovenly way, is to disgrace the understanding that it has pleased Heaven to bestow upon you; to hurry through those prayers which are appointed for your morning and evening devotion, is not what has been asked of you. I know that some of you will find excuses, "you are sleepy," or "the night is cold," "you have sat up later than usual." Why did you so? You reply, you just wanted to finish some trifle, with which you were engaged.—Why not leave the trifle till to-morrow, and use the hour permitted to you in that service, which it is ungrateful to delay?

How frequently do these little subterfuges occur,

and how often have I heard children entreat half an hour longer for their *amusement* in the drawing-room, who have, by their imperfect devotional exercises, convinced me that they deserved no indulgence of the sort. We do not expect from children, either that reflection or forethought which experience alone can establish, but habits of order may, and should be inculcated, even in infancy. Order originates in duty to those who have charge of us. Delay is consequently a stranger to that child who is reared on this most amiable and virtuous principle.

In every important situation of our lives, the comfort derived from a just disposition, or division, of our time, is clearly demonstrated; and, in all the lesser objects that engage the attention, as applied to pleasure or convenience, its advantages are equally obvious: in the two instances on which I have expatiated, it must be observed, that the little idlers met their disappointments. The reader may, perhaps, regard Miss Woodgate's deprivation inconsiderable,—but let me remind them, that to her mortification must be added, the temporary displeasure of her mother; a circumstance, in itself, truly painful to an amiable and well-disposed child; nor is it unimportant to reflect, that strangers may be led to form unfavourable opinions, in cases where the commands of parents have been neglected. Of George Aston, it would be ungenerous to say much; from mistaken indulgence, and irresolute plans, his parents have brought him through

the plastic season of infancy, unimpressed with the value of this peace-making quality; for my own part, I feel assured, that education might commence, even from the cradle. The disposition and temper might be in a state of improvement while intellect was dormant; for, as a learned and truly amiable writer has observed, "The mind is originally an unsown field; prepared, it may be for the reception of any crop; but, if those to whom the culture of it belongs, neglect to fill it with good grain, it will speedily and spontaneously be covered with weeds."

But, as *I* have avowed myself a friend to *order*, let my practice prove my sincerity. I have many letters to answer, I must hasten to the performance of my duty.

CHAP. VI.

"If I am right, thy grace impart
Still in the right to stay:
If I am wrong, Oh teach my heart
To find that better way."

In conformity to my avowed love of *order*, the letter of Jenny Bennet was the first to which I replied. It was not my wish to encourage servants in betraying the secrets of families, though I certainly did not regret that an opportunity had occurred, which, by touching on the manners of children towards these humble friends, gave me an opening for a few observations. But as I imparted my real sentiments on this subject, in my epistolary correspondence, I will submit them to my young friends *verbatim*.

To Mrs. Jenny Bennet.

I am very sorry to understand, by your letter, that your situation in the family of Mrs. Murdock is uncomfortable. You are mistaken, in supposing that the Miss Murdocks are hasty in their tempers, because they have lived in India. As amiable children come from that quarter of the world as from any other. The cruelty of Miss Louisa is very disgraceful to her character, and, I have no doubt, but her mother will hear your complaint, and use proper means to prevent her repeating such a fault. I am very willing to believe that you are civil to the young ladies under your charge, and, as such, think you entitled to kind and considerate treatment from them. I am much ashamed of that very criminal sort of language they use towards you, and the weakness of ridiculing your dialect betrays much ignorance. If a regular attention to the duties required from you, civil manners, and willingness to oblige, mark your conduct, they have no right to complain. Young women in your rank of life, are not expected to understand grammar, and it is only thoughtless and inexperienced children who would remark your deficiency in this respect. I perceive, by your letter, that you are from Worcestershire; and as, in a nursery, it is desirable that the servants should speak in a clear and *usual* dialect, I would advise you to undertake some other office in the house, where you would be more likely to lose

your present manner of speaking, and be spared the mortifications of which you now complain.

I am, very sincerely,

Your Friend,

ARABELLA ARGUS.

To Miss MURDOCK.

Though I am honoured by the correspondence of many young ladies, I confess myself at a loss how to reply to the favour of Miss Murdock. Truth is too valuable to me to be yielded on any occasion, and a letter is, of all compositions, that which should speak the exact feelings. Will you, after this frank confession, forgive my candour, and receive my admonitions? I must believe that you will, for, however the fluctuations of the youthful mind may induce error, or exhibit passion, I trust there are very few instances where they wholly reject advice, or doubt the sincerity of those who evince themselves anxious for their happiness. Though in your letter you name the indulgence of your mother, you seem to intimate that it is less now, than formerly; this is an indirect censure cast upon your parent, and, consequently, a breach of duty. You are not satisfied with the manners of your servants; ask your own heart, if your uniform conduct towards them deserves an attention more respectful than that which they shew you. That your nursery-maid should be ignorant of grammatical pro-

priety is not in the least surprising ; she speaks according to the custom of that county in which she was born, and, it is most probable, never received any rules for her language. Now *you* apprise me that masters attend you daily, and that your *nerves* are affected by the ignorance and manner of your servant's speech. I am really afraid, that you have been more solicitous to discover the defects of others than to acquire knowledge for yourself; or how shall we account for the many errors in your letter, where the orthography is so manifestly incorrect, and the tenses of the verbs so obviously misapplied; for instance, writ for *written ;* say for *said ;* send for *sent ; at* India, in place of *in* India; with many other improprieties inexcusable in a young lady, who is being taught daily, and who is likewise a critic ; but I must not omit the application of the objective pronoun *me*, in lieu of the nominative *I.* For the little errors of children, in their first attempts at letter-writing, every allowance should be made as to style, &c. but for grammatical inaccuracies, their memories are to be blamed, grammar being the first, and, next to the study of scriptural history, the most important, branch of education ; for not to to speak, and write your own language correctly, when you are so happy as to have the advantages of good instruction, argues much inattention, if not a weak mind.

You appear to entertain unreasonable objections towards governesses ; I term them unreasonable, be-

cause you have evidently decided on their characters from the representation of a few children, who, perhaps like yourself are hasty in disposition, and consequently ill-qualified to draw just conclusions. I should consider you as very fortunate if your mamma prosecutes her intention of engaging one to instruct her daughters. But should she do this, and pay her as is usual in such cases, I must beg to remind you, that she will never be termed a *servant*, but by those who are unacquainted with the proper forms and distinctions used in society. All persons who become inmates in families, and are paid for their services, are called dependants; but as their worth or talents generally cause them to be received in these capacities, they claim a portion of respect, perfectly distinct from that which is usually observed towards servants. I should be sorry to understand your remark, (that you should hate a governess) as true. The expression is contrary to every principle of Christianity; nay, I should hope that a very little time, passed under the tuition of a competent friend of this description, would lead you to recant this assertion, and most happy should I be, if you favoured my prediction, by imparting your sentiments to me on this head.

I do not mean to restrict your addressing me whenever you think proper; but as you are honoured by the acquaintance of Miss C——, I would advise you to regard that young lady's manners as worthy of imitation; and I beg of you to apply to her respecting

governesses; I think she will efface some of your erroneous opinions, and assist in establishing those of

Your's,

Very sincerely,

ARABELLA ARGUS.

To Miss WILMOT.

My dear little Friend,

To your very ingenuous and natural epistle I feel much pleasure in replying, more especially as I hope to disperse those imaginary fears which have caused you so much uneasiness. The sacredness of a promise is a very serious consideration; and it is this seriousness which should prevent our entering into obligations of the sort without due reflection. You have so fully explained to me, that you regret having assented to the mistaken zeal of your nurse, that I am persuaded you will in future avoid all such engagements. As you are now situated, it is strictly conformable to virtue and honour, that you should forbear to speak of your nurse's communication. But should she again attempt to weaken your confidence in the judgment of your father, or the kindness of Mrs. Arnold, do not suffer yourself to be misled by her perhaps affectionate, but certainly mistaken interference. It is in your power to reprove her, and evince your own duty to a good parent, by simply observing, that " your father has a right to act for himself, and

that you will always endeavour to love those whom he esteems;" reject all news which is communicated under the term of "a secret;" it rarely deserves the name, and frequently leads to much anguish of mind.

Those little domestic employments, which the tenderness of your good father has permitted you to exercise in his family, are in themselves highly advantageous to you as a female; for to study "household good," is an excellence in woman. Should the lady who you expect will be your mother, eventually fill that situation, remember it is your place to yield and resign those offices, which, as mistress of your father's house, will become her right. Yet it is very probable, she may discover your capacity in these points, and have much pleasure in increasing your little privileges: much more will depend upon yourself than on her;—you acknowledge that you *did* like her, and I have too good an opinion of your understanding, to suppose that you could be prejudiced against an old friend, merely because your father has thought proper to distinguish her, as the woman with whom he could be happy. I would advise you to use an early opportunity of talking on this subject with Mrs. Arnold; I imagine you may do so, without infringing your promise with Jones; as the event is, no doubt, generally expected in the family. Perhaps your governess wisely awaits your communication in this particular; confide in her, and I am persuaded you will not only relieve your mind, but acquire a certain portion of

comfort, in looking forward to the protection of an amiable mother as you advance in life; and Mrs. Arnold appears, from your description, a friend, capable of directing your mind, to a just understanding of all that relates to your happiness.

When your father shall condescend to make you his friend, by apprising you of his intentions, do not hesitate to express your sorrow, at having exhibited such *visible*, though *silent*, opposition to his wishes, —he will receive it as a proof, not only of duty, but good sense; and to the lady, observe an uniform and kind attention, which, I am fully persuaded, will lead to the happiest result;—continue to cherish the memory of your *own* mother, reflect on all her admonitions, and apply yourself to the practice of them with attention; what one good and amiable woman has suggested, can never prove objectionable to another.

On your nurse, continue to bestow those little marks of kindness which are her due, as the protector of your helpless infancy,—but do not by any means, accustom yourself to habitual intimacy with any servant,—all that is kind, benevolent, and generous, may be performed towards these deserving and useful friends, without familiarity, which *usually* leads them into error, and *certainly* destsoys our claim to their respect.

The unreasonable length of my letter, proceeds from the strong interest I take in your happiness, and it will give me sincere pleasure, if my advice assists

in restoring your tranquillity. You were very right in observing, that "many children have more cause to repine than yourself;"—it must be so, for your's are *imaginary* troubles, and numberless little orphans might be found, whose sad and desolate fate, would cause you to blush at having anticipated sorrow. Consider, my dear child, that life is transient; and that to pass through our allotted term wholly exempted from trouble is impossible; there is a season for all things; youth is the season of joy, embrace it while in your power; and let gratitude, for those blessings bestowed upon you, dispose your heart to cheerfulness, which is the handmaid of innocence. With perfect esteem for your character, and a firm reliance on your just claim to happiness, by endeavouring to deserve it,

I remain your very sincere,
and much interested friend,
ARABELLA ARGUS.

TO TIMOTHY TESTY, ESQUIRE.

SIR,

Though I have announced myself as the *professed* correspondent of *children*, your letter claims my thanks, as imparting some just matter for animadversion. You will excuse me if I add, that the obligation must be mine, as I cannot possibly find time for answering the letters of *grown* persons, though I

shall be obliged by their communications. You must likewise forgive me, when I avow that I do not agree with you, as to the comparative manners of children now and in the days of our youth. Very few general rules are applicable: there will always be much to do for children, and there has certainly been much done for them; I *sometimes* think too much, for we have been seeking new methods, and new models, while the fundamental principles of all virtue, and all happiness, have ever been within our grasp, in the mild *precepts* and pure example of Christian revelation. No specific rule can possibly be recommended in the education of children, whose dispositions are as various as the flowers of the field; but there is not a defect or perfection in human nature for which the *God* of nature has not provided some *ensample* that *should* guard the erring; some *reward*, which should animate the virtuous. It is while we *neglect* this merciful mediation, between mortal and imortal judgment, that we betray our blindness, and, with wilful ignorance, seek a new path. I shall receive your further communications with pleasure, and am,

Very respectfully, sir,

Your obedient servant,

ARABELLA ARGUS.

Having dispatched my letters, I felt all that ease which results from performing our appointed duties. I was now at liberty to think, so true it is, that while

the mind is clogged by obligations of any sort, it is impossible that our actions should be free and unrestrained. As this feeling is not individual, or peculiar to any season of life, it has often surprised me, when I have heard persons, whose independent situations in society have placed them at liberty to dispose of their time as they please;—to hear such persons, I repeat, lamenting that they are oppressed by the variety of their avocations, is truly ridiculous.

These imaginary inconveniences, even children affect. I have seen them surrounded by their books, pausing first on one, then on another; and by the confusion which they are active in producing, destroying the necessary preliminary to study, *method*. And now that I am speaking of lessons, I cannot forbear remarking on the manner in which these portions are sometimes acquired: it is hardly necessary to say how they should be learned, every child of sense gives a due proportion of time to the subject that is appointed for her attainment; not only because it is appointed for her, but that she aspires to excel, and would not be satisfied to perform any thing ill, which by a little application might be well performed. But I have seen children *rolling* the leaves of their books, while they pretended to be engaged by their lesson:—playing with the ribband which marks their places, and reckoning *every* repetition, as reducing from the number of those readings, they purpose to bestow on the lesson. Is it possible, that such tasks, can be well

learned, where the thoughts and the actions are so much at variance? or, can a limited number of readings perfect *all* lessons? I grant, that the perception of some children is very acute, that they learn with much facility; yet it sometimes happens, that they forget very easily, and when this is perceived, by those who instruct them, I can by no means accede to that petulance, which *sometimes* shews itself, at their memories being exercised frequently, and not on fixed days. It is very natural to suppose that those who *teach*, possess more knowledge than their pupils, and that their motives for exacting attention, in any point, would bear the strictest scrutiny; but it is not the part of the pupil to arraign or judge those motives nor yet to oppose the wishes of the instructress.

The task of rearing and teaching the infant mind has been defined a pleasing and delightful task. I *know* it is possible to make it such, but then a mutual esteem, and mutual assistance, must actuate the teacher and the scholar.

Quintilian observes on this subject,

"But let none imagine it possible to become learned by the labour of another."

This, from the comprehensive term *learned*, seems to apply to boys only; yet it may very properly be transferred to girls, as every advancement in knowledge is produced by learning, and the capability of

the female mind cannot be doubted, while we can refer to the respected names of a Carter, a Talbot, or a Montague.* But that wisdom can be attained without exertion, is an idea which none but the weak and the *idle* can possibly entertain. The very advantageous and happy domestic friendships which exist, more especially berween girls and their instructresses, may certainly, by *mutual* attention, be made productive of lasting and most beneficial consequences. But, unless a child can *esteem*, as well as *respect* her governess, the happiness of each is destroyed. If lessons are considered *punishments*, though recommended for their usefulness; if an anxiety to do only an equal portion of business every day, supersedes that graceful and hopeful thirst for knowledge, inseparable from true genius, I repeat, where these defects are evident, the teacher's task, not only becomes irksome, but altogether hopeless. Let it be remembered, that

"Nothing is easy without previous toil."

That

"Ten thousand labours must concur to raise exalted excellence."

And that, unless we are as sincerely disposed to *learn*, as our instructors are to teach, our time is lost, and our improvement impossible. To arrive at excellence is not in the power of every one, but there are

* Mrs. Montague.

certain perfections, to which the attention of children should be more particularly directed. The first, is to a strict and uniform compliance with the commands of their parents, and from this will proceed that most useful and salutary characteristic of a good mind, "the *government of the temper*;" for children, who obey their parents, must necessarily learn to yield, in many points, the affection and judgment of parents directing them frequently to counteract and interpose in numberless instances, where acquiescence would not only injure their children, but, by increasing their self-will, make them arbitrary and unmanageable. With amiable and well disposed children, the wishes of a parent are as commands. Nothing is more painful to a parent than to be forced to make duties appear difficult; yet there are cases, in which such appearances must exist, and to some of the causes, which produce this ungraceful portrait of life, I shall dedicate a future Chapter. I cannot withhold one general remark, which is, that the child, who is dutiful and attentive to the wishes of her parents, always carries this beautiful humility into every action of her life; it influences her manner towards her inferiors; it leads her to respect the aged and consider their comforts; she is alive to the best impressions from good reading, because the best books always inculcate moral virtues; and she who begins by duty, will undoubtedly receive delight and improvement

from the perusal of that which is calculated to exalt her mind. But, while I am anxious to impress the beauty and amiability of such a character on the minds of my readers, I wish it to be understood, that these perfections are not showy, that they are usually the possession of *retired* children; of children who are chearful without rudeness; studious without affectation; methodical without vanity or preciseness; in short, they are peculiar to children who, considering themselves less wise than their parents, submit to be directed, and consequently attain, not only the approbation of their delighted parents, but, what is infinitely superior, the favour of God. I cannot conclude more appropriately than in the words of the royal Psalmist, "Them that are meek shall he guide in judgment; and such as are gentle, them shall he learn his way."

CHAP. VII.

'Tis something to advance a little way.
HORACE.

A note from my daughter, which was laid on my breakfast-table next morning, awakened my maternal feelings very sensibly. She requested my presence as early as possible, intimating, that her "spirits were much depressed, at the idea of William's departure for——school." I was pleased, that a determination so essential to the advancement of my grandson had been resolved upon; yet the ill health of his mother gave me real uneasiness, well knowing that her attachment to her children was more than ordinarily tender. I hastened to———street, and found them, as I expected, deeply engaged in the concerns of the young adventurer. William seemed to regard his removal, as a matter which was to impress him with much consequence, he was giving orders and contradicting them in the next moment. He declared

the girls were very teazing, and would not let any of his things alone; while all the dear little creatures were producing their treasures, and offering the so-long-valued bauble, as a keepsake to their brother. "Only think, grandmamma," said William, "even Lucy has given me this;" and he exhibited a dollar, in a high state of preservation. I saw the child blush, and a tear trembled in her eye. "Lucy is very right, in making you this present," said I, "but she does not mean it for a keepsake, she expects you will use it; and I beg that you will let Lucy and I know how you spend this dollar; we shall both learn something by the communication,—I shall discover what degree of prudence attaches to my grandson, and Lucy will acquire a knowledge of some of the purposes to which money may be applied."

The sudden decision of my daughter, in favour of a public school, had taken rise in her observations, on the solid acquirements, and pleasing manners of some youths educated on the foundation; and a letter from Capt. Mordaunt, intimating his wish that William should be placed at school, arriving just after this favourable impression, she had immediately proceeded on the necessary arrangements, and only one day now remained ere he was to be removed to ——.

I was not so successful as I had hoped to be, in reconciling Mrs. Mordaunt to the separation: she was full of fears for his health, and very copious in her cautions and advice; to all of which, William was affectionately attentive, and as I perceived him

ready to promise a great deal, I checked the intended obligations. "You are now entering on a new scene, my dear boy," said I, "and will engage in numberless avocations, of which, at present, you are wholly ignorant. The first going to school, is an epoch in the life of boys to which too much consideration cannot be given. If your view of school-business conveys only the idea of liberty, an escape from certain restrictions, &c. you will find yourself deceived: you must earn that liberty so pleasant and, under due limitation, so advantageous to youth. I have never observed any very remarkable instances of disobedience in your character; some little irritability, and a few opinions contrary to those of your mother, have certainly fallen under my eye; I am willing to impute these to want of judgment. You must be sensible, that a parent has every claim to your duty and gratitude. I know you will be called upon to take part in sports and pastimes, quite contrary to your previous habits; to some of which a degree of *danger* is very probably attached: do not, from a false idea of courage, attempt the performance of any thing beyond your powers; your failure will lead to certain *contempt*, while your success can produce no lasting advantage. There is a species of courage, to which, if a boy aspires, he must ultimately attain '*the knowledge of himself:*' for he who knows himself will not seek false honours. He will not be led to perform an act, on which he dares not reflect by all that

the most *eloquent* of his associates can say in praise of things trifling, if not vicious; he will select for his companions, such boys as are most worthy, who are always to be discovered, by their pursuits; for the *idle* are never found in the path which leads to wisdom; nor the *vicious* in favour with those, whom learning delights. Reflect on your *home* with grateful and affectionate feelings; recur to the tenderness of your parents with delight; remember their injunctions, their advice; endeavour, and Heaven will favour your attempt, to unite those religious observances which have led you happily through infancy, in all the simplicity and innocence of childhood; unite these, I repeat, to your new and increasing studies; the task will be practicable, and the conscious peace, that so amiable a discharge of your duty will produce on your mind, will be a reward, to which nothing I could say on the subject would do justice."

William listened to me with silent and respectful attention, and I was delighted to observe his manner towards his mother, whose tears had claimed his notice; he had thrown his arms round her neck, and was kissing the tears from her cheek, "My dear mother," said he, "shall I not be your son in every place; I am almost certain, that I shall think of you more often at school than I do now, and I will write to you every week, and tell you exactly what I do." "That will indeed be a comfort to me;" said his mother,

" and my dear boy, never conceal even an error from *me*, I shall be willing to make every allowance for the foibles of youth, but I can accept no apology which estranges you from my heart."

I was forced to combat that softness which was actually stealing to my heart, lest we should depress the boy too much. " William will not forget this day," said I, with a smile; " he must indeed reflect on it with much satisfaction, and a little laudable vanity may justly mix in his recollection; we have certainly given him some idea of his own consequence by the value we have attached to his conduct, and the affection we have so unequivocally displayed; I trust, he will do credit to our anxious zeal, by respecting himself, and continuing to love those who love him so well."

" I am sure I am very sorry he is going," said Harriet, with a sigh. " I hope we are all sorry," replied Fanny; " but I dare say William will be very happy at school." I observed that these artless remarks made the child serious, and, proposing a walk to the little folks, we proceeded towards Hyde-Park. As we were walking across from Grosvenor-gate, Miss Osborn and her governess, Miss Watson, overtook us; the latter, courtesying to me, was passing on; but perceiving in the countenance and manner of Miss Osborn, that diffidence so becoming in children, more especially girls, I held out my hand and enquired if she had forgotten me. " No ma'am," said the child

with a look of modest confusion, "indeed I have not." "Miss Osborn is growing a very amiable young lady, madam," said Miss Watson, who continued walking by my side. "I am now so happy in her society that I should be very sorry to quit her." I immediately introduced the children to each other, for the girls were unacquainted with the Osborns, and Miss Watson and I entered into conversation. She informed me, that the General had been so seriously displeased by the conduct of his son as to have confined him to his room for some days; that Lady Liston made her promised visit, and in the most lenient terms made her complaint against him; that the erring boy, first denied the charge, but, upon being closely questioned by his father, was brought to avow the truth. "I do not perceive that the modes used with Master Osborn have effected much improvement as yet," continued Miss Watson, "but he is going to —— school to morrow, where, I hope, he will acquire steadiness of character, the want of which is, at present, his most predominant defect."

I was really sorry to learn that Charles Osborn was going to the same school as William, yet a second thought dissipated the unpleasant feeling; there must ever be a variety of dispositions, in all mixed societies; a school is a minor theatre, which is to fit the boy for the larger and less virtuous scene of action, the *world*. If in this exercise of his reason, he plays his part judiciously, by selecting from the few, a

well-chosen company, he can hardly fail to make a cautious arrangement, when his faculties are improved and his knowledge of characters more comprehensive. Miss Watson, with an amiable regard to her little charge, now acquainted me, that from the day of our meeting in Kensington Gardens, her pupil had expressed all those praiseworthy regrets (natural to an ingenuous mind), at the impropriety of her conduct, both as regarding her governess and the impression it must have made upon me. "I scarcely ever saw shame so amiably evident," continued Miss Watson, "and so indefatigable has been the desire of Miss Osborn, to attain my favour, that she almost anticipates my purposes by the activity of her zeal." This eulogium was indeed most pleasing to me, and here my general observation was truly applicable: while Charlotte Osborn was untaught, her manners were bold and assuming; the moment she became sensible of the value of learning, her deportment was timid and becoming. How just is that remark so often quoted. "Modesty is one of the chief ornaments of youth; and has ever been esteemed a presage of rising merit."

Convinced that my daughter would be anxious for our return, we bade adieu to Miss Osborn and her governess, and turned towards home. "How very well behaved Miss Osborn is to-day," said William, "she was not quite so polite when I saw her at Kensington." I agreed with my grandson in thinking her improved. "Lady Liston did go to Charles

Osborn's father," continued William, "his sister has been telling me so." "Did you inquire about it?" I asked. He replied in the affirmative, which proved satisfactory to me. Few things could have lowered a child so much in my opinion, as that of exposing the disgrace of her brother;—from this unamiable trait of character, the little Charlotte was fully exculpated; she had merely replied to the questions addressed to her by William, and these not so copiously as to have increased his deserved humiliation. "I cannot help thinking," rejoined William, after a serious pause, "how alarmed Charles Osborn must have been when Lady Liston was announced; all his courage forsook him I dare say." "There can be no doubt of that," I replied. "It was not courage, but insolence, which influenced his manner towards her ladyship. And that is a quality quite distinct from courage, and one which always shrinks to insignificance, when openly and dispassionately reproved." "How I rejoice," said William, "that I did not join with him that day; he tried to advise me to do so." "I hope in this case," cried I, "that your inclination was not in the least that way disposed, but I certainly approve of your firmness; always dare to think for yourself in such points; it argues much weakness of understanding to be led into degrading situations, merely because an illiterate and captious companion, has pleasure in such scenes; nor does a disposition of this sort stop here; a captious and insolent boy

usually makes a presuming and quarrelsome man, and there is not in society a more unamiable acquaintance, or dangerous companion."

As I expected, we found Mrs. Mordaunt regarding our approach from the balcony. I merely waited to deliver my dear little treasures into the hands of their mother, and give my blessing to William, and then retired to my own house.

I have before expressed my disapprobation of presents, which, in fact, deserve another name; they are bribes, consequently, my young friends will not be surprised that I suffered my grandson to depart to school, without receiving one from me; yet, I thought that the dear boy seemed to expect such a mark of my esteem, for he had shewn me all the various gifts of a very numerous acquaintance on this occasion, in a way which led me to conjecture that my mite was wanting, but a remark of Lucy's would have deterred me from so doing, had I even projected it. "Ought William to cry, grandmamma," said the child, "when he goes away to-morrow; only see what a great many presents he has got." "I hope he will cry," said I, "for I should be very sorry, my dear Lucy, that all his acquaintance had conspired to harden his heart." "My dear grandmother," replied William, taking a seat by my side, "you have such a way of making trifles seem trifles, that I never know whether to value a thing till you have seen it." "What a flattering boy," said I, smiling; "I believe

you will be writing to *me* soon, instead of the Spectator." "I will write to you certainly," rejoined my grandson, "but I must not forget Old *Spec.*; I really like the old woman, though she took me to task a little; yet I must own there was a good deal of truth in what she said, but I must mind next time, and not use any words she can catch at, for she seems very particular." This recollection had been what I wished to produce, being very anxious to have his communications, when at a distance from his family; but I was fixed in my purpose, and, as I before related, did not make my grandson any present. "I am very glad this cross old woman is not my grandmother," says one of my little readers. "I wonder what would be the use of doing one's best," says another; "to be sure she is vastly good, now, that she cannot eat sweet thinks *herself*," adds a third; "but really I think this Mrs. Argus a very troublesome old woman; perhaps some of our friends may think her plan a good one, and we shall be deprived of all the nice things we used to get."

I am prepared, as you will perceive, to meet the disapprobation of a few; but I will not believe that I shall be left in the minority: it cannot be, for I am not writing to *babies*, but children, who have, I trust, been in the habit of exercising their reason, and would, consequently, be offended with the person who should address them as though they were yet the inhabitants of the nursery.

I know it is so easy to acquire a taste for "*nice things*," as they are called; and this taste, though apparently of no consequence in early youth, is so capable of deforming the human character, that I know not how to mark my disapprobation of this fault, in language sufficiently strong. I have witnessed the effects of this selfish principle, in many of its disfiguring and various stages. I have seen children so anxious to taste good things, that they descended to become thieves, in order to taste a spoonful of jelly, or pick a *corner* out of a cake. I have known them, with an indelicacy unpardonable, fix upon that dish at table of which there was *least* in quantity. I have heard such exclamations of joy, when a nice dish, according to their idea, was placed upon the table, that I have been astonished how they could betray themselves so disgustingly; and, above all, I have seen these things pass unnoticed, by those who had a right to speak and to reprove this unfortunate tendency, for, that this quality generates to consequences truly unfortunate, requires very little argument to establish. The person who is devoted to the good things of this world is anxious for their attainment, and, to please his appetite, will yield his time to his taste: an epicure is the most selfish of all animals; generosity is a stranger to his nature, and for what is he thus *solicitous?* If he gratifies his palate, the pleasure is transient; but let him remember that gluttony has been denounced an offence to God;—and if this fails to reclaim him,

let him be convinced, that the constitution is undermined by gross feeding, and that premature age, if not death, is the certain consequence of this odious vice.

You must know, for you are the peculiar favourites of God's mercy, who, in making you capable of reasoning, hath placed you above all the works of his hands; you cannot be strangers to this mark of divine favour. Let me caution you, my little friends, against a vice so destructive as that of gluttony;—I trust it will be easy to persuade you, that it is a very unamiable indulgence, and under that term more likely to fix your attention to the understanding of my meaning. We naturally attach to the characters and dispositions of youth, a softness, which seems natural to their age, and there is no epithet in the English language, which I should feel so much inclined to bestow upon children, as that of "amiable:" it conveys a great deal of meaning; I could imagine it to imply "gentleness," "humility," "modesty," "truth," and "intelligence." Now let me ask, if these qualities could unite in an epicure, a glutton?—Impossible;—they are social virtues, the feelings natural to a generous mind; and a glutton lives only for himself, nor ever gives, but when satiety obliges him to become abstemious. And if a *laudable* ambition actuates your mind, if you wish to acquire knowledge, rest assured, that moderation in your diet, is a strong stimulus to learning, and not all the sweets that the

store-room of the housekeeper could produce, nor yet the nice cakes of your grandmothers or your godmothers, will ever compare with that delightful, and always attainable feast, a *taste* for literature. To that repast, observe how many great and virtuous characters invite you; it is true, they expect you to bring your ticket of admission, that is, *attention;* but, if you go into their society, thus prepared, your gleanings are certain. Sacred history offers to your expanding mind, the precepts for your guide through life, with such examples of divine mercy, as shall lead you to the practice of virtue, in order that you may "hope all things:"—while, in the less authentic pages of ancient and modern history, the ambition and discontent of mankind, will teach you the insufficiency of all worldly considerations. These are solid viands, from which a literary taste must make a wholesome *meal.* Geography, Natural History, and Poetry, make a *second* course, which I do not refuse to any who seek this sort of food;—nay, I will permit a *dessert* to follow in these cases, because I think *such* epicures deserve a little indulgence. The best written and least marvellous fiction, should be given to these, my rational young friends, with one, and only one, restriction,—not to devour it too greedily, as there is very little nourishment in them, and consequently they will not be brought to *table* often.

CHAP. VIII.

"Though I were perfect, yet would I not presume."

"To shun allurements is not hard,
"To minds resolved, forewarned, and well prepar'd."

THOUGH Miss Watson had, with much leniency, denominated Charles Osborn's chief defect of character to be want of steadiness, I was not disposed to coincide in this opinion, more especially when I heard he had attempted to deny that he had been impertinent to Lady Liston.

I was glad he did not persevere in this most serious crime, but there really appeared to me so many shades of character in this boy, that I was led to consider the probable effects his occasional society might

produce on my grandson. It is so essential to the virtue and happiness of children, that they should associate with those only who are well disposed; and it unfortunately happens, that some of the foibles of the vicious, are of a nature to raise a smile on the features of a youthful observer, while an inexperienced and reflecting *Spectator* will discover the lurking mischief, and tremble for those who are exposed to the insidious deception. All these considerations, I repeat, pressed so on my mind, that I confess I was very anxious to hear from William Mordaunt. I was not, however, gratified in my *spectatoral* character: a few hasty lines, addressed to his mother, in which were some kind remembrances to myself, was all that I received for some days; but in the interim I was not idle, nor did some other of my correspondents neglect me.—The first letter which engaged my attention, was one from Mr. Testy; it deserves a place in this my miscellany, and it shall have one.

To Mrs. Argus.

More miseries, my dear madam; I shall certainly retire from society, unless I find that the publication of your intended volume has some effect upon these young tormentors. You are very right; all our searches after a new system of education, are superfluous:—what does the excellent Father Gerdil say on this subject;

"Suffer not, ye parents, the deceitful bait of a

gaudy novelty to seduce you. Be cautious of trying on your children, the dangerous experiment of a method, not yet warranted by success. Let the holy maxims of our forefathers, maxims so venerable for their authority and antiquity, be always present before your eyes."

But I must not intrude upon your time: excuse me, madam, I fear I am prolix, but really I am greatly annoyed at this moment;—a lady, my cousin, with two little plagues, whom she calls "sweet, dear little cherubs," arrived two evenings since, at my house, and, *sans ceremonie*, declares she is come to spend a week with me. Now I really esteem my cousin, and, had she come alone, should have been sincerely glad to see her; indeed, had her children been tractable, I might have borne with them. My house is always kept in neat order, without that troublesome sort of nicety, sometimes to be seen in the houses of bachelors.

But my cousin is unfortunately the mother of two *geniuses*, and they must not be checked in any of their wild careers. I proposed, with my usual attention to comfort, that the little ones should make a nursery of the housekeeper's room. "No such thing: they are never to be in the company of a servant, and, if possible, to be brought up without a knowledge of these distinctions of persons." I stared: "What do you act the nurse, the tutoress, and mother?" said I. My cousin smiled with a look of self-importance, and declared she did. I own I was much surprised, as she

is a young woman, and, till lately, accustomed to a London life. The next morning, at breakfast, I had some specimens of their genius which by no means suited my taste. The elder boy, on a sudden, uncovered the tea-urn to see what quantity of steam it contained. In vain I expostulated, and reminded him of the danger to which he exposed himself. He laughed at me, "What do you think I do not know that hot water will scald," said he. Now this might be very reasonable, but it was certainly rather rude. "I like the water to be kept boiling," said I. "You are not a philosopher, cousin," said my little reasoner. I own I was rather surprised at the forwardness of the boy, but before I could reply to him his mother exclaimed in an extasy, "Is he not a prodigy?" "I cannot tell yet," I replied, "the plan is new to me." Well, the breakfast was removed, and now a race, with my chairs turned down for horses, was projected by these young Nimrods. In vain I interposed, and requested that the trial might take place in some other apartment. They had set off, and nothing I said had the least effect. In turning one of these wooden horses, a jar of considerable value in my estimation, because it was my mother's, was forced from its quiet station under a card table, hurled with eventful velocity into the middle of the room, and there, woeful to relate, it divided into three pieces. "I can mend it," said one of my young plagues, and he instantly rang the bell, and ordered a saucepan

full of milk, and some cotton or packthread to be brought to him. I positively counteracted this, and declared, that any experiment he chose to try, must be performed in Mrs. Bond's room. I thought my practical philosopher seemed to regard me with contempt, at which I felt a little indignant; but the boy retiring with my valet, I suppressed my feelings, and turning to my cousin, asked her, "what superior happiness she promised herself in *her* mode of education?" "Every thing is to be hoped," said she, "from a system in which reason takes the lead." "I cannot agree with you," I replied. "I am not quite certain that the reason of your children has not subjugated, if not wholly destroyed, all those lovely traits of character so essential to their happiness as social and dependent creatures. Where is that graceful and becoming quality, diffidence? That respect due to me as a stranger and their host? That modesty which makes them slow to speak and timid in answering?" "My dear friend," replied my cousin, "all these things were very well half a century ago, but this is the age of reason." "Poh, poh, Nancy," said I, "I do not believe that there ever was a period in my life in which I could not have told you that hot water was hot water, and that it would blister my skin and give me pain if I touched it incautiously; but I hope my reason would never have led me to the impertinence of arraigning the supposed ignorance of my elders, nor yet have prompted a boldness so conspicuous as that

of deranging the furniture and destroying the property of those who entertained me. I do not see that men or women are more happy, more virtuous, nor yet more learned, by adopting any system which is to increase their vanity, for vanity is a great enemy to the attainment of sound reasoning." Whether I should have converted my cousin to my opinion is uncertain, for a loud and universal shriek now reached our ears, and a cry of fire echoed through the hall. I ran down, and with real alarm discovered that the *philosophers* had set Mrs. Bond's chimney on fire by having heaped an unnecessary quantity of fuel on the fire in order to expedite their china-mending business.

I turned these intruders from the apartment, and having seen the fire quenched, repaired to the drawing-room. "I have been telling the boys," says my cousin, "that you do not like experiments, and persuading them to defer their attempts until we go home again." "I do not object to these things from any contempt of their utility," said I, "but I do not approve of such half-digested principles as those just exhibited. Could you suppose," I continued, addressing the elder boy, "that you were correct in your application of this process of mending china, when the vessel in which you placed the broken article was not sufficiently deep to guard it from the immense flames which played about the saucepan?" "I never thought of that," said the boy, "and indeed the fire frightened me so much that I did not take time to

think." "I am pleased," continued I, "when I see children direct their attention to useful things; the attempt in question is in itself highly so; but I would advise every child who practises a thing of this sort to submit to be directed in his first essay. The loss of my jar I must regret, but the loss of my house would have been a serious evil." I saw that my consin considered my remonstrance unkind, while the boys looked rather abashed, though certainly somewhat sullen. As this troublesome trio are yet my guests, it is very probable some new illustrations of genius may fall under my observation; in which case, I shall not fail to trouble you; but, in the mean time, let me beg of you to take notice of these ebullitions of reason, which shoot out, and overwhelm modesty, respect and duty. I know it is usual to laugh at old bachelors, but, upon my word, madam, three is something vastly comfortable in the sound of that simple word, duty, and whether it is from the length of time to which I refer, and recollect *who* claimed this feeling of me, or that I esteem it for its antiquity and divine institution, of this I am certain that no new word, theoretically or practically used, can supersede it, unless it bring with it, its amiable and comforting solace.

I am, dear madam,

Your obedient servant,

TIMOTHY TESTY.

The letter of Mr. Testy occasioned me some serious

reflections; and, indeed, I so perfectly coincide in opinion with this gentleman, that I cannot resist delineating the feelings to which his letter gave rise.

I consider the present times as offering just cause for admiration in the many and ample elucidations of science and things, formerly hoarded only for the closet of the philosopher. But as vanity is an insidious, and almost inseparable foible of the inexperienced, too much care cannot be observed in the manner in which we introduce them to knowledge.

It should be invariably inculcated, that wisdom is a store of which youth ought never to be prodigal; for with whatever facility they learn, however accurate their perceptions, they will discover in each revolving year, they have yet much to learn, and that what they considered perfect, as their minds expand, will bear correction, if not revision. I do not by this wish to throw a damp on the lively and ardent spirits of the young. Cheerfulness is a charm of character of which I am fully sensible, but there are few things more generally reprehended than forwardness of manner. It matters not how this quality shows itself: whether in vaunting its knowledge, in disrespect to elders, or in contempt for those whom we think less wise; in either case vanity is the primary cause of the failing, and a foundation more perishable cannot be imagined.

I have more than once witnessed the most humiliating consequences follow a disposition of this sort,

and though I certainly took part in their feelings, and strove to lessen the portion of their shame by explaining the methods most likely to spare them a mortification of the kind in future, yet my memory, with a justice due to modest merit, was irresistibly impelled to revert to those families, in which children, of an opposite character, had won my esteem and engaged my love.

Mr. Testy's habits of life, as is obvious, are very regular; consequently, he is more liable to be incommoded by any innovation than persons accustomed to children. Yet, I am persuaded, that many people affect indifference to the intrusions of children who are actually well disposed to be offended: and I blame this sort of acquiescence; it is suffering errors to gain an established ascendancy, and ultimately rearing pragmatical men and presuming women.

There cannot possibly be a higher gratification, than that which we receive from the well arranged replies of children, of whom we seek inquiry. Every person is sensible of this, strangers as well as relatives; nor are *their* inquiries less interesting, when dictated by modesty, and preferred with an evident desire of gaining information: but I have heard children importunate to have an explanation, and wholly inattentivewhile that explanation was given. This is a sort of pomp which betrays a very shallow understanding; besides which, the engaging a person to take the trouble of instructing you in the most trivial point,

and not availing yourself of their kindness, is a strong mark of ill manners.

I am very much prepossessed in favour of those little experiments, so ably delineated by Miss Edgeworth, and other kind friends of the young. Every thing which tends to the usefulness of life is highly worthy of our consideration;—but there is a boldness in bringing ourselves forward upon all occasions.

In the houses of your parents, in your fixed homes, the practical arcanum of children's philosophy may be exemplified, not only with propriety, but much advantage to the attentive pupil. Wisdom of every kind is laudable, and they who begin to lay up treasures in youth, may hope, in advanced life, to reap the advantages, always to be derived from internal resources.

I had the happiness of knowing an amiable child, whom it pleased God to afflict with a most painful rheumatic complaint: the disposition of my dear little friend was naturally lively, and, in the intervals of her pain, she was always remarkably cheerful;—but what chiefly leads to my speaking of her in this place is, to convince those for whom I write, that even in early life, it is possible to lay up resources in the mind, which shall teach patience under affliction, and qualify even a youthful sufferer, to comfort those most interested in her fate.

Anna C—— was always particularly attentive to her prayers, which she not only repeated with becoming

seriousness, but had taken much trouble to comprehend. Her catechism was one of the duties, to which, all who heard her repetition, ever gave the most delighted approbation. Her manner was so mild and attentive, her enunciation so clear, and the punctuation (a most essential observance in this divine ordinance) so correct, that I may with truth assert, she incited many of her young companions, to give a more serious attention to this important duty, than all the previous instructions of their tutoress had been able to effect. I have seen her, when her younger sisters have been dancing, look on with all the admiration of a matured mind, that took pleasure in seeing the happiness of infancy. It is true, I have heard her say, she should like to have been able to join the group, but no vague regrets or pinings were her's. The affection of Anna's friends led them to present her with numberless valuable toys and trinkets, which they imagined would cheer her sedentary life: she always received them with smiles, and expressed herself grateful for their attentions, but they could not engage her mind for any length of time.—"I ought to be grateful," said the dear girl, one day, "for every body is anxious to please and amuse me; but I have discovered that sick people have only one comfort, one consolation; they must read the Bible, where all that *they* suffer will appear as trifling, when compared with what is told us there." From this period, she had the scriptures laid on a table by her side, and when a

more than ordinary pain shook her frame, she would turn to the book of Job, and read a chapter. There was no display in her manner, and it was only after a time, that her most intimate friends could discover, what reflections were produced from her study.—"In all my pains, I have friends about me," said the sweet child, one evening, "and that is indeed a great comfort; and when I *can* eat, I need only express my wishes. How many are sick, and have none to assist them, nor yet the power of getting any thing they fancy." As her weakness increased, and the medical men seemed hopeless, she took upon herself the office of comforter to her parents. Frequently would a lively sally animate her intelligent countenance; and once she asked for a pencil, and sketched the scenery of her chamber, pourtraying her parents, as frightened at the length of the doctor's bill: this she shewed to the gentleman himself, who fully comprehended her intention, which was, in fact, to raise the spirits of her parents. At length she was removed from this world, dying, as she had lived, patient and resigned. I could not describe the deep regrets of her parents, who were long ere they regained their usual tranquillity; but I bring her forward as one proof, that the *really* amiable qualities of the mind, are not of a showy or intrusive nature: and I would likewise wish to impress on my young readers, the conviction, that religious knowledge is of equal importance to the young, as to those advanced in life; that its attain-

ment is as perfectly consistent with cheerful dispositions as with the gloomy and retired character; and, above all, I invite them to reflect on the consolation that a parent must in *time* acquire, when they contemplate the virtues of such a child: "her pain and anguish has subsided," says the musing mother; "I have lost a child, but she is gone to a Father, who loves all who trust in him; who have borne his will with humility, and, as far as earthly perfection extends, have been invariably strict to his laws." Such was Anna C——, a real character, one whom I loved, with the most sincere affection, and whose loss I as sincerely lamented.

I feel certain, that all who honour my book by a perusal, will readily enter into my opinion of the beauty of such a character; but it is not sufficient that we are capable of admiring and doing justice to virtue, we should endeavour to follow an example so amiable. I have, amongst others, given appropriate praise to the child who applied any useful principle to its destined purpose; have been pleased with a correct specimen of music; a well executed drawing, &c. but, that neither or all of these combined are of equal moment, or will bear any comparison, with a mind that makes religion the basis of its happiness, and from the sacred volume of all that is good, and worthy of regard draws guides for every action in life, a very little observation will confirm. The music lesson, the drawng, &c. live in the memory of the hearer during the

visit; we may recollect the performer and the artist if we meet her, but an impression of early virtue is never effaced; we are interested for the child who has evinced an excellence of the kind, we regard it as a blissful promise, and are anxious not to lose sight of a mind which bears so fair a perspective.

Thus, it is obvious that what are termed accomplishments are, in themselves, very inessential qualities; though they may be graceful ornaments, yet their chief uses are that of occupying a vacant hour, and, by their variety, giving an elasticity to the mind highly serviceable, and suitable to the period of youth, which always requires relaxation, but it is on the solid acquirements that we pause. I record the character of my amiable little friend, as one that deserves remembrance, yet I might have added, that she possessed many superficial advantages; but I was speaking of her as a very superior child, and I did not feel that such trifles would have enhanced my sketch.

I do not pretend to hold the mirror to boys; their education usually places them beyond the sphere of women; yet it was not always so: mothers were formerly considered the best early tutors of boys, and such of my readers as have dipped into ancient history will no doubt recollect, that the decline of some states was dated from that period in which women resigned this important office. You will perceive my little friends, that I am not disposed to be explicit, in any case in which your memories ought to elucidate facts.

I would rather that I awakened your curiosity, than checked your pursuits. If I could write as those amiable matrons once taught, there is no doubt but I should grow eloquent upon the present occasion, and be tempted to contrast the analogy between philosophy and duty; for as morality is blended in the pursuits and attainments of the philosopher, we err deeply when we separate these natural and affectionate relatives.

I know you will enter into my feelings, and some of you will rejoice in the digression which circumstances here oblige me to make:—a letter is presented to me, and I recognise the hand-writing of my beloved grandson. Dear boy,—but I must insert his epistle.

To Mrs. Argus.

Madam,

I hope this will be forwarded to you immediately, as I am really much in want of your advice. I am now at —— school, and have been here above a week; I like it very much, and should be quite happy if it was not for one reason. The boys here think women such ridiculous creatures that they always speak of them with derision: now I love my mother and my grandmother dearly, and had promised to write to them often, but some of the boys have caught me, with my letter before me, just as I was beginning to write, and they quite laughed at me, and, when

they saw the words "dear mother," or "dear grandmother," they asked me how I had been able to leave home, and one of them brought me a piece of packthread, which he recommended me to tie to my mother's apron, when next I saw her. I was so ashamed and vexed at this, that I put away my paper, and I am afraid my friends will be very uneasy at my silence.—But what can I do? a boy who came to school on the same day that I did, has told them that I am a sneak; because I would not join him in affronting a lady one day in Kensington Gardens. I told Charles Osborn, that I chose to act for myself, but he made out such a ridiculous story about it, that I confess I am at a loss what to say: I have got a chum, that is, a friend, already; he is a nice fellow, but not very happy, for he has neither father nor mother, and his guardian does not have him home at every holidays. He tells me, not to mind them, but to do as I feel proper. I believe he is right, yet I cannot bear to be laughed at. Charles Osborn is fag to a big boy, and he grumbles at it very much; but I can assure you he is forced to obey, and gets many a *thump*, I was going to say, but I remember you found fault with that word, but indeed I should not like the bruises he gets.

I am so lucky as to be on that form which does not fag, and, as I recollect that my mother has paid a great deal of money for masters to bring me forward in my learning, I am very unhappy, for fear she

should think me undutiful. Do pray write to me directly, and if you say I ought to finish my letters, I will not mind the boys, and, though you are a woman, I shall be very much obliged to you, and will certainly go by your directions.

I remain, dear madam,

Your's, sincerely,

WILLIAM MORDAUNT.

P. S. I forgot to tell you, that I dream of my mother every night, and she looked so pale and unhappy, in my dream *last* night, that I am very impatient for your answer.

Need I say, that my paper was instantly folded, and my pen immersed in the ink, to answer this natural, and truly interesting epistle. I saw the dangers to which he was exposed with alarm, yet I had much consolation in perceiving that he had paused, rather than consented to an erroneous and criminal imitation. My maternal heart was overcharged by its solicitude, and, while I ask the patience of my little friends to the epistle which follows, I will believe, that many of them possess in their own bosoms that tender affection for their relations, which shall lead them to peruse a *grandmother's* letter, not only with a leniency for its author, but an amiable interest in its purport.

To Master MORDAUNT.

Sir,

I embrace the earliest opportunity of replying to you, conceiving, that you are in danger of losing, or rather of sacrificing, the most amiable trait in the human character, *duty*, to a theory as wild as unsupported.

I rejoice that you have been so wise as to pause, ere you rendered yourself so weak and unhappy, nor need I expatiate on the many ill consequences that must attend a conduct so unfilial, as I perceive you are tenderly conscious, that you are not acting up to your character as a son. Understand, that between false and proper shame, there is a very distinct line; the former is the companion of the weak and cowardly mind, and leads to meanness, insolence, and falsehood, for though I perfectly comprehend, that those who recommend this system to you, appear very brave, talkative sort of gentlemen, believe me, they could very easily be proved boys of the most contemptible dispositions, and uninformed minds. Common sense should dictate to every child in such a case. Can you suppose that a few inexperienced boys, forming themselves into a society for the purpose of depreciating their earliest friends and most tender protectors, can find any just cause for this ridiculous sort of vaunting, and, if they presume to think it a manly resolution, how silly and blind they must be.

Look around you, regard the conduct of your father, uncles, all your male connections, and you will invariably observe, that, towards females they are attentive, obliging and affectionate. Thus, you see, it is contrary to their characters as men to adopt so absurd a whim; they cannot support their affected principles, for they have no basis; their insolence is obvious, it is kindness to ascribe insincerity to their folly; for to believe they act from internal feeling, is to consider them lower in the scale of created beings than the most untaught savage.

It may require some courage in a boy of your age, to combat the opinions of these imperious directors, yet I am persuaded you have it in your power to come off victorious; and, though I am no friend to contention in any shape, I think the present deserves the title of an honourable battle: stand your ground, taking care to carry to the field of action a cool manner and respectful language; assure your opponents "that, as yet, you have every reason to consider women as amongst the best and kindest of your friends; declare, with as much *warmth* as your feelings dictate, that you love your mother and your grandmother, and that, until you can enter their society, like an honourable member, viz. fully believing in its rules and sentiments, you must decline the distinction."

Many, even of these boasters, will secretly applaud yonr courage; some will laugh at you; but if

you are afraid of a laugh, yet not afraid to act the part of a hypocrite and deny your most virtuous feelings, you are the victim of false shame, and a total stranger to the only shame that a good mind should own—the shame of committing an action on which we dare not reflect. It is pleasing to perceive by your letter that your heart is at present properly attached to home. But you must be alert, nor make one sacrifice to these ill-judging blockheads. Finish your letters and continue to think for yourself in all matters that relate to your duty; while in those which belong to your studies be politely attentive to any information offered to your inexperience, and, in particular, I would advise you to shew a deference to your chum, who has evinced his good sense by his manner towards you. I dare say he would gladly own a claim to the kindness of some good woman, who should think of him while absent, and endeavour to make his vacations cheerful. Make no friendship with Charles Osborn until he reforms his manners; but, at the same time, I would recommend you to live in peace with all your companions. Convince them that you are not to be shaken in your principles, and after that cultivate the good opinion of your schoolfellows as far as in your power.

I am persuaded attention to my plan will restore you to that happiness which I am glad to discover you do not at present enjoy. The reflection that you have performed your duty will remove all doubt from

your mind. That you should dream of your mother is not surprising. She has engaged your thoughts very much, and we usually dream of that which has most weight on our spirits. I trust that in future your conduct and your feelings will be so properly united, that your slumbers, like your mind, may be tranquil. The smiling period of youth has this delusive advantage over all other seasons of life. The world looks fair, and you believe all its promises. You have few cares and very little thought for yourselves. Alas! if ye have not some guardian, some kind friend to point out the shades in this seemingly perfect picture, you will add a tint to the ever-varying scene that shall finally overshadow you. I know you will forgive an old woman who is truly anxious for your happiness; one who would willingly guard your youth without blinding your judgment by gloomy prejudices.

I hope to hear from you again, and in that expectation subscribe myself,

Sincerely your's,

ARABELLA ARGUS.

Boys who have never quitted home, who, in the approbation of their parents and the delights of family intercourse, have been accustomed to own themselves happy, will hardly comprehend how it is possible for children to enter into a combination so unnatural. I am well assured, that this absurd custom which is

most prevalent in public schools, loses its power over the minds of youth as reason usurps her throne, but that they should ever evince an ignorance so wilful, so truly unjustifiable, is certainly a matter of general concern to all who value the character of youth.

CHAP. VIII.

To all those whom it may concern.

My disposition is naturally persevering, and from the moment in which I volunteered my services as a Spectator, my vigilance has been proportioned to my ardent interest for the happiness of children.

I know exactly what sort of writing pleases some children,—for instance, a story beginning—

"In a beautiful village in the north of England lived Mrs. Villars," &c. I see the eager eyes of a little story-loving dame glisten with delight at an opening so promising: while another, with equal pleasure reads the "Fairy Tale," and wishes, just to gratify her curiosity, that there were really such crea-

tures as fairies. A third likes an opening of this sort, "Once upon a time there was an old woman," &c. It would be very hard upon the season of youth if we were entirely to repress their little tastes, or restrict them from the amusements suited to their age. But I am persuaded that an early course of light reading is very prejudicial to sound acquirement. I am, at the same time, convinced that many of the juvenile publications now in circulation are in themselves highly valuable, from the morality they have the power of inculcating, if their purport is comprehended by their readers; but I must believe that the scenery and decorations are the chief attractions with children. I wish I could impress upon my readers, that it is not the number of books which they peruse that will make them wise, but the application of the moral; the imitation of such amiable proofs of duty, good temper, and religious conduct, as is displayed in half a thousand of the little volumes which have fallen into my hands. For my own part, I am an avowed enemy to very extensive libraries for children. Give them a few books, and let them be of the best sort. If they really love reading, they will not fail to go through them two or three times; there are few children who may not with propriety be termed superficial readers. Thus, the frequent perusal of a small, select library must consequently lay a good foundation for the watchful parent to improve; and though I am conscious there would be some difficulty in persuad-

ing children to think my plan agreeable, at first, I am so well assured of its utility, that I almost wish I had as many *tongues* to enforce my proposition as I have *eyes* to observe the many defects and foibles actually existing.

I presume that you have all heard of Argus, who in mythological history is represented as having an hundred eyes; now I, as an old woman of the present times, can assure you I have not *quite* so many; yet I will prove to you that my eyes are very piercing.

For instance, they penetrate through the thick brick wall of a certain nursery:—What a scene presents itself! A battle between a young gentleman and the nurses.

Let me be correct:—Oh! I perceive the women are holding the little tyrant's arms to prevent him from proving himself a coward, for none but cowards ever raise a hand to a female.

Now let me state the cause of this confusion.—Master Edward has asserted his right to the toy with which his brother is playing; one is an infant in arms, and is amused by the plaything, the other a boy of nine years of age.

I almost doubted my sight in this case, and actually placed my spectacles on my nose to take a more accurate view.

Alas! it is too true: the young rebel is kicking and squalling, while the dear little baby, quite unconscious of his offence, is laughing at the noise with which

he is surrounded. Churlish, selfish, childish boy, I blush for you. Dry your tears and think for a moment: are you not a poor, helpless dependent on the bounty of your parents? Regard the furniture that makes your home so comfortable, the bed on which you sleep, the bread you eat. Are you able of yourself to procure one of these conveniencies of life? No: then how dare you presume to deprive a little innocent babe of a small share of those blessings you enjoy. Your brother has not the power to express his wishes yet: and if you use your reason to exhibit feelings so unamiable, you are both cruel and undutiful; cruel, because you neglect the opportunity of making your brother happy—and undutiful in forgetting that your parents have always considered you, and have, in consequence, a right to expect in return a strict attention to their happiness, which you cannot be so ignorant as to imagine you promote when you appear in a character so truly odious.

What would you say when seated at the dinner-table, if your father was to enter the room and speak thus—"That mutton, those potatoes and pudding are mine; I see that Edward looks as though he could eat of each, but as he would like to do so, I will deprive him of them." Yet your parents' right in this case is unanswerable; but they, being influenced by reason, are anxious to contribute to your comfort; you, as less endowed with reason, are not exactly capable of acting for yourself; but there are degrees of reason,

and that of which all children are peculiarly sensible, should be your guide, namely, that you would not like to be served thus yourself. Remember your catechism, "Do unto all men as I would they should do unto me." This liberal and just maxim applies to every stage of life, and if in childhood you regard it as you ought, you will be dutiful to your parents, affectionate to your brothers and sisters, and above all, you will be doing the will of God, who seeth all hearts, and hath tenderly recommended to us to love each other.

I turn my eye from this nursery fracas and behold a drawing-room cabal. Three or four children have been permitted to amuse themselves with drawing-books, maps, picture games, &c. upon certain terms, viz. that they replace each of these sources of present pleasure in their respective places. They have agreed to the proposal: but now that the games are over and the book ceases to amuse, they are quarrelling as to the share each is to take in this very essential and necessary duty, *order*.—Perhaps you are not exactly conscious of the extent of your errors in a case of this sort; let me enumerate them for you. First then, you break your word, which is a very serious fault: Secondly, you dispute the authority of your parents. I need not remind you where you are enjoined to "Honour your father and mother:" Thirdly, you evince a very unamiable specimen of fraternal love when you argue and quarrel, where a little mutual exertion and good humour would not only make

you acceptable to your parents, but encourage them to grant you any reasonable indulgence. I beg you to reflect. You are now the happy inmates of one dwelling. Time, which is stealing from you imperceptibly, will, in the course of a few years, separate you. You will be called upon to take part in the active scenes of life, and when distance intervenes and you think of the dangers to which a brother is exposed, and remember with regret the many bickerings which occurred while ye were together, believe me your happiness will be greatly diminished; and with girls whom school, distant friends, or any other contingence removes, the same feeling will certainly recur. Death, which has equal power over all the creatures of this world, may claim you for his own. Consider this, and make it your study to live together in "brotherly love." It is by ordering yourselves lowly and affectionately, that you acquire a fit temper of mind to mix in the world. A hasty word, or a blow given to a brother or sister frequently unknown to your parents, and consequently unreproved, may establish, from habit, a violence of character which shall lead to most serious consequences. Strangers will not bear with your intemperance; they will chastise your presumption, and it is more than probable that the boy who in infancy tyrannises overs his juniors will fall a victim to false honour by becoming duellist, the most guilty and criminal of characters. In girls a disposition of the kind has an effect equally

deplorable; that gentleness of manner inseparable from a delicate mind is deformed; they are petulant, overbearing, unkind to their inferiors, and but lightly esteemed by their acquaintance. Friends are out of the question, for a tyrant has no friend. A female owning such a character, is incapable of exercising the virtues which grace her sex. The voice of distress cannot reach her ear, for the desolate fear her scornful and impatient manner; thus she is a stranger to the delights of charity. Riches fail to make her respectable, for she knows not how to dispense them; or if she is led to confer a favour, the manner of her gift may add an additional pang to her heart-stricken applicant. Not one of ye but can discern the shades in these my unamiable portraits, but do not, like the Pharisee, thank your God that you are not such. Your characters are not yet perfected; it is by adding foible to foible that they amount to errors, and errors will become vices. The word is too odious to bear reference to that class of beings for whom I am thus solicitous. But, as there is a progression in every pursuit and study in which you engage, so is there a progress in your faults; and if you suffer them to gain an ascendancy over you in early youth, it will be in vain that you look for happiness or honour in more advanced life.

I shall be greatly disappointed if I am considered rigid and severe as a Spectator; yet I am certain that I cannot expect, or hope, to please *all* my young

friends; but I candidly avow that whatever the decisions of my juvenile critics may be, I have not brought forward, nor do I mean to exhibit a character, the likeness of which has not actually fallen under my observation.

I have before made remarks on the manner in which *some* children repeat their lessons; it was *warm* weather when I wrote those pages, and I *now* beg to say something of *frosty morning* lessons. I believe we are all sensible of some degree of uncomfortableness on entering a cold room, early in the morning; but as those who *hear* a lesson, may be presumed to have the same feelings with those who *say* it, I cannot understand the necessity of their interrupting their studies, by the extraordinary information, that "it is very cold," or, "that their voices are to be changed, from the clear and smiling acquiescence, so graceful in youth, to the whine, if not the discord, of sulkiness." Can a lazy posture, and a grumbling disapprobation of that, which it has pleased God to order, either abridge your appointed business, or add to your amiability of character?—Assuredly not: then why give way to such whims? Take into your consideration, how many aged people are exposed to the inclemency of the season! How many must toil, ere they can procure a breakfast! How many children, younger than yourself, are working in the various manufactories, which our happy island supports, where they are excluded any material benefit from the com-

fort of a fire, and fare on the most homely food, and that, perhaps, in limited proportions! There are very few *real* troubles attached to childhood,—even those who are most unfortunately situated, by which I mean children, who are orphans, who depend upon precarious friendships, or are confined to sedentary employments;—even these find their hours of happiness, and, in play, a moderate recreation, or the approbation of their protectors, forget their little sorrows. Nature has wisely in this, as in all her dispensations, given a sunshine to the bosom of youth, which more than compensates for the light clouds which sometimes gather over the pillow of infancy. If children thus situated, are grateful and contented, how unpardonable are those who make troubles and repine, when they ought to rejoice. But I have really seen that, which was intended as a relaxation and kindness by a parent, received with ill-humour and ingratitude by children: I mean the instructions of masters;—for instance, the music master's lesson, on one day, is the most delightful thing in the world,—and the pupil performs *her* part correctly:—on another, she is not ready for him,—she "hates the name of music;"—"she is sure the book is misprinted, and that *she* knows best what the passage should be:" she wishes there was no such thing as music. Now, if the cause of this distaste was sought into, it would be found to be as ridiculous and ungrateful as folly could imagine. The young lady has some idea, that if this

had not been her music day, she should have been able to go out with her mamma in the carriage, or have been at liberty to prosecute some more delightful, because *newer* occupation.

It is a very general error with children, to ridicule their masters; I know no foible more reprehensible, or more likely to deprive them of the advantages to be derived from their instructions.

As it is to be supposed, that parents always assure themselves of the capacity of the persons whom they engage, it must be evident to these very *discerning* little judges, that in that branch of science which they profess to teach, they must be superior to their pupils. If your dancing-master gives you the necessary rules for walking, attends to the ease of your figure, and teaches you the steps usual and proper for a gentlewoman to adopt, it is of no consequence to you, whether he speaks good English, dresses fashionably, or has an odd-looking countenance;—he does his part in attending to these points, and as *he* concludes he has been engaged to instruct the daughters of respectable families,—pray do not disappoint him, by forgetting yourselves. I might speak of all masters, individually, but I shall confine myself to the unfortunate French master. I see my readers smile,—boys as well as girls. Each of you recollect a Monsieur somebody, who is the oddest creature in the world;—one remembers a long-nosed Monsieur; another, such a starved looking animal:—one boy recollects the good

jokes he has put upon an odious French usher;—another smiles at his stupid English, &c. &c. Can any thing be more contemptible than conduct of this sort, when duly considered? The French language has become very general in this country since the Revolution, and the manner in which it is now spoken by the English is very superior to our former acquirements in the language. This is to be imputed to the distresses and necessities to which well-educated Frenchmen and French women have been reduced;—and is that laudable spirit of industry, which has led them to exert their talents for their support, to make them the objects of our ridicule? I blush, while I put my hand to a record, so unworthy of a free and generous people: nor could any thing but my love of truth induce me to pursue the subject further.

National prejudices, by which is understood a dislike to a person, merely because he is born in France, or in Ireland, or any other country, of which we entertain a mean opinion—when grown people exhibit a feeling of this sort, we are led to suppose, that they have some reasons for their conduct; but children, to whom I address myself, are very easily led to actions truly unbecoming, without an idea of the consequences to which their folly may subject them; or any other motive for their prejudices than the force of imitation. Many of you, if strictly questioned, "why you disliked a Frenchman," would appear very ridiculous in your replies. I remember once being present

where a boy had vented his excessive dislike to the French, when a lady asked him, "What were his objections to them?" The young gentleman paused; "Why they are so thin," said he.—"Have you no other accusation to bring?" retorted the lady.—"Yes; they talk so quick, and can eat any thing," rejoined the little critic. "The form of their bodies does not depend upon themselves," observed the lady;—"The facility with which they speak, is no argument against them, but rather a characteristic of their country; they are lively and animated, and their language admits of a fluency, which our's does not. I do not agree with you that they can eat any thing; they are less difficult in their food, and by no means so much addicted to gluttony as the English: and indeed this quality is much in their favour, in *my* opinion; while to *you*, who dislike them so much, it must be cause of satisfaction, that they will not interfere with the *good* things of which we English think so much." The boy looked angry, and with some boldness, added, "That they spoke such foolish English, that *he* could not help laughing, whenever a Frenchman pretended to think he understood it. "Yet, I can assure you," continued the lady, "were you in France, and expressed yourself inelegantly in *their* language, they would not be disposed to be rude; on the contrary, they would make judicious allowances for your *ignorance* and with affability, assist you to understand whatever could conduce to your comfort." "Then I hate

them, because they are Frenchmen," said this little prejudiced mortal. The lady, smiling, dropped the argument, mildly adding, "that such a decision was unanswerable, as neither reason nor humanity could convince a person so unfortunately deficient in common sense." I saw the young gentleman looked very angry, but he did not venture any more remarks.

Yet, I fear, silly as this boy must appear, there are a *few* young reasoners, who could give no better explanation of their distaste to Frenchmen, than those I have exhibited. I would certainly recommend to the young of both sexes, the love of their country: in a boy, it leads to those researches in history, which must ultimately form the mind, and polish the manners, and in whatever situation of life he may chance to stand, a knowledge of that constitution he is born to support, is absolutely necessary to him as a man ; —while girls, by contrasting the character of women, (in times, when their pursuits were very distinct to those of the present day,) may, by a just habit of thinking, acquire a knowledge of the capability and powers of the female mind, so amply illustrated in a Jane Grey, a Lady Russel, &c. &c. &c. But if our reading is to answer no other purpose than to beguile the present hour, if we enter into society, with all the weak prejudices that are inseparable from the vain and ignorant, we are indeed a very inferior people, and by no means an honour to our country.

I know that it would be almost impossible to convince a school-boy, who is turning over the pages of the Grecian and Roman Histories, that there was much to condemn in those characters, whose deeds of heroic valour so completely captivate a young mind; yet a tyrant is a tyrant, in whatever clime he exerts his power.

It is highly criminal to attach particular defects of character generally; if we are at the trouble to understand the dispositions of those with whom we associate, it will rarely happen that some trait of worth does not soften the human portrait, and it is the beauty of virtue to be seeking the good, rather than anticipating the errors, of a fellow-creature.

"What a dull chapter," says one of my yawning readers:—"Dear, Mrs. Argus," says another, "I really expected, from the opening of this chapter, that you were going to tell us a story."

In pity to your exhausted patience, I will close this tedious paper, which, even to myself, appears rather desultory,—not much unlike the frog, in the fable, who hopped about from "bank to bank." Yet I cannot forbear one wish, which is, that my little friends, like the "steady snail," may always persevere in the path of duty, for duty is the basis of every virtue; a dutiful child must have an affectionate heart, for the best feelings of the mind are matured by the practice of duty. Thus generous friendships and li-

beral sentiments are the natural blossoms of a well-regulated mind, which has too much pride to adopt an opinion unsanctioned by observation and reflection; and too much humility to dare to "judge," when it has been enjoined us not to "judge, lest we be judged."

CHAP. X.

"Be wise to-day, 'tis madness to defer."

I have often, and with sincere pleasure, contemplated the features of children, when an expected happiness, or an agreeable surprise, has animated their countenances; but none of ye, however grateful, could look or feel more pleased than I did, when, on entering my breakfast-room this morning, I discovered a letter, with the ——— post mark. I forgot my buttered toast; the urn continued singing most sonorously:—I heeded neither, but clearing my spectacles, I broke the seal, and read as follows:

To Mrs. Argus.

My dear Madam,

I have conquered, and gained two new friends into the bargain. Charles Osborn brought five or six boys into my study last night, just as I had begun to write to my mother. They made a great row at first, and I could not make myself heard for some time; at last I told them that I did not come there to be taught my duty by them;—that my study was my own, and I would do as I pleased in it;—that I loved my mother too well to make her unhappy, and would write to her and all my friends whenever I pleased. Charles Osborn made a snatch at my letter, but I soon got it from him, and gave him a hearty thrashing. He blubbered at first, and asked the boys to help him to give me a drubbing. I don't know whether they would have joined him, for just at that time, my chum, Dennis O'Brien, with Lord George M——, came to the door and inquired the cause of the row. I told them exactly how it was, and they both agreed that I was in the right; Dennis declared he would defend my cause against the whole school, and Lord George insisted that I was a true Englishman, because I considered my study as my castle, and would not yield to intruders. While we were arguing the business, one of the masters came up, and Lord George explained the whole to him. He was very kind, and recommended me always to continue steady in my duty to my parents. He sent the others away, and this morn-

ing, while Osborn and his party were quizzing me, O'Brien and Lord George who heard it, came forward. My lord made such a good speech, that I am sure he will be a great man in time; and Dennis spoke very clever; but I thanked them both, and told them I hoped they would always be my friends; but that I knew I could fight my own way in this business. They seemed to like me the better for this, and Mr. Wardon, the master I mentioned, told me to day that he approved of my conduct. I hope you will think I have done right; I have seized the first moment to tell you these particulars, and

I remain, dear madam,

Your's, respectfully,

WILLIAM MORDAUNT.

P. S. I forgot to say that I have written to my grandmother, as well my mother; and will not fail to answer any letter you may be so kind as to send me.

This letter, as my young friends will very readily believe, proved perfectly satisfactory to me, and I used an early opportunity to assure him of my approbation. When we reflect upon the advantages this child gained by an exertion of his reason, and see how completely insignificant the blustering prejudices of his antagonists appear, it must be obvious to every discerning mind that none but weak and cowardly

spirits yield up their opinions without a due consideration of their subject. William Mordaunt stood upon a precipice, and, had he not submitted to be directed, would have joined that thoughtless and unamiable band, whose object is to make others as unhappy as themselves; for that any person can be happy who acts contrary to duty and humanity is impossible.

My breakfast was scarcely removed, when my servant handed me a salver containing three letters. I will transcribe them in the order in which I perused them.

To Mrs. Argus.

Madam,

I have waited much longer than I intended to do, because I was ashamed to address you till I had conquered my foolish habits; and I have now the pleasure of assuring you, that my mamma has not had occasion to reprove me for my manner of sitting for more than a week, so I hope I have got the better of this fault; indeed I have been so happy as to please her very much during the last fortnight, and she says it is not vanity in me to tell you so. I have always been particular in placing my chair *even* and sitting in the *centre* of it, and whenever I have found myself *leaning*, or *twisting* my ancles round each other, I have suddenly caught myself and remembered that I had said, "I *wished* to conquer the foible." We have

been very much grieved at parting with our brother, who is gone to school, but he has written us word he is quite happy, and the master has called upon my mamma, and speaks so well of him that we are quite delighted about it. My sisters mean to fill up the paper, so I must conclude

I am, dear madam,

Your's, very respectfully,

FANNY MORDAUNT.

My dear MADAM,

Fanny did not explain to you how very much I have wished to write to you, but to be sure I was a little ashamed how to begin, or else I could have told you a fortnight ago that I tried your method and gave up all lessons for a week; but oh! how tired I was. I got all my bits of silk, and began to make pincushions; that would not do, for I had nobody to advise me about the shapes and the prettiest colours; well then I took my playthings, and made a baby house, but I could not talk to the chairs, and my sisters were engaged with their masters; I had told my mamma that I wished to have a whole week to myself and she gave me leave, and said she was certain it was the best plan, for she had read your letter. All my books and maps had been locked up at her desire; so I could not read, nor amuse myself with tracing the maps I got so sleepy of an afternoon that I was forced to go to bed before six o'clock

every evening; and you cannot think how vexed I was one morning, when I found that two young ladies had been at our house the evening before, and had danced reels with my sisters while my mamma played to them; was not this very vexatious? But though I tried to keep my eyes open the next night, I could not, and then I lost something, for my grandmamma came to tea, and I always love to be with her; but perhaps she would have found out that I had been idle, and would have talked to me about it. Now you see, madam, that I did as you desired, though I certainly did not understand your meaning then; it is quite plain to me now. You knew that being idle would tire me much more than my lessons could; and indeed you are right, for I have been very regular at my studies ever since, and am now very happy indeed, for my mamma is pleased with me, and I have had good tickets from my masters, almost every day. Please to tell me if you approve of my having a half holiday once a week; I shall be very much obliged to you; but pray do not order me to be idle again, for I never was so unhappy in my life. Lucy has a great deal to tell you, so I must bid you good bye.

I am, dear madam,

Your's respectfully,

HARRIET MORDAUNT.

Dear MADAM,

I wish I could write better, because what I have to tell you is much prettier than any story I ever read, for it is quite true. I never will keep my money bright any more, for indeed it is very useful. My mamma took us to a nursery ground one day last week; and while she was chusing some flowers, Harriet and I ran about the gardens. Well, do you know that we saw an old man with white hair, and two big girls, sitting upon the ground, eating cold potatoes; so I did not know what to think of it, and I stood looking at them. At last I said that "I thought potatoes were much nicer roasted," and I asked them why they eat them cold. The old man smiled, and said, "they were certainly much better hot, but that they were glad to get them any how." Are these all the dinner you will have to day? said Harriet. They said it was. So I asked them why they dined so soon, for it was only twelve o'clock, and the poor old man told me, that he and his two daughters had been at work ever since four in the morning. "Had you no luncheon?" said I. They said, "No." "What will you have for tea and for supper?" said Harriet. Only think how shocking, madam! they told us that a draught of water and a slice of bread must serve for their tea, and a few warm potatoes, and perhaps a little beer for supper. Just then, my mamma came down the walk, and I whispered to her, how

sorry I was that I had not my purse with me, but she said she would lend me whatever sum I wanted. So I borrowed a seven shilling piece, and asked the old man if he would accept of it. Oh! if you had but seen how thankful he was; I never knew, till then, that happiness could make people cry. Harriet and I could not help crying when we saw the tears run down the poor man's cheeks, and his daughters blessing us, and thanking us; yet I was not uncomfortable while I cried, which is very odd, for I always used to feel uneasy when I had occasion to cry. My mamma talked with the poor man, and we found that he had a wife at home very lame with the rheumatism. So mamma got her direction, and we bade them good bye. Well, then the coach was ordered to go to the poor woman's house. You cannot think what a mean room it was in which she lived! she was quite surprised, when we all got out of the carriage, and went into the house. She could not rise out of her seat, on account of her lameness, but she talked very sensibly with my mamma. While we were looking about us, and thinking how shocking it was for her to be lame, and have nobody to take care of her, one of the young girls we had seen in the garden came running into the room. "My dear mother," says she, "I have brought you a bit of meat." But when she saw we were there, she stopped. Only think madam, the poor creature had not tasted meat for more than a week, and if you had seen how joyfully she looked at

it I am sure you would have cried as we did. I cannot tell you all that my mamma said; but she gave the poor woman a one pound note, and told her she would send our doctor to see her, and we are to go again next week. I paid my mamma the seven shilling piece when we got home, but I have got three crowns and seven half-crowns left, so I shall buy some flannel for the poor woman and a pair of strong shoes for the old man, and I will not forget to take my purse in my pocket when we go the next time. Money is indeed very useful; what you said about it is just like what my grandmamma said when William was going to school. Really, I think you are very much like my grandmamma. There was a great deal more happened that morning, but I cannot describe it. I hope you will excuse my writing such a long letter, but I thought you would like to know that I had found out some of the ways in which money may be used.

I am, dear madam,

Very respectfully, yours,

LUCY MORDAUNT.

I hope I have in every respect proved myself an impartial spectator, and that I shall be forgiven when I declare that the letter of Lucy Mordaunt appeared to me highly interesting. There was a naturalness in her mode of expression, a simplicity so characteristic, that I actually shed tears over its artless contents; while the letters of her sisters, as exhibiting

evident proofs of their sincere desire to correct their faults, were very gratifying to me. It must be obvious to my readers, that my grandchildren had perfectly comprehended the nature of my advice by the manner in which they had conducted themselves. There was one remark in the letter of Fanny on which I dwelt with much satisfaction; namely, that she recollected having said, that "she wished to conquer her bad habit of sitting." Trifling as this may appear to a superficial observer, it is, upon reflection, a very conclusive argument in favour of her principles as well as understanding. It is so easy to say a thousand things which bear a correct import without the least attention to their meaning, that I cannot forbear recommending to all my readers to pause on this subject a little.

"I wish I could get the better of this foible," says a young lady whose mother had reproved her for a very inelegant custom of lolling on the dinner-table; "but I shall lose it as I grow older if you would let me dine with you every day, mamma; I am sure I should soon forget it." "With whom do you usually take your meals, Maria," said the lady. Maria blushed. "Why, indeed, mamma," said the unsteady Maria, "my governess does teaze me so while I am at dinner with her, that she is quite a torment to me." "I dislike the expression, Maria," replied the lady, "and very much regret that you consider the good wishes and kind attentions of Miss Richards so lightly.

So far from thinking your remark reasonable, or that you would conquer this foible by being admitted to my table, I should feel I did the greatest injustice to Miss Richards in complying with your request, and could never expect you to be attentive to my wishes while you dispute the capability and intentions of the person whom my approbation and esteem has appointed to take the immediate charge of my daughter. Nay, I should certainly disgrace you on every opportunity, by observing to all who noticed your awkwardness, that you were self-willed and above advice."

Now had Maria, like Fanny Mordaunt, been really desirous of obliging her friends, had she seriously set about reforming her manners, this just rebuke of her mother's had not reached her ear. That silly compliment which she had hoped would gain her point, like all unmeaning expressions, led to her humiliation; and did all mothers repel these little attempts at finesse with the same firmness, I am induced to believe that children would be more happy, and parents more generally obeyed. It is a most erroneous idea that youth may delay. Are you acquainted with the number of your days? Hath Providence unfolded to you how long you have to live? Assuredly not. Then consider this, ye who cavil with time; seize the moment in your power, and let duty grace all your actions. There is no fault too trivial not to deserve correction, nor any error of which we truly repent, to which the God of mercy will not incline a willing ear.

I must not omit to make some comment on Harriet's epistle. How delighted I was to perceive that the little idler had discovered the value of time. I do not fear her relapsing into her former habits, for I believe it is almost impossible for those who have experienced that soothing consciousness which arises from the performance of our duties to forego its calm delights.

The next epistle which came under my consideration was from Miss Wilmot; and to use the language of the infant library, "see here it is:"

To Mrs. ARGUS.

My dear MADAM,

I can never thank you sufficiently for your very kind advice. My papa very fortunately acquainted me a few days after I wrote to you, that he was going to marry Mrs. Dalton. I attended to all he said on the subject, and then explained to him how undutiful and prejudiced I had been; he was very kind to me, and took much trouble to make me sensible of the danger of all prejudices. But he greatly surprized me by saying, Mrs. Dalton had been much distressed by my manner towards her; that she understood my feelings perfectly, and was made very unhappy by the idea of becoming the mother of a child who appeared determined not to love her. This gave me much uneasiness, as I really had no reasons for my conduct but those which my nurse had represented

to me. I did not mention Jones to my papa as I thought he would be displeased with her, and, indeed, I recollected my promise to her. I asked my papa if I might name what he had told me to Mrs. Arnold; he gave me leave, and the next morning after I had had a long conversation with my governess on the subject, I begged her to walk with me to Mrs. Dalton's house. I cannot explain all that passed. She listened to me with much kindness, and though I did not betray even to her who had been the cause of my very improper behaviour towards her, I am certain she attributed it to the right person. We parted on the best terms possible, and a few days afterwards she became my mamma. You cannot imagine, madam, how happy we are. I continue to make breakfast as usual, and Mrs. Arnold is just of my opinion that there cannot be a more amiable woman than my mamma. Nurse Jones told me the other day not to fret, as I had a fortune of my own when I came of age, and could then live with whoever I chose. But I took that opportunity of explaining myself, and entreated her never to name the subject again, as I was quite ashamed of ever having listened to it. She cried very much, and said she meant every thing for my good. But even Jones has changed her opinion now, and yesterday declared that she believed her mistress was a very good sort of woman. I hope she will continue to think so, for I should be much grieved to part with her, as my own mamma requested she might

always remain in the family. Mrs. Arnold expressed herself so much like yourself, madam, when I first told her my foolish prejudices, and, indeed, Mrs. Dalton's sentiments were very similar, that I now clearly perceive that all good people think alike on this fault. I shall in future be very cautious how I take dislikes, for I perceive it is very ungenerous; and though I certainly love Nurse Jones, I shall content myself in giving her proofs of my regard, but will never listen to her advice in matters which do not belong to her office. I thought you would like to hear that I had profited by your kindness, and must now only beg to add, that I am your greatly obliged and very obedient servant,

SOPHIA WILMOT.

I was much elated as I reflected on the uniform and happy improvement so visible in the mind and manners of my amiable correspondents. I was not so vain as to imagine that *my* advice alone had effected these happy consequences; as well might we expect a sandy desart to become spontaneously fruitful. No: I perceived, with grateful delight, that I had been employed in the culture of a favourable soil, engaged in assisting the blossoms of virtue to expand, to cast aside the noxious weeds which would in time have grown up and wholly destroyed the fair promises of original intellect.

And, again, I am obliged to enlarge upon the great

danger of all sorts of prejudice. In the particular case of Miss Wilmot, this evil would inevitably have rendered her unhappy in herself, and unamiable to those whom providence has made her natural guardians. The motives of her nurse might very probably be well intended; but while I would recommend kindness and humanity to every domestic in your family, I would guard you against an implicit confidence or weak adoption of opinions, which neither the education nor observations of this class of persons qualifies them to offer. I am so well assured, that many thoughtless children have been led to conduct of the most undutiful kind, on reasons as unfounded as those which had nearly proved fatal to Miss Wilmot, that I cannot but offer this fact to the consideration of my readers as one very deserving of their serious attention.

The remaining letter was from Mr. Testy, and as I am tempted to believe that many of ye are more amused by them, than by my lectures, I am not so ungenerous as to suppress what may give pleasure.

To Mrs. Argus.

Madam,

Being once more in possession of my house I embrace the earliest opportunity of submitting my recent grievances to your consideration. I had fully imagined that my unequivocal disapprobation of my young visitors' conduct would have induced their mother to restrain them, in a degree, during the remainder of their

visit.—I was mistaken. To all my hints she invariably replied—"Dear creatures, this is their season; let them enjoy the present moment." "They have no enjoyment," said I; "do you not perceive that they are constantly projecting some new plan, and never satisfied when they have effected it. Why not inculcate the necessity rather of using than abusing time." "Cousin, cousin," said my kinswoman, "you quite forget your own youth; were you always consistent?" "I was like other boys, no doubt," said I, "often in the wrong; but I do not remember any period of my life, while blessed by the protection of my parents, that I disputed their commands, or had the vanity to speak and vaunt opinions that were presuming." There was a custom in my youth which seems now quite out of use—that of reproving a child for a fault. I do not think hard measures justifiable; but if children are laughed at when they should be admonished, and petted when they should experience a temporary banishment from your presence, all sense of duty and respect must be effaced from their minds; and, indeed, I am persuaded, madam, that more mischief is done by laughing at the *wit* of children than people generally imagine. Nay, I have seen this mistaken applause lead them into the heinous crime of falsehood, in order to have a good saying ready for the company. The species of falsehood to which I refer is that of passing off as your own, what you have read in some of those silly compilations

called 'Encyclopædias of Wit:' there cannot be a more contemptible sort of vanity, nor one more likely to lead the retailer into the most humiliating situations. I would remind the boy, (for I am positive this foible must be confined to the *masculine* gender) who is thus prone, to look into the Iliad of Homer, who says,—

"Nothing's so tedious as a twice told tale."

This is a feeling of which many are sensible, though politeness seals their lips.

Now my cousin's boys were wits, and they very courageously attempted to pass some of their counterfeit coin upon me.—"I am very sorry you have devoted your time to such light reading," said I, to a well applied *jeu d'esprit* of one of them.—"*I* say so, cousin," said the boy,—"But the *book* said so before you," said I, and I placed the volume before him. He looked angrily at me, but his kind mother did away all my rebuke, by observing, that next to the actual saying of a good thing, its just application was the best proof of wit: thus the boy remains satisfied with his own talents, and of course considers me a very ill-natured, not to say very ignorant, old fellow.

But I feel that I am intruding upon your invaluable time, madam, and will only beg to subjoin a statement of the expenses to which my young visitors have put me. I am rather eccentric, I own, and as such, have inclosed an exact copy of what follows, to my cousin,

who will, I trust, see my motives in a just point of view, and give me the happiness, when she next introduces her sons to me, of making a balance more in favour, and more congenial to my feelings, than that which I have recently dispatched to her.

Edward & Joseph B—— Drs.

To Timothy Testy.

	£.	s.	d.
To damaging the lid of a Tea-urn, by unnecessary pressures, &c.	0	3	6
To breaking 3 Chairs, in a poney race	0	15	6
To demolishing a China Jar, the gift of my dear mother	4	14	0
To expense of repairing Chimney, viz. Sweepers, Brooms, &c. not mentioning the alarm	1	5	0
To a new Looking-glass, shot at with a pea-shooter, Ned being a good marksman	7	10	0
To playing Cricket in the Hall, and thereby breaking the Hall Lamp, though expressly forbidden	3	3	0
Total	17	11	0
Memorandum, intended to have bought Ned a Poney,—prized one at Tattersall's—asked—deduct	14	14	0
Balance due £.	2	17	0

I have no doubt but my cousin will be very angry, when she receives my bill; but as I really have much esteem for her, and her boys will, in the course of

time, become the inheritors of my property, I wish her to understand me, and shall be very happy if she takes the hint, and permits me to esteem those, whom it is sincerely my intention to serve. If my letter should not appear too tedious, you may perhaps take the trouble of inserting it in your purposed publication; it may be of service to rash philosophers and would-be wits:—but I leave this to the discretion of Mrs. Argus, to whom I beg to subscribe myself, a very sincere friend, and well-wisher,

TIMOTHY TESTY.

I felt no hesitation in complying with the request of this gentleman, nor need I make any comment on the contents of his letter. Whimsical as Mr. Testy's manner may appear, I yet discover much justness of reasoning, and a very kind interest in the real happiness of his relations. Children, I believe, very rarely consider those persons their friends, whose candour leads them to tell them of their faults, and it is so usual for people to smile, and commend the follies of childhood, in the presence of their parents, that I certainly can make some allowance for the disappointment their little vanities experience, when a *real* friend ventures to speak the truth.

Edward and Joseph B—— are by this time apprized of their cousin's sentiments, and as a poney is an object of much consideration with boys, they are, perhaps, now vainly regretting their imbecile and babyish

horsemanship in the drawing-room of Mr. Testy. I should be glad to hear that they profited by his humourous statement, and I have that opinion of the liberality of their relation, that should they attend to his advice, he will give me the pleasure of acquainting my little friends of a circumstance, always so grateful to my feelings. I dispatched my answers to each of the foregoing epistles, and being somewhat fatigued with writing, I walked to my daughter's. I found Mrs. Mordaunt descending from the drawing-room, in order to see the children dine, and accompanying her into the eating-room, I took my station near the table; there were two young ladies added to the family, whose names I did not immediately recollect, though their features appeared familiar to me. My daughter, however, introduced them as the Miss Barlows, and I now made my inquiries concerning their family. The dinner was simple, and in every respect suited to the little party; but, as I am an avowed *Spectator*, I must not omit to give my sentiments faithfully.

My granddaughter Fanny was seated at the head of the table, and carved the joint placed before her, with much ease and delicacy, by which I mean, that she did not seem to consider it as a very fatiguing business, nor was she so awkward as to spill the gravy, &c. &c. I observed that the Miss Barlows ate very sparingly, and heard Helen, the younger of the two, whisper Harriet, and ask if she never ordered her

own dinners. Harriet looked much surprised, and answered in the negative.—"Only think how droll," said my little unguarded Harriet,—"the Miss Barlows have what they like for dinner." "Because we are very delicate," said Miss Barlow,—"and do not like mutton." Mrs. Mordaunt immediately ordered some cold chicken to be brought to table for these young epicures, and I beheld with astonishment, that they devoured it, without an idea of the impropriety and indelicacy of their behaviour; while, with real delight, I perceived on the countenances of the little Mordaunts timid blushes, and very comprehensive looks glanced at each other. These *delicate* young ladies gave us a very copious example of their powers in the eating way; for my own part, I was really afraid they would be injured by their excess, and as gluttony is in itself a most gross and degrading propensity, I was not in the least surprised at the accompanying inelegancies which marked the manners of the Barlows:—they talked loudly during the whole of the meal;—spoke with their mouths full;—handled the bones of the chicken;—and made so great a noise with their lips, that I was really pained at letting such glaring foibles pass unnoticed; but I committed each of them to memory, determined to enlarge on their very odious appearance, and serious tendency on their characters, as females. I must not omit to state, that the *knife* was more frequently used by these ladies, than the *fork;*—that they drank without wiping their

mouths, and bit their bread in place of breaking it. Besides which, they more than once remarked, during dinner, "how much they *loved* chicken, and curry and asparagus," &c. &c.

The Mordaunts never appeared to such advantage, as on the present occasion. Fanny sat irresolute, and after some hesitation, asked her visitors if they would eat a bit of rice-pudding? This, as may be supposed, was declined. I saw Mrs. Mordaunt was on the point of ordering something better; but I discouraged the intention by a glance, thinking she had already shewn too much deference to these bold girls.—"Well, I declare I am very glad that I like what my mamma orders for us," said Lucy, "for I suppose she knows best what is good for us." This remark was certainly rather impolite, but the Miss Barlows were not in the least discomposed by it, they continuing to express their liking and dislike to various dishes, of which my grandchildren knew not even the names. The little party followed Mrs. Mordaunt and myself to the drawing room, and, as I expected these young ladies would elicit some other traits of character during their visit, I was very particular in observing them.

"How happy you must be," said Miss Barlow, to Fanny Mordaunt, "you have not a teazing governess to watch you, and tell tales of you." Before Fanny cou'd arrange a reply, Helen added,—"Have you ever *writ* to that ugly old woman, the *Spectator*?

I will always hate her; for do you know that Eliza and *me* writ her a letter, and told her how we hated governesses,—and she has sent us such an impudent answer, all about charity and grammar, and such stuff;—but the worst of it is, she made mamma get us a governess, for she liked the letter, but she cannot make us like Mrs. Pattin; so Eliza and *me* often call her the old Spectator, and she don't know what we mean, and we make such fun of her."

Here the Mordaunts, as if actuated by one voice, interrupted the talkative and illiberal Helen:—but their praises and their gratitude were so flattering I dare not repeat them, lest my readers should consider me a *vain* Spectator;—yet I can assure you, that I felt my cheeks glow with blushes, as they thus added to my *spectatorial* laurels, and it was with some difficulty I refrained from embracing, and thanking them as *I* thought they deserved.

I rather imagine these little tatlers observed my countenance, for the rest of their conversation was carried on in a loud whisper; but the Mordaunts invariably replied in a voice perfectly to be understood; indeed this was a point in which their mother had always been very particular. She, with myself, deeming the very usual habit of whispering amongst children, as a custom of the most vulgar sort.

Two or three attempts were made by Helen Barlow, to rouse the little Lucy to assert her right to some particular toy, with which the others were engaged.

"If it is your own," said Helen, "say you want it, —I would if I was you." "We had better wait," replied Lucy, "for I have been made quite ashamed of being selfish since Mrs. Argus has written to me." "How can you like that cross old woman?" rejoined Helen, "I declare I cannot bear her name. Why our nursery-maid, Jenny Bennet, went away because she advised her to go; and was it not very impertinent of a *servant* to write to the Spectator?" "I am sure I don't know," said Lucy;—"come what shall we play at?" Just at this moment Harriet joined them, and with all that liveliness which marks her character, proposed a number of plays, to none of which her visitor assented; "Pray what do you like?" asked the little madcap. "Why something new," said Miss Helen; "I am quite tired of all *them* you have named." "Then pray invent one," said Harriet; "and be quick, or all the day will be gone before we fix upon what we shall do." I saw Miss Helen did not much like the playfulness of my granddaughter; whether it damped her powers of invention, or from what other cause I know not, but they never arrived at the happiness of a decision; while Helen was yet debating on the subject, their carriage was announced; and I, with secret satisfaction, saw the Miss Barlows depart.

Before I say more of the foibles of these children I will beg to make a general appeal to my readers.

Have ye not all of you experienced the feeling I have recently described? viz. been so much at a loss to find an amusement, in which each takes mutual pleasure, that the moment for separation has arrived, before you have come to an agreement. I see the blushes and the looks of reflection, which agitate my little friends;—you are all *guilty* in part; but you remember that if it had not been for Miss M— or Miss D— it would have been decided very soon. Perhaps you are correct, and it is well, if your youthful memories does not bring it more home, and, you are spared the recollection that you were the dissentient voice. It might not be so easy to prove to you that these irresolute purposes and half-formed plans are lessons of wisdom in disguise, early lessons of the imperfection of all earthly emjoyments; and that they prove most forcibly to you that *we* are very incompetent to judge of what will make us happy, while they equally teach us not to waste the present moment in unmeaning argument, but by using them innocently, prove our gratitude to Him who hath "numbered our days."

I am persuaded that I have very little occasion to recur to the subject of gluttony, so unfortunately conspicuous in the character of the Miss Barlows; but as I believe there may be *some* children who have a very favourable idea of *nice* dishes and good things, and that, perhaps, a few have been so imprudent as to interrupt their mother, while giving her orders to the cook, by an

anxious desire for a very rich pudding, or the remains of some well-remembered luxury now dismissed from the first table, I beg them to pause on this very unamiable foible; not one of you but will readily perceive how improper the conduct of the Miss Barlows has appeared in this our Chapter. But though I am led to hope that there are very few children like them in all particulars, yet let us not forget the "beam in our own eye," while we are quick to discover "the mote in that of our brother."

That girls of their disposition should be insensible to the kindness of their mother, in engaging a governess to take charge of them, is not in the least surprising, or that they should continue to express themselves in language so ungrammatical is not extraordinary; they are ignorant and self-willed, and unfortunately are indulged by their mother in many points which tend to retard their improvement. Could they be convinced of their errors, and gently directed to that path in which certain success attends their journey, by which I mean, "the path of duty," they might yet become happy and worthy of regard.

If I had not been so fortunate as to have given a very pleasing contrast to these faulty characters in the beginning of this Chapter, I should really have owned much regret at the occasion which brought these little actresses upon our juvenile stage; but as I trust, equally to the humanity as to the liberality of

my audience, I am convinced that they will pity the errors of ignorance, and be duly grateful that they possess friends who are watchful and diligent for them.

CHAP. XI.

To learn easily is naturally pleasant to all men.
ARISTOTLE.

AYE, and to all women too, not omitting to name girls and boys,—but how to learn easily? that is the question! Why really, my dear little friends, I am tempted to venture a very bold opinion, and say, that it is, with a few exceptions, a very easy matter. I grant that we must begin early and be very strict examiners of ourselves, never passing over a lesson with slovenly haste, nor receiving too much assistance from those who hear us. The *temper* of mind with which we apply ourselves to any thing, generally illustrates itself in the manner of its performance; if we regard the appointed task as a great deal *too* long, and are

rather anxious to count the lines than learn them, I prophesy that the lesson will be bad; if, with a presumption, *sometimes* an accompaniment of youth, we are detecting the *author's* ignorances, when we should prove our wisdom by imbibing his sentiments, why here, it is impossible we can gain much, our vanity places us above the instructions of the writer, whose greatest degradation is his having fallen into the hands of a self-sufficient and half-learned critic. It fatigues, oppresses us, and we are forced to lean on the table, with our elbows spread and the fingers *occasionally* making a tour through the hair, every person possessed of *feeling* will compassionate our situation, and take into their consideration that we have many things to do. But there are *some* people who think one can have no occasion for supports of this kind, and who will insist upon it that sitting upright, and *even* in one's chair, gives a seriousness to the deportment that helps the lesson; now is it not possible to shew these ill-natured things, that one will not do *exactly* as they say—have none of you thought of an invention?—ah! I see you have; there are a great number of smiles bestowed upon this page, and I hope some few blushes! for I can develope your plans, whether male or female reader. It is so easy to sit a little to the right, or a little to the left, and thus avoid the crime of *obedience*, and though you may take your elbow off the table, you can continue just to touch it, never mind any little pain you may expe-

rience from the cramped *position* in which you hold your arm, the *pleasure* of proving to your teacher, that you have a *will* of your own, will amply repay you for any inconvenience of the kind; and a boy of courage, he, too, knows how to play his part: If his tutor dares to think he has not taken sufficient time to learn his lesson, he hesitates to receive the book, 'is sure he knows it," &c. &c. If, at last, he is forced to take the book, he looks any where but into it, and with all a dunce's courage again offers himself to be heard; the result may be easily guessed, he says it incorrectly, stands twisting his buttons, or rubbing the table with his coat-sleeve, and if his tutor is properly persevering, he not only gets his book again but his task doubled.

Seriously then, my little friends, you want the proper sort of courage when you look upon books as your enemies, and consider lessons as punishments: Quintilian, an ancient author, speaking of children, says, "there is no time of life which is less easily fatigued;" the remark is very just, whether applied to their personal or mental exertions: if the little journeys of children could be accurately calculated, I am persuaded, that in the course of a day, it would be found even very young children walk many miles; and with respect to the powers of the mind, they must be exercised in order to ascertain its capabilities; the earlier we begin the important task of education, the more pleasant will the work appear, and though I

would certainly recommend to all persons who instruct children, to make it as agreeable to them as possible, I do not entirely approve of a custom now very prevalent, that of making almost every branch of learning a play; with children of dull understandings, it may be necessary to adopt such plans, but I really think it is an offence to an intelligent child, to lead him by any than that sense of duty which should impel every creature to seek knowledge, on whom God has bestowed reason; and that all who apply themselves to learning, may, in a degree, acquire that pleasure which is so fully expressed in the motto prefixed to this Chapter, is a truth which has been and is continually offering itself to our observation: how many persons born in obscurity, and reared in ignorance, have, on a sudden, become intense students, and ultimately arrived at excellence.

Yet are the progressive footsteps to knowledge those from which we expect most;—how gratefully we look upon the flowers which bloom in the spring season; we reflect with conscious delight, that we have done our part in preparing the earth to receive them, and we anticipate the perfection of that *summer*, whose early promise thus flatters our care, and from the mind which has been sedulously cultivated, the purest and most graceful blossoms of science may reasonably be expected. Yet, that late education has produced men of great talents, is an unquestionable fact, amongst others, the learned Joseph Scaliger,

whose application was of the most extraordinary kind; it is recorded of him, that he learned all Homer by heart in twenty-one days, the Iliad, containing 31,670 verses, and the Odyssey, about the same number, and in a few months, most of the other Greek poets. As a contrast to him I will mention the great Erasmus, who when a boy had all Terence and Horace by heart.

There are few circumstances which retard the progress of children more effectually than that of pressing *too* much upon their memories in very early youth; yet the necessity of exercising this faculty of the mind, must be obvious to all my young friends; many of whom, I have no doubt, will agree with me, that the more frequently they exercise their memories the greater the facility with which they learn.

That which we acquire by labour is not easily lost, the impression it makes is deep and lasting; and while I would reject the idea of fatiguing or harrassing the spirits of a child by very long lessons, I beg to make myself clearly understood. The pupil should submit to the decisions of the teacher, and use his or her exertions to attain the task appointed, and not reject it without a trial;—setting out upon a plan, in effect resembling the following: viz. "that they are sure it is to much," "that they never had so much to learn before;" "that grown people have no consideration for children;" &c. &c. First prove to your instructors, that they were wrong in having estimated your

abilities so highly, and there can be no doubt but *they* will in future adapt lessons more suited to the weakness of your capacities.

If I had purposed to swell this work to the extent of two or three volumes, I am much afraid that I could not fully express myself on one subject,—a subject so important to the capacities of the young, that I am really very solicitous to gain converts to my opinion: I mean a respect and affection for those who teach you; unless this actually exists, in a degree, neither happiness nor improvement can result from the association. It was a saying of the ancients, that "no adequate compensation can ever be made to our parents, and to our preceptors, for the benefits they confer upon us:" and in the New Testament it is written, "I beseech you that you would take notice of them that take pains with you, and that admonish you; and that you would have them in singular love for their work's sake."

Much has been said, on the pleasure of teaching children, but I am tempted to observe, that the task is not always so pleasant: some of ye will perhaps understand me, when I point out a few more facts, which occasionally mix in the school room-exhibitions. Observe, I call that room in which lessons are done by this term, whether in a private family or not. Supose a scholar is reminded, that to stand erect, and hold the book with both hands, is a graceful and proper custom; and suppose the young lady

does not *chuse* to think it such; she need not use her *tongue* to express this, but she can throw all the weight of the body on *one* foot, place her elbow close to her side, and retain the book so slightly that it may *fall* to the ground once or twice during the lesson. All this may be done, without a word escaping the lips of the little oppositionist; yet she has the power of making her instructress truly unhappy by such conduct. Her simple order being disregarded, she is obliged, in her own defence, because it is her duty to endeavour at making her pupil tractable, in order to make her happy. I repeat, she is forced to use authority, and restrict the child in some particular, or give her some additional lesson. Then the young rebel calls her ill-natured, and she is sure that no other child has so much to do; she wishes *she* was any where, and grumbles and pouts. To what is all this owing?—to want of duty. Children who have been in the practice of observing the commands of a parent will, in every circumstance of their lives, exhibit this graceful and lovely trait of character: they will conform to the wishes of an instructress, because their parent has engaged the person for their advantage; in fact, there is no quality of the human mind so extensive and blissful in its effects as duty; it is the foundation of every virtue: every imaginary hardship fades before this soothing and practicable effort of reason; and the only wonder is, that as nature dictates to every heart the necessity of its practice, that there

can be any reasonable creature who wilfully acts contrary to its comfortable influence. When we read of the acts of criminals, and shudder at the enormity of their crimes, we are apt to trace their vices to some neglect of early education, or some natural disposition to evil; but, could we converse with these children of error, I am persuaded the real source of almost every species of guilt originates in want of *duty*.

And though I know some of my little reasoners will find an exception to this, my observation, and with much quickness remark, that there are children who have become orphans in their infancy, and consequently have never known a parent's care; I answer to this, that it would be difficult, if not wholly impossible, to find a child for whom Providence had not found some kind protector, either as a voluntary benefactor, or by the liberal patronage of some public school; and to suppose that *duty* from a child thus benefited, is not equally to be expected as though they were really bound by the tie of kindred, is to misunderstand the first and most important concern of our life—religion. Are we not told "to submit ourselves to all our governors, teachers, spiritual pastors and masters: to order ourselves lowly and reverently," and what are these commands, but an explicit exposition of our *duty*? not confined to any particular relation, but to all who have charge over us. I make every allowance for the superiority of a parent's claim

to our regards; I am not unacquainted with its tender meaning, but I cannot yield my opinion, that *duty* is the foundation of every virtue; no moral excellence can be attained, but by an early attention to those who guard your infancy: of yourselves, ye are the most helpless and pitiable objects in creation; nature has bountifully provided the animal world with instinct, which enables them to seek for support, and live independent; but the human race depend upon each other, nor can a more tender proof of God's mercy be adduced, than this his gracious ordination of the one great family of nature; we are all the creatures of his bounty, breathe the same air, are warmed by the same sun, and must all and equally return to that dust from which we sprang. Then let us, my dear, amiable young friends, bear in mind the great advantages of our rank in the scale of creation, and by conducting ourselves with humility, prove our sense of those gracious promises, which are in store for those who walk uprightly in the path of duty. Reflection, the grand distinction of our class, reflection, being the offspring of *reason*, will, whether we confess it or not, silently admonish us of our errors. Let us not turn from the voice of our friend, but meet her warnings with a sincere and contrite heart; however trivial the lapse, it deserves and requires correction, let us not add error to error, but remember, that "God is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness."

I will not offer any apology for the seriousness of this my present address. I feel that I am not admonishing beings of an imperfect nature, but creatures whom God has endowed in the perfect image of himself; as such, their gratitude and their moral pride should lead them to contemplate their estate with appropriate reverence. "I am here to-day," says the reflecting being, "but I may to-morrow be called into the presence of my God. Am I fitted for a Judge so sublime? have I done my duty here? Lord, thou knowest all the secrets of my heart; in thy sight all my actions stand clear and undisguised."

Consider this ye who yet in infancy fill a station so important; know that you are the numbered atoms of an universal family; that your virtues are the glory of that God whose mercy is unbounded; and that your errors, however *trivial*, will incur the just displeasure of him, "in whose hands are all the corners of the earth."

It is by mistaking the motives of your instructors, that the foibles to which I have particularly alluded in this Chapter may justly be placed; can you seriously believe that any thing but a wish to promote your happiness actuates them; the more minute they are in their observations on your habits, temper, &c. the greater your obligations to them; and though I have dwelt with a, perhaps, tedious strictness on many *existing* defects in the youthful character, I feel truly grateful, that my own knowledge of many amiable

children, leaves me no doubt of that cordial and sincere affection, which should exist between persons situated in the relative characters of pupil and teacher; nay, I am sure, that *one* dear girl, for whom my warmest feelings are interested, could testify to the truth of my remark; she, like others, may have fallen into *little* errors, but her good sense never led her to *persist* in her foible, and I am persuaded, were she asked the question, she would not only say she esteemed her governess, but that she loved her.

CHAP. XII.

"The wise and active conquer difficulties
By daring to attempt them: sloth and folly
Shiver and shrink at sight of toil and hazard,
And make th' impossibility they fear."

THOUGH my memory is certainly very correct, considering my age, I cannot trust the impression of the present moment to a future paper, and must therefore briefly state, that I am just returned from a morning ramble, in which such a variety of matter has forced itself upon my imagination, that I really am very anxious to impart my sentiments to my little friends.

My first purpose, on quitting home this morning, was to take a walk in Hyde Park; it is a recreation in which I frequently indulge, not more for the salubrity

of its air, than the very extensive opportunity it gives me of increasing my *spectatorial* knowledge. I have, as yet, been wholly silent on the subject of *walking*; yet it is one that will bear much analysis. I have observed the *trip*;—the *serpentine* scramble, where the ancles appear so distorted, and the figure so debilitated, as to give one a correct idea of a person in a state of inebriety. Next comes the *masculine* stride with the *arms* swinging, and the *pocket-handkerchief* flaunting in the air. The *hobble*, with the toes most affectionately *whispering* each other; and the *drawl*, where the heels of the *shoes* are dropping at every step. There are many other methods of walking which might be described, but these shall suffice. If a preference could be given to any of those which I have named, it would certainly be the *trip*, which, though somewhat affected, has one advantage,—that of appearing timid,—free from boldness. There were a great number of young persons in the Park, and, as I regarded the general inelegance of their walk, I could not but refer to the probable amount of all the money which had been expended upon dancing masters for these children, and how completely it had failed in effecting a very simple, though certainly a very graceful acquirement. My regrets were, perhaps, increased, at perceiving the dresses of many children short, even to impropriety; it made the awkwardness of their manner more obvious, and I was tempted to think, that to a few it gave an additi-

onal air of boldness perfectly distinct from that soft retiring modesty, at once the greatest beauty and the peculiar charm of youth. It will appear to my readers that I am a very particular person, one very difficult to please, when I add, that out of the many whom I saw this morning, I could not select one whose manner of walking exactly pleased me. I am so fully persuaded that walking is of more use than dancing, with very young children, that, for my own part, I would not permit a child (more especially a girl) to learn one step with a dancing-master, until she had acquired a firm and equal habit of walking. I know the good teachers of this art begin by exercising their pupils in marching; but this, either to please the children or the parent, is too soon laid aside, and the consequences remain obvious frequently through life. I should certainly lament to believe that much time is dedicated to dancing, the uses of which are so unimportant to females in private life; nor do I ever hope to see greater knowledge in this art displayed, than that which tends to make children upright in their carriage and easy in their walk: I do not mean to restrain them from the innocent and very graceful recreation of dancing occasionally; but, as I have some reason for thinking that these sort of meetings have a serious effect upon the minds of children; that they derange the regular system of education, and actually unfit them for their duties, I would certainly be very cautious in admitting them to interfere with

those whom I loved. If, in your own family, you combine the requisites for a social ball, where neither dress, anticipation, nor late hours, lend their baneful influence, there cannot be a more innocent or healthy exercise.

But I have strayed from walking to dancing, even just as my little readers would feel inclined to do; I must beg of them to allow an old woman to walk by their side yet a little longer. Let me ask of you one simple question:—Are you not anxious, in all your amusements, to make them as perfect as possible? Not one of you but could, with sincerity, reply in the affirmative:—then why neglect to make a duty, however trivial, perfect? It is probable that you may pass through life, having very few occasions to exert yourselves in dancing; but walking is indispensible to health, and is, of itself a very great enjoyment:—rest assured, there is no acquirement, however simple, to which a certain degree of attention is not actually necessary; and though youthful idlers may not so readily admit this truth, the time will come when they shall not only believe, but lament their inattention. It would be impossible to enumerate all the various trifles, which appear as blemishes to an observing eye. We will drop the subject of walking, with a sincere wish, that some of my faulty pedestrians will take the hints given them, and I will, by way of proving that trifles have an influence in deforming the appearance, and lessening the perfections

of the human character, illustrate my remark by a few facts.

I knew a lady, whose understanding was highly cultivated, and whose sentiments were consequently listened to with respect; yet a very sensible pain was experienced by those to whom she addressed herself, by a habit she had of winking her eyes; the movement was so quick and incessant, that I have really felt my own eyes greatly weakened by looking at her, yet she appeared unconscious of it.

I have heard of an Englishman, of great talents, who was sent as ambassador to a foreign court, where his mind and manners were fully appreciated. It happened that his qualifications were the subject of conversation amongst the courtiers one evening; each spoke of him as learned, affable and polite. At length, a very polished and distinguished character made this remark: "I have observed him attentively, and am obliged to dissent from your eulogium in one particular; if he made less noise in *eating*, he would be all that you have said."

Another lady, for whom I have a sincere esteem, absolutely distracts the attention of those with whom she converses, by a waving motion of her body, if seated on a heavy chair; but if the seat happens to be a light one, the chair takes the motion, and you are in expectation of her falling upon her face.

Neither of these inelegancies are acquired late in life; they are the unchecked or neglected foibles of youth, which have "grown with the growth, and

strengthened with the strength," and I can very easily believe, are difficult to be eradicated.

Then how important does it make these trifles, with those who are yet under tuition! How evident must it be, even to the youngest of my readers, that they should listen to the voice of friendship, nor deem any habit too trivial to be corrected!

I have hitherto been silent upon the subject of personal vanity; indeed excepting in the instance of Harriet Mordaunt's reference to her grandmamma's mention of her beauty, I had hoped to have no occasion to revert to this excessive folly:—permit me here to add, that Harriet has been completely laughed out of her vanity, and has had the sense to allow, that duty and good-humour make the only beauty that is lasting, or worthy of esteem.

But I was going to observe, that we are never too *old* to learn: I, like an obstinate old woman, had not imagined that *personal* vanity was so general a foible; but alas! I find it exists under such a variety of characters, that I am compelled to devote a few pages, to corroborate my assertion.

One young lady avoids the fire in the morning, because it will catch her skin, and make her look coarse and heated;—but in the evening she leans on the fender, because a colour makes her look *pretty* at night.

Another tries on half a dozen necklaces, to discover which becomes her best; and will stand twenty minutes in the cold to decide a matter so ridiculous, and

perhaps, grumbles at devoting half that time to her prayers, because "it is so cold."

A third is continually combing and brushing her hair,—the former sometimes in company: and while she is thus assiduous about external appearance, her mind remains rough and unpolished.

A fourth bites her lips, and simpers and smiles, or laughs very heartily, in order to display her teeth, which have been denominated by some very *sincere* friend, "rows of pearl:" thus the laugh is always so ready, the young lady passes for an idiot, while observers deeply lament, that the child had not the sense to discern the subject to be one which claimed her sympathy, rather than her mirth.

A fifth has such *beautiful* little feet, that her shoes are of the greatest importance to all the family; no expence is too much to decorate the *petit pied*; and, of course, the young lady thinks her feet of more consequence than her *head* or her *heart*.

How I pity these unfortunate children; and how sincerely do I wish that if *any* one of the foibles I have here illustrated attach to my readers, they would take the trouble of reflecting upon it; it requires only common sense to place *every* personal beauty in its just point of view. I remember reading a very descriptive and pleasing poem, entitled the "Two Dolls," in which this perishable perfection is very justly delineated. In one part it says:

"A fever's heat may spoil the grace,
And quickly change the fairest face."

In another part:

"Nor can the loveliest form dispense,
With want of virtue nor of sense."

And the moral of this (to me) valuable little poem, is particularly expressive:

"Be uniformly good, perfection seek,
And let the face a kindred mind bespeak."

I know that many of my young friends will pause upon these pages, and perhaps a few will refute my assertion, that personal beauty is of no consequence, because their memory helps them to the recollection of numberless compliments, addressed to them on their entering the drawing-rooms of their mammas.—"I am sure," says Miss Patty Dazzle, "whenever *I* go into the drawing-room, every body calls me a lovely creature, and they say I shall be quite beautiful:" while Cordelia Connelly, with equal truth, reverts to the many praises bestowed upon her person, under the appellations of "a sweet little fairy,"—an enchanting sylph," &c. &c.

Admitting that these things do actually occur, yet are they wholly unworthy of your regard or remembrance: they are frequently uttered by persons who have scarcely looked at you, and are merely the common place expressions of flatterers, who will not be at the trouble of discovering whether you really possess qualities that deserve praise.

The graces of a cultivated mind are the beauties

which adorn the features of the young, a timid, yet cheerful manner, a heart so practised in its duties, that a parent's displeasure would,—but I will not say what should constitute the perfection of infant beauty, but relate my morning's perambulation faithfully, and leave the portrait for my readers to copy.

In my way from the Park, I called upon a friend in Brook Street. Mrs. Warren was instructing her daughter on my entrance. I apologized, fearing I should interrupt the studies of Miss Warren, but my friend assuring me that her daughter would know how to dispose of her time, I took a seat, and entered into conversation with Mrs. Warren. I was not so much engrossed by the subject, but that I was at liberty to remark the manners of this child. I saw her take a dissected map and unite it with much facility. She then reached a book from the stand, and, retiring to a corner of the room, I perceived she was acquiring some lesson, (which I imagined to be poetry,) by heart. This done, she resorted to her slate, which was clean, and to which a sponge was suspended—a custom which I sincerely wish was more general. Her calculation seemed quick, nor did I perceive that her finger played that sort of *gamut*, sometimes harmonized on the frame of the slate; on the contrary, her head appeared perfectly competent to the attempt, and as I saw her compare her sum with the assistant, and that a smile of expressive pleasure passed over her features, it was as satisfactory an answer to my en-

quiring look as her's was to the book from which she sought her information. All this passed so smoothly, with such an appearance of ease and method that I could not refrain from expressing my admiration of this amiable child to her mother. "Julia is a very good girl," said my friend. "She knows I love her too well to require of her any thing beyond her capacity; and she is equally sensible that it is her duty to attend to my wishes." Now Julia Warren is by no means handsome, but I declare as I gazed on this child, and beheld the modest blush which suffused her cheek at her mother's judicious praise, she appeared to be the handsomest child I had ever seen. Her eyes sparkled with animation, her countenance was open and expressive, and though she did not assume in consequence of her mother's approbation, it was very evident she was gratified by it. Julia soon after quitted the room, as I learned from my friend, to practise her music previous to the arrival of her music-master. It was then I was fully gratified by the character of this amiable girl. Mrs. Warren spoke of her with freedom. She assured me that she could not call to mind *one* instance in which Julia had ever disputed her wishes; that her lessons were appointed for her, that she knew they were to be learned, and had a regular method of doing them. "If any friend favours me with a call," continued Mrs. Warren, "she avails herself of the immediate interruption, and turns to some other of her pursuits. I have never heard her

express fatigue while at her lessons; in fact, she has never caused me a sigh since she was born, but when it pleased God to afflict my little treasure with those sicknesses incident to infancy."

Compliments, smiles, and praises, are, as I have illustrated, frequently applied to children; but, in this case, like a very odd old woman, as you will no doubt think I am, I could not repress a rising tear; the beauty of Julia Warren's mind claimed my delighted admiration, and as I looked forward, and anticipated her gradual advancement into life—her mind expanding, and her intellects gathering strength, I saw her an ornament to society, a comfort to her parents, and above all, when it should please God to call her hence, is she not of that class to whom the Omnipotent hath promised the "blessed hope of everlasting life," for "the pure in heart shall see God."

Much as I have said of Julia Warren, greatly as I admire her unaffected and amiable character, I am not so light an observer of causes and effects as to be insensible to the grand source of her present happiness. Her mother is at once the most gentle and discerning of women. She is a mother, with all a mother's tenderness, but none of those weaknesses which destroy the power of a parent; Julia has never been indulged, consequently she has no imaginary wants. And though she is not the companion

of servants, she has been accustomed to administer to their comforts. She has been directed by her amiable mother to listen to the tale of domestic distress, to give the comfortable cloathing to the aged, to assist in making raiment for the helpless infant, to send coals to the shivering inhabitant of a chearless garret; to do all this without an idea of ostentation, but upon the firm basis of Christian principles, that they were needy, and Heaven had blessed her with the power to succour them in their distress.

I am so impressed with one species of vanity at this moment that I cannot forbear avowing it. I feel that I have engaged a number of admiring little friends for the amiable Julia. I hear you all, as with one voice, exclaiming, "What a delightful girl!" and a few, perhaps, are wishing they had the power to act as Julia does. Here my vanity subsides and my regrets will interfere. Alas! are not many of ye blind to the advantages ye possess? Do you not expend your money in toys and trifles? Are not sweets very tempting? Charity does not consist in giving away that which you cannot use yourselves. Such an action is often performed by the most selfish and illiberal character, who from satiety and a love of novelty, gladly dispenses with that which is now valueless to them. Charity is the gentlest of all the virtues, the most retired, at the same moment that it is the most exalted feeling of the human breast. It leads its amiable votaries to forego or abridge their own comforts in order to be

serviceable to others. It is secret in its offerings, because it is conscious that even the most exalted deed that mortal can perform is poor, in comparison of those benefits which Providence has bestowed on thousands of happy beings; while that conscious peace which a duty so strictly in obedience to the commands of God incites, exalts its amiable dispensers, even in this life, to a rank to which no other application of the goods of fortune could raise them. They carry in their own bosoms, "that peace which the world cannot give." I would advise my readers to consider all the advantages of their various situations in life. From those who possess but little, little can be expected; but the purity of their intentions will enhance the gift, while such as own more extensive power, let them, with equal humility, make their offering.

I have another amiable and truly generous girl, to whom I will introduce my readers before I take my leave; but as I have already made this Chapter very diffuse, I must defer it for the present.

Though the particular manner in which I have specified the foibles of personal vanity are strictly conformable with truth, I have too much regard for the feelings of the parties to be more explicit. I am persuaded this volume will fall into the hands of one or two at whom I have glanced, and as the understanding always slumbers where vanity erects her throne, I sincerely hope my little friends will demolish the

tottering fabric, and lay a foundation in their minds less liable to decay. Almost every person is capable of admiring a finished picture or a perfect character; but if we are contented to admire, nor seek into the requisite qualities which constitute the whole, we shall remain superficial and light observers through life. We must reform our defects, not shrinking from self-examination nor judging with partiality. We must not imagine that a day of repentance can eradicate the foibles which have been gaining upon us for months, perhaps years. Nor are we to be deterred from the attempt under the idea that the task is impracticable. Every thing is possible to a zealous heart; and the path of virtuous duty is so blooming and pleasant, Hope strews her blossoms so bounteously where duty and a sincere desire of improvement actuates the traveller, that I cannot conclude this Chapter without exhorting my little friends to commence their journey, wishing them all the well known happiness that ever results to travellers who take this road.

CHAP. XIII.

"Time flies, oh how swiftly!"

THOUGH I did once express an opinion, that the Miss Barlows would become my regular correspondents, I no sooner recognised them at my daughter's, and heard their conversation, than I dismissed the idea, well pleased to escape a task so hopeless as that of correcting girls so evidently ignorant and self-willed. Mrs. Mordaunt, like myself, disapproved of their manners, and, consequently, was sedulous in checking all intercourse between her family and the Miss Barlows. It is with sincere pleasure I record *this* as the only correspondence from which I have receded. It is true, Charles Osborn is prominent and giddy; yet one

is more disappointed in finding a girl voluble and bold. No excuse can be made for females who act thus. After being admonished, had the young ladies in question evinced any symptoms of delicacy, I would gladly have volunteered my pen in their service. They have compelled me to leave them to their follies, and I much doubt if they will ever own a friend who will be at the trouble of directing them to the attainment of happiness.

It has often surprised me, (before I took up my present character) when I have of an evening reflected upon the unexpected variety which has checquered the day; but, really, since I have avowed myself a Spectator, it has appeared infinitely more obvious than ever; yet, perhaps, this is to be imputed to that watchful zeal with which I regard every thing which can possibly lead to my object.

But while I have been thus active for my little friends, Time has not been idle. He has closed one year, and brought me to the opening of another. I must not suffer this ceaseless traveller to pass unheeded; indeed, he has reminded me that a new year is not the most ineligible season for a present, and I am now almost regretting that I had not so arranged my plans as to offer myself to your favour at the commencement of this year. It cannot be, and I must endeavour to flatter myself you will be glad to see me, come when I may.

It is so impossible to form an exact idea of the re-

ception I am to meet from my young patrons, that I really am growing very timid as I refer to the number of pages written, and feel the propriety of drawing towards a conclusion. Perhaps, you will receive me kindly, and encourage me to address you again; and it may so happen that my truths shall give offence, and you may reject me as a most impertinent old woman. I must await my fate, and, in the interim, as you have not the power to interdict my enjoyments, I shall continue to ramble in the Park, and make my circuits in certain squares; nay, it is very probable, I may jostle some of my young critics, for I am not an *imaginary* character. But let me ask of you that respect due to my age. Ah! do not wound my ears by your sarcasms. I am persuaded, that, like Charles Osborn, you will often *think* you have discovered the Spectator, yet I will venture to affirm, you never will fix upon the right person. As such, be very cautious in your observations, and though each of you has sketched my figure in your own mind, do not let your fancies influence your judgment. To prove to you that I am prepared for the jibes and jeers of a youthful public, I am tempted to describe a few of those appearances, under which the "Juvenile Spectator" *will* be sought by the younger branches of the "Argus" family. In the first place, any elderly person who walks with a stick, and should chance to look about her, or who should take a seat upon one of the trees in the Park, or the benches in Kensington

Gardens; if she appears thoughtful, or in the least observing, she will instantly be *suspected*. Again, a person of *morose* countenance, or whose nose should unfortunately happen to be rather longer than the generality of noses, *she* will certainly be a suspicious sort of person. Harriet Mordaunt, who is always ready with some lively remark, declared, the other day, that she believed the "Spectator" to be very much like "Mother Goose," in the pantomine of that name. I waited with some anxiety to observe the effect of this opinion. William, who was at home for a few days, and who was in fact the cause of their theatrical treat, expressed himself somewhat warmly in reply. "I am sure you are quite wrong, Harriet," said he, "for though I have no good reason for thinking so, I cannot help fancying that the 'Spectator' is like grandmamma, and I believe it is that which makes me like her so much." Fanny observed, it was quite ridiculous to speak of "Mother Goose" and the "Spectator" at the same time, and she was very sorry that Harriet had done so. While Lucy, who often surprises me by the justness of her sentiments, asked Fanny why she was sorry about it. "Because," said Fanny, "I am afraid I shall in future always think of 'Mother Goose' when the 'Spectator' is named." "I wonder at you, Fanny," replied Lucy, "it seems quite strange to me. The 'Spectator' appears like a friend whom it would be very unkind to laugh at, but 'Mother Goose' is just the figure to make

one laugh." "Just so," retorted William; "that is exactly what I mean. No one would expect 'Mother Goose' to give advice to children; and I am certain the 'Spectator' is not a woman who could act the part of Mother Goose.'" I took part in the conversation at this juncture, and seized the passing moment to illustrate the absurdities into which a false association of ideas must necessarily lead such young reasoners. I brought them to coincide in my sentiments, and though the variety in their characters is striking, it was with unfeigned delight I perceived each of them esteemed me under my assumed name. I could be as whimsical as the most lively of my readers, and go on describing myself under my probable appearances in public; but I must repress these *juvenile* feelings, for I hear a post-rap, and the well known creak of Michael's shoes assure me, that letters have been delivered for me.

My sagacity must already be so obvious to my friends, that I forbear expatiating on the subject. I was right;—four letters are now laying on my writing-table:—Mr. Testy's hand is now so familiar, that I instantly recognise it; and, as I am rather inclined to expect some pleasing consequences, from his whimsical proceedings with his young relations, I will give his letter precedence.

To Mrs. Argus.

Madam,

I am sure you will rejoice with me on the success

of my plan:—the rogues have paid my bill on demand, and written me such a receipt, that I actually believe I shall have it framed and glazed, and hung up in my drawing room. I must be brief, as I have come to the resolution of going into ——shire to-morrow, in order to do away all my cousin's schemes. She, poor soul, is at last convinced of the necessity of curbing the lively spirits of her boys, and, like all people who have suffered their reason to slumber, she is now going into extremes, and has hinted, that she is about to place them at a school, fifty miles distance from their paternal home. This must not be: I will have the boys with me for a few months; they shall be trained into the habits usual with well-educated children. I will engage proper tutors for their instruction, and when they can, with safety to their characters as gentlemen, and emulative scholars, be presented at a public school, what pleasure I shall derive in the office! I inclose their epistle, which will be more satisfactory than any thing I could say, and beg to assure you, that I am, very respectfully,

Your obliged and obedient servant,

TIMOTHY TESTY.

(Inclosed in the foregoing.)

"We are quite ashamed, dear cousin, yet we are determined to tell you the exact truth: we *did* think you very cross and particular; but, indeed, we now know that you are perfectly right. A brother of our

dear papa's, has been here about a fortnight; he is a very good man, I believe, only he has lived many years in the West Indies, and he is hasty, and speaks so quick, that we are quite afraid of him. He does not advise us what to do, but scolds at us, and calls us blockheads, and tells my mother that she is a foolish woman. Now this we cannot bear, because all she does, is out of kindness and love for us, so Joe and I spoke out the other day, and told him so; but he would not listen to us, and gave poor Joe such a pinch of the ear, that he cried out with the pain. All this made us think of you; so we talked together, and thought how very ill we had behaved, when you used to explain to us what we ought to do. Well, soon after comes your letter;—oh! if you had but seen us:—why, what an expense! Joe declares, that the very first money he ever has of his own, he will buy all the things you name, quite new, and send them to you. I do not wish to see you again, till we are able to pay for the damages we have done. I dare say we should both think more about the poney, only, just now, we cannot help fretting about something;—but I suppose my mother has told you we are going to school:—perhaps it is best, but I am afraid we shall be expected to know more than we do. You may be certain we will pay you whenever we can;—till then, good bye.

EDWARD and JOE.

This letter was almost as acceptable to me, as it

could be to Mr. Testy. There was much nature in the sentiments; all the proper shame of ingenuous minds; and these feelings did not grow out of the regrets they experienced from their cousin's statement of what they had lost by their follies, but had risen upon the most conclusive of all reasoning,—the comparative state of things. They evince, that they had discernment enough to distinguish between the tenderness of that advice, which friendship alone dictates, and the harsh mandates of discordant authority. They had drawn the line, I repeat, before the receipt of Mr. Testy's letter, and in this case, they had made one step towards improvement; for whoever looks back upon their follies with *real* shame, and compares the happiness they have rejected, with their *present* imperfect portion of comfort, has proved, that they possess reasoning powers; and who, that is blessed with intellect, would continue the slave of bad habits? no one, and *I* will answer for the boys in question. I entertain the most favourable hopes of them, and most sincerely do I wish, that all mismanaged and spoiled children, had a relation who knew how to apply to their foibles, as Mr. Testy has done to his kinsmen.

The next letter, actually threw me into a tremor, nor will my young friends be surprised, when I explain that it was *written* by Dennis O'Brien, *for* my grandson William. I ran over it hastily, and my fears were appeased, but, as Mr. O'Brien's letter is well worth

transcribing, I must not anticipate, but clear my spectacles, and endeavour to give it my readers in the best way I can.

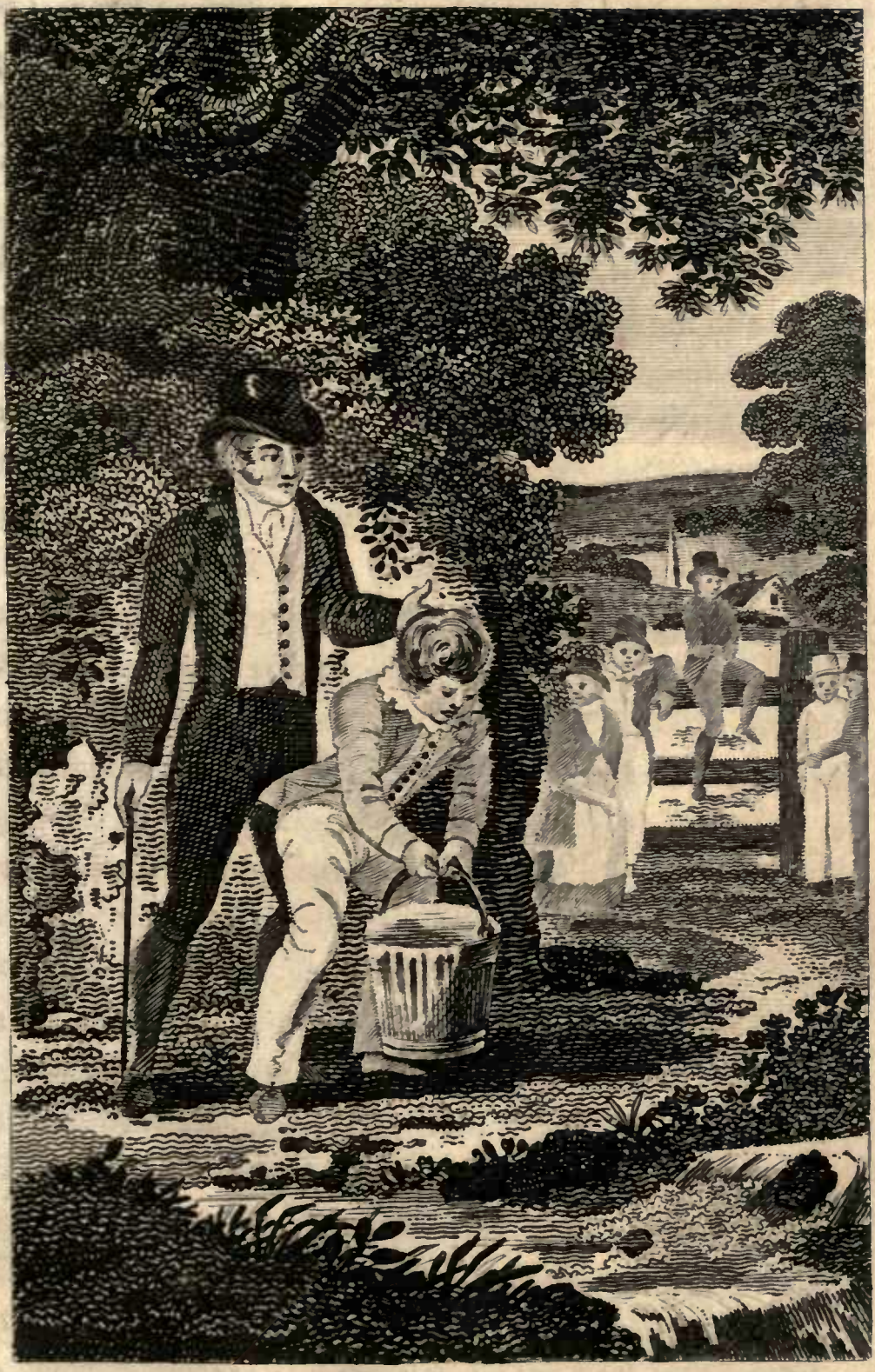
To Mrs. Argus.

Madam,

My friend Mordaunt has requested me to write to you for him, he says he will dictate the letter, but to this I will not consent, as he has been ordered to be kept quiet, and not to talk; he agrees to my terms, and I will now begin.

You know Charles Osborn so well, that I need not describe him. Yesterday, Lord M——, Mordaunt, and I, were walking our limits, when just as we came by a stile, we saw an old woman, trying to lift a pail of water over the stile; Mordaunt ran forward and bade her stop, and he would assist her; he had got into the field, before we perceived that Osborn, and two of his cronies were behind the hedge. "You may well look ashamed," said the old woman, "you see though you thought fit to laugh at me, and throw stones into my pail, your betters will assist me;" we instantly made a ring round these young fellows, and desired the woman to state exactly how they had behaved to her; she did, and we found they had abused and laughed at her, interrupted her in her work, and increased the weight of her pail, by throwing heavy stones into it. Osborn defended himself by saying, he hated *all* women, especially those

who were old. Lord M——, who is very keen, instantly proposed, that the pail should be carried by Osborn, to the brook in the adjoining field, that he should clean it from the dirt thrown into it, fill it afresh, and bring it to the stile for the woman. Osborn flounced at first, but Lord M—-, is one of the monitors, and indeed we generally carry our point, when once we have formed a resolution. He took the pail, and muttered something about he wished his mother knew how ill he was used; "Poh," says I, "your mother is a *woman*, you know, and you hate *all* women;" "but she is a gentlewoman," said Charles. "And a pretty cub you are for the son of a gentlewoman," replied Lord M——; "go, sir, go directly; and he followed Osborn to the brook, stood over him while he performed his task, and walked by his side to the stile again. Osborn's party were laughing in the hope that they should escape altogether, but we made two of them lift the pail over the stile, and carry it to the door of the old woman's cottage. Lord M—— told her, that if she ever found them troublesome again, she was to go up to the school and ask for him: the poor woman was much surprised when Mordaunt, and Lord M——, gave her some money; I was sorry I had none to give, but I am very much limited in my pocket-money, and do not get it regularly; I name this as an excuse, for I was really much ashamed at the time. Well, we all returned to school, and resolved not to take any further notice of the business,



He took the Pail and muttered something about he wished his Mother knew how ill he was used.

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as we knew we had mortified these fellows properly: but in the evening, Mordaunt told me, he was certain that some plan was in agitation against the old woman; we kept a good look out, and about half an hour before the last bell, we ran down the village, and soon found our fears were right, for the glass of the casement was almost entirely taken out of the window, and the cottage door faced with mud and stones. While we were thinking how to act, Osborn with one of his chums, came round from the garden, each of them with a duck under his arm; if you had but seen them,—they let go the bills of the ducks, which instantly began quacking; we seized them by the arms, and the poor woman, alarmed by the noise, opened the bed-room window,—we explained matters to her, and cleared her door, then ordering our prisoners to march, and promising to call at the cottage next morning, we proceeded towards school. I believe Mordaunt and I laughed a little, and I remember we called them deserters, which so enraged Osborn, that he turned round and spit in Mordaunt's face; Mordaunt could not bear this, so they fell too, and Osborn got it completely; I never saw a neater thing; he roared and cried all the way home; but poor Mordaunt sprained his shoulder, which however will not be of any consequence, as the doctor has assured us; this accounts for my writing to you. Mordaunt wants to know if he shall acquaint his mother with particulars, but he begs me to say he does not feel ill,

and thinks it would alarm her very much. I have made this a very long letter, but I was forced to be explicit, as Mordaunt would not be satisfied without it.

I am, madam,

Your obedient servant,

DENNIS O'BRIEN.

P. S. I should have told you that Osborn was much bruised and Lord M—, who came in to see how matters were going, made such a good placard about him, and placed it upon his bed-curtains,—it explained, that the young *woman-hater,* had been indebted to the kindness of *five* women in less than an hour; which was true, for one woman bathed his ancle with vinegar, another put brown paper to his forehead, a third cut away the hair, which had got mixed with a little wound in the side of his head, a fourth made him some whey, and Mrs. Horton who is the nurse, sat by him great part of the night; so I think, he has very little reason to speak ill of the women.

Throughout this epistle, there appears to me, a liberality and openness of character truly delightful. The accident under which my grandson was suffering, though treated lightly by his generous friend, yet awakened my fears, and I instantly addressed a note to my daughter, to inquire how they all were, assured, that if any serious consequence had ensued, she would

have been apprised of it by the master, and indeed I did not feel that I could make all the inquiries necessary in a personal visit, at least it was more than probable, I should betray my fore-knowledge. Michael returned with a note which in a degree tranquillized my feelings; they were all well. The next letter was from a new correspondent, it ran thus;

To Mrs. Argus:

Madam,

As a great variety of characters must necessarily have come under your consideration, during your present inquiry, I take the liberty of requesting your advice, as to what method you would recommend to a person situated as I am. I have lately undertaken the charge of a young lady, Miss Caroline Cavil; she is in her twelfth year, but certainly very uninformed both in mind and manners, yet, *she* never allows herself to be in the wrong, but *justifies* every foible, every mistake, with an address and volubility quite painful to those interested for her; if she misreads a sentence and receives a check from me, she instantly discovers, that it would be greatly improved by being corrected according to *her* reading; if a passage in her music is either beyond her capacity to perform, or that she *omits* some of the notes, the tune is ugly, or she *recollects* that she played the *same* passage yesterday,

exactly in the same way, and *I* did not find any fault; she *sees* I am angry with her, and only find occasion to oppose her; in short, Miss Cavil, in her own opinion, never is wrong. You may easily imagine how irksome my task must be; yet I am unwilling to resign this child, without giving her a longer trial, more especially as her parents are very amiable, and I do not shrink from difficulties; but, really, if I had not had some experience in the instruction of children, I should consider the present a hopeless case. I have paid much attention to various and excellent writings on education, but am now more than ever certain, that a complete and practical system can never be generally applied: even in the same families, how different are the dispositions! and I have from sad experience proved, that in moving from one *square* to another, it is possible to find a difference as great as between the polished inhabitants of ancient Greece, and the scarcely rational native of Caffraria. I should be greatly obliged by your answer, madam, and I beg to subscribe myself,

Your obedient servant,

MARTHA MORRISON.

——*street,*

Portman square.

The fourth and last letter was from Miss Wilmot. I feel that this young lady is a favourite with my readers, and I in consequence transcribe her epistle.

To Mrs. Argus.

Dear Madam,

We are going into Wales, and shall remain there many months, but I could not leave town without acquainting you, that I am quite happy; my papa and mamma are pleased to express themselves satisfied with my conduct, and my dear Mrs. Arnold does not find fault with me very often, and when she does, I know she is perfectly right in all she says. I often think of my foolish prejudices, and can never be sufficiently grateful to all those kind friends, who were at the trouble of directing me how to conquer my faults. Nurse Jones really makes me smile sometimes, she praises my mamma so much, and declares she feels she was very wicked in speaking ill of a lady who was quite a stranger to her; I hope I am now so well convinced of the danger of all prejudices, that I shall never in future forget myself. Mrs. Arnold begs me to offer her compliments to you, madam, and I trust you will believe, that I never shall forget your kindness to

Your most respectful,

and obedient servant,

Sophia Wilmot.

The complaint of Mrs. Morrison, was of a nature that required consideration: I entered into her feelings, and was truly sorry, that a girl of Miss Cavil'

disposition should be introduced to my acquaintance at *this* period of my history, yet I resolved on answering her governess to-morrow. My best wishes attend the amiable Sophia, whose welfare through life will always be a point of much interest with me; and now, though I have more than once declared, that I do not yield to unnecessary fears in matters which relate to my grandchildren, I must be ingenuous, I shall not be happy, till I call in —— street. I know that a note may be conveyed from the school by the carrier; and in fact there are a thousand ways in which news may be brought, and as all these ways will suggest themselves to my mind, I must even go and satisfy myself of particulars.

CHAP. XIV.

"What a goodly prospect spreads around."

As I approached my daughter's house, I saw a chaise drive off, and, with a palpitating heart, discovered as it passed me, that it belonged to —— —— but upon entering the hall, the servant quieted my fears, by assuring me that Master Mordaunt was not ill. I hastened into the drawing-room, and found the young visitor, surrounded by his family, while a fine tall boy was in the act of reciting that statement, which I have already given to my readers. Now I know you will all laugh at me, but I ask you to recollect, that I am an old woman, and a grandmother. Well, to proceed, I forgot my original wish of *concealment*, and turning to my grandson, "My dear William," said I, "why did you fight with that silly boy Osborn, you should have treated him with silent contempt." William was going to reply, when his friend declared it was impos-

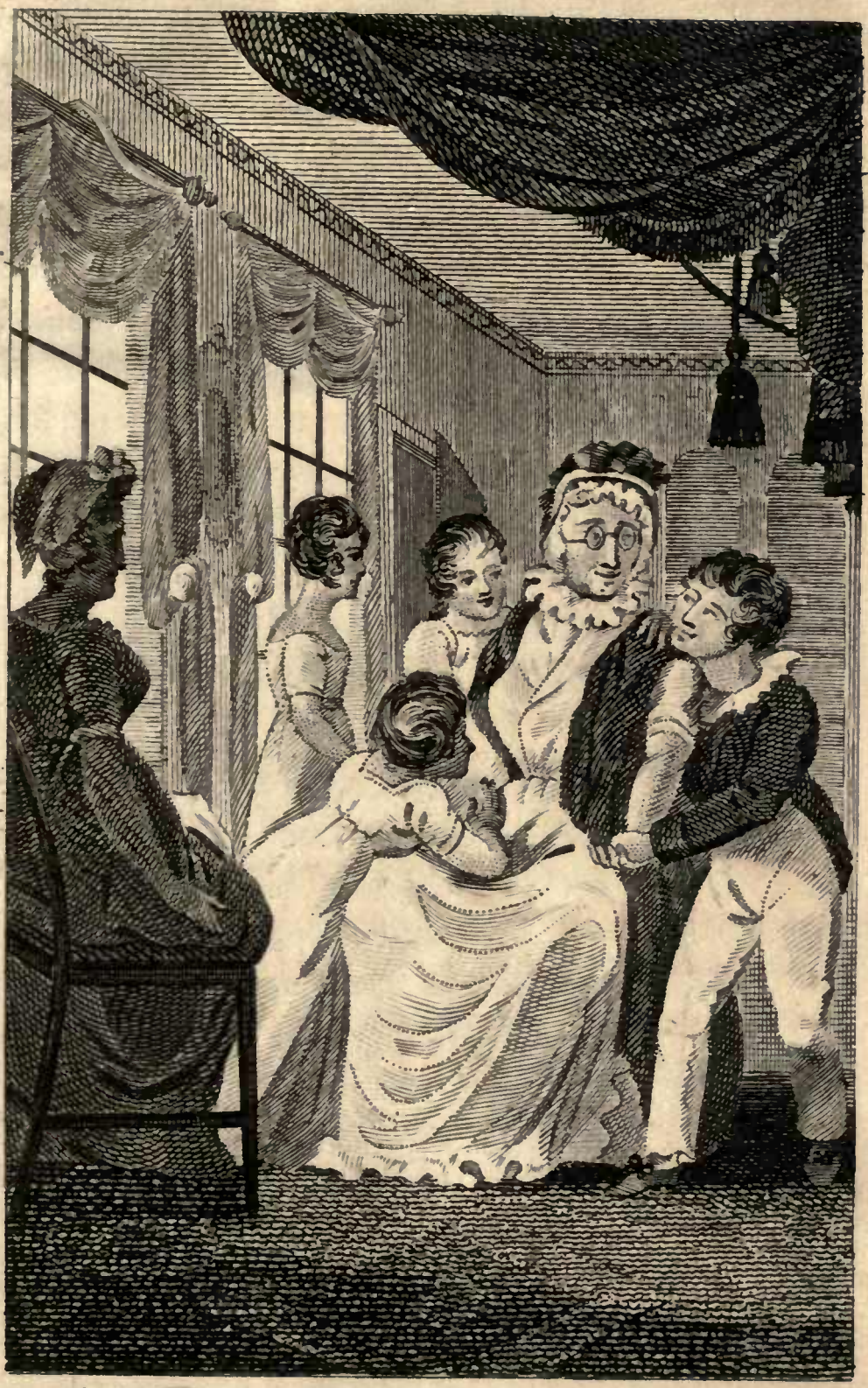
sible for any body to bear an insult like that which Osborn had offered to him. "I must differ from you sir," said I, "the action was so beneath a gentleman, that I consider William to have degraded himself by resenting it;" the young champion shook his head, while William with a look of astonishment, asked how I had become acquainted with the circumstance. The question absolutely called blushes into my cheek; I paused for a moment, and then in a half whisper told him I would explain the particulars bye and bye. I was now apprised by my daughter, that she received a note early in the morning from William's master, saying, he was a little indisposed, in consequence of having sprained his shoulder, and that, as a young gentleman, on whom he could depend, was going to town in a few hours, he should put Master Mordaunt under his care; he concluded by adding, that the season, had no such accident happened, would have entitled the pupils to a few days relaxation from study. I have often observed, that when once one has commenced by blundering a secret, we follow it up, by numberless trips of the tongue. Thus I addressed William's companion as Mr. O'brien; I was right in my conjecture, it was my amiable correspondent, and so interested was I in his plans, that without considering how deeply I was plunging, I begged to know if he would not remain with William during his short vacation: my daughter, who was equally pleased with the manner and ap-

pearance of this youth, seconded my proposal with all the eagerness of a mother; our efforts were unsuccessful, yet declined with that engaging modesty, which yet more warmly interested us for him. He declared he should be very happy to accept our invitation, but that his guardian had called him to town suddenly, and he was afraid he should not return to school again. "I am to go to India," continued young O'Brien, "my parents had great interest there, and I hear it is the best that can be done for me now." I thought there was an air of sadness in his countenance, while giving this explanation, which seemed forcibly to express that he did not like the decision. We endeavoured to represent the many advantages which might result from an Eastern residence, and that the earlier he went out the better. But we could not convert him to our opinion, and as William's lameness was not such as to affect his spirits, we united in beguiling the time in as lively a way as possible. At length Mr. O'Brien took leave, after having promised to engage his guardian's permission to dine with the Mordaunts next day.

"Now, grandmamma," said William, as the door closed upon his friend, "now tell me how you knew so well what had happened at ———. I have long had my suspicions about you, continued the smiling boy.

"I should be very unfit for that character which I have assumed," I replied, "if I was to be disinge-

nuous on any occasion; will you all continue to love your grandmother, when you hear her declare that *she* is the *Spectator*." "I thought so," says William, clapping his hands; "I knew it, it was so like your manner, and the hand-writing altogether; I have often said to myself that it must be you." "Dear grandmamma," said Fanny, "I am quite happy to find that you *are* the Spectator." "Why so," my love," said I. "Because," replied Fanny with a blush, "I would rather you knew my faults than any body else in the world." "You know I once told you in a letter that I thought you like Grandmamma Harley," said Harriet; while Lucy declared that *she* had most reason to rejoice, as her foibles had been much worse than any of her family's. "Upon comparison, my dear children," I interjoined, "your grandmother has much reason to be satisfied; I cannot term any of your little errors more than foibles; they had not amounted to faults, and I am so persuaded that your own sense of right, and the certainty that nothing but my love for you actuated me to adopt the plan, which has so happily answered my expectations, that I shall resign my fictitious name, with the full conviction, that as children who love their parents, and creatures whom God has endowed with the power of reflection, you will henceforth act agreeably to reason. I admit that it was not my *intention* to make myself known, your sagacity has defeated my plan, which is, in a degree, a disappointment, as



"Will you all continue to love your Grandmother, when you hear her declare that she is the Spectator."

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Mrs. Bently, who has greatly assisted my views during my spectatorial inquiries, has been very anxious that I should publish the result. Will you agree to this?" I asked, turning to my little audience. "Oh! dear!" said the children in one voice, "why people would know us, and we should be quite ashamed to be seen." My daughter, who had really been as much surprised by my avowal as her family, now entered into the subject, and learning that I had actually arranged my papers so as to form a volume, she suggested that by changing the names of the parties, I might yet prosecute my intention. The children readily assented to this, and were soon brought to laugh in idea as they anticipated the publication of their letters.

I could not take leave of these dear creatures without making some observations on the general conduct of my grandson as a school-boy. I applauded his judicious choice in his friends. I commended his zeal in the service of the poor old woman. Each of these traits in his character evinced manliness and humanity, principles always synonimous, for the brave are uniformly generous and compassionate. His watchfulness in endeavouring to guard the cottager from the further cruelty of her petty agressor was commendable; but I could not understand the necessity of his fighting with an ill-bred coward, admitting that he received an insult. It should be remembered, that we are expressly forbidden to resent an injury; and that the most perfect being that ever wore the human

form, was "persecuted, reviled, put to bodily pain, and finally to death;" yet he neither reviled again, nor was wrought to anger during any of the stages of his sufferings, and has left us in this, as in every record of his perfect life, a point for our admiration, and an example for our humble imitation.

It is by commanding our passions that we prove the strength of our reason. So many causes, trivial in themselves, have led to that most criminal of all contests, duelling, that I consider the government of the temper a matter of most serious consequence, with boys in particular. Very few of the causes which induce boys to fight but would, upon reflection, appear in a very ridiculous and laughable point of view." Here William interrupted me. "What do you think, grandmamma, that to have a fellow less than myself spit in my face was a thing to be laughed at." "I think so, my dear," said I, "and for the very reason you have stated; he was *less* than you, and it was not only an ungentlemanlike action, but a baby's revenge; your *contempt* would have mortified him much more than your *resentment*; more especially as, according to that code of honour observed by school-boys, he gained some advantage over you. "Over me," said William, not he indeed; I trounced im completely." "Yet, he contrived to lame you," continued I. "Not fairly," replied my grandson; "he tripped me up, as O'Brien and Lord M—— both agree, and we all of us made Osborn confess he

had been beaten." "That was an ungenerous triumph, William, for these facts always speak for themselves." "Yes, with a fellow who has a spark of courage," rejoined William, "but we all know Osborn so well, that if he had been left to tell the story, he would have turned it to his own advantage." "Here, again, your argument is weak, my child," I added. "So you compelled a coward, who is in the habit of misstating things, to declare that you were able to conquer him. It is an advantage which any person might attain over a boy of such a character, who, to spare himself and avoid the difficulties of the present moment, would say any thing." William at length allowed that what I said appeared very right, but that it was not possible to do so at school. I fear he is right; the reason is, old habits are not easily effaced, and it has been so long the custom to call brutality courage, that until we can find a better distinction for this inherent quality of the masculine mind, we must leave school-boys to fight their battles, even as they have done for centuries.

The Mordaunts, now in the confidence of the mysterious Spectator, were impatient to know when I would give my papers into the hands of a bookseller. I promised them I would be expeditious, as I easily foresaw that, like all children, they would reckon time by their own feelings.

On my return home I dedicated a few hours to putting names in those blanks which I had omitted until

this period; but I beg it to be understood that my respect for all my correspondents led me to be equally scrupulous with them; not a name will appear in this volume which can be traced.

I was certainly very well pleased with the general success of my plan, yet must ingenuously confess, and I hope I shall be pardoned, when I declare that my chief source of satisfaction was derived from the general improvement of my grandchildren. My daughter had taken the opportunity of their casual absence to assure me that Fanny was indefatigable in correcting her habit of sitting, speaking hastily to her sisters, &c. That Harriet was punctual in her lessons, and quite satisfied with one half holiday in a week; and Lucy not only generous to objects who claimed her little power to be serviceable, but uniformly liberal in all her childish plays with her sisters. William had already expressed his honest shame at having ever raised his hand to a girl—adding, at the same time, his sincere wish that his father might never hear of it. "For I am certain he would be very angry, and perhaps prevent my wish of being a sailor," continued the penitent boy. I coincided in this opinion, for my son-in-law is an ornament to the profession, and must consequently despise cowardice.

I dedicated an hour next morning to writing in reply to Mrs. Morrison, but I must beg to insert this epistle, as I do not consider it of less importance than some others for which I have asked your patient attention.

To Mrs. Morrison.

Madam,

The subject of your favour would have given me very serious uneasiness, had you not intimated that you were not hasty in your resolutions. I rejoice at this, as I trust that your perseverance and firmness of principle will eradicate those foibles which at *present* deform the character of your pupil.

We will not seek into the causes which have produced these unfortunate effects. There is no time to be lost. My advice, which you do me the honour of requiring, is simply this: if Miss Cavil remains insensible to gentle remonstrance, I would recommend that you should at all times insist upon her proving every argument she advances, and this without regard to the situation in which she may at the moment be placed. I grant that her feelings may be very painfully wounded, as there can be no doubt of her ignorance by the manner in which she conducts herself. But as it is evident *she* cannot be a respecter of the feelings of others, by the rudeness with which she treats you, it is equitable in every point of view that she should be taught that most useful of all lessons, to "do to others," &c. I have seen many instances in which a little personal humility has answered the best of purposes; and as I am persuaded that thoughtlessness of character is often classed under a term more offensive, I am willing to hope that Miss Cavil has been neglected in her education, and that your zeal and

good management will efface these unpromising appearances. With sincere wishes that your task may become more pleasant, and that my advice may prove wholly superfluous, by your pupil's having exerted herself to acquire your esteem, I remain,

Madam,

Your obedient servant,

ARABELLA ARGUS.

I had almost forgotten to sketch the portrait of one of my favourites, which I half promised in a former Chapter. I hope Julia Warren is yet in the remembrance of my young friends. I am now to speak of her cousin. Sophia Welmore is a girl who possesses some qualities rarely to be met with in those of her age. I have known her many years, she is now in her thirteenth year. I have seen her parents present her with money, sometimes a guinea, at other times half that sum; and I have known her, uninfluenced by any advice whatever, devote it to the noblest purposes of humanity, in concert with a favourite nursery-maid, with whom she was never unbecomingly familiar. She has, on a Saturday evening, sent a crown to a poor family, with whose troubles she made herself acquainted. She was accustomed to calculate what would purchase a loaf and a joint of meat; to make and send a frock for one of the children. Even when the sickness of one of her pensioners was told to her, she had the thought to send and inquire

what she could do for their comfort. I remember one instance in which a chair for the support of a very sick and distressed woman was required. I saw her obtain the permission of her amiable mother to send one to the invalid, and I shall never forget the pleasing animation of her countenance. I likewise heard from the excellent young woman, who was her agent in all these cases, how effectual the services of a child had proved to a family in circumstances of the deepest distress. I impute much of this amiable philanthropy to the good example she has in her mother. I wish I could impress upon my young friends how much they have it in their power to help their fellow-creatures. Sophia Welmore, to my knowledge, never expends a penny in any eatable whatever for herself. She has been taught to understand that the table prepared for her by the order of her parents is to suffice. Thus she has none of those Epicurean longings after *good things* which so frequently disgrace children; and her happiness is consequently much increased by this judicious plan, for how often does sickness succeed to these luxurious feasts. I could enumerate many instances of Sophia Welmore's liberality, but I am now so near the conclusion of my task, I must curb my inclination which would certainly lead me to pursue a subject so grateful to my feelings; what I wish particularly to recommend to the imitation of my readers is this—That as the happy circumstances of that class of children to whom I particularly address myself,

exempts them from experiencing any of the real miseries of life, I advise them to consider all the advantages of their situation, and, like my amiable Sophia, exert their little power in purposes so agreeable to the dictates of humanity.

I am compelled to close this Chapter. As it is proper, before I take my final leave of you, that I should make one morning's perambulation in that circle from which I have drawn a great part of my spectatorial information, so, for the last time, imagine to yourselves, you *see* Goody Argus setting off upon her tour of inquiry. But do not expect too much. Travellers are often very unfortunate in the hour which they choose for their departure; yet I am vain enough to imagine that as my road is one of my own planning, as I have never called in the assistance of any artist to aid my views, I repeat, that under all these circumstances, I presume to think I have a right to expect some encouragement from the "*juvenile world.*" I do not aspire to a *royal* letter patent, but shall certainly feel much disappointed if I attain not that patent so much in your power to bestow, namely, your patience to my miscellaneous subjects, and your cordial belief that "Arabella Argus" is the sincere friend of children.

CHAP. XV.

A Medley.

THE unsettled situation in which we left Master Aston some time since, made me resolve upon calling in —— square this morning. I did so; and, much to my regret, I found young Aston making preparations for going to school. Lady Aston assured me, it was entirely against her wishes, but that they had been so unfortunate in their tutors, Sir George had lost his patience, and was now so determined that she had lost all influence with him. She intreated me to exert myself in her interest; this I declined, considering it a subject of much delicacy,

and indeed my respect for the feelings of the boy, (who appeared to enter but languidly into the arrangement) would have deterred me from an interference so unavailing.

The entrance of Sir George restrained the importunities of his lady.—"So you find we have decided at last," said the baronet; "our wrong-head is going to school." I bowed.—"You do not approve of the measure, I perceive," continued Sir George. I replied, with sincerity, "that I considered the parents, in these cases, ought to be the best judges." The baronet smiled, and telling his son to retire, he spoke unreservedly on the subject: but, when I heard that there had been six tutors engaged and dismissed, in the course of six months, I could not but imagine, that the mistaken tenderness of the parents, must have united with the whims of the boy, to occasion a change so frivolous, if not disgraceful; and I really considered, the child must be benefited by being removed to a school, where, at least, he must acquire one beneficial lesson,—humility. In fact, there is scarcely a more dangerous sort of knowledge, than that which the too great indulgence of parents frequently induces;—I mean, that of letting children feel their importance, their power, over our hearts, if not our understandings. I know it would be difficult to prove this to many parents; but the season may arrive, in which their own disappointment will corroborate my assertion.

That Sir George and Lady Aston will experience this, in a degree proportioned to their weak guardianship of their son, cannot be doubted. I left young Aston to his fate, and proceeded to the house of Mrs. Barlow. It cannot be supposed I was influenced to this call by my esteem for these young ladies:—no; I must confess a motive of curiosity led me thither. I saw Lady Liston alight from her carriage, and enter their house; and, as I had previously spoken to her ladyship, and been much pleased by her manners, I availed myself of the opportunity of again enjoying her conversation. I must candidly add, that I purposed, consistently with politeness, to make some inquiries after Miss Osborn, as I knew she was acquainted with the family. I found the Miss Barlows wholly unemployed, though it was *morning*; they appeared to me, as if waiting in the expectation of compliments from their mother's visitors, for I observed they were at some trouble to hold their heads very high, in fact, beyond what is graceful: they were continually smoothing their hair with small pocket-combs,—a custom (setting aside the vanity of the action) highly indelicate. When Lady Liston addressed herself to either of them, they answered in a voice scarcely to be heard; while the curtesy that accompanied their reply, was the most fantastical movement I ever beheld;—such a slide, or rather a retrograde sweep.

I had not dismissed the singularity of this modern

curtesy from my mind, when Lady Liston, turning to me, observed, "that even the fashion of curtesying, was greatly changed since our juvenile days." Mrs. Barlow interrupted my intended reply, by remarking, "there had been much done in the science of dancing latterly; that all its branches had been greatly improved; and that the *carriage* of the females of the present day, was grace personified."

Lady Liston and I contended for old times: we agreed that a curtesy, *formerly*, was a serious movement, observed from a motive of respect, and performed with a mild and graceful deportment; that the present mode of salutation was highly affected, and in itself expressed, that it was made under an idea (though certainly a mistaken one) of *looking* very elegant. I saw that the young ladies decided upon our sentiments, as those of two disagreeable old women; but we were indifferent as to their opinion. I took occasion to inquire of her ladyship, concerning Charlotte Osborn, and had the pleasure of hearing, that this amiable child continues to improve, under the good care of Miss Watson. Lady Liston further informed me, that Charles Osborn had come home for a short vacation, and been made the unconscious bearer of his own disgrace; for the letter which the master gave into his charge, acquainted his father of his irregular conduct, and quarrelsome disposition, and recommended to the General, to use his parental influence to check these faults, in order that the young

offender might be spared the odium of public disgrace.

What a painful feeling must this excite in the bosom of a parent! Surely the child, who has *once* occasioned an anxiety of this kind, will "take heed to his ways, that he offend not again."

I endeavoured to gain some information of the Murdock family, but I learned the young ladies had had a disagreement, and, to my utter astonishment, their young revilers declared, "they were the most disagreeable girls in the world;—that they could neither *dance*, play upon the piano, or sing;—that, in short, they were quite like Hottentots." "I hope not," said I, "for I trust they can say their catechism and their prayers." "O, we never asked them *that*," said the Miss Barlows. "Yet, they are questions of much more importance, than those to which you allude," interjoined Lady Liston. "Why, to be sure, every body knows their catechism and their prayers," said Helen Barlow.

"It is necessary to practice their tenets, as well as to repeat their form," said Lady Liston, "and, I imagine, that our duty to our neighbour does not inculcate malevolence; by which I mean, that it is contrary to the character of a good Christian, to speak ill of any one: the term, neighbour, does not imply those only who live near us, but includes all those with whom we associate, or with whom we have dealings. Nature is supposed to direct our conduct towards those

related to us; but that fellowship, or friendship, which common humanity dictates, is not the least graceful ornament of the human character."

Mrs. Barlow reproved the volubility of her daughters, but, I am sorry to say, the effect it produced was transient. Lady Liston and I took leave at the same time: on her ladyship's perceiving that I proposed to walk, she insisted upon putting me down: an offer I did not reject. Our conversation turned chiefly upon the education of children; I will not repeat what passed, as I am unwilling to enlarge upon the subject at present. Our sentiments were so perfectly in unison, that we were quite old acquaintance before we reached my daughter's. As we drew up to Mrs. Mordaunt's, my grandchildren soon recognised Michael behind the coach.—"Here is gradmamma," was the exclamation from the balcony. Lady Liston regarded my beloved family with so much interest, and, having already intimated her wish, of furthering her acquaintance with me, I yielded to the impulse of the moment, and asked her to dispense with form, and permit me to introduce her to my daughter. To this her ladyship assented; and we entered the drawing-soom of Mrs. Mordaunt together. The children who were prepared to receive me, with their usual and affectionate salute, retired respectfully as they perceived that I was not alone; but, after the introduction was over, they each claimed their privilege, and I saw, by the manner of Harriet, that she

had some matter of moment to impart.—"Well, Harriet," said I, "is your communication of a nature to interest the present company?" "I think so," said the little fairy, "for it is about William's friend, O'Brien." "Then tell your story clearly, and in as few words as possible," I continued; "for though I am always disposed to attend to my dear children, I do not feel that it is proper to draw upon the time of others."

Lady Liston looked towards me, as if fearful of being considered averse to the habits of children; I checked her purposed acquiescence, by observing, that there was much danger in suffering children to imagine, they possess great powers to entertain: their wit may amuse, and their whims *sometimes* evince genius, but neither of these qualities are essential to their happiness; on the contrary, they frequently diminish it, by encouraging the seeds of vanity to take root, which always leads to mortification, if not to contempt. Harriet Mordaunt, however, as if perfectly competent to distinguish between what *was* seasonable, and what was not, proceeded to explain, that Mr. O'Brien was then with William in the library, that her mamma had been questioning him, as to what profession he would prefer; "and only think, grandmamma," said the little orator, "O'Brien would like to be a sailor; so, you know, papa will be home soon, and he can take him on board his ship, and when William is ready to go, they will be so

so glad to meet again." "This is a very delightful plan," said I, "if it can be effected; but I hope you have not told Mr. O'Brien of it, until his guardian's consent can be attained." My daughter now explained that she purposed to enquire into the prospects of her young favourite; and, if she found no pre-arranged plan would be destroyed by her proposition, to submit her wishes and the power she possessed to serve Mr. O'Brien, if his inclination really led him to prefer the navy. Lady Liston inquired to what family he belonged; and, as we could not satisfy her in this point, the young gentlemen were summoned from the library. "You are the son of Colonel O'Brien?" said her ladyship, rising, and taking the hand of the amiable Dennis, as he advanced towards a seat. "I am, madam," said the youth. "And your mother's name was Fanny Liston, before marriage?" "Yes madam; and my name is Dennis Liston O'Brien." "How extraordinary!" continued her ladyship; "your mother was a cousin of my husband's: tell me, child, how have you been thus long a stranger to me?" Young O'Brien could not answer to this inquiry of her ladyship's; all he knew was, that he had been nursed in India, and sent home to Ireland, at the age of five years; that he had been apprised of his parent's death, before he was seven years old; and brought to England three years previous to the present time; that he was informed his patrimony was very

small, and taught to believe that India was the place in which he would be most likely to succeed. "Does the plan meet your wishes," asked her ladyship? "No madam," said O'Brien. "I wish to go into the navy." "Your feelings shall be consulted," continued the amiable Lady Liston, "you must in future remember you are my relation, and that I possess not only the inclination but the power to serve you."

I am afraid had Charles Osborn been present at this moment, he would have pronounced Mr. O'Brien quite a *sneak* according to his usual language; yet, I am persuaded, many of *my* young friends will entertain an opinion of a very contrary nature, when I explain, that the kind words, and truly maternal manner of Lady Liston, so overpowered her newly discovered kinsman as to occasion him to shed tears, nor did he endeavour to conceal them. Nay, I declare, we were all deeply affected by the scene, while William, with a warmth which did him honor, assured her ladyship, she would love O'Brien better the longer she knew him. As we took leave, Fanny whispered me, that she hoped I would not omit to mention all that related to this morning in my intended publication. I assured her I had been too much gratified by the happy consequences of my introduction, to neglect a fact so truly interesting. I was so intent upon concluding my career as a Spectator, I withstood the united entreaties of the Mordaunt family to remain in ——street all day, and

was conveyed to my own house by Lady Liston. In the course of our little ride she gave me the heads of her history, but as they were irrelevant to the tastes of a juvenile reader I suppress them, and will only add, that I felt very happy in having been the cause of a meeting so apparently fortuitous; and sincerely hope that, under Providence, it may lead to consequences honorable to both parties.

I had just inserted the foregoing statement and was pausing upon my elbow, half wishing that I had received *one* more communication from Mr. Testy, when behold, without the aid of the "emperor of the conjurors," in comes Michael with the identical letter. I broke the seal, and read as follows.

To Mrs. Argus.

My dear Madam,

You will do me the justice of believing me sincere, when I declare it is always most grateful to my feelings to speak favourably of every body. I may have appeared rather irritable at times, but indeed, my good madam, there are many real causes for regret in the education of children, generally speaking.

I am now, however, so happily disappointed in those for whom I am more immediately interested that I cannot forbear assuring you of it. My young cousins are at present inmates of my house, they have masters who attend them daily; in those hours set apart

for recreation I am delighted to perceive their talents directed to laudable and rational pursuits. I am re-treading my juvenile path; we are frequently play-fellows, and the young rogues are now so convinced of my affection for them, and so desirous of my approbation, that I am afraid they will reverse the business and *spoil* me, for I am already beginning to count the weeks which remain, e're they are to be admitted at —— ——. But I must be firm; and I know no more likely method to re-assure me that order and discipline are indispensible with boys, (I say nothing of girls), than a morning range amongst the circle of dear, kind-feeling mammas who pet their overgrown babies to the annoyance of all their acquaintance. I am persuaded you will partake in my present happiness, and beg to assure you, that

I am, most
respectfully your's,
TIMOTHY TESTY.

I certainly was very well pleased to hear this gentleman had such good reason to be satisfied with his young relations; and have no doubt his watchful zeal and affection will in time perfect his hopes in them.

But I must now address myself to my readers, and as a *woman*, more especially to those of my own sex. I know it is very usual to say, a young lady has *finished* her education; there cannot be a more erro-

neous assertion: we know that a period in the lives of young people must arrive, in which the attendance of masters and governesses is discontinued. What then—are they to set down to *forget* what they have acquired, or are they to be contented with what they already know, and make no further enquiries?

Restraint is a feeling against which almost every disposition is inclined to contend; and the period of emancipation from regular business, and stated days for particular studies, appears to the emerging scholar the first and most desirable happiness: alas! how cruel do you consider the person who attempts to throw shade into this smiling perspective; nor would any argument, though sanctioned by the most profound judgment and experience, convince you that the season of youth is the happiest of your lives. I know *I* should lose even that little share of your favour which I have (perhaps vainly) taken to myself, if I was to enlarge upon this theme; and I am too well convinced of the effect of an unfavourable impression to hazard your displeasure in this stage of my work.

But with all those *eyes* attributed to my *fictitious* name, I look into futurity; I read in the characters of a Sophia Wilmot, a Julia Warren, a Sophia Welmore, and, I trust, in *all* the Mordaunts, that amiability of disposition and firmness of principle, which will lead *them* to seek knowledge at every period of

their lives; may they continue to be comforts to their parents, and an honour to human nature! I cannot resist transcribing in this place a few lines from that admirable fable, "The Bee, the Ant, and the Sparrow." I take my quotation from that part where the Bee addresses the Ant.

"Ah! sister-labourer," says she,
"How very fortunate are we!
Who taught in infancy to know
The comforts which from labour flow,
Are independent of the great,
Nor know the wants of pride and state.
Why is our food so very sweet?
Because we earn, before we eat.
Why are our wants so very few?
Because we nature's calls pursue.
Whence our complacency of mind
Because we act our parts assigned.
Have we incessant tasks to do?
Is not all nature busy too?
Doth not the sun, with constant pace,
Persist to run his annual race?
Do not the stars which shine so bright,
Renew their courses every night?
Doth not the ox obedient bow
His patient neck, and draw the plough?
Or when did e'er the generous steed
Withhold his labour or his speed?
If you all nature's system scan,
The only idle thing is—man."

Every line of this applicable poem conveys a moral lesson; the most common observer is capable of

discovering its justness. If the kind order of providence has placed the human class in a station differing in rank and power, it has never distinguished any one branch of the universal family as destined to live without toil. To those whom fortune has been bountiful, the cultivation of the *mind* becomes a duty as imperious as the manual exertion of the daily labourer; the mental knowledge of those who have *leisure* to learn, should be given in portions to the ignorant, appropriated to their capacities and conveyed, not in the language of vaunting superiority, but with all the humility that ever accompanies true wisdom.

Once more, my little friends, every thing is in your power—embrace the present moment—impress upon your fertile minds, that you have a part to act, a character to sustain, and that you will *finally* be accountable for all, and the most trivial of your actions. These considerations are of equal moment with the young and happy as with the more advanced in life. You can never be too good for that state "into which the just shall pass:" and as the period for our summons is withheld from mortal sight, oh! let it be the constant practice of your lives to render yourselves acceptable to that God "in whose hands are all the corners of the earth."

If I have pointed out an error, which shall speak home to any individual bosom, seize the moment of conviction and prove your heart. If, and I trust I have been so fortunate, if any of you possess those

youthful virtues on which I have dwelt with delight, do not fear to apply them; but be emulous, stop not here, let each new day add strength to your good resolutions that the promises of your youth may, in riper years, lead you nearer to perfection. In this wish you may have many dear friends who are deeply interested, but not any whose sincerity is more worthy of your esteem, than that of

Your interested friend,

ARABELLA ARGUS.

April 20, 1810.

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