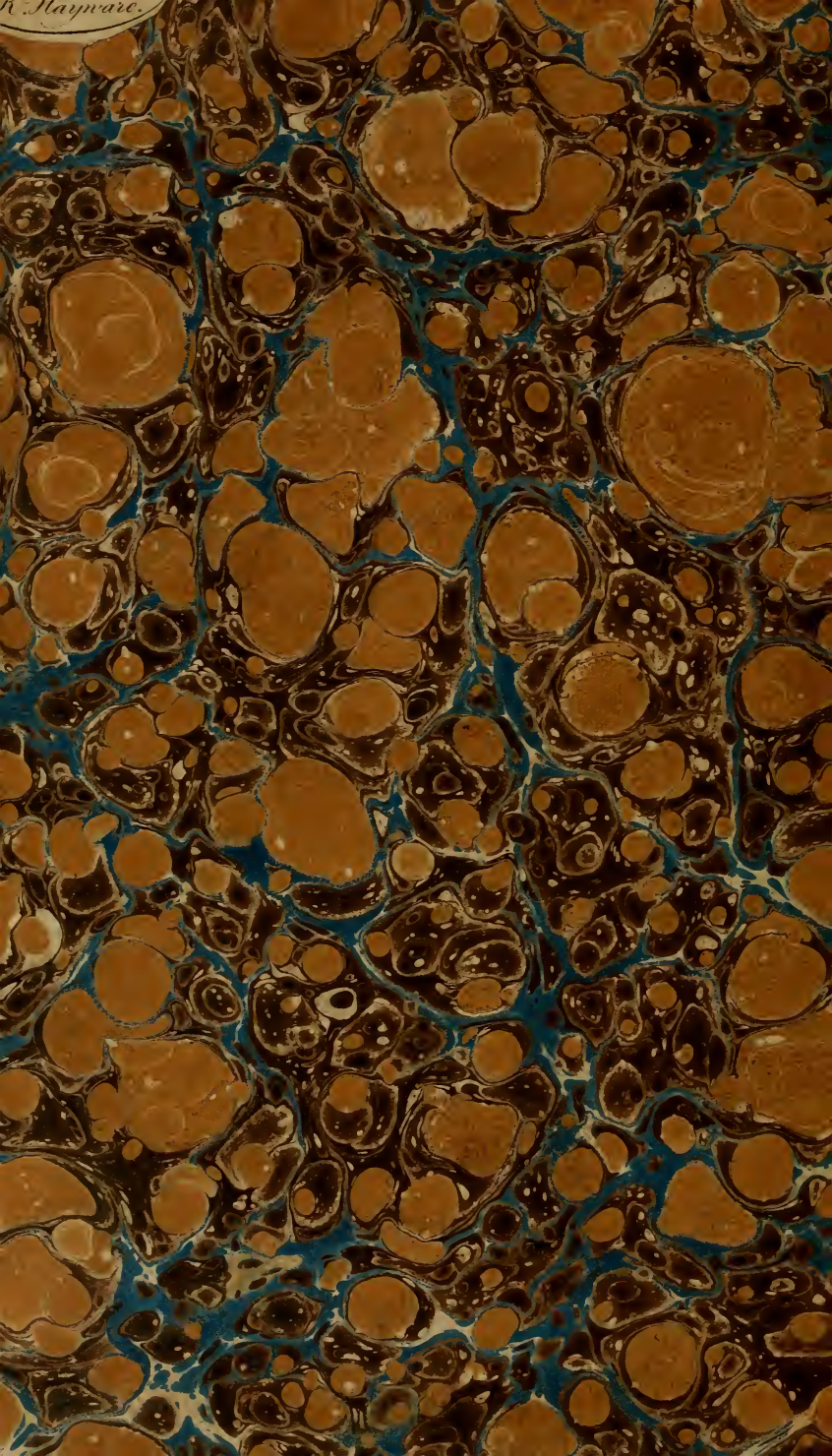
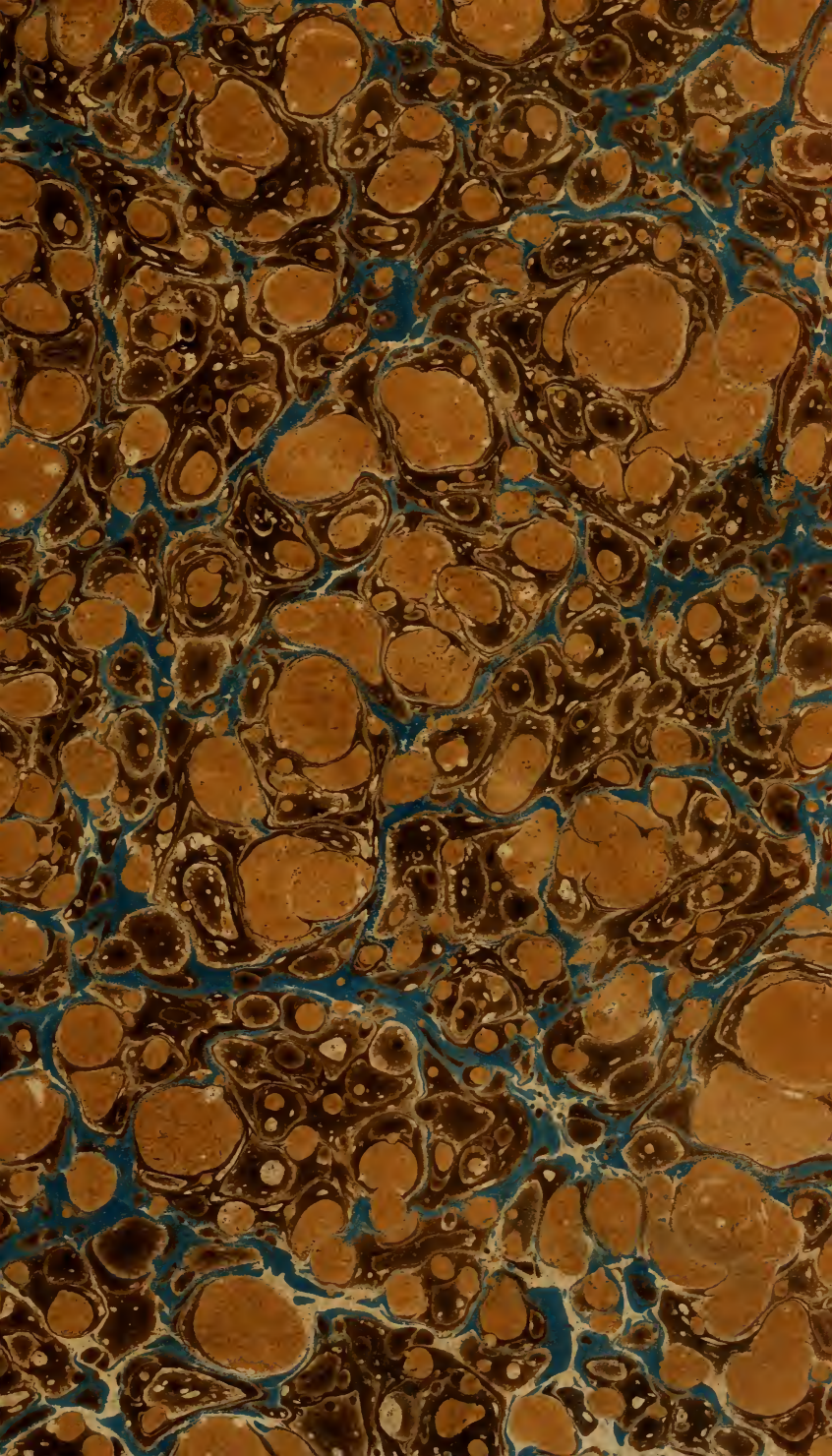


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ROSANNE;

OR,

A FATHER'S LABOUR LOST.

IN THREE VOLUMES.

BY

LÆTITIA-MATILDA HAWKINS.

Oh! quanto erra colui che'l mondo in guida
Prendesi! Ed a che strazio ed a quai pene
Ed a qual morte va che a lui si fida!

FILICAJA.

VOLUME III.

LONDON:

PRINTED FOR F. C. AND J. RIVINGTON,
NO. 62, ST. PAUL'S CHURCH-YARD.

1814.

A good mind easily amalgamates with religion; but one soured by discontent, or agitated by turbulent passions, will admit nothing exhilarating.

BIDLAKE'S BAMPTON LECTURES.

There is no virtue more amiable in the softer sex, than that mild and quiescent spirit of devotion, which, without entangling itself in the dogmas of religion, is melted by its charities and exhilarated by its hopes. COWPER.

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ROSANNE.

CHAPTER LI.

MR. Grant had, not without intention, contrived to fix his friends within sight of the finest of the churches: he well knew the disposition to copy, that often exists in the mind of unruly man, and he knew the power of imposing objects; but he was equally well aware that many a mind which will follow, refuses to be led; and therefore he used no urgency. Nothing was said on the subject of Rosanne's going to church—it seemed understood that it was not to be thought on.

‘I shall go in silence,’ said Mr. Grant to her, when he could speak to her alone; ‘but I would have the utmost delicacy observed.—Let your father see nothing but that he is consulted, and that we give up to his habits, as much and as unostentatiously as we can—and then let us mark how this operates.’

The bells ceased to call the congregation, and the streets were emptied. ‘Do you not follow the fashion of the place, Rosanne?’ said her father to her, as she sate reading behind his chair.

‘ These fine people, who have flocked by to show themselves to each other in a crowd, I dare say, *think* they are doing right: I supposed Grant would have taken you—I could amuse myself; and I certainly shall never oppose your acting consistently with your new opinions:—I have given my word, and you may rely on it.’

‘ A thousand thanks, my dear father; but it is the value of what you grant me, that would prevent my using it.’

‘ How so?—do not be absurd.’

‘ I will explain myself. If you told me I might walk across the room as a favour, I should do it, and be satisfied; but if you permitted me to go without you, to see a fine prospect, to look at pictures or statues, to hear fine music or superior eloquence, I should say, the pleasure is incomplete without my father.—Another motive would restrain me: if I did it publicly, it would imply that you had not a taste for these excellencies; and I would not so traduce you to the world. I know you have a taste, and a good taste, and a correct taste; and I persuade myself that a time will come, when you will accompany me—and for this I will wait, in the humblest and most grateful submission.’

‘ Is it possible,’ said Bellarmine, turning round in his chair to look at his daughter—‘ is it possible that you are considering *me*, instead

of performing what you call your duty to your Maker?—what inconsistency!’

‘No, my father,—perfect consistency: I am doing all in my power to atone for my neglect: I am reading the church-service—and this shall, for the present, content me. I am confident that the only way to obtain the favour of my Maker is to prefer my duty to my inclination:—should I not rather dishonour than honour my parent,—and such a parent! if, by any act of mine, I pointed out that he doubted the providence of God? You are well to-day—you will go out, you say; therefore you cannot appear hindered by want of health:—no, my dear Sir, I will never injure your estimation by my contrasting conduct:—what I cannot cure, I will hide—at least while I have hope.’

He had again turned his back: he now rose in silence, and went out of the room.

What would have been Rosanne’s apprehensions had she been privy to the scene in the forest? She could not know that her thoughtful guardian had Bellarmine’s razors in his pocket: she imagined that his penknife was mislaid, because she had lent him hers. Her own property was, indeed, safe; but on neither razors nor penknife, or any perverted use of such instruments, did she think.

She was disturbed by his manner of leaving the room; but it was because she feared he was quitting her to indulge in a fit of low spirits,

which might counteract what was doing for his restoration: she was impatient for his appearance, but she dared not hasten it.

The power of employing herself was now destroyed; and, if possible, with anxiety greater than when she was awaiting his return from the forest, she listened to sounds that passed away from her.

She went to his chamber-door, and, had she feared the worst, might have been comforted by hearing him say a few words in a murmuring, complaining tone; but to her they were 'confirmation strong' of all she dreaded. 'Why, this must be the *re-re*-action of laudanum,' said she to herself, 'if this is any effect of it; but he was so much better, that it cannot be. I am sure there is something more of cause than the laudanum—I hope dear good Mr. Grant is not deceiving me—I hope they are not treating me like a child.'

She came away—she returned: all was still—she returned again: she called—no answer: she knew not what to fear: that which she should most have dreaded was still remote from her imagination. She did not, even now, call to mind Captain Mask's prediction: evil thoughts had not ready access to her mind.

At length, while listening against the partition which divided the rooms, she heard, or fancied she heard, her own name pronounced in a low hollow voice. She flew again to the

chamber-door, but it was locked; and her request to have it opened, was not answered.

What should she do?

There was a door, perhaps, from the next room, which Mr. Grant occupied.

Her conjecture was reasonable; she found a door which she could open—but what did she see?—her father on the floor.

May the taste for scenes of horror be forever exploded! it shall not here have any encouragement—it is corrupt, and productive of moral evil.

‘If I faint, he must die,’ said she, to herself.—‘Great God! look on me—O Mr. Grant! that you were but here!’

Extreme perturbation of mind had been relieved by a very safe, though frightful hæmorrhage from the head.

‘Do not be shocked,’ said he, faintly.—‘I assure you this is accident—you will find it so; nay, satisfy yourself, I would not terrify you, my dear child;—look yourself—it is over now.’

Rosanne supposed his senses affected—he seemed apologizing to her when he should, if his judgment had been clear, have thought only on himself.

She tried to assist him to rise, hoping, but scarcely knowing how to attempt it, to place

him on his bed.—‘Rosanne,’ said he, looking up at her with an expression she had never before seen in his countenance—‘my child, I cannot conceal it from you; this is all your doing—you are right, I own.’

She sprung from her knees—she let drop the arm that she had grasped—she stood erect and motionless: her hands fell before her, while, looking on herself with contempt and horror, she said, in an accent of deep despair, ‘Then I *am* an outcast from Heaven, indeed.’

She could not now hear her father contradict her: the ‘arrowy shower’ of tears that almost excoriated as they fell, was necessary to restore even her power of voice,—all her confidence in Heaven was but enough to recall her senses.

‘Can we do murder and not know it?’ said she. ‘Can I have killed my father, and be innocent?—What is innocence? if ignorance, I am innocent of this great offence. Take out, great God, this heart from my bosom—survey it, even with *thine* eye: has it a thought, has it a wish, it would hide from thee?—has it not asked thy direction?—has it not submitted to thy guidance?’

Recollecting herself, she looked down, and crying out, ‘O my father!’—tears of better efficacy came to her relief; and she could hear him speak kinder words than ever yet passed his lips.

She sunk into the chair nearest to him; she

bent over him, while he, suppressing all thought for himself, tried to atone for the doubtful construction of what he had uttered, by professing himself benefited, not injured, by her endeavours.

‘Do not talk to me, my dear father,’ said she, ‘till we have Mr. Grant with us; he said he should be at home at One; and it wants now but half an hour.’

‘Then,’ replied Bellarmine, ‘I have no time to lose; go to the drawing-room—I will, I give you my word, only refresh myself with a little water, and I will come to you—keep quiet, and you shall have every comfort your affectionate heart needs.’

She obeyed: he led her to the door—she threw herself on the sofa—‘Am I alive? am I awake?’ said she; ‘did my father speak so kindly? what am I to hope? will he give up all his prejudices? does he think me right?’

He came to her, before she could grow uneasy: he sate down by her; he took her hands—‘Now, my child,’ said he, ‘my mind has got rid of much of its oppression—now hear me.—I remember, when I was a young man, and more talked of than was good for me, I was told that old Dr. Justamond had taken my part, when he heard me spoken of, perhaps, no worse than I deserved, and said, that if ever I was convinced I was wrong, it must be by female influence. Little did I foresee, that this influence

would be a daughter's, but so it is; and not even Grant, my dearest child, shall share your triumph. In the present state of my shaken nerves, you will rest satisfied with my saying that I am not that infidel I may have appeared: I confess I wished to be so; but you have prevented it. In France, I caught the contagion of such opinions; for education had given me none to defend me; but your conduct has been my antidote, and Grant has most faithfully aided it. I will endeavour to get my mind and spirits into good order, and, if I can succeed to my own satisfaction, we will go to church together next Sunday.'

Mr. Grant came in while Rosanne's tears were in full flow—and now seemed dispelled all the clouds of separation, of doubt and of distrust, that had marred the happiness of father and daughter, and called out the endeavours of their friend. If there was in the world a happy being at this moment, it was Rosanne Bellarmine; did she not deserve to be so?

Taking her out in the evening, in hopes that fresh air and the calm scenery of the lovely country might restore the serenity of her mind, Mr. Grant, when she expressed her difficulty in believing that what was so transporting to her as her father's generosity, could be real, replied to her, ' His mind has been long preparing for this happy change. Much is, under God, owing to yourself and to your propriety of conduct—

had you done less, you would not have roused him; had you done more, you would have soured him: he has seen the influence of Christianity on your mind, and he has considered it to a good purpose. I need not tell you we must still be very tender, and not require too much: he will probably slip many times before he reaches the point of security; but let no one persuade you, when you have not me to guide you, to use that vehemence of zeal which many people think necessary to the promotion of Christianity: it may, I grant, promote *their own* species of religion, and I acquit their intention with all my heart—but they must not tell me that this is the religion of the Gospel. When you mix in the world, your disposition will lead you to unite with what you will hear called ‘serious people.’ I hope we are all ‘serious’ in our endeavours to obtain the favour of God; but if their ‘seriousness’ depends on what they inculcate, the surrendering ourselves and our hearts to our Saviour, and if, as they tell us, there is no efficacy in any thing we can do, unless we feel convinced that we have done so, though I love them with all my heart, I cannot join them. We all, I hope and trust, mean the same thing; but I have a great objection to fanatical terms and mystical jargon; and I set my face against every thing that narrows, or plants thorns in the path of religion. Take your faith, my dear child, from the words of

our Blessed Saviour; do the best you can in understanding and in acting up to them, remembering what, I am sure, you feel yourself, the impossibility of our meriting pardon for even our common transgressions, but through his atonement. Cultivate the temper of mind that is most favourable to receive the influence of that Holy Spirit which guides us to the performance of God's will; but do not expect ever to *feel* that you have even done your best, much less that you have entirely surrendered even *your* pure heart to the service of your Maker. Read the Scriptures with none but the best commentaries, and consider the Epistles in particular, as directed against heresies in the early church; and consequently be content to find them less intelligible to you, except where duties are plainly enjoined, than the simplicity of the Gospel—yet they have their admirable use which you will discover in time; but do not resort to them in lieu of the Gospel-text—take them collaterally, and as expounders of the law. I should not give you this warning, but that you will observe, amongst these 'serious people' whom I describe to you, and whom you will find, in most instances, highly respectable, a great disposition rather to preach from St. Paul's words, than from those of our Lord himself; and I do not think this facilitates an acquaintance with the simple verities of our faith. I am not infallible—God forbid I should

pretend to more light than the rest of the world: whenever I change my opinion, you shall know it; but, for the present, do as I bid you.—And in your external, comply with all innocent customs: affect no austerity—do not fancy you offend God, by seeing a play, dancing in company with proper persons, or pursuing your accomplishments. Use music, as music was intended to be used, to invigorate the spirits, relieve thought, and aid devotion.—I know nothing more innocent, more awakening to piety. Teach those whom you can influence, to use the world without abusing it; and remember that a good mind may be lifted towards Heaven, not only by the colour of the rainbow, but even by a box of ribbons in one of you girls' finery shops.'

CHAPTER LII.

THE ensuing week promised Rosanne a species of enjoyment beyond her utmost hopes, nor did it disappoint her. Her father was now a different being from the reserved man she had hitherto known him: he was not gay, but he was tranquil: he took air and exercise, saw his physician with an improved countenance, read and conversed, and suffered her to accept the kindness of Mrs. Firmly, who, meeting her want of information more than half-way, saved her from any uncourtly surprise that her ignorance of common things might have excited (1). Her protégée was too well bred to distress any one by awkwardness: her remarks were silent when they were not favourable, or when she could doubt their being just: and it became, in a few days, matter of emulation with some of Mrs. Firmly's select friends, to offer civilities to the beautiful Miss Bellarmine.

But no alteration did this change of solitude for society, and seclusion for admiration, make in the beautiful Miss Bellarmine. She was the same Rosanne as at Chateau-Vicq, only infinitely happier, and on principle more cheerful. She judged of every thing by the standard erected in her mind; and convinced, daily and

hourly, that there are indeed very few actions or sentiments so unimportant as not to obtain a character of good and evil, she was duly circumspect in what she did herself, and as candid as her knowledge of Christianity could make her, in judging of what she saw and heard. But when once she had decided, which was the farthest her judgment ever presumed to go, as to the propriety, or rather conscientiousness, of adopting, in similar circumstances, what she saw practised, her foundation was too firm to allow that which was built on it to be destroyed; and it was soon perceived that any deviation from decorum robbed her countenance of its smile, and that her nice sense forbade the graces of her lips to encourage it. 'I dislike freedom of manners that goes beyond ease of conversation,' said she to Miss Pathos, 'because it is giving up one of those securities that set us most at ease. We cannot speak without restraint, if we put ourselves in a situation that admits of being misunderstood: whereas, within proper limits, we may do what we please; and to me, it is particularly necessary to be always sure I am within my own fence. I may, in my ignorance, make mistakes which would, I do not doubt, be forgiven me on the credit of my being known to be cautious; but any levity, any thing unbecoming the mild restraint of our religion, would subject me justly to censure;

and I have no right to make myself a worse example than I ought to be.'

'I have found out,' said she to Mr. Grant, 'the shortest way to please myself.'

'Happy girl!' said he, 'can you not teach it me?'

'She is teaching it *me*,' said her father; 'my Rose is a very good teacher.'

'I have found out,' said she, 'that taking care of motives is still better than looking after actions when they are gone a mile off.'

'Tis no new discovery,' said Mr. Grant, 'but it is a very useful one; abide by it—it would prevent half the disingenuousness in the world: we should not have to say that the first reason we hear is seldom the true one.'

All the conversation of her father and Mr. Grant tended to convince her that she might rely as much on the sincerity of the one as on the prudent zeal of the other; and, on the Saturday of this week, she heard discussed the choice of the church in which she, for the first time, should join in the worship of her Creator.

'What say you to the little French church here?' said Mr. Grant; 'it is venerable and very private.'

'O no!' said Rosanne, irresistibly impelled to speak, at a moment when she was quitting the room; 'not French, pray.'

‘It would be skulking,’ said Bellarmine to Mr. Grant. ‘Time was, and not long since, when I would gladly have skulked; but I should not be satisfied with consulting my own feeling in this instance:—and,’ added he, smiling, ‘you do not know me well enough to judge of the merit of that sentiment; for, to speak truth, I believe it is the first time in my life that I ever did not choose to consult my feeling. It has been, Grant, my bane through life. A man ought to have educated his feeling very carefully, before he presumes to let it guide him. Human nature, I doubt, is not to be trusted. I will not object to the church of the least gay resort; but let me begin properly.’

No first play—no approaching ball—no promised pleasure by water—no journey by land, ever made the novice in this world’s enjoyment so fearful of disappointment, as did the prospect of going to church make Rosanne. The day arrived: every thing was propitious: her father’s mind was calm and firm. Mr. Grant had presented her with a beautiful Common-Prayer-Book, in which his best wishes were written; and she had provided one for her father according to her own taste, but without the out-of-place ostentation of a present from her who wished to be dependent on him. The right and wrong into which she divided her ideas, taught her this propriety.

The church selected for a purpose, which, though of the commonest description, was by circumstances made awful, had remains of high antiquity and ancient grandeur; and as they entered it, Rosanne, whose heart and soul were in that temple not made with hands, looked round on its venerable walls, with an elevation of gratitude that precluded all confusion and embarrassment; for it did not allow her to think of herself. She had studied the service: she had passages of the Psalms in her memory: 'I was glad when they said unto me, We will go into the house of the Lord,' was on her lips. Yet she had one feeling perhaps peculiar to herself. Like those who, having a medical friend, think no advice can be so salutary, no operation so gentle as his, she wished Mr. Grant could have officiated. She wanted a particularly soothing tone to meet her father's wounded mind: she thought no hand could heal but his who had probed.

She had, in her pardonable ignorance, asked Mr. Grant whether it was not proper to inform the clergyman that some of his auditors were new disciples, that he might, as she understood there would be a sermon, accommodate it to their reception, which she supposed might be done without injury to others; but Mr. Grant had said. 'No: to a conscientious man, the duty is sufficiently impressive; and we might, by interesting too much, abate, in this in-

stance, the powers we wish to increase. Let us take what we must, in worldly language, call our chance, and trust to the blessing of God that we shall be able to apply to ourselves that which most concerns us, and to extract from the sermon what is most useful. A good pastor of his flock always provides for the weakest in the fold; and the dutiful follower of Him who alone 'knew what was in the heart of man,' will always adopt his mode of treatment, reprobating audacious vice with dignity, and promoting the return to virtue by persuasion and encouragement.

Nothing could now detach Rosanne from her father's side. On her knees—on the ground—rejecting every convenience and indulgence—as her father's example taught her—she, perhaps more fervently than ever for herself; besought for him the pardon, the guidance, and the blessing of God, through that mediation, of which she felt as well as acknowledged the necessity, to man, 'fallen from his high estate.'

She could not have hoped, even from Mr. Grant, more tenderness of manner than that with which the service was read; but still she waited anxiously for the sermon. She had read some which she thought would have suited her father and her: her heart beat; but 'Thy will be done' closed all her tumultuous feelings.

The preacher, in a discourse on the text 'Let

him that stole, steal no more,' certainly gave little hope of adapting his endeavours to the circumstances of Mr. or Miss Bellarmine; but extending his view of the subject to that strong proof of a wish to amend, the making compensation for injury to others, either the force of his arguments, or the energy of his manner, or the kindness which he expressed for those who had still to give this strong proof, seized the attention of Bellarmine very powerfully; and something more than all these might have been supposed to bear upon his mind, when he covered his face, and seemed to stifle his sensations.

But the sermon had finally closed with an exhortation to those then in the church, and who admitted the force of the preacher's arguments, to avouch their acquiescence in the doctrine, and further their own good intentions by partaking of the Holy Sacrament. Pale and in tears, Rosanne heard this. Bellarmine only shook his head.

They quitted their pew. Rosanne lingered; she looked, with a saintly curiosity, to see the table, which seemed spread for those who deserved an invitation to it, in preference to her and her poor father. The person whose office it was to close the doors, stood waiting their exit; and Rosanne felt as if turned out. But she dared not give way to her regret: her duty was claimed too imperiously by her father's hu-

miliation, to allow her to claim any thing for herself.

Every allowance was to be made for Bellarmine, if he appeared thoughtful, and even a little disturbed, on his return. Religion is no precipitate nostrum; it is a gentle alterative, producing regular but not violent effects; and this conviction kept Rosanne's mind easy. No objection was made by her father, when attending the afternoon-service of another church was proposed. He listened with complacency to the prayers; but there being no sermon, it remained to be proved, whether all sermons would, for a time, affect him as he had been affected by that in the morning.

‘I have deceived myself—I have hoped too much—I have expected too much;—is it all a dream?’ said Rosanne to herself, when she met her father the next morning, and saw him little less gloomy than during his former habits. The evening had passed well—he had walked out with Mr. Grant—she had spent it, by her own choice, at home; and the conversation, previous to their parting for the night, had been so supported by Mr. Grant, that Bellarmine's being somewhat silent was not striking: but now she could not but perceive that which it was most painful to observe:—and to the increase of her own anxiety, their kind friend hinted the necessity of returning to his flock, to which he

must, as soon as they could spare him, yield. Something, far more urgent than invitation, pressed their coming into Kent; and ‘This is some consolation,’ said Rosanne, when her father seemed inclined to engage himself, though at a distant and unfixed day.

At the first opportunity of speaking to Mr. Grant without her father’s overhearing her, she again resorted to her former mode of procuring ease of mind by consulting him; but the fear that she might almost offend him by supposing that which his better judgment, she still flattered herself, told him was impossible, made her affect something like gaiety when she spoke.

‘My feelings,’ said she, ‘I imagine must be, at this moment, extremely like what Miss Pathos described hers on the application of a second blister to her side, when she had hoped, in vain, to have been relieved from great pain by the first:—I cannot bear this repetition as well as I did the former suffering.’ She then communicated her fears; and happy she was in having communicated them; for they obtained for her, though her consoling friend was not at liberty to say as much as he wished, an undertaking for the security of her comfort. ‘’Tis,’ said he, ‘a bitter medicine which your father is taking; but he is sensible that he added the wormwood to it himself:—one thing I am sorry to tell you,—you must know it, and it may spare him

pain to tell it myself;—he must go to London for a few days without you.'

The tears came into her eyes as she said in a tone almost of incredulity, 'Indeed!'

'He must,' said he; 'and he will be the better for it; he has affairs to settle with various people.'

'He thinks then he shall die,' she exclaimed, clasping her hands in pitiable foreboding.

'No, no, do not you fear; you will have him back in a few days.—I wished to have seen Mr. Wellborn again before I quitted this part of the country; but perhaps you would rather I were with you; and I will then stay.—I do not know that I could be easy in leaving you here.'

'What, not when I behaved so well at the hotel?'

'The hotel was, in my opinion, though more exposed, a safer place—you do not know your servants—any scoundrel may knock at the door, and ask for you by name; and your servants might be very innocently imposed on.'

The idea of such danger was new to Rosanne; but she could not defy it. 'Shall I go back to the hotel,' said she, 'and remain there? but I could do something that perhaps would make my father and you happier about me. I am so sorry to be a trouble—I dare say you wish I were a boy.'

'No indeed,' said Mr. Grant; 'and except where girls must be sufferers, in spite of all our endeavours for them, I never allow any father

to utter the wish in my hearing. I have known some almost saying hard words to girls, under selfish fear of trouble and expense for which they could make no return :—if they are troublesome, or expensive, or helpless, 't is the fault of those who rear them; and if we cannot like them, 't is the fault of our taste and the want of knowing their usefulness—their soothing power—their humanizing properties. What should we be without you?—a set of bears, believe me—or perhaps a herd of asses. If fathers would know what daughters may be, they should ask Sir Patriarch Humid. I consigned to the earth the dear remains of his exemplary daughter Lady Valebrun, the week before I left home. *Her* father, important as a son was to him, I am sure never felt a wish that she had not been a daughter; but then he brought her up for his comfort and her own;—and then—for we cannot, Rose, make things desirable, but the people of this world will desire them—they have so much sense as *that*—then came this good young man who married her; and he was too good to be refused; and so adieu all thoughts of a father's repaid care!—*her* father could not think of it—and she is dead, and has left a large little family to feel, perhaps through their lives, that they have lost her. But come, my child, I did not mean to bedew thy eyes. How shall we settle this matter?

' I could accept Mrs. Firmly's repeated invi-

tation : I really think she is good enough to wish me to do so.'

Thus it was adjusted ; and Rosanne compelling her confidence in Mr. Grant, to overpower the fears excited by her father's countenance, parted from them, in the way least increasing any reluctance they might feel in being called away, or any painful anxiety that should arise for her comfort in their absence.

Walking with her to deposit her safely with Mrs. Firmly, Mr. Grant's ready-turning eye caught some children at play. Rosanne had just said, ' Give me something to think on while I am without you—something of which I can make profit.'

' Nay,' said he, ' never ask me for subjects :—look for yourself—the world is full of them. Those children there read us all a lesson : in kicking that tile, and aiming at a spot which it is to reach, that boy does what, would to God we could all do ! he does his utmost ; and if he plays again to-morrow, he will feel the improvement which he has gained to-day. People complain of the sameness of life—why do they not carry their eyes, and ears, and understandings about with them ? they would then see that no two things are alike, and that every minute produces something new :—they would know too that every thing has a tongue, and that every thing, whether they hear it or hear it not,

preaches to them louder than I ever did, even at my best. Shakspeare was no visionary, when he said that stones could make sermons: he did not prophesy what things would be—he knew what they *must* be, and he acquainted himself with what they are. We call poetry fancy and imagination, when we should oftener call it the intimate perception of truth. If you, my child, carry through life an observing mind, you will be insensible to what half the world complains of—you will see literally ‘good in every thing;’ and you will never, even in solitude, want for entertainment. I was a thinking boy, though an active, and, I believe, a mischievous one. When my father taught me chess for his own amusement, I saw in it that which I afterwards recognised as typical of worldly prudence. I saw the same caution in the outset of a business demanded, as in the first moves of my pieces. I saw that I needed coolness, forbearance, acuteness, to discriminate between a real and a fancied benefit, as much in the game of life as at chess—the same circumspection, the same care, in affairs of nicety, to secure an honourable retreat, the same perseverance in spite of discouragements;—in short, all the mind that my father had called out on the pie-bald platform, for the interests of my half of the population of it. A game at battledore and shuttle-cork, or at marbles, sent me, with increased accuracy, to my syntax and prosody; and music, that charm

of my vacant hours, seemed to roll the soil of my mind, and to make its product shoot stronger.

‘ I turn away,’ continued he, ‘ from those people, and there are some, I am sorry to say, in the world, who can distil none but poisonous juices from herbs—we have our choice in most things.—And here we are at Mrs. Firmly’s. I shall see you well received, and then say, ‘ God ‘ bless you!’

NOTE.

(1) We are, not even now, as a people, sufficiently refined in our manners, to insure, without the warranty of previous acquaintance, the safety of an ignorant person in wishing to be less ignorant. To distress by a smile is, in some cases, more a breach of charity than the thoughtless would believe; but the horse-laugh of superior wisdom, might be classed as the utmost possible excess of folly, were it not surpassed by the shout of those who confound others, without suspecting that they themselves are wrong. Where was the inaccuracy in speaking of the proboscis of an elephant which made young Yelper caricature a mock feeling of shame for his sister?—And when a lovely stranger to the metropolis mistook the F P that points to the fire-plug, for a direction to the foot-path, and wondered it could be necessary, would it have been kind to consider the error as deserving ridicule?—Let it be reserved for such voluntary ignorance as was implied in the answer of a very pretty girl, who being asked if she was fond of a curricule, replied, ‘ I never eat India dishes;’ or for the Sibyl, who, being consulted on the distance from her house to the church, granted that it might be half a mile less than she stated it ‘ in coming back, because it was all down hill.’ In such a case it was impossible not to recollect the lion at the fair, described as being nine feet from the head to the tail, and twelve from the tail to the head.—‘ How should I know?’ is one question. ‘ How have you escaped knowing?’ is another.

CHAPTER LIH.

THE business on which Mr. Bellarmine thought it necessary to go to London, was of a nature which he had too much delicacy, and too much respect for his daughter, to divulge. He had, but she did not know it, a son some years older than herself; but where this young man was, or how situated, he knew not.

In the state of his mind on the day when he attended Divine service, he met, with candour and conviction, the preacher's extension of his subject to the reparation demanded from us to those whom, either by violence, by fraud, by our ill conduct or its consequences, or even by accident, we may have injured; and he came away disturbed by the recollection of his deserted son. The disturbance had diffused over his mind the gloom that had again alarmed Rosanne; and the purpose of his journey was, in effect, to obey the preacher, but, in motive, to indulge feelings which, though far from reprehensible, had still the inconveniences of feelings.

Thus disposed, and dreading nothing so much as inaction, he had resolved to go in quest of this neglected offspring; and not able to endure even the unrepining eye of his friend Grant, he gave him, with his confidence on the subject,

every possible assurance of his being trustworthy, that could induce him to let him go alone on this exploring journey. To have doubted him, might have been to tempt him: to show confidence, was to teach him to deserve confidence.

The gentlemen set out together; and Bellarmine was to leave Mr. Grant with his friends, in order to give himself an opportunity of acknowledging their hospitality in his distress. He did not shrink from going again over ground which must bring painful and humiliating recollections; nor did his conversation by the way, justify the least abatement of reliance. 'My mind,' said he, 'is perfectly made up to any thing I may have to endure in this painful business. I shall never infringe on the respect I owe to my good girl, either as it is claimed by her better birth, or by her exemplary conduct; nor shall I ever put it in her power to show her filial affection by any sacrifice of her rights, or by any diminution of the distance between her and this young man. I hope I am honestly determined to do what is just, myself; and I will admit no one to blush with me or for me.' So far Bellarmine was right.

Arrived in London, and settled at a hotel there, his first steps were directed to the commercial academy, at which his son's education had been finished; and to choose which, he had

been originally induced by an advertisement, and by the local advantage of its situation in a part of the town towards which he could have no calls. From this seminary the lad had been removed, through the medium of the master of it, into the counting-house of a speculating trader; and a sum of money had been remitted for the purpose, with an intimation that it was all he had to expect for his furtherance in the world.

The interests of the academy having, in the course of a few years, passed through various hands, very little caution was requisite in the inquiry. It was made, as if on the part of a friend; and, admitted to an interview with the present head of the house, who had been a subordinate assistant in it at the time referred to, Bellarmine heard, in a mixed cant of the spelling-dictionary, the ledger, and the second-hand town, all that he could hope to hear of Mr. Frederic Gass: he was told how well he had 'gone through his studies,'—that he was 'a perfectly honourable man,'—'*very* honourable,'—'remarkably amiable,'—'a young man of nice tact,'—'a charming thin-skinned fellow,'—'generous to a degree!'—'excessively attached to his friends, no man more so,'—'a fine warm open-hearted manly character,'—'the most unsuspecting creature alive,'—'perhaps a little expensive in his habits, and free in his opinions—but all young men were so now; and when one is at Rome,

one must do as they do at Rome.'—'Everybody,' this informant could add, on his own knowledge, 'blamed Frederic Gass's father, who was said to be an Irish peer, and immensely rich, for not undrawing his purse, to a young man just beginning trade, as it was impossible, everybody must be sensible, for any great stroke to be done now in commerce without a large capital.' Bellarmine took down Mr. Gass's address, without entering farther into his history or his commercial views.

From this emporium of worldly wisdom, he betook himself, immediately, to one of the little new streets leading northwards out of the town, and which afford situations equally suited to the balancing purposes of getting money and spending it. He went up to a door, which he expected a brass parallelogram to tell him, was that which he was seeking, nor was he baulked; for he could not doubt that he was successful, when he saw inscribed on this door-plate, not merely the surname of the owner, with the addition of Mr. or of a baptismal name, or the number of the house, or any of the stage-directions by which admission is gained into spacious mansions, but his own present family-appellation, prefixed to that of Gass: and a second inspection informed him still farther; for an imperfect erasure, the result certainly of very laudable thrift—showed that what stood now MR. BELLARMINÉ GASS, had been heretofore MR.

EUGENE GASS. What could this mean? What did it say of the young man towards whom he was so well disposed? Rather, what did it *not* mean? what did it *not* say? His hand fell from the knocker; and he crossed the street, undetermined whether to prosecute or desist from his farther search; but recollecting how good an excuse his own deficiencies offered for the presumption that had wounded him, he began to survey the visible part of the house, that he might, by inference, proportion his expectations.

A neat front, draperies of pale blue and full rose colour, with all those decorations of taste that make bankrupts of the buyer and often of the seller; a picturesque veranda; flowers in all sorts of detachments; the virgin's bower, coyly training against the treillis in hopes it might familiarize itself to the situation; the elaborate gilding of a very conspicuous harp, did not indicate that the imputed parsimony of Mr. Gass's father had been fatal to his comforts, or condemned him to pine in obscure industry.

Bellarmino endeavoured to extract comfort from this proof that his neglect had been unfelt, and now gained courage to knock. A very well mannered footman, in the morning costume of the upper class, obeyed the call. 'Is Mr. Gass at home?'—'Mr. Bellarmino Gass *now*, Sir. Did you please to want him?'—'Is he within?'—'I can't, upon my honour, Sir, justly say as

he is exactly at home at this minute; we were rather latish this morning, so he is but just gone out, not five minutes ago: did you wish to see him?—‘Yes: when can I see him?’—‘Can’t justly say, Sir; but I’ll ask Mrs. Bellarmine Gass.’—‘Is he married then?’—‘We *have* a Mrs. Bellarmine Gass, Sir. Walk into that parlour, Sir, and I’ll inquire.’

Bellarmino had time to take a fair survey of the room into which he had been turned. A small piano-forte, a flageolet, a violin and a tambourine, bespoke taste and accomplishments: a child’s shoe told the visitor that he was a grandfather, and, in connexion with a bunch of keys, might have induced a suspicion that housewifery was not the cardinal virtue of the house. The furniture bespoke the best style of dining company.

‘Please to walk up, Sir,’ was permission to see the lady of the house, whom he found in a drawing-room, where glass, steel, porcelain, gold fringes, tassels, cabinet-work, musical instruments, the splendid bindings of books, and a highly-finished portrait of a very handsome young man, all at once claimed regard. The lady, little, pretty, and exquisitely dressed, came from behind the harp: and who could then look at aught beside her?

In a manner apparently timid, but with the phrases of a style of fashion, and a mixture of pecuniary regards, she answered Bellarmine’s

queries on the chance of meeting with Mr. Gass; she talked of engagements with dukes; and, as Bellarmine thought—but he must have been mistaken—with a rank of persons above *ordinary* dukes—of soap-lees—of concerts, and discounting bills—of Billiter Square and Hyde Park; and at length, if it could not be made convenient to see Mr. Gass at the benefit-opera of that evening, Bellarmine had the satisfaction of knowing that, at eleven the following forenoon, he would be in the way to receive him. ‘Gass would, to be sure, be at home in the evening—he had a few catches and glees—but Mr. Gass was not fond of being interrupted in an evening—and indeed he never transacted business after dinner:—he was always so late out of the city, that he had only time to dress; and his man, she knew, was ordered to have all his things quite ready, as two of the professors took their mutton with him.’

A polite curtsey—nay, rather a very low curtsey, and a request to be favoured with a name to give with the message, concluded the lady’s part, in which she had certainly acquitted herself in a manner that Bellarmine would still more have admired, had he been more in the habit of visiting in England.

He replied by saying, ‘My name, Madam, is of little consequence: have the goodness to tell your husband that he has done it too much honour.’

This must have been unintelligible—but no matter—Bellarmine went away.

He did not forget his appointment for the following morning: the chapel-clocks around were striking the hour, as his hand was on the knocker; and St. Paul's deep bass kept up, even in 'airy nothing,' the connexion between the elegant and the profitable.

Does any body envy Mr. Bellarmine his feelings as he again ascended the stairs? They were those indeed of 'high sensation,'—here was 'tact,'—here was 'thin skin' enough, in conscience, to satisfy any dealer in the exquisite; and Bellarmine had been through life a merchant in this traffic; but had *he* been consulted at this moment, his answer might have been nothing better than

' —O! I have ta'en
Too little care of this.'

A breakfast-room on the principal floor, received him. Prying eyes or unpleasant objects were excluded by stained glass, representing Jacob and Laban dividing their flocks, Sterne's Maria, a monk putting his own construction on a text of St. Paul, and other subjects, in the choice of which the purchaser had had but a tithe-share, having seen only one of them, and ordered 'the fellow' to send him in 'that and nine more of his best articles' (1).

The lady to whose presence Bellarmine had been admitted the day before, again received him; but it was difficult to recognise her as the same person; she had, then, been in white, and simple—she was now in blue, and ‘*piquante*.’ her voice, her manner, every thing was altered into what, had she been asked to name the style, she would have called—and *she* might have been excused—the ‘*dashing*.’

There was now no low curtsey—there was, in its stead, the bow ‘*of style*,’ from which she recovered to an inch of added height. ‘*Frederic* would be visible presently—she believed he was adonizing—the hours were so late—very full opera—season almost over—monstrous hot:—the dancing almost heavenly—*Frederic* was always an age at his toilette—Howard, do let your master know again.’

With a fierce air, a brow not very open, indeed, but adorned with hair most becomingly curling in wildness that defied fashion, the newspaper in his hand, and ready for his horse, entered Mr. Gass.

His figure was strikingly fine: his likeness to the picture in the front-room might have made the fortune of the painter; and the Apollo Belvedere was brought forcibly to Bellarmine’s recollection at the moment of his entrance.

He looked, with an interrogating eye, at the visitor to whom he had been summoned—his lip quivered.

‘ Have you taken your breakfast, Emma?’

‘ Yes—there was no end of waiting for you.’

‘ Then, leave us, will you, dear? for this gentleman and I have, I suppose, particular business.’

The lady had been sitting: she now rose, and prepared to retire—not exactly as Milton describes the retreat of Eve, rising

‘ With lowliness majestic from her seat,
And grace, that won who saw to wish her stay;’

but she marched out very handsomely, with the honours of war (2).

The young man made all sure by closing the door after her; and then, in a hollow broken voice, with very prepossessing feeling, articulated, ‘ Certainly it is my father! you *must* be my father, Sir!’

A scene of painful interest followed; and what in Bellarmine had been the struggle of moral virtue, now became the indulgence of his natural habit of mind. He could not chide: he could only inquire—and with a smile too, he inquired, when the first emotions had subsided—why his present name, a name with which there could be no existing connexion, should appear on the door-plate of Mr. Gass’s house.

‘ I throw myself on your mercy—I acknowledge myself wrong,’ said Frederic; ‘ but, my God! Sir, what will not a man of a high spirit

do, when he finds himself insulated, thrown on the pavement, an outcast in society?—To make human nature moderate in its demands, you must first allow it its right.—The river, my dear Sir, never overflows its banks, till it is straitened in its channel, or provoked by impediment.—I would not, by all that's sacred, I would not—I would sooner cut my right hand off, than I would take an atom more than is my due, in any point whatever, unless some one presumed to say, 'Nothing is yours.'—Then, indeed, a man becomes a lion, or even worse:—'tis the outlaw that is desperate—'tis the drowning man who seizes on another to save himself—human nature is not, in itself, ungenerous; those nursed in the bosom of their countrymen, will be content—they have nothing to demand: I own,' said he, lowering his voice, 'I may be wrong;—Terræ filius, I know, can claim no name but that of baptism; but circumstances have imperiously demanded what I have done.'

Mr. Gass's engagements were all set aside: he and Bellarmine spent the morning together, dined together at a coffee-house, and went together in the evening to one of the now-closing theatres. Conversation naturally drew out details; and Bellarmine found that his long residence in France had left him something to learn of modes of life in London.

Frederic described himself as 'a young trader who had tried many schemes, that is to say, tricks—to make good his want of capital: he had now, he said, a prospect of great success in a plan of general agency, which required none.'

'You must live at some expense in that house, though it is not large—but the situation—I suppose, sixty pounds a year for such a house as that—that makes perhaps eighty all together, rent and taxes.'

'Treble it, my dear Sir,' was the reply on the tongue of the merchant; but he considered for one moment—

'Why, yes, my dear Sir, the house would be expensive to any one but me; but, like the crow in the fable, *I* eke out *my* means by my head—an assignment of a decoy-duck's lease—what I am to do when that's out, God above knows.'

'What is your establishment?'

'Next to nothing; just for the child and ourselves. O! you should have seen the brat: he's a fine fellow—my horse I keep just behind the house, here; for I give you my honour, I have no carriage, I have not indeed:—I do every thing by the way of Cheapside.'

'And whom have you married?'

'O! you must hear Emma sing and play—do you know, my dear Sir, she was quite taken with you, yesterday—never saw her so fascinated in the whole course of my life.'

Bellarmino's stay in London extended to a week, during which his feelings, masked almost from his own acquaintance, by the pretext of principle, had certainly made more progress than was safe. Frederic, Emma, and the child, had so filled his heart, that he was almost surprised himself, when he found that he regretted the obstacle to introducing Rosanne to those who so interested him. He relieved himself of a considerable oppression, by a liberal present to the mercantile speculation of Mr. Gass, which was requited by a promise to bespeak a new door-plate.

And now Mr. Bellarmino *felt* that he *ought* to return to Southampton: he therefore acquiesced in the necessity.

NOTES.

(1) This is nothing new in the way of absurdity. Mount Vesuvius in stained glass for a cold bath, is under the standard of folly in the localities of this manufacture.—But is it worse than Francis the First, of France, painted in the character of John the Baptist; his grace of — in that of Solomon; or the Lais of the day under the guise of Abra?

(2) The fascinating Emma is not to be used as a model for imitation. The chameleon-character may, like the manœuvring of a pantomime, strike and amuse for a time; but variety and sameness are more related in their effects than in their causes; and it may be as wearisome to see a wind-mill perpetually in motion, as invariably still. The post of 'plaything in a gentleman's family,' is not the most elevated

to which a good girl may aspire ; and the versatility of talent demanded for it, may be dispensed with in a wife, a mother, a companion, and friend.—The power of keeping passion alive by giving it new pasture, may be necessary in some contracts ; the tenant who has no lease, must please his landlord : but that reliance on principle, intentions, conduct, and the candour of a worthy man, which English ladies may be allowed to feel, takes place of all paltry means ; and grief it is ! ever to see young women so diffident of themselves, or so little able to distinguish right from wrong, as to condescend to the adoption of those ‘ witching arts ’ that are exclusively the property of hireling-beauties. In the same way, but far less respectably, as professors and manufacturers eclipse amateurs and frugal housewives in their attempts,—must women of no character excel the modest in their emulations : ingenuity is whetted by the wants of life, more than even by pride ; and those who with every stimulus and no restraint, with perfect courage and no foresight, will do all that can be done, for the corrupt purpose of exciting envy or passion, should, if we thought wisely, be left to walk over the course by themselves ;—the race here is not to the swift, but to the needy and crafty.

CHAPTER LIV.

How had Rosanne passed the time of separation from her father and her good friend Mr. Grant? Not unprofitably nor unpleasantly. Mrs. Firmly's manners were of a class which gave confidence to those whom she protected; and when Rosanne had been asked whether she did not find Mrs. Firmly rather proud, she replied, 'Such pride as Mrs. Firmly has, I shall always make a requisite in my intimacy with my seniors.' The young lady who put the question, had indeed turned away with the homely proverb of 'like loves like;' but Rosanne was attending to some one else at that moment.

Miss Pathos was a very good girl, notwithstanding her giving herself up to the joys of the circulating library. She had an immense fortune, which had involved her in the necessity of being indulged; and the friendship of a cousin, Lady Winselina Dyche, had, by sap rather than assault, defeated the better sense of Mrs. Firmly; but still Miss Pathos would have been reclaimable, and her health might have rallied, under the influence of Rosanne's mind, could this have been for a time permanent, and her cousin kept aloof. As matters stood, this could not be; for the ladies were fated to live toge-

ther, and their inclinations perfectly accorded with the necessity. Lady Winselina was, by many degrees, the forwarder in 'her studies;' and under her superintendence, Miss Pathos was feeding on English narcotics, while, under a language-master, she was preparing to imbibe the juices of the more powerful German root which fattened her ladyship. What its effects would be on the weaker subject was to be inferred. Miss Pathos was already a miserable invalid, and so perhaps are many from the same or a very similar cause.

Every pause that Miss Pathos's inquiries for character and incident left during the first day, was filled by her ladyship's questions as to her acquaintance with French, Italian, and, above all, with German works. — 'I shall weary Miss Pathos,' said Rosanne, 'by telling her I have seen nothing;' and 'I shall disappoint your ladyship by owning that I have read nothing; for what I have seen and what I have read, I fear, has been of a description that would excite no interest, as it has been under the very strict prescription of my father's judgment.'

The ladies seemed to agree, that, with this coercion, it was impossible that Miss Bellarmine's studies and theirs could afford any similarity; but, not at all offended, they changed their course, and contented themselves again with their own habitual searches after character, and incident, and heart-reaching writers.

The season not admitting of evening-assem-

blies, morning-visits were the medium of introducing a stranger; and in these, polite attention and novel praise were so gratifying and so encouraging to Rosanne, who did to the best of her abilities, whatever was desired, and without the consciousness of other young women, that she might have been returned to her friends a very different creature from that which they had left her, had not her ideas of what became her, been borrowed from sources of the best authority.

She had read her small collection of books with the advantage that confined reading brings with it. If the surface of her knowledge was not broad, the substance was solid; and using the poets and dramatists, the preachers and the essayists of her library, as rays of guiding light, borrowed from the great luminary of religion, and adapted to the wants of the world in which her path lay, she was forming herself into a character which dispensed with half the trouble she might have seen others take, and precluded every wish to be made conspicuous. She therefore determined, at the first opportunity, to be ingenuous with Mrs. Firmly, to tell her how, more than unnecessary was any exertion for her beyond the gratification of common curiosity, and to ask her rather to screen than bring her into notice.

She met no discouragement in what she thought right and felt desirable, from Mrs. Firm-

ly. She did not attempt to flatter or to laugh her out of her singularity, for she respected it.

‘Come to me, my child,’ said she, ‘when the ladies lie down after dinner, and we will talk farther.’

‘Lie down, ma’am?’ repeated Rosanne.

‘Yes,’ said Mrs. Firmly.—‘Do not stare—you will see my daughter and Lady Winselina, unless they treat you as a distinguished stranger, take each a volume—the one some double-titled tremulous story—the other some wooing pastoral; and with these, they will spread themselves on the sofa. They will read till they nearly faint or fall asleep. Lady Winselina will get up with a pulse at 120, and my daughter’s will be down at 50: then they crawl to the medicine-chest, the whole house will be perfumed with their anodyne æther; and you may judge how profitable all this will be (1). If you see them in company, they will be peevish and discontented, wishing for every thing they have not, and disliking every body and every thing near them. If they are alone, they will be so fond and sentimental, that it will disgust you; they will sleep ill; and the apothecary will make his daily visit in the morning, to wind them up for the next twelve hours. ‘These girls,’ said she, ‘are fortunes to apothecaries and druggists. I have known seventy pounds sterling spent in a year in anodyne æther for only one of them. If you cannot join in all this, you have nothing

to do but to leave them to themselves; their powers of exertion, even to entertain *you*, will not be strong enough to oppose you if you only desire them to consult their ease, and you show that they may do it without interruption—they will love you and thank you; for they are kind-hearted, and, strange it seems to say! too good for nothing to be angry. But come to me when it is agreeable—I am always visible sixteen hours in the day—on foot or in my carriage I will attend you; and if you will have candour enough to tell me how I succeed in meeting your wishes, or point out to me how I can contribute to your amusement, I shall be gratified.’

What Mrs. Firmly had predicted was verified; and having lost only part of one day in finding out that she should err in seeking vivacity, information, or models, in the young ladies, she accepted her good friend’s kindness, and attached herself to her.

The next morning, poor Miss Pathos having sat up late to conduct two lovers over some very rough ground into the temple of Hymen, could not make her appearance at breakfast. She was, as her maid said, ‘extremely indisposed.’ ‘Indisposed, indeed!’ said Mrs. Firmly; ‘I believe it: how should she be otherwise? If exercise, air, and cheerfulness of mind, contribute to the health of young women, must not sitting

or lying half the day with a mind thus occupied, taking no exercise, but crawling to the library or being driven in a carriage, pursuing one vitiated turn of thought, and shunning every thing invigorating—must not this regimen produce effects at least different? And what satisfaction of mind can these girls know?—they convert their very virtues into subjects of reprehension:—their charity is their inability to bear entreaty—they give, to stop their own ears or the mouths of beggars;—and with Lady Winselina's school of nonsense, I have still less patience. Instead of using her knowledge of languages to the extension of her stores of information, she is really every year more ignorant; she will not know the world as it is—she will know it no otherwise than as it is represented by the enthusiasts whose works are her delight. Every body is, on her first perception, a model of all that is amiable—children are all so innocent!—young people are so enchanting!—the aged are so picturesque!—the middle time of life is the only period for which she has nothing to say. When I am a few years older, I expect to be in a class of her favourites; but understand that this general good will last only till acquaintance brings disappointment. Uninformed of the real state of human nature, Lady Winselina is astonished and disgusted when she sees the smallest preference of any thing which she can denominate selfish, to that which falls

in with her notions. She loves to walk in rain and moonlight; were you to say you feared injuring your health by it, she would, with tears and surprise, lament that even *you* were of the increasing number of the selfish. There is no curing such folly, my dear Miss Bellarmine.'

'Surely a sense of religion would cure it.'

'Yes; but how are you to get it into a mind thus pre-occupied? Were it a new thing, a thing they had never heard of, I would, even now, try it; but they have been brought up, at least with a fair chance for knowing their duty; and religion is a tried but inefficacious medicine.'

'Must I then,' said Rosanne to herself, 'must I then so greatly lower my expectations of the English? The specimens I have seen are not favourable—but still I will wait; there must be exceptions.'

Mrs. Firmly's attentions to Rosanne leaving her at perfect liberty to avail herself of any opportunity of amusement; and the young ladies preserving longer than in any former instance; their kind disposition, she roused them to something like activity, by prevailing on them one day at noon, to go with her to the rooms, in expectation of hearing a lecture on artificial memory. 'It is too late for me to attempt to patch with a different material, that which must, in so short a time, be worth nothing,' said Mrs. Firmly; 'but if I can be of the smallest imaginary service, I will attend you.'

Rosanne saw no occasion to give the good lady this trouble; nay, in her limited estimate of possibility, she had fancied that she might, at her return, agreeably surprise her with reports of success in rousing the young ladies from their mental lethargy.

There was no crowd at the place of meeting to distress her; and her adoption of modest fashions, saved her from the pain of seeing she was gazed at. But though the assembly was not numerous, and an accident postponed the lecture, there was abundance of amusement for her to whom every thing, connected with society, was so nearly new.

A pouring rain confined the walkers, and obliged those who came in carriages, and had dismissed them, to await their arrival. This and the disappointment, converted the lecture into a promenade; and Rosanne, attracted by the beauty of the view commanded by the windows, and illuminated by the bursting out of the sun, had detained her companions while she admired it.

Her heart, which, like the lark, soared to Heaven in the full song of praise, even if silent, when any object struck it with wonder, awe, or gratitude, was dilated with the best species of feeling: and it required all that was passing perhaps in the mind of the young ladies, to call her attention to that which interested them so deeply, that Rosanne's first

perception was of Lady Winselina almost in the act of fainting, and Miss Pathos doing what was in her power to prevent this unpleasant suffering.

In no way could this be accounted for by any thing perceptible to Rosanne: her ladyship had appeared, as was her usual mode of procedure, at some times in ecstasies, and at others in sympathies, all the morning: she had had her portion of indulgence in reading, and not more;—there was nothing to alarm her—nothing to distress her—yet her fainting seemed to require from her cousin, peculiar commiseration.

‘What can have made her so ill?’ said Rosanne.

‘O! the sun’s coming out,’ replied Miss Pathos—with a tone as much claiming compassion as the disaster that called it forth—‘my cousin always faints when the sun comes out suddenly in this way.’

Rosanne scarcely knew whether to laugh or to remove herself farther off, lest she might seem a partaker in what, after her conversation with Mrs. Firmly, she could not but suppose artificial weakness. A license to be amused was granted her by an elderly gentleman near the scene of action, who, quoting an instance of a lady who fainted when the sun *went in*, a little shamed the invalid into better behaviour.

‘Well!’ thought Rosanne, ‘I have here learnt that there must be pleasure in doing that which

would give me pain. This cannot be the air of the world—this is beyond it.’

The sun went in again—the rain increased—the weather had grown cold: no carriages came:—no foot-passengers could get away. Lady Winselina whispered to a young man, who was assiduous about her, that a dance would be an agreeable pastime.

‘A dance, a dance,’ cried the obsequious young man, clapping his hands—waiter—music this instant—Lady Winselina Dyche’s reel’—clap, clap, clap, clap, clap.

The proposal seemed agreeable, but the small number of gentlemen was an objection.

Lady Winselina and her agent now ‘dialogized;’—she began, ‘sotto voce,’

‘Rank?’

‘O certainly, your ladyship—’

‘But Miss Bellarmine with us—it will be expected—yet I should not like—I won’t have any body else—*you* can take my cousin—there he is—make him come here.’

Young ladies were now, in this scarcity, endeavouring to accommodate, by standing up to dance together. The musicians were arrived.

A gentleman of a very distinguishing military appearance, and who seemed to command without claiming respect, and had been very much surrounded, came up to Lady Winselina just as Rosanne had turned to her, and while she was saying, ‘You will really do me

a favour in allowing me to dance with a lady : what difference can it make to me, a stranger ? and when we are only seeking amusement !—our dresses speak for us. I am sure no gentleman would endure to dance with me in my walking-bonnet—I shall neither see nor hear—so pray put me with some lady who will be content with any thing—even with me.'

Perceiving that the officer who had come up had something to say, Rosanne drew back ; the gentleman retreated, and it became necessary for Rosanne to say a few words, that he might be at liberty to speak. She did so, and again retiring in all that ingenuous perception of right which is of all times and places, she heard him begin a hurried apology to Lady Winselina for not staying to partake of her dance. He went away shortly ; and, as if the scheme of pleasure had depended on him, all mention of it was immediately dropped. Notice was given that her ladyship was not well enough to dance ; and the rain still continuing, walking and conversation took place of the more animated amusement.

Lady Winselina's languors soon requiring rest, a groupe of chairs was formed in a situation where, should the sun chance to obtrude his deprecated visage, it should the least annoy her, over whose destiny he seemed to have such malign influence ; and Rosanne, who considered every thing as containing the possibility

of good, was not at all displeased to find herself surrounded by ten or twelve of those visitors to the place, who formed, she knew, Lady Winselina's 'set.' They were persons very lately arrived from the metropolis; and she was justified in hoping that whatever she heard must be new and informing to her.

The young man who had been assiduous in performing and *unperforming* the capricious lady's commands, now having seated his empress to her satisfaction, placed himself in readiness to execute farther orders. He was elegant in person and refined in manners; and his fine dark eyes, without aiming at a target, seemed to send their arrows wherever they directed their regard. A little guidance was given to Rosanne's observations on his peculiarly conciliating attention to the ladies, by the same elderly gentleman who had almost parodied Lady Winselina's fainting, when he addressed the busy boy by the style and title of General Cupid, pronounced with an expression that showed clearly he meant to glance at some talent of universality, rather than to ascribe the high distinction of military prowess.

Lady Winselina professed herself incapable of entertaining, but absolutely requiring to be entertained. General Cupid took the hint, and engaged himself to provide whatever the universe could furnish for her gratification. Ro-

sanne's hopes rose in their demands, and she listened.

But to what was she called to listen? To the adventures of a carpet-knight; who, neither doing, nor disposed to do, any thing worth even his own remembrance, had spent the preceding autumn 'in bower'd bliss and fairy pastimes' with the young females of the neighbourhood where he had resided, and whom he described with every epithet that could give the same character in a varied adjective: there were nice girls, fine girls, charming girls, delightful girls, and of these Rosanne's acquaintance with the new world, allowed her to hear without starting; but when he talked of majestic girls 'with fine busts,' she received a new idea: eyes, noses, and mouths, in their 'integrity,' passed very well; and the critique informed her of the English taste in beauty; but a discussion of lips seemed to leave their honey on the palate of the orator; and she felt a little as if she had got into a milliner's work-room, when he was proceeding from full sleeves to Greek sandals: something more indeed was said of the dress of the foot; and as this necessarily led again to insteps and ankles, Rosanne perhaps feared that, as in a race-course, the heat should end where it began; but the auditors got safe out of the subject, stopping only to consider the roundness of arms and the quantity of beauty due to

the eyes of amateurs. Two or three other young men now came up; for the discussions became worth the trouble of listening; they too boasted of their female acquaintances in nearly the same terms: then followed a little catechism, which being performed in side-speeches, made the ladies attentive. The questions were brief—the answers tallied—‘Energy?’—‘O! infinite.’—‘Talent?’—‘First rate.’—‘Of what class?’—‘Of all.’—‘Shoulders?’—‘Fine.’—‘Good style?’—‘Very.’—‘How are elbows?’—‘Very well turned.’—‘Teeth?’—‘Perfect.’

Other questions perhaps succeeded, but Rosanne was more than satisfied; she was near enough to the windows to move to one of them without seeming separated from her party, and she rose to meditate. But the sun again blazed out, and Lady Winselina’s interest in this disastrous event, disturbed her, lest it should produce again the same distressing consequence; but though the rays persecuted her ladyship even into her fancied security, she was proof against their power. ‘It cannot be that she does not perceive the sunshine,’ thought Rosanne, ‘for she holds up her glove between her eyes and the light.—This is worse.’

No one interrupted the meditations of Miss Bellarmine. ‘I am afraid,’ said she to herself, ‘that I am realizing my father’s apprehensions of my being singular. I know he fears it; and I strive against it as far as I can: but if such con-

versation as I have just now heard, is what I am to accustom myself to hear without feeling angry, I must get the better of something which I suppose is prejudice, or at least the sad want of that air of the world which I begin to despair of acquiring. Mademoiselle Cosart used often to displease me by her impropriety—but she never talked in this way—it is calculated to draw eyes upon us. I am sure my father would not approve it—but I cannot ask even him—I could no more tell him what I have heard, than I could dress before him;—but I must settle something in my own mind on the subject. Why does it offend me?—they meant no harm, I dare say—nor is there any harm in what they said. It must be some prejudice about me; for if I thought rightly, I should say, and even on my own notion of motives as characterizing our actions, that nothing can be blameable in those who mean innocently.—What does all my feeling amount to? why, a paltry, unjust sort of suspicion of ill in my fellow-creatures. In a country where there are no robbers, to hide my purse, would be to injure the estimation of the people; amongst persons who mean innocently, how can I then entertain suspicions?—But, replied she to herself, ‘they are not suspicions;—they are feelings—well; but I hate feelings.’

Her reverie was disturbed by the coming up of a lady, who had, in the early part of the

morning, called on Mrs. Firmly. This lady seeing Miss Bellarmine alone, and not guessing that she chose to be quiet, invited her to walk; and hinting that she knew her to be unused to the world, and a stranger in England, she, with a very agreeable sort of spontaneous loquacity, gave her, in a short time, abundance of information, by little anecdotes or sketches of some of those who formed the company in the room, or whom the sight of them brought to her recollection.

And now again was poor Rosanne vexed and distressed; for Mrs. Ductile, who had so kindly taken compassion on her, was of the modern school of extreme philanthropy; and though she related of the subjects of her biographical lecture, things which those who have been instructed by St. Paul, would rather have kept concealed, when the disclosure of them was not called for; yet she censured nothing—she condemned no one—no individual was in fault—it was human nature altogether.

Rosanne recollected Mr. Grant's opinions and precepts, and was prepared to admit all that Mrs. Ductile could say, short of that which might abate her sedulity to counteract the evil of nature which she was sensible she shared in common with her neighbours; but her acquiescence found its boundary when Mrs. Ductile, in some of the revelations she made, intimated

the almost absolute necessity of the corruption she deplored, not only to the constitution of human nature, but to its comparative perfection:—she had partitions in her mind which separated interesting weaknesses and amiable vices, from weaknesses that disgraced and vices that repelled; and when Rosanne, availing herself of the privilege of well-known ignorance, asked for farther light by which she might dress her own mind, she found she had, though unintentionally, flattered her oracle into confidence that disposed her ‘to leave nothing in the inkhorn.’

What was the sum of all she heard? Whatever it was, nothing on this side avowed opposition, could be less consentaneous to all that she had read for herself, on the subject of morals, or heard from Mr. Grant, in connexion with his profession;—‘the world as it was’—‘allowance’—‘accommodation’—‘the impossibility of making nice distinctions,’ seemed modifications of opinion superfluous after a specific assertion, that men without certain failings, which made a large interest in the desultory biography of Mrs. Ductile, and women who did not console them under them, were little better than ferocious.

A gentleman, with something unpleasant on his brow, came up to Mrs. Ductile—‘You will feel with me,’ said he; ‘George has ruined

himself—they are gone off together: I told you I feared it would be so—I am going to town directly, to see how things are left.’ He went away.

Rosanne was preparing to ask for an explanation. Mrs. Ductile did not give her the trouble: it was one of the many elopements that will, in time, make the duration of marriages in this country dependent, not on the lives of the parties, but on the caprice of the parties:—it was ‘a very pitiable case;’—‘children on both sides’—‘a great deal to be said in excuse’—‘different tempers’—‘most amiable man.’

‘This *must* be dreadful immorality,’ said Rosanne, forgetting her caution; ‘what distress to a father!’

‘O!’ said Mrs. Ductile, ‘the father knows too much of human nature and of the world, to take such a thing heinously; but it is for his son’s political career that he grieves: he was getting so forward!—and now this will be a check.’

‘What, then!’ said Rosanne, ‘immorality is, after all, an impediment to success.’

‘With one party it is—but not the party standing highest for talent; but the inconvenience is, that this matter takes the young man out of the line he was in, for a time, and others will get the start of him.’

Now came up the old gentleman, who had not ‘patronised’ Lady Winselina’s fainting.

Mrs. Ductile immediately related to him what she had just heard;—to him she ventured no farther than to pity the parent.

‘Save your pity,’ said the old man, mildly; ‘for, if a father, on principle, encourages his son’s vices, as he has done, fancying, like a block-head, that he can tether human corruption, and make it subservient to worldly success, he deserves no pity: the father is an accountable idiot—the son is a reprobate, and the woman he has carried off is, if possible, worse than either. But,’ continued he, ‘who can wonder? only go to the other end of the room, and hear the conversation there—there is that young puppy that I call General Cupid, talking with Lady Winselina Dyche and her foolish cousin, in a way that clears the ground for such defiances of Heaven: they are treading on gunpowder—and such gunpowder, as they seek only the spark of an eye to make explode.—But I beg your pardon, young lady,’ said this declaimer, catching a glimpse of Rosanne, whom Mrs. Ductile’s fuller person had hidden from his sight; ‘did I not see you with Lady Winselina?’

Rosanne was silent and distressed; but Mrs. Ductile gave her time for recollection, and conferred, though perhaps unintentionally, a great obligation by saying, that finding Miss Bellarmine, who was a stranger, not interested in their conversation, she had taken compassion on her.

‘Thank you, madam,’ thought Rosanne; ‘had you even said that I was too stupid to be interested, I should still be thankful.’

‘If you were not interested, young lady,’ said the old gentleman, ‘I presume you were not attracted; if you were not attracted, I may hope that you could not approve.’

‘I have not seen enough of the world,’ replied Rosanne, ‘to know how to join in such conversation as this. Were I to engage in it, I might do mischief.’

‘Mischief indeed!’ said the old gentleman, coming round to Rosanne’s side: ‘young lady, take an old man’s advice: *I* have seen the world, and I am not out of humour with it; but I do not like to see it mis-used.—I love my fellow-creatures, but I wish them well in the next world as well as in this, therefore I scold them; and when they will hear me, which is not always, I admonish them. Never mistake reconciliation to what is corrupt, for knowledge of the world; and if you are ignorant, remain so, rather than learn it through such a medium as your judgment, if properly informed, must tell you, by your first perception, is calculated to mislead you. Women have, I confess, less excuse for profligacy than we have, though in none do I tolerate it—their sensitive modesty is their safeguard; but when this is taken off, like the bloom of fruit by its being thrown into the basket with a heap, good, bad, indifferent, rot-

ten, and sound, it is not recoverable. Would indeed that it were only, like fruit, robbed of that which is but external beauty! but not so—the polished surface is broken, and it is at the mercy of all weathers. Shut your ears, young lady, against such conversation, keep your feelings correct under the discipline of a well-regulated conscience, and never strive to get over them.’

‘ O dear! O dear!’ replied Mrs. Ductile, ‘ my dear good friend Cato, you will really make Miss Bellarmine quite a misanthrope.’

‘ Has Heaven made her a fool?’ said the old man drily: are all people, or the majority, knaves and jilts? Can she mistake, when they take such pains to be notorious?’

‘ No, no, by no means;—but if we were to adopt your opinions, my dear Sir, what would become of us all? How are we to get through the world, if you do not at first teach us to accommodate our notions to it? There is a fashion in every thing—even in morals—and we must shut our doors, if you censors make us too nice.’

‘ Now you speak out, my good Mrs. Ductile. What shall I do FOR myself? and, What shall I do WITH myself? are the two questions that have ruined the integrity of half the world in London, and will do the same service for the country.—Good morning, ladies.—As for you, young lady, you have heard me patiently.—Think on what I have said.’

While Rosanne was expressing herself obliged, she was meditating a recommendation of herself to credit—it was fair. ‘Do you,’ said she, ‘Sir, happen to know Mr. Grant?—he is known a little to Mrs. Firmly, whose guest I am.’

‘What, Grant the clergyman, whom I saw here the other day?—O! to be sure I know him:—one of the best men in the world.’

‘He is my friend, Sir, my adviser,’ said she, involuntarily putting out her hand.

‘Then call yourself happy,’ he replied.—‘With Mrs. Firmly, did you say?’

A request, founded on what anxiety she did not reveal—but a request from Lady Winselina, that Rosanne would not relate to Mrs. Firmly the amusement of the morning, farther than in general, deprived the novice of the advantage to be gained by comparing opinions: but this had been, in some measure, atoned for by the old gentleman’s conversation. Much gratified was she the next day, when this good man, whose name was Westby, introducing himself at Mrs. Firmly’s under the pretext of inquiring for Mr. Grant, paid her and her protégée a visit, in which he showed that the truest benignity, the most condescending solicitude for the good of the young and inexperienced, free from all censorious disposition and all the querulousness of age, formed the habit of his

mind. 'I am now,' said he, 'eighty-four: I have had, I believe, the most common lot of mankind, small troubles and great blessings.—I was set out in life well by a good father; and though I cannot boast ever having had superior wisdom, I have never had it much in my power to be very foolish, or ever in my inclination to be vicious. I was brought up to respect my Maker, my country, and my family, and, humbly, myself. I have reared a numerous race, and thank God have seen them all turn out so far to my satisfaction, that I can venture to ask a blessing for them; and, bad as the world is, I am persuaded, it is, in nine instances out of ten, those who contribute to render it so, who find it the worst. I have seen, and I still see, a great deal of good in it. I do not meet with bad people. I do not find myself under the necessity that Mrs. Ductile mentions, of making the moral sense stoop to the state of things; but then,' said he, 'I confess I have no interests to consider; and I prefer my own company to that of persons whom I cannot esteem. I go to bed at night fully aware of the probability of my not living to see the sun rise; and though I do pray to God to give me warning enough to thank him for his past goodness, and to implore his mercy, I am perfectly resigned to his good will and pleasure.—But while I live, and as long as I have the use of my tongue, and reason to guide me, I shall bear my testimony against

the corrupt practices and erroneous opinions of the world. I shall not go to seek them; but if they come in my way, as they did yesterday, I shall always do as I did then, especially in such a place as this, which, in itself lovely, and in its inhabitants respectable, ought to be as salutary to the minds as to the bodies of its visitors. Well, young lady, farewell for the present: when I know your friend Grant is returned to you, I shall take the liberty of paying my respects to him.'

Perhaps Rosanne had never passed an interval of equal comfort with that which she spent with Mrs. Firmly, who, steady in her kindness, correct in all her motives, and regular in her domestic arrangements, made the result of all she did, without any exertion, pleasant to her guest.

The Sunday intervening in this period, had been spent in a way that afforded her instruction in that temperament of personal and relative duties which she now most wanted: she saw in Mrs. Firmly the same motives as she wished to make her springs of action; but she observed, that, by an ellipsis which expressed the highest respect for the faith which she professed, though she drew her principles from religion, she called the conduct they produced only rational.

'This,' said Rosanne, 'I will imitate—it is delicate. I see that extremes have no part in

Christianity.' Mrs. Firmly suffered her Sunday to be broken in on—she was not impatient. She had secured all that she could command of it; and, in Rosanne's candid judgment, she sanctified that which she gave up, by the motive on which she made the sacrifice.

The loss of Mr. Grant's inestimable society was, in some measure, atoned for by Mrs. Firmly's drawing good old Mr. Westby into a habit of visiting at her house; and a daily letter from her father, though it communicated little but the satisfaction of knowing that he was well, kept her free from anxiety. Still, however, she looked forward with impatience to his return; and not even a pleasure promised for the day preceding it, interested her so much as the hope of seeing him.

But yet the pleasure promised was very great;—so great as to rouse the active spirits of Lady Winselina Dyche and Miss Pathos, to a wish for a share in it. It consisted in carrying into effect the postponed scheme for visiting the beautiful ruins of Netley abbey, in a party numerous enough to occupy two boats, and which, thus divided, had all the advantage of a large, and all the comfort of a small party. None were totally strangers to Miss Bellarmine—some were inhabitants of the neighbourhood, who entertained a very just esteem for Mrs. Firmly. The only person with whom Rosanne was not on terms of conversation, was the cavalry-of-

ficer who had excused himself from dancing with Lady Winselina, and whom she had only occasionally met in the street. Her ladyship and her satellite-cousin seemed to attach themselves particularly to him, and with him took to the other boat, which he assisted to row.

The little necessary arrangements in putting off from the shore, had accounted to Rosanne very satisfactorily for this adhesion. She knew that this officer was distinguished by a title, and she supposed that etiquette in England placed persons of proximate rank together. No invitation to join them was given her; nor would any have tempted her to quit Mrs. Firmly, who, with several pleasant friends of various ages, were the passengers in the second boat.

Arrived at Netley, the parties mingled; Lady Winselina and Miss Pathos each, in walking, taking an arm of the cavalry-officer, whom Rosanne now heard called Lord Montrylas.

While in motion, all went well; but when, for the purposes of taking rest and refreshments, the company were seated, and the good humour of the seniors had courted the young people to contribute their vivacity towards the enjoyments of the day; when the mirth of one, the anecdote of another, and the bland benevolence of a third, —the well-bred protection of Mrs. Firmly to the younger females, and, in return, their modest readiness to join the gentlemen in their endeavours to amuse, had realized some of the most

correct scenery of the 'Decamerone,' the cousins seemed to lose all interest in the pleasure, and withdrew, in sentimentality and sympathy, to a distance, which allowed the liberty of speech, without which such friendships must be starved, till the separation of the professors allows of the happy intervention of the post-office.

If any attempt had been made to draw off Lord Montrylas with them, it had failed; and the singularity of their behaviour showed him rather inclined to discountenance their wayward secession: he declared himself very well disposed to contemplate the venerable building and its circumjacent beauties, but not in silent abstraction. 'You must cure those young women, my good madam,' said he to Mrs. Firmly, 'of the nonsense they delight in: they were ridiculous in our way hither: you should turn them a little into the world, and let them see what it requires of them—they are children of five years old.'

'Where is the medicine that is to act on their minds?' said Mrs. Firmly—'what control have I?—I have done all in my power—they have had every advantage I could give them—they are not necessarily ignorant—the world is not new to them, but they have rejected it, and now all avenues are stopped by the mischief they imbibe from books. I am desperate about them.'

'I wish my mother had the managing of them for a year,' said Lord Montrylas—'they

should see my sister. Miss Bellarmine, I wish you knew Agnes.'

'O! Lady Agnes is an example to every one,' exclaimed two voices at once.

'How she would laugh at Lady Winselina!' said a young man, who had, however, been particularly attentive to her ladyship.

'Take care what you say,' said Lord Montrylas, directing his eyes beyond the groupe to a spot where stood the ladies: for, though they did not wish to be heard, they had no dislike to listening; and with that admirable prudence which marks the romantic character, they came forward to claim the disgrace inflicted on them.

And now ensued a scene which threatened the enjoyment of the day. Lady Winselina was grand; Miss Pathos was querulous in her feelings; Mrs. Firmly was indignant: Lord Montrylas most honourably avowed his share in the offence, and endeavoured to follow it by friendly encouragement to more conciliating habits; the young man whose mention of Lady Winselina was not to be pardoned, rose to apologize and explain away; and Rosanne, who had not interfered, hoping that she had, at least, newer influence over the ladies, as soon as the wrath of one and the tears of the other had a little subsided, drew them away, and by a small exertion of the powers of persuasion—by representing, that, as the party was made for her, it

was she who must be wounded by their distress; and by soothing them, giving an amiable aspect to the excess into which they suffered their feelings to be led, restored them, in some measure, to their usual state of flaccid tranquillity. But even now, had the party courted them, when she had prevailed on them to return and take refreshments, they would have resumed their distress; but Lord Montrylas, whose favour seemed of value with one or both, assuming a tone of pleasantry, made terms with them, not devoid of compliment, but enjoining a moderate use of power; and they were coaxed into something like good humour. 'You shall be indulged in every thing,' said he—'even in your vengeance on me. You threatened that neither Trechet nor I should attend you home. We will therefore resign our places to two happier men, if Mrs. Firmly will admit us into her boat.'

This was probably more than would have been asked. Lady Winselina seemed very well disposed to forego her promised revenge: she even tried to recover her influence with Lord Montrylas by something like owning herself to blame; but questions not suffered to be proposed do not gain much consideration; and this arrangement for the return obtained none. Nor, at the moment of embarking, was any more attention paid to Lady Winselina's 'I suppose that, after all, we are to go as we came,' than

to her repentant condescension. There was in Lord Montrylas's behaviour all that could testify a proper sense of what is due to women, but not the smallest disposition to make the silly more silly. Rosanne felt for that which appeared to her the punishment of Lady Winselina and her cousin; but a character of right in the decision claimed her respect; and ignorant as she was of the fashions of England, if she had now been called on to give her opinion on the influence of the sexes over each other, she would have said that the weaker was very properly kept in order by the wiser. To her who loved dependence where independence is responsibility, this appeared no grievance.

What can be more enchanting than the close of a fine summer-evening on the Southampton water, when the sun, embosomed in his own glories, and reluctant to withdraw them, sinks into the foliage of the western shore, in a mantle of crimson, and purple, and orange!—or, drying up the evening-shower, takes his leave in the calm harmonizing tints of the sapphire and the rose! when now in immeasurable lines of liquid gold, and now in rays of colourless light, he seems to look with a smile on the world he will again illumine! The hues cast on the woods of Netley, at one moment deep brown—then purple—then flaming—and instantly resuming the rich green of their own foliage—the

sanctity of the landscape—the storied interest around—the opulence, the elegance, the retreating security of the venerable town, and the soft lines of the opposed Isle of Wight, were features addressed to the eye and recollection, and pressing on the mind with a force and a rapidity not to be withstood.

Rosanne felt all that she could comprehend, and comprehended all that those better acquainted with the scene, had the kindness to point out. Those destitute of curiosity are apt to discover that no one will take the trouble to inform them; Rosanne, all curiosity, had to return thanks around her, for the earnestness expressed for her enjoyment. *She* fancied she had never seen any thing so beautiful; but then it was new—it was her own country! a country she was only now learning to look at—and she expected her father and her friend the next day:—the objects were painted on rose-colour in her perceptions.

But it was a still higher sentiment than that which the landscape claimed, which, when it had filled her mind, made it overflow at her eyes: pale blue gloves showed drops—not of rain—but of grateful homage to Him whom she knew to be present in his works, and whose power and goodness were more than around her. To Him, her heart, not with a sense of duty, but seeking its own indulgence, offered itself—awakened by no bell—confined by no forms;

but lively as the breeze that fanned her, and soaring to the Heaven she almost coveted.

Could she have detached her attention from the magnificence in which she floated, she might have discovered sentiments, not indeed so tender, but as much elevated as her own above the low enjoyments of the worldly, in a mind that had never ceased, through the day, to watch the reach of hers, and which reflected, with no common fidelity, every ray of truth obtained from it. But if Rosanne distinguished Lord Montrylas from those who had united in the kindest attentions to one who, as a stranger, felt peculiarly grateful, it was by a reflection on the bad taste of the young ladies who could trifle with the good disposition of such a mind and temper. Of herself she thought not; for to think of herself in such a situation had not been taught her: and to the honour of human nature be it said, that where there are no teachers of folly, the scholars are rare (2).

His lordship's situation, at this time, made even his bow an honour conferred: he was of a profession which he graced with all the virtues of a soldier, and had recently returned from severe service, unhurt in body, uncontaminated in morals, distinguished by his courage, rich in anticipated experience, and mature in glory. He wore a word upon his helmet, the only pre-eminence he never veiled: he bore about him a superiority which he alone never acknowledged.

Respected as a foe—relied on as a friend—a lion in the field—the gentlest of human beings in society, Lord Montrylas was beloved, esteemed, and honoured, wherever his amiable, his estimable, or his honourable qualities could be known.

Rosanne's words and manner in the trifling affair of Lady Winselina's projected dance, had made an impression on the mind and memory of Lord Montrylas, which depended for being effaced or confirmed, on the disclosures of subsequent acquaintance. He had, without difficulty, learnt all that was to be told of her; and this all was far from discouraging to a man able to estimate female excellence of the higher class. Having no idle time on his hands, he was no morning-visitor; therefore his intercourse might have continued, for some time longer, confined to the civilities of passing in walking, had it not been for the fortunate intention of Mrs. Firmly to indulge Miss Bellarmine, and the as fortunate predilection of Lady Winselina, which made her issue her commands to him to join the party. In his usual mode of treating this humoursome lady, he might have made propriety in the mode of retaining him a condition,—but he, this time, forgot it.

The day had been very *satisfactory* to his lordship; and it was only during the return, when the favourable breeze seemed a voice of encouragement, that he had confessed to him-

self the influence of the past hours on the happiness of his remaining life. He had settled this point, without appearing abstracted, just in time to take the conduct of the sailing-boat on their approach to Southampton, and by his adroitness in the management of it, to make use of every moment of the day-light to add one, and another, and another to the objects that had crowded the excursion with pleasant images.

He called early the next morning at Mrs. Firmly's, to make his peace with the young ladies of the family: he gaily threatened to burn their books, and prosecute the libraries all over the kingdom, as vending unwholesome food; and the behaviour of the ladies under reprehension, as well as Miss Pathos's hints after his visit, would have crushed any presumption Rosanne might have entertained of his lordship's distinguishing her. There are times when ill-treatment is a distinction, as well as situations where the last lady addressed is to be deemed the first entitled to attention; and such Miss Pathos wished her cousin to occupy, and such, she signified to Rosanne, that she possessed.

NOTES.

(1) Why do not physicians and family-apothecaries, instead of asking what we eat and drink, in the first instance ask what we read? A man with good eyes and a soft man-

ner might do something towards correcting this department of regimen; or—for some of us like ‘the rough’—we might be scolded into better discipline. And why are not nervous cases treated on a better plan than even entire neglect of them, which must, at times, be unjustifiable? Why, when, in the diseases of affluence and indulgence we complain that we cannot sleep—and yet know no cause for this involuntary vigil—why are we not answered seriously, ‘I cannot doubt that your day is laudably spent—as a member of the church of England, your employments must be conducive to your own allowable interests or beneficial to others. Well then! when you find this disposition to wakefulness—for which, mind, I assume on your own report, there is no *cause*—I say, when it comes on, try to compose your spirits, and seriously turn your thoughts to Him who, the Psalms tell you, ‘giveth his beloved sleep;’ and humbly hope, that, as your daily activity in his service, requires your faculties to be in vigour, he will, in his providential care, allow you that refreshment which is necessary to your being active.’

(2) In the additions daily making to the advantages of young persons, there is one which, when more diffused, will, if a few specimens may be relied on, contribute greatly to the graces of elegant society. It is one which, now that we have exhausted all superlatives, we describe by a simple term—civility;—and it is so becoming, so recommending, that it is well worth studying and adopting. Let it not be thought low praise. The deportment of the ladies of one of the first families in the aristocracy has been uniformly marked by this quality. Their mother has inculcated it—and there are lovely exemplary daughters of West Britain, who, foregoing the admiration they might claim, are content with the respect of a village, and requite it by this charming resemblance of charity.

Connected with it, is the gratitude due to those who interest themselves to oblige; but which, however natural to a good mind, is, equally with the quality previously men-

tioned, excluded from those ordinary manners which, if fashionable, are of second-rate fashion in the judgment of the best bred ;— and opposed to the one and the other of these graces, is that artificial effrontery, for it would be libellous to call it natural, which leaves very little difference between high breeding and low. When ladies ‘order’ gentlemen, or ‘the men,’ as on such occasions they are more usually called, to provide for their amusements or execute their commands, they do no more than their maid-servants might do to their men-servants. If they even receive with indifference, attempts to serve or to please them, they subject themselves to many constructions, but not to one that is favourable; and they leave it to the civil and the grateful, to inspire that genuine regard, for even the counterfeit of which they are indebted more to the respect others entertain for themselves, than for them. If they wonder that their influence cannot accomplish that which is no difficulty to another, they have to learn how conciliating is the remembrance of civility of manners and gratitude of expression.

CHAPTER LV.

THE agreeable occurrences of the day before, were still in review in the mind of Rosanne; she had returned home to be in readiness to receive the gentlemen, and had decorated the gay paper of her sitting-room, with the sketches she had made in her excursion; when, without any of the anxiety that had attended her previous expectation of the same pleasure, her father and her friend returned to her; and, making every due allowance for the fatigue of the former, after a long journey, she was impatient for the next morning, that she might relate what interested her.

Mr. Grant returned as if to a home; but the hour of meeting in the morning, told her that the favourable appearances in her father's altered sentiments, which had so elevated her hopes, were not as visible as when he left her. He did not join Mr. Grant and herself in their exhilarating duty of thankfulness and petitions:—for this she could make excuse; but she could not account for the failure of all her endeavours to amuse him—for a melancholy restlessness, and for his mis-calling her by the name of Emma: he found fault with her height—she was surely grown since he went—with

her air, and, alas! with her dress; and when, resuming the liberty which he had heretofore allowed her, she said, 'I am sure, Sir, you have seen some lady whom you wish me to resemble; why did you not bring me a pattern of her?'—he referred to the general elegance of the women of London—expressed himself doubtful whether he should not return thither, and looked awkward and embarrassed, and almost alarmed by his own want of caution.

An idea, now more painful than any which she had yet admitted, crossed her imagination; she was an impediment to something he wished to do!—she was an unwelcome burden to him!

All traces of pleasures which she meant to enjoy again in the recital, now left Rosanne's mind; and instead of trying to amuse, she was driven to seek consolation from Mr. Grant, by disclosing to him her uneasiness, her conviction, and her apprehensions.—'My father has taken an aversion to me,' said she; 'what will become of me? surely, surely, Sir, you foresaw this, when you said, as I well remember you did, when you sailed for England, that if ever I wished I had two fathers, I might think on you—is that time come?'

Such distress was pitiable, and rendered more pungent by the necessity which her friend could no longer parry, of returning to his home and flock. There seemed no probability of Bellarmine's even following him, since he now talked

of London; and though Mr. Grant comforted her by contradicting her in her suspicion, and by renewing his promises of kindness and parental affection, yet he could not treat what had not escaped his observation, as merely imaginary. He dared not account to her for any part of what grieved her, by revealing the purpose of her father's journey; nor would she, perhaps, readily have believed that such an effect could be the result of it. Mr. Grant could only speak, in general terms, of the probable consequences of fatigue, rendered more oppressive by disuse—of the allowances to be made for relaxations in good habits, not yet established—of the necessity of patience and the certainty of success. 'Do not be discouraged,' said he; 'I am not alarmed. We must not give way—let us, as far as possible, resume the same mode of conduct as that which his journey has interrupted; and you may be assured, if this is the effect of recent objects, they once withdrawn, your influence will gradually revive. Consider what it is for a man to take up entirely a new set of ideas: consider the occasional conflicts they may have to sustain, till the victory is permanent, till the whole country of the mind is entirely subjugated to reason, and something higher than reason: consider the discipline necessary to keep good order in those who were yesterday, we may say, not only disorderly, but rebellious spirits. Your father has all that, now,

to do for himself, which is done for others by education, and sometimes merely by insensible imitation. One good, my dear child,' said he, 'you may extract for your own use—your experience will teach you to reverence and to value the establishment of your own church: when you see your poor father striving to be what a child of a month old is accounted by baptism, you will not cavil at ceremonies which supply such helps, and which, by presuming that every man in his senses, would wish to be saved, put him unconsciously in the way of being so.'

Two days only intervened between the return of Bellarmine and the indispensable departure of Mr. Grant; and the latter of these would have been a day of positive sorrow to Rosanne, had it not been cheered by her father's receiving with complacency, Mr. Grant's invitation to visit him in Kent, and naming a week or ten days, as the latest period to which he would defer it.

Her heart thus relieved, she listened with redoubled interest to Mr. Grant's explanation of the duty which particularly called him home. It was the preparation of young persons for a confirmation; and it was equally his desire and that of Rosanne, that she should be of the number.

It was almost entering on a new state of life, a new mode of existence, when, having risen at

a very early hour, to see that her friend had every requisite attention, and parted from him in tears of regret, and almost of sad prophecy, Rosanne felt herself, not so much consigned to the care of her father, as left alone to the hopeless task of supporting his spirits: he would not rise to see Mr. Grant depart: perhaps he feared an admonition—perhaps he did not wish to be induced by recapitulations to confess that, at sight of his illegitimate son, his motive of conscience had become impetuous feeling, and that, in the course of his stay, he had very imperfectly adhered to his spontaneous resolution of regarding in the first place, the interests of his daughter.

But Rosanne was inclined to augur hopefully for her own comfort, when he joined her at an early hour, seemed anxious for the dispatch of breakfast, and inclined to go out early; till indiscretely asking if she might accompany him, she provoked a negative, the very tone of which, made her instantly repent her presumption, and resolve to offend in this way no more: he went out, and returning soon with letters, it was evident that they were of a description that induced secrecy: he immediately became engrossed by them and by papers, the contents of which he seemed so desirous to conceal, that she needed no command or even hint to leave him; but he spoke kindly when she went in to bid him farewell, on being called

by Mrs. Firmly to make a visit a few miles from the town. When she returned, he was unemployed, and in deep thought; and at no subsequent part of the day was he disposed to take exercise, nor would he enjoy the beauty of a fine evening. She now saw clearly that she should consult his ease most by relieving him from any care for her; and the next day being Sunday, convinced her of a still more distressing truth, that an attendance on divine worship made no part of his intentions. She therefore again joined her good friend Mrs. Firmly, and left her father, and found him again surrounded by mysterious papers: he wrote letters, which he carefully turned on their faces, when directed: he carried them to the post-house himself, and then, with a mind somewhat lightened, invited her to walk, and was more lively than, under such indications, she could have expected him to be.

The next day, she flattered herself, would pay the debts of many. Her father rose cheerful, compared with what he had been; and though his conversation at breakfast, rather showed a disposition to indulge, than to assist her, and might be construed into saying; 'Do you what you please, but do not observe me;' she was willing to think him very kind: but even by this willingness she hurt her own interests; acknowledgments seemed to fret him, as if they had implied that his meaning, which he could

not make clear, was not understood. Writing again occupied him, and again he seemed pleased when an arrangement for a sailing-party called her away. It was no improvement of her pleasure to fancy he liked her absence, but she was disposed to accept gratefully, even imperfect enjoyments. The scheme was as agreeable as fine weather and kindness, and the absence of Lady Winselina and Miss Pathos, who were in a distant county, could make it. It had been contrived by Mrs. Firmly and Lord Montrylas, for the gratification of good old Mr. Westby, who having spoken of himself, as not expecting again to enjoy this species of pleasure, had piqued their good nature, and made them assiduous in contrivance. Rosanne was in the secret. He was to be invited to an airing, by Mrs. Firmly, and being driven to the water's edge, a boat was to be in readiness, and, wind and weather permitting, his indulgence was to be the willing care of Lord Montrylas, who, as solicitous to please the old man, as if promotion had depended on it, perfected the scheme admirably. The heavens were favourable: Mr. Westby was affected almost to tears, by this mark of respect; and perhaps no four persons ever enjoyed a purer pleasure than he to whom this regard was shown, and those who testified it.

Nor was it without mutual re-payment. Mrs. Firmly was a woman able to appreciate Lord

Montrylas's condescension: she knew indeed too little of his motives, to judge quite correctly of it; but still, under any circumstances, the effect would have been the same, and he would, at any other time, have given up some hours to please a good old man, even if again all the beauty of Southampton had been assembled at an auction, or if Miss Bellarmine had been at a distance.

If Rosanne had wished to advance her interests with Lord Montrylas, none of the common opportunities afforded by the world, of displaying recommendations to notice, could have been half so efficacious as this quiet party. For when Mr. Westby, not merely with politeness, but with delicate feeling, expressed his concern for detaining her from the auction, the desire to set his mind at ease, gave to her manner such an ingenuous energy, and she looked so very lovely while she bore witness to her own enjoyment, that his lordship began to think no time was to be lost;—she might look thus when others saw her; and others must think as he did—there could be but one opinion on a question so decisive in itself, as that the world did not afford another such woman as Miss Bellarmine. He had seen her bearing with the young follies of her own sex, yet not participating in them;—she was respectful, and even grateful, to Mrs. Firmly;—to this good old man, she was tender, almost to filial piety; and to himself—

she was—it was impossible to say what she was:—there was nothing indeed encouraging; she might be engaged ten deep, and yet he could not impeach her behaviour;—she might never have bestowed her affections—and then her conduct rose higher: it was that of a mind regulated by the forms of society, but not cramped by them.—Could it be possible that she had been brought up in France—and in seclusion?—Yes, the former was made possible by the latter. What kind of mind could her father's be?—But to what purpose make the inquiry? she spoke of him as sadly out of health—he should like to see him.—But, why? for he must join his regiment on foreign service, almost immediately.—Cruel! cruel! to attempt engaging her attention. No, he would suffer any thing rather than bring a moment's anxiety for him, on such a creature—for he was sure she had a heart as well as a soul, but it was perhaps a heart not easily obtained—Heigh ho!—‘What a heavenly day!—I hope my honoured father is not penned up in London, still:—my mother and Agnes ought to be in the country.’

‘Do they go immediately from town into Wiltshire?’ said Mrs. Firmly.

‘I am sure they would like her—how she would behave to my father!—my good mother would delight in her—and what a companion for Agnes! Her education must have been great,

but Providence has been very bountiful;—and then, if I were called into service again, I could so rely on such a mind:—she could be with Agnes.’—‘I beg your pardon, you asked me some questions—I was ‘in idle computation’ at the moment: do my father and mother go into Wiltshire? I really do not know.’

Did Mrs. Firmly smile or not?—Nobody could have ascertained this.

The voyagers landed with unabated good humour, and spirits rather exhilarated than fatigued; but, alas! a sad disappointment awaited them. Mrs. Firmly’s carriage was not arrived to convey them home; and great was the concern for Mr. Westby, and many were the plans proposed for his accommodation; but he, disdainful to be a trouble—the least of any, solicitous for himself—said, laughing, ‘Only help me up out of this cramping vehicle; and I will show you I can walk as well as any of you.’

As Mrs. Firmly’s house was, under such circumstances, a considerable distance beyond Mr. Bellarmine’s lodgings, Rosanne, at all events, felt it incumbent on her to invite the party to rest; and having two sitting-rooms, she could do this, without obliging her father to do what might be unpleasant. To mention his acknowledging the civilities she had received, by visits from himself, was not to be thought on in the posture of affairs, since his return: she could

only represent him as a care and an anxiety to her, and, by what this implied, excuse him.

He had been very industrious during her absence, which he could not think long, as his new interest, Mr. Gass, occupied his thoughts; and he was arranging schemes of connexion between them, which would, with convenience to himself and profit to the young man, make him his agent; and, as Mr. Gass had represented, without any risk allow him the use of money, by the profit of which, Mr. Bellarmine would be the gainer. Speculation is a sort of sober gambling, very well suited to the advanced years of those who have, in their youth, sacrificed without mercantile views, at the shrine of chance; and Bellarmine, still loving at his heart a stimulative, thought himself fortunate in finding in Frederic's mind and pursuits, an encouragement, or an excuse, for indulging his dormant inclination. The reasons for privacy were so many, and his dread of Rosanne's seeing a name on his folded letters which he could not tell would not lead to questions to himself or communications to Mr. Grant, was so great, that he dispatched with all diligence the epistolary business; and, to secure himself against accident, he resolved to carry his letter to the post before she returned.

But vain is the caution of the cautious: he opened the door to go out, as his daughter

reached it to enter, and introduce her friends;—and the entrance, and the introduction, and the meeting, were so inevitable, that, as his letter was out of sight, his papers were locked up, and he had time in abundance, he suffered his habits as a gentleman to overcome his intention; and something like pride got the better of something hardly meriting the name of prudence. He turned back with a very good grace, and when seated in the room he had quitted, and ordering refreshments for his daughter's friends, and elegantly kind in particular to Mr. Westby, Rosanne could scarcely recognise him for her father.

‘What must Mrs. Firmly think of me?’ said she, to herself; ‘she must think I have imposed on her.’

Had Rosanne been a little older in experience, she would not have asked this silly question, even of herself. Mr. Bellarmine was not the first head of a family whom Mrs. Firmly had known the burthen of a home, the life of a party.—She did not stare, but she felt for Rosanne; and she conciliated.

‘Somebody, or something,’ said Lord Montrylas to himself, while listening to Bellarmine, ‘has a spite at my peace—I suppose I am not to sleep again to-night;—this father must be some tyrant, for whose savageness to her, this lovely creature makes apologies; yet, how she spoke to-day of what she owes to him!—I am

resolved—but yet how cruel!—God knows!—it must not be—I would not for the world—perhaps——’

A word or two dropped by Mr. Westby, produced an effect entirely contradictory to Rosanne’s expectations:—he understood Mr. Bellarmine to be originally French, and he treated him as one who had paid the compliment to this country, of having spent his youth in it, marrying from it, and who now, after finally settling his affairs in France, had come to England to pass the rest of his days. Rosanne, who, fond of being accepted as English herself, did not like to hear her father treated as a Frenchman, was going to set the matter right; but, to her surprise, he rather indulged Mr. Westby’s supposition; and perceiving this, she was silenced.

The conversation grew every moment more agreeable: Bellarmine was completely roused; and Rosanne began to think she had suffered by giving way to him, when a little gentle counteraction would have been beneficial.

A question arose, not very interesting indeed, but of a nature very common, between Mrs. Firmly and Lord Montrylas, whether these lodgings were or were not, the same as those occupied by the family of ‘the Crackles.’

Nobody but Rosanne could decide it. She could; and, as if her superior information required an apology, she referred to her having

spent some hours in their lodgings, the day before the family left the place.

‘Why, surely,’ said Lord Montrylas, ‘*you* could not, Miss Bellarmine, be the lady walking that day with them and the Giggletons?’

Rosanne coloured.

‘I never in my life,’ said Lord Montrylas, ‘was so near rolling any man in the kennel, as I was the young man of your party.—I pitied you for being with such a groupe, though I had not the honour of knowing you. If I had not seen you quit them, I think I should have interfered.’

‘Why, then,’ said Mrs. Firmly, ‘it must have been you, my dear Miss Bellarmine, who were so good to that poor little oppressed thing Lucy Varnish, to whom they behaved—as they did indeed to every body, so shamefully.’

Rosanne held up her hands to beg for silence; but Mrs. Firmly would not stop. The money which Rosanne had given the poor young woman, had been so assisting to herself and her family, that she was forced to let the good lady indulge in the detail; and when she ceased, nothing remained for Rosanne but to point out the limited boundary of her share in what had turned out so well.

Lord Montrylas addressed himself still more to Mr. Bellarmine. The visit ended as agreeably as it had commenced; and having gone out with the party, and returned in a few mi-

nutes, Bellarmine, when he met his daughter, expressed great pleasure in his accidental meeting with persons of so much conversation. 'Mrs. Firmly was,' he was sure, 'an invaluable woman,—the old gentleman was a model for the aged;—and as for Lord Montrylas, he only wished there had been the same sort of spirit amongst the contemporaries of his youth, as there seemed to be in the present race of young men.'—He said it with a sigh—and Rosanne was going to say something that might reconcile him to himself; but a card came from Mrs. Firmly with an invitation to dinner for the following day—and what was her joy, her transport, when he answered it in the politest terms, by accepting it!

'He shall never sink again into solitude,' said his daughter to herself.

In the evening, he was occasionally thoughtful, but at leisure to converse and to walk out, and very kindly disposed.

CHAPTER LVI.

THE next morning brought, as Rosanne perceived, letters for her father, the contents of which, his cheerfulness showed to have been agreeable: he ordered new clothes for himself; he named a day in the middle of the following week, for going into Kent: he spoke of a short stay there at present, as his affairs would call him to London, whither she must, in propriety, accompany him. She thought she had never seen her father so placid: his permission to write to Mr. Grant, to inform him of their plans, was readily obtained; they dined at Mrs. Firmly's, with Lord Montrylas, Mr. Westby, and a few select friends; and Rosanne had no cause to doubt whether she was right in deciding on coming to England.

They were now living very much like other persons in the same situation, visiting and visited, and receiving attentions from even the inhabitants of the place, who, in their reception of strangers, show that they are accustomed to such strangers as merit attentions. Lord Montrylas was in the habit of calling on Mr. Bellarmine: he rode with him; and every interview gave occasion for fresh commendation of his

lordship. Rosanne's opinion of him was not less in his favour; but if her father had changed his views in life for her, if he had thought it would be a happy circumstance to see her so greatly married; or if his traitor-friends, his feelings, had ever whispered to him how much to *their* satisfaction, at least, he might, if removed from her controlling principles and assiduous eye, doze out an existence which it required energy to relish, lulled by the soothing voices of Frederic, Emma, and their boy, he had too much deference for her high-pitched delicacy, too much caution, too much fear of restraining a nature that he could not but perceive attracted love, in proportion as it became known, to betray himself.—Something, be it what it might, had raised Rosanne in importance;—he seemed solicitous to please her—he made a dinner-party for her friends in the best style which circumstances allowed; and on Saturday evening he asked her if she thought Mrs. Firmly would admit him as well as herself, into her pew at church, the next day.—Who upon earth was now as happy as Rosanne Bellarmine?

But a trifle—O! the omnipotence of trifles!—a seeming accident—O! the sad power of accident! gave a new turn to affairs. Early on Sunday morning a note was brought directed for Francis Bellarmine, Esq. Rosanne sent it to her father's dressing-room: it obliged him to

go out; and, when out, a message was sent to her, desiring her not to wait breakfast for him, as his return must be uncertain.

She was vexed that he did not join her by church-time. She went without him. At her return she found him in a pleasant temper. He told her that a friend of his from London, a Mr. Gass, would dine with them, and he was then going to show him some of the beauties of the place:—as he was a stranger to her, perhaps she had better call on some of her friends.—She thanked him—she had no wish to go out.

Mr. Gass came to dinner: he was certainly very handsome, and extremely attentive to Miss Bellarmine: he talked much, and seemed possessed of a great fund of general knowledge. Rosanne must have been not merely ignorant, but stupid, had she not perceived that her father liked his conversation; but for herself, she felt an indefinable sort of comfort, when she found that by ‘Emma,’ and ‘the brat,’ or ‘monkey,’ as somebody and something were called, she was to understand a wife and child.

She quitted the table, notwithstanding some speeches of passionate common-place from the visitor, as soon as she could after dinner; and, directed by a few words on a slip of paper from her father, spent her evening with Mrs. Firmly.

When the servant fetched her home, she found her father still cheerful, but with more

of business in his ideas; and it was a curb to the prancing of her hopes, when he told her that their journey into Kent must be deferred for a few days. She was desired to write to Mr. Grant to this effect; and she obeyed—how willingly may be guessed.

Four days passed not unpleasantly—unless Mr. Gass's dining each day with Bellarmine was unpleasant to his daughter. He had made some advances indeed in familiarity: she was beginning to be 'Rosanne,' and 'fair lady,'—and her father wondered she would not join him and Mr. Gass in walking or sailing. If she had said, 'My dear father, I saw Lord Montrylas before I saw Mr. Gass,' Bellarmine would have hoped; but on false grounds,—for she would only have meant that she had seen a gentleman before she saw one who aped a character very different.

On this fourth day, Mr. Gass, who had now begun to save servants the trouble of announcing him, called, as he said, to 'pay his devoirs' to 'the Bellarmine, or Belle Ermine, or Erminia,'—'which name would she like best to hand her down to posterity?'—before Lord Montrylas, who had come on something less of a fool's errand, had quitted the room. Lady Agnes, his sister, had done Rosanne some kindness in London, and he came, with good sense and good breeding,—and certainly with a very good will, to report it. On the entry of a visitor, who

seemed to have peculiar privileges, his lordship retreated, perhaps wondering where Miss Bellarmine had made acquaintance with a man who was the annoyance of his lordship's quarters.

'Why—that's Montrylas that's gone out, my dear Rosanne: is it not?'

Her affirmative did not, by its manner, encourage conversation; and other visitors coming in, Mr. Gass, to whom less attention was perhaps paid than he usually found, in undejected despair took his leave with, 'Well; God bless you, for the present, my dear; I shall see you again:—you dine at your usual hour, I suppose?'

At this usual hour he returned; and having, in the mean time, been bargaining for a horse, and valuing himself on his science in this branch of wisdom, the horse, and the vendor, and himself, 'what the fellow said, and what I said,—what he offered the horse for, and I bid him,—how he came down and I advanced, and how impossible it was to take me in,' lasted through dinner:—Mr. Bellarmine far more interested in this conversation, than Rosanne could have supposed possible on her knowledge of her father—Rosanne weary and almost disgusted.

After dinner, Lord Montrylas rose again to Mr. Gass's recollection; and Bellarmine, like many other absentees from the metropolis, supposing one fresh from it, must know what has

any relation with either end of it, asked some question respecting Lord Montrylas's family. Then poured forth the eloquence of Mr. Gass. He 'knew Lord Montrylas to be the eldest son of the Earl of Brentleigh,'—he 'knew them all of old; and prouder people than the father and mother, never trod God's earth,'—'they were,' he believed, 'on his own knowledge, one of the haughtiest families in the peerage: they had several sons—three,' he believed, 'but only one daughter, the haughtiest of all haughty dames, Lady Agnes Byram by name. Montrylas was a showy man, and had done famously abroad, and had got on miraculously—far better than many whom he could name, and who deserved it quite as well,—but he too was as proud as Lucifer; and they had all behaved infamously to his most intimate friend Sir Agaric Biborough, who had proposed for Lady Agnes: his friend owned half a county—returned he could not tell how many members—drove his six in the first style—was of a prime description of talent, and yet had been insulted. Lord Brentleigh, every body knew, was not always the man he was now: while his brother lived, they had little more than what would make the pot boil, and had vegetated down in the north, neither knowing nor known; but now, for these fifteen or sixteen years, they had been growing great; and people were to be insulted by them.'

Either Bellarmine's experience, or the unconquerable power of common sense, or the impression which Lord Montrylas had made on his good opinion, made him, though with great gentleness and perfectly good humour, defend a refusal which, as described, crushed hopes that, however painted, might be presumptuous; but Mr. Gass proceeding to justify his friend, and growing angry in portraying the indignity offered him when 'his altitudinous lordship had almost kicked him out of his infernal house,' Rosanne, in the little she said, sided with her father.

Had the consequences of the few words uttered by her been foreseen, she would have been silent. To this added provocation of an ill-bred temper, perhaps she had to ascribe it, that when her father had asked, in order to judge fairly what it was in Sir Agaric that called for such violent measures, Mr. Gass answered in a pointed tone, 'His illegitimacy, Sir.'

Rosanne not knowing what she was doing, but with the utmost moderation, and an honest feeling, said, 'Surely, surely, Sir, the family were right—such pedigrees are not to admit of such alliances.'

'There, Sir,' said Frederic, exasperated now to malice—'you see, Sir, what *you* have subjected *me* to. I shall have this thrown in *my* teeth, some day or other. I shall be kicked down stairs for being *your* illegitimate son.'

Rosanne was thunderstruck—she was transfixed:—Frederic was in a moment on his knees at the feet of his father:—Rosanne had right feelings—she quitted the room.

In an hour—an hour of pitiable distress, when, without friend or adviser, she was left to her own inexperience,—when she knew not how far she dared be right—what was her duty—what ought to be her opinion,—an hour spent in tears, but not for herself,—in penitence for offences not her own,—in pity for her father,—in abhorrence of the cruelty that had exposed him to her, and in anxiety for herself, she was desired to return to the room she had quitted.

Her father was sitting alone, leaning on a table, and sitting so that his face was not visible to her:—she was going up to him, when pointing to a letter at a distance, he said, ‘That is for you—open it.’

It was from Frederic, and contained an acknowledgment of unpardonable want of temper—a deprecation of her anger—a promise to offend no more, and an adieu.

Bellarmino was humbled below the humiliation of a father:—Rosanne stood no longer, in his estimation, his daughter subjected by nature to his command—but his judge, and a creature too spotless to make allowance for the blot betrayed to her: he had already pictured her to his imagination, as relying on her grandmother’s bequest, refusing even a maintenance

from him, and probably retreating immediately to seek a second father in him who she would recollect had meant more perhaps than met her ear, when he said, ' If you ever wish you had two fathers, you may reckon on me.'—She now rose, not merely in ideal value or speculative consequence, but, to his appreciation, with an advantage over him; and he waited for her speaking, with as much anxiety as he had ever occasioned her in his most intractable dispositions.

Rosanne, on her part, was equally sensible to the alteration produced in their relative situation; but if she forgot for a moment that she was his daughter, it was that she might show herself his friend. Not prepossessed in favour of her newly-found relation, she had, in her mind, more the recollection of Shakspeare's portrait of an exasperated outcast in the offspring of the ill-used Gloster, than of the tolerated progeny of the patriarch's handmaids; and considering her father as an object of pity, she was not in danger of doing any thing that could add to his suffering, or imply a diminution of her respect to him. Any advantage that she could accept, must be ultimately his, to be of value to her: it might be a temporary mean of bringing him to coalesce with her; but the coalition could have no view but his happiness.

Enabled now to account for the pleasure he had taken in the young man's company, and

not presuming to interpose her opinion of his merits, she allowed herself to be led by what appeared the exigency of the present moment; and having no one to advise with, and agitated by her father's agitation, she listened only to the tenderness of her nature when she besought him to consult her peace of mind by doing what would most contribute to that of his own, and got his permission to write a kind note of recall to Mr. Gass.

Her eloquence was not inefficacious. Mr. Gass returned immediately, and was met by Rosanne with no other recollection than of her father's suffering. She meant well, it is true, in what she did; and she was not to be blamed for her want of worldly wisdom; but Mr. Grant's absence was particularly unfortunate.

The business on which Frederic had, without invitation or encouragement, taken a journey to Southampton, was to obtain a further supply of money from Bellarmine, to enable him to carry on speculations that were to pay unheard-of interest: he had schemes that would have occupied half London in buildings, and drained the country of its hands: he was to do wonders, and, as he made appear, by such simple means that the greatest wonder was, that they should have remained for him to do; but that which is obviously absurd, or to common apprehension impracticable, when cause and effect are seen remote from each other, may be made very

tolerably plausible, at least to the well-disposed to credulity, by a series of means which shall unite them: and though, when the famous impostor Cagliostro engaged to light the streets of London with sea-water, people started; yet a short time sufficed to make one ask another, what might be thought of the scheme.

It was excusable in Frederic Gass if he deemed himself a particularly fortunate man, and relied, more than timid spirits are wont to do, on 'his luck;' for he marked, on his factitious memory, only his successes; and when intervening spaces are taken away, objects and facts draw very close together, and make a goodly show. He might, very fairly, have quoted the present instance as a proof of his boasted powers of insuring success; for it did not seem the necessary consequence of his want of every thing that restrains a man of honour, that it should induce Bellarmine to do all that he asked. But what his rhetoric might have failed in, a desire to get rid of him accomplished: he appeared no more; and Bellarmine, having next morning, in a few words, hinted to his daughter that the subject was too unpleasant to him to bear conversing on, but that he should be ready to set off on their visit to Mr. Grant, as soon as she could learn that it would be convenient, she felt some compensation for that which must now and for ever, give her more or less uneasiness.

CHAPTER LVII.

A WEEK, productive of no fresh annoyance, during which Bellarmine and his daughter had lived in society, and she had taken leave of her friends, was made peculiarly satisfactory to her by her father's not estranging himself from church on Sunday. The impression made by the service was greatly diminished; but as he was in company with Mrs. Firmly and the young ladies of her family, this was not remarkable—the sermon did not please him; and Rosanne might have feared this would be remembered on a future occasion, had she not hoped, that, ere the next question on the subject could occur, they should be with Mr. Grant. In the arrangement for this desirable remove, which yet was attended with reluctance on her part to quit Southampton and her kind friends, she met neither disappointment nor obstacle. Mr. Grant replied to her, without an hour's delay, urging their immediate setting out; and in eight-and-forty hours they obeyed him.

'O! now some impediment certainly — we shall never be safe,' said Rosanne to herself, when, scarcely clear of the gate to whose one reverend face she had turned to give a fond fare-

well, her father called to the postillions to stop.—The servant on horseback rode up.

She needed not to have alarmed herself:—it was only Lord Montrylas, who, perhaps not trusting himself to a long adieu, and not satisfied with dismissing strangers without any, had posted himself just without the gate, either to speak to Bellarmine, or to look at Rosanne.

His lordship was in uncommon spirits—he laughed more than usual—he complimented Miss Bellarmine on the taste of her travelling-carriage.

‘It is my father’s taste,’ said she: ‘he surprised me with it when he came from London.’

‘You will trust him another time,’ said his lordship.

‘I have every reason,’ said she, as she bowed, and begged to be respectfully remembered to Lady Agnes.

The travellers drove off, leaving Lord Montrylas saying to himself, ‘This it is to be a soldier!’

‘Is it possible,’ thought Bellarmine, when again in the middle of the road, ‘that this girl does not see the impression she has made?—I cannot perceive that she does, and yet I never knew the woman who would not have seen it long ago:—young women must be altered; or there is a class of which I never knew more than this one specimen.—It is not want of feeling or of heart; for she has both: it is a want of self-

opinion; or it is that I have so filled her mind with cares, that there is no room for any thing else—poor girl!

But he began to alter his ideas when Rosanne, not at all shy of speaking of Lord Montrylas, expressed, in terms unusually energetic, her high esteem for him.

‘So!’ thought he, ‘now I suppose I am to hear of something between them—something clandestine—so much for the *alteration* I fancied. I might at least have been informed, but however——’

‘Do those marriages,’ said Rosanne, ‘which Mademoiselle Cossart used to call ‘*de bonne alliance*,’ generally turn out happily?’

‘It depends on the parties, and on circumstances.’

‘If it depended only on one of the parties,’ said Rosanne, ‘Lord Montrylas must be happy. I suppose, in his situation, choice is not so much considered as rank.’

Bellarmino did not answer the ‘suppose.’ He only asked, and with some interest, if Lord Montrylas was thus engaged?

‘I understand so.’

‘And to whom?’ said he, with less vivacity.

‘To Lady Winselina, I apprehend.’

Bellarmino was too prudent to say, ‘You blockhead!’—The matter now stood as it did before, only that Rosanne’s want of perception was accounted for, and perhaps it obtained its

due respect from her father; for his conduct, during the two days' easy journey, was marked by the kindest consideration.

If he bestowed, as he probably did, any farther thought on this want of acumen in his daughter, he might advert to the probable causes of the deficiency, and recollect, that, having been reared in seclusion, and taught to prefer her own country to that in which she had been brought up, she had neither had opportunity, nor could she be inclined, to bestow her affections. She had heard no talk of love; she had read of none that could inspire her mind; and now seeing in Lord Montrylas that concentration of advantages which must make every other man suffer by comparison, she had been as much guarded from any danger of attachment to another, as she was, by his imagined engagement, from attaching herself to him. There would be little passion in the world, he might think, if the mind were early pre-occupied, and placed out of the reach of infection.

It was now the latter end of July, and the ripening harvest was a new source of delight to Rosanne, when on the evening of the second day, after a journey all joy to her, and apparently not disagreeable to her father, they reached the rectory-house of ——— in Kent, where Mr. Grant's reception of them was rendered perhaps more cordial by the dismissal of an anxiety, as well as by the communication of pleasure.

At his own house, this good man was all he had ever been to them before, and more than all; for it is to the advantage of the worthy, to be seen in that orbit which they are destined to illumine. He was the friend, the father of his flock—he was their adviser in the common affairs of life—their aid in its difficulties—their consoler under its misfortunes. Not soured, but softened, by early disappointment, and by seeing laid in an early grave, her for whom his heart had been preserved in all the integrity of its purest affection, he pitied human weakness, he entered into sorrow, he taught where, and where only, the debts of this world can be paid to us.

At a time of life when he might have claimed a little indulgence to habits, he was most careful to avoid their subjugation; and by yielding to those of others, and by cultivating cheerfulness as a virtuous temperament, he endeavoured, in himself and others, to keep the heart warm in the discharge of social duties. ‘ ’T is sometimes a slow circulation,’ said he, ‘ that inclines us to be envious, or malicious, or wanting in any branch of charity; for cheerfulness will open many hearts (1): keep the pump at work, and the water will fill an enemy’s pond, rather than it will stagnate.’

Animated without enthusiasm in the service of his church, he convinced others by showing that he himself was convinced; and from his heart his doctrines reached the hearts of those

who heard him. Possessing the secret of never wearying the attention, the liturgy was fresh as often as he read it:—some new sense, some clearer light—some allusion, known only between him and his congregation, would strike them, and they would almost ask themselves if these could be the words which they were in the constant habit of hearing. In preaching, he made himself one of his auditors:—‘*we* must strive’—‘*we* may fail,’ was his language; and that he might not fail, was as much the prayer of his people, as that they might, by his guidance, attain the blessings he taught them to hope for.

This was the man to confirm Bellarmine, in his endeavours: a clergyman, sober-minded and firm, living in the practice and urging the adoption of ‘*whatsoever things are of good report*’: though not rich, liberal—though not distinguished, content. When his hopes of domestic comfort were blasted, he had on principle stood against the blow, and in time exchanging the buoyant animal spirits of youth for the gentle conscientious serenity of maturer years, he had rendered himself happy beyond the felicity of this world. Feared more than any one who is hated, beloved more than if he had sacrificed every thing to popularity, he was absolute without being despotic, and submitted to, without disgracing his authority by destroying the liberty of those whom he ruled. His gains from his parish were returned to the needy as the

dews of the earth in benign showers; but not as indiscriminately: he taught those on whom they fell, and those whom they passed over, the immeasurable difference between the bounty of Him in whose power it is to correct even while he blesses, and the endeavours of a frail being, who, through ignorance, may convert nutriment into poison. 'The gift of God,' said he, 'may bring you to a sense of your demerit—any liberality, when I know you unworthy, would only harden you in sin.' Thus relaxing nothing of the strictness of wholesome discipline, nor ever failing to encourage those less in need of it, he made his ascendancy appear wonderful. Nothing ever prospered when Mr. Grant withheld his hand.

In society, which he loved next to solitude, his character never quitted him. Learning, experience, wide observation, a digesting mind, and playful humour, which pressed into the service of virtue the wit that might have looked another way, made him not indeed a good 'bottle-companion'—for the bottle was his interruption—but the charm of a winter's night, the sweet companion of a summer's day, and diffusing over the mind of others that tranquillity which he enjoyed himself, he left his host, or dismissed his party, nearer Heaven for his company.

Four-and-twenty hours sufficed to convince Rosanne that she could not repent her earnest

desire to be with Mr. Grant. Her father already appeared improved in health and cheerfulness, and she felt her cares divided, more in her favour, than into equal portions, by the assistance of their excellent friend, who getting round his hospitable table, the first day, those of his parishioners whom he knew most ready and best adapted to contribute to the comfort and amusement of his guests, made the novelty of their acquaintance soon forgotten. ‘Come, my dear Miss Bellarmine,’ said he, ‘take your place at the head of my table—I do not think you will ever now be displaced; and I am an old-fashioned fellow, and like old-fashioned customs: I love to see my table well filled, and a lady at the head of it. And now,’ said he, ‘blessing the Giver of all good things for the means to furnish, and health and spirits to enjoy, and friends to share these pleasant supports to our imperfect nature, let us partake of them, according to his merciful intentions, unsparingly and thankfully.’

‘Well!’ said this amiable man to Rosanne after a few days—‘we have got over Sunday, you see, to our satisfaction. Your father is too well bred to thwart me; and his acquiescence in my inclinations, will, in time, you will see, make a basis for inclinations of his own. But, my dear Rose, is it possible that you do not, in this comparative solitude, regret your dear ‘high street’ of Southampton? do tell me a little more of this same Lord Montry-

las. Is it to be believed that you can think so highly of him, and set him so above any young man you ever saw, and not think how delightful it would be to be Lady Montrylas?’

‘ My dear Sir,’ said Rosanne, ‘ you are laughing at me—you might as well ask me how it happens, that, loving my father as I do, I never envied my mother:—who is there that wishes for things out of his reach—for impossibilities? I do not recollect that I ever, even when I was a child, cried for the sun, though, you know I have told you, I was once very near worshipping it. If I were so idle as to sit down to think how charming it would be to be Lady Montrylas—the next folly would be to wish I were; and then I should fret that I was not; and then what becomes of all the warning I have had, not to set my heart on the things of this world?—how am I to keep clear of inordinate affection? and what am I to say when I ask myself how I have obeyed the commandment not to covet? What would Lord Montrylas say if he were to know that I ever presumed so far as to name myself with him, even as I have done now? Consider, Sir, the distance between us.’

‘ Good girl,’ said Mr. Grant: ‘ I am satisfied that at least the *common* baits put upon hooks to catch silly damsels, will not catch you. Yet still—but, however, I remember the Italian proverb says indeed,

‘ Amor e signoria

‘ Non voglion compagnia :’

and there may be something in this; but I thought now-a-days the sentiment did not hold. You would not suppose,’ said he, ‘ seeing me here a rusty country-parson, that I had ever drank of the spring of Vaucuse; but I was a famous sonneteer in my youth; and I don’t know but if I were to try my hand now, I might get through fourteen lines:—but, thank God! I have something better to do. When I wrote, love—ay, genuine love—inspired me. Don’t think the worse of me, my child; for, believe me, an honourable well-founded attachment to a good girl, is no disgrace to any man; it keeps the heart human through life.’

Rosanne had not long to look round the world, on her entrance into it, for interests and occupations. Mr. Grant had a curate, to whose family he introduced her. It consisted of a very worthy, amiable mother; a daughter, who, at seventeen, was all that could gratify the wish of a parent and the pride of a brother; and a young man, who deserved, and could appreciate, such relatives:—they lived on little, but their tastes were elegant, and their prudence was honourable: they had seen better days, and had a character of superiority about them, that claimed respect.

This family formed Rosanne’s first association; and only a field dividing their residence from Mr. Grant’s, some hours of each day were passed

with Mrs. Broseley and her daughter; and from the experience of the former, and the elegant fashion of mind in the latter, she informed and improved herself. They, on their part, were well disposed to love Rosanne.

But the chastisements of a still merciful Deity visited this little family. Maria Broseley's delicate health gave way under a sudden attack of disease, and left her mother and her brother objects of the sincerest pity. Rosanne was all that could assist or encourage during the suspense of the affliction—all that could sympathize and console in its fatal termination; but, a novice in commiserating, she suffered grievously herself, and was almost as pitiable as those whom she pitied; her spirits were entirely subdued; the spring of her mind was gone; and if her father had not demanded her exertions, no exertions could she have made beyond what the mourners needed.

Mr. Broseley was grateful to any thing that would assist him to support his mother under this trying affliction; and Rosanne, acting as if equally related with him, was unremitting in her attention. He looked to her discretion for directions how best to treat his beloved parent; and it was not presumption, but experience of her kindness, that made him think how blest must be the man whom Miss Bellarmine's hand honoured.

To remove from the scene of a tragedy in which she had so large a part, was Mrs. Brose-

ley's earnest wishes; and her son finding it vain to oppose it, acquiesced, but with a repugnance that nothing counterbalanced. 'Wherever his mother went, he would go: if he quitted this place, all others were equal to him. But even Miss Bellarmine thought time would reconcile them to staying.' Mrs. Broseley said, 'Never.'—Mr. Grant was doubtful—Bellarmine could not calculate.

'I fear,' said Mr. Grant, 'you are, my dear Rose, too much at Broseley's—you are unnerving your spirits—you may injure your health—you may make yourself very uncomfortable.'

'O! I cannot think of any thing but these sufferers. For poor Maria I am satisfied—I envy her lot; but for Edward Broseley and his mother, I am most painfully concerned.'

'I perceive you are; and,' continued he, 'Edward comes first.'

'Yes, indeed;—Mrs. Broseley will, I am persuaded, die. She is sickly, and not young; but Edward has a long life before him:—a man does not die of grief.'

'A Christian should not,' said Mr. Grant energetically.

She started—'True—thank you—I will remember this:—where is it in the Bible—in the first or second part?'

'In the second, as you call it. St. Paul tells the Thessalonians they must not sorrow as those without hope—I do not quote literally.'

‘ I will learn—but still I may be anxious for the sufferers.’

‘ Certainly ; only take care that your anxiety do not lead you too far. You have never been taught the control of what is in itself right ; therefore you will forgive my treating you like a child :—you are very excusable.’

‘ O ! ever, ever treat me like a child—like *your* child ;—never cease teaching me.’

‘ I will never withhold from you what I think will be of use to you. Can you bear me to affront you ?’

‘ You cannot affront me—try.’

‘ May I say, that you do not see to what your extreme interest for the Broseleys may lead you ?’

‘ Lead me ?—No—I cannot see it.’

‘ Would you not be glad if you were never parted from them ?’

‘ Yes—to speak the truth.’

‘ What counterbalances your wish, that you could for ever contribute to their comfort and consolation ?’

‘ Only my love for my father and you. Were I so unhappy as to have it in my power to consult only myself, where the Broseleys go, I would go.’

‘ Then you must even be Edward’s wife.’

Rosanne started—but was silent.

‘ Now,’ said Mr. Grant, ‘ we come to the point. You have hitherto, my sweet girl,

taken my opinion on subjects of the utmost importance to you—even on those concerning a life of eternity—now hear it on a matter that respects only the short term of human life. I speak in time—you are in no way pledged at present—you may retract. It is my duty to tell you that your incomparable heart is misleading you—you would sacrifice yourself to the good of others; and did your father and I encourage Edward Broseley to say what I am confident is on his lips, we might to-morrow seal your destiny, and give you cause to blame us.'

'I could not *blame* you,' said Rosanne, fancying perhaps that she was only just.

'You would have reason. Resolutions that have permanent consequences, my dear Rose, must not be founded on temporary feelings. Now the feeling at present predominant in your mind, must and will subside.'

He looked at her as if expecting to be contradicted: he was not disappointed; she shook her head.

'Experience tells us,' said he, 'that impressions wear out; and it is the goodness of God which gives those of the mind this tendency, else half of us would be useless from sixteen. You will not *forget*, but you will *cease to mourn*; and were you the wife of Edward, you would wake from a delirium of sorrow to a life demanding your activity, and find yourself pa-

analysed. This is one consideration: but there is a stronger. You see young Broseley in the light best suited to his character;—he is worthy—he is good—he is amiable;—but he is not a man to direct you; he would look to you to be directed; and you would, every day, feel that you had a charge and a care, not an adviser and a support.’

‘Is he weak?’

‘Not weak in understanding; but weak in the concerns of this life, indolent, susceptible, indulging imagination to the injury of that nerve of character which the master of a family should possess. Do not imagine I would depreciate him—I love him—he is a good and meritorious being; but no guardian for you, my Rose. You would have to carry him through the world; he would be mortified by your superiority, and you would blush for him.’

Rosanne’s eyes glistened. Fearing to bear even the appearance of an indifference to offend, she asked Mr. Grant’s permission to retire.

‘Go, my child,’ said he—‘yourself and your Bible are your best friends: the one will tell you that you may trust me—the other, that to subdue one infirmity of human nature, is to gain at least one step towards Heaven: here indeed it is matter of prudence—the next trial may be of conscience; and this victory will prepare you. Do not now think me hard-hearted. Were you capable of being what is

called in love with Edward Broseley, I should not speak as I do, nor think of you as I do; but you are under the influence of pity, not love; and not to endeavour to make you sensible of this, would be to suffer you to marry in your sleep, and when you waked you would be ready to hang yourself.'

Reasonable by nature, ingenuous in heart and grateful for guidance, Rosanne endeavoured to see Edward as Mr. Grant had taught her to see him; and she could not but confess to herself, that without this nimbus of affliction, his character would not have been sufficiently luminous to have attracted her regard. She acquiesced in the correction of her judgment—she sought Mr. Grant, to tell him how useful he had been to her; and when, some days after, she picked up the fragment of a torn sonnet, in which she saw an allusion to her name, she compelled herself to show something like recovery of firmness, and to promote, rather than oppose, Mr. Broseley's acceptance of a distant curacy, which Mr. Grant had asked for him.

NOTE.

(1) Were it the fashion of a work like this, to be honest in acknowledging the sources from which it is compiled, the unanxious submission of it to public opinion, would cease to be considered as meritorious, or even extraordinary; and the beautiful sentiment to which this note refers must be confessed a theft—perpetrated in an evening's conversation not

to be forgotten, from an estimable woman ; who perhaps will be the only one of the party not recollecting her uttering it. She can well afford to let others pilfer from her merits ; nor has any one, so careless in claiming them, a right to be angry. She may rest content with the recollection of having ‘ unfortunately forgotten her visiting-tickets’ when she returned her visits of compliment on an accession of honour.

Or did the necessity of dispatch allow time to inquire into the practice of those authors who printed their works at the presses of Froben or Elzevir, a precedent might be found for a grateful acknowledgment to those engaged in the typographical department of this work, for that exercise of care, sagacity, and interest, which has corrected numerous errors, notwithstanding the many that remain, and suggested many emendations, notwithstanding there is still so much to amend.

CHAPTER LVIII.

THE cheerful serenity in which Mr. Grant lived, seemed formed to suit the taste of every one who came under his roof. It was no less salutary to Bellarmine than it was agreeable to his daughter. The scenery around was attractive: the season was fine; the harvest was matter of observation to persons of curiosity not accustomed to English agriculture. Mr. Grant had a valuable library, some good pictures, and abundance of fine prints. He interested himself with Bellarmine in Rosanne's pursuits. Music closed their evenings; society varied their days; and had Bellarmine possessed, in his early years, that happy foresight which, far from alloying present pleasure, increases it by the promise of extended duration—had he but recollected that time will run—that spirits will subside—that the toys of a child are the disgrace of a man;—or had he even known when to assume the 'toga virilis' of mind, which, though admitting of additions, needs never to be put off, he would have felt no subtraction from the gratifications now offered him; he would have given energy and effect to the wish already conceived in his heart, that he could spend the remainder of his days under the shelter which

good Grant had provided for him. But he had planted thorns, and thorns sprung around him: he was disposed indeed to be guided; but, in the indistinctness of boundary by which he separated feelings and duties, he fancied that he ought not to do that which was most prudent: he hankered after Frederic—he longed to be near his speculative stimulating mind; therefore he told himself that Rosanne needed to be introduced to the world of the metropolis; and, under the specious delusion of doing justice to her, he planned his own indulgence for the ensuing winter.

All of even this, was not intelligible to Mr. Grant; and there was more behind of which he saw only a shadow, and that so shapeless, that he could not guess at the form of the substance. He was pleased with seeing a man whom, with all his faults, he loved, growing under his roof in any degree a more reasonable and a less miserable being; and when he said, ‘Thank God thus far’—he was considering how he might proceed farther.

‘Our friend,’ said he to Rosanne, when Bel-larmine was slowly walking through a corn-field before them—‘our friend wants a trade—an occupation—an interest: his mind is not to be filled, I see, by still life. Thus it is that we invert the order and purpose of things: that blessing of declining life, the welcome sense of repose, is rendered a misfortune by such as have

lived in that worst turmoil, the pursuit of pleasure:—it is only the rational labour of a man's life that will make him rejoice in ease. Unless preyed upon by ambition or greediness, the statesman will retire to the eminence of his Mæcenian villa, and look down on the world, thankful that the weight of care is off from his shoulders: the lawyer thanks, at least, his stars, that he has not to attend courts: the physician, that he is not called to sick chambers: the merchant and the mariner hug themselves in the rumour of losses and the howling of tempests; and all professions but mine, where labour indeed ought never to wish to lie down, have their holiday of life—but the professor of pleasure, the man who has been, like your father, misled into the notion, that to please himself was the way to be pleased, is cheated of that which, in the greatness of its promised reward, holds out the compensation for much that is to be endured. Yet, God be thanked! he is now, I trust, on a good path to obtain enjoyment; and if we could find him, as I say, a trade, I should be still more confident, because, even if it were irksome, it would be something to leave off, which would make the renunciation, by comparison, happiness. I almost wish I kept a school; and he should be my head-usher; for he has, I see, an admirable faculty of conveying instruction—he is a man of great powers, and, with them, might enjoy a delightful old age, could we but lead

him on a little longer, and not let his faculties rust through disuse. You are too perfect, I suppose, my dear Rose, in all you know, to want his assistance. Has he given you all his knowledge ?

‘ O ! no,’ replied Rosanne ; ‘ I was a silly girl before I found out what was wanting in my dear father’s systems : he would have taught me the learned languages—and I was obstinate ; and now I do so repent it !’

‘ O, then, begin, begin,’ said Mr. Grant ; ‘ the best stimulus possible—it will be every thing to him to occupy himself in this—you may have all my books—and I will not interfere—if I can help it.’

The request was made by Rosanne as for her own indulgence, and met with the readiest compliance. Far more assiduous in this study than she had ever been in any wherein he had heretofore assisted her, stimulated by anxiety rather for her teacher than for herself, she reaped the reward in her own progress, and in seeing the interest her father took in it. Bellarmine was proud of showing Mr. Grant what a pupil trained by him could do ; and endowed as she was by nature, and encouraged as she was by her motive, she astonished and delighted those under whose eye she proceeded.

‘ You will be amused to-morrow, my dear young lady,’ said Mr. Grant, one day when he had received letters which seemed not only to

give him pleasure, but to excite his mirth. 'I shall have a companion for you—not indeed of your own sex, but one whom, under present circumstances, I believe I may safely recommend to you. Unsophisticated as you are by the commerce of the world, you will not take real or affected alarm at my naming to you a boy-friendship.—I would not do it in general; for you will always find me, depend on it, though I may not know the niceties of etiquette, or the last fashion of nonsense, as cautious as a mother could be, where female delicacy is concerned;—I know the folly of talking of innocence in a world so fallen as this; I never yet saw boys and girls together on this plan of ignorant confidence, but they were the worse for it, or some mischief or distress occurred; but my young man is deeply engaged, head and heart and soul, to a young lass a few miles off; and there will be more danger of his wearying you with the ideal charms of his mistress—and bless the boy! I do not know where he finds them; for, in my mind, she is a very moderate business of beauty or intellect!—than of his presuming to annoy you any other way. Now, that you may understand what you are to meet, he is the son of a very old friend of mine, left to my care by his parents; but not before they, by a want of vigilance which I can excuse, though I lament it, had suffered to luxuriate into waste and some degree of detriment, the

most amiable disposition that ever lad was blest with. The mischief to himself at present is, that he is at the mercy of every one who chooses to use him ill:—that which he should resent, he takes to heart—that which he should pass over with a manly disdain or a just allowance for human nature, he suffers to make fuel for anger, which explodes in a flash of petulance:—he sends his mistress an expostulatory sonnet, when he ought to subdue her waywardness by reproof, or punish it by absence; and he writes pasquinades that give fools the importance of enemies. Now I have told you the worst of him; Arthur's misfortune is, that he is too amiable—his temper's inconvenience is, that it is open to every point of the compass:—he often makes me anxious, though he makes me laugh—and I forebode and fear more than I care to say. When he is once married and settled as the master of a family, if some foolish whim does not seize on him, his affections will find their proper leading to proper objects; and he will make an incomparable creature, if the lady has a little management. To tell you fairly, then, I wish he had seen you first; I should have been happy—for I love him, for his own and his parents' sake; yet, I sometimes thank God I am not his father,—but, had he been my son, he should have been fitter for the world he must live in: for you may as well bring up children to fly instead of walking on

the ground, as encourage the weakness of a susceptible mind, which has to encounter mankind for half a century, and then to learn that weakness is no part of the temper in which we must die.'

Rosanne had not read the English poets, without picking up a few more ideas than Chateau-Vicq afforded. She had from Milton learnt that a wife of good conduct might be a very happy being, and she so far agreed with the world as to think, that, when women had lost their parents, it was good for them to be committed to the care of those who could and would protect them. Of the intermediate vicissitudes of gay hopes and pensive anxiety, the dramatists had furnished her with specimeus; and her heart was very well disposed to admit as its agreeable aliment, such incense as she saw offered in the generous attachment of manly worth to feminine graces.

But the recollection of her recent error had a little affected this state of mind; and the fear of again erring, would have made her cautious and sharp-sighted, wherever the possibility had been discernible. It was therefore relief to her to hear that the companion promised her, was so circumstanced, as to give her confidence and justify ease of deportment; and this satisfaction she, with her wonted ingenuousness, expressed to Mr. Grant.

‘Yes,’ he replied, ‘I shall have no anxiety about you here,—you may go your own way, and get what light and amusement you can from this spark. It is fencing with foils in this case—you cannot be hurt: and you may learn something of the science. Perhaps the utmost that my ward can teach you, will be, to thank God that you have more wit on this subject, than I am afraid he has.’

The young gentleman arrived, and Mr. Grant had not said too much.

There was a character of innate elegance in Arthur—there was the cadet of family,—one not suffered, by security of inheritance, to depreciate Nature’s gifts, but encouraged to attention, in the hope of using them to advantage, and stimulated to please by the importance of succeeding. He was extremely handsome; yet Rosanne thought it was the expression of his countenance that was its charm—he was frank almost to imprudence, susceptible almost to spasmodic suffering, playful, brilliant, with infinite mirth, exuberant genius, and a deep foundation of the learning of a gentleman: the Sciences were enlisted by him in the service of the Muses—and that which in others is the cold aggregate of industrious application, was in him the illuminated concrete of intuitive selection;—nothing in his mind was wasted in vehicle—it was all ardent substance; but it must be confessed, that it was heterogeneous

in its composition, and sometimes produced combinations not expected even by himself.

Mr. Grant set him at ease, by an early reference to his situation and prospects; and happy to be permitted to expand, he was at once amusing and interesting. Nothing was wanting in the finished propriety of his deportment to Miss Bellarmine:—nothing short of that tender which he was proud not to be able to make, could be so flattering; she had soon his confidence, and was of his counsels in all the many modes of adoration which juvenile passion and a refined taste could suggest: he could not rest till his Rosanne Bellarmine and his divine Graciana St. Erme were acquainted; and though Rosanne thought rather as Mr. Grant did, that there was more appeal to soft feeling in Graciana, than power to furnish the requisites of happiness, she recollected her own narrow circuit of acquaintance with the differences of character, and believed the object of Arthur's love must be, in all points, lovely.

In well-bred compliance with his inclination, Rosanne cultivated the young lady's acquaintance; but she found little reason to alter her first opinion. Graciana was tall, slender, with a complexion of dazzling whiteness, heightened by the lovely carnation of her cheek, and contrasted by the dark brown of a profusion of hair, which, in luxuriance that

would not be confined, tried to give to her countenance, all that it wanted, vivacity. She had formed her character on common models; and, naturally inert, had concentrated all her powers in that of interesting. It was no proof of worth of any kind, that she had abundance of admirers, and had had a succession of lovers: it only told what has been told many times before.

Rosanne, very well disposed to be pleased with others, and not having set her expectations of human nature too high, saw in Arthur much to be loved, and in Graciana much to be excused; and she began to fancy she had, in them, an affectionate brother and sister; for Miss St. Erme was so good as to tolerate Rosanne's superiorities, in consideration of her counterbalancing ignorance of the world; and Arthur, who would have loved her with less superiority, and forgiven much more, saw her with a predilection that might have turned even failings into virtues. Rosanne had a distinguished situation: she knew, when no one else was intrusted with his vexation, the pauses in his felicity, which Graciana's liberal use of despotic power occasioned, and the increase of it which resulted from any thing which he could fancy did honour to his choice:—there was a thoughtful character in his silence, which soon taught her, that, when Arthur shunned conversation, his fair one was propitious: per-

haps she was pleased with this reserve—there was delicacy in it; and Rosanne's nice sense, though she was no votary of sensation, recommended to her favourable notice the sheltering forbearance. And even when Arthur's warmth of temper a little impeached his discretion, she could not be angry: it was still delightful to watch the rippling of a stream, so pellucid at its source, and so beautifully meandering in its progress.

But clouds gathered on Arthur's brow, and, unlike himself, he shunned Rosanne, as if fearful she should inquire into the cause. She had only to be quiet: his heart could not long contain its sufferings. His wish—a wish attended with little doubt—to accelerate his happiness, and which he had employed Mr. Grant to name to the father of Graciana—had been met, on the part of the lady, with shyness, which, on being farther pressed, terminated in a confession of a change of views, the ground for which she could not in honour explain.

No farther intercourse could subsist between the families: Rosanne was decided, that, though there was no chapter on jilts in the Bible, nor any clause, in any part of its injunctions, that forbade accepting pearl-necklaces and tender verses from a man, who was at last to be cheated,—yet, that jilting and cheating were nefarious practices, not at all consisting with the pretty

aphorism that told her to do to others, what she would expect herself.

The mystery was, in a very short time, unravelled: Lord Eggeskerry who had coaxed his wife into a local divorce, was now settling himself again 'en garçon' at his seat in the neighbourhood, and had been heard to say, that if Miss St. Erme had 'a little more spirit,' he would choose her for the new Lady Eggeskerry. On this hint she had improved: she had immediately more spirit; preliminaries were arranged; the bride's clothes were ordered on their return from—the altar!!—and the interesting countess wrote a billet of condescending affection to her dear divine Rosanne, giving her a general invitation when the earl and she should be returned from a nuptial tour, and desiring her to charge Arthur not to wear the willow, but to come and see her 'in her moated castle.'

Rosanne carried the billet to Mr. Grant.—'Sir,' said she, gaping and staring, 'what am I to think of this, or to say to it?'

'Why, as for saying,' replied he, 'you had better be silent; and, as for thinking—if you think as I do, you must think that this old scoundrel, in drawing the girl into adultery, has involved himself in that and bigamy.'

'Sir?' said Rosanne, staring still wider.

Mr. Grant smiled: 'My Rose,' said he, 'you

are a precious simpleton ; but I would not have you otherwise.—May you always be astonished that rational beings, professing to live by the law of your ‘ book,’ as you call it, should, with their eyes open, be such—worse than fools!

CHAPTER LIX.

THE situation of Arthur Lynden called for the attentions of friendship; and Bellarmine was not wanting in his endeavours to teach him that he had suffered only what all may expect to suffer, who trust 'the faithless sex.' This did not suit Arthur's tenderness to women; he turned from the father to the daughter, and found more cordial consolation.

A fortnight restored him to some degree of self-possession, and it was in the power of Rosanne to make him take his food and his exercise. Sitting, one lovely warm October noon, on the grass, at her feet, and playing with his dog, as if designedly to prevent her attending to the book he had found her reading, he looked up at her, and asked her if he was not very good.

On her answering kindly in the affirmative, his whole heart burst out; and attributing all his power of endurance to her, he, in the most winning style of impassioned eloquence, hailed himself happy that he had a heart to offer her: impetuous, and almost losing the power of articulation in his vehemence, he insisted on knowing whether he might hope she would continue to encourage his good behaviour, in

the only way in which it could be encouraged, by the hope of undeffered reward.

It was Rosanne's first audience to the language of passion—she was dazzled—she was giddy—she was bewildered—she was faint—tears burst from her eyes ; and thus, Arthur terrified at his own precipitation, and she wishing, but unable, to remove his alarm, Mr. Grant, who had thought it time to leave his study-window, found them.

There was no reserve with him ; but neither of the young people could speak : he took an arm of each, and depositing Rosanne in a room where she might recover in quiet, he led Arthur round to a remote part of the garden, and from the ingenuous young man heard what gave him pleasure, though not unmixed with some anxiety. At the next opportunity, Mr. Grant mentioned the matter to Bellarmine, who, entering fully with him into the subject, promised to ascertain Rosanne's sentiments, and to fulfil, to the best of his abilities, the duties of a father and a friend.

That she possessed the power to confer happiness, was, in the ear of Rosanne, novel flattery ; and the ecstatic devotion of Arthur Lynden, rendered it intoxicating. There was no such check to be apprehended from Mr. Grant, as in the case of Edward Broseley ; nor did she foresee any probable obstacle on the part of her father. But it was a short consideration that she gave

to the arguments in favour of Arthur: she began to reason by analogy; for she had neither friend nor experience to guide her. 'If,' said she, 'I was, as I feel I was once, wrong in suffering a temporary sensation to mislead me, what can I say *now* in my defence, if I am misled?—In the former instance it was pity, Mr. Grant said, that misled me, and he considered it as excusable. What would he call this influence under which I have suffered myself to be so disturbed?—He would call it passion—sudden, violent passion. Is this the temper of a Christian?—is it the conduct of a Christian, to listen to praises which I cannot deserve? to accept importance to which I have no claim? or is that persuasion to be yielded to, which at first seemed to deprive me of the power of refusing? And for what am I to be flattered? to be the spoiled child that I have seen Graciana?—If flattery spoils me too, how am I to show my face before my Maker?—And how long could I expect Arthur to retain this violent humour?—and what would succeed it?—Such language as his, might persuade any body who wished to be flattered through life; but then, who would look for it, or endure it in old age? and surely it is no more suited to induce a woman to marry than—than—than—a fine piece of music to persuade the possessor of any thing valuable to relinquish it. Now, what is it that Arthur means and wishes?—He asks me to take the place of

foolish Graciana; that is to say, if my father and Mr. Grant approve it, to be his wife—for ever:—then we are to be companions for life—we are to assist each other in all distress—we are to nurse each other in sickness—if we are rich, we are to share each other's riches—if we are poor, we are to endure each other's poverty:—we are to perform conscientiously every duty assigned us; and we are to give an account of our conduct towards each other after our death, to a Judge guided by no passion; and if we ever repent, we shall be wretched. Surely all this needs cool caution, rather than Arthur's violent conduct; and what can all his—nonsense—I may say, have to do with this?—what relation is there between my powers of life and death that he talks of, and which I have not, nor ever wish to have, and doing our duty before God? It is all, in my opinion, so much against it. How wrong I have been, in suffering myself to be disturbed thus!—what will he think of me? for perhaps he was only trying whether I could be as foolish as Graciana.'

Mr. Grant had taken Arthur out on horseback; and Rosanne had been two hours, after their departure, trying to impress on her mind the infinitive mode passive voice of Amo, but certainly not with her usual success, when her father, in the kindest terms, invited her to walk. She obeyed instantly.

'My dear child,' said he, 'you must now for-

get me as your father—do not be alarmed—you must look on me only as your friend, your equal, and one most earnestly desirous to consult your happiness. Time was, I confess, when to detain you with me all my life, was my view; but in this I did the world more injustice than I did you, for I did not believe it had the power of contributing to your happiness. My sentiments are now a little changed—I can take care of myself; and it is fit to provide against that time when I shall not be at hand to take care of you. This young man, Arthur Lynden, I understand from our good friend, avows a partiality for you; and if it be sincere, and likely to be steady, and it meets your wishes, you have only to consult them. Grant has questioned me closely whether your attachment to Southampton is not connected with a personal concern; but as I do not perceive it, I did not discourage his young friend. If I am wrong, what I have said is subject to your correction, and I have no doubt that any choice my daughter's heart could make, would meet her father's approbation.'

'You distress me by your goodness, my dear father,' said she: 'I did not expect to be thus abandoned to my own inexperience.'

'Abandoned? my Rosanne,' he repeated: 'I meant only to leave you at liberty—far, very far were my intentions from abandoning you.—Would you have thought it kind in me to give you my opinion, and impose it on you?'

‘No—but who is so fit to guide mine?’

‘I must first know what it is—and, Rosanne, before you intrust me with it, understand rightly the feeling of my mind. I need not tell you that a susceptible heart has been my bane—the only satisfaction it has ever afforded me is, that I have the power of turning my errors and weaknesses into compassion for my own species. I feel for Arthur: I conceive you capable of inspiring no common passion—I know what suspense is—I know what it is to fix our affections on excellence, and, after all, by some strange blind-fold destiny over which we have no power, to be led, entrapped, into an inferior choice. It is ruin—and I should be sorry, by any fault of mine, to risk an ingenuous young man’s being driven into this predicament.’

Bellarmino had not made the most of the time which Mr. Grant thought he had liberally allotted him to consult Rosanne: he had sat meditating on the days when such interests as that now awakened for his daughter, occupied him for himself: he had traced accidents and causes into events and effects, and had extracted matter of bitter rumination so voluminous and so absorbing, that his time was nearly expired when he sought Rosanne. He was now interrupted by the arrival of Mr. Grant—somewhat to the relief of his daughter:—it was nearly the hour of dinner, and the day could afford no other *na-*

tural opportunity:—a *forced* one would have been unpleasant to her.

Guided, in some measure, by her father's mention of the pain of suspense, she who had never learnt—and who could never have been taught by any endeavours—the dishonest vice of coquetry, wished to end it. She therefore devoted the time between withdrawing from the dinner-table, and that when the gentlemen joined her, to writing ingenuously to her father. She wrote:

‘ Do not regret, as you seemed to do when we parted, my invaluable parent, that you had not spoken to me sooner. I believe, if I had had days before me to speak, I must still have asked your permission to write; for a very oppressive sensation, the same almost as Arthur's vehemence this morning occasioned me, was coming on; and you must have blamed, as well as pitied me, and I should not have been able to speak.

‘ I dare say, though you have been too tender to mention it to me, that you are not ignorant of the error into which I was falling, and should perhaps have fallen, had not Mr. Grant saved me, of mistaking the compassion I felt for the Broseleys in their distress, for that sort of permanent affection which induces persons to unite for life, and to pledge themselves for the continuance of an inclination, not only to share to-

gether its pleasures, but—should it please God to inflict them—its heaviest calamities. I blush for my folly, after the pains you have taken to give me a more correct power of judging.

‘ But if I am mistaken in this point, the same credulity would be equally a mistake in the present case ; and the instruction bestowed on me in that will be applicable in this. Arthur as much mistakes his vehemence for affection, as I did my compassion ; and there is, in my opinion, no more relation between his fancying—and indeed I can scarcely forbear laughing while I write it—that he must, as he says, *die for me*, if I am what he calls me, and what I am sure you will acquit me of ever having been, *cruel*.—There is no more connexion between his fancying he must die for me, and his having steady patience to live with me

‘ Through all the changing scenes of life,
‘ Of trouble and of joy,’

than between his fancying that a thing must be pleasant to eat, because it is blue, or that his new boots must last for ever, because they please him in the fashion of them.

‘ My dear father, I perceive that I have now had my first lesson in the science called love—I am not in a hurry for another ; it is disturbing, and it makes my head ache : but if any one else ever speaks to you on the subject, let me use

the liberty you give me, to inform you what would please me.

‘ Allow me, then, to tell you this is not the love that will win your daughter, though it made her giddy; and though I will confess, that, had I not, as I used to call it, learnt religion, but, as I now say, without the guidance of Christianity, I should possibly have believed, and even wished to believe Arthur, and might have called you and Mr. Grant cruel, if you had not instantly encouraged me.

‘ Your allusion to Southampton makes me apprehend that Mr. Grant has said to you what he said to me. I am astonished that so sensible a man should have ever thought a moment, as he seems to have done—it is almost reproach to me. Could he think I had learnt to be humble to so little purpose? If he judges by others, I suppose all men distinguished in the world for goodness and agreeable manners, must have many ladies wishing for them, and this must make sad distress and confusion. But I dare say he is right, though I may be affronted.—Alexander the Great seems to have been persecuted; but then the women were not Christians.

‘ Your care for me calls for my gratitude. Could you promise to live as long as I may, I should think of nothing farther; but as this, alas! may not be, I suppose it will be better to give me to somebody. But mind, dear father, it must be somebody who does not talk of my

power of life and death, who is not so cruel as to make me worse by flattery—some one whom I may love without presumption, and who will love and feel obliged to you :—he must be very good, and I must have proof of his goodness :—he must be able to inform and to guide me :—he must be patient in doing the one, and very gentle in the other ; and he must not take me away from you. This is from the very heart of

‘ Your most grateful and

‘ obedient daughter,

‘ R. B.’

P. S. ‘ I forgot that you and Mr. G. may indeed have reasons for wishing I would believe Arthur—perhaps I do not understand him. I would try, if you wished it ; but then how shall I know that he will be steady?—Think how lately he was so miserable about Graciana.

P. S. ‘ I have, since I finished this, read the marriage-service—I do not think it can possibly do:—one must undertake for so much ! and I question whether Arthur would like to be so tied down ; and I would not have a word left out in what we promise each other.’

‘ Happy, happy state of mind !’ exclaimed Bellarmine ; ‘ disturbed by no artificial anxiety !—inoculated with no foreign evil !—But is this common?—is it not rather the effect of my secluding her from the world ? She has had no opportunity of catching the contagion of passion—and she is the happier for it, I feel a

satisfaction in the purity in which I have preserved her.—O! what a happiness it is not to have done the worst possible! and it is to the credit of her governess, that her mind is untainted: in her, indeed, one vice counteracted another—the woman's masculine conceit smothered her sex's failings, and the bribe of my kitchen paralysed her treachery.—I must leave this sweet girl of mine to act by the guidance of her own good sense; for, though I should certainly feel more at liberty were she married, I cannot prescribe to one so capable of judging for herself:—what she says of the problematical character of Arthur's passion, is perhaps too just—and should he be fickle, she must, with *her* mind, be particularly miserable.'

Rosanne found on her dressing-table, a note from her father, and subscribed by Mr. Grant, giving the proper encouragement to her frame of mind, and remitting to her prudence the conduct and conclusion of this affair—offering any intervention that could save her from unpleasant discussion, and empowering her to affix their authority to whatever was her decision. It was an order, it is true, to please herself, and an undertaking to be pleased with the effort; but Rosanne's principles secured her, and those anxious for her.—'In this point,' said Bellarmine, 'my dear girl may be better trusted than ever could be her father.'

The impetuous Arthur could wait no longer

than the earliest possible moment of seeing Rosanne the next morning, to inquire his fate: she made an appointment to meet him in the library, after breakfast, and unintentionally raised his hopes, by being at the place of assignation before him.

If his passion had dictated, or his prudence proposed any mode of address, it was to no purpose; for he was entirely thrown out of any plan, by her accusing herself, with a steadiness that could not be shaken, and a dignity that completely controlled him, of the most unpardonable weakness in suffering his madness to affect her, as it had done the preceding day.—‘Instead,’ said she, ‘of being of use to you, as a friend whom you had so intrusted with your confidence, ought to have been, I led you farther into error; and I must have misled you with regard to my own sentiments; for, seeing me so distressed, you might suppose me willing to forget how little reliance there could be for me on such flattery.’ She then repeated all she had urged to her father, on the irrelative character of the passion he had manifested, and the affection she could accept. Her sincerity piqued the young man—he was for half a day angry, for two days distant, and for two more indifferent; when a very unexpected visit from Mr. St. Erme gave a new turn to affairs, by making known the sudden but not unlooked-for death of Lord Eggeskerry, the extreme

distress of his widow, and her father's earnest hope that Arthur would, in this situation of affairs, forget all past offence, and comply with her penitent wish that he would accompany him immediately in his visit to her, and assist in extricating her from the labyrinth of misery in which her precipitate marriage had involved her.—Arthur asked five minutes to consult Mr. Grant, in private; and his good friend's advice being, 'Unless you mean to be a slave for life, stir not;'—he ordered his man privately to slip a change of linen and his night-cap into Mr. St. Erme's chaise; and intimating that, to avoid delay, he would attend him to the second mile-stone, he spared himself and others all uneasiness; and his first letter from 'the moated castle,' showed that when Rosanne intended only to do her duty, she consulted her own interest.

CHAPTER LX.

ANOTHER fortnight had passed, to the satisfaction, the delight, and almost the rapture of Rosanne; but now a little arrangement was necessary, lest she and her father should put their kind host to inconvenience. The Bishop was to be accommodated at his house, at the time of the confirmation: he had a nephew with him; and the parsonage-house was not capacious enough to receive them, unless the present guests withdrew. As Mr. Grant had no ostentation, this would have been easily settled by the least hint to any one of his neighbours; but all care on the subject was removed by the politeness of Sir Puley and Lady Cobby, who having once upon a time, when Mr. Bellarmine first purchased his residence in France, been beholden to him for civilities under great inconvenience, in an ill-timed and worse-planned sentimental tour—on hearing of his arrival in their neighbourhood, made him and ‘his little daughter,’ as they still called her, a visit of profuse gratitude. They lived at the distance of a few miles; and as nothing could gainsay their earnest desire to have Mr. ‘and little Miss Bellarmine’ for their guests, it was agreed that to them Mr. Grant

should be obliged for housing his friends, during the Bishop's three days' stay.

Rosanne, duly impressed with the importance of the rite, and very desirous to avail herself of the opportunity of sharing in that which she considered as necessary to the profession of Christianity, did not wish for change or novelty; but she could not, under such circumstances, hesitate; nor could what was disagreeable be avoided, without hurting the feelings of two superabundantly civil people.—It was therefore agreed, that, on the evening of the confirmation-day, Mr. and Miss Bellarmine should become the guests of these pressing friends; and those who saw Rosanne very busily engaged in needle-work at this time, might have supposed her either on the eve of matrimony, or inclined to pay great respect to the personages whom she was to visit; but her industry was called out by the more important rite; and, for this, she thought no pains superfluous.

'It seems to me, Sir,' said she, 'like coming of age in religion.'

'I wish,' said Mr. Grant, 'all people thought as seriously about it as you do.'

The day arrived. Miss Bellarmine did the honours of the breakfast-table, to the Bishop and his nephew, who being introduced as Mr. Byram, was soon recognised as the brother of Lord Montrylas. His attentions had very much the aspect of previous acquaintance with

the character of Miss Bellarmine—he, too, talked of his sister, Lady Agnes, and wished they might at any future time become acquainted. His eldest brother he described as waiting orders for embarking.

Retiring from the breakfast-table to prepare for going into the church, Rosanne was delighted with seeing the country people flocking to the ceremony: they strewed the paths—they variegated the hills: it seemed indeed a festival.

Her residence in France accounted to the Bishop for her joining the throng: he knew that, in such a house, there could be no question of her due preparation; and his condescending manners to her, showed that he thought her deserving notice. Perhaps he expected her to be the first presented to his hands, for he looked round; but, as if immediately recollecting what would be consistent with the propriety that marked her deportment, he proceeded;—yet, when she came, neither presumingly amongst the foremost; nor with pointed humility amongst the last, there was something in his manner towards her, that made Mr. Grant say to himself, ‘I am glad she did not take Arthur:—it will be his lordship’s nephew, after all.’

She received almost bridal compliments at their return:—she acquitted herself of the duties of the table, took care that nothing should be wanting for the accommodation of those for

whom she and her father made room, and in the evening, not very willingly, but very cheerfully, accompanied her father to Swan park, the seat of Sir Puley Cobby.

Sir Puley and his lady were a pair of old turtles, within a fortnight of an age, and so alike, that it was difficult, when she wore a habit, or he was in his morning-gown, to distinguish them: they were little, fat, boneless figures, and prided themselves on their fondness for each other, their taste in books, and their skill in physiognomy. The mother of the one, who was the aunt of the other, had nursed, educated, and lived with them till her death, which had lately occurred. She had kept house for them, had been called 'mamma,' and valued herself on an exertion of care which, as she said, had made this world a down-bed to 'the children.'—'Poor things,' said she, in her last moments, 'when I am gone, what will they do?—what can they know of the world?'—It was indeed a very fair question.

The same mind, and that a very foolish one, having formed theirs, the resemblance of their ideas was not wonderful. The dowager Lady Cobby had procured for them, in the first instance, a governess, who served likewise as companion to herself, and housekeeper in her family; and under this lady, the dear little doves learnt their alphabet, their little spelling-book, and all the sweet interesting little stories

and dramas, that the genius of her employer could devise, to keep them quiet; for, as her ladyship observed, 'What is so quiet for children as a book?—If you give them hoops and balls and bats, there is no peace; if you give them a pencil and paper, it is perpetually 'Do, 'mamma, cut my pencil;' and when you have just done it, jounce it goes, and you have it to do again, and with perhaps a blunted knife:—if they have a slate, mercy on our teeth!—in short, there is nothing but a book for drawing-room children.'

The baronet and his cousin having been kept under their governess, who was their faithful guardian day and night, for they had little cribs on each side her bed, till they were twelve years old, the laughter of a rough relation obliged Lady Cobby to think of altering her plan for the dear little loves, and she so far yielded to what she thought prejudice, as to fit up a room for Puley, and to have a tutor, for two hours three times a week, to teach him Latin and Greek, the mathematics, and use of the globes, a little drawing, and, by her own particular wish, the flageolet;—she herself superintending his reading, which, in poetry, for which he had a genius, had risen to Shenstone and Hammond, and in prose, to Richardson and Sterne. When another 'rise in being' was almost demanded by increasing years, she consulted her son on the choice to be made of the

university, or travel; for no profession could be thought on, at that time, where there was a prospect of money without it, and no love of danger;—but he, the most dutiful son that ever mother had! thought they were all so comfortable, it was pity to separate. They therefore remained together, varying the scene of home, by a little Tunbridge, a little Clifton, and a little of any quiet bathing-place.—The circulating libraries of these resorts were the Bodleian, the Radcliff, the ‘King’s,’ and ‘Trinity,’ of the young baronet’s sphere of education; and he profited accordingly.

At sixteen, he and his cousin married; and, excepting that one tour in France, which, it is thought, cost the dowager Lady Cobby her life, they had never slept from under the same roof with her.

In travelling, their objects were not the great, the inspiring, or the venerable: they professed to be in search only of ‘the interesting’—a novelist’s bed-chamber, or the cabbage-garden of a pastoral-writer, were to them the Acropolis and the Forum.

To return to the guests. A supper equally offensive to the corporal and mental taste of Bellarmine, was relief to the oppressive inanity of the first evening, in which, happy to get auditors, Sir Puley and Lady Cobby poured forth their nonsense, without mercy. Their

loves—the history of their little courtship, and the celebration of their wedding, which, Sir Puley said, resembled that of Cupid and Psyche, did something towards passing the time—but on books such as *they* read, neither of their visitors could speak: and when they got on their remaining hobby-horse, Rosanne, who considered the rash judgment connected with reading the characters of her fellow-creatures in lines, angles, and arches, as rather inconsistent with the precepts she best loved to follow, was, on principle, silent.

In vain they related the marvellous fulfilment of their predictions from features;—in vain they confessed the many causes they had found for disregarding the science in hiring their servants. Rosanne would not bring forward her objections, nor could she foster their ideas.

But the morrow, the guests were told, should produce them a treat indeed! and, that their expectation might be in readiness, a great secret was disclosed, namely, the present employment of Sir Puley's genius, on no less an undertaking than an epic poem, which should be read after breakfast the next day, by 'a poor devil who had a most extraordinary physiognomy,' and whom Sir Puley had been obliged to engage, to copy out the manuscript for the press; having, as he observed, 'a little odd kind of numbness'—it could be nothing but a strain in shutting his tooth-pick case—in his right hand.—The poem.

should certainly be read, if Mr. and Miss Bellarmine would only have the goodness to observe the face of the young man.'

'And *there* will be a treat, love! to hear the poem!—don't you let it keep your pretty eyes open to-night; for you can't have it till to-morrow, if it's ever so,' said Lady Cobby to her little Rosy.

The promise was not forgotten in the morning. 'Come, love,' said Sir Puley, 'dispatch the breakfast—it's a nice wet morning for us; and I want the reading to begin.'—'And now, my dear good Sir,' said he, addressing himself to Bellarmine, 'do me the favour to observe Mr. Johnson's countenance, when you see him:—only look at the arch of his left eye-brow, and mark a little draw-in that he has at the point of his nose—and mind the corners of his mouth, and tell me what you see there: if he is not something more than he appears, I am no physiognomist, I confess.—It is positively three quarters of an hour after Johnson's time; for I always order him here punctually to a minute; he knows I *will* be minded, and that keeps him exact.—Now, ring the bell loud, Lady Cobby: he knows when that bell rings twice, he is to be ready—all by clock-work here, Miss B.—Now I will attend you to the library—we shall find Johnson there.'

To the library, a room so called from its having two bowers for duodecimos between

four large looking-glasses, they repaired; but inquiries for Johnson, instead of bringing him in person, told only that he had come at the usual hour, but, not choosing to wait in the hall, as he was bid to do, he had gone away, and was not yet returned.

Before one servant had listened through Sir Puley's orders for 'making the fellow know that his master would not be so treated,' Mr. Johnson was announced by another: the rain poured from his coat as he presented himself: he made no apology; and perhaps it was recollected that none could be due from him; for he was only contemned. It was not in human nature not to look at him; but the looks of Belarmine and Rosanne could not offend.

This subject for dissection would have appeared about twenty-five years of age, had he been seen to advantage; but he was pale, emaciated, thoughtful, melancholy. He was clad in—or rather his want of clothing was concealed by—a threadbare great-coat, that still said, 'He who bought me was a gentleman;' and under this surtout shone, in rain, a pair of black silk stockings—the last sad representatives of a decayed family! His face was as long as physiognomist could wish: his nose, originally aquiline, was certainly *drawn in*, for it had a character of pinching poverty in it; and his eye-brow, which was to say so much, seemed indeed to say that intensity of thought

had struggled with vexation, till, obeying neither impulse, like a ball under projectile force, it had made its own parabola.

The wetness of his shoes had communicated itself to the carpet; and the fear of cold might a little exasperate Sir Puley, or he might want something to rail at, when he, in very sharp language, desired to know why he had not brought his slippers with him.

‘Sir,’ replied Mr. Johnson, ‘I would not have affronted you so much as to have supposed——’ there he stopped—his breast heaved—he cleared his throat—his lips quivered—he begged pardon.

This was propitiation. Lady Cobby held out the parcel of manuscript; Sir Puley *pre-commenting* for the information of the auditors.

And now what patience must have been that of poor Johnson, who, for the seventh time, was to communicate the ‘never-before-communicated’ nonsense of a wretched epic in common life—a novel in heroics. Would Bellarmine’s patience have endured even the hearing?

Johnson had proceeded a very few lines, when Lady Cobby, impatient for a morsel of approbation for dear Sir Puley, interrupted him by saying aloud,

‘How do you like the lady’s name, Mr. Bellarmine?—don’t you think Valerientia is a very pretty name?’

The reader had been standing on a spot

marked out to him by the finger of Sir Puley ; but on being thus interrupted in his outset, he put his hand before his eyes, complained of giddiness, and begged leave to withdraw.

Bellarmino, very humanely alarmed, rose to assist ; Rosanne offered her sal ammoniac ; he declined any aid ; but, supporting himself by the door which he had opened, recovered sufficiently to get out of the room. A message of excuse was brought : he was too ill to read, and was gone home. ‘ You certainly affronted the gentleman’s pride by interrupting him, Lady Cobby,’ said Sir Puley ; ‘ and now, I suppose, we must wait till his stomach comes down ; hunger will soon bring it down, I trust.’ Then followed the usual remarks on the natural association of pride and poverty.

Nor was this enough : the strange proceeding of this seemingly wretched dependent, was discussed between Sir Puley and his servants, with additions of vulgar conjectures and absurd suppositions ; and Rosanne, in this mortifying conviction of the little efficacy of what she concluded to be an universal principle, was equally astonished and indignant. The young man appeared to her a starving creature : he seemed exhausting his last remains of strength in a sordid and vexatious employment, which nothing but need could have induced him to accept. What, to his employers, explained itself as pride and insolence, was, to her apprehension,

want of power; and Sir Puley and his lady, whose affirmatives served to blow the coals of her husband's resentment, were, every moment, less agreeable to her. She was pleased to see her father, as far as was consistent with respect to the better power of judging which the young man's patron might claim, his advocate:—he kindly suggested possibilities that carried excuses with them: 'there was a gentlemanly appearance about him'—'he might explain the matter'—but, 'No, no—he must be a rogue—a rascal.' The butler was questioned as to the spoons; and Rosanne's little bank of patience and forbearance had nothing more to afford her. The next harsh word brought out all she thought.

Bellarmino, not displeased with her honest warmth, and perhaps a little proud of the manner in which, even under its influence, she declared her sentiments, let her go on; and it left her to endure from the baronet a torrent of nonsense, founded on what he called 'knowledge of the human heart,'—that is to say, prejudice in favour of the guilt of an untried fellow-creature—and the still more provoking 'Come, come, my little Rosy'—and 'Well, well! we shall see all in good time,' of her ladyship.

No hope appearing of Mr. Johnson's return, Sir Puley was going to undertake the laborious task of reading his own poetry. Bellarmino looked in despair: he almost pledged himself

for the presence of Mr. Johnson the next morning: but he must have endured the threatened trial of his patience, had not a messenger arrived from Mr. Grant's with letters for him, one of which, to the dismay of Rosanne, he said, called him to town instantly: she dared not entreat; nor would entreaty, in the present instance, have availed; for the speculations of Frederic Gass attracted him, and the epic repelled him; and Bellarmine, though grown regular and decent in his observances, was far from victorious over his habitual dispositions: he knew his daughter was safe, otherwise he would, on no consideration, have left her;—but as to the unpleasant circumstances of their visit, his sharing them would not lessen them: he 'would, without fail, return the following evening in time to prevent her anxiety.'

She had no alternative: she could not ask to accompany him: she was a prisoner at Swan park: his haste was so urgent, that, though the rain had not quite ceased, he accepted the offer of a horse to convey him to the town, where he could get a chaise; and Rosanne, having followed him with her eyes, as long as the road was visible, rejoined, with a heavy heart, those to whom she was doomed to be obliged. Their exultation in having her, as they said, 'all to themselves,' was interrupted by a civil note from Mr. Johnson, containing a resignation of his office; and before Sir Puley had ceased up-

braiding his wife for her ill-timed interruption of the epic, there arrived, as if sent to Lady Cobby's rescue, three of those forlorn beings, 'wet-day loungers in the country.' They were idle young men, the son and nephew of a family a few miles off, and a visitor to them from London: they did not know what to do with themselves; and *so* they brought their friend to Swan park.

It was scarcely noon; two had breakfasted, one had not;—breakfast was brought;—news-papers—the blessing of the idle, the interruption of the industrious—made the meal hold out. Sir Puley and Lady Cobby's 'tiffing' came. The two at liberty had gone to look at their horses, and returned as the tray was carrying out—it was fetched back—their dogs came in with it, and were fed on the carpet. They talked of going: Lady Cobby, perhaps fearing a second part of the lecture on Mr. Johnson, begged their stay. She even hinted at her want of something to amuse 'that young lady'—they ducked their heads, and pleaded engagements—for 'that young lady' had no attraction for them.

When the resistance of Lady Cobby's invitations seemed to settle the matter, Sir Puley confidently came forward with his: they were not accepted. The visitors did not consent to stay, but neither did they depart. Bagatelle—a hit at billiards—a condescending game at chess; 'to

amuse Rosy-posy'—in which Rosy-posy's good sense was more than a match for her antagonist—were expedients.

All this with the watches out and in, and 'Faith, we must be off,' filled up till the morning was gone: they could not stay dinner, 'upon their souls'—they would just see to the horses.

In half an hour, one returns. 'Won't he take any thing before he goes?'—He 'does n't care if he does:'—the tray is brought in again.

They now consent to dine—go out again—return to make neat—'have the dirt just taken off their boots;'—when dinner should be served—employ the servants wanted for the table—'cry havock' to Sir Puley's best wines, which were intended for Bellarmine—the ladies quit them;—poor Rosanne—to be entertained by Lady Cobby!—the gentlemen come to tea, and tell how one had been snoring—Casino for Sir Puley succeeds—then comes a standing Sandwich-supper—the horses are ordered—countermanded—the trio stay all night, and next morning make Sir Puley's politeness wait breakfast till his varieties of hot-bread are spoiled—then, the day being fine, they set off, all particularly engaged, 'upon their souls.'

Rosanne had waked with the recollection of Mr. Johnson, and, while dressing, requested that, in her father's name, an inquiry might be made, with hopes that he had recovered.

She had better have been quiet; for her intimation that she wished the answer to be brought her by the channel which bore the message from her, was disregarded:—it was delivered in full conclave; and she had to endure the most intolerable of all species of wit. Nor did her endeavour procure the satisfaction she had hoped to have in store for her father: Mr. Johnson had quitted his residence, and no one could give any account of him.

The evening, however, brought Bellarmine back in very good spirits. Frederic's speculations were thriving, and, though this was matter of private gratulation, it diffused a pleasant aspect over his father's mind: he had likewise indulged his feelings by contributing to the success of these prolific plans; Emma was charming; the boy was grown; and Frederic was bound by an immense debt of gratitude.

The following day finished the exile of Bellarmine and his daughter; and they returned to their good friend Grant, if possible, more than ever sensible to the decorum of his house and the charm of his society.

CHAPTER LXI.

THEY had enjoyed this tranquillity a few days, and Bellarmine, who had found London dirty and unpleasant, was beginning to think of taking a house near Mr. Grant's for the winter; when, as he was speaking on the subject, the servant brought in letters and news-papers: one of the former Bellarmine put into his pocket, and Rosanne saw Mr. Grant shake his head; but another he opened, as if wishing to show that he was not *all* mystery, saying, as he broke the seal, 'If this is from my tailor, tailors ape their employers very well.'

He looked at the signature—he looked at the date—he looked at the top—and again at the superscription: he sought for the post-mark, but in vain: he showed all the signs of extreme uneasiness, and attempted to get out of the room; but failing, he sate down, and telling Rosanne not to be alarmed, asked her to withdraw — and then added, 'And, my dear Grant, do you too have the goodness to leave me.'

'I will not,' said Mr. Grant—'Rosanne, my child, go; rely on my care, whatever this is.'

She could scarcely rely—but she obeyed; and in passing through the little hall, her eye was

caught by the figure of a man leaning on the gate from the road, and whom she recognised as the unfortunate Johnson.

She had lately heard of threatening letters. 'This is a threatening letter,' said she, in her ignorance of such proceedings:—'and could that disagreeable man, Sir Puley, be right?—Can this pitiable, this ill-used, this elegant, gentlemanly young man, as he appeared to be, be one to supply his means by violence?—But my father is safe—he is only shocked.'

Having gained her room, she continued looking at the emaciated figure: he walked—he stood still. Her difficulty to suppose him what she had begun to suspect, increased:—he looked at the house, as if anxious. In about half an hour, Mr. Grant went out to him; she saw the civilities of gentlemen pass between them. Mr. Grant opened the gate, took the young man's arm, and walked away with him. Her father's voice then feebly called her.

He was more calm, but still far from his usual composure. He said, an unpleasant circumstance, which he could not just then explain, had occurred to him:—'she had no cause to be alarmed. Grant had behaved like himself, all kindness and activity of friendship.'

But, however inclined to obey, Rosanne could not now command her anxiety. She most earnestly conjured her father to tell her what it was that had so distressed him; and not able

to make him ingenuous by a general appeal, she began to interrogate him. ‘Is your life threatened, my dear father?’—‘No, not my *life*.’—‘O! then I am happy—but your comfort?’—‘I cannot answer you to that, Rose—I feel for *you* as well as for myself.’—‘Then I *must* know.’—‘I am ruined, my child!—and still worse—worse!—O Rosanne! you cannot feel this for me;—I am—your father is—exposed—to scorn—to contempt:—go, leave him—take care of yourself—never say that you are my daughter:—I am disgraced.’

‘T is impossible,’ said Rosanne: ‘father, show me the letter—I am not a baby;—if you are ruined, they cannot take Heaven from us—and little must they know of you, who do not love and respect you.—Let us go away together—any thing—but I *will* see the letter.’

She threw herself on his neck:—the letter was under a book—he allowed her to take it.

It was brief; but its importance fully accounted for all the distress she had witnessed in her father; and the disclosure it made, verified Sir Puley Cobby’s prediction, that Mr. Johnson was not what he appeared: these words were its contents:

(Private.)

‘SIR,

‘The inquiry sent in your name indicated a degree of concern for the young man whom

you saw lately in the lowest state of humiliation; and a concern so according with the kindness which you and the young lady with you offered him under his oppression, has encouraged a presumptuous hope of obtaining attention to a situation of singular calamity. You need fear nothing, either from imposition or treachery. It is to you alone that I address myself—I guard against every accident.

‘ I will reveal myself to you as Sir Tancred Ormesden—you knew my father: he drank hard; and after having forced my mother to give up almost every thing settled on her, was suffered, in a state of intoxication, to stake all that was to have provided for her and his two daughters, and myself:—he lost, and we were beggars;—but again fortune favoured him—again he risked, and again she frowned; and he ended his life in a way that leaves a blot on our name.

‘ I charge no one—if my father would be so mad, it was at his own peril:—honour, indeed, should have prevented a gentleman from suffering him to sit down intoxicated—but still, he who did it, is not chargeable with his death; and I feel, that, injured and trodden down as we are, we have no right to make personal complaint.

‘ I have had, thanks to my excellent mother’s exertions, and the liberality of a noble friend, the education of a gentleman; and the little

pittance that remains, I might share, could I take the bread from her and my sisters;—that I cannot is the reason for your having seen me—it is of no consequence to explain my sudden withdrawing—you will place yourself in my situation, and find a reason.

‘ My application to you, Sir, now, is for the loan of a few hundred pounds, with which, I am assured, my mother might relieve her wants, by prosecuting a claim to a small estate, and which, though not enough to place her in affluence, would, I am on the best authority promised, be in a few years improvable to a great extent. We might then, after all our miseries, recover our situation in the world, and should owe all our happiness to you.

‘ I shall send this from the post-office, and shall follow it, and wait an hour at your gate for your written answer. If you do not choose it to be known that you ever had any acquaintance with my father, speak of me as a begging pauper; and any commands you will lay on me shall be most honourably obeyed by, Sir,

‘ Yours, with inviolable fidelity,

‘ T. O.’

Rosanne felt no emotions but those the most favourable to her father, excited by the perusal of this afflicting letter: she was pleased in finding the writer of it worthy of respect, as well as claiming compassion; and she saw no question but whether her father would or would

not lend him the money:—‘ a few hundred pounds could not ruin him, and surely it was no such formidable exposure—no such sad disgrace—no such risk of scorn and contempt as he represented it, to have been acquainted with a man such as Sir Tancred’s letter described his father.’

She was going to urge this consolation, and to encourage his compliance with the request, when her father, rising and stamping on the ground, with a look of self-execration said, ‘ Rosanne, *I* am the man who ruined this family; and see, see,’ said he, ‘ the cutting kindness of this injured young man—he has guarded his expressions so, that even had *you* opened the letter, you would not have detected me.’

‘ It is great—it is generous,’ said Rosanne; ‘ but, my father, why this extreme distress?—to whom are you exposed?—to no one. Avowal—confessions—are not exposure. Mr. Grant and I can know nothing but the greatness of your mind, that in its corrected state disdains concealment. You are not, my dear father, the man you were when you took laudanum:—this is Christianity that you are practising, my father;—and Christianity rises highest when it stoops the lowest; and it will prompt you to do more, I am sure, than this young man asks.’

‘ To think,’ said Bellarmine, ‘ that *I* should be the cause of that young man’s suffering what we witnessed, and one who appears so deserving

a better fate—I never was more interested for a stranger:—if he had exposed me as he might, I fear——’

‘ O! do not reproach yourself, my dearest father,’ said Rosanne: ‘ remember the sermon we heard at Southampton on that happy day, when we first ‘ walked in the house of God ‘ as friends.’—‘ Let him that stole, steal no more, ‘ but rather let him labour with his hands’—St. Paul says; and this is so truly the spirit of Christianity, that we cannot doubt. Surely the money should be returned!’

‘ So says Grant; but I do not need to be talked to—my feelings are enough; yet what may you say of me, my child?’

‘ There can be but one opinion among Christians, my father. O! how happy you are to have such an opportunity!’

‘ Yes, yes:—I must do it.’

Mr. Grant now returned. Sir Tancred had delicately retreated, to give Bellarmine time for consideration; and in a few days, Rosanne had the comfort of knowing that the matter was arranged in the way most satisfactory to her father’s peace of mind. She knew not, nor dared she inquire, the sum refunded: she might have been intrusted with it, had not Mr. Frederic Gass’s speculations previously cut so deep into Bellarmine’s property. Whatever was the proportion which it bore to the sum-total from which it was deducted, that it was deducted

could be inferred only from the cessation of all mention of a separate dwelling.

The interests of Sir Tancred passed through Mr. Grant's hands, and his manner of receiving the obligation showed him deserving of it: he was informed of some obvious caution with regard to Miss Bellarmine, and this, with the pain a personal interview might occasion, kept the parties from farther acquaintance.

If Mr. Grant had compassionately loved Bellarmine heretofore, he now esteemed and honoured him; and the good man was not sparing of his kindest encouragement. And if Rosanne had hitherto honoured her father as her parent, she now revered him as a man, who, by a voluntary choice of goodness, had rendered himself capable of the greatest actions.

There seemed now no obstacle to Bellarmine's being one of the happiest men existing, and his daughter expected to see the effects of his noble conduct in every gesture: he must, she hoped, have obliterated from his conscience all records that could reproach him; and the erasure was so filled up by this great action, that she thought he ought to be still more happy than he had ever been miserable. Alas, poor silly Rosanne! she did not perceive that her father, even in this heroic deed, acted from a motive, which, however laudable on the present occasion, might, if relied on too much, mislead him,

and perhaps now, by the approbation bestowed on it, fortify him still more in an error. They were impulses not very dissimilar that had led him into an excess of kindness towards Frederic Gass, and to an act of great justice towards Sir Tancred; and what man, under such subordinate influence, could answer for the character of his next movement? Neither did Rosanne consider the disorder brought into the mind by a mis-spent youth;—she thought her dear father had only to change his views, and that then every object must be exhilarating.

If Mr. Grant saw any defect in the foundation of that which he admired, he had the charity to withhold all observation on it: his acquaintance with human nature told him, that, however wanting his friend might be in his methods, his disposition to do right was unquestionable; and this was something gained on a conduct that had been wrong in every point: ‘he has grown regular,’ said he to Rosanne, ‘and I trust he will be in time pious;—and,’ added he, ‘I wish that invaluable sentiment of Johnson’s were considered as it deserves to be: it is encouraging to those in your father’s situation; and it teaches us, who are watching his progress, to be patient and content, and to rely on that order of things which our Creator has established for our benefit. Let us act first from feelings good in themselves when not perverted,

and we shall next act from the only one that cannot be perverted—the sense of duty (1).’

NOTE.

(1) However impatient we may be to see those whom we love, restored, after a course of error, to the comforts of a better life, we must not be discouraged by the absence of this satisfaction: the splendid robe, the costly ring, the fatted calf, may be bestowed on us only in the presence of Him whose omniscience is necessary to ascertain the sincerity of a renovated heart; and this life may be, to its last hour, a scene of trial. Neither must the vulgar axioms which encourage procrastination of amendment, foster licentiousness or folly, by including the novelty of a life of forbearance, or a course of wisdom, among the agreeable varieties of this world’s scene-shifting. Whatever we read of, as the manner of conversion in the early age of our faith;—whatever means were allowed to those who had it proposed to them to accept or reject a new doctrine, nothing preternatural can be expected by us, beyond the blessing of the Holy Spirit on our honest endeavours. There is no such thing as a crisis in sin that must evidently and of necessity be succeeded by sound and invulnerable health. The diseases of our better part, are chronic, and require, not a stroke of electricity, not a fright or a fall, to cure them, but a persevering, wearisome, and discouraging application of alteratives—a moment may suffice, indeed, to show us our danger; but it is only a regular course of self-opposition that can de-racinate evil, and substitute good.

To those who cannot retreat from the world, the task is still harder—the more knots they tie, the more they have to untie; and they will find many more assistants in the former than in the latter task. But ‘let patience have her perfect work;’ let us but once bring ourselves to wait for a reward, and every day, every hour, will, however insensibly, add

some support to an honest endeavour. The first consolation will be, 'I am not adding to the wrong side of my account:' the next, 'I have a little to set off against it:' then comes an humble hope that the balance is questionable; and afterwards, that more than worldly compensation, the feeling, that, while the grace of God attends us, even should he think fit to withhold his unmerited blessings, vice and folly must be hateful to us, and nothing pleasant that does not draw us nearer to him.

CHAPTER LXII.

WINTER now drew on, and brought no regrets on the mind of Rosanne. Under her father's excellent guidance, she prosecuted her endeavours to enlarge her stores of knowledge, which were raised into importance by the motive that actuated them. He, on his part, was uniformly kind, though not uniformly lively; and had not the interests and speculations of Mr. Frederic Gass been a subject admitting of no confidence, Mr. Grant and his friend would have been wholly unreserved; but it was soon evident that this must, for a long time, occasion shyness. Frederic's letters could not be communicated, nor could any thing have induced Bellarmine to confess the amount to which he had afforded him pecuniary assistance.

The novelty of peace had kept Rosanne's wishes within a very reasonable boundary. She saw, after Christmas, some of the principal persons of the surrounding neighbourhood preparing for a residence in London; and offers were made, or rather emulation was expressed, of introducing one so likely to do credit to introduction; but nothing could move her from her father, or make her wish to remove him from Mr. Grant's invaluable care: plans of neighbourly separation

were sometimes discussed ; but they died away as soon as proposed.

As if in pity to a visitor from a southern climate, the winter had been mild ; and in a benign February day, when Mr. Grant was from home, and Rosanne was reading with her father, that malignant disturber of her peace, whose very external now always made her heart beat—that unsounding weapon, a bit of paper, sealed and superscribed, again threatened her comfort.—Her habits did not allow her to be inquisitive ; she took up her work, while her father perused the contents of the billet ; and his holding the envelope in his hands so that she could not see even the impression of the seal, seemed to approve her forbearance.

That an effect was produced by this cause, was evident : Bellarmine wrote a very short reply, and signified to her the necessity of his immediately going to meet a gentleman who was waiting for him at the village-inn. She made no answer : he quitted her, but with a countenance so gay, and in a manner so very kind, that, if she had not been aware of Frederic Gass's power to produce such appearances, she could not have remained anxious.

Mr. Grant came in : she told him what had occurred : no satisfaction could be sought without the risk of giving the most unhandsome offence ; and they were compelled to prepare their minds for somewhat very unpleasant.

‘ I am afraid,’ said Mr. Grant, ‘ that young man has more influence than is good over your father. Every thing included in the duty of a parent, and consistent with the established rules of social life, he has a right to expect ; but whatever facilitates immorality, by removing its inconveniences, is wrong ; and we must find fault with the jurisprudence of the Almighty, if we blame that which good order makes necessary. I would be the last to make obliquity of birth felt by an individual, and probably should be the first to resent the cruelty that pointed at it ; but it is no cause for particular regard in general ; and I fear, in parents it brings out a species of affection not very safe in the indulgence.’

‘ My poor father,’ said Rosanne, sighing, ‘ has placed himself in a situation that almost takes away the possibility of being prudent. I am convinced he furnishes Mr. Gass with money ; and a stranger as he is to his disposition, for it does not appear that he knew any thing of him till we were at Southampton, he may, I am sure, be easily imposed on by such a man, especially as I can perceive the great difference between my father’s proper love for me, and that sort of weakness which perhaps he thinks ought to have no bounds, when it is to atone for what the young man may have suffered while we were living in France. I dare say my father’s good heart tells him he can never do enough ; and I am as certain, that, if this son were ever to offend

him, the sense of what he has done, would make it still more wounding; he would never forgive him; for he would add his own feelings to the offence.'

' True,' said Mr. Grant. ' You see how much better it is to suffer ourselves to be guided in the early actions of our lives—all goes right when we set out regularly : we have the advice, the example, and support of others ; but if we cut a new path for ourselves, through a thicket where the wise do not choose to follow us, 't is in vain that we shall call for help, when we are tearing our clothes off our backs in the brambles.'

But all these forebodings were dispelled by the return of Bellarmine, animated, good-humoured, and concerned for having, ' by want of recollection,' cast an anxious shade over his daughter's brow. ' It was a point of etiquette towards you, Grant,' said he, ' that called me out:—our Southampton friend, Lord Montrylas, is going through your village, and would have called; but he is too delicate to visit a visitor without permission.'

The effect of surprise, and of agreeable surprise, on the countenance and complexion of Rosanne, might have mis-led common observers; but she was in no danger of being misunderstood by her present judge: her father knew her too well; and her friend was too earnest in his wish that ' it might be so,' to anticipate her

sentiments. She made no scruple of adding her wishes to Mr. Grant's inclinations, when he and her father set out with the intention of inviting his lordship to return with them.

Now what had passed between Lord Montrylas and Bellarmine? Why, simply this: his lordship had been sent home with important dispatches from the army with which he had been serving, and where he had, as the newspapers had announced, distinguished himself, so as to make his mission particularly gratifying: he had asked for a short leave of absence on his own affairs; and the principal of them was a necessity he felt, or fancied, of ridding his mind of an intolerable weight, which it had endured since he quitted the gate of Southampton, on the morning of Miss Bellarmine's departure: his uncle, his brother, nay his sister Lady Agnes, had added to his inquietude by reports, wishes, and hopes.

The greetings of well-bred men having passed between Bellarmine and Lord Montrylas, public news, and his lordship's particular information, the roads, the weather, and all the topics of Englishmen, having been dismissed, some curiosity was perhaps feigned—and his lordship was very thankful for it—as to the direction in which he could be travelling, to make this obscure village in his way.

'Do me the favour,' said Lord Montrylas,

‘to walk with me out of the house, and I will say more.’ Bellarmine led to the broad gravel-walk of the church-yard, out of sight of Mr. Grant’s windows.

And here, in the quiet repository of the parish, where the recording biography of the tomb-stones taught the value of sincerity, and the true use of life, did Lord Montrylas, linking his arm in Bellarmine’s, and holding in his hand a letter which contained, ready for production, his father’s sanction, disclose the gratifying secret, that, blessed as he was and fortunate as he had been, his happiness was in the hands of Miss Bellarmine: he pleaded, in excuse for the presumption of having made this deposit, her many recommendations to regard: he quoted the various opportunities which their short acquaintance had allowed him, of seeing the excellence of her disposition and the capacity of her mind. He represented his family as not setting their affections on rank:—the daughter of an honourable man, such an one as he might be proud to call, even by right of marriage, father, satisfied their ambition; and here, he was certain that even their scrupulosity in a pure descent would be satisfied. Nor did they regard money: they required only a blotless and respectable alliance—and for himself he asked to be informed whether Miss Bellarmine’s affections, as well as her hand, were unengaged—and, provided they were so, to be allowed to

hope that he might from them receive the highest reward this world could afford him. He then opened and gave to Bellarmine his father's letter to him on the subject: it was the letter of a father deserving of the most affectionate filial respect, to a son entitled to confidence: it was almost in words the document from which his lordship had spoken, when he mentioned an unblemished descent and personal worth as the only points the family made the condition of approbation; and having heard from Bellarmine, that, as far as he knew, his daughter was at liberty, and acceding entirely to her father's resolution, not to bias her, by any use of parental authority, his lordship found his way back to his inn; and Bellarmine came home to prepare his introduction.

And now began a new course of anxiety on the part of Rosanne's father. When Lord Montrylas had so, almost emphatically, spoken on the preference his family gave to worth and virtue, over wealth and rank, it required very different habits of mind from those which Bellarmine had cultivated, to be ingenuous. Rosanne's happiness was too dear to him—he was too certain of its establishment, with Lord Montrylas for its guardian—the overture was too opportune, and personal estimation was too valuable, to admit of his saying, 'I have marred my own peace—I have ruined my child's pro-

spect—she is the daughter of a divorced woman;—and for myself, may the shadow of my shame hide me!’—He could say nothing like this, therefore he was silent: he congratulated himself on having suffered the mistake that occurred at Southampton, relative to his native country, to pass:—he bowed, when by implication he was complimented, and thought he consulted his conscience and satisfied it, when he said with a smile that contradicted him, ‘Your lordship, I fear, forms too high an opinion of me.’—The man who could do a noble deed on the impulse of his feeling, could not do an honest thing when prudence advised it: he brought forward his tenderness as a father, in opposition to his duty as a man: he did not foresee any possibility of detection, at least till the merit of Rosanne should have formed a sufficient barrier to secure the affection of the family: in short, his ‘feelings’ would not allow him to act otherwise; and therefore thus he acted.

Rosanne received Lord Montrylas as Mr. Grant’s visitor, with every mark of respectful attention; and, exempted by her natural character, from the inflating presumption of hope and the fettering affectation of fear, she was perhaps quite as agreeable in reality, as in his lordship’s recollected idea of her: the day passed swiftly: he chose to return to his little inn to sleep, but would be ready for Mr. Bellarmine’s

call, at any moment the next day : he departed at an hour that showed polite consideration, or else was calculated to give him time to write a letter, which, under cover to her father, communicated to her, at her first opportunity of receiving it, the purpose of his visit.

Perhaps part of the abundant charm of Rosanne's character consisted in her never having had it in her power to copy bad models : she had had nobody to instruct her how she should behave, under the present circumstances ; therefore, she behaved—like herself.—She was not astounded ; for there was in Lord Montrylas's behaviour to her, a sort of kindness that in a friend might have been called affectionate ; she never could persuade herself, though she had not presumed to judge, that such a man could approve Lady Winselina—his manner to her father showed such a degree of liking, that she thought she owed something of the present distinguishing honour to that circumstance ; yet she could hardly believe all this could be real ; and she must remember how much was still wanting to make it certain,—how little she knew of Lord Montrylas, and how little he knew of her, compared with the acquaintance necessary to ascertaining the probability of their spending their lives satisfactorily together :—then his family—would they like her ?—Yet, with all this caution and doubt, to speak honestly, what would be her answer ?—and in jus-

tice and conscience, what ought it to be?—Certainly a most grateful acknowledgment of the bounty of Providence—it was far more than she had any right or reason to expect, that a man of such high rank, such an exalted character as his was esteemed, and so entirely all that could gratify pride and command respect and affection, should think on her:—‘I am’ said she to herself, ‘to answer this to my father—how kind, how considerate! because, I am sure, he sees how little used to the world I am;—I can have no fear where there is such care. I cannot doubt the inclination of my father and Mr. Grant—it is very good in them to leave me so much liberty—to dispose of me will be a great relief to their kind anxiety about me;—and as to my own unfitness, I dare say allowances will be made; and I will do all in my power to improve.’

She went from her chamber to prepare breakfast for the gentlemen:—she found her father already in their sunny room of morning meeting. It was seldom that she rejoiced in the absence of Mr. Grant, but now she felt pleased in finding her father alone—her concurrence was expressed in her gratitude, and Bellarmine confessed himself happy.

The worst she had feared from Mr. Grant was, the exultation of superior sagacity, which had made him foresee this event; but this was not the feeling visible in his countenance, when

he came to the breakfast-table—he looked more than usually thoughtful—he observed on the weather—he talked of what he had to do.—‘How presuming I was,’ thought Rosanne, ‘to suppose that Mr. Grant must have had leisure to hear of my great good fortune!’

But the gentlemen were uncommonly *civil* to each other:—her father was rather courting to his kind friend; and Mr. Grant used the word ‘Sir,’ with more frequency than was usual with him, whose frank simplicity made one of the features of his manner.

‘They are not agreed,’ said Rosanne to herself; and her heart palpitated with the painful apprehension—‘this I must know before another step is taken: what will become of me now?’

She outstayed Mr. Grant in the room, only to entreat that no answer might be returned for her to Lord Montrylas till she had mentioned the matter to Mr. Grant, as perhaps he might expect her to do.

‘I will *not* have it mentioned to Grant,’ said Bellarmine, in a positive tone.

She was alarmed—‘Does Mr. Grant object, Sir?—will you tell me that?’

‘No, he does not; he thinks, as I do, that nothing so advantageous can ever again be offered to you; be content—it is only about a trifling punctilio that we differ: he will not name it to you; therefore, you may suppose it

is unimportant; I will take care of it, and I am sure he will be almost as happy as myself, in seeing you so greatly disposed of:—do not vex him—disappointed as he was, you know, in early life, the subject may renew unpleasant impressions.’

The closing argument had its weight with Rosanne: she was not perhaps inclined to seek for uneasiness just now: she was impatient to be alone: she did not wish to hear what arrangements were made with regard to Lord Montrylas; and finding that the servants, to whom it was generally her commission to give orders, had received them from Mr. Grant—that they had been told that ‘the gentleman who supped the evening before, was expected to dinner, and that the best china, table-linen, and glasses, were to be used,’ she turned this kindness to her own consolation, and glided to her chamber, and from thence saw her father go out.

Mr. Grant coming under her window, soon called her down, and, with tears of joy and affection, convinced her of his participation in her prospect. ‘At the same time,’ said he, ‘let me tell you, that your father and I are not quite agreed. Our disagreement cannot affect our interest for you; but we differ on a point which I cannot in conscience, and indeed in prudence, give up: he does not choose to be explicit with Lord Montrylas:—I wish him to tell all that any one else can tell, or that may be un-

pleasantly discovered hereafter:—I cannot name to you all the particulars; but one, for instance, will serve: he will not suffer this young man in London to be mentioned—now such secrecy I call foolish.’

‘Ought *I* to mention it?’ said Rosanne.—‘Can it be expected of me? or, knowing it, ought I to decline the offer? Speak now before we go farther; I am, as yet, in my own power.’

‘No, no; you must not mention it: your father might revenge it on us by punishing himself;—no, no, I do not know what might be the effect; he must go his own way, and take the consequences: he intends Gass to pass for his nephew, but I fear this will make your father his slave; for, by what occurred to you at Southampton, it is evident that the least provocation of this turbulent spirit, would make him forget every thing, in the indulgence of a momentary feeling.’

Rosanne’s happiness was made a little more thoughtful; and she saw that, under such circumstances, the peace of her own mind was to be found only in such simplicity of obedience as would, under all possible contingencies, acquit her. ‘I will never,’ said she to herself, ‘object to or repine at the allotments of a mode of providence too great for my comprehension; but I can perceive one *cause*, though there is no *excuse*, for the captiousness of infidelity, in the uniform admixture of that which requires

our patience, with that which calls for our gratitude; to *me* it is only an additional proof of a future state, and an additional motive to wish for it and prepare for it.'

She saw her father return alone: 'what was she now to think?—was it all a dream? How would her father bear any disappointment? For herself, O! she had only to submit:—perhaps he had been prevailed on to mention Mr. Gass: Lord Montrylas might not wish for the connexion—any thing was better than deceiving; yet, what was Mr. Gass to her? and what was such love? it must be love of her family, not of her, that such an objection disappointed: she grieved for this disgraceful appendage—but still her father was not to be considered as a man of habitual vice—a father's error did not stain like a mother's; she had indeed heard Lord Montrylas express his surprise when a young man was going to marry the daughter of a woman who had forfeited her character; but she could not recollect a case where a father's fault had injured a daughter—yet, on consideration, it was right.

Her suspense had endured half an hour, when her father came to her, and saying, in a peculiarly gracious manner, 'You will have company at dinner; that excellent creature Grant has behaved in such a way that I know not how we shall ever make him amends;' he not only removed her doubts, but her anxieties, and she

understood that either Lord Montrylas was informed, or that Mr. Grant had changed his opinion. Her father's spirits were uncommonly raised: he invited her to walk with him to the brow of a hill, on which the sun was then shining, and where Mr. Grant had made a gravelled terrace; and when his eye commanded the spot, he, with kind caution, said, 'Do not be surprised if Lord Montrylas should be here; he asked me to direct him to a pleasant walk; and I named this among others.'

If Rosanne did lean a little heavier than was her custom on her father's arm—if she drew closer to his side—the movement, properly understood, could not have offended even him who sought to detach her.

Bellarmino's precaution was not vain—his lordship was really there. Bellarmino had his telescope: 'the air was uncommonly clear:' he 'thought a few yards farther it was possible to see Canterbury; for his was a very good glass.'

The walk home was not dull; his lordship stopped at his little inn, and would certainly be in time for dinner. He was too well bred to make elderly men wait.

If Rosanne looked to Mr. Grant's mode of behaviour for renewing any anxiety or removing all, the pleasanter effect must have been that produced by it. Every thing that could

show respect to his guest, parental affection to Rosanne, and approbation of the cause of their meeting, was indicated by it; and no one but Bellarmine's daughter could have fancied that he was not perfectly cordial with her father. She persuaded herself that it was only the trace of what had occurred. 'Yet, was he not right?—surely, surely!'

Perhaps his lordship fancied the two seniors might have the habit of sleeping after dinner; for he politely left them when he had taken a very small quantity of wine, and sought the young lady, whom he could not suspect of needing the same indulgence: he found her, where it is probable he had projected seeking her; for he had been rather accurate in his observation of the path from the drawing-room in one corner of the house, to the dining-parlour in the other.

The necessity of setting off for London, at a very early hour the next morning, excused Lord Montrylas's taking leave, even sooner than on the preceding evening. Whether he retired to rest earlier, is another question. Mr. Bellarmine, who had in civility accompanied him to his inn, did not return particularly early. Rosanne had done what she could for the amusement of Mr. Grant. She could do any thing just now better than talk; and not greatly wishing to be talked to, she went to bed before her father returned.

When she met her father in the morning, he informed her of his arrangements. She must prepare to go to London directly: he had promised to introduce her to Lord Montrylas's family;—a house would be taken for them immediately:—she must not tease Mr. Grant:—he was very sorry to be obliged to quit him abruptly: but he hoped he should prevail on him to come to them in town.

It was not with her usual confidence that Rosanne looked in the face of their friend, when he joined them: she felt as if some ill return was making to all his hospitality and kindness; and the conflict this feeling occasioned, when met by sentiments of a different nature, to which her novel situation gave occasion, was such as to force the tears into her eyes. Mr. Grant perhaps taking nothing of this emotion to himself, but tenderly allowing more consideration than Rosanne would have accepted, took her hand in silent sympathy, cleared his throat, and invited Bellarmine to eat.

‘My father,’ said Rosanne to herself, when they were standing up to separate, ‘is, I can see, unwilling to trust me with Mr. Grant; but I must speak to him.—I cannot rely on my father, well as I love him, as entirely as if he had always acted on the principles that now, I hope, I may call his.’

At the first opportunity, she sought her good friend; but he was not now the open unre-

served counsellor he had been : his affection for her was not, ' even in external appearance, diminished ; he wished her every possible species and degree of happiness : she could not, he was confident, have any thing in this world to gratify or distinguish her, which she would not deserve and grace.' He would not admit any of her prophetic apologies, that her want of acquaintance with the world might be inconvenient to Lord Montrylas : he commended her for the rational principle on which she entered on her new prospect, and advised her through life to keep alive that paramount interest in a future state, which alone can reconcile the presumption of human nature to the dispensations of Providence. But all this he said as to a person going out of his reach ; and she could not but feel as if, in quitting his house, she relinquished his protection. To what she said, with a view to efface this sad impression from her mind, he replied with kind assurances of never-ceasing regard ; but still, still it was not like Mr. Grant ; it seemed as if he and Rosanne Bellarmine were separately existing individuals.

Yet he was not offended at the suddenness with which he was to be left alone : he accelerated every thing ; and when Rosanne took her last walk with him in his greenhouse, the day before their departure, his advice indicated almost impatience for her marriage.

' You will, my child,' said he, ' be guided

by the inclinations of the noble family which you are entering, if they appear to you persons acting on the motives which I have seen actuate you. I have no doubt of Lord Montrylas: he is, independently of his great advantages of birth, person, and manners, all I could wish him; and I assure you I have taken a little more pains than you perceive, to satisfy myself as to the confidence I might place in him. But there will be points in which you will want guidance, such as neither your father nor I can afford; and, in these, I hope you will find the ladies your assisting friends. Should one matter—on which you will perhaps not think me very competent to decide—require discussion, let me prepare your mind, at least, to consider it. Your lover is a soldier;—and the profession is, at this moment, such as adds much to the jeopardy of human life.—Against this, I need not tell you, there is no defence for you;—you may be a widow when you are fancying yourself a happy wife:—here your sense of religion will teach you not only the duty of submission, but the common prudence of committing yourself to the will and wisdom of the Almighty. I am sure you will never ask Lord Montrylas to quit his profession for an idle life, merely for the sake of your own ease; and I love you for not making it an objection. If all you pretty girls insisted on the men who marry you, giving up the army or navy, we

should have none but a parcel of boys to protect our country, and they would have little to care for in it; and if none of you would marry men of those professions, fewer would take to them, to be thus scouted. Now the question you will have to consider will be, whether you shall defer your marriage, or suffer it to take place during his leave of absence. You may be told that your acquaintance is short—true: but a man so public needs not be scrutinized as an obscure individual: he stands pledged to the world as well as to you. Another opinion you will hear, against your marrying while Lord Montrylas's life is exposed; it will be said to aggravate misery in case of misfortune. I see no reasoning in this argument, unless what is very selfish. If I were advising one of my maid-servants, I might adopt it; but in your situation, I should, even supposing the worst, prefer mourning in the eye of the world for a husband, to the restraint that delicacy must impose on grief where there is no obvious relation. In my own case, I never could feel any satisfaction in recollecting that the angel I lost, was not my wife; my friends were shy of recognising that which it was supposed was not to be known—I could not tell it—the restraint was often painful; and I was the worse for it. People would have endured my talking of a wife; but who would have pitied a young fellow at the uni-

versity for losing his sweetheart?—So, my dear Rosanne, let no artificial regards influence you; do what you think right and feel to be right; for your feelings are under a control that I can trust. Please your lover, if you find him deserving; oblige the family, if they treat you properly; and do not trifle with that which, while you and I call it good fortune, we still consider as the beneficence of the Almighty (1).’

And now came the moment of adieu to the good Grant; and deeply was it felt by her who was so infinitely indebted to his kindness. ‘Write to me, my child,’ said he, ‘whenever it is pleasant to yourself to communicate what contributes to your happiness, or painful to you to conceal what may disturb it. When you want an adviser, consult me;—when you want a friend, command me:—and remember that my house is your home, and my heart your shelter, if ever you need the one or the other.—And, my dear Sir, I can only say, that if my blunt freedom of speech has ever offended you—if we have ever differed—or if I have seemed to assume an authority over your opinions, a reference to my motives acquits me to myself as to my intention; and, towards you, I have only to regret the want of more courtly manners—God knows my heart: the best advice I can give to you both, seems much easier to follow than it is—consult nothing but your happiness; but let the happiness you consult be of the genuine sort.’

NOTE.

(1) Though the glorious prospect with which the Sun of Righteousness now deigns to illumine this country, may render superfluous many cares and anxieties that have been habitual to our minds, the unstable tenure of this world's peace will prevent caution from becoming impertinent, or example useless. To the usurpation under which France has so long groaned, we stand indebted for the revival of much that was torpid in our minds. Whoever compares the youth of our time, with those nursed in the bosom of slothful peace, must perceive what has been gained by the chastisement of Europe; and to the praise of good mothers it must be remarked, that, even in the nursery, their views have included the probability that their infant sons would have to endure the hardships of war in the defence of their country. Preparatory schools have been suffered to correct the excessive fondness of maternal tenderness: we have no 'mamma's darlings' beyond the age of imperfect speech. Children are boys—boys are lads—and lads are young men; and the name of Briton is perhaps the highest distinction that birth can at this moment confer. In another, amongst many points that might be recollected, great improvement is visible. On the noblest principles, our young matrons have renounced the society most dear to them; and women to whom birth, youth, accomplishments, and personal recommendations have given high pretensions, have cheerfully foregone them, and retired, with their young offspring, into villages, æconomizing, lest, the parent bird falling the prey of the cruel fowler, the nestlings might be exposed to complicated misery. We are very fond of talking of the bad and the wrong—but we do not say enough of the good and the right. We portray vice and folly; but virtue and good sense are left to be, what they will never condescend to become, their own eulogists. The Romans did not so: their historians recorded the Cornelia and the Portia, as well as the Sempronia and the Messalina;—and they would not

have passed over without 'pointing the moral,' such an instance of domestic virtue as Lady Penelope affords, who, devoting herself to her children, leads that life which, by its details, she knows will best please the absent General; or such an example of well-regulated attachment as that of Eudisia, who, in her first bridal honours, facilitated the Colonel's departure to join his regiment on perilous service, and reserved a smile for her friends when he was gone.

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CHAPTER LXIII.

BEHOLD NOW the travellers, whom weather and every circumstance had favoured, reaching, in very good time for dinner, the inn at which Rosanne had been informed they were to change horses for the last time, and where they were to stop for the night, as Lord Montrylas had appointed to meet them there. ‘I think,’ said Bellarmine, as they drove up, ‘we shall find some of the family here, beside his lordship; for here are four horses just taken from a landau with coronets.’

Lord Montrylas coming out, confirmed the supposition: his father, and mother, and sister, were that instant arrived.

‘O!’ thought Rosanne, ‘awful as this is, how much it spares me! What kind attention!’

Her introduction was facilitated by all that condescension, and knowledge of what was due to a young woman not greatly used to the world, could contribute. But Lord Brentleigh was so in the habit of doing polite things, that to have omitted this, would have been painful to himself; and his countess was so accustomed to do kind things, that in her management they seemed to do themselves.

Perhaps she had made too large allowances

for a lover's favourable eye;—she might have expected something that would call for only all her tenderness : she might have expected a very pretty daughter-in-law elect; for there was some surprise, as well as great humanity, in her countenance, when she received Rosanne; and if she might have spoken, she looked very much as if she would have said, ‘ I never saw a creature that better justified a young man's choice.’

The characteristic of the earl's deportment was kindness ennobled: his acceptance of her was cordial, and with the added charm of that graciousness which nothing but rank has a right to assume: and when Rosanne returned thanks for the trouble thus voluntarily taken for her sake, he said, ‘ The friends of such a son must be the friends of his father;’ and Lady Brentleigh added, ‘ You owe me no thanks, my dear Miss Bellarmine; I acted at the risk of mistaking your wishes, when I asked myself what, if I were a stranger, would most make me forget I was so: if we have succeeded, we are repaid.’

‘ What a use,’ thought Rosanne, ‘ this is of superiority!—how happy it is for the Nobodies when the Somebodies put out a hand to them!’

Of Lady Agnes Byram, ‘ the haughtiest of all haughty dames,’ as Mr. Gass had ignorantly described her, Akenside drew the portrait, when he said

‘ Thus doth beauty dwell

There most conspicuous, e'en in outward shape,
Where dawns the high expression of a mind.’

Rosanne perhaps did not appear, even in this groupe, to disadvantage. A little awe—a genuine humility—might give a tremulous accent to her tongue, and prevent that perfect use of her power to charm, which Lord Montrylas knew her to possess; but if she lost a pre-eminence, she acquired an interest. She felt most gratefully, that persons, much her superiors, had made her ease their care; and, under the guidance of the laconic precept, ‘ Honour to whom honour,’ she was in no danger of offending: and there was something too affectionate in this care, there was too much good will in the behaviour of every one, to make the kindness felt as oppressive.

The following noon introduced her to the very eligible dwelling which Lady Brentleigh had engaged for Mr. Bellarmine, which was so near the earl’s as to admit of the easiest intercourse. Under Lady Brentleigh’s direction, Rosanne took her place with great propriety, as mistress of her father’s house: she was not ignorant: she was not conceited; and she was soon a favourite with all those to whom she most wished to recommend herself. The youngest son of the family, whom she had seen in Kent, came home on purpose to pay respect to her: the second son, Captain Byram,

was acquiring honour on the ocean. The parents and children lived on the best terms, not as is the general criterion of domestic happiness, like brothers and sisters; for this, as it implies receding in one party from their natural limit, and advancing in the other beyond it, can never be just; but they lived as parents and children ought to do, the one exercising gentle authority, the other offering liberal submission; and as this was right in itself, it was good in its effects.

The introduction afforded by such a family would have placed Rosanne in the best society the metropolis affords; and as, in their friendships, moral worth, founded on its only sure basis, had directed their choice, their table was filled, and their evenings spent at home were enlivened, by a few persons of the best pretensions. But there was about Bellarmine a shyness of mankind; and he rather checked than encouraged what the countess would have done for Rosanne. The plea on which he declined putting her forward, was such as raised him still higher in the estimation of the family; and Rosanne was delighted to see the respect and affection towards her father, without which none manifested for herself could be acceptable.

Lord Brentleigh had spoken on the subject of rank, with that spirit of dispensation which his son had reported him to possess; on that of money he had shown himself equally indifferent;

but perhaps he was still more precise than he had been represented in his requisitions of untainted blood. Bellarmine uttered no falsity; but, secure as he deemed himself in his intrenchments, he assumed confidence, and ventured, with an imitation of candour and submission that called for praise from the unsuspecting, to recommend every degree of circumspection that could satisfy the family: 'his long residence in France was unfortunate; but he trusted there was hardly any one for some miles round Chateau-Vicq, who would not certify much more than he should think necessary to trouble his lordship with: the life of a hypochondriac recluse did not afford much, even for envy to comment on; and he believed that the education of his daughter, as it had been the business of his life, justified his thinking her worthy of Lord Monty-las's flattering partiality.' Lord Brentleigh recollected he was speaking to a gentleman, and could go no farther.

In this state of things, there was wanting, to the perfect ease of mind of Bellarmine, an opinion to set against that of the good Grant, who had not particularly recommended himself, by writing, at his first leisure, on the disagreeable subject of difference between them: time and distance had not abated his zeal, nor altered his view of the peril into which his friend was rushing and leading his daughter; and, but for the admirable expedient of consulting Frederic, it might have

occurred sometimes to his fancy unpleasantly; he wanted some one who could persuade him to think himself right: he wanted some one who could supply the deficiency of self-approbation. Frederic possessed this power, and used it most liberally when called for. The case was stated—how, may be guessed—the answer required was obvious; and Mr. Gass soon settled the knotty point, by a decided negative to the question of necessity, and by quoting ‘that sensible dictum,’ as he called it, of those honest fellows, Messieurs Meum and Tuum, ‘Caveat emptor.’ He descanted with fluency on the duty of parents to their children, gave a sigh to the memory of his ‘dear fellow,’ whom he had buried at Christmas: he considered the ‘nice tact’ demanded by the changes every day taking place in opinions on all subjects, and seemed to account as the perfection of ethics, the acute discrimination between the fit season for being honest, and the many seasons more propitious to the policy of the world. When Bellarmine’s formation of his features to reply, told him to be cautious, he drew a strong line before his arguments, and made them fall back:—he lamented the necessity of ever approaching even within sight of the boundary; but the fault rested with others; and, in the present instance, it was the pride of the house of Byram alone that could be blamed:—‘had they been candid and liberal,

others might be open; as matters stood, they imposed the mode of treating with them.'

If there remained a scruple in the mind of Bellarmine after the operation of all this eloquence, it was completely removed by the closing recollections, that 'it was now too late to recede;' that 'publicity and ridicule would be attracted by such methodism;' and, above all, by a strong question, whether a man had a right thus to injure his daughter—and 'such a daughter!' Mr. Gass did not exactly say, 'I wish that daughter out of my way:' he only candidly stated what he himself would do, and expressed the highest respect for Miss Bellarmine. Confidence in his judgment was increased by previous disposition; and that in his disinterestedness, was not impeached by imprudent precipitation; for though it was ebb-tide with his hopes and speculations, he forbore the disclosure.

Poor Grant sunk some degrees lower in Bellarmine's appreciation after this conference: his motives, indeed, were unimpeachable; his zeal and anxiety claimed gratitude:—it was only his knowledge of the world of the present day that could be impeached; and this only by the advocates for the mutable character of moral virtue.

'Tis pity,' said Mr. Gass, 'but you will always find it thus, that religion unfits a man entirely for business.'—'I fear so,' said Bellarmine.

In Rosanne there was no change, unless increase of regard in the calm recollection of Mr. Grant's virtues, could be accounted change. She wrote him details of all that occurred to her: she described the few public amusements which she was allowed to partake; she wrote whatever could amuse or give him pleasure on general subjects, and, of her own particular interests, all that she had courage to put on paper: but the aversion to egotism, and her respect for his time of life, took from her letters all appearance of their being written by the idol of the Byram family. Of her father's shyness to introduce her, she spoke as if seeking for the cause, and of the leisure it allowed her to write to him, with gratitude.

It could not long be concealed from her observation, that correspondence between her father and Mr. Grant had ceased, and that the mention of their friend's name was no longer agreeable. Bellarmine seemed to wish to throw the blame on Grant; but when Rosanne, in her next letter, said, 'Something, my dear Sir, makes me fear you are angry,' he replied immediately, 'How often are we supposed angry, when the only feeling of our hearts is that of the deepest regret that we cannot do all the good possible!' Every subsequent expression testified to the steadiness of his friendship;—no letter came without bearing in its conclusion the repetition of the kindest offers of service—the

most truly fatherly recognition of every previous promise. He charged her never to rest in any doubt or difficulty without applying to him; and he ended with the assurance that none but her father's anxiety for her could vie with his.— With this, she was obliged to rest content, because beyond it she could obtain nothing.

But if she had her vexation, she had great enjoyments. Nothing could exceed the kindness of the family into which she was to be adopted. Lord Montrylas won daily on her good opinion. His father was a father to her, and Lady Brentleigh was not kinder to her own daughter. Lady Agnes was gratified in the prospect of having a sister-in-law whom she could so perfectly love; and Rosanne fancied she wanted little of complete happiness, but that her father should be less reserved. She knew not that this reserve contributed to her peace, for it concealed the fact that the current of expense flowed faster than the fountain rose, and that Frederic was introducing his favourite policy of 'the Crow and the Pitcher' into her father's pecuniary concerns. It was easy to keep her ignorant of this: her grandmother's bequest, of which she was now in possession, more than met all her personal wants; and care on her father's brow was too common to make her inquisitive. He lived in the most perfect, regular decency, with the liberality of a large income, and the decorum of a well-bred man.

They had returned together from a neighbouring chapel on a Sunday early in April, and Bellarmine had been some time gone into the park on horseback, when, as Rosanne was sitting alone reading, the servant introduced a lady of the middle time of life. She was announced as Lady Lucretia Sinister, and instantly on her entrance professed herself the most intimate friend of the late Mrs. Bellarmine, while, with something like tears of fond recollection, she contemplated the likeness to her which she traced in Rosanne's features. She accounted for her visit by naming Mr. Gass as having informed her where she might find Miss Bellarmine.

Rosanne's curiosity respecting her deceased parent had not worn out; but every attempt she made to satisfy it, had been so repelled by her father, that, early in life, she had learnt to suppose the subject distressing to him; and therefore, first fearing his displeasure, which had been excited by her attempts, and then tender of inflicting pain, she felt the prudence and the necessity of forbearance. If Mademoiselle Cosart was in the secret of any thing so little awakening as the abdication of a wife in Paris, it must be concluded that some penalty was annexed to any communication; for, to all Rosanne's questions concerning her mother, she never answered more decidedly than by 'Ah! —your poor mamma, and your dear papa—he

has mourned indeed! — she was a charming woman.'

The plan Bellarmine had devised and adhered to, in bringing up his daughter, had perfectly secured her from hearing of her mother's disgrace: undefined feeling had suggested this caution; but it was now rendered more than ever requisite, by the avowed pretensions of Lord Montrylas, and the scrupulosity of his family; and that which was heretofore a care, was grown into a necessity. Bellarmine, in thinking on the risk he ran, enumerated to himself the instances that had ever occurred in his knowledge of an awkward truth told point-blank, without provocation, to the person whom it would most injure. — Some few there might be, but they were few — so few as not to admit of that parallax of computation which brought the danger within the sphere of probability.

But he could not, though nearly half satisfied on this point, always dismiss a feeling, half regret and half repentance, that he had not, at the time when she most opposed his wishes, informed her of the worst that she could hear. 'Perhaps,' thought he, 'she would have borne it better at that time than she can at any other: — when her enthusiasm opened new prospects to her, and other romantic piety was striving to earn its reward, I do not know whether I might not have trusted her with her mother's indiscretion; but then what could I have said of my

own? No, no; better, better be silent—she may never know it—I have annihilated every vestige of it that my death could put into her hands.’

But this visit of Lady Lucretia’s threatened destruction to all caution; and as Rosanne, charmed by her kindness, interested by the regard she expressed for one whom she knew not that it was blameable to lament, and rejoicing in an opportunity of gaining information as to her mother’s history and death, was as ready to hear as her new friend was to communicate, there would have been no doubt of the event of the next five minutes, had not the narrator, like some prolix historians, who think they can never say enough while there is any thing to say, gone back a generation or two, to describe not only the commencement of her friendship with Mrs. Bellarmine, but those circumstances of her own birth, which brought them within the distance at which bodies can act on each other: this leading her up to her father and mother’s wedding, with a few particulars of the obstacles to it, resulting from parental opposition, founded on a crazy clause in the will of her mother’s grandfather, and the odd incident in his early life which occasioned that clause, gave time for the entry of Bellarmine, before his wife had made her appearance on the stage.—A folio page of various thought was printed on his forehead, when he, rather hastily, entered the room, informed by the servant who had let him in, how

it was occupied; but his presence of mind was at home—in a tone that his daughter had almost forgotten he could use, he ordered her to quit the room, and then frankly informed her ladyship, that, as it was his wish that Rosanne should never hear of the imprudence of her mother, he must decline the honour of her visits to his daughter. This was an affront not to be endured by a woman of quality, who had not an atom of reputation to spare, and who had proposed to herself in this visit, the probability of becoming chaperon, if not something nearer, to Miss Bellarmine. Her ladyship's rank was great, but her purse was fluctuating, and often slender; and she would not, in its existing circumstances, have hesitated to eke out its contents by a little comfortable domestication. Any favour of the kind, she might have accepted without wounding her pride, as it was known that a very short time, and the prescription of a little rum and milk in a morning, a spoonful of brandy in his tea, a little weak Hollands and water occasionally, with preparations from the apothecary's whenever he felt low, to say nothing of evening dinners, must remove out of her way to distinguished wealth, her brother, the high and mighty prince, our right trusty and right entirely beloved-cousin, his Grace the Duke of Rockweed.

Bellarmino had dressed what he had to say in the least offensive terms; but no skill of

pharmacy can overcome some flavours—the purport was perceived, though the phrase was cautious, and he had scarcely concluded, when her ladyship's dark eye, and darker brow, told how she felt the implied exclusion. Loud and deep might have been her resentment, and Rosanne, even shut into her dressing-room as she was, awaiting, in nameless terror, the issue of she knew not what, might have known all, had not Bel-larmine possessed the power to intimidate. After a few high expressions, the lady suffered him to ring the bell, and, putting her into the hands of her footman, to bow her out.

He then sent a message to his daughter, requesting to see her; and trying to compose her alarmed look, as she entered the room, he, with an appearance of more candour than he ventured on, told her, that, in her increasing knowledge of the world, she would find that family-connexions, the power of deception, or sometimes prudential considerations, brought into the contact of acquaintance, persons not at all of similar dispositions; that circumstances had indeed made her mother and Lady Lucretia Sinister early friends, but that her ladyship's conduct had, for some years past, been such as would reflect no credit on her acquaintance; that, inexperienced and young as Rosanne was, nothing but the prospect of Lady Brentleigh's kindness, had encouraged him to bring her to London; this, he said, had not failed his ex-

pectations; but it added another reason to the many already subsisting for her being particularly cautious in the acquaintance she formed, which he had already told her, and now repeated, must have individually his specific sanction, even added to the introduction of Lady Brentleigh. Lady Lucretia was but one of a host of worthless women, who were very prudently desirous to ensnare the innocent for their own temporary credit; and he enjoined his daughter rather to appear not to recollect her, than to be seen returning even her slightest civilities. A painful weight was now removed from Rosanne's mind. It was no hardship to her to promise she would neither love nor esteem that which was not estimable. She convinced her father, that he commanded only that which she wished to do; and keeping what had passed to herself, no recollection of Lady Lucretia clouded the new happiness of each day spent with the family of Lord Montrylas.

Perhaps some of Rosanne's most agreeable hours were passed with only the ladies of this honourable house, when the countess would add to her little stock of common information, or, if Lady Agnes was entirely out of hearing, tell why her dear daughter was so anxious to employ every moment—and why, alas! alas! she feared she never would marry. 'I do not *wish* her to marry,' said she: 'she may be very useful in a single life. I am sure she will be very good

in any situation: and, on the whole, I own I like to see such a woman setting the example, I know she will, of maiden excellence; but I am sorry Agnes has been disappointed—I am sorry that the inconsistency of a human being has given her cause to distrust human nature—I am sorry she has seen a sensible elegant man, steady in every thing laudable till thirty, and then, by the seduction of a visit to a friend, approaching very near to the character of a libertine and a gambler, two characters, each of which is detestable to me. Yet I ought not to regret it, when it has afforded her an opportunity she never otherwise might have had, to show how she can support one of the severest trials a young person meets with in the world. Agnes exercised the truest charity: she believed, she hoped, as long as she had an excuse for either; but, when once convinced, the struggle was short and the triumph complete—her esteem was gone; and, though she did not withhold her sincerest pity, her good sense told her with which feeling her love ought to abide. She admitted all that Lord Robert had to say in extenuation: but when she asked him what protection a woman was to hope from a man who could not, at these years, protect himself, he had nothing to say. Her father and I, knowing what is accounted our family-failing, scrupulosity of honour, or perhaps, I may say, pride, were fearful that her

heart might break in the resolution to conform to our ideas. We, therefore, in our conversations with her, endeavoured to lower our pretensions and to admit the license of the times; we thought, at least, if our doing so had no other effect, it would anticipate any distracting considerations which her own feelings might suggest, or she might be obliged to hear; but it was to no purpose—her high opinion was gone; Lord Robert's principle was as much corrupted as his practice; and though, for the sake of Agnes, whom I may say no man could love and cease to love, he might have returned to habits of decency, she must have been disgraced, and her happiness must have been precarious; for such a young woman as my daughter can never be supposed capable of accepting the sacrifice of some headlong passion, in lieu of those blessings which cannot be dispensed with. She was early taught that necessary accomplishment in this world, and more particularly necessary to persons of rank, the control of her inclinations; and having assisted her in this important point, we had no trouble with her as she grew up: her habits of thinking and reading, which, guided by the good sense of her father, and my humble endeavours, were made the best we could give her, have formed a mind not to be imposed on by the world or herself. She never hesitates at the renunciation of any thing ever so agreeable, if the mo-

tive to renouncing it be a sense of duty. Her choice, her taste, is to seek, to pursue, and to adopt what is right. If this is attended with pleasant circumstances, it is, with her, so much cause for gratitude: if the circumstances are unpleasant, she considers herself as a gainer another way, and she is satisfied. It is on this principle that you see Agnes's conduct so consistent, and her temper so even.'

In a short time, native ingenuousness, or the want of knowledge of the world by practice, betrayed to Lady Agnes, that her young friend was in the secret of the misfortune that had once clouded her happiness. 'I do not regret,' said she, 'that my mother informed you of it: I would rather you should hear it from us, than from those who cannot know the circumstances accurately: the only favour I ask, in all cases where I am a party concerned, is, to be allowed to tell my own story: and though I have my delicacy, and perhaps my pride, as well as the most reserved, I so abhor all mystery, I think the world has such a right to be satisfied of the conduct of those who compose it, that I would tell any thing, rather than have it supposed I wear a veil to hide some deformity. It is no stigma to have been deceived or disappointed; and I am persuaded that, even twenty years hence, I shall feel it no disgrace to be unmarried. Notwithstanding all that can be said of the illiberality of the world, the condition of

single women in this country is much mended; my mother says, within these few years; and as I suppose the amendment is the consequence of their improvement, the world must be called, in this point, just. If there ever was a time when single women were what they are described as having been, gossips, ignorant and idle, the conveyers of scandal and the fabricators of falsehood, it was fit that, at that time, they should be regarded as the pests of society; but now, when I see many in confidential situations which none but themselves could fill, and discharging very anxious duties in a manner highly honourable to them—even taking out of their merits the good use they may have made of their larger portion of leisure, I feel no reluctance to being of their corps, and it will be matter of solicitude with me never to disgrace them.’

‘But you may still marry, Lady Agnes,’ said Rosanne, ‘and, I hope, be happy, with some one sensible of your worth.’

‘I might perhaps marry,’ said Lady Agnes, ‘and I do not proclaim that I will not. I can believe it very possible and very proper, that a woman may marry on different motives from those on which she had formed a first attachment; and as I have a decided aversion to romance of all kinds, I am not likely to make rash vows against doing what common sense

approves : but, as to myself, I feel like a person whose palate has been spoiled or taste warped by one flavour or one habit. I have often told my dear father I will accept the first man I can like ; but this he takes for a refusal to marry. And then,' said her ladyship, shuddering, ' think *how* I have been deceived ; to whom can I give credit—*whom* can I trust ?'

When Rosanne expressed her deep concern in this misfortune, Lady Agnes took on herself to console her. ' You are mistaken,' said she, ' if you think me unhappy. I am so thankful that I was warned in time ! It may be a severe trial to be called on to renounce the sunshine of our existence : but what is it to live in a storm, or in dread of an earthquake ! To part with our lover, may be grievous ; but see what it is, *not* to be able to part with some husbands. I am not one of those doves that think matrimony makes all things sweet. I am very thankful that I am not the wife of the man I loved, as much, I believe, as I could love a human being ; and I am certain Providence decrees best for us, though sometimes we are called to hard duty. Then, when I look round and see what those are who have undergone a fate at all similar to mine ; and, believe me, there are more such unfortunate damsels than you would suppose—their example encourages me : for they all seem to me the wiser and the better for it.—
O ! I have seen such examples !'

CHAPTER LXIV.

TIME wore; and the period of Lord Montrylas's leave of absence had but six weeks to run, when the question which Mr. Grant had foreseen, arose between the families; and whether Miss Bellarmine preferred awaiting his return—which was uncertain as to time, and uncertain on a more serious contingency—or would meet his wishes, and those of his family, by consenting to an immediate marriage—was a choice to be proposed to her by her father. Any thing apparently arbitrary on his part, would have been unpleasant to the Byram family: he therefore reserved it for a tête-à-tête with Rosanne, to tell her, but very kindly, that, circumstanced as he was, he could hardly give her as much latitude of decision as the family offered: he had particular reasons for wishing her, and even urging her, to become the wife of Lord Montrylas before he quitted England.

‘I will certainly obey you, my dear father—but—you do not doubt Lord Montrylas——’

‘No, far from it: every day increases my regard for him, and my happiness in thus disposing of you. But I have many reasons for it; it will place you, in his absence, more obviously under Lady Brentleigh's protection—it will

lessen my anxiety—it will prevent offers to you;—and it will greatly increase your liberty.’

Bellarmino returned to the family an answer of compliance, which his arguments, aided by Mr. Grant’s wishes, had readily obtained from his daughter; and the vivacity of preparation was added to the cheerfulness of Rosanne’s temperate life.

She now passed nearly all her time with the countess and Lady Agnes. Lord Montrylas gave to her every minute that he could snatch from a constant succession of occupations. ‘May I find you with my mother,’ he would say on quitting her, ‘when I return?—for perhaps the time it will take me to get to your house, will be half of that I can command.’ Rosanne’s simplicity of obedience was amusing to Lady Brentleigh, who had seen many instances of a contrary behaviour. It was received as personal obligation by Lady Agnes, and by him whom it most interested, with a feeling that would have repaid far greater sacrifices to his comfort.

‘I am only too happy,’ said Rosanne, in concluding a grateful letter to Mr. Grant: ‘you must exert all your care for me, that my head may not be turned. I endeavour to remember the uncertainty of worldly happiness, and to keep my hopes fixed on that which is permanent; but still I may, if you do not warn me, forget, in the enjoyments around me, the Hand

that so blesses me. Pray, if you see the least symptom of this baseness, admonish me.'

In a few days after the time for her marriage was arranged, Lord Montrylas, to spare his father trouble, went into the west of England on some important family-concern. Bellarmine was vexed at it; but Rosanne, knowing that it, in some measure, respected her settlements, and that the motive to it was consideration for the earl, behaved with perfect propriety. It made no other difference than depriving her of his company: he wrote daily; and his family were all attention to her.

That it disturbed her father, was evident; but it did not occasion all the disturbance she saw in him. His anxieties were daily increasing on the situation into which he had suffered himself to be drawn by Mr. Gass, and by the style of life he had thought it requisite to assume. The caution he considered necessary to keeping Frederic out of the sight of the Byrams, gave an alarm to his countenance, if he was called out of the room when either of the ladies was with his daughter; and Rosanne was reminded of the mixed lot of mortals by this drawback on her perfect felicity. Still it was temporary; and to remedy it was out of her power.

She had gone to Lord Brentleigh's one lovely morning, at rather an earlier hour than usual, expecting to find the ladies at home: they were out; but having left a request that she would;

if she called, wait for them, she sate down in the drawing-room, threw off her bonnet, and took up a news-paper. In this situation of ease and unanxious expectation, she had been but a short time, when a servant, who had not seen her come in, and was not aware that she was in the house, introduced a gentleman. Perceiving her, the man apologized, and said, a gentleman wished to see the ladies, and would wait there, as Lord Brentleigh was not at home. She had only to rise, curtsy, and sit down again in silence. The gentleman bowed, walked across the lower end of the room, and was lost to her sight in the recess of the farthest window.

‘What shall I do?’ said Rosanne to herself; —‘this is awkward—I cannot speak first—I have a good mind to go—but perhaps this would be rude.’

What she might have done is uncertain, but she presently found herself directed by the stranger’s next move: he came forward from his recess, very different in countenance from what he appeared on entering the room: he was then, though of rather a grave aspect for a young man, so prepossessing, that Rosanne in a moment had involuntarily associated him and Lady Agnes in her ideas; but now he was paler, looked distressed, and extremely like somebody whom she had once seen and could not call to mind.

Advancing a very few steps, he said aloud, ‘It certainly is Miss Bellarmine.’ She had

looked up on his moving. Surprised, but not alarmed, she might have said, probably, that she could not recollect where they had met before, though of the fact she was certain; but this trouble was saved her by his proceeding to say, with an expression of a most intelligent countenance that told what had been, as well as what was, 'You cannot recollect me, unless you remember a poor creature of the name of Johnson—I am he.'

She was informed indeed, and she needed no farther information; but in a moment she saw the unlimited power this accidental meeting had over her destiny. She knew not what question first to ask. Did Sir Tancred know the family?—Did they know the situation to which he had been reduced? and by whom he and his family had been distressed?—Did he know her situation?—the danger in which he put her?—What could she think?—What might she tell him?

She could not speak, it was impossible; for the first word might be that which her father could least approve: she had not him to resort to; she rose, took her bonnet, and the quivering on her lips told that unutterable distress banished her. At last, recollecting that even flight was not safety, she said, 'Sir, if you mention in this house that you know my father—he will never be happy again.'

Sir Tancred stopped her as she advanced: he

took her hand, and gently restoring her to her seat, said, ‘ Do not be alarmed ; I see what distresses you—you have only to say, my dear madam, if the family come in on us, that you recollect meeting me at Swan park : say nothing more. I hope, however, I shall have time to assure you, you and your excellent father are perfectly safe, and may rely on my honour—nay, rather on my sense of what the Author of all good demands from one who has so much cause to be grateful.—I am not, I hope, saying more than I ought to you.’

‘ No,’ said she—‘ you may say any thing.’

‘ Montrylas,’ continued he, ‘ is my friend—the family have been more than friends to me: they never heard your father’s name from me, nor should they ever hear it, even were you out of the question. I know them: I know—not their *failing*, but their *high pretension*,—and I honour it.’

‘ O ! it is impossible,’ said Rosanne, ‘ that you can be their friend, and they not know——they *must* have heard of my father’s—— O ! how shall I bear it?—or they will hear of it. My father will die, I am sure, if it is spoken of—it will kill him instantly.’

‘ They have not heard—they will not hear—they *shall* not hear,’ said Sir Tancred : ‘ only listen to me. When the misfortune occurred, the family lived in privacy in the north :—their income was limited and very narrow : they were

ignorant of what was passing in the world; and you, if you know them at all, must see that they are not persons who go abroad to hunt evil; they are retired people, and such escape much that annoys others. I was at a public school when my father died: Montrylas came there on the accession of his father to the title: he found me dejected and in deep mourning: his excellent nature attached him to me, though I was younger, and could ill repay his kindness: he inquired into the cause of my dejection, and my dress; I told him, I had lost my father, and that he had left us in poverty: but my incomparable mother had made me promise her, most solemnly, that I never would reveal the circumstances of his death or our disgrace. She showed me the prudence of this reserve with regard to myself, the justice of it as to the families of those by whom we had suffered. I remember well her saying, ‘It is only for Almighty Wisdom, which can direct events, to do what appears to us punishing the innocent with the guilty. Mr. Bellarmine has an infant daughter—let us not injure her; the other man, who has completed our ruin, has an amiable wife, and a large family of young children.’

‘I am satisfied,’ said Rosanne, ‘of your generosity and your honour, and I feel indebted to Lady Ormesden,—but as to the morality of the concealment——’

‘There can be no question,’ said Sir Tancred, smiling, ‘if you consider Mr. Bellarmine’s conduct to me: he has behaved most nobly to me; and my only concern is, that, finding you here, and concluding that you are the lady to whom Montrylas is to owe his happiness, I am more precluded than ever from doing justice.’

‘O! it must not be told,’ said Rosanne.— ‘Well, if it is but right, I am satisfied; but I dread concealment and deception: nothing can recommend secrecy to me in this instance, but that I secrete what is honourable to my dear father, with what is—— O! here are the ladies!’

The reception given to Sir Tancred, told the delight of Lady Brentleigh and Lady Agnes in seeing him, and the increase of their satisfaction by finding him not a stranger to Miss Bellarmine. He had not visited the family since the alteration in his circumstances; and it appeared, that for some time before, they had heard of him only by letter—a delicacy for which Rosanne could readily account.

He spoke of his mother as restored to the enjoyment of property which had been withheld from her: he said, that those who opposed her were intimidated by finding she had obtained means to prosecute her claim: he spoke of her estates as promising large returns; and, with a feeling which only Rosanne could under-

stand rightly, he expressed his gratitude. He was in haste—but, as he stood, he said, in a manner which reflected the honour his candour conferred, ‘ And how unfit should I have been to receive this good fortune, if Lord Brentleigh had not, in my mother’s distress, defrayed the expenses of my education!’ He took leave, saying, he should wait on the earl at the first opportunity, and should see Lord Montrylas as soon as he knew he was returned. He gave Rosanne a message for her father, and said he should pay his respects to him now he knew where to find him.

When Sir Tancred was gone, Lady Brentleigh told, what she thought, his story;—but she knew only that his father had died poor—that the widow had given up every thing but a bare subsistence, and had lived with her children out of sight for several years. Yet she had something to tell that Rosanne knew not—that Sir Tancred, when at school, had, at the risk of his own life, saved Lord Montrylas from drowning, and that this had rendered their friendship brotherly attachment, and Lord Brentleigh’s regard that of a parent, while he could trace the family in their obscurity.

Rosanne, urged by circumstances, reported to her father her meeting with Sir Tancred, and with some difficulty prevailed on him to see

him the next day. Nothing but the acquaintance subsisting between him and the Byram family, and the fear that his caution might induce suspicion, operated on his shyness; but he acquiesced with a tolerable grace; and Rosanne had something pleasant to tell Mr. Grant.

CHAPTER LXV.

‘THERE is,’ indeed, ‘a tide in the affairs of men,’ but a tide subject to higher influence than that of the moon.—This tide had set very much in favour of Rosanne Bellarmine, for a long time; and now, without, indeed, her changing her course, but merely by the salutary alternation of ebbing and flowing, it turned against her.—Mr. Gass was frequently with her father; and the tones in which she heard their conversation carried on, gave her reason to suspect that they did not agree as well as formerly. Her want of all regard for Frederic might have made her almost rejoice in what afforded a prospect of his withdrawing; but any thing like high words between men is so dreadful to the apprehensions of the females who form their families, that she was always glad to get out of hearing, though to get out of anxiety was impossible.

She had escaped to spend part of a morning with Lady Agnes, when her father was in one of his saddest humours, and she knew Frederic was coming; and she was deliberating on part of her bridal dress when Lord Brentleigh came in, and politely asked her to write, as quickly as she could, a few lines to his son, who was inquired for with such haste, that an express

must be sent after him. 'I think,' said he, 'this may oblige him to return instantly.' She would have said gaily, 'Tis an ill wind that blows no one good, my lord;' but the earl looked grave, and said, 'If he cannot stay to finish the business, I must go myself.'

The suspense would have endured till the express returned, had not the public papers stated the extreme haste in which the regiment, of which he was lieutenant-colonel, was ordered to embark at Falmouth; and this was confirmed by the messenger, who brought only a few words from Lord Montrylas, softening the blow to his family, by representing that his absence might be very short, and that his situation was such as must much abate their kind anxiety.—To Rosanne, what he said was what it ought to be, firm, but feeling; considerate and encouraging.

There was no remedy.—Rosanne called up to her own recollection, and to her father's comfort, the many aggravating circumstances that might have attended, and were not to be found, in this delay. The Byram family were more affectionate than ever. Sir Tancred's conduct seemed to win on her father, and she flattered herself would, by its elegance and the superiority of his conversation, abate his weak attachment to Frederic. It was impossible to prevent their occasionally meeting; but Rosanne saw, in the first five minutes, that they would never coa-

lesce, and she felt an odd kind of satisfaction in imagining that Sir Tancred and she thought alike.

There was in Sir Tancred Ormesden, now that he had recovered his health and the vigour of his mind, a character that made Rosanne regard him as an inestimable friend, and almost as she would have regarded a brother: there was also a similarity of situation that seemed to unite their interests: each had something to keep from the knowledge of the Byram family; and neither of them was perfectly easy under any deficiency of confidence to persons so deserving it; but, at present, the caution seemed peculiarly necessary to each, as it included both; and when Rosanne spoke of it with regret, Sir Tancred encouraged her by saying, that, as their motive was justifiable, and they acquiesced in the will of those who had a right to direct, they must at least wait a favourable opportunity for being ingenuous; and, considering what had been Mr. Bellarmine's conduct, he could not but think, that, with him, the disclosure was optional.

The visits of Frederic, which heretofore had given such pleasure to Bellarmine, as sometimes to eclipse the milder effulgence of Rosanne's regular affection, began to show that they had lost all their soothing power; and it was with a counterbalanced concern that she heard her father speak of quitting London, and remain-

ing at a distance till Lord Montrylas's return. Whether he would go, even into the neighborhood of Mr. Grant, she was not informed; but in almost any remove to a distance from Mr. Gass, and consequently from the irritation that vexed her father's mind, she could acquiesce, grievous as it would be to leave Lady Agnes; for the secrecy to which she was compelled by Frederic's influence on her father's comfort, was rendered painful: she could not speak of him as what his looks declared him to be, lest a cause should be asked, or he should be teased with prescribed remedies, which he would neither have tried nor endured to hear mentioned: she was forced to speak of him as always well, though his appearance contradicted her; and sometimes she could not forbear imagining that Lady Agnes thought her less solicitous than was amiable, for the welfare of so kind a father.

It is in the power of those on whom our happiness depends, to make us hate the thing we covet. Rosanne, to have seen her father what she had, at times, seen him at Southampton, would almost have foregone all her glittering prospects.

At length, Mr. Gass seemed to compel Bellarmine into something like confidence towards his daughter, by addressing a letter to Rosanne, requesting her to use her influence, which was marked by the equivocal epithet 'unbounded,'

to procure the advance of a sum of money, to prevent the positive ruin of speculations already entered on, to a large amount.

Unwilling to distress her father by a reference, when she could anticipate the directions he would give her, she wrote civilly, regretting that she dared not name the subject.

The next day came another billet, more urgent, and containing something like a threat;—it was so mysterious in its expression, that she could not venture to reply to it: she put it into her desk, determining not to speak of it till late in the evening, when her father would have time to think before he acted:—if she produced it at the first opportunity, Frederic might come in while he was reading it, and she might increase that which she wished to lessen. She had reason to rejoice in having been thus cautious. Sir Tancred called soon after she received this billet: her father joined them, but was presently fetched out of the room, as she was aware, to Mr. Gass. Their conversation in the parlour underneath was so loud that she could not seem not to hear it; and it continued so long, and her uneasiness was so apparent, that Sir Tancred offered to go down stairs.

Before he could decide on what was prudent, the tone of the louder speaker was lowered; and, to put an end to the concern of Sir Tancred, she was compelled to say that she knew the voice to be that of Frederic Gass, who had bu-

siness with her father. 'It is a voice and a name,' said Sir Tancred, 'that I own I have been surprised to hear in this house. Is Mr. Bellarmine aware that the man is a marked character?'

'Excuse my ignorance,' said Rosanne: 'I do not know what you mean by 'a marked character.'

Sir Tancred smiled, and his smile seemed to say 'Happy, elegant ignorance!' He explained himself, a little qualifying the stigma, in consideration of the person to whom he spoke,—but concluded a sketch that justified what he had said, by adding—'And that foolish old woman, Lady Lucretia Sinister, is going to marry him:—I am unfortunately well informed—because the lady is my mother's cousin, and I have tried to prevent the match.'

'You are *mis*-informed,' said Rosanne: 'he is married.'

'No, believe me—the woman who has passed as his wife, is dismissed, to make room for her ladyship: the duke, her brother, is so near dying, that she trusts she may do what she will with impunity; and on this one of many speculations, Gass is proceeding.'

They presently heard movements that indicated the departure of the intruder; and Rosanne and Sir Tancred could distinguish the common adieu of gentlemen, and an appointment for two the next day.

'Now,' said Sir Tancred, 'if you can learn,

in the course of this day, what this appointment is, let me know, and I will be at hand, if you have any cause for apprehension.'

Thoroughly sensible to this kindness and its importance, Rosanne determined to learn the nature and place of this meeting. She dined alone with her father, and was to spend the evening with him at Lord Brentleigh's. After dinner, he was extremely thoughtful, but there was no time to wait for auspicious moments: she showed the billet she had received, and reported her conversation with Sir Tancred.

The application to her Bellarmine excused—the appearance of threat was explained away—the report was disbelieved—'Frederic's wife was only absent on a visit;' and, still taking part against himself, he deferred passing any judgment till the morrow, when, without revealing that any thing unpleasant had occurred, he said Frederic was to call on him. Thus, for the present, he escaped the necessity of intrusting those who would have aided him,

At Lord Brentleigh's, Rosanne privately communicated what it was necessary that Sir Tancred should know: he thanked her for relieving his anxiety, and seemed to dismiss the matter. But before two, the next day, he was at Mr. Bellarmine's; and affecting to be interested in comparative trifles, he almost made Rosanne forget the serious purpose that had occasioned his visit. But Mr. Gass did not render it vain: he was

punctual: a gentle murmur of discussion, nay, something like mirth, was audible—then followed a little more forcible oratory—and, at last, it was not to be doubted that the parties were angry;—high tones and deep tones ensued—then a foot was heard—then a request to quit the house, and a point-blank refusal, unless——

The gentlemen were now so far out of the room in which they had met, that Sir Tancred, by going to a very little distance from the door of that where Rosanne was, could see them.—She was close behind him.—He looked over the balustrade, and, in a whisper, said, ‘The rascal has collared Mr. Bellarmine.’—In an instant he was in the entrance-hall, and, saying to Bellarmine, ‘Excuse my interference, Sir, but five-and-twenty to fifty I can never see patiently,’ he seized Mr. Gass, detached his hand, and, looking him full in the face, and addressing him as one acquainted with him, he probably expected him to depart with some sense of shame; but Frederic, though foiled, had another arrow in his quiver; he affected to be thankful for the check given him, and saying, in a manner that told every thing, ‘What claim has a father on a son’s duty when he forgets his own?’ he walked out of the house with the air of a conqueror.

Sir Tancred did not permit himself to show surprise, but leading Bellarmine, now scarcely

able to stand, into the dining-parlour, would have shut himself in with him alone; but Rosanne, entreating to be admitted, and the one being as unable as the other was unwilling to oppose her, she did all that her prudence and ingenuity suggested, to restore her father to composure. As if hoping she could lessen the effect of Frederic's cruel disclosure, she talked of him as her brother older than herself, and seemed to think that, if *she* recognised him, he must be less a disgrace;—but Sir Tancred saw her praise-worthy intention, and could not be deceived by it; he prevailed on her to leave them, and she could not but feel the strong resemblance of her present anxieties to those which had, at a former period, so marred her comfort.—‘I am returning,’ said she to herself, ‘into that state of terror and alarm which, in reflecting on it, I have thought I could not again undergo; but still my confidence in Sir Tancred, like that Mr. Grant used to give me, is a most comfortable support: I can never be thankful enough to that Providence which, whenever I have wanted it, has afforded me a friend and a protector.’

When she was allowed to see her father, he was greatly restored. Sir Tancred had shown him, on his own knowledge of Mr. Gass, the impossibility of making kindness beneficial to him, and had approved Bellarmine's intention of withdrawing from London;—he had soothed

the wounds of the insulted parent,—he had met with supporting pity the remorse of the misguided man;—every offer that a long-standing friendship could have suggested, was made by Sir Tancred, and Bellarmine might have said, ‘I have indeed found a son of whom I should be proud, at the moment of losing one who is my shame.’—‘If ever I may tell Lord Montrylas of the conduct of his friend,’ said Rosanne to herself, ‘how much will his regard for him be increased!’

CHAPTER LXVI.

WHEN we presume to judge of the requisites to our happiness, we are often sadly mistaken;—we know not how many things we may fail of obtaining, and yet be insensible to the want of them;—we know not how imperfect may be our satisfaction, even when all we could ask is granted us. Rosanne thought that, could she but remove Frederic Gass, she should not have another source of vexation to fear:—she heard her father now declare, positively, that he would have no farther intercourse with him, but through the medium of some one appointed to arrange their pecuniary concerns:—she heard him express, as she wished, his sense of the young man's conduct, and she had more than she could have asked in the friendship and active affection of Sir Tancred; but the calm produced by the late disturbance was rather the forerunner of a subsequent storm than the follower of one past over.

Sir Tancred Ormesden breakfasted with her and her father the morning after the dismissal of Frederic, and, having seen her father as well as the late shock would allow, she went, as was her usual custom, and now particularly to prevent suspicion of any thing unpleasant, to spend

part of the morning with Lady Agnes.—She had walked, and her servant had nearly reached the door, when she saw, coming towards her, a lady, who appeared to have just left Lord Brentleigh's; she too had a footman, but her external appearance was so much below that of a woman of birth or fashion, that, if she had not recollected to have seen something like her, she would have passed her without regard; but disagreeable things make strong impressions, and she was certain this lady of the subdued order of cleanliness was the Lady Lucretia Sinister.—‘If she visits at Lady Brentleigh's,’ thought she, ‘we *are* persecuted—my father will never endure her;—I am sure she shall not visit me even when——’

The door was opened: Rosanne ran up to the room where she knew she should find the ladies.

There indeed she found them, but not employed exactly as they usually were. The countess was sitting on a sofa, in deep and melancholy musing; Lady Agnes on the footstool at her feet, with her face bowed almost on her knees;—newspapers and letters were scattered on a table near them;—an open letter was on the ground, as if it had fallen from Lady Agnes's hand;—and, as Rosanne advanced, she heard Lady Brentleigh say, ‘I cannot tell your father!’

The only idea that found its way into the

mind of Rosanne was, that Lord Montrylas was dead—that letters or newspapers, which the earl had not seen, communicated the tidings—and that this was what the countess could not reveal. Without supposing it necessary to inform herself, Rosanne acted on this supposition:—‘They could not,’ she said, ‘deceive her; she was sure Lord Montrylas was dead; all her prospect was, and indeed it had always appeared so to her, a dream—her poor father!—but still it was the will of God—and she could submit, might she but know the worst.’ ‘But, O!’ said she, ‘how am I talking!—all of myself, as if I had most cause for grief, and was the person to be comforted:—O! Lady Brentleigh, my dear second mother! it is your son, and dear Lady Agnes, my promised sister! it is your brother—what am I, compared to you?’

‘Montrylas is not dead,’ said the countess; ‘we have had no news of *him*: but come, my child, sit down by me; you shall know all; you can explain, perhaps contradict;—for I cannot believe what we have heard.’

‘Dear mother!’ said Lady Agnes, as if beseeching the countess to suspend a blow that must be fatal.

‘Nay,’ said Lady Brentleigh, ‘I will not treat her like a child; beside, she *must* know: I am persuaded it is all some malice.’

‘ Now,’ thought Rosanne, reddening to crimson, ‘ I see it all: Lady Lucretia has told of Frederic.’ She gained courage, and said aloud, ‘ I know the worst now: I met, I am sure, Lady Lucretia Sinister as I came in; she once called on me, and my father will not let me have any intercourse with her.—I understand she has—she is—that is—she knows a young man who is much at our house, I am grieved to say a son of my dear father’s—I confess it—it is so—and such a cruel unprincipled young man! He yesterday, in one of his furies, seized my father by the collar, and if Sir Tancred Ormesden had not—but I am going too far—this woman has come to you to tell of Frederic; did she tell of my poor father’s severe punishment for this fault—his sad repentance?’

Rosanne had made every effort; she threw herself on the sofa, and cried bitterly.

The ladies looked at each other, and were silent. Rosanne spoke: ‘ I see the consequences—I am prepared for them—it was against Mr. Grant’s opinion, and, I am sure, against mine—but I dared not speak—that it was not mentioned;—but is a fault, sincerely repented, never to be forgiven? and such a man as my father—such a father!—and so educated, that he had no fence against erring; no one ever took the pains to teach *him*; he had no one to give *him* principles of religion, and

what else can preserve us from transgression? O! when you know all, how you will pity and love him!

Lady Agnes looked for the effect of this on her mother's countenance, while tears, like hail-stones, too cold to flow, stood on her cheeks. Rosanne, now in a fever, proceeded:

'I have always felt it wrong to conceal this; it has made me unhappy, even when I have had most cause to be thankful; but still, as it did not, could not, in any way affect *me*, I should not have been justified in betraying my parent. I have never been able to discover that such a misfortune banishes from society the rest of a family; if I had, I would, at least, have declined the honour offered me here.'

'Surely, my dear Rosanne,' said Lady Agnes, 'your father had better have been explicit on every point; the danger of my father's learning afterwards, only think——'

'But,' said the countess, 'my dear Miss Bel-larmine, you are mistaking the matter; we knew nothing of this young man till now that you have told us.'

Rosanne was instantly as white as alabaster. 'What has my precipitation done?' said she; 'I thought you *must* have been told it;—you will drive me out of my senses if you puzzle me so.—Pray tell me; Lord Montrylas *is* dead then—it *can* be nothing else—or perhaps Mr. Grant——'

‘No, no,’ said the countess; ‘it is this sad concealment.’

‘So I said,’ replied Rosanne; ‘but still what could *I* do?—I was going to say, that, had it been any thing that respected *me*, I would, at all risks, have told it;—but I knew so little of the world:—I am certain, if I know myself at all, that, had it been any thing that I could suppose rendered me unworthy of entering your family, I should have revealed it; had it respected my mother, I could not have hesitated, because I should myself feel that the daughter of a woman of immoral conduct, in any way, ought never to be received into a family such as this; but my *father’s* fault, and that so repented——’

‘She *has* then been kept in ignorance herself,’ said the countess, looking at her daughter.

Rosanne could not now even ask for information.

Lady Brentleigh drew her to her, and, speaking gently and not unkindly, explained to her the purpose of Lady Lucretia’s visit, which was to tell all she knew of her bosom-friend, Rosanne’s mother, stimulated by the slight she herself had endured, and in revenge for the treatment her accepted lover had met with the day before.

‘Pray let me be carried home,’ was all Rosanne could say, when she dropped out of her hand a statement of facts which Lady

Lucretia had signed, and sunk behind the countess on the sofa.

She was on her bed, her father and her maid standing by her, when she recollected herself. Perhaps the moment when she gazed round and saw her father's countenance was the most painful of her life.—She was going to speak—to ask him, possibly, why he looked thus, as if the proximate anxiety of his mind covered a thousand others.—He stopped her, saying, as he bent down to her, ‘I know all—be quiet for my sake, my child—think only on yourself.’

Her maid was called out of the room: Lady Agnes Byram had waited below, and begged to be allowed to come to her.

‘No,’ said Rosanne; ‘my very humble thanks: I can see nobody.’

She rose, and soon followed her father to the drawing-room.—They were silent.

Dinner was served. ‘O! she could go down very well with a little assistance.’

‘Gladly would I remain,’ said she to herself, ‘but I dare not;—I should be better alone;—but, were I to spend this time even in praying for support for myself, when my father wants all that I can give him, I should be wrong.’

‘This is very nice soup,’ said she; ‘it is quite reviving; I have heard it said, that, after any fright, soup is very good nutriment.’

‘It is the food easiest of digestion.’

‘ I was very foolish to alarm myself so ; I took up a notion in a hurry.’

‘ Bring something else,’ said Bellarmine to the servants. ‘ Rosanne, will you venture on a little wine?’

‘ I am afraid,’ said she. The servants were out of the room. She whispered: ‘ Time—time—only a little time.—Keep up, dearest father; think of me!’

‘ ’Tis not eating-day,’ said Bellarmine, when he saw the matter desperate; ‘ clear the table.’

‘ Pray leave me some very cold water,’ said Rosanne,—‘ and oranges.’

The exertions of father and daughter seemed equally entitled to the praise of fortitude; but the impulse was not similar: Rosanne thought only of supporting her parent—Bellarmine had no higher view than to get through the time of dinner without betraying the agony of his mind to his servants.—Instantly as they were gone, rising from his seat, and in a manner that bespoke more a being quitting all relation to a previous state of existence, than one on whom a helpless female must depend, he said, in melancholy slowness, and the sonorous accent of the tomb:

‘ The gods are just, and of our pleasant vices
Make instruments to plague and punish us.’

‘ My daughter, were there a possibility of my

long distressing you, I would quit you, and betake myself to a country that should for ever separate us.—Your happiness should not be blasted by the disgrace of your father; you should say I was dead, and your friends would then seek and pity you; but my mind has received its death-blow, and, before Lord Montrylas returns, I shall be out of your way:—he cannot break his engagement; and, if you can forget me, you may still be, and, if ever human being deserved it, you ought to be, happy.’

‘Father, hear me!’

‘First let me speak,’ said he, throwing himself again into his chair.—‘I have been so wrong, that it seems beyond the power of Him whom I have striven, weakly enough I confess, but still I have been *willing*, to trust, to restore me to that common path of rectitude which others almost blindly follow. Rosanne, you have a claim on me to be candid with you:—I have risked your happiness, I hope not ruined it;—I will do nothing more. Do not fear my accepting the release of a violent death—you have nothing more to fear from me. You now know the worst. I have, you are sensible, given up my own errors, and endeavoured to adopt correctives which, I was told, would bring peace;—they flattered me for a time; but I have nursed a concealed disease that has, perhaps, prevented their acting on me as they would have acted on others. I do not impeach them; I blame only

myself. — I only lament their inefficacy. The three great offences of my life have been those of which you are now informed—beyond these I defy the whole world to bring a charge. O! let me be a warning to those who cannot be satisfied with temperate enjoyments—and who, demanding pleasure instead of satisfaction,—something more than enough instead of a sufficiency, pull ruin on their head, and, worse than all, destroy the peace of those for whom alone they can endure existence! O Rosanne! think of Frederic: am I not punished there? and to be saved from his mad violence by the man whom I once so injured——’

‘ But, O dear father! think of the retribution—face *this*, for you *may*—and for other errors——’

‘ My marriage!—what a fatality! O! had I thought then as I do now!’

‘ What may I know of this?’ said Rosanne, in tears: ‘ is it, then, all true?’

‘ All that that vile woman, who was, I believe, the corrupter of your mother’s light vain mind, has said, is true. I knew your mother’s first husband—for she had a former husband—a worthy man, and my friend: it was a disproportionate marriage—selfish on her side: her levity made her husband withdraw her from the world, and this increasing her weariness of him, made her seek the gratification of her vanity: she had no heart—I was, perhaps, as vain—I

was flattered, and spoiled—I was angry at her husband's slighting me, and I suffered myself to be drawn in. I was, I must confess, more blameable than she was, however I may despise her; for I knew her to be weak, and open to every temptation that a vain woman is exposed to.—This I have rued all my life—I have lived under the weight of this unpardonable offence against every principle of moral obligation, and in dread of its discovery, and now all I feared is realized.—I am waking from a wretched dream to misery more wretched—and if I were to live, unless you consent to our separation, I should have the added sense of having ruined you with myself—I cannot, however, suppose the Byram family will behave dishonourably to you when I am out of the way. I would go to-morrow back to France, at any risk, if they will allow you to remain with them while they are waiting Lord Montrylas's return; and I would bind myself, even after your marriage, never to appear—were it probable I could live to disturb you.'

Rosanne could only shake her head.

'We must resolve on something,' said he, 'for—I cannot conceal it from you—unless Frederic be more a man of principle and property than I have any reason now to suppose him, the injury he has done me in drawing money from me is such, that I have not the means of living on any but a very contracted scheme.'

‘ Give me till to-morrow,’ said Rosanne, ‘ to think: do not talk to me—let me be quiet, and only promise to let me do what is necessary to my peace.’

‘ As far as I can,’ he replied.

She then placed herself at a distance from him, and having in a few minutes decided on what she should do, comforting herself that she had heard the worst, she persuaded her father to lie down on the sofa, in such a situation as that he could not see how she was employed:—she then, as steadily as was in her power, wrote a short letter to Mr. Grant, telling him that discoveries had been made which altered their views, and begging him to lose no time in coming to her father:—this request she inclosed in a cover to Lady Agnes Byram, in which she wrote:

‘ My dearest Lady Agnes,

‘ As sisters we never can meet—but as objects of your pity, I am sure my father and I may still rely on you. Let me beg for mercy to him, and for silence with regard to myself: let us, if possible, never be named—my father’s love for me has mis-led him: his fate, be it what it may, I must share—I can never now quit him. Shut in as I am with him, in the same room, I can do nothing for the support of his fortitude under his present wretchedness. This must excuse me, if I presume to request

you to allow one of your servants to find as expeditious a messenger as possible, to carry the inclosed to Mr. Grant. Farewell, dearest Lady Agnes—rid yourself of whatever can remind you of me, if I have left any thing in your rooms. Make my most humble acknowledgment of unmerited goodness to Lord and Lady Brentleigh, and be assured that, however innocently I suffer, I shall never call any proceeding severe that they think proper towards

‘ Your afflicted

‘ R. B.’

Giving the servant her packet on the outer side of the door, she, in returning, stopped to look at her father: he was languid, but he was more tranquil: he suffered her to take his hand and to kneel down by him. She tried to persuade him that her mind was relieved from a burden by his trusting her with his uneasinesses: she professed her perfect confidence in Heaven—that she should be supported, and enabled to support him through his temporary suffering:—she felt comparatively happy that this accident had occurred in time to give the Byram family an opportunity of choosing the path they would pursue—if it did not shake their friendship, it was firm for ever—if it did, how happy was it to know it in time!

‘It will not only shake—it will overthrow it as to me,’ said he. ‘Finding you so unaccountably overpowered, I went there to learn the cause—I was not admitted—but Lady Brentleigh sent over the papers. This was enough to show what their conduct would be if I did not withdraw—It is the only expedient for saving you—I shall not live long—I am worn out with the distress I have made for myself—all my own folly—and worse than folly!’

‘You will see rays of comfort in a short time,’ said Rosanne, ‘even from this black cloud. Never suffer that cruel creature Frederic to come near you—give up any thing rather than trust to him: think of what you did in Sir Tancred’s affair; and for any thing else, we will retire into the country—my income will allow us all we shall *want*—only let us be near Mr. Grant, and we will lead ‘a life of penitence and peace.’

‘Impossible, I fear, my child—Grant will not, I am sure, see me,—we differed on this very point: he knows all, and predicted all that has happened—and I have shamefully neglected him.’

‘He will forgive, I am sure—I only wish we were with him.’

‘You may do what you please, my dear child—here we cannot stay.’

She continued to talk—to soothe—to coax—

to interpose consolation of the highest kind, with that which the world might afford:—she suffered not a thought for herself to intrude while she reasoned on the probable scheme of a merciful God to withdraw all human support from a mind not prone to believe, in order to impress incontrovertibly the conviction of his own over-ruling power. But her best arguments were in her own example: ‘Could I feel as I do—could I speak as I do,’ said she, ‘if I relied on my own strength, or any thing in this world?’

‘O! give me your faith—your heart—your innocence,’ said he, as he looked at her, and saw the swimming brightness of her heavenward eyes.

‘My father!’ said she, ‘you may have more—your faith may be superior to mine, because it will have overcome opposition—your heart will improve to a degree of excellence mine may never reach—and instead of my untempted innocence, you will have to offer to a righteous Judge a repentance which, he expressly says, is more acceptable.’

‘Rosanne,’ said he, ‘I can say more to you than ever I did—God grant me a better spirit than has yet possessed me!—and I will endure even the misery of having injured you—may we but meet in another world—for another there must be, to reward you. Pray for me, and I

will not fail, you may be assured, to pray for myself: my pride is humbled—my reserve is conquered—my disgrace is complete—this world is lost to me—let me then strive to gain another.'

CHAPTER LXVII.

ROSANNE'S fortitude might not have stood this consummation of her wishes, as well as it had done opposition to them; but the experiment was prevented: the door was thrown open; and Sir Tancred Ormesden was announced. 'Sir Tancred wished to deliver a message from Lady Agnes.'

He would have been excluded, had he given an option, but he gave none. Rosanne took the opportunity to quit the room.

'Heaven has sent you, my dear Sir,' said Bel-larmine, as he entered,—'the only man, perhaps, in the world, whom I can now look at, without fear of his disowning me.'

'You would wound me to the very soul,' said Sir Tancred, 'if you could feel shy of *me*:—it would stamp me for ever unworthy of all I owe you. I come from Lord Brentleigh's—therefore I know what has occurred; whether you will approve my proceeding I know not, for I have put the family in possession of all that relates to myself. We have neither of us now any thing to conceal; and that, if I may judge by myself, is a situation of comparative relief. That unprincipled fellow Gass, I find, has been doing all the mischief in his

power: and I would not leave him more to do. He has declared himself a ruined man, and I am afraid there is no hope of his being any thing better. Lord Brentleigh is disposed to the most conciliating measures, and has desired me to act as his confidential friend, which I will do to the best of my power, when you have read this letter, which he gave me for you.'

' My dear Sir,

' The concern which I have felt since Lady Brentleigh communicated to me the occurrence of the morning, gives way to my very earnest wish to relieve the severe suffering we have so unfortunately occasioned you.

' You do me injustice, if you suppose, that any feeling of superiority, either in the accident of birth, or the negative merit of a life protected from temptations, mixes itself with the scrupulosity which you have heard me express as to untainted blood:—if there be one right dearer than another bestowed by birth, it is the right of condescending; and if there be one temper of mind more imperiously than another demanded of those who have been, perhaps involuntarily, preserved from the contagion of the world, it is that of compassion towards the less fortunate.

' I should affront your good sense, were I to pretend to undervalue that which, perhaps, has been too much my boast—the unsullied pedi-

gree of my family: but when I set my face against any connexion that should cloud it, I did not mean to preclude myself or my children from an alliance with a man who has, long since he ceased to err, given a proof of transcendent goodness. *My* whole life, Sir, does not boast such a deed as that by which you have anew founded the ancient house of Ormesden. And well as I loved Sir Tancred before this, my love and esteem for him are infinitely increased, by his bringing forward, at this moment, so important a communication.

‘ We propose, with your permission, a reference to my son, which, I give you my word, I will in no way influence; and Sir Tancred is so good as to offer himself to be our ambassador on the occasion, that he may save Montrylas all that will be painful in the business, and bring it to a satisfactory issue.

‘ Thus much, Sir, we conceive due to the extraordinary merit of your incomparable daughter. And now, relying on your perfect agreement with me in every point important to the highest interests of persons who, like you and myself, are looking beyond this world, and almost envying you the power you have had of doing one of the greatest actions for which life affords opportunity, I wait your reply.

‘ You will, I am sure, feel for my son, for the ladies, and for me, if you advert to the

very strong attachment we have formed to Miss Bellarmine.

‘I hope you will allow us to expect you and Miss Bellarmine at our usual dinner-hour to-morrow, as, whatever turn this business takes, I wish it to appear matter of cordial agreement between us.

‘I have the honour to be, with every sentiment of regard, &c.’

‘And now,’ said Sir Tancred, when Bellarmine, overcome by the generosity of Lord Brentleigh, closed the letter, ‘I am ready to set off immediately;—give me your sanction, and I go to-night.’

‘You must not,’ said Bellarmine, ‘without my daughter’s concurrence: give me till to-morrow to consult my poor girl.’

Too delicate to stay beyond the extent of his power of being useful, Sir Tancred went away, promising to be with Bellarmine at noon on the morrow, and saying all that could induce him to use persuasion with Rosanne.

But Rosanne was not to be persuaded. There was, in her nice mind, an apparent impropriety in commissioning, on this business, the man who, of all in the world, was the most tied by obligation to her father. She wished Lord Montrylas to be immediately informed, but, if not by the ordinary conveyance, by a messen-

ger entirely from his father,—and to this effect she sent a note, before the evening concluded, to Sir Tancred.

If days of affliction keep the sense of it alive, still the pause of night is a very imperfect suspension; and perhaps the necessity of quitting those who are sharers in suffering, throws more than its whole weight upon ourselves: whatever its effect, the ‘Good night’ of sorrow is bitter; and in the case of Rosanne, it might have induced apprehensions to which she was now beginning to grow sensible, if a young man whom her father had brought with him out of Kent, on Mr. Grant’s recommendation, as an under-servant, had not, before it was the hour of rest, found an opportunity of entreating that, ‘as his master seemed in some trouble, he might sit up, at least at his chamber-door.—Mr. Grant had given him such a charge, if ever he saw his master ill or uneasy, always to do all in his power for him! for he said his master had gone through a great deal of trouble, and that was a sad thing—and his master had been such a good master to him! he could be in his dressing-room if she pleased, and keep the door just a-jar, and she might then be very sure that his master could not turn but he should hear him.’

This faithful care could not be accepted without the permission of him who called for it; but having spent the evening in gentle discus-

sion, and in temperate remonstrance against every thing that did not arise from a principle of perfect submission, and a willing adoption of means of mercy ordained by Infinite Wisdom—setting herself an example how easy it was to relinquish all superfluous blessings, for the sake of obtaining that from which others derived all their value; and having shown, under the experience, now, of some years, the efficacy of that support and direction on which she besought her father to rely, she did not find him obstinate: she might order or do whatever would contribute to her repose—‘Would she read to him?’—he ‘thought he could attend; and Sir Tancred’s kindness had been a cordial to him:—he had so delicately forborne saying what might make him feel how low he was sunk! yet he had not, through that delicacy, suffered him to lose the advantage of what he could say: he had returned a letter by the servant who carried her note—it had been given him while she was absent—he had feared it might be more affliction, but it was very much the contrary; she might see it herself.’ She asked for it, and perused it.

It indeed did honour to the writer—it was a hasty transcript of his sentiments on the present occasion: it rated, as of high importance, the preservation of the friendship which he hoped the family of Lord Brentleigh were well

disposed to preserve : it requested that he might at least write to Lord Montrylas, as no one could, so well as himself, speak to facts, and he was certain, that, in preventing a breach, he consulted the happiness of both families : it spoke in the most manly and modest terms of Christian generosity, on the distinction to be made between those who have, through the force of temptation on an unfortified mind, destroyed their own peace, and those who, urged by the malevolent passions, have assailed that of others : it repeated the offer, nay, it urged the acceptance, of every consolation that respectful and grateful friendship could administer, while the decisions of the Byram family were in suspense. He wished Miss Bellarmine to consider him as a brother—would Mr. Bellarmine only allow him to interest himself in assisting him, he should find in him the affection and solicitude of a son. He was confident that a very short time would give him cause to say, that the happiness of his life was improved : he was convinced, on his own experience, that the severe lessons of the world, taught by that adversity which is directed by the Almighty, never failed to produce the most beneficial effects. All would be well :—what was his prospect of suffering, compared to the gloom in which any stroke that deprived him of his daughter, would have involved him?—With her, every thing might be hoped for ; without her, the world could

promise nothing. Assisted by her, he would unite in any plan for Mr. Bellarmine's comfort; and it would be the pride of his life to watch over him who had so nobly rescued him and his family from their depression.'

'Such kindness as this,' said Bellarmine, 'I can accept; and if you could, my child, say any thing to our good friend Grant to convince him of my concern for all that is past with regard to him, and of still more for that which is now so justly punished in me, he might perhaps—for he has no gall in his nature—forgive it as he would injuries received from a man under temporary distraction. Tell him, that, in one point, I feel the goodness of God most convincingly—and it is an obligation on me which I can by no self-deception avoid: the much evil that I have done is, I confess, severely corrected, but not to an extreme—for then *you* would be taken from me: here the Almighty has stayed his hand—and why I know not, but in mercy: the very little good I have done has constantly been rewarded; and as I know this is not the uniform course of Providence, I consider it as intended to encourage me—should any reverse befall me, should what I may mean well, turn out ill, I shall submit as if only put to a severer test.'

Had Rosanne now been certain of the reply she might receive from Mr. Grant, she would

have given her father the satisfaction of knowing that she had written; but she could not calculate on the effect which disappointment might produce; and she therefore punished herself by withholding the communication.

CHAPTER LXVIII.

THE night passed in such perfect quietness, that, though Rosanne had counted every hour, she could not fancy any new distresses. She had been busy in arranging plans founded on what she could collect from her father; and taking every particular at that which appeared the worst, she told herself that she had to provide for quitting London with him, to live in that state which must, in some measure, be new to her, as involving the necessity of prudence, and perhaps forbearance. Her father she must expect to see suffer greatly; but if Mr. Grant would allow them to be near him, much of her anxiety would be diminished; therefore, nothing was, in her eyes, so important as this question.—‘Any one,’ said she, ‘who has suffered as I have, would gladly forego every thing not absolutely necessary, to insure quiet peace. My splendid prospect is gone—Lord Montryla will feel so thankful that this sad affair came to light in time, that we must expect nothing beyond what I know his noble heart will grant, a generous forgiveness;—of him I must think as if I had accepted an advantage intended for somebody else, under a mistake: if any one had paid me an immense sum—immense I may

well say!—taking me for another person, I must refund it when the mistake was discovered.—I must not, will not think on this;—I make a resolution here, at this moment, never to name him to myself, even silently.—O! how thankful I am, that I had always before my eyes, the precariousness of every thing in this world! If the family will but forgive us! this I shall try to bring about, through Sir Tancred.—O! what a happiness to have a friend! And now Lady Agnes's example is of use to me: her trial was more severe than mine, for she had ventured to give all her affection—*she* might; but my sense of inferiority, by preventing this, has saved me: I never erected myself, therefore I am ready bent to the storm.—And I might feel this great disappointment much more, were it not in some measure counterbalanced by my absorbing concern about my poor father. But even without this, did I consider rightly, of what real consequence is it—or will it be fifty years hence?—If I were to be seen in deep grief, by some poor lame starving creature, with a sick husband and a family of children, for whom she had no bread, and I explained to her my cause of sorrow, she would laugh at me:—she would say, 'Have you not health and the use of your limbs, and food and clothing, and a bed to sleep on, and no one to make you uneasy but your father?'—or supposing I were so unhappy as to have been very wicked, should

I not envy any one who suffered only as I do by necessity? And now, if all turns out as I wish, we shall have Mr. Grant and Sir Tancred for friends, and perhaps I may be introduced to Sir Tancred's mother and sisters; but they shall be informed of every thing first:— I will leave nothing for any body to tell of us; and if we can retreat from observation and can live in peace, and my poor father grows better and better, I may never be very happy, because I must for ever remember and feel what has happened, but I can be content; and, if kept out of the way of things that would remind me, the impression they may have made, will wear out. This I am resolved on, to do my utmost for myself and for my father, or else I shall expect something worse to befall me— and another resolution I make, never to repine. I remember I used to say to myself, when I had every thing almost before I wished for it, and yet was very unhappy, that, to get rid of my miserable feelings, I would give up every thing I enjoyed—those feelings are gone: I am convinced that I could be happier in poverty in the present state of my mind, than in the most splendid and affluent situation, with my mind in any other state; and it is the goodness of God which enables me to say, with the concurrence of my own wishes and in preference to any lot I could choose, 'Thy will be done.'

She rose refreshed in mind, more by the com-

posure she had rationally acquired, than in body by rest. Sending her maid to inquire after her father, she heard he was rising. She then read her accustomed portions of Scripture—they seemed—and how often does this wonderful co-incidence bear such an appearance!—to suit their expressions to her wants.

She next sought her father; but she sought him in vain in the room which he usually occupied: his valet had finished his attendance, and supposed his master had come into his sitting-room: she then looked for him on the gravel-walk at the back of the house: he was not there; but the window of his sitting-room commanding that of his dressing-room, she perceived him through the curtain:—he was, she was convinced, on his knees, and, she could not now doubt, voluntarily imploring that aid on which she could the most confidently depend for his support. She went away.

Presently a mesage from him called her to him: he was in his accustomed place: his countenance was dejected, but not disturbed. He beckoned her to him, and burst into tears: she tried to console him: she inquired how he had passed the night.

‘ Sadly—he had never closed his eyes, but to fancy that he had lost her.’

‘ Then,’ said she, ‘ if you suffered so much by this fancy, you must be equally comforted by finding it without foundation.’

‘ I am,’ he replied ; ‘ and I think I shall be better soon.—I was afraid I was almost out of the reach of my own exertion ; but my mind is calmer : I have been reading, and I am better. The Scriptures have certainly a divine character about them—human oratory has no such power ; and when I think,’ said he, raising his voice—‘ for I have no more doubt of the fact than I have of any in history—it is as well authenticated as any we have in the life of Hannibal or Cæsar : when I think of the punishment of David, I bless the mercy of God, that *my* child is not taken from me, and that, in giving me the heart of a father, he has kept alive in me that sense which may lead me to Him. And now, my incomparable girl, my one dear remaining blessing!’ said he, ‘ let us face the evil—if you can forgive your share in it:—remember, I am ruined, probably, in circumstances, and disgraced in private estimation ; it will not be for the advantage of any one to carry what has passed farther, therefore the knowledge of my merited affliction may be confined to its present extent ; but I must quit London directly, I can never go out of this house but to some place of retirement—where you will :—near Grant, if possible. I am sure Sir Tancred would interest himself in an investigation of my affairs ; but I know, if I were to employ his kindness, that the mischief I have permitted Frederic to do me, would make him feel uncomfortably that which was only

justice towards his family: therefore, in that point, you must be cautious, for I will work for my living, rather than receive any thing back from Sir Tancred. I paid him the money on *feeling*: it is on principle that I shall insist on his retaining it. We must then, when we have got rid of every thing, think of a plan of quiet life for me, in which I will do my best to bear what has befallen *me* so justly, *you* so severely, and to repay, by the tenderest affection, and, I may add, the highest esteem, all your admirable filial duty—thankful, very thankful, that the strong disposition of your mind did not suffer it to bow to a system which now would indeed leave us in despair; but it was impossible you could imitate my error. I remember the pleasure with which, when a boy, I heard of a Creator and a Governor of the world; there was no natural impediment in my mind to adopting the general belief of mankind; but I really was set out in early life so erroneously, and accidents have so accumulated to preclude me from recovering myself, that, however voluntary my modes of thinking have seemed, they were as much imposed by circumstances as any superstition can be by spiritual authority:—none but a virtuous mind can be a candid one: none, I can now see, but the servants of God, are free; and dissatisfaction with one's self, is, I am certain, the origin of all dissatisfaction with that

which we find Providence has established as the nature of things.

‘ It is almost presumption in me,’ continued he, ‘ to say that a religious life will be my choice. I have no option—I shall get books about me ; and till the great question is decided, perhaps, must oblige you to what, after your living as you have done, may appear a dull life ; but I know you will submit to it for my sake. You have had a hard lot, my Rosanne, but you will fear nothing more from me ; and I know your excellent heart is set on too high an object to break with what I hope will prove only one of the temporary disappointments of this world.’

Near an hour slipped away in thus conversing with her father ; and Rosanne, in the back part of the house, knew not what support she should meet in passing to the front of it. Mr. Grant entered at one door of the breakfast-room, as she came in at the other. On the arrival of her letter, he had risen from his bed to visit the distressed, and had brought back the messenger. All Rosanne’s cares now seemed at an end. She ran to warn her father of the unexpected visitor he would find ; and, while waiting his acquiring composure enough to come forward, she hastened breakfast, and explained briefly what had happened.

The entrance of the servants confined her to general acknowledgments. Mr. Grant replied, ‘ I have done about as much, this once, as a phy-

sician is subject to do every night of his life, if he lives by his profession. I would tell you of the fine night and lovely morning, the bright moon, and a thousand pretty things, but positively I finished my nap as I came along, and I waked only to ask what they were all about, when they changed the horses. I dreamed I was in the hay-field, and took the carriage, I verily believe, for the hay-cart; we seemed too, I thought, to go rather on the canter—I could not tell what to make of it, till we came into London, and then I rubbed my eyes, and knew whereabouts I was.'

Rosanne, having done what was necessary to her dear friend's present refreshment, went again to her father. 'Talk to this excellent kind-hearted man,' said he, 'a little without me; tell him how deeply I feel his goodness—I will come presently.'

She obeyed by returning to Mr. Grant. 'This will not do with me,' said he, taking up his tea-cup and his napkin: 'we fancy ourselves sometimes getting courage when we are losing it—he will make the seeing me formidable—show me the room he is in.'

She thought it best to let so judicious a man pursue his own scheme of doing right—she pointed to the door, and Mr. Grant gained admittance.

The interval in which she might have sat down to think—and perhaps it was too early to

do this to good purpose—was filled up by receiving a very affectionate note from Lady Agnes, which required, for the relief of the family, that she should reply to it herself. Expressions could not be more healing than were Lady Agnes's; and though they gave no flattering hope, they indicated no inclination on the part of the family to any coolness. Her ladyship, without adverting to any thing specific, said, that no unnecessary delay would be suffered to protract suspense; she urged Rosanne's admitting her in the evening, for which satisfaction she would forego any engagement; and Rosanne was obliged to say, that, if nothing occurred in the course of the day, she would accept kindness so far beyond any that she could presume to ask.

Mr. Grant returned. 'Your father is better than I expected to see him,' said he; 'and I am, what I never could say before, perfectly satisfied with the state of his mind. He has, to be sure, so entirely demolished his own comfort and yours, that I could not have said much if I had found him deaf to all we could urge.—I am astonished that he ever could think such a plan would succeed. In my opinion, you have cause to rejoice; for I should not have wondered at any thing he might have done the day after your marriage.'

'What he says convinces me that he would

have left me, and probably have gone to France again.'

' Well, he has paid a high price for repentance—but send him his breakfast—he is best by himself at present ;—and let me have a little talk with thee, my child. I am afraid you are doing too much. Tell me now, methodically, what has been the course of proceeding with this triple-headed business ;—for here is your sad affair—and this scoundrel Frederic,—and this same Sir Tancred, whom I must see.'

Rosanne gave the best account she was able, of the causes and motives that had produced the events now so threatening in their consequences. She was so steady, that Mr. Grant himself was surprised; and when she had brought the occurrences up to the present hour, and expressed her firm purpose of devoting herself solely to her father, he said,—

' Why, my dear young friend, are you imposing on me? or are you not, as I fear, pledging yourself for too much? Consider what frail beings we are. Our corporeal part, I am sorry to remind you, will not always answer to the orders of its better neighbour; and we must not be rash in our demands on it. What reason have you for this self-confidence, when you tell me that you can cheerfully renounce your prospect? Believe me, you promise yourself too much. Do you consider what you would renounce? No, no; we must try to make some

compromise. We are not sure the family will not, in this case, abate of their dignified scrupulosity, when matters have proceeded thus far. I admire, I own, this pure pride; but, as Johnson said, ‘General precepts are never applied to particular cases;’ and I hope this may be true now.’

‘You do not know me,’ said Rosanne, ‘if you treat me thus. I am serious—I am collected: I am firm in what I say;—I am prepared for all that this choice will cost me, because it is the less of two evils. The greater is the misery of seeing my father, to whom I owe a life of inestimable worth, since it is to lead to a glorious immortality—to whom I am indebted for education, and who would, I am sure, have carried my mind on to the still more valuable knowledge of my Creator, had he been not unfairly dealt with in his youth:—to see such a father, whose very faults serve only to make his goodness to me more conspicuous, at best admitted into a family only on sufferance, and for *my* sake, and liable to the scorn of those who, however great my respect and attachment, I cannot hope could ever cordially forgive us: this would be misery indeed. And beside, how unfair, how immoral would be this conduct towards this family! Is it for me to blot their escutcheon?—Is it for me to register myself in their peerage as the daughter of a divorced woman?—I know little, I say nothing, of my

mother;—God grant her penitence may have expiated her faults!—Were she alive, nothing would I omit that could persuade her to live well; but my father seems my charge; and my heart is set on seeing him, at least, ‘die the death of the righteous.’ I cannot, I will not desert him in his hour of need: it is my duty, it is my concern, to obliterate from his memory all recollection of this unfortunate prospect,—enough, after all I can do, will remain to answer every important purpose.—No, no, we will have no supplicating, no compromise—we will not be disdained: I will take him out of town—he shall have his house and garden, his horse and his books, and I will perpetually hold before his eyes, while I endeavour to sustain his fortitude under his grievous trial, the prospect which animates me, and to which I owe my fortitude.’

‘Ah!’ replied the good Grant, ‘this is very pretty talking, and I love your temper; but you know not for what you are undertaking. You may sink under such a trial. I can make great allowances for the ardent expectations of young people, to whom the world is new; and I hate them to be balked at the moment when the sweetest cup life has to bestow, is at their lips. Many a young man has been set wrong for life, by a disappointment; and many a good girl has pined to her grave, I am afraid, when less severely tried than you are.’

‘Do you think so, Sir? It must then have been in consequence of a weak mind or a bad education in a man, and of slight constitution, and want of a right direction of her views, in a woman. Now I have very good health, though I am not robust; and I have, notwithstanding the indulgence in which I was brought up, never been deceived as to the importance of this world. Another great difference is to be remarked in the circumstances of my situation;—I did not fall in love like young women I have heard of; and the prospect was so above me, that I have constantly been on my guard.—I have always felt a dread of something. Certainly I am convinced, that, had every thing taken place, as my father hoped and the family designed, I might have been the most enviable being on earth; but this possibility or probability could not make my happiness absolute. A thousand things might have occurred to show me the presumption of my hopes; and as I am confident it is in the power of the Almighty to make me as happy in attending on my dear father, as I could be in the enjoyment of rank and riches, it would be to distrust his mercy were I to say that I can never be content with any thing but that which I know I cannot have, and which now I would not accept.—Beside, my dear Sir,’ said she, ‘consider the effect of reading: if I had read such books as those poor silly girls at Southampton, I should, I grant,

be in great danger; but I, who love nothing so well as the Scriptures, who read them over and over again, and, every time I read, find some new instruction, some more powerful encouragement—I cannot be so attached to the world, or build *my* happiness on notions and fancies. You will think me very absurd; but I really should be ashamed of dying in consequence of a disappointment; and I should fear I had learnt the Sermon on the Mount to very, very little purpose, if I took such violent thought for the morrow, as to disable myself from doing my duty to-day.’

‘You are an admirable girl; but yet I wish you would not make hasty resolutions.’

‘I make none, my dear Sir: I only say, that, conceiving it impossible to reconcile my entering the family, with the maintenance of that high character on which they justly pride themselves, I will not do it, nor will I ever introduce my father to a connexion where he is to be endured for *my* sake.’

No longer could Rosanne remain separated from her father: she went to him, and found him reading. He thanked her for her judicious care in sending to Mr. Grant—he spoke, almost with tears, of his kindness, and appeared not averse to joining them. When she brought him into the room she had quitted, they found Sir Tancred Ormesden there; and matters of

business, unpleasant to her, being of necessity discussed, she withdrew.

The full occupation which this world's vexations find for us, is not so much to be feared as the sudden pause which they sometimes leave. Rosanne exerting herself for her father, was a heroine;—out of his sight, and now not called on to think for him, she was a woman, and a very young one: she sate down to look round on desolation, and the view was formidable; every thing she saw was the relic of some defeated intention:—a miniature of her father was ready for the setting—it must never be set;—one of Lady Agnes was just begun—it could never be finished: various elegant works, all connected with that which must never take place, seemed to put themselves forward, as if to attract notice:—her servants were waiting for orders—they were dismissed briefly. She was engaged that evening to a ball with Lady Brentleigh: the employment of writing an excuse was preferable to the indulgence of her own thoughts. Greater still was the relief when she was called to her father, and found him alone, and desirous that she should remain with him. Sir Tancred and Mr. Grant were gone to Lord Brentleigh's; 'she needed be under no apprehension—nothing should be done without her sanction.'

The earl received the mediators not as a so-

vereign possessing the power of life and death, but as a sharer in the distress which they sought to lessen, and therefore, equally with Mr. Bellarmine, indebted to their benevolent exertion. But in this question, the amiable disposition of the parties did little towards settling the business. It remained, after all had been said that could be said, just as it was: Lord Brentleigh had referred to his son: he showed the gentlemen the copy of his letter—it was most equitable; and if there was a leaning in it, it was towards the uncommon merit of this exemplary young woman, who so justified all attachment, and who, by the propriety of her conduct and her high principles of virtue, proved that the degenerate qualities are not always hereditary;—Lord Montrylas was enjoined to act solely on his own decision: that he should consult his happiness, was the only command laid on him—but the word happiness was twice underlined.

A message came from Lady Agnes to Mr. Grant, requesting to see him: he went to her ladyship's drawing-room, and was introduced to her: and as he entered, and met the lady advancing towards him, he paid her the full 'debitam reverentiam' of her rank: he made the best bow of his time and his college—and—for he was more honest and humourous than courtly and precise—he might, had not the distresses of others sat heavy on his heart, have

muttered to himself, as he raised his eyes, 'She's devilish pretty'—but he would, the next moment, have stroked his good-humoured chin, and corrected his judgment;—he would then have said, 'No, she's rather handsome than pretty—she's too fine a woman for diminutive praise—she's a fine creature, faith! how perfectly formed are her eyes!—I must behave my best here.'

Her ladyship, had she possessed any of that discernment which, with the accuracy of a graduated scale, adjusts the condescension due to certain stages of inferiority, might have perceived that she was addressing herself to nothing more than that whetstone for the wit of poets, tale-mongers, sketchers, painters, and engravers, called a country-parson,—but she did not seem to have acuteness enough to find this out; for she made him a very respectful curtsy, and begging him to consider her as one of those happy young persons to whom he bore good will, she led him to the seat by her, and began to inquire with the tenderest anxiety after Miss Bellarmine.

'She is well in health, and better in spirits, madam, than I supposed possible—at least so she appears; but I fear, poor young creature! she is sick at heart, though she will not own it.—This is a bad business, my lady.'

'It is tremendous,' said Lady Agnes; 'you know, I hope——'

‘ I know all, madam, and more than I wish was to be known. The young woman is an angel—I never yet saw her equal; and yet I have seen many good girls;—and as for the father—why, I believe on my conscience, that, were there a sponge that would wipe out past errors, he would stand a fair chance for our esteem. He was set out wrong in life, my lady:—a man has not a fair chance of doing right, when he has been so mis-led in the outset. When we stare at the mad choice people make, and it seems to us so easy to choose well, we do not take into the account how much good is involuntary on our parts, or how much evil on theirs. There are enough to lead us astray—few to lead us right:—I don’t defend, I only make excuse. This man has been taught his part on the stage of life very ill;—we have a right, as his audience, to cry, ‘ Off! off!’ but he must not be pelted, my lady. With all that can be done for us by others, or by ourselves, we know the difficulty of doing always what we ought; and, for my friend, every allowance is to be made; for I cannot find, that, till his dear daughter showed her excellent qualities, he ever had any one near him who could be of real service to him.—But, alas! past follies, madam, are mill-stones about a man’s neck—and vice lays trains for us which overtake and blow us up, miles off. Yet I need not tell you, my

lady, this man has his virtues, and his great virtues.'

Tears such as angels weep over the frailties of mortal beings, were diamonds in the eyes of Lady Agnes.—She inquired as to the state in which Mr. Grant had found Mr. Bellarmine.

'Bellarmine,' said he, 'is striving in the best way, to submit as he ought to do; he would sink if he had not that daughter to live for—but, after all he can do, I think he will die of remorse, and she will then not long survive:—he sees himself, by his errors and their inevitable consequences, the murderer of her happiness; and his was centred in hers.'

'May I not hope to see her?' said Lady Agnes: 'she has said she would, if she could, let me in this evening; but I fear she will excuse herself; and I am sure she would not, if she knew how sincerely we love and esteem her:—no one can deserve love and esteem more than she does:—I feel it hard to be excluded because I am a Byram.'

'Take my arm, my lady,' said the good Grant, 'and I will be responsible for introducing you—it will be comfort to *my* heart to commit her to yours.'

CHAPTER LXIX.

SIR Tancred Ormesden had returned to Mr. Bellarmine, and was still with him. The front drawing-room was vacant; Rosanne had retreated into the back of the house; Mr. Grant left the Lady Agnes alone, and went in quest of Rosanne. No persuasion was necessary to induce her to do what appeared his wish;—she followed him immediately,—collected but pale.

Lady Agnes approached her in a manner that seemed to acknowledge rather than confer a favour. Rosanne put out her hand;—which should speak?—The Lady Agnes could not;—she who was all fortitude for herself, was all softness for her friend—she burst into tears. Rosanne could say, ‘I am sorry to have made you wait a moment—I was beginning to think of writing to you.’

‘I can do no good here,’ thought Mr. Grant; ‘I shall be as foolish as my lady if I stay, so I’ll go to the other patient.’

Rosanne felt relieved: she drew her friend into the back room, and there, making her sit down, she knelt before her, and, burying her face in her lap, sobbed out the fulness of her over-charged heart.

Assurances of the unabated and invariable affection of her family, and kindness that included her father, were cordials to the wounded spirit of Rosanne.—Lady Agnes treated her as one who would anticipate and enter into all her just sentiments; her expressions were, ‘We could not think of suffering this to make any *dissension* between us—my father would not allow it; he would regret it for his own sake; he said so yesterday; he remarked on the infrequency of men, past the middle time of life, meeting with agreeable friendships.—He thinks highly of Mr. Bellarmine, and I am certain will continue to do so;—for Sir Tancred’s opinion is enough to make any body respect him; and, as to all that has happened, it would be very hard, when a man says himself, ‘I am ‘as much inclined to blame my past conduct as ‘you can be—I see my faults—I sincerely regret ‘them—I mean, as my conduct has already ‘proved, to atone for them:’—it would be cruel to consider such a man the same person as when he was leading a less correct life. Your father will take part against himself; and, as my father says most truly, before we blame the seamanship that carries a ship on the rocks, we should know how she was fitted out; if she had neither chart nor compass—if she was overmasted, and had too little ballast—the blame is theirs who were so negligent——’

‘This generous disposition,’ said Rosanne,

'is, my dear Lady Agnes, my greatest worldly consolation; I know how our sad affairs must, and indeed ought to terminate—your brother must not think on me.'

'My mother foresees,' said Lady Agnes, 'that he will consider himself as bound, and,' added she, smiling, 'that he will make it an excuse; my father says, 'Well, if he does, I shall not oppose it.'

'It must not, shall not, be,' said Rosanne; 'if there were any danger, I would persuade my father to take me away.—I am decided, my dear Lady Agnes; I never will marry Lord Montrylas. I shall give myself up to the care of my dear father; we will live in the country, in quiet obscurity; you will write to me, and continue to love me.—You have shown me, my dear friend, how our inclinations are to be overcome, and yours was a severer trial—I dared not love as you might.'

Bellarmino, when left alone by his friends, who went different ways to serve him, came to seek his daughter; at sight of Lady Agnes he would have withdrawn, but they would not suffer it. Lady Agnes, assuming a playful manner, said, 'Now you must come and see my papa and mamma; we are not to talk of disagreeables; we are to take one another up in a new relation—intimate, confidential friends. Mamma said, before I came out, that she should always consider you as a brother, and Rose as a

niece; and she will be something still dearer to me than a mere cousin. My dear Sir, if we cannot have all we would in this world, let us be content with what the good providence of our merciful Creator allots us:—half a loaf, remember, is better than no bread.—There is no reason for saying, because I cannot have all, I will have none. Depend on it, a time will come when we shall thank God for what we think now so terrible:—I never yet saw that worldly event which had not its peculiar good attached to it. We shall all be the better for this whipping; and my earnest wish is, that we may set an example of two families living in the most perfect cordiality, increased rather than diminished by the wicked attempts of the malicious to set them at variance. Let us disappoint that wretch Lady Lucretia, and whoever it was that set her on.’

Lady Agnes was speaking when a carriage stopped. Rosanne did not move: she said, ‘Nobody will be let in, my dear father; I left orders to say that you were indisposed, and I could not leave you. Go on, Lady Agnes.’

But Rosanne was mistaken; Lord and Lady Brentleigh were admitted, and came gently into the room: her ladyship put out her hand to Bellarmine, and, passing him, caught Rosanne to her bosom with the tenderness of a parent.

‘My dear Sir,’ said his lordship, ‘you must allow us the privilege of friends; those who

have wished to make us otherwise, must not be encouraged in their attempt. Allow me to attend you to another room,—or send these ladies away,’ added he with a smile.

The ladies retreated; and while Rosanne was receiving the kindest support that condescending friendship could offer, her father was not less benefited by the generous spirit of the earl. When they were again left alone, she felt the efficacy of their goodness. Bellarmine was still more resigned, and, though his humiliation was afflicting, it seemed to strengthen his fortitude.

A few days did much for the wounds of the father and daughter. Sir Tancred was indefatigable in his attentions; and, though Bellarmine would not quit his house, the daily visits of the Byram family were not refused.

It had been long enough matter of doubt, whether the speculations into which Bellarmine had been tempted, would not leave him utterly destitute, or rather responsible beyond his powers of liquidation, to prove the firmness with which he could submit to be beholden to his daughter for a maintenance, or even, if necessary, to labour for a subsistence: ‘And here,’ said he, ‘again I meet the goodness of a merciful Avenger; my exertions for my daughter point out to me a mode of life; she has kept me in the habit of giving instruction; and, in

some way or other, I can turn my talents to a useful purpose, if I have but my liberty.'

That any question thus painful demanded consideration, was, however, known entirely only to Mr. Grant. Delicacy prevented Sir Tancred's being in this confidence; and every feeling shielded Rosanne. Accounts of such apparent complexity, and guarded by such cunning as Mr. Gass's, seemed ill-suited to the simple mind of the good Grant; but he was a man who always knew the best way of setting about any thing; and his plain right sense was more than a match for Mr. Gass's dexterity. He soon found that, with a view to avoid a partition of his expected gains, Frederic had unintentionally exonerated Bellarmine from any responsibility under his losses; and the vigilance of Sir Tancred having brought to light facts that would have had very serious consequences, it was not difficult to make him refund, by the sale of his villa, in Surry, as much as would allow Bellarmine, added to his daughter's property, the competence necessary for a respectable mode of life. A moderate dwelling very near Mr. Grant, was to be their residence; and peace, at least external peace, was again on Rosanne's horizon. She suffered no time to be lost; she prepared, with not only fortitude, but grateful feelings, to relinquish her house and establishment, the gaiety of London, and the splendour of her delusive prospects. She visited

again at Lord Brentleigh's, lest, by tenderness to her own feelings, she might discourage those of the family; and, in ten days from the explosion of her hopes, was ready to follow Mr. Grant, who had returned home to be ready to assist her.

On the day previous to their departure, her father received from Mr. Gass this dutiful and affectionate epistle :

‘ Sunday, midnight.

‘ My dear Sir,

‘ I have, I hope, at length satisfied the enormous and, excuse me if I add, very *illiberal*, demands of your agent, Grant; and, as long as I breathe, I never wish to have again any transactions with a man so completely ignorant of the methods of business.—However, it is now over; you have deprived me of that for which I have worked hard—my cottage and my little farm; where my dog and my gun have sometimes paid me for the harassing of business, and I could still have enjoyed the society of a few friends: but so it must be; and my present prospects diminish the importance of your cruelty.—But I have to complain that I have been treated, by one of your agents, as if I had been a Jew broker; and, by the other, like a swindler; and, if I venture to assert this in the face of the world, I am threatened with the most illiberal misrepresentations,

by men who are entirely ignorant of the manner of conducting extensive mercantile speculations.—It is of no consequence now. My purpose in writing was to address myself to you as my father.

‘ I am very sensible of the injury I have done you ; but the blame must, in some measure, rest with yourself : I shall neither prevaricate nor apologize, believe me.

‘ I have sometimes, in the bitterness of my feelings, compared a man who leaves behind him a neglected illegitimate progeny, to the captain of a band of robbers ; he lets loose on the world, a race uninstructed how to repair honestly, or even to endure tamely, the misfortune of their birth, and made desperate by obloquy : at least religion should be given *us* : it may not suit the inflictors of misfortune, but even I, though certainly not disposed to adopt prejudices, can see that a little of it would be well bestowed on us who are to encounter it ; but the dog in the manger is still to be found in society, and what, full-fed and over-grown, you cannot use yourselves, you will not bestow on those who need it. If ever I take up the pen in the service of literature, I shall, like my fellow-sufferer, Savage, make my own predicament my theme, and tell the haughty revellers in vice that it would be their policy, if it is not their pleasure, to make us somewhat better than themselves. Had you, my pious

father, turned me over to any old woman, who would have taught me my duty to God and my neighbour; and then—for, if you would not care for me yourself, you ought, in honour and justice, to have supplied the want of care;—had you then given me into the hands of some other old woman of a parson, to establish me in something like principle, and then finished me at a school for trade, I might—I can see myself—I might have been a plain honest man. But my mother was, you well know, graceless as I am to say it, not a woman much to be trusted. You cared nought about me.—Had *my* poor boy lived, I would not have acted as you have done: he should have *learned* to be honest, if he was not *born* so.

‘ It should be considered, that men placed in my situation, if neglected in youth, are by nature enrolled of a desperate band. They have a common cause, but without the benefit of mutual assistance; for every one must do what he can for himself. We are a set of undisciplined outlaws, compounded of the high vices of our fathers, and the low tastes of our mothers: what is there then, except virtue and honour, that may not be expected from us? If we are not hated from our birth—if natural feelings last long enough to give us a chance in the world, we are urged on to exertion, by hearing rung in our ears the nothing we are to inherit:—we are warned that our wits must be our wealth; and,

in taking possession of this very portable patrimony, we are not to blame if we calculate on the interest it may be made to bear. On entering into life, we feel that the poorest wretch, not disowned by his parents, is what we can never hope to be—a recognised member of society:—envy consoles mortification by teaching us, that to cross the path of another is to cut one for ourselves.

‘ Once launched on the world, feeling that we have no credit to lose, no character to which we are responsible, we are either swallowed up in the vortex of dissipation, and sunk in profligacy, or else industrious to obtain the means of indulging the tastes we inherit: the passions are spurs that clear the ground at a great rate: we soon reach to the extent of our galling chain; and if it will not let us attain what is in view, break it.

‘ Such, my dear Sir, has been my origin—such my rearing—and such, I am sorry to say, are my sentiments. In despair of those great convulsions which in other countries have so befriended the hopeless, I have been driven to content myself with a little private play, the chances of which your late kindness almost makes me regret to perceive so much loss to you: but you are to blame yourself for this and for any other vexation of which you may suppose me the author. Your warm professions led me not only to hope every thing from you,

but to act on that hope; and when I had struck my circle of action, I could not contract it.

‘ With regard to any thing else of which you have reason to complain, you must likewise refer to your own conduct for a cause. It was impossible that such a woman as Lady Lucretia Sinister should take tamely the treatment she received from you when she paid a visit to your daughter.—My dear Sir, before you are again insolent, ask yourself if the party you offend can betray you; and another piece of advice let me give you—never permit a man, who has no credit to lose, to guide your conduct in a nice point of honour. What could be so absurd as your consulting me as to what was due to the Byrams?

‘ Cruelly treated as I was by your refusing me the assistance with which you had flattered me, coolly as your proud daughter replied to my request for her interest, and insulted as Lady Lucretia had been, it was almost natural that we should join forces, and enjoy the project of a mine, to blow up the projected alliance with the peerage. This is all that will be attempted against you or your daughter.—I shall soon, I trust, bid adieu to the anxieties of the commercial world, though by a very great sacrifice. Lady Lucretia honours me to-morrow with her hand; and I see nothing that I can do but accept it; she is her brother’s heir, and a very

few weeks must consign his remains to the burial-place of his ancestors.

P. S. 'Thursday. I have not been able to put pen to paper since I wrote the above. Still I am persecuted—my *birth* and—to think of the unreasonable insolence of the world!—my *character* are in my way, wherever I turn.—I became, indeed, the brother-in-law of the high and mighty duke, and he did me all the service I thought I could ask of him, in withdrawing himself from this troublesome state of mortal existence last night; but since his sister's marriage, he has had time and strength to make a new will, which it would be throwing away money to dispute. He has left her nothing, and my name is used as his justification. Lady Lucretia has deceived me; she was my guarantee against such an accident, and you cannot wonder that I resent it; though, accustomed to the chances of the world, I take the thing more coolly than a novice would.—We are parted, and parted must remain. She had but 200*l.* a year, and of this I leave her half—she has therefore no right to complain: on the other I must raise money. I am preparing to embark for the southern hemisphere, where I still hope my talent for business may serve me: it is not my *intention* to be a rogue, though it seems my *fate* to be an outlaw.

' Yours very much,

' F. G.'

The contents of this letter made no alteration in circumstances or in views: all that Mr. Gass could say of himself only tended to make any one connected with him more desirous to break the connexion.

Bellarmino had been persuaded to dine at Lord Brentleigh's on the day previous to his quitting London; and thither, while the party were waiting the arrival of Sir Tancred, the letter followed him. Rosanne, now always suspicious, interposed to stop it. Her father took it from her, and retired to a window to read it, but allowed her to look over him. She passed over much, and had just got possession of the facts in the postscript, when Sir Tancred came in, apologizing for having made Lady Brentleigh wait, and pleading, in general terms, business. He said little during dinner, and little was said by any one, till the servants were withdrawn, when Rosanne impatiently communicated the retributive justice which Mr. Gass and his bride had brought on themselves. 'I do not,' said she, 'think it any virtue to dissemble. I rejoice, with all my heart, in their misfortune; and the utmost charity I can extend, is the wish that it may convince them, that, in attempting to hurt others, they will always hurt themselves—perhaps that may lead them to a sense of their conduct. My dear father, let us only wait patiently, and you will see, as David did, the

reward of such baseness, and discern the hand of the Almighty.'

'But surely,' said Sir Tancred, 'you will have *some* compassion for my poor cousin, Lady Lucretia Gass—do not you think the duke's heir ought to do something for her?'

'No,' said Rosanne; 'I cannot see that she had a claim on any one which she has not forfeited. I beg your pardon, but I have no compassion. She cannot starve; and, though I would help her in want, she must be in want before I would help her.'

'Well! would you have the duke's heir assist her husband?'

'O no, no!' said Bellarmine: 'on my experience I say, no. Frederic shall not be reduced to beggary, if I can avert it: this will be a point of *duty* with me, but beyond it, I should think it unsafe to go.'

'I differ from you,' replied Sir Tancred: 'I think the man who thus unexpectedly must come into such immense property—and who, for I know him well, is very little deserving of it,—must, in conscience, settle five hundred a year on the poor woman for her separate use, give five thousand pounds to her husband, on condition of his quitting the kingdom for ever; and, if he has any honour, he will, where it will evidently be well used, repair what injury Gass's speculations may have done to those who thought too well of him.'

The earl was silent out of delicacy; it was a question in which he could not interfere. Lady Brentleigh was silent from the habit of obeying her husband.—Bellarmine gave his firm veto—Rosanne her warm negative. — Lady Agnes smiled.

‘ I have a strong suspicion,’ said she, fixing her eyes on Sir Tancred with a look indescribable to those who knew her not—it united exultation, anxiety, conviction, doubt, and mirth.

‘ You are right, Lady Agnes,’ said Sir Tancred gaily: ‘ I knew *you* would detect me.—I am sorry that I am not indebted to a better motive; but certainly a very short will has given me every thing that poor Lady Lucretia has forfeited; and, with the blessing of God, it shall be used as it ought to be.’

Involuntarily every one rose, and went up to Sir Tancred; but no one except Lady Agnes had the free power of speech.

‘ Nay,’ said Sir Tancred, giving his hand to every one—‘ let me not be vain. The words of the bequest are very little gratifying. I am described as the only one of his grace’s relations whom he had not cause to hate.’

‘ Might I be allowed to withdraw with my daughter?’ said Bellarmine: ‘ my joy is too much for me.’

‘ No, no, my dear Sir,’ said Sir Tancred, taking him aside;—‘ you must not quit us. Consider, this is a blessing indeed to *me*, but it

is doubly a blessing at this time, and when it can be turned to a good purpose. I am better aware than you suppose, of the delicate concealment you have practised, to prevent my feeling your generosity to me injustice towards yourself; and had I not been at hand to act as occasion might require, I could not have submitted to it. You must allow me, at least, to see what is to be done with this bridegroom and his bride: I have offered them terms, and have given them only a time, which is nearly expired, to accept them.'

Still Bellarmine begged to retire: he was indulged, and Rosanne attended him to the library. She allowed him to remain silent and in quiet, well knowing that an oppressed mind is only the more oppressed by officious solicitude. Her father's first power of speech repaid her care. 'How vain,' said he, 'is it to suppose we can understand the system of Providence!—how presumptuous to set bounds to possibility! Could I have projected what I have seen accomplished? Should I not have treated as visionary any such prediction? Before I had the will to ask it, I have experienced mercy; and before I could prove my disposition to submit, those who have injured me have been punished!—O my Rose! but for this one obstacle, you might now be happy indeed! we should have every thing to hope—nothing to fear, and the delight of seeing those most closely connected with us

happy. I foresee Sir Tancred will now marry Lady Agnes, and we should all be one family. I cannot quite give up my hope in Lord Mont-rylas's honour—here are so many circumstances that draw us together.'

'Do not let us build castles, dear father,' said Rosanne: 'we shall have happiness enough in seeing others happy, and our minds will never want employment, if we do but compare the course of things in this world with the order impressed on them by its Creator. Forgive me; but, in such a case as this, I cannot be beholden to a sense of honour.'

Sir Tancred interrupted a conversation which Rosanne began to fear indicated a disposition still too sanguine—still clinging to the world. 'Here,' said he as he entered, 'here are two brilliant epistles.' The one was from the Lady Lucretia, sneaking, grovelling, returning thanks like a mendicant for the bounty extended to her,—almost unsaying what she had said, written, and subscribed of Mr. and Mrs. Bellarmine, laying all the blame on the deceased wife, in hopes of paying court to the surviving husband, and complying with some very supposable requisitions of Sir Tancred, by the most humble confession of her malice, and the meanest entreaty for forgiveness. The only genuine sentiment, perhaps, was that with which her ladyship concluded—her execration of her own folly in marrying, and of the man whom she had so foolishly

married. The other epistle was more creditable. Mr. Frederic Gass accepted thankfully the generosity which he confessed himself little to deserve: he would quit the kingdom gladly, and convince Sir Tancred, by his future conduct, that neither his munificence nor his advice was thrown away: he considered himself as in some measure indebted for this bounty to the interest Mr. Bellarmine's situation had called forth, therefore he begged his most humble acknowledgments might be offered to him, with the sincerest repentance of the rash revenge he had taken for supposed affronts, and his very solemn promise that no accounts of him should ever reach him that would not testify his amended conduct.

CHAPTER LXX.

IT was a bitter parting that separated Rosanne from the Byram family, in which now she did not doubt she was to include Sir Tancred Ormesden; and heavy, though the month was May, was that journey back, which, in the former instance, had been so gay, so flattering. The day was dreary—the roads were such as made the way tedious—the hills seemed always against them, and but for the love of Mr. Grant, and the recollection of the peace he diffused round him, she would have felt herself an exile from one place without attraction to another.

Her father's situation resembled that of an involuntary but rash homicide, conveying the corpse that he had deprived of life: he could speak only of his repentance, and his unavailing wish to atone for his error. This was now added misery—it kept recollection awake, or it awoke it whenever it slumbered.

At length they reached Mr. Grant's, and Rosanne's looks said, ' 'Tis the house indeed, but whither has flown the dove of peace?' Yet when they stopped, and she saw her dear friend at his threshold, her heart said, ' Yes, peace will return—that peace which the world cannot

give—that peace which the world cannot take away.’

‘ I intended,’ said Mr. Grant, when he sat down between his newly arrived guests, with thankfulness that those so much the objects of his anxiety were again under his protection— ‘ I intended to have been quite alone to receive you; but poor Arthur Lynden came last night to give me a sad account of his matrimonial comforts: he and his wife had, I knew, soon disagreed: the woman had the folly and presumption to expect to be better treated for the infamy of being such a countess; and my young gentleman could not see the reasonableness of her claim; so of course they quarrelled, and of course home became disagreeable, and every attraction away from it, a temptation: they have been in London and at Bath since I heard of them; and now this silly creature, who absolutely was seduced out of her natural inanity by hearing that if she would be gay she might have a title, has sacrificed her life to dissipation:— she died last week, and Arthur is come to his old quarters: the poor fellow is shocked extremely, and may, for a few weeks, fancy himself very unhappy; but in the end he will find his loss a great gain; and the fortune his wife has left, will be of much more use to him than she could ever be.’

Rosanne, wearied and oppressed, was little

able to bear the addition which the sight, even of a stranger's sorrow, must prove; but for Arthur's ingenuous nature and his affectionate heart, which she knew, under good treatment, would have paid large interest for any thing bestowed on it, she felt more than for a stranger. Wishing to avoid the meeting, she begged to retire for the night, before Arthur, who had dined at his father-in-law's, came in: she was indulged; and when left in her chamber, which before, even compared with Chateau-Vicq, had, in her eyes, superior charms, she could not but be sensible, that, however resigned we may be to the rough roads of this world, the bruises of a fall from a lofty precipice will make us remember the height from which we fell.

Perhaps Rosanne would have behaved better, had any specific been yet discovered and administered, by which the action of mind on body may be prevented; but she had now resigned part of her cares for her father to Mr. Grant, and, the counteracting stimulus in any degree removed, she felt to what her exertions had reduced her. Her confident boasting had served its purpose; but it was at an end, when, after a disturbed night, she found it impossible to rise, though she could not allege any thing but general inability as a reason.

Again the good Grant's incomparable plain sense aided all around him: he sent Bellarmine into his library—he rode out with Arthur Lyn-

den;—he directed even the medical treatment of Rosanne:—light diet—febrifuges—air—new interests—agreeable images—resignation to Infinite Wisdom—hope in Infinite Mercy—reliance on the means ordained for infinite happiness—were his prescriptions; and under them she gradually amended, and had the consolation of seeing her father all she could have hoped, from the kind and judicious treatment he had, as well as herself, experienced.

Arthur Lynden had not been wanting in the most affectionate services to Bellarmine; he knew nothing but that Rosanne had been ill, and, therefore, concluded that her father must be afflicted; and, when she appeared amongst them, at the end of a fortnight, he forgot all his own recent grief in kind assiduities to her.—It was some amusement to the party, who were too much occupied with a sameness of ideas, to observe on the artificial character Arthur was striving to gain, in order, evidently, to recommend himself; he was ten years older, in his own imagination, for six months' experience. He had been a married man, and was almost ludicrously a widower. 'I can never think,' said Mr. Grant, 'of Arthur, as having buried a wife, without bringing to my imagination the grimace that must have attended the episcopal ceremonies of the boy-bishop, in the church of Salisbury, before the Reformation; but yet I would not discourage him from any deport-

ment that can give even one coat of paint to his absorbing heart, and help to keep out a little of the weather it must meet with.' This was the farthest that the delicate mirth of Mr. Grant would go; to have laughed at what he soon discovered, Arthur's hopes of re-instating himself in Rosanne's attention, to which he saw no obstacle but his own imperfections, would, as she was circumstanced, have been impossible to a mind so alive to propriety.

The Byram family had omitted nothing that could keep affections warm and intercourse open, during the period of inevitable suspense; and it was ended with very little more delay than that for which they had calculated. Sir Tancred Ormesden made himself the bearer of Lord Montrylas's letters, and of those from the family; and the expression of his countenance, as he entered the parsonage-house, said, 'Be happy!'

Rosanne was alone when this zealous messenger arrived; the gentlemen received him; and Mr. Grant brought to her the packet; he opened it for her, and, save and except Lord Montrylas's letter to her, perused its contents with her. Lord Montrylas had written in a situation very little favourable to reflection, but yet what he said to his father appeared the result of thought; as it expressed no surprise, no shock, on the receipt of the very painful details forwarded to him, there was reason to suspect that

this was a letter calculated for Rosanne's perusal.—He began with thanking the earl for his paternal care, and proceeded to argue on the justifiable grounds on which alliances, where there were any objectionable circumstances, were avoided; he considered them as all resolvable into the fear of hereditary failing; against this he was so secure, that he could have no apprehension; and, as Mr. Bellarmine's error appeared quite as much matter of repentance to himself as of regret to his friends, he could not hesitate.—Whatever might be attempted by envy, hatred, or malice, he held himself now too deeply pledged to have any right of retracting; and he confessed himself too much attached to the only woman he could ever love, to wish it in his power. He was very much indebted to his lordship for remitting the matter to his decision; it was consistent with the kindness hitherto extended to him; and he flattered himself, if he might judge from the language of his communication, that he met his wishes in indulging his own, and in defeating the wicked designs of an artful woman. His greatest vexation was the probability of his being detained longer than he had expected; but, in the hope that Miss Bellarmine was very much his sister's companion, he must rest satisfied in fulfilling the claims his country had on him.

His lordship's letter to Rosanne noticed not any question; it repeated, in the very tenderest

expressions, the many assurances she had received of invariable love; and, in the gayest manner, bade her look forward to the time when he should allow no one to share his solitude for her happiness. It called to mind the bright days of their Southampton acquaintance. It said all that could be said to convince her that no impression had been made on his mind.

Lord Brentleigh wrote politely and kindly; he had referred to his son's decision—his son had decided; the respective situation of the families was, therefore, re-established.

The countess's few lines were general expressions of affection, and a very cordial invitation. Lady Agnes filled her sheet with the kindest hopes of restored tranquillity, and enforced her mother's earnest wish that their dear Rosanne would, by joining them in Wiltshire, whither they were now going, accelerate her own restoration and add to their pleasure.

Sir Tancred had arrived at noon, and Mr. Grant, who better knew than any one what passed in Rosanne's mind, amused him and took Arthur Lynden out of the way, that she might have an opportunity of conversing with her father.—'Yet what,' he asked himself, 'had he to hope but the termination of her anxious suspense?—He was sensible of her still-remaining objections; he never could doubt the sincerity of what Rosanne said; she was not light-mind-

ed ; she was not given to change ; she had invariably said, when at liberty to express her sentiments, without giving pain to her father, that, even should Lord Montrylas kindly decide in her favour, and in the way that she could best accept, she never could be happy ; she should always consider herself as contemned by his relations : she should always fear, if she saw the least cloud on Lord Brentleigh's brow, that she occasioned it : every allusion that had the smallest reference to persons erring as her parents had erred, would wound her : she should feel to herself living on sufferance ; and, should any pique or ill-humour, any election-animosity, such as she had witnessed once since she came to England, where every thing derogatory to the character of the candidates had been called up from oblivion, subject Lord Montrylas to hear that his wife's parents were persons of reproachable morals, no rank, no affluence, not even Lord Montrylas's tenderest affection, could restore her peace.'

Against these weighty arguments, Mr. Grant, who saw no comfort for either family, unless the marriage took place, had found nothing to oppose but her father's earnest wishes, and the consideration that she, as well as Lord Montrylas, had gone too far to recede. When so much had been done by the family to facilitate her happiness, they would have an equal right

to complain of her unwillingness to perform her part of the contract, as of her entering into the family.

Bellarmino, at the first moment, impatiently sought his daughter, and, with a temperature of joy and gratitude, which no one could reprehend, congratulated her and himself on what he called his unmerited escape from the horror of destroying her happiness.—He gave her every assurance that the completion of his wishes, so far from relaxing his care to deserve the mercy he had experienced, would only excite him still more to show himself not wholly unworthy of it: ‘ he should give himself up to the study of the Scriptures, and, in connexion with them, should direct all his remaining activity to the service of his fellow-creatures. He could not expect, however kind Lord Brentleigh and the ladies had been in their concern for him, that they could be to him what they would be towards a more deserving man; he should, therefore, remain at a proper distance, but always ready to offer to her every thing that could show his high sense of her worth as his daughter, and convince her that no engagement which she could form, lessened his tender regard for her.’

Rosanne hoped her acknowledgment of his goodness would, for the present, hide from him the very little alteration Sir Tancred’s mission had made in the state of her mind; and her

father was too sanguine to be easily rendered suspicious. She joined the gentlemen, in the garden before dinner, and meant that Sir Tancred should see only her sense of his friendly zeal, in her countenance; but Rosanne, who to those who lived with her, appeared recovered, seemed, to him, declining; he was shocked at the expression of her features: he saw that it was not in the power of the Byram family to restore her happiness.—‘I am sure,’ said he to himself, ‘she feels indulged at too great an expense: her sense of right for others is superior to any regard for her own interest; and I can tell the whole train of thought in her correct mind.’

By pleading a commission to view an estate in the neighbourhood for a friend, which would furnish occupation for the next day, he gave her time to write at leisure; and she availed herself of the opportunity to state every possible objection to the consideration bestowed on her: she was advocate against herself; and she had the satisfaction of thinking that nothing which she had not anticipated, could ever wound the family. Sir Tancred was the bearer of her letters; and, when he took them from her hand, he thought her still farther from health and happiness.

Hitherto Bellarmine and his daughter had been the guests of Mr. Grant; but now they

again talked of separating.—It was so little agreeable to either party, that a compromise was made, and a very agreeable employment was struck out for Bellarmine, by the proposal of adding to the parsonage-house for the accommodation of its present inhabitants, and with a view to Bellarmine's continuing to reside with Mr. Grant. Arthur Lynden had declared that he would never seek another home; and the resolution on which this declaration was founded, lasted while he had hopes that Miss Bellarmine had the same intention; but, beginning to suspect that there were other views for her, and not daring, at present, to bring forward his own wishes, he joined a provincial corps to which he belonged, and got rid of his black coat for the summer months.

The next letter from Lady Agnes contained a still more urgent invitation to Mr. and Miss Bellarmine; and Rosanne, to the joy of those most painfully anxious for her, seemed disposed to accept it. Her father begged leave to decline this favour; the trouble of superintending workmen must fall on Mr. Grant if he left him now; and he felt unequal to any society but that of his good friend, from whom he should never wish any thing to separate him.

Rosanne acquiesced; and, with only her maid, and a servant on horseback, set out for London, where she knew she should, on an appointed

day, find Lady Agnes and her youngest brother, and might with them travel into Wiltshire.

It was her first departure from her father; but she was too well content with the hands in which she left him, to feel this an increase of distress. The persons to whom she was going, were her dear friends, and she had a purpose to answer: her *writing* had produced no conviction—she would then *say* all that suggested itself to her; and, to have opportunity for doing this, it was almost necessary that her father should not be with her.

‘I did not think,’ said Rosanne to herself, as she proceeded in a day neither bright nor gloomy, ‘that there could be a state of mind remaining, in which I could travel this road, equally at a distance from the ecstasy in which I first became acquainted with it, the flattering hope which attended me when I went to London, and the sad dejection in which I returned from it;—but now, without joy, without hope, and, thank God, without sorrow, I travel in a sullen sort of mood, that has no character—I wish I could call it submission; but I fear it is only apathy.’

Even in entering Lord Brentleigh’s house, there was too much of counteraction to leave any vivid feelings in her mind: but if she was not pleased, she was thankful, and if she was not happy, she was far from murmuring. Lady Agnes and her brother received her with sen-

timents of cordiality that could not be questioned: Sir Tancred visited them in the evening, and had a private conference with Lady Agnes: some contingent arrangement was made for his coming into Wiltshire; and that his movements were interesting to Lady Agnes, Belarmine's prediction had directed Rosanne's attention to perceive.

The supposition was still farther confirmed by her ladyship, when, taking advantage of her brother's absence, after Sir Tancred had left them, she began to speak highly in his praise: 'I rejoice doubly, my dearest Rosanne,' said she, 'in the wealth that has fallen to him, because he is not only exemplary in goodness, but has made the best use of adversity, by learning how to soften it to others: the friend for whom he pretended to view the estate to which the advowson of your good Mr. Grant's living belongs, is himself: he to-morrow completes the business; and I assure you one of his principal inducements is to watch over the comfort of your father and his excellent friend; he is so afraid they should have a disagreeable 'squire of the parish, that he would have bought it, even could he *not* have made it convenient to live there; but I am sure you will rejoice with me in his determination to put the house into the best condition, and to reside in it: you will therefore be certain of your father's having all the attention a son could pay him; and you may be satisfied,

that, in choosing a wife, Sir Tancred will present a comfort to your father.'

Why did not Rosanne at this moment ask Lady Agnes whether she really was a stranger to the lady Sir Tancred would marry?—Perhaps she did not herself know why she was thus deficient—it might be delicacy—it might be awe: for Rosanne had a sufficient portion of the one, and was very susceptible of the other: be her motive what it might, she was correct in the forbearance.

CHAPTER LXXI.

A LONG summer-day brought Rosanne and her companions to the end of their journey, during which, all the affectionate kindness of the incomparable Lady Agnes, which, without pledging her for any thing, omitted nothing that Rosanne's peculiar situation demanded, was but sufficient to atone for what she discovered, or thought she discovered, in Mr. Byram. She would have found it difficult to specify that which, in his very considerate attention to her, gave her pain; but had she been called to characterize it all together, she would have said that it was the honourable and reverend sentiment of an earl's son, educated for the church, and who felt that his endeavours to stop the contagion of vice would be impeded, if delicate regards to the failings of his own family were to interpose between him and his duty.

Arrived at Lord Brentleigh's seat, the reception given to Miss Bellarmine would have flattered any one whom imagined demerit had not rendered sharp-sighted; but she detected the kind endeavour to supply from a sense of right, and the feeling of a generous sympathy, that which was deficient in spontaneous volition. She read on every thing done for her

gratification, the inscription, 'To others, not to ourselves,' and every kindness she received was a fresh dagger: she seemed fed from the vitals of her friends; and she saw them lacerate their own bosoms, to save her from wounds.

The earl had not foreseen the difficulty of acquiescing in that liberty he had allowed Lord Montrylas. When the alternative lay between abating his high pretensions, and marring the happiness of persons who were the depositaries of that of his son, he had thought the sacrifice demanded was within his power; but when the choice was made, the costliness of the renunciation was matter of cool calculation, and he considered himself as forfeiting the highest privilege he could appreciate, the right of attaching unsullied honour to a long descent. Lady Brentleigh's deportment seemed to say, 'Let us make the best of that which we cannot alter;' and Lady Agnes, 'O! that I could bear all uneasinesses for all whom I love.'

The report of an expected first visit from Lady Ormesden and her daughters confirmed Rosanne in her opinion of Sir Tancred's situation with the family, and urged her, if she meant to be ingenuous, to lose no time. Considering the earl as the person to whom she might address herself with the least danger of future self-reproach, she requested Lady Agnes, on the day next but one to that of her arrival, to obtain an audience for her. She was obliged

in some measure to reveal the use which she meant to make of it, and the confession drew out all that her ladyship had left unsaid : but Rosanne was firm, and at the appointed hour, in perfect self-possession, she introduced herself to Lord Brentleigh in his library.

He received her with cordial politeness—he heard her with attention ; he encouraged her without interrupting her : he gave her fortitude to proceed, by the conviction which seemed to attend what she urged ; and when she ended, making her physical power to answer to her own moral intention, his first regard, he stated to her every present, future, and contingent advantage of that which she seemed willing to sacrifice, and exhorted her to weigh well that protection which his family would be happy to offer her against the privations to which the course of nature and the lapse of time would subject her, before she attempted to bring him over to her opinions.

She was not prepared to answer every thing that his lordship could adduce to acquit him to himself, or to spare her : he found a palliation for every inconvenience, a defence against malice, a mean of averting situations that would provoke spleen : if he could not in honour be the advocate of general practice, he was disposed to admit the plea of individual exceptions ; and when the amicable contention

was ended, it seemed only to have removed the obstacle to that which she was endeavouring to represent as impracticable. 'I would yield to your arguments, my dear Miss Bellarmine,' said his lordship, as he attended her to the door of the library, 'if I did not listen to an eloquence far superior to that even of your language; but there is a tongue in female virtue, which speaks still more sweetly than your voice.—I have always wished that my son might marry one of the best young women in the world; and I perceive that I must forego my wish if I listened to your persuasions.'—Had Rosanne not been convinced that what she said was founded in reason, she might now have been more than satisfied.—What she had urged seemed to have been very favourably reported: she saw an increase of kindness in every one.

Very pleasant letters from her father and Mr. Grant the next day, contributed to her consolation; and a request from the latter to the earl to bestow a little good advice on Captain Lynden, who was quartered in the town near his park, brought Arthur as Mr. Byram's guest at dinner, just in time to meet Lady and the Misses Ormesden.

In the present state of Rosanne's mind, Arthur would have been a nuisance, alone and at liberty.—The ladies were relief in themselves, and, as they might occupy his attention, doubly welcome. Rosanne had curiosity to see them,

and she could not but feel well disposed towards the relations of any one to whose friendship she was as much indebted as to that of Sir Tancred.

Lady Ormesden had all the remains of elegant beauty chastened by affliction: her daughters were blooming into superior loveliness,—Miss Ormesden resembled a lily whose stem had needed a stronger soil for the support of a luxuriant flower: her sister seemed a violet content with the ground.

Lady Ormesden had removed from the place of her concealment, for it was more than retirement, to occupy a house in Berkshire, which she had heretofore made profitable by letting it; but not yet settled in her new abode, she had made this visit of gratitude her daughters' first introduction, and they afforded the novel spectacle of two girls of family, visiting in the house of persons of the first rank, before they had seen so much of the world as a country-town would afford. Excepting from books, or the franked letters of their mother's few friends, they knew not that society existed other than they had seen it in a very sequestered village, in which they visited no one, because there was no one to visit: they had never slept out of their mother's room since their first remembrance, because their mother never could afford a separate apartment: they had never dined at any table but hers: of plays, operas,

balls, concerts, and the other appendages of a metropolis, they had ideas obtained like those of blind persons; and in the common pursuits of young women in their situation of life, they were as uninterested as if they had been reared with 'the sons and daughters of Abyssinian royalty,' in the happy valley.

With these circumstances of difference from the rest of the world, which she was to find in Miss Ormesden and her sister, Rosanne was intrusted; and the resemblance which their seclusion seemed to bear to that of her early life, allowing for the dissimilarity of pecuniary detail, was felt by her as an attaching identity.

The ladies arrived two hours before dinner; and Miss Ormesden and her sister being shown to their apartment, to refresh themselves after a dusty journey, Lady Ormesden lingered to bespeak the allowance and patience they would, she feared, need. She was pleased to learn that the situation of public affairs in France had subjected Miss Bellarmine almost to the same disadvantage; and to facilitate the method of treating her 'young savages,' as she called them, she explained the very limited plan on which she had formed their manners: 'I have given them,' said she, 'only three rules of behaviour: I have taught them to be humble, to be observing, and to be useful; and as a general rule of reference, where they might be in doubt, I have recommended them to put themselves, in imagi-

nation, in the place of the person to whom their behaviour might address itself, and then to judge what would appear most right to themselves. 'All this, little as it is,' said Lady Ormesden, 'I have, however, inculcated from the best sources of instruction; I have literally taught them manners from the Scriptures—how far I have been right, I am sorry to say, the experiment of to-day will show.—Your ladyship will not be astonished at any thing they may do:—they have conditioned with me to hear of their faults before we part for the night; and when these are, as I fear they will be, glaring, any assistance in correcting them, I shall esteem as an exertion of as kind guardianship to my girls as your lordship's generosity was to my son.'

Arthur Lynden was not admitted into this confidence: he was in the saloon when the ladies came from their toilette; and that the beauty of Miss Helen Ormesden struck him, was instantly evident to Rosanne, who knew Arthur's tindery heart. Dinner was served, and he was very much embarrassed between the honour of Lady Brentleigh's right hand, and his manœuvring to sit near Helen—but fate did not stand his friend: he was compelled to take up with the honour and his old acquaintance Rosanne; and her thoughts were diverted from their less pleasant channel, by the difficulty he found in being content.

Miss Ormesden, Rosanne knew, from Sir

Tancred's report, to be twenty years of age; and his affectionate expressions testified to some degree of worth, though delicacy in referring to the circumstances which had formed an early trial for her, would not permit him to be particular in describing her merits: but what he had said had given her no expectation of that which she found. 'Much as I dislike pretensions to develop character by the information of features,' thought Rosanne, 'I should say of this young woman, judging by her countenance, that hers is a great mind, oppressed by an early acquaintance with affliction. O!' thought she, 'how comforted I am that my dear father is not here! it would distress him to know what those women are who have suffered even partially by him.'

Dinner passed without the least impropriety betrayed on the part of the young ladies—they were quiet and collected; and if their want of knowledge of the world was shown by any thing, it could be only by a transient blush when they began to speak: if there was any particular reference to the approval of the mother, it manifested itself rather in cautiousness not to look at her, than in any awkward search for her directions:—the elder seemed to treat her with respectful consideration—the younger seemed to feel no shame like that of making her ashamed of her.

Arthur Lynden was not in the best mood for

showing to advantage the powers of Miss Ormesden;—engrossed by her sister's attractions, he felt every thing said by the elder, an interruption; while Mr. Byram, extremely charmed by Miss Ormesden, listened with the utmost attention if she spoke. There was a tremulousness in her voice, which made her continuing to speak a favour, and called for encouragement to her under an exertion that might be painful; but once warmed into interest, she was too perfect in what she said, to be put out, and too humble to be disconcerted. Rosanne, hitherto the darling of the Byram family, felt herself eclipsed: she had no 'pretensions that could rival Miss Ormesden—for her beauty was now clouded by an anxious mind; and the natural endowments of Honoria Ormesden were such as acquirements could not equal. But Rosanne felt no jealousy—she could love Honoria; and situated as she was, her estimation for such superiorities with the Byram family, was not a point of which she felt particularly tenacious.

Encouraged by the very kind condescension of those to whom they were guests, the young ladies, by the close of dinner, had obtained the valour necessary to something beyond mere answering; and Miss Ormesden had made a remark to Rosanne, on the heraldic engraving on a piece of plate near her. Lord Brentleigh, seeming to understand that he was not to slight

a polite deference for what might be supposed an aristocratic taste, entered into the conversation, and fostering with benignity the young lady's modestly-presented ideas, he led her on till even Arthur listened, and intending to join in her sentiments, began to commend the multiplied record of heraldic bearings. 'I prefer,' said she, 'the simplicity of distinction to its complexity:—the Byram cross, though many families bear the same device, is a noble recognition of interest in a common cause—it says, 'I will rather be one of an illustrious many, 'than myself conspicuous and alone.' Our foolish elm-trees say nothing to my understanding, but that they must rob the space of land they occupy.'

'You do not, then, like canting arms, as the heralds call such bearings?' said his lordship.

'I did not know they were so called,' said she, 'but I dislike all ill-placed wit; and this approaches very near it.'

'Yes,' said Lady Agnes, 'too near it.—I confess I should not have liked a ram held up for sale, for the charge of my lozenge.'

'What,' said Mr. Byram, 'then, Miss Ormesden, do you think of quibbling mottos?'

She shook her head.

'O!' said Lady Ormesden, 'Honorina has her own system of mottos:—explain it, my dear—you are speaking to indulgent auditors.'

After a moment's hesitation, she said, 'I dare

say what I proposed is not practicable, or it would have been thought on long before—the adventure cannot have been left for *me* to accomplish,’ added she, smiling. ‘What I said to my mother was, that I wished mottos were sentiments of virtue and acrostics of family-names, because they would then assist in the knowledge of family: they would make that which is intended to inform, more informing; and, if well chosen, they would impress a precept, up to the spirit of which children might be brought to act. Now, from our motto, ‘*Attendez moi sous l’orme*,’ I had hoped to find that some patriotic heroes of old had assembled under the shade of an elm-tree, to consult on the restoration of a royal family, and the deliverance of a people from the bondage of an usurper; but the dictionary says, that ‘*Attendre sous l’orme*’ means ‘to wait till doomsday;’ and that is a day which, in this sense, should not be familiarized to our ideas.’

‘Would it be troubling you too much,’ said the earl, ‘to ask you to give me a specimen of your motto-system?’

‘O no, my lord,’ said Honoria; ‘I will recollect a few that occurred to me.’

Her examples were ingenious and elegant:—Helen reminded her of some which did not occur to her.

‘I hope,’ said the earl, ‘you have not left us without our share in your scheme.’

‘ Were I to say the truth,’ she replied, ‘ I never turned my invention yet to your lordship’s name :—it does not,’ said she, smiling, ‘ address itself to my *imagination* ; but I could presently think on something that would make a precept : ‘ Be ye ready at midnight,’ would be understood by those conversant with the Gospels. My brother,’ she concluded, with a look that made his lordship take out his handkerchief, ‘ could, I am convinced, improve on my poor idea.’

Lady Brentleigh interposed the refreshment of a little ice for Miss Ormesden. Helen obeyed Lady Agnes by explaining a process in some manufacture which happened to have come within her knowledge.

The ladies quitted the table ; and passing through the house to a beautiful lawn at the back of it, which the sloping rays of the sun, now little more than an hour’s journey above the horizon, made temperate—they divided : Lady Agnes, as if to give the liberty which she knew would be desirable, took Honoria and Helen with her : Lady Brentleigh and Rosanne remained with Lady Ormesden.

‘ How happy you are, my dear Lady Ormesden,’ said the countess, ‘ in two such daughters ! —your savages are the best bred savages I ever met with ; and I really should say, if I had not a daughter and a daughter’s friend, that I never yet saw two young women nearly approaching to them.’

‘ I believe,’ said Lady Ormesden, ‘ they are as good as any other system of education would have made them—whether keeping them ignorant of the world is a fair way of fitting them for it, I have yet to learn—but this praise I must take to myself—I have made their first knowledge of society pleasant. The kind reception given them to-day, will have an effect on them through life : they will not feel discouragement, when they recollect how they have been received by those for whom they have the highest deference, and to whom they are so indebted.’

The sympathy which Rosanne felt in the only degree of seclusion she could ever compare with her own, made her curious as to the manner in which these girls had been reared. She took off all reserve from their parent, by adverting, herself, to the regret which her father would feel on seeing them ; and she learnt that Sir Tancred’s education had been made that of his sisters—that his vacations had been spent in instructing them—that Lady Ormesden’s time and elegant accomplishments had been wholly bestowed in atoning for the disadvantages under which they lived,—and that, without any other instructors than their mother and their brother, guided by the principles of religion, and those important sub-divisions of it, moral virtue, honour, delicacy,—profiting by a select library, which she had increased her privations to

retain, and never suffering a moment to pass unused, Honoria and Helen had been made what they had shown themselves. 'I believe,' said Lady Ormesden, 'I escape some anxieties which mothers in general must experience. I could venture to trust them in many trying situations; and,' added she, turning aside, 'I hope I could commit them to the mercy of their Creator. For the encouragement of others,' said she, in a firmer tone, 'I make no scruple of saying that I have had some trouble—intellects the bounty of Providence gave them; but I do not think either of my girls near as faultless by nature as their brother: he has all their ability;—and I never had the least difficulty but to check the overflowing of his generous heart. Now Honoria was born proud, and Helen peevish; and the vestiges of their natural dispositions will perhaps, as long as they live, mark their characters; but this difference will, I believe, appear now very safely: Honoria will lead when courage will secure a benefit to another: Helen will be assiduous where she can be useful. Honoria will say, 'Be happy'—Helen will say, 'You shall be happy if I can make you so.' I am not,' said Lady Ormesden, 'in the least degree apprehensive for their exposure to the vexations of life—they have seen sorrow—they know how to be content: their list of real calamities is very short, and their sense of gratitude very strong: they know the tenure of

this world's inheritance—they are thoroughly aware of that which is to succeed it; and the sober thankfulness with which they have borne this great reverse of our fortunes, which, my dear Miss Bellarmine, your noble-minded father began, convinces me that I may trust them, even in prosperity. I shall, by very gentle degrees, now show them ‘the world,’ but not ‘to the world:’ in the spring they shall be in London; and if the protection extended to them within these few hours, may be continued to them, I shall be as tranquil as, thank God, I have been in watching their vegetative life.’

Such a day as this seemed to hush the cares that disturbed Rosanne. Arthur Lynden took his leave, consoled for quitting Helen by a general invitation from Lord Brentleigh; and Rosanne rejoiced that, from so agreeable a party, he was the only subtraction.

CHAPTER LXXII.

FROM hours, which, unlike some of their recent predecessors, brought more of antidote than bane, Rosanne was, in two days, recalled to those of painful recollection, by an invitation to write, with the rest of the family, to Lord Montrylas. She had *suspended*, not *altered*, her sentiments; therefore, whatever she wrote, must be a repetition of those arguments which she had heretofore adduced; and with an imagination wearied by repeated discussions, and a mind harassed by presenting to it all possible modes of suffering, under all lights, she sate down in tears, to advise that which was to separate her from persons every day more claiming her love and esteem. The employment of all of the house of Byram had been at the same time the same; and when they met at dinner, the traces of it were on their countenances, and every one seemed, with equal willingness, to address the Ormesdens in preference to those concerned in their thoughts.

It was renewed grief to Rosanne to observe this; yet where was she to give vent to her feelings? Lord and Lady Brentleigh appeared to have formed their mode of thinking and acting, and to repel, on system, all her endeavours to

be disinterested. Lady Agnes soothed her, and discouraged all mention of that which would, she trusted, arrange itself; but to Mr. Byram she had yet made no application, and perceiving him at times lost in thought, and particularly shy of her on the day of writing, she determined to be explicit with him, and at least to preserve his esteem by revealing the oppression of her mind. For this purpose, she contrived to cross him the following morning in his early walk, and to show him the letter she had written to Lord Montrylas, which contained every dissuasive she could use, but concluded, as it was right it should, with the most perfect recognition of the obligation by which she was bound, and a willing submission to that mode of proceeding which, on consideration, his lordship thought the most becoming him to adopt.

A few prefatory words bespoke the favourable attention of one who lamented so sincerely as did Mr. Byram, any obstacle to his brother's views of happiness with such a woman as Rosanne. But when he had obeyed her by reading her well-written, conscientious, yet affectionate letter, when he saw in it that every hope that life affords, but that of consoling the advancing age of her father, was offered as a sacrifice on the altar of virtuous pride—and when he looked at Rosanne, his sentiments followed the lead of those of his family; and he could not but own

that, thus advanced, it was best that the affair should proceed.

‘And in saying this,’ added he, ‘I give the allowance I dare not take—you will not, I am sure, betray me, if, in showing myself your friend, I expose my own weakness: every fibre of my heart is seized on by Honoria Ormesden; but I must not introduce into our family, the daughter of a gambler and a suicide.—I shall go to my living to-morrow; for, if I stay a week longer, it will be more difficult: and now, my dear Miss Bellarmine,’ said he, ‘whenever you hear any of the vulgar declamation on the wallowing indulgences of royalty or nobility, you will, as I do, feel with how equitable a hand the blessings of this world are dispensed:—persons conspicuous in situations, have their fetters, which those of the subordinate classes cannot discern, and will not suppose: they are covered from sight with the robe, and secreted from the ear by the ermine; but fetters they are, and as fetters they are felt by those whose progress towards happiness they impede. I will not wish myself the son of a sordid tradesman who has purchased with a next presentation for his son, the first gentleman of his family—a right to marry his housemaid with impunity: I will not lament that I am of a noble house, or the son of such parents as mine;—I have *my* portion of good; and I will be thankful: but you and I must most bitterly deplore—and let us impress

this on the minds of all the young who come in our way—that sad vitiated taste for illicit pleasures in others, which, far more than want of ancestry, opposes our views. My father, I am confident, would never thwart any of his children in a wish of their heart; you might have been the daughter of a poor parson, and he would have paid you the respect personally due to you; and I might marry my curate's daughter, and he would thank God that our taste for virtue was still pure.—I cannot, I will not, wound such a man by doing what he ought to disapprove.—I can plead no engagement—the allowances he makes for Montrylas I cannot claim. There is but one Rosanne Bellarmine.'

'What can I do to imitate your disinterestedness?' said Rosanne. 'I too am fettered.—Any way I must be miserable; and I would far rather be miserable with the approbation of my conscience, than without it.'

'You will be happy with Montrylas,' said Mr. Byram: 'when we are accustomed to the caution requisite, it will be easier.'

'I can never be accustomed to it,' said Rosanne; 'I have but one resource—I will, at all hazards, be firm. I will tell Lord Montrylas that I must risk his displeasure: I never, Mr. Byram, will be his wife, depend on me, I give you my word.'

'Are you serious? Are you firm?—Can you maintain this resolution?'

‘Yes—I will persuade my father to take me away before he returns.’

‘Will it not be more than you can bear?—I should grieve——’

‘No, I can bear any thing rather than the misery of bringing evil on others.’

‘Then now,’ said Mr. Byram, ‘if your mind is noble enough for this exertion, I will encourage it. This,’ said he, taking out of his pocket-book a written paper, ‘is a transcript of Montrylas’s answer to my father’s letter on this terrible subject. That which you saw was calculated for your eye.’

She read the paper he gave her:—it began with expressing the utmost consternation and distress, on receiving the particulars his father had communicated; it stopped little short of execrating the duplicity, as well as previous ill conduct of Bellarmine; but it spoke of Rosanne in terms of the tenderest affection, and the most generous pity; and the decision was that which had been transmitted to her, that, having gone thus far, he conceived it impossible to retreat—that he rejoiced in his inability, though he knew not that he could ever speak to her father with complacency, or think of him without aversion.

Rosanne needed no more to direct or confirm her. She felt all her obligation to Mr. Byram, for his kindness, his example, his precept;—she quitted him with acknowledgments—not

having dared, even in this confidential openness of heart, to name to him the supposition of Sir Tancred's and Lady Agnes's intentions.

Mr. Byram had left it to her option to conceal or reveal her having seen the transcript of Lord Montrylas's letter;—she chose the more ingenuous procedure, as that which was right, convenient, and efficacious. She accommodated her letter to the information she had received; and not till the packet was inevitably dismissed, did she make known what had been her final decision, and her proceeding on it.

If she could be repaid, the large increase of love she received from the hearts of the Byrams would have repaid her; but she was too sensible of that to which she exposed herself by this renunciation, to be consoled from any source but that which she had traced up to a celestial eminence.—‘I plead no passion,’ said she to herself; ‘I will suffer no imaginary ill to connect itself with my real substantial disappointment; but I should have been protected, beloved, happy with him whom I have been compelled to refuse; and now a few short years must deprive me of protection, of love, and happiness—a forlorn, neglected, unattached single being, I shall see one neighbour who cares not for me, succeed one who cares little for me;—this family must wean itself from me, they will draw away the Ormesdens; and when I die, it may be engraved on my tombstone,

‘ HERE LIES ONE ROSANNE BELARMINE.’

The increase of confidence resulting from her disregard to her own interest, rendered the departure of Lady Ormesden and her daughters less terrifying than it would have been, had Rosanne exposed herself to any possibility of coolness from the Byram family. These agreeable visitors were now going to join Sir Tancred at his new purchase in Kent; and nothing but the earnest opposition of Lord and Lady Brentleigh, prevented Rosanne’s taking the opportunity of returning with them. She wrote, by their favour, to Mr. Grant, bespeaking for them his best affections, and to her father, describing herself as infinitely relieved by the election she had made:—she had avoided all mention of the confidential letter which had concluded her decision: she assured him of the increasing kindness of her noble friends; and endeavouring to amuse him by portraying the new captivity of Arthur Lynden, as very formidable, she thought it impossible he could discover that she was not perfectly calm.

To avoid giving renewed pain to Lord Mont-rylas’s family, by receiving his reply while with them, she made arrangements for returning into Kent, before it could arrive. Mr. Byram, who seemed happy to do whatever could testify his sense of her desert, came purposely to attend her to town; Lady Agnes again accompanied

her; and from the earl's house in London, she easily reached again that which she had now to regard as her only home, Mr. Grant's rectorial dwelling! making, as she travelled, a fresh comparison of her varying situation, and, on the whole, feeling herself a gainer in some particulars of important advantage, having now good reason to promise herself the continued friendship of the Byrams, and hoping to keep alive that of the Ormesdens, unless the union of the families should be followed by a wish to forget past vexations connected with her name. She dared not indeed look forward to the effect of Lord Montrylas's return,—such sentiments as those which he had expressed towards her poor father, however merited, must make them shy of each other.

But in one point she felt herself really a gainer: in firmness of mind, now that she had resolved, and carried her resolution into effect; and looking back with humble confidence on the motive actuating her, she met that consolation and support which alone she sought, and alone could rely on.—‘And still, still,’ thought she, in concluding her sad ruminations, ‘let me be honest—I would rather have my mind thus disagreeably filled with regrets and forebodings, than experience again those miserable feelings that destroyed every pleasure at Chateau-Vicq. I am daily drawing nearer to that which will

secure me from increase of suffering.—While I lived in ignorance of my Maker, I seemed always going farther from it. If I have a good account of my dearest father's health and state of mind, and can but persuade him that I am content, I will not murmur.'

But this satisfaction she had not: her determination had fixed heavily on the heart of Bel-larmine; and the more he admired the conduct of his daughter, the more oppressive he felt it. He had not, indeed, receded from any part of his good intentions: he was regular, he was pious;—a child in submission to punishment, and disposed to relinquish all that he felt he had a right to forego; but the happiness of Rosanne did not come under this description of transferable indulgences: here he had no permission to submit. He was extremely reduced in flesh, and debilitated in strength; and Rosanne, in addition to her own trials, had to endure the sight of his, with the foreboding that she should see him sink under grief, of which his love for her was the source. Nor was the good Grant by many degrees what she had left him: his tender nature could hardly approve voluntary penances that involved the subsequent punishment of those, whose errors he hoped were corrected: he did not enter quite into the sentiment of the Byram family: he persuaded himself that Rosanne would more than atone for any concession she might have accepted from them: he thought

they knew not their own happiness when they did not consult hers. Her fears, with regard to her father; he could not treat as unfounded: vexed and disappointed himself, he could not entirely forbear adding his vexation and disappointment to the heap already accumulated. When Rosanne said, 'My father will, after all, die'—he could not say 'No, no:—'—he replied, 'And you will follow him—and then I shall indeed feel, for the short remainder of my life, what it is to lose a daughter.—St. Paul says that 'the desolate hath many more children ' than she which hath an husband;—it has often been my lot to feel that the human heart has a larger family than any that can be numbered up by consanguinity or alliances.'

The only enlivening circumstance attending this gloom, was the vicinity of the Ormesdens, who, residing in part of the manor-house while the rest was putting into that state of perfect comfort which would make it a very desirable residence, immediately paid every attention to Rosanne. Sir Tancred had heard from Mr. Grant her determination, and, influenced by his friendship for all parties, and his particular regard for Lord Montrylas, he conversed with her in private on the subject, giving every possible encomium to her noble sentiments, but not at all admitting that his friend would concur in her decree. She could not prevail on herself to disclose that which she considered as a refutation

of all his arguments, Lord Montrylas's private letter—it was not in favour of her father.

The building which was to make Mr. Grant's house sufficiently commodious for the permanent residence of Bellarmine, had proceeded very slowly; no one had hastened the tardy workmen, and every question that could be reserved for her, was thrown by for consideration. — She tried to excite interest and give energy; but she had herself neither the one nor the other: the only situation congenial to her mind was the churchyard, where she could sit on a grave that sheltered one sufferer, and read that truest history which tells that there is a hope for all, of which we cannot be defrauded, but by ourselves—one refuge from calamity, which all who seek may find.

Arthur Lynden was, at this time, the guest of Mr. St. Erme, and his attentions were received at the manor-house as those of any other gentleman in the neighbourhood. On the news of Rosanne's arrival, he had made her a visit, and his good-nature was hurt by what he saw: something unpleasant he could suspect, but Arthur was in no one's confidence: he tried to learn the cause of her dejection, and of the ill looks of Mr. Bellarmine, and the increased seriousness of Mr. Grant; but he was put off with general answers; and he saw and was sensible to his own want of importance.

Unable to bear any oppression of his spirits,

Arthur wrote to Rosanne: he told her frankly that he suspected some obstacle to her prospects, and was wretched under the suspicion, and the corroboration it received from what he had observed in visiting at the rectory-house: he did not explicitly say, ‘Perhaps you may now wish you had been less hasty in rejecting me;’ nor did he state his apprehensions that his visits at the manor-house might excite her jealousy;—for Arthur was neither presuming nor conceited;—but he had studied on his own stock of ideas; he knew how often *he* had repented precipitation—he knew how *he* felt when another seemed preferred to himself; and Rosanne had too much of his respect and esteem to suffer him to overlook the possibility of his increasing her uneasiness, by a failure in that which he had once professed.

This letter contained the most perfect devotion of himself, might he be permitted to profess it—to her, and, which he knew would have its weight—to her father: ‘he had now an affection to offer her, far more worthy than that which she had before so justly slighted: if she had heard of his forming other views, he would anticipate the effect, by confessing the charge just, while he congratulated himself on not having yet put it out of his power to make the happiness of her life his sole object.’

‘Good young man!’ said Rosanne, closing his gentlemanly letter: ‘this is indeed nothing to

me, but it will please my father to see how much of what is great may be added to an amiable character, merely by acting on the Christian principle of preferring another to ourselves; and it will please Mr. Grant, because it will show that his cares have not been thrown away on Arthur Lynden. They must both see his merits, if they compare me now with Helen Ormesden. I am the faded flower of an unkindly season—she is the germ of loveliness opening under a benign sun.

‘I can speak to Arthur better than I can write,’ said she: ‘he must not know all, but he must still have the distinction of as much confidence as I can give.’

She sent to him. Arthur now knew her too well to be as much elated as when she had before mis-led him by her alacrity. He obeyed her summons in the honest disposition to fulfil all he had professed, and with a manly resolution to deserve an approbation so correct as hers, by showing that he could prefer to any domination of passion, the superior indulgence of a just, a tender, and a benevolent susceptibility.

She confessed to him that the prospect which she had been led to consider as hers, was not only clouded, but withdrawn;—she could not in honour reveal particulars—the Byram family, so far from deserving any reproach, had greater claims than ever to her love and respect;—nothing but time, quiet, friendship, and that sup-

port which was afforded to all who asked it, could assist her. She was truly sensible to his more than brotherly kindness, and she did not know that any thing could have given her the pleasure she felt in seeing him settling into that manly character, which she sincerely hoped would recommend his wishes to the Ormesden family.

CHAPTER LXXIII.

‘COME, come,’ said Rosanne to herself one morning in the week after her return, when she rose for the first time refreshed by her sleep: ‘I certainly am better—I am not quite so pale, and my father last night was more cheerful, and dear Mr. Grant does not sigh quite so sadly; and the Ormesden girls and their excellent mother are amusing and more than amusing; and Sir Tancred is very kind—and Arthur Lynden’s success interests me—and if Lady Agnes *does* come down to the manor-house, I shall have a confidential friend; but what is all this haste?—here is Sir Tancred’s carriage and four horses, and he only in it—perhaps going to town to fetch Lady Agnes. The workmen are so tedious—he will not wait.—*I* am not in their confidence—but it may be delicacy—perhaps ***** is arrived—and now the wedding.’

Sir Tancred had alighted and come into the house—Mr. Grant was in his study:—in about a quarter of an hour they came out together, and the former, not aware that he was passing under her window, said, ‘I would stay for the purpose, but I could not do it. I have now, my dear Sir, given you my confidence; no one, not even the father, must share it with you; for the

present I shall, you may be sure, be silent; but this terrible event you must communicate; and God bless you! let me know directly how they bear it. I am going immediately to the family, and my stay must be determined by circumstances.'

Sir Tancred drove off, saying to the drivers, 'As fast as you can, not to risk your necks, or hurt your horses.' Rosanne remained at her window; and as Mr. Grant passed again under it, she said to him, 'I know there is something terrible—I am coming to hear it.'

She was instantly in his study. She repeated what she had heard, and entreated to be informed of its meaning.

'I would tell you,' said Mr. Grant, 'but that I am sure you will so totally misunderstand what you hear, that you will almost accuse me of occasioning you additional uneasiness; and as it appears to me that no one of those interested for you, could have devised so merciful a dispensation, I may differ from you.'

'Whatever it is,' said she, 'pray tell it me. My father is at home, is he not?'

'I really do not know; you had better go and inquire, or shall I go?'

To gain time, as she neither spoke nor moved, Mr. Grant rang, and with affected anxiety asked the servant where Mr. Bellarmine was.

'He was in his room dressing—his man had just left him.'

‘Thank God!’ whispered Rosanne.—‘Now, Sir, I am ready to hear any thing.’

She stood as if waiting to be shot.

‘It is hard,’ said Mr. Grant, ‘to have such an office put on *me*; stay, Rosanne, till your father is with you.’

‘No, Sir: does the misfortune come from the hand of God, or from any one in the world?’

‘From the most merciful hand of God.’

‘Then thy will be done!’ said she, raising her hands and eyes: ‘perhaps every thing we have in the world gone—perhaps beggary; it will teach us to be humble; disgrace it cannot be—*that* the Almighty does not inflict;—sin it cannot be, if it comes from him; any thing else I can face.’

‘We have obtained a great victory, Rosanne; but——we have lost some officers. Now, I should seriously blame you if you were to make no distinction between the gratification a soldier feels, who falls in his duty, and the misery of the deaths that take place every day: in this instance no happy circumstance was wanting; he fell in the moment of as much felicity as this world could afford, and, without the suffering of an instant, is gone to enjoy that to which none other is to be compared.’

‘Then all is over!—but tell me, can you,’ said she, ‘had he my letter?’

‘No; the packet is brought back by his servant; your letter is sent to you—it arrived the

day after. The family have thought most kindly on you; they are as well as you could hope.'

'As *I* could *hope!*' said she, heavily,—'they do not say, as *I* could *wish*: they know my hopes are now brought down to nothing; but if he had not my letter, this is comfort: his mother, his sister, his father, they will acquit *me*. But, O! Mr. Grant, how could you talk of mercy?—It may be justice, and to that I bow; mercy will follow: but my father, who is to tell him?'

'*I* will,' said Mr. Grant.

'We cannot endure many more such shocks,' said she: 'forgive me—indeed I will submit—but it is very hard—if I must not cry, I—I shall be choked!'

'I will not hinder you, my dear child,' said Mr. Grant: 'tears are your best relief at present—indulge them' you will have no more such shocks, I hope. Pity your poor old friend for being made the messenger of evil tidings to you; think of him, my Rosanne—think what he suffers for you all; yet did you ever hear him say,

'What's Hecuba to him, or he to Hecuba?'

—Your father is my brother; you my more than niece—the child of my affections; and, could I but rock you through this last storm of life, I am persuaded I should yet live to see you happy—happier far, I am convinced,

than in any state we have pictured to our imaginations as what we could most wish for you.'

'I have no wish to be happy,' said Rosanne, drying her tears—'could I but bear for others;—but the family!—the family!—the brother!—the sister!—the parents!'

'Rosanne, they are good people; they are not so weak as you are. Every man who has a son in the service of his country knows the peril. The Almighty provides food when he grants offspring—he sends consolation when he withdraws a child; and the greatest he can send is that which this family will experience: their son, whose happiness in this world nothing could have repaired, has died without the suffering of a minute, in the discharge of his duty, in the moment of glory, a British officer and a Christian!—I am sure you have too much good sense, you are too well taught, to make his blameless life, his unsullied honour, his high character, a reason for regret; would you make a worse present than the best you have to your Maker?'

Rosanne could acquiesce—Rosanne could admit—but, of necessity, Rosanne felt deeply. The dread of seeing her father enter, not informed of what had happened, made her urge Mr. Grant to go to him. He was absent from her near an hour, which she strove to employ in

making herself sensible to the much that might have added to the magnitude of her share in the misfortune:—that her father lived; that he was daily improving in habits; that he was transferring his dependence from the perishable world, a world which every day read a lesson of detaching forbearance, to that for which she hoped he was anxiously preparing himself;—they had no Frederic Gass to disturb their quiet; no Lady Lucretia to reveal wounding secrets; the Byrams would continue their friends; the Ormesdens would become so; and Mr. Grant was, under Heaven, her firm reliance.

Rosanne had always been in the practice of compounding with happiness: she made some condition on which she would make exertion; it was the simple process of a mind formed by itself—a sort of childish accommodation to imperfect powers; she had not, even now, left off the custom: ‘If my father can support this shock,’ said she, ‘I must and will think of nothing but aiding those who stand so much nearer to it than I do.’

But how did her father receive it? She had not even the satisfaction of knowing this; for, when Mr. Grant came from him, his handkerchief was at his eyes, and she was told that her father begged to be allowed to spend the morning alone; he entreated her to take every care of herself, and hoped, in a few hours, to meet her with composure. ‘You may be satisfied,’

said Mr. Grant, 'if you have any confidence in me; I am sure he will repay our forbearance.—His room is open to me, I shall go and talk to him for a few minutes at a time; and he thinks so rightly, that I know he will think to advantage.'

'And now,' said Mr. Grant, as he was quitting her, after their unrelished breakfast, 'here is my good Lady Ormesden coming to take care of you; and I insist on your letting her in: see her good sense; and, believe me, child, there is a vast deal of good sense in the world that is passed over as matter of course. This useful faculty, in her, points out that *she* is the only fit companion for you just now—she is experienced in sorrow; her children have had their share of passive suffering; but they are not the adepts she is: so she comes herself. You will recollect that, though your father's errors are no secret to her, yet no one but her son, of all the family, knows, or ever will know, any thing more, in this instance, than, that professional danger made a great obstacle; and that now you are in the state of many more, with abundant cause to be thankful that you are not a helpless widow with half a dozen children, and a hundred and fifty pounds a year to maintain them.'

Lady Ormesden spent the morning with Rosanne, in that quiet composing exertion of kindness which is never without good effect. She

allowed her to write to Lady Agnes without interrupting her, but watching and encouraging her, as often as she laid down her pen.

Rosanne parted from her almost with regret, so soothing, so judicious, had been her persuasions; and, when she saw Mr. Grant, she could observe to him that she felt the advantage of Lady Ormesden's not having her perfect confidence: 'Might I have given way,' said she, 'to all I felt, I might have made myself weaker—the necessity of being cautious gave me the ability to be prudent.'

'It is for this very reason,' said he, 'that intimate friends, one shade off relationship, can often do more in affliction than near kindred.'

It was not till the evening that Bellarmine could see his daughter; he then sent for her; and, at first overcome by meeting a mind equally oppressed with his own, he could give her no intimation of fortitude; but, when he could speak, though nothing could remove their causes of grief, he proved to her how those the most pungent may be counterbalanced: 'I have not,' said he, 'till to-day felt my own extreme deficiency; I flattered myself I was become a pious man, and, of course, a Christian; but I perceive now my error; I see that a sense of being wrong, the desire to be right, repentance of past errors, and earnestness to avoid them,

hardly entitle me to the glorious appellation of a follower of Him who came to teach us to suffer;—on His example I must humbly form myself—on His intercession I must rely, since all that I can do is so imperfect—and to the Holy Spirit I must look for guidance, since I am so incapable of guiding myself. Now, therefore, my dear child, acknowledging the goodness of God, in his severest dispensations, and his tender care for his creatures in that which seems to bear hardest on them; feeling my own want of worth, my insufficiency, my helplessness, I abandon all hope of support from this vain world, and look only to that from above. We must, my Rose, it appears the will of Providence, end our days, father and daughter, together.—I grieve that this lot is imposed on you by my faults and follies, but I will do what is in my power to atone for it. It is most humiliating, it is dreadful, to admit the idea, that your poor wretched father could not be taught obedience to an omnipotent Deity, or made to see the forbearance of an all-merciful God, but by such severe means: that his heart could be reached only through wounds given to his child, argues a sad state of mind; but such, I fear, is the truth; and it almost requires me to ask forgiveness if I still am thankful that you are spared to me. You have suffered a martyrdom; but I know you will not repine if it was necessary to the great purpose effected.—Nor

must you or Grant be alarmed or grieved if you see me sometimes a little depressed: my heart is, I hope, too sincerely converted to endanger my relapsing, while the goodness of God remains on my memory; but, however I detest the errors of my life, there is still much to be done before I can hope to turn so weedy a soil into good agriculture: my resolution is, to follow the plan recommended in forming a taste—I will contemplate and practise what is good till I entirely prefer it, and, as in the study of the fine arts, this must be accomplished by industry. There are days in the year on which you may see me gloomy: I must, at present, be allowed to keep them with a little austerity, but my subsequent cheerfulness shall repay you. I feel happy already in one point—I can forgive all by whom I have suffered, and love all whom I have heretofore considered as in possession of comfort denied to me. If I could but relieve you, my child, from the burden I have imposed on you——’

‘It will be no burden,’ said Rosanne, ‘when so supported; a little time, and I shall recover; the worst is, I trust, past.’

‘Any violent shock,’ replied Bellarmine, ‘I hope we have not cause, at present, to dread; but there will be, I fear, a severe trial for you, even in our quiet—you will, I foresee, be called, in due time, to witness the happy marriages of all around you; Sir Tancred will marry Lady

Agnes; Arthur Lynden will obtain Helen Ormesden, just the woman to make him respectable! and I cannot think, whatever Mr. Byram's apprehensions, that Lord Brentleigh can discourage his partiality for Honoria; such vice as her father's rather calls up the virtues of a suffering family. Great will be your merit, my child, can you see all this without repining.'

'I *will* see it even with thankfulness, my father,' said Rosanne, 'may I but, at the same time, see you in peace.'

'You will, if you can be content. See,' said he, 'the sentiments on which you have to depend—this noble passage in Akenside speaks what I feel:

'Then let the trial come; and witness Thou
 If terror be upon me, if I shrink
 To meet the storm, or falter in my strength,
 When hardest it besets me. Do not think
 That I am fragile and infirm of soul,
 As late thy eyes beheld me; for Thou hast chang'd
 My nature. Thy commanding voice has wak'd
 My slumb'ring powers, to bear me boldly on
 Where'er the will divine my path ordains,
 Through toil or peril—only do not Thou
 Forsake me. O! be Thou for ever near,
 That I may listen to thy sacred voice,
 And guide by thy decrees my constant feet!

'—Thou, in Heaven,
 O thou Eternal Arbiter of things!
 Be thy great bidding done; for who am I
 To question thy appointment?'

CHAPTER LXXIV.

Is stillness peace?—Not always;—it may be a truce with misfortune; it may be the controlling action of one power on another;—or it may be the covert industry of revived invaders. There is a character in some stillness which renders it suspicious, and disquiets those over whom it is diffused, by the habit or the necessity of watchfulness. Such was the stillness that succeeded to the events that had exhausted the present resources of Rosanne; and her mind was on the alert to figure causes of alarm, when it was almost too much stunned to feel it. She had now no self-congratulation to bestow, even on her father's best endeavours to secure his own and to promote her comfort: she saw him all she could have asked, but she seemed to see it too late for this world's purposes. He accompanied her to the altar, and her heart melted in gratitude. She assured herself that his mind and its best affections would never now again relapse under the influence of the world. She saw him disposed to grow eminent in Christianity, to communicate to others the best means of attaining the satisfaction of every wish: but she could only say, 'This must be—and it is well—let us endure to the end, and

we may attain that which is out of sight—nothing in it can ever again interest me.’

Her father was now her comforter: the powers of his mis-used mind turning their light on the sacred volume, seemed to have recovered more than their own acumen. His experience of the efficacy of inspired language, gave an intimate sense, a personal application, to what he read, which, as he was one of the too many for whose conversion it was designed, it was more peculiarly his province to explain; and feeding her curiosity from the stores of his own knowledge and by bringing within its reach some of the great part of the Sacred Writings, which at present, on Mr. Grant’s advice, she read with a passive faith, he roused her mind, by degrees, to endeavour to regain that vigour which it had been voluntarily renouncing. That the intelligence of a man whom pride had made a scholar, and who scarcely knew the time when the learned languages were not familiar to him, should give an advantage over the industrious endeavours of a young woman, was not wonderful; but when Mr. Grant confessed that he had not seen before, as he now did, the reference of a parable or the fulfilment of a prophecy—Bellarmine, with honourable humility, replied, ‘You have happily, my good friend, never put yourself in the way to see it. This parable, for instance, of the unclean spirit taking to himself seven others, is best under-

stood by those who have experienced the dominion of a corrupt principle, made imperfect endeavours to shake it off, failed for want of immediate recompense, and sunk at last into all the mire of sin;—from which fatality may God of his mercy, through the intercession of his Son, and the operation of his Holy Spirit, keep all those, who, like me, have persisted too long in the ways of perverseness.’

‘Come, my Rosanne,’ said Mr. Grant one day when he had been remarking to her on the beauty of the now advancing autumn, ‘let us number up our supernumerary causes of thankfulness;—our minds ought to be in the state of this lovely day, much better than the common course of seasons, which the relation of causes and events allows us to expect. Your letters from this suffering family begin to assume a firmer tone—they talk with pleasure of meeting you. The now elder son, you see, will come home, and change his views, to watch over the wounded spirits of his father. This is good and gratifying, and, in such a peculiar case, highly proper; for the succession of the aristocracy of a mixed government must not be risked in the ardour for public virtue. The clerical young man, you see, is most liberally permitted to bring into the family that jewel of a girl, your friend Honoria; and they will all come into our neighbourhood for the winter. The manor-

house will be, I know, a scene of generous hospitality: my poor neighbours will rejoice, and we will rejoice with them.'

'It is cheering even to me,' said Rosanne; 'and I hope in time I shall show myself more grateful than I am conscious I appear, for your and my father's goodness; it has preserved me, under the mercy of Heaven, from 'impious discontent':—it has all been necessary, for I have felt it, even with my natural disposition, sometimes difficult to acknowledge the hand of mercy in such continued inflictions; but my submission is, I hope, perfect. I can suspend my judgment, and tell myself all will be well; and I hope that when I see this rejoicing that you promise me, I shall be able to prove myself at least a faithful friend to those more fortunate, though admitted not to a share in their fortune.'

Mr. Grant was retiring abruptly, but Rosanne stopped him. 'Tell me,' said she, 'my dear Sir, now my father is not by, whether you do not think it a little hard that so much lenity and so little disapprobation should be shown by the Byram family to the children of a man, who, for the sake of dishonourable gain, ruined his wife and offspring at a gaming-table, and then shot himself, while I have been treated so severely.'

'All the severities to which, by our own want of prudence, we expose ourselves from each other,' said Mr. Grant, 'are more immoderate in

their quantity, and less efficacious in their operation, than any we meet with from the hand of Him who might crush us in a moment; and I admit the justice of your question: but, to begin with one of the least reasons—you must consider that it is not necessary to inroll in a ‘pedigree fifty yards long’ the circumstance of a man’s having a passion of this kind.—A gambler does not, of necessity, bear for his coat of arms—I wish, with all my soul, he did—a dice-box *or*, between two fiends *sable*, crest a fool’s head *proper*, motto ‘Sic itur ad inferos;’—therefore he escapes the heralds’ college; but, in registering alliances, you must tell all you can get at, and in telling all, you proclaim, or you let out, that which by inference tells if the conduct of women has been flagitious. This, I am sure, would satisfy you, as to the seemingly unjust distinction; but when you consider how important it is to the well-being, nay, to the very existence of a state, that the female part of its population should be objects of the highest respect, you would, for the general good, I am convinced, submit gracefully to individual evil; but, in the present instance, I deny the extension of any thing but mercy to *you*. If this young man was to fall thus early, would your near connexion with his family have gratified you, who cannot plead the excuse of vanity in your defence? And think how good the Almighty has been to you, my Rose, in, as

it were, protecting your heart himself against yourself:—corrupted by no passion, spoiled by no folly, you have felt and acted naturally, and therefore the natural awe of superiors has preserved you from the effects of fondness.’

‘ It is most true,’ said Rosanne; ‘ I admired, I honoured, I loved; and these feelings every day grew stronger; but there was, I confess, a check to my heart in the disparity of our situation—in the little interest I could, as almost a foreigner, claim in the country of which he was so distinguished an ornament; and, above all, in the consciousness that we were not ingenuous. Yet I would have chosen him from all the world, as I would have accepted dignity, which in him was of every kind, and the elevated power of doing good, in preference to gross indulgences and low enjoyments.’

‘ I understand you—it was holiday-love. I remember remarking our incompetence to judge of what will make us happy, in comparing him to the simple portrait which you gave in your letter about Arthur, of the requisites to gain your affections.’

‘ I was sincere and I am steady.—I not only would never displease my dear father in marrying, but I would make pleasing him, next to doing my duty to a still higher authority, my aim in every action of my life; yet still I say, that, to have made me entirely happy, I must have loved without the fear of seeming to pre-

sume—he whom I loved should have felt my father's interest for him an obligation.—I said he must be good, and I must have proof of it; he must be able to guide and protect me; he must be gentle to my faults, and patient to my defects; and all this, and much more, he was; but I said he must not separate me from my father; and I could now add, nor from you; and, above all, I might have said, he must not be kept ignorant of any thing.'

The kind attentions of the ladies of the Ormesden family were now invaluable to Rosanne. She had never before experienced the blessing of such friendship as they had it in their power, and were equally disposed, to offer her. Lady Ormesden was a parent, her daughters were sisters to her; and to the almost by nature insulated Rosanne Bellarmine, whose heart would have well repaid the cares of a mother, and would have cherished the love of collateral relations, to find in strangers thus recommended to her regard, and now forming her nearest society, all that she could image to herself of domestic affection, was a counterpoise to her weight of sorrow, which she rated as it merited. It was not necessary to her availing herself of this comfort, that the young women should know what had preceded that which seemed the cause of her dejection—there was enough explained to them to account for all they saw, and to give them every requisite power of serving her.

Lady Ormesden, fully informed of the circumstances of Bellarmine's conduct, could trace his errors back to their sources, and suggest to Rosanne the hope of good to be extracted from them. 'I know,' concluded she, 'the disabilities which ought to mark through life the incorrect youth of persons so mis-led, and I acquiesce in them; but when vice has become quite as odious to the vicious man as it is to others, then is the time for private friendship and personal regard to pour in their balm: in short,' said Lady Ormesden, 'in this, as in other cases, let us ask advice where the best is to be found, and we shall then omit nothing that can deter from vicious paths, and invite to those of virtue. What would I not give, my dear young friend, to have recovered my infatuated husband to the state in which your father is! And were I to tell you what he was when I married him, and how entirely he owed his ruin to a visit we made together in the autumn afterwards, you would, even in his instance, feel for the weakness of human nature. O! what do those deserve, who, under the guise of hospitality, and in situations where to suspect that vice had ever penetrated, would be a breach of charity—what do they deserve, when they lure an inexperienced man to that vortex, the gaming-table?'

'You make me,' said Rosanne, 'dear Lady

Ormesden, 'almost content with my own misfortune.'

'You ought to be so,' said she, 'now that your father is so well established in a contrary course of life. We must not ask impossibilities—we must not ask things not to have been: he repents; he amends; he has made all the atonement in his power; and I am certain his conversation is such as will assist in keeping others out of the snares into which he had fallen himself. Any inconveniences to which what we lament, must expose him, I should look on as those attending an injured limb: do not let him attempt too much, and he may pass through life now with little suffering from his hurts.'

For some weeks the attention of Sir Tancred had been devoted to the afflicted family; and he had only at intervals come into Kent to expedite the preparing his house for their reception after Christmas; when, instead of being in London, they proposed, in a manner the most consoling to Bellarmine and his daughter, to be his guests. Sir Tancred had never been in the neighbourhood without visiting at the rectory-house; and all Rosanne's apprehensions of any diminution of regard consequent on the approximation of these two families, or her own abscission from one of them, vanished when she saw him attaching himself, with the affection of

a son and a nephew, to her father and his friend. To facilitate intercourse, he gave orders for making the shortest road practicable from the manor-house through the grounds to the parsonage; and, with the obvious meaning of giving importance to Rosanne, he referred to her taste in the choice of some decorations. In all his intelligence from the Byram family, he was anxious to set forward their kind disposition towards her; and she thought he meant to say, that Sir Tancred and Lady Agnes Ormesden would continue her very affectionate and assiduous friends.

Returning from them in the end of October, he was the bearer of letters which gave still better hopes of recovered serenity. Hitherto Rosanne had had brief reports of Lord and Lady Brentleigh's fluctuating spirits from Lady Agnes;—she could not dwell on subjects so painful, and there was a word which she could not write. She spoke of her elder brother's having reached them, but she could describe him only as James; but now she could say, that those dear to her were so far recovering as to form a wish—the first they could form—that Mr. Bellarmine and Rosanne would come into Wiltshire, and remain with them till after Christmas, when they should themselves make a visit of some weeks to the Ormesden family, and would travel with them into Kent.

‘When I consider,’ said Bellarmine, ‘how much there was to overcome in the minds of these excellent people, before they could prevail on themselves to include a sight of me in their wish, I feel still more humbled as well as more grateful. Their politeness smooths every obstacle to my pleasure in seeing them here; but I can by no persuasions be induced to obtrude on their goodness. Go, my Rosanne, if you can give comfort—even if you cannot receive it, go. Sir Tancred takes your dear Honoria with him—you will spare yourself the pain of parting from her, and your sad home may be made pleasanter to you by a little absence.’

Rosanne was neither obstinate nor selfish—she was not prone to envy or alive to jealousy; but her newly-blighted hopes might have been brought out to more contemplation by comparison with those of others now just budding, and which she fancied belonged peculiarly to the promised companions of her journey. She was not in the confidence of one of the parties: but she could make allowances for the peculiar delicacy required by circumstances. On all accounts, she wished to decline leaving her father.

Lady Agnes’s reply to her letter of excuse, which she received after Sir Tancred and Miss Ormesden had reached the earl’s seat, would have repaid her for more than she renounced.—It convinced her that she had acted rightly;

and it informed her, in the kindest manner, of the arranged union of Mr. Byram and Honoria. It expressed pleasure in the prospect of any thing that would keep near each other, either in local situation or by the ties of alliance, persons who seemed designed to make one consolidated family. It anticipated the satisfaction of finding her in Kent after Christmas, and it said all that could be said to a wounded mind.

Here was now a new scene in view. Bellarmine exerted himself to complete the improvements at the rectory-house, and Mr. Grant undertook the fitting up a very pretty house within sight of it, preparatory to the marriage of Arthur Lynden and Helen Ormesden.—‘And thus,’ said Mr. Grant, ‘my dear Rosanne, the accident of your making an acquaintance with my foolish niece in a forest in France, will people a village in Kent.’

CHAPTER LXXV.

CHRISTMAS came. The manor-house was in high order for the noble guests; and the rectory-house, in liberal propriety, made good its claims to the minor praise of a comfortable clerical abode: its rooms were not so spacious; its decorations were only modest; its cellars were neither as ample nor as various; but it was still something more than might have been exacted—it was decorous, and it was fitting; and, without making any invidious estimate in their own favour of the relative proportions of riches and cares, its inhabitants were content. Rosanne, by comparison a princess at Chateau-Vicq, was here the daughter of an inmate; and not to go beyond what she considered as her station in life, was now a care to her, who had been regarded as the certain purchaser of that which no one beside could afford. She conformed without a murmur, even when she might have indulged her vanity; but the repository of her unworn bridal ornaments, was a spot her foot at present avoided.

The guests arrived, and Rosanne hastened to pay her respects as the humble female of the parsonage, to those who seemed once, however elevated above her, to have been offered to her

as parents. This the good Grant felt for her far more than she did for herself. It was a fine frosty morning, and she would have walked, but he would not permit it: his carriage and a servant on horseback attended her; and, though he suffered her to go alone, it was because he thought a particular reception was her due.

‘But now,’ said he, when she was putting on her gloves, ‘don’t you think—but I am no judge of ladies’ fashions—don’t you think a little sprinkling of mourning would have been a handsome compliment to the family?—the Ormesdens, you see, have put it on. I am always in mourning; or else, faith, I should put on something, just to say, ‘I feel with you, my lord and lady.’

‘No, no,’ said she; ‘I have not colour enough just now for black. Dear father, mind and be very busy till I return—you must have all those books in their places before dinner.’

She went away in assumed gaiety; but it was, equally with any solicitude for her looks, assumed:—she would not *presume* to mourn—she meant the family to see that she considered herself as renounced, and acquiesced in her fate; and it was to be her care to show, that no renunciation could abate her respectful attachment.

The earl received her alone: he could not pay her a higher compliment, nor more consult

her feelings. She saw him first, to whom the loss was greatest; and he tried to convince her, that the sight of her was consolation to him. 'If you have not,' said he, attempting to smile, 'already more fathers than you can manage, continue me, I beseech you, of the number: you will always be to us the same dear child as if my son had lived to make you our daughter; and our love for his memory would secure our affection to you, were any thing wanting to attach us personally.'

Lady Brentleigh came in with Mr. Byram and Lady Agnes: she had been too confident in her fortitude; but her daughter, all firm dignity, gave her time to recover that self-possession which enabled her to act for more than herself; and, in a few minutes, recollections gave way to the general sentiment on meeting Rosanne. Every one inquired after Mr. Bellarmine. 'I shall love him more than ever,' said the countess: 'Sir Tancred says, he never saw such an example of goodness—tell him, he must come to us—we shall have no scruple of showing our weakness before one who will make such allowances for it.'

An intercourse was immediately established, which realized the pleasures that the society of persons thus circumstanced could be supposed capable of affording. Rosanne was admitted into all the plans of the Byram and Ormesden families, except that which respected Sir Tan-

cred and Lady Agnes; and at length, weary of waiting for confidence, that perhaps only waited to be invited, she, in private with her ladyship, ventured to beg her to allow her the satisfaction of knowing that she might indeed expect her as a resident at the manor-house.

Lady Agnes was not offended; but she laid some blame on that general inconsistency which makes serious intentions pass for professions. 'Were I to say,' said she, 'that I would go to Bath next month, those who know my usual performance of promises, would believe me; but because some people marry after they have violently and vehemently declared they will not, the first possible match is made for me, who have always coolly and cautiously acted in a way that should rather have inspired confidence than excited doubt. My dear Rosanne—I shall never be any thing more than an occasional visitor at the manor-house. *I* the mistress of it!—*I* Lady Agnes Ormesden!—No, believe me, I could give you such a reason against my listening to Sir Tancred, were he to propose for me, as even *you* must admit: he will, I believe, bring home a lady—but not your friend Agnes, I assure you. I am not at liberty to say more at present—you have seen the intended Lady Ormesden often, and at our house; but I am sorry to add, that we never could discover that you admired her as much as we did: my father says, you have always ap-

peared to him to undervalue her; but I think when she is properly introduced to you, and you know her better, your opinion of her must mend; and you will love her as we do. You will know all in good time—but keep what I have told you to yourself.’

A winter of some severity was passed in a state of improving peace, and in disseminating around the manor-house and the parsonage the best alleviations of poverty. Bellarmine led the way in all that required his extensive knowledge of the various branches of a national community: his habits of calculation contributed to that desirable end, the doing good without doing harm. Agriculture and mechanics were indebted to his experience, and above all, in matters still more important, he could say, ‘This is possible, for I have done it’—‘This is right, for it has given me peace.’

‘I may have known happiness more brilliant,’ said Rosanne to Lady Agnes, ‘but I never enjoyed any that had so permanent an aspect. In those around me, I have fathers, mothers, sisters, brothers—and were I not anxious to know who is to be this new Lady Ormesden, whom I am sorry to have, as you say, undervalued, I do not think I could ask any alteration in the blessings I enjoy.’

‘You shall be gratified before we part,’ said Lady Agnes: ‘permitted or not, I will tell you, before we quit Kent.’

Spring approached, and a removal to town was necessary previous to the marriages of the Miss Ormesdens: Rosanne was invited and urged to accompany them; but she could not yet attempt the experiment of a gayer life: rendered fearful of vicissitude, she preferred the Kentish parsonage and the society of her father and Mr. Grant, to attending one of the brides into Wiltshire, or even returning with the other. She undertook to have Arthur Lynden's house ready for the reception of Helen, and was perfectly content with the distinction of being relied on.

Lady Agnes seemed, in the bustle of departing, to have forgotten her promise of disclosing the secret of Sir Tancred's intended lady. She recollected it, however, in time; and on the morning of their setting off, reminding Rosanne herself of her engagement, she led her into the library, where the earl was alone, sealing some papers; and saying, 'Now, my dear father, do let Rosanne know every body's plan'—she left her.

Without the least formality, the earl, as if wishing not to be overheard, said in a low voice, 'You are anxious, I understand, about the neighbour you may have here; and Agnes thinks I can, better than any body, reconcile you to Ormesden's choice: the lady is a near and dear connexion of ours; and we certainly would do any thing in our power to facilitate the match; but the success of our endeavours is still very

problematical. She has stated conditions, and we would accede to them, but it would be presumption in us to say we can satisfy such demands—we give her time to consider—she will not be hurried:—if she will not abate, we must devise the means of our meeting them; but with all we can do, it depends so much on her disposition, that we are anxious. These are the terms she insists on in her own handwriting, my dear Rosanne; and when you know her, a little of your influence may serve us.’

What was Rosanne’s surprise, when she perceived that the paper Lord Brentleigh held before her, was her own letter to her father on Arthur Lynden’s declaration, and that ‘the terms’ of which his lordship had spoken, were contained in the concluding paragraph, in which she had depicted the necessary qualifications in him who might hope for the unreserved possession of her heart.

‘And now,’ said Lord Brentleigh, ‘my very dear Miss Bellarmine, if you can find another man who answers as my friend does to these hard requisitions, I have done:—he has never ‘flattered’ you: you certainly may ‘love him ‘without presumption,’—he ‘will love, and must ‘ever feel obliged to your father’—he is ‘good,’ and you ‘have proof of his goodness’—he can ‘inform’ and ‘guide’ you—he is ‘patient’ and ‘gentle’—and he ‘will not take you away from ‘your father; nor,’ added his lordship, smiling,

‘ even from Mr. Grant. I could say a great deal of his uncommon merits and pretensions,’ concluded the earl,—‘ I could tell of love at first sight, submitting to despair—of friendship rejoicing in the sacrifice of happiness—of generosity seeking to preserve for another that which it needed for itself—and of the consolation myself and all my family must derive from seeing bestowed on my son’s dearest friend her whom we must ever regard as a daughter of our house;—but here is the owner of these great qualities to speak for himself, and I leave him to your justice.’

THE END.

ERRATA.

VOLUME I.

- Page 12, line 7, for *grieved* read *greeted*.
75, --- 7 from bottom, for *latter* read *former*.
133, last line, for *repining* read *ripening*.

VOLUME II.

- Page 75, line 17, for *covered* read *wood*.
141, --- 18, for *inform him* read *inform her*.
253, --- 10, for *spring* read *autumn*.
263, --- 10, for *country* read *county*.
308, --- 17, for *walks* read *walk*.
323, --- 7 from bottom, for *so* read *as*.
5 from bottom, after *feel* insert a comma.

VOLUME III.

- Page 108, line 9, for *any* read *my*.
113, --- 1, for *wishes* read *wish*.
149, --- 10, for *our* read *your*.
205, --- 4, for *other* read *her*.
313, --- 3 from bottom, for *feel* read *fear*.

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