

LADY ANNE GRANARD ;

OR,

KEEPING UP APPEARANCES.

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CHAPTER XXIV.

“ Keeping up appearances” had been the business of Lady Anne’s existence, not only in the vulgar cares commonly understood by the word, as relates to the debtor and creditor affairs of life, but the more delicate and complicated business which belongs to friendship and connubial happiness. She was fully persuaded that people could not present a respectable front to society, without being connected with high circles of the nobility, wealthy denizens of the circle immediately under them, talented persons who had earned notoriety, and good people of superior moral conduct ; and it was now the great object of her life to keep up an appearance of being acquainted with those esteemed by all who were thus distinguished. When she was a married woman, although determined

never to resign her own will, diminish her own extravagance, listen either to the remonstrances or the persuasions of her husband, she yet yielded to the necessity of keeping up the appearance of happiness, since the quarrelsome were never deemed the respectable in society. Always cold, selfish, and hollow, yet her hypocrisy had its use, and was that which has been described as the "homage which vice pays to virtue." As, however, such conduct implies considerable labour, as she advanced in life she shrunk from the toil of *seeming*, and bore her contracted sphere of action the better, because the demand for virtues was proportionably decreased. Still, the desire to be known, the ambition to be distinguished, was pre-eminent—"the world prevailed and its dread laugh" at poverty and pretension, at inveigling mothers and portionless beauties, at family union and suspected tyranny—and, therefore, to a given point, and with the least possible portion of self-exertion and self-controul, she had "kept up appearances," allowing herself a certain portion of tyrannical government over her daughters, as a kind of safety-valve to her temper and habits.

This was the more necessary, because it could not be practised on servants; at least, not upon the class of servants Lady Anne could afford to keep, which were of a very different description to her opposite neighbour's, being not of the Shakesperian genus, "who sweat for service, not for meed." As a certain great divine, in a moment of playfulness (cruelly mis-

construed), told a rustic hearer, "a conscience was an expensive thing," so do those children of toil, when poorly paid and scantily fed, refuse to bear hard words and black looks into the bargain. "Siwility is vot's the due o' sarwants, ven two quarters is gone by, an the colour o'yer money's unseen, 'specially vith so many cold wittles as ve has, and nothink but swipes," had been said or sung in the ears of Lady Anne, "many a time and oft;" and such was its effect that she knew and felt her daughters *alone*, the unchartered helots which Nature had given her, "to have and to hold," by a bond (which could never be cancelled until marriage had bound them by the still stronger chain which Death and Sin can alone unloose), must be the exclusive recipients of her ill-humour in trifles, her despotism in essentials.

That Lady Anne had assumed her rights, and proved her power to break her victim, *mentally*, on the rack, or consign her to the stake, was so evinced by the appearance of Helen (though much the lesser sufferer, as the lesser delinquent), that Louisa fully concurred in the resolution her husband evinced to go down to Rotheles Castle, and obtain from the Earl some relief to the prisoners, leaving it to his lordship's judgment to provide, or, at least, to suggest the means. He held it to be a service of great delicacy, for, whatever might be the demerits of Lady Anne, he neither desired that a shilling should be withdrawn from her income, nor her daughters removed from her

guardianship, because he thought the former necessary for her rank, and the latter for the respectability of the sisters—Society forges fetters as strong as Nature, and neither can be foregone or despised.

The morning following the ebullition of which we have spoken, Lady Anne, contrary to her habits of late, summoned her daughters to breakfast. Helen, despite of the previous trouble, or, perhaps, in consequence of it (for the constitution in youth seeks reprisals), had slept well and looked tolerably; but Georgiana appeared like a faded flower—she neither spoke nor eat—there was not a shade of anger on her brow, but there was solicitude and sorrow in every lineament.

“ I shall go to Brighton, to-morrow,” said Lady Anne, laying down the paper she had been reading, “ so you may both pack your things.”

Georgiana had taken her seat in such a direction that the light fell full on her side face, and Lady Anne almost started to see how pale and thin that face had become. “ It is time we went somewhere, for you, Georgiana, are really a shocking object, and I don't suppose I am much better myself!—we shall be better at Brighton; you will get air and exercise, and I shall get rid of the annoyance I have sustained from impertinent letters, which tear my nerves to pieces.”

“ *Impertinent letters!*” Oh! it was plain Arthur had not forgotten her, for those were the very words applied to her brother Penrhyn's letter, when he asked

for Louisa. "Could it be that mamma had refused him?" Nothing was more probable; but, even in that case, it was inexpressible relief to believe she had been sought for, to know that her feelings were indeed reciprocated, that she had not thrown away her young heart's first affections on the insensible, or been deceived in her surmises by the insidious and deceitful. "Oh, no! Arthur was all she had thought him;" in daring to rely on his love and give confiding esteem to his character, more than half her sorrows were overcome, and hope whispered that the rest might be; her eyes became lighted up by the joy of her heart, and her whole frame seemed suddenly renovated.

"How strange," whispered Lady Anne to herself; "the girl is already in a consumption; there is the bright eye and the hectic flush of the disease, yet it was never in my family, *never!* Mary was long weak, but she didn't die, as one expected — it will never do for *me* to take her here and there, but the Marquis may. Surely, if a newspaper-man in the city could engage a vessel to take his wife to Lisbon for her health, the Marchioness of Wentworthdale might have two. I wish he would come up from the country to-day, that I might hasten the affair by telling him the disease is actually begun.

"Hold! that will not do. No man of family would choose to have a consumptive heir. It is a difficulty to know what view one should adopt; she may drag on for two whole years; in that time her

good fortune, with all its concomitant advantages, would be insured to her connexions, after which her death would be the most interesting thing possible, and make an astounding impression. The worst of it is, if teased too much, the complaint may turn to a galloping consumption, and she may die before any thing can be done. How horrible to have death in one's own house? But that must be guarded against; she shall die in a lodging, I am determined!"

Whilst thus soliloquizing, the doomed one was certainly making the best effort to live which had taken place for three weeks, by eating a good breakfast, to the great delight of Helen, who, encouraged by a glance of permission, took up the newspaper, and was not long ere she saw in the list of departures from Mivart's hotel:—

“Viscount Meersbrook for Portsmouth, the Hon. Lieutenant Arthur Hales for his ship, the *Thetis*;" news which she contrived the eye of Georgiana should glance at; and although an idea of a voyage to she knew not whither presented threats of an interminable parting, this painful knowledge confirmed, in all respects, the facts she had assumed. She doubted not that she was the object of Arthur's tender and honourable love—a love she certainly returned; that he had made her an offer of his hand, which she earnestly, though modestly, desired to accept, since his fortunes were at all events superior to her own, and could by no means include the personal and

pressing poverty under which she had suffered the whole term of her existence, with partial relief, and of this information, so necessary for her happiness, she had been cruelly deprived—deprived for a purpose she would die rather than accomplish.

If any doubts remained on this head, they were dispersed by finding a letter in the first drawer she opened, and which had unquestionably been placed there during the time she was at breakfast. She had never seen the handwriting before ; but it was sealed with a crest, and the letters A. J. H. beneath it. *His* name was Arthur James—he, the dear, emphatic *he*, alone could be the writer !

Yes, he was, and the letter was written as “the Doctor”—he “who looks all through the affairs of men” tells us, love-letters should be written “freely, fully, artlessly, passionately, and sincerely,” the protestations of love being followed by an account of the kindness of his brother, grandsire, and aunt—the utter impracticableness of Lady Anne, his certainty of the persecution she was undergoing for his sake, and his earnest desire that she would seek refuge with her uncle at Rotheles Castle, until his return, when it was probable that he should have a ship, in which case Lady Anne could not *possibly* refuse him ; he concluded with saying, that he trusted her sister was very kind, and would neither counteract his wishes, nor encourage those of any other lover during his painful absence ; and his hopes on that point were

the higher, because Meersbrook, who had seen more of her than himself, assured him that Helen's disposition was every way excellent, and her love for her sister as decided as the attachment which bound themselves to each other.

The letter was dated three days before it was found ; and Helen, who had read it all through with interest, and scanned the latter part with eyes that dwelt on every letter, was of opinion that it had been placed in the hands of the page, who could find no opportunity or excuse for going to their bed-room, until he knew they were in the breakfast-parlour, from whence they had long been banished.

At the moment these conjectures were going forward, Lady Anne's foot was heard ascending their stairs ; it was a positive event, for no ordinary circumstance, whether of threatened or actual sickness, had ever brought her, and on all occasions of anger the young ladies were sent for to be scolded, as Georgiana of late was well aware. The guilty are always cowards ; and both of them at this very moment felt so oppressed by their awful secret, that they were ready to believe mamma had actually planned the whole affair, and was about to pounce upon them in the very fact of receiving a love-letter by surreptitious means. Most fortunately the exigence of despair prompted Georgiana to instant action—she seized the letter and thrust it under the bed-clothes, at the moment the door was opened,

and Helen, from whom it was snatched, stood the very picture of shame and confusion, with her hands held up before her face, as if suddenly petrified in the act of treason.

But no discovery was made, for no volley of reproach was uttered, and could they have looked in their mother's face they might have seen that strange defeatures were written there. As it was, neither of them looked or moved, until they heard the words—

“ My dears, when I had a party you brought me a considerable part of the money Mr. Glentworth gave you, but you could not, did not, give me all, I hope?”

“ Not all, mamma, because you told us we must find our own dresses, and so we did of course ; we bought our winter clothing, and then our summer bonnets, and our *challis pour demi saison*, and our ——”

“ Well, well, but you have something left? give it me all, *all*. I borrow it of you till your uncle sends his usual pension. I must have every shilling !”

Georgiana hastily unlocked her work-box. “ Mamma should have every sovereign she had,” for giving money was, indeed, a little matter, so that she could escape unblamed and unrobbed of the treasure no jewels could redeem ; and Helen seeing how eagerly the prize was seized, how entirely money was the thing sought for, and how diligently every little recess in the work-box was searched for more, endeavoured

to turn over the possibility of saving a little (were it ever so *little*) from her own depository, when in turn it should be thus rummaged ; for, said she to herself, “ if I have not an odd half-crown to give to Georgiana, poor girl, how can she pay the postage for a letter to Arthur? If I can save a half sovereign, what a thing it will be !”

Keeping, therefore, an eye to the main chance, stimulated by the best possible motive, Helen emptied her purse on the bed, in such a manner, as to allow a stray half sovereign to escape, when she added the shillings and half-crowns to the little heap, and said, in a tremulous voice, “ Here is my money.” Lady Anne instantly took it up, and observed, “ You have not been so prudent as Georgiana—at least you have got less of your present left.”

“ Georgiana being so young bought only muslin, when I got a *mouselin de laine*, like Louisa’s, mamma, as you recommended.”

“ I remember *that* ; but I also remember, miss, that you are the very worst of my girls (and all are bad enough) as regards charity. I tell you, Miss Helen Granard, once for all, that no money ought, or shall be given in my house for *charity*—no, not a shilling !”

“ Madame is wanted below. • *Le vilain n’attendez pas,*” said Fanchette.

“ Let me see—five, ten, twelve. Oh ! there is thirty-nine pounds twelve. I have seventeen ; we

shall manage," said Lady Anne; "the brute cannot arrest me!"

With these words, which were only half uttered, but heard distinctly by the young and excited ears of her daughters, Lady Anne flew down stairs. The poor girls, deeply interested and alarmed in these few moments, had entirely changed the object of their fears and feelings. Their mother's words had awoke a new current of thought, a new subject of terror. Mamma arrested, dragged to prison, confined to a subterranean dungeon, starved, and probably murdered, whilst disgrace, as infectious and fatal as the plague, burying all the hopes and prospects of their lives, all the fond affections and expectations of their hearts, rose simultaneously before them, and alike forgetting their own sorrows in hers, who was, at all events, their mother, they simultaneously uttered the words, "Poor mamma!" dropt into each other's arms, and burst into a flood of tears.

For such daughters as these was the world, with its idle vanities, its real inflictions, and unreal pleasures, preferred. But we will not stay to moralize, for surely "he who runs may read."

The time came when they ceased to cry and began to think; by the way, if Georgiana had not, from a concurrence of circumstances, been enabled to eat her breakfast, this operation of the mind could not have been engaged in without further injury, for she was, indeed, weak and exhausted; but having no actual

disease, was capable of the renovation peculiar to youth; and the letter was an able physician, and might soon have effected a cure, if this new trouble had not arisen. Their first immediate care was how to dispose of it. Georgiana could not have destroyed it even if she had had the means; but she felt that *hidden* it must be, for all their sakes; the possession of a document clandestinely obtained, which, although considerably written, indirectly blamed her mother, and was in direct opposition to her wishes in the point where she claimed obedience, was, in their eyes, a kind of immorality, which was made much worse now she was known to be in trouble. Helen took charge of it in the first place, as being much the less likely to be suspected and examined; but hard indeed did the beloved and reassured one feel the necessity to part with the sweetest treasure she had ever possessed, and which she wished to place next her heart, and hold there till it had throbb'd its last.

No young person of either sex, who ever pressed to their lips, for the first time, "the one loved name," inscribed on that sheet which has revealed the softest, sweetest fears, hopes, and tender solitudes of the heart (in those days of early life when its feelings and wishes are new, undefined, but yet powerful and profound) will fail to sympathise with poor Georgiana. The letter had raised her from death to life, from despair to hope; it had given her confidence, not only

in *one* but all mankind ; it had converted a world of gloom into one of comparative brilliance, despite the clouds which overcast it. No wonder that “some natural tears she dropped, but wiped them soon,” in consequence of Helen’s observations.

“You see, Georgiana, it is not the party alone which cost mamma a good deal of money, for that was made up on every side, as it were, like the penny wedding in the print, for *we* paid for the fruit and gave her that beautiful velvet dress and cap, which cost nearly forty pounds ; but it is the little matters which have occurred since. The marquess has dined here twice or thrice *en famille*, but still very expensively, as there was a French cook, and fine wines, and hired plate, because she did not choose the Palmers to know any thing about it. Then, finding he totally disapproved of Lady Penrhyn and that class of women, which he evinced very sensibly by repeating, in an approving tone, what Lord Meersbrook had said (which was, in truth, excellent), she took, all at once, to Lady Betty Laroche, and Miss Radcliffe, and their set of friends. She has had three parties since we were confined in the attic, which, although only in an evening and without music, were not without expence, for there was always a costly *petit souper*, which came from the hotel ; and you know, whenever she began having things from that place, she always went on with it, until the scene was changed, and we removed either to Brighton or the Castle. It may be a good thing

to keep up appearances, perhaps, by now and then giving an entertainment you can ill afford ; but I can never be made to think it a good thing to run bills for personal dainties you are unable to pay for. I would rather live on a crust ; and, indeed, comparatively speaking, we girls have done so ever since I can remember in our own house."

" True, Helen, but still if, in her mistaken wish to secure our happiness, mamma does foolish things for our advancement, surely we ought to be grateful. I greatly fear she entertained the marquess for my sake, and I desire to thank her for it, though I had rather die than profit by the match she seeks to procure me. No power on earth shall make me marry *him*, but I would not grieve or offend her by marrying Arthur, even if I could do it ; and, alas ! I have little chance of seeing him for years to come."

" If my mother thought you were resolute, and that she never could bring the plan to bear, she would be very glad to give you to him she calls the ' sailor fellow,' who is unquestionably a very good connexion for unportioned girls like us, but she reckons on your facile temper and acute feelings, Georgiana ; you know you are of a yielding disposition."

" I *was*, you mean ; now I have become the possessor of a heart like Arthur's, I feel as strong as a lion, as firm as a rock."

" And as white as the counterpane," said Helen, shaking her head.

CHAPTER XXV.

The conference taking place between the sisters was broken up by a summons from Lady Anne, who was in the breakfast parlour.

“Helen, you are now nearly of age, and may be considered a responsible person. I consider you, myself, as of good character and constitution (indeed, my children seldom died even when babies), and I think there are people who would lend you a hundred pounds for a few months; you must try to borrow it for me; we cannot go to Brighton without it.”

“Then we had better stay at home, mamma,” said Georgiana, seeking to make a diversion in Helen’s favour, as she seemed positively awe-struck and stupified.

“What business have you in the matter, miss? nobody will lend you any thing, of course.”

“I thought, I feared, you were inconveniencing yourself on my account.”

“So I am ostensibly; but *actually* I don’t choose to remain in London when there is nobody left in it, and the agent has an offer for the house from some man of fashion, who pays a month in advance, and may keep it for three, so that go we must. Who do you

think of applying to, Helen? old Palmer, Charles Penrhyn, or who? You must see clearly that I cannot do it in either case."

"It is very difficult for me, mamma, because I have no fortune, and cannot repay it, you know."

"So much the better; you are free from deception, which is the worst part of every difficult transaction, and one nearly always attached to money matters."

"But surely it will be a strange thing and a bold thing for a young woman, without the means of returning it, to say 'pray, sir——'"

"Amuse yourself as long as you please, Miss Helen Granard, by making rueful faces and awkward speeches, but get me the money or a check for the money to-night. You had better go to Penrhyn's, in the first place, and find out whether Charles has got it, for those city people, at times, are pinched as much as people of fashion, and, of course, his wife has been troubling him, of late, for baby linen; if you think you can't get it, don't ask for it; go to old Palmer."

"But he is—he must be so offended that really—"

Lady Anne arose, and, with true Siddonian majesty, stalked out of the room; but her latest look at the bewildered Helen told her that "she *would* be obeyed," and there was so much pleasure in the prospect of spending a few hours with Louisa (about whose health and welfare they were in great anxiety), that they endeavoured to balance the pain with the pleasure, and set out to walk, attended by the page. In a short

time both became exceedingly weary — the result of their long confinement, and Georgiana was positively too weak to proceed. The boy was, therefore, despatched for a coach; he hesitated a moment, and then, clapping his hand on his pocket, said to himself, “I has my half-crown,” and darted off.

“We will borrow his half-crown,” said Helen, “or we shall have the half-sovereign taken from us. Oh! Georgiana, what a terrible thing is the want of money; the actual want which we are experiencing now! One may well feel for the poor when they beg for pence, after finding one’s sister dropping, as it were, in the streets of London for want of a few shillings. Mamma scolds me for pitying beggars. I wonder she is not herself the most charitable woman in London; for surely “a fellow feeling makes us wondrous kind.”

“I am convinced that James knows how poor she is, and that we have no money; how mortifying that is! but he does not look knowing, which is a great comfort.”

Louisa was delighted to see them, and immediately guessed their errand, which saved all the pain and trouble of explanation: as, however, her husband was gone into the country, and would be absent a few days, the money could not be procured that night; but hastily was her own well-filled purse drawn out to supply the wants of her sisters, who told her all that had occurred, ending with Helen’s proposition of leaving the letter with Louisa, as then it would be safe.

The precious deposit was placed in her pocket-book, and Georgiana told to remember where it was laid; "for, you see," said Louisa, with a tremulous voice, "God only knows whether I may live to return it to you! Charles will be back as soon as possible—I know he will be here in three days; but a person in my situation is apt to get low, and I durst not ask for either of you to be with me, which is a little hard. I wonder my mother can think of leaving town for the next fortnight; if things should not go well with me, how desolate I should be without one member of my own family near me, especially her whose experience and kindness should be my support!"

"You shall not be so left," said Helen, warmly. "I will be with you, and help to nurse you, if poor Georgiana can do without me."

"I can, my love; the letter has put new life into me. I shall be much happier, knowing you are with Louisa; and I will beg mamma so earnestly, she will give you leave to do it, which will be best; it is no credit to any one to be on bad terms with her own mother."

After seeing all the beautiful little wardrobe of the mother expectant, praising her delicate needlework, and inwardly regretting their own inability to add to it, they got a hearty lunch, intended for a dinner, and returned homewards, in better spirits the first half of the way, but much worse the remainder, for "how could they face dear Mr. Palmer, much less ask him

for money !” When, however, the door turned on its hinges, and they were once more under that dear hospitable roof, where they had been so happy many a time, all fears and feelings, save the pleasurable, subsided, and they rushed forward into the library with schoolgirl impatience.

“ Young ladies !” cried Mr. Palmer, in surprise, but not of pleasure.

“ My dear girls !” said his lady, snatching the nearest to her heart, “ how delighted I am to see you !”

“ And we are so glad to come !” said Georgiana.

“ And so ashamed and so sorry !” added Helen, looking pitiably towards Mr. Palmer.

“ I must ask you a question in the first place, a very vulgar one, I confess—‘ Does your mother know you’re out ?’ ”

“ Oh, yes ! she sent us first to Mr. Penrhyn’s, and then to Mr. Palmer’s.”

“ I am very glad Lady Anne is come to her senses,” replied Mrs. Palmer—“ very glad indeed.”

“ As I am not her keeper, such lucid intervals give me little pleasure, I confess,” said Mr. Palmer, drily.

“ Come, come, Palmy !” said the lady, “ don’t speak in that way before these dear girls, who I am certain love us both very much, and who have had nothing but punishment since they were here before.”

“ That’s true ! for life itself would be a punishment to me, if spent under Lady Anne’s roof ; however, I don’t want to grieve the poor things, so I will say not

one more word respecting mamma, after Helen has told me the simple, unvarnished reason of their being sent hither.”

“It is, sir—it is, in plain truth, the want of a hundred pounds.”

“Yes, sir,” added Georgiana, “to borrow a hundred pounds.”

Mrs. Palmer saw that the previously pale faces of the pleaders were absolutely crimson ; but her husband saw nothing, for so completely were his risible faculties aroused by what he inwardly termed “Lady Anne’s impudence,” that peal after peal of uncontrollable laughter burst from him, in which it was at times evident that his wife was nearly joining. Though extremely disconcerted in the first instance, yet the sisters soon became comforted ; they very naturally thought that laughter and anger were incompatible, and that presently Mr. Palmer would come to himself, and hear what poor Helen had got to say on the subject. At the proper time she begun with, “It is I who would borrow the money, not mamma, in order that Georgiana may go to Brighton, which is necessary for her health.”

“Very good, my dear ; but, in reply, I have to say, I will not lend *you* a hundred pounds—you may marry, or you may die, and in either case I shall not be paid at all. It won’t do, Helen ; you are a good girl—you don’t mean to cheat me, but you might do so, and sadly would you grieve to have done it.”

“I told mamma I could not pay the debt, but she said ‘she only wanted it for a few months;’ at Christmas uncle will send her plenty.”

“Well! if Lady Anne Granard will step over the way to ‘those low people, the Palmers,’ she will find ‘the old man’ in the library, and, if she chooses to give him a note, he will give her a check for a hundred pounds, or a trifle more should she need it; but he will not encourage her daughters to trot out on any such errands—there is something quite shocking in it, to my conception.”

“Don’t hasten home, my loves, for Mr. Palmer is not going out, and I shall retire before your mamma comes. I want to know how you found Mrs. Penrhyn, about whom I am very anxious. I shall contrive to drive thither to-morrow, and Mrs. Gooch will be with her on Friday.”

Helen mentioned her ardent desire to go to *her* instead of going to Brighton, on which Mr. Palmer said, approvingly, “You may consider that point settled, my dear; is there any other circumstance you would accomplish that concerns mamma?”

“Louisa wishes to see her exceedingly.”

“Then she shall go to-morrow with Mrs. Palmer, whose presence will induce her ‘to assume a virtue, though she has it not.’ ”

“Thank you, thank you, dear Mr. Palmer! what would become of us without you! You will never call us *young ladies* again, but dear girls, won’t you?”

“No, you will be *borrowing baggages* to-morrow!”

Helen moved quickly, but Georgiana's steps lingered ; she had a question to ask that would not leave her lips, yet would not be repressed, and she looked from one to the other of the worthy couple, as if reading in the countenance which would be the most likely to answer. At length, whilst her hand was in that of her kind host, she said, " Pray, sir, has Mr. Hales— Lieutenant Hales — really *sailed*, as the newspapers said?"

" He has, Georgiana, and a worthier man or a better officer is not on the sea, wide as it is, and many fine fellows as there are on its bosom. I have seen a great deal more of him, from circumstances that have occurred, than I expected to do, and I never read a brighter page in human nature than that young fellow's heart presented to me."

Georgiana did not attempt any reply, for none appeared called for, but her eyes told how sweet were the words she heard to her heart, and how truly the speaker had judged what would console her for the loss she had had the last time she saw him. Not a word more was uttered.

Lady Anne listened to Helen's negotiation with profound attention ; that Mr. Palmer should ever meet her again flattered her pride of rank, since she thought no other motive than a mean subserviency to the possessor of a title could induce him to forgive, or rather to get over, the many offences she had within a week or two practised towards him, and which, it must be allowed, savoured of ingratitude, all things considered ;

but “ what was the value of *caste*, if it did not absolve one from the usages of the vulgar ? Lord Meersbrook talked of gratitude to Mrs. Palmer ; but, then, he was a young man who had lived abroad, and did not understand the privileges of his order. Besides, his father was the first peer in his family ; and they being remarkable, age after age, for their learning and virtues, chose to retain the character, even now the family peculiarities might be dispensed with. To be sure, a good many people of high rank did entertain the same notion ; and, if *convenient*, it was desirable, on the whole, that the nobility should be honourable, and compassionate, and generous, especially to their own body ; but to be *grateful* to those below them was carrying the thing too far, especially if a little haughtiness, or a mixture of suavity and insolence, would answer the purpose as well.”

A whole string of great names rose, uncalled for, to Lady Anne’s mind of her own compeers, whose lives are daily passing in the practice of every virtuous action and elegant occupation suitable to their high station, their talents, and attainments ; but it was not agreeable to dwell on their characters. It required the goad of poverty, and all the native energy she possessed, “ to screw her courage to the sticking point” to meet Mr. Palmer ; but, as the sooner it was done the better, she set out to the “ man over the way” in a few minutes, recalling the remembrance of her station, and the graces of her manners to her aid, whilst that

of her obligation, being never very vividly impressed, vanished into thin air, thereby enabling her to meet Mr. Palmer with much of the coolness to which he had lately affixed a very unseemly epithet.

“ You are always a very good neighbour, Mr. Palmer, and, I understand from my daughters, are willing to lend me a hundred or a hundred and twenty pounds.”

“ Say a hundred and fifty if you are pressed, Lady Anne, but it must be on certain conditions.”

“ Helen said nothing of conditions, but of course I must submit. What are they ?”

“ That you permit Helen to be with Mrs. Penrhyn during her confinement.”

“ Of course, I always intended that she should.”

“ I would also suggest, though I do not insist, on the propriety of remaining in London until her safety is ascertained.”

“ I fear I cannot promise that, as Pigget has let my house.”

“ I have taken it for a friend, whom I will accommodate in my own until you are enabled to set out to her satisfaction, as believing you have an interest in her. The laws of fashion do not bind people of rank to forget the ties of consanguinity and affection, for I could point out numerous instances where mothers really love their children, and wives their husbands. Who was ever so long and so tenderly a nurse as the late Duchess of Northumberland? and I am old

enough to remember how often I have seen the beautiful Duchess of Devonshire, about eight in the morning (when I was at Bath in 91 or 92), returning from the parade, where she had sate up the live-long night with her sister, Lady Duncannon; it can therefore be no disgrace to *appear* as if you felt for your daughter."

"Very fine, sir! I ask the terms on which I am to have the money?"

"And I have named them. Your ladyship does not speak to a money-lender, but a gentleman; fully aware, of course, that you are a woman of rank whom circumstances have laid under obligation to him of a nature never to be cancelled, but which would never have been remembered if your ingratitude had not been mingled with cruelty to your own sweet, unoffending child, in a way unknown to her, and held hitherto in secrecy by me, but not therefore forgiven or forgotten."

Mr. Palmer spoke "as one having authority," for he was a tall and handsome man, past the prime, but still in the vigour of autumnal life, and his features, in their impressive character, though generally benevolent and sweet, were now stern and intellectual, conveying the idea that he looked into the very recesses of the heart; and Lady Anne had a heart, small as might be its dimensions, and incrustated as its surface undoubtedly was with pride and selfishness. She had, during the absence of her daughters, actually

felt great solicitude for Louisa, and the memory of her own days of trial had risen in vivid colours to her mind. "How very, very kind poor Granard used to be on those occasions! There could not be a better husband certainly, and I trust Charles Penrhyn will be equally so. I think he will, which is a great comfort. Probably Isabella has a child—surely it is a boy! One does not like to be a grandmother, but yet, when an heir is concerned, it is the sooner forgiven. She is very young; but then he is rich, and will leave nothing undone for her, I trust."

These passing thoughts were, of course, unknown to Mr. Palmer. Had he given Lady Anne credit for them, his manners would have been more bland and his words less pointed. They were answered so far as it was convenient to notice them.

"I hope you will continue to be silent on the subject to which you refer, as there is no occasion for Georgiana to know she has received an offer I could not accept, having much higher views for her, which, in due time, will be developed."

"They are known to every body, Lady Anne, already; your *new* friends were less discreet than your *old* ones. They have boasted of their having converted you during the enforced absence of your wicked children, one of whom, they observed, was going through a course of discipline necessary for the beautiful young wife of a very particular elderly nobleman, who neither chose his estates to be dilapidated,

nor the legitimacy of his heir to be doubted. God knows, neither Georgiana nor any of your daughters merited to be thus reflected upon! If she could bring herself to be Marchioness of Wentworthdale, she would be an honour to her high station;—however, that is over now, he is grouse-shooting in Scotland.”

Lady Anne was relieved; the absence of the marquis had greatly puzzled her, as he had bade adieu for a short time, which had become a long one. Baskets of game had reached her house, but not a single line, in his own hand, had met her eye. Better it should be so: Georgiana was not yet in a state to “lure the gentle tassel back,” but no thanks to the chattering *coterie* whom she had courted for the sole purpose of rendering the marquis reassured on the subject of proper acquaintance. With much less tact than was usual, she had concluded that the reverse of *wrong* must be *right*, and that the occasional appearance of a *serious* lady in her drawing-room, would neutralize the flirtations of her gayer friends; and this she now mentioned, with many indignant expressions, venting on those she called “prosy old hypocrites” the anger she really felt for Mr. Palmer.

“It was not a wise thing to enter a close *clique*, my good madam, until you had examined both them and yourself, and considered how far you were likely to coalesce. Your *true* friends would say either party were unworthy, or unfit, for your associates; the un-

erring propriety of Lady Anne Granard as wife, or widow, has never been doubted (fine woman as she certainly is), yet it must be said she degraded herself in *chaperoning* Lady Penrhyn; but, as she loves the world, lives in the world, and for the world, surely she was ill-calculated for the associate of those who run into the extreme of discarding it, despising it, classing its amusements with the most heinous sins, and earning a better, by utter renunciation of what we have mercifully received in this. Every profession implies education, and you had not taken your degree in my Lady Betty's college. You had better by half have turned Catholic."

"Spare me, Mr. Palmer! I was wrong—have been wrong in many respects, I fear, but I meant well. I had a great end in view, and—I have it still in view!"

"Yes, I see how it is! You are playing for the odd trick, but it is the bystander who sees the game, and I tell you honestly, you have not cards to carry it, neither physically nor figuratively. You have already—like the dog in the water—lost the substance for the shadow. That reminds me I had better pay you as I agreed to do—a month or six weeks in advance for your house. Suppose I give you forty pounds, it may be a convenience."

Lady Anne took the money eagerly, and, in truth, thankfully; professed an intention of seeing her daughter the next day, and returned home with her

heart so much lighter, that she forgot every remark which had awakened her resentment, except inwardly acknowledging "that much of what the man had said was too true. Of course the sailor would forget Georgiana directly; but should the marquis really slip through her fingers, there would be no difficulty in getting another younger brother. The worst of it was, that in her pertinacious refusal of the sailor, she had lost the lord his brother, who, in time, and with the advantage of family connexion, might have thought of Helen, who was at this period the more attractive of the sisters." Alas! what a weary world must this be to the plotting part of it! the plodders have infinitely the advantage.

We hasten over the next ten days (for we are anxious to reach our friends so long abroad, and of whom we know so little), but in them much occurred, for a letter was received from Lord Rotheles, not only reproaching his sister for having robbed Georgiana of an honourable and excellent connexion, but insisting on her being sent down to the castle, and informing her that "her family being so much reduced, his allowance would be so too, as it was plain that money only fostered the pride it was her duty to subdue." The postscript added, "that the countess was completely overcome by the misconduct of Lady Allerton, who had eloped with an officer—a circumstance which also affected his own mind severely, by recalling events long gone by, but never ceasing to be painful."

Georgiana, in a few days, had the comfort of seeing Louisa the mother of a sweet child; Lady Anne, in affectionate attendance upon her; and her own invaluable letter, the companion of her journey, which Mr. Penrhyn partook, until she was placed in her uncle's carriage, which was sent to meet her. Lady Anne had, therefore, the satisfaction of proceeding to Brighton unencumbered by a single daughter, immediately after she had received the good news she most desired, that Mrs. Glentworth had presented her husband with a young Roman as his heir. The circumstances surrounding her were therefore, on the whole, extremely pleasant; for it cannot be supposed she had much sympathy for the Countess of Rotheles's mortification, and she relied on the good offices of Georgiana for the restoration of her uncle's kindness and allowance, the former being of little importance, if unaccompanied by the latter.

CHAPTER XXVI.

When Mr. Glentworth, his young bride, and her gentle sister, set out for Marseilles, the former observed "that there was a necessity for his travelling to that place with all convenient speed; therefore he could not shew them much of Paris, or give to its amusements the time and attention they merited;" but he added, "as soon as ever I have settled my business at the city where I resided so long, I will take you to Italy by way of making amends."

As they both declared a great preference for this most interesting of all countries, and were alike charmed with all they saw, and grateful to him who provided their pleasures, and whose taste and information gave zest to all their enjoyments, nothing could be more delightful than their whole journey, which was rendered more interesting by including the passage of the Rhine, and a portion of Switzerland. The wonder and awe which pervaded Isabella's mind at some periods, the delight she expressed at others, her unsophisticated sentiments, her kind-heartedness, the manner in which (when she was the most moved or charmed) she wished for her sisters to partake her pleasures, were all sources of the sweetest joy to her

husband, to whom she was as a dear child whom it was luxury to indulge, and amusement to develop.

Entirely as he gave his mind either to the study or the improvement of her's, it yet struck Mary that, however great the *goodness*, however perfect the *kindness* of Glentworth, yet the *love* was principally on Isabella's side. She was too happy at this time to attempt analyzing his feelings or her own; she was so ignorant of all other men, within or without the pale of marriage, that she had no opportunity of comparing him with them, or his ordinary conduct with theirs; and her admiration, her reverence of him, was so intense, her obedience and submission so entire, it was hardly likely she would do so: but if ever she did, if her eyes were once opened, with her acute feelings, her entire devotedness, the tender sister feared that her high wrought happiness might find a downfal proportioned to its present altitude.

Mary had loved once as Isabella loved now; and she had attained that point of reliance, that confiding faith in the beloved, which Isabella enjoyed, and had a sense of sympathy from congeniality of tastes and equality of years, and of knowledge with the one chosen, more perfect than her sister could possibly have with a man so superior in attainments; and, as the loss of this love had been the great misfortune of her life, it was no wonder she estimated it to the extreme of its value, and sought most anxiously, on her sister's behalf, the continuance of that hopefulness

which was its best substitute. When the pleasures and troubles of travelling ceased, and their little circle became strictly domestic, she saw clearly the time of trial would come, and dreaded lest Isabella should become sensible alike to her own inability of supplying the society her husband required, and which in London was always at hand ; and to the fact of his being unexpectedly, though on her part most innocently, drawn into making an offer, without that profound consideration, and that careful investigation, which can only be affected properly during a certain lapse of time and thought.

The entire change which had taken place in Isabella's situation was enough to dazzle and bewilder a much older and apparently much wiser person. She was taken from the pressure of a poverty that made itself constantly felt, to all the comforts and pleasures of wealth in its best gifts and most luxurious indulgences — from the taunts of a mother who upbraided her for supposed personal deficiencies, and gave grudgingly her barest necessities, to a husband who considered her youth as beauty, or admired her as possessing that description of it to which he had been accustomed long, and preferred much, and on which he lavished freely whatever could enhance its merits, or awaken the gratitude of its possessor.

But a man may idolize a wife (which Glentworth did not), and yet not find her a companion, save as a pupil, which term indicates inferiority. A great dis-

parity of years places two people in two distinct areas, as to the history of their country, their connexions, memory, and their feelings, for them to enjoy the friendship of marriage, the fellowship of opinions. At that period, when enthusiasm and romance is natural and even graceful in one, it has subsided in the other, and the genuine eloquence of imagination, the vivid burst of feeling, may elicit a smile; but it is at best sickly, and often sneering. On the other hand, the finest argument ever concocted, the concentrated wisdom drawn from men and books, will fail to charm, like the hilarity of a dance, or the splendour of a gala, the young, gay girl, whose spirits are exuberant, and whose heart is untouched by care, and who, a dozen years afterwards, would, in calm cheerfulness, listen lovingly, and examine carefully, the pleaded reasons offered to her judgment.

Mr. Glentworth had been all his life a close observer of men and things; and, as events of the most extraordinary nature had occurred in the last quarter of a century, and his mind was stored with anecdotes of men and measures, persons and places, it was natural that he should make mention of them in conversation, not unfrequently referring to familiar facts, or asking the aid of another's memory. On these matters of chit chat occurring, Mary always came forward with ready assistance, so far as her recollection or reading enabled her; for, when Isabella had said, "that was before I was born, I believe," a blank shadow seemed

to spread over the fine countenance of her husband, and he would fall into a fit of silent musing, indicating disappointment, or *ennui*.

The affectionate anxiety felt for her sister's happiness, together with the change of air, and that moral change of scene which was best of all, had the happiest effect on the health, spirits, and person of that most amiable young woman so long designated as "poor Mary." She was still very quiet, and somewhat subdued, from long habit, but she was cheerful and sensible, peculiarly alive to the happiness of all around her, and unobtrusively solicitous to display the good qualities, or supply the deficiencies of her young sister to the guests whom they occasionally entertained. These were generally merchants, with whom Mr. Glentworth was formerly connected, and with whom he was now finally settling, or such of his countrymen as were returning from Greece, Egypt, or Turkey. He always listened with great delight to the details given by these travellers, and not unfrequently expressed a great desire to follow in their steps, in which case Isabella always expressed a willingness to set out immediately; but not one traveller thought such journeying desirable for ladies, and the conversation generally ended with his saying, "No, no; Italy must be your place of travel. I know it so well, that I shall make a good guide; but, by the same rule, I shall find nothing new, which one always requires in travelling."

“ I should think you had left your own country long enough, Glentworth, and, since you are married, would think it right to settle in England, go into parliament, and so forth,” said a friend.

“ So I intend, certainly ; but I have *promised* to go to Italy.”

“ Surely, dear Mr. Glentworth, you do not apprehend that I shall trouble you to keep that promise—the sooner I go to England the sooner I see my sisters, you know,” said Isabella ; “ besides, I shall be with *you* in either case.”

“ My promise must be kept, Isabella ; but be assured I feared no trouble of any kind from *you*, who are always the best little girl in the world.”

“ I shall not be the best *little* one much longer, for I am growing very fast since we left England. Dr. Bartolomé says it is the climate, and that I may go on for a year or two ; and, being quite tall enough already, I am willing to leave Marseilles whenever you please, for I don't want to be a may-pole.”

There was something so extremely ridiculous in the idea of having a wife who was so very much a child as to be growing, in the opinion of poor Glentworth (who was in all respects a fastidious and sensitive man), that he evidently shrunk from the eyes of his company, several of whom were exchanging smiles. Mary saw his situation, and observed immediately—

“ You forget the words, dear Isabella—he said you would grow till you were eighteen ; and that time

will come soon enough to save you from being taller than my mother, who is a very fine woman of a commanding not masculine height."

Foolish as his annoyance had been, these words were a positive relief to Glentworth, but, unhappily, they brought before his eyes a form which had perhaps never entirely left them, since he too frequently studied to find her lineaments in the face of Isabella, who had a much greater resemblance to her than English women in general exhibit, and was at least the only one in her family whom, as a matter of taste, he would have preferred. "The eyes blue languish and the golden hair" had with him no comparative charm with the smooth, fine-grained skin of the olive beauty, united with dark, hazel eyes, arched brows, an outline of classic chiselling, teeth of pearly whiteness, and lips of vermilion redness; the round, soft throat, becoming whiter as it recedes from the eye, and leaves to imagination the perfection of the half-defined and delicately-proportioned bust. Such were the lineaments on which he had gazed in passionate admiration, dwelt on with tender devotion, and lamented with sorrow, the more deep and abiding in that it was silent and unsuspected, nourished and fed, despite of the wealth which offered every other treasure, and even of the young, innocent, and ardent love of Isabella's virgin heart.

The long companionship of years, the interchange of thought, the gradual unfolding of affection, ripen-

ing by degrees, until the whole being is absorbed in one object, and holds existence as tending to one end. Communion of thoughts, and fears, and hopes, on the most important subjects and doctrines that can affect the human mind and agitate the immortal soul—difficulties that retard, and delicacies that enhance the blessing, long promised but never obtained, form altogether bonds for the heart, from which it can be never wholly exempt so long as life and memory endures — for what may be termed the small fibres, as well as the substantial cordage, contribute to bind it. The habits of seeing through another's eyes, of referring to another's judgment, and using your own on her behalf — of pitying her sorrows or her pains, trembling for her happiness or her life, rejoicing in her joy, and exulting in her excellence — these are the *spirit's* sacred *marriage bonds*, rarely felt in their most extensive character, and only felt by the best and noblest of mankind, never broken with impunity, or severed even by death, though time, which tames down all passion, and religion, which controls and purifies all motive, may bestow a sweet and even glorious sunset to a cloudy or tempestuous day—but we return.

Miss Granard had always received the kindest attention from her brother-in-law, but she remarked that he henceforward paid her more respect than he was wont, and sought to place Isabella more immediately under her *surveillance* ; and, although, in point

of fact, she could not increase her love or her solicitude, she was not sorry to obtain from him approbation on any point she desired to carry with his wife.

As she considered the whole family under the highest obligation to him, on their dear Louisa's account, and her young married sister in a superior, as well as happier, situation than herself, she would have found it difficult to interfere with Mrs. Glentworth (although her youngest sister), had she not been the sweet and amiable creature she was—if her husband had been the dotting lover, one so much older is generally supposed to be. Since their arrival at Marseilles he was much engaged, and soon found that his business would detain him longer than he had expected; this information did not render his young wife, for a moment, petulant or impatient, for she was habituated to bend to another's will, and his pleasure was the law of her life; but his absence, which was frequently prolonged far beyond the time he had named for his return, always gave her extreme uneasiness, the effects of which were visible, despite of every effort made by her sister to divert her attention or amuse her time.

Men, who are bachelors to six and thirty, have rarely the punctuality required in married life; they are neither habituated to the sharp reproach of a hungry wife, nor the pleading paleness of an ailing one; and, when not selfish by nature, they become careless from habit, and, lacking the pleasures of a social meal, accept the freedom conferred as their

substitute. This fault in Glentworth increased the more as his desire to conclude his stay in Marseilles increased, and it affected Isabella very painfully. She had grown fast and was become very thin, at the time when a new claim was made on the strength of her constitution, and her appetite became failing and capricious at the very period when its assistance was required to sustain the waste subtracted. It would, therefore, not unfrequently happen that when she had been for an hour fainting almost for want of food, on its arrival she could scarcely taste it, or, having done so, was obliged to leave the table. Her constant efforts to appear better than she felt, and her actual delight when she received her husband, deceived him as to the extent of the injury under which she was suffering; and, one day, when she had waited too long, and yet felt unable to eat, her husband remarked “that Lady Anne Granard could manage petted children better than he could.”

Isabella coloured, but did not speak, or even look up; but Mary, seeing the English servant had left the room, and knowing the French one would not understand her, said, in a low voice, but with something of asperity, perfectly new in her—

“Lady Anne Granard had no petted child to manage, and I am sure you have *none*, Mr. Glentworth, at present. Were my father alive, he would tell you to be very indulgent towards the one you may expect.”

“Isabella, my sweet Isabella! pardon me, my love; my kind, patient girl.” Isabella was in his arms, but she had fainted, for the revulsion in her feelings had been too rapid. He carried her, himself, to her couch, and, after seeing her recovered and cheerful, returned to dinner, much relieved, saying to Mary, “he had more satisfaction, a great deal, in knowing poor Isabella was unable to eat, than in believing her subject to airs and affectations, such as some girls were guilty of, and which of late he had been apprehensive she was adopting.”

“I cannot say I have equal stoicism,” said Mary; “I love her far too well to see her sufferings unmoved, much as I admire her fortitude and patience: but you cannot understand her as well as I do. You consider her as a mere child; I know her to be a well-principled woman, with an understanding far in advance of her years, and a strength of mind only equalled by the integrity and beautiful simplicity of her character. I had hoped that, as a sensible man, you chose her for her excellent qualities, as my mother always called her the plainest of the family. She is the only *brunette*, certainly.”

“She is; and I liked her for that reason. Moreover, before she became so poorly, she approached my standard of beauty more nearly every day. In fact, she grew very like——”

Isabella at this moment entered the room: she found herself better, and could not forego the plea-

sure of her husband's society ; and never had he rendered it so agreeable since " he was the bright, particular star" who alone illumined the dull dwelling in Welbeck Street. Mary managed to prove the truth of her own assertions, by enabling Isabella to speak with more freedom than usual in the presence of her husband, for whom she had too much admiring reverence for the ease and freedom necessary to domestic intercourse. This had been more felt, and therefore more acted upon, since her marriage than before, because she had become properly sensible that her sphere of action was enlarged, that she had new duties to fulfil, and that, as the mistress of an important establishment, the wife of a man whom every one looked up to, she ought to assume, with modest propriety, the consequence that belonged to her. Considering it was time to " put away childish things," her husband never called her a child, or referred to her as one, but she felt it as the harshest remonstrance, the cruellest reproach he could use, and preferred being silent in general to saying any thing which might be construed into that which was her innocent fault, her positive, yet not irremediable misfortune. She neither dared be playful, nor enjoy the playfulness of another ; yet, being utterly devoid of dissimulation in repressing the natural buoyancy of her spirits, she only half succeeded, and, whilst she suppressed the laugh of gaiety, failed to display the womanly composure, or the imposing gravity, she sought to obtain and to exhibit.

It is impossible for the most thoughtful girl to appear the experienced woman ; but the lady-like and gentle, the reasoning and listening, will never be condemned as inadequate companions, either by the old, the sorrowful, or the fastidious, to each of whom they may impart, as by a happy contagion, some portion of their own elastic spirits and ever-springing hopefulness.

CHAPTER XXVII.

Mr. Glentworth was a man of too much genuine feeling not to pity the sufferings of his young wife, which became so much increased by the heat of Marseilles that her sister was seriously alarmed, thinking that a frame so attenuated as hers must sink under its influence, and he, therefore, hastily arranged his affairs, and they removed to Civita Vecchia.

Their little voyage was beneficial, in the greatest degree, to Isabella; therefore they soon renewed it as far as Leghorn, from whence they went to Pisa, not choosing to leave the sea at a great distance, as it appeared to be the best friend of the invalid. Here it was certain she rapidly recovered her lost strength, and recruited her wasted form; and here she received the letters of her beloved family, relating many circumstances well known to our readers, but new to the travellers, the tidings having far to go. They were delighted with the idea of their mamma having forgiven Louisa, but sorry, she thought, such a public proof of her pardon necessary as that of giving a party; for the sisters well knew how great an embargo it would lay on the purses of Helen and Georgiana;

and Mrs. Glentworth sincerely wished she were at home again, that she might obviate their inconvenience, or in any way contribute to their comfort. Neither could she doubt that her residence near them was as likely to contribute to their eventual advantage as their temporary pleasure; and being, in fact, more calculated to live on the heart than the mind, she began to wish exceedingly for reunion with her family, and observed to Mary :—

“You are a great deal better, and so am I. Had we not better go home immediately, dear sister? I should like just to see Rome, which could be easily done since we are so near it; but, as to Florence and its grand galleries, Genoa and its palaces, Naples and its burning mountains, even Venice and all its wonders fade in my eyes, when I think of the delight I should enjoy in having mamma and all my sisters around me, and dear Mr. and Mrs. Palmer seated at our table.”

“I hope you will have that pleasure next spring; but, since we are here, and Mr. Glentworth intends to take us to all these places, we must not offend him by underrating them.”

“But it is principally on his account that I would return home, Mary, for he has never been happy, I am confident, since we entered Italy; he has been nervous and ill at ease since the hour we landed at Civita Vecchia, I am certain.”

“He was extremely anxious about you.”

“So I thought; and I did my very best, on that ac-

count, to appear well, and, thank God, I soon became so ; but he did not, therefore, get better : on the contrary, he is frequently pale and abstracted. If ever we speak of Rome, he becomes either bewildered or angry ; yet, if a cross word escapes him, makes ten times the apology called for. Your anxiety about me, dear sister, has prevented your noticing these things, but I cannot fail to see them ; besides, no one can observe so much as myself ; he often sighs and mutters in his sleep, and more than once has said, ‘ dear Margarita ! ’ or ‘ oh, Margarita ! ’ ”

“ That is accounted for by his anxiety for *you*, since Margarita is your name ; though seldom used in your family, he may like it the best.”

“ He *may*,” said the young wife, musingly, “ but I have a great notion, Mary, that he is not thinking of me. Sleep restores the absent and the dead. It strikes me that the passion of his youth referred to, when he made me an offer, has been felt for one whom he knew in Italy, and who probably died here.”

“ Very likely, my dear ; it is by no means uncommon for young and beautiful girls in consumption (the most interesting of all human beings) to end their short lives in this country.”

“ I think he supposed that a length of time, a new connection, and the great pleasure he has in works of art and the many glories of Italy, would enable him to bear the memory of her loss with resignation and calmness, whereas he finds himself more affected than he

expected, and fears to retread the scenes where he has been happy with the departed. Why else should we delay going to Rome, which is as near the sea as Pisa, and has always been the especial spot to which my wishes pointed?"

"He said this very morning he should go soon thither, and procure us a house, you know."

"He did so; and there was trouble written in every feature of his fine countenance, at the moment. Why does he not tell me his troubles, dear Mary? why not permit my sympathy to soothe his sorrows by partaking them? He would not find me jealous or exacting; on the contrary, he would gain the freedom to mourn unwatched, to lament unreprieved, to praise uncontradicted. I am willing to drop a tear on the grave of her he loved, as if she were my sister; for, surely, our preference of the same dear object, our admiration of the same virtues, form a tie between us, I can look up to her pure and happy spirit with veneration, and trust she can look down on me with approbation, if I make her beloved happy."

"Your feelings on this delicate subject are all amiable, and even exalted, my sweet sister; but there are few who can comprehend them; and, though I really think Mr. Glentworth would do so, and be sincerely grateful for your tenderness and your affectionate comprehension of his troubles, yet I do not think it will do for you to seek his confidence, or venture, as it were, to seize on his secret. We sisters have all been so ac-

customed to share each other's griefs, and support each other through all our little troubles, that we do not know how to live without pity and the consolations of affection. But man, in the pride of his sex, may not choose that a cherished sorrow should be noticed and soothed, even by a devoted wife. He may wrestle with it and overcome it, as he has done at other times, and the cloud now on his breast and his brow may subside. Hold yourself at all times ready to receive any communication with your wonted kindness, but seek not to lift the veil, even to pour balm on the wound it hides."

"But can I be cheerful when he is sad, Mary? can I doubt whether sorrow or anger, or ill health, oppresses him, and never seem to care for his affliction?"

"Apply your cares exclusively to the last named evil, which will enable him to hide or reveal as much as he pleases. Let us both strive to win him into conversation, receive all our pleasures and information from his hands, be willing to take what he gives, and never regret what he withholds—and in time (perhaps a short time) he will be all himself."

Thus Mary spoke, and Isabella thankfully acceded to her advice, but deeply did the elder sister grieve that there was occasion to give it, for she was far from being persuaded that it was for a buried love, poor Glentworth was now suffering. To the pure mind of Isabella thought of no other had arisen; and it was far better that the generous romance of her young heart should expatiate on the rival in heaven, than for a mo-

ment dread a rival on earth, and therefore become subject to jealousy, which would render heaven itself a hell, more especially to one so altogether absorbed in her husband as Isabella.

At times Mary thought it not improbable that Glentworth, if he accounted at all for the evident weight on his spirits, the silence and abstraction which they were unable to shake from their own manners under his infliction, would speak to her in preference to one so young as her sister, and so situated as to her health and her expectations. She remembered her mother once saying, in a tone of anxiety, about the time of their marriage, "surely Isabella will have children, for Glentworth always loved them about him; besides, every rich man wants heirs;" and these words had, for some months, in which there was no likelihood of such a circumstance, given her a little uneasiness, and induced her to suppose her brother-in-law anxious on the subject; but, although particularly desirous that his wife should have all possible medical advice and indulgence, she never had perceived that the prospect gave him pleasure. A few words of Charles Penrhyn's, added to his wife's letter, conveyed a far warmer sense of joy in the circumstance, and of grateful love and tenderness to Louisa, than any thing which had fallen thus far from the lips of the rich and generous Glentworth. This was the more remarkable, because he was a man of acute sensibility, not devoid of family pride, and accustomed to speak of certain purchases and estates

received from his uncle as devolving on *heirs*, and including responsibilities. Could a man so situated fail to evince the joy he felt in the circumstance expected; thereby, delighting and sustaining his suffering young wife, if he were not wrapt and absorbed in the contemplation of an object still more interesting—an object still living, still capable, however high or virtuous, of working woe to Isabella?

Carefully did Mary conceal these thoughts in her bosom, and earnestly did she beseech Almighty mercy to avert the evils they threatened, and Almighty guidance to those who were the subject of her fears and her affections. At the same time, active in mind, calm in manners, and firm in the path of duty, the lovelorn maiden (who, in resigning her own hopes of happiness, had bound herself the more entirely to that of her sisters,) evinced the good sense and the warm affection, the considerate pity demanded by the mysterious troubles of one party, and the better understood solicitude and physical inflictions of the other.

Glentworth proceeded to Rome, in the prosecution of the intention he had spoken of, which was that of procuring a house at the healthy season, and, in the interim, proposed going by sea to Naples, touching at Genoa, and in every respect being governed by the health and capabilities of his young wife, who would gladly have accompanied him, but dared not make the proposal, as he was evidently determined to be alone, not taking even his valet with him. Isabella had no

doubt that he sought to weep in solitude over the grave of her he had loved, and only grieved that she was not permitted to share his sorrows. Mary encouraged the supposition, though she could not share it, and engaged Isabella much in making purchases of beautiful work at various nunneries, learning particulars on the subject of *festas* and miracles, and bestowing on the peasantry useful gifts, which drew forth blessings uttered in the glowing fervour of their hearts and their sweet language with poetic fluency, so that his few days of absence passed with little of repining, and he actually returned at the time he had specified, to the great delight of Isabella, who was never weary of thanking him, until she became alarmed by the change in his countenance, which indicated either positive illness or severe affliction.

“ You are ill, dear Glentworth, or you *have been*, I am certain ? ”

“ I had a little bilious attack at Rome, but it is over now. ”

“ There are good physicians there, of course — did you see one ? ”

“ I saw a physician, certainly, but he did me no good — he half killed me. ”

As Mr. Glentworth spoke, he left the room, and Mary read in his countenance an expression of agony which he sought to hide by retiring to his dressing-room, where he kept his books and papers, and spent much time in general ; but Isabella construed the words

literally, and grieved that he had not procured an English physician. She had not seen the expression which alarmed her sister, and would have been the source of equal sorrow and solicitude, vain conjecture, and rejected pity, to herself; it was therefore well for her to escape it. There was sufficient mortification in finding that several hours elapsed before her husband joined them, which, after five days' absence, could not fail to be painful: if he were not interested in her pursuits, yet he well knew how much she was in his; "had *he* nothing to communicate, who had been visiting imperial Rome?"

It appeared he had not, for the evening passed in silence, save when Glentworth said, that "on the following day they would leave Pisa, as a vessel would put in at Leghorn in the evening." When Isabella recollected the trouble she used to have in preparing for a removal to Brighton, she could not help contrasting her situation then with that she held now, when the most material changes called for no personal exertion, and abundance of handsome apparel, suitable for every place and every want, were always at hand, and her heart swelled with gratitude not less than love. But when she turned her glistening eyes on him who had bestowed so much, his look of care and absence told her to keep silence, "though it was pain and grief" to her, lest she should intrude on the treasured reverie, and convert his sorrow into anger, his coldness into contempt.

When busy he was better, and appeared to think perpetual motion a panacea for his unnamed and unnameable complaint ; and so much were they hurried from place to place, after their arrival at Genoa, that both sisters were thankful when they embarked again, as the sea appeared a resting-place ; and during their placid sail to Naples, Isabella regained the quiet she required to her person, but she could not fail to perceive that her husband was proportionately ill at ease ; perpetual motion seemed necessary for him ; and when not hastily walking the deck, he would be asking incessant questions of every person on board, without attending to their replies, or apparently remembering what he had inquired about. There was a bustling attention to their wants, that was entirely new in his conduct, and evidently arose from a vain wish to escape from some corroding care, which he could neither conquer nor explain, and which he sought especially to hide from his own family, though it might be accounted for by the situation of his lady.

On arriving at the hotel in Naples, he immediately inquired for letters, and on one being given to him which was from Rome, he put it in his pocket, and proceeded to select rooms suitable for their accommodation ; having settled every thing in a manner more like himself than usual, he said he must take a short turn on the Chiajia, and see if the mountain looked as it used to do, and not till he had completely left the house did he draw forth and read the letter.

Isabella's eye was following him. "Who could the letter be from?—had it any thing to do with the state of mind he had lately evinced?"

When these questions were repeated to Mary, she answered,—“That most likely it was from the owner of the house he had taken, since it was plain he had given orders that some communication should be made to him as he asked for the letter, and not less so that it was a mere matter of business which could be read at any time, since he never even looked at it whilst he was with them.”

Isabella accepted the explanation, but her heart was not satisfied with it; she remembered that Louisa used to pocket Charles's letters, and keep them as treasures to be opened only at bedtime, or when she could be alone. The business of a house might be supposed to concern her as much as himself, and it would have been natural to say what he had heard respecting it. Mary was mistaken.

Alas! Isabella was not. In that incident she imbibed the poison which circumstances almost compelled her to receive, since from the very first she had, in the modesty of her nature, held herself incapable of winning and retaining the affections of so superior a man as Glentworth, and his manners, even when most kind, had been calculated to confirm her fears. She had still been in his eyes the *child* with whom he had been wont to play, the *little girl* he felt most interested in, because ill-treated by her mother as plain, whilst

she possessed a countenance and features to him more interesting a thousand times than those of her dazzling sisters.

He might also have known "she had that within which passeth show," but it is certain that until Mary insisted on her possession of mental power, he had given her no credit for it; but, having really a very high opinion of Miss Granard's good sense and discrimination, he was willing to believe all she said, but since that time his mind had been in such a situation as to leave him little power for investigating the mind of another.

CHAPTER XXVIII.

It is the peculiar property of jealousy to “make the food it lives on ;” and although poor Isabella had not one point on which to hang an argument, save the evident uneasiness of her husband—though she did not know whether her supposed rival was dead or alive, whether the complaints she at once pitied and resented were those which “poppy and mandragora” might medicine, or “those written troubles of the brain” which were incapable of cure, she contrived to make up for herself a draught of most terrible infliction. If Glentworth, conscious of his late errors, struggled to appear cheerful, and explain, with his wonted ability, the situation of a temple in Pompeii, point out the finest portions of a landscape, or dilate on the character of the Neapolitans, she would suppose he had received pleasant letters, and endeavour to learn, by every indirect medium, if any had arrived. Her eye was ever restless and inquiring—she was suspicious that the servants knew more than they ought of their master’s secrets—and when at length her misery had palpably affected her health, and Mary lamented it, she thought that “she also helped

to deceive her," and addressed her with a petulance and acrimony so new and alarming in her, that the tender sister burst into tears of sincere sorrow and profound compassion.

"Isabella," said she, at length, "I pity you more than I have words to express; but I must also exhort you; if you cannot conquer the sorrow which has seized you wholly, yet you may control the temper which arises from it, otherwise, you may render a temporary trouble a life-long alienation, for many women have done so. You are encouraging a passion which will not only destroy your happiness, but your amiability, and may really bring upon you the evil you dread. 'You are *jealous*, Isabella!'"

"And have I no cause! Can you, Mary, in whose integrity I could at one time have fully confided, deny that I have cause for suspicion? and have not you, in many little matters, tried to mislead me?"

"I have undoubtedly tried to put the best construction on your husband's conduct; and when you did so yourself, were you not much happier than you are now? and was it not more consistent with the obedience you have promised, the honour in which you hold him? Surely, you do not wish to hold out Mr. Glentworth to the world as a man who would, in so short a time, degrade himself by deserting the young wife so lately married for love. You cannot explain in what his error consists. You cannot accuse him of any thing tangible—and every one

must see how attentive he is in going with you from place to place. I can also see that he struggles much to appear cheerful, for your sake, and that your altered manners, and your bad health, affect him deeply."

Isabella might have truly said—"The change began with *him*; he has led me on till I resigned myself to that demon which, like the evil spirits of old, seek unto themselves others more wicked, to enter the heart and dwell there;" but she sought for no excuse, and started with horror from the idea of doing, saying, or even thinking, any thing which could bring obloquy upon her husband. She recalled many times of late, "when in the bitterness of her feelings she had repelled with coldness those attentions long withdrawn, but now, from pity, again conceded; and she felt that if she had indeed lost his love, it would be well to accept the substitute that remained; "for whatever might be his feelings, *she* had not ceased to love:" "there was no sacrifice she could make for his happiness too great; no proof of tenderness she could display too endearing."

"If your sensibility is alive to his merits—if you still love so fondly—there is the greater necessity for you to retain, or renew, his love. You must call on your fortitude and your patience, to endure that which he inflicts—not willingly, it is certain—but from some terrible necessity, some painful mystery, of which we cannot judge. You think you could

sacrifice a limb, nay a life, for his service; can you not then sustain your spirits and preserve your temper? Confide in his goodness, if you cannot in his affections, and pray to God for better times to you both?"

Isabella threw herself into Mary's arms, and, for a short time, wept vehemently; but she struggled with, and conquered, an emotion which she knew, from sad experience, would leave her exhausted, and entail evil on the dear, though unborn, heir of her affliction. Mary seated her on the couch, and after kissing her tenderly, withdrew; trusting that she might take the sacred advice—"commune with thy heart in thy chamber, and be still." Hoping that Mr. Glentworth would not see her sister whilst her eyes were so red, she inquired "if he had returned from the ride he generally took after breakfast?" and was answered by an English servant.

"Master did return from his ride, ma'am, half an hour ago; but finding a letter from Rome, he went out again, and is walking on the Chiajia, a-reading of it."

Mary's heart sunk within her; and, sensible that her countenance changed, she turned hastily towards her own room; but Robert was an old servant of her father's (on which account Glentworth had engaged him), and he rarely missed an opportunity of speaking to Miss Granard, therefore she could not avoid the farther observation of—

“ I don't like them there Roman letters a bit — they brings more bile to master than a lord mayor's dinner would do.”

“ Perhaps so, Robert; but he has not many.”

“ I think it's pretty thick, four within a fortnight; and every one a shaking him down, as it were, and making him an old man afore his time.”

“ He does look old,” said Mary to herself, as she closed the door; “ and if these letters come so frequently, poor Isabella has more cause for jealousy than I apprehended. It may be something amiss in his affairs! Would it were! — the dear creature could lose her new-found luxuries much better than her husband's affections!”

Mary sate down, silent tears rolling over her cheeks, wondering how all would end, and seeking, in vain, to find what was her duty in a case affecting her so nearly, yet, in many respects, precluding her interference, since there was no quarrel to make up, no injury to complain of. Perhaps the same thoughts were passing the mind of Isabella; but her grief was necessarily more acute, and its expression more vivid. After Mary had withdrawn, she tried to meditate, tried to pray, and especially tried so to chasten her heart that, come what would, it should never again rebel against the husband she loved so entirely, and whose sorrows demanded her pity, whatever were their cause. Whilst absorbed in

thoughts like these, and happily, ignorant of the new cause which existed to warrant suspicion (and which had drawn from her husband's eyes tears that fell like scalding lead from his burning brain), she slowly paced her dressing-room (the door of which was unclosed, because unnoticed), and had exclaimed, as she had done many a time before—"if he would but *tell* me!—if he would but *tell* me!" when Glentworth stood before her.

Isabella was afraid of her husband; her very love caused her to fear from its excess; and Mary's late advice had so clearly shown her the error into which her jealousy had led her, that for a moment she stood before him as one convicted of guilt; yet she felt as if now, or never, must she seek for an explanation necessary to her very existence, and before he had time either for comment or inquiry, she exclaimed—

"Yes, I *must*, I *will* be *told*, why you are thus ill and wretched, flying from me to solitude as a comfort, and associating with me as a duty? Why have you a trouble too deep for me to partake, who would thankfully share with you the meanest hut we have beheld in all our travels, and look round on the wide world saying, 'envy me; I am Glentworth's wife!'"

"My dear Belle!—my noble-hearted girl!—"

"Girl! There is my misfortune! You fancy me a child, incapable of comprehending your difficulties and sharing your troubles. You are mistaken; for

your instructions (received as those who love receive all that the beloved gives), have left me not ignorant, so far as knowledge is required in woman, and the solicitude of a wife has matured me in all other feelings. I am your one wedded wife, and I need not say, the pure, innocent, young wife, whose eye has never lingered on another form, and who trusts she will give to your fond caress, and to your future guidance, another innocent creature, perhaps more dear, but not more loving than herself. I am no child—no girl—no silly miss: I am a wife who may be trusted, and claim confidence, not adulation?”

Glentworth was astonished by the energy, the eloquence, and the truth, with which she spoke; for truth, simple honest truth, borne out by conduct, will have its effect. He caught her to his bosom, saying,

“I do believe you are right. I think you can keep a secret—act a secret.”

Isabella thought for a moment; she then said slowly and deliberately—

“I *can*, save from my sister Mary, alike your friend and mine.”

“That she is such I firmly believe; but *this* must not be trusted to her. Not because she would not keep it, but because it would embarrass her.”

“That is enough. I will never add to her sufferings more than I can help. Now to your story, Glentworth.”

“It involves not merely sympathy, but action;

prompt action, temporary humiliation, the generous sympathies of friendship, the tenderness of woman, the self-oblivion of wifehood, the —— Oh God! I cannot ask you to ——’

“ You *could* not, *would* not ask me to do a wicked, nor even a wrong thing, Glentworth, for my father’s sake ; you are an honourable man, and even a religious man, which goes far beyond earthly honour in its demands. You do not ask me to do *wrong* !”

“ God forbid ! No, there is neither sin nor shame in what I require ; but there is partial, apparent degradation—such as taking the character of a servant, a—a—nurse to a sick—indeed a dying lady ; the Marchesa di Morello, who is, in fact, your own cousin, and who earnestly desires to know you. I must not, however, disguise from you that her motive originates in love for me—*love* that must soon be quenched in death.”

“ I know my father had a sister, whose name was added by him to that of Isabella at the font ; but I was never called by it. The *Margarita* murmured in your dreams, Glentworth, was this Marchesa. Poor Isabella had no share in your thoughts—God help me !”

The low, deep tones of Isabella’s self-commiserating voice cleft the heart of her husband—he threw himself on the couch, hid his face, and sobbed in agony, saying something that seemed like blame to himself for having rendered her so wretched ; but his words were inarticulate from suffocating grief.

Isabella approached the couch, knelt down by it, and drawing the hand nearest to her, covered it with kisses and tears. “ You have been to blame for not telling me, dearest, because you planted in my bosom jealousy and suspicion, which are now vanished, therefore I can bear my share of *your* trouble ; and on your part some of *my* surprise and bitter mortification must be endured also. If you can give me the history of this poor lady, do. If it will affect you too much do not attempt it, but say at once what you desire me to do.”

“ I have a letter from Doctor Parizzi, who has known her many years, and, with the exception of her confessor, is better acquainted with her feelings and wishes than any human being, and esteeming her very highly (as she well merits), would raise heaven and earth in her behalf, so as to procure her that she earnestly desires, the sight of *me* ; should that be impracticable, as I fear it will, to know and converse with *you* would comfort her dying hours. 'Tis a melancholy task, but it will be a short one, from all that I can learn.”

“ Surely it is one that becomes me as her relation, and ——”

“ In that capacity you cannot approach her, because you are also my wife. Her husband is a doating, but a jealous one ; also a bigoted Catholic ; the Doctor has induced him, with much difficulty, to consent that she shall receive a young English woman,

to divert her melancholy, by singing the songs of her country, and relating anecdotes of its people ; but it will be required of her that she never speaks on the subject of religion.”

“ Alas ! ” said Isabella, “ I am little likely to do that ; my other duties I can perform. When shall we set out ? ”

“ In two hours time. The evenings here are delightful, and the moon is favourable ; we shall be unattended, travel early and late, resting in the middle of the day. We shall sleep at Velletri to-night.”

“ What shall be said to my sister ? We cannot steal from her without saying something, as she would conclude we were murdered, apply to the ambassador, and bring on the very *exposé* we desire to avoid.”

“ You are right, Isabella, we should be ruined ; besides, the cruelty to dear Mary. I leave the matter in your hands ; but charge her to be very cautious, for there are circumstances connected with the case and the country not easily conceived by English people. Tell her she shall hear from me constantly, that I beg she will go frequently to the Opera, take airings on the Chiajia, and act as if we should be back very soon indeed ; and so we may, you know. On our journey I will tell you every thing. I will prove that I hold you to be indeed my wife, as Portia claimed to be.”

Isabella had thought of Portia’s words ; she also remembered her fate, and said to herself, “ surely the burning coals are already at my heart.”

Mary heard with sorrow, and fear also, of the projected journey; but the altered expression of Isabella's countenance was a great palliative — dreadful as it was that her husband should love another (and of that distressing fact it was impossible to doubt), his confidence was consoling; and her power to prove the firmness of her character, her right to his esteem, and the immolation of her happiness to further his desires, had, in itself, the sustainment which belongs to great sacrifice. Suffer she must; but there are *degrees* of pain, and the whole catalogue of miseries which man, either from design or carelessness, inflicts on his weaker moiety, is trifling when compared to jealousy, as man himself occasionally knows from bitter experience.

Glentworth, a man of kind and generous nature, prone to all the gentler charities, habituated to the exercise of the affections, and to consideration for his fellow-creatures, however situated, was the last man on earth to have willingly or heedlessly oppressed the woman he had promised to protect, or swerve from the spirit of the promise he had made at the altar; but he knew not the depths of his own heart, the effect of habitual affections, and more especially the power which some women possess of rekindling, through memory and circumstance, flames which appear to have expired from lapse of time, or have been crushed by reason, by religion, or those circumstances which influence the tide of human affairs. She whom

the great master of the human heart termed the "Egyptian toy," to whom one of the world's masters "would *return*," was far less indebted to her beauty than her genius for her influence ; and in all countries and ages, women so gifted, who are tolerably handsome, are generally found to have an abiding or a recurring power of captivation over that slippery thing, the heart of man, which, if once felt, is rarely wholly eradicated. There is a charm in the companionship, the novelty of idea, the poetry, which irradiates common objects ; and the sublimity which occasionally pervades those beyond them, which mixes itself alike with the taste and the affections, the imagination and the intellect, and will not be forgotten, since it enhances all that is most lovely in beauty and attractive in youth, so long as they exist, and not unfrequently supplies their departure by its own imperishable talisman.

Margarita Riccardini held this spell ; therefore was Glentworth to be more pitied than blamed in this unhappy conjuncture ; but far more than either should the innocent Isabella claim our compassion. That information, which on her journey she received by fits and starts, as the resolution or the agony of the hour prevailed, we will offer in the following chapter.

CHAPTER XXIX.

Every one knows, that in the beginning of the present century the troubles of Italy were terrible. She had the most powerful enemy, the world had seen for centuries, *without*, and she had a discontented race *within*, who, by turns, opposed the enemy, or adopted his views, sensible that a great change was necessary for the country to which they were devoted, grieved that it should be effected by an enemy, yet unable to effect it themselves. Courageous, patriotic, yet vacillating, many of the noblest principles and the purest intentions, men of large possessions and ancient names, under the afflicting circumstances of the times, failed to render service to their unhappy country, but involved themselves in irremediable ruin. The proscribed and the conquered alike fled to England whenever it was possible ; and England, though pressed on every side, bleeding at every pore, proved an asylum to those of every party, so they were the impoverished and the suffering.

Amongst other emigrants driven into this country at the beginning of the present century by the troubles

of their own, was the Count Riccardini, whose estates, lying in the vicinity of Castello-mara, had become involved in those troubles, which drove from their throne a weak and worthless family, but did not, therefore, establish that which he desired, for foreign rule was to him as hateful as the despotism it removed. In a great measure, he stood alone, and was not less a rebel to his king, than the defender of his country against France. He was young, enthusiastic, brave, high-minded, and virtuous ; he had been loved by his tenantry to enthusiasm ; the pride of his neighbours and friends ; but these circumstances were of little avail, when he landed, a poor emigrant, in England, without money or credit—unknown, save as a foreigner flying from the most terrible evils that can menace the already pillaged and helpless.

It soon became apparent to the count, as to many others, that he must work or starve ; and when it was made known to him by a French nobleman that, at a town specified, the owner of a ladies' boarding-school would, in return for his services, offer a stipend, which at the moment appeared enormous, he declared an intention "to apply for a passport immediately"—there was none required, and the circumstance at once astonished and delighted him—"this was freedom indeed ! he might travel almost two hundred miles without answering a question." Forlorn and wretched as he had been, since he first set foot in the land, he felt it to be the land of *freedom*, for which he had sighed,

and it might be that of wealth, which his situation called for.

Many bitter mortifications necessarily befel the emigrant, who left hearts, warm as their climate, attached to his name for ages, and to his person from infancy; for, even when kind, the strangers were cold; and, if his services were liberally rewarded, the demands made on his purse were proportionably great; and frequently did he think it would have been better that he had died in his own sunny Italy, than linger out existence among a people who knew neither his situation in the past, nor his sorrow in the present—who might pity, but could not comprehend him.

Granard Park was about ten miles from the town which received the wanderer, whose person and manners were much too distinguished not to have attracted some attention from the neighbouring gentry, though many were of opinion “that foreign papists ought not to be encouraged.” The females of their families could not hold the same opinions, and the Signor Manuello’s eyes and mustachios, the graceful drapery of his cloak, his melancholy step, and his broken English, occasioned many domestic differences of opinion in the neighbourhood of K——, at the time when Mr. Granard, with the then beautiful Lady Anne (who had lately become a mother) and his lovely sister, took up their abode for the season at the ancestral mansion, and became the centre of attraction to the neighbourhood, all of whom hastened to the balls and dinners,

given by the lady as much in the spirit of rivalry as hospitality. She had a countess on one hand, and a marchioness on the other, whose husbands were in the ministry. Moreover, the estates of the poorer of the two were treble in value to those she undertook to spend; but considering herself to be younger and handsomer than the countess, who was an established beauty, and as well born as the marchioness, she determined to cut as good a figure by spending as much money.

At one of their public dinners, a neighbouring squire, from the vicinity of K——, addressing Mr. Graham, observed,

“I think you travelled a long time in Italy, sir?”

“I did; and should have been there still longer, if it had not been for the troubles of the country, as it entirely restored my sister Margaret’s health, which was my object. We stayed till the movements of the French army compelled us to decamp, and were twice assisted by a nobleman, in whose neighbourhood we resided, or we might have been prisoners at this moment, as so many English are. In one instance, himself and dependants rescued us; in the other, he saved us by sending a countryman to inform us of our danger, and cause us to return rapidly to the place we had left, from whence we soon after were enabled to reach the sea. We were never able to thank him, but we must ever remember Count Riccardini gratefully.”

“Signor Manuello is Count Riccardini, who teaches Italian at K——,” said a young lady, eagerly; “can it be the same, I wonder?”

“Is he remarkably handsome, about twenty three or four, with short mustachios, and very curly dark hair, and fine teeth?”

“Oh! yes, sir, that is the exact description.”

“Poor fellow! I will see him to-morrow, and must try to do him all the good I can. It is no wonder he is obliged to take refuge in England; between France and Germany, Italy would be swallowed up, were it not for the stand we are making in Calabria.”

From this time the poor foreigner, generally designated “the French teacher at the boarding-school,” became much too busy to be melancholy. In every house there was some one person who wanted to learn Italian, in every party his presence was a desideratum. Lady Anne considered him a first-rate lion—her husband held him as a friend. Alas! in a short time his fair sister felt him to be something far dearer!

There was much in the situation of the parties to excuse their imprudence. Miss Graham, left an orphan at an early age, found in a brother, who was ten years her senior, all the tenderness of a parent, and the companionship of a friend, possessing, like herself, a taste for the beautiful in art, and nature, and that poetry of perception, classed with the romantic, in those minds incapable of distinguishing its excellence. Save for external inconveniences, and the dangers that hovered around them, their sojourn in Italy would have been one long day of pure delight—the revel of the mind in Nature’s paradise and Memory’s storehouse;

and so perfect was their union, so much did they appear to be the world to each other, many persons thought they were likely to continue single, notwithstanding the probability that each might marry remarkably well. Mr. Granard was a kind-hearted, easy-tempered man, calculated, in the opinion of his friends, to be very happy as a husband; moreover, they thought it a pity that he should not have heirs, and, since he could not give his estate to his sister, preserve it for progeny of his own. They also knew that he had a great taste for beauty, and a considerable regard for good blood, so they directed his views to Lady Anne Rotheles: he married, became the father of five daughters, the mourner after departed property, but the truly affectionate brother he had ever been.

For his sake Margaret Granard resided with the new-married couple, being then a minor; and, before she had attained the age of twenty-one, an unfortunate passion tied her to the house, where she could alone see him her sister-in-law chose to call the "emigrant teacher," although it is certain there were times when she extended to him the kindest looks ever granted by her to any thing beneath a royal duke. We are not called upon to trace the struggles and fears of these lovers; it is enough to say, that though they lasted a considerable time, they did not last long enough; for, at the close of the second summer, instead of returning with her brother's family to town, Miss Granard accompanied her heart's chosen to Gretna Green; after

which, they stopped in Cumberland long enough to have the marriage celebrated by bans.

The marriage made all the noise in the country usually made by such affairs, and Mr. Granard was condoled with as if his sister had been guilty of a heinous crime, instead of a too natural imprudence. "When he came to H—, the signor had scarcely a second shirt to his back," said one. "I know that he sold the ring off his finger to pay Mrs. Pearson for his lodgings," said another; "and to think of his ingratitude to Mr. Granard, who has been every thing to him; what a wicked creature! he must be the frozen adder which destroyed the bosom that fostered it."

After a time these wise people began to find out "Mr. Granard might thank himself for what had happened; how could he expect any thing better to arise when he was perpetually sending for the signor? Nor could the poor man be called a vagabond, since he was wonderfully industrious for one not brought up to work; he did not owe a shilling in the world, and several poor people had reason to lament his absence. His priest approved him exceedingly, and that was praise, though it came from a papist." It was the only thing in the whole affair, however, which troubled Mr. Granard, but he trusted the count was too honourable to influence his sister on the score of religion; and he was right.

Lady Anne raved, sneered, and descanted on the

dreadful example set by their aunt to her daughters, (the eldest of whom could scarcely speak,) until she succeeded in signifying to friends and servants, that “the young woman who was formerly Mr. Granard’s sister must never more be mentioned in the hearing of any person in the family.” This injunction was strictly complied with, after sufficient time had passed for wonder and blame, and was perfectly agreeable to the master of the house, since he was in the first place soon engaged in looking up money for the payment of the seven thousand pounds which was his sister’s portion; and the fifteen hundred pounds which he considered to be its accumulations, not choosing to accept any allowance for the board of his only sister.

When Miss Granard, or we ought to say the Countess Riccardini, had, after some months of severe suffering, once more seen her beloved brother, received the kiss of reconciliation, and the fortune which her husband nobly refused to touch, desiring the interest might be paid to his wife only, and which her brother placed in the funds, they retired to Devonshire, as being both cheap and mild, and were as happy as love and an adequate though moderate competence could make them. A year or too afterwards they contrived to take a lodging in the suburbs of London, where they had the satisfaction of not unfrequently receiving the visits of that beloved brother and friend who found with them his happiest, perhaps his only happy hours; for more girls were born to him, more

embarrassments haunted him, and “the little strong embrace” which often twined around his neck, stung his heart to agony. Whether Lady Anne knew or suspected who it was that drew his steps from the *purlieus* of fashion he knew not, nor held himself bound to explain. To one friend who remarked the frequency of his absence in the morning at a given hour, she replied, with perfect *sang froid*, that “most men of fashion had their mysteries, and Mr. Granard had a right to *his*; all she knew of the matter was, that he did not belong to a coining concern, as in that case the money would come more freely.”

Lady Anne well knew that all which could come passed through her fingers. Incapable of hearing reproach or bandying invective, her husband had sunk into the indolence of pensive resignation, and, sensible that things had gone too far for effectual retrieve, tried to find a lenitive in the love of his sister, and the often disappointed hope of a son, during whose long minority wonders were to be done in the management of his property.

The peace removed the family of Riccardini to Italy, and on his estates being restored, the fortune of his wife was happily applied to removing the dilapidations of time and circumstance. Their eldest child was a daughter, followed at a distance by two sons, with whom it appeared the climate of their father did not agree, as they successively sickened and died, after their arrival in Italy,—a circumstance which

those with whom she was now associated, rendered so impressive to the mother, as arising from her own "continued heresy," that she adopted the Roman religion in the most open and ceremonious manner, and, like many other proselytes, in a short time became a positive bigot.

The Riccardini family had been removed some time, Isabella born for several years, and still no prospect of the wished-for boy succeeding; when poor Granard, sunk into premature age by useless solicitude, found in Glentworth, (then a young man seeking independence by his own exertions as a junior partner in the house to which he had now transferred Charles Penrhyn,) the consolations offered by a patient listener and a pitying friend, with little power but sincere inclination to help him. All that could be done in the way of arranging his affairs, and so winding them up, that he might ascertain that his widow and children had any thing to secure them from abject poverty, was the effect of Glentworth's knowledge and exertion, and the trifling presents which rendered his "presence a little holiday" in the nursery, were frequently accompanied by the journals or the new publications, which might divert the father's mind from contemplating his daily increasing debility and decreasing property.

Could Mr. Granard have foreseen that Glentworth's bachelor uncle would, from the fear of making a will, have left him the heir of his estates, and their accu-

mulations, thereby entailing upon them not a single legacy for friendship or charity, he would undoubtedly have used every argument against his going abroad, in the natural hope that his pretty Mary, or the blooming Louisa, would become the wife of one dear to him already as a son. This he did not believe, and as Glentworth was taken into the house on the express condition that he should travel, whenever the elder parties demanded this mode of exertion, Mr. Granard said not a word on the subject, though he felt at the time that to him the parting would be a certain shortening of the term, already short. He gave him letters to his sister, speaking of him in the highest terms of affection, and insured him a home at the Castella Riccardini, whenever his pleasure or his avocations called him into its vicinity.

Glentworth's home, as the representative of his house, was Marseilles, and his first journeys were taken in France and a part of Spain, so that at least a year had passed before he made his appearance at a place where he had been long expected, and was received as an especial friend. He was astonished to find Margarita, of whom her uncle had spoken as a mere child, and who in fact was three years younger than Mary, much more womanly than that northern flower had been when he left England, and much handsomer, to his conception, than all the combined beauties of her cousins could have made her; yet even then he observed to himself, "if Isabella lives, she will be very like her beautiful cousin some time."

Glentworth, an orphan, brought up in a desultory, unhappy manner, and nobly self-consigned at an early age to the drudgery of a counting-house, had hitherto seen little of the world of women, save in the house of Mr. Granard; but, had he dwelt with the noble and the gay from his birth, it is hardly likely he would have found any one so singularly interesting and fascinating as Margarita Riccardini; for the striking and animated beauty of her father was softened and relieved by that peculiar something, half modesty, and half pride, which is the characteristic of English loveliness, and which every Englishman requires as a *sine qua non* ere he resigns himself to a bondage it is the habit of his nature, or the result of his privileges, to admit reluctantly. He feels this emotion more especially as regards the Spanish or Italian beauty, because of the difference in their religious creeds; he is not equally apprehensive on the account of a Frenchwoman, who is probably only too liberal in her views on the subject.

Poor Glentworth had not the usual fears of his country on this point, for Mr. Granard had not been informed that his sister had renounced the church he loved. Margarita spoke the sweetest English as a mother tongue, and her complexion was (at this time a rare one) of the olive and the rose united; the impression she gave was that of being half English at least, and more entirely, more enchantingly charming, than either England or Italy had ever produced

before, from the time when Julius Cæsar took the liberty of introducing them to each other.

Poor Glentworth was gone whole ages in love, and the Signora Margarita by no means behind him in the acquisition of the sentiment, before either was aware that no earthly power could induce the English mother to give her daughter to an English husband professing the religion of his country. She believed, firmly, conscientiously believed, that her own darkness and obstinacy, in being for five or six years the wife of a man professing the true faith and never embracing it, had rendered her amenable to the especial judgments of God, who had seen fit to deprive her of two promising boys, the heirs of her husband's ancient and honourable house, as a punishment. What can we say in such a case? She acted in all sincerity, agreeable to the light which she believed to be "light from Heaven." Who shall blame her?

The count, on the other hand, loved England and all that belonged to it — even the washerwoman who had trusted him had a share of his gratitude; what then did he hold due to the wife of his bosom, the high born, and the rich and beautiful one, who had pitied his misfortunes, loved his person, and bestowed on him alike the wealth of the heart and the purse, finally abandoning the land of her fathers and the religion of her family for his sake. He never for a moment recalled his own history, without bestowing on her the warmest eulogium which gratitude could

dictate, and declaring “ that whatever she said and did must be subscribed to by himself and her daughter.”

Nevertheless, his reason rebelled, and his sense of religion by no means allowed the justice of refusing the amiable, handsome, and wealthy Englishman, whom his sweet child preferred, and who was perfectly willing that the signora should enjoy all the liberty required by her conscience and her church, together with such sums as should, from time to time, purchase the prayers of the faithful, and all other immunities, so far as his fortune furnished the means.

“ No! ” said the countess to every thing save the open renunciation, the positive reconciliation of the lover to the church of Rome; “ no daughter of mine,” said she, “ shall wed a heretic — she had far better die.”

Lady Anne could calmly contemplate the death of a daughter, provided she died a marchioness: we trust our readers see the difference between the worldly and the religious mother — the cold-hearted and the enthusiastic, but virtuous and upright, woman, although both were wrong, and both inflicted misery on their respective victims, alike unjustifiable in the eye of reason, or the contemplation of Christianity.

CHAPTER XXX.

This open exhibition of love and war did not take place, as may be supposed, the first year of Glentworth's visit, but it did on the second, when Margarita, having entered her fifteenth year, and being introduced into society, had become so attractive, that the timidity of the lover and the prudence of the man gave way, and his declaration was the signal of that unhappy strife which we have mentioned, and which involved every member of this little circle in anxiety and distress.

“ We were happiest of the happy before you came amongst us,” said the countess, in effect ; “ leave us, that we may regain our peace, and maintain our principles ; we love and esteem you as a friend, but cannot receive you as a son. To our only child we are devoted so entirely, that we must not give her to one whose example and whose tenderness (combined with her childhood's recollections of your country and my conduct) would in time be sure to seduce her from the truth. She has a great capacity, a love for investigation ; she reads and thinks too much, and would become a victim to her reasoning faculties, the great

error of Protestantism. In loving you she would love your creed, and would return to your church as to the friend of her infancy. You could not refuse her right to worship at the same altar, offer up the same prayers with yourself, and train up her children in their father's faith?"

"God forbid that I should attempt it! Though I would not invite her to join me, I could not desire to hinder her."

"Thus the soul of my Margarita would be lost; and how do I know that some terrible accident or wasting disease might not cut her off before my eyes, as the retribution due to the transgression?"

"Allow me to say, madam, that you lived several years in great peace and comfort with the Count, each party following different forms of worship, but both obeying that spirit of Christian charity which is above all forms — if you were not converted by the Count, whom you undoubtedly loved entirely, why should Margarita yield obedience to my more simple code?"

"Because it *is* more simple, and, in its simplicity, becomes sublime to a mind like her's—in my days of darkness I did not like the ceremonies of the church, but classed them with silly mummeries, hardening my heart against that which I did not understand—now you would have no such feelings to contend with; Margarita could not be disgusted with your inefficient, but interesting worship; on the contrary, she would embrace it with the *proviso* of aiding it by the adop-

tion of the fasts, feasts, and ritual of her own church, so far as she could consistently.”

“ And, surely, such a worship, offered in sincerity and humility (the essence of all true religion) would be acceptable to God ? ”

The Countess would think long, but never finally assent ; for, in truth, from her *priest* must the effective answer come, either to permit or refuse the marriage. Many causes operated to render a negative desirable. The country had been long harassed, the lands devoted to monastic and ecclesiastical establishments overrun, and sacred buildings were dilapidated, property destroyed which it would take many years to repair ; and how could the estates of the last of his family (save one daughter) be better appropriated than in repairing the sufferings of the church ? If deprived of her heretic lover, Margaret might hide her sorrows under the veil, by which means her salvation would be secured, and, in all probability, the now flourishing property of her father take the right direction. We cannot justly blame this line of argument, until we have been placed in the same situation with the good monks, and partaken their enthusiasm to rebuild the waste places of the land.

The language of Margarita was the reverse of that of the mother ; she yet loved with unbounded tenderness—“ In my love for you I have found a new life, not less sweet because it is dashed with sorrow ; forsake me not, I beseech you, for my existence is bound

in your's; when you leave me I should die, but for a constant correspondence, by which your heart may be moved to give all possible attention to the truths I may be inspired to lay before you—or, if your judgment refuse conviction, your love will be led into farther compliance; it is only when divided that each party will be able to consider how far we are able to live without the other, and what sacrifices each can make for the other—in six months mamma may be more yielding, and papa allows for me so much, in fact, loves *you* so well, that, be assured, he would not give me to a prince by compulsion.”

The letters of Margarita were all that the fondest lover could desire, the eye of a poet linger on, but they did not contain the casuistry which could lead Glentworth to renounce a faith which he had now been led to examine in a manner he had certainly never done before. He was become so completely in love, and the pains of absence were so great, that he entirely overlooked the certainty that his marriage with a Catholic would occasion his uncle to renounce him, and would be a source of sincere sorrow to his friend Granard, though his niece was the object of his choice; but he could not fail to know that a man should think long and feel strongly before he openly renounced the religion of his country for one which closed to him many of the rights and much of the freedom it was that country's especial pride to bestow. He did not choose to abandon the position in which he stood, without seeing what it was — often had he admired

the manly manner in which he had seen both French and Italian gentlemen enter their always open churches to partake the service of the hour, saying to himself, “let their religion be what it may, they are not ashamed of it, as we English too often are;” and he now determined to examine that which he professed as an Englishman.

The result was a full conviction that he never could become a good Catholic—he could love and honour many who professed the religion; and he could allow, unblamed, the wife of his bosom to hold its tenets, obey its precepts, and submit in part to its discipline—beyond this he could not go; and he well knew, that much less than this would be perfectly satisfactory to Count Riccardini.

Year after year passed by, and twice in each year had Glentworth spent several weeks in the same house with Margarita, either relighting the taper of passion, or confirming the warm admiration her distinguished talents and her virtuous conduct elicited: his esteem for her was perfect, and, although time tamed down in them both the more ardent portion of their love, the tenacity of their attachment seemed rather to increase, for the Countess had found it utterly impossible, even with the aid of the confessor, to make her daughter resign those dear interviews so fatal to her peace, even when she had proved they answered no end, save to feed

————— those flames which burn
To light the dead, and warm the funeral urn.

In the mean time, the mother was literally breaking her own heart, in endeavouring to break the tie which bound that of her daughter ; and the father, who ardently desired his daughter's marriage, beheld all her blooming years pass by without the hope of seeing his wishes fulfilled. The death of Mr. Granard affected his sister exceedingly ; and the religious exercises she engaged in, on his behalf, threw her into so weak a state, that the visit which Glentworth made as early as he could after the news of this loss was received, showed him clearly that it would be the last in which he should be called on to listen to her exhortations and reply to her arguments. Poor Riccardini was distracted, between the dread of losing the wife he fondly loved, the hope that her death might realize the great wish of his heart, by giving Margarita leave to marry, and a fear lest she should be entrapped into taking the veil, which he well knew was a point often pressed by the priests, who might at present be said to be the only company admitted to his melancholy abode.

The invalid lived much longer than was expected ; and she so entirely won the whole heart of her idolizing daughter, that she prevailed on her to promise that she would never marry Glentworth for the express reason “ that he would make her so excellent a husband, that his virtues would seduce her from her church, and that he would not allow her to bring up his children in the true faith.” She did not, however,

even wish her to take the veil; she said "an act of obedience to her father, in becoming a wife, would be more acceptable to Heaven."

"I can never marry any other than Glentworth."

"You are mistaken, Margarita; your affection has been nourished by those frequent meetings, and that constant correspondence, from which I have vainly tried to divert you; the parting must now be entire and complete, for both your sakes, and the love still lingering will naturally expire. He is now rich enough, I should suppose, and will return to England, and, most likely, marry. I trust he will be happy; I wish him well. I forgive him fully the many years of sorrow he has brought on me, for he brought it innocently, and he has suffered severely. We will speak of him no more; I fully rely on your promise."

When Glentworth again presented himself, the countess had been some days in her grave; and he received from the bereaved husband and disappointed father information which for ever closed the dream of young love, the expectation of matured affection. He saw Margarita for a few moments only; she was like a faded flower, but her conduct was that of a firm or rather an exhausted spirit. In truth, she then believed that she had ceased to love; that the penances to which she had submitted had exorcised the demon, which it was her duty to expel.

This long, sad waste of life and happiness, though told in few pages, might, in its details of trying scenes,

deep solicitude, fruitless argument, tender reproach, false hopes, hours of joy and years of sorrow, have occupied folios. It would have gone far to destroy life and unsettle reason, in the weaker one, if she had not been sustained by the cheerful love of her father, and occupied by her mother, with the unceasing ceremonies and amusing pageants of her religion. To Glentworth business supplied the necessary *panacea*; he was too upright to neglect that which involved the welfare of others: and he found the cares of the lover suspended or forgotten in the cares of the merchant, and the circumstance of continually shifting the scene compelled him to take "thought for the morrow," and by that means elude the pressure of the present.

He was, in fact, much better for being completely cut off from hope and left to shape his course as circumstances might direct, wisely determining never to trust himself again in Italy, and having, as desired, returned the letters of Signora Riccardini, received and burnt his own. He trusted his heart would henceforward be as free as his person. It so happened that he heard of the marriage of Margarita at the same time that he was summoned to England to take possession of his uncle's fortune; therefore, the cares of wealth devolved upon him at the very period when it became his duty to bid a still farther and an eternal adieu to every remaining care and thought of love; and, as he had arrived at that season of life when the "episodes" love causes to man generally subside, he

might be said to enter on his new state of existence as an English gentleman, free to choose his own mode of seeking such happiness as a very enviable position in society afforded to a worn and disappointed, but yet a warm and generous heart.

The very circumstance of the Riccardini name being proscribed by Lady Anne Granard, would have taken him to her house as a safe resort; but he had loved her husband most sincerely—and, in proportion as he condemned her past conduct and pitied the privations of her situation, so did he sympathize with those dear young creatures who were wont to play on his knee, call him *uncle*, and kiss him for little presents of which he had not failed to keep up the memory by those which were of more cost, and came from a great distance, which the young generally consider a circumstance which enhances value. He was surprised at finding them become young women, especially Isabella, who was the “little one” when he left England, but had been remembered much better than any other on account of her resemblance to Margarita, and whom, therefore, he was impatient to see, when Lady Anne consigned her to the nursery for want of a second muslin frock.

Mary (as we know) was at that time nursing, or at least enduring, a secret sorrow, Louisa fostering a secret attachment; but the other three innocent girls were all delighted to see the dear young “uncle Frank” again, and could soon have been led to ex-

perience a more vivid sentiment if, as Lady Anne said, "he had been a marrying man," but the thought never entered his mind; when he saw that the children were become women, it reminded him only that he had become older in the same time which made the alteration. How that time had passed, how it had been lost or murdered, it were now vain to recall; his task was that of forgetting it, which was always done best among those he still thought and called the "dear children." To contrive for their present pleasures and their future comforts, was the business and amusement of his life; but we can hardly doubt that there was a certain tenderness in the tone of his voice, or a lingering look of his eye, when Isabella was near, which conveyed to her guileless and ingenuous heart much more than was intended. She imbibed a fond and abiding passion, the pains of which *he* could estimate only too well, and pity too tenderly. He could not bear to inflict on another the sorrows under which he had suffered so severely himself; and he took her, not because he loved her, but that she loved *him*, believing, at the time, that all other love had been dead in his bosom, and feeling that the preference the dear child evinced would ever animate his bosom in her behalf.

After his marriage, under the peculiar circumstances already described, had he remained at home, enlarged his sphere of duties by entering into public life, or his acquaintance, as the head of a family, all would have gone well with them undoubtedly; but he

had promised to instruct his successor in his duties, and could not honourably evade going to Marseilles, and the *tour* took place as we have seen. When at Marseilles, he heard, by chance, that the “Marchesa di Morello, once Signora Riccardini, had become the mother of a son, who died soon after he was born; that she was herself in very bad health in Rome, to which city she had removed in order to ensure the services of a celebrated physician.”

Margarita married, and the mother of a son, seemed to startle the senses of Glentworth — strange! and sickening! — was she indeed the wife of another? “How could she have given the sacred name of father to any one, save him who had loved her so long and so constantly? who had borne so much for her sake, and was so closely united to her by congeniality of taste, feeling, and intellectual power—was she, really, gone for ever?”

It appeared as if he had heard with the ear, but not believed with the heart, till now, that all ties were dissolved between him and Margarita, whose image again rose as vividly to his mind’s eye as if it were wafted by the wind, or brought by the sunbeam. He determined to avoid the possibility of seeing her, yet found it utterly impossible to return to England without knowing the actual state of her health, and the probability of her happiness; and after many a plan devised and abandoned, at length resolved to see her father, whom he always loved, and on whose information he could best rely.

During their stay at Civita Vecchia, chance favoured him so far, that he learned the physician under whose care she was placed was one who formerly resided near their own estates, whom he knew well in the first years of his acquaintance with the Riccardini family, and to whom he had himself been of essential service by recovering money due to him from the legacy of an English patient. To this gentleman he determined to apply in the first place, that he might on no account venture to reside in Rome till he knew how to place himself at the greatest possible distance from the establishment of the Marchese di Morello.

He learnt all that he wished, yet dreaded to hear. Margarita was hopelessly ill, yet not in immediate danger. "She married to please her father, and she is dying to satisfy herself. Had her child lived, it might have won her to the love of life, perhaps to the love of its father, for the marchese is handsome and clever, and fond of her to distraction. His own love renders him conscious of the deficiency of hers, but hitherto her coldness has been attributed to her mother's habits and manners; should he discover the truth, the volcano in his bosom would flame out to her destruction, in the state to which she is reduced. She knows you are in this neighbourhood, and would give the world to see you, if only for five minutes. She talks perpetually of entreating your pardon—of living only to be forgiven."

"Does she not know I am married?"

“ Yes ; she read it in the English journals, and being pregnant and unwell, it occasioned her to faint, which was attributed to an article headed ‘ Atrocious Murder,’ on which the marchese determined that no more things of that description should enter the house. When better, she told me ‘ it consoled her that you had married a cousin, who resembled *her*, in your opinion, she knew.’ ”

Before Glentworth left Rome, a short note, as from a dying woman, was placed in his hand, confirmatory of her desire to see him, but despairing as to the possibility. It ended with these words,—“ I fear we have both been mistaken in supposing that hearts bound together as ours were during the best years of existence could permit us any happiness in another union, but you, as belonging to the world, may one day find it, more especially when I am gone ; and you can devote your *whole* heart to your wedded wife. Oh! that I knew her, that I could infuse into her my heart, imbue her with my imagination, and render her the girl you loved so dearly, and who was, alas ! who *is*, your loving

“ MARGARITE.”

CHAPTER XXXI.

Mr. Glentworth contrived to arrive in the evening at the house of Dr. Parizzi, where the little metamorphose of Isabella was soon effected; that of her husband was more difficult. But, as Count Riccardini had been obliged to go to his own seat, and the marchese had never seen him, it was less material; at this time, he was looking in the eyes of the doctor so much altered for the worse, many old friends might see, yet not recognize in him, the once-admired Englishman.

Poor Isabella had formed such an exalted idea of the beauty and accomplishments of her cousin, from the description her husband had given, that partly from fear of her, and partly from consciousness of deception, it was with the utmost difficulty she could allow herself to be presented. This once over, she became forgetful of all that was unpleasant in her situation. She could not fear the rivalship of beauty in the pale, sharp features of the invalid before her, nor could she doubt the perfect kindness and goodwill of one who took the opportunity of the first moment they were alone, to draw her closely to her heart, call her her "dear, *dear* cousin, the beloved of her own beloved, in days that were gone for ever."

“ You see me, Margaret,” said she, “ and you are satisfied ; much as your pity may be moved and your sympathy awakened, you know that the woman so soon to resign existence, the child of error and weakness so soon to stand before her God, meditates no harm to *you*, or would for a single moment draw your husband from his allegiance. No, no ; far rather would she strengthen the bonds which bind you, and which alone can bestow on your husband the wife of which he was so cruelly deprived, under impressions as blameless as they were deplorable in their inflictions.”

“ Surely,” said Isabella, eagerly, and totally forgetting herself in her sympathies, “ there are bounds to our duties even to our parents ; — if your religious sentiments resembled your father’s, and were more liberal than my aunt’s, ought you not to have rewarded poor Glentworth, even at the risk of disobeying your mother ? My dear sister, Louisa, ventured to do this, and is happy ; my mamma was soon reconciled, and ———.”

“ Your mamma, so far as I could ever hear, is a different woman to mine ; she was all tenderness, all goodness ; her scruples were high and holy ones, and she so nearly persuaded me that she was right, I believed myself wrong in all that remained deficient in my conviction. A near approach to the grave makes me doubt my own judgment, and in one sense confirms hers. As the wife of Glentworth, I should unques-

tionably have become a Protestant. You have a poet who says something like this,—

“ a frame decayed,
Lets in new lights thro’ chinks that time has made.”

It is thus with me. I go to corruption, but the soul becomes more acute to discern, more wise to distinguish, as she approaches her immortal source.”

“ I know very little,” said Isabella, tremblingly alive to the awful situation of the interesting being before her, whom she already loved; “ but I remember the Bible says this, ‘ corruptible shall put on incorruption, this mortal shall put on immortality;’ which is a great, *great* comfort. In a few weeks, I may myself be nearer death than you are, dear cousin.”

“ Cousin ! cousin !—say that again, it is almost sister. I have never known the blessing of such sweet relationship.”

“ Then let me call you sister, dear Margarita, my elder sister; honoured as well as dear, and *very dear*, as such, will you become to me. I am used to sister-love, and it has always been very sweet to me.”

“ Poor child ! have you not also found husband-love sweet? Perhaps not, it will be better in days to come.”

Isabella could have dilated on her husband’s love and her own happiness in it, but a delicate perception of Margarita’s situation kept her silent. “ Perhaps,” she said, “ the poor sufferer would rather it were so—rather that all the love of Glentworth belonged to her—

self. I would not undeceive her ; yet, surely Glentworth loved *me* once ?” After thus conversing for an hour, Doctor Parizzi was announced, the signal for Isabella’s departure. The patient eagerly pressed her hand, whispering, “ Have you a small English Bible ?”

“ Mr. Glentworth has one, I know—so has Mary, for I have borrowed it.”

“ Bring me the blessed book to-morrow, and put it under my pillow ; it will be to me a source of great comfort ; and if discovered when all is over, can only be considered as the fault of the young English woman. Strange that a church founded on Christianity should deny the scriptures it professes to reverence and obey ; but go, my dear Margaret, go willingly, that you may return the sooner.”

Glentworth listened to Isabella’s account of her interview with intense interest, though he endeavoured, for the relator’s sake, to suppress its warmer expression ; but he could not forbear to ask many questions, drawing out, more than once, every word uttered by Margarita, and spoken by Isabella, as it now appeared in the very tones so long, dear, and familiar to his senses ; and he could have fancied Isabella grown more like to her than she had ever been before ; he thanked her tenderly for her kindness to her *cousin*, as if desirous to consider their relationship her motive for the visit—to the devoted wife it mattered not, so he was pleased and consoled.

It happened fortunately in the opinion of Doctor

Parizzi, to whom they mentioned the marchesa's request, that Mr. Glentworth had no book with him, therefore her request could not be acceded to. "It would be considered the deed of her father, and he has already more enemies than one in the church; even now I know he is under close *surveillance*, and dare not remain in Rome, where it would be very possible at any hour to place him *silently* in the Inquisition, which he is safe from by remaining at home. It is hard that the death of his little grandson should be followed by that of his only daughter, and that he cannot watch her dying couch."

"She will not die, I trust, at this time. She is very thin, and looking very ill; but I saw nothing which indicated danger about her."

"You saw her at the time when her fever was absent, and her usual pains subside. I would not, for your own sake, you should witness her times of restlessness and suffering. Besides, her mind is of the highest order, and controuls the body in an extraordinary degree; nevertheless, her fate is sealed."

"And she cannot have a Bible? the book she read in English a happy child, seated by her mother—the book which would be her guide to heaven!" said Isabella, in a mournful tone of expostulation.

"Be assured, dear Isabella," said Glentworth, "she is well acquainted with all of its contents from which necessary knowledge and sound comfort can be derived, either for life or death; and greatly would it add

to my sorrow for poor Riccardini (ever my warm friend and a truly good man) to become amenable to blame for any action of ours, however well intended.”

At a stated hour in the evening, Isabella, no longer loath, accompanied the doctor, and she then saw the Marchese, who praised the latter for his happy thought in bringing her countrywoman to his adored wife, who had been better throughout the day, and he graciously promised a great reward to the young woman who had benefitted her. This passed in the anteroom, for the Marchesa always insisted that more than one attendant at a time made her feel worse.

Twice in the twenty-four hours, for seven or eight days, did she thus receive Isabella, and converse, at second hand, with Glentworth, communicating her regret for having promised her mother, and still greater regret that she had not been absolved (as she might have been by the pope) from her bonds. “Alas!” said she, “I mourned so sincerely, and had borne so much, I believed that I could never love again; but, since my marriage, every circumstance of my wedded life brought back the very man from whom I was, in a two fold sense, for ever separated. Di Morello loved me as his country loves, with a fervour flattering to its object, therefore especially sweet to the heart of woman; but mine perversely refused to enjoy it—the ‘what would Glentworth say? how would he have looked and smiled?’ (he has a charming smile, you know, my dear), were questions continually arising; and though I

prayed against them, and fasted until my constitution was ruined, still would the thought haunt me, that he was the true husband—*he* whom I must see no more.”

“And thus unquestionably has my dear Glentworth felt also since we left England.”

“We must say no more ; the marchese expects to find you singing to me—can you not sing, Margaret?”

She could a little, but not then. By an impatient gesture, Isabella was compelled to make an effort, finding her husband was in the anteroom. At that moment she considered him her fellow-sufferer ; she could have wept over him, but it was difficult indeed to sing for him.

But Isabella had a strong mind as well as a kind heart, and she sung, successively, various songs, until the arrival of Parizzi, who found her looking almost as pale as his patient ; and it was understood that she could not return that evening, her situation accounting for her indisposition.

After a day or two's absence, in which the patient had become much weaker, Di Morello, with all the warmth of his country, insisted on Isabella's return ; on which he was told, that “her English husband was a stubborn man, and cared not for money, and would himself fetch her away, even from the presence of his holiness, if he thought she was injured by remaining in a sick room ; for, although of rude manners, he loved his young wife tenderly.

“Let the barbarian come with her to the Palazzo,

and convince himself that she cannot be injured here," was the immediate answer.

When Isabella again became regular in her visits, the marchese took that opportunity for taking the air his long watchings and deep solicitude really required ; and twice during these absences was Isabella enabled to bring, for a few minutes, poor Glentworth to the couch of his dying Margarita, whilst, with a beating heart, she watched in the anteroom and listened for servants' footsteps ; happily none approached—the attendants were glad to avail themselves of the temporary relief her presence gave them.

Poor Margarita's flitting life appeared to concentrate all its powers for this long desired visit, and her eyes seemed to emit a supernatural light, when they were indeed assured that Glentworth stood before her ; seizing his hand with her thin fingers, she drew the sorrow-stricken, silent, statue (which yet lived and suffered in every vein), before her, and hastily besought his forgiveness for the injuries she had inflicted on him, and for which her death could not atone, though it was, doubtless, the sacrifice. She then, without waiting for reply, besought him to take her father to England, and cherish him as a son, for her sake, saying, " Margaret, my Margaret and yours, will, I know, supply my place to *him*, not less than to *you*, for she is an angel, whom I will have you love—yes, your dying Margarita tells you to love, as you once loved *her*, entirely, devotedly !"

“That is impossible, Margarita—you feel it is. I am no longer capable of a passion so strong and so pure, but I will try to make her happy, and——”

At this moment Isabella heard a step, and she recalled and led him to the place he had occupied just in time to escape the eye of the nurse ; and, finding herself exceeding fluttered, she determined on going home immediately. On their way they passed the carriage of Di Morello, who stopped to inquire why she had retired so soon. “I was not well, so I sought my husband,” was the reply ; and the husband, with his slouched hat drawn still further over a countenance agitated by fear, indignation, pity, and sorrow, passed on.

Dr. Parizzi took her in his carriage that evening, when the marchese reproached her for leaving her charge so early in the morning. “I found her,” said he, “in great agitation, doubtless from anger and disappointment. Surely, if you were poorly, the family could have given restoratives without actually quitting her ; you are the only person who does her good ; your humanity might operate—but the English have little feeling ; so I will now give you money, which perhaps you want for your husband.”

“I am not in want of money, sir,” said Isabella, proudly ; “English people attached to great families rarely are ; and, to prove I am not devoid of feeling, I promise to pay the dear marchesa all possible attention without fee or reward, the remainder of my stay

in Rome, provided my husband is always on the spot to aid me if I need him."

"Of course, that is but reasonable," was the reply. "The marchesa fainted, I remember, when——. But go, go, I beseech you! for I fear you will find her worse."

She was indeed worse, yet in one sense better; for she had been enabled to place her beloved father (the parent whose wishes had never thwarted her, and whose opinions were congenial with her own at the present time) in the hands of one whom she could trust; and she was well aware that from the death of her child new hopes would arise as to gaining his property. He was a man of many sorrows, and might soon be beset with many difficulties: why should he not be happy in England, and eventually give his property to her mother's relations, from whom it was partly received, and who now wanted it?

The next time poor Margarita was enabled to receive Glentworth under the kind management of his wife, all was calm and subdued in her deportment; her earthly cares had subsided, and her heavenly trust was strengthened. She comforted him by words of the happiest import, uttered in low tones—but words that sealed their impress on the memory and the heart; but she was now so worn, and appeared so evanescent, that every instant he feared she would expire before him. Isabella saw his suffering, and suggested that "he had better depart—she would herself remain."

“ Take her advice, dear Glentworth — kiss me and depart.”

Trembling, though tearless, and nearly as pallid as herself, did Glentworth bend over the wasted form, and press his cold lips to hers, then fly fast as his weakened limbs permitted, far from the house and from the city, until he found in some of its many ruins a desolate corner, where he could weep unseen, recall the memory of hopes raised but to be blighted, of love cherished only to be crushed. At times the memory of new duties, new calls on his affections, new powers to exercise his benevolence, seemed rising before him, rather with an appalling than a soothing aspect; for how could one so smitten down and afflicted find that resurrection of the spirit they demanded!

The doctor and the marchese came at their usual time, when the latter observed, “ he was obliged to leave home some hours, being convened to a meeting of the senators.”

“ Go, dear Morello, and do not harass yourself by hastening away; you have been very good to me—yes, very good! On your return I shall be better than I am now, so do not be unhappy during your absence.”

They both departed; but Parizzi stationed two attendants in the anteroom, and mentioned an intention to Isabella of sending for her in an hour; but the marchesa said, “ she will not leave me till all is over; I owe you thanks for much, my good doctor, but for nothing so much as *her*; she has been far better to

me than her husband could have been during this awful period."

This kind attendant was compelled to leave her for other pressing duties, and she remained silent a long time, apparently in deep thought, which Isabella believed to have reference to *her* husband ; but in this she was mistaken, as it appeared, for at length Margarita said,

" Did you ever see any person die, dear Margaret ? "

" I never did—I have not even beheld a corpse. I was denied when I would have looked upon my father ! "

" Yet I cannot forbear entreating you to remain with me, if possible ; there will be no struggle, I trust, that would frighten, or eventually injure, you. "

" I won't be frightened, dear Margarita—God will support me ! "

" He will, my love ! and I had rather be quiet, and resign myself into his merciful hands, than have the priests and the women about me, as my dear mother had. Place the little crucifix in my hand, that my latest thought may be of my Redeemer ; and lift up your heart to heaven on my behalf, dear Margaret, and kiss my forehead once before you go. "

" I will not go, my beloved sister ! I will not leave you for a moment ! "

There was no reply ; and Isabella, sitting down on a low stool, took her left hand, which was very cold, and gently chafed it. She was thus employed when

the good doctor Parizzi, who had been very anxious for them both, and hastened back the first moment he was able, entered the room—he saw that Margarita was dead! Calling the women from the anteroom, he at once announced the fact, and hastened to take away the gentle heretic, whose presence might have been obnoxious during the ceremonies that followed, although the general conduct of the Roman clergy is that of kindness and liberality.

CHAPTER XXXII.

To the great alarm of poor Isabella, Mr. Glentworth did not return to the house where they had been lodged by Dr. Parizzi for several hours, and his appearance indicated in what extreme distress and utter abandonment of spirit he had passed the intervening time. Happily for her that kind friend had remained, and now busied himself in persuading him to take food and wine, and earnestly to exhort him, for the sake of her who had done so much, to exert himself, and not yield to sorrow.

But for him there was no peace ; continual movement, and even absolute fatigue, seemed a necessity, and he proposed the next morning to set out again immediately for Naples, saying, “ You have done miracles, dear Isabella—I am bound to you for ever ; but I trust you will go with me immediately, for you will see that I cannot stay in this place whilst the funeral of Margarita is going on ; besides, you require the solace of dear Mary’s society.”

“ Then must her sister come to *her*, and certainly the sooner the better ; but, as to a long journey, I protest against it,” said the friendly physician.

“ I am willing to remain alone. I have borne worse things than that lately ; you can go without me.”

Glentworth looked perplexed : “ I certainly ought to go, for I must see Count Riccardini ; how else can I fulfil my promise to poor Margarita ?”

“ She made you promise to be good to *me*, to guard *me* affectionately,” thought Isabella ; but she could not speak ; her heart was very full.

“ You must see all this, dear Isabella ?” reiterated Glentworth.

“ I do see that it will be better for you to go, my dear ; but, as you cannot bring Count Riccardini hither, poor man, and your presence at his abode may bring him no good, and is sure to affect you severely, I think it a pity you should go thither. You must not *cherish* your sorrow ; she begged you would not, for my sake — I ask you not to do it for *hers* ; it is better to encourage no surmises, to recall no memories of the past.”

“ My remaining life must consist only of recollections,” said Glentworth, flinging out of the room and the house with an air of utter recklessness ; but, ere he had gone many yards, his heart smote him, and he returned with rapid steps, and, running into the room he had left, found Isabella, with her head laid on the table, weeping bitterly.

Concluding that his sorrow must be her sorrow, and that all who wept in the Eternal City must weep for Margarita alone, he placed himself on the sofa beside

her, and putting his arm round her, caused her to raise her head, and he then began to console her by the commonplaces poured into the ears of mourners. Alas ! poor Isabella wept for herself, for the blighted hopes, the gloomy vista of life before her — for that bitter mortification which told her she had laboured to no end, endured to no purpose, placed herself in the most cruel position ever occupied by any human being without obtaining the reward due to her love and her sorrow, due even for her humility. At length she said slowly, in reply :

“ I do not doubt one word that you say ; I believe she is happy, very happy. I am sure she ought to be an object of my envy now, as much as she was one of my love and admiration lately.”

“ Then you will not cry again, Isabella, in that terrible way.”

“ I never cry when I can help it, for mamma never allowed what she called ‘ puling misses.’ God only knows how much I have felt in the last three weeks, yet I have not troubled you with complaints and tears ! Of course, after receiving my cousin’s last breath, listening to the last words she uttered, obeying her last injunctions at a hazard I felt terrific ; to have another parting to go through is hard. But—I am not a child, Glentworth ; I can remain, but I wish not to remain in this place. I am no longer the meet companion of di Morello’s servants.”

“ What have I been thinking of ! ” exclaimed

Glentworth ; “ we will go into our own house directly ; it has been ready some days, and there are three servants in it.”

This was soon accomplished, after which Glentworth set out ; and, when the English couple were inquired for by the servants of the marchese, he was informed that they were already out of the country, having procured passports the day following that when the marchesa died. It appeared that the widower was almost distracted by the severity of his sorrow, and was about to bury himself in the retirement of his country seat, so that no fear remained on the subject of discovery, and Isabella really congratulated herself that she had been enabled to pay the tenderest attentions to a relation so much entitled to her affection as Margarita, and one who must for a long period continue to have an influence on her happiness through the way in which it would affect her husband’s.”

When Parizzi could spare an hour, he devoted it to showing her some of the many objects of interest by which she was surrounded, and she earnestly endeavoured, as she had often done before, so to store her mind and exercise her intellectual faculties, that she might become the more suitable companion for her husband ; and, as she could not forbear to see that his late sorrows had taken a great effect on his person, streaking his full dark hair with grey, and planting premature wrinkles on his brow, she rendered the mourning she adopted proper for an older person, and

in every respect determined to appear a suitable partner, trusting that he would comprehend her feelings, and in time reward them. She now knew what she had to dread; no circumstance could arise to her in future life so pungent in its inflictions as that which she had passed through.

Perhaps she was right; the more acute suffering was passed, and the rival in her grave was less to be dreaded than she had been in life; nevertheless, there was much to fear, for, when we are unwise enough to compare the living with the dead (since the grave hallows its victims, shrouding their faults and beautifying their virtues), the living are seldom deemed their equals. The impressions made in early life are so vivid, and those of poor Glentworth had been so reiterated and woven, as it were, into his nature, they were never likely to be erased, and his standard of excellence was so high, it was not to be expected any second woman could ever reach it till he had forgotten the first, who had all the advantages of his own young imagination to assist her attractions.

Isabella had this advantage, that the only person to whom she could speak at all, was one to whom she could speak freely, and who really felt for her, and acted towards her, as if she were a daughter, transferring the regard he had felt for Margarita to one whose meekness and firmness, unbounded love and unhesitating obedience, made him earnestly desire her welfare. That he understood her well, and spoke very

tolerable English, was also a relief to her, for she could not continue her Italian studies in the absence of her husband, on whom she was continually thinking, to calculate when he would return, how he would look, and whether he would remember he had a wife, which at times she suspected he did not, as he would frequently start from the reveries into which he was accustomed to fall, and exclaim, "Ah! Isabella! — yes, yes; I remember now."

"Nivver sit and do thinking, it is very bad for youse; get the gay book, the journal, play some, sing some, look at the picture, youse have that ready in every *chiesa*. The hosban run over mountains, go here, go there, for kill the thinking; youse shall kill him at home for sake your baby; baby restore health and life to him father, love and joy to him mother. No think, no think, sweet lady," said Parizzi.

"I will do my best, I will be cheerful; I will look forward to better times; my dear sister is coming, and she will help me."

"Youse must help yourself, most peoples think for self, all *men* do, we cannot help it, we no know it is so, we will be angry when told it *is*, but in de truth it is in man's nature; the husband of youse he is noble and generous, he do me one large good, he give one grand fee, but he think of *self*; dat must not be grieve to youse, neither blame to him. Say in your heart, 'it is habit of bachelor, it is habit of years;' nivver think hard of him, nivver have sorrow for dat,

take so much of happy as you can ; give much happy to others ; rich man's wife can always give de happy to many."

"To whom can I give any thing?" cried Isabella, eagerly.

"To the young mother and her babe, the widowed mother and her poor children. Will youse visit them? I will not take youse where sight or sound can hurt youse."

At his persuasion, she employed herself in visiting the widow and the fatherless in their affliction, not only to relieve them out of her abundance, but console them by her sympathy. Her own anxiety grew lighter as she considered *their* wants, and pondered on the means to help them ; and although she often most gratefully thanked the dear husband who had given her the power to be bountiful, she ceased to dwell on him with restless desire for his presence, or a painful exertion of fortitude to bear his absence. She had been so happy as to meet with a physician who could "administer to a mind diseased," and did so far "raze out the written troubles of the brain," as to restore her health, which had been greatly injured, and give strength to bear the trial she must soon expect to encounter.

Far different was the state of her husband, when at length he returned to gladden her eyes with the sight of her sister, who was at this especial time as welcome as himself ; he looked ill and dejected, and Mary ob-

served, had done so ever since he had returned, except when they were actually travelling, when he became animated and sociable, the same dear pleasant man they had known him in days past.

Isabella had very naturally conceived a high opinion of the skill of Dr. Parizzi; and as he called upon her at least once a day, she thought it better to wait for than send for him, having observed that Glentworth insisted that he was not ill, and she therefore feared to offend him by officiousness, though he evidently expected from her much sympathy, saying, "that in one respect he had felt constantly the want of her society, as he had no one to whom he could speak of Margarita, except in the single day in which he had met poor Count Riccardini."

"Poor man, how does he bear his affliction?"

"Better on the whole than I expected, though he was dreadfully agitated on seeing me; he had expected the death of his daughter from the time her child died, it seems, and found great consolation in hearing what were her plans for himself, with which he wishes to comply; he will be here in a day or two."

"Here! what in Rome?" exclaimed Isabella, whose imagination conjured up a thousand terrors, in consequence of what Margarita had hinted of the Inquisition.

"This house will be his protection; you need not be uneasy about him."

Nevertheless, it will be evident that she would

rather have been without a visitant of his sex at this time, and that he was the last person who should associate with her husband, if the tone of his spirits was to be restored, and her own situation, as the wife of his bosom, to be recognized; again her heart sunk, and the shadows of fear and sorrow settled on her spirits.

Still farther was the gloom increased, when, after many questions, Parizzi pronounced her husband suffering from a low fever, which was always accompanied by dejection of spirits, and would only yield to travel. "I would send you," said he, "into Greece or Egypt, any where in short where you had never been before, where the excitement should be great and the difficulties by no means few. Live in the air, get a poor lodging, scanty food, objects of great interest around you, and not unfrequently of apprehension also, and you will soon be better; at least I know no other way to make you so; nothing else will do, I assure you; nothing less."

"Perhaps," cried Isabella, forgetting her own previous conclusion, "the poor Count will like to go with you, dear Glentworth."

"He is too old a man for the kind of journey I mean. A servant who will also be a guide, a country abounding either in natural wonders or historical associations, and if rich in ruins and poor in luxuries so much the better."

"But surely he need not leave us far, for all that?"

Sicily has the wonders both of nature and art to excite curiosity, and from all I ever heard, it is wild and rough enough for any thing, and has never been explored as it deserves to be. Why should he not go to Sicily?"

"Why not indeed? I do really think the selection is admirable, for Etna alone is a world worth expending a life upon," said Parizzi.

"And I can follow you thither, and wander about with you, dear Glentworth, when I am well again."

"I believe the advice to be very good, and am sensible of being wonderfully better for the air, and even for motion, nor do I dislike the idea of going to Sicily: I have frequently wished to find the exact spot where the Grecian army beheld the water, for want of which they were expiring. I will go;" he cast his eyes on Isabella, whose very lips were pale with alarm, and added, "but not till you wish me to do so."

And, in truth, he did not for a time require the excitements or the troubles of travel, to tear his mind from a cherished sorrow, by offering a new interest; for Isabella, who well merited to be always such, did now recover her rights, and in the alarm which he experienced, Glentworth was led to believe that the anxiety and sorrow she had felt throughout her acquaintance with Margarita, and the shock given by her death, had produced an effect on her constitution which would render her present trial fatal. "She resembled her cousin in person, and would resemble

her also in her fate," he observed to Parizzi, in a voice of terror.

"Take comfort, it was only in the voice and the features they resemble each other. Margarita was a spoiled child, and afterwards an adored wife—the mother, whose religious scruples denied her the *great* wish of her heart, granted all the lesser, rendering her (sweet girl as she was) capricious and petulant—her husband went still farther in worship and indulgence—your lady has not been ruined by such weakness."

"She has not," said Glentworth, as certain passages of lovers' quarrels rose upon his mind, which, however sweet when healed, had not given promise of that submission and glad obedience ever found in the wife, and he sighed, profoundly ejaculating, "poor Isabella!" and, perceiving he was again left alone, eagerly traversed the long drawing-room, hour after hour, in terrible solicitude—at length he was summoned: a living son and a living mother (though a weak one) were before him.

If there is a moment in man's life when he feels, profoundly and intensely, that he has a heart, it is at such a moment as this; and Glentworth, a man endowed by nature with the acutest sensibility, which of late he had fostered at the expence of sober and rational happiness, could not fail to experience the glowing gratitude to Heaven; the thankfulness, tenderness, pity, and love for his young wife, her late

sufferings so justly demanded. To find himself placed in a situation he had so often contemplated as being the summit of all earthly felicity to a man of his description, and from which he had been so cruelly torn away from time to time, rendered his position as surprising as it was delightful, and a miracle seemed to have been wrought in his favour, as if to reward him for the sorrow of past years by the promise of the future.

He could have been eloquent in his praises of his wife, and the far sweeter praises of her fair boy; and much did he wish to apologize for every word and look (from whatever cause) that could by possibility have hurt her; but he was hurried away, lest he should injure her whom at this moment he could have died to bless.

Isabella recovered slowly, but her child was a thriving one, and became to her a source of such constant occupation and delight, that she urged her husband to set out on his projected journey. Much as he had desired to do so a week before, he now sought rather to elude the prescription than take it; but he soon found of a truth something must be submitted to, for his late mental disease had become bodily ailment, which would not yield to his bidding.

“ You *must* go—there is no helping it now—you need not travel over such rough ground as I prescribed at first, nor seek at all hazards for excitement, for the cord that draws you homeward will

supply it; but you must live in the air, and change it continually—we shall have malaria here, and I will soon get your family to the coast, where, in a few weeks, I trust, you will join them quite a new man.”

Before he set out, Count Riccardini arrived, and it was evidently well for Glentworth that his departure was fixed, since the state in which the Count found the family was necessarily very affecting to one who had so lately lost his only daughter, and, having spent a few days with his son-in-law, had by no means been good for either of them. The doctor observed to Isabella, to whom alone he ever spoke English, “Youse countrymen have great advantaage in de politics, dey take away all trouble beside demself—make youse husben man of parliament so soon as you get him home; de contension in great house and de heir in his own house make him forget Italy and her grieves.”

“I will persuade him to do so—a man of his abilities and large fortune ought to be in parliament,” said Isabella, who constantly held Parizzi’s words as those of an oracle.

On resuming her drawing-room she became first pleased with and then sincerely attached to poor Riccardini, whom she called her “dear uncle,” as did Mary also; for the word, though not the relationship, was familiar to them. To the bereaved husband and father they were dear and delightful—he had loved their father with all the enthusiasm of his country, and, having seen little of their mother, save as a beautiful

woman doing the honours of her establishment gracefully, and looking on him even "in his low estate" graciously, he was kindly disposed to her and her's; perhaps secretly attributing (with a vanity common to very handsome men) her extreme anger at his marriage to a sentiment very distinct from the contempt it expressed, and he might suppose her misconduct as an extravagant wife was allied to the same cause.

We believe his conjectures to have been wholly wrong, but, be that as it may, the effect was so far pleasant that the sisters had the satisfaction of hearing their father warmly praised by one who knew him well, without a single hint which disparaged their mother, which was a delightful novelty. The Count was a kind and most intelligent guide to Mary during her short stay in the Eternal City, and, on their leaving it for Leghorn, a most desirable travelling companion, considering all the cares of the nursery with the tenderness and knowledge of one who had been accustomed to the subject—to Isabella he was the happiest of all acquisitions; "the only one," she said, with tears, "that could make me amends for you, dear Dr. Parizzi."

"Do not say de farewell, dear lady, I no like farewell—when come de ship wit smoke, I come see you in Inglon; I have good relation in London."

"You shall visit no relation, no friend, but *me*; remember, I claim you for my own—I shall have a

house before then, of course, and it must be your house."

"Be it so—no say more; I will cheat myself, and think to call to-morrow."

Of Isabella it might perhaps be said, "some natural tears she dropped, but wiped them soon;" yet promised herself never to forget the many pithy maxims the good old man had uttered in the way of advice, nor the true kindness and support he had given in those trying scenes which would hereafter appear to her as the dreams of "romance rather than reality." Surely her after-life would be that of calm, yet, what some might call mere *hum-drum* happiness. She was young, but in a short time she had gone through whole ages of fears and sorrows. Was she not going through them now, for where was Glentworth?—how was his health?—had he arrived at Messina?

Some of these questions were likely to be answered, for the Count put into her hands a letter, directed, as agreed between them, to Leghorn.

CHAPTER XXXIII.

Need we say that our anxious wife broke the seal in haste? No! we are all aware that even the child could not prevent attention, instant attention; to the father, from a wife so devoted, and within so short a time relieved from doubts and fears of the most distressing nature, the first words startled her even now.

“ My dear Margaretta,

“ I cannot forbear to call you thus in writing; to no other name could I address myself so freely and pleurably, and since it really is your's, I know you will not object, even if the memory of the past mingle with the present. You have given me so many causes for holding you in the highest degree as an object of pure esteem and warm affection, that you can never suppose my heart can cease to acknowledge your claims, or look upon you rather as my friend Granard's little daughter, than the excellent young woman whose virtues have outgrown her years, rendering her the next successor of her gifted cousin, and so far dearer to me, that she is my wedded wife

and the mother of my child — the friend to whom I am indebted for the kindest of all possible services, and the one human being to whom I can pour out my soul in the full confidence of my feelings being appreciated. Now I am at this distance, I feel even more than in your presence the extent of my obligations, and my heart aches to be with you, that we may gaze upon our sweet boy together. It is, indeed, no marvel that I can speak to you more fully on paper than when I am with you, for then I am sensible of the disparity in our years ; I have a dread that my love may appear foolish, perhaps disgusting to you, or that, with the knowledge you now possess of the years in which I was the slave of an unfortunate, but certainly a reciprocated passion, you may be inclined to despise that which I can offer as the dregs of an exhausted heart—the unworthy offering of a vain old man, unworthy of your youth and beauty.

“ Mistake me not, my dear Margaretta ; you have given me no reason even for a moment to believe that circumstances have lessened your affection for me ; that my sickness, or my sorrow, have changed me in your sight. I say only that fears of this description haunt me—a circumstance which occurred to me since my absence has shown me how great a change has occurred in my person.

“ You know I embarked at Pisa in a vessel bound for Messina, but engaged to land passengers at Naples. We had scarcely got out, when my attention

was drawn to a very elegant-looking man, slowly pacing the deck, with his eyes cast down in a manner which proved that the neighbouring coast had little attraction for him, and, in fact, I saw he was an Englishman. When he turned round from his short walk, whom should it prove but Lord Allerton, whom I first saw at the house of a friend in London, and was so much pleased with, I should have pursued the acquaintance, if your mother had not given me to understand she had reason, for our dear Mary's sake, to be displeased with him.

“ I felt much too lonely not to rejoice in seeing a countryman, and immediately addressed him. He evidently rejoiced in hearing his own tongue, but said, ‘ that although my voice was familiar to his ear, and my person so to a certain degree, he dared not to give me a name.’

“ ‘ It is Glentworth ; we have met repeatedly at Sir Alfred Robertson’s.’

“ ‘ God bless me ! Mr. Glentworth ! Did you not marry a Miss Granard ?’

“ ‘ I was so happy, sir. My wife has just made me a father, and is, of course, unable to accompany me, to the great grief of both, as you may suppose ; but my physician has compelled me to leave her for a short voyage and change of air : I am troubled with a fever not uncommon at this season in Italy.’

“ ‘ Only a fever !’ he exclaimed. ‘ You are a happy man ! I thought—I *feared* you were withered

by some unknown sorrow. You married a very young wife, and though it is certain I know no harm of Lady Anne Granard's daughters, a man who has suffered as I have done is liable to suspicion.'

" 'I have known every one of my wife's sisters from their infancy, and more amiable, pure-minded women do not exist. The eldest is with us, for her health was so precarious that it was thought Italy might be useful, and——'

" 'Has it been so? is she better?' he cried, with great solicitude.

"I answered 'she was; but that I imputed her recovery more to the tender interest she had taken in her sister and myself, than to any advantages of air. She is,' said I, 'one of those people who live on the heart; something which affected *that*, occasioned the derangement of her health, and she has derived her cure from the same source.'

" 'Is she then engaged?—is she about to marry?'

" 'Not to my knowledge; for she has refused very advantageous offers, and, I rather think, determined to reject all such. I alluded only to the excellence of her disposition, which, for our sakes, roused her to an energy beneficial to herself.' Soon after this we retired to his cabin, and he told me a sad and shameful story, which you will see in the English journals, with an addition they may not yet have announced, that, immediately on obtaining a divorce, he set out to travel until the affair should be blown

over. With him it was an object to avoid the English at Paris and Rome; therefore he crossed France, through Brittany, and took shipping at Marseilles for Naples: as, however, he will find many there whom he knows, I think it likely he will conclude to accompany me to Sicily, which I shall be very glad of, for he is a most agreeable companion, and interests me exceedingly. I cannot be sorry that he has lost a wife who from the very first was a bad one, marrying him only for situation, and becoming at length so hardened, that she actually had the effrontery to tell him, she, with the assistance of her aunt (who, I grieve to say, is your's also, in courtesy), cajoled him into an offer, thereby dividing him from a woman who really loved him. I rather think she meant dear Mary.

“I had a very bad night after leaving him, but since then, have been much better, and shall, I trust, be soon enabled to tell you, my own dear Isabella, I am every way restored. Kiss the babe for me, and tell his mother I am her's, her's only.

“Your's,

“FRAN^S. GLENTWORTH.

“N.B. Say every thing kind to Mary and the Count, and don't suppose for a moment I had a sad night from contemplating poor Allerton's sad story, coupled with the proof he had given of my own sad looks. I must not have you think I could thus suffer

from suspicion of you, my good and excellent Isabella : no ! it was the heat and the fever.”

If it were joy to poor Georgiana to receive a letter from her sailor lover, still greater was the joy of the young wife to read so long and so kind a letter from her distant lord, one, too, so gratifying in the intelligence it conveyed ; but perhaps the circumstance which struck her as best of all, was that of Mr. Glentworth having forgotten the Margareta with which he began the letter, and resuming the Isabella by which he was wont to recognize her. She trusted it was a sign that his mind was recovering a more healthful state, that he was not obliged to refer to his imagination, and, by giving her an ideal existence, compel himself to love her as the representative of another ; surely, if he could do so long without the real Margarita, and appear cheerful and happy as he used to do when in England, he might (now that death had really taken her, poor thing !) resign her entirely, and love his wife, without reference to one who, however beautiful and attached, had innocently caused him a life of sorrow, and herself a year of it, but whom she should ever remember with affection.

Here too they received letters from England of the greatest interest ; dear Louisa was, like herself, a mother, and Charles, the happiest of men, wrote as he felt. Poor Georgiana had written also from Rotheles Castle, but her joy was mixed with her own sad story

of the refusal given to her distant lover by her mother, as the medium of effecting a marriage from which her heart revolted, of the gloom cast over the circle with whom she now resided, from the misconduct of Lady Allerton, and of many fears as to the situation of Lady Anne's affairs, as the earl, her brother, declared he would no longer help her as he had done ; seeing the fewer daughters she had to maintain, the more money she spent, refusing respectable offers from an ambition she had no right to indulge, with so numerous a family.

On this topic Helen dilated still more, when she also had reverted to the painful situation of Georgiana, who might have been married to the brother of the best and most amiable nobleman in England, who would have made her a good settlement, and provided, with his grandfather's assistance, an income more than sufficient for Georgiana's wishes, a great deal. The poor girl could not tell all that was passing in her heart on the subject ; but it is certain much did pass there respecting the possibility of Georgiana's union becoming a prelude to her own ; but, as this could not be spoken of, she turned abruptly to the subject of mamma's wants, related the manner of her borrowing money from Mr. Palmer, and of her gay living since she went to Brighton, quoting a paragraph from the Morning Post which announced the intention of Lady Anne Granard, with her beautiful daughters, to preside at one of the stalls, at a grand fancy bazaar,

in Kemp Town, which was expected to be the gayest scene and the most splendid assemblage of royalty and nobility ever beheld in Brighton.

“That it is true mamma does meditate doing this, I cannot doubt; for she has written, desiring both Louisa and me to make as many pretty things as possible, saying we must work the harder because Georgiana cannot assist her, Lord Rotheles disliking all kinds of exhibitions of young ladies. We would fulfil her wishes, but Louisa cannot sit up to work, you know; and she prefers the baby to all the hand-screens in the world, and mamma has sent me no money to buy materials with—so what can I do?”

“What can she do, indeed?” was re-echoed by both sisters, as Mary, who was the one to whom the letter was addressed, thus proceeded:—

“We expect letters from you every day to tell us, as we trust, that you are well and happy, for that will do me good; as I know, if you are in health, being in cash, you can have no trouble—at least, Isabella cannot. How fortunate she has been! how differently is she now situated to the time when Mr. Glentworth came to see us, and she was ordered to remain in the nursery, that Georgiana might wear the muslin frock they had between them. She did not look well in that dark merino, yet she got the best man that ever was born—the kind friend to us all. I doubt not he loved her from that very time, because he pitied her, as we all have often done.’

“You are mistaken, dear Helen,” said Mrs. Glentworth, “very much mistaken in your conclusions, as Isabella has since then known to her sorrow, but not in your assertions; for dearly, indeed, did you all love me and cheer me on my thorny path: you indeed shared it, dear Mary. It was curious to hear mamma blame you for growing plain, and me for being plain. Of course, we could not help it in either case, and should have been pitied, not blamed.”

“She used to say I could, and be, therefore, the more severe in her remarks upon me, but it is better for us both to forget them, Isabella,” said Mary.

“Very true, dear Mary, and we must also forget all in my history which shews my error as to my married life, painting it all sunshine. I wish never to draw on their sympathies, but I can well understand Helen’s distress, and must try to relieve it as soon as possible; how can we manage?”

“Count Riccardini will do it by getting a banker’s order, payable in London; but I confess myself much more uneasy about mamma than Helen, whom Louisa can always help with a trifle. Lady Anne’s income is so well known, nobody will lend her money, nor can one wish they should, as there is no saying how they could be repaid. I am sure things are bad with her, for there are no letters from her, which is a sign she is very poor.”

“In that case, she would have written to ask for money, I think.”

“If she had wanted any sum which your purse or mine, united, could have supplied, she would have demanded it unquestionably; but she would, on no account, choose Mr. Glentworth to know her distress, for she fears him as much as my uncle Rotheles. I greatly dread her applying to the Marquess of Wentworthdale, which would be a kind of sale of dear Georgiana; it is horrible to think of.”

“Finish your letter, dear Mary; something consolatory may arise in it.”

Mary glanced over the letter. “She says Viscount Meersbrook, the brother of Lieutenant Hales (that lover of Georgiana whom mamma peremptorily refused), took our house for three months, and paid beforehand, that he is intimate with the Palmers, and that at Christmas Lord Rotheles will reduce mamma’s allowance one half. Now, as she always spends her money before she gets it, you know, what will become of her when Christmas comes? Helen says she gave a note to Mr. Palmer to repay the money in six months, which I am sure she cannot do.”

“I wonder he would take a note from mamma.”

“I do not, for, although he is a generous man, he is a regular man; and I have heard him say, more than once, that Lady Sarah Butterlip had taught him a lesson, as to lending money, that would last him his life in the way by which she cheated his friend, Mrs. Clare, of Canterbury. And it always struck me, and often very painfully, that in his own mind he was com-

paring Lady Anne Granard and Lady Sarah Butterlip as being alike ; both were high-born, both married private gentlemen, both were extravagant, and were left poorly provided, as widows with daughters, and both assisted by their brothers. Here, thank God, the resemblance ceases, and will, I trust, never be renewed, save to say that both are very fine women, mamma being the younger.”

“ I know nothing of Lady Sarah Butterlip ; I have never seen her.”

“ How should you, my dear, marrying so soon, and leaving England immediately. I saw her at Rotheles Castle, and, like all the rest of the world, was perfectly fascinated by the beauty of her features and the graces of her manners, though one was marked by time, and the other tinged by affectation.”

“ But what does she do that is wrong ? in money matters, I mean ?”

“ What does she not do ? She runs into debt to every body, and pays nobody ; borrows money without a chance for repayment ;”

* * * * *

“ My dear Mary, nobody living shall dare to compare my mother with such a woman as that ; it is frightful to think of any human being, much less any woman of rank, stooping to such baseness. Depend upon it, her faults have been greatly exaggerated ; she is the victim of scandal.”

“ I fear not, to *this* I can speak, for Mr. Palmer

told us, *i. e.*, Louisa, Mrs. Gooch, and me, she formed an acquaintance with a Mrs. Clare, his friend, a good-natured, benevolent, elderly lady, somewhat eccentric in manners, but of fine taste, extensive reading, and such unbounded kindness, that she would have been ruined if a kind friend had not guarded her from herself. Lady Sarah, during this friend's absence, discovered that Mrs. Clare had been receiving rents one day, and actually at the time had about seven hundred pounds in her pocket : she immediately made up a very pitiable story, which the loan of seven hundred pounds would relieve, and which could be soon gratefully repaid. Mrs. Clare produced the seven hundred pounds, and was overwhelmed with thanks, Lady Sarah hastening away on the instant, on which Mrs. Clare wrote to her, saying, 'that in her hurry she had forgotten to give the necessary acknowledgment.' What do you think Lady Sarah did?"

"What could she do, but return, and give the proper papers?"

"No such thing ; she wrote a fine flummery letter, saying 'she knew her dear Mrs. Clare intended to present her with the money, therefore, she would never offend her generosity by offering legal acknowledgment for her gift, which she accepted in the same kind spirit in which it was offered.'"

"And what did Mrs. Clare do, then?"

"She protested against the conclusion, so did her friend, declaring that such a gift was beyond her

means, and would be a source of positive inconvenience; the result of which was, that they were treated with contempt. You may well look aghast, Isabella, but I tell you the tale as told to me by the truly good and upright."

"Well, dear Mary, then my reply is, that at any hazard mamma must be relieved, lest she should be tempted to do any one of the many wrong things you have mentioned. I would rather send her all the money we have; nay, I would sell the trinkets Glentworth has given me, at the risk of his anger, in preference to any disgraceful circumstance occurring to her, much less her consenting to any: but how can we manage it? what can we do?"

"We can only write to Louisa, and promise indemnity to Charles."

"Charles does not like his wife's mother, and has, indeed, no reason; Louisa is like ourselves; she will feel that, let Lady Anne's faults be what they may, she is her mother, and may in her distress say more than she ought; we must not, as they say in the East, 'throw the apple of contention into the dwelling of matrimony.'"

Count Riccardini entered whilst they were concerting ways and means to help their mother, and the kind inquiries he made as to their apparent discomfort, soon drew them to disclose all that was necessary of Helen's letter. He took a warm interest in it, for he well knew how frequently in days of old Mr. Granard

had been driven into difficulties when he had a fine income, and he could readily conceive how likely it was that, with her present small one, Lady Anne should be embarrassed. The riches of the English, and their habits of expense, made her present situation extremely pitiable in his eyes, and he seemed to ponder the matter with as much anxiety as the daughters; at length he said:—

“It is not an easy thing for an Italian to move with the rapidity of an Englishman; he may resolve when he has investigated, but he is lazy; nevertheless, I leave Leghorn on Saturday, you shall see, and go straight through France, take one little rest at Paris, go thence to Dieppe, and cross to Brighton.”

“My dear count, you astonish me.”

“I visit Lady Anne, I find out soon if she is distress, and I advance two or three hundreds of pounds, to save the ruin of your law. I take present, if you please, but you must not use your husband money for save Lady Anne, nor must you be disgrace in this country, and who can say how long poor Glentworth may find it necessary to travel, or that he shall not sent to you for part of the money he left with you—nothing can be more likely.”

Isabella felt alarmed at an alternative she had not considered, and saw clearly that no possible plan for relieving her mother, at once effectually and wisely, could be offered of any comparative utility with this, and since it had been the full intention of the Count

to accompany them on their return, it could not make any great difference to *him*, whilst to *them* it was of incalculable advantage. They considered that the Count, from his close affinity with the family, had a right to advise their mother, which neither her children nor her sons-in-law could pretend to, and that, remembering the fortune their aunt brought him, and the accumulations their father might be said to have presented him with, no delicacy on their part need to interfere with his evidently generous intentions. Isabella so well knew the high opinion Glentworth entertained of him, and the deep regard he felt for him, that she was certain whatever he did would be perfectly approved by her husband.

From the time poor Riccardini had engaged his courier, and taken his passage to Marseilles, he became extremely melancholy, and required all the active kindness of both his nieces to support his spirits. Doubtless his heart often addressed his dear, his beautiful, and noble country, saying, "With all thy faults I love thee still," and even to leave the hallowed dust of his wife and daughter was afflictive; but Isabella well knew, from what Margarita had told her, it was far better he should depart, since nothing could be more probable, when he was no longer prevented by domestic ties, than that he should join some party of those who sought to overturn Austrian usurpation, and by that means consign himself to a turbulent

state of existence, or a hopeless imprisonment, during that period when he ought to be surrounded by a host of friends, and an honoured guest among those “ who sit at good men’s feasts.”

CHAPTER XXXIV.

Both the sisters prepared various letters, and took especial care to supply the wants of Helen, trusting that Georgiana's would be cared for by the earl her uncle; but she was not left without money by Isabella, who well remembered what it was to hope and be disappointed—cast an eye and breathe a sigh over the lank sides of a worthless “silken purse,” as devoid of merit as a “sow's ear”—when a pair of gloves could be no longer mended—a warm shawl was called for by every wind that blew, and there was no walking round the square for want of winter boots. “In a nobleman's house how many gloves, and ribbons, and dresses, too, are wanted!—poor Georgiana must have ten pounds, at all events.”

And never did Isabella relieve a suffering fellow-creature, or assist a beloved sister, without blessing the dear, distant one that had made her rich, and kissing her sweet boy with new zest, as the son of his father. The warm apostrophe of Riccardini to this little representative of his parents, whom he called “the son of his love, the child of his old age, the gift of his beloved niece, on the behalf of his angel-daughter,” affected them all; and if prayers and blessings

could ensure him safety, his voyage must be attended by halcyon skies, and his long monotonous journey through France to Paris be unaccompanied by weariness.

Such was not the case ; the Count found himself an older man than when he passed through the same route twenty years before, though his appearance was little changed ; he also found how much he had lost in leaving those amiable young women, whose sweet society had been to him the renewal of his sensibility, not less than the soothers of his sorrow.

Had we not better partake or at least follow the steps of the Anglicised Italian? We have left Lady Anne for a long time ; nevertheless, we must stay with Isabella another week, in order to read a second letter received from Glentworth, which was expected with the more impatience in consequence of the Count's departure. Our ladies were situated as well as it was possible ; they had good servants, splendid rooms, obsequious attendants, and had become habituated to the country, so that the loss of the Count was not any thing of moment beyond the pleasure of his society ; but, it might be truly said, their wishes went with him, and "home, sweet home !" was the cry of their hearts ; therefore, they earnestly desired any message which, by informing them of the health of Glentworth, awoke their hopes of a return to their own country.

"I write, my beloved, from Messina, by the returning vessel, to say that, on the whole, I am better for

the voyage ; but, I must own, I impute my improvement more to the kind attentions of Lord Allerton, who is my companion still, and will not, I think, leave me, than to the sea air. Parizzi was quite right, I really think, in saying excitement was good for me, therefore I must seek novelty (by which he meant, I must forget the past, and learn to live in the present), for I really find more advantage than I expected in the time ; but it has been in consequence rather of water than air, which has kindly provided me with two excellent nurses !

“ Yes, two ! What do you say, dear Isabella, to my having actually picked up another *ci-devant* lover of one of your sisters, poor little Georgiana, who is at present wearing the willow, as well as this fine young man, who is really the *beau ideal* of a sailor-gentleman, because Lady Anne must have lords at least for the rest of her daughters ? You know her last letters said how unwell this poor girl was, and that she was hastening to Brighton on that account. She may well be unwell, for Arthur Hales (who, by the way, had a viscount for his father, and has one now for his brother, to say nothing of a glorious old baronet for his grandfather) is in age, person, rank—nay, even fortune, all one could wish for dear Georgiana, whom I used to love as well as yourself, and whose welfare I would, if possible, ensure. I wish you to write and tell her this, in order to support her spirits until our return, when it shall go hard but we will make her as

happy as Louisa. She is several years younger, and will be no worse for waiting two or three years—not that she can see much more of her husband than she has done, as he is continually at sea, which is all the better, as there is little doubt of his having a ship ere long. We all love that the best which has cost us the most ; and they will prize each other the more for their present sorrow, provided it is not continued too long. It is on this principle, Isabella, that I hope for the continuance of your affection. God knows I have cost you enough ! every day of my life increases my sense of your kindness, and the way in which you ‘stooped to conquer.’ Depend upon it, my love, the object was insured. Some people say there are such things as good husbands, but never grateful ones—that the innate pride of the strong sex never owns obligation to the weaker. I rather think there is some truth in the observation, especially when, as in our case, the lady is so considerably younger ; for it does seem strange, almost impossible, to hold oneself under serious obligation to the child you have dandled—the little girl who has kissed you for giving her a new doll. Well, never mind, darling, I shall love you the most when I have forgotten to thank you at all—you understand this?”

“ Perfectly,” exclaimed Isabella ; “ the sooner he forgets the past the better for me,” and she eagerly resumed the letter.

“ Messina interests me much ; but I shall talk to you of Sicily, not write of it. To-morrow we set out

to explore Etna—we will hope his fires will sleep, for I shall have quite enough with either hand—a lover ‘sighing like furnace,’ as the craft are wont. ‘Prepare our dear Mary for what is prepared for her’ (as our old divines say)—a penitent lover who knows her worth, and will give her the rank she truly merits, and the fortune she will spend well and wisely. You, dear Isabella, will, I trust, obviate all difficulties of the brown merino character. I wish you both to be out of mourning when we return, unless it will give pain to dear Riccardini, for Mary, though very fair, is too thin for black, and you too dark. See what a coxcomb you have made of the old fellow; like Benedict, I shall be thinking a whole morning of the cut of my own doublet next—*n’importe*, I am willing to grow young by contagion.

“I cannot close this without giving you some pain, dear Isabella. I understand, from Lieutenant Hales, that Lady Anne gave a splendid party on the occasion of Louisa’s marriage (indeed, we heard of it, I remember); but, I mean to say, she has so placed herself in difficulties, by increased expenditure, as to offend Lord Rotheles exceedingly, who threatens to withdraw his allowance, which Allerton says is the more likely to take place, because, to his own knowledge, the countess is her enemy. If, from the letters you receive (or have received), you find she is embarrassed, write immediately to Mr. Penrhyn, telling him to advance her, on my behalf, from two hundred and fifty to three

hundred ; but on no account part with any money, save for your personal expenses, it would subject us to difficulties with the bankers. I shall, of course, save your mother from serious evils ; but, like Lord Rotheles, I must condemn the misconduct which has embarrassed her at a time when, so many of her family being removed, she ought to have been comfortably situated. If she has robbed the girls, as I greatly fear, I shall leave her to feel more than she will find palatable ; but Penrhyn will do the right thing, so just write what I have told you."

" Oh ! what a happy thing it was that I did not send away two or three hundred pounds to help poor mamma ! What a dear, good creature was the Count to go off at the moment he did !"

" Indeed he was," said Mary, who had only heard that part of Glentworth's letter which related to her mother ; " as otherwise she would not be helped, for I am quite certain she has long ago taken the last shilling from Helen and Georgiana ; that stands to reason, she must look to her own daughters, if they had any thing."

" Of course, of course, — she must look to us all," said Isabella, shaking her head.

" But surely, dear sister, Mr. Glentworth's whole letter is not written on this painful topic, and in the stern style those lines are dictated which you read. I do not wonder he finds fault, but it is hard on you to receive a lecture instead of a letter," Mary added.

“ You are quite mistaken, dear sister ; it is a good, kind, dear letter, as ever was written ; the words are poured out freely as the thoughts rose to his mind — his conclusion is all apology, and he mentions you and his noble companion in such a kind manner. You need not to blush so, Mary, but I must say it becomes you amazingly.”

“ Don't jest on that subject, Isabella, I beseech you ; I can better bear the severity of Mr. Glentworth, than a joke, even from you.”

“ Dear, dear sister, I would not trifle with your feelings for the world ; and I am sure you believe neither Lord Allerton nor any man living would dare to trifle with Glentworth, either respecting his sister or any other subject ?”

“ I don't suppose they would ; he is the last man any one would play with in a serious matter.”

“ Admitting that, I may tell you, for I am authorized to do so, both in the body of the letter and again in the postscript, that Lord Allerton is a penitent in all that concerns the past, and a *true* lover at the present, and that he is returning with Glentworth, to offer you the heart which has suffered anguish enough since you lost sight of each other, to render him an object of pity if not of ——. But here, take the letter, and shut yourself up with it. I must have the babe, and prattle to it of the father : when once I can teach it to say ‘ Papa ! Papa ! ’ I think it will be the happiest day of my existence. Fie

on me ! to make dear Mary happy ought to be sweetest of all, for, oh ! how long have I known her heart-broken and spiritless, faded and disconsolate, yet never cross or unkind, even for a moment. How often must our childish mirth have been as distressing to her jaded spirits, as the cruel taunts of mamma ; and when she used to express such a desire that Glentworth would marry her, might not the same desire enter her own mind, hopeless as she then was, that Lord Allerton could be at liberty — and therefore, my marriage, if not affecting her tenderness, might be wounding to her pride, yet in her affection, her interest in me, she has to a certain point regained health and spirits. Oh ! how sweetly I will dress her ; how delicate, but how lovely she will look ! thanks to you, dear Glentworth, who thinks for all, support all ! Oh ! how shall I worthily adore the merciful God who gave you to me (the youngest and least deserving of my family) to be the blessing and the protector of all !”

Several hours passed by unnoticed by Isabella, in meditating on her husband, or in playing with her child (which increased in health and beauty every day), before Mary emerged from her chamber—her eyelids were swollen, and the traces of tears were on her cheeks ; it was evident that she had sustained a struggle, whether it were with the pride of female delicacy, dreading to show too plainly that she could forgive ; that she was willing to be won ; that although that priceless gem, “ a virgin’s first love,” had been

blighted, it had never expired ; that the germ survived when the flower drooped, and required only a kind hand to offer new nourishment, a patient care and cultivation, to restore its vigour and relume its brilliance ; or whether — but conjecture is vain in a case so full of all that is most interesting to feminine apprehension and feminine tenderness. Her countenance was full of gentle joy and that perfectly reposing confidence which belongs to the guileless and the artless, who, utterly incapable of deception in themselves, suspect it not in others. That she had been the victim of such conduct, she had too good an understanding to doubt ; but when she learnt that Lord Allerton had been in the same predicament, as told by Glentworth, whose integrity and ability were equal, not the shadow of a doubt remained, and she felt that she could love as she had first loved, when “love and life itself were new.”

To a woman so situated, especially one who has been reproached for looking pale or yellow, thin and lank, unlovely and unloveable, the next question that arrives will inevitably be, “How do I look ?” this will branch out into many “Can I expect him to love me, when I am no more the same ?” “Is he so foolish as to suppose I am still a girl ?” “Does he remember that it is full seven years since I was nineteen ?”

Miss Austin, in her admirable novel of “Persuasion,” has declared that a woman’s twenty-eighth year is the most interesting period of female life, and bow-

ing to such authority, we yet venture to say, one year less will not make her the worse, and we may add, that Miss Granard's increase of general happiness, and the aids offered by the sea and the climate, had unquestionably so restored her, that although not what she was in the bloom of nineteen, she was to a man in his thirtieth year, who had known the sorrows and mortifications poor Lord Allerton had experienced, and in some measure merited, a far more interesting person than he had ever seen her, for she had unquestionably gained in the expression of intellect and sensibility more than she had lost in youth and its evanescent beauty.

CHAPTER XXXV.

We left Lady Anne Granard in that state of mixed good and evil—the misery arising from numerous duns, and the felicity arising from actual possession of a pretty sum wherewith to go to Brighton—which is a very common lot in life, and by no means confined to persons distinguished by rank or fashion. Many people of very humble pretensions put money in their purses, and set out to watering-places, when they ought to have stayed at home and *paid* that which they magnanimously determined to spend; leaving the small fry below them in the scale of society to flounder in the mud as they can, whilst they magnanimously ape their betters, by “doing that which they ought not to do,” and “leaving undone that which they ought to have done.” In the present progressive state of human affairs, a duchess could not sport a new folly, or practice a new sin, for a fortnight, without being closely imitated even by shopkeepers’ wives. Vanity furnishes the steam, fashion lays the railroads, and away we all run on the “road to ruin,” reckless whom we crush

below us, or to what dread abyss the giddy whirl may hurry ourselves.

With much to think of, many points to carry, and some vexations of a very painful nature to get rid of, Lady Anne would not have immediately perceived the happiness of her present position, if Fanchette had not, with outspread hands and eyes that shone with delight, congratulated *chère miladi*, that she was about to depart under circumstances of such rare *félicité*.

“*Félicité!*” said Lady Anne, simply repeating the word.

“*Sans doute!* Are not all gone? every one yong lady; *quelle plaisir!*”

“That all were removed, at least temporarily,” Lady Anne said to herself, “is certainly a great relief; I can now do as I choose, without having any thing whatever to provide for them; and when I am first seen without any of that eternal tribe of daughters, the impression will be, that I have married them all;—thanks to the circumstance of the youngest marrying so well, it made the affair talked of. It is also fortunate that the two who are married have produced sons, whereby the stigma attaching to myself, as bringing nothing but daughters, is removed; and the Marquis of Wentworthdale may venture on Georgiana. She will be much more likely to meet his wishes after a residence at the castle, than an imprisonment on short commons in her

dormitory in Welbeck Street; for in one case she only learnt how much she could endure, in the other she will find how much she can enjoy. Nothing improves the understanding like strong contrasts! But where can he be? He seems absolutely withdrawn, after all the pains I have taken, boring myself to death as I did with those *serious* women, who plagued me terribly with talking about things nobody that was anybody ever used to think of; but the world is in a horrid state, undoubtedly. I don't wonder at Lady Sarah Butterlip exposing it as she does, and making money of it, for in truth, 'the times are out of joint,' and deserve lashing.

“Let me see! the Methodist-man who wrote against Shakespeare made a great deal of money, and had nothing to fear on the score of prosecutions for libel, which is a great matter. Could one write against Milton, I wonder, with effect? He was a low creature, a schoolmaster, a cross husband, a great rebel; but that wouldn't tell against him now. I can't undertake *him* to any purpose; for the party who were delighted to put down the player-man support *him*, I have understood. Time was, writing at all would have been deemed shocking; but it has really been done so much of late in one's own world, even by some who were born in it, that I see no objection, except the trouble; but the girls could do that. Five or six hundred pounds would surely be little enough for my name on a title-page, and if one could

lay hands on an old book, as Lady Sarah did, get Helen (since Mary is not at home) to transcribe it, with new names and places, there is no doubt it would sell, if not to the world yet to the publisher, who could not suspect *me* of deficient originality. I should not suppose those kind of people would be particular with a woman of rank. I shall send for Helen as soon as I have arranged the matter in my own mind, as to what it shall be. There are more than twenty thousand sold of one missionary book, I see; and I remember being told by those tiresome people, I might get any thing for a reprint of 'Bunyan's Groans from Hell,' with my name and a short preface of recommendation, but it would be both painful and vulgar. Think of a frontispiece with my face opposite such words as those!—the bare idea is horrible! I wish I may not dream of it."

Lady Anne closed her long reverie in such horror that she banished the idea of books in toto from her mind, at least until "a more convenient season;" and after reasoning down two tradesmen, paying her landlord in part, and suffering herself most unfortunately to be persuaded into giving bills of short dates to two others, Lady Anne set out in good style to Brighton, with Fanchette by her side and the page behind, comparatively little incommoded by luggage, and so conscious of the pleasures of liberty, that she decided on taking up her abode at the convenient hotel close to Kemp Town, where she could see and be seen by

every body. It soon, however, became evident to Lady Anne that she was less visible in her individual state than when she was accompanied by two or three blooming daughters, to whom nature had been so liberal as to make amends for the few advantages maternal solicitude afforded them, having written gentlewoman as decidedly on the persons of each, as ever she wrote on that of uncle Toby. This shortsightedness was not compensated to the feelings of the woman of rank by the compliment it conveyed to the mother, and she was debating whether to send for Helen and press the propriety of Louisa's having a month's pleasure, when a new medium for attraction was started in the bazaar to which we have alluded, and her letter was dispatched with all possible celerity, insisting that her daughters "should work day and night"—so ran the document—for three weeks, then bring down their produce, recruit their good looks for one week, and be ready to assist in discharging the duties of a stand which, in the mean time, she determined by hook, or crook, to obtain.

Of course, Lady Anne was seized (suddenly we apprehend, seeing she never was similarly affected before) with charity, in the general sense of the word, but a decided predilection for the charity in question, which was not a new affair, but one which had fallen grievously into "the sear and yellow leaf," for lack of due attention, and to which it was certain Lady Anne, though a constant summer visitant, had never yet con-

tributed a single guinea. This circumstance by no means depreciated her in the eyes of the charitable duchess who headed the lady committee, or the charitable noblemen who presided at the gentlemen's, since no person could lament their own omission more gracefully, or advert with more becoming humility, to the very little her altered circumstances allowed her to give at all, and which she candidly confessed (candour is candy to most of us) she had hitherto on principle confined her alms (such as they were) to her own parish, which was so extensive, although it contained the great and the wealthy to an immense amount, demanded also the widow's mite and the orphan's scanty offering. Her children had been brought up in such a manner that they were always glad to do their best, and would be indeed happy if their ingenuity and such accomplishment as she had been enabled to give them, could contribute to the excellent purposes intended.

“How happens it,” said the Duchess of C——, “we see none of your daughters with you this season, Lady Anne? they are not all married, I know.”

“Like your grace, I have married two; and, in another respect like your grace, I have two remaining.”

“Three surely, if I remember right? Indeed, Miss Granard is not one to be forgotten; on the contrary, though pensive and delicate, I thought her's a very sweet person.”

“My dear Mary, how could I for a moment forget

you, the best of daughters? But being now in Italy, at the moment ——”

“Yes, I see, at the *moment* you forgot her—one may forget their eldest, especially when they look older than they are,” said the duchess considerately (being herself a very fine woman married when very young); “but what have you done with the younger ladies?”

“Georgiana, poor girl, is at Rotheles Castle, with her uncle and aunt, who really cannot bear to part with her, or I should insist on her being with me.”

“Oh! let her alone, she consoles them for losing the worthless *ci-devant* Lady Allerton, who has earned her own lot, and must abide by it.”

“My daughter Louisa has lately made me a grandmother, and ——”

“Oh! don’t fret about that; I am a grandmother—I am delighted, I confess.”

“So am I; but my daughter Helen is with Louisa—both are as busy as possible for the charity, and will come down when it takes place.”

“Your daughter Louisa. That was the lucky girl who caught handsome Charles Penrhyn, who might have picked and chose among *us*, I can tell you. Well, I am glad she is coming; she is a fine girl, and will tell now. I wish we could secure his sister, who is precisely the kind of woman for a bazaar; we must have attraction—a well furnished stand is a good thing, but a beautiful and fashionable saleswoman still better.”

“Your grace is so far happy, that all the stands

under your auspices will be occupied by elegant women," said the Hon. Mrs. Tresham.

"I can answer for Lady Penrhyn," said Lady Anne.

"Then I will contrive one stand more for her, and you, and your daughters; meantime, I trust, Lady Anne, you are busy for us?"

"I confess, that deprived of my dear girls I find myself good for nothing; with them I could do something, though not much; for, having lately been employed with my pen, I have neglected my needle."

"Come to us, dear Lady Anne, every morning; up to lunch-time we work very diligently; you are so near our house, that nothing can be more convenient; like myself, your eyes may not be *au fait* to every thing; but my girls shall pick out those things which will suit us both."

Nothing could be more delightful than this arrangement—every morning Lady Anne joined the working party till two, after which she stepped home to write to her daughters, and, at least, four days out of six, she went again to dinner at the duke's, where she met pleasant people, and found good fare; in fact, she found invitations also; for the remainder of her time the mother-in-law of the rich Glentworth, and the sister of an earl, moreover, the mother of five lovely, and distinguished daughters, found herself no longer overlooked; and she began to calculate on the still superior figure she should cut, if, next season, she should be pointed out as the mother of the young and

beautiful Marchioness of Wentworthdale, who had succeeded in winning the heart of the richest bachelor peer in Great Britain.

This exultation was a little checked, in consequence of hearing a portion of the conversation passing between two gentlemen, who, like herself, had been guests at the Duke of C——'s table, but had departed before her, and were walking on the broad pathway leading to her hotel, at the time the duke's servant was attending her home, which was but a step, as we have already said.

“I have been told so; but I don't believe a word of it,” said one. “Lady Anne appeared to me a sensible, amiable woman; and to suppose she would refuse the very finest young fellow in the service—a man of family and of competence, and whom her daughter, in my opinion, must love, if she is not an idiot, is a reflection on her understanding I cannot allow.”

“Why, it does seem madness, I grant; but I have reason to say it is so. We all know it is very different to the conduct of the duchess, in a case by no means parallel, so far as love is concerned. Both you and I know the duchess, a year ago, would have given her loveliest daughter to ——”

The parties had passed beyond hearing, and Lady Anne was left to ask herself, “how far she had been a *wise* mother?” How far she had been a kind one, we are all aware.

CHAPTER XXXVI.

Whilst Lady Anne was enlarging her circle of acquaintance, increasing her importance, meditating her dress, and deciding on the propriety of Louisa's furnishing that of Helen, who must have two handsome frocks for the two days' exhibition at the Bazaar, very differently was the present inhabitant of her house situated, for he was nearly "the last man" in melancholy London.

Circumstances, connected with the affairs of his late father, passing through certain law courts, had induced him to engage a temporary house in town, which Mr. Palmer undertook to secure near to themselves, with whom he well knew his Lordship could at all times have the resource of confidential gossiping, (by no means a slight comfort to those who find in "the safe companion and the easy friend," a substitute for more stimulating pleasures,) also a good library, ever ready to supply the best possible advice, and, in one sense, companionship, because we can without offence lay down the speaker, or change the subject whenever we are weary of either. A good horse rides or drives to Richmond, a row to Greenwich, and a stroll in the

park, from whence to contemplate mighty London, here seen as

“a lion stretched out at his ease,
A sailor his keeper, his lair the green seas,”

was always delightful to him as associated with all that belonged to Arthur; and these amusements, together with short trips to his dear venerated grandsire and great aunt, made the first two months pass off very tolerably, but the third became very wearisome, for the Palmers were gone to Tunbridge. Arthur's last letter was of a very melancholy character, considering the elastic nature of the writer's mind, and there was no one to whom he could speak of it, no one of whom he could ask those questions the writer urged him to make, though with little hope of gaining reply for a very considerable period.

Besides, the weather grew bad, there was no riding in such abominable torrents as every now and then came on, and still more disheartening was the drizzling, dirty-looking rain, which defiled the streets instead of washing them. Foreigners, or persons who have resided in more equable climates, are always much annoyed by this species of downfall; they are accustomed to the cataracts of the rainy season, and can submit to it cheerfully, often gratefully, but the silent, sleety droppings of the *demi saison* affect even the best regulated tempers, and the most buoyant spirits. Books lose their charm because we are driven

to them, and we sigh for society because we cannot expect it. "Really in England a man must be married or he is lost," said Lord Meersbrook, in self-condoling accents, and with a woeful elongation of visage. "I will step over the way and see if I can find any work on the subject:—that may be done."

By the help of an umbrella this was effected, and half a dozen books chosen, not one of which, however, had reference to the last thought in his lordship's mind, (unless dear Emma Roberts's civil wars of the roses may be thought akin to love and marriage,) his trip across the straits, as Arthur might have termed it, answered a better purpose, it gave him something to think about.

An old woman, with a basket on her arm, and a shabby cloak shrouding her person, was standing in the entrance of the door, and so absorbed in the answers she received, that the servant of the house was obliged to tell her twice to go away before she obeyed, and it was then done with little attention to the information that my lord was coming in, as she departed, muttering, "every one of 'em away, *every one*, bad luck to me it is alltogether."

Lord Meersbrook had remarked the same woman a day or two before, peering into the area, as if looking for some of the servants, yet neither venturing to ring nor knock; he concluded she was there for no good, but the self-commiserating tone in which she spoke, together with her Irish accent, now caught his ear;

he concluded the servants, who were gone with their lady, were the persons she wanted, and thought it was hardly likely they should be great customers, but it might happen they were useful ones; he wished he had bought the contents of her basket.

Disinclined to read, and slowly pacing the drawing-room, Lord Meersbrook, after looking earnestly at two small pictures, by old masters, which had *someway* escaped from their brethren, which were heirlooms at Granard Park, he at length began to examine the works of ingenuity which adorned the mantel; they were various in form, and some of them considerably the worse for time, but two hand-screens were quite new, and exhibited in front two well-executed bunches of wild flowers; at the back were the initials of H. G. and G. G., traced in cipher by a trailing plant.

“Poor Arthur! if you could hold this in your hand as I do, it would be absolutely inspiring, and we should have a sonnet to your mistress’s eyebrow, or her crow’s foot; they are very neatly and faithfully executed, but I think Miss Helen’s the more tastefully arranged; indeed, she is a very superior young woman; how much good feeling she showed that night at the opera! I shall never forget her sweet sisterly sorrow.” How true it is, that one little incident of no great moment in itself may unlock a bosom, in which you may find gems of value, that were not suspected previously!

“Please, my lord, there is a very nice fire in the dining parlour.”

“A fire? I am heartily glad of it, 'tis the very thing I want; I am glad you thought of it, Williams.”

“The housemaid would have lighted it in one of the drawing-rooms, my lord, but cook said they would smoke she knew, as they have not swept the chimneys for a long time. Lady Anne would not spend a shilling on them after they were let;—not a shilling.”

Lord Meersbrook smiled, drew near the fire, and resumed his book, but in a short time found the room insufferably hot, and repaired to the window, glad to see the rain had ceased, and the day gave promise of a ride ere long. Whilst looking out, he perceived the old woman, peering into the area, whom he had seen before. After a time she touched the bell, with great caution; the cook appeared, to whom she gave a slip of paper, on which the woman vanished, leaving the little pedlar of small wares standing on the steps, where she had already placed her basket, in which were a few laces for stays, a half-sheet of pins, two or three balls of cotton, and a couple of bonnets, so small, Lord Meersbrook wondered to what lillyputian race they could be useful, having no acquaintance with the family of dolls.

The cook soon returned with the very hand-screens he had been admiring, and one or two other small affairs, which she laid carefully into the basket; it was an evident case of robbery. The young nobleman rang the bell violently, and ordered his man to seize the woman and her basket, and bring her into

the house, and then to fetch a policeman. The man obeyed the first injunction immediately, by bringing the delinquent, basket and all, before his lordship.

“ This woman has been robbing the house, with the cook’s assistance ; fetch a policeman, Williams, this moment ; the woman below is, I rather think, the worse of the two ; both must be secured.”

“ She’s not to blame, indeed, my lord, for cook got me to read the paper which sends her for the things. Here it is.”

“ Please, Betty, to give old Judy the new hand-screens in the front drawing-room, the harp and the bellows pincushions, the tulip workbag, and the carrier old woman ; lay them carefully into the basket, Betty, as you know how to do it, which poor Judy may not.

“ HELEN GRANARD.”

Of course all suspicion vanished, and Lord Meersbrook, conscious of hasty conclusion, and eager to atone for it, said eagerly, “ You know the young ladies of this family, it appears ?”

“ Know them, yer honour, why, yees, I knows ’em as well as needs be ; forbye my lady nivver allows *me*, nor sich as me, on the primmisses, so I hopes yer honour will be something too much of a gintleman to mention yon have seen me.”

“ You may depend on my holding no conversation with Lady Anne,” said Lord Meersbrook, drily.

“ My knowledge of the young ladies goes only to

this, that, from time to time, they supplies my basket (swate crathurs that they are every soul of 'em !); what 'ud I ha done three sore winthers but for them, I wondher?"

"Supply your basket?"

"My basket, which I turn an honest penny by: one'll give me a shilling, and another a sixpence, to buy stock with; and, when all were at home, and my Lady Anne to the fore, they have many's the time made me up half a crown amongst them, besides the little things they make without end for the childern, all unbenownst to my lady, and jist for the pity o'ther swate hearts for old Judy, yer honour's lordship."

"But are you going to sell these?" said Lord Meersbrook, eagerly drawing the hand-screens from the basket, and feeling for his purse at the same time.

"Oih! no, no; that there thingumby is by no manes at all for the likes o' me, nor by no manes right to come out in a poor woman's basket; their for the bezar intirely, where the charity is done in great style, your honour, by the say side, wi' the queen, God bless her! at the head of it."

"She means," said Williams, "my lord, the bazaar at Brighton, which is to be seen next month, when duchesses and ladies stand behind the counter, selling such things as those, and then give the money to some public charity. Miss Helen Granard and Mrs. Penrhyn are making all sorts of things for it, at least

wise my lady desired them to do it, only, as cook says——”

The man suddenly stopped, as if conscious he had said too much; but old Judy, who concluded that he stood still in the wrong place, added vehemently,

“ All the poor cook says is just the truth, yer honour; my lady says, ‘ make me a boxful of grand things — I insist upon it;’ but the deuce a stiver she sends to go to market with, and that’s the rale truth, as I knows from them as found it out at Master Penrhyn’s, who is a gentleman as sets his face agin the bezars, tho’ no way agin the poor in ginral; being he is no way partial to lady shopkeepers, not liking by any manes that every dirty fellow with a crown in his pocket should have lave to stare his own beautiful wife out o’ countenance, an’ she the mother of his heir, yer honour.”

“ Then it appears every body does not approve bazaars, Judy? ” said Lord Meersbrook, exceedingly amused by her earnestness, and by no means sorry to have an opportunity of talking about the young ladies, “ for the sake of his brother,” as he assured himself.

“ Why, troth, my lord (for a raal lord and a gintleman into the bargain I don’t doubt ye are), there’s two sides as to opinions in every thing; one good man does not see wid the same eyes as another good man, and who’s to say which o’ther eyes sees the clearest. But about one thing there’s no doubt at all at all—things cannot be bought athout money, and the most inge-

nestes ladies as ever were born can't make pretty things out of their fingers' ends, else for sure Miss Helen Granard is the ganius for it."

"But you don't think her so clever or so pretty as her sisters, Judy?"

"Faith and troth, my lord yer honour, I should be glad to see which o'them (barrin thare aqual in the *real* goodness all five) can stand beside her in regard to the blue eyes, which are as innocent as the virgin's in Bethlehem (afore ever she cast them over the crowds in Jerusalem); and, as to the length of her white neck, and the way her head stands upon it, which, I'll be bound to say, will hardly be matched in all Connaught, and that's a bould word, rimimbering them that springs from the true Irish gentry."

A slight colour tinged the cheek and even flitted over the brow of our handsome, not less than noble questioner, as he recollected that his own conclusions and recollections coincided with the opinions of an ignorant old Irishwoman, "but certainly no fool — the Irish are all acute and discerning. But why did she look at *him*? What could she mean by it?"

"Then you have nothing to sell in your basket, Judy? You are going to take those screens and things, I trust, to the true owner."

"Of course; and it's true, yer honour, my basket has nothing whatever that 'ud tempt a gentleman to buy who is not in the matrimonial line, for it wants plenishing sadly, and it's little Miss Helen can do to-

wards it, an sorry I'd be entirely to mention my necessities to her who (being a rare lady, flesh, blood, and bone, to the heart's drop) has got a workbox herself that needs that same plishing; and so good day to your honour; an if there be a wish in yer heart going along wi' the bit blush on yer cheek (which same becomes you mightily), all I can say is, God speed it, jewel!"

Need we say Judy's basket "got a plishing." If it had not, the young lord (as handsome as he was) would not have been, in Judy's phrase, "the man for our money."

CHAPTER XXXVII.

“ I am going to ask you a question that does not require much legal acumen to answer,” said Lord Meersbrook to his attorney, when he called the next day in Lincoln’s Inn : “ what is a bazaar or fancy fair?—of course I know the meaning of the first word pretty well, but I don’t understand the second.”

“ A fancy fair is a new kind of charity, my lord ; or, strictly speaking, a new mode of dispensing it, by employing the wits and fingers of our wives and daughters in making all sorts of fidfads, which turns your house into a Babel, sends your servants to Ackermann’s, or the haberdasher’s, ten times a day for coloured paper and pasteboard, fancy edgings and colour-boxes, ribbon and velvet, silver edging, beads and braid, card-racks and hand-screens, dolls’ heads and purse-clasps—in short, things without end, as I know to my sorrow.”

“ And I to my joy,” thought Lord Meersbrook, but he only said, “ And these are worked up for purposes of charity?”

“ They are, my lord, so worked up that fifty or perhaps a hundred per cent. arises from the exercise

of ingenuity displayed upon them ; therefore, if a man like myself, for instance, finds himself annoyed by the litter that is made in his house, and the absorption given to every member in his family, he finds himself rewarded by the cleverness displayed, or the remembrance that his little paternal gifts have been laid out so wisely, and to such a good end, by his young family and their provident mother.”

“ Fudge, fudge, arrant fudge,” said an old gentleman who had been sitting some time ensconced behind the “ Times,” which he now laid down with an indignant air — “ positive fudge, as Birchell would have justly said !”

“ You are of the old school, Sir Robert, I know ; but, still, even you must allow that a fancy fair does good—many a sinking charity has been revived under its auspices, many a principle of care for our humble classes been implanted in the young heart, and—”

“ Many a young fellow angled for successfully, you were going to say, but I deny the fact—the girls bob for eels, it is true ; but they only dance or writhe round the hook for a time, and then sheer off, probably leaving the slime of unmerited reproach sticking to the bait. To a fancy ball, for the purposes of charity, I have no objection ; for, there, every body pays for a ticket, partakes of a healthy amusement, and leaves a handsome surplus for a good purpose—there is no individual display, no injury done to the regular trader ; in this case, it is poor helpless widows and orphan

girls, whom fancy fairs expressly ruin—say, that a few hundred pounds are amassed to recruit a hospital or open a dispensary—in that very act you take away shillings, crowns, and pounds, from the industrious and helpless, who are starving for the want of them; you relieve one pauper and you make two: this is so well known that you, Mr. Wallaston, cannot say one word on that part of the subject.”

“ But even allowing you to be right, Sir Robert, so far as the charity goes, you must grant that a fancy fair is a good thing, so far as it shows that the great of the land are interested in its institutions—willing to unite with the circle below them for a good end—and prove, by the suavity of their manners, that the aristocracy of this country are by no means the proud, fastidious exclusives we have been taught to believe them!”

“ Fiddle de dee, the whole thing is neither more nor less than a substitute for the masquerade, which luckily became so gross, it died of repletion. Instead of nuns and sultanas crowding playhouses, we have now pretty shopkeepers, simpering under bowers, behind boards of greencloth, selling pincushions and purses to ogling lords and city dandies, fops and *roués*, as well in low life as high (so they can pay entrance-money), whose grandmothers would have shuddered at such contamination, and whose husbands may reflect, in days to come, on the sweet words used to decoy a purchaser, or the smile that lingered on a hand-

some customer, with any thing but complacency. Why are our innocent and nobly-born girls, our beautiful and well-educated young women, exposed to the unhallowed gaze of libertine eyes, the coarse observation of criticizing tongues, here chartered by charity, forsooth?—Why is the gay, witty one of the party tempted to use her faculty beyond discretion?—the arch one to exert her powers to beguile and refuse change for a note, that she may, by and by, produce the greatest sum for the charity?—a *ruse* practised on myself—in short, why are foreign countries to be told that British feelings can only be *cheated* into compassion?—that the richest people in the world have the hardest hearts in it, and refuse to help their fellow-creatures, save through the medium of ostentation, and in return for value received?—that the highest and oldest nobility in Europe—the purest blood which ever mantled in the lovely cheek of virgin woman—is regularly exhibited in large bodies, under the protection of British matrons, policemen, and constables, at half-a-crown a head?”

“There is much truth in what you say, Sir Robert; but still we live in a world that must keep moving—the impetus is given, and we can't stop it. Fashions are foolish things, but the change they adopt is the very soul of trade. Railroads are dangerous, but they save time, the most valuable of all commodities—the march of mind renders multitudes averse to the privileged classes; therefore, it must be more wise to mix

with them as friends than defy them as enemies, seeing the *many* must govern, and—”

“I deny the assertion; the many cannot govern, never have governed, never will govern—diffusion implies weakness, as concentration does strength: but I never talk politics; I eschew *them* in toto; but at fancy fairs I will take a fillip so long as I live, more especially for the benefit of a stranger.”

With these words the old gentleman departed, making a low bow to Lord Meersbrook, and a profound shake of the head to the lawyer.

“Sir Robert Akhurst is a good man, a very good man, notwithstanding his philippic; but he is an old one, which makes all the difference.”

“And they get his money out of him at the bazaa it seems?”

“By a kind of imposition; otherwise, he is the last man in the world to grumble. A better landlord, a kinder neighbour, or a more generous donor than Sir Robert, it would be difficult to meet with: but we all have our prejudices, and the longer we have cherished them the more warmly we defend them; there is no more possibility of putting a young head on old shoulders than the reverse.”

“Where is the shop where fancy-fair things can be bought?”

Being informed on this head, Lord Meersbrook stepped into his cab and drove directly to the place, really believing that there was a great deal of truth in all the observations of the old baronet, for all his

prepossessions were in favour of female seclusion, and he had no idea of rank being an advantage beyond its right to mix in a higher atmosphere of morality and intellect than can possibly be found in the great mass of society. He had the chivalric and heroic perception which belongs to loftier and more idealizing spirits than those to be generally met with, either amongst his own order, or others claiming distinction from nature and education, and all his dreams of love and beauty tended rather to enshrine than display the fair being to whom he could devote a heart, certainly fastidious, but naturally confiding. He determined, on the point in question, however, to see for himself: it was an easy thing to run down to Brighton, and a very proper one to see as much as he could of that society in which he must henceforth “live, move, (and to a certain degree) have his being.”

Whilst he is, like the people who are very properly angry at all satirical and lying journals, yet allow them to be always on their tables, *i.e.*, encouraging what they condemn, we must leave the young lord for the—the lady of a certain age, (that most *uncertain* thing on earth) and attend to the labours and cares,

——the manifold schemes *

Of those who it seems

Make charity business their care,

though not given exactly

To a gamester decay'd,

And a prudish old maid

By gaiety brought to despair.

* Anstey.

Very troublesome, indeed, are all such affairs, where the parties engaging in them are liable to the changes entailed on watering-places. The company pretty generally go out for a given time, and with a given sum in their pockets, which, in nine cases out of ten, admits of but little encroachment; and if the temptations of mixing in superior society and speculating in expensive novelties cause new demands on papas, or show mammas the impolicy of making them, nothing can be more probable than that a hasty retreat should be resolved on, the consequence of a "summons from some sick or dying friend, of the most pressing nature."

Then have the lady patronesses and their active coadjutors, whether noble or ignoble, all the work of beating up for recruits to go over again. This was so decidedly the case at Brighton, within the month when the plan was broached, that it was for a fortnight given up in despair, and the duchess set out to make visits in the neighbourhood, and three others actually deserted their posts by removing to Hastings. Poor Lady Anne could not run away, therefore she struggled to keep the affair open, thereby earning a high character from the serious party, and the benevolent also, which she merited by "doing affability to all kinds of creatures," and writing such accounts of her own success and the promising character of arrivals, that the duchess returned, Lady Penryhn arrived, having in her train two Polish nobles utterly ruined,

with pelisses, constituting their claims and their fortunes; a young Turk, retaining the habit of his country, because he had tact enough to discover that the eyes of English *houris* preferred it; and a Scotch laird, who, at her request, brought his tartans, though compelled to exhibit without his tail.

With such acquisitions as these, the duchess and her friends again took the field, and with every prospect of success, for the Dowager Marchioness of Linlithgow and her three tall daughters (each of whom might be deemed a rival to the Swiss giantess) had arrived, and entered warmly into the plan. Lord and Lady Conisburgh, and their eight beautiful children, with blue eyes, coral lips, and flaxen locks, (the very models of wax dolls) were the charm of the new pier, and would be transferred in a tasteful group, as the background of a stand, and two Otaheite princes, nearly seven feet, swathed in white calico, with naked arms and legs, would stand on each side, holding a laurel crown over the heads of the fair cherubs, with a massive club in their right hands, threatening destruction to all who approached. The two beautiful little Miss Wrens (already celebrated by Miss Mitford) agreed to exhibit their exquisite miniature persons under a canopy of dahlias, on condition that a proper bench should be provided for them to stand upon, and all the properties in which they should deal be commensurate with themselves. For this purpose it was necessary that the stocks of all the contributing

parties should be examined, in order that little pin-cushions and purses ; little old women and little negroes ; diminutive models of cathedrals and castles ; wee reticules ; diamond editions of old poets, and baby albums ; little socks and less mittens ; miniature scar-mouches and punchinelloes : men-of-war, with minnikin pins for their cannon, &c., might be selected ; and accordingly a certain time was fixed on when the committee-room received all that was sent, and the lady patronesses began eagerly to select the pretty little things to be sold by the pretty little ladies, who popped about amid the gay confusion, like birds of paradise, selecting their food from baskets of parti-coloured flowers.

Although a great quantity of materials appeared, in the first place, to meet the demand, the sharp eye of the duchess, who understood the affair, soon perceived that there must not only be *little* but *few* things assigned to the stand of the Wrens, or some others would be lamentably deficient. Brighton was not a likely place for work to progress in effectively ; those who come to see and be seen, cannot afford to shut themselves up for hours together, at the risk of getting pale cheeks and dim eyes ; therefore, much the greater part of the goods in question were bought, and the purchasers either could not, or would not, or at least did not, produce, by any means, what was expected. Those parties who, like the Misses Wren, were conscious of their own strength in persons “ fine

by degrees and elegantly less," or, with Lady Penrhyn, knew the value of their allies in attracting attention, furnished little or nothing to sell; and the duchess, for a moment, cast round her eyes in despair, by no means sorry to perceive such a promise of storm in the sky as to insist on another postponement of the fancy fair day, by which means a little time was given for more begging, with the assurance "that the smallest donation would be thankfully received."

"To be sure," said the duchess, musing, "as an exhibition of curiosities, the affair will be well furnished, and ought to be attractive; the people will come in by thousands: we must refuse nobody, and prevail on our lions to pace the ground the day through. We shall make money at the doors undoubtedly, but the sale will be nothing, absolutely nothing; for there is not a tolerably good thing in the collection besides our own, and not a single novelty amongst them. I think, Ginevra, my dear, we had better put your music-books into our stand; they will sell the better for having your autograph."

"I hope we shan't be so pushed for materials as that comes to; and you forget, mamma, that the daughters of Lady Anne have not arrived with their work, which will, I should hope, be worth having."

"I cannot hope any thing of the kind; if Lady Penrhyn brings so little, we cannot expect her sister-in-law to bring much; and where could the unmarried girls get materials? Lady Anne has been very useful

to us, and must have distressed herself in order to procure two very elegant dresses nearly like mine, so that I fear she could not do more, though she has, at present, only one girl to fit up for the occasion; and, luckily, she is very pretty—in that piece of good fortune she resembles myself.”

“Thank you, dear mamma,” said Lady Ginevra, with a smile well meriting the marble that shall transmit it to future ages.

Three rainy days succeeded, and a whole week of tempest followed, after which there was the promise of better weather; and the committee, for the third and concluding time, fixed on the two middle days of the following week for their appeal to an intelligent and benevolent public.

During the very bad weather, when persons could neither ride nor walk, the duchess, either by beautiful notes (to be kept as heirlooms) or by calls at the nearest houses, got people to work for the bazaar, and kept Lady Anne always in sight and in employment, of one kind or other, as she had superior taste, and could tell how many things ought to be done, though she did them no longer; for time was that she had made one in the working parties of Queen Charlotte and her daughters, the most accomplished *artistes* in woman's special emporium of useful knowledge.

But, although her friends were kind, Lady Anne was not easy; neither daughter made her appearance, nor did she receive a letter to account for their silence.

She remembered, indeed, that Charles Penrhyn could not get franks now, and her daughters knew she would not pay postage; and she had commanded Helen to work night and day, saying, "surely they can give her common materials." As, however, each day drew to a close, her mind misgave her; she doubted the power of Helen, the good will of Charles, when, two days only before the fair, arrived (no daughter) but an important-looking packing case, carriage free. For this Lady Anne gladly paid portorage, bargaining only that it should be carried a few doors distant, to the house of the Duke of C——.

CHAPTER XXXVIII.

Lady Anne's page led the way to the duke's house ; Lady Anne herself followed, explaining the business. The duchess soon had the case unpacked, the inner boxes drawn forth, and the whole contents taken out piece by piece, in the breakfast parlour.

"Oh ! what sweet, sweet things !" cried Lady Ginevra.

"Did you ever see such loves ?" exclaimed her younger sister. "Here are velvet reticules — real velvet (eighteen shillings a yard), trimmed so beautifully ! and purses, with bead work, and bead bracelets ; and there are babies' robes, with lace let in at the tucks ; I never saw any thing so pretty. Look, what droll pincushions ! all kinds of devices perfectly *new*," she continued ; "what genius they must have had that invented them ! and lace cuffs—the prettiest things—so advantageous to the hand. I wish I might buy a pair of these, your grace ; they would be so very becoming when one puts out one's hand. Do just look at the way in which they sit."

"Surely, Lady Ginevra, you will do my daughters the honour to accept any little matter you see

here before it is seen elsewhere. Your finely-formed hand and beautiful fingers make you fancy the cuffs pretty ; but I will say *this*, they are singularly becoming, and I do hope her grace will take the other pair.”

As the dress must be to a certain point *en deshabelle* adopted on this occasion, and the hand and arm which Phidias might have copied must be covered, her grace did accept the cuffs, and very carefully proceeded with the unpacking, in the course of which a note directed to Lady Anne was found, and immediately handed to her, with a request that she would read it that moment ; it was from Mrs. Penrhyn, and ran thus :—

“ My dear Mother,

“ Both Helen and myself have done our best to fulfil your wishes, though my part of it has been necessarily little, in comparison with hers, for she has fulfilled your commands literally, and, by working day and night, is become so poorly, it is impossible for her to travel at present, yet I did my best to save her from suffering, by engaging the services of several young friends, as you will perceive from the quantity of articles sent. A parcel addressed to me ——.”

“ How extremely ridiculous !” exclaimed Lady Anne, who had hitherto been reading aloud, “ to be ill, and not able to come, to put me to all this frightful expense, and then take no advantage from it ; really, my daughters are the plagues of my life, and ——.”

“Not a word, not a word, will I hear against them ; they have sent you materials for a stand, that will cut down every bodys, and it is plain, poor things, they have impoverished themselves to obey your wishes. We must look up some pretty young women to assist you, or really, Lady Anne, with this stock of goods, and your own fine person, you might take a plain one or two off our hands. What do you say ? the charity is our grand object, of course, you know ?”

Lady Anne thought for a moment, and then said :

“ Provided they are ugly enough, not by possibility to be mistaken for daughters of mine, I have no objection. Nor would I dislike them for being smart and witty on such an occasion as this, though I never allow any *l'esprit* at home.”

“ You are charmingly accomodating, dear Lady Anne, and we will drive out together, call on Lady Linlithgow, and secure her youngest May-pole, Lady Jemima ; she retains the pure Doric in phraseology as well as accent, and her ‘ a weals,’ and ‘ ye kens,’ will be sure to tell, besides, her complexion is as pure as the snows of her native mountains. Then, suppose we get for a *pendant* that little dowdy round about Mrs. Montmaitre, she is a bride, and an honourable, you know ?”

“ But she is rich, and would do better to buy than to sell.”

“ I expect her to buy, certainly, and, by putting her into the midst of your beautiful collection, place

her in a scene of temptation, no bride with a full purse can resist. She cannot be scolded in the honeymoon, you know, and it may be of use to her in after life, to prompt her to do what she will with her own money."

It struck Lady Anne that this companion of her toils might be, indeed, useful, for surely any purchases made between themselves within the stand might, with little or no legerdemain, find their way into her own private purse, instead of the large business-like affairs provided by the committee for the reception of money. "It was very well to enjoy the *éclat* of bestowing the best contribution to the charity, and, perhaps, not amiss to have daughters so enthusiastic in the good cause, as to work themselves to death in it, but there could be no possible necessity for giving it so much actual property. She now regretted much having had the case taken to the duke's, for surely it might have been *weeded* to very good purpose, and no one the wiser."

When reading the note, and arriving at an assurance of Helen's absence, Lady Anne had indignantly crushed it in her hand, and thrust it into her reticule, but, on her return home, whilst Fanchette was industriously employed upon her hair with the invaluable liquid dye, she drew out the ruffled paper, and read the concluding paragraph.

"A parcel addressed to me, on the inner wrapper of which were these words, 'a friend to the Brighton dispensary, unable to use these materials to good pur-

pose, intreats you to render them available for the assistance of that charity,' has enabled us to fulfil your wishes. We apprehend it must be some rich old lady, who found herself unequal to using what she had so liberally purchased, and having by chance heard we were employed in a *little* way, thus generously made it a *great* one. Charles says it must be somebody in the city, for there is not a creature left at the west end. Mrs. Gooch thinks it is from Clapham Common, where all the rich people are religious and charitable. However, guessing is foolish, and it is enough for us to know we have turned the gift to good account, and, we trust, given you, dear mamma, much satisfaction."

Satisfaction unquestionably in the figure she should cut, and the fame she would acquire, but still a host of wishes had arisen, which refused to be contented without avarice could be gratified, not less than ambition. The golden apple of discord had been thrown into her mind, awakening contention and suspicion, and she was busy with fifty plans for recalling the box and its contents, when the duchess's woman arrived with the key of the breakfast-room, which her grace thought it best to commit to her care.

Poor Lady C——, so long accused (and often very falsely) of possessing the organ of appropriation largely developed, and the "itching palm," which made snuff-boxes, cambric handkerchiefs, lace frills, glittering brooches, and gold chains, liable to changing their domicile, never felt a propensity to robbing her

neighbours more than Lady Anne felt at this moment for robbing herself. Still, on accepting the key, she said with an air of great condescension : —

“ I am sure Mrs. Wilkins *this* could not be in better hands than your own.”

“ Why as to looking sharp ater things, my lady, I may say for myself I can do *that*, and I’ll be bound at this moment that the littlest tweedy pincushion ever was made could neither be taken from your ladyship’s lot, nor our own lot, but I should miss it in a moment ; ‘ once seen, always remembered,’ is my motto ; but, lor, my lady, what’s the use o’ missing a thing, when it’s gone ? and why should I increase my cares for this fancy fair, who am but a servant, my lady ?”

With a wish, not very distantly related to a curse, did Lady Anne see Mrs. Wilkins flit past her window homewards, sensible that she was utterly foiled in her scheme for the present, as she recollected that she had heard the duchess herself boast of her maid’s memory, which, like the well-known faculty of the royal family, always retained what it once admitted ; “ with this characteristic difference,” said her grace, “ *they* remember persons, and Wilkins remembers things, a very great property in those who have the care of a wardrobe.”

Not to be able to select a single thing for her own use out of so many, which were *bona fide* her own property, to remember even the “ beautiful loves of lace-trimmed cuffs,” gone for ever, had no parallels,

therefore offered no excuse for rummaging the things previous to their removal, was certainly so provoking, that, had any one of her daughters (to say nothing of the two who were the real delinquents) been near, her ladyship's wrath would, undoubtedly, have vented itself in a very unlady-like manner, for anger must be vulgar, unless it is put in fetters of blank verse; no power less than a poet's can restrain the errors of that "unruly member, which no man can tame," and which Lady Anne Granard's daughters knew full well could send forth "bitters as well as sweets, salt water, and fresh."

What could she do but write an angry letter, that did not half empty her heart of its overflowing bile, reproaching both Louisa and Helen with unbounded extravagance in making up *all* their materials for one bazaar, and unparalleled folly on Helen's part for becoming worn out, and, of course, ill-looking; since *she* had joined the affair, from the first, solely with a view to getting her an offer before she became of age, which was the more necessary, because her younger sister had refused what some people termed a suitable offer; and a still younger was married and a mother.

"I also fear," added Lady Anne, "that some improper overture, some absolutely shocking *eclaircissement* will follow your acceptance of the present you speak of, and which has been so lavishly given, as to derogate from the duchess's stand exceedingly, and will, therefore, mortify her, of course, however, she

may carry it off; and render her either a cold friend, or an active enemy.

“To think the parcel came from a devout old lady, proves total ignorance of the world, and an entire forgetfulness of what I must have mentioned many a time—that as people grow old they become wise enough to take care of themselves, knowing that nobody else can care for them. When they give any thing, if privately, it is in purchase of attention, which is affection’s proper substitute; if publicly, it is to gain popularity, the last thing any one resigns. Perhaps they may *give* from a more pressing motive than either—an existing necessity for ‘keeping up appearances;’ for seeming rich when you are poor, either in order to render your creditors patient, or your friends generous, in the hope of getting good legacies to repay them handsomely. Under any circumstances, the old are to be pitied; but I scarcely know one case in which they could be thanked. Yet, one proof of great goodness has certainly come before me this very year—a very extraordinary fact of generosity in an aged woman; and it may be the same person who has thus assisted you; but I greatly fear it came from a more questionable party. Altogether, I am disappointed, uncomfortable, *distrain* excessively. I desire you will come to me, Helen, the moment you are able; Mr. Penrhyn will contrive for you; it is of no use sending money when I shall be returning so soon—by the way, call and see if the Palmers are come home, and ask him

to pay the remainder of the rent for my house—it will be a convenience to me, and can make no difference to a young man who has no family to maintain. You must bring me this money entire—I can't do without it—*mind what I say*. Should Mr. Palmer not be at home, call on the gentleman who holds the house, and ask him yourself. Louisa will accompany you, to take away any awkwardness; and have it I must. You had better say nothing to Charles Penrhyn.”

It will be evident, that whatever had been the vexation experienced on this occasion by Lady Anne, she had taken care to give her duteous and unoffending daughters much more than she had received, and which only arose from her own conduct. In the first place, they were bitterly disappointed that their good fortune and great exertion should have caused anger, when they had every reason to expect praise and pleasure as the result; and she had contrived to alarm them on the subject of their present; beyond these, her ladyship's observations went for nothing—“*their best friends were the Palmers, dear old people; and who would have made poor Georgiana a settlement, but those kind, considerate old people, Sir Edward Hales and his sister? Mamma was very clever, but she did not know one half of the goodness there was in the world.*”

Neither did she know that the report of her grand contribution had already run through all ranks and conditions, gathering as it went the usual exaggera-

tions, until the molehill of a deal packing-case became the mountain of a waggon-load ; after which, Lady Anne's good name sunk in an inverse ratio. "It was quite abominable, that a widow lady, with a large family and a small income, should presume to rival a duchess, especially such a handsome, amiable, cheerful duchess as her Grace of C——, who had a kind word for every body, whether gentle or simple ; besides, she had been three years in her milliner's books, and her lodgings last summer were not settled till Christmas—she was "one of them what could pinch their own flesh and blood, so she pleased her own self and provided for her own pleasures. Many people believed that she really broke the heart of Squire Granard, who was as good a man as ever lived ; and every body was quite sure that she would compel her daughters to marry any old fogram as chose to take 'em. Her very youngest had been forced to marry a man full twenty years older than herself, poor thing ! and the other made a *run-away* marriage with the man of her heart, pretty creature."

Although the railroad did not take people from London to Brighton in two hours, as it proposes to do in a few years, yet coaches do their work pretty well ; and two days before the important one arrived, for which Lady Anne Granard had laboured in spirit, and her daughters in person, the news of her occupation and contribution had reached her own neighbourhood ; not, indeed, to be discussed in the now solitary

parks, or commented upon in drawing-rooms consigned to silence and brown holland. No, her grandeur and her charity, her ambition and her indiscretion, her *appearances*, which resembled other apparitions, as being “unreal mockeries,” and her realities, which were noun-substantive inflictions, to be seen, felt, heard, and understood, were told and talked over in the back parlour of the grocer, and the counting-house of the coal merchant. The result was, a determination, on the part of both these worthies, to be “blarneyed by my Lady Anne no longer, since a woman who goes to outshine her betters, and to give in charity what she owes in justice, cannot be any great shakes, though she might be a born lady.”

So said Mrs. Plumpound, and so said the seller of black diamonds; and let those who sneer at their vulgarity remember, that derision is not argument, nor ridicule the test of truth. No form of words, however poetic, eloquent, droll, or epigrammatic, can warp, elongate, or contract, the straight lines of simple integrity. It has been said, “that honesty is the virtue of a footman;” and so it is; but not the less ought it to be that of his master, and of every other human being.* Whenever the obligations of society

* Ages hence, when all lesser records of wars and tumults, parties and bickerings, have ceased, that glorious, imperishable, and affecting annal, will remain of Queen Victoria, who, when still very young, and quite unable to remember her father, honourably paid all his debts, and those of her mother also. Whe-

are evaded, the social compact is destroyed, the great deep is broken up, and "gorgons, monsters, and chimeras dire," rise from the abyss, to astonish and terrify both the guilty and the innocent. Such was the punishment preparing for Lady Anne, and likely to involve her perfectly innocent daughter.

ther her mighty empire shall expand or contract, her personal happiness continue brilliant with love and joy, or submit to the common changes which are the lot of humanity, this gem shall sparkle in her crown, as "the immediate jewel" of her people's love, and the virtue they are called to imitate, for ever and for ever!—*Editor's Note.*

CHAPTER XXXIX.

Whatever had been the pleasures or pains, wishes or disappointments attending preparation for the fancy fair, when the day actually arrived, all was with Lady Anne *couleur de rose*. Her rich, becoming dress fitted her perfect shape most admirably, and Fanchette had never arranged her *coiffure* to more advantage; the rich lappet of blonde, carelessly tied under the chin, hid all the "defeatures time had made," without hiding the long white throat, for which she had always been remarkable, and was a beauty which had descended to all her daughters, even to the stigmatized Isabella. The very, *very* delicate tint of rouge was admirably applied, and could never be suspected, for it supplied no actual bloom, yet diffused a healthy hue, giving animation to the character of the countenance, and brilliance to the eyes. "Very well, indeed, exceeding well, for *un peu passée*, the mother of five young women. 'Tis as well they are not here, perhaps," said Lady Anne, as she examined herself from side to side, in the longest *cheval* the hotel afforded.

The excellent rooms appropriated to the fancy fair had been tastefully ornamented, the stands well ar-

ranged, and fifteen ladies, accompanied by at least two young friends, each all elegantly dressed, o'er-canopied by pink drapery and green branches, really formed a very beautiful spectacle ; and when taken in association with the productions of their ingenuity, and the end for which it was designed, might have warmed the heart of the sternest cynic, and could not have failed to banish the prejudices of Sir Robert Akhurst himself, at least sufficiently for the purpose of opening his purse-strings. Every face was dressed in smiles—every eye shot bright glances around, either in search of a customer or an admirer, an old friend or a new lover. Happily the sunshine, which of late had been very scarce, shone out most invitingly, and the room soon became full ; but it was rather with starers and loungers than purchasers ; and the duchess shook her head very knowingly to Lady Anne, who was her opposite neighbour. Lady Penrhyn had desired to be placed near the door, as she said she was one of those people who could not live without air ; and she might have added, the situation will give *beaux*, who are equally necessary for my existence. In a short time her turbaned Turk was to be seen pinned to her counter, and apparently busy with the purchase of beads (ever a plaything in the hands of a Moslem) and various toys ; not so her tall Poles, who duly paced the room, and looked at the ladies, but had too little money and too much sense to exchange a dinner for a pincushion.

Two or three Americans, proud of their countrywomen's beauty, came in for the express purpose of examining and comparing that which they had at home with that which "these Britishers" were exhibiting, "calculating and guessing," that more might be seen in the Broadway in an hour than in Brighton in a day; they soon, however, found that the stand of the duchess was "a fix;" and, being too well acquainted with the nature of commercial affairs not to know what was required of them, began to buy from the fair hands of Lady Ginevra with all their might. The duchess humoured their peculiarities, praised their country, extolled their taste, and joined in their laughter, so that, in a short time, a kind of infectious mirth and pride in their bargains took possession of the place, and every one bought something, holding out their purchases to view, and praising them in the words and phraseology of the young yankees, who, finding their own importance, were not slow to avail themselves of it, and walked from stand to stand, wherever beauty attracted them, making comments which had more truth than politeness, but never failed to be well received by those whom they distinguished.

Poor Lady Anne did not take a single dollar from them, though she was pronounced "a regular-built senate-house of a woman, fit for the wife of a president," when her stand was pointed out by the duchess as abounding in beautiful things; but Lady Penrhyn got *her* share—every body admired the stand; and

several ladies made purchases, to a trifling amount, of the bride who was selling at Lady Anne's stand, not unfrequently being piqued into taking articles herself, said to be dear; but the gentlemen did not come near her. Lady Kilverton, the wife of a city knight, with two pretty nieces to her right, did very well; and Mrs. Calford, with her young daughters, seemed to have people without end (most likely friends of her distinguished husband), but the men did *not* come—she was not the fashion. It was a perfectly plain case that Lady Anne's daughters were looked for, and were not there; on the contrary, her unfortunate companions frightened men away: and as for herself (much as she was looked at, perhaps admired), the magnetic power was absent.

“To think,” said Lady Anne, to herself, “that I, who have so often been troubled with my daughters, should now be so much more troubled with the want of them! Had Helen and Georgiana been here, even tolerably dressed, what an impression they would have made! No one can accuse me of a blind partiality to my daughters; but I do not see in all the circle any more handsome than they are, and scarcely one with equal style. If Louisa were here, Lady Ginevra herself would be second, for at this time she is really splendid.”

Lady Anne's cogitations were interrupted by one of her neighbours, the Marchioness of Linlithgow (as there was room behind the stands for a servant to attend, or a neighbour to step onward, which was screened

off), who said earnestly, "Pray, Lady Anne, tell me who the young gentleman is in the brown frock that is coming this way?"

"There are so many, marchioness, that really——"

"I mean the handsome man — he who is bidding good bye to Lady Penrhyn ; look what a forehead, and what hair ! — his height, too ! and that air of quiet dignity ! You see how earnestly the duchess and her daughters are looking at him. No wonder ! really it is a consolation to be no longer young, when such men are stirring."

"It is Viscount Meersbrook, the son of the ambassador to Persia," replied Lady Anne, actually colouring at the recollection of certain passages in her connexion with him and his family.

"I remember now, the young man who saved his brother from drowning."

"No, no, the brother saved *him* ! being, indeed, the handsomer and taller of the two."

At this moment Lord Meersbrook stopped at Lady Anne's stand, and took out his pocket-book, on which, though much fluttered, she smiled most graciously, saying, "Thank you, my lord, I am most happy to see you, you are going to bring me good fortune. Here are purses, my lord, card-cases, pincushions——"

"I will look at them all presently ; my first care is to give this money into your hands—thirty-five pounds—due for the remainder of the rent of your house, to which you may return when it suits you."

“ Oh, from Mr. Palmer! — thank you, my lord; it is quite right—I had forty pounds before. Pray, how are my dear neighbours?”

“ Very well, and will, I hope, be here to-morrow,” replied the young nobleman, divided betwixt remembered anger on his brother’s account, and a really anxious desire to examine the stock before him, behind which he expected Helen was shrouded.

In consequence of a look from her mother, Lady Jemima poked a pair of hand-screens before his eyes, saying, “ Ye’ll jist luik at these, my laird, it’ll be long ere ye see twa bonnier, I’m thinking.”

Lord Meersbrook smiled; they were old acquaintances, and bought immediately. A card-case, on which were delicate pencil-drawings, was also selected — the dumpy bride choosing to claim attention from “ the observed of all observers.”

“ It is hard upon me,” said Lady Anne, observing a something in the eye of the purchaser denoting dissatisfaction, “ to be without a daughter on this gay but really fatiguing occasion, the fact being, that Helen has worked herself ill for the charity, and Georgiana is at Rotheles Castle, where I don’t suppose she durst name such a thing as coming here, for my brother dislikes bazaars. Poor man! it is but too natural he should, as his first countess eloped from one, and the very name leaves a painful impression, unhappily revived by Lady Allerton, his niece by marriage.”

The latter words were spoken in a low and confiden-

tial tone, and with that peculiar suavity of manner which conveys to the person so addressed an assurance of high esteem and regard, a certainty of generous sympathy in your troubles, and a cordial acceptance of it. The ice melted away which had encrusted the viscount's manners; he thought Lady Anne had seen her error, and was anxious to make *l'amende honorable*. The bride was charmed by being told that, after going the round, he should most probably come back; therefore he requested her to take care of his property, which was readily undertaken; and every other pair of hand-screens, painted by the industrious and affectionate Helen, were instantly disposed of, the tide running most evidently in Lady Anne's favour. So remarkably, indeed, did it now set in, that poor Lady Penrhyn lost all her *lions*, and, after watching in vain for some one with whom to flirt, consigned her charge to her friends, and tripped to the stand of Lady Anne, in order to assist her in disposing of those articles which had been discovered by this time to be really the best in the room.

Of course she was a useful auxiliary, and the market became more and more crowded. The Duke of C——, the Marquis of V——, his son, a party of officers from the tenth, several strangers of distinction, diplomatists, great lawyers, including judges and bishops, naval officers of distinction, ladies of high rank, deputed by majesty, and at least two royal dukes, were amongst the crowd, which became so great that

the real business of the day was impeded by it; nevertheless, it was recruited as fast (for the heat compelled certain to retire) by new comers, many of whom were said to have arrived from Dieppe since the commencement of the fair, and, after making a hasty toilet, determined to see what was stirring before they proceeded homewards.

It was with considerable difficulty that Lord Meersbrook, who had now seen the bazaar with all its phases (and made up his mind as to its Janus properties of containing both good and evil), really could reach Lady Anne's stand, and secure, which he determined to do, the remainder of articles touched by Helen's pencil. Lady Penrhyn attended to him with officious zeal; but Lady Anne interposed so as to gain his ear for a moment, when, with a truly maternal air, she whispered the question—

“ You are of your father's political opinions, I apprehend? He was not a man whose sentiments could be forgotten or forsaken.”

“ I am,” said the young nobleman, his heart beating with remembered conversations, and emotions of love and reverence.

“ Then be careful how you accept invitations. To a large dinner, or an evening party, you may go with pleasure and safety indiscriminately, be the party of what side it may; but a breakfast or dinner, *en famille*, with those whom hereafter you will know as political opponents, may embarrass you exceedingly. There

is no compromise that will not affect your honour or your happiness ; a false step at the outset in your private life may ruin your public life, so be careful of your freedom."

Lord Meersbrook was elbowed away from his mentor, but he treasured her words, well aware that she had lived long in the world into which he was only entering, and even as he left the place did he find their value, by being led to an act of self-denial in declining to join a few gentlemen, whose society could not have failed to be delightful, to whom he had been introduced an hour before. "Lady Anne is a worldly woman," said he, "as I know to my sorrow ; but then she does know the world she lives in well, and can have no motive but kindness in her advice. I feel quite certain she is ashamed of her past conduct to Arthur : we shall see."

As he descended the stairs, two persons passed him, so remarkably dissimilar in their persons, dress, and carriage, that he could not forbear to look earnestly at them, as forming a criterion of the mixed character of company admissible in such places, and which was to him (with his preconceived notions of the inviolability of the female *sanctum*) an insuperable objection to such scenes of general resort. The first who passed him was a man about thirty, with a gait at once jaunty and clumsy, and who was so outrageously be-dizened with eye-glass, watch-chain, and stock buckle, gay satin waistcoat, and new white continuations

meant to apologize for a seedy coat, as to give the idea of a servant out of place. The other was evidently a foreigner, perhaps nearer fifty than forty, but with such singularly finely-chiselled features, clear olive complexion, perfect teeth and curling raven locks, elegant form and dignified gait, that he appeared gifted by Nature herself with the patent of nobility. He was dressed in a complete suit of black Genoa velvet, and from a ribbon round his neck hung an eye-glass, surrounded with brilliants, evidently of the most costly description, his only ornament. For a moment Lord Meersbrook thought he might be from the east, but in the next concluded more justly he was either a Spaniard or Italian.

When the first man entered, he inquired of the doorkeeper "whereabouts Lady Anne Granard's stand was!" and was answered in the centre. "Ah! she is in the centre—the middle of the room," ejaculated the tall stranger. It was evident that both these very different persons were some way interested in the lady he had just quitted. "Who could they be, and for what purpose did they seek Lady Anne? The foreigner was probably some friend of her daughter's now abroad, but the sinister look of the other rendered it impossible he could be the friend of any body."

Our readers will perceive that the stranger was Count Riccardini, who, having landed from Dieppe like many others, but with an interest far beyond

theirs, after taking a slight refreshment, hastily dressed in what his portmanteau happened to contain, neither affecting singularity, nor shrinking from it, being in fact much too happy to give attention to dress, although perfectly aware that his person could do without its aids, or with them.

England ! dear England ! the land of his dreams and wishes, was attained—the object which his situation rendered necessary, which his beloved daughter had urged him to secure, and which his religious principles rendered as requisite to his happiness as his safety. But what a crowd of memories and feelings were awakened by the first view of her shores, the first sounds of her language, the first specimens of her bustling, active spirit, in contrast to the inertness by which poverty in warm countries is usually characterized, and the air of perfect repair and cleanliness by which the mere homeliness of decent architecture is raised to a level with splendid and stately buildings, decorated with crumbling ornaments, dilapidated in some parts, and unfinished in others ! The cheerfulness and bustle of Brighton at the present moment stood him in stead of all the beauty and grandeur, even the deathless and unparalleled associations, he had left behind ; he felt that, in the attainment of freedom and comfort, all other things were included.

When, in early life, he was driven by impelling circumstances to a country he considered barbarous,

and a clime he dreaded, an unknown éxile, a positive beggar, shrinking from the scorn of the ignorant and the cold-heartedness of those above them, he had yet found some who had held out “the right hand of fellowship” with a generosity beyond his hopes and almost his wants. If services forgotten by himself were so remembered by the generous Granard as, in a great measure, to reinstate him in rank and consideration, and eventually to add the blessings of love and the gifts of fortune to the exiled wanderer, returning him to his country, with power to claim his rights, improve his property, and maintain his ancestral dignity, surely at the present time England and its glorious immunities would be more valuable than they had ever been. He came now not a beggar, but a lord, if not of comparative wealth with her rich nobility, yet with enough and to spare; for his means far exceeded his wants, and both hand and heart were “open as day to melting charity,” profoundly grateful, and inflexibly just.

But, alas! he was a widower and childless. England would protect him from evil—she would endow him with liberty—she would receive him as a son to her maternal bosom, and bless him with the Christian privileges which the bigotry of his still lamented wife had taught him to estimate so highly, but she could not restore the past. His fair Margarita was wedded to the cold grave, and her beloved Glentworth (the man of his own heart’s exceeding

preference) was given to another; the hopes of life were blotted out of life; nevertheless, health and competence remained, claiming gratitude to the great giver of good, and impressing their own value on him who had seen the first fade away in the persons of the only beings on earth united to himself, and who had felt the want of the last when he was a stranger in the land to which he fled, with all the false refinements, the natural prejudices and the habitual indulgences, which are inseparable from the class to which he belonged, whatever be the country from whence they are driven.

Never may the "good old English gentleman, all of the olden time," be thus sent wandering in search of a place wherein to lay his head, or a corner in which to eat the crust moistened with his tears; for, although we firmly believe he would be as honourable and as virtuous as any similarly situated man, which by turns France and Italy, Poland and Spain, have thus sent out to sue for the protection and charity of Great Britain, we greatly fear that he would be found wanting in that happy suppleness of character which can conform to circumstance, and render the gifts of nature and education of avail in the day of sorrow and misfortune. Louis Phillippe is now a great king, and being truly a good one, merits our praises and good wishes; but unquestionably he was as *great a man* when he condescended to teach a few boys, in a far distant

country, where republican habits and prejudices denied him the sympathy due to his misfortunes, and left him an isolated, exiled prince, “alone in his glory.”

CHAPTER XL.

The heat of the room in which the fancy fair was held had caused a very considerable number of persons to leave the place at the same time Lord Meersbrook did, but two or three like himself, struck with the *distingué* air of the gentleman in black, turned again in order to find out who he was. In a very few minutes he followed their example. His entrances and exits were now unnoticed; the "Who is he?" "Who can he be?" heard on every side, referred to a man old enough to be his father.

Several gentlemen were at the duchess's stand, every one of whom bent their regards on the stranger advancing towards them. "Bless my life!" exclaimed one, "here is Lucien Buonaparte, without a single friend or attendant; but every one makes way for him—that is something."

"It is not the Prince of Canino," said the duchess, "though the features much resemble his. I have seen several of the family: all are handsome, but not one has so good a figure as the person approaching us, by a great deal."

At this moment the Count's eye fell on her grace,

and, seeing she was not the lady he sought, he turned towards the opposite centre, and fixed his eyes on Lady Anne. "Could that fair, tall, gauky girl be the Georgiana of whom Isabella was so fond of talking? or that round dumpling be the married sister they praised so highly? Impossible!"

But the lady *par excellence* was really Lady Anne, faded but still beautiful, and wearing, though with a constrained and artificial air, those smiles with which she had been wont to greet him at Granard Park, where she was most remarkable for the haughtiness which offended, or the condescension which mortified, the country friends of her husband. "Poor Lady Anne! times were changed as well as circumstances; but she was still a fine woman, and dressed most admirably and expensively. Her daughters had been needlessly alarmed for her: 'so much the better.'"

Riccardini had time to make these silent comments, as there was a closely wedged circle round the stand so polite a man could not find easy to pierce, and the thoughts of purchasing had not entered his mind; for though he had been told that the fancy fair was for a charitable institution, no farther explanation was given. He was amused by the pains taken to dispose of their wares by the ladies, especially Lady Penrhyn, who had been about to return to her own stand, when she perceived the fine-looking foreigner approach Lady Anne's, and

she determined that no one else should be saleswoman to him. She had seen the full, dark eye of the duchess dart across the company as if she would have arrested the new and noble-looking customer, and she was determined to seize and keep him to herself.

This became every moment more difficult, for his having been pronounced "Lucien Buonaparte" by a nobleman at the duchess's stand had sent a whisper round the room, and every one was pressing towards the spot where he stood; but Lady Penrhyn was not easily foiled. Stepping on a part of the wooden stool provided to raise the bride, she stretched her hand forward, with a small pincushion in it, and said—"I believe you want a heart, sir! Allow me to recommend this."

"If, fair lady, you are determined to rob me of my own," said the Count, gallantly, "surely you do not think such a thing as that will replace it!"

"We have them of all sizes and shapes; purses, card-cases, thread-papers, watch-pockets; every thing gentlemen have occasion for. May I ask what you desire?"

"I want my friend of long time, Lady Anne Granard; she is my object."

"Come round to us, my good sir. Go to the bottom of the room, and give the man this card; there is no possibility of speaking to Lady Anne, at this moment, but by coming round."

As this was very evident, the Count, gracefully bowing, departed, followed by all eyes, also by the steps of the person on whom Lord Meersbrook had been looking earnestly for some minutes. Whilst the Count had been speaking to Lady Penrhyn, the bedizened man had made his way to the duchess's box, bought a card-case of her youngest daughter, and on the near approach of her grace, had said in a low voice,—

“No offence, marm, but I believe you are my Lady Anne Granard.”

“No,” said the duchess, “I am *not*. Lady Anne's stand is opposite.”

“I beg pardon, my lady ; but I was told to look out for a fine woman in the centre box, an' I did.”

“I am the Duchess of C—— ; the duke, my husband, is in the room, and ——.”

“I beg your grace's pardon most humbly,” said the man, retreating, for he had now become sensible that there were two centre stands, similarly ornamented, and, from drawing as close as possible to the opposite one, heard what was said by Lady Penrhyn to the Count, whom he followed so closely, that the keeper of the private passage admitted them as a foreigner and his attendant, who continued to tread in the Count's steps, though not quite at his ease, until a fair hand, putting aside a curtain, admitted the former into Lady Anne's little inclosure.

“I am a stranger, but not willing to believe myself

quite forgotten, Lady Anne?” said Riccardini, the tones of his rich voice vibrating with that tenderness natural to his awakened feelings.

“Signor Manuello!” cried Lady Anne; “is it possible I see you in England?”

“You do, indeed, see that bereaved man; but this is not the place to talk of our past histories, suffice to say, your dear daughters in Italy are well and have ——.”

“You are Lady Anne Granard, I presume;” said a person, moving the curtain.

“There is no entrance this way; you must go back instantly.”

“Yes, my lady; but his Majesty’s officers, when about their duty, go any where so they breaks no locks. I means no offence, I’d scorn for to act unlike a gen’l-man, specially to a unprotected female, so please come out here, and then nobody will know is your ladyship arrested.”

The hand laid on her arm drew her unresistingly towards the speaker, and the curtain hid both for a moment, but the Count instantly followed, and eagerly inquired, “Where she was going?—What was the matter?”

“This here lady, sir, is arrested on the suit of Thomas Plumpound, grocer, for the sum of ninety-three pounds, seventeen and sixpence, sir, that’s all; if your honour and any other ’sponsible person pleases to give bail, I’ll accept it. I wouldn’t go to distress a lady, not I, indeed.”

“Come with me to the hotel, and I will give you the money.”

“You speak very like a gen'lman, sir, but it is my duty not to lose sight of my prisoner.”

The Count strode away as if he had secured seven-league boots, and in less time than it seemed possible, though it was an age to Lady Anne (who could not forbear to consider him in some measure cognizant of the dreadful incident, and taking this means of revenging himself upon her for all the contemptuous slanders which she had heaped on his name in days past), he returned with two bank of England notes in his hand, which he put into the bailiff's, saying,—
“There's your money for yourself and all. You have proper behaviour, and will make no say of this littel matter.”

“Sir, you are a real gen'lman, therefore I cannot help telling you, there will be another writ against my lady to-morrow, for it was thought she would take so much money at the stand, she could pay easy.”

“Come to me at the Clarence hotel; ask for the Italian Count.”

“I will, sir; and I shall say this was all a mistake, for it is true I did make one since I came in.”

“What shall I do for you, dear Lady Anne? Where is there a seat?”

“Within,” said she, attempting to withdraw the curtain, but trembling so violently, she was unable to do it—in another minute she was carefully seated in a

chair, and the handsome foreigner seen to be leaning over her, talking of her daughters. Lady Penrhyn readily took the cue given by the Count; she said "the meeting with a kind friend unexpectedly had been too much for her dear Lady Anne, joined to the excessive heat of the room," sent to order her own carriage, and deluged the place with *eau de Cologne*, but all would not do; the mortification in the first instance, the revulsion of feeling in the next, a dread of exposure, a deep sense of contrition towards Riccardini (and in the *melée* of awakened emotion, thankfulness to God might have part), were altogether too much for her, and she would have fallen prostrate in a swoon, if the watchful eyes of Lady Penrhyn and the arms of the Count had not saved her.

Lord Meersbrook, with the agility of his age, was in a moment over the counter, and assisting in bearing her to the door, where the air soon effected her restoration. She was loath to leave the rooms, as feeling with Mrs. Candour, that "she left her character behind her," but at the earnest entreaty of Lady Jemima (who insisted on accompanying her with a kindness of heart that made her accent musical), she consented to go, and the ladies drove off together in Lady Penrhyn's chariot.

"I hope," said Lord Meersbrook to the Count, whom he now understood to be a relation, "you have not brought Lady Anne bad news from her daughters?"

“ On the contrary, I left her daughters in Italy, perfectly well, only seventeen days since, and she told me herself Helen was well, save indisposed by labouring too much for this fair. Georgiana may have some ache of the heart, perhaps, but not of the health.”

“ Then the heat alone caused her faintness?”

“ Yes, the heat, of which there is so littel here, nobody received it well ; besides, the room is in very bad state, full of *malaria*. Lady Anne is not so young as she was, like myself, and cannot go through the fatigue as she wont.”

“ It is a dreadful fatigue ; I have seen several ladies leave the room within the last hour. It was a very pretty spectacle in the morning, but *you* were late.”

“ I did leave Dieppe at four this morning only, and was in fortune to see it at all. To me it is spectacle *melancholique*, to see the ancient nobility train up their children, even their females to the trades ; it is prudent, certainly, to prepare them for the misfortune, but yet it is *melancholique*.”

“ My good sir, you mistake ; the ladies you have seen undertake all this trouble for the sake of charity. *This* is in aid of the dispensary.”

“ You are young, my lord ; I hope you will escape that which I have seen, but I must question that you will, when I witness such preparation for revolutions as the scene of this day supplies. Depend on it, this is the mode taken to teach the young how they will

live when come some violent overthrow of government, some revolution, as in France; some civil war, as in Spain; some invasion, as in Italy: yes, yes, the English are prudent, but it is sight for sorrow.”

“ Upon my word, sir, it is all for charity, there is no prudence in it, save that of making a little money go a long way.”

“ Then the English have change their character exceeding much; they did not use to burn candels before their gifts, neither to wheedel one anoder into the kind action. No, no, altogether it is allied to the sorrow.”

So far as Lady Anne was concerned, the conclusion for the present appeared right, for she continued very unwell, and being obliged to consult a medical man, was consigned to her bed; and an anodyne, which, although it prevented her from receiving the Count, perhaps gave her the more of his society in her dreams, when he appeared in every possible guise, but always as a friend and protector. He rescued her from the burning house and the shipwrecked vessel; was the Perseus who delivered his Andromeda from the monster, and the warrior who broke the doors of her prison; and so agreeable did she find the pleasant land of “idlesse and dreamyhood,” that nothing less than the desire of seeing and thanking the object of her thoughts would have induced her to arise, and prepare for another day of fatigue and triumph.

She *must* make her appearance on this day, and look well upon it also, or she would give occasion to a thousand reports connected with the appearance of the strange man, and the circumstance of the foreign gentleman flying through the streets with bank-notes in his hand. How far the words of either the enemy or the friend were heard by those in the neighbouring stands she knew not, but she could not doubt that Lady Penrhyn guessed the fact pretty nearly, and would henceforward hold her in fetters as the price of keeping it; but the great object of dread was the Duchess, to whom she had herself seen the creature approach

“That monster dire, abhorr’d of gods and men;”

and who could say how far he had revealed his terrific mission?

Whilst sipping her chocolate, the Count was announced, and Fanchette saw with surprise her lady’s countenance suffused with the same sort of blush she had observed spread over the face of the fair Louisa, when the name of Charles Penrhyn was abruptly mentioned. “How is this?” said the penetrating Frenchwoman, “is the old lady caught at last? I shall make a pretty penny out of her if that is the case; she must pay for making up, I can tell her.”

With very little circumlocution, the Count proceeded to tell Lady Anne, that a second writ had been out against her, the evils of which he had most happily averted, and he had himself seen the man

leave the town; he hoped she had no other creditor whose claims were of the same, or nearly the same amount.

“She owed a gentleman about the same sum, but then he was a gentleman.”

“I fear he will not wait as patiently as the coal-merchant have done; he was very good person, that John Whiteman.”

Lady Anne tossed her head, but it was gently, and she overwhelmed the Count with thanks; she “did really believe, that if the same thing had occurred again it would have killed her, and that he should have come so opportunely to her relief at the hour, nay, the minute, when he was wanted, was something so singular, so romantic, something in short to, to—”

“*To thank God for,*” said the Count, his fine features taking the character of serious devotion; “yes! to thank *Him* for, who thus saved you from that affliction you would feel the most acutely. You must thank your good daughters, too, who caused me to set out this long journey in two days, that I might find if you were in distress, and relieve you: oh! they are very good.”

“I cannot imagine how those in Italy should know any thing about me.”

“They have great common sense, and great love too;—the first tell them, that if their dear mamma spend two years of income in one, the next she will have no income to spend; and their love urge them to take all the moneys they have for live, and send

all to mamma. That make angry the husben, that never do, so I relieve them, (whom I will love so much,) and I bring three hundred of pounds for the convenience of you. I tell you the true of the matter, so you must manage according. I am no longer Signor Manuello, who earn the little wage, and only have the monies two times in the year; but neither is Count Riccardini, the rich noble, or the wealthy merchant of your own land, where I am come for live and die."

"I understand you, dear Count, and can assure you, that the sum you name, though small, will greatly relieve me; and since my affairs are known, or at least guessed at, by my daughters, I should hope Glentworth would think it only right to send me a few hundreds, for he is rich enough."

"He also know the value of money, for he have been without it, and worked for it, he have take two daughters from you, he have provided for a third, and when the good young sailor marry a fourth, he will give bridal present, so will I, but Castello Riccardini is for the son of Margarita; but we will not talk more; you must dress, so must I. If you look so handsome as you do yesterday, the pretty companion who do the coquette will be fear of you."

These words so effectually palliated whatever had been offensive in any which preceded them, that, together with the fascinating smile and graceful bow, an impression was left of the most grateful and en-

dearing description. It was perfectly plain, that fast and far as scandal flies, Lady Anne's words, when derogatory to the Count, and that beloved wife, for whose sake they would have been most resented, had never reached their retreat in Devonshire, much less followed them to distant Italy. She had always treated him with distinction personally, and had never seen him since his marriage with Margaret Granard, which was certainly a fault she had punished severely, without, perhaps, examining, as she ought to have done, how far it was one. At *this* time, she was perfectly willing to retract all she had said about "buying the fellow a monkey and a dulcimer," to the amusement of her friends and the mortification of her husband.

"It is by no means wise to be witty and malicious," said Lady Anne, "for we little know whom we may have occasion for as we travel through life; a pauper emigrant has discharged my debts; the brother of that young sailor taken my house, and paid for it beforehand, and helped Riccardini to carry me out with the care and kindness of a son: how the people must have looked at beholding two such men, carrying such a woman as me, though apparently lifeless."

Lady Anne, at that moment, unquestionably realized the feelings of her whom Pope has immortalized, when she exclaimed,

"One would not sure be frightful when one's dead."

CHAPTER XLI.

A new and elegant dress had been provided by Lady Anne for the second day, but it was of less costly material, and, by the same rule, considerably slighter ; so that Fanchette suggested the idea of substituting a slip to make it equally warm, as the weather had set in cold and boisterous.

“There is no occasion at all,” said Lady Anne, “for any such thing ; the rooms were so tremendously hot as to occasion many persons to faint, and the lighter one’s clothing, the better. I shall not dress as close, in any respect, as I did yesterday.”

With some degree of alarm Lady Anne remarked that the duchess’s carriage was not sent for her ; she, therefore, told Fanchette to order horses to her own chariot, remembering that her own purse was, at the moment, well lined, and that her receipts, the day before, had been enormous. “Surely,” said she, “I may take two or three pair of horses, and the money cannot be missed.” For a moment she felt the pangs of suspicion cross her mind, as to the integrity of Lady Penrhyn, who had repeatedly wished the fair had been got up for the benefit of her friends, the Poles, and

who might be tempted to dip her hand into the public purse ; but she was consoled by remembering that Lady Jemima Highcairns said she had locked it in Lady Anne's work-box, adding, " One can neever be too carful of money reelegously appropriated ; an our meenister says the deevil is a bizzy boddy in aw public pleeses."

Count Riccardini was folding his cloak about him when Lady Anne alighted, and, of course, he offered her his arm. She was rather late, but her mind, invigorated by actual relief, and anxious to the utmost to pass off her seizure of yesterday as a mere *bagatelle*, she walked down the whole length of the room, in order to speak to her friends.

" I am so glad to see you to-day !" said the duchess ; " you can't think, for, do you know, the same wretch who frightened you came first to me."

" How strange !" said Lady Anne, with well-feigned surprise ; " what did he say ?"

" Why, the oddity of the matter is that he did actually ask if I were not Lady Anne Granard, and when assured I was not, he said something about one fine woman being like another ; I don't know what, for the fellow fluttered me ; I was sure he was an improper man to be here."

" Undoubtedly he was. I fear he has pillaged more stalls than one ; he called me by a name not my own, but had evidently got hold of several—my friend Count Riccardini sent him off in a twinkling ; he had arrived

not an hour before, and brought me news of my children, especially my little grandson. What with the welcome news and the unwelcome man, perhaps more than all the heat and the terrible press about my stand, I was overpowered. Dear Lord Meersbrook, who helped Count Riccardini to take me out, said the air about my stand would kill a strong man; so it was no wonder a woman could not bear it."

"He is quite a love, that Meersbrook! what a lucky woman you are to secure such people about you, even when your daughters are absent! But, I say," she added, whispering, "who is this foreigner? did you really know him long since, as people say?"

"He is Count Riccardini, of Castella Riccardini, a most enchanting place, about twenty-five miles from Naples. He married Mr. Granard's only sister, to whom he was the best of husbands. She is dead; so is his only daughter, the Marchioness di Morello, and he is become exceedingly attached to my daughters, it so happening that Mrs. Glentworth greatly resembles the one he has lost."

"And being so much attached to the daughters will very naturally lead to an attachment to their mamma — *c'est le comme il faut*; if Glentworth knows him, 'tis enough: pray, bring him with you to-night; I have secured your young bearer. Now go; I must not detain you; I know you will bring the charity lots of money."

But the sea roared, and dashed over the banks; the

wind blew cold. The Poles could not spare more entrance money, and the Turk thought a warm home better than the resort of the *Houri*. There was nothing new to see; therefore, the charitable of yesterday became the niggards of to-day. The Count slowly traversed the room, a solitary and unconscious lion, stopping for awhile to listen to Lady Penrhyn's recommendations, which drew from him three shillings, and then pursuing his promenade under the full persuasion that it was intended, by the seniors, as a school for the juniors, who were destined to fall from their high estate, and, mingling with the lower classes, become what Buonaparte had called them, "a nation of shopkeepers."

"And why not?" said he, at length; "if the *Medici* were merchant princes; if Genoa, the city of marble palaces, was raised by commerce; if Venice rose from the sea she commanded, to grant protection, or hurl defiance alike to east, or west; no reason can exist why Great Britain should not become one grand mart for the produce of the world; her merchants being princes, and her princes merchants. It is a fine thing, the commerce; if I sell the wine, I cannot drink at Castello Riccardini, and give the money to good purpose, do I not do good thing? English traveller laugh — bah! never I mind of him *now*. I no put Margarita in her young beauty to sell that wine, and with smile and sweet word cajole him who buy. I have respect to her purity and my own ancien blood, I transac the business by my servant—why not?"

The Count's soliloquy was interrupted by a sudden and large accession of company, who, finding they could neither walk nor ride, for the high, cold winds, turned into the rooms supposed to be hot, as a place of refuge, thereby admitting a stream of air which taught Lady Anne to feel that her dress was unsuitable; but there was now no power of changing it. The business of the day commenced; though the sale was not great, the number of visitants was; and their pressure in the centre of the room prevented her from seeing any one whom she could entreat to procure her a shawl. After a time, as it was found that the sale was slow, that the hours remaining were few, one gentleman proposed turning auctioneer, and selling the goods by lot.

The thing took; Lady Penrhyn lent him her table, and was willing to officiate as his assistant in handing the things to him, and giving him their names, at the same time procuring him a clerk to keep accounts and receive money. The spirit of gambling seized on all, and those who had hitherto prudently withheld a half-crown now willingly bade up to a sovereign, or more, with what they deemed a proper spirit. The auctioneer was voluble, even eloquent, and an admirable mimic of George Robins, the various nature of the goods giving great latitude for the play of words. His assistant clerk played well into his hands, and his assistant lady attitudenized with immense effect, playing comic muse, or tragic, as the case admitted. Shouts

of laughter were elicited, smart biddings drawn out, from the whispers of a timid miss, to the stentorian voice of a fox-hunting squire, and not a few fracas from parties either contending for a supposed prize, or disclaiming their chance for it, and “I assure you it’s none of mine.” “I was, by no means, the last bidder,” was not less frequently asserted than, “I can assure you it is mine; put it up again, for have it I will, let who will bid against me.”

If Lady Anne gathered, in the *melée*, a few trifles, which could be put into her reticule, that was all; for the “braw lassie,” Lady Jemima, guarded the charity-purse “reight weel,” and the result was decidedly the greatest gift to the charity which the fifteen stands had produced, several being very small; the money Lady Penryhn produced was as little as her services were great; she therefore, (guaranteed by a look from her grace) in a kind of mock-hoydenish manner, seized all the purses, emptied them into the auctioneer’s hat, and declared that, as every one present had done their best, all were equal benefactors to the charity; at the same time she handed its produce to the chairman of the committee.

Lady Anne considered herself, by this *ruse*, robbed both of fame and property, and voted the whole affair an execrable bore:—“It had neither helped herself nor her daughters, and it had increased her milliner’s bill enormously: to be sure, it had been the means of rendering her on friendly terms with the duchess and

several other persons of consequence, but the thing itself had done no good whatever, save to the dispensary, which was only frequented by paupers and such wretches."

After dining and dressing, Lady Anne met the Brighton world at the duke's: the party was gay, for the money received at the fancy fair had turned out beyond their expectation, the auction having had such a stimulating effect that it had trebled the value of the articles sold. Lord Meersbrook was joked much on his purchases in this way, which he parried by saying he had a particular taste for pencil drawings, and should never think he had paid too much for those he had secured. Lady Gertrude and other young ladies became anxious on this subject, on which Lady Penryhn, from pure malice, having always a dislike to those she termed "the misses," joined the whisperers for the purpose of assuring them that every article knocked down to his lordship came from Lady Anne Granard's stand. "She had seen them all there the day before, and remarked them when she placed each article in the hands of the gentleman who sold them. Lady Anne's daughter, her own sister-in-law, had a very pretty notion of drawing, she knew."

She knew more; for she was well aware that the articles in question were done by Helen and no other of the five sisters, since the talent was only possessed by her and Mary in any remarkable degree: she had her own suspicions, from various trifling circumstances,

but she chose to stifle them, being neither inclined to flatter Lady Anne nor foretel good fortune to her daughters, and very much inclined to thaw the frost of that cold politeness which marked the manners of Lord Meersbrook whenever she accosted him, which was more frequently than he desired.

Notwithstanding the way in which she had, in what she termed “the delicacy of her feelings,” contrived to pour the receipts of the fancy fair into one *reservoir*, the duke and several other persons complimented Lady Anne very much on the superior beauty and value of her articles, and said “she had been the most efficient friend of the charity;” and whether a whisper that had gone forth respecting her *contretemps* with the strange man was spread, or it had fortunately been so well managed by the Count as to have escaped observation, and her indisposition of the preceding day was the true cause of their pity and friendly attention, it was, at all events, certain that she did receive more attention, and that of the most kind and flattering nature than often falls to the lot of dowagers, and that her Italian friend paid her the homage of the most accomplished Cicisbeo: yet she enjoyed no triumph, was sensible of no pleasure, even when most satisfied with the belief that the arrest was unknown, and that Lady Penryhn’s *ruse* was defeated—that her pecuniary anxieties were delayed and her position with Riccardini envied—still no sense of self-gratulation followed. The proud swell of the heart, ever courting

distinction, ever conscious of the value of rank, and that still more active principle assumed as the right of personal attraction, by which nature asserts her rights as superior to all artificial distinctions, lay dormant. She was at this moment neither proud nor vain; praise failed to elate her; even words and looks, which she desired to consider those of love, (let the world laugh if it liked) failed to yield her consolation. It was very strange, even to herself, that she could be so inert, so discontented, so incapable of exertion or enjoyment; but there was no shaking off the sensation—it shrouded her faculties, it obscured her sight; she really apprehended that it made her look a complete object.

Alarmed with this idea, she told the Count “that she wished to go home immediately; she knew the duchess would lend her a chair, as she had often done.”

“You have got your death of cold, I fear, dear Lady Anne. Alas! alas! I offer you my cloak when you enter the place, which I say will cover you all over, and you refuse positive—what sad pity! we are not young, neither you neither me — time is come for care to us both. I have lost two — yes, two beloved ones, more young as either.”

The anger which rose in Lady Anne’s heart, and suffused even her brow, gave her a momentary animation and power unknown for the whole evening; and, though she disdained reply, she left the room with a firm step and the air we are apt to attribute to royalty,

being placed in her chair by the Count, whose earnest desire that she would take all possible care of herself, half atoned for his late error, and almost made her think that sincerity and good-will were forgiveable qualities.

CHAPTER XLII.

In the course of the night Lady Anne found that she had got a very bad sore throat, that her oblivion of pleasure the preceding evening was the herald of pain, which universally pervaded her frame, and the Count's words, "you have got your death of cold," seemed to be the only ones she could remember, and they were registered in her mind as a sentence decreeing her destruction.

Of all other expenses, Lady Anne had most avoided those which belonged to the faculty. Often had the words been addressed to her, "Miss Granard is extremely delicate, I think she should have the best advice before winter sets in," but never was her mamma of a similar opinion—generally speaking, she took great care of herself, and, having an excellent constitution, regularly attributed any temporary ailment of her daughters to carelessness, for which she prescribed "water gruel, and keeping in bed," being certain that under so safe a regimen, "they would get well as soon as possible, and learn to *keep well* also." That her system was an excellent one, was fully evinced by the general health of her family, and the great care

each sister evinced for the other's welfare. If the depletion had cured a bad cold, or averted a slight fever, and the patient came down declaring she was well, yet looking very ill, and an officious caller recommended "beef-tea, calves' foot jellies, or a glass of old port," Lady Anne, who well knew the value of such nutriment, seeing she constantly used them, would observe in reply, "at her time of life there is an innate power of resuscitation, which operates better without such stimulants, in my opinion;" nevertheless, she would after a time tell the delinquent (for the invalid was always considered criminal) to put on her things, and go to the Palmers for a couple of hours; "'tis but a step, and change of scene may do you good, and make you less an object. I hate to see pale faces always before my eyes, and fair people, when colourless, are either ghastly, or sallow: indeed, they are often both. Isabella, poor brown creature, as she is, stands a bad cold better than any of you."

We need not say how these fair sinners were received and relieved by Mrs. Palmer, who had established her character from the beginning of their acquaintance, for being a skilful nurse, and at the present time happy would Lady Anne have been, could she have secured the advice and care of the invaluable neighbour, whom she would probably have looked upon with contumely two days before. But the case was pressing, and the nearest medical practitioner was sent for. On examining the throat, he expressed his

desire that a physician should be called in, and accordingly a gentleman, duly authorized, made his appearance, and prescribed gargles and diluents *secundem artem*.

“And will you send de nourse along wid de bottel?” said Fanchette.

“There is no occasion for a nurse,” said Lady Anne; “as I cannot leave my bed, you will have nothing to do but give me my medicines, and can write for Miss Helen to come to me immediately.”

“Oh! *mon dieu*, I can do nothing for de sick bed; Inglis constitution ver odd thing, if I gif bottel not right. I go for kill *ma chère ladi*.”

“I will procure a nurse,” said the apothecary, “for it is not a case to be trifled with. I question if this person can read a label, or apply a leech.”

“Leech! leech!” shrieked Fanchette, in the horrors, “*les noir diable!* I will not live when I look in him face. I have de grand *aversion*.”

“Leave the room, and send a housemaid; you alarm the patient, and will do more mischief in an hour, than a week can retrieve.”

Whilst this gentleman was intreating the care of the mistress of the house, until a proper nurse could be procured, Count Riccardini arrived, and heard with more sorrow than surprise of the state Lady Anne was in, for, accustomed to the care long demanded by an ailing wife, and naturally a man of acute sensibility and great intelligence, he had become learned in

symptoms, and seen clearly that she was becoming seriously ill. He expressed a desire to be shown to her room immediately, and, as he seemed to speak on the subject as if he were a relation, no objection was made by the medical man, save by the observation, "that sore throats were very infectious, and he would do well to keep at a distance from the patient," but Fanchette, in the most violent manner, protested against such a proceeding.

"*You see my lady in the bed! you see her with the flannel all wrap up, no toilette! un vilain cœuf-fure you! O! she go die instant.*"

Riccardini recollected himself, and changed his purpose. The best thing he could do, was to fetch Helen, and in less than half an hour he was on his road to London, but not until he had authorized the landlady to take immediate possession of the purse and dressing-case of Lady Anne; a circumstance extremely offensive to Fanchette, until informed that it was always the custom when strange nurses were brought into sick rooms. She had, however, the comfort of knowing that her lady's wardrobe was in her power, but it did not avail her much, as the servants of the house were so shocked at the Frenchwoman's refusal to nurse her sick lady, that every eye was upon her in the way of espial and condemnation; and having declared most solemnly that the complaint of her lady was contagious, she effectually closed the house-keeper's room at the duke's, against herself.

That family, like many others, were now on the wing, and although, from the representations of her husband, her grace did not actually visit the chamber of the sufferer, she neglected no means of assisting her; the finest fruit being constantly selected for Lady Anne, and constant inquiries made as to their power of being useful. Alas! in these cases every one must bear her own burden; sympathy may soften the affliction, wealth may procure many alleviations, but the king must bear his individual pangs as surely as the pauper, with this difference, that he has been less used to them, in all probability, and, therefore, finds them more severe.

About the middle of the day following, Count Riccardini arrived with both the daughters of Lady Anne, for Louisa could not bear to be left behind, although her child and the nursemaid were unavoidable incumbrances; but, as the Count immediately took a lodging for Mrs. Penrhyn and himself, they were stationed there. This new relative, who constantly called himself their uncle, seemed to the sisters like a man dropped from the skies, for, although he had been mentioned by Mary in her latter letters, he had not in any manner become familiar to their ideas, and the very little which had ever dropped from their mother's lips respecting himself and their unfortunate aunt, was that of unqualified contempt and utter reprobation. They had actually ranked him with those of his country who travel with monkeys and white

mice, and considered the degraded sister of their father as a woman following him with a ragged child on her back, a red and yellow handkerchief bound round her head, with a tanned skin, a haggard look, and penniless poverty joined with bitter repentance, being evident in every lineament of her once lovely countenance.

“Look at what she was, and think of what she is!” Lady Anne would say, when any one ventured to look on her picture at Granard Park—a picture she chose to leave there, saying, “it was better that her children should never remember that disgrace to her family.” Under such circumstances, it was no wonder that their young imaginations depicted their aunt in the form of the only Italians they had happened to meet with—in childhood, the younger had some vague apprehensions, from time to time, of seeing her; and feeling sure that, if she were ever so little a bit like dear papa, speak to her they must; but they outgrew their fears and their memories, and for them she was dead long ere she died.

So far as Isabella was concerned, it might have been the apprehension of presentiment, for, in what a questionable shape did this lost aunt, in her fairest representative, appear to the unhappy and bewildered girl?—far easier would it have been to have clasped a wandering vagabond cousin to her pitying heart, than find the blameless and beauteous object of an idolized husband’s love in that relation.

Poor Lady Anne, although her fever ran high, and she suffered much from rheumatic pains, as well as her ulcerated throat, was not subject to delirium; and she, therefore, could not fail to rejoice in the presence of her daughters—undoubtedly, she had pleasure in seeing them, and must justly estimate the love which brought them so speedily to *her*, after they had given proof that pleasure could not draw them; but we fear the most sensible gratification derived from their attendance was the certainty that she might be cross with impunity; that even Louisa, unprotected by the presence of her husband, might be dealt with according to the law of her former tenure.

Nothing could exceed the grief and pity her deplorable situation excited in them both, on their arrival; and, both night and day, did they watch her couch, and seek, by every medium, to allay her pain and mitigate her fever, discovering, by the happy intuition of affection, her wants by the slightest sign, her wishes by the faintest murmur; but the young mother was not equal to bear this fatigue long, for she could not suffer alone, and the plaintive wailings of her little one compelled her to leave poor Helen to her duties unaided.

The kind-hearted Count was as valuable to the sisters in England as he had been to those in Italy; he watched her little one so kindly that Louisa could, in a short time, go twice a day, with a heart at ease, to visit her mother; and, at such periods, send Helen

out for a short walk, or for an hour's repose; and she soon learnt to arm herself with his name, in such a manner as to secure Lady Anne's consent. Indeed, it is only justice to say, she desired much to insure Helen's health, considering it as the means of preserving her beauty, without which she had no chance of marrying her—*one* daughter, she thought, it would really be desirable to retain, for they certainly could wait upon her better than the nurse (who had fairly yawned in her face repeatedly, and never hesitated to say, "she knew her duty, and was not to be told what to do by a patient"); but, then, Mary would unquestionably be at leisure for all useful purposes, and why keep two of them?—"Not that a daughter cost much—she must say servants cost more, a great deal; the nurse would ruin her in green tea, to keep her awake, and brandy to compose her nerves. Nevertheless, she must be kept, since the girls could never compel me to take the nauseous medicines, and unquestionably they are necessary."

In about a fortnight Lady Anne's throat was nearly well, but much general pain remained in her limbs, and she was more sensible of it than she had been before, and the confinement was more irksome. She could be taken out of bed, and sit up for a couple of hours, and this period she usually spent in bemoaning her sufferings and reproaching her daughters as the cause of them.

"It is entirely owing to you two making such a

heap of things, and compelling me to sell them during that dreadful cold day, that has brought me into this wretched state. I have you to thank for all my misery; therefore, it is as little as you can do to wait upon me, and seek to alleviate it—in fact, if Charles Penrhyn is not a mean, ungrateful wretch, he will send me a hundred pounds at least, to make me some amends for his wife's share of the mischief.”

“ Indeed, mamma, Louisa did very little, for she was so busy with her baby; besides, she was extremely delicate, and only able to sit up part of the day in the beginning of the time.”

“ Delicate, indeed!—what made her delicate but undertaking to feed that great lump of a boy?—to be sure it was consistent with marrying a man who is a city merchant—what better could she expect than to be compelled to such low, I may say, such beastly employment, for all kind of creatures suckle their young. Royal mothers never dream of such a thing. Noble mothers never did, till the Duchess of Devonshire brought it into fashion, on the very same principle that she made bonnets the shape of coal-scuttles the rage. Odd things she could do and would do, because she had the power to do. However, she died soon after I was married, and I never followed her example, and trust no daughter of mine will do it, save those allied to city connections; one can expect nothing better of them, when a woman has once renounced all self-respect, so far as to form a lasting union with a

man like Penrhyn ; it is quite in character that she should, as Hamlet says in the play, proceed

“ To suckle fools and chronicle small-beer.”

“ But surely, dear mamma, Mr. Glentworth is still more a city man than Mr. Penrhyn, who has been a merchant a very short time, whereas the other was engaged many years.”

“ Yes ; but Glentworth’s shame was hidden by transacting business abroad, and his rich uncle’s estates covered the disgrace. Indeed, money, when there is plenty of it, will cover every thing ; but a mere handsome competence leaves you exposed to a thousand remarks —you are numbered with *respectable* people, like the Palmers, for instance ; you have no style, no debts (not that debts are desirable, but the contrary) no fashion, no ancient importance to turn back upon, no modern landmark, such as an extravagant entertainment, a costly embassy, a loss or gain at Newmarket, or a crash at Doncaster, to be talked of ; you have no title, no *caste*, no any thing. It is far better to be a distinguished author than to be distinguished for nothing, which is generally the case with *respectable* people, who ‘ pay their way,’ as the saying is, and delight in private charity, and bringing up large families well.”

“ Dear mamma,” Helen replied, thankful by any medium to escape the fancy fair and its attendant reproaches, “ however strange you may think it, Count

Riccardini says——” She hesitated, and Lady Anne, in an impatient tone, cried out—

“ What does he say? Why do you act so like a fool, speaking very often when you should hold your tongue, and stopping when you should speak !”

“ He says no person should ever incur debt for his own personal pleasure or celebrity ; that it is a disgrace and an act of dishonesty, which places the highest nobleman (in a just and moral point of view) below the poorest artizan, who works for his bread and pays for his bread. There may be cases, he allows, where a man desires to effect a grand national purpose, in which he may incur risk, because the *many* must not be sacrificed for the *few*, and——”

“ There, there, be silent ; I have had quite nonsense enough in one morning for my weak state. Come, and rub my right foot. It is shocking that the Count should talk so like an ass about the *few* and the *many* ; but Italian people are dreadfully ignorant ; their church keeps them so—I have heard him say so himself. Still he cannot but know that in every country the nobility are the *few*, the *canaille* the *many*, who work, dig, delve for them, and ought, as poor Lady Sarah Butterlip says, to be only too happy when they have it in their power either to *lend* them or *give* them any thing they will condescend to accept. It is on that principle I have been always so kind to the Palmers ; every day of my life I wish I were at home

on their account — I would eat no jellies but those made by their cook.”

Helen trembled for the money she had had a hand in borrowing, and felt that no power on earth could induce her to be ungrateful to those dear neighbours, who once saved her life, and since then had largely contributed to its comforts. “If I were made a queen to-morrow,” said she to herself, “could the attentions I should certainly shew dear Mr. and Mrs. Palmer, repay my obligation to them? impossible!”

“You do well to make no reply; young people ought to receive information, not dispute its correctness, which is indeed the fault of the times; and the nobility themselves (nine times out of ten) live so entirely without using the privileges of their order, that they render it difficult for others to assume them. Mind, I do not say either honesty or humility are bad things even in the highest classes, but I do say they ought not to be expected if inconvenient, which must be the case some times with some people; otherwise, as the great radical poet very justly observes,

‘That if you have not got a very high rental,
’Tis hardly worth while to be very high born.’

Remember, however, in any future conversation you may happen to hold with Count Riccardini, never to induce him to suppose I question any of his silly and stupid dogmas. We ought to make allowances for foreigners; and, talk as he may, in person and man-

ners he will always be *très distingué*, as you must perceive. Tell my page to ask him to walk with you, for you look wretchedly, and to be sure you have been on your knees a long time rubbing that foot, I must say."

CHAPTER XLIII.

When poor Georgiana arrived at Rotheles Castle, she was received with much kindness by the earl, her uncle, and with an appearance of it on the part of the countess, such as she had never experienced before. The fact was, that this lady was so angry with her niece, Lady Allerton, she determined to punish her by adopting, as her heart's chosen, any one of her husband's nieces that might happen to suit her. She had not yet seen one that would ; but, as she firmly believed Lady Anne to be exceedingly like herself " in the *strong* lines of character," by which the selfish, *manœuvring*, doubling, and cunning traits were meant, she concluded that, out of five daughters, one or more would be found to resemble the mother, whom yet she would not love, for, as Lady Anne's deficiency in what she termed " maternal weakness " would be most remarkable to a sharp, clever, and observing girl, so would she be the first to rebel against her mother in secret, and try to subvert the authority with which she could not contend.

Lady Rotheles was by no means right in her conclusions, because she could not analyze the mind of

Lady Anne, which was essentially distinct from her own, by which she measured it. Shakespeare has given us several fools, but no two of them are alike ; each was the product of “ an imagination all compact,” which gave to each his own identity, despite the grand characteristic. And thus did these ladies differ from each other, though both were pretty generally classed by their friends “ artful women.” So far as Lady Anne was such, she had been made by circumstance and observation, for both nature and education had stamped her as too proud and self-sufficient to stoop for the purpose of obtaining that which she had a right to seize. In the day of her power she was vain, extravagant, unfeeling, and intensely selfish ; but her poverty alone taught her as much of cunning as her necessities exacted, or her difficulties compelled, but no more. On the contrary, the countess was cunning by nature, and had so cultivated her faculties, that the “ charming simplicity of her character” was constantly the theme of strangers previous to her marriage, and had indeed been the sole cause of it, for the earl, worn out by the passions and impulses, the abilities and sensibilities of his own heart and its errors, the hearts of his preceding wives and their errors, sought only in her the simplicity he could never suspect, and the quiet kindness he had no cause to dread. He was only beginning to find that, as the perfection of art is to conceal art, his lady was so accomplished a person, he might rely as safely on

the tinsel she assumed as the gold for which he had given her credit.

The very cunning should never venture to be the very angry. Poor Lady Rotheles was really so imprudent on the late occasion of her niece's elopement as to go into a passion, and to utter such a tirade against her, her lord was roused from his habitual, but not natural listlessness, and became, in consequence, master of sentiments and secrets hitherto most commendably concealed from his cognizance. The former assured him that his discreet lady saw no harm in her niece's conduct save its publicity, which she reprobated as unforgiveable, horrible, damnable; the latter gave him to understand that poor Mary Granard had been completely choused out of her lover by the artful cunning of a woman who despised, whilst she married him, and had for seven long years wasted his property, thwarted his pursuits, ridiculed his attainments, despised his person, and told him how and for what purpose she cajoled him into marriage; a coronet and a fortune being her sole object, save in so far as she had pleasure in thwarting Lady Anne.

“ But coronet and fortune are now gone for ever. Miss Aubrey penniless will be cast on the world which despises her; perhaps look to her aunt for charity: but no, miscreant, not a shilling, or a loaf, shall you ever have from me! Not if you are starv-

ing, rotting, at my park-gates, shall you have a penny from my porter."

"You are very angry, and talk very wildly, Lady Rotheles. If Emma Aubrey writes to me in a proper manner, she will not be refused help."

The words "writes to me," in a single moment arrested all the fury in the angry woman's breast. "Should she write to her lord, what might she not unfold;" and she saw in an instant how much mischief she must have done in mentioning the affair of Lord Allerton's marriage, since her lord could not fail to know that if she did not assist *her* niece, she connived at her conduct, to the injury of *his* sister and *his* niece. No man less merited such conduct from his wife than Lord Rotheles, for he had been both generous and confiding to an extreme in her case, and deceit was abhorrent to his nature. Unfortified by sound principles, unblessed by parental control, his morals had been lax, and his passions strong, but his disposition was kind and considerate, and the heart, too subject to melt in the eye of beauty, yielded also to the voice of pity. His sins were allied to the heart's tendernesses, not the cruelties which so frequently accompany them; he was rather seduced than the seducer, and there had never been a period in his eventful and unhappy history, when a sensible and good woman might not have rendered him a respectable member of society; but his first step had been wrong, and in

losing that first step, which is “ a tide in the affairs of men,” he had been ever after condemned to be “ bound in shallows and in miseries.”

But the bloom and summer of life had passed by, and since retrospection could redeem no folly, much less present any consolation, he desired only to forget it, and to dwell, as far as he was able, in the Castle of Indolence, save when the Castle of Rotheles was animated by the presence of some really worthy person, whose name was surrounded by the halo of virtue and talents. In such periods, he was proud and happy as the monarch who cried in his sleep, “ I have gotten Themistocles, the Athenian !” He became active, hospitable, full of conversational power, displayed extensive information, and much of that hopeful spirit which belongs to an earlier period ; in fact, he felt as if he could redeem the past, as if his affections and abilities could still be exercised for the benefit of his fellow-men in the manner befitting his rank, but the stimulus withdrawn, the effect subsided ; not, however, without leaving benefit which might have been most happily improved, had not his lady bent all her powers and wishes to one single aim—her own pecuniary interest.

Our readers will see at once that Lady Rotheles was completely disappointed in any hope she might have formed on the subject of rendering her husband’s niece a substitute for her own. She had,

however, the consolation of perceiving that if there was nothing to hope, there was nothing to fear, from Georgiana; and she consoled herself by the power she must possess over the actions of the little fool who might be made useful in many ways, without comprehending she was so.

In this, the "lady promised herself too much." Georgiana, like all her sisters, had an excellent capacity, and a sound understanding; indeed, abilities and good taste were indigenous in the family; but it may be observed, that all cunning, artful people invariably set down those who do not practise their own gifts, as being very poor creatures, a kind of contemptible second-rate human beings. A learned man can allow abilities in a mere rustic, an author or an artist admire a man devoted to a science of which they are ignorant; but that class who work their way mole-wise in the dark, always look down on the children of light as if their integrity was ignorance, and their plain dealing deficiency; they rank innocence with silliness, and believe no one speaks truth but those who have not wit enough to invent a lie.

Lady Rotheles by no means despised Lady Anne Granard, as she did her daughters, but she disliked her exceedingly, and had great pleasure in setting her talents to work to thwart her wishes, sneer at her follies, render her brother angry with her, and contrive a whole multitude of petty inconveniences, which might either prevent their receiving

her annual visit, or render it very unpleasant to her. The great matter of all, however, was that of spiriting up the earl's resolution to curtail her income, and this, as we have seen, she had, at length, effected; less, however, from her influence than Lady Anne's own folly. Though the earl did not suspect his lady of being the adept she was, yet he had long known she disliked his sister, which he accounted for from the circumstance of Lady Anne's superior personal attraction; the countess, though with a pretty face and at least ten years younger, cutting comparatively no figure when placed beside the tall and graceful form of Lady Anne, whose beautiful bust and slender waist never failed to attract admiration.

From the time the possibility of her niece writing to her husband took possession of Lady Rotheles's mind, she had really never known a happy hour when awake, and her dread of post-time amounted to a perfect fever, as it was that of breakfast, when she could not take possession of the letters without showing her anxiety. So perfectly easy was Lord Rotheles on the subject, that she might have examined all and secreted half without inquiry on his part; but the mind makes its own scourges, and poor Georgiana could not cast a look towards either of them, when taking off the envelopes, without being suspected of some way playing into her uncle's hands, for it was plain that every day of his life she became of more value to him; for she not only read his letters, but generally wrote the answers.

At length Lady Rotheles became so sensible that her anxiety was making her seriously ill, that she laid the matter before Georgiana, imparting her desire to become possessed of any letter her misguided niece might write, purely to save dear Rotheles from the vexation it would not fail to cause him, by reminding him of circumstances in his own early life of an afflicting nature. “ Besides, she can only write for the purpose of getting money out of him — and he is not rich ; he has been obliged to curtail Lady Anne’s allowance, you know ; and surely it would be very improper to give that wicked woman money which might be so much better bestowed on his own sister ? ”

“ Dear Lady Rotheles, how good you are to think of mamma ; I am sure, if you are her friend in the matter, we can get my lord to forgive her, and send her the same he used to do. As to the person that was Lady Allerton, depend upon it she will be no trouble to *him*, for she is gone to the East Indies with the colonel.”

Lady Rotheles shrieked with delight. “ The East Indies ! Who told you so ? ”

“ The Naval and Military Gazette, which is the best of all information, because it always knows the truth, and tells the truth. My brother Penrhyn happened to have one in his pocket when he brought me hither. I will shew it to you.”

Suiting the action to the word, Georgiana quickly placed the precious document in the hands of the coun-

tess, who could scarcely refrain from weeping for joy. Her auditor was quite surprised at the sensibility she displayed by warmly kissing her, and declaring "she had given her new life in the immeasurable relief afforded, and that she should henceforward consider her as her dearest and best loved niece, the one who must supply to her love the worthless Henrietta."

After these protestations, Georgiana trusted that some day, when her mother was named, Lady Rotheles would take the opportunity of saying something in her behalf, which might, at least, have the effect of softening her uncle's feelings towards her; but time passed, and nothing of the kind taking place, she ventured to beg the countess would have the goodness to say "something which would enable her to follow and explain circumstances which would show that mamma was little if at all to blame."

"My dear girl! you cannot suppose I have neglected to speak of your mamma when alone with Rotheles, which is indeed the only time that a wife can properly speak of family affairs with her husband. At this time, I grieve to tell you, he is so extremely angry with her, that all which you or I can do with good effect is not to mention her name, or start any subject likely to lead to it. You made me happy one day by a paragraph in a newspaper, and I am sorry to make you unhappy through the same medium; but, the fact is, Lady Anne's name is mentioned in the Morning Post in a way which has disturbed Lord Rotheles exceedingly."

The countess spoke the truth for once, but not the whole truth. The earl was vexed and disturbed—as well he might—he had, from the time of Georgiana's arrival, sent her out on horseback with a careful groom ; and, the preceding morning, as soon as she was gone, Lady Rotheles said, as she handed the paper to her lord, “ My dear, I wish you to look over the Morning Post, that we may burn it before Georgiana returns ; there is a paragraph saying, that the Duchess of C——, Lady Anne Granard, and others, are getting up a fancy bazaar—fancy fair, I mean—at Brighton, which is expected to be a very gay thing, as the daughters and nieces of the ladies concerned are all the loveliest of the *beau monde*. Of course, Georgiana will desire to go thither, to shew off, with Helen and her mamma, and I am quite sure she has not strength for any thing of the kind.”

“ Fancy fair !” exclaimed her lord, angrily—“ how can you name such a thing to *me* ?”

“ My dear Rotheles, it pains me to do so, certainly ; but if your *own sister* can engage in a fancy fair, your nieces Helen and Louisa exhibit themselves at a fancy fair, surely I may call on your strength of mind and your kindness to save our sweet Georgiana from the injuries a fancy fair may bring upon her !”

Nothing could be better managed than this speech, because it complimented his lordship on that quality, in which, being notoriously deficient, he wished every body to give him credit for possessing. It also ex-

hibited his sister, at whom he had been angry, but towards whom his gentler thoughts had been returning ever since Georgiana arrived, in the light of an extravagant, and, what was worse, an unfeeling and indelicate woman, forgetful of that circumstance which had inflicted anguish unutterable on her only brother, and rendered him for years a reckless and worthless man. Now that he was endeavouring to consign all the past to oblivion, and, by "leading a new life," establishing a new character, this act of madness and folly on her part could hardly fail to recall *his* great grief, *his* great error, and increase the difficulties of her own situation. To all this he added the irreparable injury she would do her daughters; he would venture to say, "no grandson of Sir Edward Hales would henceforward think for a moment of the degraded daughter of Lady Anne Granard."

As these thoughts, or such as these, poured from his lips, his lady took care to give them the point and impression which might convert a passing pet into an abiding resentment; but, in order to convince him how sincerely she wished well to his innocent nieces, she seized the first pause in his rapid condemnation of the mother to say,

"But we can save Georgiana, my dear, from a folly alike injurious to her health and her hopes—for hopes she has, poor thing, I am certain; and, if she abstains from the fancy fair when the rest of her family are there, will it not prove her superior sense of propriety and all that?"

“ You are right, Lady Rotheles, quite right. As to looking at the paper which shews Lady Anne in so unamiable and blameable a point of view, I shall *not*; so take it out of my sight, and burn it as soon as you please. And I beg of you, if any more nonsense about her and her daughters appears in the papers, let them be kept out of my sight. It is not my strength of mind (exert it as I may) that will prevent me from experiencing dyspepsia, if such follies as these are exhibited before me.”

Although Lady Rotheles had thus with good effect defeated Georgiana's wishes and hopes with respect to her mother, yet she could lay the “ flattering unction to her soul ” that she wished to promote the poor girl's happiness by marrying her to Lieutenant Hales. The venerable Sir Edward was one of those persons whose acquaintance, or rather whose friendship, Lord Rotheles would give the world to gain. In days past he had loved the son and honoured the father, and he believed that he had been held in sincere regard by both. It was a consolation to believe that Lord Meersbrook, in his glorious but short career, knew little or nothing of his own; but Sir Edward *must*, for he had an estate which joined the Rotheles property, and occasionally brought him into the neighbourhood, when the doors of the castle were always thrown open to him, but never yet had he accepted an invitation, though it had always been refused so courteously as to justify the repetition. It was now

rumoured in the country that he was coming for the last time, and would be accompanied by his heir, the young Lord Meersbrook ; and the earl hoped that the presence of his niece might induce them at length to accept his invitation, especially as there was on the spot nothing suitable as a residence for the young lord, though the old baronet had put up with poor accommodation from an old tenant whom he valued.

Under these circumstances, in Lord Rotheles' opinion, nothing could be more *mal-à-propos* than Lady Anne's conduct ; therefore, he felt every putting off of the Brighton fancy fair as a kind of reprieve, and instead of having the papers burned or kept out of his sight, he soon eagerly examined every one, in hopes to find that the whole affair was quashed ; but this satisfaction did not occur. Despite of himself, he felt a degree of pleasure when Lady Anne was admired, or pitied for being overcome with the heat, and carried out by an Italian nobleman and Lord Meersbrook : but above all things did he rejoice to find that " her ladyship's lovely and accomplished daughters were, from unforeseen circumstances, not present."

" God bless them all ! They know nothing of their uncle's mishap, which, perhaps, in the eternal whirl of fashionable life, is really obliterated from its annals ; but they have the good sense and delicacy to refrain from what is, in fact, a matrimonial market. I am quite certain Georgiana had not a single wish to join them, and it is plain Helen had none. How strange

it seems that my sister should have less sense than her daughters ; but, be it remembered, neither of *us* had parents within our memory : there lies the grand, the irremediable misfortune of our lives. It is a plain case that, let her errors be what they may, she is an admirable mother : where can a sweeter creature than this poor Georgiana be found ? So modest, she thinks the secret of her poor little heart is safe in its inmost recesses, yet so sensitive, if ever a sailor or a man-of-war is named, the blood mounts to her brow.

“ But Anne never had a heart herself, so how should she feel for her daughters ? If Granard never won her love, doubtless she was invulnerable ; and it is certain he did *not* ; for, if she had really loved a man so admirable both in mind and person, she could not have preferred the gauds of life to him and his love, especially when Heaven had granted her so large and so sweet a family.

“ No ! to me, and me *alone*, was given the sensitiveness which should have been divided between both, the bitter sweet, and sweet bitter, which has been the charm of my life, yet the ruin of my happiness.

“ Happiness ! what is happiness ?—a dream ! But to be respectable, to be virtuous, to receive the warm grasp of a good man’s hand, to be surrounded by a tenantry who say, ‘ my lord is an example to every body ’—when you speak in the *House*, to know no man says, ‘ he talks better than he *acts* ’—‘ I wish I could take his hand *freely* ’—these are the things one

wants to receive or to avoid. What an immense difference there is in one's estimate of desirable objects at twenty-three and fifty-three !

“ Would I had been a father !—how much could I have taught my son !—he is denied, and it is right he should be, undoubtedly. I am a not religious man, but I do feel that to this decree I ought to bow in humility. Let me, then, take care of these dear girls ; they are the children of my blood, the children of my only sister and my sincere and virtuous friend. Yes ! I will take care of the girls ; it is the one comfort of my life that I am doing so.”

CHAPTER XLIV.

Lord Meersbrook had lingered longer than he intended, or even approved of in himself, to see this fancy fair, because he knew that the dear old baronet was waiting for him ; but the very day following he presented himself at Meersbrook Park, willing to set off an hour after his arrival.

“No, no,” said Mrs. Margaret; “evening travelling will not do for my brother. I will tell you how to manage him, dear Frederic ; and you must not allow him, either from his fancied strength or his good-natured compliance, to mislead you—let him breakfast at eight, set out at nine, and not travel after five, and you will manage the hundred and twenty miles admirably—yes, admirably, in two days and a half.”

To take such a time for such a purpose, appeared surprising to so young a man, though he was perfectly willing to obey the mandate, if necessary ; and, looking at the aged traveller, he said : “Do you agree to this arrangement, dear grandfather ?”

“Willingly, as I know my sister is quite right ; for, in the course of my whole life, I have never known

but one man that could travel fast after he was turned of eighty; that man was the Reverend John Wesley: he was, unquestionably, as much the remarkable, the unparalleled man of my early life, as the great duke is of my present period of existence. As they are both descended from one stock—for our great captain was a Wesley, and Lord Mornington, his father, was enriched by a legacy at one time designed for the father of methodism—I wonder it has never entered into the heads of people who write books to make a parallel between them: it might be done exceedingly well, in my opinion, and take Marquis Wellesley into the group.”

“In what way, dear sir? you excite my curiosity much,”* said Lord Meersbrook, who ever listened

* In many of the portraits of Mr. Wesley, taken about 1780, or earlier, there is evidence of a decided family likeness to the duke, and though scarcely the height of his grace, there was great resemblance in the spareness of flesh, the perfection of muscle, the springiness of the step, the brilliance and comprehensive character of the eye, the commanding and distinct intonation of the voice, and a power of enduring fatigue and physical privations only paralleled by themselves. The mental properties of the parties still more resembled each other—high intellect, great penetration, perfect integrity and singleness of purpose—a resolution devoid of obstinacy and a fortitude admitting sensibility and cherishing affection, were alike the characteristics of the clergyman and the soldier. To this it may be added, that each party was endowed with a genius for governing men. The duke found his soldiery half disciplined, flagitious, disorderly and inefficient: he rendered them, in his own words, a “perfect organ.” John Wesley went into

with fond attention to the "old man garrulous" he honoured so entirely.

"Qualities and faculties, my dear Meersbrook, descend in races not less than features and stature, and what is most to the purpose, longevity both of mind and body. That the elder Wesleys, of whom I speak, were extraordinary men, no one now disputes. The labours of John as a preacher, writer, and traveller, may be compared with the man of a hundred battles, and thousands of letters, the deep thinker, the contriver, the consolidator. Lord Mornington was a

the "highways and hedges" of society, to "seek and save that which was lost." With a personal courage never exceeded, and a patient endurance rarely equalled, he laboured amongst the ignorant and the wicked, until he had called order out of chaos, and gained the suffrages of the good, for his benefits to the bad. He not only purified the dregs of society, but reformed the church to which he belonged, whilst he built up another. At least a million of Christians are called by his name, and although the writer is herself episcopalian, she firmly believes his followers to be the most consistent body of religious persons in existence. The duke's army, when most perfect, of course, had some bad men in it, and there may be some blots in the Wesleyan government as conducted in America, notwithstanding which the Methodists are to the United States the "salt of the earth."

May the duke be enabled, like his prototype, to labour in behalf of his country as effectively as we are sure he will conscientiously and wisely, and when his latest hour arrives, may he also enjoy intellectual strength to the verge of existence, and "nobly" *give*, not *yield*, his soul to death," in "sure and certain hope!"—*Ed. note.*

musical composer of first-rate talent, and Charles Wesley's son, the musical genius of his day—Charles himself was both a lively and a devotional poet, and the Marquess of Wellesley is not only an elegant classical scholar, but a sweet poet, though the world does not know it; from thus looking over the family, Frederic, I infer that this country may be blessed by the wisdom and energies of the duke for many, *many* years, provided he takes proper care of himself, such care as you are willing to take of me."

"I should wish no better lot in life, than taking care of you both," said his lordship; but he felt, at the same moment, there was another and a very different person whom he should like to include in his circle. Although he had been very angry with Lady Anne Granard (of whose present situation he was ignorant), and therefore was still the same, so far as his dear brother was concerned, yet he was sensible of a certain tie to her which might, at a different period of society, have been imputed to witchcraft. He considered her a proud, insolent, and unfeeling woman, who deserved a thousand inflictions by way of punishment, but he could not himself bestow one of them; on the contrary, when he found she was distressed for money, he earnestly intreated Mr. Palmer to relieve her, and the plan of paying beforehand for the house was entirely of his suggestion. The few words of advice she gave him as to escaping political embarrassments, struck him as the acme of wisdom, and as indicating an inte-

rest in his well-being of the kindest description ; and he was thence led to consider that “ perhaps her own narrow income and pecuniary difficulties had alone induced her to fear such a fate for her daughter, and occasioned her refusal of Arthur, and that the reports which had been made about her seeking to marry Georgiana to the Marquess of Wentworthdale were mere idle fabrications.”

Though taciturn, from partaking the manners of those with whom he had recently lived, and naturally too modest to do justice to his own conversational powers, yet, when he reached the dear home of his infancy, he could talk freely of all that he had lately seen or even thought, and his representations of Lady Anne, to a considerable degree, ameliorated their feelings towards her, and they thought most probably she had changed her mind, and would not be long before she gave some farther intimation of it.

“ I well remember when Lord Rotheles was a young man (and a very engaging one he was), that he was much given to running from one opinion or predilection to another. ‘ Unstable as water, thou shalt not profit,’ says the wise man ; and truly the sentence is full of truth : perhaps Lady Anne may resemble him ; I know too little of her to judge. We should make allowance for this disposition, because our own failings lie the other way.”

“ Say rather our virtues, brother, for surely constancy is one ?” said the old lady.

“Constancy in our affections is a good thing certainly, but constancy in our opinions is a different affair. A good man may change his sentiments, though he cannot change his principles.”

“Well, all I think about is this: — Does the girl herself deserve dear Arthur? I wish of all things, that your brother could see her, and judge how far she resembles that vain peacock, her mother, or that shuttlecock, her uncle? I confess I never liked the first, but I did have a great regard for the last, when he was intimate with dear Frederic.”

“Was Lord Rotheles intimate with my father?” said the son, earnestly.

“Oh, yes; they were college friends, and happy would it have been for him had his young mentor been near him; but your father went to India, came home, but for a short time; married, and went out again. In losing his friend, he might be said to lose himself; he has led a strange kind of life, more ‘sinned against than sinning,’ but certainly has not been a man with whom your father would have continued intimate. However, he is now sobered down into decency, at least—is an excellent landlord, a good husband and brother, and restored to the respect of his neighbours.”

“I should like to know the man who knew my father! — knew him when he was young, and could tell me how he looked, and spoke — what were his tastes and sentiments in early life?” said Lord Meersbrook, warmly.

“As to his person, dear Frederic, you have nothing to do but sit down before the glass, and there you have it,” said his great aunt.

“And his mind, you must know,” added Sir Edward, “for he might be said to breathe it into you, my dear boy.”

“Nevertheless, I should like to know this Lord Rotheles.”

“And you shall know him, only let us set out, and the rest you may leave to me.”

They did set out, and in the forenoon of the third day, Sir Edward arrived at his old tenant's, who was two years his senior, and received him with great pride and delight, presenting his married granddaughter and her two children. The poor woman, who was well aware with such incumbrances she could do nothing with visitors of their rank, eagerly presented a letter from the castle, which had been waiting almost a week, and their horses' heads were in a few minutes turned thitherward, a boy being dispatched from the farm by a near road, to announce their arrival.

Georgiana had heard nothing of this invitation, for, although determined once more to make it, Lord Rotheles could hardly hope it would be accepted after the conduct of his sister, unless that very conduct induced Sir Edward to say, by his manners, “I know *you* had nothing to do with it, my lord.” As this was not unlikely, so far as he could judge of the worthy

baronet, he determined to send his invitation in good time, and the acceptance gave him sincere delight ; he hastened to inform his lady, and entreat her to do all honour to their expected guests, and then walked towards the entrance of the Castle. Georgiana was returning from her ride, and jumped from her horse just as the carriage door was opened ; and Lord Meersbrook sprung out. “ What could bring him there ? who was in the carriage besides ? ” were questions that suffused her cheek with crimson, and made her heart beat almost audibly. She stood as well as her trembling limbs permitted, but could neither move nor speak till she had seen the venerable baronet descend with his grandson’s assistance, when she began to comprehend that they were visitants to her uncle, with whom she had nothing to do beyond exchanging the usual civilities.

Never had she seen Lord Rotheles so entirely discharge his usual nonchalance so rapidly, and receive his new guests with such graceful and animated welcome. On taking the hand of Lord Meersbrook, he pressed it between both his own, and whilst the tears welled up into his eyes, said, in a voice suppressed by emotion, “ you are indeed the son of my early friend. Poor Frederic ! he deserved to be the father of such a one.”

Georgiana escaped to her own room, desirous of obtaining more composure before she went through the ordeal of presentation to the venerable man who would

so kindly have received her portionless and unknown, and even generously endowed her ; and she could so school her heart and command her nerves as to walk into the drawing-room with her usual ease, and receive the compliments of Lord Meersbrook with only the heightened colour natural to an agreeable surprise. When he led her up to the grandsire, of whom Arthur had talked so much, and had written so gratefully, that bloom receded and returned with such quick changes, that even the eye of age detected her confusion ; and Sir Edward, rising, took her from Lord Meersbrook, and, with a tenderness beautiful in him, touched the pale cheek with his lips, and brought back not only roses but tears — “ sweet, grateful, touching tears,” which no one seemed to see, but were felt by every one.

As Sir Edward Hales had some business to transact every morning, and it was understood that he was not equal to large parties, Lord Rotheles busied himself, with Georgiana’s assistance, in giving invitation both to near and distant neighbours to come in small parties, on different days, to dinner during the ensuing week ; such parties including the young of both sexes, who were likely to render the visit more agreeable to Lord Meersbrook. Several sportsmen were amongst the number ; and, as pheasant-shooting had commenced, these made their appearance early in the morning, and, of course, Lord Meersbrook accompanied them ; but it was certain, though fond of field

sports, he would rather have accompanied Georgiana in her ride, for he had a great deal to tell her respecting the fancy fair, and a great many questions to ask, both direct and indirect, in which Helen was concerned.

On explaining to his grandfather his necessity for leaving him, in consequence of the earl's arrangement for his pleasure, the baronet replied, "Go, by all means, and prove yourself a good shot, for I taught you myself; yes, I took you on the moors when I was sixty-four, which is something to say, and very sharp you were, only too pitiful for a sportsman; but that was my sister's fault: women will spoil men, do what one will. However, I wish you would get Georgiana Granard to sit with me when the tenants come. I am getting too fond of that child, I can tell you; in fact, I am rather angry at myself, for I should like to give her to you, and that would be wrong, for I am sure Arthur must love such a sweet creature very dearly."

"Dear Grandfather——" his lordship began with a very grave face, and was certainly on the point of making a confession, but his servant, entering with a variety of fowling-pieces, sent for his choice from my lord, together with a shot-bag, jacket, &c.; no more was said, and he joined the gentlemen, completely forgetting Georgiana, because his head was full of her sister. Sir Edward's wishes were not the less fulfilled.

"Georgiana, child!" said the earl, "you are the

best secretary in the world, so I would have you offer your services to Sir Edward; it would be indelicate in me, whose lands adjoin this estate of his, to offer mine, or I would gladly do it; not that I am half so *au fait* as either you or your aunt, who has most kindly undertaken to read and answer all letters this busy, and, let me add, this happy week."

Georgiana, in a moment after, stood before the aged baronet, offering her services, saying, she should be most happy to assist him in any way she could; adding, with great modesty, "I can cast up a sum readily, and I write quickly and legibly."

"Great things in your favour, my dear, and more than your great grandmother possessed, I'll be bound, though she might know a little latin. For the present, since we are *tête-à-tête*, let us talk of Arthur, James Hales; I believe you know him."

"I do know him, certainly, Sir Edward."

"And you love him, Georgiana Granard?"

There was no reply, save on the speaking countenance.

"But are you quite, *quite* sure you prefer Arthur, the younger brother, to Frederic, Lord Meersbrook, the elder?"

The timid, trembling, blushing girl rose instantly to the decided and impassioned woman, as she replied,

"I believe Lord Meersbrook to be a most excellent man, and the very best of brothers—as such I honour

him, and could, as a sister, love him ; but he has never distinguished me as Arthur has. I owe him no gratitude, nor can I possibly feel the same kind of—of—of——”

“ Say *love*, my dear.”

“ Well, Sir Edward, to you (whom I love very, *very* dearly) I will say love ; but I hope you believe I would not say so to himself.”

“ I’ll be sworn you would not, my dear child, till the moment when you ought to do so ; but since you confess your love to me, come and kiss me.”

Georgiana did not hesitate a moment, for she generally kissed her uncle when she met him in the morning. Sir Edward, tenderly encircling her with his feeble arms, said, half playfully, half solemnly,

“ With this kiss I thee wed, as the representative of my grandson, Arthur, in token whereof, I place on thy finger this ring, intreating thee never to look upon it without remembering that thou art united to him for better for worse, for richer or poorer ; can you take it ? think before you speak.”

“ I can take, and gladly will take, that plain gold ring upon your finger, as an emblem of my fidelity, but not the diamond ring ; I have much love, but little ambition.”

“ My child, you must take that which I can give ; my wedding ring must never leave my hand, but the other shall be yours. Our precious Arthur’s profession places him always in peril, but come what will,

this ring binds me to *you*; take it, I beseech you, as the promise of hope, the rainbow which succeeds the tempest."

And sweetly did the costly brilliant glitter on the soft white hand.

CHAPTER XLV.

The scene of courtship and union we have described was broken in upon by farmers and their sons, eager to pay their homage to a landlord they honoured, to talk over the situation of their crops, protest against the weather, which never does right, sue for favours, deplore difficulties, and trust that the next possessor would be just like the last. Some brought their rents, others only the arrears of rent, and asked more time; and at Sir Edward's request, Georgiana made minutes of all that passed, writing receipts for the baronet to sign, and memoranda on which he meant to take counsel with his heir, or his neighbour. When Georgiana perceived that he was fatigued, she gave prompt orders that no more should be admitted that day, and having persuaded him to take some light refreshment, and lie down on the sofa, she arranged his cushions, and left him to repose, with a heart so full of joy, she thought it scarcely possible that she could be more happy.

“I have finished for Sir Edward, can I do any thing for you, ma'am?” said she to the Countess, who was apparently busy with her pen.

“Not to-day; I have been writing myself, in answer to a distressing letter, which you shall know more of in time; but pray ask me no questions, for I cannot bear to damp your uncle’s happiness.”

As Georgiana left the library, she met Lord Rotheles, who praised her for having sent away Sir Edward’s visitors till the morrow. You have been a good secretary, I doubt not, and it appears to me that you have taken a retaining fee. I am sure your mamma never gave you that ring, and, what is more, she will not allow you to keep it; it was Sir Edward’s gift.”

“It *was*, my lord, and given in a very solemn manner; he said it bound him to me for life.”

“I hope it binds you to him and *his*, much longer than we can hope to keep him below; but it is a family jewel of especial value, wear it here constantly, for I hold it as a great compliment; but when you go to London, get Louisa or your good neighbour to keep it for you; mind my words.”

Three succeeding days showed Georgiana in the same amiable point of view to the baronet; and Lord Meersbrook declared he was positively jealous of her, and should report her to his aunt; nevertheless, he contrived to get a ride with her every morning, when he constantly inquired if she had any letters from Mrs. Penrhyn or Miss Helen, to which a shake of the head was the only reply, on which both parties would observe, “it was strange,” but they did not the less

make them the subject of conversation, except when Arthur and his letters were the theme. Georgiana had blushed so terribly when his brother was named, that Meersbrook had in pure pity forborne to speak of him in the house, but he found he could do it when on horseback, and that she obtained the power of reply, which was, probably, a consequence of her belief that he was not looking at her; at all events, she drank in with eager ear, and admiring mind, anecdote and history of all those excellent traits of disposition, and nobleness of conduct, which made him the idol of his describer, and gave her a knowledge of his temper and character, and the manner in which his boyhood and youth had passed, which she could never have gained by any other medium, and which it was unquestionably right she should know. Previously, she had felt as if she had tied herself irrevocably to one she could love, but of whom, in point of fact, she knew much too little, and often contrasted herself with Isabella, who loved Mr. Glentworth for his goodness; but now, her esteem justified her to herself, and permitted her to revel unreproved, in the entire devotedness of her innocent affections.

Sir Edward could not help feeling extremely gratified by the considerate courteousness of Lord and Lady Rotheles, who assembled round him the small party that amused without fatiguing him, and whose regard for his person, or respect for his high character, was grateful to his feelings; for age, conscious of

its declining power to captivate or command, rejoices in that silent homage which is tendered freely; he always retired very early, taking the arm of his grandson to his chamber door, when he was consigned to his servant, and the young nobleman dismissed with a fervent blessing. Often were the bright eyes of him who returned to join the quadrille Georgiana was arranging, or take part in a duet, suffused with the drops that would, per force, arise, on remembering that that pale, sweet countenance must soon cease to smile upon him, and that faltering voice to pray that God would bless him.

On the last evening of their stay, a gentleman urged his two daughters to return at an hour so very early, and they were evidently so unwilling to go, that Lord Rotheles expostulated, saying, "the moon was near the full, the road excellent, and the distance nothing, and he surely might allow the young people one more dance."

"Well, my lord, they shall have it; but, as I must leave home at four, you will allow it is right I should be there by twelve. I have had the misfortune to have a letter delayed two days, being only given to me on my road hither, and I must therefore catch the mail, which you know passes my lodge at four, in order to obviate the inconveniences which may arise from apparent inattention to a dear, perhaps a dying friend. I said nothing to the girls, for I don't like to trouble young people more than I can help."

Lord Rotheles allowed it was a very sufficient cause for returning soon, and reprobated all delays of letters, though he confessed to being a very idle correspondent; but his lady became exceedingly agitated, saying, “she must plead guilty to having kept back information of a very painful nature, ever since the arrival of Sir Edward Hales, because she could not bear to damp her dear lord’s pleasure in the society of his venerable guest.”

“What can you possibly mean?—have you letters from Italy?”

“No; but letters from an Italian gentleman, telling me Lady Anne is very ill, at Brighton; and, to-day, a short one from Mrs. Penrhyn, saying, ‘her fever is somewhat abated, and they hope for a considerable change to-morrow;’ so that, I trust, by this time danger is over.”

“In that case, you have saved me from a great deal, and I ought to thank you; but, give me the letters; I must judge for myself—perhaps I, too, may have to travel in haste.”

“No, Rotheles! not for the world would I hear of it—the complaint is infectious, which was an additional reason for withholding the information.”

Lord Rotheles retired—this neighbour and others went home—and the Countess, after an assurance to Georgiana that her letter of that morning was favourable, proceeded to say, “that her mother had been taken very ill the day after the fancy fair, and that

both her sisters had gone down from London, and were then with her."

The poor girl was exceedingly struck and grieved. She felt as if the happiness she had experienced in the late week had been a positive sin, and she could never sufficiently blame herself for not having inquired concerning the painful news to which Lady Rotheles had alluded — "she ought to have known it belonged to some one in her own family, as being her uncle's only near relations; she ought to have remembered that mamma had fainted, which she never did before"—and she inquired eagerly of Lord Meersbrook, "if he had seen any thing particular in Lady Anne's looks, the evening he passed in her company?"

"There is no company in a great crowd," said he, in reply. "I believe I spoke to Lady Anne only once *en passant*; and merely remember that she was splendidly dressed, and I thought herself and her companion, Count Riccardini, the handsomest people in the room. I came away early, but think she went away before me—at six, next morning, I set out for Kent."

"Who is this Riccardini?" said Lord Rotheles, who had returned into the room whilst Lord Meersbrook was speaking.

"I understood him to be the brother-in-law of Lady Anne Granard, and the particular friend of her son-in-law, Mr. Glentworth. He only arrived the first day of the fancy fair, but he made an impression that might be considered universal, and Lady Anne seemed to rejoice exceedingly in his arrival."

“ It can be no other than poor Manuello, who married Margaret Granard ; he was known to be a man of family, and Granard was always attached to him ; but my sister resented the marriage excessively, forbidding even the names of the parties to be mentioned in her presence — did you, Georgiana, ever hear of them ?”

“ Only from Isabella, who calls him her uncle Riccardini, and says, he is the kindest and best of friends, and, having no relations of his own, adopts my father’s family as such—she says his seat, Castello Riccardini, is one of the most beautiful places in the kingdom of Naples, but he prefers England to his own country.”

When the first letter arrived respecting Lady Anne’s illness, the Countess firmly believed it to be a feint to move her brother’s compassion and get money out of him for the expences she must have incurred at Brighton ; not doubting that, as her fainting from the heat had been mentioned in the papers, it formed a good groundwork for the getting up a little domestic interlude of the pathetic kind, likely to affect her lord. She had, therefore, great pleasure, in the first instance, in the power of defeating it ; but, on re-reading the letter, and finding the sufferer’s daughters were there, she addressed a very kind letter to Mrs. Penrhyn, intreating to hear every day, and lamenting the distance between them. The second letter received was from the Count, who thereby showed he thought it necessary they should hear ; and the one which followed

distinctly proved the patient in great danger, though it spoke of a promising turn being expected. The Countess had begun to find herself much puzzled how to proceed when this *denouément* took place; for she well knew that, however angry Lord Rotheles might be with his sister, that her danger and suffering would alike banish anger and restore affection.

“Situated as we are,” said Lord Rotheles, “with our venerable guest, I think, my dear Meersbrook, it will be better that not a single word be said of this trouble in the hearing of Sir Edward, but, when you have set out, Georgiana and I will set out also; we shall have received a letter most probably in the mean time, which may be a great comfort. You must not cry thus, my good girl, but try to sleep, that you may be able to travel.”

The plan Lord Rotheles suggested was evidently good, and his advice was equally so; but that which he gave he could not take, for he pressed a sleepless pillow. As Georgiana causelessly blamed herself for being happy when her mamma was suffering, so did he (with as little cause) condemn himself for allowing one unkind word to have escaped him towards his widowed sister. It was his only consolation that Christmas was not yet come, that his threatened reduction of income had not taken place, that it was still in his power to render her mind easy, and he had full reliance on the unceasing attentions of her daughters:—
“but would they procure the best medical help?

would they have an experienced nurse? if they relied on themselves, she might be lost, for their love could not supply skill.”

The turmoil of thought continued for several hours, throwing him back on many a heart-rending scene of death and sorrow—of remorse, penitence, and tenderness, producing bitter grief, and burning fever, which towards morning resolved itself into an attack of gout so violent, that every one was aroused save the aged visitant, and fears for the distant merged in alarm for the present sufferer.

Medical aid was speedily procured, and one who well understood the constitution of the earl took up his abode in the sick chamber, anxious to fix the invading enemy in the limbs, which was now threatening the stomach. In the general confusion, no one thought of the letters, save Georgiana, who dearly loved her uncle, and was tremblingly alive to his situation, but at the same time extremely anxious on her mother's account. She was not disappointed; a short letter from Helen informed her that the doctor said the dangerous part of her mamma's disorder was, assuredly, subsiding, but that her pain seemed to increase, or at least she complained of it more. She mentioned having an excellent nurse, and two medical men of the highest reputation.

When the cessation of severe suffering allowed this letter to be read to Lord Rotheles, it evidently relieved his mind exceedingly, and the same influence

which had placed him on the rack contributed to save him from the danger threatened by driving the gout to his foot, but there it became stationary, and Georgiana, as the kindest of nurses with the lightest of hands, became not less so.

The following day the visitors set out, which they could not whilst the Earl was placed in such an alarming position. Lord Meersbrook promised Georgiana that as soon as he was able he would go to Brighton, and endeavour to be of use to her sisters, for which she warmly thanked him, but added especial entreaties, that “his highest cares, his unceasing attention, should be paid to that ‘beloved angel’ of a man, Sir Edward.”

“You are so nervous and excited, Georgiana, that I dare not allow you to bid my grandfather farewell, on the point of what is to him a long journey; it would not do to move his feelings; I know he could not bear your tears. Indeed, you must grow firmer, or you will never do for a sailor’s wife.”

“I cannot wonder that you are afraid of me; but, indeed, I will be very good; only let me look at him once more, and hear his voice.”

“Well, then, come to us at the very last, when he is *in* the carriage. I will let you know the proper moment.”

And thankfully did Georgiana embrace it; controlling her feelings, and springing into the carriage, she gave and received an embrace truly paternal, but a

kind and brotherly hand hurried her out, and, before it seemed possible, she found herself alone — half her world seemed taken from her, and the remainder to be full of trouble and terror; but she remembered Lord Meersbrook's words, she felt the necessity of exerting herself, and was perfectly aware that her lot was light in comparison of what her sisters' must be, as attendants on her mother.

“It is well,” said she, “that Louisa is there, but her babe is with her, and she can be little with mamma; but you, dear patient gentle Helen, you must do every thing, for the nurse will seldom be allowed to touch her. Poor mamma! I would do any thing in the world to help you, and to save Helen at the same time. I am thankful that dear Mary is in Italy, for all this trouble would kill her; none of them have so much to comfort their hearts with as I— at least, not the unmarried ones. I will do my very, *very* best.”

Georgiana kissed her ring, and flew to the bedside of her uncle.

And there for nearly a month did she “rock the cradle” of disease, by a thousand gentle attentions, preventing the unexpressed wish by accomplishing its object, diverting the fears which anticipated pain, and on its arrival soothing it as best she might, and at the same time teaching her own mind lessons of fortitude and wisdom. She was not, however, the unregarded and unrewarded slave that poor Helen was, as well

she knew ; for, let his state be what it might, never did the Earl allow her to miss her ride in the morning, and her short walk in the garden three hours afterwards ; and the Countess, thankful that she could do so much, was always ready to further every means of adding to her relief, and of restoring or preserving her strength. Gouty patients are generally acute in their senses, and possess their mental faculties in perfection ; in their intervals of pain they listen with avidity to a well read book, enjoy a game of chess, and have no objection to a political argument, either read or spoken. They, therefore, cannot be well attended, *i. e.*, satisfactorily attended, by servants alone. This was particularly the case with the Earl, who had been his whole life in the society of ladies, and required such to be about him, since to them he loved to be indebted for kindness, and was not fearful of displaying weakness. It appears to us that this disposition is inherent in the stronger sex, for all can complain to woman in their day of infirmity, and, therefore, do ; otherwise, in how many respects would one of their own sex be the more efficient attendant ?

CHAPTER XLVI.

So soon as Lady Anne was pronounced convalescent by the medical men, she insisted on discharging "that odious woman," the nurse, told Louisa to go home, as she was spending her husband's money very uselessly in staying there, when there was nobody in the place, and desired that Fanchette might be told "that no possible harm could arise to her from coming up to her lady, and trying to make her look less horrible."

Mrs. Penrhyn was by no means sorry to be discharged, for she earnestly desired to be at home, and knew that her husband exceedingly regretted her absence, and she had long deplored her inability to do her sister the service she desired. As, therefore, she immediately determined to set out the following day, she thought it right to give her the substance of Georgiana's letters, by telling her "how deeply her uncle, Lord Rotheles, had been affected by her late perilous situation, so that his own state became alarming, but she was most happy to say it had now subsided into a regular fit of the gout." She added "that Georgiana was his constant attendant, and a

great relief to the countess, who behaved with much kindness to her.”

“ Poor Rotheles ! ” exclaimed Lady Anne ; “ it is just like him to take things so violently ; he ought to have remembered that he has been subject to gout the last seven years.” As she pronounced these words, her lips quivered, and tears gathered in her eyes, which by degrees rolled slowly down her cheeks.

“ I never shall forget,” said Louisa, “ how kind my uncle was when he called in Welbeck Street to see us after we had had the fever ; but, indeed, he always had a very tender heart—*very !*”

Lady Anne instantly rallied, drew up her attenuated form, and in a sharp voice, not a little querulous, said sneeringly—

“ ‘ *A very tender heart !* ’ Pray, Mrs. Penrhyn, what is the use of a tender heart ? ”

Louisa was taken aback ; she said “ She did not exactly believe she could *name* its uses ; but she always loved people who possessed it.”

“ And your love is precisely of the same value as your uncle’s tenderness. Had he possessed a *good* heart instead of a *tender* one, he would have sent me some money ; commend me to the hand that gives, rather than the sensibility that weeps.”

Louisa could not help a flush of generous anger that lighted up her beautiful face, and formed a strong contrast to Lady Anne’s pale one, as she replied, “ Surely, dear mamma, Lord Rotheles has never yet

been wanting in essential services, as well as kind attentions? He has doubled your income ever since you were a widow, he made me a kind present on my marriage, received you and some of your daughters every autumn for a month or two, sent you abundance of venison, game, and fruit, which you always gave away, by that means securing yourself numerous invitations to pleasant families——pardon me if I speak warmly, but I must do my uncle justice.”

“Of course, for he justified your disobedience; and I do suppose it has been your tattle that justifies him to himself in not sending me money, now that he cannot fail to know what I want, in order that I may leave this place.”

“I have never written a line to Lord Rotheles since my marriage, save to thank him.”

“That is a paltry subterfuge. You have told Georgiana that the Count found me money on his arrival, and she has told Lord Rotheles, to make him easy?”

“Count Riccardini find money! I did not know he had any. I thought he was poor, for I am certain he is careful; and I could not dream of such a thing.”

“Not unless he had told you. Well, well, since you did not know, I beg you will consider yourself in ignorance still, and by no means let it slip to Helen; if she knows nothing she can tell nothing, and is in the safer state.”

“ But, dear mamma, it would relieve her mind so much if she knew you were better off than we both feared you were, that, if you would say a word to make her easy, I should be very much obliged to you.”

“ But I am not easy — quite the contrary ; and I desire, as soon as you get home—and I expect you to go to-morrow — you would ask your husband to lend me a hundred pounds. I suppose he can do such a thing as that, now Glentworth has given him that city concern, or it must be a very poor one ?”

“ I am sure he will do it gladly.”

“ Then let his gladness be immediate, for I want to get home. You had better settle your affairs to-day, and see if you have more than you want to take you home, in which case you can leave it. You must travel post, but you only need one pair of horses in your situation of life.”

“ I never thought of more ; and as the Count will travel with me, and he insists on paying half our lodgings (for he is as liberal as he is careful), I dare say I shall have twenty pounds to spare, and——”

“ I can't see the use of his going away because you do. Not that I shall see him for some weeks to come, but he is useful to Helen, and I can't see what he can possibly do in London.”

“ He is extremely anxious to be received into the Protestant church. A part of every day is spent by

him in conversation with the clergyman here, preparing him to that end."

"What, is he ill also? All the world seem ill at once, I think."

"The Count is not ill at all, mamma; thus far he finds the climate agree with him."

"Then what in the name of wonder makes him think of churches and clergymen? he must be superannuated or deranged."

"I believe he has long meditated this renunciation, and, perhaps, your danger has made him more solicitous to——"

"My danger! what can you possibly mean? I have been in no danger whatever; how could I, with such a constitution as mine? I have been poorly, I grant. I suppose I have gout in my system; it runs through the peerage, as poor Rotheles is another proof. It is exceedingly wrong to mention such words as danger in the ears of an invalid; though I am comparatively well, it is very likely to bring on the vapours; I am sure *you* have no tenderness, whatever your uncle may have."

"The Count is very desirous of seeing you, dear mamma."

"I cannot return the compliment whilst he has those meagrimms in his head; however, you may bring him in the twilight—he will not expect to stay more than five minutes, and he is a very good creature, that is certain, and a man one can always be seen with; and

I dare say Fanchette can make me a little more tolerable meantime, so go away and send her."

Louisa departed, but almost as quickly returned, for she had met Fanchette with a letter franked by Lord Rotheles, and evidently well filled.

"I dare say there is a note in it from Georgiana to me," said she, standing at a respectful distance, whilst Lady Anne broke the seal. Being very weak, she did so in somewhat of a bungling manner, for, on opening the letter five bank bills fell from it upon the carpet, which she gathered, and presented to Lady Anne, rejoiced to see £50 in the corner of each. When her prize was safe in her hand, the invalid read as follows.

"My dear sister,

"I have been truly grieved to learn how much you have suffered. I send you half a year's income, thinking it may be wanted by you at this time. I am still confined to my couch, but better. Georgiana is by this time in better health than Helen can possibly be, therefore I propose an exchange. I can speak to the former being a good nurse. Trusting we are both improving,

"I remain," &c., &c.

The handwriting spoke the feebleness of the writer, and as Lady Anne held it in her hand, she seemed likely to relapse into weakness, but recollecting herself, she said—"You need not tell Charles Penrhyn to send the hundred pounds down

here, it will only make double postage to pay. I shall not want it now for six weeks, but the twenty sovereigns you have will be handy, and you may bring them when you bring the Count, only take care he does not see you lay them on the table."

"I cannot be certain I shall have twenty sovereigns, mamma, when I have paid every thing, and allowed for my expenses home."

"Of course, you may have twenty, or only eighteen; bring what you have."

Parental control had been so decisive in Louisa's case that marriage bonds had not hitherto enfranchised her from the former; she, therefore, at the proper time of light, appeared on the arm of Signor Riccardini, and laid her purse on the lap of her mother (who she knew had at least three hundred pounds in possession), at the risk of being deemed extravagant by her husband.

Count Riccardini did not—to Lady Anne's great satisfaction—allude to her past danger, for, after a few words of warmly uttered congratulation, he adverted to his own solicitude on that subject he deemed of infinite importance and Lady Anne of none at all, because Catholic disabilities were all removed. "At the time of your marriage, it was a shocking thing to be a Papist. You couldn't go into parliament, your children couldn't hold places, and, in fact, there was an awkwardness in the affair; but *now*, there was so little difference between

Protestants and Catholics, it was hardly worth the care of a gentleman, much less of a nobleman, which name he went by."

"So much the better, in one sense, Lady Anne; but if my conscience dictate one mode of conduct, I must obey it. I am going to a country where I hope to meet a great many noblemen and gentlemen, Catholics and Protestants, on a system of perfect equality, for they will all be *servants*; but not one of them will be found who did not follow the truth, according to his conscience."

"Well, I shall very soon follow you," said Lady Anne, by no means comprehending the Count's mode of putting his case, and having a horror of theological subjects.

"You have been very near going before me, my dear madam, and no one knows how it will be yet, for we are nearly the same age, if the memory say true. I do not like the complaint of you. I know many case of the what-call *ulcer* in the throat; he go down, down, fix himsel on de lung, and come to be fatal. The disease bring many person to Italy; one will recover, nine will die."

"You talk of young people; girls and boys, Count, are subject to consumption."

"Yes, *principe*; but some that are neither young, neither old, will just do the same."

Mrs. Penrhyn rose in great confusion, saying, "We shall be too much for mamma, indeed we

shall, Count;” and taking Lady Anne’s hand, she, with great respect, stooped to kiss it, and then hurried out of the room, taking the Count with her the moment he had performed the same *devoir*.

“How glad I am they are gone!” said Lady Anne to Helen, as she returned into the room. “Louisa is so healthy, she is quite vulgar-looking! By the way, I have never seen her child; remember that it is brought to me early in the morning. The Count is unquestionably become a Methodist, or something of that kind. How shocking! so very well looking a man as he is!”

“He is very handsome, for his years; and so good and kind!”

“His *years!*—Years! One would really think you were all gone mad together! What extraordinary words have I heard the chimes rung on this day! *Danger!*—*conscience!*—*consumption!*—*years!* You must all have a passion like the king in the play, for ‘skulls and epitaphs and graves.’ You look like a corpse yourself, that’s certain; so I shall send you to Rotheles Castle, and get something better to look at.”

“Send me away!” said Helen, with a face of great dismay.

“I shall set out for London the day after to-morrow, and soon after that, you will be exchanged for Georgiana. Lord Rotheles will contrive about

it. I should not be surprised if somebody put it in his head."

Helen's colour returned with abundant interest ; for three days before, when she was literally leaning on the arm of Count Riccardini, completely worn down with watching (for the young cannot live without sleep), who should they meet but Lord Meersbrook, who started with surprise and pity at the appearance of Helen, and although in a short time he began to hope that her disorders were temporary, yet he was convinced that they ought to be arrested soon. When she had returned into the house, he continued for a long time to walk with the Count on the pavement, and finally, to turn into his rooms, and sit awhile with Mrs. Penrhyn ; from whom he learnt every thing he wished to know respecting Lady Anne, and, in his turn, communicated great pleasure by the account he gave of Georgiana's improvement, and the opinions entertained by Lord Rotheles and Sir Edward Hales, respecting her union eventually with his brother.

Mrs. Penrhyn expressed herself extremely gratified, but observed, innocently, " She wished Captain Hales had preferred Helen, for she was now nearly of age !" Lord Meersbrook did not second that wish ; on the contrary, he drew up and looked proud and grave.

" I think her age would make no difference," said the Count. " I mean to say it would give her

no liberty; either she love her mamma so much, or she have such great perception of the duty and the delicacy; in such case, she will decline to take advantage. Oh! she have the beautiful mind, that Helen; she is my daughter to me, and I look close into all the folds of her innocent heart, and all is good."

Lord Meersbrook's countenance regained its usual expression of urbanity.

"You have never seen Georgiana," said Louisa, "or you would say the same for her dear uncle."

"Perhaps so; we shall see. At this time, to preserve the health and soothe the spirits of Helen, is my grand object. I am full of fears for her: she want an object for make her take care of herself, is my opine."

"Oh, no! She knows how dear she is to us all," said Louisa. "Yes, *all*; for I am sure my Charles loves her as if she were his own sister. Dear mamma being *ill* is fretful and cross, and Helen has to bear it *alone*, for the first time in her life, and it is too much for her."

"She is pretty full of cross when she is well, so it is no wonder she have abundance now; and the gentle spirit of poor Helen sink underneath. I have one large desire to write to my Lord of Rotheles, but I cannot love to grieve him now he is so bad himself."

"I will go to Rotheles Castle," said Lord Meersbrook, "and break the matter only in the way he can

bear it. I have become quite used to English travelling, so pray make no apologies ; I will set out in half an hour."

The result of this journey was Lady Anne's receipt of the bills, and Helen's of the invitation, or rather command. Without this happy interference, neither circumstance would have taken place until evils of many kinds had accumulated ; for, although, as we have seen, poor Lord Rotheles, in the acuteness of his feelings for his sister, became in a most alarming state, in proportion as she mended his compassion subsided towards her, and became active for himself, on whom so much severe suffering had fallen. The fit was, however, nearly over ; he was delighted to see the young nobleman, began to consider the great expenses of his sister's illness, and kindly acted as we have seen ; he also consulted with the countess how far it might be advisable to get Lady Anne down to Rotheles Castle as soon as possible ; but this she considerably thought would not do for either party, for they would both be too much excited for persons in such a state. "If," said she, "the thoughts of your sister placed you in such a situation, what will the sight of her do, sickly and wasted as she must be ! I really dare not risk it—all your bad symptoms might return in an hour."

Poor Lady Anne thus lost the chance her native air might have given her for speedy recovery ; but, as she bore her removal to London well, and rejoiced exceedingly in having effected it, looking to Mrs. Palmer's

cook as an able successor to the one at the hotel (with a quality the latter by no means boasted), her spirits were raised, and she was much more cheerful and amiable than Helen had seen her since the time of their re-union.

A week afterwards, Georgiana, so long deemed the queen of flannels and soft palms, left the home she loved for the one she dreaded, but was perfectly willing to encounter, being indeed anxious to see her mother, and shew her every dutiful attention. On leaving Lord Rotheles, "some natural tears she dropt;" and they did not fall alone, for he was exceedingly moved; but Lord Meersbrook sustained him, and was, in the opinion of Lady Rotheles, quite a godsend, though she did not propitiate him so much as she intended, when she expatiated warmly on the superiority of Georgiana to all the rest of her nieces, though she owned "that she knew but little of Helen, who would return with the servant who accompanied her sister."

CHAPTER XLVII.

There is a surprising difference in the powers of renovation possessed by the young and the middle-aged. Lady Anne had seen her daughters all reduced to shadows by fever, but they were all well again in a very short time, and took plain food with good appetites and evident advantage. This was by no means her own case; she had no ailment to which she could or would give a name, but yet she was not well—her palate was fastidious to the greatest degree, and, even when gratified, produced little beneficial results. She was overdone by slight exertions, heated rooms, and large parties; even an opera was death to her, and there was nothing for it but lying by for a whole season.

At this period she therefore seriously resumed the intention she had occasionally mentioned to her eldest daughter of writing a book, for which she intended to get a sum of money which should cover the remaining pecuniary obligations, and put such a surplus in her pocket as would make her at ease, and enable her to “keep up appearances.” If so many ladies of rank wrote books, there could be no impropriety in her

following their example, though it must be allowed to be a great concession in one of her noble blood to write a book at a common price, to be had at a circulating library, and which even a dirty artizan might read. She remembered, when a girl, seeing a short poem written by the beautiful Duchess of Devonshire, for which her papa gave three guineas; she did not suppose there was a single copy sold in the city or the country, so that her grace had really the satisfaction of knowing that her beautiful hotpressed folio was opened alone by courtly hands. "It was true the verses themselves got into all the newspapers, for they get hold of every thing."

Having made up her mind to do the thing, Lady Anne assumed at once the rights and privileges of her order; she beautified her dressing-room as far as was necessary for the reception of the *élite* amongst the class she meant to honour with her acquaintance; she consulted the publisher, who boasted the most extensive intimacy with persons of rank, on the subject, and was told that her work must be three volumes long, and no longer.

"I never thought of making it longer; but I think I shall be tired when I have finished two, otherwise I *could* write a dozen."

"Your ladyship can bring out two or three series, but each *must* be three volumes; any thing short of that would not pay."

As *pay* was Lady Anne's object, and poor Georgiana

was intended to be the amanuensis, should she be found capable of forming sentences out of disjointed hints, and of wrapping foul facts in clean composition. “There will be some anecdotes I had better tell myself, and I must find the smartness and the pathos, but there may be sheet after sheet of prosiness that Georgiana may do fast enough; the essence of the work will be in the title-page — ‘Records of People of Rank,’ by Lady Anne Granard; or, ‘Facts known to few,’ by the Right Honourable Lady —; or, ‘Annals of High Life:’ but I had better write the book first, and give it a title afterwards.”

“But I thought you were going to write a novel, mamma, like Mrs. ——”

“Then you thought wrong. I shall not write like *Mistress Anybody*. I shall write like what I am—a woman of rank. Did Lady Mary Wortley Montague write like Miss Emma Roberts and Miss Pardoe, who were merely modest young ladies in private life, and could not see or relate what an ambassador’s lady did?”

“May I read her book, mamma? It is locked up in your bookcase.”

“No; you may see quite enough of Turkey in the old copy of Guthrie’s grammar. I wish you to study stile and composition, in order to assist me in the relation of anecdotes; and you may do that effectually by reading Johnson’s *Rambler* and Hawksworth’s *Ad-*

venturer, which are always left out. If you want any thing more, ask Mr. Palmer for it, he has an excellent library, and I never objected to any of the books he has lent you. Indeed he is a well-informed man, I must say, and has practised 'forget and forgive' to me ever since I returned, and, I trust, will do so about the money I borrowed, at least till the publication of my work. As to reading many books, it would be nonsense, as I am certain I have seen enough, and can relate enough, to astonish any body; my own brother's history, during twenty-three years, would make a huge quarto. I have had domestic scenes, too, that would have effect upon paper."

"Dear, dear mamma!" cried Georgiana, in absolute terror, "you surely would not put any thing in print about uncle or papa?"

"Not if I can help it, and fill up the book, certainly, for it might kill poor Rotheles. Granard it could not hurt; but nobody wants anecdotes of private gentlemen, except they were great orators, like that red-nosed Sheridan, or great writers, like Scott. No; the charm in all such books, is stories of royalty, and undoubtedly I can tell several; not only of what I have read in letters addressed to my mother, and which, by the by, should never have been permitted to fall into my hands, as the old Countess of C——k very justly observed—not but she gave me herself all the particulars of things I could not make out. I have all the history of the beautiful Mrs.

N——, Admiral N——'s wife, whom the two royal brothers were both in love with—I mean the eldest and the fourth successively. That is a good story, and can be spun out. She took a cottage in Clewer Meadows, and the prince (whom she certainly admired) used to visit her, after the castle gates were shut, by letting himself down.”

“ I thought you said she was married, mamma ?”

“ So she was ; but her husband was an admiral in the West Indies.”

“ And the prince had never heard of him ? I suppose it was what they call a clandestine marriage.”

“ I suppose it was,” said Lady Anne, actually colouring for shame, as well as anger, as Georgiana looked innocently into her face, eager to learn the romantic in the story, and not conceiving to what it could tend.

“ Then I suppose she told the prince she was married, and that drove him to despair, mamma ?”

“ Why, he was not much given to *that*. Princes seldom are. She was taken away suddenly by the Countess of H——, and there was, happily, an end of the matter.”

“ But, after that, his younger brother fell in love with her ; her marriage being still a secret, how did she go on with *him*, mamma ?”

“ No matter. I shall change my plan—I shall write a novel.”

“ But novels take a deal of inventing and contriv-

ing ; so, that if you could write from your memory it would save you a deal of trouble, because, as you told it, I could put it down."

"No, you couldn't. You can't help me at all ; so don't tease me. I cannot be assisted by you, I see plainly, unless you could do something towards a novel ; do you think you have any head for that?"

"I think I could write a great deal about the love, and the sorrow, and—and—other things."

"What other things, child?"

"The glimpses of hope and comfort, that come across the mind like sunbeams, without any apparent reason, and the way in which, without a cause (or, at least, a new *cause*, and when, on the whole, prospects are mending), the heart sinks all at once, as it were, into an abyss of anguish, increasing the pains of absence a thousand fold, by the fears and terrors of an awakened imagination."

"That's all very well ; but do you know nothing of any sorrows but those of love?"

"Oh ! yes, mamma, I could do the sorrows of poverty very decently, I dare say, and tell something about the happiness of relief, and the pleasure of helping those one loves. I could also say a great deal against riches being the medium of happiness, and the inadequacy of grandeur to supply the wishes of an humble, tender heart."

"I dare say you could ; I have no doubt you could pour out as much nonsense as other fools of your age.

Don't be frightened, I am not angry with you. I know perfectly well that the stuff you are talking is the staple of old novels; but now-a-days they must have a great deal besides to make them go down; if those people would come from Italy, they might do one some good."

"Surely Count Riccardini could tell one a great deal more than my sisters, for he could give an account of all the ceremonies and splendour of his church—the nuns, and friars, and penances, and the soft music, the blue skies, the grapes and melons, and feasts of saints, and all the magnificent antiquities; I think, mamma, one might get a great deal out of him."

"I think one might, Georgiana, if I were not such an object."

"Object! you were never so interesting in all your life as you are now. Mrs. Palmer said, only the other day, 'though Lady Anne is very pale and thin, she retains all her wonted elegance of person.'"

"As to the paleness, *that* can be remedied, and Fanchette does certainly manage the thinness very well; she is a perfect *artiste* with cotton wool; so you shall write him a note, and ask him to take tea to-morrow evening. When he chooses to be agreeable, there is nothing like him; and certainly for *contour* and manner he is a wonderful creature. I am sure he might pick and choose amongst the best dowried dowagers in England; and, instead of making any thing of himself, he has actually been all the way to Granard Park

to look at his wife's picture, and make his bow to all the people who knew him, as "Manuello, the emigrant Italian," hunting up his sempstress and washerwoman, to make their old age comfortable, and talking religion with paralytic vicars and learned curates. Ah! that illness of mine was a sad thing! it divided us, as it were, the moment we came together, and, by leaving him to his conscience and his reminiscences, positively ruined him."

"I have scarcely seen him; but he appeared to me very happy and exceedingly agreeable; I could almost say captivating, for a man of his age."

"That's the very thing I complain of; he makes himself happy under such degrading circumstances; he has actually nursed Louisa's child two hours at a time, sometimes singing the exquisite compositions of his own country, sometimes weeping over it, and calling it his own sweet Manuello. When he resigned it, he would go to prayers at one of the churches; yet, at that very time, there was a Jew's widow, as rich as Croesus, and really beautiful, watching his every motion, and at length leaving Brighton in despair. My medical men mentioned it as a most extraordinary thing, and well they might. They had never known an Englishman so utterly blind to his own interest."

"But, dear mamma, you could not surely wish my uncle Riccardini should marry after he had declared my father's children should be his children?"

"Of course, I do not want him to marry. I only say he is a fool for not doing it."

“Get well, dear mamma, and then we shall see where the Count turns his eyes ; he is like the hero of your future novel—merit not money is his object.”

“Go down and tell them to make a fire in the dining-parlour ; those claret-coloured curtains are more becoming than any we have in the house, and both you and I need them.”

The latter assertion was scarcely true, for Georgiana was looking very well ; all external circumstances had been, of late, favourable to her, and internal no less ; her uncle and Sir Edward Hales alike treating her with the utmost affection, and promising her the support her case required. Not a single word had been hitherto said of the Marquis, and the Count had contrived to fulfil Isabella's desire by giving her the money she really needed, which Lord Rotheles, in his gift to her mother, did not doubt she would share. Indeed, as a man, he did not conceive that she wanted any thing. The Countess well knew she did ; but she was not of the giving school ; she idolized “the dear, affectionate, artless girl,” and could see her want shoes and stockings, and smile when her own insolent maid remarked the “sweet young lady's situation.”

But, in fact, the happiest impetus was given to the mind of Georgiana by the writing scheme broached by her mother. Had she known that prurient anecdotes, breaches of confidence, scandalous facts, and cruel observations, were intended to constitute the matter and to enhance the price, her very heart would have

broken under the affliction such a disgraceful proceeding exhibited, but having no idea that her mamma was capable of such conduct, it could not enter a mind so pure and so uncontaminated by the world ; and, happily, Lady Anne was incapable of fulfilling her own purpose, and of displaying herself, at once, as the scandalizer of the order she was proud of, and the mother who could injure and disgrace so admirable a family of daughters.

CHAPTER XLVIII.

When Count Riccardini arrived in Welbeck Street, he was constrained in manner, and his fine countenance betrayed displeasure, it being an open book, always revealing what was passing within. Lady Anne could not be surprised at this, for he had been to the neighbourhood where she had taken such unwarrantable liberties with his name and that of the wife he loved; and, although many years had passed since then, the affair had come to him with all its original freshness, “for country people, not having the advantage of a succession of scandals, are obliged to nourish the memory of old affairs for their amusement.”

Georgiana felt a little intimidated; but, recollecting what Helen had said of his kindness, and perceiving that her mamma was struck into unwonted silence, she ventured to “hope that his journey to the north had been productive of health and pleasure.”

“It have, in every respect, for I have got in my possession the picture of your aunt, my own beautiful Margarita, concerning which, Lady Anne, you tell me one large falshood; you say it was *heirloom*, and cannot be remove. The owner say “you might

have it, and you decline ; he make me present of it in very much of kindness.”

“ There must have been some mistake,” said Lady Anne, inwardly relieved ; “ in the overwhelming distress I was then in, Count, I might, like Hotspur, say ‘ I would or would not, when they made me mad,’ with distracting questions. You who knew dear Granard can surely conceive what the agony of parting with him and with his estate also must have been. Think of me turned out of house and home, with five helpless girls, unportioned, and the greater part uneducated : with boys a mother has hope of relief ; but with girls—*five girls !*”

Lady Anne’s handkerchief was at her eyes ; the Count took her left hand, and, gently pressing it, exclaimed :—

“ I was grief and vex, and I have speak my speech ; never more will I invoke your sorrow. I *did* know Granard, and love him as my best friend on earth ; never had he successor in my heart—but Glentworth—forgive me ; take your tea, dear lady, from my hand.”

“ Presently, dear Count,” said Lady Anne, rising, and slowly pacing the room ; the eyes of Riccardini followed.

“ She gets better in a strange way,” said he, “ for she is much thinner than she was when I left London.”

“ Mamma is going to write a book,” said Georgiana, anxious to set all at ease, and well aware that the

less her widowed parent's sorrow was observed the better; "and she thought you could tell her a great deal about Italy — especially its church — that might be very interesting."

"So I can, my dear child, for I have had much thought of making book myself, expressly on that subject; but I can *speak* your tongue more good than I will *write* it; and littel mistake is bad in print book."

"But I can write any thing into good English, you know."

"Then," cried the Count, with animation, "I will reveal to you all the contents of my heart and my brain for twelve long years, as they have been exercised on the most awful, the most noble, the most interesting subject, on which an immortal soul can ponder. I will prove that in the Catholic church exist holiness, purity, devotion, and the elevation of purpose, that never have been or will be excelled, and which, in your church, rarely — perhaps never, equalled. I will shew you men that were angels below; and I will shew you, in the same church, imperious bigots flaming with zeal, destroying the peace of families, loading weak consciences with imaginary crimes, and inflicting penances the most cruel, and, eventually, fatal; interfering with your privacy, extorting money and lands from your property—perhaps inducing or compelling your wretched wife—but I will say no more. In the same church there are angels, so are there devils; in your church there are none

such. Every man, in this country, carry his Bibel in his hand ; he refer himself when he puzzle, not to this man or that man, but to the written word of God, to the abiding testimony.”

“ My dear Count, for Heaven’s sake, don’t run on in this way about things held obsolete by all people of fashion ! I would not have had any body here, for the world, when you were talking about the Bible and such like—it is never done with *us*, I assure you.”

“ But I assure you it *is*, though. I spent three days, last week, with the Marquis of Wentworthdale ; and there was visitants, noble and learned, who speak continual of such thing, and ask me question of many kinds ; especial the Duke of Plymouth and the—”

“ Were you really with Lord Wentworthdale ?—what is he doing ?—when will he come to town ?—he is the strangest man I ever knew !”

“ He have had a fever of rheumatics, which make him lame with crutch, his hair is bleach, his face has the puckers—he is very good man—man to love, but certainly not man for marry Georgina.”

“ Then why not say so ?—why not write to me ?—an infamous old man, what does he mean by being ill in the country ?”

“ Hush, hush, hush, he is very good, and not to call old ; but he is infirm, and gets well as you do, by the long degree—I mean the slowness.”

“ When a man of his age takes it into his head to marry, he ought to do the thing at once ; a *coup-de-*

main is every thing, as I told him indirectly—had I been more explicit, I should have been called a *manœuvring* mamma, or something of that kind.”

“ Nevertheless, it is surely the proper, that he should consider very serious, if he will be happy and make happy the girl he marry, and whom it is his duty so to guide that she will take the way to Heaven when he leave her on earth.”

“ Way to Heaven!—what, in the name of wonder, has Heaven to do with it?—if he makes a young, unportioned woman a marchioness, he has done very handsomely by her; she ought to be grateful, and expect nothing more—really the world is in a most unaccountable way. You turn protestant, when there is nothing in the world to be got by it, and he—”

“ Pardon me! there is personal freedom, which is worth more than political freedom—freedom from penances and fastings; from pilgrimages and hair-shirts; freedom to read the Bible—most glorious of all gifts.”

“ Georgiana, play that sweet sonata the Count sings so delightfully (the poor man is really very near gone—I wonder if Finch could take him at my recommendation? I fear not)—do sing, dear Count—Georgiana’s taste is quite equal to Helen’s.”

The Count approached the instrument mechanically, internally observing, “ her illness have destroy her faculties, poor thing; she cannot think on one thing serious; her mind is fatuitous, poor lady.”

The performers were soon wrapt and absorbed in

“ sounds themselves did make,” and Lady Anne’s thoughts flew back to the Marquis. If half was true that the Count declared, he never could be persuaded that Georgiana loved him, and happy would it be if the sailor came back and took her away at once; for surely it was by no means unlikely, if she were alone, the sympathy attaching to their similar inflictions might, under existing circumstances, lead him to see that she would be much more of a suitable companion than any of her daughters — “ we have known the same people, witnessed the same events, met at the courts of the same monarchs—all circumstances that tend to unite people.”

“ Your judgment is right,” cried the male singer—“ why did you not consult it before you marry little Isabella to Glentworth?—how could a girl of sixteen be the company for a man who had travelled much, seen much, felt much?—my heart bleed when I thinking of her, what she *have* suffer, what she *must* suffer.”

Lady Anne had had no idea that she had spoken aloud in her reverie; but, since it was impossible to deny a fact to which the reply was so palpable, she found it a relief to turn the conversation on her youngest daughter, and, with some confusion, but quickness, replied—

“ I had nothing to do with it — Isabella was really in love with Glentworth.”

“ That I belief, for she is so at this moment: but,

what I say is, that you should have had much to do with it; for, a clever woman as you, must see that he was not in love with her, and it is on the man's side the more large lump of the love should lie. He was good man and handsome man, and she know no other man, so she love him, poor child; but they no fit for each other, as she would have found out in a year or so, if you get her to think—”

“*Think?* and run the risk of losing his fortune out of the family!”

“No fear for that; you always think right when the money is not in your head, but wrong when it is—you judge quite right in thinking the Marquis will you suit. I tell him so myself. I say Lady Anne born in the same year with yourself, milord (so say the book of the peeritch), only she is in the beginning, and you in the end; and he make for answer, ‘She is a very fine woman of her years, *certain.*’”

Lady Anne was very angry, both at herself and the Count; nevertheless, his perfect simplicity and sincerity, and the *nonchalance* with which he spoke, amused her as much as it vexed her; and, as poor Georgiana, after various efforts to subdue her risibility, was constrained to laugh outright, the features of Lady Anne admitted the Chesterfieldian smile, and she exclaimed, “Really, Count, you are the drollest man in the world, and say the oddest things in the world.”

“I thought droll thing in your tongue was *scandal*

thing. I never say that, neither repeat it to my heart, for fix it in such place, even when it have been spoke of myself. No, no ; I am not much droll. Talk of your book—if you will not have my memoirs, what will you have for make it ?”

“ I have known so many people of rank in my time, and the lower world is so eager to know something of that circle from which they are necessarily excluded, that I proposed a work of reminiscences and anecdotes made on the plan of one written by a lady, which of course you have not read, but which had a prodigious run last year, but is probably superseded now. My object is to get a thousand pounds, as she did.”

“ A thousand pounds for a book that live a year only. O ! my dear lady, that never will do, it ruin the man which publish.”

“ That can be nothing to me, you know, Count, if I get the money ?”

“ Nothing to *you* ? Nothing to an Inglis lady of rank, that you have injure the man of commerce ? When he come to you with the document and shew he made loss, you *must* repay, and the repay is inconvenient.”

“ It would be so, undoubtedly, but I don't see the necessity ; there is no law to that end, I am certain.”

“ If there is no law in your inside to that end, you

are in a worse state than I did apprehend, yet I had a large fear. I wish you good night, and very much better than you are, my Lady Anne."

With a little pressure of Georgiana's hand, the Count withdrew, looking very sorrowful, and shaking his head most ominously. Even then the young lady thought him quite as handsome as Helen had described him to be, but she was drawn from the Count to her mamma.

"What can that strange creature mean by talking of my *inside*, and wishing me better so emphatically? At Brighton, he spoke, I remember, of ulcers going down the throat, and sticking to the lungs. Surely, he does not apprehend any thing of that kind has taken place with me?"

"Dear mamma, Signor Riccardini was talking only of your moral health, and your imaginary debt to the publisher of your book; by wishing you 'much better,' he meant to desire you to be just and honourable as well as legal."

"I hope you are right, child; indeed, I am sure you are; but as with all his eccentric, far-fetched notions, he is no fool, and has buried both a wife and daughter, it struck me at the moment he might see something in me that resembled them, but that is impossible; I am no relation whatever to any of the set, you know."

"You are not, and I really think keeping so much

at home has injured you ; besides, you have not been to Rotheles castle, which always did you good, you know. Pray don't think about the book till you are stronger. Cannot you spend a day with dear sister Penrhyn ; I am sure that would do you good ?”

“ I don't think so ; but you shall go to-morrow, and ask her husband for the hundred pounds I told her I should want about this time : and mind what I say, if Charles Penrhyn seems to part with it freely, say I should prefer a hundred and fifty — can you say that ?”

“ Surely I can, mamma, when I know that you must have a hundred and fifty to pay Mr. Palmer with next week, on the fifteenth.”

“ You are a mighty accurate person, but like many other wise young ladies, are out in your reckoning. I shall get old Palmer to renew the loan for six months ; I will invite myself to dinner (which of course will please them), and then I can mention it, and manage him. By the way, how did you get the gown you have on, and several other things I have seen of late ; surely you have not dared to run a bill any where ?”

“ No, mamma ; I would rather be ragged than do that.”

“ You are quite right ;—then your uncle made you a present ; it is the first time he has thought proper to remember that girls require clothing.”

“ He is very good, but he does not notice one's wants, as Mr. Glentworth did. It was Isabella who

sent me a little bill by the Count. I was in a dreadful shabby state before I got it. Indeed my bonnet is so now."

"You may take mine; I mean the white chip I got at Brighton, for I must have a proper winter bonnet, and as you say I must go out and get rid of the weakness that hangs about me."

Georgiana brought home a check for the hundred and fifty pounds, receiving at the same time an earnest exhortation to persuade mamma to pay Mr. Palmer, on the fifteenth, from Mr. and Mrs. Penrhyn. On repeating the why and wherefore, as they had given it, she was gravely assured that there was no occasion to attend to their advice or their reason whatever. "In all cases where people lend money," said Lady Anne, "they consider themselves entitled to talk of the necessity of being exact in repayment and prudent in expenditure, and all that kind of thing; they feel their own right to be disagreeable, and very few omit it—therefore, when one can do it, it is better to beg than to borrow, for a giver (they are few in number, unfortunately) generally lays down the cash without comment. Poor Riccardini, I must say, gave me three hundred pounds, at Brighton, in the most handsome manner possible; generally speaking, no people give the contents of their purse so freely as sailors."

Georgiana had been what they call, in Yorkshire,

“flamagasted” by the information Lady Anne gave her, having herself sealed the letter which conveyed her uncle’s gift, but the word “sailor” recalled her scattered senses. “Suppose I were, indeed, married to dear Arthur; and when he came home from a long voyage, he should find that I spent all the money he had been gaining, poor fellow, so that he could afford to give nothing, and found himself in debt, how very shocking it would be! But that will never be the case with me or any of mamma’s daughters; we all know the value of money too well.”

As these thoughts passed Georgiana’s mind, those of Lady Anne ran thus:—

“If I can make nothing of the marquis, either for Georgiana or myself, I shall have been dreadfully taken in, for undoubtedly that young Hales would have been the best of my sons-in-law. Glentworth, in taking two daughters, providing for another, and sending paltry bits of bills to the other two, thinks he does enough. Charles Penrhyn, knowing that money makes money, will always part with it like his heart’s ‘ruddy drops,’ and the only advantage one has in getting any thing out of *him*, is the certainty that he can’t prosecute. Now, sailors at times get prize-money to a considerable amount, and that young man might and would have respected my claims — then, if not noble, he is nobly allied, and if his brother should die, would come in at once. I fear much he has for-

gotten the girl by this time, otherwise I would now give consent. By writing a handsome letter, ascribing my refusal to a wicked report now proved to be entirely false (and which, if true, would have compromised the happiness of my most beloved child), I shall get over the matter in a way to prove me the best of mothers, and in time, it stands to reason that he will be grateful.

“There is no saying where he may be, but, if addressed to his grandfather, it would, undoubtedly, take effect; besides, if the girl were disposed of, the marquis would be less tempted, and more at liberty to see the advantage of a suitable match; even at the worst, if he must needs have a young wife, or none, I can send for Helen, who is perfectly at liberty, and, being really a sensible girl, must see at once how completely a marriage with the marquis would set her above all her sisters. One cannot expect every thing in this world, so if one gets the happiness she desires, another may be thankful for the grandeur she achieves. It would be hard, indeed, for me not to catch a single nobleman, after so ardently desiring at least three out of the five.”

Lady Anne fulfilled her intention: she did not write a book, but she did write a letter, which she could do much better, and which was much more to her credit than her projected authorship. She also went out a great deal to evening parties, which increased her

milliner's and silk mercer's bills to a great extent, but she did not accept dinner invitations, as she inevitably found that one additional glass of wine lost her a whole night's rest, and fixed on her cheek a hectic blush, more beautiful than agreeable. Happy was Georgiana when a summons arrived from Rotheles Castle, (the consequence of that letter, of which she was hitherto ignorant) because she trusted that her mother's native air in early spring could hardly fail to be restorative. Mamma would not allow, indeed, that she ailed any thing, and had been positively denied to the Count, (for whom she had still a lingering affection) because he insisted that she was far from well, and grew thinner every day, and, of course, even the most inexperienced of her children thought that something might be done, and ought to be done on her behalf.

We might expatiate on the literary parties to which at this period of her career Lady Anne Granard "did seriously incline," under the idea of becoming herself a bright star in the galaxy of "noble authors," but, as we do not want to gild refined gold, by extolling the highly gifted, and the truly agreeable, and still less to caricature our friends, and so paint little blemishes, that they become great eye-sores, we will leave such descriptions to those of keener eye-sight, and more satirical taste. Whatever might be the talents of the party, it is certain Lady Anne was al-

ways received with the most flattering distinction, few amongst the gifted throng had so learned to estimate their own pretensions, as to be critically inclined towards so fine a woman, who was the daughter of an earl. Unfortunately, however, though Lady Anne received the most flattering attention and the most eloquent compliments which ever met her ear, she could not consider herself as being in her vocation. To her a peer was more than a poet, and, had Gibbon the historian been present, she would have considered his friend, Lord Sheffield, infinitely the greater man; and, after being present at three of these reunions in the house of an honourable, she declared that she would go to no more, for one of the men, in consequence of something which she had said, pronounced her "a woman of genius," in the very same tone and style he had used when speaking of some American woman who wrote verses.

"Now," added Lady Anne, "I have no objection to be called a talented lady or so, because, without talents, no book can possibly go down, but to be termed a 'genius,' I cannot think of. At least, ninety-nine out of a hundred men of genius have been persons in what is called the middle ranks of society, and many from its dregs. I don't believe more than half a dozen aristocrats were positively 'men of genius,' from Chaucer to Byron. There was Sir Philip Sydney and Lord Surrey, Locke, and Boyle, and Bacon;

quite a proportion, perhaps, because we have been few always ; at this time, there are more than there ever were before, but still not enough for it to be agreeable to me to accept of such a distinction ; in fact, I feel it to be a foreign order, as yet unauthorized by my own court."

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