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TEMPER.

FROM

THE WORKS

OF

MRS. AMELIA OPIE;

VOLUME III.

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“Shut the door, Agatha,” said Mr. Torrington to a beautiful girl of four years old; “the wind from the passage is intolerable.”

But Agatha stirred not.

“Did you not hear what I said?” resumed her father; “shut the door, for I am cold.”

Still, however, the child continued to build houses, and her father spoke in vain.

“I will shut the door myself,” said her fatally indulgent mother;—“Agatha is not yet old enough to understand the virtue of obedience.”

“But she is old enough to understand the inconveniences of disobedience, my dear Emma, if properly punished for disobeying.”

“Surely it would be cruel to punish a child when she is incapable of knowing that what she does is worthy of punishment. When she is old enough to have reason, I will reason with her, and make her obedient and obliging on principle.”

“It is lucky for society, Emma, that the keepers of lunatics do not act on your plan, and allow them to follow all their propensities till they are reasonable enough to feel the propriety of restraint.”

“There is a great difference between mad people and children, Mr. Torrington.”

“Undoubtedly, but not in the power of self-guidance and self-restriction. The man who has lost his reason, and the child who has not gained his, are equally objects for reproof and restraint, and must be taught good and proper habits by judicious and firm control, and occasionally by the operation of fear.”

“Fear! Mr. Torrington, would you beat the child?”

“If you were a foolish mother, and by weak and pernicious indulgence were to *brutify* Agatha so much as to render her incapable of being governed in any other way. But in my opinion,

if corporeal chastisement is ever necessary, it can only be where the parents by neglect and folly have injured the temper and destroyed the mind of their offspring.”

“Could you ever have the heart to beat Agatha, Mr. Torrington?”

“If Agatha’s good required it. If it were necessary that she should take medicine in order to cure her body, even you, Emma, would not hesitate, I conclude, to force the medicine down her throat.”

“Certainly not.”

“And is not the health of her mind of even greater importance? and should we hesitate to inflict salutary punishment in order to preserve *that* uninjured?”

At this moment, Agatha, unconscious, poor child! how important to her future welfare was this conversation between her parents, interrupted it by seizing a pair of sharp-pointed scissors, and carrying off the forbidden plaything to the furthest part of the room.

“Agatha, bring back the scissors this moment,” cried Mr. Torrington; but Agatha kept them still.

“Give them to me this instant,” he repeated, rising from his chair, and approaching to take them by force; when Agatha, unaccustomed to obey, as she was, when not in her father’s presence, always used to command, instantly threw the scissors on the ground with violence.

“Take them up, and give them to me.”

But Agatha only turned her back, and putting her hand under her chin threw out her raised elbow at her father with the gesture of sulky defiance.

Mr. Torrington now found that he was seriously called upon to practise as well as preach.

“Agatha,” said he, firmly, but mildly, “obey me, and give me the scissors, or you shall go to bed this moment, and without your

supper.” But as the child continued obstinate and disobedient; in spite of her cries, blows, and kicks, Mr. Torrington took her up in his arms, and carried her into the nursery.

“Put Miss Torrington to bed directly,” said he; “and on pain of instant dismissal, I forbid you to give her any thing to eat or drink.”

He then returned to her mother, in the midst of the screams of the spoiled and irritated Agatha. He found Mrs. Torrington in tears.

“Why are you distressed thus, dearest Emma?” cried he, affectionately.

“I cannot bear to hear Agatha cry, Mr. Torrington.”

“It does not give me pleasure,” coolly replied he.

“Ah! Mr. Torrington, but you are not a mother.”

“I know it, my love. I have had, it is true, many comical nervous fancies; but I never fancied myself a mother yet.”

“This is a bad joke, Mr. Torrington.”

“I grant it.”

“And *I*, Mr. Torrington, am in no humour for joking; this is too serious a subject.”

“Emma, I joked, to show you that *I*, at least, did not think this temporary affliction of our violent child a cause for sorrow.”

“No? Hark how she screams! Indeed, Mr. Torrington, I must go to her.”

“Indeed, Emma, you must not.”

“Her agonies distract me; I cannot bear it, I tell you.”

“You must bear it, Mrs. Torrington, or forfeit much of my respect.”

“O, a mother’s feelings——”

“——are natural, and therefore honourable feelings; but I expect a rational being to be superior to a mere brute mother.”

“A brute mother, Mr. Torrington!”

“Yes; a brute mother. The cat that lies yonder, unable to bear the cries of its kitten, would, from mere natural instinct (the feelings of a mother, Emma, which I have not, you know,) fly at the animal, or human creature, that occasioned those cries; and the cat, wholly guided by instinct, could not do otherwise, though an operation were performing on its offspring that was requisite to save its life. But from you, Emma, who have reason to aid and regulate the impulses of mere instinct,—from *you* I expect better things than a selfish indulgence of your own tenderness at the expense of your child’s future welfare; nay, even of its present safety. For had she been allowed to retain the scissors, she might have destroyed an eye or laid open an artery with them. If you must weep because she weeps, let it be for the alarming obstinacy and violence which she is now exhibiting; a violence which may, perhaps, be big with her future misery and ruin.”

“I am a weak, a foolish woman, Mr. Torrington, and——”

“Not so, Emma. If you had been weak and foolish, though young, rich, and beautiful, and I only a younger brother, I would never have made you my wife. No; I saw in you a woman capable of being a rational companion, and the instructress as well as the mother of my children; and I do not recognise you, my dear Emma, in the puerile tenderness that shrinks appalled at the cries of an angry child.

“Let me put a case to you, Emma;—Suppose in one house a mother informed by the surgeons attending, that her beloved daughter must undergo a painful operation in order to save her life, or prevent the progress of a pernicious disease; suppose that mother unable from maternal tenderness to remain in the room while the operation is performing, and giving way to tears and hysterics in the adjoining apartment;—

“Suppose in another house a mother under similar circumstances, suppressing all selfish emotions, by thinking only of the beloved

sufferer, and hastening to the scene of trial, to cheer by her presence, to soothe by her caresses, and to support in her arms, the object of her anxiety; while maternal tenderness checks the tear that maternal tenderness urges, and firmly, though feelingly, she goes through the painful task assigned her by affectionate duty. Now, in which of these two do you recognise the highest order of motherly love?"

"In the latter, undoubtedly."

"And such, my dear Emma, is the conduct of those wise parents who, in order to ensure the future good of their children, refuse them indulgences pernicious to their health, or inflict on them salutary punishment regardless of the pain they themselves suffer from giving pain to the resisting and angry child, and consoling and comforting themselves with knowing that, though the duty they are performing is even an agonizing one, the good of the beloved object requires it of them;—while the parents who suffer their children to tyrannize over them, and have their own way in every thing, because, forsooth, it gives them pain to deny and afflict them, are like the hysterical mother, who had rather indulge her own feelings in tears and exclamations, than punish and constrain herself in order to endeavour to be of service and of comfort to her child."

The cries of Agatha at this moment began to grow fainter and fainter, and at length ceased altogether; for she had cried herself to sleep. But now a new alarm took possession of Mrs. Torrington.

"Bless me!" she exclaimed, "perhaps she has screamed herself into convulsions! I must go up and see her, indeed, Mr. Torrington."

"No, Emma. I will spare you the trouble and go myself."

Accordingly he did so, and found Agatha in a calm and quiet slumber; though on her full and crimson cheek still glittered the tears of turbulent resentment.



Mrs. Torrington, whom love and reverence for her husband made submissive to his will, did not venture to follow him into Agatha's bed-room; but she stood in the hall anxiously awaiting his return.

“Away with these foolish fears,” said Mr. Torrington, “the child is in a most comfortable sleep;—or, if you must fear, let it be, as I said before, for the health of her mind, not of her body; and avoid in future the conduct that may endanger it. Should the child with which you are about to bless me be a son, Emma, I shall expect you to assist me in forming him for a hero, or a legislator; and I you must not disappoint the expectations so honourable to you, and so dear to me.”

What is there that a wife, a woman so flattered and encouraged would not have promised, and would not, at the moment, have felt able to perform? Mrs. Torrington fondly pressed the kind hand that held hers; declared her consciousness of past weakness, and her hope of future strength, and retired to rest one of the happiest of human beings.

A very few weeks beheld an amendment in the behaviour and temper of Agatha, under the firm but gentle authority of her father, assisted by the now well-regulated indulgence of her mother. But, alas! in a few weeks more this husband so devotedly beloved, this father so admirably fitted to take on himself the awful responsibility of a father, was carried off, after a short illness, by consumption, the hereditary scourge of his family; and his almost distracted widow, overwhelmed by the suddenness as well as violence of the blow, gave birth to a dead infant, and was for some time incapable of attending in any way to the duties which she was lately so solicitous to perform.

But when time had ameliorated her grief, and Agatha regained her usual power over her affections, she was continually saying to herself that she would show her regard for her late husband by acting implicitly on his system for the education of Agatha. Still, at first she gave way to the childish whims of her daughter, from want, she said, of energy in her afflicted state to contradict her;

and afterwards from want of power to distress, even momentarily, the beloved being who reminded her of the husband she had lost; and as that lamented husband was the only person who had ever possessed power to overcome her usual obstinacy of decision, and indolence of mind, and prevail on her to use her understanding uninfluenced by the suggestions of temper or prejudice, with him for ever vanished Mrs. Torrington's inducements to the exertions which he recommended, and Agatha became the tyrant of her mother and her mother's household, and the pity, the torment, and detestation of all the relations and friends who visited at the house.

But when Agatha approached the age of womanhood, and with her years the violence of her uncorrected temper increased, she became an object of fear even to Mrs. Torrington; for, having been long accustomed to tyrannize in trifling matters, she showed herself resolved to govern in matters of importance. Mrs. Torrington, however, loved power as well as Agatha, and a struggle for it immediately took place, which gave rise to a great deal of domestic discord, and had no tendency to improve the already impetuous temper of Agatha. Still she loved her mother, for her affections were as violent as her disposition; but her virtues, her beauty, and her talents were fatally obscured by the clouds thrown over them by the obliquities of temper.

There is nothing more likely to soberize the intoxications of self-love, than the reflection how soon even the most celebrated of men and women are forgotten; how soon the waters of oblivion close over the memory of the distinguished few, whose wit or whose beauty has delighted the circles which their reputation had attracted round them; and that even they, when they cease to be seen and heard, at the same time also cease to be remembered.

Mrs. Torrington (when Emma Bellenden) had shone brightest of the birthday beauties, and besides being nobly born, was rich both in personal property and estates; consequently, she was the little sun of every circle in which she moved. But when, at the age of eighteen, she gave her hand and her heart to Mr. Torrington, and

retired with him to a remote residence in the country, where, like a virtuous and affectionate wife, she found her best pleasure in the enjoyment of her husband's society, and in attention to her husband's comforts; the circles which she had herself forgotten, forgot her in their turn; and some new beauty, some new heiress, filled the place which she had vacated, and soon banished all remembrance of the once celebrated Emma Bellenden.

The seclusion which love had taught, affliction and habit continued; and when Agatha became old enough to be introduced to general society, her mother found that, having for so many years dropped those acquaintances whose knowledge of the world would be of use to her daughter, she should re-appear in "those scenes so gay," as a stranger, or one long since forgotten, where she had once shone "the fairest of the fair," and should be forced to form new connexions, or to solicit a renewal of friendship with those whose self-love she had wounded by long and undeviating neglect. She knew, notwithstanding, that the effort must now be soon made, and Agatha be presented to that gay world which she seemed formed to adorn.

Previously, however, to their taking a journey to London, it was agreed upon that Agatha should be allowed to visit a relation a few miles distant from home, unaccompanied by her mother, who was confined to the house by attendance on a sick friend; and the beautiful heiress, in all the bloom of seventeen, made her appearance at a race-ball in the neighbourhood of her relation's abode.

"I conclude," said Mrs. Torrington to her daughter before she departed, "that my cousin will take care to prevent all possibility of your dancing with improper partners, and forming improper acquaintance."

"I flatter myself," replied Agatha, "that my own judgment will enable me to avoid such risks without the interference of any relation whatever."

“You forget that you are very young, Agatha, and new to the world; but I trust your pride will teach you the propriety of dancing with men of rank and consequence only, even though they be neither single nor young.”

“I will not answer for obeying my pride, if the only rich and titled in the ball-room be the old, the ugly, and the married; for my taste certainly leads me to prefer the young and the well-looking at least.”

“But it is my request, Agatha, that—”

“Hush, hush,” cried Agatha, laughing and jumping into the carriage. “I will not allow you, dear mother, to fetter my first moments of liberty with any restraints.” Then singing,

“My heart’s my own, my will is free;  
No mortal man shall dance with me,  
Unless he is my choice,”

she kissed her hand to Mrs. Torrington, and drove to the house of her relation.

Agatha had not been long in the ball-room before her hand for the first two dances was solicited by the eldest son of a viscount, and she began the ball with a partner such as her mother would have most cordially approved. But as her partner was neither young nor handsome, Agatha resolved that, having done homage to pride and propriety in her first choice, she would either dance no more that evening, or dance with one more calculated to please than the right honourable partner whom she had just quitted.

At this minute her attention was directed to a very handsome young man, who, apparently uninterested in anything that was going forward, was leaning against the wall, and seemingly looking on in vacancy.

“Look, Miss Torrington, look! that is the handsome Danvers,” said the young lady on whose arm Agatha was leaning; “there he is! in a

reverie as usual! and though almost all the women in the room are dying to dance with him, the insensible creature looks at no one, and dances with no one; but after exhibiting his fine person for an hour, he will lounge home to bed.”

“Perhaps,” said Agatha, “the poor man is in love with an absent lady, and thence his indifference to those who are present. He is very handsome.”

“Yes, and very agreeable too, I am told, when he pleases; but he is so proud and fastidious, (for he is not in love, they say,) that he does not think any lady in this part of the world worth the trouble of pleasing.”

“Who is he?” asked Agatha; “and whence does he come?”

“What he is I know not; but he came hither from London, on a visit to Captain Bertie, who is quartered here, and who assures me that he is a man of family, though not of fortune.”

“And so he never dances!” said Agatha, whom this handsome and indifferent man was beginning to interest, while her self-love piqued her to wish to conquer the indifference of which he seemed to make so provoking a parade. While these thoughts were passing in her mind, she and her companion were approaching the spot where Danvers stood; and as he chanced to glance his eye on Agatha, an obvious change in the expression of his countenance took place, and with evident interest and admiration he gazed on the beautiful girl before him; and when she moved to another part of the room, his eye followed her with undeviating attention.

Agatha, blushing and delighted, observed the effect which she had produced; nor was it unseen by her companion, who could not forbear, in an accent of suppressed pique, to rally her on having subdued at once a heart supposed to be impregnable. In a few minutes more Mr. Danvers was presented to Agatha by a lady of whom she had a slight knowledge, and led his ready and conscious partner to join the dance. In vain did her relation tell her she had engaged her to one baronet, and that another had also requested

the honour of dancing with her, and that it was quite improper in her to dance with a man whom nobody knew. Agatha persisted in her resolution to dance with whomsoever she chose; and when Danvers came to claim her, she curtsied with a look of proud independence to her monitor, and joined the dancers.

To be brief; Danvers found opportunities to see Agatha often enough, in spite of the vigilance of her chaperone, to deepen the impression which his appearance, his manners, and still more the marked preference which he had given her over every other woman, had made on her heart; and when two gentlemen of rank and fortune asked Mrs. Torrington's leave to address her daughter, Agatha peremptorily rejected their addresses, and replied to her mother's letter of expostulation on the subject, in terms which wounded both the love and pride of Mrs. Torrington. Soon after her relation informed her that Danvers was endeavouring to gain the affections of Agatha, and that it was evident he would only too soon succeed. On hearing this, the alarmed mother resolved to summon Agatha home; but as she well knew that, being a stranger to the virtue of obedience, her daughter would refuse to obey the summons if the cause of it were told to her, Mrs. Torrington had recourse to the weakness and the vice of falsehood; the same weakness which led her to spoil Agatha in her *childhood*, naturally enough prompting her to make use of fraud in order to influence her in her *youth*; and she wrote to her, requesting her to return home, as she was very ill, and required her attendance.

The filial affection of Agatha immediately took alarm. She fancied that her mother had caught a fever of the friend whom she had been nursing. Without a moment's delay, therefore,—for even Danvers and the pleasures of a growing passion could not detain her from the sick bed of her mother,—she set off on her return home, and arrived there even before Mrs. Torrington could think her arrival possible. But when Agatha saw in the unimpaired bloom of her mother's cheek the evidence of uninjured health, and observed in her countenance at the same time the expression of grave

resentment, she felt that she had been recalled on false pretences. Consequently she understood the motives for the summons, and with a sullen, haughty demeanour, she received without returning her mother's unendearing kiss, and, throwing herself into a chair, awaited in angry silence the lecture which she had no doubt was prepared for her.

Nor was she mistaken. But unfortunately the angry mother reproached her daughter for encouraging the attentions of a man whose fortune was contemptible, whose character was equivocal, and of whose connexions she had no satisfactory knowledge, in terms so violent and provoking, that they aroused all the rebellious feelings of the equally angry daughter; till at length, overcome by a variety of conflicting emotions, Mrs. Torrington gave up the fruitless contention; and yielding to the suggestions of maternal tenderness, alarmed for the future happiness and welfare of its object, she melted into tears of agony and affection, and told her daughter, that if she persisted in marrying Mr. Danvers, she would give her consent; but she knew that she could not long survive a union which would utterly destroy her peace of mind.

The proud rebellious heart, which anger and reproaches could not subdue, was overcome by gentleness and affection; and Agatha, throwing herself on her mother's neck, promised that she would endeavour to conquer a passion which was likely to be so inimical to her mother's peace. But the next day Mrs. Torrington, on a renewal of the subject, and on being more and more convinced, even by the confession of Agatha herself, that a union with her lover would be the most imprudent of actions, gave way immediately to a new burst of passion, and desired Agatha to remember, that by the will of her father she was left wholly dependent on *her*, and had only ten thousand pounds left her by her godmother which she could call her own. This ill-timed remark was of all others the most likely to awaken the pride and irritate the feelings of Agatha.

“Do you then threaten me, madam,” cried Agatha indignantly, “after having had the meanness to impose on me by a tale of feigned illness?” then, with a look and gesture of defiance, she suddenly left the room, and retired to her own apartment, where she remained all day.

That evening, that fatal evening, she received a messenger from Danvers, to inform her that he was waiting to speak to her in a wood near the gate of the park; and urged by the dictates of ill-humour, and resentment against her mother, even more than by the suggestions of affection, she stole out unperceived to the place of rendezvous, whence her lover, who had a chaise waiting, had little difficulty in persuading her, in the then irritated state of her temper, to elope with him, and become his wife without the privity or approbation of Mrs. Torrington. In order to avoid pursuit, Danvers took care to have it reported in the neighbourhood that he had carried Miss Torrington to Scotland; but he preferred taking his victim to a village near London; and at the end of a month, Agatha was led to the altar by a man who knew that at the moment he pledged his faith to her, he had left a wife and family in India.

There were two circumstances, relative to the ceremony that united Agatha to Danvers, which it is proper for me to remark. The first is, that the only person present at it, besides those concerned in it, was the mistress of the house where they lodged, who, though far gone in a decline, which carried her off in two months afterwards, chose, as she had never seen a wedding, to accompany Agatha to church. And the second is, that the clergyman who married her was in a few weeks after their marriage killed on the spot by a fall from his horse.

Agatha for a few weeks thought herself happy; but she soon found that it was easier for her to violate her duty than to be easy under the consciousness of having done so; and with the entire approbation of Danvers she wrote in affectionate and even humble terms to Mrs. Torrington, to implore forgiveness. But the still irritated parent did not even vouchsafe an answer to her letter; and



this silence soon became intolerable to Agatha; for, ere she had been a wife six months, she discovered that she had married a man of no tenderness, no affections, and who, now the novelty of her beauty was passed, and her fortune nearly expended in paying his debts, regarded her in no other light than as an encumbrance, and ran from the loud reproaches of her indignant spirit, and soon irritated temper, to the society of other women, to the tavern and the gaming-table. Nor was there any chance of his ever being reclaimed; for it was not in the nature of Agatha to soothe any one; and still less could she subdue her feelings so far as to endeavour to please a man who was now on the point of becoming the object of her contempt as well as her resentment; and Agatha, the repentant Agatha, was, as a wife, in every point of view completely miserable.

“Well, sir,” said she one day to her tormentor, “if you will not give me your own company, let me seek that of your friends. Introduce me, as you promised you would do, to your relations.” Danvers turned round, looked at her with a smile of great meaning and contempt, saying, “Never!” and left the room in disorder.

Agatha was motionless with amazement and fear of she knew not what; for why should she not be presented to his friends and relations? From this moment a feeling of forlornness took possession of her mind, which not even the consciousness that she was soon to enjoy the happiness of being a mother, could overcome,—and she again sat down to address Mrs. Torrington; who, though she had not written to her daughter, had so far relented as to send her trunks and trinkets, as soon as she knew where she was to be found. On this indulgence Agatha built hopes of future pardon, and she wrote in the fulness of her hopes and of her gratitude. Mrs. Torrington answered her letter; but she told her she would never forgive her; and, had not a tear evidently dropped upon the paper, and proved that she was more full of grief than indignation when she wrote, Agatha would have despaired perhaps of ever being pardoned. But in the first place her mother

had deigned to write, and in the next place she had wept while she wrote.

“Courage!” said Agatha to herself; “I will write to her again when I am become a mother; and I think, I am *sure* that the image of her only daughter giving birth to her first child, unsoothed and unsupported by her presence, will soften her heart in my favour, and she will receive me and my poor babe into the safe asylum of her bosom;”—and then she shed tears of bitterness at the recollection that, though a wife, she was likely some time or other to need such an asylum.

At length Agatha gave birth to a daughter; and my heroine came into the world welcomed, fondly welcomed, by the caresses and tears of her mother, and received with sullen indifference by her vicious and cold-hearted father.

“Now then,” thought Agatha, “I will write my intended letter;”—but in a few days she became so ill that her life was despaired of; and Emma was four months old before Agatha was able to announce her birth to Mrs. Torrington. Indeed she had scarcely courage to begin the task; for she had to entreat from her mother’s bounty, the means of living separate from her husband, if she would not receive her and her child into her own house; and Agatha hesitated to narrate the sad tale of her sorrows and her injuries.

Danvers was now never at home; but she observed that he went out more carefully dressed than usual, and commonly returned home sober, and at a decent hour. She also observed that he wrote notes frequently, and in a very neat hand, and on expensive paper. From these and other circumstances, she conjectured that the present object that drew him so frequently from home, and seemed to engross his thoughts when there, was a woman of character and respectability, who might perhaps encourage his addresses, not knowing that he was already married, and whose affections might become irrevocably and fatally engaged.

Soon after, as she was taking an evening walk in St. James' Park, with her child and its maid, feeling herself tired, she sat down on one of the chairs in the principal promenade,—when she saw her husband approach, in company with some ladies elegantly dressed, and apparently of great respectability. To one of these ladies, who leaned on the arm of an elderly gentleman, she observed that Danvers paid the most devoted attention, and that he addressed her in a low voice, while she replied to what he said, with evident confusion and delight. She had sufficient leisure to make these observations, as the party walked backwards and forwards, slowly and frequently; and as she wore a thick veil, she could observe them without any fear of being known even by her husband, if his attention had not been wholly engrossed by his companion; while the nursery-maid, though she wondered why the husband and wife did not notice each other, was too much in awe of Agatha, even to say, “Look, madam! there is my master!”

What Agatha now beheld, confirmed all her suspicions. She saw in Danvers, that dangerous expression of countenance, and gentle insinuation of manner, which had won her inexperienced heart; and she left the Park, resolved to expostulate with him the next morning.

That night Danvers returned early, and in good-humour,—so much so, luckily for Agatha, that he threw a purse of thirty guineas into her lap, telling her that he had won the money at cards, and that she had a right to share the luck she had occasioned; “for,” added he, laughing, “you know the proverb says, ‘That if a man has bad luck in a wife, he has good luck at cards.’” The fulness of Agatha’s torn heart, deprived her of the power of answering him, and she deferred her intended expostulation till the next day; when, in all the bitterness of a wounded spirit, she told Danvers what she had witnessed; and disclosing to him her suspicions of his intentions towards the young lady whom she had seen, she declared that she would do all in her power to warn her of her danger.

“She is in no danger,” replied Danvers, thinking the moment was now come for him to throw off the mask entirely, “as you are no obstacle to my marriage with her; for I am a single man now, and you never were my lawful wife. Know, madam, when I led you to the altar, my friends and relations could have informed your mother, if you had given her time to make the proper inquiries, that I was married six years ago in India, and that when I married you, I had a wife living in that country.”

Agatha heard him with speechless and overwhelming horror. Now then his reluctance that she should see or correspond with any of her relations and friends was explained, and his refusal to present her to his own; now then the whole hopeless wretchedness of her fate was disclosed to her. She saw that she was a mother, without being a wife; and that she had given birth to a child who had no legal inheritance, and though not the offspring of a mother's guilt, was undoubtedly the victim of a father's depravity! With the rapidity of lightning these overwhelming certainties darted across her mind, and with the force of it they stretched her in a moment senseless on the earth.

Slow and miserable was her recovery; and such was her frantic agony when she took her child in her arms, that though her manners, too often under the influence of her temper, had not conciliated the regard of the persons where she lodged, the mistress of the house, whom Danvers had sent to her assistance previously to his leaving home, when she found her senses returning, hung over her with the appearance of compassionate sympathy; and at length by her soothing moved the broken-hearted Agatha to tears, which in all probability saved her from immediate destruction.

In a few hours she was able to form some projects for the future. To remain even a night longer in the house with Danvers, was now, in her just conceptions of propriety, criminal;—but whither should she go? Would her mother consent to receive that child when proved to be only the mistress of Danvers, whom she had refused to receive when she appeared to be his lawful wife? She

dared not anticipate the probable answer of Mrs. Torrington;—but to fly from Danvers and implore the protection of her mother was now her sole hope, her sole resource.

While she sat lost in mournful reverie, she heard Danvers return; and shutting himself into his own apartment with great force, he continued to walk about some time in violent agitation. At length he entered the room where she was, and looked at her in silence with a countenance of such savage and cruel defiance, that the original violence of her sorrow returned, and she was carried to bed in a state of insensibility.

Had Agatha suspected the cause of Danver's agitation, and the severity in his expression when he looked at her, she would have felt emotions of thankfulness, not of sorrow; for he had that morning received intelligence which defeated the expectations of his love, and showed him that his villany towards Agatha had been wholly unsuccessful. When he informed her that he had, at the time of his marriage with her, a wife living in India, he told her what he imagined to be true, (as he had received information of his wife's death only a few days preceding that conversation;) and she, to whom the practice of falsehood was unknown, implicitly believed the horrid truth which he asserted. But he had scarcely left the house when a letter was put into his hands, containing not only a detailed account of his wife's illness and death, but also the exact day, and even hour when she breathed her last; by which he found that she had been dead full three weeks before he led Agatha to the altar, and that consequently AGATHA TORRINGTON WAS HIS LAWFUL WIFE! He also met at the house of his agent a woman of colour just arrived from India, who was inquiring his address, and who, by the mother's advice, had brought over to England his only child, a beautiful boy of five years old; and from her he received ample confirmation of the intelligence which burthened him so unexpectedly with a wife whom he disliked, and made it difficult and dangerous perhaps to prosecute his endeavours to marry the woman whom he loved.

But as he grew calmer, he began to reflect that he had told Agatha she was not his lawful wife, and she believed him; therefore he hoped he should have no difficulty in keeping the real state of the case from her knowledge. But in order to make “assurance doubly sure,” he resolved that the woman of colour before mentioned should be introduced to Agatha, in order to confirm his statement.

Nor was this woman averse to do so, when she heard his reasons for requiring this service from her. In early life, this unhappy being, when living at Calcutta in his father’s family, had been the favourite mistress of Danvers; and she had ever remained so warmly attached to him, that when he married, her affliction, and her hatred of his wife, were so great, as to make it advisable for her to be sent up the country, lest, in a transport of jealous fury, she might gratify her hatred on her innocent and then beloved rival. But when she heard that this rival was in her turn forsaken, and was separated from her inconstant husband, she forgot her animosity; and hearing that Mrs. Danvers was in want of a nurse maid to attend on her child, she returned to Calcutta, where Mrs. Danvers resided, and became the attached and confidential servant of that lady, who, on her death-bed, consigned her son to her care, and charged her to see him safe into his father’s arms.

This charge of her dying mistress the faithful creature punctually obeyed; and when, while inquiring for Danvers of his agent, he, as I have stated before, unexpectedly entered, the sight of him renewed in all its force the passion of her early youth; and as soon as he told her that he had a wife whom he hated, and whom he wished to get rid of, she was very ready to assist him, in the weak but natural hope that she might, for a time at least, be his again. Had she known that Danvers wanted to get rid of Agatha in order to obtain another woman, she would not have shown such a pernicious alacrity to oblige him; but she now readily promised to tell the falsehood which he dictated; and the next morning, while Agatha, buried in thought, was leaning on her hands and endeavouring to decide on some immediate plan of action, Danvers

entered the room, leading in his little boy, and followed by the woman of colour.

At sight of the author of her misery, Agatha started, trembled, and rose from her seat, with a look so terrible and so wild, that the frightened Indian gazed on her with mingled awe and terror. Agatha, in compliance with the wishes of Danvers, had never worn powder; she usually, when at home, wore her hair, which was very thick and glossy, and had a natural wave amidst its other beauties, parted on the forehead, and hanging down on either side of her long and finely-formed throat. This flowing hair, which was commonly kept in the nicest order, was now neglected, and it fell disordered and dishevelled, while a long white bed-gown, loosely folded round her, completed the disorder of her dress, and added to the frantic appearance of her countenance and action.

“Who are these?” she demanded in a tone of desperation.

“This,” said Danvers, “is the faithful servant of my late wife, who attended her in her last moments; and I have brought her hither, lest you should be inclined to disbelieve my assurance that you never were my lawful wife, in order to tell you the very day and hour on which she died, namely, two months after my marriage with you.”

“It was wholly unnecessary, sir,” said Agatha, turning still paler than before; “for I believed your own statement implicitly. But surely, sir, you are liable to a prosecution for bigamy?” added Agatha.

“Undoubtedly I am,” replied Danvers; “but even if you had it in your power to adduce evidence of my two marriages,—which you have *not*, nor ever *can* have,—still, I know your pride and delicacy to be too great to allow you to proceed against me, especially as by so doing, you would neither establish your own marriage, nor legitimate your child.”

“True,—most true,” said Agatha, shuddering. “But what child is this?” said she, drawing near the little boy, who hid his face in his nurse’s gown, as if alarmed at the approach of a stranger.

“It is my son,” replied Danvers.

“Ay,” returned Agatha, “your legitimate son. But what then is *this* innocent babe?” snatching to her heart the child sleeping on a sofa beside her.

Danvers, despite of his dauntless callousness of feeling, turned away in confusion.

“Poor boy!” continued Agatha, “why shouldst *thou* hide thy face, as if in shame? for THOU art not the child of shame. Nor art thou either, poor unconscious victim! Let me do myself justice,” she exclaimed, pressing her child closely to her bosom; “it is for thy father, thou wilt have to blush, not for thy mother!” Then with an air of proud insulted dignity, she bade Danvers and the woman of colour, to be gone immediately;—and as if awed by her manner, and conscious of her superiority, they instantly and rapidly obeyed.

The rest of the day was spent by Agatha in forming plans for her future conduct; and after long and varied deliberation, she resolved to write to her mother again, but not till she could date her letter from a roof unpolluted by the presence of the man who had betrayed her, and inform her she had parted with him to behold him no more.

That night Danvers, to whom the dread of a discovery, in spite of the pains which he had taken to prevent it, occasioned considerable agitation, indulged more than usual in the excesses of the bottle, at the tavern where he dined, and was brought home and put to bed in an apoplexy of drunkenness. In the middle of the night, Agatha, who, unable to sleep, was pacing the floor of her chamber in morbid restlessness, thought she heard an alarming noise in Danvers’ apartment, from which she was separated only by a dressing-room; and aware of the state in which he returned, she stole gently to his door, from an impulse, not of alarmed affection, but of principled humanity. She listened a few moments, and all was still again; and the stillness alarming her as much as the



previous noise, she entered the chamber, and anxiously surveyed her flushed and insensible betrayer.

But a few moments convinced her that she had nothing to apprehend for his life; and she was gently returning, when she saw on the floor, papers that had evidently dropped from the pocket of the coat, which was thrown in a disordered manner on the chair, by the side of the bed. Involuntarily she stooped, in order to replace them, and her eye glanced on an open letter, sealed with black, addressed to George Danvers, Esq., Bruton Street, Berkely Square, London, *England*. An impulse not to be resisted, urged her to read this letter. It probably was the one he alluded to, containing the account of his wife's death! and setting the candle on a table, she opened it, and read the contents; which were such as immediately to throw her on her knees in a transport of thanksgiving. It was indeed the letter giving an account of Mrs. Danvers' last moments, and also of the very day and hour that she died; and Agatha, as Danvers had done before, saw that beyond the power of doubt she herself was THE LAWFUL WIFE of Danvers, and her child the offspring of a LEGITIMATE MARRIAGE. When the transports of her joy and gratitude had a little subsided, she folded the letter up and deposited it in her bosom, resolved to keep it as a defence against the evidently villanous intentions of Danvers; and with a lightened heart she returned to her own apartment.

The next morning she made a small bundle of the clothes most requisite for herself and child; and leaving a note for Danvers, informing him of the discovery which she had made, and of her intention to take every legal means to substantiate her marriage, bidding him at the same time farewell for ever, she walked with her child in her arms, to a stand of coaches, and having called one, desired the coachman to drive to a street which she named, at some distance from Danvers' lodgings, and then to stop wherever he saw "Lodgings to let" in the window.

Luckily for Agatha, she found two apartments to let on the ground floor, in a distressed but honest family; and having taken them

for one week, she sat down to deliberate on her best mode of proceeding. To obtain a certificate of her marriage seemed a necessary step; but first she resolved to write a full detail to her mother, flattering herself that, as the conduct of Danvers was calculated to injure the fame of her daughter, Mrs. Torrington's pride might be roused to resent it, though her tenderness might remain unmoved.

Unfortunately for Agatha, Danvers was of the same opinion; and as soon as he found that Agatha was in possession of the letter, he took every possible means in his power to frustrate the success of her application to Mrs. Torrington, and to deprive her of every evidence that a marriage with him had taken place. Danvers knew, though Agatha did not, that her mother was at a retired watering-place, about a day's journey from London; and thither he immediately sent the woman of colour, and his little boy, whose deep mourning and excessive beauty were, he well knew, likely to attract the attention of all women, but more especially of *mothers*.

Nor was he mistaken in his expectations. Mrs. Torrington observed and admired the perhaps orphan child, who was constantly led along the walks which she most frequented; and at last she could not help stopping the servant to inquire the name or that beautiful child, and the cause of the deep mourning which he wore.

“He is in mourning for Mrs. Danvers, [at this name Mrs. Torrington started,] his poor mamma, who died a little while ago in India.”

“But has he no father?” asked Mrs. Torrington.

“O dear! yes,” replied the woman of colour, “A fine gentleman indeed, Mr. George Danvers, formerly of —— regiment, who lives in Bruton street, Berkely square, just now.”

“Impossible! quite impossible!” answered Mrs. Torrington, tottering to a bench which was near her. “Surely that Mr. Danvers has a wife living!”

“A wife!” resumed the artful Indian with a look full of sarcastic meaning. “No! my master never had any wife, I am sure, but my poor dear mistress. That miss (Miss Torrington I believe her name is) who lives with him only goes by his name, and is only his miss.”

It was too much for a mother to bear; and believing implicitly a tale which seemed so plausible, Mrs. Torrington fell from her seat in a state of insensibility, and it was many hours before she recovered her senses and recollection. But at the very moment she did so, a letter from Agatha was put into her hands, and torn unread into a thousand pieces; while the woman of colour remained a few days longer at the watering-place, in order to avoid any appearance of having come thither merely to effect a purpose,—and then returned to the delighted Danvers, who had no doubt of the success of his scheme in order to prevent the money and power of Mrs. Torrington from being exerted in her daughter’s favour.

But his machination did not end here. In the clerk at the church where they were married, he had recognised an old friend and his assistant in the unprincipled seduction of a farmer’s daughter; and who, though he had to his great surprise, when he last saw him, found him in a situation of trust and respectability, he was very sure was a being so completely unprincipled as not to scruple any action, however bad, for which his avarice was to receive a single gratification. Accordingly, he set off for the village where he had been united to Agatha; and while the church register was lying in the library of the rector, for the purpose of having extracts made from it, the cleric, bribed by Danvers, contrived to tear out the leaf which contained the evidence of his marriage; and as, owing to circumstances, no copy had yet been taken of the register, Danvers returned to his own apartments with the consciousness of successful guilt.

Agatha, meanwhile, watched the arrival of the post every day with vain and fruitless anxiety, till her feelings approached the very verge of insanity, and the nourishment which she had hitherto

afforded her child began to be dried up; for dark and hopeless was the prospect before her. At length, she wrote again to her mother. And this letter Mrs. Torrington opened; but seeing that Agatha, presuming as she conceived on her superior understanding, was trying to impose on her, by making her believe that she was the deserted *wife* of Danvers, she read only the first sentence or two; then, in a letter of reproach and invective, she returned it to the expecting and half-distracted Agatha.

Agatha received her own letter back, and read her mother's with the calm firmness of desperation, and also with the indignant pride of conscious and outraged innocence. But where could she turn for assistance, advice, and redress? She was too proud to confide in inferiors, too proud also to apply, in that equivocal situation, which even exposed her to be called infamous by a *mother*, to the scorn or suspicions of her own relations and friends.

Yet something she must do; and her good sense taught her, as before, that she must try to obtain a certificate of her marriage. Accordingly she hired a coach, and drove, as Danvers had done, to the village where they were married. She was directed to the clerk's house; and little did Agatha suspect with what malignant joy this base agent of her unworthy husband saw her arrive at his door, and knew the errand on which she came. For during her childhood this man had been a hanger-on in her mother's kitchen; and his little girl, a most lovely child, the darling of his heart, had been often the playfellow of Agatha, and the slave of her tyrannical humours. One day this uncorrected tyrant, in a fit of passion, gave a blow to the poor child, who was forced into the misery of playing with her; and though the blow itself could have done her little injury,—in endeavouring to avoid it, she struck her head against a marble table so severely that she was taken up stunned and apparently dead; and while the terrified and therefore penitent Agatha was by her criminally weak parent soothed and comforted as tenderly as her little victim was by the parents who feared for her life, the father of the endangered child breathed curses on the

head of the unamiable Agatha, and wished from the bottom of his soul to be revenged on her.

True—Agatha meant not to hurt so seriously the offending child, but who can say where may terminate the consequences of a blow aimed by the hand of passion! True—many presents were lavished on the child, when she recovered, both by Mrs. Torrington and her daughter;—but the darling of a father’s heart had suffered pain, and had experienced danger; and the man hated the being that had inflicted them; for this darling did not live to womanhood, and her father always believed this blow was the occasion of her death.

Soon after he left the neighbourhood, and he never saw Agatha again till he beheld her at the altar. He now saw her once more, and he had had the *revenge* on her which he desired. But his vengeance was going to be more *amply* gratified;—he was going to see her writhe under the misery to which he had contributed.

Agatha was requested to alight, and the well-remembered face of the clerk met her view. Still she had no idea *where* she had seen him, and he had no inclination to inform her; while with suppressed agitation she begged to have a copy of the register of her marriage, mentioning the day and hour when it was solemnized. The clerk feigned astonishment, and looked at her as if he doubted her being in her senses. But Agatha persisted in her statement and her demand, and the clerk at last accompanied her to the church, having procured the keys of the vestry closet from the sexton; and the register was opened at the month which she mentioned. But in vain did she seek the record which she required;—it was not there! and the helpless, injured Agatha stood speechless with surprise! At length, however, indignation gave her words, and turning scornfully round to Cammell—

“You are a villain!” she exclaimed, “and the mean agent of a greater villain still. Let me see your rector himself; to his justice I shall appeal.”

Cammell bowed; and said, “if the lady insisted on it, he would go to him.”

“No,” replied Agatha; “I will accompany you, nor shall you quit my sight till I have seen him.”

The clerk again bowed, and saying the lady must be obeyed, led the way to the rector’s house. At the door the servant said his master was dressing, but that the clerk might be admitted; and Agatha was, unwillingly, forced to submit to this separation.

Her suspicions of its consequences were not unfounded. The clerk described her as a maniac; a woman deprived of her senses by the marriage of a man who had seduced and abandoned her; that she was become mad, on the idea that she was his wife; and was in the habit of going to different churches demanding a copy of her marriage register. It is not to be wondered at, therefore, that the clergyman should, when he beheld Agatha, discover immediately in her looks the frenzy attributed to her;—and to her appeal for justice, and her accusation of her husband and Cammell, he replied with shrugs of the shoulders, shakes of the head, and “Really, ma’am, I can’t say,—I cannot believe——” which drove the proud, irritable, and aggrieved Agatha into the real frenzy which the clerk had feigned. And when the clergyman wished her good morning, and attempted to leave the room, she, to his great consternation, suddenly seized his arm, and commanded him to stay. Then turning to Cammel, she started, mused a moment, and exclaimed,

“Where have I seen that dark and gloomy face before? It haunts my recollection like some miserable remembrance of pain endured long since!”

Here the clerk and the clergyman exchanged significant glances; and the clerk, prefacing his words with a look of pity, and “Poor, distracted creature!” assured him that he had never seen her before in his life.

“You are both in a league against me, I perceive,” said she, “and where to turn, and what to do, I know not.—Sir,” (turning round so

quickly as to make the clergyman start,) “sir, who keeps the keys of the place where you deposit the register?”

“Myself.”

“And you never trust them to others, except as I have myself witnessed this day?”

“Never.”

“You never have it at your own house?”

“Yes; but then it is never out of my sight?”

“Never! And this you would swear in a court of justice?”

“I would.”

“And there, sir, you *shall* swear it then,” replied Agatha.

Then darting at them both a look of ineffable and fierce disdain, she walked majestically away; and, having found her coach, returned in an agony of unspeakable wretchedness to London; while those whom she left behind remained differently affected, though equally glad that she was gone. The clergyman was really afraid of her, on account of her imagined disorder, though at the same time he felt charmed by her beauty, and awed by the evident dignity of her manner—the natural result of conscious importance; while Cammell, though he rejoiced in his revenge, was every moment afraid that Agatha would recollect him and his name, and prove beyond a doubt that he had lied in declaring he had never seen her before.

Meanwhile Agatha, with despair in her heart, arrived at her lodgings, and was eagerly knocking at the door, having scarcely waited till the step was put down; while, so anxious was she to see her child, whom she had never left till now, that she forgot to ask the driver his fare. But he surlily reminded her of her neglect, and made a most exorbitant demand.

Agatha, however, complied with it immediately; and taking the purse which Danvers had given her, and which once contained

thirty guineas, but was now reduced to much less than a fourth of the sum, she paid the man what he required. But he, his avarice being awakened by a compliance he so little expected, seized her arm, and told her she had not given him enough, and he must and would have more.

Against this evident imposition even the fast-clouding intellect of Agatha revolted, and she refused to comply; but alarmed at the violence of the coachman, and the crowd that began to gather, her hand dropped the purse, which scattered the guineas around as it fell.

The coachman immediately let go his hold; and Agatha feeling herself at liberty, and hearing her child cry, rushed into the then opening door, and was not conscious she had dropped her purse till the maid of the house brought it to her a few minutes afterwards, declaring that the coachman and the crowd had run away with all but one solitary guinea.—But she spoke to one who heard her not.

The mistress of the lodging-house had met Agatha on her return, holding her screaming child in her arms, who had been vainly for some time requiring the food which her fevered and agitated mother, even when she arrived, could no longer bestow on her. And while the poor woman, who had never been a mother herself, was lamenting her inability to offer either advice or assistance, Agatha sat in still, desponding silence, clasping the gradually sinking child to her heart, and ruminating sad and desperate resolutions.

At length she started up, and, wrapping her child in a large mantle, with outward composure but inward perturbation, told her landlady that she was obliged to leave the lodgings directly; and on begging to know what she was indebted to her, she heard with horror, that the sum exceeded, far exceeded, the guinea which, Agatha now comprehended, was all that remained of her once well-filled purse!

“Do not distress yourself thus, madam,” said the kind-hearted woman, to whom her own sorrows had taught sympathy with those



of others, "it is not much, and we can wait; and if you never pay us, it does not signify."

"I shall never be able to pay you if I do not pay you now," replied Agatha in a mournful and solemn tone; "but I believe my clothes are more than worth the money. I shall therefore leave them behind me; and if you do not hear from me in a month's time, look on them as your property."

The woman, alarmed, she scarcely knew why, by the manner of Agatha, earnestly entreated her to remain one night longer where she was, and offered to go in search of a wet nurse for the child. But Agatha, by a commanding look, imposed silence on her importunities; and, borrowing a shilling to pay her coach-hire, desired a coach to be called, and took a feeling, though distant, farewell of her anxious and kind hostess.

The coachman had driven Agatha, who knew little of the geography of London, as far as Windmill-street, on her way to Westminster-bridge, when she recollected that probably a shilling would not be sufficient to pay her fare thither. Accordingly she stopped the coach, and, desiring to be set down, got out, offered the shilling as payment, and was relieved to find that it was immediately accepted.

"I can ask my way thither," said Agatha to herself, "it is the only trouble I shall ever again give my fellow-creatures;" and she pressed her sleeping, because exhausted, babe still closer to her bosom; while the grave appeared her only place of refuge. For Agatha was married, yet had no husband; had a mother, yet was motherless; she was herself a parent, without the means of prolonging the existence of her child; she was spotless in virtue, yet was believed criminal even by the mother who bore her in her bosom; she had uttered her just complaints, and had been treated as a maniac; and discarded by the only being who could enable her to redress her wrongs, where on *earth* could she look for succour and for sustenance!

“I will seek the mercy and pardon of my God!” she exclaimed, and with a firm voice she desired to be shown the way to Westminster-bridge. But she was told it in vain; and in Cockspur-street she was again at a loss, and was debating of whom she should next inquire, when, just as a most severe summer shower began to fall, she was forced to stand up against the door of a shop in order to avoid a carriage. The pale face of Agatha was slightly shaded by so very costly a lace veil, depending from a small straw bonnet, and around her tall majestic figure was wrapt a laced muslin mantle of such curious texture, and her air and mien were so pure and so commanding, that it was impossible for her to be mistaken either for a servant, or for a depraved woman, or indeed for any thing but what she was—a gentlewoman. Yet this lady, as every thing about her proved her to be, was wandering alone in the streets of London, and carrying, like a menial, an infant in her arms.

“This is very strange,” said a Mr. Orwell to himself, as Agatha stopped against his door; and his wife’s countenance expressed equal surprise with that of her husband.

It was a bright evening in the first week of July, undimmed even by the shower then falling, for that glittered with the evening rays; and many of the inhabitants of Cockspur-street stood at their doors to enjoy the genial season. The door of Mr. Orwell’s shop was very near that of his parlour, which also stood open, and he and his wife were drinking tea, and seeing the carriages and people pass; when Agatha, after throwing a wild unconscious look into the shop, stood up, as I before said, for safety. There was something in her look, her dress, her air, which irresistibly impelled Mr. Orwell to start from his seat and approach her; and an impulse equally strong led his wife to follow his example. Coach after coach continued to impede the progress of the passengers, and barrow after barrow; while the increasing rain made all who were not provided with umbrellas, seek shelter in some friendly doorway. But Agatha remained in the wet, unconscious that it rained; and, turning round, her wild, yet sunk eye, met that of Mr. Orwell.

“Pray, madam, come in,” said he, in an accent of kindness, an accent made kinder than it was wont to be, by recently-experienced affliction; “it rains very hard, and you will be wet through, ma’am.”

“Ay, pray do come in, and sit down till the rain is over,” said his equally kind wife; and Agatha, though she scarcely knew why she did so, complied with their request, and entered the shop.

“Here is a chair, ma’am,” said Mr. Orwell; and Agatha took it; but to sit was impossible. She hastily arose, and began, ill-suited as the narrow bounds of the place were for the purpose, to pace backwards and forwards, with the maniacal walk of overwhelming misery. Here a faint cry from the infant called her attention to it, and awakened still more forcibly that of the Orwells.

“I thought it was a child you were carrying, madam,” said Mrs. Orwell. “May I, without offence, beg leave to look at it?”

“It is not worth looking at *now*,” replied Agatha, unclosing the mantle; and Mrs. Orwell brushed away a tear, caused by a painful recollection, as she saw in its pale and sunken cheek, the evident approaches of death. Agatha saw her tear, and understood it.

“It will not suffer long!” said she; “neither shall I;” and she pronounced this in a tone of voice so deep, so solemn, and with a look so expressive of the resolution of despair, that Mr. Orwell, who was gazing on her when she spoke, guessed the misery, and suspected the desperate purpose of her soul.

“I will follow and not lose sight of her,” said he, mentally; “but first I will endeavour to draw her into the relief of conversation.”

Agatha had resumed her walk, and extended it into the parlour, where the tea yet smoking in the cups, and new bread, attracted her unconsciously, and she recollected that she had not eaten food for days. Mrs. Orwell observed the eager look she cast on the well-filled table, and with great humility,—for she saw that Agatha, as she afterwards expressed it, was “somebody,”—asked her to take

a cup of warm tea, to counteract the cold, should her wet clothes have exposed her to it; and Agatha, her wonted pride yielding to her sense of fatigue and hunger, gave a ready assent; and in a moment more she was seated at the humble board of Mr. and Mrs. Orwell.

“Well; I am degraded for the last time!” said Agatha to herself; and she immediately began to ask her way to Westminster-bridge.

“To Westminster-bridge!” said Mr. Orwell, looking at her steadfastly; “It is past eight o’clock, and it will soon be dark; what can a young lady like you, burthened too with an infant, do at such a place at this late hour?”

“I am going to meet a friend there,” said Agatha, sighing deeply.

“Indeed!” said Mrs. Orwell. “Well, Mr. Orwell, I’m sure, will see you safe so far, if you will allow him.”

“No, madam,” replied Agatha, haughtily, “I shall go *alone*.”

Mrs. Orwell was awed, and begged her pardon submissively, but Mr. Orwell coolly replied, “You shall go alone, or with me, as you please, madam, but not till you have had a hearty meal here, so pray condescend to sit down again;” while, presenting Agatha with some bread and butter, he opened a cupboard and offered her some cold meat, to tempt and gratify the ravenous appetite with which she devoured whatever was set before her.

“You are very kind,” said Agatha, “and this is so welcome to me! I had not tasted food for hours—no, not for days.”

“No! Then to be sure you are not a *nurse*?” observed Mrs. Orwell.

“I *was* a nurse,” said Agatha; “but all is dry here now,” putting her hand on her bosom.

Mr. Orwell left the room.

“No wonder;—if you starve yourself, you must starve your child.”

Agatha started. “True—most true,” she replied, “but if——” (“If I have no money to buy food,” she meant to say.)

“If you were to eat and drink, the poor little thing might still live and do well,” resumed Mrs. Orwell, who in her zeal in the cause of maternity, forgot her fear of Agatha; “and I wonder you can answer it to your conscience, not to do all you can for it. In the meantime, let us see what *I* can do.”

Immediately, and while Agatha, now alive only to the idea of relieving her famished infant, sat gazing in wild but still expectation, Mrs. Orwell ordered some milk to be warmed, and in a very few minutes by artificial means, known to her who had been herself a mother, the exhausted infant sucked nourishment eagerly and copiously while she lay on Mrs. Orwell’s lap;—and Agatha, encouraged by Mrs. Orwell to expect with certainty the restoration of her babe, uttered a wild hysteric scream of joy, and sank back, laughing and almost convulsed, into the arms of Mr. Orwell, who at that moment returned.

“My dear,” said Mr. Orwell, while his wife was administering remedies to her interesting charge, “I trust we have not saved the child only!” And as he gazed on Agatha, tears in quick succession rolled down his cheek. “My dear,” resumed he, “I see a likeness; don’t you?”

“Yes,” replied Mrs. Orwell, with a deep sigh; “especially now that her eyes are closed, and she looks so like death. Our poor child, when dying——” Here emotion broke off her speech.

“I wish she was not a lady,” said the old man; “else for the child and grandchild we have just lost, it should seem that Providence had thus sent us this distracted stranger and her poor babe.”

At length Agatha completely recovered her senses and her powers, and found her head resting on the compassionate bosom of Mr. Orwell, who if she had been a neighbour’s child, would have pressed the poor forlorn one to his heart, and bidden her be comforted. But Mr. Orwell’s feelings towards Agatha, were

checked by the cold and haughty dignity of her mien, which not even affliction could subdue; and before she could herself proudly withdraw from his supporting arm, he had resigned her to the care of his wife.

Strange, mixed, and almost insupportable sensations returned with her senses to the heart of Agatha; and pride yet unsubdued,—for I believe the proud are rendered prouder still by adversity,—urged her to leave these kind but lowly strangers, who had stopped her on her way to the peace and independence of death.—”But *must* she die? Could she not live and her poor infant too?” And the moment she had once borne to ask herself the question, the reign of despair was beginning to cease, and that of hope to return.

“It still rains,” said Mr. Orwell, “and is now nearly dark; your friend, madam, at Westminster-bridge cannot expect you now! Allow me to see you to your own house.”

Agatha started, shuddered, and hid her face in her hands.

“Madam, I wait your commands,” said Mr. Orwell, taking his hat down from the peg; “Shall I call a coach, and see you home?”

“I have no home!” exclaimed Agatha wildly. “Nor, when I leave this hospitable shelter, know I where to seek another, except—”

Here she remained choked by violent emotions; while Mr. Orwell, replacing his hat, eagerly locked the street door of his shop, ordered the shutters to be closed, and drawing a chair seated himself by the side of Agatha.

“My dear young lady,” said he, “excuse my freedom; but my home is yours for this night at least; and were you not so much our superior, it should be yours as long as we lived, as I am sure guilt has had no share in your evident distress.”

“Bless you! bless you for that!” said Agatha. “You, *you* do me justice; you a stranger, while *she*—”

“Allow me,” said Mr. Orwell, “to tell you something of the man who thus presumes. Perhaps it is merely the suggestions of my own

conceit; but I cannot help thinking you must have considered my language as superior to my situation in life.”

Agatha only bowed; for she had not thought on the subject; and Mr. Orwell continued thus:—

“I have known better days, and having been heir to great wealth, received a suitable education. But unfortunate speculations ruined my father, and I was glad at last to settle in this little shop, where in the bosom of my family I became obscurely indeed but thoroughly happy; and I blessed the present goodness, without ever repining at the past severe dispensations of Providence. I had not, however, yet suffered my appointed share of affliction. I had an only *daughter*;—she married, had a child, and came to die in *our arms*;—she *did* do so; but still we were resigned; despair was never in our hearts nor its expressions on our lips; but we suffered, suffered deeply, and we still suffer——”

Here he hid his face, and wept; and Agatha, though at first felt inclined to resent being thus *preached* to, conscious of the obligations she owed him, sat and listened with evident attention and sympathy.

Mrs. Orwell, meanwhile, was still nursing the sleeping babe of Agatha, and weeping as she did so; while her husband went on.

“My dear young lady, you resemble our poor child, and——”

“Ay, you do indeed,” cried Mrs. Orwell with a violent burst of sorrow; “and when you lay just now looking so like death, I could not help kissing your pale lips, and fancying you my poor Mary. Oh! that you were not, as I see you are, a lady, though now so sad and friendless; for then I could throw myself on your neck, and call you my lost daughter, my dear—dear Mary!”

Agatha’s heart could not stand this appeal to its best feelings; every emotion of pride was annihilated; and bursting into a flood of tears, the first she had shed for many days, she threw herself on the neck of Mrs. Orwell, and exclaimed, “Do call me your child, your Mary,

if it will relieve your poor heart!” And when composure was a little restored, Agatha, whose oppressed head and bosom had been greatly relieved by crying, blessed her in the most affectionate manner for having saved her child and her also from destruction.

“Well, but you will stay here till you can do something better?” said Mrs. Orwell.

“You shall have a room to yourself,” said her husband; “and you shall pay me what you will, either little or much.”

“I have not a shilling in the world!” cried Agatha.

“I am glad of it,” replied Mrs. Orwell; “for then you may be pleased to stay with us.”

“I fear *not*,” observed Mr. Orwell; while Agatha gratefully and gracefully pressed his wife’s hand to her quivering lip. But a sudden thought struck across her brain;—she jumped up, she ran into the shop, examined the contents of the shop windows; and returning with a countenance radiant with renewed hope and joy, she fell on her knees, and audibly returned thanks to God for having allowed her to be snatched from irremediable perdition.

Her new friends listened and beheld her with considerable alarm, and feared her frenzy had only taken a new turn. But they were relieved when Agatha, as soon as tears—tears of joy—would allow her to speak, told them she had discovered that they sold prints, patterns, water-coloured drawings, and paintings of flowers.

“To be sure we do,” said Mrs. Orwell; “but what then, my dear young lady?”

“Why then you can employ *me*, and I shall be able to maintain myself and child by the exertion of those talents which to the rich heiress were only the source of most pernicious vanity.”

“And you are a good artist then, are you?” said Mr. Orwell doubtingly; for he knew something of art, and of what lady artists too often are.



“You shall *see* what I can do,” said Agatha; and she took from her pocket a miniature of her mother.

“Excellent!” said Orwell. “A copy, I presume?”

“No! an *original*; but that is not all; give me a pencil and paper, and let me sketch that dear group.”

He gave them to her; and in a few minutes she designed with great skill and accuracy, Mrs. Orwell and her child upon her lap.

“Admirable!” said the delighted and convinced old man. “It is not so handsome as my old woman, to be sure; but it is a very pretty sketch. Why, madam, you may make my fortune and your own too. And what else can you do?”

“I can paint much better than those unnatural, stiff, ill-coloured groups of flowers for patterns are painted. In short, I am somewhat skilled in every branch of your trade, and you will save me from distraction and death by promising to employ me to the very utmost.”

Words cannot express the joy of the benevolent and affectionate old couple, as Agatha spoke thus.

“Then you will *stay* with us now?” said Mrs. Orwell.

“Yes,” said Mr. Orwell, “now you can do so without incurring pecuniary obligation;—for I see, young lady, that you have your full share of the pride of a gentlewoman, and have not yet been afflicted *long* enough to be humble. However, *who* you are, and *what* you are, you will tell us when *you choose*.”

“All I *can* tell you, I will tell you *now*,” returned Agatha. “I am a *deserted wife*, and a discarded daughter; but I am *innocent*; and now that I have a prospect of being able to earn a livelihood, I may one day live to triumph over my enemies. Perhaps some time or other I may tell you more;—but now I wish to suspend the operation of painful images on my mind. O ye kind, generous, Christian beings, who, though I was a stranger, took me in, and cherished me!—may you in your last moments be soothed by the

reflection that you were the means of saving from destruction, from *self*-destruction, a wretched, injured, but *virtuous* fellow-creature!”

“Hush! hush! don’t speak so loud,” said Mrs. Orwell, smiling through her tears; “you’ll wake the dear babe. Well, I’ll put it to bed, for the bed is ready for you, my dear—*madam*, I mean.” And Agatha, affectionately pressing Mrs. Orwell’s hand, followed her to her apartment. It was a clean and quiet though not a spacious chamber, and Agatha, with a relieved and grateful heart, retired to the prospect of rest which it afforded her; and having again fed her evidently recovering infant, she soon sank into repose by its side.

In the morning, Agatha, wondering, humbled, sad, yet no longer despairing, awoke to mingled and overpowering sensations; amidst which, gratitude to her Maker for preservation from a sinful death, was the predominant feeling;—and happy would it have been for her, had not the sentiment of grateful adoration to God been nearly paralleled by one of vindictive resentment towards a fellow-creature, and that fellow-creature the mother who had given her being. But TEMPER, the bane of Agatha’s existence and the ruler of her conduct, towered in all its strength by the side of her religious emotions, and rendered vain the resources against the evils of her situation, to which a person uninfluenced by temper would gladly have had recourse. True it was that her husband had denied her to be his wife, and destroyed, as she could not doubt, one evidence of his marriage with her;—but did it follow that there was no other remaining, which legal means might not enable her to procure? True it was, that her mother had renounced her, and declared her belief that she was only the mistress of Danvers. But she had powerful though not near relations in London; and it was most likely that the tale she had to tell them, though they might at first disbelieve it, would at last find its way to their hearts, and through them, to her mother’s, by the irresistible and omnipotent power of truth.

But Agatha derived a sad and sullen joy, a malignant consciousness of future revenge, from the idea that one time or other, when no one could know and no one disclose the fate of her lost daughter, the mother who had dared to suspect the virtue of that daughter, and to discard her in consequence of that suspicion, would regret her lost child, would wish she had been less hasty to condemn her, and feel in all its bitterness, the agony of a fault, for which it was no longer in her power to make any reparation. It was perhaps an angry feeling like this, that, adding force to the other source of misery, prompted her to the resolution of committing violence on her and her infant's life;—for there is little doubt that suicides have been often, very often, occasioned merely by the vindictive wish of planting an everlasting thorn in the breast of the parent, the lover, the mistress, the wife, or the husband, whose conduct has in the opinion of the weak sufferer, the slave of an ill-governed temper, excited the terrible cravings of a vicious resentment.—Sure is it, that Temper,—like the unseen, but busy subterranean fires in the bosom of a volcano, is always at work where it has once gained an existence, and is for ever threatening to explode, and scatter ruin and desolation around it. Parents, beware how you omit to check the first evidences of its empire in your children; and *tremble* lest the powerless hand which is only lifted in childish anger against you, should, if its impotent fury remains uncorrected, in future life be armed with more destructive fury against its own existence, or that of a fellow-creature!

“No,” said Agatha to herself, “I will conceal my name and my wrongs in oblivion the most complete. Not even the good and generous beings to whom I owe my life and its continuance, shall be informed of them; but sustained by the proud consciousness of my own desert, I will be all-sufficient to myself and to my child; and the injured heiress of thousands shall derive more honourable pride from the exertions of her talents in honest industry, than she ever felt as the idol of an interested crowd.”

And, unfortunately, the persevering obstinacy of Agatha, led her to adhere rigidly to the determination which Temper led her to form. Had she not done so,—had she opened her heart, and told the tale of her injuries to the benevolent Mr. Orwell,—it is possible that his representations might have induced such a line of conduct as would have been the means of restoring her to her mother, and might have enabled her to establish her marriage beyond dispute; for Mr. Orwell would have advised her to have immediate recourse to legal advice, and would gladly have afforded her the means of doing so.

But her resolution was taken, and she never allowed herself to suppose that from her resolves there could ever be any appeal.

At an early hour Agatha, who with the feeling of a real gentlewoman wished to conform to the hours of her hosts, took her seat at the breakfast-table, and with a quivering lip beheld her child received into the arms of Mrs. Orwell, while her husband took her seat and occupation at the board. Still, spite of the even parental kindness of these excellent people, Agatha felt that she was not in her place; and notwithstanding her efforts to be affable, she was at last only graciously condescending.

“You are not so like our poor Mary to-day,” said Mrs. Orwell, attentively regarding her.

“No,” said Mr. Orwell; “our Mary was not a lady, and therefore, had not the look or air of one; nor had she this lady’s beauty.”

“Our Mary was very pretty, my dear,” interrupted Mrs. Orwell, “and looked so good and sweet-tempered!”

“She was certainly quite perfect in her parents’ eyes,” replied Mr. Orwell, the big drops swelling in his eyes;—”but she is gone—and it is a comfort we cannot be too grateful for, that we were allowed to administer to her wants during her last illness:—

‘On some fond breast the parting soul relies,’”

added he, willing perhaps to show off his little reading to Agatha. But he was interrupted by her starting from her chair, and paring with distempered haste the narrow floor of the room.

“Excellent people!” said she at length, taking a hand of each, and pressing them affectionately—“you feel as parents should feel;—and would I had been in reality your Mary! for then I should have breathed my last on a bosom which loved me.—But now——!”

Here her voice failed her, and she burst into tears. And as she viewed her softened eye, her languid air, poor Mrs. Orwell again recognised her lost Mary.

“But come,” said Agatha with a more cheerful countenance, as soon as breakfast was over; “let us to business—I long to be earning money; procure me some flowers, and I will paint a group immediately.” And in a very short time Mr. Orwell had procured the best flowers Covent-garden afforded; while Agatha was diligently employed in copying them.

As soon as the group was finished, it was exhibited by the delighted Mr. Orwell in the shop-window; and to his and Agatha’s satisfaction, it was sold as soon as it was seen. It was bought by a gentleman of some rank and distinction in society, and he bespoke eleven more by the same artist, as he wanted them to decorate some particular room in a villa which he had lately purchased; promising, at the same time, to recommend Mr. Orwell’s shop to all his friends.

“It was a kind Providence for me as well as you, madam,” said Mr. Orwell, “that brought you to my house.”

“I trust it will turn out so,” said the gratified Agatha, who worked with such assiduity, that in a very short time the twelve paintings were completed, and declared admirable by the satisfied purchaser.

By this time Mrs. Orwell, who was become used to Agatha’s “grand manner,” as she called it, and who naturally enough was

attached to her by a sense of the benefit she had conferred, was very desirous to learn whether she meant to continue with them, especially as she had contrived, by removing their own bed to the top of the house, to make a sitting-room for Agatha. But the latter, though her heart glowed with gratitude towards these excellent people as her preservers, could not prevail on herself to remain an inmate of their house, nor indeed of any other in London. She felt, in this respect wisely felt, that though Mr. Orwell had been a gentleman, and had had the education of one, (however his manners might have lost some of their habitual polish by collision with vulgar society,) Mrs. Orwell was only a tradesman's wife; and she knew that not Only her pride but her taste would be offended by constant association with one so much her inferior; and whose affectionate familiarity she might, however reluctantly, be at times forced to repel. For it is not pride alone, but a sense of fitness, that makes persons prefer living with their equals to association with their inferiors.

It is the want of equal education that makes the great difference between man and man; and the bar that divides the vulgar man from the gentleman is not a paltry sense of superior birth, but a feeling of difference, a consciousness of different habits, ways of thinking, and manners—the result of opposite situations.

“No, no—I cannot, must not stay here,” said Agatha to herself;—”besides, I long for the country, and some wild sequestered place where my infant may derive health and strength from the mountain breeze, and I may escape all chance of being known.”

But in order to reach “this mountain breeze,” it would be necessary for Agatha to undertake a long and expensive journey, and live at a most inconvenient and expensive distance from the metropolis. Her drawings and paintings for sale would in that case be some days on the road, and the carriage to London, consequently, considerably diminish the profits of her employers. She was therefore at last prevailed upon by Mr. Orwell to reside in a village

in Sussex, sufficiently lonely, bleak, and desolate, to satisfy the gloomy and unsocial taste of Agatha; sufficiently near the sea to make it a healthy residence in her opinion for her child, and near enough to the metropolis for purposes of business; while Mr. Orwell pleased himself with the idea that he could occasionally step into a stage-coach, and in twelve hours' time be set down within a walk of the habitation of Agatha. Besides, his benevolence was gratified by being enabled from Agatha's choice of the abode he had recommended to be of pecuniary service, without her knowledge that he was so. He had hired rooms for her in the house of a dependent relation of his, and binding the woman to secrecy, he had desired her to ask of Agatha only such a sum for the apartments, paying her himself the real rent which she had a right to demand.

Agatha, when she arrived at her new abode, resolved in solitude the most rigorous, to devote her days to unremitting industry, in order to maintain herself and child; endeavouring at the same time to impart to her little Emma those accomplishments and refinements which she had herself been taught, in order that she might be able to acquit herself with propriety and elegance, when (as Agatha had no doubt she would be,) she should be called upon to emerge from obscurity, and move in that sphere of life in which her birth had originally designed her to move. For Agatha was sure, she scarcely knew why perhaps, that her mother would not always remain inexorable; and though resolved never to hold communion herself with her tardily relenting parent, she looked forward with angry pleasure to the time when she would become an object of unavailing regret to her mother, and her daughter an object of pride and of tenderness. In the meanwhile, her natural activity, both of body and of mind, being rendered still more vigorous by an almost frenzied sense of injury and unkindness, she exerted her varied talents to the utmost, and had the satisfaction of knowing that she thereby increased, to a considerable degree, the profits of her affectionate benefactors; though they could not often prevail on themselves to sell a drawing, however good, that seemed taken

from Agatha or her child; for “if we did not give, we at least saved their lives,” said Mr. Orwell; “and every memorial of their persons is precious to us from that recollection.”

But to return to Mrs. Torrington,—who, deceived by the arts of Danvers into a belief of her daughter’s infamy, gave way to all the indignation which a proud and virtuous woman would feel on such a conviction; and while she returned to brood in solitude over her shame and her distress, to her sequestered seat in Cumberland, she was surprised there by a visit from her cousin, the honourable Mr. Castlemain, one of her earliest friends and admirers, but whose suit she had rejected in favour of Mr. Torrington.

Mr. Castlemain, faithful to his first attachment, had never married; and hearing of the distress in which Agatha’s conduct had involved her mother, he hastened from the continent, where he had long resided, in order to express to her in person his sympathy in her sorrow, with a hope perhaps as yet scarcely defined to himself, that in her forlorn and childless state Mrs. Torrington might be induced to listen to his addresses, and secure to herself an attached and affectionate companion. Nor was he deceived in his expectations. Mrs. Torrington, grateful for his long and faithful affection, and eager to lose in new ties the remembrance of those which appeared dissolved for ever, consented to become his wife; and the birth of another daughter had in a degree reconciled her to the loss of Agatha, when, four years after her marriage with Mr. Castlemain, death deprived her not only of a husband whom she sincerely esteemed, but of the child to whom she looked for a renewal of all that happiness which Agatha’s conduct had deprived her of. At first she almost sank under the blow; but as she recovered her powers of reflection, the idea that Agatha, though disgraced and distant, was yet alive, presented itself, and spoke peace to her wounded mind. “After all, she is my child!” said Mrs. Castlemain to herself, “and it was cruel to discard her for a first and only fault; for who knows what base arts were used to mislead her!” And from the moment she had allowed herself to think and feel



thus, she became constantly solicitous to discover the residence of Agatha. But her solicitude was heightened almost to frenzy by the following circumstance.

There is probably no heart so callous, no human being so thoroughly depraved, as not to feel at some moment the agonizing pang of remorse and compassion towards the victim of its successful villany.—When Danvers recollected that he had put it out of the power of Agatha to obtain a copy of the certificate of her marriage at the church where the ceremony took place, and that owing to accident no copy of it had been previously transmitted according to the usual forms to any other register, he knew that he was perfectly secure from any legal prosecution in order to establish the fact of the marriage having taken place, and that his subsequent conduct, in order to make Mrs. Torrington discard her daughter entirely, had been a piece of villany as needless as it was detestable. Concluding also from Agatha's temper and disposition that her mother's rejection of her on the plea that she was only a mistress, though she endeavoured to make herself be received as a wife, would in all probability drive his unhappy victim to the frenzy of desperation, and involve his child also in all the misery incident to a deserted orphan,—he in a moment of remorse and self-condemnation wrote to Mrs. Torrington before he sailed for the West Indies, to assure her that he had really led Agatha to the altar, and that, as she never even suspected he had a wife living, she was consequently in intention as pure and virtuous as when she left her mother's house; adding, that as soon as she found she was not his lawful wife, she had fled from him for ever, carrying her child along with her; and he ended by conjuring Mrs. Torrington to give her innocent and injured daughter an asylum under her roof.

Though no representations from a man of such confessed profligacy as Danvers was, were worthy of credit, still Mrs. Castlemain did not for a moment hesitate to believe even his testimony to the innocence of Agatha, a belief at the same time precious though agonizing to her heart; and wild with remorse,

regret, and anxiety, she left no means untried to find out the retreat of the sufferer, and induce her to return to the arms of her repentant mother. Danvers, meanwhile, satisfied that if Agatha lived she would be restored to the favour of her mother, or that his child at least would receive from her the protection of a parent, left England with a mind lightened of a considerable load, and felt himself less painfully haunted than he had lately been by the image of his victim. Of Mrs. Torrington's second marriage he had never heard, nor of her change of abode. The letter, however, as I have stated above, reached her in safety, and occasioned her repeated and long unavailing endeavours to discover the retreat of her daughter.

But no traces could be found of this long-lost daughter; and at last, despairing of any other means, Mrs. Castlemain caused a paragraph or advertisement, addressed to "Agatha," to be inserted in every paper, desiring that an answer should be directed to her lawyer in London. But as Agatha never saw a newspaper, this advertisement would have appeared in vain, had not Mr. Orwell seen it, who suspecting that the Agatha so addressed was the interesting object of his benevolence, sent the newspaper immediately down to her.

Agatha, in the mean time, had been endeavouring to make herself amends for the loss of other ties, by inspiring her child with an exclusive attachment to herself. "She is all to me, and I will be all to her!" was her constant exclamation; and when she fancied "Agatha," as she *now* called her, (since "Emma," the name of her mother, after whom she had christened her, was become odious to her,) was old enough to understand her, she used to delight in telling her the story of her cruel treatment; and she took a sad and savage pleasure in hearing her express hatred of her grandmother and her father, because they had been so cruel to her dear mamma;—while the lesson of deep resentment for a mother's wrongs was daily inculcated. But, though Agatha hated, or rather despised her husband, she was far from feeling sentiments of this

nature in reality towards her mother; for her conscience told her she had violated her duty in marrying contrary to the laws of decorum and the express will of a parent; and though she could not remember without indignation that her mother had presumed to question the purity of her conduct, she felt that it was but justice to make allowance for those violent and resentful feelings, which after all were the result of her own disobedience.

Such was her frame of mind when she received a parcel from Mr. Orwell; and the address to “Agatha,”—an address so worded that she could not but immediately feel that she was the person addressed,—met her eager eye, and convulsed her whole frame with emotion.

“So then,” cried she, “I am at last forgiven, regretted, and solicited to return to the home so long denied me:—Be it so; and when I am on my death-bed I too will forgive, and be contented to be forgiven—but not before.”

Still, in spite of this angry resolution, she read the welcome address of parental affection over and over again; and several times she caught herself calling her daughter by the long prohibited name of Emma, the name of her mother; and as she did so the last time, she burst into tears, and folded the astonished child to her bosom with emotions of a various and contending nature. But the name so recalled to her memory and her tongue, was not again banished thence.

“I am Agatha, not Emma, mamma,” said the little girl.

“You are both, my dear,” replied her mother, making an effort to restrain her tears; “and henceforth I shall call you Emma.”

Another and another week elapsed; the advertisement was repeated again and again, and the paper sent down to her every day; while the resolution of Agatha, never to let her mother hear of or from her but on her death-bed, grew weaker and weaker; and she began bitterly to repent of the pains which she had taken to make her child imbibe an aversion to her grandmother.

“Let me endeavour,” said she to herself, “to eradicate this aversion while it is yet time.” But she found the task a much more difficult one than she at first imagined.

Other persons had helped to deepen the feeling of dislike which she had originally inculcated. The surgeon of the village had several children, with whom Emma was occasionally permitted to associate, and sorry am I to add that they were frequently sufferers from the violence of her uncorrected temper. The consequence was, that her little playfellows, finding her grandmother was an object of terror and aversion to Emma, used to frighten her into submission by threatening to send her to her grandmamma. And Agatha found too late, that she had inspired her child with a sentiment of hatred unworthy of a Christian to feel or to inculcate.

Shuddering at this conviction, and at her own guilt in having cherished so vile a feeling in the heart of her child,—”How criminal I have been!” she exclaimed in the anguish of her soul; “but let me now make all the expiation I can.”

“My dear child,” cried Agatha, “you are to forgive your enemies, and to love everybody.”

“Yes,” replied Emma, “forgive and love everybody;—No, no,—forgive and love everybody but grandmamma.”

Agatha was confounded at the tenaciousness of Emma’s memory and feelings, and eagerly answered;—”No;—you must forgive and love grandmamma too; for she is a very good woman.”

“No, no,—she is not a good woman; she is cruel to you, and uses you ill, and beats you!”

“Indeed she is good, and you must love her, Emma,” replied the distressed Agatha; “for she will love you and me very dearly, and perhaps we shall live with grandmamma very soon.”

Words would fail to express Agatha’s consternation at the violent expression of rage and aversion which this information excited in her child; for she was not in the least aware that her mother had

long been a bugbear to Emma, through the means of her play-fellows.—And with painful surprise she heard the child, stamping with terror and passion, declare that she never, never would go nigh so wicked, so very wicked a woman.

“I deserve this,” said Agatha mournfully;—“I violated my duty both as a child and mother, when I tried to pollute that innocent heart with the angry and disturbed passions of mine.” Then melting into tears of tenderness, she sighed over the injury which she had done Mrs. Castlemain, by steeling her child’s heart against her; and the feelings of returning affection towards her were deepened by the consciousness.

The next week the advertisement was again repeated; and Agatha’s heart was completely overcome. “Mother! dear mother!” she exclaimed, “you shall not long sigh for me in vain.”

It so happened, that on the Sunday following the parable of the prodigal son was read at church. Agatha listened to it with emotions the most overwhelming; and when the preacher came to those words, “I will arise and go to my father,”—her feelings became uncontrollable; and throwing herself on her knees, she hid her face on the seat, and nearly sobbed aloud.

Her emotion had not escaped the observant eye of the amiable being who was officiating; and when the service was over, he followed her, resolved that he would no longer permit her to reject, as she had hitherto done, his advances to acquaintance, since he was now convinced that something weighed heavily on her mind; and he believed that conversation with him in his professional capacity, if not as a friend, might be the means of lightening her sorrows. But he soon found that Agatha was no longer averse to form the acquaintance which he sought. Her mind was wounded by the reproaches of conscience; and knowing the character of this truly pious man, she hoped that if she unbosomed herself to him, he might speak peace to her self-upbraiding spirit.

Accordingly she requested an interview with him, which he readily granted. She then detailed to him the eventful history of her short life, and of the feelings of regret, remorse, and repentant affection excited in her by her mother's advertisement.

"Let me advise you," cried Mr. Egerton, sighing as he spoke, "to lose no time in writing to your mother! Let her feel no longer the agony of 'hope deferred!'" And as he said this, overcome by some painful recollection, he brushed a tear from his eye. Agatha promised that she would write the next morning;—and cheerfully acceding to her request, that he would give her the benefit of his society as often as he could, he took his departure, leaving Agatha full of regret that she had allowed the feelings of disappointment and proud resentment to shut up her heart so long against the comforts of society and the consolations of religion.

But, alas! Agatha had neglected to profit by the past, and the present, and for her there was no future in store.

Whether the agitation which she had experienced in church was the cause of illness, or whether it was only the effect of an illness then impending, it is impossible to determine; but that night she was seized with all the symptoms of a low and dangerous fever, and was soon pronounced to be past any hopes of recovery.

In one of the intervals of delirium she sent for Mr. Egerton; and after having gone through with him the duties of religion, she earnestly entreated him to take her child under his care, till her mother, to whom she was about to write, should make known her will concerning her.

"I will do more," replied Mr. Egerton;—"I will myself deliver your daughter and your letter into your mother's hands."

"What! undertake so long a journey yourself?"

"Can I be better employed?—Remember that your mother will need consolation;—and who so likely to give it to her as the

man who attended you in your last moments? for believe me," continued he, "I shall not leave you till all is over."

"May God reward you!" cried Agatha, grasping his hand fervently—"O that I had known you sooner!"—Then, making a violent effort, she scrawled, with a trembling hand, the following lines:

"I presumed to indulge the bitterness of resentment, and towards a mother too; and I am punished for it! for just as I was going to throw myself into your arms, and accept your protection for me and my poor child, I was seized with a mortal malady; and when you receive this, I shall be no more.—Take then my last blessing and farewell! Would I could have seen you before I died!—but I have a child,—named Emma, after you; love her;—she will be presented to you by the pious and generous being whose kindness has soothed to me the agonies of my last moments. If you and he think it right, let my claims and my Emma's, on my deluded husband, be prosecuted legally; and let him be told, if you bring forward my claims, that with my last breath, I forgave and prayed for him!

"A thousand sad and fond thoughts, my dearest mother, struggle for utterance, as I write; but—I can no more—I—farewell—I—"

Here she fell back exhausted on her pillow; and in a few hours she expired.

Emma, in the meanwhile, had been kept as much as possible at the house of the surgeon, where she had been in the habit of visiting; but the affectionate child could with difficulty be restrained from going home, though forbidden to go thither; for Agatha, as soon as she found that her disorder was infectious, had courageously determined not to see her child again.

When Agatha had breathed her last, Mr. Egerton went in search of the poor, unconscious orphan, who eagerly ran up to him, and begged him to take her to her mamma.

“My dear child,” replied Mr. Egerton, tears starting in his eyes, “your mamma has desired that I should take you home with me.”

The child for a moment sullenly refused to go; but when he gravely added, “and can you have the cruelty to disobey your poor sick mamma?” Emma burst into tears, and suffered him to lead her to his house.

But it was some time before he had resolution to tell the quick-feeling child that she could see her mother no more! nor, when he did so, had he fortitude enough to retain any thing like self-command, when he witnessed her frantic agony at hearing it. Of death, indeed, she could have but a vague idea; but not seeing her mother, was a positive and intelligible evil; and hour succeeded to hour, and still the little sufferer was not consoled. But the next day the violence of her feelings had abated; and though she occasionally gave way to dreadful bursts of sorrow, the pains which Mr. Egerton’s house-keeper took to amuse her were not thrown away upon her.

On the fourth day after Agatha died, the funeral took place; but Mr. Egerton did not allow Emma to attend it. He knew how little used to restraint she had been; and he dreaded, from a degree of curiosity and proneness to inquiry above her years, questions and conduct ill-assorted to the solemnity of the scene.

But he desired that Emma might be put into deep mourning. And on his return from the performance of the last melancholy duties to Agatha, with a heart full of sadness, and a cheek pale with emotion, he started and shuddered at witnessing the childish joy with which Emma ran forward to meet him, and showed him her new clothes and her fine black sash.



“Poor child!” said Mr. Egerton, shedding tears as he clasped her to his generous bosom, “one day thou wilt know how dearly they are purchased!”

A few days after, Mr. Egerton, having learnt from Mrs. Castlemain’s agent in London her change of name and her present abode, set off with Emma for the house of her grandmother. But he was careful not to let her know whither they were going, as he was aware of the child’s aversion to Mrs. Castlemain, and knew that it would be better to conquer it by degrees, than attempt to overcome it by violence. Mrs. Castlemain still lived in Cumberland, and her house was situated about three miles from Keswick; it was therefore some days before Mr. Egerton reached his journey’s end, and beheld at the foot of a mountain the beautiful mansion of Mrs. Castlemain. But the journey had not appeared long to him. Emma, though not much more than six years old, had found the way to his heart, and had unlocked his long dormant affections. By turns he had been charmed by the quickness of her perceptions and had been terrified by the quickness of her sensibilities. He soon saw that she required a strict and unusually watchful eye to be kept over her; and long before they were arrived at their journey’s end, he had convinced himself that Emma could have no guardian so watchful over her as he should be.

“Poor thing! how useful I could be to her!” he had said to himself;—and having once admitted the truth of that proposition, it was impossible for a man so conscientious as Mr. Egerton not to resolve to act accordingly; and his heart had fondly and for ever adopted the orphan Emma, when the postilion informed him that the house he saw before him was the house of Mrs. Castlemain, and by that means recalled to his recollection that he was going to present Emma to one who had real and natural claims on her, which might entirely annihilate those which he had resolved to put in force. “But if her grandmother should not be willing to receive her?” thought Mr. Egerton; and he was shocked to find how much he wished that Mrs. Castlemain might give them a cold reception.

While these ideas were passing in his mind, and while Emma, sitting on his lap, was leaning against his bosom, and playfully parting the unpowdered locks that hung over his forehead, among which sorrow, not time, had scattered the grey hairs of age, the chaise stopped at the door of the White Cottage, as it was called, and a lady, whose dress and manner bespoke her the mistress of the house, while her appearance proclaimed her worn with sorrow and anxiety, came to the green gate at which they stopped, and in a faint and languid tone demanded their business.

“Do I see Mrs. Castlemain?” said Mr. Egerton.

“Yes, sir,” replied the lady; and struck with compassion at sight of her evident and habitual state of depression, he forgot the wish which he had just expressed, of keeping Emma to himself; and thought of nothing but the probable comfort which she would prove to her forlorn and miserable relation.

“I have some business with you, madam,” answered Mr. Egerton; “and with your leave I will alight.”

In a few moments Mr. Egerton, leading Emma by the hand, whose features were shaded from the view by her ringlets and the bonnet which she wore, followed the anxious and uneasy Mrs. Castlemain into the house, and prepared himself to give her the information which she was too anxious to demand.

But Mr. Egerton felt himself unable to speak before the child; he therefore requested that she might be allowed to play in the garden before the house; and Emma having eagerly accepted the permission given her, he found himself at last alone with the mother of Agatha.

“Is that your little girl, sir?” said Mrs. Castlemain, while with an anxious and inquiring look she gazed on Emma from the window, and saw her bound along the lawn with all the untamed vivacity of childhood.

“O, no!” answered Mr. Egerton, “she is not my child;—would to heaven she were; She——” Here he paused, for he had not yet courage to enter on the mournful task that awaited him.

“You were going to say something, sir,” said Mrs. Castlemain, seating herself by him, and speaking in a faltering voice, as if her heart foreboded something unusual. “That sweet child, sir, by her dress seems to have lately sustained a great loss?”

“Yes, madam, the greatest of all losses,” replied Mr. Egerton, making a great effort; “poor Emma has just lost——her mother!”

“Emma! did you say?” cried Mrs. Castlemain, catching hold of his arm, and gazing wildly in his face. “Who was her mother, sir?”

“You——you had a daughter, madam,” replied Mr. Egerton.

“I *had* a daughter!” exclaimed Mrs. Castlemain, and fell back insensible in her chair.

Mr. Egerton immediately rang for assistance; and while the servants ran backwards and forwards with restoratives, Emma, who saw them pass to and fro, imagined that refreshments for them were preparing, and instantly returning to the house she re-entered the parlour just as Mrs. Castlemain had recovered her senses, and had learnt from Mr. Egerton that Agatha on her death-bed had bequeathed her orphan child to her care. Mr. Egerton was going to add, that Emma had conceived so great a terror and hatred of her grandmother, that it was advisable Mrs. Castlemain should not for the present be known to her as anything more than a friend of her mother’s,—when he was prevented by her unexpected entrance.

As soon as Mrs. Castlemain saw her, a thousand fond and uncontrollable emotions urged her towards the unconscious orphan; while tears of tenderness trickling down her wan cheek, she stretched forth her arms to the astonished and affrighted child, and dropping on her knees entreated her to come to the arms of her grandmother.

At that name Emma, starting from Mrs. Castlemain's grasp as if from the touch of a serpent, uttered a loud and piercing shriek, and darting through the open doors flew over the lawn; while Mrs. Castlemain, shocked and surprised, sank almost fainting on the floor, and demanded of Mr. Egerton an explanation of this strange conduct.

"By some unfortunate means or other," replied he, "she has learned to associate with the name of her grandmother ideas of fear and dislike, which her poor mother has vainly endeavoured to remove."

"But then she did endeavour to remove them?" eagerly remarked Mrs. Castlemain.

"She did," said Mr. Egerton.

"Thank God!" returned the unhappy and repentant mother; (and Mr. Egerton immediately gave her Agatha's letter;)—then begging Mr. Egerton to go and find Emma, and endeavour to soothe her, she hastily left the room to read it in the solitude of her own apartment.

Mr. Egerton went immediately in search of Emma. He found her in a paroxysm of rage and terror. At sight of him she stamped with all the violence of passion, and protested that she would go away that moment. Mr. Egerton replied, that he had brought her there by her poor mother's express command; but that, if she would not stay where she was, he must take her away again; still he could not and would not go till he had eaten his dinner; he therefore expected that she should return into the house with him. But the violent child refused to comply; for she said the house belonged to her wicked grandmamma.

"So does the bank on which you are sitting, my dear," replied Mr. Egerton; and Emma started from it immediately. "The place on which you are standing is hers also; every thing you see is hers except the post-chaise," observed Mr. Egerton; "therefore while I dine I know not what can become of you, as you can't bear to remain on your grandmother's premises."

“I will sit in the post-chaise,” said Emma, sobbing violently. And Mr. Egerton having ordered the postilion to put the horses into the stable, and to go into the house himself, he assisted Emma into the chaise, and then left her to herself, expecting that solitude and hunger would at length subdue her as yet untamed and pernicious anger and animosity.

It was near an hour before Mr. Egerton was sufficiently composed to venture into the parlour again, and during that time the cloth was laid for dinner, and he saw that Emma from the chaise window could see the preparations which were going on.

Mrs. Castlemain at length came down, and with a countenance so full of woe, that Mr. Egerton could not speak to her, when he beheld her, but was forced to turn to the window to hide his emotion.

“Where is my child, my all now?” said Mrs. Castlemain in a voice almost extinct with sorrow.

“I have left her to herself,” replied Mr. Egerton; “for at present she is too headstrong for me to attempt to bring her hither.”

“Shall I go to her? shall I humble myself before her?”

“By no means. On the first impression which you now give her of yourself will depend her future conduct towards you; and if she finds you submissive, depend on it she is discerning enough to act accordingly.”

“No matter,” cried Mrs. Castlemain, “so that she does but love me.”

“But for her sake as well as for yours, my dear madam, it is necessary that she should respect you too. At least allow me to advise you to-day, and we will see what to-morrow will produce.”

“You shall direct, and I will obey you,” replied Mrs. Castlemain; “for a mind so injured by distress as mine is, scarcely knows what is right; and indeed,” added she, “I would have seen no one but you, after the sad intelligence which I have just received; but you

have such claims on me! Besides, from you I can learn all the particulars of——” Here her voice failed her. Mr. Egerton was at no loss to fancy the remainder of the sentence.

Soon after, dinner was announced, and Mrs. Castlemain, as she seated herself at the table, asked Mr. Egerton if she must really not invite Emma to join them.

“Certainly not,” he replied; “but let us open the windows, that she may see what is going forward.”

Mrs. Castlemain, whom sorrow kept fasting, sat opposite the window; and as she could not eat, her whole attention was directed to Emma; she saw her continually looking out of the window of the chaise, as if she wished to be a sharer in what was going forward; and Mrs. Castlemain begged to be allowed to carry her some dinner. But Mr. Egerton requested that she would not be so perniciously indulgent. When dinner was ended, and a dessert of fine fruit brought on the table, Emma proclaimed by her gestures and her angry screams the violence of her rage and disappointment.

“I cannot bear this; I must go to her,” said Mrs. Castlemain.

“Forgive me, but it is not yet time.”

“But there is a mist rising from the lakes, Mr. Egerton, and she will catch cold.”

“I had rather, madam, her health should be temporarily affected, than her temper ruined eternally,—which it must be, if she be allowed to see that by persisting in violence she can gain a point.”

At these words, at this sentiment, Mrs. Castlemain sighed deeply, and became silent; for she had heard them before; she had heard them from that beloved husband whose precepts she had disregarded, whose rules for education she had neglected to act upon, and had by that means occasioned the ruin of her daughter!

Terrible are the wounds inflicted by self-reproach; and Mrs. Castlemain felt them severely.

When Mr. Egerton had finished his fruit, he went out to Emma. He found her quiet but sullen; and he took care to let her know, that, but for him, her grandmother Mrs. Castlemain would have brought her out some dinner; but that he told her he knew very well that she would take nothing from her hands. The child hung her conscious head on her bosom at these words, and, bursting into a loud fit of sobbing, replied, "But I am so hungry!"

"Indeed!" answered Mr. Egerton; "I am sorry to hear it; for hungry you must remain, unless you choose to eat some of your grandmother's excellent pudding and fruit."

"I am so hungry!" cried Emma again; and Mr. Egerton immediately letting down the step of the chaise, Emma allowed him to lead her in silence into the house; while with all the grimaces and distortions of sheepishness and sullenness she accepted a chair and plate at the table, and, turning her back on Mrs. Castlemain, eagerly ate the good things which were set before her.

When she had satisfied her hunger, she got up and begged Mr. Egerton to order the chaise, and take her away again.

"Not to-night," said Mr. Egerton coolly; "for I have promised to stay and sleep here."

Emma heard him in sullen silence; but it was not long before she gladly consented to be undressed and put into a warm bed; where, with the happy forgetfulness of her age, she soon ceased to remember on whose bed she was, and fell into a deep and peaceful slumber.

"Thank God!" cried Mrs. Castlemain when she heard of it, gratefully pressing Mr. Egerton's hand as she spoke, "the child of my poor Agatha is reposing under my roof."

The rest of the evening was passed in anxious and interesting questions on the part of Mrs. Castlemain, and as interesting answers on the part of Mr. Egerton; who, though prejudiced greatly

against Mrs. Castlemain by knowing Agatha, and the faults in her temper, a character which he attributed to a defective education, was so deeply impressed by her evident distress, so affected by the “venerable presence of misery,” (as Sterne calls it,) that he retired to rest full of kindness and regard for his unhappy hostess, and resolved to do all that lay in his power to console her afflictions.

The next morning, when Emma awoke (and worn out with the fatigue and angry agitation of the day before she had slept much later than usual,) she found two servants watching by her bedside, and ready to assist her to dress as soon as she was disposed to rise. It is difficult to say how soon a child loves to be made of importance; and certain it is, that Emma was fully capable of feeling the delight of being waited upon. She was also equally alive to the pleasures of a repast far more luxurious than she had ever seen; and the sight of a breakfast consisting of hot bread, honey, cream, preserved gooseberries, potted char, and fruit, immediately had power to suppress the emotions of terror and aversion which the sight of Mrs. Castlemain again occasioned her.

Mr. Egerton was also careful to let her receive every thing which she desired from the hand of Mrs. Castlemain; and the latter, having received the hint from Mr. Egerton, called the servants into the room; and after introducing Emma to them as her granddaughter and sole heiress, and their future mistress, desired them, as they valued her favour, to show her every possible attention.

Where one association is already powerful, it can be destroyed only by one as powerful, or still more so. The grandmother, hitherto an object of dread to Emma, and a being with whom she associated nothing but ideas of hatred and aversion, was now, because she had ministered to Emma’s pleasure and ambition, become associated with agreeable images only in her mind; and with the versatility of childhood, she now no longer shrank from the offered kiss of Mrs. Castlemain, but gazed on her with a propitiatory smile as the dispenser of plenty and happiness.



Mrs. Castlemain beheld with delight the victory she had gained; and eager to insure its duration, she went in search of some old toys which had belonged to her daughter; and not waiting to indulge the painful recollections which the sight of them occasioned her, she soon returned laden with them into the parlour; where Emma, uttering a scream of joy, ran forward to meet her, and with eagerness received in her lap the precious case. The scream, the eager look of joyful impatience, the mottled and extended arms, reminded Mrs. Castlemain so powerfully of her lost daughter, that, with a heart oppressed almost to bursting, she rushed out of the room, and walked on the lawn to recover herself. But then she recollected how foolish she was to allow herself to be so painfully overcome by a resemblance which must endear Emma to her, and she resolved to re-enter the parlour, to contemplate the likeness from which she had before fled.

But the lapse of years, on her return, was entirely forgotten, and the illusion complete. Emma was seated on the carpet, encompassed by her mother's toys, and in the same room which had so often witnessed the childish sports of Agatha! and as she shook back her auburn and clustering ringlets from her face, and smilingly held up one of the playthings to Mrs. Castlemain on her entrance, she rushed forward to embrace Emma, exclaiming as she did so, "My dear, dear child!" Then, suddenly recollecting herself, she left the room, overcome by the mixed and painful feelings which overwhelmed her.

At this moment, as she slowly walked down the lawn before the house, she met Mr. Egerton, to whom she expressed the emotion which Emma occasioned her to experience from her strong likeness to her poor mother.

"The likeness strikes even me," replied Mr. Egerton, "who saw your daughter only when pale and faded by uneasiness of mind.—And I fear," added Mr. Egerton, "that the likeness in one respect extends still further; and that in the quickness of feeling

and in the ungovernableness of her temper, she also resembles her mother.”

“Perhaps she does,” said Mrs. Castlemain; “but so as she be but like her, I care not, however dear the complete resemblance may cost me!”

Mr. Egerton forgave the irrationality of this speech, for the sake of the feeling which it contained; but he felt it his duty to convince Mrs. Castlemain, that she was bound in conscience to endeavour to correct and eradicate those defects in Emma’s temper and disposition which had had so fatal an effect on her mother’s happiness. And he did so in a manner so kind and soothing, at the same time that he expressed his sentiments firmly and unequivocally, that Mrs. Castlemain confessed the impropriety of the sentiment which she had before indulged, and promised that it should be the study of her life to make Emma’s temper as mild and tractable as her poor mother’s had been otherwise.

“But, indeed,” said Mrs. Castlemain, “I fear my own weakness, my own want of resolution. Sorrow and remorse have changed almost into imbecility and incapacity of resistance that proud tyrannical spirit to which I attribute all my woes;—and against the child of my injured Agatha, never, never can I use severe measures, even though they may be deemed necessary.”

“I can enter into the feelings which produce that conviction,” replied Mr. Egerton, “and have no doubt but that you will sometimes act upon them to Emma’s disadvantage; therefore, you will want an assistant in the important office of educating your dear charge.”

“I shall;—but where, O! where can I find the person with the proper requisites to undertake that office? If you, sir, would and can undertake it, believe me, my fondest hopes for Emma’s welfare would at once be realized.”

“To say the truth, madam,” answered Mr. Egerton, “I have been wishing to offer you my services.”

“Indeed!” cried Mrs. Castlemain eagerly; “then all my fears are at an end. Name your own terms, and I will instantly accede to them. I should think my whole income cheaply spent in securing to my Agatha’s child those advantages which I was incapable of affording to her mother.”

“Believe me, my dear madam, that the pecuniary reward which I shall ask for my trouble will be very little; my best and dearest reward will be your esteem and respect, and the affection of Emma. I *was* a solitary, insulated, unattached being; but I feel *now* that I have still affections, and that my heart is not entirely buried in the grave; and while I travelled from Sussex hither with your orphan grandchild, I learnt to love her so tenderly, that I thought I should never have the courage to separate from her again.”

“I hope you never will,” replied Mrs. Castlemain.

“I don’t mean to do so at present.—In a fit of gloom, and disgust to the world, I solicited the curacy of the village near which your daughter resided; but I found not there the comfort which I sought. I had been used to society, and I saw myself in a desert;—true, there were poor around me, and I could minister to their wants; but they were as ignorant as they were indigent, and I felt the wretchedness which made me leave the world, increased by the fancied remedy which I had chosen. Therefore I was resolved to give up the situation and seek a less gloomy one, when I became acquainted with your lost Agatha, and learnt to know the value of that society which the sullen, proud reserve, springing from a consciousness of unmerited misfortune, was always careful to withhold from me.—But this is not to the point in question; you wish me to assist you in the education of Emma, and I wish to afford you such assistance. My terms then are these;—you shall give me the same sum (and no more) which I received as a curate; and as preaching does not agree with my health, I will give it up entirely, and content myself with performing the other duties of a parish priest, namely, visiting the sick and the afflicted, and

bestowing on them the consolations of religion.—But I must have a house to myself.”

“What! will you not live with me?”

“By no means; but as near you as you please. And should any one in the neighbourhood have another pupil to offer me, I will agree to receive another pupil, either boy or girl.”

“Nothing can be more fortunate,” eagerly replied Mrs. Castlemain; “Mr. Hargrave, a gentleman who lives about two miles off, is at this time greatly in want of a tutor in some way or other, for his nephew, Henry St. Aubyn, whom, from some caprice or other, he has taken from Westminster school; he has a very pretty little cottage on his estate, which is now to let; therefore, if you will not indulge me by living in my house—”

“Indulge you, my dear madam!—What! make you and me the theme of all the gossips in the town of Keswick! No;—we are neither of us old enough to set busy tongues at defiance; besides, as we are to educate Emma, we must not set her the example of a violation of decorum; for I deem an attention to decorum one of the first bulwarks to female chastity.”

Mrs. Castlemain in a happier moment would not perhaps have been sorry to be told that she was still too young to escape scandal; but she was very sorry that she could not make her arrangements such as to enable her to enjoy the comfort of Mr. Egerton’s conversation at all times. She however rejoiced at having succeeded so much to her own satisfaction in procuring a preceptor for the orphan Emma.

“But what sort of man is Mr. Hargrave?” asked Mr. Egerton.

“O! a humorist, and a domestic tyrant; a man who can’t bear contradiction, and who likes to keep even those whom he pretends to love, in an abject state of dependence on his will.”

“Was he ever at College for a short time?”

“Yes.”

“At Cambridge?”

“I believe so.”

“Is he rich?”

“Very rich.”

“And is his name Henry?”

“It is.”

“Then it must be the same Hargrave whom I knew at College. He is my senior by some years, but I occasionally associated with him during his short stay there.”

“I flatter myself he is the Mr. Hargrave whom you know; for I hope there are not two such queer-tempered beings in the world.”

“This Henry Hargrave had a very beautiful sister, who came to visit her brother, a very showy, dressing, dashing girl, and her name was Henrietta.”

“That convinces me,” replied Mrs. Castlemain, “that my neighbour and your College friend are the same person; for Henrietta Hargrave married Mr. St. Aubyn, a gentleman of an old and honourable family and large estates; and having ruined him by her extravagance, he died, it is said, broken-hearted; and she as well as her son is now dependent on the bounty of Mr. Hargrave, and at this moment she resides at Keswick, and Henry with his uncle.”

“So,” replied Mr. Egerton, “I am here then *en pays de connoissance*; and for your sake, Mrs. Castlemain, I rejoice in being so, for you can now receive proper testimonials to convince you that I am the man of education and honour, which I have professed myself to be; for, my dear madam, you must own that you have at present only my own word to prove that I am the reverend Lionel Egerton, and no sharper or swindler.”

“Sir,” replied Mrs. Castlemain, with great feeling, “it is enough for me that my poor child named you with gratitude and affection

in her letter, and that you have been the protector of her orphan hither.”

“But suppose I have robbed the real Egerton of the letter and the child?” replied Mr. Egerton, smiling.

“O! my dear sir, your looks and manner are sufficient proofs that——”

“Well, well,—I see you are determined to think well of me, and that it was not imprudent in you to receive me into your house without a certificate of my good intentions; however, I feel at this moment, so satisfied with myself, with you, and with my present prospects, that, as I am in a conversable humour, I will trouble you to tell me my way to Mr. Hargrave’s; and I will call upon him, and beg him to assure you that your confidence is really not ill-placed.”

Then, having received the necessary information, Mr. Egerton set off on his visit to the Vale House, as Mr. Hargrave’s seat was called.

I will now give a short sketch of Mr. Egerton’s history. But it is a history common to many men. Events in life are often not important in themselves, but rendered so by the effect which they produce in the person to whom they occur.

Mr. Egerton was the youngest son of a very numerous and respectable family, and brought up to the Church, in the prospect of being provided for by a noble relation. At College he soon distinguished himself by his knowledge of the classics, and his conversational powers; and he was so deservedly a favourite of the circle in which he moved, that, having become a fellow at the age of twenty-eight, he was contented to await at the University, a good College living, or one from his long-promised patron; when, unfortunately for his peace, he was introduced to the beautiful sister of a College friend, and became passionately and irrecoverably in love for the first time in his life. Nor was the young lady slow to return his passion;—but to marry was impossible.

Miss Ainslie was the daughter of an extravagant man of fashion, and her habits had been expensive in a degree far beyond what her fortune warranted. True, she was willing, in a transport of youthful enthusiasm, to share the poverty of the man of her heart, and to quit “the scenes so gay, where she was fairest of the fair.” But Mr. Egerton knew that it was the nature of enthusiasm to subside, and that love, when exposed to the assaults of poverty and the teasing details of severe domestic economy, is only too apt to struggle against them in vain; and though sure that his passion was proof against all attacks whatever, he was unwilling to expose that of Miss Ainslie to the trial which he did not fear for his own. It was therefore settled, on mature deliberation, that the lovers should not marry till Mr. Egerton obtained a living; and in the meanwhile Mr. Egerton and Miss Ainslie’s friends were both very active in their endeavours to obtain, from the noble relation mentioned before, the long-promised living. But year succeeded to year, application to application, and still Mr. Egerton’s claims were overlooked or forgotten; and the sickly hue of “hope deferred” began to be visible on the once blooming cheek of Clara Ainslie. To her a union with Mr. Egerton was desirable, not only because he was a man whom her heart and her reason both approved, but she longed to seek shelter in the protection and quiet of a house of her own, from the profligate and dissipated company which frequented the house of her deluded father, and sometimes insulted her with addresses, to which her well-known poverty but too frequently exposed her. But her hopes of emancipation from her sufferings still continued fruitless; and she saw herself at the age of five-and-thirty the ghost of what she was, and vainly endeavoured, by the faint glimmerings of a distant hope of a union with her still devoted lover, to cheer her drooping spirits, and light up the languid radiance of her eye. But the frame, weak and delicate while warm with youth and the consciousness of happiness, shrank and faded before the constant and corroding power of restless wishes and certain distresses; while Egerton, only kept alive himself by a sure though distant prospect as he thought, of having his long-

raised expectations gratified, hung over her drooping form with still increased affection and anxiety.

At length he heard in the fourteenth year of their courtship that the incumbent on a very considerable living in Lord D.'s gift was a very old man, and at the point of death; and he hastened to the house of a friend at about forty miles' distance, where Clara was then staying, in order to impart to her this welcome intelligence. He arrived, and found her in the last stage of a rapid decline. Her constitution had at length yielded to the constant demands made on it by her feelings;—and she had scarcely smiled on the welcome news which her lover brought, had scarcely received the kiss on her pale cheek, with which he hailed her his in prospect for ever—when, laying her head on his bosom, she murmured out, “We shall then at length be happy!” and expired.

On the day of her funeral, and while Egerton with the calmness of deep-rooted anguish was visiting the body for the last time and gazing on it in solitary woe, the letter announcing the death of the incumbent above mentioned followed him to the chamber of mourning; and he found that a living worth a thousand a year waited his immediate acceptance.

Oh! what agony did he not endure, while in a hollow and mournful tone he exclaimed, “It comes too late!”—and stooping down as he did so, rested his cheek on the cold brow of Clara.

“*It comes too late*, and I reject it;—I scorn the wealth of which she lives not to partake and now welcome poverty and solitude!” was his only answer to his patron; and with a sort of spiteful sorrow and savage grief, he gave up his fellowship, and sought for the trifling curacy above mentioned, resolved to court the difficulties and privations of a narrow income. But when time, the great soother, had calmed the first transports of his sorrow, he became dissatisfied with his situation;—not that he wished for means of living better, for on principle he had always practised the strictest denial, nor had he ever found his yearly savings insufficient to relieve the really deserving indigent around him; but



he was conscious of having other treasures which he could not in solitude bestow—the treasures of his learning, his knowledge of mankind, and his experience. He saw himself amply possessed of the power of being useful, but completely shut out from the means of employing that power. If he talked, there were none to listen to or understand him; and though he felt convinced that his affections were for ever buried in the tomb of Clara, he sighed for a kindred mind, and wished for an intelligent companion, if it was only to listen to the tale of his sorrows. As soon as he saw Agatha he thought he had found this companion. He read an expression of fixed sorrow in her countenance that interested him; but he soon found that it was a sort of savage, proud, sullen sorrow, like what his own had originally been; and though, he felt her endeared to him by this conviction, he also felt that this disposition was a bar to all hopes of intimacy; and he had lived in the same village with Agatha two years before he had exchanged two words with her. But when he saw her melted into tears at church at the pathetic parable of the prodigal son, he felt that the power of sullen grief was past, and he doubted not but that the moment was arrived when the voice of consolation would be welcome to her, and when her heart, as I before observed, would be lightened of half its load, could she but tell the tale of her sorrows to one who would listen to and pity them. Accordingly he did speak to her;—he heard her mournful tale; and while he hung over her death-bed, and received her last parting wishes, and promised to obey them,—with the consciousness of being useful, returned a degree of tranquillity to his mind; and the death of Agatha awakened him to new life and the prospect of new enjoyment. Besides, he read in her deep and guilty resentment,—in that sullen indignation which had caused her to put off the day of forgiveness till the pardon which she longed to pronounce and to implore was arrested on her lips by death,—a warning lesson and a salutary reproof to himself. Because a patron had neglected to fulfil his promises till, according to his long-treasured hopes, he could no longer profit by his bounty, in the sullenness of resentment,—a

resentment which could injure and mortify himself alone,—he had fled from the society of men, to brood in retirement over the proud consciousness of injury. He had allowed the powers of his mind to droop, unstimulated by the influence of collision; and had suffered hours, precious hours, to be wasted in the languor of unavailing regret, which he might have employed to amuse, to instruct, and to enlighten his fellow-creatures.

“I have erred; but I will endeavour instantly to repair my error,” he exclaimed, as he stood by the corpse of Agatha;—adding, as he imprinted a kiss on the cold unconscious hand beside him, “Thou shalt not have suffered and repented in vain. And I will repay, by endeavouring to benefit thy child, the gratitude I owe thee for the good I have derived from thy warning example.”

He kept his resolution; and the child of Agatha became the pupil of his affection.

When Mr. Egerton returned from his visit to Mr. Hargrave, who happened to be in a good humour, and therefore received him graciously, he was pleased to find that when the postilion had come to the door with the chaise, according to the orders given the preceding day, Emma had burst into tears at sight of him, had protested that she would stay where she was, and had screamed as much at the idea of leaving her grandmother as she had before done at the idea of staying with her; nor could she be at all pacified till Mrs. Castlemain had paid and discharged the driver and his chaise.

“May all her hatreds through life be as evanescent as her hatred of you has been, my dear madam!” said Mr. Egerton; “for the being who hates easily and eternally, is a curse to himself and a pest to his fellow-creatures.”

Mr. Egerton returned, accompanied by Henry St. Aubyn, the nephew of Mr. Hargrave, and now the pupil in prospect of Mr. Egerton, who ever and anon regarded him with such looks of interest and affection, as, considering the shortness of their acquaintance, were matter of surprise to Mrs. Castlemain.

Henry St. Aubyn was a tall, lank, unformed boy of fourteen; his figure all bone, and his face all eyes; for the rest of his features had not as yet grown sufficiently to bear any proportion to the large dark grey eyes, shaded with long and silken black eyelashes, which formed the striking feature in his sun-burnt yet blooming face. His hair, which once curled in luxuriant ringlets down his shoulders, was, to the great mortification of his mother's vanity, cropped close to his head, to gratify the arbitrary will of his uncle. But to prevent his hair from curling was impossible;—short, but full, his dark ringlets still clustered round his straight low forehead, and gave his head the resemblance of the bust of some young Greek. Still, though his appearance was certainly picturesque and interesting, he was not yet handsome enough to deserve the earnest gaze of affectionate and silent admiration which Mr. Egerton bestowed on him; but Mrs. Castlemain ceased to be surprised, when Mr. Egerton, sighing deeply as he turned away from a long examination of St. Aubyn's features, said to her, "That dear boy, madam, is, by his father, I find, second cousin to the Ainslies, and to *her* whom I have mentioned to you. And I am sure, quite sure, that in the cut of his dark-grey eye, and in countenance particularly when he smiles, he greatly resembles her. Judge then, madam, with what delight I shall undertake the task of instructing him."

Before Mrs. Castlemain could reply, Emma, who had just been fresh washed and dressed, came running into the room; and jumping on Mr. Egerton's lap, told him with a scream of joy that the post-chaise was gone, and that they were to stay where there were, and go away no more. "I am glad of it," cried Henry St. Aubyn; "for I hope you will stay and play with me, and love me."

Emma at first drew back from his offered hand; but after looking at him some time under her ringlets that hung over her eyes, she ventured to give her hand; and in a short time she very kindly took him to see her baby house.

The intimacy thus happily began, was as happily matured by time. Mr. Egerton became the inhabitant of a small house at an equal

distance between Mr. Hargrave's and Mrs. Castlemain's; but he taught Emma and St. Aubyn together at the house of the latter; while Emma, urged on by the example and praises of St. Aubyn, learnt eagerly and readily every thing which Mr. Egerton taught her, and was soon the pride and delight of her grandmother, her preceptor, and her companion.

But it was not in her studies only that Emma profited by the society of St. Aubyn; her heart and her temper were benefited by his example. It was at first a difficult task for Mrs. Castlemain by kindness, and Mr. Egerton by judicious severity, to break their pupil of those habits of violence and ill-humour which the unfavourable circumstances in which she had been placed had exposed her to acquire. But this task was rendered easy at length by the model of fine temper and obedience exhibited to her every day by St. Aubyn.

Henry St. Aubyn's most striking characteristic was filial piety. He was an only child, and his mind and feelings exhibited that precocity which is often observed in those children who have been the exclusive objects of attention and instruction. But he had also been in situations which never fail to bring forward prematurely the sensibility and the intellect. He had been nursed and educated in scenes of domestic distress;—the tears of his mother had mingled with her caresses of him, while she loudly lamented that extravagance, though she had not resolution to relinquish it, which would unavoidably destroy the future fortune of her son. He had also wept on his father's neck, while in unavailing agony the self-condemned parent had implored his forgiveness, for having weakly allowed his fond folly as a husband to get the better of his duty as a father, and suffer Mrs. St. Aubyn to pursue that ruinous line of conduct which had made them all beggars and dependants.

But luckily for Henry it was only as a husband that Mr. St. Aubyn was weak and criminally indulgent; as a father, he knew how to unite kindness with restraint, and tenderness with firmness, so judiciously, that the temper of his son was neither soured by

cruel privations, nor injured still more by blind and excessive indulgence.

Henry St. Aubyn obeyed his father in infancy, because he knew that on disobedience awaited certain punishment; and thus the habit of obedience to proper restraint and proper commands was acquired without trouble. As he grew older, he found that he was thus constrained, because his ruler knew better what was good for him than he for himself, and he continued to obey from respect as well as from habit; and as his father possessed that command of temper himself, which he endeavoured to teach, St. Aubyn both from precept and example became mild without abjectness, and good-humoured without effort. Besides, he had the great advantage of being his father's constant companion; and being thus early the witness of his parent's sorrows, he learnt to feel and to reflect deeply at a time of life when children in general only know "the tear forgot as soon as shed," and the almost uninterrupted sunshine of the breast. He also felt himself the sole comfort of his father; and his young self-love flattered by the consciousness, he often preferred his own lonely fireside and the sad society of his unhappy parent, to the sports of childhood and the heartless mirth of his companions.

When his father was on his death-bed, he called St. Aubyn to him, who had then not long reached the age of thirteen; and telling him that he knew he was in virtue and understanding considerably above his years, he bequeathed his mother to his care and protection; desiring him whatever might be her errors, to behave to her with tenderness and forbearance, and to prove himself in every thing not only a fond and obedient son, but a guardian and a defender.

"The charge was needless," replied St. Aubyn melting into tears; "but, to give you all the satisfaction in my power, *hear me swear, that in all emergencies whatever, my mother's peace and comfort shall be my first care and my first motive of action.*"

Mr. St. Aubyn accepted the oath; called him the best of children, prayed for his welfare; and the last words he pronounced, while with clasped hands he awaited his final struggle, were a prayer for Henry.

St. Aubyn's father had not been dead above nine months when he first saw Emma at Mrs. Castlemain's, and her mourning habit for her mother he beheld with a sympathetic interest.

"Poor child!" said he one day, as he looked at her black dress.

"Ay!" replied Mrs. Castlemain, "unhappy child!—it is very hard to lose a parent so young!"

"Say rather, happy child!" said St. Aubyn bursting into tears, "to lose a parent when she was too young to know the greatness of her loss!"

"Don't cry, master Henry," said Emma, putting up her pretty mouth to kiss him; "grandmamma is not angry with you." And St. Aubyn caught her to his bosom with mixed pity and affection.

When Mrs. Castlemain was again alone with Mr. Egerton, she said to him after some little hesitation, "but by what name, my dear sir, shall I call our Emma?"

"By what name, my dear madam? By her own name certainly,—that of her father—Danvers."

"No, sir, no!" replied Mrs. Castlemain with great agitation; "I cannot bear to be every moment reminded of that villain."

"But consider, madam, that by not calling your granddaughter and heiress by the name of her father, you would seem to admit her illegitimacy, and that she was not born in wedlock."

"No, sir, no; because I mean to call her Castlemain!"

"But, madam, her name is not Castlemain; and I am a decided enemy to all sorts of fraud. For whom, and what, madam, do you wish this dear child to be imposed on the world?"

“Sir, I scorn the idea of imposition as much as you.”

“Then, to prove it, call her the child of Agatha Danvers; for then, and then only, will the real truth be told.”

“No, sir; I will call her by the name of my late husband, who was my first cousin; for I mean, as soon as she is of age, to give her an estate left me by Mr. Castlemain, and shall solicit leave for her to bear the name and arms of Castlemain.”

“But in the meanwhile, madam, for what do you wish her to be taken by strangers?—for your child by Mr. Castlemain?”

“I do not see, sir, that it is necessary for her own and her mother’s story to be told to every one. Our intimate friends know it of course; and should any gentleman pay his addresses to Emma, he also will be told the truth.”

“But suppose, madam, that, believing Emma to be the daughter of the honourable Mrs. Castlemain, a gentleman allows himself to become in love with Emma, under the sanction of a father’s approbation; do you not think that gentleman will have reason to reproach you, when he finds he has been deceived by the change of name; and that your heiress is the fruit of a marriage, which, in all human probability, will never be proved to have taken place?”

“Sir,” said Mrs. Castlemain angrily, “you are putting an extreme case, and fancying, I hope, an improbability that does not *exist*! Sir, my peace of mind depends on my not hearing the hateful name of Danvers; and in this respect, sir, I must beg, sir,—nay, sir, I must *insist* on having my own way!”

“Well, madam, then I must submit, though against my principles and my judgment; for never yet did I know any good the result of deception,—and God grant that from this no material mischief may ensue!”

Accordingly the orphan of Agatha was in future known by the name of Emma Castlemain.

But before I go on with the history of Emma, and her young companion, Henry St. Aubyn, I shall make my readers acquainted with two persons, who will be prominent characters in these pages, and on whose influence, directly and indirectly, will in a great measure depend the fate both of my hero and my heroine.

Mr. Hargrave was one of those fortunate men whom a series of unforeseen accidents, aided by quickness of talent and industry, elevate from a mean and obscure situation of life to one of opulence and gentility; and, as is often the case with persons who are the makers of their own fortune, he valued himself greatly on the extent of his possessions, and had a particular spite against family pride, and what he denominated “a poor, proud gentleman.” Mr. Hargrave’s understanding was good, but he fancied it better than it really was; or rather, perhaps, he did not so much overvalue his own ability, as undervalue that of those who surrounded him. He did not fancy, while measuring himself with others, that he was a giant; but he erroneously imagined them to be pigmies, while he piqued himself on his talent of overreaching and imposing upon his less acute companions. This propensity alone would have prevented him from being a desirable companion; as, though he was unconscious of it, his attempts were often discovered by the objects of them; and however politeness might prevent them from disclosing the discovery, they felt an indignant resentment at being supposed weak enough to be so deceived. But there was a still stronger reason why, though he might be an active citizen, an upright tradesman, and a generous relation, he could never be an amiable man, an agreeable companion, or a beloved friend. He was the slave of a bad and incorrigible temper; and this slave to himself became the tyrant of others. The spoiled child of a weak and ignorant mother, whose understanding he despised, and of an indolent and sottish father, whose helpless, yet contented indigence disgusted him,—he was thrown upon the world with all his irritable feelings uncorrected and unsubdued, except where interest and ambition made it necessary for him to assume the virtue which he had not.



At the age of thirty, love asserted its turn to reign over his yet unwounded heart; and the object of his affection had extreme youth, loveliness, and gentleness, to recommend her to his notice. Her fortune was small; but that he did not consider as any obstacle to his wishes, as he had wealth enough for both; and her birth and connexions were such as to flatter his pride. Nor was he long before he made known his passion and his views; and the lady seemed so fully to return his affection, and to share in the warm approbation of his suit which her parents expressed, that even a time for their union was fixed; while the prospect of happiness as perfect as this world can afford, seemed to soften the usual asperity of Mr. Hargrave's disposition, and he felt desirous of imparting to others the cheerfulness which he was conscious of himself. But his hopes and his benevolence were only too soon clouded, as it were for ever, by the most cruel and unmerited of disappointments. A better connexion, and perhaps a more amiable man, were offered to the mercenary parents of Mr. Hargrove's betrothed wife; and in a short time, by a number of little neglects and petty affronts, he was given to understand that both the lady and her family were become tired of him and his pretensions; and while by letters of earnest expostulation, he was daily requesting to be informed how he had deserved to forfeit the favour of the parents and the tenderness of the daughter, he received the overwhelming and heart-rending intelligence that the woman of his affections was married to another!

It would be needless for me to point out to my readers the natural effect of an injury and a disappointment like this, on a proud and irritable temper like that of Mr. Hargrave. Suffice that, having shortly realized by a successful speculation, a fortune sufficient even for his lofty ambition, he resolved to give up business and retire into the country, in order to brood in solitude over the recollection of promised joys to him for ever lost, and the wrongs which, though common to many, his resentment magnified into injuries never experienced before by any one but himself.

But the affair did not end here. The brother of his mistress, hearing that Mr. Hargrave in the bitterness of just resentment had used very opprobrious terms when speaking of her conduct, insisted that he should either retract what he had said, or give him the satisfaction of a gentleman. With this latter demand Mr. Hargrave eagerly complied, and his second fire stretched his adversary on the ground, apparently deprived of life. But though the surgeon in attendance declared that life was only suspended, his wound was so dangerous a one that Mr. Hargrave and the seconds thought proper to abscond. During a whole twelve-month, the former was forced to be an exile from his country, and to experience the tormenting fear of being obliged never to return to it, or of standing a trial for his life.

At length, however, the cause of his distress was declared wholly out of danger, and Mr. Hargrave returned to England;—but both from principle and feeling he was become so decided an enemy to duelling, that he solemnly declared he would discard, pursue with implacable hatred, and disinherit a relation, however dear to him, who should either give or accept a challenge. He returned, too, so disgusted with the world, that he immediately went in search of an estate in some distant part of the country; and having on the death of his parents made his orphan sister the mistress of his house, he took her with him on his journey. It was while making the tour of the Lakes that chance introduced Mr. St. Aubyn to their acquaintance, who, captivated with the beauty of Miss Hargrave, formed that hasty and ill-advised union with her, which was the ruin of his fortune, and the bane of his peace of mind.

The marriage of his sister with Mr. St. Aubyn, though welcome to Mr. Hargrave in some points of view, as he got rid by it of a sister whose want of management hourly offended him, was very unpleasing to him in others. Mr. St. Aubyn, whose estates were deeply mortgaged, owing to the extravagance of his father, was a poor and proud gentleman, and Mr. Hargrave, as I have before observed, hated persons of that description; and the dignified

refinement of Mr. St. Aubyn's manners, which as he could not imitate he therefore pretended to despise, was ill-suited to the coarse banter and unpolished demeanour of his brother-in-law. Nor could Mr. St. Aubyn always command his temper when the latter was determined to put him off his guard; and at such moments the just and haughty resentment of the man of family, used to show itself in a manner which the man of wealth never pardoned. And as Mr. Hargrave, like all angry persons, was apt to dwell on the provocation which he received, and to forget that which he gave, the proximity of the St. Aubyn estate to that which Mr. Hargrave purchased in the county of Cumberland soon made it a very undesirable residence for him; he therefore removed with his wife and infant son to a house which he still possessed near the west end of the metropolis. But he soon found reason to repent of his removal, as his wife's extravagance became such, that in a very short time he saw himself reduced to the alternative of going to a gaol, or of parting with his paternal estate; and as a purchaser for St. Aubyn (the name of his seat) offered at this critical moment, he with a sort of desperate resolution accepted the offer, and bade for ever farewell to the dear abode of his ancestors.

Soon after, he discovered that the real purchaser of a possession so valued by him was the purse-proud Mr. Hargrave; and the agony of his situation was considerably increased by the news. But he recollected that if Mr. Hargrave did not marry,—and he had solemnly resolved that he never would marry,—his son would in all probability be his heir, and St. Aubyn would revert to its original possessor! This thought was rapture to him; and in the happy state of mind which it occasioned, he even fancied that Mr. Hargrave made the purchase from the benevolent wish of preventing the estate from going out of the family; and as Mr. St. Aubyn was resolved to act upon this idea, and in Mr. Hargrave's supposed generosity to forget his unkindness, the latter soon after received a most affectionate letter from his brother-in-law, requesting him to forget all that had passed, and to receive them for a few weeks as his guests. Mr. Hargrave, flattered at being

thus courted to a reconciliation, promised to forget and forgive everything; and the St. Aubyns came to Vale-House on a visit. But in less than two years Mr. Hargrave, either in a fit of spleen against Mr. St. Aubyn, or from the love of accumulation, sold the highly-prized estate for a very large premium to another possessor; and Mr. St. Aubyn never recovered the blow.

“How I have mortified the pride of that poor gentleman!” said Mr. Hargrave to himself in one of his angry and malignant humours.

But he had it in his power to inflict still greater mortification on him. Debt succeeded to debt, embarrassment to embarrassment,—till so little of his once-comfortable fortune remained, that Mr. St. Aubyn on his death-bed saw himself obliged to recommend his wife and child to the protection and bounty of Mr. Hargrave! It was a moment of triumph for Mr. Hargrave; the representative of the ancient family of the St. Aubyns was thenceforth thrown by his high-born father on the pity and dependence of a man of yesterday. How humbled was now the pride of the man of family! But a better feeling succeeded to the throb of ungenerous exultation.

Mr. Hargrave gazed on the pale and care-worn cheek, the imploring and sunk eye of Mr. St. Aubyn, with pity, not unmixed perhaps with remorse. “She shall not *ruin me*,” said he with ungracious graciousness; “but I will maintain her handsomely; and if he behaves well, I will be a father to the child.” The eyes of the dying man beamed with momentary joy,—for he knew Henry would “behave well,”—and visions of future greatness, and even of the recovery of the family estate, danced momentarily before his closing eyes; while a blessing, a fervent blessing, faltered on his quivering lips, and wrung a tear from the usually dry lid of Mr. Hargrave.

Mr. St. Aubyn died; and he fulfilled his promise to the dying: he hired a small house for his sister in the town of Keswick, and allowed her a respectable income, but took Henry to reside with

him, proposing to provide for and to educate him as if he were his own child.

But it was impossible for a man of Mr. Hargrave's temper and disposition to make conscious dependence easy to be borne. On the contrary, every day, every hour, every moment, reminded the St. Aubyns that they were eating the bread of dependence; and Mrs. St. Aubyn had at once to dread from her brother the sneer of contempt, the frown of reproof, and, what was still more painful to endure with composure, the coarse and noisy banter of sometimes well-deserved ridicule.

The circumstances in which Mrs. St. Aubyn had been placed in early life, were the most unfavourable in every point of view, to form a well-principled and respectable woman.—Praises of her beauty were the first sounds that met her ear; while, as she grew up, her weak and unprincipled mother, in order to obtain means to purchase ornaments for the child whose personal graces were her pride, used to set apart for that purpose, with her knowledge, small sums from the slender allowance given her by her husband for their daily meals; and by this means her daughter's young mind learnt a lesson of artifice and disingenuousness to which it could never rise superior. Nor was her father's sense of moral rectitude much greater than that of his wife, as a love of truth made no part of his precepts or his practice; and the ready lie with which his daughter usually endeavoured to hide the faults which she committed, was looked upon, both by him as well as Mrs. Hargrave, as a proof of talent and quickness above her years, and received with a wink of the eye at each other, and an ill-suppressed smile, which convinced the young delinquent, that the only crime in lying was that of being found out.

In addition to this sort of training, was a constant assurance from her mother that nothing was so necessary to a young woman as to look well, and that if she set off her person to advantage there was no doubt but that her beauty would make her fortune. But spite of her attention to her dress, and the splendour of her personal

charms, Miss Hargrave's apparent folly and flippancy had so far counteracted the power of her beauty, that she had reached the age of twenty-five without having had one offer of marriage worth accepting; when, on the death of her parents, her brother invited her to reside with him, and Mr. St. Aubyn saw her with Mr. Hargrave, as I before mentioned, on his tour to the Lakes.

The vivacity and perhaps even the silliness of her expression, gave Miss Hargrave the appearance of extreme youth, an appearance which her manner strongly confirmed, and the bloom of her fine complexion, heightened by air and exercise, considerably increased. Mr. St. Aubyn gazed on her, the first moment that he beheld her, with admiration and delight. He saw her in her youth, beauty, grace, every thing that his heart had ever sought in woman; and when he became acquainted with her, and accompanied her hanging on his arm, through the romantic scenes around him, he felt that she was become the arbiter of his fate, and that it was impossible for him to be happy without her. Indeed she appeared to Mr. St. Aubyn under peculiar advantages. The fear of her brother made her always silent and timid in his presence; therefore her lover heard not her usually insipid volubility, and her occasional he considered as general timidity. When they were alone, indeed, he found that she talked a great deal, but this he attributed to the sort of intoxicating relief which she felt at being removed from the alarming eye of her tyrant; and judging thence how great must be her sufferings from a residence with such a man, pity assisted to fan the flame of love, and he felt that it would be both a just and generous action to remove so fascinating a victim from the fetters that galled her.

Her want of fortune was indeed a serious obstacle to his wishes; as Mr. St. Aubyn, in order to pay off several heavy mortgages on his estates, had been living many years on a very inconsiderable part of his income, and it was necessary that he should continue so to do, in order to effect the honourable design which his integrity had dictated. But if Miss Hargrave loved him, he thought every

obstacle would vanish; for she had been accustomed to live on a narrow income, and that which he had to offer her was certainly larger than the one on which she had been accustomed to live. Accordingly, rendered blind and confiding by the illusions of passion, Mr. St. Aubyn revealed his love to the object of it, and received from her an avowal of mutual regard. Immediately transported with joy, and the hopes of future happiness, he declared to her his situation, his well-principled plans of economy, and all that he required of his wife during the first years of marriage, in order to assist him in clearing his estates, and in rescuing from obloquy the memory of a much respected though improvident father.

Miss Hargrave listened to and approved his plan, promised every thing that he desired, and performed nothing. Still her infatuated husband admired and adored her; and even while they remained at their country-seat, he indulged her pride and her vanity by resuming much of the ancient state of his family in his mode of living. But when, in consequence of repeated differences with Mr. Hargrave, they removed to the vicinity of London, her extravagance knew no bounds, and her husband had not the heart to reprove or restrain her; for was she not called “the beautiful Mrs. St. Aubyn?” was she not the most admired woman in the drawing-room? and while her charms administered thus to the gratification of his vanity and his affection, Mr. St. Aubyn endeavoured to forget that the mortgages remained unpaid, and that debts were accumulating around him.

The result I have before detailed, and the consequences of that fatal uxoriousness, that want of proper energy, which led to the utter ruin of his fortune, and precipitated him into an early grave. But, let me speak it to his honour, he never, in his consciousness of the errors of the wife, forgot for a moment the respect which he, as a gentleman, thought due to her as a woman. Though too late convinced of her folly, her vanity, her extravagance, her disregard of truth,—he behaved to her before his servants and his son with

as much politeness and deference as if her words were oracles. He took no mean revenge on her for her weakness, by wounding her self-love either in public or even in private; and though her foibles were such as to make her often an object of ridicule, he deplored but never scoffed at her weakness; whatever she ordered respecting her son, he never contradicted; if wrong, he told her it was so in private, and the order was repealed by herself, as if from her own conviction, and not his desire; and it was owing to this kind, generous, and manly conduct in her husband, that Henry St. Aubyn, in the midst of his convictions of his mother's follies, never lost sight for one moment of the respect due to her as his parent. His father had accustomed him to treat her with respect by his own example; and when crushed to the earth by the avowed contempt and ridicule of her brother, Mrs. St. Aubyn's tearful eyes could turn on her son with confiding and never-deceived affection, and her self-love was immediately soothed by his respectful attention to herself, and the firm, decided, but cool and gentle manner in which he defended and supported her under the attacks of his uncle;—while Mr. Hargrave feared, approved, oppressed, admired, and envied his nephew—love him he did not; it is not in nature for us to love those whom we feel to be our superiors in those qualities which entitle a person to the appellation of amiable. No one loved Mr. Hargrave, and every one loved St. Aubyn. How then could he possibly forgive his nephew an advantage which he had never possessed, and never could possess himself? But he could torment him occasionally, and that pleasure he often gave himself by speaking slightly of his father; and once with ingenious malignity he tried to wound St. Aubyn to the utmost by leading Mrs. St. Aubyn to join him in disrespect to the memory of her husband. "After all, Harriet," said he, "St. Aubyn turned out a very bad match for you; with your beauty and power of pleasing, you might have done better; a rich London merchant would have been a more proper husband for you, than a poor and proud country gentleman; and I dare say you think so yourself; for then, you know, whatever you had spent, he could have supplied you by his



increasing gains; and instead of now being dependent on a queer tempered fellow like myself, perhaps at this moment you might have been Lady Mayoress.”

St. Aubyn turned pale at this ensnaring speech, and sat in fearful expectation for his mother’s reply, who, trembling with agitation, rose from her seat, and pressing both her hands upon her bosom, as if to keep down the emotions that struggled there, indignantly exclaimed,

“What, sir, do you think I ever wish that I had been the wife of any other man than Mr. St. Aubyn?—No, sir; I know he was only too good for me; I know how faulty I am, and how indulgent he was.—No, Mr. Hargrave, believe me, with all my faults, I can never forget what I owed to the best of husbands; and I had rather have the proud consciousness of having been his wife, than be married to an emperor!” Here sobs interrupted her; and while Henry, with whom this energetic tribute to his father’s worth effaced a score of her faults, ran to her, and laid her head on his bosom, Mr. Hargrave, struggling himself with a little rising in his throat, held out his hand affectionately to her, and said,

“Come, come, Harriet, don’t be a fool, I only said what I did to try you.—So, I find you have a *heart*; and as St. Aubyn, but for his confounded pride, was a very fine fellow, if you did not feel concerning him as you do I should despise you;—but you have said what you ought; so shake hands, and be friends.”

She gave him her hand, smiled, and forgot what had passed. But her son could not so soon forget this wanton trial of his mother, and the torture inflicted on himself; but with a look of reproach, which Mr. Hargrave felt, though he did not choose to notice it, he folded his arms in a sort of contemplative sadness, and left the room.

But to return to the inhabitants of the White Cottage.—I shall pass over the details of the succeeding eight years, contenting myself with saying, that during that time Emma’s progress in acquirements had fully equalled the expectations of her preceptors,

and that her improvement in temper, from the firm though gentle authority of Mr. Egerton, and the influence and example of St. Aubyn, had surpassed even their warmest hopes.

Indeed, in that difficult part of good temper which consists in forbearance and accommodation to the ill-humour of others, St. Aubyn was unrivalled; and Mr. Egerton was never tired of dwelling on his praises, and holding him up in this instance as an unfailing and admirable example.

“Excuse me, Mr. Egerton,” said Mrs. Castlemain one day, piqued perhaps at the evident superiority which he attributed to St. Aubyn over Emma in this particular, “excuse me,—but I think you consider Temper as a quality of more importance than it really is.”

“I am surprised at such an opinion from you, madam,” replied Mr. Egerton gravely, “as I should have thought that you must have been aware, the chief part of your misfortunes and those of your daughter were occasioned by Temper.”

Mrs. Castlemain looked down and sighed, conscience-stricken.

“So far from agreeing with you, madam,” continued Mr. Egerton, “in what you have just advanced, I consider Temper as one of the most busy and universal agents in all human actions. Philosophers believe that the electric fluid, though invisible, is everywhere in the physical world; so I believe that Temper is equally at work, though sometimes unseen except in its effects, in the moral world. Perhaps nothing is rarer than a single motive; almost all our motives are compound; and if we examine our own hearts and actions with that accuracy and diffidence which become us as finite and responsible beings, we shall find that of our motives to bad actions Temper is very often a principal ingredient, and that it is not unfrequently one incitement to a good one. I am also convinced,” added he, “that the crimes both of private individuals and of sovereigns are to be traced up to an uncorrected and uneducated temper as their source.”

“You seem to have considered this subject very carefully, and in a manner wholly new to me,” answered Mrs. Castlemain in an accent of uncomfortableness; “and you probably are right; but if you be, how many then are wrong!”

“Alas!” replied Mr. Egerton, “the many are indeed, in my humble opinion, wrong; for few persons are sufficiently aware how much the virtue, the dignity, and the happiness of life depend on a well-governed temper. You may remember that the Bourgeois Gentilhomme in Moliere finds, to his great surprise, that he has been speaking prose all his life without knowing it; and I have often observed, that parents and preceptors have in their gift the best and most compendious of all possessions, that of a good and well-governed temper, without at least the seeming consciousness that it is in their disposal; and that to watch over the temper of a child, ameliorate it by salutary or proper indulgence, or control it by salutary restraints, is far, far more necessary to its future welfare, than to reprove a fault in grammar, or to correct an exercise.”

“Well, sir,” said Mrs. Castlemain, “education and care may do much; but I suppose you will allow that some persons have tempers naturally good,—and there is no merit in that.”

“No, madam,” answered Mr. Egerton smiling; “but there is great convenience. I will allow, as the contrary does not admit of proof, that there are persons who seem to come into the world with good tempers, and that therefore they have no more merit in being good-humoured than in having fine eyes. But then what a world of trouble they themselves are spared! as they have no ill-humours to subdue; and how pleasant is an intercourse with them! because you are not afraid that their temper, like a tiger chained, should occasionally break loose and tear asunder the scarcely well-knit tie of affection, destroying the confidence and comfort of society. But many possess this sort of good temper, which may be called the physical part of it, without having an atom of the other sort, which may be called the moral part.”

“I do not understand you, sir; you are too deep for me,” observed Mrs. Castlemain.

“I will explain my meaning, madam, if you will permit me to talk a little longer.—I own that I am given to preach,—but preaching you know is my vocation,—therefore I hope you will excuse it. I mean by the moral part of good humour, that which shows itself in bearing with the ill-humour and provoking irritability of others; and this necessary and valuable power, I must say, is rarely, in my opinion, possessed by any one who has not a good understanding. Now St. Aubyn possesses both sorts of good temper, and—”

“Ah!” interrupted Mrs. Castlemain, “I thought how this long harangue would end; namely, in the introduction of your favourite’s name, and of his praises; but they are not *new* to me; therefore, excuse my staying to hear more.” So saying, she left the room with a toss of the head and a quick step; not conscious, perhaps, how much she herself was at that moment under the dominion of temper.

Mr. Egerton smiled, but not in derision. It was not for Mrs. Castlemain that he had harangued, but for the silent and attentive Emma, who was present, and in whose young and conscious heart every word that he had uttered had made a due and salutary impression.

“Sir,” said Emma, coming to Mr. Egerton, and leaning on the back of his chair; “pray, sir, go on with what you were going to say about Henry; for I like to hear him praised for his temper, though I can’t help thinking, sir, that grandmamma does not.”

“Indeed!” said Mr. Egerton, suppressing a smile; “and what makes you think so?”

“O! her look and her manner, and I think I know why too; I think—”

“What dost thou think, my dear child?” said Mr. Egerton, taking her hand.

“I think, sir, that she looks upon such praise as a reproach to me; for you know, sir, I am not half so good-tempered as Henry St. Aubyn.”

“O yes, much more than *half*, my dearest girl,” replied Mr. Egerton; “but I believe you are right in your observation; and as Mrs. Castlemain is hurt at the praise of Henry, merely out of her affection for you, you ought to love her the better for being so.”

“Certainly, sir,” said Emma; “but you know her love to me need not make her unjust to others; and I am *sure* Henry deserves *all* you can say of him.”

“True, very true. Well, then it is in your power to put a stop to Mrs. Castlemain’s affectionate error, as you think it, by becoming as tractable, as mild, and as forbearing, as Henry himself.”

“I will, sir, indeed I will,” said Emma; and Mr. Egerton saying “I believe thee, dear child!” set out for his evening walk. But to resolve and to execute are, alas! very different things; and even that evening, as well as the next day, exhibited proofs of Emma’s love of excellence being stronger than her power of imitating it.

That very evening Mrs. Castlemain invited Emma to walk with her to the town of Keswick; and when there, business led the former to the shop of a milliner. In the shop, unfortunately for Emma, was that weak, vain, inconsiderate woman, the mother of St. Aubyn; and on the counter, as unfortunately, lay a straw bonnet trimmed with pale-blue ribands. Emma’s eyes were soon attracted to the bonnet; which the shopwoman perceiving, she instantly begged the young lady would put it on, assuring her it was the last new fashion, and amazingly becoming. To resist this entreaty was impossible. Emma’s own bonnet, though nearly new, became immediately of no value in her eyes, especially as the milliner and Mrs. St. Aubyn declared, when Emma put on the new one, that there never was any thing so becoming, and that it seemed made on purpose for her.

Mrs. Castlemain was silent, her look grave and unapproving; but Emma had a quarterly allowance, and enough remaining of it to pay for the bonnet at least. Ay; but she did not want it, and she knew that Mr. Egerton and Mrs. Castlemain would both disapprove her incurring so unnecessary an expense. Yet the bonnet was so pretty and so becoming, and Mrs. St. Aubyn advised her so earnestly to buy it, that Emma had faintly articulated “Well, I think I must have it,” when Mrs. Castlemain, who recollected that Mr. Egerton had said no opportunity of inculcating the practice of self-denial in Emma should be passed over, gravely observed,

“You must please *yourself*, Miss Castlemain, as I have made you in a measure independent of *me* in your expenses; but I must say, that if you are so extravagant as to purchase, for the indulgence of a whim, a hat which you do not want, I shall be very seriously displeased.”

Emma’s proud spirit revolted at this threat, uttered before so many witnesses; and saying within herself, “What signifies my independence if I am not allowed to use it?” she had half resolved to disobey her grandmother, when her resolution was completely confirmed by Mrs. St. Aubyn’s indiscreetly and impertinently observing,

“Dear girl! it does not signify how much she spends! but do, dear madam, buy it for her! she looks so beautiful in it!—I assure you, Miss Castlemain, my son Henry says nothing becomes you so much as *pale-blue*.”

This was *decisive*; and after a short struggle between duty and inclination, Emma threw down the money for the hat on the counter, and desired it might be put into the carriage, which now came to the door, as they were to walk only one way.

The drive home was gloomy and uncomfortable. Mrs. Castlemain was too greatly irritated to speak; and Emma, to the painful consciousness of having indulged a refractory temper, and displeased and disobeyed her grandmother, added that of having

unnecessarily expended nearly the last farthing of her allowance, forgetting that it wanted some weeks to the quarter-day.

Mr. Egerton, who met them on their return, soon discovered that something unpleasant had happened, and he sighed as he observed that the ingenuous vivacity which had sparkled in Emma's eyes when she set out on her walk, from having formed a virtuous resolution, with the full intention of keeping it, was replaced by a sullen downcast look, indicative of self-upbraiding, and the consciousness of having failed in some necessary duty.

Mrs. Castlemain was silent, and spoke and answered in monosyllables; but as soon as Emma, tired and dejected, had retired to bed without her supper, she told her tale of grievances to Mr. Egerton, who, though much mortified at hearing of the weakness of his pupil, hoped that the inconveniences to which the want of money would expose her, would at once punish and amend the fault of which she had been guilty; and after volunteering a promise to Mrs. Castlemain that he would neither give nor lend Emma any money, however she might require it, and receiving a similar promise from her in return, he could not help hinting to Mrs. Castlemain that this was a fresh proof of the importance of a good and yielding temper; and he obliged her to own that, under similar circumstances, Henry St. Aubyn would not have gratified his own inclinations at the expense of a frown or a pang to his mother.

“But,” added he, “depend on it, my dear madam, that our joint and incessant care will at length succeed in abating, if we cannot entirely remove this only fault in the object of our solicitude, and one entirely owing to the pernicious effect of early and erroneous habits.”

The next day, to the joy of Emma, was a day of splendid sunshine; so much so, that there seemed no likelihood any rain would fall during the day; and as this was the case, she looked forward with all the delight of her age to a party of pleasure, in a beautiful vale about two miles distant from Mrs. Castlemain's house, which was

to take place if the weather promised to be fine and settled. This party was to consist of Mr. Hargrave, Mrs. St. Aubyn, her son, some young ladies in the neighbourhood, and Mrs. Castlemain, Mr. Egerton, and Emma. It was in order to look well on this occasion that Emma was so eager to have the new hat, and when told that she might prepare for this promised expedition, as the weather would certainly be good, the pleasure she felt on putting on this dearly purchased ornament, almost deadened her regret for having disobeyed and displeased Mrs. Castlemain.

The place of their destination was Watenlath, or the valley on the top of rocks; a scene as beautiful and sequestered as the warmest fancy can conceive, and beyond the power of the most finished pencil to describe. It was agreed that Mr. Egerton, Mrs. Castlemain, and Emma, should walk thither, and meet the rest of the party there, they having resolved to go on horseback, as to them the vale was well known; but Mr. Egerton and Emma had never seen Watenlath, and its peculiar beauty could best be felt if approached on foot, and by means of one particular pathway.

The party were to dine in the valley, and a pony well-laden with provisions was to follow at a certain hour.

The party from the White Cottage were to go in the carriage as far as Keswick; and at length nine o'clock, the time for setting off, being arrived, Emma, dressed to the very utmost of her wishes, joined Mrs. Castlemain and Mr. Egerton, on the lawn.

“So—you have gotten a new bonnet, I see!” observed the latter; “but I don’t think you look so well in it as you did in your old one. Not that the hat is not a pretty hat, and the colour of the riband becoming to you; but you don’t look so happy as usual, and your countenance has not that open vivacity which I saw on it when you set off on your walk yesterday. Believe me, my dear girl,” added Mr. Egerton, taking the hand of the conscious and blushing Emma, “the best ornament to a young woman is a mind at peace with itself, and a brow unruffled by a frown.”



This remark, though well-meant, was perhaps ill-timed. It convinced her that Mrs. Castlemain had told tales; and the resentment of the preceding evening, which had nearly subsided, was again called forth.

Within a mile of Keswick, one of the wheels came off, and obliged them to alight; when on the road, which in places was exceedingly heavy and dirty, (and against which Emma's feet were fortified by a pair of thick shoes which fastened high on the instep, and were buckled on one side by a pair of small but substantial silver buckles, which had belonged to Mrs. Castlemain's grandfather,) the interest of the party was excited, and their course arrested, by the sight of a woman fainting by the side of a hedge, whom a child, seemingly of eight or nine years old, was vainly attempting to recover. But Mrs. Castlemain was more successful in her efforts; and when the poor creature, whose tattered garments bespoke her extreme poverty, recovered her senses, she said that she was a soldier's widow, and was travelling with her child to her parish, which was in Carlisle; but that, being worn down with sorrow, hunger, and fatigue, she had lain down, as she thought, to die on the road.

The woman's countenance bore a strong testimony to the truth of her narration;—and her auditors listened to it with the sincerest compassion. But to pity her distresses was not sufficient; they resolved to alleviate them; and having procured refreshments both for her and her child from a neighbouring cottage, they resolved to walk on briskly to Keswick, and hire a man and cart to convey her to Penrith, where she was to stay a night or two to recruit her exhausted strength. Longer time she said she could not spare, as she had a mother on her death-bed, whom she wished, if possible, to see once more. When she was quite recovered, and was seated comfortably at the cottage-door, awaiting the arrival of the cart, Mrs. Castlemain and Mr. Egerton took out their purses; and both not only relieved her present wants, but gave her money sufficient, as they hoped, to procure her a conveyance as far as Carlisle.

Now then the moment was arrived to fill the generous heart of Emma with sorrow, for the needless extravagance of the preceding evening, and Mrs. Castlemain was amply revenged. For the first time in her life since she had money to bestow, she had it not in her power to add her mite to the bounty of her friend and her relation; who, as soon as they had given the poor woman what they intended, walked forward to escape from her thanks, and hasten the intended conveyance for her; while Emma, sad, mortified, and irresolute, lingered behind, reading, as she fancied, in the sufferer's looks, an expression of wonder that she gave her nothing, and also of expectation and supplication.

"I have no money in my pocket," said Emma, mournfully; "but I will borrow some;" and having overtaken Mr. Egerton, who was behind Mrs. Castlemain, she begged him in a faltering voice, to lend her five shillings.

"I have no silver, my dear," cried he: "ask Mrs. Castlemain." But the latter angrily turned round and said she would not lend her money, as she did not deserve it; adding, "this is a proper punishment for your obstinate folly and extravagance in buying what you did not want last night."

This was only too true; and angry, sorry, abashed yet irritated, Emma ran back to the cottage, and soon, to her great satisfaction, lost sight of her monitors. Immediately she stooped down, took out her old-fashioned silver buckles, drew the twist out which confined her gloves over her dimpled elbows, endeavoured as well as she could to re-fasten her shoes by tying them; and then, as much impelled, I fear, by spite as by generosity, she entered the cottage, and telling the woman that she could not give her money, but that those buckles were silver, and would sell for some, she waited neither for an acceptance nor a denial of her gift; but, almost afraid to reflect on what she had done, she ran violently forward to overtake Mr. Egerton and Mrs. Castlemain; not liking, however, to show her tied shoes in the town of Keswick, she called out to tell them they would find her on the lake, and turned off to hasten to

the boat in waiting to convey them to the spot whence they were to ascend the mountain; which having entered, she sat silently, sorrowfully, and even fearfully; for she dreaded the discovery of what she had done, and began to wish that she had had more self-government.

At length, Mrs. Castlemain and Mr. Egerton, with the expression of satisfied benevolence on their countenances, arrived at the boat, having procured the promised cart for the poor soldier's widow. But the joy of both of them was soon damped by observing the clouded countenance of Emma, who could with some difficulty contrive to hide her feet under the bench on which she was seated.

At length they landed near the foot of the Lodore waterfall, and began their laborious walk; when to Mr. Egerton's surprise, he not only found that Emma, so remarkable for the agility with which she used to climb mountains, could now with difficulty keep up with her companions, and evidently walked up with uncomfortable effort; but that ever and anon she was stooping down to adjust her shoes.

"This is very strange," thought he, turning round and offering her his assistance, (while Mrs. Castlemain, whom nothing impeded in her progress, was nearly out of sight;) but Emma in so pettish and peremptory a manner rejected his assistance, and turned her back while she stooped, that a suspicion of the truth darted across his mind; and when she again turned round, he saw that his suspicions were just. He said nothing, however, but contented himself with observing Emma, as first one string broke and then another, till at last they were too much broken to be used again; and poor Emma, almost crying with vexation, was forced to proceed with the straps of her shoes hanging loose, and threatening to throw her down every moment. To add to her distress, the road was wet and full of bogs; and at last both her shoes stuck completely fast in the mud, and unable to help herself, she was precipitated forward on her knees,—when a new calamity befell her; for before she could put

her hand to her head to prevent it, the new hat was blown off by a sudden gust of wind, and the blue ribands disfigured with mud!

In spite of his love for Emma, his compassionate vexation at her distress, and his self-command,—when Mr. Egerton saw this last accident, and beheld the hat, the cause of all the mischief, on the ground, he could not refrain from a violent fit of laughter; which so irritated the poor prostrate Emma, that, as he stooped to raise her from the ground, she attempted to strike him.

Mr. Egerton, shocked, but instantly recovering himself, said with great calmness, “I shall address you, my dear, in the words of a celebrated Greek general on a similar provocation; I shall say to you, ‘Strike, if you please; but hear me!’”

“No, no,” exclaimed the sobbing and now subdued Emma; “hear me, hear me! I beg and entreat your pardon. O do, do, Mr. Egerton, forgive me! but I am sure I shall never forgive myself.”

“I do forgive you, my dear, and will not say what I meant to say, and I scarcely regret what has passed; because I am sure that to a mind ingenuous and generous as yours is, it will afford an indelible lesson, and one for which you will be the better as long as you live; besides, I am well convinced that your own reproaches are more severe, and will be of more benefit, than any I should have the heart to address to you.”

“You are too, too good,” replied Emma, almost convulsed with sobs, and leaning her head against his arm.

“But recover yourself, my child,” said Mr. Egerton, “and let us see what we can do for you, for you are in a terrible condition—shoes, stockings, petticoats, hat covered with mud!”

“Well, I must bear it patiently,” said Emma meekly, “for I deserve it all.”

“Good girl!” said Mr. Egerton affectionately; and Emma was able to look up once more. “But, my dear girl,” added Mr. Egerton, “let me put you on your guard. You know Mr. Hargrave, and you

know that to tease and to torment is one of the great delights of his life; and that I always hold him up as constantly as an example to deter, as I do his nephew as an example to invite. Then you will readily believe that he will make a number of provoking and teasing observations on your draggled appearance; but ‘forewarned, forearmed;’ and as you owe some reparation for the pain your conduct has occasioned me, make it, by bearing with temper and calmness the sneers and sarcasms of Mr. Hargrave.”

“I will try to obey you, sir,” replied Emma; “but indeed I have lost all confidence in myself.” Then leaning on the now welcome arm of Mr. Egerton, Emma slowly and with difficulty renewed her walk; but though dirty and fatigued from being scarcely able to lift her feet from the slippery and tenacious ground, her mind was considerably lightened, and she even began to observe the beauty of the richly-wooded rocks, and the flowery and velvet carpet, which, the further they advanced, still more and more kept spreading under their feet; while the sound of the cataract of Lodore, lately so distinctly heard, grew every moment fainter and fainter, and the lake of Keswick became diminished to the eye. Yet so gradual had been the ascent that they had scarcely perceived it, and now could only ascertain its length and height by the effect exhibited to the sight. They now began to approach the expected valley, and beheld with wonder that they were still, though on the top of mountains, surrounded by mountains and rocks, and were eagerly gazing around them, when some of the party whom they expected to join appeared in sight coming to meet them.

“Now, Emma, now your hour of trial begins; and I see by the sneer flickering on Mr. Hargrave’s upper lip, and the expression of his fierce projecting eye, that I was right in my forebodings,” said Mr. Egerton.

Mrs. Castlemain at this moment was expatiating to Mr. Hargrave on the great progress which Emma had made in the study of Latin, and even of Greek, as Mr. Egerton had readily acceded to her wish of learning those languages, because he wisely considered that it

was the ostentatious display of learning in a woman, and not the learning itself, that was to be objected to; and telling Emma that all he required of her was a promise never to quote a Latin saying, or talk of Greek quantities, he tried to make her as good a classical scholar as he did St. Aubyn. And at this moment, as I before stated, this unlucky moment, Mrs. Castlemain was reporting her progress to the cynical Mr. Hargrave, who, as soon as he saw poor Emma with the straps of her shoes hanging down, a draggled frock, and dirty stockings, observed, as many men, ay and many women too, would have observed on a similar occasion—"Yes, madam, I don't doubt but that her progress has been considerable; for, see, she looks very like a learned lady indeed! There's a smart figure for you! Pray admire her!"

On hearing this, the eyes of all the company were turned on Emma; and Henry St. Aubyn kindly ran forward to inquire what had happened.

"Bless me! Where are your buckles, Emma?" asked Mrs. Castlemain, half suspecting the true state of the case; and Emma could not answer her.

"O!" said Mr. Hargrave, "I suppose she forgot to put them on; geniuses cannot attend to such trifles, you know!"

"You don't answer my question, Emma," resumed Mrs. Castlemain; "Was Mr. Hargrave's conjecture right?"

"No, madam," answered Emma, sobbing as she did so; while Mr. Egerton preserved a grave silence.

"Come, come, Mrs. Castlemain, don't distress the fair classic," exclaimed Mr. Hargrave; "but let us return to the valley, or we shall not see all its beauties before dinner;" and she, suspecting she had nothing to hear that would give her pleasure, consented to his proposal; while Emma, having begged her young companions to walk on without her, remained behind with Henry St. Aubyn, who declared he would not leave her; and Mr. Egerton, who was better pleased to gaze on the beauties of the surrounding scene

alone, than surrounded by loquacious companions, walked slowly on before Emma and Henry, yet was not so far before them but that he heard their conversation.

“Now do tell me, dear Emma,” said Henry, “why you have neither riband nor buckles in your shoes;—you who are generally so neat in your dress!”

“Why then, I must tell you,” replied Emma, “that as I had no money to give, I gave my buckles to a poor distressed woman whom I saw on the road.”

This explanation, so flattering to the generous pity of Emma, if not to her judgment, alarmed Mr. Egerton for the sincerity of his pupil; and he listened anxiously for what was to follow.

“Dear, generous girl!” cried Henry; “so this was the truth; and yet you bore my uncle’s taunts in silence! But I will go and tell him.”

“No, no, Henry,” returned Emma, detaining him; “for, if you knew *all*, I doubt you would blame rather than praise me.”

Here Mr. Egerton breathed freely again.

“Indeed! Well, what is this dreadful *all*?”

“Why, you must know, Henry, that I yesterday spent my last shilling most foolishly and unnecessarily; therefore, to the joy I believe of my mother and Mr. Egerton, I was punished by having no money to give the poor woman.”

“Well, but you gave her your buckles, you know.”

“True; but I tried to borrow some money first, and was refused; therefore as much out of spite as charity I gave her my buckles; and now what do you think of me?”

Here Mr. Egerton almost bounded forward with joy.

“Think of you!” replied Henry; “why, even more highly than before, for so nobly disclaiming the praise that was not due to you.”

“You are right, quite right, my dear boy,” said Mr. Egerton turning round; “ingenuousness like this is a much rarer quality than that of a disposition to relieve distress. I have overheard all that passed, and I own, Emma, I am again proud of my pupil. But be not elated by this well-earned praise; remember, you have still a terrible defect to conquer—a defect of temper; and that on the excellence or badness of temper chiefly depends not only one’s own but the happiness of others. But come, let us forget everything now, except the beauties that surround us.”

But Emma pointed sorrowfully to her shoes, and declared she must sit down on a piece of rock near them; while Mr. Egerton, producing a piece of strong cord from his pocket, (which from principle he had not produced before,) contrived, though rather awkwardly, to fasten Emma’s straps over her feet, and enable her to walk with less effort.

While thus employed, neither of them was conscious of the disappearance of St. Aubyn; but when they looked up again he was out of sight.

“This is very strange!” said Mr. Egerton.

“This is very strange!” echoed Emma.

But the next moment a suspicion of the cause of St. Aubyn’s absence came across the mind of both, though neither of them communicated it to the other.

Emma was now sufficiently rested to proceed as fast as her admiration would let her, while Mr. Egerton pointed out to her the picturesque beauties which met her eye as she advanced. They now found themselves on the banks of a clear and rapid river called the Lodore, whose waters fall into the cascade known by that name, which forms one of the great features on the shores of Keswick Lake. The green and velvet banks of this river were bounded on either side, and at no considerable distance, by bare, by wooded, and nearly perpendicular rocks, of which, as Gilpin observes, the particularity consists in their being nearly as much asunder at the



bottom as at the top. It was then the hay season, and the unrivalled verdure of the scene was beautifully contrasted with the golden haycocks that were reared almost profusely around; while in places the dark green alder, and the mountain ash then decorated with its brightest berries, met across the stream, and united their well-assorted branches. At some distance a small lake was discoverable, on whose shores were scattered a few white cottages.

Near the lake, and on the point of entering a boat, Mr. Egerton and Emma now discovered their whole party, and amongst them Mrs. St. Aubyn, who was endeavouring, though evidently she was angrily repulsed by her brother, to assist him in getting ready his fishing-tackle, as the lake contained excellent trout.

On not seeing St. Aubyn with the companions with whom he had left him, Mr. Hargrave angrily desired to know what was become of his nephew, that he was not there to assist him with his fishing-tackle, which was entangled.

Mr. Egerton coldly replied, that he knew nothing of Mr. St. Aubyn;—but that he doubted not, when he returned, he would be able to account for his absence in a satisfactory manner.

“Oh, that I am sure he will,” said Mrs. St. Aubyn; then seeing a frown gather on her tyrant brother’s brow, she exclaimed, glad to turn the conversation, “Dear me, what a pity! Why, the ribands on the beautiful hat of Miss Castlemain are covered with dirt! Still, young ladies, pray look, is it not very becoming? She would not have bought it if I had not persuaded her, and told her that I had heard it observed how becoming *blue* was to her.”

“So, Mrs. St. Aubyn!” said Mr. Hargrave with a provoking sneer; “you are not content with being a coxcomb yourself, but you must endeavour to make one of a mere child?”

“Dear me, brother, you are so——,” but her declaration of *what* he was, was stopped on her lips by a frown so terrible, that the poor woman almost trembled with apprehension; while Mr. Egerton was not sorry to find that Emma’s obstinate extravagance was

occasioned as much by the folly of another as by her own. But still St. Aubyn came not; and his uncle was so discontented at his absence, that nothing pleased him; nobody could steer a boat so well as Henry, he declared, as he was not there to steer it; for had he been there, his excellence would not have been allowed; and after rowing about the lake some little time, stopping occasionally to let Mr. Hargrave endeavour to angle, in order, if possible, to get him into good humour, the party returned to shore; and soon after, his cheek crimsoned with heat and exercise, and bearing a bundle under his arm, St. Aubyn appeared.

“I thought so,” cried Emma, running forward with artless delight to meet him, and hanging affectionately on his arm, while he told her the bundle contained clean stockings, shoes, petticoat, and frock for her.

“So!” cried Mr. Hargrave, “it was well worth while, was it not? for you to go and heat yourself into a fever in order to make a little girl clean, who, I dare say, does not care whether she be clean or dirty!”

“But I *do* care very much, sir,” said Emma; “and I am sure I am so obliged to Henry——”

“It is more than I am,” muttered his uncle; “but I am always to be last served.”

“Nay, I am sure, brother,” observed Mrs. St. Aubyn, “Henry is always ready to wait on you; and it was only his good nature that led him to ——, for I am sure Henry is the sweetest and most obliging temper!”

“That he is,” exclaimed Mrs. Castlemain, giving Henry her hand; “and this is a proof of it.” And so said all the young ladies, and Mr. Egerton too.

This praise of his now well-grown nephew, and for a quality which Mr. Hargrave was conscious that he did not himself possess, either in reality or reputation, was more than he could bear, as he had

already begun to be so jealous of his nephew's virtues, and the general love which they excited, that he felt a sort of malevolent consolation in the knowledge of his complete dependence on him, and on his will.

"Come, let us have no more of your flattery, if you please," he angrily exclaimed; "the boy is a good boy enough, but no such paragon as you represent him to be."

St. Aubyn, more gratified by the praise he had received than wounded by his uncle's ungraciousness, now attempted to turn the discourse by following Emma, who was going into an adjacent cottage to change her dress; and producing a paper he said, "Here, dear Emma, here is some blue riband to supply the place of that dirty one;—pray accept it as a present from me."—And while Emma with a sparkling eye and dimpled cheek received this new proof of Henry's kindness, Mr. Hargrave, who had overheard him, observed with a look of more than common malice,

"I am glad, Mr. St. Aubyn, to find you are *rich* enough to make *presents*."

"This is a present," said Mr. Egerton eagerly, "which *I* must beg leave to make my young pupil,—and not Mr. St. Aubyn; as I know that, if the riband be *my* gift, it will recall to her mind some events of this day, from the recollection of which I trust she will never cease to derive improvement."

"I dare not dispute this matter with you," replied Henry timidly, "as your right is so much beyond mine; but, dear sir," said he in a whisper, "do tell her that what I have done was meant as a reward for her *ingenuousness*."

In a short time after, and before the beauty of the scene and the pleasant tone of spirits which it inspired had begun to pall upon the feelings, and to allow any sensation of hunger to prevail amongst the party, Mr. Hargrave proposed having dinner; and as he was generally conscious of being the richest individual in company, (an advantage of which he was very proud,) his proposals were usually

uttered in the tone of commands.—Mrs. Castlemain, indeed, had some right to oppose his will; but she was on this occasion willing to accede to it, in hopes that he might eat himself into good humour; dinner therefore was served up as soon as ever Mr. Hargrave expressed his wishes on the subject.

But the angry particles of a bad temper, when once they have begun to effervesce, do not soon subside again. Mr. Hargrave was still dissatisfied; the meat-pie was too salt, the fruit-pie too sweet, the potted char wanted seasoning, and the home-brewed ale wanted strength. Every word from his poor dependent sister called forth from him an expression of insulting contempt; while his nephew, whom he could not even pretend to despise, was treated by him with sullen disregard.

“He is nothing but an old baby,” whispered Emma to Mr. Egerton.

“True,” replied Mr. Egerton; “but remember that all this disgusting conduct is the effect of *temper*; and be warned by his example!”

At this moment Mr. Hargrave asked Emma to help him to some tart which stood near her; and in her haste to comply with his request,—a haste perhaps occasioned by her consciousness of having just spoken of him in a degrading manner,—she unfortunately spilt some of the juice on the table-cloth, which happened to be his; and this trifling accident irritated him so much that he exclaimed,

“Pshaw! I might have known better than to have employed you to help me, as geniuses are above knowing how to do common things.”

Henry blushed with indignation at this coarse speech, and Mr. Egerton looked ready to resent it; but Emma meekly replied,

“I am very sorry for my awkwardness, sir, as I wish to do every thing well. I am certainly a bad carver, but I will try to become a good one.”

Mr. Egerton and Henry looked at each other with an expression of mutual satisfaction while she said this; and Mrs. Castlemain, looking proudly around her, exclaimed,

“You are a good girl, Emma, for you can return good for evil, and that is better than being a good scholar, as you certainly are.”

“But is she a good workwoman? and can she make a pudding or a pie?” cried the implacable Mr. Hargrave.

“No, sir; but I can learn—”

“Can learn!—But will you? would you not think such things beneath you?”

“I am sure, sir,” cried Henry eagerly, “Miss Castlemain has too much good sense to think it beneath her to be useful.”

“I did not speak to you, you puppy,” replied Mr. Hargrave; “What says Miss Castlemain herself?”

“That time will discover how justly Henry St. Aubyn answered for me.” And Mr. Hargrave, pleased at the trimming which, as he boasted afterwards, he had given these uncommon folks, was tolerably good-humoured the rest of the day. Nor was this change lost upon the rest of the party; for it had an agreeable effect on their spirits. So paralyzing is the influence that one splenetic, sullen, and unamiable person in company has on that company!

Mr. Hargrave, now deigning to be agreeable, offered Mrs. Castlemain his arm, and even complimented her on *wearing well*; while Mr. Egerton offered his to the now loquacious and simpering Mrs. St. Aubyn, who, no longer awed by the dark and frowning brow of her brother, began to play off all the artillery of her airs and graces on the unconscious Mr. Egerton.

Little indeed did he think that even the vanity of Mrs. St. Aubyn could have imagined his affection for his amiable pupil Henry was at all increased by admiration of his mother;—yet such was this weak woman’s belief;—and while with the common care and attention of a gentleman he handed her over broken pieces of rock,

or little rivulets difficult to cross, which ever and anon obstructed their path, she fancied his supporting grasp was one of overflowing tenderness; and if he sighed, she sighed audibly in return.

“What a countenance that young man has!” cried Mr. Egerton, as Henry bounded past, and smiled on them as he went.

“He has indeed,” simpered Mrs. St. Aubyn; adding, with affected and hesitating timidity, “Do you see any *likeness*? Some people say that——”

“A likeness! O yes, I do *indeed*, madam,” replied Mr. Egerton in a faltering voice, “I do *indeed* see his likeness to one very dear to me;”—for he concluded she alluded to her husband’s cousin, Clara Ainslie, whose image was always present to his mind, and whose name he thought Mrs. St. Aubyn from delicacy forbore to mention.

“Do *you* not see the likeness yourself, dear madam?” asked he, pressing her arm gently as he spoke.

“Why—yes,” replied the lady, “I believe I do; but I must be a bad judge you know——”

“You are too modest,” rejoined Mr. Egerton, again pressing her arm kindly, and hoping she would gently hint some praise of his regretted love; but Mrs. St. Aubyn only pressed his arm in return, and he felt the action to be an expression of her sympathy in his affliction and sorrows; which being recalled to his mind by this supposed allusion of Mrs. St. Aubyn’s, he fell into a melancholy reverie, mistaken by his companion for a tender one, with her for its object. But at length, tired of his long and unnecessary silence, she ventured to express to him how happy she esteemed her son in having found in him such a friend and preceptor, nay even a *father*, as it were.

“A father!” cried Mr. Egerton enthusiastically, and suddenly starting from his reverie; “you say well, madam; I hope I shall one day or other prove a father to him!”

“Dear me!” said Mrs. St. Aubyn, affectedly disengaging her arm from Mr. Egerton’s, for she thought this speech amounted to little less than an offer of his hand. But Mr. Egerton, wrapt in his own thoughts, heard not her exclamation, neither was he conscious of the delicate scruple which unlocked her arm from his, nor of the action itself;—and seeing Emma before him evidently waiting for his approach, he walked hastily forward; then taking her under his arm, he left Mrs. St. Aubyn to walk alone,—but at the same time to hope also; as she attributed his abrupt departure from her to the fear of having disclosed too much of his intentions on so short an acquaintance; and she earnestly wished she had let her arm remain where it was. But she had no opportunity of regaining the station which she had lost; for when the party, who all walked home, reached the town of Keswick, they separated and went to their respective homes; and as Mr. Egerton before he entered Mrs. Castlemain’s carriage which met them at Keswick, bowed low to Mrs. St. Aubyn without looking her in the face, the tenderness which she had thrown into her last look was wholly thrown away; but she mused for hours after on her prospect of becoming the wife of Mr. Egerton, and had in fancy made him exchange his greyish unpowdered locks for an auburn Brutus.

Meanwhile Mr. Egerton, wholly unsuspecting of his power and of the dangerous hopes which his words and attentions had excited, was, together with Mrs. Castlemain, conversing with Emma on the errors which she had committed in the beginning of the day, and the virtues with which she had made amends for that error; while Emma, penitent yet pleased, and smiling through her tears, promised to turn the events of that day to profit the most unfailling.

The next day Henry, being obliged to go to Penrith on business for his uncle, did not attend at the usual hour for lessons; and Mr. Egerton, observing that Emma was very absent, desired to know the reason. On which she confessed that she thought herself pledged to learn those branches of housewifery which Mr. Hargrave had reproached her for not knowing.

“I have no objection,” said Mr. Egerton, smiling, “to your close initiation into all the mysteries of the kitchen and the pantry, provided the motives for learning them be good ones;—but if your only motive be a wish to triumph over a splenetic old man, I object to it; for then it would be only *your* temper taking its revenge on *his*.”

“I own,” replied Emma, blushing, “that I *should* like to prove to him that the fair classic can be useful; but I do assure you that I had a painful feeling of *shame* during Mr. Hargrave’s coarse speech, from the consciousness how little I knew of what I have often heard that all women should know; therefore for my own sake, I wish to learn all a woman’s learning.”

“And so you shall,” replied Mr. Egerton, “as it is for your own gratification; for if you wished for it on any other account, you would be terribly disappointed. Men, and women too, scarcely, if ever, part with certain prejudices; and in spite of the evidence of their eyes, if they once find out that you have learning and talents, they will still taunt you with the reproach of being a slattern, and ignorant of every thing which it is necessary and becoming for women to learn. And yet, though in trifles like these prejudice is so difficult to be eradicated, we sit and wonder at the slow progress we make in eradicating prejudices of a more important and pernicious tendency.”

“And is the world so full of prejudice then?” asked Emma, sorrowfully.

“More than you can imagine,” replied Mr. Egerton; “but still in some respects mercy and justice have triumphed over it.”

Here they were most unexpectedly and painfully interrupted; and Emma felt, in its full force, how true it is, that when once we have committed a fault, however trifling, it is impossible to calculate what may be the mischievous consequences of that single error.



Mrs. Castlemain ran into the room, an open letter in her hand, and exclaimed, "There, Miss Castlemain! see the effect of your preposterous generousities! There, read and tremble."

Emma did read, and did tremble; for the letter was an official letter from Penrith, stating that a poor woman had offered a pair of silver buckles for sale there, on the inside of which was engraved the name of Bellenden; and that, on being asked how she came by them, she had said that a young lady who had no money in her pocket had given her the buckles out of her shoes; and that this story had appeared so improbable, that the silversmith concluded she had either taken the buckles from the young lady's person by violence, or had stolen them in some other way; and had therefore carried the woman before a magistrate; who having on inquiry found out that Mrs. Castlemain of the White Cottage had hired the cart in which she came to Penrith, had committed her till further information could be procured from Mrs. Castlemain herself; and she was requested to send such information directly.

It would be impossible for me to describe the clamorous grief of Emma on this unexpected consequence of her foolish conduct; or her frantic eagerness to set off immediately to the relief of the poor woman, whom she had not only been the means of exposing to the disgrace of being committed as a felon, but who might probably be prevented by the delay from reaching Carlisle time enough to see her mother before she died. But Mrs. Castlemain and Mr. Egerton were just as eager to go as Emma herself was; and soon, as fast as four horses could carry them, they were on the road to Penrith. In the meanwhile the story of the poor woman's commitment and its cause was told to Henry St. Aubyn and his mother, who had accompanied him to Penrith that morning; and he, filled with pity for the prisoner, and grief for what Emma would feel on the occasion, ran immediately to the magistrate who was then sitting in court, to tell all he knew on the subject, and exculpate the poor woman. But unfortunately Mrs. St. Aubyn went with him; and while Henry was telling his story to the magistrates,

she was relating the same at the door of the hall to the crowd that was collected; while, pleased to be listened to, and as she thought admired, she dwelt with raptures on the noble generosity of Emma; describing her as an angel not only in mind but person, till she worked up her audience to such a pitch of enthusiastic admiration of Emma, and of pity for the woman who had been so unjustly confined, that they huzzaed Mrs. St. Aubyn, and declared they would huzza Emma as soon as she arrived.

Mrs. St. Aubyn was so delighted at this homage paid to her eloquence, that she went on haranguing, flattering herself all the time that she should be exalted by it in the opinion of Mr. Egerton, and that he would feel the greatest gratitude towards her, as having been the means of his pupil's receiving so public a tribute to her virtue; and she was waving her white hand gracefully in the air, and expatiating on the duty and charm of charity to the poor, when the party from the White Cottage stopped at the hall, and beheld the delighted Mrs. St. Aubyn.

"I wonder what that fool is about!" said Mr. Egerton in no kind tone of voice; for he had taken alarm at seeing Mrs. St. Aubyn directing the attention of the crowd to the carriage; and his brow assumed a frown almost terrific, when, as soon as he lifted out the trembling Emma, the crowd greeted her with three loud huzzas; while the self-satisfied simper, nods, and glistening eyes of Mrs. St. Aubyn explained at once the cause and the effect.

"O that grinning idiot!" muttered Mr. Egerton, as he hurried the confused Mrs. Castlemain and the weeping Emma through the crowd; while the latter, seeing instead of the angelic beauty whom Mrs. St. Aubyn's description had led them to expect, a pale girl with blubbered eyes and discoloured cheeks, could not help muttering, "Well, I see no beauty in her, howsomever."

"But handsome is that handsome does," said one; and "That is the good young lady that gave her buckles to the poor woman out of her own shoes," was whispered on every side; while poor Emma

wanted to stop and assure them that she did not deserve the good character they gave her.

“My dear girl,” said Mr. Egerton, “you must bear in silence this new but severe punishment to an ingenuous mind like yours, that of being praised undeservedly.”

Henry St. Aubyn had but just finished his story when the party arrived in the court, where Emma was again received as an object of curiosity and admiration; but she had not long to undergo the pain of interrogatories and praises. The poor woman was soon discharged, and she was made ample amends for the disgrace, delay, and terror she had undergone, by a promise from Mrs. Castlemain to send her in a light open chaise to the end of her journey.

Henry St. Aubyn undertook to procure this chaise, and see the soldier’s widow comfortably settled in it; and as soon as the money necessary to defray expenses had been deposited by Mrs. Castlemain, they hastened from the court, the self-judged Emma being eager to hide her confusion in the carriage. Accordingly they passed so rapidly along to it, their speed being hastened by a renewal of the shouts, that Mrs. St. Aubyn, who was still waiting at the door, and had been too much elated with the attention she excited there to follow her friends into the court, had not even an opportunity of speaking to them, which for two reasons she earnestly desired; the first was, that she might show her intimacy with the lady who arrived in a carriage-and-four; and the second was, her wish to borrow money of one of the party to give the lower order of the crowd which she had collected round her, some of whom had seemed to hope her ladyship would give them something to drink her health, and had certainly lost a little of their respect for her when she declared she had (as was usually the case with her) no money in her pocket. “But,” added she, mortified to observe the almost contemptuous expression of countenance which her avowal called forth, “I can borrow some of my friends when they come out.”

But this was rendered impossible by the celerity with which they passed her and drove off. However, she knew she could procure some from her son, “the best of sons,” who would soon appear.

Meanwhile, as it was market-day, the surrounding crowd was increased by several farmers whom curiosity had led to the spot, and whom the love of fun kept there when they heard all that had been communicated by the loquacious Mrs. St. Aubyn; who, while she went on to dwell on her son’s great kindness in hastening to relieve the poor woman before the parties concerned arrived, applauded by clapping of hands, and sometimes cried “*Angcor*“ in a manner so evidently intended to ridicule her, that she began to feel the impropriety of her situation, and resolved to go in search of St. Aubyn, who had been detained by an unexpected circumstance. While he was endeavouring in the sword-room to hire a chaise of a person present; an attorney, who was always on the watch for jobs of the sort, took the poor woman aside, and informed her that an action would lie against the silversmith for false imprisonment, which St. Aubyn overhearing, he eagerly interfered to prevent a proceeding which was, he thought, both unnecessary and unjust. Nor did the sufferer, worn down as she was with sickness as well as sorrow, feel any inclination to revenge herself, especially when the silversmith, in order to make her some compensation for the distress which his ideas of duty had occasioned her, came forward and offered to send her in his own chaise to Carlisle free of all expense; and begged that the money deposited by Mrs. Castlemain, should be given to her for other uses. To this proposal St. Aubyn gladly acceded, and the lawyer had the mortification of losing his job, and of seeing those whom he hoped to make enemies, part as friends. At length St. Aubyn appeared, and as soon as his mother saw him, she joyfully exclaimed, “There he is! there is my son!” On which one of the group archly cried, “Come then, let us huzza *the best of sons!*” and St. Aubyn, to his infinite confusion and surprise, was greeted by loud huzzas.

“What is the reason of this?” said he to his mother, and looking fiercely round on the mob.

“Oh, nothing, nothing,” replied she, at that moment seeing to her great relief the horse and chaise come to the door, in which they were to return home; “only do lend me five shillings, that’s all;” and with a deep sigh Henry obeyed her, and entered the chaise, into which she immediately followed, throwing the money amidst the crowd as she did so.

This action immediately gave rise to such violent, repeated, and loud acclamations from the populace, that the horse took fright and ran with alarming violence through the town and along the road, till he overtook Mrs. Castlemain’s carriage, which he passed, and soon after, by a sudden and unexpected shock, St. Aubyn and his mother were thrown out, and the gig nearly broken to pieces.

In an instant Mr. Egerton, followed by Mrs. Castlemain and Emma, who were scarcely able to support themselves from terror, hastened to the spot, and were greatly relieved by seeing St. Aubyn unhurt running to raise his terrified and nearly fainting mother.

“Lean on me, my dear madam,” cried Mr. Egerton, seeing St. Aubyn too much alarmed to be of much use; and Mrs. St. Aubyn, who even then was sufficiently alive to certain impressions to be aware of the affectionate anxiety with which Mr. Egerton spoke, threw herself on his arm, and leaned against his shoulder with such prompt and energetic obedience, that his fears subsided, and he was well convinced that by the aid of Mrs. Castlemain’s salts she would soon be herself again. Nor was he mistaken; after a little hysterical laughing and crying, Mrs. St. Aubyn resigned the support of Mr. Egerton, and, relinquishing the cold and trembling hand of her still terrified son, began to set her dress to rights, and to replace the *flaxen* ringlets, that had wandered from her forehead to her ear.

“But where’s my bonnet?” she exclaimed. And when it was brought to her, covered with dirt and completely spoiled, “I am

glad of this," said she, as she surveyed its discoloured beauties; "I have *now* a good excuse to get a new one; and I shall get one like yours, my dear," she added, addressing Emma; while St. Aubyn, deeply blushing, turned away.

"But what is to be done with this broken whiskey!" asked Mr. Egerton. "We can take Mrs. St. Aubyn in the carriage with us; and as the horse will soon be caught and brought back, Henry can ride it home. The chaise is then our only difficulty."

"I must get it taken back to Penrith," replied St. Aubyn, "and cause it to be mended as fast as possible, or my uncle will never forgive me."

"Bless me!" cried Mrs. St. Aubyn, "and must I go home without you, Henry? I am sure I dare not face my brother unsupported and alone. He will be so angry about his ugly old chaise."

"O we will go with you," said Mrs. Castlemain; "and perhaps our presence will be some restraint on him." And Henry and his mother being both relieved by this promise, the former went to a neighbouring farm-house in search of assistance to remove the broken carriage, and the latter took her seat in the chaise of Mrs. Castlemain.

An uncomfortable silence took place during the ride to Vale-House, rarely broken in upon even by the loquacious Mrs. St. Aubyn, as the dread of her brother's anger was the feeling continually uppermost, and the rest of the party had not as yet recovered the terror which they had experienced from the accident of the overturn. But at length, Mr. Egerton begged to know what had frightened the horse.

"O, the people's shouting."

"And why did they shout?"

"Why, the first time they shouted because they saw Henry, and were pleased with him on account of his kindness in going to try to exculpate the poor woman."

“But how came they to know that he had been so kind?”

“Because——because I told them.”

“And how did they know him when they saw him?”

“Because I said it was he; and my son, the best of sons; so then they huzzaed him.”

“But you have not yet explained why they shouted so as to frighten the horses?”

“O that was because I gave them five shillings.”

“So then,” replied Mr. Egerton, “they were resolved you should have your money’s worth of huzzas. And now, madam, be so good as to tell me why we were greeted in the same noisy way; was that owing to you too?”

“It was,” said Mrs. St. Aubyn, drawing up her head and smiling with satisfaction as she informed Mr. Egerton of the obligation which his pupil owed her; while she proceeded to tell him how lavish she had been in the praise of the abashed and humble Emma.

“And you said all this?” they all three asked at once; and Mrs. St. Aubyn, convinced they were filled with gratitude and delight, answered, “Yes, and a great deal more,” with such a simple, confiding, and self-admiring expression on her distended mouth, that, even more amused by her folly than angry at its disagreeable consequences, Mr. Egerton gave way to a violent burst of laughter, in which he was joined by Emma and Mrs. Castlemain.

Mrs. St. Aubyn gazed on them with wonder. Instead of thanks, to be repaid with laughter!—but she was too good-humoured to resent it; and in a few moments she laughed as much as they did, though why she did not exactly know. They gave no explanation, and Mrs. St. Aubyn did not demand one; but conceiving the business of the shouting to be a better joke than she had fancied it, she felt satisfied that all was as it should be, and was convinced that Mr. Egerton’s pride was gratified by what had happened, though he was too politic to acknowledge it.

But the white chimneys of the Vale-House now began to appear in sight; and Mr. Egerton, who wished Mr. Hargrave to remain ignorant if possible of their journey to Penrith and its disagreeable cause, proposed that they should dismiss the carriage, as it was drawn by four horses, and walk the rest of the way; a plan highly approved of by Mrs. St. Aubyn, as she hoped by that means to enter the house unobserved, and change her dirty and disordered dress before she was seen by Mr. Hargrave. Accordingly they alighted, and walked to the house, which they entered by a back door; but not unperceived by Mr. Hargrave, who, being in an adjoining parlour, called his trembling sister, who was therefore forced to appear before him, leaning for support on Mr. Egerton, he having engaged to explain the cause of her strange appearance, and of the absence of Henry.

“Heyday! whom have we here?” cried Mr. Hargrave. “I did not expect so much good company. And why this extraordinary humility of coming in at the back door? Well, where is Henry?—What! not a word? And you all look as glum as if you had just come from a funeral.”

“We were very near being present at a death,” replied Mr. Egerton gravely.

“A death! What do you mean? No accident to Henry, I hope?”

“No, thank God! no serious accident.”

“Nor to me neither, as it happened,” returned Mrs. St. Aubyn.

“As it happened!—Ah! and now I look again, your wig is on one side, old girl, and you have lost some of your bloom. And, why, ‘sdeath! you have been in the *mire*, madam!”

“I have indeed, I have been *overturned*.”

“Overturned!—No harm come to my horse and gig, I hope?”

Here Mrs. St. Aubyn, afraid to answer “Yes,” thought it best to give way to a gentle hysteric; she had known such an expedient succeed with her husband, and she had a mind to try it on her brother. But



scarcely had she begun to raise a few notes, when Mr. Hargrave rang the bell and ordered in a pail of water.

“Good heavens! what for?” cried Mrs. Castlemain.

“For my sister,” he coolly replied; “to souse her,—that’s all.”

And while Mr. Egerton turned round indignantly to reprove him for his brutality, he saw to his infinite surprise that Mrs. St. Aubyn was quite recovered.

“There!” said Mr. Hargrave exultingly, “now am I not a good physician?—I have known St. Aubyn on such occasions send for a surgeon, and wine, and brandy, and hartshorn, and the deuce knows what, and almost go into a responsive and sympathetic hysteric himself;—while madam kicked and squalled very much at her ease.—But I, you see, had no sooner—”

Here he paused; for real tears, the tears of wounded sensibility, now coursed each other down his poor sister’s cheek, as she recollected the tenderness of her husband, and contrasted it with the coarseness of her brother;—while she indignantly exclaimed,

“It is cruel in you to remind me of that fond indulgence which I have lost for ever, and which the behaviour I now experience serves to endear to me every day more and more.”

“Humph! well put, that,” replied Mr. Hargrave; “and I like to see you cry for St. Aubyn, for he deserved it from you; though he was a confounded proud fellow, and I hate pride.—But come, now let us hear about the accident; are my horse and gig safe? I ask you.”

“Your horse is, I hope;—but your gig—”

“Is broken to pieces, I suppose?”

“Not quite.”

“Not quite!! ‘sdeath! I had rather—but how did it happen?”

“The horse ran away,” said Mr. Egerton, “and threw your nephew and sister out, and broke the chaise, which Mr. St. Aubyn has taken to be mended!”

“The horse ran away! That must have been the fault of the driver; for he is as gentle as a lamb, and not given to such freaks.”

“Indeed it was no fault of Henry’s,” said Mrs. St. Aubyn; “but the people at Penrith *shouted* so loud that they frightened the horse.”

“And what did they shout for, pray?”

“Why, for *us*.”

“For you! What the deuce could they shout for at the sight of a fantastical old woman, and a tall gawky boy?”

“Well, they shouted for others besides us.”

“So,” thought Mr. Egerton, “all will out!”

“They shouted when they saw Miss Castlemain too.”

“Amazing!” cried Mr. Hargrave; “Why, what ails the people of Penrith?—are they going mad? or are old women and pretty girls so rare at Penrith, that the sight of them turns their heads?—Do, Mrs. Castlemain, or Mr. Egerton, explain this business; for the fair classic looks sulky, and so does my sister.”

Mr. Egerton immediately, as succinctly as possible, related what had passed; but could scarcely go on in his story uninterrupted by Mr. Hargrave, who was impatient to give a loud vent to the suppressed bursts of laughter which evidently shook his frame. When he had concluded, Mr. Hargrave put a restraint on his inclinations no longer; but gave way to so loud and hearty a laugh, that even the mortified Emma could not help joining in it. But her inclination to laughter soon ceased, when Mr. Hargrave recovering his speech exclaimed,

“This is glorious fun. It is a great consolation to poor ignoramuses like myself to see these uncommon folks getting themselves into such ridiculous scrapes! Oh! ho! ho! ho! I protest I don’t think

it would have entered into the head of any one, but a little Miss who learns Greek and Latin, to give away her buckles out of her shoes, in a fit of unnecessary generosity, and bear to go about like a slattern the whole day after! Oh! ho! ho! I shall burst my sides! I think I see you, Miss Emma, with your straps hanging down, and your draggled petticoats! But what did that signify? You had done something out of the common road, and that was enough for you, you know!”

Mr. Egerton, who felt deeply this coarse and unmerited attack on his pupil, was so angry he dared not trust himself to speak; but Mrs. Castlemain was beginning a—

“Let me tell you, Mr. Hargrave,” when he interrupted her with,

“Stop, madam, I have not done yet.—Tell me, my pretty classic, were you not much elated when those fools at Penrith applauded you for what you had done? I dare say your little heart beat high with exultation and conceit, ha!”

Mr. Egerton was going to answer for her, dreading that Emma would make an angry reply, as he had marked the varying colour of her cheek, and the quick heaving of her bosom;—but she spoke before he was aware of it, and in a voice so gentle, that his alarm subsided.

“No, indeed, sir,” she mildly replied; “for I did not add to the folly of giving away my buckles that of valuing myself on what I had done;—on the contrary, sir, my conscience told me that my fatal present was given more from ill-humour and spite than generosity; and the moments which you fancy I thought so flattering, were to me the most humiliating that I ever experienced.”

“There, sir!” cried Mrs. Castlemain, in a tone of triumph.

“Heyday! what is all this? what new stage-effect have we here?”

“No stage-effect, nor attempt at it,” said Mr. Egerton; “but a plain matter-of-fact, as I will condescend to convince you; though you hardly deserve that I should do so. But no, Emma shall tell her

own story.”—And thus encouraged, the blushing girl gave a circumstantial account of her extravagance and all its consequences, and blamed herself so unaffectedly, where Mr. Hargrave had fancied her valuing herself on her nobleness of feeling, that even he, though mortified to find he had not been able to mortify Emma, allowed she was a very good and well-disposed girl;—but he was afraid they would *educate* her into a pedant in petticoats.

It was now near Mr. H.’s dinner-time, and his guests rose to depart; but he would not allow it, and insisted so violently on their staying to partake of his family meal, that they at length consented, especially as they were anxious to await the return of Henry St. Aubyn, and be convinced that he had not at all suffered from his accident. Their compliance put Mr. Hargrave into great good-humour; still he could not entirely forget the destruction of his chaise; and he declared that Henry was a lad to be trusted alone anywhere; but that, if his ridiculous mother went with him, he was always led by her into some scrape or another.

“I am very certain,” observed Mr. Egerton, “that Henry would not feel obliged to you for this compliment to him, at the expense of his mother.”

“No, to be sure,” answered Mr. Hargrave; “I know he is your pious Æneas;—or rather, I dare say you think pious Æneas was bloody Nero to Henry St. Aubyn.—But, huzza! here he is! here is pious Æneas at last, and my chaise too, I declare! But I vow Henry shall pay for the mending!”

By this time the wine which Mr. Hargrave had drunk had made him more than usually kind. He therefore received Henry most graciously; declared he was an honest fellow, and he was very glad he had not broken his neck as well as the chaise. Then filling up a bumper, he desired him to drink it off to Madam Castlemain’s health, and wish her another husband, and soon, (winking his eye as he spoke, at Mr. Egerton;)—then he chucked his sister under the chin, by the title of old mother St. Aubyn; and telling Emma

she was a beauty, and he should come a courting to her soon, he gave her so loud a kiss, that St. Aubyn started from his seat with a feeling of pain, which he would as yet have found it difficult to define even to himself.

When the company separated, an early day was fixed for their meeting again, at the house of Mrs. Castlemain; and Emma anticipated the arrival of that day, with more pleasure than she had ever before felt, when expecting to be in company with the dreaded Mr. Hargrave. But an attack of the gout deferred that gentleman's visit even some weeks longer.

At length, however, Mr. Hargrave's malady left him, and he was able to pay his long-promised visit to Mrs. Castlemain; and Mr. Egerton was not a little amused to observe that Emma was an interested partaker in the preparations making for Mr. Hargrave's reception.

"You take such pains to please this odd-tempered man," said he laughing, "that one might suppose you were in love with him!"

"Indeed," replied Emma with great simplicity, "I don't even like him; still I had rather please than displease him; for he is Henry's uncle, you know."

Mr. Egerton smiled again, but turned away as he did so, conscious that his smile had now assumed an arch expression, which he would not have liked to explain to her who called it forth.

At the appointed hour Mr. Hargrave, his sister, and Henry arrived, and the former in good humour. But when Emma helped him to some fruit-pie, and did it without spilling any of the juice, he observed that she took better care of Mrs. Castlemain's table-cloths than she did of other people's.

"Let me tell you, sir," said Mrs. Castlemain, "that you are very ungrateful to Emma, considering the pains which she has taken to please you. The custard which you are now eating and

commending, was made by her; and you reward her by reverting to past grievances.”

“He! what!” replied Mr. Hargrave; “Why, how should I know this? How should I suspect that the young genius had so condescended?—Here, give us your hand, my girl; and believe me, this pretty hand will look prettier covered with the remains of paste and pie-crust, than daubed with ink from writing Latin themes, or scribbling verses.”

“Every thing in its season, Mr. Hargrave,” replied Mrs. Castlemain, piqued at his ungraciousness; but she hoped that the present which Emma had in store for him would make him repent, and perhaps amend his harshness; and in a low voice she desired her to bring down her work.

Emma obeyed. Then timidly approaching Mr. Hargrove, she begged his acceptance of a silk handkerchief to replace one which he had mentioned having lost.

“He! what!—What have we here?” said he; “and whose work is this? and why is it given to me?”

“It is Emma’s work; she both made and marked it; and now she begs you will reward her for her trouble by accepting and wearing it.”

“Nay, madam,” returned Mr. Hargrove, “I am not much obliged to her, I believe. Come hither, girl; and so you did all this to prove to me that I was an old fool, and to give me the lie, did you?”

(Here Henry with indignant emotion started from his seat.)

“No, sir,” answered Emma, her eyes filling with tears as she spoke; “I did it merely to gain your good opinion and my own; as I agree with you in thinking that a woman should learn every thing that is useful.”

Even Mr. Hargrove was not proof against this meek and modest reply; and catching her in his arms, he swore she was the best little girl in the world. “But,” added he, as if afraid of being too amiable,

“I shall never dare to use my handkerchief; but I shall lay it up in lavender, and show it as a wonder—Neat work by a learned young lady.”

Mrs. Castlemain, Mr. Egerton, and Henry looked their indignation at this ungracious and sarcastic courtesy; but Emma, as if she did not feel the bitterness of it, replied, “Pray, sir, do not do that; for when it is worn out I should be very happy to make you another.”

Mr. Hargrove looked at her a moment in silence; then said, taking her hand and kissing it respectfully, “You have conquered, young lady; and I will never call you learned again.” While Emma, venturing to raise her eyes to those of Mr. Egerton and Henry, read in them such lively approbation of her forbearance as amply rewarded her for her efforts to obtain it, and flattered her much more than Mrs. St. Aubyn’s repeated assurances, that to be sure she was the sweetest temper in the world.

In the evening Mr. Hargrave and Mrs. Castlemain played chess, and unfortunately the latter was the conqueror,—a circumstance which was particularly galling to the former, because he had an avowed contempt for the talents of women, and piqued himself on his skill as a chess-player; and secretly displeased as he had before been, and as Mr. Egerton suspected he would be, by Emma’s triumph, his ill-temper became ungovernable; and on his poor dependent sister’s coming near him, he vented some of his spleen on her by desiring her, with an oath, to get out of the way, and accompanying what he said with a push violent enough to send her almost on her face to the other end of the room.

Soon after, on Mrs. Castlemain’s venturing to contradict him, he was so gross in his abuse of her that she replied in no very gentle manner. The consequence was, that they parted immediately, resolving never, on any terms, to meet again. Vain were Mrs. St. Aubyn’s tears, and Mr. Egerton’s remonstrances. Mr. Hargrave persisted in leaving the house, and Mrs. Castlemain in approving his departure; and meeting Henry at the gate, returning with Emma from a walk in an adjacent valley, he seized his arm, and

exclaimed, "Come along, you puppy! and mark me, I do not choose you should be inveigled by any artful old woman, or her base-born brats; so come home, and never presume to enter these doors again."

"What has happened? for mercy's sake, tell me what has happened?" cried Henry; while Emma ran into the house; repeating his "Come away, I tell you!" Henry had only time to say, "Good night, my dear Emma, and I will try to see you to-morrow."

But that very night, Mrs. Castlemain told Emma, that as Mr. Hargrave and she, in consequence of a violent quarrel, had parted, never to meet again, it was not at all likely that Henry would be allowed to continue his visits; and Emma did not behave like a heroine on the occasion, for she retired in great distress to her apartment, and literally cried herself to sleep. The next morning Henry did not appear according to his promise, either at Mrs. Castlemain's or Mr. Egerton's; and Mr. Egerton, after endeavouring with some little success to calm the violence of Mrs. Castlemain's resentment, set out for Vale-House, with the benevolent intention of appeasing that of Mr. Hargrave. But his efforts were wholly unsuccessful, and he was forced to return with no prospect of a reconciliation between the parties, unless it should be in the power of time or accident to effect it; and, however deeply his want of success might affect the heart of Emma, it was not less sensibly felt by Mr. Egerton himself.

Emma could not be more desirous of pleasing Mr. Hargrave, because he was the uncle of St. Aubyn, than Mr. Egerton was. He allowed his paradoxes to pass uncontradicted, his asperities of temper to remain unresented, rather than offend the man on whose caprice the destiny of St. Aubyn depended; for his heart was bent on a union between Emma and Henry; and he well knew, that by displeasing Mr. Hargrave he should run the risk of weakening, if not of destroying the chance of this desired union's taking place. But all his forbearance was now rendered vain, and by a circumstance more likely to prove fatal to his views than a



dispute between him and Mr. Hargrave could have been. The near relation of Emma had mortally offended the arbiter of Henry St. Aubyn's fate; and when Emma ran out to meet him, as soon as he appeared in sight, she discovered by his countenance, before he answered her interrogating eyes, that he had no pleasing intelligence to communicate. But to submit with patience to a positive evil, even though it be unavoidable, is a hard task for youth to learn; and to bear with fortitude the loss of her companion, her monitor, and her example, was a lesson which Mr. Egerton found it difficult to teach his usually docile scholar.

In a few days, however, Mrs. Castlemain observed that Emma had recovered her spirits; and she also observed, that though she herself rose very early, Emma rose still earlier, and immediately went out to take a walk. At first, this unusual circumstance excited no suspicion in the mind of Mrs. Castlemain, and she forgot to question Emma concerning it. But one morning, it occurred to her that these early walks must have a motive, and she determined to follow her. She did so, and found that she went to meet St. Aubyn. On seeing Mrs. Castlemain, Henry and Emma advanced towards her, afraid perhaps of being received with some degree of coldness, but not conscious that they deserved the severity of reproof. St. Aubyn, therefore, was shocked, and Emma irritated, at hearing himself accused by Mrs. Castlemain of having seduced her child into the commission of a disobedient, indelicate, and clandestine action, and secret, unbecoming intercourse.

“You astonish and distress me,” cried St. Aubyn; while Emma was too indignant to speak. “You know I am forbidden to visit both at your house and Mr. Egerton's, (a command which I dare not disobey,) but I am not forbidden to associate either with you, Mr. Egerton, or Emma, if I happen to meet you; therefore, having been so fortunate as to meet Emma by chance one morning, I prevailed on her to indulge me with her company, and in hopes of enjoying the same pleasure again, though not by appointment, I have walked the same way every morning ever since; and——”

“She has been so complaisant as to do the same, I suppose?”

“She has,” replied St. Aubyn, blushing; “nor did either of us imagine that in so doing we were guilty of an impropriety.”

“Sweet innocents!” said Mrs. Castlemain, reddening with resentment; “but though you, Mr. St. Aubyn, may, and no doubt *do*, disapprove your uncle’s unwarrantable conduct to me, and therefore do not at all feel disposed to enter into his quarrel, Miss Castlemain ought to have resented my injuries so far as to scorn to have meetings with the nephew of the man who has offended me; especially when she knows that her intercourse with you, if known to Mr. Hargrove, would be disapproved by him, and consequently forbidden. But if she does not know how to act with proper spirit, I must teach her; therefore, sir, while Mr. Hargrave and I are at variance, I positively forbid you to see or speak to Miss Castlemain; and I forbid her to see or speak to you.” So saying, she turned hastily away, refusing to listen to St. Aubyn’s remonstrances, and desiring Emma to follow her immediately.

Emma obeyed, but slowly and sullenly; and till she lost sight of St. Aubyn, she continued to kiss her hand to him, while the rapid tears that coursed each other down her cheek, sufficiently betrayed her sorrow at this cruel and in her opinion unnecessary prohibition.

“And you expect me to obey you, madam?” said Emma, in a tone more akin to defiance than submission.

“I do,” hastily replied Mrs. Castlemain; “or you most take the consequences.”

It happened unfortunately that Emma, who had been told by a tattling old servant who waited on her, some imperfect particulars of her mother’s rash marriage, and Mrs. Castlemain’s bitter and long resentment of it, had asked St. Aubyn if he could give her any information on the subject; and he, though he endeavoured to soften his account of Mrs. Castlemain’s implacability as much as possible, had said enough to recall to Emma’s mind the recollection of the dread and hatred which she used to feel towards

her grandmother, and to account for her mother's having, as she concluded, inspired her with them.

It was at this moment, this unlucky moment, that Mrs. Castlemain, having kept Emma in sight, followed her at a distance; and seeing her walking with St. Aubyn, suddenly appeared before them with determined severity and resentment in her look; and while Emma listened to her words with a heart bursting with indignation, her mother's sorrows, her mother's wrongs alone were present to her view; and she forgot all Mrs. Castlemain's kindness to herself, and her own daily sense of that kindness, and she only saw in her indulgent and fostering parent the object of her early and just terror and aversion. No wonder then that her proud spirit rose at hearing a sort of threat from Mrs. Castlemain of future vengeance if she dared to disobey her; and that she listened with a rebellious heart to the lecture on propriety, which after breakfast (of which Emma refused to partake) Mrs. Castlemain thought it her duty to give her.

"I see no harm in what we have done," replied Emma; "and as an uncle is not one's father, nor a grandmother one's own mother, and therefore their right to command may very well be disputed, I should not at all scruple to meet Henry St. Aubyn again, and walk with him, in spite of your prohibition and Mr. Hargrave's."

Mr. Egerton who had entered the room just before Emma made this unbecoming reply, now came forward in great emotion; but she was too angry to be awed even by his presence.

"I see by your countenance, Mr. Egerton," said Mrs. Castlemain, "that you have heard what this ungrateful girl has been saying, and that you are shocked at it."

Mr. Egerton bowed in silence.

"I am glad you are here, sir," she continued, "that you may also hear what I am going to say; namely, that if in defiance of my express commands, and all the laws of propriety, Miss Castlemain persists in meeting Mr. St. Aubyn, I shall——"

“Renounce me for ever! I suppose,” cried Emma rising, and pale with anger; “for I know you are not very forgiving in your nature. My poor, injured, discarded mother knew that to her cost!”

A thunderbolt could not have had a more overpowering effect on Mrs. Castlemain than this cruelly reproachful speech. She fell back in her chair; she spoke not—she stirred not—but lay with her eyes fixed in glaring unconsciousness.

Emma, on seeing this, gave a loud shriek, and sprang forward to her assistance; but Mr. Egerton, indignantly pushing her away with violence, exclaimed, “you have killed her! or you have driven her to frenzy!” and ringing the bell for the servants, he would not suffer Emma to share in his endeavours to restore her victim, as he called her, to life and reason; and Emma, screaming dreadfully, threw herself in frantic agony on the ground.

This roused Mrs. Castlemain from her stupor; she sobbed violently, and in a few moments tears came to her relief; while a “thank God!” that seemed to come from the bottom of her heart, burst from the self judged Emma.

In a short time Mrs. Castlemain was able to speak; and as she then begged to be left to recover herself alone, Mr. Egerton took Emma away with him, and led her into a room which she but rarely entered; namely, the dressing-room of Mrs. Castlemain. “Poor child of passion!” cried Mr. Egerton, seizing Emma’s hand; “what an act of brutality have you been guilty of! Do you see that picture?” (pointing to a picture hanging over the chimney-piece, and drawing aside the curtain which concealed it as he spoke;) “know then that the life of that indulgent parent whose heart you have so cruelly wounded, is already tortured by incessant repentance and self-upbraiding; and that it was only yesterday, when unperceived I entered the adjoining apartment, that I overheard her, as she looked at that picture, speaking aloud in all the agonies of a broken and contrite spirit, and calling on her lost daughter to witness her sufferings and pardon her injustice! Cruel

unnatural child! was it for you to inflict a still severer pang on a heart already lacerated and bleeding with remorse?"

Emma stayed to hear no more; but rushing out of the room, she almost flew into the apartment where she had left Mrs. Castlemain, and throwing herself on her knees before her, earnestly conjured her to pity and forgive her, though she declared that she never, never should forgive herself.

"Forgive thee! my child," replied Mrs. Castlemain in mournful and faltering accents; "ay, from the bottom of my soul do I forgive thee; for I have only too much need of forgiveness." Here she pressed Emma almost convulsively to her bosom; and as she again wished to be left alone, Emma returned to Mr. Egerton.

But, as she had foreseen, it was not easy for her to obtain her own pardon for the wound she had inflicted on the feelings of Mrs. Castlemain; during the whole of that day she was occasionally in paroxysms of frantic anguish, and the death-like figure of Mrs. Castlemain was present to her view; for what agony can exceed that of a young and virtuous heart that feels for the first time the horrors of remorse!

That evening, after Emma, exhausted by exertion, was retired to rest, Mr. Egerton told Mrs. Castlemain that he thought, as Emma was more than fifteen, she was old enough to be told her unhappy mother's story; "and at this moment," added he, "that her mind is melted and humbled by self-upbraiding, the warning moral which it inculcates will sink into it deeply, and she will also learn to understand and hold sacred your claims, your just claims, to her obedience and affection."

"I believe you are right," replied Mrs. Castlemain; "but as the narration would only call into additional force feelings and recollections which are already only too present to my mind, I shall order the carriage and go out for a long drive, that I may be out of the way of it. But here," said she, taking a letter out of a case deposited in her bosom, "here is my child's last letter to me; show

it to her daughter, who in some respects I see too nearly resembles her, and as soon as I shall have driven from the door to-morrow, begin your melancholy task.”

Mr. Egerton approved of Mrs. Castlemain’s intended absence; and having on his return to his own cottage that night looked over some papers containing particulars necessary to be accurately explained, he was prepared the next morning to give Emma the desired and necessary information.

As soon as Mrs. Castlemain had left the house, Mr. Egerton told Emma that he wished to have some conversation with her on some circumstances very interesting to her feelings; and leading her into Mrs. Castlemain’s dressing-room, he again undrew the curtain that concealed the picture of Agatha. “I am going,” said he, “to relate the history of that dear unhappy woman.”

“I am glad of it, very glad of it indeed,” replied Emma bursting into tears; “but is it possible that that can be my mother’s picture? I believe my grandmother showed it to me some years ago, and told me it was so; but I have never seen it since, and I had quite forgotten there was such a picture.” Then going close to it, she regarded it some moments in silence, and, turning mournfully round, exclaimed, “O, sir, is it possible that my mother could ever have looked so young, so happy, so beautiful?”

“Yes, my dear,” replied Mr. Egerton gravely, “till she became the slave of an imperious temper and ungovernable passions, and by an act of disobedience paved the way to her own misery and early death.”

Emma blushed, looked down, and remained silent for a moment; but looking again at the picture, she suddenly observed, “Surely I have seen a face like that, for the features seem quite familiar to me!”

“You have,” said Mr. Egerton with a significant look, which as Emma’s eyes involuntarily turned towards a pier-glass opposite to her, she was at no difficulty to explain, and she blushed again; (but

from emotions of a mixed nature, for pleasure was one of them,) as “the consciousness of self-approving beauty stole across her busy thought.”

“Yes, Emma,” cried Mr. Egerton, replying to the deepened and expressive glow of her cheek, and the involuntary complacency that dimpled the corners of her closed mouth; “that picture is as like you as if it had been painted from you; and you yourself have pronounced it beautiful. But be not elated by the conviction which it gives you; for,

What’s female beauty, but an air divine  
Thro’ which the mind’s all-gentle graces shine?

Therefore, how easy it is for temper and passion, by leaving their traces on the countenance, to injure if not to destroy loveliness even perfect as that is! Such as is that picture was your dear unhappy mother at the age of sixteen;—and such as is *this* picture was the same woman at the age of *twenty-four*; (giving Emma a large miniature of her mother as he spoke;) so great and so obvious were the ravages which the passions had made in her appearance.”

Emma, surprised and affected, took the picture with a trembling hand, but had no sooner beheld it, than she exclaimed in a voice inarticulate from emotion, “this is indeed my mother!” and sunk back in her chair almost choked with the violence of her feelings.

When she recovered herself sufficiently to speak, she asked why this resemblance of her mother as she was accustomed to see her, had been so long concealed from her; and Mr. Egerton informed her that Agatha had desired him to let it remain unknown to her till she was old enough to hear the story of her mother’s wrongs.—“When that time arrives, and not till *then*, show Emma,” said she, “this picture which I have painted on purpose for her.”

“I have obeyed your mother, my dear child,” added Mr. Egerton, “in the one respect; it now only remains for me to obey her in the other.”

“How many heartaches should we spare ourselves,” said Mr. Egerton, as he prepared to narrate to Emma the history of her mother’s sorrows, “if we were careful to check every unkind word or action towards those we love, as it is occasionally suggested to us by the infirmities of our temper, by this anticipating reflection;—’The time may soon arrive when the being whom I am now about to afflict, may be snatched from me for ever, to the cold recesses of the grave; secured from the assaults of my petulance, and deaf to the voice of my remorseful penitence!’ O Emma! had Mrs. Castlemain fallen a victim last night to the strong emotion your cruel reproaches occasioned her, what to-day would not have been your bitter and unavailing agonies!”

Emma, conscience-stricken, did not attempt to answer him even by a promise of future self-control; and Mr. Egerton continued thus:

“‘She is dead, and never knew how much I loved, and how truly I forgave her!’ was the exclamation of Mrs. Castlemain, when I informed her that your mother was no more; and the tone in which she spoke conveyed to my mind such an impression of remorse and agony as no time can eradicate from my memory! and when you shall learn how much both of your mother’s and of Mrs. Castlemain’s miseries was the result of ill-humour, improperly indulged, I trust, my dear child, that you will not wonder at the incessant care with which I have endeavoured to teach you the virtue of self-command.”

Mr. Egerton then proceeded to his long and melancholy detail, with which my readers are already acquainted;—but I wish to observe, that when Mr. Egerton said her mother was led to the altar, Emma eagerly interrupted him, and exclaimed with great emotion,

“Is it indeed true that my mother was really *married* to my father?”

“Certainly,” replied Mr. Egerton, amazed at her agitated manner.

“Bless you! bless you! sir, for telling me so!” returned Emma, bursting into tears; “Oh what a load have you taken off my mind! I



thought I had been told—but now that agony is over, and I have not the misery of blushing for a mother’s guilt!”

“But,” replied Mr. Egerton, affectionately, “it is only too probable your mother’s fame may never be cleared in the eyes of the world.”

“It is cleared, sir, in the eyes of her daughter,” replied Emma, “and other considerations are comparatively indifferent. I know her to be innocent, and I bless God that I know it; but pray go on: I think I can now bear to hear the detail of my father’s depravity.”

Mr. Egerton, satisfied with his pupil, pressed her hand kindly, and proceeded in his narration.

It is not in the power of words to describe the force or the variety of the emotions which agitated the heart of Emma while she listened to the tale of her mother’s wrongs and sorrows; nor of the affectionate eagerness which she expressed to see the Orwells, the humble but admirable friends of her mother, to whom Mr. Egerton was in the habit of writing occasionally, and sending little presents in the name of Emma.

“I should like to go to London on *purpose* to see them,” said Emma; and Mr. Egerton kept alive in her young heart a sense of gratitude so honourable and so just.

But he soon found that the praises of the Orwells, which Emma was for ever indulging in, sounded harshly on the ears of Mrs. Castlemain; for they recalled her own hasty renunciation of Agatha to her mind, and she felt that if *she* had done her duty by her, she would not have been forced to incur such vast obligations to the benevolence of obscure strangers.

“My dear child,” said Mr. Egerton to Emma when they were alone together, “do not mention the Orwells again in the presence of your grandmother.” And Emma, who immediately discerned the cause of his request, implicitly obeyed him.

It was now that Mr. Egerton thought the time was come for some inquiries to be made concerning the father of Emma, and for some

steps to be taken in order to force him to acknowledge her as his legitimate daughter; and to the propriety of these measures, as a justice due to the memory of her child, Mrs. Castlemain reluctantly consented. Hitherto, the terror of being forced to resign her to a father's claims, when those claims were established, had kept them from bringing the affair forward; but selfish considerations could not now with propriety be acted upon any further; and Mr. Egerton employed an agent in London to inquire what was become of Danvers. And it was with no small degree of satisfaction they heard that, after many inquiries, the agent could only discover that Danvers had sailed nearly fifteen years back for the West Indies, and was supposed to have died there of the yellow fever, as no person of that name was known upon any of the islands.

“Then you are mine, exclusively mine *now*,” said Mrs. Castlemain affectionately embracing Emma, “and all that is necessary to be done, is to procure a copy of the register of your mother's marriage, in order to clear her fame from the shadow of suspicion.”

But though sure of still remaining under the protection which she loved, though *in hopes* of being proved the legitimate child of her mother, and lawful heiress of her grandmother, gaiety no longer lighted up the eye nor bloomed on the cheek of Emma; for Mr. Hargrave remained at variance with Mrs. Castlemain, and Henry St. Aubyn therefore was no longer a visiter at the Cottage. Mr. Egerton too missed his pupil as much as Emma her companion. Still at church they met; but for two successive Sundays Emma had vainly looked both for St. Aubyn and his mother, and she wondered at an absence so unusual. But she heard the reason of it only too soon from the gossip of the town of Keswick; and learnt with indescribable emotion, that St. Aubyn and his mother were gone on a tour of the Lakes with the honourable Mrs. Felton, a beautiful widow with a large jointure, to whom report said St. Aubyn was shortly to be united.

“This is a mere gossip, I am sure,” said Mr. Egerton when the report of St. Aubyn's marriage reached him; “for I am certain

Henry would have done me the honour to inform me of his marriage prospects, had any such existed.”

And while Mr. Egerton said this, dear as he had always been to his affectionate pupil, she felt him at that moment dearer to her than ever;—but, as yet unacquainted with the nature of her own feelings towards St. Aubyn, she attributed her emotions to the indignation of injured friendship, which resented not being in the confidence of its object.

“No, no,” continued he, “I can never believe that he would take a fancy to this fashionable belle and blue stocking.”

“Pray, sir, what is a blue stocking?” said Emma.

“That is a question which I am not able to answer with perfect accuracy; especially as the term ‘blue stocking’ is one that has, like many others, varied from its original signification.”

“I believe, I am *sure*,” replied Emma, “that I am most interested in knowing what is its present meaning; still, I should like to hear all you can tell me on the subject.”

“I have heard that it had its origin in the mistake of a foreigner, who, on being invited to a party of ladies and gentlemen that were in the habit of meeting for the purpose of conversation, asked whether he must come in full dress? and was told in answer, by no means; you may come in blue stockings;—meaning by that, that any undress was admissible.”

“But what could be meant by blue stockings?”

“I conclude worsted or thread stockings of that colour, occasionally worn even by gentlemen in a morning. The foreigner, however, conceived that *bas bleus* were the livery of the party to which he was invited; and he went about describing them as wearing *bas bleus* at their meeting, and requiring their visitors to do the same. Hence arose the title of ‘the blue stocking society,’ given to the ladies and gentlemen in question; amongst whom were

some of the first wits, scholars, moralists, poets, and painters of the day.”

“I thought,” said Emma, “that ‘blue stocking’ was a term applied to ladies only?”

“So it is now; but originally it must, from its origin, have been common to both sexes.”

“Now, however, it is used to women only, is it not, sir? and is it not used as a term of reproach rather than of commendation?”

“I fear it is,” replied Mr. Egerton, smiling at the eagerness with which Emma asked the latter part of the question, and which he accounted for by his having denominated Mrs. Felton a ‘blue stocking;’ “but whether justly or not, you shall judge for yourself. A ‘blue stocking’ is now, I believe, strictly speaking, nothing more than a woman who loves reading and literature, and who courts the society of literary men and women. Sometimes, perhaps, she is herself a writer, but not a professed one; and she occasionally makes her friends happy and flattered by the sight of manuscript verses and translations.”

“Oh! then surely, sir,” interrupted Emma smiling, “there are strong symptoms of blue stockingism about me!”

“Wait till I have finished, Emma. The ‘blue stocking,’ however, after all, only dips her foot in the waters of Helicon, without daring, like the bolder published authoress, to plunge in altogether. But giving the name of *bas bleus*, to the amateurs of literature of both sexes, I will point out the great advantage in society which *bas bleus* have over professed authors and authoresses. ‘Blue stockings,’ who write and read for pleasure, not profit, can afford to cull the richest flowers from the garden of their fancy in order to decorate their conversation. But not so the author or authoress;—they, as they write probably either to procure a necessary addition to their income, or even perhaps to obtain a subsistence for themselves and family, cannot afford to exhaust in society that produce of their imagination which is requisite for

their works. The florist in Covent-garden market, whose flowers are in greatest profusion there, does not probably spare his own wife even a single sprig of geranium to adorn her bosom; and authors and authoresses, while ‘blue stockings’ are splendid and eloquent in their conversation, deny to theirs the brilliancy that might teach it to charm. I have often pitied authors, when I have seen them exhibited on these occasions in what are called conversationes, and expected to become what Dr. Johnson calls ‘intellectual gladiators,’ and have wondered at the wonder expressed, that men who could write so well should talk so ill; when the truth is probably, in the first place, that they do not choose to exhaust their minds in society; in the next, that the mind, which is often at full stretch in the study, requires relaxation in the drawing-room; and therefore they rather shun than court literary converse; while the love of display, which causes men and women of letters to delight so much in literary subjects, being gratified in authors on a wider and a prouder field, they have not in company the same motive to intellectual exertion.”

“Then, my dear sir, you would not have professed authors and authoresses invited to blue stocking parties, because they are of no use when they get there?”

“Pardon me, I would have every attention possible paid to talents, at least in one point of view. Authors and authoresses are useful and ornamental too on such occasions; for every one feels a desire to see the being whose works have either interested or enlightened the world.”

“Then I think,” replied Emma, “that authors and authoresses are the costly heavy chairs in a drawing-room, which are there to be looked at only, and not used; while blue stockings of both sexes are the gilt cane chairs, which are set promiscuously about the apartment, for use as well as show, and formed of a lighter material.”

“Bless me, child!” cried Mrs. Castlemain, who, lost in reverie, had only heard part of what had passed, “what are you saying about *bas bleus*? I hope you are not going to set up for one!”

“Dear grandmother,” returned Emma, “I have a shrewd suspicion that I am one already; at least I shall henceforth take all *bas bleus* under my protection.”

“What! Mrs. Felton and all, Emma?” archly asked Mr. Egerton.

“Yes, sir, certainly; for I think them very harmless and even commendable persons; for their greatest crime seems to be, preferring having full to having empty minds; literary conversation to gossip, scandal, and cards; nor do they do any thing which you and I and Mr. Egerton and St. Aubyn do not do every day.”

“Perhaps not,” replied Mrs. Castlemain; “still there is such a prejudice against blue stockings that I should be very sorry to hear you called by the name.”

Emma was going to answer in a way that would not have pleased Mrs. Castlemain, and with more sarcasm on the prejudices of the world in general than would have become her age, her ignorance in many respects, or her relative situation to the speaker; but recollecting herself, and put on her guard perhaps by a look from Mr. Egerton, she replied, affectionately hanging over Mrs. Castlemain’s chair as she spoke, “I shall endeavour, dear grandmother, to avoid deserving to be called any thing that you disapprove, and my highest wish will always be to please you.”

Mrs. Castlemain kissed her affectionately as she said this, but suddenly rose up and left the room in tears, affected probably at the consciousness, that had the unhappy Agatha received from her the same judicious education and control which had been the safeguard of her more fortunate orphan, she might have been blessed with meeting from her the same respectful and affectionate deference to her will, and been at that moment free from those self-upbraidings that in solitude and secrecy too often invaded her peace.

But to leave my heroine for a little while, and return to St. Aubyn. Part of the story was undoubtedly true. St. Aubyn and his mother were on a party of pleasure with the honourable Mrs. Felton and other friends.

This lady, whose charms in early youth had captivated the younger son of a nobleman, and induced him to raise her from the situation of governess to his sisters to the rank of his wife, was now, according to her own account, about seven-and-twenty. She had vivacity, grace, and accomplishments; and if not regularly handsome, there was an expression in her countenance, a something so attractive in her altogether, that women dreaded her for a rival quite as much as a more perfect beauty; and as the fine though full proportions of her form were set off by the most exquisite taste in dress, Mrs. Felton ranked in the calendar of fashionable belles. But presuming on her situation and talents, and not being a woman possessed of such delicacy of moral feeling as to shrink nearly as much from the imputation of guilt as from guilt itself, too proud to bear to be indebted to the candour of the world for believing her innocent spite of appearances, Mrs. Felton had been a flirting wife, and was now a flirting widow, dragging on a sort of sickly reputation, shunned by some few of her own sex from jealousy as much as from propriety, and extolled or abused by many of the other, according as their self-love was flattered by her fancied preference, or wounded by her neglect.

Mrs. Felton was now attended by a companion, on a visit to a lady and gentleman, friends of the St. Aubyns, who lived on a fine estate in the neighbourhood of Carlisle, meaning to go thence on a tour to all the Lakes, on which tour she had expected to have been joined by some of her London admirers. But having been disappointed in this expectation, she was anticipating a very dull expedition, when Mr. and Mrs. Selby, her host and hostess, thought it would be a good opportunity to claim an old promise made by Mrs. St. Aubyn, that she and her son would one day or other accompany them on a tour through the beauties of Westmoreland

and Cumberland. Mrs. St. Aubyn's company would, they knew, be of no value to their fair guest, but as St. Aubyn was a handsome young man, of nearly four-and-twenty, was of a studious turn, and wrote pretty verses, they imagined that he would be a great acquisition to Mrs. Felton, whose aim was universal conquest, and whose pretensions to literature and taste were as decided and as universally acknowledged as her pretensions to fashion and to beauty.

To a woman of this description, it was, therefore, very certain that the expected arrival of a young, handsome and accomplished man, was an event of some importance; and on the day on which the St. Aubyns were expected, Mrs. Felton appeared dressed evidently for the purposes of conquest.

Mrs. St. Aubyn meanwhile had commenced her journey with feelings and anticipations of pleasure the most unalloyed. She wore a new and in her opinion most becoming riding-habit, and a straw bonnet exactly resembling that which in an evil hour she had recommended to Emma. True, in order to procure these decorations of her person, she had been obliged to increase an enormous old bill, and begin an enormous new one; enormous, I mean, according to the slenderness of her income; but that was a trifle in the estimation of Mrs. St. Aubyn, and the idea that for a whole month perhaps she should not meet the awful frown of her brother, excited in her such even girlish gaiety, as she sat by the side of her beloved son, who had hired for the occasion a low chaise, and a horse warranted steadiest of the steady, that she called a frequent and sometimes sympathizing smile to the now grave countenance of her companion, who, since he had been banished the dear society at the White Cottage, had felt a void at his heart, and a propensity to silence and abstraction, which were before unknown to him. But whatever were St. Aubyn's cares, the sweetness and benevolence of his nature always forbade him to make them a source of pain, or even uncomfortableness, to others; and nothing could be more foreign to his feelings than



that selfishness which leads many persons to give way to the expression of their sorrows, even before those to whom the sight of their sufferings is an affliction difficult to endure. If St. Aubyn ever gave way to grief, it was in the solitude of his own chamber; for, as a social being, he thought he had no right to mix with his fellow-creatures without contributing his share of cheerful conversation, and endeavouring to do all in his power to fill the passing hour with innocent amusement.

After a pleasant and safe journey, though a few gentle screams from Mrs. St. Aubyn, on the road, seemed to imply that she had been in some danger, they arrived at their journey's end time enough for Mrs. St. Aubyn to dress for dinner. And when Mrs. Felton and herself entered the drawing-room, it would have been difficult to say which of the two ladies had taken the most pains at their toilet. The effect which the appearance of each had on the other, was, however, very different. Mrs. St. Aubyn certainly beheld Mrs. Felton's dress with unqualified admiration; but the latter could scarcely restrain a smile as she rapidly surveyed the long uncovered and meagre throat of the former, and the flowers which nodded on one side of the flaxen tresses which shaded the once polished brows of the faded but still self-admiring beauty. Yet Mrs. Felton was used to such exhibitions in town, but she did not expect them in the country; and she expected that Mrs. St. Aubyn's conversation would confirm the impression of her character which her dress had given.

St. Aubyn undoubtedly found more favour in Mrs. Felton's sight than his mother, on his introduction to her; and the look and smile with which she received his graceful bow, were calculated to convey to him how much she already appreciated him; but their force was lost on St. Aubyn, and he was only conscious that Mrs. Felton was a good-looking, and Miss Spenlove, her companion, an ill-looking woman.

But as he sat opposite to Mrs. Felton at dinner, he could not but discover that she had very fine eyes, though he was unconscious

of what was visible to every one else, how often those eyes were turned expressively towards him, reminding one of the simile, “as on impassive ice the lightnings play.” In vain too did the fair widow court every possible opportunity of carving, that she might show the beauty of her hands and arms, which were uncovered to the very extremity of fashion. St. Aubyn did not notice them; but, unconscious of her motive, he admired within himself that attentive politeness which made her willing to take so much trouble to help and please other people.

After dinner, Mrs. Felton introduced literary conversation, and brought in her taste and understanding in aid of her personal graces; but her evident wish to show off, counteracted her power of pleasing him in this instance, and St. Aubyn would have admired her more had she not talked so well. But the singularity of taste in the auditor for whom she talked was wholly unsuspected by Mrs. Felton, who, having displayed her own powers and gratified her own vanity sufficiently, thought it was incumbent on her at length to gratify the vanity of her intended captive; and before the evening ended she took care to insinuate to him that the fame of his literary talents had reached her, and she hoped that he would indulge her during their tour with a sight of some of his beautiful verses.

Nothing but St. Aubyn’s surprise could exceed his confusion at being thus invested with the dignity of authorship, and told of the celebrity of his literary talents; for he was not conscious that his having written at all was known beyond the dear circle at Mrs. Castlemain’s, and he gazed on Mrs. Felton with looks of wonder, confusion, and inquiry.

“Who can have so much misrepresented me and my pretensions to you, madam?” said St. Aubyn, blushing deeply.

“Misrepresented!” exclaimed Mrs. Felton. “Fy, Mr. St. Aubyn! With that ingenuous countenance, how is it possible you can be so deceitful? However modest your pretensions may be, Mrs. Selby assures me she has seen very beautiful verses written by you on

different occasions;—but I see, Mr. St. Aubyn, that you ‘write verse by stealth, and blush to find it fame.’”

“However the verse on these occasions, madam,” replied St. Aubyn, “may have been written, I am sure it must have been seen by stealth, as I never gave a copy of it to any one but my mother.”

“But in the first place you own that you have written?”

“I do—a few schoolboy’s verses.”

“In the next place, you plead guilty to the charge of having given a copy to Mrs. St. Aubyn?”

“Certainly.”

“And you know there is such a thing as *parental pride*; and Mrs. St. Aubyn, in the amiable pride of her heart, showed these stanzas so given to some of her friends; and these friends mentioned them with the praise they deserved to me.—Have I not clearly made out my case, Mr. St. Aubyn?—Verdict against the defendant, who is adjudged to pay a fine of so many stanzas into the Muses’ court.”

“A severe judgment,” replied St. Aubyn, “when the poverty of the condemned is considered,—and I move for an arrest of judgment.”

“What is the matter?” said Mrs. St. Aubyn, drawing her chair closer to her son’s.

“The matter is, that Mr. St. Aubyn is called upon, as a punishment for his offences, to write some poetry, and he wishes his sentence to be revoked.”

“My son refuse to write poetry! Well, that is droll indeed. Why, he writes such beautiful poetry!—Oh, I could show you, madam, such sweet things!”

“Admirable! just what I wished! These ‘sweet things’ are what I want to see; but Mr. St. Aubyn looks as if he would forbid you to show them.”

“What! when he knows I wish to show them? No; Henry never denied me any thing yet, and I think he will hardly begin now.”

St. Aubyn bowed to his mother with a look and smile of affection, and, seeing the display of his manuscripts was unavoidable, withdrew to another part of the room.

From Mrs. Felton’s severity of criticism St. Aubyn had little to fear; for to him she was disposed to be particularly indulgent, as his person and manners were likely to make his poetry appear even faultless in the eyes of a female critic.

Henry St. Aubyn was above six feet in height; but the fine proportions of his form made it almost impossible for any one to deem him too tall; and now that all his features had acquired their due size, the beauty of his face, though not as perfect, was as striking as that of his figure. Still his beauty was chiefly the charm of countenance and expression, heightened by a rich and ever-mantling bloom, the result of health, temperance, and exercise. His manners, though he had seen little of the world, were the manners of a finished gentleman; for they had been modelled on his father’s; and in those of his most intimate associate Mr. Egerton, he had a daily example of the politeness and graceful attention of the old court, as it is called, without any of its formality; and while his lofty and dignified carriage seemed to speak him born to command, the affectionate gentleness of his manner, and the mildness of his address, spoke him eager to oblige and willing to obey.

“What a highly gifted creature it is!” said Mrs. Felton, wiping a tear from her eye, as she read some lines by St. Aubyn, to the memory of his father.

“Henry! come hither, Henry,” cried the delighted mother; “see, see! you have made Mrs. Felton shed tears!”

Henry obeyed the summons, and *saw* tears in the fine eyes of Mrs. Felton; but he either did not see, or would not see, the hand which

she held out to him, and which he ought to have pressed or kissed according as his inclinations prompted.

“Here,” said Mrs. Felton, “take away your odious verses; I wish I had not seen them!”

“Odious verses! and wish you had not seen them!” cried the literal Mrs. St. Aubyn—“well; that is funny!”

“But very true; for they will make me out of love with every thing else of the kind for ages to come. They are so beautiful, that I shall be as fastidious in future as I have hitherto been indulgent.”

“There, Henry! do you hear?” asked Mrs. St. Aubyn.

“Yes, madam, and would I could *believe* what I hear!”

“You may, for I never flatter; not even myself.”

“Nor do I; therefore I must think that your kindness rather than your judgment speaks.”

“May be so,” replied Mrs. Felton; “but I trust that the world will some day or other decide between you and me. Mr. St. Aubyn,” added she, lowering her voice and looking archly at him, “these are pretty lines entitled ‘To Emma, aged twelve years, on her birthday.’ I wonder how you will write ‘To Emma, aged *eighteen*.’”

“‘To Emma, aged eighteen,’ I shall probably not write at all,” replied St. Aubyn blushing.

“Perhaps not,” returned Mrs. Felton with quickness, and heaving a sigh as she spoke; “and in that case she will be a more enviable object than if you *had* written.”

“I do not exactly understand you,” said Henry.

“No matter,” was the answer; and the artillery of glances, sighs, and occasional pressures of the soft white hand on the sleeve of his coat, were again played off on the still insensible St. Aubyn, who when they retired for the night kept repeating to himself till

he dropped asleep, "What could she mean? and why would she not explain herself?"

Had she not contrived to occupy his mind by this affected mystery, St. Aubyn would not have thought of Mrs. Felton at all. However, she had contrived to make him think of her, whether directly or indirectly, and that was a point gained; and had Mrs. Felton been sure she had done so, she would have been of the same opinion, and looked forward with some certainty to a time when she should occupy his attention and thoughts still more.

The next morning the whole party were to begin their tour through Cumberland and Westmoreland. It consisted of Mrs. Felton and her companion, the St. Aubyns, Mr. and Mrs. Selby, and Miss Travers, a young lady on a visit to the latter. At nine, the carriages drove to the door, consisting of Mrs. Felton's landaulet and the one-horse chaises of Mr. Selby and St. Aubyn.

As Mrs. Felton, it was known, preferred a chaise to her own carriage, it was resolved that Mrs. Selby, Miss Spenlove, and Miss Travers should go in the landaulet; accordingly, they took their seats and drove off from the door before Mrs. Felton, who had been writing letters, was equipped for her journey; and before she came down stairs, St. Aubyn had handed his mother into his chaise, and was preparing to follow the carriage. Nothing could exceed Mrs. Felton's astonishment and mortification at finding, when she reached the door, that, instead of requesting leave to drive her in his chaise, he was already contentedly seated by the side of his own mother, and preparing to drive off, as regardless of her as if he had never seen her. To such neglect and indifference, she had never been accustomed, and knew not how to endure it; and her countenance assumed so gloomy an expression, that even Mr. Selby, who was not the most penetrating of men, discovered the cause of her disquietude; and calling to St. Aubyn to stop, he in a low voice asked Mrs. Felton whether she would not oblige Mr. St. Aubyn, by taking his mother's place beside him, while he would condemn himself, for the sake of his young friend, to the pain

of relinquishing her society. At this speech, which soothed her wounded self-love, her countenance brightened, and she allowed Mr. Selby to oblige St. Aubyn by making the proposal; but what could exceed her astonishment and angry mortification when St. Aubyn returned for answer, that he must beg leave to decline the honour intended him, as his mother was so fearful in an open carriage, that he knew she would be miserable if driven by any one but himself, as to his driving she had been accustomed!

Too much provoked to speak, Mrs. Felton seated herself beside Mr. Selby, and followed the other chaise in perturbed silence, debating in her own mind whether she should not show her sense of St. Aubyn's rudeness, in preferring his mother's comfort to her society, by treating him with disdain. But in the first place, he was the *only beau*, therefore she could not *afford* to affront him; and in the next place, she felt conscious, that by seeming to resent his indifference, she should only gratify his vanity, by proving that indifference gave her pain; therefore, before they had gone two miles, she had recovered her good-humour. Mr. Selby, who had waited in patient silence till the clouds of mortified vanity had dispersed, now led her into conversation, and took occasion, on her making some inquiries concerning St. Aubyn, to panegyricize his filial piety, amongst his other virtues, of which, he said, his refusal to have the honour and happiness of driving her was another instance; and Mrs. Felton, gratified to find she had been sacrificed to an habitual, and therefore irresistible duty, forgot all her displeasure, and made numberless inquiries concerning St. Aubyn's age and expectations in life.

“But who is that Emma,” said she, “to whom he has written verses?”

“Oh! a little girl with whom he has been educated.”

“But is she still a little girl?” And Mr. Selby, who had forgotten the insensible lapse of years, answered, “Yes; her age is only thirteen or fourteen.”

“But who, and what is she?”

“The heiress of the honourable Mrs. Castlemain.”

“But what did St. Aubyn mean, think you, by saying in answer to a remark of mine, on my mentioning his verses ‘to Emma, aged twelve,’ ‘to Emma, aged eighteen, I should probably not write at all’?”

“That he should not dare to take the liberty of writing to her at that age.”

“And why not?”

“Because he is poor, and utterly dependent on a capricious uncle; and she is a rich heiress.”

“Oh! that is all that he meant, is it?” replied Mrs. Felton; “I suspected that he meant much more.” And she immediately fell into a pleasant reverie, of which St. Aubyn was certainly the object.

It was the intention of the party to go to Cockermouth, and thence to Cromack Water and Buttermere, whence they were to make the complete tour of the lakes, ending it at Ulswater. When they stopped to bait the horses, and explore some of the fine scenery on the road from Carlisle to Cockermouth, Mrs. Felton eagerly approached Mrs. St. Aubyn, and offering her her arm as she did so, regretted having been so long deprived of her society, declaring at the same time, her resolution not to undergo a similar privation again. This speech, which Mrs. St. Aubyn received with smiles of unexpected satisfaction, was overheard by Mr. Selby with wonder and mortification; for he could not help thinking that his conversational powers were quite equal, if not superior, to Mrs. St. Aubyn’s; and as he was a simple-minded, straight-forward man, as the phrase is, he had no suspicion that Mrs. Felton was saying what she did not think.

“I have a proposal to make to you, my dear madam,” added Mrs. Felton, “which is, that you will do me the honour of going with



me, when we resume our journey, in my landaulet, as you are apt, I find, to be alarmed in an open carriage.”

“Dear me, you are vastly obliging! I am sure I should prefer going in the landaulet, and then my son may have the honour and happiness of driving you.”

“Me! Oh, by no means; that would entirely defeat my purpose; which is, to procure myself more of your company. Therefore, if he pleases, Miss Spenlove shall be Mr. St. Aubyn’s companion, and dear Mrs. Selby go with you and me, while Miss Travers takes my place in Mr. Selby’s chaise.”

From Mrs. Felton’s decisions there was usually no appeal; and as his mother looked delighted at the marked and flattering attention of Mrs. Felton, and wished to accept her offer, St. Aubyn cheerfully acquiesced; though Miss Travers, who was a very pretty girl, and therefore perhaps not fixed upon by the fair widow to accompany St. Aubyn, would have been better pleased if the latter had not been so quiescent, but had insisted on driving her instead of Miss Spenlove.

Mr. Selby meanwhile said nothing,—but he thought the more,—and wondered within himself to hear Mrs. Felton professing such eagerness to enjoy the conversation of a woman who, but a few hours ago, she declared was as insipid as she was fantastical! “Well, it is very strange,” thought Mr. Selby; for her refusal to be driven by St. Aubyn had completely succeeded in blinding the simple-minded Mr. Selby to her real motives of action; and he resolved to consult his wife on the subject, as she prided herself on her sagacity, and had persuaded him to think very highly of it also.

At length the horses were refreshed, the scenery sufficiently explored, and Mr. Selby handed Mrs. St. Aubyn and Mrs. Felton into the landaulet, and then his wife; who, as she seated herself, stooped down, and laying her finger on the side of her nose, (a habit which she had,) significantly and sarcastically said to her

husband in a low tone of voice, "Oh ho, is it so?" a jingle she was fond of. And on this expressive but mysterious couplet, as it may be called, Mr. Selby mused for at least half an hour; but recollecting that it was deemed unmanly to be curious, the vice of curiosity being said to be exclusively that of the other sex, he resolved to wait patiently till bed-time for an explanation of what Mrs. Selby's penetration had discovered, and valued himself not a little on being a man, and consequently not at all curious. How often is one reminded of the fable of the Sculptor and the Lion!

During the drive, his sagacious wife was much amused at observing how completely "dear Mrs. Selby," as Mrs. Felton affectedly called her, was neglected for the new acquaintance, Mrs. St. Aubyn, and she was very eager to arrive at her journey's end, in order to indulge herself in another "Oh ho!" proof of her penetration.

"My dear madam," said Mrs. Felton with great tenderness of manner, "believe me, I consider you as a sort of cousin!"

"Dear me, do you! How so?" said the flattered Mrs. St. Aubyn.

"Oh, not without reason. Lady Mary St. Aubyn, your Mr. St. Aubyn's mother, was second cousin to my Mr. Felton; therefore, by marriage, you and I are certainly cousins."

"Dear me! to be sure we are," replied the delighted Mrs. St. Aubyn; "are we not, Mrs. Selby?"

"Oh ho!" replied Mrs. Selby, looking very arch, "and pray what relation then is Henry to you, Mrs. Felton?"

"I protest I—I never considered," said Mrs. Felton in some confusion.

"But why, my dear madam," continued Mrs. Selby, "is it necessary for you to discover a relationship to Mrs. St. Aubyn in order to account for your sudden affection for her——"

"No, certainly not," answered Mrs. Felton.

“O dear me! said Mrs. St. Aubyn.

“There is,” resumed Mrs. Selby, “a sympathy, a natural adhesion between some persons, stronger than any which are the result of blood. The ivy, dear ladies, clings much more closely to the oak than any of its own saplings do; and I am convinced that the cause of your growing attachment will make it much stronger than if relationship had really anything to do with it.”

“You are very figurative in your language, Mrs. Selby,” said Mrs. Felton, conscious that she saw through her designs.

“Oh! there is nothing like a simile to illustrate one’s meaning. But which of you in this case is the ivy? *You*, Mrs. St. Aubyn, resemble it in one respect; that is, in being an evergreen; but sober green is not smart enough for your taste; no, you would rather be likened to the China rose, that blooms even in winter.”

Not one word of this conversation was thoroughly understood by Mrs. St. Aubyn; however, she bowed and smiled, and said “Dear me!” as if she did understand it; though she was not at all sure that by comparing her to a blooming rose, Mrs. Selby did not mean a sarcasm on her rouge.

Luckily for the maintenance of Mrs. Felton’s good-humour, the conversation was soon interrupted by their arrival at Cockermouth; for Mrs. Felton feared Mrs. Selby’s sarcastic penetration, and she was not likely to be backward in the use of it on this occasion, as she in her heart disliked that lady; for whenever there was no other gentleman present, the fair widow, whose aim was universal conquest, and who always kept her fire-arms in order by constant exercise, used to flirt most unmercifully with the simple-minded Mr. Selby; and to use a vulgar but expressive phrase, the jealous wife was now paying off old scores, while Mrs. Felton was not backward to return the dislike which she felt conscious of exciting; and she spoke of and to her hostess by the name of “dear Mrs. Selby” on the same principle that we often throw perfumes about a room in order to hide an unpleasant smell.

At length, after the duties of the toilet were gone through, the company assembled to a late dinner, and St. Aubyn saw in the happy countenance of his mother an expression of satisfied and conscious importance which he had not for years beheld on it; and as he was certain that she derived it from Mrs. Felton's marked attentions to her, he felt grateful to that lady for the benevolence which dictated them.

“But is it benevolence?” thought St. Aubyn, for he sometimes had a suspicion that Mrs. Felton was laughing at his mother; as, spite of his filial piety, his uncle's just though coarse raillery had so often held her up in his presence to deserved ridicule, that he could not help fearing that this superabundant passion for her society which Mrs. Felton evinced, was founded on a wish to make her what is denominated a butt; for St. Aubyn had no suspicion that it was through his mother that the fair widow was aiming at him; and watchful, and suspicious, and pensive, he sat down to dinner as before, opposite to Mrs. Felton. But, with all his distrustful vigilance, he saw nothing in her manner to his mother but what demanded his grateful approbation.

Mrs. Felton evidently endeavoured to give her consequence, and she succeeded. She talked to her of her former residence near London, of the birth-day and the birth-day balls, of Lady Mary St. Aubyn, her husband's mother. And Mrs. St. Aubyn, who in her brother's presence had always the appearance of a frightened fool, thus encouraged, resumed the ease and gaiety natural to her; and her son, who had never seen her to such advantage before, and was now convinced he had undervalued his mother's talents, felt the liveliest gratitude to that benevolent woman, as he now believed she might really be, who had thus gratified his filial affection, and caught himself several times saying mentally, “She is certainly very beautiful!”

Never for an instant did a suspicion of Mrs. Felton's motives come across the mind of St. Aubyn. But Mr. Selby was now become more enlightened, for he had seen his wife alone; and having

been informed by her of the plan of operations which was going forward, the corners of his good-humoured mouth were during dinner dimpled with more arch meaning than usual, and though he did not give utterance to any “Oh ho’s,” he looked even more of them than Mrs. Selby herself.

Not but that it required all his confidence in his wife’s penetration, to be entirely convinced of the truth of what she asserted; for instead of directing her discourse to St. Aubyn, and paying him those pointed attentions which he had witnessed the first day they met, Mrs. Felton talked less to him than she did to any one else; and her seducing looks, her *agaceries* were so exclusively directed to himself, that he began to fear his wife would be jealous again.

But Mr. Selby was not aware that St. Aubyn, being opposite to Mrs. Felton, could see her every look and motion; and that the play of her countenance while speaking to him, and the graceful bend of her finely-formed head and neck while leaning towards him, with the occasional display of her fine hand and arm, could not escape St. Aubyn’s notice, especially as now he was become unconsciously interested in her from her attention to his mother; and they were more likely to have their full effect on him, from not being *apparently* intended to captivate him; while ever and anon she addressed Mrs. St. Aubyn in a tone and manner so kind and so respectful, that Mrs. St. Aubyn’s countenance was quite radiant with pleasure, and she forgot there was such a person in the world as her formidable brother.

During the course of the evening, Mrs. Felton was asked to sing; and having immediately complied with the request, she sung the following song:—

The soft blooms of summer are fair to the eye,  
Where brightly the clear silver Medway glides by;  
And rich are the colours which autumn adorn,  
Its gold chequer'd leaves, and its billows of corn.

But dearer to me is the pale lonely rose,  
Whose blossoms in winter's dark season unclose;  
Which smiles in the rigour of winter's stern blast,  
And smooths the rough present by signs of the past?

And thus when around us affliction's dark power  
Eclipses the sunshine of life's glowing hour,  
While drooping, deserted, in sorrow we bend,  
O sweet is the presence of one faithful friend!

The crowds whom we smiled with when gladness was ours;  
Are summer's bright blossoms, and autumn's gay stores;  
But the friend on whose breast we in sorrow repose,  
That friend is the winter's lone beautiful rose.

Mrs. Felton did not increase her power over St. Aubyn by singing; for though she sung with taste and science, she only recalled to his recollection a sweeter voice, and tones which he dearly loved; and for a few moments the White Cottage and its beloved inhabitant swam before his glistening eye. He soon, however, recovered himself; and suppressing a deep sigh, he hoped Mrs. Felton would be more generous than to excite their wishes by a proof of her musical talents, and then refuse to gratify still further the wish she had excited; and as he said this, there was so much softness in the expression of his eyes, the result of recent recollections, that Mrs. Felton flattered herself his evident emotion was caused by her, and that the look which accompanied his speech was also caused by the feeling of tenderness with which she had inspired him.

“You overrate my musical talents,” said Mrs. Felton modestly; “but, such as they are, you and this good company may command them; and I hope Miss Spenlove will join me in a duet.”

“Certainly, if you desire it,” replied Miss Spenlove, “and I shall at least be an excellent foil to you.”

“Ridiculous!” said Mrs. Felton; and she said right, as my readers will also say when it suits me to give a short history of Miss Spenlove. As soon as Miss Spenlove had given her consent to sing, Mrs. Felton fixed on a duet, which was received with more applause even than the song had been; and it was evident, even to the most untutored ear in the company, that, so far from being a foil to Mrs. Felton, Miss Spenlove’s voice was of a richer and finer tone than her friend’s, and her delivery of it proved her a performer of great excellence. She could not, however, be prevailed upon to sing any thing but a second to Mrs. Felton, and the latter was again requested to favour the company alone.

“But pray,” said Mr. Selby, “who wrote the words you have just been singing?”

“Well, Mr. Selby,” cried Miss Spenlove, “I am surprised you should ask. I thought you must suspect, if you did not *know*—that they are—”

“Hush! hush! you foolish woman,” said Mrs. Felton, putting her hand before Miss Spenlove’s mouth.

“No, I will speak,” exclaimed she; “the words are this dear creature’s!”

“Oh, fy!” cried Mrs. Felton, as well she might if she had valued truth; for, though Mrs. Felton wished them to pass for hers, as she had the reputation of never singing any words but her own, they were in reality the production of a friend, who did not value himself on them, and was contented to let them pass as productions by Mrs. Felton. It is to be supposed that when the company heard

that the songs were Mrs. Felton's, they were so complaisant as to admire them.

“And who composed the music?” asked St. Aubyn.

“Oh! the music is—” replied Mrs. Felton.

“By the same person, I suspect, that wrote the words.”

“You may say so,” said Miss Spenlove. And indeed with equal truth so he might; for the tunes were both old tunes; but, as they were not much known, by a few judicious alterations by Miss Spenlove, and some pretty cadences and shakes well introduced by Mrs. Felton, they passed for the original composition of that lady, and were handed about in MS., in fashionable circles, as little *chef-d'œuvres* by the honourable Mrs. Felton.

“What a monopolizer of talent you are!” said St. Aubyn.

“A monopolizer!” exclaimed Mrs. Selby; “it is well you did not call my fair friend a regrater too.”

“Dear me!” cried Mrs. St. Aubyn, “what is a regrater?”

“One,” answered Mrs. Selby, quickly, “who buys up other persons' commodities, and retails them according to their own fashion and their own price.”

“Well, well,” said Mr. Selby, hastily, alarmed at his wife's coarseness, (for he well knew her suspicions,) “considering you are a woman, and therefore know nothing of business, the explanation, though not a correct one, is a tolerably good one, and I shall not take the trouble to amend it, but beg our friends to indulge us with some more singing.”

Henry St. Aubyn had listened to Mrs. Selby's observation, and seen Mr. Selby's alarm, with ill-disguised astonishment. It seemed to him so unnecessary for a woman to write verses, or compose music, in order to be either charming or estimable, that he never suspected it possible for a gentlewoman to forfeit the indispensable requisites of truth and honesty, in order to obtain the reputation of



being so gifted. He therefore unwillingly attributed Mrs. Selby's evidently intended sarcasm to the spite of an envious woman, while his admiration of Mrs. Felton was increased by the temper with which she bore the imputation, and consented to sing again.

"Might I be allowed to choose your song?" said Miss Spenlove fawningly.

"Certainly you shall," replied Mrs. Felton with apparent kindness; "for no one will dispute the excellence of your judgment, and you certainly know which song I sing best."

St. Aubyn did not know it; but the rancour which Mrs. Selby had excited, Mrs. Felton vented thus on poor Miss Spenlove, who had once been a professional singer, and had taught music; but who having, on an accession of property, commenced woman of fashion, had not strength of mind enough to like to be reminded of her former situation. Miss Spenlove therefore blushed, from mixed feelings excited by this masked battery, which, "this dear creature," as she had just called her, had opened upon her; but returning good for evil, she requested her to sing the song she was famous for singing with such irresistible pathos; "though indeed," added she, "I wonder you can have the heart to sing it at all, as the unhappy writer was most fatally in love, and—"

"No more on that subject," replied Mrs. Felton, affecting to sigh very deeply, "for I wish to sing my best;" and she began the following stanzas, which she had adapted to an old Scotch melody;

Then be it so, and let us part,  
Since love like mine has fail'd to move thee;  
But do not think this constant heart  
Can ever cease, ingrate, to love thee.  
No—spite of all thy cold disdain,  
I'll bless the hour when first I met thee,  
And rather bear whole years of pain  
Than e'en for one short hour forget thee,  
Forget thee! No.

Still Memory, now my only friend,  
Shall with her soothing art endeavour  
My present anguish to suspend,  
By painting pleasures lost for ever.  
She shall the happy hours renew,  
When full of hope and smiles I met thee,  
And little thought the day to view  
When thou wouldst wish me to forget thee,  
Forget thee! No.

Yet, I have lived to view that day,  
To mourn my past destructive blindness,  
To see now turn'd with scorn away  
Those eyes once fill'd with answering kindness.  
But go—farewell! and be thou blest,  
If thoughts of what I feel will let thee;  
Yet, though thy image kills my rest,  
'Twere greater anguish to forget thee,  
Forget thee! No.

“Brava! brava!” cried Mr. Selby, when Mrs. Felton had finished her song.

“I think,” said St. Aubyn gravely, and conceiving by what Miss Spenlove had said, that the song had been addressed to her friend, “I think a man who could love as well as the poor man who wrote

those lines must have loved, ought not to have loved in vain; but it seems he did; and he also complains of encouragement given and then withdrawn.” St. Aubyn said this with a severity of manner which Mrs. Felton, spite of her aptitude to flatter herself, could not impute to apprehensive jealousy merely, but was obliged to see in it an implied censure of suspected coquetry; and she replied as composedly as she could, that men were very apt to flatter themselves, and to fancy encouragement given where none was intended.

“True, very true,” observed Mrs. St. Aubyn, looking, or trying to look, wise; “I have often found it so to my cost. But, poor man! I should like to know what became of the gentleman who wrote that song;—I hope he did not drown or shoot himself for love!”

“I hope not too,” said Mrs. Selby, “for that would have shown he was more in earnest than such a jilting mistress would have deserved; for you know, Mrs. St. Aubyn, our friend Hudibras says,

‘If a man hang, or blow out his brains,  
The deuce is in him if he feigns.’”

“Upon my word, madam, I have no friend of that name,” replied Mrs. St. Aubyn, “at least not that I recollect; to be sure, when I lived in town, I had many foreigners on my visiting list, and this person might be one of them.”

St. Aubyn blushed—Mrs. Selby bit her lip—while Mrs. Felton kindly said,

“I protest, my dear madam, I know no more of Mrs. Selby’s friend Hudibras than you do; and indeed it is a book not usually liked by ladies, and you served Mrs. Selby quite right in affecting not to understand her allusion.”

St. Aubyn, though grateful to Mrs. Felton for this attempt to veil Mrs. St. Aubyn’s mistake, could not allow even his mother to be defended at the expense of truth; and therefore replied,

“I am sure, my dear madam, that my mother had not the intention which you obligingly impute to her; especially as, though she does not know the poem of Hudibras by name, she is familiar with many passages in it, for my poor father was fond of quoting Hudibras; and you must remember,” added he, addressing his mother, “how much you used to admire one burlesque simile which he was often repeating—

‘Now, like a lobster boil’d, the morn  
From black to red began to turn—’”

“Dear me! yes to be sure I do; and that was by Hudibras, was it?”

St. Aubyn finding it was a hopeless case to attempt to set her right, sighed and was silent; but no one even *smiled* at Mrs. St. Aubyn’s mistake. The filial piety of her son cast such a shield over her on all occasions, that when he was present it would have seemed sacrilegious to make her an object of ridicule; and even Mrs. Selby, who, because Mrs. Felton seemed to protect Mrs. St. Aubyn, felt inclined to attack her, was awed by respect for the son’s feelings into forbearance towards the mother; and Mr. Selby took advantage of the temporary silence to change the conversation by observing,

“Your father, Henry, was a most amiable man, and I shall regret his early loss to the end of my existence. However, my dear boy,” squeezing St. Aubyn’s hand affectionately, “he survives still in you. Do you not think, Mrs. St. Aubyn, that your son is an improved likeness of his father?”

“My Mr. St. Aubyn was a very handsome man also,” she replied; while her son’s deep blushes at this implied compliment to his beauty called forth some good-natured raillery, and the evening terminated in mirth and good humour.

The next day Mrs. Felton persisted in going in the landaulet with Mrs. St. Aubyn and Mrs. Selby, though St. Aubyn requested the honour of driving her; but she was gratified at his having made the request; and when they arrived at Buttermere, she accepted his offered arm, and the assistance of his hand in passing miry paths

and pieces of projecting rock; and sometimes while he sat down to sketch the most striking parts of the scenery, she leaned over him as he did so, and occasionally leaned her arm on his shoulder.

“Oh ho!” said Mrs. Selby to her husband as she observed this familiarity; and Mrs. St. Aubyn, as she delightedly gazed on them, asked Miss Spenlove in a whisper, if she did not think they would make a very handsome picture.

As the weather was fine, and Buttermere and Cromack Water were well worth visiting again and again, they did not quit the banks of the latter lake till twilight, and then took up their abode for the night in the neighbourhood, that they might return to the same scenes again the next day; Mr. Selby’s servants having in the meanwhile joined them with fishing tackle, and a tent which they could pitch wherever they thought proper.

But late as was the dinner-hour, neither the ladies nor the gentlemen sat down to table without changing their dress; and had St. Aubyn continued to distrust Mrs. Felton’s motives for behaving with such marked kindness to his mother, the appearance of the latter when she came down to dinner would for ever have lulled his suspicions to rest. Mrs. St. Aubyn appeared in a very elegant lace cap tied under her chin, the gift of Mrs. Felton; and as it was a style of head-dress more becoming her time of life than any cap she was in the habit of wearing, St. Aubyn saw that Mrs. Felton endeavoured to remove rather than promote his mother’s follies; and his heart glowed towards her with a fervour that she had never excited in him before, and which all her beauty, all her coquetry, and all her seducing familiarity, would have failed to excite. She had really attacked St. Aubyn on his weak side, if I may call by such a name his attachment to a most foolish mother; and the fair widow was not at all blind to the advantage which she had gained.

As the day had been a day of fatigue, the party separated early. Nothing worth relating took place during the evening, except that Mr. and Mrs. Selby looked a number of ho ho’s at each other,

on observing several kind and corresponding glances exchanged between the grateful St. Aubyn and the fascinating Mrs. Felton.

The next and the two succeeding days were passed amidst the scenery of Buttermere and Cromack Water, or on the Lakes themselves; and the whole party walked from and to the inn. But as the lake which they meant to visit the next day was at some distance, the carriages were again necessary, and again St. Aubyn requested leave to drive Mrs. Felton, and was graciously permitted to do so, to the petitioner's great satisfaction, as he was become tired of both his companions, Miss Travers and Miss Spenlove. The former, though very pretty, was very insipid; and towards the latter, St. Aubyn, though not at all apt to dislike any one, was inclined to feel something rather resembling aversion.

Miss Spenlove, as I have before said, had once been a teacher of music, and had sung, for hire, in many respectable societies, contented with the honourable distinction of gaining an honest livelihood by virtuous industry; but having become mistress of eight or ten thousand pounds by the death of a distant relation, Miss Spenlove wished to set up for a woman of fashion. But to do this was a difficult task as a *noun substantive*; therefore Miss Spenlove resolved to become a *noun adjective*; and, by making herself useful to some leader of ton, get herself passed into the circles of high life, as an appendage to the aforesaid leader; like a *burr* sticking to a velvet petticoat.

At the time when Miss Spenlove's good fortune, as she called it, had led her to form this resolution, Mrs. Felton was a leader of the ton; and having known that lady when she was poor, and dependent on her talents for support, Miss Spenlove took the first opportunity of calling on her now her style of living was changed, and that she walked nowhere without a servant behind her. The pretence for calling on Mrs. Felton was, that she had composed a song hitherto unheard by any one, on purpose for Mrs. Felton's beautiful voice and manner of singing, and Miss Spenlove had little doubt but that under the auspices of the fair widow she should move in those

circles after which her ambition panted; not that Miss Spenlove was romantic enough to suppose that Mrs. Felton would introduce her into fashionable circles from motives of kindness; no, she knew too much of the world and of human nature, and also of Mrs. Felton's nature, to suppose that. But she knew she could make it a traffic of mutual accommodation, and that she could purchase the services which it was not in her power to command.

After Miss Spenlove, who was immediately admitted, as Mrs. Felton had nothing better to do, had presented her song, which was most graciously received, she told Mrs. Felton that she knew her generous heart would rejoice to hear of her good fortune; that in consequence of it she had given up all professional pursuits, and had made a vow never to sing even gratuitously for any one again, "except," she added, "for *you*, my dear Mrs. Felton, whose musical talent is such as to entitle you to demand an exertion of the best efforts of others."

Mrs. Felton, whose heart was not at all given to rejoice at the good fortune of other people, received the first part of the intelligence very coldly, but heard the other with unfeigned delight, though she could not at first divine why this kind exception was made in her favour.

Miss Spenlove perceived the satisfaction her proposal had given, and went on to the complete furtherance of her project.

"My dear lady," said she, "I know you compose pretty melodies;—perhaps you have some by you to which you would like that I should put a bass. It would give me the greatest pleasure to be of use to you in that way; and perhaps you would sing over with me the song which I have brought."

Mrs. Felton complied; and without at all wounding her self-love, Miss Spenlove contrived to give her a most instructive lesson in singing; and she was too clever not to perceive immediately how useful to her a friend would be who could insure to her fame as a composer, by doing for her what she was too ignorant to do for

herself; and reputation as a singer, by teaching her to sing in the first style of excellence, without her being at the expense of having a master.

The little melodies were produced; song succeeded to song, duet to duet; graces were noted down for the acquisition of Mrs. Felton, amateur, by the obliging fingers of Miss Spenlove, now amateur also; and, after some hours spent by Miss Spenlove thus in conferring obligation, she returned home, having at length received obligation in return; for Mrs. Felton begged, till her kind friend Miss Spenlove could meet with lodgings entirely to her mind, that she would make her house her home.—And that very night Miss Spenlove, who was elderly and ugly, removed to the house of the young and beautiful Mrs. Felton; being qualified to serve at once both for a foil and for a companion.

Nor, though the ladies had no great affection for each other, had their union during three years ever known interruption, so powerful is the tie called mutual convenience; and as Miss Spenlove paid Mrs. Felton very handsomely for her board, it was impossible for either lady to think herself more the obliger than the obliged.

But they knew each other too well to add to the tie of interest that of esteem and affection. Mrs. Felton, whose temper was not good, used to vent on her companion the ill-humour she was forced to restrain towards others; and as she knew Miss Spenlove wished it to be forgotten that she had ever been a musical professor, Mrs. Felton used to take a malicious pleasure in alarming her by distant allusions to this circumstance, which in time would have been wholly forgotten but by Miss Spenlove's almost pettish refusals to sing anywhere but at Mrs. Felton's, as the reason for her refusal was immediately suspected and whispered round the room, with sneers at her pride and affectation.

But Miss Spenlove took her revenge amply on Mrs. Felton behind her back for the mortification she endured sometimes in her presence; for she had a custom in seeming friendship, but with real malignity, to extol Mrs. Felton's personal charms and talents



in so extravagant a manner to her rivals and acquaintance, as could not fail to provoke her hearers to deny her pretensions to such excelling attractions; for few persons can bear to admit the overwhelming superiority of any one, and on such occasions envy with propriety assumes the garb of justice, and may unoffendingly dispute the claims of the person so praised, to such extravagant eulogium. It was very evident therefore that Miss Spenlove set up Mrs. Felton in this manner as a ninepin, only for the pleasure of having her knocked down again;—after which she used with well-feigned concern to hint to Mrs. Felton what envious persons there were in the world! and how strenuously she had asserted her charming friend's rights to universal homage; well knowing, as she did so, that Mrs. Felton would be more hurt at the consciousness of being attacked, than gratified at being defended by such a person as Miss Spenlove.

But it was not by extravagant praise of Mrs. Felton that Miss Spenlove had disgusted St. Aubyn; it was only before women that she amused herself in this manner; to men she had a different way of proceeding;—as thus,

“Do you not think, Mr. St. Aubyn, my sweet friend is the most beautiful creature in the world?”

“She is beautiful certainly, madam, but—”

“Oh! I know very well what you would say,—that she looks differently at different times, and that when not a little rouged she is like all women of fashion, rather sallow.”

“No indeed, madam,” replied St. Aubyn, “I was not going to say any such thing, and I did not know till this moment that Mrs. Felton's colour was not at all times her own.”

“Her own!” returned Miss Spenlove with a laugh as she meant it to be, but which was any thing *but* a laugh, “her own! yes, it is certainly her own, for she bought it with her own money.”

“But what a sweet figure she is! though to be sure, at her time of life it is as well perhaps to grow fat.”

“At her time of life, madam!”

“Yes, sir, after thirty it is always advantageous for a woman to get a little *em bon point*,” drawing herself up as she spoke with a proud consciousness of rotundity.

“After thirty! I did not suppose Mrs. Felton was above five-and-twenty, madam!” replied St. Aubyn.

“I do not wonder at that, sir; many persons have been so deceived; when dressed she certainly looks very young; for her great vivacity and cheerfulness give a youthful expression to her countenance. Not but that her temper is none of the *evenest*. She is *very* irritable at times;—however, I love her so much, dear creature! with all her faults, that I cannot help remaining with her, though, as I have an independent fortune, (bridling as she said this,) and could live handsomely *anywhere* for what I pay Mrs. Felton for my board, I need not stay with her if I did not like it.”

“No, to be sure not,” replied St. Aubyn, by way of saying something, and disgusted with this conversation; still, however, he felt less angry with Miss Spenlove, when he heard she was a woman of independent fortune, because till she said this he had looked upon her as a poor dependant on Mrs. Felton, who vented on her benefactress in this manner the hatred excited in her by a sense of obligation which she felt that she could never repay. Now the case was altered; however, disgust was still the predominant feeling in him towards Miss Spenlove; and though he was in a degree amused by the ingenious malice with which, while praising Mrs. Felton’s beauty, she insinuated that her beauty was the result of art; that though she looked young, she was in reality old; that though she seemed cheerful and good-humoured, she was in truth the contrary; still he could scarcely refrain from putting a stop to this effusion of wormwood mixed up in syrup, by asking very

seriously whether after this conversation he was to consider her as Mrs. Felton's friend or her enemy?

But as I am quite as much tired of this sickening though too natural conversation as St. Aubyn himself, I shall repeat no more of it, but go to pleasanter contemplations; namely, the very different subjects discussed by St. Aubyn and Mrs. Felton, when she became his travelling companion. They delighted to converse on literature, the arts, morals, and every thing connected with them, and it was with pain that they found themselves arrived at the end of their journey; where Mrs. St. Aubyn beheld with delight, but Mrs. Selby with pain, the mutual satisfaction which beamed in the countenances of Mrs. Felton and St. Aubyn, as they declared how pleasant their drive had been; and the expression of interest and pleasure with which St. Aubyn, apparently regardless of every one else, eagerly, offered his arm to Mrs. Felton, when they began their walk to the lake.

Till this excursion took place, the first wish of Mrs. St. Aubyn's heart was, that her son should marry Miss Castlemain; but now her only ambition was to see him the husband of the honourable Mrs. Felton, while she in fancy beheld herself by this means reinstated in those gay and fashionable scenes which her own vicious folly had caused her to forego, but which she had never ceased most bitterly to regret.

No such sanguine expectations for the aggrandizement of St. Aubyn entered into the more penetrating mind of her friend Mrs. Selby. She accurately read and justly appreciated the character of Mrs. Felton; and it was not only from dislike of that lady that she could not bear so precious a votary should do homage at the shrine of her vanity, but also from a conviction that Mrs. Felton in no one point of view was worthy to attach a being so excellent as St. Aubyn; the feeling of esteem for him being even more strong in the heart of Mrs. Selby than aversion to Mrs. Felton; whom she would never have admitted into her house, had she not been related

to Mr. Selby's first wife, and had not he in early life been under obligations to Mrs. Felton's father.

To be brief; that evening St. Aubyn retired to rest more charmed than ever with the fascinating widow, especially when his mother, following him to his apartment, told him, almost with tears of joy, that Mrs. Felton had given her a most pressing invitation to visit her in London the ensuing spring, when London would be most full, and she could introduce her into such circles as she ought to be seen in.

"Kind Mrs. Felton!" exclaimed St. Aubyn, kissing his mother affectionately; "she is irresistibly charming; but of all her charms, the greatest she has for me is her affectionate attention to you!"

That night when St. Aubyn laid his head on his pillow he certainly did not recollect so vividly, nor think of so long as usual, a pair of dark-blue eyes peeping at him almost by stealth, between the crimson curtains of a certain pew in a certain church, from under the longest and thickest black eyelashes that ever were seen; while the blushing cheek beneath them was shaded by a large cottage bonnet tied with blue ribands.

Three weeks had already passed rapidly in exploring the beauties of the lakes, when the party arrived at Keswick or Derwentwater; and as that lake was well known to every one of the party, as neither Mrs. St. Aubyn's house nor purse would allow her to entertain her companions, and as Mr. Hargrave was absent from home, it was resolved that one day only should be spent in revisiting Borrowdale, Watenlath, and the other surrounding beauties; and that then, after visiting Bassenthaithe and other scenes worthy of notice, they should proceed to Penrith, and devote all the time they could spare to the varied and extensive beauties of Ulswater and its environs. It was not without many tender and many painful recollections that St. Aubyn found himself once more in the vicinity of the White Cottage, and saw the church where, and where only, he had now for weeks beheld the dear companion of his youth and his studies; he therefore seized the

first opportunity to steal from his party and mount a hill whence he could discern the chimneys of Mrs. Castlemain's dwelling. And when he returned he was absent and pensive during the remainder of the evening; but so marked had lately been his attentions to Mrs. Felton, that she, blinded by vanity, was sometimes inclined to attribute his abstraction to love for a present not an absent idol; and of the rest of the party some hoped and some feared the same thing.

Already before Mrs. St. Aubyn's sight swam white and silver favours and bridal finery, and she had nodded, and winked, and insinuated the same belief into pretty Miss Travers, who thought with a sigh that Mrs. Felton was a very lucky woman. But Mrs. Selby, who did not believe the dangerous widow was capable of being in love even with a St. Aubyn, and who believed her only aim was conquest, was alarmed lest the peace of a heart so valuable should be ruined by the wiles of a coquette.

In this instance, however, Mrs. Selby was only right in part. Mrs. Felton had made no vow against marrying again; and if St. Aubyn had been already in possession of his uncle's immense fortune, she was so charmed with the beauty of his person and the graces of his manner, that she would willingly have resigned her liberty to him, and have been proud to exhibit her handsome husband in the circles of high life. But love in a cottage was not at all to Mrs. Felton's taste; and so Miss Spenlove assured Mr. Selby, when he hinted his suspicions of St. Aubyn's attachment to her, the first time they were alone together.

"Pho! nonsense!" said she, "I know her; She is only at her usual tricks. I endeavoured to put the young man on his guard, and tell him what she really is; but he is mighty conceited, and I saw by his look he did not believe me."

Mr. Selby, good man, listened, and was astonished for he had been completely the dupe of Miss Spenlove's "sweet creatures," and "dear creatures," and supposed that she idolized her friend with even blind affection.

“My dear,” said he to his wife at night, “would you believe it? I have discovered that Miss Spenlove’s affection for Mrs. Felton is all put on.”

“Oh ho! is it so?” replied Mrs. Selby; “what, have you only now found that out, Mr. Selby?”—who, poor man, sighed to think that he should never, if he lived even to the age of Methuselah, be as wise as his wife.

It was now an understood thing, that St. Aubyn was always to drive Mrs. Felton, and of course he handed her into the chaise as soon as it drove round. The preference he felt for her society he had no scruple in showing by his manner; and Mrs. Felton, though she had sometimes doubts herself on the subject, was charmed to discover, by the looks and conduct of the rest of the party, that most of them suspected St. Aubyn, though not yet her declared lover, was on the point of becoming so; and she felt authorized to add to the list of her captives, the name of Henry St. Aubyn.

Mrs. Felton had now in a great measure carried her point; still, she wished her conquest to be proved past doubt, by a regular declaration; and towards this she saw no symptoms of any progress; not that she meant to accept his offer, but most earnestly did she wish to have the honour of refusing it.

“I wish I could excite his jealousy,” thought Mrs. Felton, “in order to bring him to the point; but that is impossible, as he can’t be jealous of Selby, and there is no other beau.” Fortune, however, as if eager to indulge so amiable a wish in this accomplished coquette, sent another beau, when she least expected it; and such a beau! no other than the man whom, of all others, she was the most desirous of charming, and to whom she would most willingly be made captive in return.

Mr. Wanford was, at the time I am speaking, one of the most admired and courted young men in the regions of fashion. Fortunately for him, when he first went to college, his fortune was so small, and his expectations so trifling, that he knew his only

chance of distinction and success in life, was in having resolution enough to labour to deserve them; and Mr. Wanford had ambition; he had also talents and perseverance; and the same year that he took a very high mathematical degree, he was senior medallist also; while the ensuing year, having cultivated with great assiduity his poetical abilities, his poem on a given subject obtained the prize.

At this climax of his well-deserved celebrity, prosperities of another kind poured in upon him, but luckily too late to interfere with those virtuous habits of application in which poverty had fortified him. An uncle of his father died, and left him heir to a large independent fortune; and at the same time, his mother's brother, who had acquired an immense fortune in trade, had interest enough to obtain a peerage; and, having no children of his own, the patent was made out with remainder to the son of his sister—this fortunate Mr. Wanford.

It is not to be wondered at that such sudden prosperity should in some measure turn the head of the young and laurelled scholar; and that the expectance of title, and the possession of wealth, should not sit so gracefully on him as on those to whom such things have long been habitual. But to do him justice, he was quite as proud of his academical as of his other honours; and while he was abroad on his travels he published a volume of poems, consisting of some original pieces, and some elegant translations of Greek and other fragments.—This volume, coming as it did from the heir to a barony, and the possessor already of a very fine fortune, was received with much admiration by those ladies and gentlemen who unite literature with fashion. But the return of Mr. Wanford from abroad was anxiously expected not only by all who had read his works, and had heard of his reputation; he was considered as a prize worth trying for by illiterate mothers who had daughters to dispose of, and by widows of small jointures, who only knew that he was rich and lord Erdington's heir. To Mrs. Felton he was welcome, as scholar, poet, heir, and rich man; “and if I ever part

with my liberty again," she had often said to herself, "it shall be to Mr. Wanford."

Being so highly gifted as I have described him, it was almost unnecessary for him to possess beauty of person or grace of manner; however, he was well made though not tall, and handsome rather than otherwise; and his manners, though at times rather haughty and important, were generally pleasing, and sometimes even insinuating. Of marrying he had at present not the most distant intention, and he had been so much the object of coquetry, that he was become no mean proficient in the art himself. Such was the man who was now making the tour of the Lakes, accompanied by his only sister, who resided with him, in a carriage of his own construction, which he drove himself, and of which the back part contained his man and his sister's waiting-maid.

Mr. Wanford had not returned to England long before the close of the season for parties in London; and it had so happened that though Mrs. Felton had been invited more than once to meet this gentleman, long the object of her secret wishes, he had either gone away before she had entered, or had come after she had left the house; while, in spite of her repeated invitations to him sent by friends of both parties, he never gratified her so far as to visit her either in a morning or an evening. She had therefore never seen him, nor he her; and when Miss Spenlove, who had seen Mr. Wanford arrive, and had heard his name from his servants, announced his arrival to Mrs. Felton at the inn at Patterdale, the joy she felt was so great as to make her jump off her seat, and exclaim, "The man here whom of all others I am most ambitious to see and know! What a fortunate event!"

"What a fortunate man! you might also have said," observed St. Aubyn, with perhaps a little feeling of mortification; while Mrs. St. Aubyn uttered a "Dear me!" in no cheerful tone, and Mrs. Selby drawled out a significant "Oh ho!"

But Mrs. Felton was too much engaged in her own speculations to attend to them.—Thought, that rapid traveller, had already gone



through all the advantages accruing from meeting Mr. Wanford in such a spot; and could she but be introduced to him, could she but have such opportunities with him as she had with St. Aubyn, her success seemed sure, her marriage undoubted! But how could she contrive to make herself known to him? “Necessity has no law,” says the proverb; and if nothing but a bold stroke can succeed, Mrs. Felton is too much a woman of the world to scruple it.

“My dear Mr. St. Aubyn,” said Mrs. Felton, “will you do me an essential service?”

“Any thing in my power.”

“It is absolutely necessary that I should be introduced to the gentleman (Mr. Wanford) who is just arrived, Lord Erdington’s nephew and heir; would you then have the great goodness to tell him that Mrs. Felton wishes much to make his acquaintance, and begs the pleasure of seeing him? He knows me by *name* and reputation very well already.”

“If then, madam,” replied St. Aubyn gravely, “he knows you by name and reputation already, and learns, as no doubt he will do, or indeed as he shall do, (for I will take care of that,) that the honourable Mrs. Felton is at this inn, it will be his business surely to solicit the honour of knowing you.”

“To be sure—certainly,” said Mrs. St. Aubyn.

Mrs. Felton, who felt the delicacy of this reproof, blushed deeply both with a sense of shame and of resentment; though she fancied jealousy as much as regard for her dignity had dictated St. Aubyn’s reply.

“My dear sir,” she replied, forcing a laugh, “where a woman is conscious she confers full as much, or more honour than she receives by courting an acquaintance, there surely is no harm in her making the first advances.”

“Not to a lady; but indeed I respect you, or any one of your sex, too much to endure the idea of flattering any man’s vanity so far

as to be the bearer of solicitations from a fair lady to a gentleman, requesting the pleasure of making his acquaintance.”

“Mr. St. Aubyn,” cried Mrs. Felton, too determined on her purpose to be withheld from it even by the risk of disgusting her friendly monitor, “it is necessary, as I said before, that I should know Mr. Wanford, as I have a message to deliver to him; and if you will not repeat to him what I said, I will go and introduce myself.”

“Rather than you should do that, madam,” said St. Aubyn, “I will, though reluctantly, obey you.”

At this moment Miss Spenlove entered the room.

“So!” said she, “Mr. Wanford has a lady with him, I find!”

“A lady!” echoed St. Aubyn, immediately returning; while Mrs. Felton blushed from alarm, lest the lady should be such a one as to prevent the possibility of her introduction.

“Yes; but it is only his sister.”

“His sister!” cried Mrs. Felton pettishly, but with her countenance brightening up; “why could you not say so before, Miss Spenlove? and then I should have felt no difficulty in this business; for Mr. St. Aubyn’s delicacy will not be shocked by my requesting the honour of knowing Miss Wanford.”

“Undoubtedly not,” he answered, bowing profoundly, and left the room.

“Well, and may I ask who this great gentleman is?” asked Mrs. St. Aubyn in a tone of pique.

“He is a poet, a scholar, a fine gentleman, and the heir to a nobleman,” replied Mrs. Felton.

“May be so; but I never heard of him before.”

“It would not break his heart if he knew it,” said Mrs. Felton contemptuously; “he is sufficiently known and admired where he wishes to be.”

“Then if this be true, and you do not know him, it must be because, by you at least, he does not *wish* to be known and admired,” sarcastically observed Mrs. Selby.

“Think what you please, ma’am,” replied Mrs. Felton angrily.

“Dear me!” cried Mrs. St. Aubyn; “what a fuss there is about this man, who, I am sure, if that be he coming yonder, is not half as handsome as my son.”

“Ridiculous! beneath my notice!” muttered Mrs. Felton, looking at Mrs. St. Aubyn with such a frown, that she almost fancied it was her brother whom she beheld.

Just then Mr. Wanford passed the window, at which stood Miss Travers, who had taken off her riding-hat from the heat of the weather, and let fall over her shoulders a profusion of fine light hair; while on her cheek not only the “sultry season glowed,” but the bloom of healthy and happy eighteen!

Mr. Wanford gazed earnestly at her, and *almost* stopped as he gazed, but recovering himself passed on. Soon however he returned pretending to call his dog, though his eyes were riveted on the now blushing Miss Travers, who from native modesty turned away and went to a remote corner of the room; on which Mr. Wanford repassed the window and disappeared.

“Well, I declare,” said Mrs. St. Aubyn, “my dear, you have made a conquest certainly of this Mr. Wanford.”

“Ridiculous!” muttered Mrs. Felton.

“Not so ridiculous neither,” cried Mrs. St. Aubyn; “for I am sure he had no eyes for any one else.”

“That was very certain,” observed Mrs. Selby; “and I think it was strange after your message to his sister, Mrs. Felton, that he should not look for you!”

“Perhaps,” said Miss Spenlove, “he took Miss Travers for my dear friend.”

“Impossible!” exclaimed Mrs. Selby. “Take that young thing for Mrs. Felton? Nonsense!”

“It is not the first time, madam,” said Miss Spenlove looking grave, “that Mrs. Felton has been taken for a girl of eighteen.”

At this moment St. Aubyn put his head into the room, saying, “Miss Wanford desires her compliments to you, madam, and she will wait on you presently.” So saying, he disappeared, and the party soon after saw Miss Wanford walking along a path at a little distance, whither St. Aubyn had been in search of her.

However, instead of coming immediately into the house, she passed the window, after having asked of the waiters which way her brother went.

“Very odd that,” said Mrs. Selby; “it seems as if she dares not make the acquaintance unsanctioned by her brother.”

This remark gave Mrs. Felton as much pain as it was intended to give her; for the elegant widow knew very well, that though generally received in society, there were some squeamish and rigid persons who were not desirous of visiting her; and as Mr. Wanford had hitherto rejected all her advances to acquaintance, it was possible that his sister might be of the latter number. St. Aubyn, meanwhile, ever ready to oblige, was gone to gather some curious grass which he had discovered in a wet ditch behind the inn; a grass of which Mrs. Felton, who studied botany among other things, was desirous of obtaining specimens; and in this ditch he was standing mid-leg in water when Miss Wanford hastened to her brother, who was sitting on a bank and sketching a fine tree on the other side of the hedge under which St. Aubyn was.

“So, Frank!” cried Miss Wanford, as soon as she saw her brother; “who do you think is here, and has sent the handsomest young man I ever saw to solicit the pleasure of making my acquaintance? No other than Mrs. Felton!”

“What! *the* Mrs. Felton—”

“Yes, her own honourable self.”

“Fairly hooked, by Jupiter! Now I must know her whether I would or no,” returned Wanford; while St. Aubyn coughed and hemmed very audibly to inform them they were overheard, though he stooped down as he did so, lest the young lady should recognise him and be shocked at finding he had heard her praises of his beauty. But regardless of St. Aubyn’s honourable notice, they went on.

“I never could understand why you would not know Mrs. Felton, brother.”

“Because, when I found she was so desirous of making my acquaintance, I suspected she had designs on me.”

“Well said, my modest brother! and so I suppose you think, in soliciting my acquaintance, all she aims at is yours?”

“To be sure I do.”

“And so do I. For, from what I have heard of Mrs. Felton, I do not believe she ever cares an atom for the females of a family, unless she can through them best obtain ascendancy over the males.”

Here Mr. St. Aubyn smiled to himself, and again hemmed audibly, though in vain.

“I see you know this sweet enslaver as well as I do, Bell. Well—as I must know her, I must; but if marriage be her end, I can tell her she cannot catch me in that snare; and if her only aim be to make a fool of me as she has done of other men, that I defy her to do. But, pray, have you met?”

“No; I sent word I would wait on her soon; but as I never mean to make an acquaintance till it is approved by you, I chose to consult you first, especially as Mrs. Felton is——”

“Generally received, Bell, and that is enough for me. I do not wish my sister to set up for being more wise and more virtuous than two-thirds of the world; besides, you know, Bell, you are very desirous

to be invited to Mrs. Felton's parties. But come, since the fair widow will attack me, who's afraid? Besides, in her party I suspect is a lovely Hebe of a girl that I should like to be better acquainted with; and I shall have no little fun in playing off this inexperienced blushing beauty against this celebrated and dangerous coquette."

So saying they walked towards the inn, leaving St. Aubyn warned and enlightened sufficiently, if he had needed such warning; and not pleased with Wanford for his worldly and convenient morality; for, if it was to be more wise and virtuous than two-thirds of the world to avoid association with women of doubtful reputation, he proved in St. Aubyn's opinion, by not wishing his sister to be thus wise and virtuous, that his sense of propriety was not over-nice, and that he was not a very fit guardian for the honour and reputation of a young and pleasing woman.

"And this formidable coquette, whom they have thus freely discussed, is my amiable friend Mrs. Felton! and this woman whom I so much respected and admired, was really *mean* enough to want to solicit the acquaintance of a man who, it seems, has purposely hitherto rejected all her overtures to acquaintance! Sure is the saying, that where there is much vanity there is no pride, (virtuous pride I mean)!" And with a feeling of pity not unmixed with contempt for Mrs. Felton, he returned to the inn to change his shoes and stockings, before he joined his companions in a party on the lake.

But new arrangements had taken place during St. Aubyn's absence, in consequence of a violent thunder-storm, and it was agreed that in order to lose no time they should take a cold dinner while the bad weather lasted, and when it was over go on the lake, and remain on the water or its banks till the approach of night should force them to return to Penrith, their head-quarters.

Mr. and Miss Wanford, therefore, when they arrived at the inn, found the party preparing to sit down to dinner; but having been graciously met at the door by Mrs. Felton, and being pressed to sit down to their meal by her and Mr. and Mrs. Selby, they complied

with the request, and soon felt themselves as much at ease as if they had been old acquaintances. When the dinner was completely served up, and the ladies seated, Mr. Wanford took the chair at the head of the table between Mrs. Selby and Mrs. Felton; on which Mrs. St. Aubyn hastily said, "You have taken my son's place, sir."

"Your son's place, madam!" replied Wanford coldly; "pray, where is he? I have not the honour of knowing him. Oh! I suppose that gentleman at the bottom of the table is your son."

"Dear me! if I ever heard the like! Why, Mr. Selby is as old as I am."

"Not happening to know how old that is, I hope you will excuse me, madam, and your son too when he makes his appearance, for I must keep my seat." And this he said with an air, as if he felt that the heir of Lord Erdington had some right to sit at the head of the table next to the honourable Mrs. Felton.

"Gracious goodness!" whispered Mrs. St. Aubyn to Mrs. Selby, "what airs the man gives himself! I can't abide him. And then for Mrs. Felton not to tell him it was my son's place!"

Wanford, who was only too fond of that mean order of fun denominated quizzing and banter, and to which those who reside in college are but too much addicted, soon discovered that Mrs. St. Aubyn was an excellent subject for this sort of diversion; and perceiving by her fanning herself violently, and other symptoms, that she was displeased, he very coolly exclaimed, leaning towards her as he did so, "Are we not friends?"

"No, sir," she replied, "nor even acquaintance."

"But I hope we shall be, dear madam," returned Wanford; "no endeavours on my part, I am sure, shall be wanting to bring about so desirable a circumstance. Shall we drink wine together?"

"No, sir, I never drink wine so soon; though stay—yes, I will take half a glass, for I remember my husband's mother, lady Mary St. Aubyn," (whom by the by she always talked of when she wished to

impress any one with an idea of her consequence,) “yes, lady Mary used to say that it was rude to refuse to drink wine with any one.”

“Lady Mary is a very sensible woman, and here’s her good health.”

“Good health, sir! Why did one ever hear the like! The poor soul has been dead these sixteen years.”

“Indeed; I am very sorry for it.”

“Sorry! Why, sir, you did not know her, I dare say.”

“Not I, madam; I was only sorry on your account; as you seem so fond of her, you cannot help bringing her into company by head and shoulders.”

“Indeed, sir, lady Mary was not a woman to be brought into any company against her will, and those whom she associated with might think themselves honoured; for, sir, lady Mary was none of your upstart yesterday quality; she was of the old and right sort, and a duke’s daughter, sir.”

“So much the better for her, madam,” returned Wanford, who thought this was meant as a sarcasm on his want of family antiquity, and the bought peerage of his tradesman uncle. “So much the better for her. It is a fine thing to be a duke’s daughter!” Then, with mock pathos, he added, “I wish I was a duke’s daughter! but I fear it is impossible for me to be one now.”

“Dear me!” whispered Mrs. St. Aubyn to Mrs. Selby, “did you ever hear the like! This your wit and your scholar indeed! Why, he appears to me no better than a fool or a madman!” And while the rest of the party were laughing spite of themselves, at Wanford’s nonsense, St. Aubyn entered the room. There was such an air of command about St. Aubyn’s person and manner, that he always inspired strangers at first sight with a sort of involuntary deference; and Wanford, who felt himself irresistibly impelled to laugh at the mother, was as irresistibly impelled to respect the son. When St. Aubyn saw Wanford occupying his usual seat and that the table seemed completely filled elsewhere, he exclaimed with a smile,



“The table’s full.”

On which Miss Spenlove said,

“Here is a place reserved.”

offering him a vacant seat between herself and Miss Travers, which he instantly accepted. But Wanford, with more graciousness than usual, said—“I understand, sir, that I am occupying your usual place, and I earnestly wish to exchange it for that you have now taken.”

“Impossible, sir! I know its value too well,” he replied, smiling, “to bear to inflict on any one the pain of quitting it.”

“And it is, sir, because I feel its value equally,” answered Wanford, “that I am resolved not to expose a fellow-creature to the misery of regretting it.”

“Well, sir, if I must be made happy at another’s expense, I must;” and they exchanged seats. Mrs. Felton felt excessive mortification during this dialogue, which in words appeared so flattering to her vanity; for she saw that Wanford, whose eyes were oftener turned on Miss Travers than herself, was glad of an excuse to sit next that young lady; and in St. Aubyn’s smile, and his extravagant compliments, so unlike his usual manner, she read that his heart was quite at ease, though she had carried her point, and the man she so much desired to know was sitting by her side. Nor was the pleasantness of her feelings increased by witnessing the entire devotion of Wanford to the pretty Miss Travers, or the good-humoured archness with which St. Aubyn rallied her on her evident discomposure and absence of mind when he addressed her.

“This man is too much at his ease to be jealous!” thought Mrs. Felton; and she thought right; therefore, as she did not like to lose one admirer before she had gained another, she renewed her attentions to Mrs. St. Aubyn. And though that lady was inclined to resent the epithets of “ridiculous! and absurd!” which she had addressed to her, and also her not keeping the place next her for

her son, she was completely pacified by a “when you come to stay with me in town, Mrs. St. Aubyn.”

After a hasty meal, as the thunder-storm soon passed away, leaving the scenery of Ulswater still more beautiful than it found it, they went on the lake, and as usual Mrs. Felton and her friend were requested to sing; while St. Aubyn, who, though no coxcomb, could not help looking on Miss Wanford with complacency, as she thought him “the handsomest young man she ever saw,” hoped that she also would favour the company with a song, as her brother had hinted that it was in her power to do so. But that lady having declared that her brother had not spoken truth, Mrs. Felton and Miss Spenlove sung a duet; after which Miss Wanford hoped that Mrs. Felton would sing the song of “Forget thee! No,” of which she had heard so much; and Mrs. Felton, as usual, complied with graceful and unaffected alacrity.

“You know who wrote that song,” said Miss Spenlove, significantly to Wanford, while Mrs. Felton sighed and hung down her head.

“Oh, yes,” replied Wanford, carelessly; “poor Trevor! Ay—he was desperately in love when he wrote it! at least he thought so, and that is pretty much the same thing.”

“Thought so! Why, I understood,” cried Mrs. St. Aubyn, “that the poor gentleman was near hanging or shooting himself. Did not you say so, Mrs. Selby?”

“Me! Oh, dear no,” replied Mrs. Selby, smiling at the inaccuracy of Mrs. St. Aubyn’s memory.

“Then, sir, you know the author of this song,” addressing Wanford, (for she did not believe it was addressed to Mrs. Felton,) “and did the gentleman recover his disappointment? and is he living, sir?”

“He was living, madam, in 1798, at Florence, when I parted with him.”

“Poor man! Retired into a convent, I presume, disgusted with the world?” asked Mrs. Selby in an ironical tone.

“What an absurd idea!” cried Mrs. Felton. “Mr. Trevor was too wise a man, however disappointed, to seek a remedy in seclusion.”

“True, madam,” answered Wanford, archly smiling; “though your cruelty drove my friend to despair, I see you appreciated his wisdom justly. You are right—my friend sought a better remedy than seclusion or the cloister’s vows for his misery.”

“How, how is his health, sir?” asked Mrs. Felton.

“Never better; and in the smiles of one beautiful woman he sought consolation for the *frowns* of another.”

“What, sir!” cried Miss Spenlove, “is Mr. Trevor married?” for Mrs. Felton was too confused to speak.

“He is, madam, to a most lovely and admirable woman, indeed; and I am sure Mrs. Felton’s generosity and tenderness of heart are such as to make her rejoice to hear, that my friend’s eternity of woe exists no longer anywhere than in his song.”

“Certainly, sir, certainly,” said the lady; while Mr. Selby, laughing heartily, exclaimed, “So much for the constancy and sincerity of a poet!”

“*Apropos*,” said Wanford, “I should like to read those doleful verses. I will not ask *you* to *repeat* them, Mrs. Felton; but perhaps you can favour me with a sight of them.”

“I cannot? but Mr. St. Aubyn can, for I wrote them out for him.”

“Indeed, I am very sorry, and ashamed to own,” replied St. Aubyn, blushing, “that I have *lost* them.”

“Lost them!” said Mrs. Felton, pale with mortification; “it is a proof that my gift was not of much *value* in your opinion.”

“You do me great injustice then; I valued it so much that I had it constantly about me.”

“But not in a safe place, it seems.”

“I thought it so; but I suspect that in stooping over the boat yesterday, it fell into the water.”

“Oh ho!” said Mr. Selby, borrowing a phrase and a look from his wife, “then I suspect you wore it in your bosom, and it fell out from thence.”

“No, indeed I did not, sir,” hastily replied St. Aubyn, blushing with a sort of indignant feeling, and conscious *that* place was sacred to the hand-writing of only one being in creation; “no, indeed, sir, I wore it in my waistcoat pocket.”

“Ay, ay,” said his sapient mother, “he does not like to own that he did so, but I have seen a piece of folded paper in his bosom.”

“Madam,” replied St. Aubyn firmly but respectfully, “I know no motive sufficient to justify a falsehood. I wore the valuable verses which I have unfortunately lost nowhere but in my waistcoat pocket, and the paper to which you allude is still where you discovered it, and this is it.” Then, with many blushes, St. Aubyn produced a folded paper from his bosom, and holding it towards Mrs. Felton, said, “You see, madam, this cannot be the paper in question, for that was embossed paper, and edged with green.”

“It was sir,” said Mrs. Felton in a tone of pique.

“Yes,” observed Mrs. Selby, “Mrs. Felton wrote it with her best pen on her best paper, and in her best hand; and *yet* you lost it! O fie, Henry, to set so little value on a lady’s favours!”

“But *all* ladies’ favours he is not so negligent of, it seems,” said Wanford.

“On that subject, sir,” replied St. Aubyn, proudly, “I do not admit of any comments.”

“I dare say,” cried Mrs. Selby, in hopes of laughing off what might grow serious, “that treasured paper contains the white satin

bandeau that I lost off my hair the other day.—Well, at my time of life, who could have thought it!”

“But, my dear,” said Mr. Selby, “as at your time of life you are too wise to wear satin bandeaus, this is no stray charm of yours that has met with so sure a pound.”

“No, but I remember now that Mrs. Felton lost *her* bandeau,” archly observed Mrs. St. Aubyn.

“Oh ho!” cried Mrs. Selby.

“Yes, yes,” nodded Mr. Selby, while St. Aubyn blushed so deeply, that every one *but* Mrs. Selby and Mrs. Felton herself, was convinced the guess was a just one. However, the former being anxious to drop a subject displeasing to St. Aubyn, and the latter being willing to let it be supposed her bandeau was so highly honoured, were silent, while nods and winks went round; and here the conversation dropped.

The day, on the whole, was one of mortification, and therefore of pain, to Mrs. Felton. In the first place, she had lowered herself in St. Aubyn’s esteem, by wishing to force herself on Wanford’s notice; and she had pretty plainly shown Mrs. St. Aubyn that her temper was not so mild as self-command had hitherto made it appear. In the second place, it was evident that Wanford, as yet, admired Miss Travers more than he did her; and that St. Aubyn, who she fancied was all but her slave, was wholly from love towards her, for he was free from jealousy; besides, he had lost her precious hand-writing, and wore some one’s else she believed in his bosom. And lastly, Mr. Trevor had forgotten her, and was happy with another woman!

But though a little disappointed, Mrs. Felton was not disheartened. She expected that Mr. Wanford, as the friend of Mr. Trevor, who had been in reality, the victim of the most consummate coquetry, would feel prejudiced against her; and she made it her study to remove this prejudice as fast as possible, even though she gave up St. Aubyn wholly in order to effect it, and resigned his weak

mother to the insignificance in their party from which her notice had raised her. But the difficulty was, how to obtain enough of Wanford's society to make him willing to acquit her towards his friend, by feeling her power to charm himself. She saw that it was a matter of indifference to him whether she noticed his sister or not; therefore she could not make any impression on his heart by gratifying his affections. Alone, she never saw him; for having dared to ask him to let her go with him in his very pretty and novel equipage (which was in truth the ugliest thing ever seen,) Wanford had coolly replied, he was very sorry, but that he was already engaged to drive Hebe, as he called Miss Travers, but hoped at some future time that he should be able to devote himself to the *maturer* charms of Minerva.

This was insupportable, especially as it had been overheard by St. Aubyn, who, with a smile too natural to be the result of pique, said, "You see, after all, you must take up with me; so you had better submit to your fate with a good grace, and let me hand you into my humble chaise, which, when you are in it, I consider as a triumphal car;" and Mrs. Felton, with assumed gaiety, complied.

I must mention here, that St. Aubyn wrote out from memory a copy of the song which he had lost, and gave it to Mrs. Felton in his *own hand-writing*.

Mrs. Felton would have been still more assured, that St. Aubyn's admiration of her was wholly unmixed with love, had she known of the dialogue that had taken place the preceding evening between him and his mother. Mrs. St. Aubyn had followed her son into his chamber, requesting a few minutes' conversation with him, when she exclaimed, "Oh! my dear Henry! it grieves me to the soul, to think how you are going on with Mrs. Felton!"

"What do you mean, my dear mother? I protest I do not understand you."

“Why, to see you so grave and so queer, and her so cold and so pettish, after you have been so loving together, and I thought and hoped all would soon be settled between you.”

“Do I hear right, madam? For pity’s sake, what can you mean? as I said before.”

“Why, that you are going wrong together, I am sure, only owing to your not speaking *out*, as she expected you would do. Now pray come to an explanation with her; for I can’t bear to see that pert jackanapes going to put your nose out of joint, as the saying is.”

“I protest I cannot yet comprehend what your meaning is, and what I am to explain.”

“Nay, dear child, this is all jealous spite and pride, I see very clearly; but do conquer it, do, my darling, to make me happy, and do what she expects and wishes, that is, pop the question to her.”

“Pop the question, madam! I have no question to ask Mrs. Felton. To what question do you allude?”

“Now as if you did not know, Henry, what popping the question means! Why, asking her to *marry* you, to be sure.”

“Marry me! ask Mrs. Felton to marry me! And is the state of your son’s heart so little known to you, that you could suppose him capable of loving, and wishing to marry Mrs. Felton?”

“Well, did one ever hear the like! I could have sworn, and so could other people, I’m sure, that you were in love with each other; and I was so rejoiced to think that I should call the honourable Mrs. Felton daughter, and go and live with her and you in a fine house, and be as happy as the day was long!”

“My dearest mother, you greatly distress me! Is it possible that my attentions to Mrs. Felton, such as she had a right to command from any man, could lead you or any one to suppose I was seeking to gain her affections? Certain am I, however, that, great as is her vanity, she knows too much of the human heart to have been

herself deceived; and therefore I have nothing to reproach myself with,—else I should be miserable!”

“Miserable!” replied Mrs. St. Aubyn in a whining tone, “miserable! I am sure you have made *me* so. There! to be thus disappointed, when I thought I had got a daughter-in-law, that was so fond of me, and had invited me to go and see her! Dear me! I shall not have half the pleasure in staying with her in London, now I find there is nothing serious between her and you.”

“My dear madam, you will never be asked, depend upon it, to visit Mrs. Felton.”

“No, child! Why, how can you be so provoking? Why, she repeated her invitation only yesterday; and I am sure, if she does not again, it will be all *your fault*.”

“Believe me, she never meant you should be her guest. I have reason to think Mrs. Felton is not the amiable woman she seems to be, and that under that apparent kindness and good-nature she conceals a cold heart and a bad temper.”

“Indeed! Well, and now I recollect, when you were not present to-day she called me ‘ridiculous! absurd!’ and looked as if she could have eaten me, just like my brother!”

“Very likely; and now you will see that the attentions she paid to you and me she will transfer to Mr. Wanford and his sister, and neglect us.”

“No, child, no; I can’t think she is so bad as that, neither.”

“Well, we shall see. However, I thank her; for I am indebted to her for many pleasant hours, and for making me forget awhile the secret care that oppresses me; for surely, my dear mother, you cannot have forgotten that I undertook this journey not only to oblige you, but also to dissipate the uneasiness I felt at being forced to relinquish the beloved society at the White Cottage, and even that of Mr. Egerton, in compliance with my uncle’s will!”



“Dear me! Why, what a fool I have been! Well, to be sure I see it all now; and so you have not forgotten Miss—”

“Hush! hush! dear mother! and let me try to rest. So, good night, good night! and do not be so cruel as to wish your son to be the husband of Mrs. Felton.”

Mrs. St. Aubyn reluctantly departed, and St. Aubyn retired to bed, but not to sleep; for so nice was his sense of honour, that he was apprehensive lest his attentions to Mrs. Felton should have gone beyond what admiration alone warranted, and he began to consider how he ought to behave to her in future.

“As I have hitherto done, to be sure,” said St. Aubyn mentally, after long deliberation. “If I change my manner now, it would prove that I am self-condemned, and that I think my behaviour hitherto has been improper, while of aught dishonourable my heart acquits me; but for my mother, who *knows* Emma Castlemain, to think that a Mrs. Felton could drive her from my thoughts! Emma, dear Emma!” and thinking on her he fell asleep.

The next day he accosted Mrs. Felton with the same attentive manner as usual; and as he saw her earnest desire to captivate Wanford, and now knew her to be a most determined coquette, he anticipated some diversion from observing her plan of operations, in the same manner as a person who has already witnessed a display and an explanation of optical delusions, is amused at observing their power to deceive those who are as yet unacquainted with their nature.

During the walks on the banks and rocks surrounding the lakes, Mrs. Felton, just before they returned to Penrith, contrived to begin a long enumeration to Wanford, whose arm she had as it were seized, of the very fine things a friend of hers had said of him; but just as the carriages were announced, she had come to the most interesting part of the eulogy, which was she declared too flattering for her to indulge his vanity with. The bait took; Wanford vowed

she should not leave him till she had told him all, as she had excited his curiosity to an intolerable degree.

“No, no,—the carriage is here,—adieu! au revoir,” cried Mrs. Felton.

“No adieu for me. You stir not from my side, or sight, till you have told me all,” replied Wanford. “Therefore, Mr. St. Aubyn, will you do me the favour to take my place and drive Miss Travers, while I drive this lady?” And St. Aubyn, knowing that in making the exchange he should greatly oblige Mrs. Felton, smilingly agreed to the proposal.

During their ride to Penrith, Mrs. Felton, by feeding all the varied sources of vanity which were abundant in Mr. Wanford, won on him so far that he did not once regret the pretty Hebe whom he had forsaken; and he made himself so agreeable to the fair widow, that it was not till St. Aubyn, with a cheek glowing with exercise, and eyes sparkling with a number of arch meanings, met her at the supper table, that she secretly wished, with a sigh more tender than usual, that he, and not Wanford, had been heir to Lord Erdington. During supper, however, she had no eyes or ears but for Wanford; she took no notice of her dear Mrs. St. Aubyn; and to the great amusement of St. Aubyn, having prevailed on Wanford to repeat some of his poems and little pieces, she had tears for his eulogies, smiles for his epigrams, and a loud laugh for his comical songs; in short, she acted over again the same scene with which she had endeavoured to charm him the second evening that they met.

During this time, Mrs. Selby’s oh ho’s, Miss Spenlove’s meaning sneer, Miss Wanford’s arch smile, and Mr. Selby’s sly winks at his wife, were not unobserved by St. Aubyn, and added to his diversion; but he had no pleasure in observing the comic-pathetic of his mortified mother’s expression, nor her evident resentment at seeing her son thrown into the back-ground entirely, and even his poetry forgotten,—that poetry which Mrs. Felton had declared was so fine that it would be a long time before she relished any other!

At last maternal vanity got the better of all restraint, and she said to Mr. Wanford,

“My son can write poetry too, sir, and a very pretty poet he is, as that lady can testify. Come hither, Henry, and repeat to that gentleman some of your *beautiful* verses, as Mrs. Felton called them.”

“Forgive me, dear madam, if I do not obey you,” replied St. Aubyn, blushing, and leaving the room.

“Dear me! see what it is to be modest,” added Mrs. St. Aubyn; “my son could no more repeat his own verses than he could fly; though, as I said before, he is so pretty a poet.”

This remark excited a general smile at the implied contrast it contained between Wanford and St. Aubyn in respect to modesty; and he, in order to hide his confusion, said,

“A *pretty* poet, madam! your son a pretty poet! That is impossible!”

“Well, did one ever hear the like! to tell me my son *can't* be a pretty poet!”

“I repeat my words, madam, and I appeal to the whole company for the *truth* of what I say. ‘Pretty’ does not describe St. Aubyn! No—the appellation is unworthy of him. If he be a poet at all, he must be a *handsome* one; his height, his size, the size of his features, pretty indeed! Ask the ladies if they ever thought of calling him the *pretty St. Aubyn*. No, no—that appellation belongs exclusively to his mother,” bowing low to her as he spoke.

“Well, good folks, you may laugh, and all this may be true,” replied Mrs. St. Aubyn, a little pacified by the compliment to her beauty; “but Mrs. Felton knows my son writes finely, does he not madam? I ask you the question point blank; for I suspect that you do not like to answer me, lest you make your new friend envious and jealous.”

“Madam!” replied Mrs. Felton contemptuously, “your suspicions proclaim the depth and nature of your understanding. Mr. St.

Aubyn it a fine writer, a very fine writer; and so is Mr. Wanford, with this *additional* claim to admiration, a claim which must set him above the fear of competition with your son, that his talents have been stamped with the seal of public approbation, and that the university where he was educated, is proud of calling him her own.”

“Not prouder, I’m sure, than I am of calling *Henry* my own, madam, for that matter,” said Mrs. St. Aubyn; and Mr. Selby declaring it was past midnight, broke up the party.

The next day, when they all assembled at breakfast, Mrs. St. Aubyn made known the intention of herself and son to take their leave and return to their respective abodes; a resolution which, if she could, Mrs. Felton would have been glad to attribute to the pain St. Aubyn felt at seeing her growing partiality to Wanford; however, she flattered herself that the *rest* of the party would attribute this intended defection to a cause so flattering to her vanity. But Mrs. St. Aubyn, who now disliked her as much as she had formerly liked, was resolved neither she nor any one else should labour under an error which she thought so injurious to Henry, and into which he had hinted to her it was just possible they would fall. She therefore told the company, who expressed universally great regret at the idea of parting with them, that it was quite useless to pretend to alter their determination, for that the reason that could alone have induced her son to leave home so long existed no longer; as the unhappiness which he travelled to dissipate was removed by the removal of the cause.

“Unhappiness!” exclaimed Mrs. Selby.

“Yes; my brother had quarrelled with Mrs. Castlemain; therefore Henry was forbidden her house, and could no longer be with Miss Emma and Mr. Egerton, whom he loves better than the whole world, myself excepted.” (Here Mrs. Felton changed colour, in spite of her self-command.) “To-day, however, my son has received a letter from my brother, telling him they are all reconciled, and Henry is so impatient to see his dear friends again,

that to make him easy, I promised to set off directly; besides, as my brother is returned, I think it right to go home, lest he should be angry at my staying away so long.”

This story was not only true, but had such an air of truth also, that Mrs. Felton was forced to believe in it implicitly, and felt that the rest of the company would believe it also,—therefore all idea of St. Aubyn’s ever having had a serious thought of her, must vanish from every mind; and had any doubts remained, the countenance of St. Aubyn, who now entered, would have been sufficient to banish them. His heightened colour, and the joy that sparkled in his eyes, spoke such internal happiness, that his former gaiety appeared languid to his present animation; and there was not a woman in the room that did not feel inclined to envy “Miss Emma,” if not Mr. Egerton.

“Hush! mum!” said Mrs. St. Aubyn, “pray don’t tell my son *why* he is so happy, and so impatient to be gone.”

“So, you are going to leave us, Henry?” cried Mrs. Selby, affectionately.

“Ay, cruel boy!” said Mr. Selby, “and you seem as if you were glad to leave us too.”

St. Aubyn blushed, and, suspecting that his mother had been communicative, told him that he was sorry, very sorry, to leave so many kind friends and companions, but glad, very glad to return to others from whom he had long been separated.

“That’s enough; we cannot expect more. And pray, Henry,” asked Mrs. Selby, interrupting her husband, “how old is Miss Castlemain now?”

“I believe she is, that is to say, I think, yes, she is between sixteen and seventeen now.”

“So old! I had no idea of it.”

“And she is so tall and formed for her age,” observed Mrs. St. Aubyn, “that she might pass for eighteen or twenty; then she is the

most beautiful creature that ever was seen;—no art; all pure nature there; and then so learned and so sensible, and yet she never gives herself airs, and sneers at other people who may not know so much as herself!”

“Quite a prodigy!” said Mrs. Felton, with a laugh in which there was no mirth.

“My dear friend,” said Mrs. Selby, “Miss Castlemain’s merits have made you quite eloquent; but what says *Henry*? does he confirm your account?”

“Oh, yes! my mother has scarcely done her justice; the greatest charm of her character is ingenuousness, and, and——”

“Do not distress yourself,” said Mrs. Selby kindly, “you are not on your oath, and you have said enough and looked enough to convince everybody that Miss Castlemain is the most charming of girls, and you the most *impartial* of judges. I *hate* her for being one of the magnets to draw you hence; and so I dare say do some others in the company, if they were as ingenuous as Miss Castlemain and I.”

“But is she very intelligent, Henry?” asked Mr. Selby. “I met her a year ago in a large party at your uncle’s; and though I thought her face and form perfection itself, I did not hear her say anything extraordinary.”

“No, my dear sir; no, I trust not.—Emma—Miss Castlemain, I mean, has all the modesty becoming her sex and age. She is, as Mr. Egerton once said of her, like the six-hour primrose, that closes its flowers in a bright and dazzling day, and only displays its beauties in shade. At home she talks; uttering with the simplicity of a child, observations that would do honour to a woman.”

Here Henry paused and deeply blushed, shocked and astonished to find that he had had nerves enough to say so much; then saying he must go and see after his chaise, which was gone to have one of the wheels mended, he left the room.

Before the company could make any remark on what he had said of Miss Castlemain, Miss Spenlove, who had been absent a few minutes, returned, and told Mrs. Felton that a gentleman with whom she had entered into conversation knew her, and spoke in raptures of her beauty, and would like to renew his acquaintance with her.

“Oh! pray, show the gentleman in,” cried Mr. Selby; and Miss Spenlove, who was eager to have him introduced, desired him to enter, before Mrs. Felton could ask a single question.—I have before said that Mrs. Felton, who was a native of a sea-port town, had not been born to the rank of life in which she then was, though education had fitted her to shine in it. Still, her family was respectable, and some of her connexions opulent, though not calculated for companions to the *honourable* Mrs. Felton; and one of these very relations, introduced by Miss Spenlove, now entered the room. He was a thick-set, short-necked, vulgar-looking man, very rich, very purse-proud, and the wit of his own family, a family that he thought the wisest and most virtuous in the world,—and had consequently a thorough contempt for every one not belonging to it; therefore, though he admitted Mrs. Felton, because she had once been a Stokes, might be both clever and handsome, yet, when he heard of her marrying a lord’s son, he observed, ‘A fool! she had better have married me, or cousin Simon, than a pert sprig of quality.’” And as Mrs. Felton was conscious that quality and the Stokes family would not agree well together, she had not seen any of her cousin Stokeses since her marriage. Judge then of her consternation, when, while in such company, she saw the door open, and cousin Peter Stokes enter the apartment!

“How do you do, cousin, how do you do?” cried Peter Stokes, advancing to the petrified Mrs. Felton; “I dare say you did not expect to see me;” attempting at the same time to salute her; but she drew back with a sort of horror, and offering him her hand, coldly said, “Bless me, is it you? how are you, sir?”

“Ha! what, I suppose it be n’t the fashion to kiss! But I think the children of two own brothers, as you and I are, should not meet like strangers.” Then, looking round, he said, “Your servant, gentleman; how do you do, ladies?” and leading Mrs. Felton to a chair, took a seat beside her. “Well, cousin Lucy,” he cried, “you look monstrous glum. Ha! there is a pretty girl!” in a half whisper, looking at Miss Travers. “Ay, Lucy, I remember you just such another; but beauty’s a blossom—the fairest rose at last is withered. However, I must say you wear well—though all’s not gold that glitters,” grinning maliciously; “and as you are now set up for a fine lady,” rubbing his cheek, “you may have more there than what’s your own.”

Never was woman more distressed than Mrs. Felton; to affront so near a relation was impossible, especially a man who was coarse and brutal enough to say the most offensive things if offended; yet she scarcely knew how to forbear resenting his vulgar rudeness.

“Well, cousin, though you are grown so sad and so silent, I’m glad to see you. Ah! poor thing! when you were only Lucy Stokes you used to be as merry as a grig; but honours change manners!”

“True,” said Wanford, turning to Mrs. Selby, to whom this scene was highly gratifying:—

‘—new-made honour doth forget men’s names;  
And if his name be Dick, I’ll call him Peter.’”

“What’s that you are saying, sir, about Peter?” cried Stokes to the astonished Wanford; “Peter’s a good name; I have a great respect for it; *my* name’s Peter, sir.”

“Sir, I have a great respect for the name too; and I shall have the more since I hear it is the Christian denomination of—Whom, sir—pray, whom have I the honour of addressing?”

“Why, as to the *honour*, sir, that’s neither here nor there; though Peter Stokes, sir, is a name on ‘*Change* as well known and as



honourable perhaps as any in the land. My pockets, sir, have no gold outside, but plenty *within!*”

“Not more, I dare say, than this gentleman has,” said Mrs. Felton.

“No! who is he?” (whispering.)

“Mr. Wanford, Lord Erdington’s heir.”

“Heir! a fig for heirship! ‘A bird in the hand is worth two in the bush.’ But hark ye! as you are so fond of lords and their heirs, I’ll inquire, if you please, into the truth of such reports of riches, and let you know the result, that you may not be swindled.” This was said in a whisper, but so loud a one that Wanford and the rest of the party were forced to turn to the window to hide their laughter.

“Well, good folks, you are very merry there,” said cousin Peter; “as to your names, I have only heard the name of one of you; and my own I was forced to tell myself, thanks to my cousin here, who did not choose to introduce us,—but may be that’s the fashion; or perhaps she thinks Peter Stokes is not smart enough, nor grand enough for her to own him, now she has got *honourable* before her name.”

“Indeed, sir, you wrong me.”

“Sir, indeed! No sirring me, if you please.”

“Well then, cousin, allow me to present you to——”

“*Present* me! There’s an affected word! Why can’t you say *introduce*?”

“Well then, let me *introduce* you to Mrs. Selby—Mr. Selby—Mrs. St. Aubyn—Miss Wanford—Miss Spenlove—Miss *Travers*.”

“Ay, that’s something like; I wish I was your cousin, young lady, and I would not be put off with a shake of the hand, as I was with cousin Lucy here. All’s pure and wholesome on that round cheek, you pretty smiler; but come, tip us your dandy, will you not?” And poor Miss Travers, half-alarmed, complied.

“I admire your taste, sir,” observed Wanford; “but allow me to ask, is there a *Mrs.* Peter Stokes?”

“No, sir; but perhaps there may be, one day or other; there’s no hurry.”

“No, sir, no, you are quite a young man yet.”

“Why, yes; but not so young as I was, nor my cousin, here, neither, and she and I are much of a muchness with respect to age.”

“You and *Mrs.* Felton, sir! Impossible!” cried Wanford.

“What, sir, do you doubt my word? I tell you, when I *die*, cousin Lucy may begin to quake in her shoes.”

“Really, Mr. Stokes, really,” faltered out *Mrs.* Felton, “you must be——”

“Ay, coz! what am I? Two-and-thirty next birth-day, and so are you?”

“Sir,” replied *Mrs.* Felton almost ready to cry with vexation, “you must not be contradicted, I know; therefore I shall not dispute the point with you.”

“Dear me!” whispered *Mrs.* St. Aubyn to *Mrs.* Selby, congratulating herself that the register of her parish was out of his reach, “did you ever hear such a rude, vulgar brute?”

“No whispering there, that an’t manners, I’m sure, *Mrs.* —— What did you say this lady’s name was?”

“*St. Aubyn—Mrs. St. Aubyn.*”

“*Mrs. St. Aubyn!* What, the widow of *St. Aubyn*, once member for Cocker-mouth?”

“The very same, sir, the very same,” eagerly replied that lady.

“Well, said the incorrigible Peter Stokes, after looking long and earnestly in her face, “to see how things come about! Why, I dare say then you are Henny Hargrave that was?”

“To be sure I am: but what then, sir?”

“What then? Why, only that five-and-thirty years ago my uncle, Dick Stokes, was so in love with you!”

“Dear me! I am sure, sir, I never knew such a person as Dick Stokes in my life, and you must mean some one else.”

“No such thing, I tell you; I know what I say; and his father, my grandfather, would not let him marry you because you had not the cash.”

“It is all a mistake, sir, I tell you,” cried Mrs. St. Aubyn, provoked at being made so old.

“No, no, madam, it is not; and where’s the wonder that some thirty years ago you were young and beautiful? I say, sweetheart,” to Miss Travers, “don’t be vain of your youth and your beauty; for as the man says in the play,

“To this complexion you must come at last.”

“And a very good complexion it is to come to, sir,” said Wanford; “‘tis beauty truly blent,’ as I see you are fond of quotations, ‘whose red and white—’ But to speak more to the purpose, sir; give me leave to hint, that if a Mrs. Peter Stokes be not already fixed upon, this young lady whom you admire, Hebe I call her, would perhaps be—”

“Mr. Wanford,” said Mrs. Selby angrily, “you distress Miss Travers, and I must desire you to desist.” While Mrs. Felton, at length recovering her vexation a little, asked him how his family did.

“My family!” he replied; “why not say *our* family, as your and my family are the same? And if your husband had not been honourable by nature, as well as by name, and done so handsomely by you, as to leave you a good 2000*l.* per annum, you would have been glad enough to have come to *my* family for support.”

“*Never*, sir, never,” cried Mrs. Felton, fire flashing from her eyes, “never; I would have begged my bread sooner.”

“Well said, spirit, but I don’t believe you; however, I am glad to find you so well to do in the world, with your fine landaulet which I saw in the yard; however, as I know nothing about coats-of-arms, I should not have known to whom it belonged but for that chatty lady yonder, Miss or Mrs. Spenlove; but she began talking to me, and she told me that it belonged to Mrs. Felton (the honourable Mrs. Felton,) with whom, she contrived to tell me, she was living, and on the present tour. Oh, thinks I to myself, if so be she is so proud of being the *friend* of this bit of quality, what will she think I ought to be when she hears I am her relation?”

“So then it is to Miss *Spenlove*, is it,” said Mrs. Felton with a most malicious expression, “that I am indebted for this happiness!”

“Yes; she knew how fond you were of your own flesh and blood, and so she said she would *present* me.”

“Miss Spenlove, you may depend on it I shall not *forget* the obligation.”

Just then St. Aubyn entered, and Mrs. Felton introduced him.

“What! is this your son, madam?” cried Stokes, rising and bowing low to St. Aubyn.

“Yes, sir, it is.”

“Then, madam, you have deserved well of your country. Why, he looks like a prince! The finest young fellow I ever set my eyes on!” in a half whisper to his cousin; one would have thought she had him by my uncle; out of my own family, I never saw such a man!”

St. Aubyn now said his chaise was at the door; and having gracefully taken an appropriate leave of each of the company, and received from Mrs. Felton her card of address in town, he handed his mother down stairs; to whom, when she bade her adieu, her faithless friend had said, “Should you ever happen to come to town, Mrs. St. Aubyn, I hope you will not forget to give me *a call*.”

“So much for your visit to London, my dear mother,” said St. Aubyn as they drove on. “But come, be cheerful, we are hastening to real friends; to fond, affectionate, faithful friends; to beings who mean all that they say, and by whom it is an honour to be respected and beloved.”

“My dear child,” cried Mrs. St. Aubyn dolefully, “to be sure you forget we are going home to my brother.”

As soon as they were gone, the carriages were ordered round; and Mrs. Selby, not out of kindness to Mr. Stokes, but malice to Mrs. Felton, asked the former if he would not do them the honour of joining their party, and accompanying them to and on Ulswater lake.

“I was thinking, madam,” said he, “that considering it is so many years since we met, my cousin here might have had the kindness to invite me.”

“Impossible! I could not take the liberty,” replied Mrs. Felton. “I consider myself as Mr. and Mrs. Selby’s guest, and cannot ask any one to join our party.”

“Except,” retorted Mrs. Selby laughing, “that one be a gentleman of certain agreeable qualities and rank in life;” for it was Mrs. Felton who invited Wanford.

“Well, madam, whether so be my qualities and rank in life,” cried Stokes, “be agreeable or not, is neither here nor there—I am her own flesh and blood—but not that I should have accepted her offers, had they been ever so pressing. None of your going on your lakes for me.”

“Excuse me, sir,” said Wanford, “I thought you came on purpose to see the lakes.”

“Well, and so I did; but going on the lakes and *seeing* them are two very different things, I take it.”

“Certainly, sir,” replied Wanford; “then I conclude you are afraid on the water.”

“I afraid on the water! that’s a good one—I that have crossed the Atlantic half-a-score times! I that have been for logwood to the bay of Honduras, I afraid of the water! No, indeed—but after being tossed about on waves as high as a house, this going along on smooth water is poor insipid work.”

“True, sir, who after having ridden an elephant would cross a donkey!”

“Besides, angling in fresh water is poor milk and water fun.”

“Certainly, sir, to one,” replied Wanford, “whose pleasures, like yours, are all of the sublime kind; you I conclude never bob but for whales. May I ask how many you have ever caught?”

Stokes, having shrewdness enough to perceive that Wanford was laughing at him, replied, half in joke and half in earnest, “Caught whales! No, sir, no,—I never caught anything of the sort; but I’ll tell you, sir, what you’ll soon find you have caught to your cost.”

“Bless me, sir, what have I caught?”

“Why, in me you have caught a *Tartar*,” he replied in a voice of thunder, which turned the laugh against Wanford, and made Stokes very vain of his own wit.

The carriages were now announced, Stokes persisting in not accompanying them, even though, he said, nodding and winking at Miss Travers, they had with them a nice decoy duck.

Mrs. Felton coldly gave him her card of address in London, and said she should be glad to see him; that she breakfasted at ten or eleven commonly, and dined at seven.

“Thank ye, thank ye,” said he; “and when you come into our parts, cousin, I hope you will come and smoke a pipe and drink a bottle of wine with me.”

“A very extraordinary proposal to a lady, sir!” said Wanford.

“Not more so than her inviting me to a breakfast at ten, and a dinner at seven; for I am just as fit for one as she for the other.

“No, no, my honourable cousin, your habits and mine don’t suit,—so we shall not come together often,—and luckily the world is wide enough for us both. But come, let us see you off.” So saying, he handed Mrs. Felton down stairs; when finding she was to go with Wanford in his carriage, “what, is she going with you?” said he to Wanford. “I thought you would have preferred that pretty young thing. But every one to his taste, as the old gentlewoman said when she kissed her cow.”

“Stay, sir, one moment’s conference,” cried Wanford. “Have you any ground for what you have just said? Is there any historical evidence for supposing that the sensible person whose saying you have just quoted, was an old gentlewoman, and not an old woman only, as she is usually called?”

“Whom do you mean?”

“I mean the cow-caresser, sir, whom you honoured by speaking after; perhaps amongst your own family archives you may possess her pedigree?”

“Why, no, sir,” returned Stokes, with a malicious laugh; “I have not much to do with pedigrees; but if the *cow* in this case had a pedigree, I should not be surprised to find your name in it as one of her descendants, by the name of a *calf*.” Then he laughed so loud at what he fancied wit, that Wanford, glad to escape from a contest in which he was not likely to come off unhurt, set his horses into a quick trot, putting his whip-hand to his ear, as he did so, and exclaiming, “A most extraordinary and overpowering person, ‘pon honour!” while Stokes, after shaking the rest of the company heartily by the hand, and looking as if he wished to give Miss Travers a warmer farewell, allowed the other carriages to drive off, and then mounted his horse. But he overtook Wanford’s vehicle on the road; and riding up to Mrs. Felton, to the great mortification of her pride, he desired her to see how independent he was,—for that he carried his linen and portmanteau before him.

“How shockingly vulgar, sir!” exclaimed she; “why, you look like a rider!”

“Ay, ay, and like a very good thing too; for if your ancestors and mine, cousin, had not been riders, you and I should not have been as genteel as we are now. But look, those powder-monkeys are, I see, grinning to hear a man with saddle-bags call their mistress cousin. So my service to you, I and my bags will shock you no longer.” So off he galloped, much to the joy of Mrs. Felton, but the regret of her companion—to whom his oddity was a source of amusement.

The next morning, as the lake had been sufficiently explored, the party resolved to return to Mr. Selby’s house, where after staying two days, Mr. and Miss Wanford continued their journey to Scotland; whither, had she been invited, Mrs. Felton would have accompanied them. But Wanford, now he had lost his rival St. Aubyn, from whom he was proud to have gained the fair widow, was tired of a conquest which he had made with so little trouble; and as he clearly perceived Mrs. Felton would accept his hand if he offered it, his vanity was sufficiently gratified, and he thought his honour required that he should leave the lady before she had lost her affections beyond the power of recall. Accordingly he and his sister pursued their original plan, and set off; while the mortified and disappointed Mrs. Felton returned to London soon after, out of humour with herself, Miss Spenlove, and all the world.

But while St. Aubyn and his mother are on their road home, I will relate how this happy reconciliation with Mr. Hargrave took place. “I am come,” said Mr. Egerton, one morning abruptly entering the room where Emma and Mrs. Castlemain were sitting, “I am come to tell you that Mr. Hargrave is dangerously ill with the gout in his stomach.”

“O dear! if he should die!” exclaimed Emma, with nothing like alarm in her countenance.—Here she stopped, checked by a look of displeasure from Mrs. Castlemain, and one of sad surprise from Mr. Egerton.



“I doubt, Emma, you do not always think before you speak,” said Mrs. Castlemain.

“At least,” replied Emma with blushing ingenuousness, “I do not always speak well, and I must own that there is not to me any thing very terrible in the idea of Mr. Hargrave’s death.”

“Do you think him then so well prepared to die?” said Mr. Egerton gravely.

“But he shall not die if I can help it,” exclaimed Mrs. Castlemain; “I have a prescription for the gout in the stomach, which I have known perform wonderful cures; and if you, Mr. Egerton, could but contrive means of getting it administered to Mr. Hargrave, without his knowing from whom it came——”

“I will attempt no such subterfuge, madam,” replied Mr. Egerton; “but I will go to Mr. Hargrave myself immediately, and if he will consent to be saved by your means, well and good; but it is always the best, as well as most virtuous mode of proceeding, to tell the truth, regardless of consequences.”

“I dare say you are right,” said Mrs. Castlemain, rising to go in search of the prescription; while Emma, starting across the room, kissed her affectionately, exclaiming, “Kind, good grandmother! how I respect you! and after all his ill-usage too! But you forgave *me*, and that was more difficult still;” not being aware that the difficulty lies in preserving enmity towards those we fondly love.

Mr. Egerton found Mr. Hargrave so seriously alarmed for his life, that he was willing to try any medicine, and from any hand; and though he said with an oath, that Mrs. Castlemain was a very conceited, obstinate old woman, he was quite willing to take her medicine, adding, that to be nurses and Lady Bountifuls was all old women were good for; and Mr. Egerton left him fully resolved to profit by the cure which Mrs. Castlemain had sent.

In two days’ time, whether the medicine was infallible, or the disorder transient, certain it is, that Mr. Hargrave was cured; and

on the morning of the third day, he presented himself in person at the door of Mrs. Castlemain, who graciously received him, and his hearty thanks for her kind and salutary attention, which were accompanied by a salute, at once a pledge of reconciliation and gratitude,—while he swore, that no infernal chess-board should ever in future make any words between them.

“But where is Henry? is not he returned yet?” asked Mr. Egerton.

“No, he is still on his frolics.”

“And on his *preferment* too, we hear,” observed Mrs. Castlemain, while Emma turned to the window to hide her involuntary emotion.

“Pho! nonsense! all stuff!” cried Mr. Hargrave, “Henry is not such a goose as to marry any honourable madam, any fine lady whatever. Besides, I flatter myself that I must have a spoke in that wheel, and I promise you, I have no taste for any thing like quality-binding; and I value my banker’s book more than all the red books that were ever printed.”

Emma listened with anxious attention to this speech, and thought she had never seen Mr. Hargrave so amiable; still he only spoke what he believed, not what he knew; and though consciously easier than before, she was delighted to think St. Aubyn was probably on his road home, and she eagerly anticipated his return to the Vale-House.

But a new event now took place, of more importance even than Mr. Hargrave’s reconciliation with Mrs. Castlemain. Mr. Egerton, who, as I have before stated, was the younger son of one of the branches of a noble family, became, by the death of a distant relation, heir to a very large fortune, not less than 60,000*l.* in money, besides estates, which were capable of being raised to some thousands per annum. The news of this great accession of property, was received by him at first with a feeling of anguish, rather than of joy. It re-awakened the agony he had felt before, when good tidings reached him, for then he was mourning by the dead body of her who could alone, he thought, give value to riches, by sharing them with

him; and as he read the letter, informing him of his acquisitions, he clasped his hands convulsively together, and exclaiming, "It comes too late," as he had formerly done, he threw the letter to his alarmed friends, and rushed into another apartment.

"No," said Emma to Mrs. Castlemain, "it does *not* come too late, and so his benevolent heart will own when he recovers his first feelings; he will then recollect the good which this money will enable him to do, and he will rejoice in it, I am sure he will." Emma was right, and in an hour's time Mr. Egerton returned to them composed and even cheerful. But neither Emma nor Mrs. Castlemain could speak to him: they each took and held his hand in silence, while the full and glad heart betrayed itself by the swelling and quivering lip.

"So, ladies, I am a rich old fellow at last," said he, brushing a tear from his eye.

"And I bless God that you are so," said Emma, "for your wealth will be the source of blessing to many."

"My dear sir," said Mrs. Castlemain, "your present residence will not be good enough for you now!"

"I am sure I shall have no other," replied Mr. Egerton, "I shall make no difference in my mode of life—*none*. I have long had a melancholy pleasure, and shall have to the end of my existence, in rejecting *all* but the bare necessities of life, as she who would have joyfully shared my poverty cannot share——Pshaw!" cried he abruptly, and hastily left the room; while Emma, whose young heart was rendered unusually susceptible by the anxieties of a dawning passion, wept over these affecting reminiscences of a virtuous, faithful, and unhappy love, and almost envied the lost, but still fondly regretted Clara Ainslie.

"Mr. St. Aubyn is like Miss Ainslie, in Mr. Egerton's opinion," observed Emma.

"*Mr. who*, my dear?" said Mrs. Castlemain.

“M—Mr. St. Aubyn.”

“Bless me, child! why do you *Mr.* him? I never knew you do so before.”

“Well,” replied Emma, deeply blushing, “then Henry St. Aubyn is like Miss Ainslie; therefore it is no wonder that Mr. Egerton loves him so dearly; nor,” thought Emma sighing, “if she was really like Henry, is it to be wondered at that he was fond of *her*.”

It was some hours before Mr. Egerton could conquer his own heart, and meet his good fortune with the thankfulness of a Christian and the fortitude of a man; but at length he was quite himself again, and re-entered the drawing-room.

“Well, Emma,” he exclaimed, “to whom shall my *first* present be given? whom does your heart suggest as the first object for my riches to be exerted on? Come, speak; I do not mean you should openly and boldly point out who are to be my heirs.”

“No, sir,” replied Emma, “for I hope your only heirs will be your own children.”

“My children, Emma! I suppose you mean the heirs or children of my adoption?”

“No, sir; I mean that I hope you will marry and have children.”

“Very disinterested that in you,” replied Mr. Egerton forcing a smile; “but consider my grey hairs, child.”

“What are they, sir?” she returned; “only a little snow on the top of a green mountain; you are a young man yet, and formed as you are for domestic life, I—”

“Say no more on that subject, if you love me,” hastily returned Mr. Egerton, “the vibrations of that string thrill through me yet too painfully. No, Emma, no, talk to me only of feasible plans,—of the St. Aubyns probably by my means rescued from dependence on Mr. Hargrave!”

“Oh! my dear sir, do that, do that,” eagerly exclaimed Emma, “and you will be good indeed!”

“Well, well, we shall see,” replied Mr. Egerton, smiling at her eagerness; “but Henry, you know, is said to be on the eve of independence already.”

“I have not yet answered your question, sir,” said Emma (glad to get rid of that subject,) “relative to your first gifts on this accession of fortune.”

“True, and to whom shall they be given?”

“To the Orwells, sir, if I may advise.”

“Right; you guessed my meaning;” and Mrs. Castlemain, with a deep sigh, observed that they deserved every attention.

The next day, and before etiquette *warranted*, as breakfast was scarcely over, St. Aubyn appeared at Mrs. Castlemain’s gate; for though he had been home two days, his uncle, on pretence of business, had not allowed him to leave the house. Immediately, in spite of her repeated declarations that she would fly to him as soon as she saw him and reproach him for not confiding in her, Emma ran up stairs to hide the perturbation which the sight of him occasioned her; and when she had resolution to enter the room where he was, and alone too, her manner was involuntarily cold, distant, and restrained.

“Dear Emma,” said St. Aubyn, “what an age it is since I have seen you, and how glad I am to see you once more!” while Emma, walking awkwardly across the room, for the first time in her life smiled languidly, coldly gave him her hand, and seated herself at a distance from him.

“But how *well* you look!” cried St. Aubyn, following her and gazing with delight on her mantling cheek; “yet surely you are not well,—you seem out of spirits, and so so,—I can’t tell how, but certainly not like *my* Emma;” and he kissed her hand as he spoke.

“Your Emma, Mr. St. Aubyn!” said Emma, putting up her pretty lip, and angrily withdrawing her hand.

“I desire you will not take such liberties with me; I dare say you dare not do so to Mrs.—Mrs. Felton.”

“Mrs. Felton!” replied St. Aubyn, laughing.

“But perhaps you are on very familiar terms with that lady?” resumed Emma.

“Ay, to be sure I am, or was, dear Emma,” he replied, again approaching her; but with a look of serious displeasure, she desired him to keep a respectful distance, for that she did not consider herself any longer as a child.

“Emma, dearest Emma, for pity’s sake,” exclaimed St. Aubyn, “tell me how I have offended you!”

“You have *not* offended me, but, but—”

St. Aubyn now saw tears in her eyes, “But what?”

“Only I think it very unkind that you should not let me know yourself that you were to marry Mrs. Felton, but leave me to hear it from strangers.”

St. Aubyn, surprised but delighted beyond measure, again seized her struggling hand, and exclaimed,

“Is this then the reason of all this coldness and displeasure? Oh! if I dare interpret these signs as I wish,” said he to himself, for he was too delicate to utter the sentiment, “I would not give one of those frowns or starting tears for all the smiles or distinction that Mrs. Felton could bestow.

“And *could* you for a moment, Emma, believe that I was in love with, or going to marry Mrs. Felton? O Emma! are you indeed so unacquainted with my heart?”

It was unnecessary for St. Aubyn to say any more. Emma felt that the report was entirely false; and with a heart suddenly lightened

of a load, the weight of which she was not conscious of till it was removed, she smiled archly through her tears, gave him her hand freely, and saying, "So then I am disappointed of my wedding favour!" jumped up suddenly with her usual velocity, bounded along the lawn to meet Mr. Egerton, and told him with great eagerness, that Henry St. Aubyn was come, and not going to marry Mrs. Felton.

"I told you so," said Mr. Egerton, his countenance beaming with satisfaction, and observing with delight that the countenance of his pupil also had an expression of happiness on it which, he had not seen for some time,—for certainly his fondest wish was a marriage between Emma and St. Aubyn. And weeks and months lasted the happiness that was thus restored to the bosom of Emma, by the presence of St. Aubyn. Every hour that he could spare from his exacting uncle he spent at the White Cottage, and every hour seemed to insure to him a dearer interest in the heart of all its inhabitants. Emma had not a sorrow, a care, or a hope, which she did not communicate to her friend as she called him, save one lurking anxiety which she did not like to own even to herself. St. Aubyn, in relating to her the events of his tour to the lakes, had owned that he thought Mrs. Felton very handsome, very clever, very accomplished, and very insinuating; and she was not without her suspicions at times, being naturally inclined to jealousy, that had not Mr. Wanford come in the way, St. Aubyn's affections might really have been captivated by this dangerous woman, and her *friend* have been lost to her for ever. This idea used sometimes to come across her mind, and fill her eyes with tears, while St. Aubyn was talking of Mrs. Felton, which he perceiving, used tenderly to inquire their cause.

"Oh! it is nothing, nothing," she was in the habit of replying; then, ashamed of her weakness, she endeavoured to change the discourse, and was very soon herself again. To St. Aubyn she now confided every circumstance of her poor mother's history; while he used to gratify her by declaring, that whenever he went to

London, his first wish would be to see the benevolent Orwells, to whom *he* owed so much. In short, nothing of love was wanting between them but a declaration of it; and that, St. Aubyn, aware of the obstacles to their union, hesitated to make, lest, as honour forbade him to do so without having first obtained the consent and approbation of his uncle and Mrs. Castlemain, his suit should be at once rejected, and the present delightful intercourse be entirely forbidden. Of Mr. Egerton's intentions in his favour he knew nothing; and he knew his uncle too well, not to fear that, were it only from the suggestions of temper, he would oppose his wishes; he therefore reluctantly resolved to conceal his secret in his own breast, (if that can be said to be concealed, which every look, every tone, and every sentiment betrayed,) and to wait patiently, contented with the privileges of a friend, till Emma, no longer secluded from an admiring world, should be the object of other vows, and he must either speak, or lose her for ever.

It may be asked why St. Aubyn with his honourable feelings, and possessed as he was of health, industry, and talent, should so tamely submit to dependence on a tyrannical and coarse-minded relation? But, alas! his reasons for so doing were cogent and even unanswerable. He knew that were he to throw off the yoke of dependence, his uncle, in revenge, would cast off Mrs. St. Aubyn, and leave her to be wholly maintained by him; a duty which he would have delighted to take on himself, had his mother been like, I may venture to say, *most* women under similar circumstances; but St. Aubyn well knew that by no probable and even possible exertion of his could he ever *maintain* his thoughtless, wasteful, and extravagant parent. With a mother of other habits he was conscious that he could have lived on the income of a fellowship or clerkship, and on whatever trifle she could have added to their income by keeping a school, or the exertions of her needle; while with such a one he felt that he could have supported the difficulties of a narrow fortune with a light, contented heart, and have gladly braved the danger of being disinherited by his unamiable relation. But it was clear even to a mathematical demonstration, that should



he venture to disoblige his uncle, and be turned adrift by him with the helpless Mrs. St. Aubyn, a jail for his mother, if not for himself, was the only prospect that awaited him, such were her inveterate habits of needless extravagance; and thus did this otherwise affectionate parent, by this pernicious vice, hang like a millstone round the neck of her noble-minded son, palsying all the energies of his free-born soul, and reducing to the slave of a tyrant's nod, a creature born with the best and proudest aspirings of a virtuous and highly-gifted being.

While St. Aubyn was thus continuing to bear the burthen of dependence from the best of motives, a little cheered indeed under the load by the consciousness that it was only as the heir of his uncle that he could pretend to the hand of Emma Castlemain, (for of Mr. Egerton's intentions in his favour Emma was at present forbidden to inform him,) Mr. Egerton was considering the best mode of putting those plans in execution, flattering himself that they would further an immediate union between Henry and Emma, as he well knew that only the half of his fortune ceded to them during his life, would be sufficient for the gratification of all their wishes. "But the race is not to the swift, nor the battle to the strong;" and the benevolent man, however good his intentions may be, must only be too often forced to content himself with the consciousness that he meant well, though chance or error may frustrate the accomplishment of his designs.

Mrs. St. Aubyn looked upon herself, it is true, as rather an extravagant woman,—but then she smoothed over the acknowledged fault thus; "To be sure I like to spend money,—but then I have been used to it, and I like to have things *genteel* about me; and I know my brother is rich enough to keep me a carriage if he would; and therefore I *must* have things a little smart, and I *will* have them too."

But like all of us in our turn, Mrs. St. Aubyn did not look to the consequences of her own actions. She was not aware that errors, like *sorrows*, "come not as single spies, but in battalions;" that the

consequence of her determination to have “things genteel about her” was running in debt; that the consequence of running in debt was lying and mean evasions in order to put off the pressing demands of creditors; and she chose to forget that though she talked of making her *brother* provide for her elegant wants, she dared not make any one of them known to him, but that she drew from the filial piety of her noble-minded son even the money he wanted to enable him to support the appearance of a gentleman. Still Mrs. St. Aubyn called herself only a *little extravagant* or so; but she had soon to learn that an extravagant being, like an avaricious one, is never sure of remaining completely honest.

St. Aubyn and his mother both returned home with all their little stock of wealth expended on their tour, and two months must elapse before Mr. Hargrave, who never paid money before it was due, would pay them their quarterly allowance; and debts and duns awaited Mrs. St. Aubyn at home.

“I will pay you in two months’ time positively,” said she; and soon after her return, all but one creditor went away relying on her promise; but he telling her she had so often deceived him that he would have the money that evening, or half of it, or apply instantly for it to her brother the squire; poor Mrs. St. Aubyn saw herself reduced to the necessity of either borrowing what she wanted herself, or prevailing on Henry to borrow it, or of being exposed to the terrible and fierce resentment of her awful brother. But already had she asked her son for the money, and he, eager to oblige her, had asked it as a loan to himself of his uncle, who had *obligingly* told him he must wait for it till it was his due, and that he need not have been so extravagant as to spend his money in journeys and frolics. Still she thought St. Aubyn might be prevailed upon to borrow the money elsewhere; and as she was to dine at the Vale-House that day to meet Mr. Egerton and the families from the White Cottage, she hoped to have an opportunity of seeing her son apart, and of disclosing her distresses to him. To Mr. Egerton she dared not apply, because, though he was come to a large fortune

and was very generous, she did not like to make a disclosure which might lead him to suppose her extravagant, as she had not yet given up the idea that he secretly loved her, and might one day or other make her his wife.

As it was a wet day, Mrs. Castlemain sent her carriage for her when it had taken them to Mr. Hargrave's,—therefore, Mrs. St. Aubyn had not the relief she expected, of unburthening her mind to her son when he came to fetch her in the chaise,—and full of agitation she took her seat at her brother's table.

Nor was the humour in which she saw Mr. Hargrave at all likely to calm her perturbation; for he was in one of his worst moods, a mood, indeed, in which his nephew was but too often accustomed to see him, but which he did not frequently exhibit before any one that was not a dependant.

“Where is St. Aubyn?” said Mr. Egerton, seeing that they were summoned to dinner without his having yet made his appearance.

“He is gone some miles off on business of mine,” gruffly replied Mr. Hargrave, “and he can't be home for an hour yet.”

“I am very sorry to hear it,” cried Mr. Egerton.

“Yes, no doubt,” returned the other, “I know I am nobody to Henry; and it is him and not me whom you came to see.”

“Not so, Mr. Hargrave; but surely, if you invited me to come and partake of turbot and turtle-soup at your table, I should have a right to be disappointed if you gave me only the latter!”

“So, you make Henry the turbot, and me only the soup! But you are right there, for certainly I have more cayenne in me than he has.”

Just then, Henry himself arrived, having ridden very fast; and was received by his uncle with—

“How dare you, sir, ride my horse as hard as you must have ridden him in order to get back so soon?”

“I have not ridden him harder than humanity warranted, sir,” replied St. Aubyn.

“It is a lie,” answered Mr. Hargrave.

“As you know, sir, that I never told you a falsehood in my life, and am incapable of doing it, I am satisfied that you are not in earnest in what you have now said,” replied St. Aubyn mildly but manfully.

“Meaning to say then that I lie, I suppose?” retorted Mr. Hargrave.

“I hope my words will not bear so coarse an interpretation, sir.”

“Come, come, let us eat our dinner,” interrupted Mr. Egerton; and Mr. Hargrave, full of sulky irritation, took his seat.

St. Aubyn then produced some letters which he had written for his uncle; but they were all condemned as ill-worded and ill-written; and Mr. Hargrave added,

“But you never do any thing well for me; you think any thing good enough for me. If Mr. Egerton had employed you, the case would have been very different.”

But neither that gentleman nor St. Aubyn chose to notice this splenetic remark, and the subject was dropped.

It was the time for Mr. Hargrave to receive his dividends on his East-India property; and though the contemplation of his riches had usually power to put him in good-humour, it had not done so to-day; as he was not fond of his expected guests; and he really disliked Mr. Egerton more than ever since his accession of fortune,—he, like most other rich people, not being able to endure a rival in wealth, and having great pleasure in undervaluing the fortunes and gains of others, while he not unfrequently boasted of his own.

“Alas!” thought Mrs. St. Aubyn, while her brother at dinner talked of the pleasure of a well-filled purse, and seemed to wish to measure his with Mr. Egerton’s; “I wish he would impart this

blessing to some one whom I could name!” and her wishes were not a little increased, nor her alarm heightened, by the intelligence that some one wanted to speak with her, and by seeing that it was the dreaded creditor. With some difficulty she however got away from him, and returned to Mrs. Castlemain, who was busily reading the paper in the drawing-room, whither the ladies had already retired, while Emma was walking in a grove near the house.

“O that I dare borrow this money of Mrs. Castlemain!” thought Mrs. St. Aubyn; “the half, which would satisfy him, is only *five pounds*.” But before she could make up her mind to do it, Mr. Egerton and Henry came in, and the latter sat down to copy a letter of business for the former, which he wanted to have written immediately. Consequently, Mrs. St. Aubyn could not speak to her son as soon as she had intended. Soon after Mr. Hargrave entered the room, and taking a handful of bank-notes out of his pocket, which he was going to deposite in the drawers of a book-case which stood at the end of the apartment, he told them over one by one with all the pride of riches, naming the amount of the precious hoard.

“It is right,” said he, “to tell money, they say, even after one’s own father;” then preparing his keys, he was going to lock up the sum, when he was called out to speak to a tenant, and he left the notes piled up upon the table at which St. Aubyn was writing. At this moment St. Aubyn’s whole attention was riveted on his letter; Mr. Egerton’s back was towards the company, while he was employed in making a new pen for Henry; and Mrs. Castlemain was completely absorbed in reading the newspaper; while on the top of the notes lay a five-pound note, the very sum which would extricate Mrs. St. Aubyn from her difficulties; and Mr. Hargrave had told the notes once, therefore it was very unlikely he should tell them again. The temptation was irresistible; and she flattered herself that she could own what she had done when her brother paid her allowance, and return five pounds; so it was taking what

would soon be her *due*; till at last she drew near the table; and while she pretended to be admiring Henry's fine writing, she contrived by degrees to separate the five-pound note from the rest; and having done so, with a sort of desperate resolution she put it in her pocket and retreated to a glass door leading into the garden, meaning to join Emma who was walking there, and avoid the perturbation which her brother's return would unquestionably expose her to feel. But to effect this was impossible. Mrs. Castlemain followed, and, detaining her, insisted that she should read a long and interesting account in the newspaper of a mysterious murder; and Mrs. St. Aubyn, too ill at ease to find a ready excuse for refusing, submitted to her request and read the story, wholly unconscious of a single character before her, for Mr. Hargrave's loud voice was heard in the hall, and in another minute he entered the room.

"A plaguy puppy!" said he in no very placid frame of mind; "I thought I should never have gotten rid of him. But now for my notes. Hey-day!" exclaimed he, "how is this? why, I thought I left a five-pound note at top! Some one has been meddling with these things," darting a look of suspicion around.

"I am positive, sir, that no one has touched them," said St. Aubyn mildly, and looking up as he spoke; "for I do not recollect that any one has been near the table but myself."

"Well, I shall soon see that," said Mr. Hargrave, and began to retell the notes,—while Mrs. St. Aubyn wished herself in the centre of the earth.

"I was not mistaken," said Mr. Hargrave, scowling suspicion and accusation from under his bushy brows; "the sum was right before, and now there are five pounds wanting; besides, the note was a remarkable one, and could not but be missed. Ha!" cried Mr. Hargrave, "and now I remember, five pounds was the sum you wanted to borrow of me yesterday, Mr. St. Aubyn; and here, sir, before all these witnesses, I accuse you of having stolen my note!"

At this dreadful speech, uttered with almost maniacal vehemence of look and gesture, Mr. Egerton, Mrs. Castlemain, and even Mrs. St. Aubyn approached the scene of contention; while St. Aubyn rising with all the dignified indignation of conscious and outraged innocence, was about to deny the charge with firmness equal to his uncle's violence, when his eye glanced on his self-convicted and guilty mother, who more dead than alive, awaited the consequence of her too late repented guilt, and seemed to regard him with a look of supplication. In a moment the truth flashed on his mind; and aware that his denial of being guilty, and the proof which Mr. Hargrave would require of him, namely, submitting to be searched, would immediately fix the accusation on the *real* culprit, his courage failed him, his indignation was swallowed up in agony, and sitting down he leaned in silence on the table, and hid his face in his hands.

“What, sir! you will not speak then, you will not confess your guilt! But silence gives consent, they say, and—”

Here Mr. Hargrave was again called out of the room, and muttering a curse or two, he obeyed the summons.

“What is the matter?” said Emma, hastily entering.

“A mystery,” replied Mrs. Castlemain: “Mr. Hargrove misses a bank-note, and accuses his nephew of having taken it; and it is very certain no one was *near* the table but he.”

“And what then, madam?” cried Emma, turning pale with anger, “If fifty Mr. Hargraves accused St. Aubyn of the theft, I would not believe him guilty. Nay, I would not believe, if I had even seen him take the note,—but I should have doubted the evidence of my senses.”

“Mighty fine and romantic indeed!” cried Mrs. Castlemain; “and pray who do you think then *did* take the note, I, Mr. Egerton, or Mrs. St. Aubyn?”

“Me!” said Mrs. St. Aubyn almost convulsively; “Dear me!”

“I accuse no one,” said Emma gravely, “but I only say, I *know* that St. Aubyn is innocent; and to the base charge, I would have him ‘let his only answer be *his life!*’”

“Well said, my dear child, cried Mr. Egerton, “and well felt too;” while St. Aubyn, too miserable to be even capable of joy at being thus defended, could only reply to the “dear, dear St. Aubyn, be composed,” which she addressed to him, by wringing her hand with the convulsive violence of agony. Mrs. St. Aubyn meanwhile, unable to stand, tottered to a chair, for again the alarming voice of her brother was approaching.

“I see, madam,” said Mr. Egerton, “that the scene which must follow will be too much for your nerves; therefore, allow me to lead you into another apartment;” and Mrs. St. Aubyn, leaning on his arm, staggered out of the room. In a few moments, Mr. Egerton returned, just as Mr. Hargrave was again accusing his nephew, and demanding a confession of his guilt. Oh, then, what were not the struggles in St. Aubyn’s mind! Scenes, long past, rapidly flitted across his recollection. He remembered his father’s death-bed; and the promise he made, to make his mother’s good his first rule of action, to screen her from every ill, to shelter from every sorrow; and now, one word from his lips would plunge her in irremediable disgrace.

“No,” said St. Aubyn to himself, “I can better bear my own; and *Emma* will not believe me guilty.”

During this struggle, Emma, amazed and alarmed at his hesitation, exclaimed,

“Mr. St. Aubyn, why do you hesitate? why are you silent? You surprise, you *terrify* me, Mr. St. Aubyn!”

This was a stroke indeed; and his resolution almost failed him.

“So, then, *she* too will believe me guilty!” But filial piety prevailed, and with a look of desperate resolution, St. Aubyn said,



“Sir, I own, and I deny, nothing; but I beg you to dispose of me, and to proceed as you think proper.”

“There, you see!” said Mrs. Castlemain; and Emma, though even *yet* she thought him innocent, bewildered and miserable turned aside and wept.

“I shall certainly not harbour a thief in my house, sir,” said Mr. Hargrove; “therefore, you may decamp immediately;” and St. Aubyn, bowing, was about to leave the room, when Mr. Egerton, in a voice hoarse with emotion, seized his arm; “Mr. Hargrave,” said he, “if you turn this young man out of your house, why then, as the old lord says in the play, ‘I will receive him into mine.’”

“Yes; out of spite to me, I suppose?”

“No, sir; out of justice to him. Look up, look up boldly, thou noble-minded being, and tell this hasty-judging uncle of yours, that no guilt has ever stained either your heart or hand; and that you are now holily, though mistakingly, taking on yourself the guilt of another.”

“Heyday! What is the meaning of all this?” cried Mr. Hargrave.

“Oh, sir! what are you saying? what are you going to do?” said St. Aubyn; “I see you know; I am satisfied; pray let me—”

“Peace!” cried Mr. Egerton; “you have done your duty, young man; now let me *do mine*. Mr. Hargrave, your nephew did *not* take the note,—but your sister did!”

“Very likely,” replied he, you persuaded her to take the fault on herself to screen her child;” vexed, Mr. Egerton imagined, to find that the virtue and high reputation of his nephew were not stained with the fault imputed to him, but were likely to shine out greater than ever.

“Indeed!” said Mr. Egerton, sarcastically; “Mrs. St. Aubyn’s known virtue and Henry’s known vices make this likely, do they? You know *better*, Mr. Hargrave; but here is the note which your penitent and miserable sister desired me to give you. However, sir,

to put her guilt beyond dispute, know that I *saw* her take it. My back was towards the table, but my face fronted the pier-glass, and I happened to look in the glass just as Mrs. St. Aubyn took the note and put it in her pocket. At first I thought she did it on purpose to alarm you; but the moment I looked at her, I saw in her countenance and manner, all the perturbation of guilt, and was meditating how I should act, when your return brought the matter to a crisis, independent of me, and showed that excellent young man in—”

“There, there, you have said quite enough in his praise,” interrupted Mr. Hargrave; while St. Aubyn left the room abruptly, in order to go and speak comfort to his mother. While he was gone, Mr. Egerton told Mr. Hargrave that he had informed Mrs. St. Aubyn that he had *seen the whole transaction*, and must, to save her son, disclose the truth; begging to know what the great distress was which could alone have led her to commit such an action,—and she had told him much to palliate, though not to excuse, her guilt; declaring her satisfaction at knowing her son’s fame would be cleared, though terror of her brother prevented her from doing it, and he hoped Mr. Hargrave would be as merciful to her as he could.

Emma and Mrs. Castlemain, though greatly shocked at a delinquency which they could not conceive possible in a rank of life like Mrs. St. Aubyn’s, earnestly joined the cry for mercy; but Mr. Hargrave vowed he would reduce her allowance one-half.

“That is,” said Mr. Egerton, “you will increase the poverty which was the occasion of her error. Is that wise?”

“May be not; but it is my will.”

“Well, then,” said Mr. Egerton, “hear with indulgence the plan that I have to propose. Allow *me* to maintain Mrs. St. Aubyn in future, as the mother of my adopted son should be maintained; and let me also maintain Henry St. Aubyn, and send him to College as my future heir.”

At first Mr. Hargrave, irritated to madness by this well-meant, but most injudicious and ill-timed proposal, a proposal which, however it might flatter the avarice of this man of wealth, was calculated to wound a passion more dear, namely, that of his pride, was speechless with unutterable rage.

“S’ death, sir!” cried he, at length, “do you take me for a pauper, that you offer to maintain my nearest relations for me? Have your newly-gotten riches turned your head, Mr. Egerton; and you think nobody is rich and benevolent but yourself? Sir! how *dare* you insult me thus? But mark me, sir, if either my nephew or my sister condescend to be your pensioners—I *will*—Yes . . . .” he, as if triumphing in some malignant recollection which gave him pleasure; “yes, that will do; and he dares not displease me.”

“Mr. Hargrave, only hear me!” said Mr. Egerton.

“No, sir, I will hear nothing more on this subject; but I am not angry, sir, no, not at all; I owe you, on the contrary, a great obligation. Ha, ha, ha! so you wanted to take your pupil, did you, out of the clutches of his old crabbed uncle! I see it, I see it all;—and instead of doing so, you have fixed him there firmer than ever. Ha! ha! ha! O these wise folks, how often they overreach themselves!” Then laughing within himself, and looking as maliciously merry as Sir Joshua Reynolds’ Puck, he left the room.

“What does he mean?” said Emma.

“I can’t exactly tell,” replied Mr. Egerton, pacing the room in considerable agitation, “but I fear I have done harm.” St. Aubyn returned no more that evening, or rather not till the ladies from the White Cottage and Mr. Egerton were gone; nor did Mr. Egerton see him the next day, as he had a right to expect, but he received from St. Aubyn the following hasty note, written in a hand scarcely legible:

“My kind friend, and intended benefactor, accept my best thanks and blessings for your generous proposal!

which I *never, never* can accept, nor *any bounty from your hands*. Still how fondly my heart clings, and will *ever* cling to you and the dear inhabitants of the Cottage!—But I dare add no more, except that I am your faithful, grateful, and affectionate, though miserable,

“HENRY ST. AUBYN.

“Ask me no questions, for mercy’s sake ask me no questions!”

This letter, evidently written in a moment of excessive agitation, and a total absence of judgment, because it said both too much and too little, gave excessive pain to Mr. Egerton, and still greater to Emma. Mrs. Castlemain bore it more heroically; for, conscious how great an heiress Emma would be, she was not sorry to see that the growing attachment between her and St. Aubyn might be checked by circumstances arising out of the strange temper of his uncle; for though she never would have opposed a marriage between them, out of respect and gratitude to Mr. Egerton, whose wishes she was well acquainted with; still, as she was of noble descent herself, and nobly connected, she wished her heiress to marry the heir or son of some great family; for though St. Aubyn’s was ancient and honourable, it was not noble. Therefore, while Mr. Egerton, alarmed more than he liked to own to himself, at the probable result of his avowed wishes, and quick-sighted too late to what was likely to be the event of the transactions of the preceding day, sat brooding in melancholy reverie over St. Aubyn’s letter, Mrs. Castlemain preserved a degree of composure which was most painful to his feelings, and said “All things are for the best—and Providence orders every thing for our good,” so often and so provokingly, that, pious and good as Mr. Egerton was, he could scarcely help wishing to contradict her; while Emma wandered along the paths in solitary sadness, where she had lately roved with St. Aubyn, and tried to remember only his declaration, “that to the dear inhabitants of the Cottage his heart would fondly cling for ever.” But when she again saw St. Aubyn, every hope

that she had cherished, every prospect that she had contemplated, seemed extinguished and closed from her view. He came alone indeed,—but his manner was cold and restrained, his countenance bore the marks of excessive depression; he never looked at, and rarely spoke to Emma,—though Mr. Egerton thought, and Emma too perhaps, that whenever she spoke he seemed to hang upon her accents with the silent attention of love, and to reply in tones softened by the influence of ardent, though restrained tenderness. Mr. Egerton at last, unable to endure in silence a change so afflicting and so marked, took him by the arm, and demanded to speak to him in private. But as soon as he entreated to be told the cause of what he saw, St. Aubyn, with a vehemence, an agony not to be resisted, conjured him for mercy's sake to desist, and not to require explanations which he could not give, but to leave to him uninjured the only consolation that was left him under his misfortunes, the consciousness of fulfilling his duty, and of an unblemished integrity. “But one day, one day, Henry,” replied Mr. Egerton affected by his evident distress, “you will explain every thing, I trust.”

“One day!” he exclaimed, “one day! Ay, sir, I trust that day will come, or I doubt I should want fortitude to bear up under the tortures of a lacerated heart and a wounded spirit.”

“Your unhappy mother,” said Mr. Egerton.

“Do not name that subject to me,” interrupted St. Aubyn, “I cannot bear it—but she *is* my mother, she was left too to my care by a dying and revered father, and I *will* do my duty by her, come what may.—Sir, dearest and best of friends, I should say, I shall see you all once more, and only once; for I am going to College at last; I have prevailed on my uncle to send me, and in a few days I set off.”

“In a few days! well, it is better not to see you at all, than to see you thus.”

“Oh, much better,” replied St. Aubyn with quickness; “in this at least he is kind—and absence will be salutary.”

They then returned to the ladies, and St. Aubyn soon after took his leave; but, as he withdrew, he cast a look of mournful tenderness on Emma, which, during the many long months of absence which succeeded, was the only comfort which her agitated bosom knew; for St. Aubyn returned not to the cottage, but set off for Cambridge without bidding his friends farewell.

Various conjectures and ever-changing surmises mingled with the painful feelings which this conduct in St. Aubyn occasioned both to Emma and Mr. Egerton, and unfortunately neither of them could have the relief of imparting their different sensations and ideas to the other. Delicacy and pride, the pride and delicacy becoming her sex, forbade Emma to complain of St. Aubyn's conduct, lest the secret of her heart should be by that means discovered; a secret only recently discovered to herself; for Emma was not aware that her silence on this occasion was a proof of that love which she wished properly to conceal; as but for a conscious feeling of disappointed tenderness, she would naturally, from the quick feelings of a neglected friend, have clamoured against the strange conduct of St. Aubyn, and his blind obedience to what she considered the will and caprice of his uncle. But this well-meant silence spoke volumes of conviction to the heart of Mr. Egerton, and he felt with an agony of self-reproach, that he had done all in his power to encourage in his docile pupil an attachment which was likely to end in nothing but miserable suspense and unavailing wishes.

Yet he had one consolation under his distress, and that was the consciousness that Emma in loving St. Aubyn was loving virtue; and while he respected the feelings of Emma too much to allude even in the remotest manner to the cause of her evident dejection, and even to endeavour to account for St. Aubyn's altered manner and conduct, he felt a firm conviction that those very changes were the result of some imperious necessity of which duty was the source, and he looked forward with certainty to the hour which should clear up the present mystery, and restore St. Aubyn to

their society. But in the meanwhile he felt it to be his duty and that of Mrs. Castlemain to do all in their power to suspend in Emma's mind the images which preyed on it, and he therefore proposed excursions into different parts of England. But as soon as a certain number of weeks or months had elapsed, they returned home again, and occasionally saw St. Aubyn, who, with his uncle, paid his respects formally at the Cottage during the vacation; and these meetings, Mr. Egerton soon discovered, though painful in the extreme, were sufficient to keep alive in Emma's mind, not only the image of Henry St. Aubyn, but the dangerous conviction that he loved her, spite of his behaviour, as an involuntary look of tenderness, and a sigh half-suppressed, continually gave marks of feelings wholly contrary to the coldness which he assumed, and added fresh fuel to a flame which absence and the total annihilation of hope might have been able to extinguish. But at length St. Aubyn ceased his visits entirely, and Emma became more and more dejected.

"This will not do," said Mr. Egerton to Mrs. Castlemain, who mourned in secret over the faded cheek and abstracted air of Emma; "we had better resolve to leave this neighbourhood entirely;" and Mrs. Castlemain joyfully consented.

"But whither shall we go?" and Mrs. Castlemain answered, "To Roselands, to that seat which I have in the neighbourhood of the town of K——, in right of Mr. Castlemain."

"I did not expect," said Mr. Egerton to Mrs. Castlemain, "that you would propose going to Roselands, because I thought that place would be disagreeable to you, as it was there you lost Mr. Castlemain and your little girl."

"Some years ago," replied Mrs. Castlemain, "it would have been so; but I own to you that the presence of our dear Emma has so forcibly recalled to me the recollection of her mother, and of the ever-dear and regretted object of my first and fondest love, that all other recollections have faded before them; and though on my arrival at Roselands, mournful and tender remembrances will no

doubt recur, still they will be bearable and evanescent feelings, and the most powerful possessors of my affections will again assert their influence unrivalled." Mr. Egerton felt that this must be a true statement, because what it asserted had its origin in natural feelings, and feelings which he could comprehend; and saying, "You must be the best judge of your own sensations," the subject was dropped, and the journey to Roselands agreed upon.

This removal was even more necessary than they imagined. True it was that even Mr. Hargrave at length gradually ceased, as well as his nephew, to visit at the White Cottage, because, in the first place, he had never forgiven the scene at his own house, in which Mr. Egerton had been so foremost an actor; and in the second, because he knew that without St. Aubyn his company had little charm for any one of the family; besides, he always disliked those who preferred his nephew's society to his, though such a preference was very natural and irresistible. It should seem therefore that all intercourse with St. Aubyn, or knowledge of where St. Aubyn was, would have been wholly at an end, especially as Mrs. St. Aubyn also, too conscious to be easy in her company, had not returned the visit which Mrs. Castlemain had kindly made her, and had declined the acquaintance—but the fact was otherwise.

However short were St. Aubyn's visits to his uncle, during his residence at College, he always contrived to steal out at night before the clock had struck eleven, and conceal himself in the neighbourhood of Mrs. Castlemain's abode, in order to catch a sight of Emma as she crossed the landing-place, on her way to her own apartment; and once, when Emma, unable to sleep, had arisen, and come in the dark to an open window, she saw, unseen herself, a tall figure of a man walking slowly away, who, by his height and manner, she was convinced was St. Aubyn; and having once seen him, she watched for him several successive nights, and saw him come again and again. Once too she had left a small ruler in a summer-house at the end of a wood, and when she went back for it the next day it was gone; and as its real value was too trifling to



tempt a common thief, she suspected that St. Aubyn, having visited the spot, had, for her sake, purloined it as a remembrance; and her suspicions were confirmed a short time after, by the seeming reappearance of her ruler in the same place; but on examining it she found it was not her own, though it was one so like it; as to have made it impossible for her to have distinguished the difference, had she not been conscious of having scratched with a pin on the ivory her own initials and those of St. Aubyn.

Often, very often, too, did she see the footsteps of a man on her most favourite walks, the walks which she had trodden with him, which her heart whispered were the footsteps of St. Aubyn.

These proofs of still-remaining and still-ardent, though concealed affection for *her*, kept alive in its utmost force, her deep-rooted love for *him*; and though her pride and her delicacy revolted at the idea that she loved a man who had never solicited her love, yet she could not but feel an internal conviction, that he would have made such a solicitation, had not an imperious necessity commanded him to forbear; while she lived over and over again in memory the happiness she had experienced only the evening before the sad exposure at Mr. Hargrave's, when on her falling from a piece of projecting rock, St. Aubyn, though she was not in the least hurt, was as much alarmed as if she had actually sustained an injury; and by the tenderness of his expressions, and the affectionate manner in which he supported her as they walked home, declared so plainly how fondly, how entirely, he was devoted to her, that she almost wished to meet such an accident every day, in order to be so questioned and so supported.

But all these consciousnesses and these recollections were food to a passion which she felt she ought to conquer, because it promised to be hopeless; and Emma forced herself to rejoice that she was going to leave scenes so destructive of her peace; for though she was sorry to be obliged to leave the school she had established in the neighbourhood, and some other useful and praise-worthy

occupations, she felt that to go was right, and to stay as improper as it was dangerous.

K—— was a provincial town, near the northern coast of England; and, though partiality to the beautiful estate in Cumberland, which she inherited from her ancestors, had made her prefer her White Cottage to Roselands, still Mrs. Castlemain was not sorry to have a sufficient motive for incurring the expense and trouble of removing to the latter residence.

“Besides, I was once there for some months,” said Mrs. Castlemain to Mr. Egerton, “and I thought the society at K—— very good, though it was that of a country-town,”

“No wonder, my dear madam,” said Mr. Egerton; “the society in country-towns is composed of men and women made up of the self-same passions, the same virtues, and the same vices, as those are who inhabit the country itself, or a metropolis.”

“I begin to feel impatient to be at K——,” exclaimed Emma, “and wish we were to set off this moment!” Not that Emma anticipated in reality much pleasure from her new residence, but that morbid restlessness which ever attends a mind ill at ease, made motion and change desirable to her; and as she drove away from the Cottage, she fancied she was driving away also from the associations there, which were wearing away her health and undermining her peace. This happy illusion was prolonged by the sight of the new mansion itself; for it had every charm of architecture, and of situation, to recommend it; and in the richly-decorated and spacious apartments, Emma found some pictures, by rare and excellent masters, which gave her a degree of pleasure to which she had hitherto been a stranger. But as the environs of the White Cottage, and even the town of Keswick itself, did not afford much society, and that variety of human character and liveliness of event so interesting to a young and inquiring mind, Emma looked forward with eagerness to the hour when she should become acquainted with the wider society of K——, and make her appearance at a K—— ball. Nor was it long before her wishes were gratified.

As soon as it was known, that Mrs. Castlemain, after an absence of many years, was returned to Roselands, many of those families, whom she had formerly visited, came to pay their compliments of welcome to her.

Contrary to her expectations, Mrs. Castlemain felt embarrassed while presenting Emma as Miss Castlemain to these acquaintance, especially when she saw in their countenances an expression of wonder and inquiry, who Miss Castlemain could be! However, as Mrs. Castlemain did not explain, they were forced for the *present* to remain in ignorance; I say for the present,—because, as a gossiping spirit of inquiry is proverbial in a country-town, it was not likely that any one of the parties should long remain ignorant on this subject, especially as amongst them was one lady who piqued herself on knowing the marriages and intermarriages of every noble or ancient family in the kingdom. Their curiosity indeed was soon gratified, as the ladies and gentlemen in question met that very evening at a rout, and naturally enough the first persons whose merits and demerits were discussed, were the inhabitants of Roselands.

“I think,” observed a gentleman, “that Mrs. Castlemain looks excessively well.”

“Indeed, poor woman!” returned a Mrs. Evans, a lady who affected great feeling, benevolence and sentiment, and who had not yet called on her; “I am surprised at that, considering her years, and what she has gone through! I have not yet been to Roselands, for I dread going. Poor dear Mr. Castlemain and I were such old friends, that the meeting between me and his widow, whom I have not seen since her loss, will be a very affecting one.”

“Especially,” observed another lady sarcastically, “as the afflicted widow is on the point of marriage with a third husband, if report says true.”

“Impossible!” replied Mrs. Evans; “I can’t believe my friend capable of a measure so derogatory; really if I thought she was, I would not go near the house.”

“What, for fear such improprieties should be catching!” bluntly replied a gentleman to this lady of alarmed susceptibility, who, like Mrs. Castlemain, had buried her second husband. Mrs. Evans answered him only by a look of disdain.

“But pray,” said she, “who may this third husband be?”

“Oh, that handsome, keen-looking, grey-headed man who lives with her.”

“*Lives with her!*” exclaimed Mrs. Evans.

“Yes, madam,” resumed Mr. Vincent, the gentleman who had before spoken; “may I beg leave to ask what are the improper ideas which your delicacy annexes to the term? But Mr. Egerton, whom I knew at College, is only on a *visit* to Mrs. Castlemain here, and does not live with her when in Cumberland; but he resides in a cottage near her, and is the preceptor of Miss Castlemain.”

“Of Miss Castlemain!” exclaimed several ladies at once; “and pray who *is* Miss Castlemain?”

“Ay,” said Mrs. Rivers, the lady skilled in pedigrees, “ay, who is she? I am sure I *know*, whatever *you* may do.”

“And I too, I hope,” replied Mr. Vincent.

“Nay, I can’t guess,” said one. “We all know that Mrs. Castlemain left Roselands, because she could not bear to remain in the place where she had lost a husband and an only child.”

“No, that is a mistake; she had a daughter then living by her first husband.”

“She had indeed,” said Mr. Vincent, sighing.

“O dear, yes!” cried another; “a fine handsome girl, who ran away with a man named Danvers, a fellow whom nobody knew.”

“No! there you must excuse me,” observed Mrs. Rivers, conceitedly, and speaking very fast; “I know something on such subjects, and I can assure you the Danverses are a very old and respectable family. There’s the Danverses of Shropshire, and the Danverses of Cheshire. The heiress of the Shropshire Danverses married Sir Henry Douglas, whose sister married Lord Clanross; and the Cheshire Danverses by marriage are related to the Duke of Montagu; and a daughter of that family married General Nugent, whose sister was drowned on her voyage to the Cape of Good Hope.”

“But what is all this to Miss Castlemain?” said Mr. Vincent, as soon as Mrs. Rivers had talked herself out of breath.

“O dear!” resumed she, “I only meant to show that Mr. Danvers was not a man whom nobody knew; for that people of family themselves, and who therefore prize it in others, *know* that his family is both ancient and honourable.”

“I am much more interested in what he was himself than what his family was,” returned Mr. Vincent, “for the sake of the beautiful creature whom he married. I saw his wife, Agatha Torrington, when, in the pride of her youth, her beauty, and her expectations, she made her first appearance at a race-ball, and for the first time in my life I regretted that I was not a man of high birth and fortune.”

“Bless me!” cried Mrs. Evans, “who should ever have suspected Mr. Vincent of being tender and sentimental?”

“Those few, madam,” returned he, “who look beyond the surface, and therefore might fancy me both because I affect to be neither.”

“Well, but Mr. Vincent,” said Mrs. Rivers eagerly, “if you were so much charmed with Miss Torrington, you will be pleased to know that there is every reason to believe this Miss Castlemain her daughter.”

“I suspected as much, madam,” replied Mr. Vincent, “and am happy to find that Mrs. Castlemain received to her favour her

daughter's unoffending orphan, though to her daughter herself she continued inexorable."

"How can you be so cruel and unjust," resumed Mrs. Evans, "as to blame my friend for her virtuous severity? How could she receive her daughter into favour when she knew her to be only Mr. Danvers's mistress, not his wife?"

"I am convinced, madam, that she could know no such thing, for I am sure Miss Torrington would never have been the mistress of any man."

"I fear it is only too true," said a lady who had not yet spoken, "that Miss Torrington was never married to Danvers; and on his marriage with another woman she lost her senses, and used to go about to different churches demanding a copy of her marriage register. I know this to be true, because I had it from a clergyman to whom she applied, and whom she accused, together with the clerk, of having destroyed the register, threatening at the same time to prosecute them."

To an assertion so positive as this Mr. Vincent had nothing to reply. At length, however, he said, that as to Danvers, he believed him to be capable of any villany; but that whether Miss Castlemain was born in wedlock or not, he knew, from a servant who then lived with him, (but who lived with Mrs. Castlemain when Mr. Egerton arrived with the little Emma,) that the day after their arrival she called her servants into the room, and introduced the child to them "as her daughter and heiress."

"*There*" cried Mrs. Evans; "you hear that—'as her *daughter*;' and then she gave her the name of Castlemain; whereas, if the child had had a name of her own, she would have introduced her as her *grand-daughter*, Miss Danvers! Oh, it is as plain as possible; and I fear the other story is only too true, namely, that this Miss Castlemain was Miss Torrington's child, *not* by Danvers, but the man with whom she lived when she died, this very Mr. Egerton!

O, my poor dear Mrs. Castlemain! it breaks my heart to think what you must have suffered from the errors of your daughter!”

“Surely, madam,” said Mr. Vincent, “a lady of your exquisite benevolence, who feels so severely for the faults and griefs of her friends, should not be so ready to believe reports that militate against the fame and peace of others! What ground have you for the calumny which you have now uttered against that most respectable man, Mr. Egerton?”

“Oh, sir, I had it from undoubted authority.”

“Name it.”

“Excuse me, sir, I never give up names.”

“No, you only make free with them. Mr. Egerton, to my certain knowledge, had never spoken to Mrs. Danvers more than once, till he saw her on her death-bed.”

“Dear me! Egerton! Egerton!” exclaimed Mrs. Rivers; “I wonder whether he is a relation of the noble family of that name; or perhaps he is of the Durham Egertons. The heir of that family, by the by, married a Castlemain, so it is very likely——” Here, luckily, she was interrupted by a summons to the card-table; and Mrs. Evans and Mr. Vincent being called away for the same purpose into different apartments, they had no opportunity of resuming their angry altercation.

The next day Mrs. Evans was amongst the earliest of the visitors at Roselands; but her meeting with the lady of the house was not, as she apprehended, such as to affect the acuteness of her feelings. Mrs. Castlemain, who was usually cold and stately in her manners, did not at all relax in her usual stateliness at sight of Mrs. Evans; nor did the gathering tear in her eye declare that she either recollected “poor dear Mr. Castlemain” tenderly, or Mrs. Evans as his friend. The latter lady, therefore, who had taken out her pocket-handkerchief, and was beginning to sigh and look very pathetic, was obliged to resume her natural look, as reminiscences

were not, she found, the order of the day, and she was soon able to answer Mrs. Castlemain's inquiries concerning her acquaintances at K——, with her usual assumed benevolence and real malignity.

"Pray, how are the Johnsons?" said Mrs. Castlemain.

"Oh, they live in a *great style*, and make a very fine appearance; and it is all very well if they can go on so; but there is such a family! Poor dear little things! my heart bleeds for them when I think what their fate may be!"

"Set your bleeding heart at rest then," observed another lady archly, "for their fate will be a very good one; as I know from authority that Mr. Johnson is worth at least 150,000*l.*"

"I don't believe it," hastily replied Mrs. Evans, reddening violently; "that is, I mean I wish I could believe it."

"Pray, madam," interrupted Mrs. Castlemain, "let me inquire after that sweet little girl, the daughter of an attorney at K——, who promised to be a perfect beauty."

"Oh, poor thing! she grew up to be both a wit and a beauty, and——"

"And what, madam? I hope no harm has happened," said Mr. Egerton, smiling, "to a young lady so proudly gifted?"

"Harm, sir! No, not harm in the common sense of the word, certainly,—for she is married very much above her sphere in life,—she is married to a young baronet of very large fortune, and who is also heir to a higher title, who fell desperately in love with her."

"She is very much to be pitied, indeed," said Mr. Egerton, ironically;—"no wonder you called her 'poor thing!' So, she is young, beautiful, and clever, and is the wife of a rich young baronet, who married her from disinterested affection!"

"You may laugh, sir," replied Mrs. Evans, but "'all is not gold that glitters,' It is said that her husband is a very gay man."



“Well, madam,” said Mr. Egerton, affecting not to understand her; “and if she be a gay woman, and loves to laugh, so much the better for her.”

“Nay, sir, by gay I did not mean lively, I meant that he was a very, very libertine man, sir; and that she, poor thing! is pining herself very fast into a consumption! I am sure I did not believe this story till I could not help it, and I have felt a great deal for the anguish of her poor parents, who were so proud of their daughter’s elevation!”

“For which, if this be the case, she has paid dear indeed,” observed Mrs. Castlemain; “but I never approved of unequal marriages.”

At this moment Mr. Vincent was announced, and received by Mrs. Castlemain with marked cordiality. When she presented him to Mr. Egerton, he too seemed glad to see him as an old College acquaintance; but Mr. Vincent was so struck with the strong likeness that Emma bore her mother, who had really captivated his young heart the first time he beheld her, that he could scarcely speak the welcomes which he felt; and Emma, blushing at his earnest yet melancholy gaze, turned to the window.

“I have been making inquiries of Mrs. Evans, sir,” said Mrs. Castlemain, “concerning some old acquaintances of mine at K——, and I am sorry to find that beautiful girl, Mary Beverly, has been so unfortunate in her marriage, and is fretting herself into a consumption!”

“And you told this lie to Mrs. Castlemain, madam, did you?” said Mr. Vincent sternly, looking steadfastly at Mrs. Evans.

“Sir! sir! I told it because I do not believe it is a *fib*, for I scorn to repeat your vulgar word again.”

“Yet you well know, madam, that I told you only two days ago, when you were repeating the same rancorous tale, which you and others believe true only because they wish it to be true, as they cannot forgive the sweet girl her good fortune; you know, I say,

that I then told you, that from my own knowledge I could assert the whole story to be false.

“Madam,” added Vincent turning to Mrs. Castlemain, “I must beg you to excuse my warmth, but I love the lady concerning whom you have kindly inquired; and as I have lately been staying at her house, I am qualified to assure you, that if being unhappily married is having a husband that adores her, and if growing fat be any proof of pining in consumption, then is this lady right in her assertions, and my poor friend in a miserable way indeed!”

“Well, sir,” replied Mrs. Castlemain, “I have no doubt you are right, and——”

“I have great doubts still,” angrily exclaimed Mrs. Evans; “for Mr. Vincent is so pleased with being this great lady’s guest, that he is *bribed* to say what he has done.”

“It is well for you that you are a *woman*, madam,” replied Mr. Vincent, “or I should soon convince you that my honour is not to be questioned with impunity.”

“We had better call another subject,” coldly and proudly observed Mrs. Castlemain; and Mr. Vincent, again apologizing for his warmth, soon after took Mr. Egerton by the arm and led him to the end of the room, where with many apologies for the liberty he took, he begged leave to ask him whether that young lady was not, as report said, the daughter of Mrs. Danvers; on which Mr. Egerton gave him a short detail of Agatha’s history, and, to his great joy, gave him another opportunity of contradicting the representations of Mrs. Evans.

In a short time Mrs. Evans was the only visiter remaining; when looking out of the window she exclaimed,

“Oh! that’s the mayor’s coach, here comes his lady, I protest.”

“Who is mayor now?” said Mrs. Castlemain.

“Your old acquaintance, Mr. Nares the banker; he has married a second wife, and she is coming to pay her compliments to

you;—but I wish just to say something concerning this charming but giddy creature.”

“Giddy! Has then Mr. Nares married a young wife?”

“Yes, poor man! he has indeed! and I think it right to let you know that she has been a great deal talked of; there was a sad business about her and an officer, and almost half the town will not visit her; but *I* do, for I believe she was only *indiscreet*, not *guilty*; and therefore out of Christian charity and kindness I thought it right to take her by the hand, poor young creature, when no one else would; and now she is very well received. Still, lest some evil-disposed person should tell you this tale in order to prejudice you against her, I thought it right to be beforehand with them.”

“Upon my word, madam,” replied Mrs. Castlemain, drawing herself up even higher than usual, “I cannot see that it was at all necessary for you to give yourself this trouble; for I flatter myself there is nothing about me to encourage any one to tell me a gossiping tale of scandal, as I have long been convinced that no one is ever told by another any thing but what that other supposes the person so addressed is likely to relish.”

The mortified Mrs. Evans was at first too much confounded to speak; at last she stammered out,

“That really there was so much ill-nature in the world, that——”

“Ay, madam, so there is indeed,” observed Mr. Egerton; “but never is ill-nature so odious as when it tries to hide itself under the mask of pity and benevolence;—don’t you agree with me, madam?”

“O yes! certainly, sir,” she answered in a hurried manner; and at this moment Mrs. Nares was announced.

In spite of the well-principled aversion and the well-grounded distrust which the quick-sighted family at Roselands were beginning to feel towards Mrs. Evans, they could not help being a little influenced by what she had said respecting the lady who now entered the room. But distance, suspicion, and reserve, vanished

before the charms of her manners and her countenance, and Mr. Egerton did not wonder, if she added indiscretion to youth and beauty, that half the town of K—— were too strictly virtuous to visit her. But Mrs. Castlemain's stately carriage evidently disconcerted her. However, blushing as she did so, she gracefully requested her acceptance of tickets for a public ball, to which Mr. Nares was to be steward; and Mrs. Castlemain expressed her readiness to accept them. Mrs. Nares then sought relief from the awe impressed by Mrs. Castlemain, in a more familiar intercourse with her kind friend Mrs. Evans, who welcomed her with a sort of protecting air,—while the countenance and manner of Mrs. Nares to her, denoted such unsuspecting confidence in the reality of her friendship, that even Mrs. Castlemain, filled with pity and indignation at the treachery of Mrs. Evans, forgot that her new guest was said to be a woman of suspected character, and entered with alacrity into conversation with her. But in the meanwhile she had advanced greatly in the good opinion of Emma and Mr. Egerton, and rose in proportion as Mrs. Evans declined; for both ladies had brought a child with them. Mrs. Evans's was a girl about five years old, so spoiled and so humoursome, that it was very evident the mother had either not known or not practised her duty towards it. When desired to say or do any thing, its only answer was, "No, I won't;" while it ever and anon interrupted conversation with loud clamours of "Mamma, I will go home!" till Emma did not know which was most disagreeable, the mother or the child.

Mrs. Nares's little boy, on the contrary, though he was so beautiful that some mothers might have thought themselves excused for spoiling him on that account, was under such proper restraint, and so well brought up, that he always spoke when spoken to, and never otherwise; and the whole appearance and manner of the child argued so forcibly in favour of the good sense and propriety of the mother, that all Mrs. Evans had said was soon forgotten; and *indiscretion*, a great and pernicious error in every woman, was judged wholly incompatible with the evident good qualities that Mrs. Nares as a parent possessed.

At length the ladies departed, and the family were left to comment on the variety of persons and characters, many of which I have not mentioned, who that day came under their review.

“Do you not remember,” said Emma, “an interesting anecdote of the poor Dauphin, who, when those horrible *poissardes* besieged Versailles, was taught by his mother, who held him in her arms, to clasp his little hands, and say ‘*Graces pour maman*’”

“To be sure we do.”

“Well then, Mrs. Nares’s little boy’s manners seem to cry ‘*Graces pour maman*’ for I find it difficult to believe that so good a mother should be so bad a wife.”

“And so do I, Emma,” replied Mr. Egerton; “for I think it a very fair conclusion, that when a woman performs one duty well, she is not very negligent of others; for I believe the virtues, like the vices, are so fond of one another, that they are seldom or never found separate; and if a virtue or two be sometimes found crowded in amongst many vices, they are there only like sprigs of geranium set without roots in a garden, which before they have time to take root, are thrown down by the first shower or gust of wind, and are no more seen or heard of. But did you ever see so odious a child as that little girl?”

“Hush! hush! dear sir,” cried Emma, laughing and blushing, “I cry ‘*Graces pour cet enfant*’ for my sake; for *indeed* I saw in that disgusting child my own likeness when I first knew you, and I could hardly help saying, ‘Pray, my dear, is not your name Emma?’”

“Indeed, Emma,” cried Mrs. Castlemain, in great emotion, “I cannot bear to hear you calumniate your mother so far as to compare yourself to that rude and spoiled child!”

“I calumniate my mother! God forbid!” cried Emma, “My poor mother! it was no wonder if she did spoil me, for I was her all, you know.”

“I *do* know it, I know it but too well, Miss Castlemain;” while Emma, shocked at the inconsiderateness of her reply, was, like Mr. Egerton himself, unable for a few minutes to change the conversation or give a pleasanter turn to it. At length however she said,

“Yet fond of me as my mother was, she had strength of mind enough to correct me very severely when she thought such correction necessary for my good.”

“Ay, indeed!” said Mr. Egerton, “as when, pray?”

“Oh! never but once, and then I shall remember what passed to the last day of my life. She had given me a piece of cake, and I some time after asked her for another; on which she replied, ‘Have I not already given you some?’ when I, thinking it better to tell a fib than lose my cake, replied, ‘*No*, indeed you did not.’ In an instant her face became quite terrible with rage; and giving me a blow that almost felled me at her feet, ‘You are a base and mean-spirited liar,’ she exclaimed, ‘and I am ashamed to own you for my child! Hence from my sight, nor dare to come into my presence again all day.’ It was the first and last time I ever saw her angry with me; but her wise resentment did not end with the impulse of passion. She made me go to church the next day in my oldest and dirtiest coloured frock, telling me that any thing was good enough for a liar to wear; and that till I had the *spirit* of a gentlewoman’s child, I should not wear the dress of one.”

“Well! I think for a first fault my daughter need not have been so severe.”

“Surely, dear grandmother, as it was a first fault, it was the more necessary to be so; for, though I did not know why, I considered lying to be so terrible an offence, from this unusual severity in my indulgent mother, that I was terrified from committing it again; and as I grew older, and found myself fondly caressed whenever I spoke the truth, fearless of consequences, the habit of

ingenuousness which you have so often commended in me, was impressed on me too deeply, I trust, to be ever eradicated.”

“Well, well, I am sure I am disposed to think your poor mother right,—but let us drop the subject, and tell me what you think of Mrs. Evans.”

“Think of her!” cried Emma, “Why, do you remember, grandmother, that I used to say to you when you wanted me to take a pill wrapt up in currant-jelly,—’No, no; when you give me physic, give me physic; when sweetmeat, sweetmeat;’ and so I used to make a wry-face, and swallowed the physic as physic.”

“Well, and what is this to the purpose?”

“Why, Mrs. Evans appears to me physic wrapt up in sweetmeat; for under her jelly of pity and feeling is hidden the bitter herb malevolence, and so forth. Now, this is as odious to me as your physic wrapt up in sweets; and I should like to say to her, ‘Good Mrs. Evans, say at once, I rejoice in the distresses of my fellow-creatures, and that’s the truth of it.’ I fear I was wicked enough to wish that honest gentleman, who looked at me so comically kind, had knocked her down.”

“So then, you did observe something particular in his expression when he looked at you?”

“Yes, my dear sir; and that he took you to the other end of the room. Well, sir, what was it for? Did he make proposals?”

“Proposals! What is she talking of?” cried Mrs. Castlemain. “To think of that child’s talking of proposals, indeed!”

“And to think of a young lady who is going to a K—— ball, and will probably open it with the mayor himself, being called a child!”

“How the girl’s tongue runs to-day, Mr. Egerton,” said Mrs. Castlemain smiling.

“I am glad of it,” replied Mr. Egerton, “for it shows a heart at ease.” But Emma, knowing this was by no means the case, suddenly turned round and hastily retired to her own room.

Mr. Egerton soon discovered, however, that her heart was by no means as much at ease as he imagined. Going into her apartment one day, which she had only quitted meaning to return to it immediately, he saw some verses lying on the table, evidently wet from the pen; and, concluding that verses not meant to be seen could not have been left so exposed to view, he ventured to read them.

When Mrs. Castlemain came to Roselands, she found the garden had been so much neglected, that weeds grew along the parterre, and the spring flowers had planted themselves in the gravel-walks. This circumstance occasioned Emma to write the lines in question, which were as follows:—

#### IRREGULAR SONNET

##### ON A NEGLECTED BUT BLOOMING GARDEN.

Not on the weeded bed of yielding earth  
Bloom the bright flowers that in my garden grow;  
Midst rougher soil they force their beauteous birth,  
And on thick turf or pebbly gravel blow.  
Self-call'd they came, like friends in sorrow's hour,  
Who wait not forms, but aid uncourted bring;  
And like yon welcome, yet obtrusive flower,  
O'er our rough path a rainbow splendour fling.  
Sweet flowers! while wrapt in pensive thought I stray,  
Where still unlooked-for in my path ye bloom,  
Fond fancy whispers that some cheering ray  
Of future joy may chase my present gloom;  
May, like your buds, opposing powers o'ercome,  
And light, with gladness light, my clouded home.

“I wish I had not read it,” Mr. Egerton had just said to himself, when Emma returned and saw the sonnet in his hand, as he had



purposely kept it that she might know he had read it, though he knew not what to say to her relative to it.

“So, I see you have read my lines,” said Emma, blushing deeply as she spoke.

“Yes,” replied Mr. Egerton, “and approve them too; my only objection to them is their solemnity,—but I hope your next will be of a gayer turn;” then, without looking at her, he left the room. While Emma, conscious how little likelihood there was that his hope would soon be gratified, vented her feelings in tears; and, afraid of being seen while under the influence of such painful sensations, set off for a walk in the gardens and the woods adjoining.

The assembly-day at length arrived; when Mrs. Castlemain and Mr. Egerton, for the first time for many saddened years, and Emma, for the first time in her life, prepared for a public ball. Not one of them, however, looked forward to the busy scene with any one feeling unalloyed by pain. Mrs. Castlemain recollected, as if it had been yesterday, the hour when she had parted with Agatha, that she might be present at her first ball, that *fatal ball*, which stamped with woe the future destiny of her life; and Mr. Egerton remembered that the last time he had been present at such an amusement, he had danced with the lost object of his constant affections; while Emma recollected, in the secret recesses of her heart, how often she had hoped, and how certainly expected, that her first partner at her first assembly would have been Henry St. Aubyn! But no one communicated to the other the feelings that were common to each, and they met with seeming cheerfulness in the drawing-room to await the arrival of the carriage.

Mrs. Castlemain, in order to do honour to her old acquaintance the mayor, and to show her respect to her K—— friends, made a point of appearing in a new and handsome dress, and in her family jewels. As her mind had now been for many years in a degree lightened of its overwhelming load, she had recovered her usual *embon-point*, and her complexion had lost but little of its

original loveliness. At this time, therefore, she looked considerably younger than she was,—an illusion heightened by the judicious manner in which she dressed herself; for, conscious that after fifty, the less of the skin and form that is exhibited, the more is gained in personal appearance, as well as in propriety, Mrs. Castlemain concealed, either with lace or fine muslin, the whole of her figure; while round the only part of her once beautiful throat that met the view, she wore a black velvet collar, which at once hid the as yet only threatened wrinkles, and set off its still remaining whiteness. Her dress for this evening was black velvet, of which the only ornaments were point-lace and jewels; and on her still dark and glossy hair, she wore a simple though costly cap composed entirely of lace.

When she entered the drawing-room at Roselands, her smoothed and finely-grained complexion flushed with emotion, and a sort of anxious expectation, occasioned by the idea that she was going to introduce the child of Agatha at her first ball, Mr. Egerton was struck with wonder at her beauty, and the general magnificence of her appearance, and was gazing at her with respectful admiration, when Emma appeared, glowing with youth and expectation, simply habited in a white crape dress, ornamented, as well as her head, with pearls only. Both Mrs. Castlemain and Mr. Egerton looked at her with delight, though a tear glistened in the eye of both. Nor was Emma as unmoved as she seemed to be; but, substituting, like many other people, gaiety for cheerfulness, she held up her white and dimpled hands with wonder as she looked on her grandmother, and making a pirouette, exclaimed, “Well, I know who will be the handsomest woman in the room to-night!”

“That is very conceited in you, Emma,” said Mrs. Castlemain smiling, and affecting to misunderstand her.

“What! is it conceited to be vain of one’s own grandmamma?” replied Emma, caressing her as she spoke.

“I believe I may look well enough for an old woman,” she answered; “and considering——,” then overcome by many tender

and many agonizing feelings, she burst into tears, and hastily retired.

“I suppose she is thinking of my poor mother,” said Emma in a faltering voice; “but how well, how even beautiful she looks!”

“She does indeed,” said Mr. Egerton; “and how judiciously she dresses herself!”

“Judiciously!” replied Emma.

“Yes; and were she, instead of being indifferent to her personal graces, at all inclined to the hope or wish of conquest, I should even have said, how *coquettishly* she is dressed! for I never saw any one who, at her time of life, better understands the art of clothing judiciously. I have often thought, that a beauty of fifty should imitate the example of a skilful general after the battle of the day is over, and a retreat is sounded. The general, previous to beginning another attack, takes an accurate survey of his remaining forces; and when he enters the field again, he puts in front and in full view the strongest part of them, but takes care to conceal from the sight that in which he is conscious of weakness. In like manner, a faded beauty should be careful to hide by dress whatever, according to the regular progress of decay, is the indication of age in the female figure, and to set off to the best advantage, whatever beauty time has touched with a more gentle hand.”

“Really, dear sir,” replied Emma, “it would be only kind in you to publish a magazine of instructions for elderly ladies in the art of dress, embellished with a vignette of my grandmother by way of illustrating your meaning.”

Before Mr. Egerton could reply, Mrs. Castlemain returned, and soon after they set off for the ball.

“I hope,” said Emma when they were seated in the coach, “that the greater part of the inhabitants of K—— resemble the pretty mayoress rather than Mrs. Evans.”

“My dear child,” replied Mr. Egerton, “very possibly the pretty mayoress herself may resemble Mrs. Evans, as most human beings resemble her also.”

“What a libel on human nature!” exclaimed Mrs. Castlemain.

“If the truth be a libel on human nature, I am sorry for it; but I am sure that I speak only the truth.”

“I hope not; but if it be so, why, my dear sir, do you wish to throw a gloom over the prospects of this young charge of ours, by representing human beings in so unamiable a point of view?”

“Do you wish me to deceive her?”

“I would rather that you should, than speak truths calculated to destroy those blissful illusions on which so much of the happiness of youth depends.”

“But admitting, which I will never admit, that happiness can have a stable foundation on delusion, youth is but a small part of human existence; and I think it is the duty of a preceptor to prepare his pupil’s mind in such a manner as to fit it for every stage of life. Illusion, we all know, must end in disappointment; and there is nothing that has such a tendency to sour the temper, and deprive the mind of energy, as disappointment. The young, who are not taught to believe all human character imperfect, are only too apt to set up idols to worship, and to fancy the acquaintance, the friend, the lover, or the mistress, devoid of blemish either of mind, heart, or temper; but time, circumstances, and rivalry, most probably unveil the real character, and the poor dupe learns not only to mourn past confidence betrayed, but to give up all hope of ever feeling confidence in future. But this would not be the case, if to the young was exhibited a picture of things as they are.”

“Disappointment, I own,” said Mrs. Castlemain, “would be avoided, but years of happiness or confidence would also be lost; and what then would they gain by the exchange?”

“Much, in my opinion, of the greatest importance to the improvement of the heart and character, and to the safety of the temper.”

“Explain.”

“I would wish to impress on the young mind this painful, degrading, but salutary truth, that ‘envy, hatred, malice, and all uncharitableness,’ are the most frequent, and the most general of all human passions. If they were not so, should we have been taught to pray publicly every week, to be delivered from them? I would impress on the young mind, that even those who are capable of honestly and deeply feeling the distresses and misfortunes of their friends, are often very much mortified at their success and elevation. That, generally speaking, the elevation of a friend or acquaintance above ourselves, either in fame, rank, or wealth, is a crime against our self-love, which we never thoroughly forgive; and that we seize with eager avidity on any dirty story, however improbable, which tends to lower the individual, so favoured and so envied, in the scale of happiness or reputation.”

“A dreadful, but I trust an exaggerated picture!”

“You are a strong painter, Mr. Egerton, but you are one of the black masters!”

“I am particularly fond of those masters,” replied he smiling; “and as I am convinced even their darkest tints and shadows are all to be found in nature, I think you flatter me by the comparison.”

“But I am anxious to know how a young mind can be benefited by being taught to believe ill of all the world.”

“That is not a fair statement;—but let me go on;—It would be benefited thus: A tendency to overrate the virtues, and to be blind to the weaknesses of others, has a most pernicious effect on our own character; our self-love forbids us to suppose that we ourselves are not as virtuous and as free from weakness as other people; therefore to those best and most necessary friends, self-

examination and self-condemnation, we become wholly strangers; whereas, if we look upon certain mean but natural passions to be common to all, we cannot deceive ourselves so far as to believe that we are exempt from them. Consequently, we shall be on the watch for every rising tendency to them in our own breasts; and being conscious of a fault is one very important step to an amendment of it, I have sometimes, with disgust and contempt, heard hoary-headed sentimentalists, persons grown old in worldly experience, with whining candour and pretended generosity declare that it is most unjust and cruel to judge thus harshly; while, like the simple girl in the play, they exclaimed, on being told of the errors of others, the result of malice and envy,

‘Can there be such, and know they peace of mind?’

Yet, before an hour was at an end they would themselves utter something dictated by those very passions, the existence of which, as common agents on the actions and language of men, they had so strenuously denied.”

“I feel the weight of what you say,” replied Mrs. Castlemain; “still, I doubt not our poor Emma here would have been glad to have thought higher of human nature.”

“But, my dear madam, it would have been more cruel to deceive her by a false representation of it. Suppose, Emma, (for I know you love a metaphor,) that you and I were approaching a large city, and I were to inform you, on hearing you admire the handsome churches, towers, and buildings, which we beheld before us, that the whole city was composed of such, and every part of it equally worthy of admiration; surely you would have great reason to reproach me with your subsequent disappointment, when you found, on your arrival, that these edifices were encompassed by mean, little, ill-built houses, and narrow streets, and dirty lanes?”

“Certainly, sir.”

“But if, on the contrary, I told you that these fine buildings were so surrounded, but that the small houses, narrow streets, and dirty

lanes, were necessary to carry on the common business of life, you would not only feel no disappointment on entering the city, but you would be contented to bear with its defects for the sake of its beauties. It is thus with human life and human character, Emma; we must all of us forgive each other's faults for the sake of each other's virtues; but we must not be guilty of the pernicious vice, not virtue as some call it, of blinding ourselves to the faults of others; in the first place, it has, as I have before observed, a tendency to blind us to our own; in the next, it only prepares for us the agonies of disappointment; for disappointment is always the offspring of error, by blind and ill-founded expectation. You see, ladies," added he, "that I cannot leave off the habit of preaching; and a pretty long sermon you have had!"

"I thank you for it, for more than one reason, sir," cried Emma; "for I thought I was only going to a ball; but you have convinced me I am going to a ball and *masquerade*, where many Mrs. Evanses will be walking about, affecting to be the thing they are not."

"Ay, Emma, till passion and circumstances, like the call to supper, or the morning light, cause the mask to be taken off, and the person to appear what it really is."

Here the coach stopped at the assembly house, and Mr. Egerton had not an opportunity of preaching any longer.

Though out of compliment to Mrs. Castlemain the steward would not have allowed the ball to begin till she arrived, had she come ever so late, still, as she knew the usual hour of beginning was nine o'clock, she was too well-bred not to accommodate herself to the custom of the place, and she entered the ballroom before many persons of less consequence had made their appearance.

Emma, having no rank, could not have begun the ball, because there were young ladies present who had claims to precedence, if she had not been a stranger; but according to the polite, and I may add benevolent, regulation of the K—— balls, a stranger lady was

always provided with a partner if she wished to dance, and was uniformly allowed to begin.

The mayor himself, having given up dancing, presented his son to Emma, who accordingly was led by him to the top of the set.

The unfortunate mother of Emma was a remarkably fine dancer, and it was fortunate for her child that she was so, as otherwise her proficiency in dancing could not have been very great. But Agatha, knowing that grace of motion and activity of limb are only to be acquired by practice and habit in the earliest years of childhood, began to teach Emma to dance when she was only four years old; and when she died, Emma knew in that art all her poor mother could teach her;—therefore a lesson which she received once a week from a master who resided at Kendal, and gave lessons in the neighbourhood, was sufficient to keep in her memory all she already knew, and to teach her whatever she was still ignorant of. But notwithstanding she had reason to think herself a very good dancer, she trembled with diffidence and emotion at performing before so many spectators; while the natural bloom of her cheek was heightened by the mantling glow of modesty.

Mr. Egerton's eyes followed her down the dance with admiring and gratified affection; but Mrs. Castlemain, still unable to separate the idea of Agatha from that of Emma, was so agitated, that it was with difficulty she could command herself so far as to remain in the room.

The first two dances being over, Emma's partner, a young barrister of very agreeable manners and conversation, begged leave to introduce a partner to her for the next two dances. Accordingly, a vulgar-looking young man, who was, as Mr. William Nares had informed her, one of the first beaux in the town, was presented to her by the name of Popkison; while Mrs. Castlemain, leaving Emma to the care of a lady, was glad to join a party to the card-room, and endeavour to calm her mind by cards.



Though Emma had never been at a public ball before, she had been at private ones in the neighbourhood, and was therefore conversant with the usual rules on such occasions; but if not, her own good sense and love of justice would have taught her, that it was only fair that the person who had stood at the top during two dances should go to the bottom during the two next. She accordingly took her place at the bottom of the dance.

“Why, what’s that for, Miss Castlemain?” said her new partner. “Why, to be sure you don’t mean to stand here?”

“Indeed I do, sir; it is my proper place, as I began the two last dances.”

“Well, but what does that signify? The misses here, I assure you, never mind that; but ‘tis first come first served, and there is always such pushing and pushing! Come now, let us go up higher. I know some kind body or other will let us in. I see a good-tempered girl yonder, she will let us in above her.”

“I cannot suppose, sir,” said Emma, “that any young lady will be kind to me, a stranger, at the expense of other young ladies her acquaintances; nor has she any right to oblige one at the expense of many.”

“Oh, that is her concern, so don’t be so scrupulous, it is always done; and I assure you nobody here, that is *somebody*, ever stands at the bottom.”

“I should rather think, sir,” replied Emma, smiling, “that it is somebody who is *nobody*, that is thus presuming; as persons of real consequence are usually better bred than to assume rights which they have not;” and the young man finding that he could not gain his point, said within himself, “What a queer fish she is!” and was silent for a minute or two.

“Well, Miss Castlemain, how do you like these parts?” resumed he, after a pause.

“Very much, sir; the country around is pretty, and well-cultivated, though not grand. There is a gentleman’s seat a few miles off that is a very desirable residence.”

“Oh! I suppose you mean Mr. Wells’s, or Squire Wells’s, as we call him?”

“I do.”

“Ay, ay, let you young ladies alone for finding out the rich bachelors. There, there he is! Now what say you to setting your cap at him? Shall I introduce you?”

“No, sir,” coldly and proudly replied Emma, disgusted at his forwardness; “I am not in the habit of courting the acquaintance of any one.” Then, in order to change the discourse, she inquired the name of a fine-looking woman who was standing near them.

“That! Oh, she is one of the has-beens. She has nursed me on her knee many is the time and oft.”

“That lady! I should not have supposed she was thirty!”

“Thirty, and sixteen added to it, more likely. But what do you think of our mayoress? is not she a pretty creature?”

“Oh, very; and pleasing too.”

“Yes; and *fond* of pleasing. But you know, if an old man will marry a young wife, he must take the consequences—ha!”

“Mr. Nares is a very young and well-looking man,” said Emma, gravely.

“So he is for his years, fifty-six turned; but he is grey; so the joke here is, that he is the grey mayor, but not the better horse, for madam drives.”

“Drives! a gig, or a curricule?”

“Poh, poh, you are a rogue; you know what I mean; that is, she has her own way.”

At this moment Emma caught the eye of a lady whom she had seen at Roselands, and curtsied to her.

“What,” said Popkison, “do you know old Peg?”

“Not I, sir. Pray who is old Peg?”

“Why, you curtsied to her this moment.”

“That, sir, was Miss Mortimer.”

“I know that; but we call her old Peg, or Peggy. *Miss* Mortimer! yes, and a fine old Miss she is! I know the year she was born in.”

“But why, pray, sir, do you call her old Peg? she seems a very well-bred, pleasing woman; and age, if she be aged, is not a crime in K——, is it?”

“No. But by way of fun and joke we call her so. To be sure she is a good-natured, inoffensive, excellent creature.”

“You seem to be great jokers here, sir. And so the distinguishing reward for good-nature, inoffensive manners, and excellence, in the town of K——, in a woman, is the appellation of ‘Old Peg?’ I suppose, sir, you call a good-natured, inoffensive, excellent man, Old Harry?”

“Ha, ha, ha! very good indeed! A good joke, eh!”

“I am sure, sir, I did not mean it for one. Really, sir, you are very facetious persons here.”

“Why, that’s true. There is a set of us, to be sure, who do love fun and joking, and who make very free with our neighbours sometimes.”

“I hope your neighbours return the compliment.”

“Oh, they are welcome; ‘Give and take’ is my motto. Why, there’s Dick Mullins, and Jem Hanway, and two or three more, when we get together we are very funny, sure enough; and we do give comical names to people. Jem Hanway is a most excellent mimic, and it is such fun to see him take off everybody!”

“I dare say; and how pleasant it would be for you to get unperceived behind a screen, and hear him take yourself off!”

“Why, that’s true, to be sure, that one should not much like.”

“Oh! you forget—’Give and take’ is your motto; and if you like to see your friends served up for your amusement, it is only fair you should be served up in your turn for theirs.”

“Yet if I thought he *did* mimic me, I would break every bone in his skin.”

“Right; and all I wish is, that every one whom he does mimic would do the same.”

Here Popkison left her for a moment to go and whisper in a gentleman’s ear who was dancing with a lady who had only one eye; and coming back with a face brimful of laughter, he said, “I beg your pardon for leaving you, but I could not help going to whisper Sam Vernon, who is dancing with that one-eyed beauty; I told him, as she is so rich, it would be wise in him to get on the blind side of her.”

“And did you really whisper concerning the poor girl’s personal defect to the gentleman with whom she was dancing? Suppose she had overheard you?”

“Oh, she would not have minded; for she knows she is called Miss Polypheme.”

“And is she?”

“Yes; and once Dick Mullins, from use, forgot to call her by her own name, and called her Miss Polypheme to her face.”

“How cruel!”

“Oh, but he did not mean it; and after all it was only a joke.”

“*Only* a joke! If, sir, you and this Dick somebody are capable of being amused with jokes on the deformities of your fellow-

creatures, you can never want for mirth certainly; but you obtain it at the expense of all the finer feelings of human nature.”

Popkison, piqued at the animated contempt which beamed in Emma’s expressive face as she spoke, and unable to answer her, looked up saucily in her face and said, “Pray, madam, are you bringing up to the church? for I never heard a young lady preach such fine sermons before.”

“No, sir,” replied Emma, laughing at this fair retort; and was going to say, “I conclude that you are already brought up to the bar, by your ready impudence;” but she wisely recollected that it would be unbecoming her to imitate the pertness and sarcasm which she condemned.

Emma was little aware what ample revenge for her just severity it would soon be in Popkison’s power, unintentionally, to inflict.

“I think, Miss Castlemain,” said he, “that I know some one from your part of the world. Does not Harry St. Aubyn live near you?”

“He does, sir,” replied Emma, blushing and alarmed at hearing that name pronounced, and pronounced by such a person.

“I was at College with him; he is a fine-looking fellow, though rather a quiz, and a formal chap, for he would not drink, and used to study all day.”

“Is that uncommon, sir? I thought young men went to College on purpose to study.”

“Ha, ha, ha! What an antediluvian idea! Study is very well in its way, but to do nothing else is a horrid bore. Do you know one Alton?”

“No, sir.”

“Why, he is a great friend of St. Aubyn’s. Alton is a short, thick-made, fat little fellow, and so nervous, that if he is alarmed or agitated at all, he stutters most laughably; so some of us, who loved fun, used to like to tease him in order to set him a-stuttering; and

you know there was no great harm in this—only a little sport or so.”

“No, certainly,—only the fable of the Boys and the Frogs.”

“Ay, so St. Aubyn used to say; and he never would let us make fun of Alton in his presence, and as he is a devilish strong-built fellow, and has a good large fist of his own, we thought it as well to let Alton alone; but we nicknamed St. Aubyn Don Quixote, and Alton his Sancho Panza.”

“That was witty indeed; but no doubt the same laudable fear of consequences which led you to avoid laughing at Alton in St. Aubyn’s presence, prevented you from calling him and his friend by their nick-names in his hearing?”

“Why, yes.”

“And pray, sir, may I ask you in what you took your degree at College?”

“Degree! Why I did not stay long enough. Bless your heart! I thought it a horrible bore to be forced to get up willy-nilly to prayers at seven o’clock in the morning, or incur certain consequences; and really, as I never got up time enough to tie up my stockings before I went to chapel, I used to get the rheumatism in my knees.”

“Poor man! The rheumatism!”

“Oh, poh! you need not look so compassionate; that’s a joke.”

“What, the rheumatism, sir?”

“No, that’s no joke certainly; but I mean that I was laughing when I said I had it.”

This was indeed a joke which Popkison had repeated several times as a clever thing, though our heroine was too stupid to understand it.

Just then the pretty mayoress passed, and Popkison stopping her said, "Here is Miss Castlemain knows your cousin Harry St. Aubyn."

"No doubt she does," replied Mrs. Nares. "It is many years since I saw Henry; but I well remember to have heard him talk of his little playfellow."

"I did not know that you were relations," said Emma in some confusion.

"Very distant," replied Mrs. Nares. "It is through the Ainslies I am related to Mr. St. Aubyn."

Here they had reached the top of the dance, and the conversation, to Emma's relief, was put a stop to.

Having danced down with only half the couples standing up who had begun, Popkison told Emma he supposed she would rest herself, and not join the second dance till it was near her turn to begin.

"No, sir," replied Emma, "let us do as we would be done by. If all dancers did as you recommend me to do, those who are at the bottom of a set would be served as you and I were just now, and would have scarcely couples enough to form a dance."

"Well, and what is that to us? I always take care of number one. Pray, madam, are you related to Don Quixote, alias St. Aubyn?"

"No, sir."

"But you were playfellows together, Mrs. Nares said; and, upon my soul, I believe you read out of the same primer, for I never heard two people talk so alike as you and he."

"Sir," replied Emma warmly, "I thank you; for you have now, in my opinion, paid me the highest compliment I could receive from any one."

"So so," cried Popkison, "the Don has gotten a Dulcinea, I see;" and would have gone on on this scent much longer had not the

dance been a double one, and the set so small, that to talk while they went up it was impossible; and Emma, as soon as she had danced to the bottom, made her courtesy to her partner, and happy to be released from him, joined the lady to whose care Mrs. Castlemain had left her. For she was indeed completely tired of him, as his whole conversation consisted of such jokes as I have enumerated above, hints and sneers against every one whom he mentioned, and an account of the age of every man and woman in the room, and the age of the latter given with such spiteful accuracy as Emma could only have supposed possible in the worst species of female envy. But spite is of no sex, and it is not always born of rivalry; it is as often the result of a mean malevolent pleasure taken by the person who indulges in it, in traducing and lowering every one that happens to come within reach. Nor can I allow that gossiping is a fault more common to women than to men. Emptiness of mind, and want of proper and wholesome occupation are common to both sexes, and consequently their result a gossiping spirit and a traducing tongue; and though some faults like some diseases are for the most part confined to women; yet backbiting and slander, like the attacks of a fever, are common equally to both women and men.

Before Emma made Popkison her parting courtesy, she assumed a very arch look, which he in vain tried to understand, and said, "I could not for some time imagine how you could have opportunities of knowing the ages of all those persons whom you have named to me; but at last I have found it out;" and before the inquisitive beau could tease her, as he meant to do, into an explanation, she had entered into conversation with Mr. William Nares.

"I am going to quarrel with you, sir," said she to the latter, assuming a very angry look. "I did not expect that you would have paid me so bad a compliment as to introduce to me so improper a partner."

"Improper! Believe me, madam, he is one of the first young men in the town."



“Then so much the worse for K——, sir; for I am convinced, by his knowledge of every one’s age, what his situation in life must be, and that he is the clerk of the parish.”

Young Nares immediately understanding her sarcasm, and disliking Popkison, told it to his father, his father to another, that other to two or three more; and the mortified beau had at last the pain of finding, through the means of some good-natured friend, that he, who had no pleasure so great as that of turning others into ridicule, was now the object of ridicule himself; and he saw that he would be called the Parish Clerk for the rest of his life. In vain did he take his revenge, by calling Emma the young Parson. He was told the idea was not new, but borrowed from Emma’s name for him; and though he related his happy repartee to her over and over again, no one believed it, till wearied and angered beyond measure, he quitted the ballroom, wishing Emma had been a man, that he might have had the satisfaction of caning her.

Emma having refused to dance again, and Mrs. Castlemain being tired of cards, she proposed they should return home, and Mr. Egerton and Emma cheerfully acceded to her desire.

“Well, ladies,” said Mr. Egerton, as soon as they were seated in the coach, “how has your evening pleased you?”

“For my part,” said Mrs. Castlemain, “I fear I must own that pain has preponderated over pleasure; and much of this was owing to you, Mr. Egerton. The picture of human nature which you had drawn previously to our reaching K——, in spite or myself was ever before my eyes, and made to me a sort of glass, distorting like a concave mirror, through which I viewed the actions and conduct of every one during the whole evening.”

“Say rather that you viewed every one, not through a distorting medium, but with clearer optics than you did before.”

“And what have I gained by that? Oh, what ill-nature there is in the world! Would I could get back my happy ignorance! for really I must say with the poet,—

‘——where ignorance is bliss,  
‘Tis folly to be wise.’”

“A very pretty thing, my dear madam, for a poet to say, but a very bad rule to be acted upon in our passage through life, and for this best of all possible reasons, that it is not true. But what was this ill-nature? I suppose you heard of several marriages that were going to take place?”

“Yes.”

“And I dare say, not one of them was allowed to have any prospect of happiness.”

“Scarcely one, certainly,” replied Mrs. Castlemain.

“Ay, I can imagine what was said. I once lived in a country-town, and I always observed that a reputed marriage was sure to call forth all the malignity, not only of acquaintances, but friends. Madness, scrofula, bad-temper, libertinism, extravagance, and all the curses of life, were immediately imputed to one or other of the poor creatures that were looking forward, in the simplicity of their hearts, to conjugal felicity; and it is astonishing how long the town used to feast on this cheap dainty. Indeed, a projected marriage in a place like K——, is a treat, given at the expense of the lovers and their families, to the whole town, while ‘envy, hatred, malice, and all uncharitableness,’ like the harpies of old at the table of Phineus, cover the entertainment with their filth; though, unlike that of the harpies, their presence is not known to the entertained; but the good souls, while indulging their bad passions to the utmost, believe that they are only actuated by a sincere interest in the well-being of the poor victims of their busy tongues. The wise son of Sirach,” added Mr. Egerton, “says, ‘There be three things that my heart feareth, and for the fourth I was sore afraid;—the slander of a city,—the gathering together of an unruly multitude,—and a false accusation; all these are worse than death.’ Now all these things, my dear madam, you probably have encountered this evening; for you have heard the slander of a city,

and many a false accusation, no doubt; and what is a crowded assembly but the gathering together of an unruly multitude?"

"An unruly multitude, indeed!" cried Emma, laughing; "there was amongst the dancers, at least, such jostling and crowding and trying for precedence! and such a selfish disregard of other persons' pleasure exhibited, by many couples sitting down as soon as they had danced down the dance!"

"That is a most base practice indeed," said Mr. Egerton. "I declare that were I a marrying man, I should be afraid to marry a girl who made a practice of quitting the dance when she had taken her own pleasure, and, regardless whether others had theirs or not, did not join the dances again till it was near her turn to begin."

"But why judge a girl from this action? this one action too?"

"Because the general temper and disposition are often shown in one action, however trifling; and it is evident that she who is thus selfish in her amusements is selfish in little things; a terrible trait in a wife! The happiness of the married life depends on a power of making small sacrifices with readiness and cheerfulness. Few persons are ever called upon to make great sacrifices, or to confer great favours; but affection is kept alive, and happiness secured, by keeping up a constant warfare against little selfishnesses; and the woman who is benevolent, and habitually fond of obliging, will, regardless of herself, be benevolent and obliging even in a ball-room.

"But tell me, Emma, how have you been entertained?"

"Oh! much, very much, on the whole. I was pleased with my first partner, and I had agreeable conversation with two or three persons, and wholly unstained with scandal or calumny. My second partner, however, was a sad counterbalance to these advantages."

"Yes," replied Mr. Egerton; "but I was sorry to find that you took such ample revenge on him for his delinquency."

“How!” exclaimed Mrs. Castlemain; “pray what was the delinquency, and what the revenge?”

“Why, madam, it seems that as he amused her with a minute detail of the ages of every person in the room, Emma had the malice to tell Mr. William Nares that she concluded he was the parish clerk; and the Parish Clerk the poor man was not only called during the rest of the evening, but will be all the rest of his life, for a nickname sticks to every one like a bur.”

“Well, but, dear sir, where was the harm of this? Why was I wrong in throwing a poor little harmless bur at a man who himself throws darts and dirt at every one within his reach?”

“Such a man, I own, my dear Emma, deserves punishment, and I am only sorry that you were the inflicter of it. Your youth and your sex make you an improper person to go about reforming the world; and silent contempt would have been in my opinion the only weapon for you to use against him; for you must see that what you said was only too much in his own way.”

“I feel that it was so,” replied Emma ingenuously; “but I assure you the error carried the punishment along with it; for I overheard a very pleasing young man say, on being asked to dance with me by Mr. Nares, ‘No, no; she is a wit, I find, and I am not fond of encountering that sort of person.’ But fore-warned fore-armed, and I hope to profit, dear sir, by your lessons and my own experience.”

And Mrs. Castlemain and Mr. Egerton, who forgot her fault in the ingenuous readiness with which she confessed it, forbore any further comments except those of commendation.

As it was now generally known that the family at Roselands wished to visit and be visited, invitation succeeded to invitation, and in paying and receiving visits several cheerful if not happy weeks passed away; for the society of K—— might be called on the whole good society, though tainted with the usual vices of a country place,—or, I should rather say, of human nature, called more frequently into action by the operation of circumstances, the

result of closer collision, and the greater jarring of interests and self-love, from the narrowness of the field of action. But at length that morbid restlessness which ever attends disappointed affection again took possession of Emma; again her colour faded, her spirits flagged, and she ventured to hint that she was tired of Roselands.

“Then suppose we go to London,” said Mrs. Castlemain, whose anxious and observant tenderness immediately took alarm. “We have,” added she sighing, “business of some importance to transact there, and it is now the prime of the London season.”

“The proposal delights me,” replied Mr. Egerton.

“Then when shall we set off?” returned Emma.

“In a few days,” was the reply, and Emma again vainly hoped to escape from her own heart. Three or four days before that fixed upon for their departure, they went to another public ball at K——. As Emma had complained of indisposition lately, she had promised her grandmother to decline dancing; therefore the family appeared at the ball merely to have an opportunity of taking leave of those friends and acquaintances to whose civility they had been principally indebted during their residence in the neighbourhood.

During the course of the evening Emma had an opportunity of entering into conversation with Sir Charles Maynard, the gentleman who had refused to dance with her because he fancied that she pretended to be a wit; and she had the satisfaction of finding that by the reserve of her conversation, and the modesty with which she gave her opinions, she succeeded so well in her endeavours to remove his prejudice, that he never left her to join the dance, but was her constant and assiduous attendant.

But her amusement was not derived entirely from Sir Charles Maynard. A young man made his appearance at the ball that evening, whose dress, manners, and countenance amused her excessively, though she had no conversation with him. His name was Varley; and the place of his residence, London; but he was come down to K—— on a visit to a relation. His mother, who was

a widow, kept a lodging-house in Westminster, and a relation of hers had had interest enough to procure the son, who was about one-and-twenty, a small place in the War-office, with the promise of future promotion. Meanwhile Varley, who was industrious and frugal, contrived in different ways to increase his little income; and to do him justice, he had a great variety of talent—for he could paint watch-papers and transparencies, copy music to admiration, play on the tenor and flute very well for an amateur; he could dance admirably, and spout speeches, and enact scenes from plays with great excellence; and so infected was he with a love for the theatre, that his conversation was amusingly varied with quotations from Shakspeare and other dramatic writers. But I must now speak of his higher pretensions and attainments; he had a great command of language, and wrote prose and verse with equal facility, and I might add of equal merit; for though he had some talents, as he had no strength of understanding, they were like a thick embroidery on a flimsy gauze, and were of more detriment than service; while, like many people, he mistook a taste for literature for a power of excelling in it.

But Varley was of a very different opinion, and while he kept his muse in breath by constant exercise in diurnal and monthly publications, he looked forward to the time when he should distance past and present competitors in the race for fame, and shine a planet in the sphere of literature and the beau monde. For it was Varley's ambition to blend the poet and the man of fashion, and to be at once a beau and a bel esprit. Nature had indeed made him a very pretty man; he was tall, slenderly but gracefully formed, had a regular set of small features, a pink and white complexion, light hair and light eye-brows; but the judicious application of some dark substance improved the latter, and sometimes his natural bloom looked as if it was heightened by art. It must be owned, therefore, that Varley, with these pretensions to be reckoned very pretty, might without any great stretch of vanity fancy himself very handsome; and as his dress made him a beau, and reading and natural capacity in his opinion, had made

him a bel esprit, it is certain that as a beau and bel esprit, he had a right to present himself to the town of K——, and to hope to astonish the natives, to use his own phrase, when in the spring of 1802 he made his appearance at a K—— ball, dressed in all the extremity of the mode. Fashion, indeed was his idol, and he meant to be what he considered as fashionable in his attachments. He wished excessively to be in love, but as yet had found no object worthy of his heart and his muse; for as yet he was not introduced into that high life for which he panted. Therefore lady ——, the countess ——, and the honourable Miss ——, could only be gazed at by him through a glass from the pit at the Opera; and as yet, at least, these admired ladies had not apparently noticed his personal beauty, or the graceful lounge which distinguished him in fop's alley. In the meanwhile, he wished to become the lover of some beauty rather advanced in life, provided such beauty was of rank or fashion, and he was on the look-out for such an object when he came to the ball.

Varley had so much of the true cockney feeling about him, that he fancied it was impossible there could be anything so knowing or so tasty as himself in the room; and he walked op and down, concluding there was no one present fit for a Town-man to dance with, when he was requested by a gentleman whom he could not refuse, to dance one dance with a young lady who had sat still all the evening. Accordingly, with an air and a grace, he complied, saying,

“Since you will buckle fortune on my back.”

When he had begun the dance, not being yet satisfied with the notice he excited, he took a pair of castanets out of his pocket, and by the novelty of the exhibition and the admirable though affected manner in which he danced with them, called the attention of the whole room to him and his terrified partner. When he had done, he looked round with an air of great self-satisfaction; and the young lady declining to dance any more, though Varley said,

“Oh, do not tear thyself away from me,”

he volunteered a few steps with the castanets at the end of the room, while Popkison went about proposing to go round with a hat for him, adding, "He is very poor, and I dare say the cash would be welcome." And to the ladies he observed, "Are you not fascinated by that rattlesnake?" and on these two new jokes Popkison valued himself highly.

By this time Varley found that he was become an object of attention to every one, and that delighted him; he also saw the eyes of our heroine, and those of the friend on whose arm she leaned, observing him with great attention; and concluding admiration was the cause, he began to look delightfully with all his might.

"Ha! Varley, are you there?" said a gentleman who then entered the room.

"Ay, my good lord, and your poor servant ever," he replied, bowing very low and affectedly. Then extending his hand to a young man, who now approached, he exclaimed, seeing that Emma and her friend were listening,

"I prithee, shepherd, if that love or gold  
Can in this crowded place find entertainment,  
Bring me where I may rest myself, and drink.  
I am a youth with dancing much opprest,  
And faint for succour."

"What! I suppose, in plain English, you want a seat, and some porter?" cried his friend bluntly; "the one you may fetch from the bar, and the other is behind you."

"I thank your courtesy,"

said Varley, with a sneer, and seated himself beside him, on the seat to which he pointed.

"Is all right in that poor young man's brain?" said Emma to Sir Charles.

"Yes, if a brain can be said to be quite right that is nearly turned by vanity."



Varley, still seeing Emma's fine eyes following him, asked, "Who is that pretty girl

"That falls to such perusal of my face  
As she would draw me?"

"That pretty girl, as you call her, is a great heiress."

"The devil she is!" cried Varley, immediately adjusting his neckcloth, and stretching out one leg in what he imagined a becoming posture; "but is her fortune in her own power yet?"

"No; for her grandmother, the honourable Mrs. Castlemain, is not dead, nor like to die, but as strong and as good-looking as ever."

"What! has she a grandmother, good-looking, rich, a widow, and an honourable into the bargain?"

"Yes."

"And is she here?"

"Yes."

"Show her to me."

"She is not in the room at present; but surely a young heiress is a better thing than an old one."

"That is as people think," replied Varley, conceitedly; "you country-folks have vulgar every-day notions; the girl, that young thing, is not despicable certainly, but let me see her grandmother."

"Well then, so you shall, for here she comes!" and Mrs. Castlemain entered the room, her cheek flushed with a very brilliant bloom, and looking, being attired in French grey satin, even younger than she did at the preceding ball.

Varley really was, to do him justice, as much struck with her beauty as he pretended to be; while turning away from Emma, and gazing on her grandmother, he theatrically exclaimed,

“So doth the greater glory dim the less;  
A substitute shines brightly as a king,  
Until a king be by.”

“My dear grandmother,” said Emma, running up to Mrs. Castlemain, “here is the most amusing person! I think him a little mad and——”

“Mad! child!” she replied, “I see nothing amusing in madness, that climax of human misery. But where is he!” And Emma pointed Varley out to her, who now rose in order to walk and show his fine person off, in hopes of charming as much as he was charmed—

“Oh! she doth hang upon the ear of night,  
Like a rich jewel in an Ethiop’s ear,”

he exclaimed, as, taking hold of his companion’s arm, he lounged up and down the room after Emma and Mrs. Castlemain, looking at the latter languishingly through his half-closed eyes; while she, wholly unconscious of her own power, imagined those dying looks and those sighs were all aimed at Emma. Emma herself was of the same opinion; and though not remarkably vain, she also took to herself the “beautiful! charming creature!” which Varley occasionally uttered when behind them. And as the ladies when they turned round saw Varley using extravagant gesticulation, Mrs. Castlemain’s opinion of his madness became a much more positive one than Emma’s had been. Therefore, though she attributed his behaviour to admiration of Emma, she began to be seriously afraid of him. In early life, and when a young and beautiful heiress, Mrs. Castlemain had been excessively alarmed by a madman, who fell in love with her, and she was also in some danger from him. She therefore, naturally enough, feared for Emma, the risk she had incurred herself; and when Emma said, “But if he were really insane, he would not be here,” she with great propriety replied, “The gentleman who persecuted me was at large, and went to balls, like other people; therefore, I really wish to go home directly; for you see the poor man never once takes his eyes off you, and his dress, his looks, and his manners are all proofs of

a deranged mind.” She then requested Mr. Egerton to call up the carriage directly. Mr. Egerton did so; and Emma began talking to Sir Charles Maynard, who said, that in order to mortify her pride of youthful beauty, he must inform her he had discovered the object of Varley’s passion was not herself, but her grandmother, and that Mr. Egerton could tell her the same.

While Emma was enjoying this information, and laughing with Sir Charles, the carriage was announced; and Mrs. Castlemain desired Mr. Egerton to take Emma between him and Sir Charles; “for indeed,” said she in a low voice, “I do not like the looks of that young man.”

“That is very ungrateful in you, and very hard upon him,” said Mr. Egerton smiling; “but pray, if we do as you bid us, who is to take care of you?”

“Me! I want no guard.”

“There, madam, you are deceived. It is you who are the prize aimed at; you are the Hesperian fruit that requires a dragon to guard it.”

“I cannot understand you, Mr. Egerton; and as the horses are waiting,” replied Mrs. Castlemain angrily, “I must beg you will take Emma, as I desired, and let us be gone.”

Mr. Egerton and Sir Charles immediately bowed and obeyed, while Mrs. Castlemain, thinking herself quite secure on the shady side of fifty, feared not the fate of Proserpine for herself. When Varley saw her going, he exclaimed to his companion—

“I now do penance for contemning love,  
Whose high imperious thoughts have punish’d me.  
Oh! gentle Tomkins, love’s a mighty lord,  
And hath so humbled me, as I confess  
There is no woe to his correction,  
Nor to his service no such joy on earth!  
Now, no discourse, except it be of love:  
Now can I break my fast, dine, sup, and sleep,  
Upon the very naked name of love.”

“A very lucky thing,” observed the purse-proud Popkison, “for a man of no fortune.” While Varley, exclaiming,

“I must be gone and live, or stay and die,”

ran out of the room to catch another look at his idol. Varley overtook Mrs. Castlemain just as she was left alone at the door, the gentlemen being gone to see Emma into the coach. This was an opportunity not to be lost. With a smile which he meant to be irresistible, Varley said, “Allow me the honour of conducting—” when Mrs. Castlemain, with a half scream, bounded forward, and did not stop till she found her hand in Mr. Egerton’s.

When they drove off, and before Mrs. Castlemain was sufficiently composed to speak, Emma exclaimed, “Well, grandmother, whenever I mean to make conquests, I will not go into public with you; my youth has no chance against your beauty, I find; and the wretched Varley has received a mortal wound.”

“I desire, Miss Castlemain, you will not presume to laugh at me,” she angrily answered. “Besides, it is very inhuman to laugh at the vagaries of a madman. Would you believe it, he spoke to me! and I was so terrified!”

“Believe me, madam,” said Mr. Egerton, “he is no madman; though I fear he may be one when he finds you cruel, for he is dreadfully in love.”

“If this be true, sir,” replied Mrs. Castlemain in her most angry manner, “I wonder you can presume to assert that he is not mad; for what boy in his senses would think of falling in love with an old woman like me?”

Neither Mr. Egerton nor Emma could help laughing at the modesty of this speech. “Pardon me, madam,” said the former, “but there is something irresistibly comic to me in your manner of proving Varley’s insanity, who, I dare say, would be ready to exclaim,

“O! madam, who’d ever be wise  
If madness be loving of thee?”

There is so much modest simplicity, and ‘bonhommie’ as the French say, in that answer!”

“I am glad it amuses you, sir. But I must say the whole thing is to me very disagreeable. Poor crazy boy! I am sure my heart bleeds for him.”

“That is only retributive justice then,” resumed Mr. Egerton; “but I assure you I met him this morning in a bookseller’s shop, and had some conversation with him on books; and he, being a collector of old editions like myself, I was much pleased with the meeting. He told me he possessed one very scarce book, but had it not with him here, else he would have shown it to me.”

“What an escape!” cried Mrs. Castlemain, “for then he would have come to Roselands to bring the book! However, we are going away in a few days, so it is not worth fretting myself about such nonsense!” Then, as soon as they alighted, Mrs. Castlemain retired to her own room, in no little perturbation, and some indignation of mind; while Emma, though neither perturbed nor indignant, retired to bed any thing but calm and happy; for the pretty mayoress had told her that she had just heard from London, that St. Aubyn was seen there very gay and gallant, and escorting the beautiful Mrs. Felton everywhere; while report represented them as shortly to be married.

It had been with great difficulty that Emma had summoned resolution to say, “and where is Mr. St. Aubyn now? in London?”

“No, he is, I believe, returned into Cumberland;” and Emma felt relieved to hear she was not likely to meet St. Aubyn and his mistress in town.

The next morning, when Emma and Mr. Egerton set out for their usual walk, they met Varley very near Roselands, who had really walked that way in hopes of seeing Mrs. Castlemain, with whose person as well as rank and fortune he had persuaded himself that he was violently in love, and he had lain awake all night thinking over his chances of success. In the first place he had convinced himself that both Mrs. Castlemain and her daughter had married at fifteen, and that Emma was only seventeen; therefore, that Mrs. Castlemain was not fifty. In the second place, he knew that many women older, and probably as wise as she, had married young men for love; and he flattered himself that his personal graces and acquirements were such as to excuse such a tender weakness in any woman. In the third place, he had a great idea of the power of perseverance; and could he once get introduced into the family, he was sure that his powers of pleasing would establish him there. In the fourth place, Mrs. Castlemain had had two husbands already; and so far from that circumstance appearing to him likely to militate against the success of any third suitor, he looked upon it as a favourable omen of the success of his suit. But he well knew that he must appear to suffer long, and in secret, and that his best way to obtain hope was to personate *despair*. And *happier* than ever he was in his life, for he had found a lady of rank to be in love with, and to *boast* also of being in love with, feeling that it would tell well to be in love with the honourable Mrs. Castlemain, Varley set off for Roselands to *look* as *unhappy* as possible.

When Mr. Egerton saw him, he bowed, and that gentleman courteously entered into conversation with him, presenting him at the same time to Emma, who was much diverted with his dress. He wore a white hat lined with green, and a pair of striped pantaloons

of pink linen, which gave a most offensive air of effeminacy to his appearance. But his conversation was, though affected, not unmanly, and sufficient to convince Emma that his love for her grandmother was no proof of madness, but a great one of worldly wisdom and presumptuous ambition; and she had *no mean* idea of his *courage*, to call it by the mildest term, when she heard him say, looking at Roselands,

“How reverend is the face of that tall pile!”

The views from the *house* must be very *fine*, I should think.” But as neither Emma nor Mr. Egerton took the hint, and asked him to return with them, he was forced to wish them good morning, and trust to chance for giving him a sight of the goddess of his idolatry.

“It will be better, I think,” said Emma, “not to tell my grandmother we met Varley so near the house;” and Mr. Egerton coincided with her in opinion. But the well-meant caution was vain.

As soon as Varley lost sight of them, he proceeded to Roselands; and discovering a lane that led by the park-palings, he entered it, and found at the end of it a high gate that commanded a wood, in which were several walks; then climbing this gate, he got up a convenient hedge, and, putting his head between the branches of a tree, awaited there the chance of seeing Mrs. Castlemain.

That lady, being full of other thoughts, had forgotten Varley, and was, as usual, taking her morning walk in this her favourite wood; and Varley had not acted Hamadryad long, when she came in sight, and passed very near him. The second time she passed still nearer, and Varley ventured to sigh.—Mrs. Castlemain started, looked round, but saw nothing, and passed on. When she was approaching again, Varley, by moving, moved the branches through which he looked, and the motion attracted Mrs. Castlemain’s notice, on which she looked steadily forward, and saw a *face* in the tree;—and whose could that face be? Instantly, the idea of Varley recurred to her; and turning round, regardless of her age and her

dignity, she ran towards the house with all possible speed;—while Varley exclaimed in transport,

“Just so the fleet Camilla scour’d the plain,  
Flew o’er the unbending corn, and skimm’d along the  
main!”

The Camilla in question, however, not being quite so young as formerly, did not find flying agree with her; and when she reached home, she began to doubt her own wisdom in having run so rapidly from what at last might be an imaginary danger. For was it certain that she *had* seen a man’s face,—and if she had, was it certainly Varley’s? However, she thought it better to ascertain the fact, by sending the gardener to search the lane; who soon returned, saying he had seen nothing; for Varley, being conscious that Mrs. Castlemain had acted Camilla merely in consequence of seeing a man’s face in the hedge, without at the same time suspecting that man was his charming self, wisely conjectured that she would, in her alarm, be likely to send some one to search for the intruder, and ask what he wanted; therefore he thought it wise to make a precipitate retreat.

“I shall certainly not tell Mr. Egerton and Emma of my alarm,” said Mrs. Castlemain to herself, “for they would only laugh.” While Varley, on his return to K——, took care to look very pensive and lovelorn, and to let every one know that he had been wandering near Roselands all the morning, and had seen Mrs. Castlemain; adding, with a sigh, “What a fine creature she is! O Heavens!”

The next day, Mrs. Castlemain had a great struggle with herself, whether she should take her usual walk or not; but ashamed of her own want of courage, she determined to conquer her fears, and walk through the wood, and cross a field to visit a poor neighbour. Varley, meanwhile, had stationed himself in his old place, having resolved, if Mrs. Castlemain saw him and was alarmed, to discover himself, and beg her pardon for having alarmed her; by which means, he should have an opportunity of speaking to her, and also



rendering her a service; for he had seen a furious bull in the field, and he did not know whether he had not better at once watch for Mrs. Castlemain, and accost her, in order to warn her against this identical bull.

Mrs. Castlemain, meanwhile, timidly but rapidly approached the spot where Varley stood, and again she saw a face; on which, as before, she turned about and fled. But Varley, according to his previous resolve, immediately jumped from the hedge and pursued the fleet Camilla, in order to assure her it was *only he* little suspecting that that *only he* was the only person of whom the flying lady was afraid. The faster she ran the rasher Varley pursued; till at length, unable to run any further, Mrs. Castlemain, nearly fainting, leaned against a tree, and Varley stood before her hat in hand, begging leave to assure her that it was he, and no evil-disposed person, whom she had beheld, and that he had followed her to assure her of her safety, and to warn her against a mad bull that was in the field.

Mrs. Castlemain only bowed and trembled, for she was conscious of being afraid of a mad something, but not of a mad bull; then, with faltering steps, she proceeded towards the house, Varley still following.

“Might I presume, madam,” said he, “to take advantage of this opportunity to present a little petition?” taking a paper from his pocket, from which also at the same time dropped a German flute——

“Bless me!” cried Mrs. Castlemain, starting, for she thought it a pistol. But Varley, taking it up, said, “It is only a flute, which sometimes

‘Discourses most eloquent music.’

But this paper, madam,” he added, bowing and presenting it. And Mrs. Castlemain, having heard he was poor and a poet, concluded it was a proposal to print his poems by subscription; and hoping to

get rid of him, she eagerly said, giving him a half-guinea which she had loose in her pocket,

“It is not necessary for me to read this paper,—but take this.”

The astonished and mortified Varley, who was merely presenting her with a copy of verses which he had written on her and Emma, comparing them to a full-blown rose and a rosebud, surveyed the money with a look which Mrs. Castlemain mistook for one of fierce indignation; and fearing she had offended him by the smallness of her donation, she immediately took out her purse, and putting it in his hand, was ready to exclaim like the old lady in the play,

“Take all I have, but spare my life.”

But she only said, “Take whatever you please,—you are quite welcome.” Then, seeing the gardener approaching, she walked rapidly forward; and before Varley, who was lost in amazement at the offered purse which she left in his hand, could recover himself, she had entered a conservatory communicating with the house, and having locked the door, sat down to recover herself.

“I have it! I have it!” at last exclaimed Varley. “She thought I was asking her to subscribe for the relief of some distressed object; and having a hand

“Open as day to melting charity,”

she gave me her *purse* to dispose of. But what could frighten her so? What caused her emotion? Certainly my approach fluttered her, and flutter they say is a sign of love;

“Deep confusion, rosy terror,  
Quite expressive paint her cheek!”

Oh! Varley, Varley! what a lucky dog art thou!” Then resolving to call the next day to return the purse and explain the mistake, he went home in the most happy of reveries.

Poor Mrs. Castlemain, meanwhile, had no such enviable sensations; and her companions discovered that something disturbed her, though what it was they were unable to conjecture. At about ten in the evening they heard the sound of a flute at a distance, which seemed to be drawing nearer and nearer, and as it did so they saw Mrs. Castlemain become much agitated.

“How finely the person, whoever he is, plays!” cried Emma; “let us open the window.”

“Open the window!” exclaimed Mrs. Castlemain. “Not for the world! And I will have every door and window closed and barred directly.”

“Dear grandmother! What danger can you apprehend?”

“No matter what; I will be obeyed, Miss Castlemain;” and immediately she ordered every window and door to be fastened.

“I suspect,” said Emma to Mr. Egerton, “my grandmother thinks it is Varley come to serenade her!” And Emma was little conscious how truly she spoke.

The flute meanwhile drew nearer; and had Mrs. Castlemain been a catholic, she would have crossed herself; while her visible alarm astonished her companions.

“Surely, madam, if it be a blunderbuss approaching, it comes in the sweetest shape possible, and I should like to see who carries it.”

“I beg, I *entreat*, you will not think of such a thing,” replied Mrs. Castlemain, and though reluctant to obey, Mr. Egerton’s respect insured his obedience.

The flute now came very near, and then the sound appeared to grow fainter and fainter, till at length it ceased. But when Mrs. Castlemain had retired for the night it was heard again; and Emma expressed an earnest wish that her grandmother had not forbidden her to peep at the musician.

“But I conclude that you recollect her prohibition, strange as it was, and will attend to it,” replied Mr. Egerton.

“Certainly,” returned Emma. “I am incapable of being so base as to do behind my grandmother’s back what I should not dare to do in her presence.” Then, listening to the flute as they went, which was now evidently under Mrs. Castlemain’s window, who slept in the front of the house, they retired to their apartments wondering at that lady’s emotion and commands, and suspecting that they were occasioned by some idle or well-grounded fear of her young admirer.

Varley, for it was he, having played

“How imperfect is expression,”

and other love ditties under Mrs. Castlemain’s window, for he had contrived to find out which was her room, retired, resolved to come again early in the morning, though not to approach the house; but he meant to awake his Juliet by his melting strains, and perhaps draw her to the window. Accordingly he came; and as he foresaw, he soon saw a curtain gently drawn aside and closed again. But as it was partly of clear muslin, he was sure that he could be seen through it; and immediately ceasing to play, he began to assume despairing looks, and apostrophize with much action the house that contained his beloved; while, as he paced the banks of a fine piece of water opposite Mrs. Castlemain’s window, he seemed as if he had a great mind to throw himself in, to the terror of that lady; who now being more than ever convinced that he was insane, was on the point of sending a servant to watch him, when Varley, feeling hungry, and having had no breakfast, thought he had exhibited love enough for one morning, and went quickly back towards the town.

Mrs. Castlemain now began to think seriously of consulting Mr. Egerton, and telling him of her alarm; but still the dread of ridicule prevailed, and she remained silent.

“I will certainly not walk in the woods and lane again,” said she to herself; accordingly she went on the other side of the house, and

taking a book with her, sat down, when tired, in a sort of summer-house at the end of a walk, surrounded by what had been a ha-ha, but was now filled with water.

But what can escape the prying eye of love? Varley, having breakfasted, and till the time for his visit to the wood had arrived, had gone round the premises, and had seen Mrs. Castlemain go up and down the walk in question, and then seat herself in the summer-house.

“What an opportunity,” thought he, “to return the purse, and have a conversation with her in that sweet spot! besides showing my grace and agility in jumping that watery barrier.”

Mrs. Castlemain was reading at this moment the “Victim of Magical Delusion,” and was pitying the poor man, who, like herself, was haunted by one particular person and face; when looking up she saw Varley, who had leaped over the water, standing before her; and instantly uttering a loud scream, she sprang forward, locked the door, and fell back almost insensible in her chair. The gardener was, however, luckily for her, and unluckily for poor Varley, very near at hand; and hearing his mistress scream, he came running, armed with his spade.

Varley, who stood trembling and abashed at sight of Mrs. Castlemain’s situation, had added to the strangeness of his white and green hat, and his pink pantaloons, a branch of May, which he thought would give him a pastoral and picturesque appearance, and had therefore gathered as he came along, and put on one side of his hat. It was no wonder, therefore, that the gardener should take him for a sort of mad Tom, (every village having occasionally its mad Tom or its crazy Betty,) and lifting up his spade, he desired Varley to go away, and not to frighten his mistress.

“I must speak to her, I must indeed,” cried Varley.

“Not you, indeed, poor crazy soul!”

“Crazy! I am not crazy.

‘When the wind’s southerly I know a hawk from a hernshaw,’”

said Varley. “Nay, let me speak to her.”

“There, there, go away! If you are not a little wrong in the head, more shame for you to go about such a figure, looking like a Miss Molly, and drest up in flowers. But whosoever you be, as you came over the water, back over it you shall go again; so off with you, my lad; you shall be ‘Charley over the water.’”

In vain did Varley entreat to be permitted to go out by some path. The man was resolute, and Varley was forced to attempt the jump; but not being on the vantage ground as he was before, he could not effect it, and he fell into the water, whence with great difficulty he contrived to scramble up on the other side. However, he did reach the land at last, but in such a condition that he was glad to hide himself all day in the adjoining wood, and not return to K——, till it was quite dark, lest the boys in the streets should hoot at him, as did the ploughmen who saw him run across the field, and pursued him with shouts and derision. The gardener, meanwhile, was quite vain of his exploit; and looking in at the summer-house window, assured his lady, who was only just recovering her senses, that the poor madman was gone, and she had nothing to fear.

“There!” thought Mrs. Castlemain; “even the servant sees the poor wretch is mad; and when we have left Roselands I will own all that has passed, and make Emma and Mr. Egerton ashamed of their obstinacy.”

That evening poor Varley stayed quietly at home, excessively chagrined at his morning’s expedition, and only consoled by the reflection that he had not his best coat on when he fell in the water.

The next morning he dressed himself in his best coat, waistcoat, and breeches, and a black hat; and, looking like other people, set out to put in execution a plan which he had now enabled himself to realize.

“Well, my alarms are now almost over,” said Mrs. Castlemain mentally that morning when she arose. “In another day we leave

K——, and it is only giving up one walk; and I will take a drive if I wish for air, and then I shall certainly be safe.” When, therefore, Emma and Mr. Egerton set out, as usual, for one of their long rambles, Mrs. Castlemain, instead of going out, sat down to read in her library. The servants had just brought in the luncheon, and Mrs. Castlemain was preparing to lay down her book, having ordered the carriage round, when one of the men came in and told her that a gentleman had called to inquire for Mr. Egerton; but that hearing he was not at home, he had requested to see her.

“To see me!” exclaimed Mrs. Castlemain, turning very pale. “What sort of looking man is he, John?”

“Oh, he is a queer-looking gentleman, madam; but it is not the poor man, certainly, that frightened you so much.” And Mrs. Castlemain had just desired he might be admitted, when, introduced by another servant, in walked the queer-looking gentleman in the shape of Varley himself; while John, not understanding his lady’s nods and winks for him to stay in the room, retired, shutting the door after him.

At first Varley only bowed; while Mrs. Castlemain, rendered respectful through fear, courtesied as much as he bowed. At length he stammered out an apology for having unintentionally alarmed her so often, and she begged him to make no apology. He then approached her, while she retreated to a door behind her, and, presenting a book to her, begged she would do him the honour of giving it to Mr. Egerton, he having sent to London for it, in order to show it to that gentleman; and as it was a very scarce work, he did not like to leave it in any hands but hers. He then, with a deep sigh, and a look of such love that Mrs. Castlemain could not mistake the expression, begged leave to return her purse, as he had had no other petition to prefer to her than one in the success of which his heart was much interested; namely, that she would deign to peruse a little poetical effusion, presenting the paper as he spoke, which he was unable to restrain. And Mrs. Castlemain took it, begging he would sit down, she herself still keeping near the

door, and exhibiting evident emotion, which the vain boy attributed to her consciousness of feelings of tenderness towards him which she was ashamed to indulge.

“What a fine piece of water is that in the park, madam!” said Varley; “and it looks so calm, so tranquillizing, that a man forced to endure ‘the proud one’s contumely,’ or ‘the pangs of despised love,’ might easily be tempted to plunge into its silver bosom, and forget his woes for ever.”

“*Begin* his woes for ever,” replied Mrs. Castlemain, “if he thinks properly of the crime of suicide, sir; and I am sure I should never look at that water again with any pleasure, if a fellow-creature were to drown himself there.” Then fancying Varley looked very wild, she got up, saying, “Perhaps you would like to take some refreshment, there it is, ready.” Then opening the door, she made a precipitate retreat into the next room, while the delighted Varley seated himself at the table.

As soon as Mrs. Castlemain escaped from the dreaded presence of Varley, she called the two footmen, and desired them not to lose sight of that gentleman, (who was the very man, though differently dressed, who had alarmed her before,) till they had seen him safe out of the grounds, and into the town of K——, or in the custody of some of his acquaintance, for she had reason to believe he was mad; and they were to take particular care that he did not go near the piece of water. The servants promised to obey her punctually; and Mrs. Castlemain, finding the coach at the door, jumped in, desiring the man to drive very fast.

Varley, meanwhile, was regaling himself much at his ease, on excellent cold pigeon-pie, flattering himself that Mrs. Castlemain was gone to read his verses. His pride too was gratified by the attendance of the two servants, who, seeing his very odd faces and gesticulations, when, laying down his knife and fork, he indulged in a tender reverie, and congratulated himself on his cleverness in having so well introduced himself at Roselands, kept looking at



each other very significantly, as much as to say, “Ay, poor man! I see my mistress was right!”

But Varley continued eating till he was ashamed to eat any longer. Then, beginning to wonder at Mrs. Castlemain’s long absence, which he vainly tried to flatter himself was owing to the sweet bashful reluctance she felt to re-enter the room after having perused his verses, he asked the servants if their lady was particularly engaged.

“My lady, sir! Why, she is gone out; that was she who drove away just now.”

“Zounds!” cried Varley, starting up with mortified dismay; then, with a theatrical air, exclaiming,

‘And must I leave thee, Paradise!’”

by which the servants thought he meant the pigeon-pie, he put on his hat and walked out of the house, not knowing exactly what to make of the behaviour of its mistress, but satisfied with the eclat, as he thought it, of being known to the honourable Mrs. Castlemain, of being in love with her, and of having dared to hint his passion to her in verse. Full of these thoughts, which made him sometimes jump, dance, and bound forward as he walked, he was not conscious that the two servants were behind him; and when he was, he certainly felt no small surprise. But having that happy vanity which was capable of converting every thing into a source of pride, he recollected that there were gates to open in the park, and that Mrs. Castlemain being a lady of the old school, she had, with old-fashioned politeness, ordered her servants to open the gates for him—and so they did—by that means confirming his suspicions. But nothing could exceed his astonishment, when, as he approached the beautiful piece of water above mentioned, and was dancing towards its brink to look at some swans, the two servants came up, one on either side of him, and told him he must walk along the path willingly, or they must make him.

“Make me! make me! A man like me be controlled by two impertinent footmen!” cried the indignant Varley.

“Why, look ye, sir,” said John; “it is a good thing for you to have two anybodies to take care of you; and as to your calling names, if it was not in consideration of your infirmities, why, we’d soon cure you of that fun.”

“My infirmities! rascals! I’ll go and complain to your mistress of your insolence.”

“Ay, do, and she will tell you that we only obeyed orders in not letting you go near the water.”

“Obeyed orders!” exclaimed Varley;

‘——Man, proud man,  
Dress’d in a little brief authority——’”

Then recollecting what he had said about drowning himself, and his gestures as if he meant to do it, he imputed this order to weak but alarmed tenderness, and, clasping his hands in an ecstasy, exclaimed—

“I see what Emma meant to say,  
My Varley, live for me.”

And he bounded along the path with such swiftness, that the servants, now more convinced than ever of his insanity, could hardly keep him in sight. But at this moment he met two gentlemen whom he knew, who each took him under the arm; and the servants seeing him thus, as they thought, in custody, and being now long out of the grounds of their mistress, returned to Roselands, satisfied that they had done all that was necessary.

When Mrs. Castlemain returned home, she questioned the servants relative to what had passed, and received from them an account completely corroborative of all her ideas relative to Varley.

“Well,” said Mrs. Castlemain to herself, “shall I, or shall I not, tell all that has passed to Mr. Egerton and Emma, and triumph in my

superior penetration? No, I dare not; for they will very likely still assert that this youth is not mad; and that I can't bear; for, if not mad, his pursuit of me is an insult not to be endured, and one which I have not deserved. Had I painted my face, and gone about half undressed, and without a cap, I might have been taken for a woman of intrigue, and a silly, vain boy might have dared to make love to me; but for a woman of my propriety of conduct and appearance to be the object of a pursuit like this!—No, no, 'tis impossible; I must, in self-defence, think the poor wretch insane. However, I will desire my servants not to mention what has passed to Mr. Egerton and Emma, and I will be equally silent myself." Accordingly, she only said when they returned, "Mr. Varley has been here, and left this book for you;" and, seeing an arch smile on the lip of him and Emma, she suddenly left the room to avoid further questions. The book was that evening returned, with a note of thanks to Varley from Mr. Egerton.

The next morning they set off for London, having given the town of K—— something to talk of for at least a week. One person reported that Mr. Egerton and Mrs. Castlemain were privately married; another, that they were going to town to be married; a third, that Mrs. Castlemain, having vainly tried to get Mr. Egerton for herself, because he was in love with Emma, and not willing his wealth should go out of her family, was going to sacrifice that beautiful young creature to that old fellow through avarice. Popkison said, he supposed the young Parson was going to get ordained. Mrs. Evans declared it made her heart ache to think that poor dear Mrs. Castlemain had so little regard for her reputation as to go about everywhere with that Mr. Egerton, especially as it was shrewdly suspected he had been the gallant of her daughter. But this she took care never to say in the hearing of Mr. Vincent.

"Now then," said Emma, "we are on the road to this boasted metropolis. But do you think, my dear sir, that I shall certainly admire the style of life and the society which I shall meet with there?"

“Not at first,” replied Mr. Egerton. “You will feel, even though conscious of wealth, and of the importance which wealth gives, like a drop in the ocean, or like an atom in creation, when you find yourself in the immense crowd of London, an unknown individual. You will probably wonder at first that there should be so many persons in the world whom you neither know nor are known by; and it will be so impossible for you to believe this almost mortifying truth, that, as you drive along the busy streets, you will fancy at every turn that you meet some one whom you have seen before; but in time you will form so many acquaintances, that this illusion of your fancy, or your self-love, will become a reality. Admirers, if not friends, will soon surround the carriage of Mrs. Castlemain’s heiress when it stops at a shop in Bond-street, and all the adulation which can attend on youth, wealth, and I will venture to add beauty, will in a very short time, my beloved girl, be yours! And——” Here Mr. Egerton paused; for Emma suddenly leaned her head on the table, and burst into a violent flood of tears; for she felt how contemptible, how valueless would be to her the admiration of the whole world, if unaccompanied by that of one being whom she might never behold again;

“——an atom to creation, yet of power  
To hide the whole creation from her.”

Mr. Egerton and Mrs. Castlemain both understood the cause of her tears, but delicately forbore to notice them; and at length Mr. Egerton continued thus: “But in the conversation of flattering men and flattering women you will not find that society of which I have so often boasted; and it will require a long residence in London to procure an entrance into it. It will soon be known that you must be an ornament to a ball-room, or any assembly which you will honour with your presence. But those whom good taste and a respect for talent lead to assemble at their houses persons of both sexes for the purposes of conversation, will not even suspect, perhaps, that a young and admired woman has similar tastes with themselves, and had rather listen in modest silence to the converse

of the intellectual and the learned, an unobserved, though not uninterested auditor, than shine the gazed at meteor of a ball-room, or form the centre of an admiring crowd in a fashionable assembly. But we will endeavour to teach them this, and then, I trust, my dear Emma will feel how just is my partiality to London society.”

“I wish it may be so,” said Emma; “but at any rate we shall have gained something; we shall no longer be forced to listen to dirty gossip, to stories of vice and folly, which often have no foundation; and as no one in this great world of London can know the private concerns of his neighbour, because in London there are no neighbours—and as Mr. D. cannot speak ill of Lady S. because he can’t be sure that he is not in company with some near relation of the lady’s, I am convinced that my good feelings will be more often called forth than my bad ones, during my residence in the great city; and I shall scarcely sleep to-night for joy at thinking, that in two days more we shall be in London.”

At this moment, as they turned up a hill, on which was a sort of seat made of turf, Mrs. Castlemain, looking out of the window, started back in great trepidation, declaring that there was the madman again, and more wild than ever, for he was using violent gesticulations, and even in the carriage she felt afraid of him.

“My dear madam, let me *assure* you,” cried Mr. Egerton, “he is *not* mad, poor youth!”

“I don’t like to be laughed at,” said Mrs. Castlemain.

“Nor would I presume to laugh at you; but it is very certain that this ton-studying, affected, poetical boy has set you up as an idol to worship, and I doubt not but he is standing there on purpose to catch a last glimpse of you.”

“Nonsense!” cried Mrs. Castlemain, throwing herself back in the carriage, drawing up the glass first; while Emma, laughing violently, was peeping at Varley through the front windows. The truth was, that he had taken this early walk, not only for the purpose, as Mr. Egerton suspected, of endeavouring to see Mrs.

Castlemain, in order that he might write a sonnet on the occasion, and paint to his companions at K—— the elegant woe he had experienced; but in the hope that he should be favoured with an invitation from Mr. Egerton to call on the family in London. Finding, however, that the coach was not even in sight when he got to the top of the hill, he thought he might as well amuse away the pangs of tender expectation, by rehearsing a speech which he was going to make at a debating society in London, whither he was soon to return; and thence arose the vehemence of gesticulation which Mrs. Castlemain beheld. When the coach drew near, Varley took off his hat; and while it passed him, he made a most obsequious bow, but vainly tried to behold the object of his passion. Greatly also was he discomfited by receiving only a cold bow from Mr. Egerton, instead of the expected invitation, while his countenance and affectation had an immediate effect on the risible muscles even of Mr. Egerton, which were so rarely acted upon; an effect which was not at all counteracted by a “Let me tell you, this is *mighty disagreeable*“ and “I am very glad we have left K——,” from the incensed Mrs. Castlemain.

They little suspected, nor even did Varley himself, the mortification that awaited him on his return to K——; a mortification infinitely greater than that of not having received an invitation to call on Mr. Egerton in town, nor even a gracious smile and bow of adieu from the divine widow, in return for his elegant verses.

Popkison was riding along the road to Roselands, at the very time when the servants of Mrs. Castlemain were following Varley; and from a hill commanding the park, he saw Varley’s approach to the water, and the singular conduct of the men in consequence of it. “This is very strange,” thought Popkison; and soon after seeing Varley running along the footway to the town, while the men turned back towards Roselands, he clapped spurs to his horse; and being of a very inquisitive, as well as malevolent and gossiping spirit, he rode after the men, and began questioning them relative

to what he had seen. Delighted to tell all they knew on the subject, and proud, not only of their valour in taking charge of a madman, but also of their spirited humanity in having dared to oppose him in order to save his life, they told him every thing he asked, calling Varley “the poor distracted creature!” thereby gratifying Popkison’s most favourite propensities so much, that he sincerely regretted that an indispensable engagement to dine in the country that day, prevented him from going back to K—— to tell this story, and raise a laugh at Varley’s expense. But this benevolent indulgence he was forced to put off till the evening of the ensuing day, when he knew he was to meet Varley at a rout; and he entered the room just as the poor young man was haranguing to a group of ladies and gentlemen, on the beauties or Roselands, and on the excellent pigeon-pie which Mrs. Castlemain’s cook made; having before informed the company, in order to give them an idea how intimate he was already become with the family, that he had seen them that morning also.

“So!” said Popkison with a malevolent grin, “Mrs. Castlemain gave you cold pie, did she? I wonder she did not give you cold pudding to settle your love, or rather your brain.”

“My brain, sir! Do you think that wants settling?”

“Not I; but no doubt Mrs. Castlemain does. So she sent her two servants home with you!”

“Home! No—only to open the gates for me.”

“But would not *one* have done as well?”

“Yes, but it would not have been so *respectful*; and persons of ancient families are always remarkable for carrying good breeding and ceremony even to a fault.”

“But where was the servants’ good breeding, I wonder, when they *insisted* on your not walking by the water’s side?”

“Amazing! How should you know that?” replied Varley, too much thrown off his guard to deny it.

“No matter how I know it,—is it not a fact?”

“Yes; but a fact of so delightful a nature, and originating from so charming a cause! Excuse me, but I cannot explain myself.”

“What’s all this nonsensical rhapsody, Varley?” replied Popkison, “I shall begin to think Mrs. Castlemain’s idea was right.” Then to the amusement of the company, but the shame and agony of poor Varley, he related all he had heard from the servants, and even mimicked Varley while eating and walking, as the servants themselves had mimicked him,—till the mortified and self-adoring Varley left the house in a rage. And not being able to bear the ridicule which he knew would continue to be his portion, he threw himself into a coach that very night, having told his friends he was summoned away on business; and having crossed the country to a friend’s house, about fifty miles from London, on the Windsor road, he stayed there one night, and proceeded to town on top of a stage-coach, the day our travellers arrived at most elegant apartments provided for them in the best part of Piccadilly.

But to return to them; at length, on the third day of their journey, the distant dome of St. Paul’s burst on their sight, and proclaimed their approach to the metropolis.

“Now then I shall soon see the good Orwells!” exclaimed Emma. “Oh! how glad I shall be to see *them*, how glad they will be to see *me*, the poor little babe whom——” Here a look from Mr. Egerton broke off her discourse; for the gloom that had during the whole day been evidently gathering on the brow of Mrs. Castlemain, now burst into a convulsive fit of sobbing, which both alarmed and affected her affectionate companions. Yes, they were approaching the metropolis, that place where her discarded daughter, with the lovely girl who sat beside her in her arms, was about to commit the crimes of self-murder and infanticide, in consequence of her unrelenting severity; and she was also about to behold, humbled and conscience-stricken to behold, the benevolent beings, the good Samaritans, who had poured oil and wine into the wounds which



she had made, and had proved more truly parents to her child than she herself had been!

“But you are spared to me, and I trust I have done my duty to *you*,” she at length articulated, catching Emma convulsively to her bosom.

“You have done your duty by us, and by the Orwells too, my dear madam,” said Mr. Egerton in a soothing tone of voice, “and would have done so by your daughter, but for the representations of a villain.”

“A villain!” echoed Emma, turning pale with painful emotion, for that villain she remembered was the man who gave her birth. “Alas!” thought Emma, whose mournful recollections ‘and blighted prospects in love’ had been, unknown to herself, dissipated for some hours by the consciousness of the favourable circumstances under which she was going to be introduced into fashionable life, and who was feeling the advantages attending on being young, handsome, accomplished, and an heiress,—”alas! how many, perhaps, are the drawbacks on the apparently most brilliant situation, could one but commune with the closely veiled heart! Who will suspect, while I am smiling amidst the glittering crowds of London, that I *know* my father to be a villain, and that I feel in the secret recess of my heart all the torments of a virtuous but hopeless passion?”

Mr. Egerton observed the reverie into which she had fallen, and, in order to put an end to it, directed her attention to the beauty of Highgate Hill and the surrounding country. And soon the everywhere increasing promises of an approaching London, the regularly built rows or houses stretching on every side, bearing the pompous names of Paradise-Row, Paragon-Place, Phoenix-Terrace, by awakening a new train of ideas in her mind, weakened the force of old and painful associations, and substituted in their stead a variety of new and pleasant ones.

At about three in the afternoon they arrived at their place of destination,—not without Emma’s having, as Mr. Egerton predicted, several times fallen into the error or fancying she saw persons whom she knew; while Mrs. Castlemain beheld, in the brilliant scene of wealth and business and existence around her, nothing but that London where her daughter had suffered, and where she had nearly died the death of the despairing. Her feelings therefore in consequence of this remembrance were indeed insupportable; and as soon as she alighted, she retired into her own apartment, unable even to bear to witness the delight of Emma at the novelty and splendour of every thing which she beheld from the windows.

“How much more interesting, my dear Emma, would this scene, pleasant as it is, become to you,” said Mr. Egerton, “if I could tell you the names of some of the gentlemen whom you see standing in groups near the windows, or lounging up and down the street! for among the throng are probably men of rank without name, and men of name without rank, generals and admirals, who have fought and bled for their country, and orators who have endeavoured to promote her interests in the senate. Perhaps at this moment some fashionable poet, whose works have delighted you, is passing under the window, or some distinguished pleader, whose eloquence, even in newspaper reports, has aroused your feelings in the cause of oppressed innocence.”

“How tantalizing,” cried Emma, “and how mortifying it is to think, that of so many well-known persons I know not one!”

At this moment a stage-coach passed; and seated on the top of it, though muffled up, as it were, Emma beheld and recognised Varley, who, with laudable economy, was contented to be an outside passenger to the great city, whither he was hastening to gain a livelihood by the exertion of his industry and talents. Immediately Emma, being thrown off her guard by the pleasure of seeing one face that she knew, exclaimed “It is Mr. Varley!” kissing her hand in even delighted recognition; while poor Varley,

mortified at being known in such a situation, and too angry with Mrs. Castlemain to wish to be recognised by any of her family, turned away his head without noticing her salute, in hopes by so doing she would imagine she had mistaken some one for him.

“It certainly *was* Varley,” said Mr. Egerton. “The foolish young man would not return the bow, because he is evidently ashamed of what he ought to be proud of, namely, the virtue of squaring his expenses to his circumstances.”

“He is certainly following my grandmother,” said Emma, laughing, “but I will not tell her of his arrival for fear of alarming her.”

At this moment they heard a violent crash and loud screams, and throwing up the window, they saw that owing to a hole in the street the coach had been overturned, and poor Varley precipitated from his elevated station into the kennel. The first impulse of Emma was to run out herself, and inquire if any mischief had been done. But Mr. Egerton prevented her; nor did he go himself, as he saw that the only inside passenger was taken out unhurt; and he soon beheld Varley on his feet, evidently suffering no inconvenience but that of being covered with mud.

“But surely, sir,” said Emma, “it would be only kind in you to ask Mr. Varley to come in and take a glass of wine after his fright!”

“No, my dear girl,” he replied. “I suspect, from Varley’s manner, that it would be very unkind; for his self-love would be more wounded by the conviction that we had witnessed his distress, than by our desire to comfort him under it; and I dare say the foolish boy is more mortified at the possibility of our having seen him on the top of a coach, and thence precipitated into the dirt, than he would have been had we seen him reeling home from a tavern in a state of inebriety. Such are the false estimates of good and evil appearance, which we all in our turns make.” They now saw a fat, vulgar, loosely and dirtily dressed woman run across the street, who going up to Varley with open arms, exclaimed with loud sobs

and many tears, “Oh! my dear Billy! my dear Billy! are you sure you are not hurt, my Billy! my poor dear child!”

It was Varley’s mother, who expecting his arrival, had gone out to meet him, and had seen the accident happen before she had reached near enough to ascertain the degree of damage that had ensued.

It was not in the nature of Emma or Mr. Egerton to experience any thing but respect and sympathy for the fears of a mother for the safety of a darling son, however ridiculously expressed; and at first even the populace respected her alarm. But knowing it to be groundless, and poor dear Billy wholly unhurt, they could not survey without excessive laughter, the endeavours of Mrs. Varley to clean her son; who, taking from her pocket a handkerchief begrimed with snuff, wiped the poor youth’s face with it so elaborately, that it was streaked from one end to the other; and the sight produced such excessive mirth in the spectators, that Varley, suspecting the Roseland family were witnesses to his mortification, broke from his poor mother’s grasp, and running down the street was out of sight in a twinkling; while he from that time cherished a spite against them, which he took the earliest opportunity of indulging.

It is curious to observe in the history of men, and even of kingdoms, how often the destiny and the most important event in the lives of both, are to be traced up to the most apparently trifling and insignificant of events.

While watching the motions of the discomfited beau, neither Emma nor Mr. Egerton was conscious of the effect which the appearance of the former had had on the gay crowd between them; but when Varley had disappeared, Emma blushed with confusion, at finding herself the object of universal attention, while many glasses were levelled at her, and some gentlemen absolutely stopped in order to gaze more at their ease at the new and beautiful face before them.

Emma instantly drew back, sorry to find her indiscretion had deprived her of the pleasure which she derived from watching the passers-by, as she saw several persons pass and re-pass evidently from the hope of seeing her again; for, whatever satisfaction her vanity might derive from this tribute to her charms, it was dearly purchased, she thought, by being forced to forego that of standing at the window. But after all this was a heartless enjoyment, and a mere gratification of the eyes and the curiosity. A dearer and a more respectable one awaited her the next day, as every feeling most near to her heart decided her to pay her first visit to the Orwells.

The next morning, when they assembled at the breakfast-table, Emma proposed going at eleven o'clock to call on the Orwells.

"You are in a great hurry, I think," said Mrs. Castlemain, starting, and in a tone of pique.

"Not in too great a hurry surely, madam," replied Mr. Egerton, "to see persons to whom we all owe so much!"

"Well, well," she returned with a deep sigh, "but you had better send them word that you are coming."

"They know it already; I never like what are called agreeable surprises; I think that by depriving persons of anticipations of pleasure, one robs them of more than half the pleasure itself; I therefore wrote to the Orwells last night to announce our visit to-day."

"I think you might have consulted me first," said Mrs. Castlemain, angrily; "but I suppose you will not insist on *my* going with you."

"Certainly not, though we shall regret your absence; but why, dear madam, should you not go?"

"Oh! because—because it will be for many reasons a painful visit to me."

"Then get it over."

“Besides, the Orwells don’t wish to see me.

“Not to see you! Not to see their benefactress!”

“*Their* benefactress! Oh, Mr. Egerton!”

“Yes, madam, their benefactress. My dear lady, why will you always dwell on your past and repented errors, and forget the virtues by which you have made such honourable atonement? The Orwells owe you *much*, and I am sure that they will be cruelly disappointed if you do not accompany us.”

“Do you think so?” said Mrs. Castlemain, in a gentler tone, soothed and encouraged by this speech; and on Emma’s tenderly approaching her, and begging her to go with them, she consented, and as soon as the carriage came to the door, they got in and drove to the house of Mr. Orwell.

It was in a small street in Kensington, and was pleasantly situated on the side of a wide field, while the back-windows commanded the well-cultivated country adjoining. This house, furniture and all, was the gift of Mrs. Castlemain, who accompanied it by a deed of settlement of a handsome annuity on Mr. and Mrs. Orwell for their joint lives, sufficiently large for them to give up half the produce of their business to their nephew, and enjoy the blessing of comparatively country air; while, as they grazed with ever-new delight on the comforts that surrounded them in their new habitation, their grateful and conscious hearts whispered, “All these are the reward of an act of kindness to a suffering and friendless fellow-creature!”

The Orwells, as soon as the church-clock struck eleven, began to count the moments which must still intervene before they beheld their anxiously-expected guests; while Mrs. Orwell endeavoured to beguile the time by calling the maid again and again to rub the mahogany tables,—being never satisfied with their brightness, so eager was she to show Mrs. Castlemain the care she took of the furniture which she had bestowed. Mr. Orwell, unable to sit still, walked up and down before the door; and Mrs. Orwell had stroked

down her bustling because clear-starched muslin apron, at least twenty times, as she heard the sound of an approaching carriage, before the expected party arrived.

“I wonder who the child is like, my dear,” said she, joining her husband in his walk.

“The child! You forget, old woman, that the child is now a young lady.”

“True, true; but I think I see her now as when—” Here affecting recollections made emotion break off her speech; and the old man, equally affected, spoke not, but pressed her arm, which was locked in his.

“I wonder whether she is like the drawings we have of her,” resumed Mrs. Orwell; and in spite of her knowledge that Emma was now indeed a woman grown, her idea of her could not get beyond those drawings, and she clothed the image of Emma in the childish form which they exhibited.

The expected visitants, meanwhile, were not without their agitations. Mr. Egerton was much affected by the sight of Mrs. Castlemain’s agitation; but in Emma’s he participated, for it was the flutter of joyful sensibility. She was to see the preservers of her and her mother’s life! and the tear that trembled in her eye, was one of grateful pleasure. At length they arrived at the little gate which opened into the small garden leading to the house in which Mrs. Orwell had intended to await her guests; but as soon as the coach was drawing up, overcome with trepidation, she hastened back into the parlour, and, scarcely knowing what she did, began to set the chairs and wipe down the table with her handkerchief. Meanwhile, Mr. Orwell stood bowing at the door. Mr. Egerton got out first, and seizing the old man’s hand, pronounced, “God bless you, sir!” with such earnestness of feeling, that he took from Mr. Orwell the power of replying.

Mrs. Castlemain then, leaning on Mr. Egerton, tottered into the house; and Emma bounded out after her; while Mr. Orwell

followed, raising his eyes in pious thankfulness for having been allowed to save the life of such a creature. Mrs. Orwell stood at the door of the parlour to courtesy if not to speak her welcome. But Mrs. Castlemain did not notice her; she rushed past her, and throwing herself on the sofa, hid her face with her hands.

“Shall I get the lady anything?” said Mrs. Orwell to Mr. Egerton.

“No; you had better take no notice of her,” he replied in a low voice; and Mrs. Orwell turned from Mrs. Castlemain to look at Emma.

“Bless me!” cried she, “is it possible? Can that fine young lady be—”

“It is the child whom—” replied Emma; she could say no more, but gracefully throwing herself into the extended arms of Mrs. Orwell, she sobbed out her thanks on her shoulder; and Mr. Egerton, seizing Mrs. Orwell’s hand, raised it to his lips as respectfully as he would have done that of an empress.

“But where is Mr. Orwell?” said Emma recovering herself; while the old man, wiping a tear from his eyes, came forward and affectionately saluted the wet and glowing cheek which Emma presented to him.

“This is a proud day for you both,” said Mr. Egerton, as he and Emma seated themselves on the offered chairs.

“Yes,” observed Emma, “it must give you great pleasure to see one who owes you so much.”

“But I am the person the most obliged,” cried Mrs. Castlemain uncovering her face, “and I—I cannot even articulate one thank.”

“Madam,” replied Mr. Orwell, “it is for us to thank you! Look round! all the comforts we enjoy are, you well know, the gift of your benevolence!”

“Say rather of my *gratitude*,” she resumed, “for obligations which I can never sufficiently repay. Let me,” she added, taking a hand



of both Mr. and Mrs. Orwell, “let me clasp in mine the hands of the preservers of—” and as she pressed their trembling hands, she bowed her head on them with the humility of a contrite spirit.

“You have a very pleasant house here,” said Mr. Egerton.

“Yes, indeed,” replied both at once; “and I am sure,” continued Mr. Orwell, “that coming to it has lengthened both our lives.”

“God be praised!” cried Mrs. Castlemain, smiling through her tears, and bowing to the gratified Orwells. Soon after, as she followed the eyes of Emma towards some drawings which decorated the room, she saw enough to convince her those drawings were by Agatha, and she again hid her face in her handkerchief.

“But why is there no drawing *here*?” said Emma, pointing to a vacant space over the chimney-piece. “If you have not one large enough for that place, I will give you one of mine.”

“I should rejoice to have it,” said Mrs. Orwell, “but——”

“My dear,” interrupted Mr. Orwell hastily, “*some other time*, not now, we will explain.”

Mrs. Castlemain at this moment raised her head; and seeing by the nails in the wall that a drawing or picture had once hung in that place, suspected the truth, and desired to know whether a picture or drawing had not for some particular reason been removed.

“Yes, madam,” replied Mr. Orwell, “one which we thought it might give you pain to see.”

“No matter,” rejoined Mrs. Castlemain with quickness, “I would rather you should inflict pain on me than not;”—and Mrs. Orwell brought in the drawing. It was a coloured drawing representing Mrs. Orwell with Emma pale and dying on her lap; while Agatha, on her knees beside her, was awaiting with clasped hands and a look of wild anguish the effect of the nutriment which Mrs. Orwell was going to convey into the infant’s mouth.

“It is *very* like her,” said Mr. Egerton with a quivering lip.

“It is like, indeed!” said Emma, gazing wistfully on the beloved face of her unhappy mother.

“It is not like my child as *I knew* her!” exclaimed Mrs. Castlemain wildly, and falling back on the sofa in an agony almost too great to bear.

“I would not be that poor lady for all the world!” thought Mrs. Orwell;—“my poor Mary died in my arms!—Sir, sir,” said Mrs. Orwell, affectionately pressing Mr. Egerton’s arm, “were not you the gentleman who were with——”

“We will talk of those things another time, my dear madam,” interrupted Mr. Egerton; then approaching Mrs. Castlemain, he asked her if she had not better return home; to which proposal she thankfully assented; and Mr. Egerton having put her into her carriage, and well knowing she would prefer solitude to company, desired the carriage to return for them as soon as it had set down Mrs. Castlemain.

“Now, my dear friends,” said Mr. Egerton, “I will tell you all you wish to know.” And Emma, as well as the Orwells, listened with eager interest to the description of Agatha’s last illness and death, and the journey Mr. Egerton took with his orphan charge; while ever and anon the deeply interested old couple interrupted him with exclamations of “Dear child! poor little girl!” then turning to gaze with pleasure almost amounting to rapture on the lovely and expressive face of the being whom they had been the means of preserving.

Almost daily did Emma and Mr. Egerton visit the Orwells; and Mrs. Castlemain too very often forced herself to call on them; but she was never easy in their presence, and was also conscious that, however gratefully they felt towards her as their benefactress, a chill came over their feelings when they thought of her as the unforgiving mother of Agatha; and at such times she could not help recollecting, that in Agatha’s narrative she had herself contrasted

with her own mother's conduct the benevolence of these strangers. But to the pleasure which Emma and Mr. Egerton derived from being with these good old people there was no drawback, and many a day did Emma spend with them alone; for she thought that they had a right to some hours of that existence which they had preserved; and the joy that sparkled in their countenance whenever she appeared, gave her more heartfelt satisfaction than the homage paid her by admiring crowds. They were more at ease with Emma than they had ever been with her mother; for she united to the dignity of Agatha a degree of graciousness and playfulness of manner wholly unknown to her; and never once were the Orwells reminded by Emma's manners, though they had often been by Agatha's, that there was any difference between them in rank and situation.

But the pleasure which Emma derived from visiting the Orwells was not wholly the result of a feeling of duty fulfilled. They had informed her that a very handsome young man had called on them a few months preceding her arrival in town, and had told them that he came to see them, from the respect their conduct to Mrs. Danvers and her child had excited in him; and that having stayed with them an hour or two, during which time he had informed them that he knew Mrs. and Miss Castlemain and Mr. Egerton, he had taken his leave without letting them know his name or place of abode. But Emma was at no loss to discover who this visitant to the Orwells was; and the consciousness that St. Aubyn, actuated no doubt by the interest he still felt in her, had been at that house, had sat in that apartment, and had conversed with the owners of it, gave a degree of charm in her eyes to them and to their residence, which other feelings, though very powerful, could not alone have bestowed.

Emma often recollected that Mr. Orwell had once been opulent, and had probably been no stranger to the luxuries which opulence bestows; she therefore could not rest till she had seen his old age in possession of most of the enjoyments which his youth had known.

“I wonder whether he ever kept a close carriage?” thought Emma; and she contrived to find out that he had not, but that for many years he had had a one-horse chair, in which he used to drive his mother. This intelligence, and her wishes in consequence of it, were immediately made known to Mr. Egerton, who joyfully undertook to purchase a low-built open chaise, and a steady horse to draw it; while Mrs. Castlemain and Mr. Egerton disputed which of them should defray the expenses attendant on this new appendage to the establishment of the old couple. But at length Mr. Egerton carried his point; and till Emma came of age, and had an allowance of her own, it was agreed that Mr. Egerton should be at all the charges incident to this gift.

“Dear me! see what a pretty little carriage has stopped at our door!” said Mrs. Orwell to her husband, when Emma, who had come to spend the day with them, was standing by her side at the window.

“A pretty carriage, indeed!” replied he; “I wonder whose it can be; for see, the servant who is in it is getting out, and coming hither. It must be a mistake, unless he brings some message to you, Miss Castlemain.”

“He has made no mistake,” cried Emma; “and I have to request that you, my dear sir, will drive me a little way on the road, that I may see how the horse goes.”

“I drive you, my dear!”

“Yes; you know you used to drive your mother, and I hope and trust that for many a day to come you will drive Mrs. Orwell in that chaise for my sake; for that chaise and horse are yours, if you will do us the honour of accepting them.”

The delighted old couple, well aware that in accepting this gift they should impart more pleasure than they received, gratefully acceded to her request, and Mr. Orwell had the pride and satisfaction of driving Emma through the beautiful environs of Kensington.

But though Emma derived unmixed satisfaction from her visits to the Orwells, they frequently beheld her with mingled pleasure and pain; for Mrs. Orwell, like all women, quick-sighted to the feelings of her sex, soon discovered that some secret disquiet preyed on the mind of Emma, and she suspected her young favourite was in love.

“And if she *were*,” said Mr. Orwell, petulantly, when Mrs. Orwell communicated her discovery to him,—”if she be in love, as she can’t love in vain, that I am sure of, her cares, if she has any, can’t proceed from that source.”

“But perhaps she loves some one whom her grandmother does not approve! for you remember that very handsome young man’s calling on us, to see us as the preservers of Miss Castlemain, and who knows but it may be her mother’s sad story over again?”

“God forbid!” ejaculated Mr. Orwell; and he resolved to watch Emma as attentively as his wife had done; nor was he slow to discover in her symptoms which alarmed him for her future peace, though they *both* thought that Emma’s spirits seemed to grow better from day to day.

Nor were they mistaken. Though Emma thought that she could love one alone, she was not insensible to the pleasure of being admired and addressed by sensible and respectable men, amongst whom Sir Charles Maynard had pleaded his suit, but pleaded in vain. And now, Mr. Egerton and Mrs. Castlemain having both renewed some of the acquaintance of their youth, she often associated at her grandmother’s table with persons of acknowledged talents and great conversational powers; and she had also been introduced into those parties which she and Mr. Egerton used to discuss under the name of conversationes. These parties were held at a house where she would infallibly have met Mrs. Felton, had not that lady been at variance with the mistress of it; nor did they resume their acquaintance till Emma left London.

On these evenings they used to arrive at the lady’s house at an early hour, and were introduced into a most elegant and tastefully

decorated apartment, containing a party sufficiently large to admit of its being formed into many groups, but not large enough to preclude the possibility of walking about with ease and comfort. Amongst the company were usually men and women of the highest rank in the country, but waiving all the distinctions of their rank and situation, and only desirous of recommending themselves by their own talents, or their graceful and respectful attention to the exhibited talents of others; for many of both sexes who held a distinguished place in the literature, the arts, or the sciences of the day, were mingled in this fashionable throng, and joining in that greatest of all delights, rational conversation. Emma, though her polite hostess frequently endeavoured to call her forth, was always contented to listen; but it was in silence so animated and intelligent, that once, as she timidly declined giving a decisive opinion on a subject which she was hearing discussed, an elderly gentleman, turning to his neighbour, observed that that young lady need not speak in order to charm, for that she reminded him of the lines of the poet with one word altered—

“Alike her speaking and her silence move,  
Whose voice is music, and whose looks are love.”

At the close of one of these evenings our heroine and her friends observed that the party had increased so much that the adjoining room was full of company, while they heard one voice, louder than the rest, speaking alone; and as the folding-doors which divided the rooms were at this moment thrown open, Mrs. Castlemain, with infinite amazement, beheld Varley, standing up in the middle of the room, speaking with great vociferation, and using gestures of the most violent description.

It was indeed Varley, exercising for the amusement of the company a talent, which, as I have before observed, he possessed in no mean degree, viz. that of spouting, or acting. He was not the mimic or copier of others; on the contrary, he gave his own conception of certain parts, both in comedy and tragedy, from which, with the

occasional aid of paint and dress, he was in the habit of acting detached scenes, in a very amusing and interesting manner. It had long been the first object of Varley's ambition to get introduced into fashionable circles; and to do that he would willingly have consented to play Punch, or grin through a horse-collar, had such accomplishments been deemed necessary to procure such an introduction. At this acme of his ambition he luckily was introduced to a gentleman of some rank, who was a *Pidcock* or a *Polito* in his way, and was famous for assembling at his house those rarities, or monsters, or wild-beasts, denominated remarkable persons, or persons possessed of curious and amusing talents. Dwarfs, giants, ventriloquists, Turks, parrots, monkeys, mimics, often formed the rare and entertaining menagerie of this gentleman when he opened his house to fashionable society; and having been told by his hair-dresser that a young man of his acquaintance in the war-office had great talents for spouting, the delighted Varley received an invitation to dine with this gentleman, who, finding he really had the talents imputed to him, invited him to a party; and thence he gained admission to the still more tonish house of the lady where Mrs. Castlemain saw him.

It was the first time of Varley's appearing there, when his evil genius led the family from Roselands thither also.

Such is the power of prepossession, that even seeing Varley at this house had not power to remove Mrs. Castlemain's impressions concerning him, and she said to a gentleman near her—"How shocking it is that no one has humanity enough to interrupt that poor young man, and lead him home!" Then seeing Mr. Egerton, she exclaimed, "There, Mr. Egerton! here is your boasted London society, indeed! How dreadfully cruel and unprincipled it is for persons to amuse themselves with the ravings of a madman!"

"Indeed," said Mr. Egerton, "Mr. Varley is only showing off as a sputter, and is now acting Benedict. Approach, and you will be convinced of it." And as Emma, who was already listening to him, smilingly beckoned her, Mrs. Castlemain leaning on Mr.

Egerton's arm timidly drew near. But as Varley's eye happened at this moment to turn towards Mrs. Castlemain, the consciousness that she had it in her power to tell a ridiculous story of her mistaking him for a madman, so completely overset him, that after fruitlessly endeavouring to recollect himself, and go on with his speech, he complained of illness occasioned by the intense heat of the room, and made a precipitate retreat before any one could stop him.

But when was excessive vanity unaccompanied by malignity? Varley, who was never happy except he was in all places the prominent person, was so provoked at the power which Mrs. Castlemain's appearance had on him, as it prevented his continuing to be that evening a centre of attraction, that he determined to be revenged; and whether she did or did not tell the story of his love, and its results, he was resolved to inflict mortification to the best of his power on her and Emma, in return for that which they had occasioned him that evening, and at K——. Accordingly, being at this time a writer in a fashionable newspaper, he inserted the following paragraph:—

“We hear from undoubted authority, that the Hon. Mrs. C——, grandmother to the beautiful Northern star that now glitters in our hemisphere, intends to obtain letters patent for this young lady to bear the arms and take the name of C——n, as she was not born in wedlock, and therefore could not otherwise be called by the ancient and noble name of C——n, though she will inherit some of the estates of that family; thus endeavouring to hide this terrible stain on the purity of the T——n family, by the spotless shield of that of C——n. This may be called *an escutcheon of pretence* indeed!”

This paragraph had all the power to wound the mother and daughter of Agatha which he expected it would have; for he had heard at K——, that Mrs. Castlemain's feelings were most painfully alive to any allusions to the illegitimacy of Emma, and he took a malignant pleasure in thus exercising the most dangerous of all powers, that of wounding anonymously. Deeply indeed was



Mrs. Castlemain distressed to see the fame of Agatha publicly injured, and her child declared illegitimate, without the power of vindicating her in any convincing or satisfactory manner; for the only evidence which they could at present adduce, even to their friends and relations, was the declaration of Agatha, that she was the lawful wife of Danvers, because he had led her to the altar *after* the death of his first wife, as was proved by the letter to him which she had found and preserved;—while Danvers on the contrary asserted in his letter to Mrs. Castlemain, that his first wife was *alive* when he married Agatha. And as no register had yet been found to contradict by its *date* the truth of the assertion, there was only too much reason to believe that Emma's claims to legitimacy would always remain disputable.

“This paragraph must have been written by some secret enemy,” said Mr. Egerton thoughtfully.

“But whom can we have offended?” demanded Emma. “I flattered myself that I had no enemy.”

“No enemy!” replied Mr. Egerton. “Then, my dear child, you must have thought you had no merit. But whoever wrote the paragraph in question, it is very certain that it calls upon us imperiously to endeavour once more to procure a copy of the registry of your mother's marriage. And I must advertise again, in all the papers, a considerable reward to whoever will procure one.”

“Advertise!” exclaimed Mrs. Castlemain, who had hitherto preserved a gloomy silence, “advertise, and we in London! I could not endure it, indeed I could not.”

“Well, then, let us leave London.” And Emma, disgusted and alarmed at this effusion of secret malice, consented joyfully to the proposal.

“But whither shall we go?” she added.

“What say you, ladies, to a trip to Paris?” replied Mr. Egerton; while Emma almost screamed for joy at the idea.

“I should like it excessively,” said Mrs. Castlemain,” as being out of England during the time we are advertising would be a most desirable circumstance indeed.”

“Then let us take the necessary steps immediately.” And in a few days everything was ready for their departure.

Thus did the paltry spite of a vain, malignant boy, the result of a wound to his self-love, disarrange the plans and disturb the quiet of these respectable individuals; and thus did a paragraph in a newspaper, lead them to a scene pregnant with the fate of their future lives, and fraught with events of the most serious and important nature.

This paragraph, however, stimulated afresh Mr. Egerton’s intention, to call on the minister of the parish where Agatha had been married; and at her earnest request, Mrs. Castlemain and Emma, as well as Mr. Orwell, accompanied him. They found, on inquiring for Mr. Jones, that he was still alive, and still minister of that parish; therefore they knew that they had met with the object of their search. He was also at home, and they were immediately conducted to him in that very room where the poor Agatha, nearly nineteen years since, had vainly opposed the representations of injured and helpless innocence to the successful machinations of a villain.

Mr. Egerton told the cause of their visit, and the subject of their inquiry, in as few words as possible; and Mr. Jones assured him, that he recollected the *poor lady’s* calling on him, and her evident derangement, perfectly. But on Mr. Egerton’s asking him, whether he had judged her to be insane from his own observation only, or from the previous suggestions of another, he owned, that he entered the room prepared to see a mad-woman, because his clerk, Cammell, had assured him she was notoriously so, and told him the cause of her madness.

“Then, sir, that Cammell was a villain; for the poor lady was in her perfect senses, though driven perhaps into the temporary

frenzy of passion by the consciousness of being the victim of treachery,—But where is this man, this Cammell?”

“Cammell! Cammell!” exclaimed Mrs. Castlemain, in an agitated manner, “What sort of man was he, sir! and how long had he been clerk of this parish?”

“For about nine years, I believe, madam; and he was a man marked with the small-pox, with small light eyes, and turned-up nose, and very red hair.”

“And whence did he come, sir?”

“From somewhere in the North,—Cumberland, I believe.”

“It is he! it is the same man!” cried Mrs. Castlemain, turning pale as death; “he left Cumberland about that time; and I was told, after he left my neighbourhood, and went to London, that he had often wished to be revenged on my poor child.”

“Revenge! for what, madam?” asked Mr. Egerton.

“Ask me not now!” she replied in agony the most overwhelming. “The miseries of my child are on my head, and I feel sinking under the load.”

“However,” observed Mr. Egerton, “we have gained much by finding that Cammel had a motive to join Mr. Danvers in his scheme against his unhappy wife. But where is this man? Let him be confronted with us.”

“That, sir, is impossible,” replied Mr. Jones in some confusion; “for he absconded about two years ago with all his family, and it is supposed he went abroad, having been detected in some very dishonest practices; therefore I really should have thought it very likely, if I had not been conscious the registry had never been from under my eye, that the poor lady’s accusation was just.”

“I am sorry he is gone off,” said Mr. Egerton; “though this evidence of the man’s villany gives still greater credibility to the fact we wish to establish. And now, sir, you shall hear what

happened to this injured lady, on the evening of the day on which *you* saw her, from the mouth of that benevolent being who succoured her in her distress; the good Samaritan who poured oil and wine into her wounds, while the priest passed by on the other side." So saying, he led Mrs. Castlemain into the room where they had left Emma and Mr. Orwell, and returned to Mr. Jones accompanied by the latter.

As soon as Mr. Orwell had told his tale, which clearly proved the sanity of Agatha,—as whatever might be called insanity in her vanished as soon as the power of the operating causes was removed,—Mr. Egerton desired to introduce to Mr. Jones the orphan of Agatha, whose claims to legitimacy it was now the first desire and purpose of Mrs. Castlemain and himself to prove. But before he did so, he gave him a short detail of Agatha's life, and the circumstances attending her death, in order to interest that gentleman as much as he could in the fate of her injured child, and induce him to do all in his power to aid their efforts to discover Cammell and bring him to justice.

"But allow me, sir," said Mr. Jones,"to make one remark;—I recollect perfectly, that the unhappy lady said to Cammell, who was certainly a most ill-looking man,'Where have I ever seen you before?' and she added words importing the consciousness of having seen his 'dark and gloomy face,' as she called it, without being able to recollect where; on which Cammell, saying half aside, 'Poor distracted creature!' declared he had never seen her before in his whole life."

"Well, sir,—and what then?"

"Why, sir, as Cammell must have been the clerk at the time of the lady's marriage, if she really was married; and as, according to your own statement, he must have even officiated as father to the lady, it is very strange that she should not have remembered *where* she had seen him; and I confess that this appears to me a strong proof that at this church, at least, the marriage between her and Mr. Danvers never took place."

“There is some plausibility in what you say, certainly, sir,” replied Mr. Egerton; “but you should make allowance for the perturbation of mind Mrs. Danvers was under while questioning Cammell, and also for that which she felt during the ceremony of her marriage; for she has declared to me, that she had not the slightest recollection of the clerk who gave her away, nor indeed was she sure that she even looked at him.—She added, that she had forgotten to ask how long this man, whose name she did not know, had been clerk of that parish; but she had a consciousness of having seen him before, when she conversed with him in this house; and, to use her own expression, that the recollection of him was ‘associated in her mind with the idea of pain endured long since.’ And how *correctly* she judged and felt on this subject, we have now her mother’s testimony to prove. However, sir, that a marriage *did* take place, we have Mr. Danver’s own evidence in a letter to Mrs. Castlemain, at which time *he* says he had a wife *living*. But this we could prove false, could we obtain a copy of the marriage register, as we have a letter to him proving his wife to have died some time previously.”

Well, sir, well,” returned Mr. Jones, this may be true as you say;” and Mr. Egerton, leaving the room, returned, leading in Emma.

As Mr. Egerton had conducted her, he gave her to understand that Mr. Jones was not very friendly to their cause, and was unwilling to give up the idea of her mother’s insanity. Emma, therefore was not disposed to regard that gentleman with much complacence; and she assumed on her entrance so much haughtiness of manner and expression, that her resemblance to Agatha was rendered thereby even more striking than usual. To her cold and dignified courtesy Mr. Jones returned a low bow; when venturing to look up in her face he exclaimed,

“I protest I never saw such a likeness! It seems as if her mother really stood before me! Only that this young lady’s complexion is more brilliant, and her cheeks and person are fuller.”

“No wonder, sir,” replied Emma, tears involuntarily filling her eyes, “for I have been the child of happiness and kindness; my poor mother was that of misery, and was the victim of the depravity of others.”

“The very voice too, as I live!” returned Mr. Jones.

“Well, sir,” said Mr. Egerton, “this is the injured orphan, in order to assert whose rights you see us prepared to bring the whole matter into a court of justice; and your evidence, though not as favourable as we could wish, we shall undoubtedly call for.”

“Such as it is, sir, and such as I can conscientiously make it, you may command it, sir.”

“It now only remains that we should examine the register,” said Mr. Egerton; and the book was produced. After a long and a most minute examination, even Mr. Jones himself declared, that it did seem as if a leaf might have been torn out much about the time when Agatha stated her marriage to have taken place; though, as he was *positive* the book was under his sole care, he did not see how it could have happened. And having to their own satisfaction established *this* fact, the party returned to London. On their way thither Mrs. Castlemain, with many compunctious feelings, explained the cause of Cammell’s inveteracy towards Agatha, and by that means made his compliance with the infamous proposal of Danvers the less to be wondered at.

On their return home a circumstance happened mortifying to the pride, though not painful to the affections, of Emma. A young nobleman, the eldest son of a peer, had been so charmed with Emma’s beauty and other attractions, that he had solicited his father to make proposals in his name to Mrs. Castlemain; and the earl, imagining Emma to be Mrs. Castlemain’s daughter, did what his son required.

Mrs. Castlemain, in her reply, referred the gentleman to Emma for his answer, declaring that she would never influence her in her determination on such subjects, though in the present instance

she earnestly desired that Emma might approve of the proposal as highly as she did; but that she thought it proper to inform his lordship that Miss Castlemain was not her daughter, but her granddaughter; her daughter's child by a marriage of which hitherto, and at present, there was no possibility of procuring proofs.

The answer to this letter she received on the day of her return from visiting Mr. Jones; and it added not a little to their wish of quitting England, as the earl politely, but coldly, declined for his son all further thoughts *at present* of a union with Miss Castlemain.

During the ride home Mrs. Castlemain remarked, that she thought it was not right for Mr. Egerton, who wished to conciliate, to call Mr. Orwell the good Samaritan, and insinuate that poor Mr. Jones was the priest.

"I agree with you," replied Mr. Egerton laughing; "and I can only say, that I was too much at that moment under the dominion of TEMPER, that domestic enemy against which I am so fond of guarding others; but I am not at all sure that good Mr. Jones had sense enough to make the application."

The next step they took was to prepare an advertisement for a copy of the registry of the marriage of Agatha Torrington and George Danvers, in case such a copy had been made, offering a very considerable reward.

A few days before their departure they went to the Haymarket Theatre, when just as the play was finishing, Emma heard a gentleman in the next place say, "What fine fellow now has Mrs. Felton caught in her chains? Who is that good-looking youth to whom she is talking?"

"It is a Mr. St. Aubyn," was the answer, "a North-country man, who has just entered into the dragoon guards." And Emma, following the direction of the speaker's eyes, as surprised and agitated she involuntarily turned round to look at him, beheld St. Aubyn, apparently gay and animated, listening with smiling attention to a tonish-looking woman, whose beauty she

unconsciously exaggerated to herself. In a moment the stage, the audience, every thing disappeared from her view, but St. Aubyn and Mrs. Felton. Still, however, in the midst of her emotion she felt that seeing St. Aubyn as she *now* saw him, seemingly absorbed by another woman, would be of great service to her heart on reflection; it was the idea that he loved her, spite of his neglect, which made his image so dangerous to her; could she but once be convinced he loved her no longer, and loved another, she was *sure* that time and absence would in the end entirely annihilate his power over her. But *absence* was, she thought, the *surest* remedy; and not seeing him at all, a better cure than even seeing him paying attention to Mrs. Felton. She therefore gladly acceded to Mrs. Castlemain's proposal to return home as soon as the play was finished, as she felt oppressed by the heat of the house.

"But surely," said Mr. Egerton to Emma, "you will stay to see the entertainment! You came on *purpose*, and Mrs. Castlemain has no objection to returning alone."

"Not in the least," she replied; "do, my dear Emma, stay;—Mr. Egerton will take care of you, and I will send the carriage back."

"Indeed I had rather, *much* rather, go home," said Emma deeply blushing.

"Are you unwell? Are you oppressed by the heat of the house?" And Emma, too great a votary of truth to violate it on any occasion, professed herself neither ill nor *warm*, but declared that she had rather go home with Mrs. Castlemain.

"'Tis very strange!" said Mr. Egerton;—when at this moment the same gentleman who had spoken before observed,

"See! see! Look at St. Aubyn! How attentive he seems! Egad, I believe the fair widow has him." On hearing this, Mr. Egerton himself turned round, and seeing St. Aubyn, no longer thought Emma's wish to leave the house an unaccountable one. But he took no notice to her of what he saw and thought; only he could not help gently pressing the cold hand which trembled in his.



“I will see for the carriage directly,” said he, “and do you remain in the box.”

While he was gone, lounging on the back seat of the box next her, Emma saw Varley; and actuated not only by the wish to be civil to him, but also by the desire of turning her attention from St. Aubyn and Mrs. Felton, she courtesied very kindly to him, and, leaning forward to speak to him, lamented that she came into the room too late at Mrs. C.’s to be gratified like others with his admirable recitations. At this tribute to his vanity from a quarter so unexpected, and from one too whom mortified vanity had led him to injure to the best of his mean ability, Varley’s conscience gave him some well-merited pangs; and scarcely could he with all his impudence reply to the benevolent and lovely girl who addressed him, little suspecting that he was the adder who had stung her and Mrs. Castlemain through the medium of a newspaper.

In a few moments Mr. Egerton returned, accompanied by Sir Charles Maynard, who assisted in seeing the ladies to their carriage, Varley crossing them on their way, in order to be noticed, in sight of some of his fellow clerks, by the beauty of the day.

“You are a lucky fellow, Varley,” said one of his companions to him, just as Sir Charles returned into the lobby, “to have such a bow and smile from that angelic being.”

“Do you think so?” cried Varley conceitedly, and pulling up his neckcloth, “she really is a fine creature, and I mean to patronize her.”

“Presuming coxcomb!” said Sir Charles, loud enough for Varley to hear, and giving him a look of fierce disdain; while Varley, pretending not to notice it, slunk away into the crowd and disappeared.

A day or two after, however, Sir C—— M——d was stated in a certain newspaper to have been one of the unsuccessful suitors to a certain Northern heiress. Had Varley been contented to let his revenge stop here, it would have been better for him; but when

the intended departure of Sir Charles and other men of fashion for France, was a few days after announced in some paper, he inserted another paragraph, which was as follows:—

“We hear that Sir C—— M——d, being disappointed in his matrimonial speculations, is glad to escape into a foreign land, from certain troublesome remembrancers, and is on the eve of his departure from England.”

The consequence of this was, that Sir Charles was arrested at Dover by an alarmed creditor, whose bill he was fortunately able to discharge immediately,—vowing as he did so, that as soon as he returned, which would be in a few months, he would leave no method untried to discover the author of so foul a libel.

The proprietor of the paper in which Varley wrote, was himself abroad, when this paragraph concerning Sir Charles was inserted, else it would have been rejected as libellous and unsafe; but the person who officiated for him, knowing Varley was a favourite writer of his employer, concluded what he sent must be admitted and approved, and therefore he either did not know or did not regard the risk. But when the proprietor himself returned, he was so justly incensed at the paragraph in question, and apprehensive of its consequences, that he paid Varley whatever he was in arrears to him, and dismissed him from all future employment, having first drawn from him a confession of his motives for this calumnious insertion; severely reproaching him for having meanly dared to make the power of anonymous attack with which he was vested, the engine of venting his own petty spite, and the means of gratifying the malignity of his offended vanity.

The sum of money thus earned, Varley, afraid he should never again have so large a sum in his possession at once, resolved to spend in a trip to Paris; and there I shall again introduce him to the notice of my readers.

It was well for Emma that they could leave England so soon, as she had ceased to drive along the streets with any security and

pleasure. She fancied every gentleman she met was St. Aubyn, and cast a timid inquiring glance round every company she entered, dreading to behold him accompanying her fascinating rival. But at length they set off for France; and when Emma landed at Calais, “thank Heaven!” she mentally ejaculated, “now the sea rolls between me and them!”

I am well convinced that no two persons can receive exactly the same impressions from any one object or scene, but that, however like the impressions might be in the aggregate, they would be different in detail; therefore there would be something of variety, and consequently of interest, in the account given by each passenger in the same boat of his voyage even from Dover to Calais. Still I shall not fatigue my readers with a relation of what my heroine and her companions saw, thought, or felt, during their passage to France, or on their landing on the Calais Pier. But no sooner were they arrived at their hotel, namely that kept by Grandsire, the one formerly the residence of the Duchess of Kingston, than Mrs. Castlemain became alarmingly ill, and Emma and Mr. Egerton endured an increased degree of anxiety on her account, from their very natural want of confidence in a foreign medical attendant; but luckily for them, Mr. Egerton learnt on the second day of her illness, that an English physician in the suite of an English nobleman had just landed.

Immediately, though a stranger to both gentlemen, he waited on them at their inn, to request the physician’s attendance on the invalid,—a request instantly granted; and he had the satisfaction of hearing that three or four days of rest, with the aid of medicine, would remove every unfavourable symptom, and enable them, without any fear of a relapse, to proceed on their journey. Accordingly, after having passed a week at Calais, they set off in their own open barouche, drawn by four horses, with the footman and the lady’s maid on the dicky.

The ladies, who had never been out of England, were surprised, as well they might, at seeing the horses fastened together and to the

carriage by ropes; and as one never values health sufficiently till one is attacked by sickness, so our travellers, for the first time in their lives, felt the value and the elegance of an English equipage.

“Yet, as far as it can affect national happiness, of what consequence is it,” said Mr. Egerton, “whether the harness and the other accoutrements be of leather or rope—if the French be as well contented with the one as the other?”

“No,” replied Emma; “nor does it signify that the boasted view from the Calais ramparts commands in reality nothing but a miserable barren flat, and the uninteresting meanderings of the treeless road into Flanders, if all the inhabitants, as no doubt they do, like that good old gentleman in the steeple-crowned hat, can point it out to strangers with, ‘*Mais voyez donc! quelle vue superbe! Mais, mon Dieu! c’est magnifique!*’”

Nothing either of event or of interest worth narrating, happened on the road till they approached Chantilly; when the increasing beauty of the country, the distant view of the palace and its celebrated stables, awakened their as yet dormant feelings into life.

“Alas!” said Mr. Egerton, “*I saw that fine building in its splendour! However, I will see it in its *décadence*, were it only to impress on my mind the frail tenure of earthly greatness.*”

But as Chantilly has been frequently described by travellers, and is likely to call forth the same feelings in every one, I shall pass by in silence our travellers’ visit to the palace and the environs, and content myself with giving the following lines, written no doubt in the days of its magnificence, which Mr. Egerton desired Emma to copy and preserve, as one of the instances in which the double meaning of a word is the same in both languages.

The following lines are written either on a wall or window of an inn at Chantilly:

“Beaux lieux, où de plaisirs Condé fixa la source,  
A ne vous point quitter l’on feroit son bonheur,  
Si vous n’étiez à notre bourse  
Plus CHERS encore qu’à notre cœur.”<sup>[1]</sup>

When they were about twenty miles from Paris, they were passed by a curricule and four driven by a gentleman, another gentleman sitting beside him. The one who drove looked earnestly at Emma as he passed, and turned back several times to repeat his gaze (evidently one of admiration) till they were out of sight; and when they had proceeded about two miles further, they saw the same equipage standing in the road, having evidently been just overturned, while the gentlemen belonging to it and the servants were employed in arranging whatever had been discomposed by the accident. The truth was, that the gentleman who drove had been so absorbed in admiration of Emma, that he had been unconscious of the horses’ increasing speed till it was too late to stop them, and in trying to turn them short on one side, the vehicle had upset. The gentlemen, however, were both unhurt; and the poor youth, who had thus been put in peril of life by the power of beauty, was resolved to repay himself by another look at the beauty that had endangered him, and he still found something to do to the carriage, long after his companion had assured him that every thing was properly adjusted.

“I hope, gentlemen,” said Mr. Egerton, in very good French, “that you have sustained no injury?” To which the gentleman who drove, with a bow and a blush, and a look at Emma, answered “No,” in the same language.

“At least, not such an injury as the gentleman apprehends,” observed his companion in English, (concluding Mr. Egerton was a Frenchman,) and laughing archly as he spoke. While Mr. Egerton, who found by this speech, which he perfectly understood, that the gentlemen were English, smiled involuntarily; but not choosing to expose Emma any longer to an intensity of admiring observation,

which, though respectful, evidently distressed her, and displeased Mrs. Castlemain, he, with a bow, and an expression of pleasure at their safety, desired the postilions to proceed. But the curricle again overtook, and passed them, and its driver had another opportunity of looking at Emma, while he made a distant bow of recognition to the party.

At length, our travellers were approaching Paris; and if Chantilly had awakened strong emotion in their hearts, what must they have felt on entering that great city, that Paris, whose decrees had for years influenced three quarters of the globe, and whose inhabitants had, by turns, excited the pity, the horror, the detestation, and some few the admiration, of the world!

“I saw the church of St. Denys in its pride,” said Mr. Egerton, as they entered that fauxbourg, “when the royal and the mighty dead slept undisturbed within its walls, and rapacious avarice had not thence removed the costly offerings of piety and superstition!”

“But is there nothing worth seeing there still?” asked Emma.

“No; I am told not,” replied he. “However, some pious hands have conveyed to a place of safety many of the statues, the mausoleums, and perhaps the bones of those who here were ‘quietly inurned,’ and I expect to feel great interest and pleasure in beholding the former once more in, I trust, their last home; together with many other things of the same description, gathered from distant provinces, and all arranged under one point of view at Paris.”

“Ay, but how much,” observed Mrs. Castlemain, “must they not lose of their interest by being no longer seen in the spot where they were first placed!”

“True, madam, much of local and associated interest; still they have an interest appertaining to themselves, of which no change of situation can deprive them. Architectural beauty and propriety, and powers of sculpture, must exist, to charm and to instruct, whether in the church of St. Denys, or in the Petite Augustins at Paris; and I shall certainly not scorn the pleasure of looking at them where

they now are, because I have once seen them to better advantage. On that principle, we might despise the gratification of seeing the Apollo of Belvidere, because Paris is not Florence, where he was originally situated, and, as I hear, in a better point of view. But to go from inanimate to animated beauty,—What did you think, ladies, of the young Jebu who passed us just now?”

“I think,” said Mrs. Castlemain, “that he is almost the handsomest man I ever saw; I wonder who he is.—But what say you, Emma?”

“That he is certainly very handsome.”

“Well, I dare say,” replied Mr. Egerton, “we shall see him again; and in the meanwhile I shall fancy him somebody of great consequence.”

They were now entering Paris, and Mr. Egerton was amused by the surprise which Emma expressed at seeing melons piled up against the walls, and lying one on the other in baskets in large heaps, like turnips in Covent-garden market.

“Well,” exclaimed Emma; “What a superiority over England this circumstance proves them to possess! Melons, a luxury only served up in our country at the tables of the rich, are here, you see, a mere common fruit, like apples with us.”

“Yes,” replied Mr. Egerton, laughing; “and perhaps you may find out occasionally, that carpets and clean floors, which are every-day necessaries with us, are luxuries here.”

They took up their abode at the Hotel des Etrangers, Rue de la Concorde, the best and widest street in Paris, and particularly interesting from its being so near, not only the finest objects in the city, but the scenes most pregnant with impressive associations. At one end of it, was the place where the perpetual guillotine stood; at the other, was the church of La Madeleine, where so many victims of revolutionary fury were buried; and the stones of that street, now so peaceable and so smiling, had lately reverberated from

the heavy steps of a ferocious multitude, and, almost without a metaphor, had been dyed with rivers of blood.

The next day, for Mrs. Castlemain was too tired to venture out the evening of their arrival, was impatiently hailed by Emma; and as soon as she saw Mr. Egerton, "To the Louvre!" cried Emma; "I cannot rest till I have seen the Gallery." And Mr. Egerton, breaking from the mournful reverie into which he had fallen, led the way thither. It lay across the Place de la Concorde, and through the garden and palace of the Thuilleries. But while Emma and Mrs. Castlemain, struck with the uncommon beauty and grandeur of the surrounding objects, stopped on the above-mentioned place to gaze with delight around them, Mr. Egerton, with an exclamation of horror, darted down the passage which led into the gardens, and awaited them at the entrance.

"My dear sir, what impelled you to leave us in that abrupt manner!" cried Emma: "Why were you in such a hurry to quit the sweetest spot of the kind that my eyes ever beheld?"

"Because a friend, a venerable abbé whom I dearly loved, was butchered on that spot; because, Emma, the guillotine was erected in the midst of that smiling plain!"

"Is it possible?" exclaimed his auditors.

"I fear," added Emma, "that I shall never think it beautiful again." Yet the next moment she wished to go back again to see the very spot where the guillotine stood; but the Palace of the Thuilleries now caught her eye, and by calling forth other feelings urged her forward on her way.

Emma could not help stopping in the hall of the Palace, as certain recollections came across her mind; and going up to a soldier on guard there, she said in French, "And was it on those stairs that the poor Swiss were massacred?" The soldier, colouring deeply, replied, "Mais oui, mademoiselle:" while Mr. Egerton seizing Emma's arm, all the terrors of the revolutionary government recurring to his mind, hurried into the Place du Carrousel, saying,



“For the future be more guarded. Why could you not have said killed, instead of massacred?”

“Because my pity got the better of every other consideration.”

“But had your pity been so powerful in those days, when there was neither pity nor justice, that small mistake of yours might have sent us all three to the guillotine.”

But all unpleasant remembrances of the past, or fears for the future, were absorbed in delight when they entered the saloon of the Louvre, and beheld in one room the scattered glories of the first painters whom the world ever saw. Yet great as was the pleasure which this first room afforded them, where the pictures were not only fine, but seen in a fine light, amongst which the St. Peter Martyr of Titian shone conspicuous, their sensations on entering the long gallery adjoining were of a still higher nature. There was a vastness, a magnificence in the idea of the whole space before them being crowded with chef d’œuvres of art, that filled and elevated the mind in a manner too vast for utterance; and choked with the emotions that overwhelmed them, they paused at the entrance as if too much overawed to proceed. But recovering themselves they slowly walked up the room, unable at first to fix on any one picture as an object of admiration; and they went to the top of the Gallery and back again without stopping before any one in particular. At length, however, Mr. Egerton was fixed by the St. Jerome of Dominico, Mrs. Castlemain was gazing on the Three Crosses by Rubens, and Emma was contemplating with admiring interest the Deluge by Poussin, when it was loudly rumoured that the First Consul was going in state to the Conservative Senate, and would very soon be on the Place du Carrousel.

“That I could but see him and the procession!” exclaimed Emma, eager to forsake a picture for a reality; and running up to Mr. Egerton, “Could we not see him from these windows?” she added, running to the window near her; when one of the guardians of the Gallery, hearing her name Buonaparte, and suspecting her wishes from the expression of her countenance, told her if she

would follow him he would lead her to a window whence she could see the sight to the greatest advantage; and immediately Emma, followed by Mrs. Castlemain and Mr. Egerton, eagerly kept up with the rapid pace of her guide. He led them to the very extremity of the Gallery, which joined the Palace of the Thuilleries, and introduced them into an unfurnished apartment, full of lumber and of unframed pictures, where they found sitting in the window two French ladies and a gentleman engaged in earnest conversation. The women immediately, with French politeness, made room for the stranger ladies, and the gentleman also rose to offer his seat to Mr. Egerton; and when he turned round, our travellers, though with less delight pictured in their countenances than beamed on his at the meeting, recognised in him the driver of the curricule who had been so endangered by looking at Emma.

“Countryman and countrywomen of mine, I presume!” said the young man; “and indeed I earnestly hope so for the honour of England,” he added, looking at Emma, while Mr. Egerton, smiling, replied in the affirmative, and hoped he had experienced no ill effects from his accident.

They were now, all, except the young stranger who insisted on Mr. Egerton’s taking his seat, most commodiously placed for beholding the whole sight from the windows; but one of the ladies assuring them that it would be some time before the First Consul entered his carriage, she earnestly requested the gentleman, whom she called “*mon cher Balfour*,” to go on with the subject of their dispute. “But, perhaps,” said she to our travellers, “as it is connected with a story of a countryman of yours, it may be interesting to you to hear it; so suppose you tell the whole story over again, Balfour?” And Balfour declaring he was never tired of telling a story so much to the honour of any one as he thought it to be, smiling archly at the lady who spoke, said, with the English ladies’ permission, he would relate what had occasioned a disagreement between him and the French ladies present.

“There are several English and Irish officers here; amongst the latter of whom is a man of brutal manners, who used very improper language to a young lieutenant, a great favourite with the ladies present.”

“O mon Dieu, oui!” exclaimed one of them; “Il est fait à peindre,<sup>[2]</sup> c’est grand dommage qu’il soit poltron!”

“But is he so?”

“That is the point in dispute between us,” returned his animated historian. “From you, ladies, and you, sir, he added, bowing to Mr. Egerton, “I hope a milder verdict. But to proceed;—the young lieutenant replied with temper, yet with proper severity, and the consequence was a challenge from the other, which to the astonishment of his brother officers, he refused to accept; and he even declared, on their telling him that they expected him to fight, that duelling was against his principles, and fight he would not.”

“How I honour him!” cried Mrs. Castlemain.

“But the consequence, sir?” eagerly demanded Emma.

“The officers, who had a sincere regard for him, earnestly entreated him to behave as officers on such occasions were expected to behave, telling him that they did not think his reasons sufficient as a military man for declining to fight.

“‘But,’ replied he, ‘before I became a soldier, I was a man, a son, and a responsible being; and, as all these, I deem myself forbidden to fight a duel. As a man, and a member of society, I think it right to bear my testimony against a custom worthy only of savage nations; as a son, I think it my duty not to risk a life which is of the greatest consequence to a fond and widowed parent; and as a responsible being, I dare not, in express defiance of the will of my Creator, attack in cold blood the life of a fellow-creature.’”

“Well said!” cried Mr. Egerton.

“Ah!” cried one of the ladies, sarcastically looking at Mr. Egerton’s coat, “apparemment Monsieur est prêtre!”<sup>[3]</sup>

But, without answering her, he begged to know of the stranger whether he was present at this conference.

“I was,” he replied; “and perhaps, being hasty and rash in my judgments, I should not have judged more candidly than the officers, had the lieutenant been an every-day-looking man; but his look, his voice, his air, his manner are so full of truth and manliness, as at once to carry conviction to the heart that cowardice is unknown to him; and I could swear that, in his refusal to fight, principle, and principle alone, was his motive of action.”

“Ah! le pauvre petit crédule!”<sup>[4]</sup> exclaimed one of the ladies affectedly.

“I believe we are as credulous as you, sir,” said Emma with a smile that well repaid him for his candour, “but again I ask what was the result to this interesting being.”

“Sorry am I to say,” he replied, “that the officers of the lieutenant’s own regiment, amongst whom was his colonel, who is, I believe, jealous of him, told him he must either fight, or they must abjure his society, and insist on his leaving their regiment when they returned to England. He still however persisted in his refusal, and met the threatened consequences with the manly firmness which might be expected from him.”

“Poor young man!” said Emma.

“Poor! Rich rather,” cried Mrs. Castlemain, “rich in the best of all fortitude, that of being able to act up to his principles, unawed by the fear of shame!”

“True, madam,” said Mr. Egerton; “and believe me, I honour you, sir,” addressing Balfour, “for daring to defend this young hero (hero in my sense of the word) against these fair accusers.”

“But where is this gentleman, sir?” said Emma.

“I am told that he is gone into Poitou, madam.”

“What led him thither?”

“Kindness and pity. An emigrant friend of his in London is so anxious concerning his father,—who is or was living in that part of France, and whom he has not heard of for some time,—that he got his address, and is gone in search of him.”

“I am afraid,” said Mrs. Castlemain to the ladies, “that you think our opinion on this subject very outré.”

“O! poor cela non,” one of them replied; “but I wish cet exquis St. Aubyn had not entertained the same.”

“St. Aubyn!” exclaimed Mrs. Castlemain. “What St. Aubyn? pronouncing the name in English, and addressing herself to Balfour.

“A Mr. Henry St. Aubyn,” he replied, “who has but lately entered the army, to oblige his uncle, a Mr. Har—Har—”

“Hargrave, perhaps.”

“The same.”

“‘Tis he! ‘tis he himself then!” exclaimed Mr. Egerton, “our own St. Aubyn!”—while Emma leaned forward and looked out of the window to hide her emotion—“Just what I should have expected from him! consistent! manly! pious!”

“Do you then know him, sir?” asked Balfour, glancing a look of suspicion towards Emma; when at this moment, luckily for her, “Le voila! le voila!” exclaimed both ladies at once; but before he could be distinguished, the First Consul was in his carriage, and the procession began.

But neither the different corps of Mamelucs, their sabres glittering in the sun, nor the eight bays harnessed to the Consul’s carriage, nor the splendid consular guard bringing up the rear, could draw Emma’s attention from the narration which she had just heard! St. Aubyn in France! St. Aubyn disgraced, though more deserving of

honour than before! St. Aubyn gone on a mission of benevolence into a remote part of the country! St Aubyn lost to her, probably for ever; though why, alas! she knew not;—but at least he was not with Mrs. Felton, and on that idea she could dwell, and dwell with pleasure. Mr. Egerton, meanwhile, was informing Balfour of his long intimacy with St. Aubyn, and lamenting that some circumstances which he did not think necessary to mention had interrupted their intercourse for the last two years; and Balfour immediately suspected that this circumstance was either unrequited love for Emma on the part of St. Aubyn, or parental disapprobation perhaps of a mutual attachment between the parties; and he felt his latter suspicions confirmed by his having observed the anxious look of inquiring affection which Mrs. Castlemain turned on Emma when St. Aubyn's name was mentioned, and her evident emotion.

Soon after, the sight being over, Emma rose, wishing to return to the Gallery; and as she did so, she gave the defender of St. Aubyn so kind and fascinating a smile, that he earnestly hoped St. Aubyn had never been her favoured lover; and he was eagerly anticipating a hope that Mr. Egerton, whose name and that of the ladies he had yet to learn, would express a wish of being better known to him, when he was summoned out of the Gallery to speak to a messenger from his father; and before he returned, Emma having complained of indisposition, and Mrs. Castlemain of fatigue, Mr. Egerton had called a fiacre, and they had returned to their hotel. Mr. Egerton however, more fortunate than he had been, had learnt his name and rank from a gentleman in the Gallery, and found that he was the Honourable George Frederic Balfour, only son of lord Clonawley, an Irish viscount then at Bareges for the recovery of his health;—he also learnt that the son had some thousands a year, independent of his father, left him by his grandfather. The whole of this information gave great satisfaction to Mrs. Castlemain, who saw Balfour's evident admiration of Emma, and wished for nothing more than to see her addressed by a man worthy to obtain her, in order to give her a chance of forgetting the ever admirable

and still too dear St. Aubyn; while she rejoiced to find that her illness, by delaying their arrival at Paris, had prevented their meeting St. Aubyn there.

Perhaps Mr. Egerton ought to have wished as she did relative to this new acquaintance,—but he could not; the idea of seeing Emma the wife of any other man than his beloved pupil was agony to him; and though he was much prejudiced in favour of Balfour because he did justice to St. Aubyn, the prospect of his becoming the avowed admirer of Emma almost called forth, even in his subdued feelings, a sensation of aversion towards him, and he was inclined to retard an acquaintance which he clearly saw that he could not prevent. Accordingly, when, on finding that a lady to whom they had brought letters was gone to the valley of Montmorenci, a favourite spot some miles from Paris, Emma proposed that they should go thither in pursuit of her, he eagerly acceded to the proposal, and to Montmorenci they went, leaving Paris as yet unseen, in compliance with the wishes of the restless, because secretly unhappy, Emma.

In the castle of Montmorenci then resided two or three families, who had separate apartments, but met at dinner at a common table.

As soon as they arrived, they made themselves known to the lady for whom they had letters; but finding her an insipid, uninteresting woman, they would not have remained in the valley for the sake of her society, had not the ease and cheerfulness of the way of living there, and its vicinity to interesting objects, induced them to stay and take apartments for a fortnight; especially as Mrs. Castlemain fancied herself much better for the air.

The second day after their arrival, Emma was seated at dinner between two Miss Balfours, West Indians, who, with a little sister and a governess, were awaiting their father from Bareges and their brother from Paris. Emma immediately concluded that this brother was the young man whom she had seen at the Louvre; and she took occasion to say to Miss Balfour,

“I believe I saw your brother, Mr. Balfour, two days ago at the Louvre Gallery.”

“Oh, very likely. Frederic is an extremely handsome young man, very tall, and rather thin.”

“Yes; that describes him.”

“Oh! dear Mary Ann,” cried Miss Harriet Balfour, “I dare say Miss Castlemain is the young lady whom my brother mentions in his letter, in such raptures, and whom he is seeking all over Paris!”

“Very likely,” said Miss Balfour turning to look at Emma with a critical stare, which ended in a look of disappointment; after which she said, “you have great reason I am sure to be proud, Miss Castlemain; for Frederic, who is, I assure you, very difficult to please, and is a great judge of beauty, thinks you the most beautiful creature he ever saw.”

“Then I am tempted to believe,” replied Emma blushing indignantly at this gross speech, “that it was not your brother whom I met; as I could not be very proud of the commendation of the gentleman I mean, since his extreme youth makes it impossible for his experience to give much value to his praise.”

“Young! Why, Frederic is near four-and-twenty; and I assure you he knows every thing. Why, he is such a critic in dress, as well as in beauty, poetry, painting, and music, that neither Harriet nor I dare wear even a riband that he disapproves.”

“But deciding on every thing, and knowing every thing, are very distinct things; and I suspect that if I were Mr. Balfour’s sister I should choose ribands for myself.”

“No, you would not,” said Harriet; “for you would love Frederic so much that you would have a pleasure in doing every thing he bids you.”

“That,” cried Emma, taking her hand with kindness, “is the best proof of your brother’s worth that has been given yet, and shows that he has merit beyond all the connoisseurship in the world.”



“Poor Frederic!” exclaimed Miss Balfour, “there is he roaming about Paris to find a bird that is safe in his own nest at Montmorenci! I declare I must write and tell him you are here.” But this Emma positively forbade; and that evening, weary of his fruitless search, Balfour arrived.

Unconscious that the beautiful girl he so much wished to see was observing him from the windows, Balfour, as soon as he saw his sisters, began to show off to them in his usual consequential way; and giving one his gloves to carry, another his hat and whip, and leaning on a third, he lounged into a room next to that where Emma was sitting with the door open, and threw himself on the sofa.

“I am dying with heat and thirst!” cried he. “Do, Harriet, come and fan me; and you, Mary Ann, fetch me the shaddock which I desired might be saved for me.”

“I’ll get it directly,” she replied. “Fanny was feverish last night and wanted to have it, but I would not let her lest you should want it.”

Emma, who overheard all that passed, expected Balfour would regret that the poor feverish child had not been gratified. But she was mistaken; he declared that he would not for the world have lost the luxury of eating it then. The shaddock was brought; and one sister having pulled off the young despot’s boots, another his coat, and exchanged it for a loose chintz gown, and the third having rubbed his head dry, then sprinkled it with eau de Cologne, he cut the shaddock and was preparing to devour it, when one of his sisters, looking up in his face archly, said,

“Pray, brother, have you found the beauty you were in search of?”

“Pshaw! do not mention that subject, for I can’t bear it.—No, I have not found her, though I have searched all Paris; and I suspect she was suddenly translated from the Louvre to her kindred skies, angel as she is, as soon as I was called away that morning!”

On hearing this, Emma, who had promised the sisters to come in and surprise Balfour, was rendered incapable, by delicacy, of

fulfilling her promise, and she endeavoured to escape into another apartment; but they, being on the watch, ran after, and prevented her. Then, almost dragging her up to their brother, they presented her to him, as Miss Castlemain; while Balfour, blushing with delight, not unmixed with confusion, lost in a moment the important airs which he had assumed with his family, and like a timid youth stammered out something about surprise, pleasure, and so forth, setting down his untasted shaddock while he spoke.

“Do not let me disturb you,” cried Emma; “pray eat your fruit.”

“Impossible!” replied he, “unless you partake with me.”

“I don’t know that I should like it, as I never tasted shaddock.”

“No!” cried the little feverish girl, “it is so good!”

Emma smiled, and ate a piece; while Balfour, seeing that she liked it, insisted on her eating the whole.

“In Jamaica,” said the little Fanny, “every body has a whole shaddock, me and all.”

“But as that is not the case here,” replied Emma, touched by the poor child’s diseased wish for the forbidden fruit, and willing to give the spoiled child (as she considered Balfour) a lesson, “I shall insist on sharing this fruit equally amongst us all; for participation makes pleasure sweeter.”

“But my sisters,” cried Balfour, “know what shaddock is.”

“And they do not like it, I presume, as you were going to eat all this yourself!”

“Indeed we do,” cried the girls, “but—”

“Then eat this to oblige me,” said Emma. “But you, dear Fanny, whose lips look so parched and feverish, shall have the largest piece;” which Fanny ate with great eagerness, wishing that she was again in Jamaica, that she might have a whole shaddock to her own share.

All this time Balfour, who saw he was lessened in Emma's eyes by the circumstance of the fruit, was silent from mortification; and Emma became silent also. She was shocked at the little girl's greedy and selfish wish for solitary pleasure, and could not help attributing it to the bad example of her brother, whose habits, as she saw, being those of selfish gratification in trifles, had taught her to value unparticipated enjoyments. "No doubt," thought Emma, "Balfour has had a bad education!" and fancying, though mistakingly, that he had been chiefly brought up in the West Indies, she began to consider him as an unfortunate young man, spoiled by having been placed in unfavourable circumstances, especially as he had been for some years in possession of an independent fortune. While these things were passing in her mind, she was roused from her reverie, by little Fanny's whispering in her ear,—

"Brother must love you very much to offer you all his shaddock!"

"Nonsense!" cried Emma, blushing very deeply; and the sisters declaring Miss Castlemain looked warm, proposed taking a walk,—to which Balfour, forgetting his fatigue, gladly assented. Immediately the obsequious sisters ran to fetch his coat and shoes, and get his white hat.

"I think," said Emma, "you should have brought some of your slaves over, to wait on you."

"I have none; but my father would have brought over some of his," replied Balfour gravely, "had there been any chance of their being properly obedient in England;—but there, you know, as soon as they land, they are free."

"And would they were so all the world over!" cried Emma warmly, "or rather, would that the detestable traffic in slaves was everywhere put an end to!"

"We will talk together coolly on that subject one day," replied Balfour gently, contrary to his usual custom when any one expressed opinions differing from his own, "and I have no doubt but I shall make a convert of you."

“Never,” exclaimed Emma indignantly, “but I hope to be more successful in my endeavours to convert you.” And immediately, with all the sanguine expectations of a young and virtuous mind, Emma, presuming on the influence which she saw she was going to acquire over Balfour, beheld visions of freed negroes, and schemes of benevolent utility float before her fancy; which determined her, romantically eager as she was to do good, to encourage rather than repress his growing attachment.

Mr. Egerton, meanwhile, little thinking that the intimacy which he was willing Emma should go to Montmorenci to retard, had been hastened by that very plan, was at Paris on business; and Mrs. Castlemain, seeing at the end of a fortnight that Emma was pleased with her new companions, and that Balfour improved every day upon acquaintance, joyfully consented to the entreaties of the Balfours that they would stay another fortnight. And when Mr. Egerton returned, he saw with pain, that another fortnight spent together under the same roof would, in all probability, mature Balfour’s passion into a serious attachment; and though it could not eradicate Emma’s love for St. Aubyn, it would at least weaken his power, and very likely induce so strong a feeling of gratitude and esteem in her heart towards Balfour, as to make her willing to listen to his addresses with a view to accept them in future.

And he was right in his conjectures. Before the end of the month Balfour made proposals of marriage to Mrs. Castlemain for Emma, which she decidedly approved, provided his father approved them also; and Emma, though she positively refused to give a decided consent, on the plea of the shortness of their acquaintance, yet allowed Balfour to continue his addresses, and do all in his power to overcome her dislike to marry. But, in spite of the shortness of their acquaintance, his character was already known to her; and when she contrasted the disrespect with which he spoke of his weakly indulgent parent, with the filial piety of St. Aubyn,—and his violent despotic temper, with the mild forbearance of the latter,—her heart died within her, and she felt it would be equally

impossible to forget St. Aubyn and marry Balfour. Still, however, new hopes and new views on the subject presented themselves occasionally to her mind; hopes and views too much, perhaps, the result of vanity and self-confidence. But Emma was only nineteen, and was, from motives dear to the heart of every delicately-feeling woman, anxious to get rid, if possible, of an attachment which she felt derogatory to her *delicacy* and her *pride*.

“Balfour,” thought Emma, “has great faults; but then he is conscious of them, and he owns them to me with tears in his eyes, declaring, at the same time, that if I would but become his mistress, the result of the errors of his education will be removed!” And she also remembered that he looked so handsome and so humble when he said this, that Emma could not help wishing to lend her aid towards making so charming a being perfect; especially one whose self-importance, great as it was, was surrendered at the feet of her beauty. And then she reasoned thus: “St. Aubyn’s character is perfect already, according to Mr. Egerton; to him, therefore, I could be of no use, and to him the defects of my character, were it possible we could ever be united, would be painfully apparent; whereas, by becoming the wife of Balfour, I should improve and exalt, perhaps, the character of a being capable of great actions, and be, besides, not only beloved by him, but looked up to by him as one of the first of women.”

Emma forgot, at that moment, how often she had brought it as an argument for loving St. Aubyn, that his wife would have in him a friend to whom she could look up for instruction and improvement, while she learnt to correct the errors of her own judgment by the calm experience of his. But, unknown to herself, it was wounded pride and pique against St. Aubyn, two of the varieties of Temper, that urged her to marry a man she did not love; and Mr. Egerton, almost convinced that he must give up the darling wish of his heart, resolved, for Emma’s sake, to study the character of Balfour, and endeavour to ameliorate it to the best of his powers. He found the young man more docile than he expected, and even willing to give

up opinions, after having long and manfully defended them, on conviction of their fallacy. “This young man,” said he to Emma, “has a heart, but it has never been taught to feel; he has a head, but it has never been taught to reason. However, I believe I shall like him in spite of his faults, and that his greatest defect in my eyes is not being——”

“What?” asked Emma, eagerly.

“Not being St. Aubyn;” and Emma understanding him, blushed, sighed, and turned away.

The month being now expired, they returned to Paris; while Balfour, having heard Emma express great admiration of filial piety, had the resolution to accompany his two elder sisters on the road towards Bareges, whence Lord Clonawley was proceeding by slow journeys to Paris. Accordingly Emma and Mrs. Castlemain, attended only by Mr. Egerton, prepared to explore all the scenes and beauties of that city. The day after they returned thither, the First Consul was to review the troops, and to have a grand levee afterwards. Accordingly our travellers procured tickets of admission to enable them, when the review was over, to get into one of the passage-rooms, in order to see the company pass to be presented.

The review being ended, they went from the ground-floor of the palace, whence they had beheld it, into an upper apartment, and were commodiously seated there, when an English gentleman entered into conversation with them, and said, that he was not come thither to see the review, or the company pass, they being sights familiar to him—but that he was curious to see an English officer go by, to whom the First Consul was going to present an elegant sword as a reward for his personal bravery.

“And shall we see him pass?” said Emma.

“Certainly, or I should not be here,” he replied. “But in the mean while, suppose I tell you, ladies, the story of this young man’s

noble daring.” On which Mrs. Castlemain begged him to begin the narration immediately, and he proceeded thus:

“It seems that during the troubles in La Vendée, many robbers by profession, calling themselves royalists, took possession of places of concealment in the woods and caverns there, and used to murder, or otherwise ill-treat the passengers; and as yet the government has not been able to hunt them all from their hiding-places. The young officer in question was travelling by himself one evening in this unhappy part of France, when he heard the cries of women; and spurring his horse up to the spot from whence the cries proceeded, he saw two women and their two servants in the power of some of the Vendéan banditti, one of whom was holding a pistol to the head of one of the ladies, while another ruffian was carrying the other off in his arms. Our young hero did not stop a moment to deliberate; with the butt-end of his whip he knocked down the ruffian who was standing over the lady, and, seizing his pistols, attacked the wretches who were plundering the carriage and the servants; the latter of whom, being thus reinforced, struggled with the plunderers, while their champion shot dead the man who was carrying off the lady, but who, leaving her, was coming forward to attack him. Then, though severely wounded, he, assisted by the servants, succeeded in mastering the banditti; and being reinforced by some peasants whom the noise called to the spot, they were all secured and carried to prison; while the rescued ladies overwhelmed our gallant countryman with their praises and their blessings.

“They were on their way to Paris; but as their preserver bled profusely, they insisted on going back with him to their chateau, and his weakness obliged him to comply with the proposal.

“The ladies are the widow and daughter of an early friend and favourite comrade of the First Consul, who, on hearing from the lady’s letter to madame Buonaparte of the gallantry of their champion, insisted on their bringing him with them to Paris, that he might see and publicly thank one who had so materially served

friends so dear to him. But these public thanks, and this elegant sword, are not the only good things, I find, which are likely to be the portion of our countryman; for the young lady has a large fortune and is very handsome, and it is supposed that herself and her wealth will both be bestowed on one who has so well deserved her.”

“But his name, his name, sir?” demanded Emma.

“I have heard it, but I have forgotten it.”

Then, while her companions thanked the gentleman for the interesting narration he had given them, Emma fell into a reverie.

At length the levée began, and a French gentleman said to their communicative companion, that he was sure, when the gallant Englishman drew near, the heart of the little girl opposite would beat violently, for it was she whom he saved from the ruffians; “and I have seen her have recourse to her salts several times to keep her from fainting.” On bearing this they all followed the direction of the gentleman’s eyes, and saw a pretty interesting girl with blonde hair, who was fanning herself with great violence, and seeming oppressed by the notice which she excited. But their attention was soon called to a more interesting object.

“Le voilà qui vient ce brave Anglois!” cried the Frenchman, the friend of their companion; when pale from recent loss of blood, his left arm in a sling, and dressed in full uniform, they beheld St. Aubyn.

“There!” said Mr. Egerton, and it was all he could say; while Emma, pale and trembling, caught hold of Mrs. Castlemain’s hand, who, full of emotion herself, retained it in her grasp; while St. Aubyn, looking neither to the right nor to the left, went forward to the presence-chamber.

On the opposite side Mr. Egerton saw the French ladies who had accused St. Aubyn of being *tant soit peu poltron*; and having caught their eye, he made them a bow of very sarcastic meaning,



which they perfectly understood, and by their gestures made him comprehend their penitence and their admiration.

Emma meanwhile spoke not a word; but Mr. Egerton and Mrs. Castlemain, while the French and English gentlemen were admiring the beauty and grandeur of St. Aubyn's face and person, assured them that they had once known him intimately, and that his mind and heart were not inferior to his personal graces.

In an hour some of the gentlemen who had been presented began to return, and amongst the rest St. Aubyn,—but not pale and languid as when he had passed them before; his cheek was flushed with pleasure, and his eyes were beaming with animation, while in his hand he held the promised sword of honour. Nor was he unattended. Those officers who had desired him to leave their regiment were crowding round him, offering him any apology that his offended pride might require; and Mr. Egerton, who approached them unseen, heard him answer, "I require no apology; you, according to the rules of military etiquette, did your duty, and I did mine; but there is one justice, sir," said he, addressing his Colonel, "which I shall require of you in due time."

While this was passing, Emma and Mrs. Castlemain heard a gentleman repeat the First Consul's address to St. Aubyn, which was such as could not fail to be gratifying to his pride.

Was all this likely to assist the endeavours of our heroine to drive him from her heart? Ah! no. And Emma felt in all its bitterness the cruelty of her situation. While he was thus congratulated, and pressed, and gazed upon, St. Aubyn's eyes met those of the young lady and her mother for whom he had fought and conquered; and with a look of delighted eagerness he made his way up to them, and, kissing a hand of each, pressed the young lady's hand to his bosom without speaking, while the poor girl's head sunk on her mother's shoulder.

"We shall meet in the evening, I trust, dear St. Aubyn," said the mother, who saw that St. Aubyn's presence overcame her daughter,

whose nerves had been greatly injured by the fright which she had received; and St. Aubyn, taking the hint, withdrew; while Emma, who had witnessed the scene, felt the anguish of the preceding moments comparatively trifling.

In the door-way, in order to intercept St. Aubyn on his passage, stood Mr. Egerton. St. Aubyn, on seeing him, started and turned pale; but he held out his hand to him with affectionate pleasure, and while Mr. Egerton, speechless with strong emotion, could only press the hand he held, his eyes filled with involuntary tears.

“I did not expect,” said he at length, “to see you here, my dear sir.” Then looking round, as if he wished, yet dreaded, to see some one, his eyes rested on Mrs. Castlemain and Emma;—and all the animation of his countenance fled. Mrs. Castlemain kissed her hand to him with a look which powerfully expressed the affectionate interest which she took in all that had passed; Emma tried to smile also, but her lip quivered with emotion, and she knew that her bow was cold and devoid of grace; while St. Aubyn, instead of making his way up to them, bowed in a hurried manner in return, and taking Mr. Egerton’s arm, left the room with him.

“We have heard all your adventures here, Henry,” said Mr. Egerton, (who, alive only to the pleasure of seeing his beloved pupil, and witnessing his successes, could not feel any resentment towards him for his long estrangement from his society,) “and you are really quite a hero of romance;—but what is the justice you mean to require of your Colonel?”

“Why, you know my uncle——”

“Yes, only too well.”

“And you know, perhaps, that he has always declared he would never forgive a relation of his who ever accepted a challenge?”

“Yes.”

“Well then, when I on principle refused one since my arrival here, I wrote him word of it, telling him that, though I should

have done just the same if he had not been in existence, it gave me great pleasure to reflect that my conduct in this instance was conformable to his opinions, and would procure for me his approbation.”

“And what was his answer?”

“That he did not believe principle had any thing to do with my refusal to fight, and that he thought the officers quite right in wishing to get rid of such a chicken-hearted fellow.”

“Shocking!” exclaimed Mr. Egerton; “here is another proof of the obliquities of Temper. But what will he say when you write him word of your chivalric exploits?”

“I shall *not* write to him on the subject; but I shall desire my Colonel to do it, and let him know that his ‘chicken-hearted nephew’ is no longer considered by the regiment as a disgrace to them; and this is the service I told him I should require.”

At that moment St. Aubyn was told that he was wanted at the hotel of Madame de Coulanges (one of the ladies whom he had saved.)

“But we shall meet again, I hope?” said Mr. Egerton, impatiently.

“Not for some time, I doubt,” replied St. Aubyn, confusedly, “for I expect a summons to England. My poor mother is very unwell, and unless to-morrow’s post brings me a better account, I shall set off immediately;—so farewell! all happiness attend you and your friends till we meet again.”

He then disappeared, and Mr. Egerton returned to the ladies.

Mr. Egerton’s countenance bore evident marks of vexation and disappointment; and in reply to Mrs. Castlemain’s “Well, what says St. Aubyn?” he almost pettishly repeated his conversation. But Emma, who had accurately observed the change in St. Aubyn’s countenance when his eyes met hers, was so conscious that the sight of her occasioned him to experience very strong emotion, emotion which neither hatred nor indifference could cause, that her heart felt considerably lightened of its load, and though she thought

it might be true that St. Aubyn was going to marry Mademoiselle de Coulanges, she fancied, she was sure, that he was not positively in love with her. Still she was unhappy, and could not help comparing Balfour and St. Aubyn so long and so often, that the former seemed to lose every moment the little ground which he had gained in her heart, and she began to dread his return to Paris.

That evening she at first refused to go to any public place, lest she should see St. Aubyn and Mademoiselle de Coulanges; but her delicacy being wounded at the idea that it was necessary for her to avoid St. Aubyn, she consented to the plan proposed, and neither at the Opera nor at Frescati did she behold him; while had admiration been her passion, the admiring gaze which greeted her whithersoever she went, and the name of la belle Anglaise which on every side met her ear, would have gratified her feelings to the utmost, and healed perhaps the wounds of secret and ill-requited love. But admiration, though pleasing to Emma, was only dear to her from those she loved, and the greatest satisfaction she derived from it, was the look of pleasure and exultation which the notice she excited called forth in the expressive faces of Mrs. Castlemain and Mr. Egerton. That evening when they returned from Frescati, and Emma had left them, Mrs. Castlemain and Mr. Egerton began to discuss St. Aubyn's singular conduct, but still attributed it to some caprice of Mr. Hargrave, whose obliquities of temper they could not help recalling.

"It is very plain, by Mr. Hargrave's vulgar violence," said Mrs. Castlemain, "that he is a low-bred man, and was not born a gentleman." (Mr. Egerton on bearing this smiled significantly.)

"Why do you smile, Mr. Egerton?" added; she.

"Because, madam, I am convinced that the conduct of the low and the high born, when under the dominion of temper, is commonly the same; that temper is the greatest of all levellers, the greatest of all equalizers; and that the peer and the peasant are, when under the influence of passion, equally removed from having any right to the name of gentleman."

“Indeed, Mr. Egerton,” replied Mrs. Castlemain, “I cannot agree with you; consider the force of habit, that the language of a gentleman being habitually genteeler than that of the peasant, even his angry expressions must partake of this induced difference.”

“But do you consider, my dear madam, that we are talking of a feeling powerful enough to overturn even the most powerful thing, itself excepted, namely, habit? It is a notorious fact, that even ladies delicately and carefully brought up, when in a state of derangement, use such language and such oaths as are only to be heard amongst the lowest of the sex; and what is passion but a temporary derangement, a maniac unrestrained by the usual decorums of life, and only to be kept in bounds, like other maniacs, by the operations of fear?”

“This is a mortifying and I hope an exaggerated picture, Mr. Egerton.”

“No, madam, would it were! Still it is not temper, as exhibited in the shape of violent passion, that has the most pernicious influence on human conduct and happiness. It is temper under the shape of cool deliberate spite, and secret rancour, that is most to be guarded against.

‘It is the taunting word whose meaning kills;’

the speech intended to mortify one’s self-love, or wound our tenderest affections; it is temper under this garb that is most hateful and most pernicious; when inflicting a series of petty injuries with a mild and smiling face, then is temper the most hideous and disgusting. The violence of passion, when over, often subsides into affectionate repentance, and is easily disarmed of its offensive power. But nothing ever disarms the other sort of temper. In domestic life it is to one’s mind, what a horsehair shirt is to the body, and, like the spikes of Pascal’s iron girdle, whenever one moves it lacerates and tears one to pieces.”

The next morning, the same principle which forced her to the Opera and Frescati, led Emma to the Louvre Gallery, though at the risk of meeting St. Aubyn.

Mr. Egerton had gone to the Louvre Gallery very early that morning, in order to gaze on some of his favourite pictures alone and undisturbed. Not that he pretended to be a great connoisseur in painting, and fancied, because he had during a short residence in Flanders and Italy seen fine pictures, that he must understand them; his judgment taught him a more correct idea of his own powers, and he felt that a person by looking at Greek manuscripts might as well suppose himself capable of understanding Greek, as pretend to set up for a correct judge of painting from having gazed on pictures without some previous knowledge of the rules of art. But he had a correct eye and a poetical fancy, and on such paintings as interested his feelings he delighted to dwell,—while, by comparing the style of one master with another, he endeavoured to form an idea of the different merits of each. He was thus employed in that precious depository of the best works of the best masters,—and particularly precious to artists, because they can in the same room compare in a consecutive series the French school with the Flemish, and the Florentine with the Venetian,—when he saw a man pass him in a Highland dress.

“Another countryman arrived, I see!” said he to himself; “but why is he so clad?” Then supposing it might be some officer of one of the gallant Highland regiments, who had particularly distinguished themselves during the war, he followed him from a motive of respect and curiosity, and also probably from that warming of the heart which one feels when in a foreign land towards any native of our own beloved isles.

This sensation, however, was somewhat damped in Mr. Egerton, when he recognised in the stranger, on his turning round, no greater person than Varley. Still operated upon possibly by that feeling which makes one willing, when meeting countrymen abroad, to consider strangers as acquaintance, and mere acquaintance as

friends, Mr. Egerton welcomed Varley most cordially to Paris; though, considering the personal vanity of the young man, he had his suspicions that Varley had assumed this very singular dress for an Englishman and a clerk in the War-office, from an idea of its being becoming and likely to attract notice to his really graceful form.

“Well, Mr. Varley, what brings you hither?” said Mr. Egerton.

“A truant disposition, good my lord,”

was the reply.

“Have you brought letters with you? have you any acquaintance here?”

“No,” replied Varley, sighing, “I am

‘Remote, unfriended, solitary, slow!’”

“Unfriended,” returned Mr. Egerton, “you shall not be if I can serve you; and I will do all in my power to make your residence here agreeable to you.”

“I rest much bounden to you,” replied Varley, concluding that his charm of manner and conversation had interested Mr. Egerton in his favour. But he was mistaken.

Varley owed the benevolent wish which that gentleman felt to serve him, not only in trifles but essentials, to his having witnessed what Varley was ashamed of, namely, the laudable economy that had made him travel on the outside of the coach; and the anxious affection of his poor dowdy-looking mother. Even the dirty pocket-handkerchief which she had employed in a vain endeavour to wipe him clean, had had a pleasant effect on Mr. Egerton’s feelings, as a proof of maternal tenderness; and when he recollected that Varley had some talent, and was, he had been informed, industrious, and a good and dutiful son, he could not help wishing to employ some of his large income in ameliorating the condition of these poor people, could he do so in such a manner as to stimulate, not check, the industry he so much approved. For never did the Christmas gift

of a piece of money burn a child's pocket, as the phrase is, more certainly than did Mr. Egerton's purse burn his since his accession of wealth; and as he had no personal expense, he had so much money to give away, that it was quite a piece of good fortune for him to discover objects on whom to exercise his benevolence. His fixing on Varley, therefore, (for one of his protégés,) was more perhaps an act of necessity than of choice. He saw the young man's foibles, and was not a little disposed to resent his daring to cast a look of love on Mrs. Castlemain, little suspecting how far his conceit had led him; but he thought that a judicious friend might correct these follies, and convert him into a useful if not an ornamental member of society.

“Yes,” said he mentally, “I will be that friend.” Then, as the Gallery began to fill, he took Varley's arm, and, saying he wished to have some conversation with him, led him into a solitary part of the gardens of the Thuilleries. He then told Varley how much he had approved the manner in which he travelled,—a manner so contrary to the habits which he had attributed to him; he also expressed the interest which his affectionate mother had excited in him; and while Varley listened with amazement to hear that what he thought must have degraded had exalted him in Mr. Egerton's opinion, he added, that he wished to prove himself his friend, and must begin by telling him, that if he wished to be introduced into gentlemen's society, he must dress like a gentleman, and leave off every thing outré in his appearance, especially the dress he then wore,—begging to know what could induce him to assume it.

Varley, who did not want shrewdness, immediately saw that he could turn this circumstance, which originated in the motive Mr. Egerton had suspected, to good account; therefore, with downcast eyes, and affected reluctance, he answered,

“My poverty, but not my will, consented,”

when my poor mother proposed to make up for me a plaid, which was a present to her from her native country, into the dress you



see;—this, made at home to save expenses, and another by a smart London tailor, are all the wardrobe of one

‘Who would buy more, but that his hand wants means.’”

Varley had formed a right judgment of the probable effect of this avowal on the man to whom it was addressed; and it deepened the interest which Mr. Egerton felt for the mother and the son.

“My dear sir,” said Mr. Egerton with an air of great respect, and a blush of deep confusion, “I shall not believe that you pardon the great liberty I have taken in speaking to you with such freedom, if you will not confer on me the obligation that it is in your power to confer, namely, to accept this,” sliding a purse into his hand; “for, having presumed to find fault with your dress, it is only just that I should furnish you with the means of procuring another;”—while Varley only bowed, and spoke his thanks in half-sentences, then put his handkerchief to his face to hide not his tearful, but his *dry* eyes.

“Mr. Varley,” said Mr. Egerton, “you must dine with me. Can you come to-day? My ladies dine out, and I shall be happy to see you.”

Varley, still more delighted at attention so unexpected, gratefully promised to wait on him; then telling Mr. Egerton he would go to his hotel immediately, and lay aside a dress so displeasing to his benefactor, he took his leave; and, as soon as he was out of sight, eagerly examined the contents of the purse which he had received. Its amount was as much beyond his expectations as it was his deserts; and while he felt some few stings of conscience for having written a certain spiteful paragraph, those feelings were soon forgotten in anxiety lest his delinquency should come to light, and cause him to forfeit the favour of that benevolent but credulous being, as he thought him, whose purse was thus generously opened to his suspected wants.

The real truth which Varley concealed from Mr. Egerton was, that he, in imitation of the celebrated Dr. Goldsmith, intended to walk through some part of France, hoping by the charm of his flute, and

his dancing, to obtain food and lodging amongst the peasantry, and perhaps gain admittance into some chateaux on the road; and he thought his Highland dress would have not only a becoming but *pastoral effect*, and give him still more the air of a *héros de roman*. But the plea of poverty would, he was sure, do more with Mr. Egerton than that of picturesque effect, and certainly his scheme succeeded beyond his utmost expectations.

Mr. Egerton, out of respect to Mrs. Castlemain, would not invite Varley to dinner when she was at home; for, though he had no suspicion what good grounds she had for disliking that ridiculous boy, he felt that he had no right to ask him to a table where she presided, though with her conviction of his insanity her terror of him had vanished. Nor when he told her that he had invited a friend to dine with him, did he inform her who that friend was. But if, after some hours' conversation with Varley, he should appear to him deserving his notice, he resolved to endeavour to interest the excellent heart and benevolent nature of Mrs. Castlemain in his favour; and he had no doubt but that she would conquer her present dislike to Varley the forward coxcomb, in compassionate consideration for Varley the ingenious, industrious son of a poor, affectionate, and widowed mother.

At the appointed hour Mrs. Castlemain and Emma went out, and Varley arrived; and Mr. Egerton, under the unconscious influence of an eager desire to find an object for his benevolence to exercise itself upon, found Varley intelligent and interesting beyond his expectations, and was resolved in a day or two to arrange with the young man some scheme for serving him essentially.

During the course of the afternoon, Mr. Egerton, seeing a flute stick out of Varley's pocket, asked him to play to him; and he had not long complied before he was convinced that the flute he had heard in the park at Roselands was Varley's. He did not, however, think proper to notice this discovery,—to the great joy of his guest, who did not wish to have any allusions made to the transactions at Roselands.

“You are really a very fine performer on that instrument,” said Mr. Egerton when he had ended; “can you play on any other?”

“Yes, sir, on the tenor and the violin.”

“You must be quite an acquisition, then, to a private concert; and as I am going to join my companions to-night at a musical party, I will take you with me, if you have no better engagement.”

And the gratified Varley had the satisfaction of hearing that he was about to be introduced into one of the best circles in Paris!

When they arrived, Mr. Egerton presented Varley as a young friend of his, who had great musical talents; while Mrs. Castlemain, seeing Varley before her, was ready to exclaim with the poor man in the story—“Vat! Monsieur Tonson come again!” and observing with surprise, not unmixed with resentment, that Varley was introduced by Mr. Egerton, she drew herself up, intending to receive both the introducer and the introduced with an air of haughty coldness. But Varley did not come within the reach of her disdain; for he soon took his place amongst the performers, and played the solo flute parts in a quintetto so well as to delight every one. Nor was he less successful on the tenor in a quartetto; and before the end of the evening, an English nobleman present was so charmed with his performance, that he invited him to a concert at his house the next week; and Varley thus saw an entrance into that sort of society which he most coveted, opened to him without any difficulty.

Emma, meanwhile, was lost in amazement at seeing Varley introduced by Mr. Egerton, who, purposely to enjoy her looks of wonder and curiosity, kept at a distance both from her and Mrs. Castlemain; nor till they returned home would he say anything on the subject. He then told Mrs. Castlemain his wish to serve Varley, and the interest he felt for him and his mother, and his hope that she would have the goodness to pardon the too open display of his admiration of her, which had, he believed offended her delicacy at the K—— ball; assuring her that he would answer for

Varley's conduct and manners being in future all she could desire. To this speech Mrs. Castlemain, conscious that she had much more to pardon in Varley than his conduct at the K—— ball, did not vouchsafe an answer; but with an air of offended dignity she retired to her own apartment, leaving Emma to hear and approve Mr. Egerton's intended patronage of Varley, and to promise to assist him in removing her grandmother's prejudice against him.

As soon as Mrs. Castlemain reached her own apartment, dismissing her maid, she began to walk up and down it in violent agitation, debating with herself how she ought, consistent with her dignity, to proceed. She well knew that, if she were to tell Mr. Egerton how Varley had haunted and persecuted her at Roselands, he would resent his presumption so much as not to countenance him perhaps at all; but benevolence, and a sort of self-defence, *both* forbade her to make this confession. She felt that even to Mr. Egerton and Emma she could not bear to exhibit herself as an old Daphne flying before a youthful Apollo, and screaming and fainting at seeing a young man suddenly appearing before her, having jumped a ditch full of water in order to get at her. Then her mistake about the petition, and the verses on her beauty! Oh! it was impossible to disclose all this, because, though there was nothing derogatory to her in all this from Varley insane, it assumed the appearance of insult from Varley proved to be in his senses. What then could she do? and was it quite certain that Varley was as culpable as he appeared to be? Did not she, seeing through the prejudiced medium of conviction of his insanity, give a false colouring to actions in themselves excusable? When his face first alarmed her peeping through the branch of a tree, might he not be merely surveying the pretty walks in the wood? When he jumped down and ran after her, might he not be actuated really by the wish of informing her a mad bull was near? Might not his presuming to show her his verses, be excused by the very natural wish in a man like him, to obtain the patronage and notice of a woman of her rank in life? And might not the flute-playing in the park be justified by the same motive? while the jumping

the ditch could be excused by the honest wish of returning her purse as soon as he had an opportunity. The call at Roselands was to Mr. Egerton, and the request to see her was satisfactorily accounted for by the value of the book which he was to leave. In short, Mrs. Castlemain's generous wish not to stand in the way of the welfare of an indigent, but endowed young man, conquered even the suggestions of offended pride; and when she saw Mr. Egerton again, she assured him that *she* would throw no obstacles in the way of Varley's success with him. Accordingly, Varley was received at her table, and he, by his very judicious behaviour, a behaviour that spoke admiration, only kept in bounds by proper respect, soon made Mrs. Castlemain as much his friend as Mr. Egerton; and for his introduction to many pleasant parties, and the enjoyment of many pleasant evenings, Varley was indebted to our benevolent travellers.

It was on the very morning of Mr. Egerton's rencontre with Varley that another acquaintance was added to their list. I have before said that Emma had forced herself to go to the Louvre Gallery, though fearful of meeting there St. Aubyn and Mademoiselle de Coulanges; but neither he nor that young lady was to be seen, though there were Scotch, Irish, and English, in abundance. Amongst the English was a new comer, a widow of some rank, who, attended by a humble companion, and dressed à la Parisienne, was displaying her own lovely figure to great advantage, while admiring the plump person of Titian's mistress. This lady, catching a glimpse of Emma as, with her arms pensively folded in a long white veil, she walked along the Gallery, unconscious of the gaze of general admiration which followed her, was so struck with her beauty that she turned quite round to look at her, and with national pride exclaimed, "That must be *English* beauty!" And then, having eagerly inquired who she was, she smiled with great meaning, and unattended, followed Emma out of the saloon and down the stairs. Before she could overtake her, Emma had reached the Statue Gallery, and she did not come up with her till she had entered the "Hall of Illustrious Men," and was gazing on the statue of Phocion.

As Emma turned way from it, she passed her hand affectionately over his chin, smiling, and shaking her head as she did so; when, looking up, she saw peeping from under a long black veil, the brilliant dark eyes of the above-mentioned lady, archly fixed upon her.

“What you said just now,” cried the lady, “was very true.”

“And what did I say, madam?” replied Emma, surprised at the familiarity of the speaker; “I do not remember that I spoke at all.”

“No; but you shook your head, and according to our friend Bayes, that is the same thing, you know.”

“And what did my shake say?”

“Oh! it meant, (for you looked at Phocion) ‘Excellent, honest old fellow! these modern republicans are, alas, very little like you!’”

“I declare I will not stay near you a moment longer,—you are a conjuror, or something worse; for it is true that I thought nearly what you said.”

“Not so, *ma belle*; we must not part so soon; by virtue of the art which you attribute to me, I also know that you are Miss Castlemain, commonly called here ‘*la belle Anglaise*,’ and out of pity to you, who have no devil to consult, I give you this (presenting her card) to tell you who I am.”

On reading the card, Emma almost started as well as blushed, for it was, she found, Mrs. Felton who addressed her; but as she had now a new object of jealousy in Mademoiselle de Coulanges, she felt more kindly towards Mrs. Felton than she had done when she left England; and recovering herself, she said she should be happy to be better known to her.

Mrs. Felton, having made her a formal courtesy and received one in return, twisted her arm in Emma’s, and exclaimed, “There,—now let us forget that we have not been acquainted these seven years.” And Emma suffered herself to be led by Mrs. Felton back into the Gallery.

“So,” cried Mrs. Felton, “it is full mall, I see! Come, my sweet old new friend, call up a look, and let us make

‘Parisian nymphs with envy die,  
Their shepherds with despair;’

for

‘The Hotspur and the Douglas both conjoin’d  
Are confident against the world in arms.’”

And saying this, she began to strut theatrically up the room.

“But let our arms be directed against the French, not the English world,” replied Emma smiling; “for, or my eyes much deceive me, there are none but British in view.”

“I believe you are very right,” returned Mrs. Felton; “for so much do we abound here, that on a gentleman’s asking who a man was at Frescati last night, he said on hearing the reply, ‘Thank ye, sir. Now then I shall not return to England without having seen *one* Frenchman.’ But, my dear, is not that Mrs. Castlemain approaching? Pray present me.” And Emma did so. But that lady, to whom Mrs. Felton’s character was known, and who thought her granddaughter might have made a more desirable acquaintance, assumed an air so proud and distant, that even the *woman of the world* felt awed by it.

But at this moment Mr. Egerton joined them; and when Emma presented him to Mrs. Felton, he made his bow with a look of so much satisfaction, and entered into conversation so courteously with the fair widow, that Mrs. Castlemain, conjecturing Mr. Egerton could not by his manner disapprove the acquaintance, and having implicit reliance on his judgment, relaxed in her repulsive hauteur, and condescended to be agreeable.

Mr. Egerton, though he certainly did not entirely approve of Mrs. Felton’s character, was bribed into approbation of her present acquaintance with Emma, by seeing that the contagion of her vivacity had called back to her faded lip the smile so long a

stranger to it; and if Mrs. Felton's varied talents, and the charm of her conversation could divert Emma's mind from dwelling on depressing images, he thought it was the duty of both Mrs. Castlemain and himself to encourage the association, especially as Mr. Egerton believed no guilt, either of act or intention, stained the conduct of Mrs. Felton, and that his pupil's morals and reputation would neither of them be injured by her. With these feelings, he accosted Mrs. Felton, and his favourable intentions towards her were increased by her introduction.

Mrs. Felton possessed a great deal of what is called *manner*, a charm difficult to define, but certain to captivate. Mr. Egerton told Mrs. Felton, with an apology for alluding to the husband whom she had lost, that he had known Mr. Felton at College, and had so highly esteemed him, that he had cherished some spite against the irresistible charms which had made him give up being a fellow, in order to become a husband; and Mrs. Felton, in reply, said,—

“Is it possible that you, sir, can be the Mr. Egerton whom my husband knew and admired at College? I should have expected to have seen a much *older* man.”

Thus, each offering a very innocent homage to the self-love of the other, (for it was not founded on falsehood, as Mrs. Felton was very handsome, and Mr. Egerton very young-looking, for his years,) they were disposed to regard each other with complacency;—for, whether Mr. Egerton's vanity was pleased or not by the implied compliment, his moral sense was satisfied, as he highly valued that sort of good-breeding, typical of benevolence, if not benevolence itself, which wishes to put every one in good humour, and call forth the good feelings only of those with whom we associate;—a habit of wishing and acting, which, when it does not militate against sincerity, in his opinion very nearly bordered on a virtue; while, on the contrary, he classed among the vicious those members of society, who, from coarseness of feeling, and a want of benevolence, (perhaps I should say of humanity,) are in the constant habit of wounding the self-love even of their best



friends, by vulgar jokes on the defects of their persons, their dress, nay, sometimes on their professions, their trades, or their poverty.—And when not in good-humour, or when careless of pleasing, Mrs. Felton was as much given to speak daggers as any one;—but this he had as yet to find out.

But where was Miss Spenlove all this time? Miss Spenlove was Miss Spenlove no longer. A gouty, decrepit old Admiral, of seventy, who wanted a nurse, and had no objection to her 9 or 10,000*l.*, paid his addresses to her, and was immediately accepted,—to the great mortification and agony of Mrs. Felton; not that she envied Miss Spenlove her gouty husband, but, alas! this gentleman was the son of a *peer*, ay, and the son of a viscount too. Therefore, as Mrs. Felton's husband was only the son of a baron, Miss Spenlove, alias the honourable Mrs. Fitz-Walter, had precedence of the honourable Mrs. Felton; and it was amusing enough, to see the ill-concealed triumph of the one lady, and the mortified pride of the other. One day, the servant, at a small party, handed the tea first to Mrs. Fitz-Walter, when Mrs. Felton was sitting by her; on which, the former lady obligingly observed, “it shocks me, my dear creature, to take precedence of *you*,—but, you know, I *must* selon les règles;” and Mrs. Felton uttered a ‘*ridiculous*’ in a tone sufficiently expressive of her pique at the necessity her amiable friend was under. But Mrs. Felton was consoled for the pain she felt, at seeing a sort of dependant raised in rank above her, by the consciousness that she paid very dear for her elevation, as the old Admiral was said to use his gouty stick for more purposes than *one*, though its dimensions were larger than those allowed of by legal authority for the infliction of conjugal discipline; and no one could offend Mrs. Felton more, than by asserting that poor Mrs. Fitz-Walter was *not* the most wretched of women.

When they separated, Mrs. Castlemain assured Mrs. Felton that they should have the honour to call on her next day. Accordingly, they did so; and Emma would have felt quite at ease with her new

and fascinating companion, but for the terror she experienced; lest Mrs. Felton should talk to her of St. Aubyn. But of this there was no fear; for Mrs. Felton, who was in reality more in love with him than she had ever been with any man in her life, was extremely jealous of his attachment to Emma, and was as much averse to talking of him to her, as Emma could be to hear her do so; at least while such conversation could not assist in furthering the design nearest her heart.

I will here explain why St. Aubyn had renewed his acquaintance with Mrs. Felton, and had been seen escorting her to places of public amusement in London. Soon after Mrs. Felton's return to London, two pieces of intelligence reached her; the one was, that all hope of her ever marrying Wanford was rendered vain by his marriage with pretty Miss Travers; the other was, that Mr. Egerton, having become possessor of a large fortune, intended to adopt Henry St. Aubyn as his son, and settle on him immediately an independent property. This last information, which unhappily could not, as we have seen, be realized, made St. Aubyn appear as desirable a match in fortune, as he was before from merit; and Mrs. Felton began to repent her folly in giving up her chance of winning *him*, for the vain hope of captivating a man considerably his inferior in charms and agreeableness; and she immediately concerted a plan to

“Lure this tassel gentle back again!”

and a plausible one soon offered. St. Aubyn was much interested in the fate of a young man, who, having been brought up in affluence, was reduced to the extreme of poverty, and as this young man was in London trying to procure some employment, St. Aubyn mentioned him to Mrs. Felton, in the hope that she had interest, and might exert it in his favour. Mrs. Felton promised that she would so do; but she would never have remembered her promise again, had it not held forth a prospect of enabling her to please St. Aubyn, and induce him to renew his acquaintance with her when he visited London. For this purpose she wrote to him for the

address of his protégé; and having received it, she not only was of great pecuniary relief to the poor youth and his distressed family, but she procured him by her exertions a place of increasing profit in a mercantile house.

When St. Aubyn, therefore, entered into the dragoon guards at the desire of his uncle, his first visit was indeed to the Orwells, but his second to Mrs. Felton; and more charmed with her than ever from her generosity to his friend, he allowed her to carry him about with her, a seeming captive in the chains of her attractions. But love and jealousy are quick-sighted, and though Mrs. Felton might deceive others, she did not deceive herself; she soon discovered that, whatever might be the cause of St. Aubyn's cessation of intercourse with the family at the White Cottage, his heart still sighed for the subject of his early muse; and that though to *Emma at eighteen* he had *not written at all*, to that Emma every faculty of his soul was devoted. But would it be so, if he was convinced she loved, and was likely to marry another? This query had occurred to her at Paris, and she resolved to proceed accordingly.

The new friends were now frequently in parties together; sometimes to Meudon, sometimes to Versailles; and not only were they at concerts and balls given by the English visiting at Paris, or residing there, but at some of the elegant fêtes given by a noble Russian family at a chateau about twelve miles from the metropolis. Mrs. Felton, meanwhile, gained so much on Mr. Egerton's good opinion, that she began to think, if she could not secure St. Aubyn, it would be no bad speculation to turn her artillery on *him*. And certain it is that, by way of preparation in case she was reduced to make such an attack, she continued on her guard in his presence, and did not give way to those airs and flippancies which, having been told that they became her, and were allowable in a woman of rank and fashion, the exuberance of her spirits sometimes prompted her to indulge in.

Mr. Egerton had seen her to great advantage in his opinion, namely, at her own table. It was one of his maxims, that it was easy

for any woman to behave with graceful propriety at the table of another, where she has nothing to do; but the test of an habitual gentlewoman was seeing her at the head of her own;—and here it must be owned that Mrs. Felton always appeared in an attractive point of view.

They had met at a dinner given by Mrs. Felton two pleasant French families, and an English and an Irish family. But Emma's enjoyment of the conversation was damped by the terror she felt lest she should hear St. Aubyn named, and his late exploit expatiated upon. But though Emma was unfortunately ignorant of it, this was perhaps the only table in Paris, that day, where the circumstance was not likely to be alluded to; for the Irish gentleman present was the very officer whose challenge St. Aubyn refused, and the English one was the very lieutenant-colonel who sided with him in all he did. It was very certain therefore that Mrs. Felton would not name St. Aubyn, and she had given her French friends a hint to be as guarded.

The dinner itself was in the best style of French cookery; and Mrs. Felton's politeness had led her to learn all the difficult nomenclature of French dishes, and the meat of which they were composed, lest the appetite of her guests should be damped, as English appetites are so apt to be, by the terror of being betrayed into eating, in masquerade, something which in its ordinary dress is peculiarly repugnant.

This attention in their fair hostess was not thrown away on Mr. Egerton, who was an accurate observer of manners. "Well," said he as they returned home, "Mrs. Felton has gone through with honour to herself, in my opinion, one of the tests by which I try the understanding of a woman, and that is by her conduct at her own table."

"I never saw any one acquit herself better," replied Mrs. Castlemain, "and she is as well-bred as if she had been born to the rank of life in which good fortune has placed her."

“How attentive she was to her guests!” observed Emma.

“Yes,” said Mr. Egerton, “and how well she preserved the medium between being troublesomely pressing, or painfully negligent in asking her guests to eat! In short, she never forgot that she was the mistress of the feast, and was not stuck up there to do nothing. I hate to see the master and mistress of a house sitting at the head of the table with their hands and arms crossed before them as useless as a carving-knife and fork before a fricassé, or serving only like their plateau to fill up a space.”

“Yes, but, unhappily,” observed Emma, “though just as useful, not so ornamental as that self same plateau, which is generally the prettiest thing in sight.”

“I think,” said Mrs. Castlemain, “that the master and mistress of a house should consider their guests as so many fire-works, and themselves as the *match* to be applied to them in order to make them explode for the general amusement.”

“Ay, but there are some guests,” observed Emma, “that, like phosphoric matches, blaze of themselves, requiring no external application; and I should like best to surround my table with them, as much the least troublesome as well as the most pleasant.”

“And there are some guests,” said Mr. Egerton, “who, if they are to be likened to fire-works at all, it must be to fire-works damaged by rain, and therefore incapable of going off let the match be applied ever so often. Some persons seem to think that they come to your table only to eat and drink, and not to contribute their share of conversation for the amusement of the company.”

“Miss Castlemain,” added he, “I hope you observed that Mrs. Felton condescended to know the name and quality of every dish. I have sometimes been amused, I confess, at the ludicrous distress of an unhappy John Bull eater, when he has been vainly exploring some made dish in his vicinity, and, often not daring to venture on the desperate step of eating ‘a dish without a name,’ has modestly inquired of the lady of the house what that tempting viand was;

and then being informed that she knew nothing of the matter, I have seen the poor tantalized man apply to another dish, with equal doubt and equal curiosity, and receive the same answer to his question again; while, with all due deference, Miss Emma Castlemain, to your talents and latinity, I could not help thinking a woman could know nothing of more daily utility than what her table was composed of. For, after all, society is kept together, and our good feelings called forth, not by any *great* services that we can any of us do or receive, but by *little* services and attentions; attentions which show our friends when present, that we have thought of them when *absent*, and have felt interested in doing all in our power to gratify even their palates; for, such are the artificial wants that society creates, I never yet met with any one to whom dinner was positively a matter of no consequence. Therefore, Miss Castlemain, when you have a table of your own, I expect that you will never answer my question of what such a dish is, ‘that indeed you don’t know,’ unless you mean by that to inform me you are rich enough to keep a housekeeper,—a fact that I should never have thought of doubting; and I do assure you that Mrs. Felton’s conduct at table, to-day, was to me a much stronger proof of the soundness of her understanding, than if she had shown me a moral essay of her own writing, or descanted eloquently on a moral duty.”

“Sir,” replied Emma, “you may rely upon it, that the coroner, if called upon to sit on one of my visitors, shall never have to bring in his verdict, ‘Died of eating an anonymous dish!’ It should seem,” added she, “that Mrs. Felton had modelled her conduct at her own table according to the wise son of Sirach’s directions, who bids the master of a feast take diligent care for his guests, and so sit down. ‘Then,’ adds he, ‘when thou hast done thy office, take thy place, and make thyself merry with them.’”

“This seems to imply,” observed Mr. Egerton, “that the givers of the feasts should stand, and wait behind their guests, that probably being the custom of those days. But the advice to take diligent care for one’s guests, that is, to be attentive in helping them, and

providing for them, is a rule applicable to all ages of the world, and worthy of the illuminated pages from whence your quotation is taken.”

“Your observation, Mr. Egerton,” said Mrs. Castlemain, “on Mrs. Felton, reminds me of a story which poor lady Bellenden, my mother, used to tell. Lady Bellenden was, you must know, what is called a notable woman, and piqued herself on a knowledge of household duties. My father and mother were dining one day at the house of what are called here ‘*les nouveaux riches*, or *new rich*,’ persons who, though born only to a narrow income, and its usual paucity even of comforts, had been enabled by successful speculations in trade to keep a carriage, two men in livery, and a housekeeper; and the gentleman had been knighted for carrying up an address. The lady in this case was a very silly woman, and her weak head was nearly turned by the great change in her situation. The dinner was good and expensive, and consisted of many made dishes. As usual, some timid or some luxurious eater asked the lady occasionally what such a dish was. ‘I am sure I don’t know, you must ask my housekeeper,’ was the reply with a smile, as if she had said a good thing. As this answer was amusing enough, another person, out of a malicious love of fun, and then another, asked the same question, and the same answer was given. At length, the master of the house ventured to ask what was coming at the bottom of the table, when the fish was removed. ‘How can you be so ridiculous, Sir James,’ replied the lady indignantly, ‘as to ask me such a question? That is just like you! You know, since we have been rich enough to keep a housekeeper, I never trouble my head about those matters.’ ‘Suppose then, madam,’ said a very sarcastic old gentleman, who was intimate in the family, and from whom they expected a legacy, ‘suppose we have the housekeeper up; for she seems to have much more useful information than her lady.’ The lady looked silly, but had not capacity enough to understand the full force of the speech, and profit by it; for she again made the same reply to the same question; and soon after, while she was talking to the person next her, a gentleman asked her if she

would not like a piece of mince pie; and concluding it was the same tiresome question, she angrily answered, 'I am sure I don't know, you must ask my housekeeper.' This produced a general and most violent laugh; while the old gentleman observed, that as he did not approve of taking anybody's name in vain, he moved that the housekeeper so often named should be brought in to answer for herself."

"I thank ye, madam, for your story," said Mr. Egerton; "and in future, when I hear a lady say, 'I am sure I do not know what that dish is,' I shall translate her words into 'You troublesome person, ask my housekeeper.'"

"But silly as this lady was," observed Emma, "in her reply to her guests, she was still more offensive to me in that to her husband. There is nothing I dislike more than to hear a woman speak disrespectfully to the being whom she has sworn to honour."

"The same wise man from whom you have already quoted," replied Mr. Egerton, says, "'A woman that honoureth her husband shall be judged wise of all.' And Richardson, in his *Clarissa*, a book which many years hence I wish you to read, gives a fine monition to wives. When his hero Lovelace calls at a glover's shop, and desires to see the master of it, the wife replies that he is up stairs, and calls him down by the name of 'John!' on which Lovelace calls him also, and by the same familiar appellation of John. This gives great offence to the woman, and she reproaches him for taking such a liberty with her husband; to which he replies, 'Woman, learn to treat your husband with respect yourself, so shall you teach others to respect him.'"

"Admirably said," replied Mrs. Castlemain, "and the poor lady in my story might have profited by the hint. There is nothing so offensive, certainly, as the bickering of husbands and wives in company, especially in those conspicuous situations, the top and bottom of their own tables. I have sometimes seen *such* looks travel backwards and forwards!"



“Ay, so have I,” returned Mr. Egerton; “looks sent like a shuttlecock backwards and forwards from the one to the other.”

“But,” observed Emma, “it was like a shuttlecock then, could such a thing be, with the quills not the feathers uppermost, and those of the porcupine kind.”

“True,” said Mr. Egerton; “and I am of opinion that conjugal quarrels, like conjugal endearments, should never take place before company; and that those parents who quarrel with each other, and correct their children, before even their intimate friends, are positive nuisances in society.”

“This from you, Mr. Egerton!” replied Mrs. Castlemain laughing. “I thought you were so fond of having children corrected, that you would have no opportunity omitted; but, like King Arthur in Tom Thumb, you would bid the school masters

‘Whip all the little boys’

at any time.”

“Not so, madam,” answered Mr. Egerton smiling; “but if the alternative was, that they must be corrected in my presence, or not corrected at all, I should certainly say, whip away, and make no stranger of me. But let me quote in defence of that wise man King Arthur and myself, no less authority than that of the wise man in whose writings I am happy to see you, Emma, so conversant; ‘He that loveth his son causeth him often to feel the rod, that he may have joy of him in the end.’ Again, ‘He that chastiseth his son shall have joy of him, and shall rejoice of him amongst his acquaintance.’ ‘A horse not broken becometh headstrong, and a child left to himself will be wilful.’”

“Ay, ay, all this is very wise, I know,” said Mrs. Castlemain, and ‘Spare the rod, and spoil the child,’ is a well-known proverb; but there is also another proverb, Mr. Egerton, about bachelors’ wives and so forth.”

“True, madam, and a very sensible proverb it is; for it means that people are very apt, overlooking the difficulties of those tasks which they have not been called upon to perform, to arrogate to themselves a power of acting better and more wisely in a difficult situation than their neighbours and friends. But in this case the proverb does not apply to me; for I am fully aware of the difficulties of bringing up children properly; and though I am well convinced that the parents who have resolution to correct their offspring, love them more truly than those whose fine feelings, forsooth, forbid them to do it, I can make allowances for the obstacles thrown in the way of such corrections by a selfishness looking so very like the virtue of parental tenderness. But all I pretend to say is, that the conduct towards children which I admire, though rare perhaps, is very possible. Though not so fortunate as to be a parent myself, my mother was a parent; and I am well convinced, that whatever of good there is in my temper or disposition, I owe to her judicious corrections in the early stages of my childhood. I have also known many mothers, (for on mothers chiefly depends the conduct which forms the temper of the child,) whom I have surveyed with affection and veneration, while the firm and salutary frown of maternal severity could scarcely conceal the starting tear of maternal tenderness as they inflicted, magnanimously inflicted, punishment on present error, from the consciousness that it was the means of preventing more serious guilt in future. Some such mothers I have still the happiness of knowing; the grave has hidden others from my view, and circumstances separated me from many; but lovely and venerable is the recollection of them to my mind! And when all my conduct towards you, dear madam, has showed, during Emma’s childhood, that I thought you capable, with a little exertion, of being all that these mothers were, I do not think I deserved to have a musty proverb thrown in my teeth as a sort of reproach, and I must say that it exhibited too much of pique and temper.”

“Perhaps it did,” replied Mrs. Castlemain, “and I sincerely ask your forgiveness.”

“My forgiveness! O fy! the fault was too trifling to require such an apology. But I see by the light of yon lamp that you are looking very arch, Miss Castlemain. Pray why is this?”

“Nay, nothing; only that one has heard of a man’s going to see that good-for-nothing person a house-breaker, executed in just punishment of his offences, and taking the opportunity himself of picking a pocket.”

“Well, Emma, and now for the application.”

“Why, sir, you reproached my poor grandmother with quoting a proverb against you, in spite and ill-temper, and in a manner at least as indicative of anger as hers was.”

“True, child, true; and I beg pardon in my turn.” Here the coach stopped at the door of the hotel.

When Emma had retired for the night, Mrs. Castlemain told Mr. Egerton that she wished to speak to him. “You said just now, sir, that some years hence you would wish Emma to read *Clarissa*, and I doubt not but your reasons for wishing her to defer reading it so long are very good ones. But, I must tell you, that Madame de Lamoignon reproached me the other day, because Emma at nineteen had not yet read that book,—a book which, she assured me, most French mothers think it right, as one of the first sources of moral instruction, to put into the hands of their daughters at seventeen. But I replied to her that I could see no necessity for this.”

“No, madam, no more than to make a point of leading your pupil into a squalid and filthy cottage, the abode of dirt and poverty, in order to teach her the necessity of keeping her person clean. Can the death-bed of a Sinclair, and the horrible fate of *Clarissa*, be necessary to teach a young woman to hate vice, love virtue, and detest a villain? And as this otherwise admirable work contains very improper descriptions, and scenes of infamy with which it must sully a young woman’s mind to be acquainted, I must think that putting this book in the hands of a girl, by way of improving

her morals, is like giving a person a wound in order to bestow on them a plaister. Still, I consider the Clarissa of Richardson as a national boast; and so far from objecting to the formal manners of his Harlowe family, I think one might as well object to the dresses of Vandyke, and Lely and Kneller's portraits, because they are not according to the present fashion. The manners of the Harlowes are the manners of that time of day, and I cannot therefore wish to spare them an atom of their stateliness."

"I agree with all you have said," replied Mrs. Castlemain, "and am happy to find my opinions sanctioned by yours."

The next day Mrs. Felton was to accompany them to the Petits Augustins. It was agreed that they should meet in the Louvre Gallery, and walk thence to Mrs. Castlemain's hotel, whence they were to proceed in that lady's carriage. The walk from the Louvre lay, as I have before said, across the Place de la Concorde; and as the day was fine, the sunbeams beautifully illuminated the splendid objects which that scene exhibits. Our travellers, standing near the scaffolding then erected on the spot where the guillotine stood, and where once stood the equestrian statue of Louis Quinze, paused awhile to gaze upon the grand assemblage of objects. Behind them were the palace and gardens of the Thuilleries; on the right, the magnificent pile of building called Le Garde Meuble, divided by the widest street in Paris, the Rue de la Concorde, terminated by the numerous columns of La Madelaine. On the left were the river, and the Palais Bourbon, with the distant dome of the Invalides; and in front the Elysian Fields, with the grand vista leading to the hill beyond.

"Were all Paris like this spot," cried Mr. Egerton, "the world surely could not parallel it as a city."

"But it is not," replied Mrs. Felton; "and lovely as is this scene, I must forget the horrors transacted in it before I can relish its beauty as it deserves. Alas! this is a spot which the world cannot parallel for other reasons than its loveliness."

“True,” said Mr. Egerton, the thought of his murdered friend painfully recurring to him. “And what a brief but eventful chronicle is the place in which we now are! In that palace lived and reigned Louis XVI. On the very spot on which we now stand, he was beheaded; in that church he lies buried; and all these striking memorials meet the eye as it were at once!”

“Ay,” observed Emma, “in that church his remains, his unhonoured remains indeed, lie buried.”

“Yes,” replied Mrs. Felton, “amidst the bones of those humbler individuals who were crushed to death amongst the crowds assembled to witness the rejoicings which took place on his nuptials.”

“True, madam,” returned Mr. Egerton, “and I never feel more disgust at the operations of temper, (here he smiled significantly at Emma,) that universal agent in all human actions, and that soul of party spirit, than when they lead men to assume as it were the terrors of the Almighty, and presume to point the arrows of retributive justice. Often have I heard the circumstance of the poor king’s being buried with the victims of his bridal-day, mentioned as an awful and signal instance of retribution; than which, nothing could be further from the truth, as no one can be properly said to suffer for a crime he never committed. Had the unhappy Louis ordered these persons so buried to be crushed to death, or had he by an act of sovereign power caused them to be put in a situation of which death was the unavoidable consequence, then might this circumstance be held up as a sign of retributive justice. But he was only an accessory to this dreadful fact, by having been, as a bridegroom, the cause of the festivity which called together those wretched people who perished in the gratification of their curiosity. This is one amongst many of those cruel deductions and observations which the virulence of party spirit makes, and partisans adopt as true without giving themselves the trouble of asking their own understandings whether it be really the truth or

not; and this spirit caused Louis to be buried in that spot, as an expiatory offering to the manes of those unfortunate people!”

“As exhibiting an awful picture of human passions in uncontrolled action,” said Mrs. Castlemain, “the history of the French revolution is an instructive volume to read, though every page be written in characters of blood.”

“Alas!” replied Mr. Egerton, “in such characters must the history of *every* revolution be written; for private dislikes and personal resentments are commonly amongst the most powerful motives of the promoters of revolutions, and Temper reigns triumphant under the specious name of Public Spirit!”

“Conversations like these, and the sight of a scene like this,” said Mrs. Felton, “are no bad preparation for what we are going to survey,—the tombs of those illustrious dead on whom the mean vengeance of Temper did indeed, under the mask of patriotism, vent itself with even Vandal barbarity.”

At this moment Mrs. Castlemain’s carriage appeared in sight, and the coachman came forward to meet them; while Emma slyly whispering Mr. Egerton, said, “So, sir, you could not forbear mounting your hobby-horse just now. But I suspect, by Mrs. Felton’s looking so grave when you began to talk about Temper, and your system concerning it, that your hobby gave her a kick or two. However, we shall find out if that was the case.”

The Museum of Ancient Monuments which our travellers were now visiting, is in the Rue des Petits Augustins, and in the former monastery of that name. There are now deposited the tombs and monuments of the metropolis, as well as of other parts of France, which, saved from the destruction of Jacobin fury, are here historically and chronologically arranged. With judicious accuracy, the chamber<sup>[5]</sup> containing the works of the twelfth century is decorated with the architectural ornaments peculiar to that age; and the same excellent plan is adopted in ornamenting the other chambers, containing in succession the monuments of the

thirteenth, fourteenth, fifteenth, sixteenth, seventeenth, and eighteenth centuries; while the garden, dignified by the pompous name of the Elysium, contains forty statues, besides several tombs and urns raising their marble heads amidst pine trees, cypresses, and poplars. Here rest entombed the ashes of Abelard and Eloisa; here the illustrious remains of Descartes, Moliere, Lafontaine, and Boileau, and those of many other great men who are immortal in the pages of French history, and were judged worthy of having their names and actions recorded on monumental marble.

The interest which our travellers and Mrs. Felton expected to feel in these scenes, so calculated to call forth a variety of recollections and emotions, did not fall short of their expectations; and they gazed with gratified attention on the sculptured features of many a one whose valour, whose weaknesses, whose virtues, or whose genius, had been made known to them by the pages of history. The monument of cardinal Richelieu was already known to them by engravings; and there were others, amongst which was that erected by Le Brun to the memory of his mother, sculptured from a design of his own, of which they were happy to be enabled to perpetuate the recollection by similar means. When they entered the chamber of the sixteenth century, in which one of the most striking things is the monument of Diane de Poitiers, duchess of Valentinois, they saw a gentleman looking at this tomb with great attention, and contemplating the features of the once captivating beauty, whose kneeling figure was worthy of admiration; and when he turned round they recognised Varley, whom Emma immediately presented to Mrs. Felton, Mr. Egerton being too much engaged in consulting the book he held in his hand to do this kind office for his protégé. It was Lenoir's "Description Historique et Chronologique des Monumens de Sculpture réunis au Musée des Monumens Français."

"I am amused," said Mr. Egerton smiling, "with this sentimental gentleman's account of this tomb, that of Diane de Poitiers."

"Who was she?" asked Emma.

“The mistress of Henry the Second, who was the husband of Catherine de Medicis.”

“A mistress! and of a married man too! And yet there is a splendid monument erected to her memory!” exclaimed Emma.

“There spoke the uncorrupted feeling of a virtuous heart,” replied Mr. Egerton. “Yes, Emma, it is even so; but Diane de Poitiers, the lady of Anêt, whither she retired on the death of Henry, and where she died at an advanced age, might have a tomb erected to her, as this was within her own chapel, without any offence to good morals. And I, as an Englishman, cannot object to it, when the remains of one of our celebrated actresses, a woman notoriously the unmarried mother of children by different men, after lying in state in the Jerusalem chamber, was interred in Westminster Abbey. But what strikes me, and *offends* me as contrary to decorum and good morals, is what this Frenchman *values* himself upon; and that is, that the ‘emails or enamels, which he has introduced in the pedestal of her statue, suit it exactly, since, on one side is seen Francis the First, and on the other Henry the Second, at the feet of Diane, who is surrounded by love-ciphers, such as ornamented all the monuments erected by Henry’s orders.’ Thus does he show himself vain of perpetuating the remembrance of an adulterous intercourse, as if it were the bright spot on the life of the departed sinner, whom this breathing marble represents, instead of a stain on it, which it would be kinder to shroud in oblivion.”

“But what does he say of this celebrated woman?” asked Mrs. Felton.

“Oh! he calls her ‘illustre, aimable,’ and so forth.”

“And does he not regret that her talents and her graces were clouded over by her misconduct?” said Mrs. Castlemain.

“Oh, no.”

“And does he say nothing of her age?” asked Mrs. Felton laughing.



“No; even when speaking of a dead beauty he is too gallant to talk of her age.”

“Yet her age was one of the most remarkable parts of her history,” returned Mrs. Felton; “for she was more than forty when Henry the Second, who was then eighteen, fell in love with her!”

“Astonishing!” cried Emma.

“Not at all so to me,” observed Varley eagerly; “for, probably, as the poet says of Cleopatra,

‘Age could not wither her, nor custom stale  
Her infinite variety.’

For my part, *I* admire Henry’s taste, and do not wonder that, like a modern poet, he should have been apt to exclaim,

‘So lovely thou art still to me,  
I had rather, my exquisite mother,  
Repose in the sun-set of thee,  
Than bask in the noon of another.’”

It would have been difficult to say whose cheeks were of the deeper crimson at this moment, Mrs. Castlemain’s or Varley’s. While Emma, who stood behind them with Mr. Egerton, could not help whispering to him, that for ‘*mother*,’ she supposed Varley meant they should read ‘*grandmother*.’ Mrs. Castlemain during this whisper, said hastily, “What nonsense! A boy of eighteen in love with a woman of forty! He indeed has youth for the excuse of *his* folly, but there can be none for the lady’s.”

“Nay,” cried Mr. Egerton, “he had a still better,—economy; for, in choosing so sage and reverend a companion, he could make her serve both for privy counsellor and mistress *too*; and perhaps the lady, from a spirit of patriotism, consented to further this saving plan.”

“Well,” said Mrs. Castlemain pettishly, “I think this monument has detained us long enough; let us pass on to more.”

“I cannot regret our detention,” replied Mrs. Felton, “as it has drawn forth so many various comments;” and conscious that she was herself turned thirty, she looked with an eye of great complacency on the very pretty young man whose obliging taste led him, as it seemed, to value women, like wine, the more, rather than the less, for their age.

Emma was too *young* to feel thus gratefully, and her grandmother too *old* in her own sober judgment; but Varley soon observed that, whatever was the cause, this handsome Mrs. Felton paid great attention to what he said; and when he afterwards found that she was “an honourable, a fashionable, and a rich widow,” he began to think that Mrs. Castlemain’s place in his heart might perhaps be filled up even in a more stylish manner.

At length they reached the Elysium, where Varley, on having the tomb of Abelard and Eloisa pointed out to him, began to recite, with great propriety of action and sweetness of tone,

“If ever fate some wandering lovers bring,”

and so on to the line of

“Oh! may we never love as they have loved!”

“Thank you, Mr. Varley,” said Mr. Egerton, “given with good emphasis and discretion.”

“I beg pardon for my little effusion,” replied Varley, “but at sight of that tomb enthusiasm conquered every other feeling.

“Surely,” observed Mrs. Felton, “the sight of the tomb of those renowned and unfortunate lovers, Abelard and Eloisa, may well excite and excuse enthusiasm.”

“Why so?” said Emma. “For, after all, those unfortunate lovers were guilty ones also. When Mr. Egerton first read aloud to me the poem whence Mr. Varley quoted those fine lines, I was charmed by the beauty of the verse, and interested for the sorrow that it

expressed. But when I found that it was the sorrow of unlawful love, and not of a virtuous wife separated by force from a virtuous and beloved husband, that the writer too was a woman not ashamed of her error, but glorying in it, and preferring the title of mistress to that of wife, while the poet had only given more power and notoriety to her own profligate prose by clothing it in the most seducing poetical language, I lost the deep interest I originally felt for the eloquent nun, and can, I confess to you, gaze on this tomb with as much indifference nearly as on that of the mistress of Henry the Second.”

“I am far from sharing in this indifference,” said Mrs. Felton, “though on principle I ought; but the poem in question is so popular, that it is generally read long before one’s ideas of right and wrong are precisely defined to our own judgments, and one’s feelings are charmed without waiting for the leave of one’s principles. But did Mr. Egerton, your grave preceptor,” asked Mrs. Felton smiling, “really read that poem aloud to you?”

“Yes,” interrupted Mr. Egerton, “all that I could read with propriety; for it is very certain that this poem, which, as you justly observe, is in general request with all ages, is one that a man who respects your sex could not read aloud to any woman.”

“And were you, Miss Castlemain, contented with hearing it read?”

“Certainly; for surely what Mr. Egerton could not read *to* me, must be improper for me to read *to myself*.”

“Her mind, I see,” said Mrs. Felton, taking Mr. Egerton’s arm, and leading him aside, “has all its original whiteness unsullied.”

“It has been the endeavour of her most excellent parent and myself to keep it so,” he replied, delighted, as Mrs. Felton foresaw he would be, at this tribute to his mode of educating Emma; “and I flatter myself that the correct judgment which in my opinion she displayed in her comments on Eloisa, she exhibits on all moral subjects; and that you will never see my pupil allowing a veil of sentiment to give a false loveliness to the face of female frailty.”

“But are we not all too severe to one single error of that kind in our sex?”

“I think not; for, as the end of punishment is not to punish crime, but to deter from its commission, the individual delinquent must, I fear, be always on principle sacrificed for the good of the whole. Besides, I am much of Dr. Johnson’s opinion. ‘Chastity,’ says that excellent moralist, ‘is the great principle which a woman is taught. When she has given up that principle, she has given up every notion of female honour and virtue, which are all included in chastity.’”

“But where,” said Mrs. Castlemain, “is the tomb of Turenne! I expected to have seen that.”

“It has been removed from this place,” replied Mrs. Felton, “and you will see it at the Invalides, where it stands by itself, harmonizing well, as the monument of a great hero, with the memorials of French valour which surround it. Striking is it also by its dignified simplicity, and worthy of the simple greatness of him whom it contains; for it is of undecorated black marble, and its only inscription is the name of ‘Turenne’ in gold letters.”

“And that says enough,” replied Mr. Egerton. “I always liked the character of Marshal Turenne, and when I read the account of his death, and of its effects on all ranks, as given by Madame de Sevigne in her inimitable letter on the subject, I learnt to love him, and to envy France her hero.”

“O that the tomb of Madame de Sevigne were here!” cried Mrs. Castlemain. “Then indeed would my feelings be powerfully excited, and my judgment approve the utmost homage that they could pay!”

“True,” said Mr. Egerton, “for she was an honour not only to her nation, but humanity. She was chaste in an age and at a court where to be unchaste was scarcely considered as a crime. Young, beautiful, and adored, she was faithful to a grossly unfaithful husband. The perfect wife became as perfect a mother, and at

the early age of twenty-four she devoted herself exclusively to the children of her dear though unworthy husband; while in her maternal affection appeared a pure but decided passion as well as principle, as is exhibited by those admirable letters, which, though in some instances they are stained with passages not suited to the exemplary and matchless delicacy of Englishwomen, are models of wit, style, tenderness and friendship. I wish," continued Mr. Egerton, "that she had lived longer and happier; but it was no unfit end for this sweet and spotless lady to die the victim of maternal anxiety for the health of her daughter. And it is a comfort for me to think that she breathed her last at the house of that child for whom she had lived, and for whom she also died."

"Happy, enviable woman!" exclaimed Mrs. Castlemain with a faltering voice and a glistening eye; "for she died before her beloved daughter, and with the blessed consciousness of having fulfilled towards her every duty, and having displayed towards her the most unremitting tenderness and affection! Oh! how I envy her!"

Here Mr. Egerton, alarmed at her strong emotion, gently pressing her arm, recalled her to more self-command.

"I feel equal enthusiasm with you," said Mrs. Felton, "and wish much more strongly than you can do, that the monument of Madame de Sevigne was preserved in this interesting museum."

"Why so?" demanded Emma.

"Because I know the fate of that monument which was erected to her in the chapel of the castle of Grignan, her body being deposited in the vaults of the family.<sup>[6]</sup>

"During the reign of terror, the chateau with the church and family monuments were all laid in ruins; but when the destroyers came to the monument of this illustrious lady, on which was her effigy, a name so celebrated struck even them with a sacred awe, and the monument was left untouched."

“I thank you, I thank you heartily, madam, for this anecdote; it delights me to see such homage paid to the combination of exalted virtue with superior talent, even by barbarous ruffians like those.”

“Ay, but the sequel, dear sir! So far, so good; but as avarice was of stronger influence over them, than enthusiastic reverence for virtue,—when they entered the vaults, and found that the body of this illustrious woman was incased in lead, they carried away the coffin, and left the body to the chance of what might befall it.”

“Wretches!” cried Emma.

“Having been embalmed, it was found entire, and in a state of high preservation. It was dressed in a long robe of silk, fastened round the waist with a silver girdle. The girdle was carried away, as well as the coffin, and the body was in time deprived of its silken garment, by persons coming and taking a piece of it as a precious relic. The body remained amongst the ruins, and is probably now restored to its original dust,—while neglect and the injuries of the weather have laid this respected monument in ruins with the rest.”

“O that the same pious hands which preserved these monuments had been busy at Grignan!” cried Emma.

“Would that the same *politic* hands had been busy there!” replied Mr. Egerton, “for I doubt their being actuated wholly by feelings properly called pious; and would that we possessed some of the silk that covered those sacred remains! For, however philosophy may laugh at such feelings, and learn to consider the unconscious body as unworthy the respect of rational beings, when the soul has departed from it, I believe it salutary to the affections, that of the mouldering relics of those we loved, or honoured, we should continue to think as if they were still conscious, and to consider them as too sacred to be polluted by mortal touch; and coeval with this world itself be those feelings that make our departed friends revive in our own creative sensations! What is it that throws a charm over all that we are now contemplating, but a reverence for, and a sympathy with, those very feelings? Taught by our

own experience of similar emotions, fancy portrays the sorrowing affections which gratified themselves by erecting these memorials to those whom they loved; and whether the monument be one raised by private tenderness or national gratitude, it is by our power of entering into that enthusiasm, long since passed away and forgotten, which prompted the tributary erection, that we learn to feel so strongly while gazing on the cold unconscious marble, and to claim a sort of tender kindred with the dead who sleep beneath.”

From the time of this visit to the Musée des Monumens, Varley became an invited guest of Mrs. Felton’s, and he began to think that all the high-raised hopes of his vanity and ambition were likely to be gratified. I have before said that Varley danced admirably,—and he must indeed have been a good dancer to be admired as such in the circles of Paris; and as a man’s dancing only tolerably well is a proof that he must be of a respectable class in society, as his friends were rich enough to send him to a dancing-school, it was natural that the very superior style in which Varley danced should lead the Parisian world to believe him a person to whom fortune had facilitated the means of having the first instruction; therefore he was soon named the Chevalier Varley. Indeed his excellence in this art was a matter of surprise to Emma, who knew that he was poor, and understood that he was born of obscure parents; she was also sure that whatever his father might have been, his mother was a vulgar woman. While these thoughts were occurring to her, which as they rose she communicated to Mrs. Castlemain, who was with her at a ball near Paris, to which Mrs. Felton had brought Varley, she resolved as delicately as she could to interrogate Varley on the subject. And while he was handing her some ice, she said, “There is no accomplishment, perhaps, Mr. Varley, in which it is more advantageous to a young man, who is a stranger anywhere, to excel, than dancing; as a proficiency in that art, such a proficiency as yours I mean, indicates *une éducation très soignée*; you must have had the first masters, to dance as you do.”

“I had indeed a most admirable master; my poor father spared no pains for my improvement,” replied Varley, sighing.

“So it seems; I know no one who does so much, so well. Your father must have been a great loss to you.”

“He was indeed; for he never took a step but with a view to my future good; and had he lived, I should have certainly become rich by degrees.”

“I am always sorry when the prospects of youth are thus suddenly blasted,” said Emma kindly; “and I am very glad, Mr. Varley, that my admirable friend Mr. Egerton, is interested in your welfare, and has both the wish and the means of promoting it.”

Little did Emma suspect the double meaning of Varley’s words. The truth was, that his father was *a dancing-master*, and died before Varley was old enough to take his business.

Little also did she suspect that Varley, incapable of appreciating the generosity that he could not feel, was inclined to attribute Mr. Egerton’s wish to serve him to a consciousness that Emma loved him; and that, finding she was bent on marrying him some day or other, he had resolved, by getting him forward in life, to make the match as little unequal as he could. But the end of his ill-deserved elevation was near at hand.

A Russian nobleman had invited all the French and British of rank and fashion, in and near Paris, to a dress ball at his chateau about twelve miles from the metropolis; and Emma had leave to bring any one she liked. Varley, though he had accomplishments, had neither rank nor fashion, and was therefore not invited; but he pined to be at this splendid fête, at which, though no one was to be admitted in a *mask*, every one was to wear a masquerade dress or a fancy dress.

“I wish, dear sir,” said the kind-hearted Emma to Mr. Egerton, “you would go with us, and take Varley.”

“I go, in a masquerade or a fancy dress, to a ball, child!”



“Why not? you would look so well as a Druid!”

“Fy, fy! consider my profession. But perhaps you think that a clergyman is not more bound to abide by certain restraints than another man; and that he may play high, attend cock-fights and boxing-matches, and go a-masquerading?”

“No, indeed I do not. On the contrary, I think that the man whose profession it is to teach self-denial to others, should first set an example of it himself, and should never be addicted to such amusements as must lead him occasionally to association with dissolute and bad people. But that would not be the case here, and a Druid is a very venerable character.”

“My dear child, no man of my age and profession can assume any character without a total surrender of *his own*. I wish Varley to go to this fête, but I can’t introduce him. However, you recollect that monsieur de Lamoignan and his son will go with you and Mrs. Castlemain as your protectors; therefore there can be no impropriety in Varley’s being of the party.”

Accordingly the delighted Varley was told that Mrs. Castlemain would, on such a day, send her carriage for him, and take him to this splendid fête, Mr. Egerton having informed him that he must go in a fancy dress.

“What say you, Mr. Varley,” said he, “to going as a Highlander! What an opportunity would the Highland dress give you of showing off your Scotch steps, and playing Scotch tunes on your flute! and the dress ready provided.”

Varley, conscious the dress was becoming, and that it would give him an opportunity of great display, acceded to the proposal. “But,” said he, “I will go as the *Young Norval* and *spout Douglas*. Afterwards I can join the dance and play on the flute.” And Varley could neither eat, drink, nor sleep, for thinking how his constellation of talents would charm and astonish every one at the ball.

But in the meanwhile Mr. Orwell, feeling great resentment against the unknown asperser of Agatha's fame, resolved to find out, if he could, the author of the paragraph. Accordingly, he seized an opportunity of forming an acquaintance with the proprietor of the newspaper in which it appeared, and did so, just as Sir Charles Maynard, being returned from his tour, had gone to the office, and insisted that the writer of the paragraph against him should be given up, or he would proceed against the editor. But, finding that the writer, whose name they told him was Varley, was dismissed for having written this libel, and that the proprietor was not in the least to blame, he contented himself with the insertion of another paragraph, apologizing for the false statement in the first; while the proprietor could not help inveighing bitterly against Varley by name, and did so before Mr. Orwell, who soon discovered that the Varley whom Emma mentioned as a protégé of Mr. Egerton's, was the same Varley that had written the slanderous paragraph; and, obtaining the original, in Varley's own hand, he sent it over to Paris, to let Mr. Egerton see that he was fostering in his bosom the serpent that had wounded Mrs. Castlemain and her family, and might wound them again.

The day, the long-desired and expected day of the Russian nobleman's fête was at length arrived; and Varley, dressed in his Highland habiliments, to which he had added a shield and spear, in order to represent the young and gallant Douglas, was admiring himself and practising attitudes and steps before a whole-length glass. Sometimes he laughed, to admire the effect of his white teeth; sometimes he added a shade of black to his eyebrows; sometimes he laid on a deeper tint of rouge; and then finished his interesting survey of his own person by making an *entrechat*, to the great diversion of his opposite neighbours, who supposed it was "*un fou Ecossais*," and stood at the window to watch him.

"The poor Emma Castlemain, how she will look and love to-night!" thought Varley; "but I shall make her horribly jealous of the divine and honourable Lucy Felton!" At this moment, while he was

expecting the carriage that was to convey him to the scene of his triumph, instead of that anxiously-expected carriage, he received the following note from Mr. Egerton, enclosing the paragraph in the paper in *his own hand-writing*.—"Mr. Egerton is very much concerned at being forced to inform Mr. Varley that he does not consider the writer of anonymous libels as fit to be introduced to the house of a gentleman, or admitted to the society of one.—He therefore declines all further acquaintance with Mr. Varley."

I will not attempt to describe Varley's agonies at receiving this overthrow of all his splendid expectations, amongst which, the shame of detection, not the penitence of guilt, was predominant. The consequence was, that he the next morning put his plan in execution, and set off to walk through part of France in his Highland dress, with his flute in his pocket.

After a fortnight's absence, Balfour, unable to endure a longer absence from Emma, left his father two days' journey from Paris, and returned thither to see her for a day or two. He brought with him his father's unqualified approbation of his choice, and consent to his marriage, in a letter to Mrs. Castlemain, she having written to Lord Clonawley by his son, to explain who Emma was, and the particular circumstances of her situation. This letter, and what passed between him and Lord Clonawley, Balfour with great joy and animation communicated to Mrs. Castlemain alone. But when he entered the room where Emma was, and eagerly advanced to seize her hand and press it to his lips, she shrunk from his touch with such evident coldness, and seemed so little glad to see him again, that Balfour, stung to the soul at her behaviour, gave way to all the violence of his temper; which provoked such severe sarcasms from Emma, who could not help secretly drawing comparisons between him and St. Aubyn, that Balfour left the house in an agony of resentment and despair, and almost resolved in his own mind to give up for ever, the prosecution of a suit to which he met with so ungrateful a return.

As soon as he was gone, Emma severely reproached herself for her cruelty and ingratitude, and almost felt disposed to despise herself for behaving so unkindly towards a man who really loved her, and had with manly openness avowed his love, from the powerful and degrading influence, as she considered it to be, of one who, having gained her affections, had never offered her his own, but had left her for ever, as it appeared, in a manner at once offensive and incomprehensible. But Balfour did not return any more that evening; therefore he missed the opportunity of taking advantage of the whispers of her remorse. Nor did he come the next morning at his usual hour; for, being still too angry to see Emma with composure, he joined a party of young men to the Louvre Gallery, who flattered his vanity by begging him to tell them what pictures were most worth looking at; and while he was talking loud, and showing off with all the conceit of a connoisseur, Emma and Mrs. Felton, arm-in-arm, entered the Gallery. Balfour affected not to see Emma; but, being glad to display his real or supposed knowledge before her, he went on haranguing on the art of painting, and the beauty of particular pictures. As they came up the stairs, at the bottom of which some gentlemen had left them who had accompanied them in a walk in the Thuilleries, Emma had been rallying Mrs. Felton on the provoking sarcastic severity with which she had treated their harmless beaux, asking her whether all women of ton resembled her.

“Oh! by no means,” replied Mrs. Felton. “I assure you I am unique, no servile copy I, but a daring original.”

“Daring indeed,” said Emma, archly; “and who shall presume to follow such a leader!”

“No woman under the rank of an honourable, or without a certain reputation for talent, should attempt it, certainly,” replied Mrs. Felton, piqued at Emma’s meaning smile, and thrown off her guard so much as to give way to her natural love of mortifying the pride of others; “No, my dear child, no; as you are not a person of rank in society, what would only be thought whim and spirit in me would

be called rudeness in you; not that I flatter myself so far as to suppose you are likely to copy me, far from it!”

“Indeed,” cried Emma laughing, “I should not presume so far; and to prevent any foolish girls from attempting a task of so much danger, I think it would be a proper measure in the King to grant you a patent, running thus; ‘We grant to the honourable Lucy Felton, the sole use and benefit of certain airs and graces of her own inventing, for such a term of years; when the said Lucy Felton having made her fortune and left off business, the said airs and graces shall become the property of any lady whose rank entitles her to become a purchaser, and who thinks them worth the trouble of acquiring.’”

“So,” said Mrs. Felton colouring with resentment, and secretly resolved that she would not be long unrevenged; “you can be severe, I see, and I am not sure now that my caution was unnecessary.—But what have we here? Who is that gawky youth talking in that oracular tone of voice? Oh! I see now; it is a young man whom I saw at Frescati; Lord Clonawley’s son.” She did not add, though she had certainly not forgotten, that the said gawky youth had eternally offended her at Frescati, because, when pressed by a gentleman to be presented to Mrs. Felton, she had overheard him reply, “No, I like neither her face, her form, her dress, her expression, nor her manner;” a severity of criticism which few women, and certainly not a Mrs. Felton could be expected to pardon.

“Don’t you think,” said Mrs. Felton to Emma, “that youth is mighty disagreeable?—Yet, do you know, I hear a very pretty girl is in love with him, and is going to marry him!” Then, before the blushing Emma could reply, Mrs. Felton was standing near Balfour and listening to him with profound attention; while the vain youth went on with redoubled eloquence. Mrs. Felton then, with a half-courtesy to Balfour, begged leave to profit by his remarks, and asked him some questions relative to the names of certain pictures

and their subjects; which Balfour, flattered by the appeal, gave most elaborately.

“But what were you saying to these gentlemen,” said she, “concerning the ignorance of artists in general?”

“I was lamenting,” replied he, “that modern artists take so little trouble to excel. A painter should be everything: He should be an anatomist, that he may be able to draw accurately; he should be a sculptor, that he may know how to put flesh properly on the parts when drawn; he should be a botanist, that he may know how to paint plants with such accuracy that every botanist might swear to the class of every separate flower; he should be an architect, that he may know how to exhibit buildings correctly.”

“And,” interrupted Mrs. Felton with great gravity, “he should be a tailor, that he may know how to fit coat, waistcoat, and breeches properly to the body.” This speech occasioned a laugh, which disconcerted Balfour; “and,” added she, “after all these *should-bes*, he should have the years of Methuselah, to enable him to complete so elaborate a course of study;” then, being tired of his harangue, and wishing to give him his coup de grace, she made him another drop, and, thanking him for the trouble he had taken, said that he was one instance amongst many, of the politeness of the French nation, which, for the convenience of English travellers, had provided them with a showman of their own country.

“A showman!” cried Balfour turning pale, “Do you take me for a showman, madam? The lady with yon, by informing you better, might have spared me this insult.”

“This lady does not know you, I believe, sir,” she replied, “and how can you call my very natural mistake an insult? for who could suppose that a man would take so much trouble, unless he was employed and paid for it?”

“Miss Castlemain,” cried Balfour, “surely, in consideration of the intimacy that subsists between us, you might have prevented me from experiencing the mortification of this moment!”

“Intimacy!” exclaimed Mrs. Felton. “Sir, she disclaimed all knowledge of you.”

“How can you say so?” cried Emma. “You know, before I could answer, you accosted—”

“Ay, very true; so I did;—but pray Mr. Gaw—Gawky, forgive—”

“My name is not Gawky, madam,” replied Balfour colouring.

“No! wrong again, I protest;—Why, my dear, I am sure you told me the gentleman’s name was Gawky.”

“Mrs. Felton,” replied Emma indignantly, “I beg you will not attribute to me speeches which can become no woman ‘under the rank of an *honourable*’ and of ‘*some reputation in the world for talent*’? but remember, that what is ‘only *whim* and *spirit*’ in you, would be ‘*rudeness*’ in me; and Mr. Balfour knows, that to raise a laugh at the expense of another is contrary both to my habits and my inclination.”—There she stopped, and the grave rebuke,

“Severe in youthful beauty, added grace  
Invincible.

Mrs. Felton angrily bit her lip, and felt that Emma’s retort had a little damped the triumphant revenge which she had taken on Balfour, for his speech concerning her at Frescati, and on Emma for her well-deserved sarcasms; while Emma held out her hand affectionately to Balfour. But he, too angry to accept it, and be just, indignantly left the room.

“So then, I suspect,” cried Mrs. Felton, taking her arm, and making her walk up and down the Gallery, “I suspect you are the pretty girl who is going to marry that handsome savage; for handsome he is, and most uncommonly so; and when you have tamed him a little, he may be worth knowing. So no wonder you answered me so spitefully;—but is it really to be!”

“Possibly,” replied Emma sighing deeply, “some time or other.”

“But bless me! how dismal you look! Is that the effect of the sweet prospect of marrying the man of your heart? for I conclude he is the man of your heart; else, young, beautiful, and rich, as you are, I cannot see why you should marry him.”

“Nor I neither,” pettishly answered Emma.

“And really, to do him justice,” coolly returned Mrs. Felton, “he has a great command of words, and is very handsome as I said before;—not,” added she, thinking the time was come for her to strike the stroke she meditated, “not that I think him as handsome as another Englishman, who I am sorry to say is not now in Paris, a dear friend of mine, who has lately made a great noise here, and is quite the hero of the day. I conclude you know whom I mean.” And so confused was Emma at this address, that nothing but her habitual reverence for truth could have prevented her replying, “No; I know not to whom you allude.” But the rising falsehood was instantaneously checked, while in a faltering voice she said, “I conclude you mean Mr. St. Aubyn.”

“To be sure I do,” answered Mrs. Felton. “Oh! now I recollect, by the by, that St. Aubyn is or was an old friend of yours. Yes, yes, I recollect you are the little girl to whom he once addressed some pretty lines, entitled ‘To Emma, aged twelve, on her birth-day.’”

“Did Mr. St. Aubyn show you those verses?” said Emma blushing.

“O, yes! and when I said ‘I should like to see now you will write to Emma aged eighteen,’ he made me an answer which, to use a French phrase, m’intrigua beaucoup.”

“What was it?” demanded Emma in a voice faint from emotion.

“Why, he said, ‘To Emma aged eighteen I shall probably not write at all.’ But I believe,” she added with affected carelessness, “I quite mistook his meaning, and he has not, I fancy, written to you at all since you was eighteen.”

“No, ma’am, he has not,” replied Emma almost in a tone of vexation.



“That’s a pity, for he writes charmingly. Indeed, now I recollect, he has not seen much of you for the last two years. It is a pity he is not in Paris. If he were, I would ask him to meet you at my hotel one day. But he is gone to see a poor sick man, the father of an emigrant whom he knows in London, who on his way hither was taken ill, and is at a village twenty miles off; for St. Aubyn is, you know, a good creature. Poor fellow! he expects to be summoned to England to see his mother; but he has promised me to come back, unless she is in danger, in order to see me across the water. He came over with me; but when I went round by Flanders, he chose to come on to Paris, in a fit of jealousy forsooth, because I took some notice of a German baron who was of my party.”

All this was said with an air so natural that it deceived Emma exactly as the speaker meant it should; however, struggling with her feelings, she replied, “But what will Mademoiselle de Coulanges say to Mr. St. Aubyn’s attendance on you?”

“Oh! you have heard that idle report, have you?—But I assure you there is no truth in it, none. At least, I know from undoubted authority, that when the lady’s friends hinted to him that if he offered he would certainly be accepted, he honestly confessed that his affections were fixed elsewhere.—Bless me! what is the matter with you?” cried Mrs. Felton at this moment; “I fear you are going to faint; let me lead you to a seat.”

“Thank you,” said Emma sitting down, “I feel a giddiness in my head.”

“Well, thank heaven! the complaint is not in your heart.” And Emma, roused to exertion by this speech, which she did not attribute to chance, regained her composure, and with a proud feeling of insulted delicacy looked her tormentor in the face.

“I beg your pardon,” said Emma; “my illness interrupted you; you were saying something about mademoiselle de Coulanges and Mr. St. Aubyn,—then it is not to be a match?”

“A match! O dear, no!—how could you believe it?”

“Why not? She is very young, very pretty, and very rich.”

“Ay, but a woman may be all these, and yet not be able to attach permanently such a man as St. Aubyn.” And Emma felt that this truth as it *seemed* was aimed at *her*.

“Yet St. Aubyn can *love*,” resumed Mrs. Felton; “I could show you some lines of his addressed to a friend of mine.”

“A friend of yours,” repeated Emma, scarce knowing what she said.

“Yes. By the by, I believe I have them about me.” So saying, she took a pocket-book out of her *reticule*, and taking out some MS. verses, presented them to Emma, observing, “You know his hand.”

“Perfectly,” answered Emma, and opened the paper. The verses were those which St. Aubyn wrote out from memory for Mrs. Felton to show Wanford, when he had owned that he had lost the copy she gave him, and which were in reality written to her by a Mr. Trevor! But Emma, too guileless herself to suspect guile in another, saw it was really St. Aubyn’s hand-writing, and implicitly believed that he had addressed them to Mrs. Felton. When therefore she read

“Then be it so, and let us part,  
Since love like mine has fail’d to move thee,”

a mist came over her eyes; and unable to go on, she told Mrs. Felton she would, with her leave, keep them to read at her leisure.

“By all means,” replied Mrs. Felton. “The poor soul was very dismal when he wrote them; but those hours of gloom are over, and I trust that happier days are in store for him. I have a miniature of St. Aubyn at home,” she added, “which I will show you some day or other.”

Emma now, affecting great gaiety, talked very fast, and laughed very loud, though she said nothing at all laughable; and seeing Mr. Egerton, she challenged him to walk three times round the Thuilleries gardens before dinner; while Mrs. Felton, thinking she

had said all that was necessary to convince Emma that St. Aubyn was attached to herself, bade her farewell till the next day; convinced that, though Emma secretly preferred St. Aubyn to Balfour, pride would in all probability induce her to make an effort to overcome her passion, and thereby render certain a union which at present was only probable; “and then,” thought Mrs. Felton, “St. Aubyn may perhaps be mine!”

It required all Mr. Egerton’s speed to keep up in any degree with Emma during their walk. The restlessness of her mind imparted itself to her movements; and as she dreaded rest, since rest would bring leisure to think, it was not till Mr. Egerton pleaded excessive fatigue, that he could prevail on her to turn her steps towards the hotel. At dinner, Emma’s total want of appetite alarmed her affectionate companions.

“Do, Emma, eat some of this dish,” said Mrs. Castlemain; “I ordered it on purpose for you.”

“You are very good,” replied Emma, “but you know I am not dainty.”

“No, my dear girl; but your appetite has lately been so indifferent, that I wished to tempt it to the best of my power.”

“You are ever kind and indulgent,” said Emma, a tear filling her eye, “and I will try to eat.”

“How unfortunate!” exclaimed Mrs. Castlemain. “I ordered most of these things for Emma and Mr. Balfour—and Emma can’t eat, and Mr. Balfour did not come.”

“Did you ask, did you expect him to dinner?” said Emma eagerly.

“Yes, to be sure I did; but just now he sent a note of excuse.”

“I am sorry, very sorry for it,” returned Emma. “Then I fear he is seriously offended with me, though without adequate cause.—Would he were here! For never since I have known him did I feel so affectionately, so warmly towards him as I do at this moment.”

“I am prodigiously glad to hear that,” cried Mrs. Castlemain; while Mr. Egerton, who had been observing Emma in perturbed silence, sighed, but spoke not. At length Emma, complaining of a bad headache, said she would go and lie down awhile, and hastily retired to her apartment.

As soon as the servants were withdrawn, Mr. Egerton said, “This ought not to be, madam. It is evident to me that Emma has some terrible weight on her mind; and with your approbation I should like to tempt her to a disclosure of it, provided you yourself will not undertake the task.”

“I had rather not,” replied Mrs. Castlemain; “but I wish you by all means to do so.” And as soon as Emma re-appeared, it was settled that Mr. Egerton should request a private conversation with her.

Emma meanwhile lay down, but not to *rest*. Busy memory recalled every hour of her past intercourse with St. Aubyn, since his acquaintance with Mrs. Felton; and she now recollected that he must (unconsciously to himself, she admitted,) have even then imbibed sentiments for that lady, which justified the jealous suspicions she herself always *felt* relative to her; which sentiments being now, as she evidently saw, returned, had ripened into sincere, ardent, and *successful* love,—for was it possible that a woman should have the picture of a man whom she did not expect to marry? Then her thoughts dwelt on poor Mademoiselle de Coulanges, who was also said to be attached to him. But could she have felt for St. Aubyn a real attachment in so short a time, unless he had given her reason to suppose he felt attachment towards *her*? No;—and when she considered his conduct towards herself and this young lady, she could not acquit him of being that most despicable character, a male coquette; for it was evident that Mrs. Felton was, and had ever been, the only real object of his affections. She then ventured to read the verses so falsely attributed to St. Aubyn; and having read them, she fell back on her pillow, in an agony of wounded pride and jealous love. But at length the soothing thought, that the extent of her weakness was known only

to herself, and that St. Aubyn, if she married before him, would never suspect that her regard for him had exceeded the bounds of friendship, tranquillized her mind in a degree; and feeling more tenderly towards Balfour, in proportion as St. Aubyn decreased in her good opinion, she at length returned to the drawing-room tolerably composed. But her composure vanished, when on her entrance Mr. Egerton took her hand, and begging to have some conversation with her in her dressing-room, led her thither in silence.

“Emma,” said Mr. Egerton, after a pause of great emotion, “I have hitherto forborne, from respect to the pride and delicacy of your sex, to endeavour to remove the veil which you have so properly drawn between the feelings of your heart and the curiosity of others. But both Mrs. Castlemain and myself are so alarmed and distressed, at witnessing the present agitated state of your mind, that we conjure you, by all our past and present affection for you, to confide in that affection, and let us know what are the secret sorrows that oppress you! My dear child,” added he, “recollect that our peace of mind depends on you, and that we must be wretched while we see that you are so.” Here emotion stopped him from proceeding; and Emma, every feeling of pride and reserve overcome by the claims of gratitude and affection, replied,

“Put to me, sir, any question that you please, and I will answer you.”

“Well then,” said Mr. Egerton, “are you not going to give your hand to one man, while your heart is wholly in possession of another?”

“Had you put that question to me, sir, yesterday,” replied Emma, “I must, I fear, have answered *Yes*—but to-day I feel myself justified in answering *No*.”

“Indeed! can a few hours have obliterated an image so long and so deeply impressed on your heart? Are you well assured that you are not under the influence of jealousy?” Emma paused for a moment,

and then, without further comment, related to Mr. Egerton the progress of her attachment to St. Aubyn; her idea that it was mutual; her jealousy of Mrs. Felton after his return from his tour; her endeavours, on principle, to return the love of Balfour; the prospect she now had of succeeding in those endeavours; and finally, the whole of what had passed between her and Mrs. Felton relative to St. Aubyn.

“Amazing!” cried Mr. Egerton. “Is it possible that St. Aubyn can be in love with her, after having known you? Answer me, Emma; did his evident emotion when he saw you in the Palace appear to you a proof of indifference and aversion, or of still straggling but concealed love?”

“Of the latter. But I am now convinced that emotion proceeded from a remorseful consciousness that he had basely endeavoured to gain my affections, without any real intention of offering me his in return.”

“Impossible!” warmly replied Mr. Egerton, “my life upon his honour!”

“At least you will own,” answered Emma rather indignantly, “that his avoiding me, and attending Mrs. Felton, with those verses and the picture, are very suspicious circumstances; besides his having refused the hand of Mademoiselle de Coulanges, on the plea of a prior attachment.”

“Nay, that proves nothing. You as well as Mrs. Felton may be the object of that attachment.”

“Well, sir,” resumed Emma proudly; “but suppose that I am the object of St Aubyn’s concealed affection, concealed through dire and invincible necessity, what would you have me do? Would you have me wait humbly and patiently till he thinks fit to come and say, ‘Will you marry me, dear Ally, Ally Croker?’ and would you then have me make him a courtesy, and say, ‘Yes, if you please to accept me, kind sir!’ No! forbid it every feeling of woman’s pride and woman’s delicacy!”

“But is it therefore necessary that you should marry a man you do not love?”

“There is no danger of that. It will very soon be in Balfour’s power, I am convinced, to convert my present feelings towards him into positive tenderness. Besides, I have ever considered a woman who has so much meanness, and such a want of self-respect, as to pine in love for a man who has either never loved or has forsaken her, to be in the next degree of vice to a woman who has forfeited her honour; and I am well convinced that I shall be able to act up to this principle completely, as soon as, by a marriage with a man who adores me, the barrier of wedded duty will be raised between me and Mr. St Aubyn.”

“But suppose Balfour, from the obsequious lover, becomes the tyrant husband?”

“He will not do so; for he is conscious of his own infirmities of temper; and I am sure the influence over him which I possess, and which my not loving him as much as he loves me will allow me to increase, as I shall not be thrown off my guard by ungovernable tenderness, will enable me to keep his temper in subjection, especially as I am tolerably sure of my own now.”

“Indeed,” said Mr. Egerton doubtfully, “your temper is a *corrected* temper; and were you to be united to a man of such a disposition as is possessed by one that I could name, I have no doubt of your continuing to exercise proper self-command; but, when exposed to the contagion of a violent temper, I doubt the force of bad example will awaken dormant tendencies, and that you will too late repent the rashness which led you to marry a man in hopes of improving him. Yet one question more,” he added, “have you disclosed to Mr. Balfour your attachment to St. Aubyn?”

“Not directly; but I have told him of our long-intimacy and friendship, and of my sorrow at his sudden and apparently unmotivated estrangement from me. But I will summon resolution to tell him more, and even to own that I had unsolicited bestowed

my affections. For, though a delicate woman must feel agonies at owning so degrading a truth, an ingenuous woman feels still more from concealing it.”

“I do not doubt it,” replied Mr. Egerton; “still the task of disclosing such a truth is a difficult one, and one from which a common mind would shrink for ever. But I expect more from an uncommon mind like yours, and principles and practice usually so pure and upright. It is your duty to be as explicit with Balfour as you have been with me. Your future happiness depends on it; for on mutual ingenuousness must all connubial happiness be built.”

“I agree with you,” replied Emma, faintly, “and I will tell Balfour all directly; feeling at this moment, as I have often done before, great self-upbraiding at having so long delayed to tell the degrading tale.”

“Not so, Emma. Loving a St. Aubyn is no degradation; and though he never in words solicited your love, I am witness that he did so every day by his attentions.”

“Then how, sir, can you excuse or account for his present conduct?”

“That I cannot do; but I still believe that time will, and satisfactorily. However, I see that you will and must marry Balfour, provided his self-love, which is I think as strong as his love, strong as that may be, is proof against knowing that you *have loved*, if you do not *still* love, another. If, when he knows that, he still perseveres in his suit, I shall feel him raised considerably in my estimation, and shall with less fear commit to him the guardianship of your happiness.”

“At every risk, however,” replied Emma, “I will tell him the whole truth; and then, come what come may, I shall have done my duty, and shall not have to add to the sorrows I now experience, the aggravated misery of self-condemnation.”



“Spoken like yourself, my dear child,” replied Mr. Egerton; while with the lofty mien and open countenance of conscious integrity, Emma, on being told that Mr. Balfour was below, desired him to be shown into her dressing-room. He entered with an expression of joy on his countenance, which surprised Emma. It was occasioned by Mrs. Castlemain having, in the joy of her heart, informed him of Emma’s affectionate feelings towards him, and her hope that their union was now not only probable, but certain. Soon after, Mr. Egerton retired; and Emma, putting an immediate stop to Balfour’s expressions of penitence and love, begged that he would listen to her in uninterrupted silence.

I shall not detail what Balfour’s feelings were during her confession, nor his expression of those feelings. Suffice that, when she had ended, Emma said, “And now, dear Balfour! I leave you to think over alone, uninfluenced by my presence, all that I have been saying; and if, after a night’s calm deliberation, you still feel inclined to entrust your happiness in my hands, come to me tomorrow morning, and I pledge myself most solemnly to tender you this hand, as a pledge of grateful, faithful, and principled affection.” So saying she ran out of the room, and Balfour saw her no more that night,—a night to Emma, as well as to himself, of anxious perturbation. The next morning by eight o’clock he was at the hotel, and Emma soon after joined him.

“I come,” said Balfour, as soon as he saw her, “to claim this promised hand, as I am sure that my devoted affection will at length procure to me a full return, and to you with ardent and confiding love I willingly entrust my happiness.”

“Take it! it is yours!” said Emma, blushing and sighing as she spoke; and Balfour, seeing Mrs. Castlemain enter the room, led Emma up to her, and begged her blessing on them.

“This is as I hoped,” she cried, mixing tears with her blessings. And Mr. Egerton, on hearing what had passed, endeavoured to pronounce his congratulations as steadily as Mrs. Castlemain; but he could not do it; and it was a relief to him to hear that Balfour

was forced to set off immediately to his father, who was taken very ill on the road.

Before he departed, he candidly told Emma that he did not approve her having much intercourse with Mrs. Felton. "And I think," said he, "you yourself cannot desire it now. For, if she is to be the wife of St. Aubyn, it will be impossible for you to talk with her on her prospects, without betraying the deep interest you once felt in him yourself; and if she be his mistress, she is an improper acquaintance for you."

"His mistress!" cried Emma; "such a suspicion never entered my mind."

"Very likely; but I dare say it may be a very just one, notwithstanding."

"At any rate," replied Emma, "I do not wish to see much of Mrs. Felton. Besides, I am not a little inclined to resent her rudeness to you."

This speech delighted Balfour, and he asked her how she would avoid Mrs. Felton.

"I will tell you how," said Emma. "Your sister Fanny is very unwell at Montmorenci, and has sent to request me to visit her. To-morrow morning I have promised to accompany two friends from K——, just arrived, to the Petits Augustins; but before the evening I will set off for Montmorenci, and stay there as long as my grandmother will spare me." And Balfour, satisfied with this arrangement, bade her adieu, to return to his father, with more tranquillity of mind than usual. Emma too, considering her fate as fixed, exerted herself to preserve the appearance of content, as one means towards procuring the reality, and she set off to the Petits Augustins, with a quiet heart and a calm countenance. A visit to the tombs was indeed congenial with her feelings; and what so likely to speak peace to each rebellious passion, and soberize the vanity of human wishes and expectations, as the contemplation of those mementos of mortality, and the lowly beds of kings and queens,

of heroes and legislators, who having been the sport of their own passions and the passions of others, there, heedless of their enmity while living, sleep beside each other in the cold forgetfulness of the grave, reminding long suffering and patient affliction, that at last her miseries, like theirs, will find a resting place and an oblivion.

“When I look upon the tombs of the great,” says Addison, “every emotion of envy dies in me; when I read the epitaphs of the beautiful, every inordinate desire goes out; when I meet with the grief of parents upon a tombstone, my heart melts with compassion; when I see the tomb of the parents themselves, I consider the vanity of grieving for those whom we must quickly follow.”

Emma, in pensive silence, listened to the remarks of her companions, as they passed from the monuments of one age to those of another, till at last they entered the Elysium, and the tomb of Abelard and Eloisa was pointed out to them by their guide. As they approached, they saw a man evidently absorbed in a deep reverie, leaning his head on his hands against this interesting monument. The gentleman who accompanied Emma, on seeing him, said to her in a low voice,

“O’er the cold marble shall they join their heads,  
And drink the falling tear each other sheds.”

But this poor gentleman can only drink his own. What a pity that his love is not with him, to realize the fancy of the poet!”

Emma was about to reply, when, the gentleman raising his head, she could discern his profile sufficiently to see that she beheld St. Aubyn! and overpowered, bewildered, and surprised, she became heedless of her steps, and fell over a piece of marble that lay across the path.

St. Aubyn turning round, and seeing the accident, ran to her assistance as eagerly as her friends, and felt full as much emotion as she did when he recognised in the pale and trembling being whom he supported, and whom pain and emotion both made ready

to faint, that Emma, whose probable marriage and attachment to another, having just been communicated to him by Mrs. Felton, had made him wander forth he scarcely knew whither, till, finding himself near the Petits Augustins, he had entered the garden, and almost unconsciously had drawn near the tomb of the unhappy lovers.

“I hope you are not much hurt,” cried he in a tone of tenderness, with which Emma’s ear and her heart also were but too well acquainted; while Emma, recovering herself a little, replied that the pain was only momentary, and that she was already better, withdrawing herself as she spoke from his supporting arm, and venturing to lift her eyes to his; but they shrunk immediately from the tender expression of his glance, and she felt relieved; when, sighing deeply, St. Aubyn bowing coldly round, wished them good morning, and suddenly disappeared.

“Is it possible,” said Emma mentally, “that a man happy and successful in his love I should be found almost in tears reclining against that monument? Is it possible, either, that the lover of Mrs. Felton could look at me with such an expression in his eyes?” And Emma certainly felt much happier than when she came to the Musée.

“Well,” said her female companion, “I am afraid that uncommonly handsome young man is more hurt than you were, Miss Castlemain; for I never saw such a look of love as he gave you! Did you ever see him before?”

“O dear, yes,” replied Emma in visible confusion; “it was Mr. St. Aubyn.” And her companions, seeing her distress, forbore to press her further on the subject; while Emma, as they returned, forced herself to talk with unceasing volubility.

Mr. Egerton meanwhile had shut himself up in his own room, to reflect on the important decisions that had taken place on that and the preceding day; and in spite of his high reverence for Emma’s principles, and his respect for the apparent motives that actuated

her to accept Frederic Balfour, he was convinced that, unknown to herself, Temper was at the bottom of her decision. He was of opinion, that what is called pride, in a man and woman, both by themselves and others, is often nothing but temper in one of its various modifications, denominated *pique* or *wounded self-love*. And he felt assured that, had not Emma's pride and jealousy been roused by the communications of Mrs. Felton, she would have taken more time to deliberate, before she gave an irrevocable promise to bestow her hand on a man towards whom she well knew that she had not a sentiment resembling what she felt for St. Aubyn, and had long learnt to denominate love. Nor, indeed, did Mr. Egerton see in Balfour's attachment for her, the symptoms of a real affection. Her beauty had charmed him at first sight, and he found his taste justified by the admiration of all who beheld her; and as he was never accustomed to know an unsatisfied wish, he resolved to make himself the envy of others, by obtaining this valuable prize. But her coldness threw obstacles in his way; and obstacles to a temper such as his was, only induced him to persevere the more. His self-love indeed was very near getting the better of all other considerations, when he heard that Emma loved another; but it was counteracted by the wish he felt to triumph over St. Aubyn, who he believed loved Emma in spite of the representations of an artful woman, such as he considered Mrs. Felton to be, for he had become jealous of St. Aubyn's fame; who was now not only called the English hero, but "le bel Anglois," a title exclusively Balfour's till St. Aubyn reappeared at Paris.

"No, no," said he mentally, "he shall not triumph over me in every way, and I will marry the woman whom he loves, and have the felicity of forcing her to love me in return."

Accordingly he persevered, and Emma promised to be his. Meanwhile, though Mr. Egerton could not read Balfour's heart, he was so unhappy as to suspect that love alone was not the motive that overcame the influence of his pride, and induced him to forget so soon that Emma had loved, and probably still loved another.

He was still indulging these sad thoughts, when Emma and her companions returned. They found Mrs. Felton and Mrs. Castlemain, to whom the latter had communicated the news that Emma had accepted Balfour; and that lady could not help suspecting that her communications had been instrumental in influencing her determination.

Mrs. Felton expressed great surprise and sorrow, at the idea of Emma's departure for so many days, then begged to see her alone; when, taking a case from her pocket, she said she had brought St. Aubyn's picture to show her. Emma, provoked at her indelicate forwardness in displaying this picture, and also in her heart, a little distrustful of her truth, since the rencontre with St. Aubyn, was irritated into self-command, and, looking at the picture with great calmness, replied,

"It is like, that is to say, it is like what he now is, rather than what he was, for I never saw a man more altered; and I am sure he does not look like a happy and successful lover."

Mrs. Felton blushed at this observation; and hastily said, "Pray when did you see him?"

"Just now," she replied; and Mrs. Felton turned pale; while Emma, with great composure, added, "we found him reclining on the tomb of Abelard and Eloisa, and he evidently had been in tears."

"O, yes! Of yes!" in a hurried manner answered Mrs. Felton, "he is very uneasy about his mother, and thinks of setting off directly for England; that is all, I assure you, that afflicts him." And Emma with a sarcastic smile, which she meant Mrs. Felton to perceive, as she turned from her, in silence led the way back to the drawing-room.

The truth was, that Mrs. St Aubyn was better, not worse. Still her son, unable to bear to be in Paris during the time of Emma's marriage, set off for England as soon as he left the Petits Augustins; and perhaps, like Emma herself, he was in his heart

cheered and consoled by the meeting of that morning, and the emotion that he had witnessed.

As soon as Mrs. Felton and her friends from K—— had taken leave, Emma set off in Mrs. Castlemain's carriage for Montmorenci, and alone; for the only woman-servant that they had brought with them was wanted to attend on her grandmother, who had had at least the wisdom to teach both Agatha and Emma habits of independence, habits which rendered the poverty of the former more bearable than it would otherwise have been, and guarded the other against many inconveniences and difficulties to which those women are exposed who have been accustomed to depend entirely on servants for the duties of the toilette. Yes, Emma and Agatha, though heiresses, could really dress and undress themselves!

"I shall see you I hope during my visit, sir," said Emma to Mr. Egerton, as she got into the carriage, and proceeded on her journey,—little conscious what trials and what dangers awaited her at Montmorenci.

But to return to St. Aubyn.—It was lucky for him that he set off for England when he did, as by that means he avoided receiving a letter, desiring him, if he wished to see his mother alive, to return immediately; therefore, being already on the road when this letter reached Paris, he was spared the agony of travelling, an agony insupportable to an affectionate heart, in terror lest he should arrive too late. As it was, though he expected to find his mother ill, he did not expect to find her dying; and when he reached Keswick, he found that, so far from the account given in the letter, which never reached him, being the literal truth, Mrs. St. Aubyn was likely to live some weeks longer, though all hope of her recovery must prove to be vain.

After having shown Mrs. St Aubyn in the degraded light of a detected criminal, I could not venture to obtrude her on the notice of my readers again, till I could exhibit her in that sad and fearful state in which one is disposed to pardon the most guilty their offences, because they can offend no more, and may soon be

within the reach of that judgment, more terrible than any punishment which human justice can inflict.

When he arrived, the surgeon who attended Mrs. St Aubyn, seeing him drive up, met him at the door, in order to prepare him for the change which had taken place in her during his absence. The wish of serving an interesting emigrant family, whom some peculiar circumstances of distress had thrown in St. Aubyn's way, as much as a desire of seeing France, had induced him to go abroad; an excursion in which his uncle, being by chance in a good humour when he requested his leave to undertake it, enabled him to indulge himself in a manner worthy of his expectations in life; while his poor mother taught herself even to rejoice in his absence, by the thought of the pretty things he would bring her from Paris. St. Aubyn, therefore, could not accuse himself, with justice, of having violated any duty by his foreign tour. Still, when he saw his certainly, though slowly, declining parent, his agony was so great as to make him bitterly reproach himself for having left her so long. In the first place, indeed, he had left her, to fulfil a military duty; but if he had not gone to France, he thought his attentive care and tenderness might have prevented her being guilty of the imprudence which brought on her complaint, as during his leave of absence he should have returned to the Vale-House, and been with her at the time when her love of youthful dress had made her go to a sort of *fête champêtre* on the lake, which was extended into the evening, too lightly clothed to bear the chill of the autumnal wind, especially as at that very moment she was oppressed with a severe cold.

When St. Aubyn saw her first on his return, she was sitting up in an easy chair, breathing with difficulty, and one meagre cheek pale as death itself, while the other was glowing with the bright red of fever. Her son, scarcely able to control his emotion, sprung towards her, and reclining her drooping head against his bosom, wept over her in silence.



“Ay, my dear Henry,” she faintly articulated, “you little knew how ill I was, or I am sure you would have come sooner; but I am now getting well very fast; so don’t distress yourself, for you know the sight of you will do me quite as much good as medicine.—Well, but I hope you have brought me some pretty gowns and trinkets from Paris. I have been quite reckoning upon them, I do assure you.” And St. Aubyn, glad for an excuse to leave the room and give vent to his feelings, went in search of the expected presents. They consisted of fans, gold pins, brooches, &c., and two pieces of sarsnet for gowns.

The poor invalid was delighted with all she saw, and eagerly looked forward to the time when she should excite the envy and admiration of the town and country by wearing her Paris finery; while St Aubyn, unable to bear this language of hope, which he well knew was the result of mortal disease, was again and again obliged to leave the room, in order to conceal the emotion which he felt. One of the pieces of sarsnet was dark, and his mother told him it was too old and grave for her; but the other, being what was called a French white, suited her taste exactly, as she pronounced it to be very becoming to the complexion.

That evening, while his mother by the aid of anodynes procured a little sleep, St. Aubyn visited Mr. Hargrave, who received him very graciously, nay, with a degree of involuntary respect; for the colonel had written to him a detail of his nephew’s bravery, and the praises bestowed on him by the First Consul; and though his jealousy of his nephew was considerably increased by the means, his pride in him increased in proportion, and spite of himself he felt that he was in the presence of a superior.

St. Aubyn told him that he earnestly desired he would allow him to resign his commission, as, if he had not an insuperable objection to remain amongst men who had been so willing to disgrace and discard him, he could not bear to be under the necessity of leaving his mother, as his attentions and care, if they could not prolong her life, might at least smooth her way to death.

“Pshaw!” cried Mr. Hargrave, to whom the idea of his sister’s death was as insupportable as to her son from different motives, “the old girl will recover again, never fear; however, resign and welcome if you choose. But harkye! don’t come hither any more with that ugly long face, for your mother is in no more danger than I am, unless that ghostly visage of yours should frighten her into convulsions, by reminding her too powerfully of her latter end.” And St. Aubyn, not feeling himself able to endure this sort of coarse banter, so uncongenial to his feelings, took an early farewell of his uncle and returned to Keswick, where he was resolved in future to pass every day and every night,—a determination very disagreeable to Mr. Hargrave; but as he was a little in awe of what other people might say, he did not venture to forbid St. Aubyn’s performance of the duties of a son.

If Mr. Hargrave had been possessed of supernatural power, his sister would have borne about “a charmed life,” and her existence would have been at least as long as his own. Not for any great affection that he bore her, but because with her life, he knew, all his power over St. Aubyn must end, as he, for her dear sake alone, had endured in patient silence the goadings of his tyranny, and even sacrificed on the altar of filial piety the best and deepest wishes of his pure and deeply feeling heart.

I will now explain the reasons of his mysterious conduct towards the family at the White Cottage. I have before said, that Mr. Hargrave in his heart never liked either Mrs. Castlemain or Mr. Egerton, for many cogent reasons. In the first place, they were of ancient families, and he was apt to hate any one who possessed an advantage which must be for ever unenjoyed by himself;—in the next place, he knew that they preferred his nephew to himself, another unpardonable fault; and finally, he had never forgiven what he considered as the triumph of that conceited girl, Emma Castlemain, over those splenetic effusions of his malignant disposition, of which, though he had not power to overcome them, he had sense enough to be conscious and ashamed. Still he knew

not how, respected and respectable as Mrs. Castlemain, was, to refuse what he saw would probably be proposed to him, namely, a union between his nephew and Emma, as he foresaw that every one of his acquaintance would blame him for such a refusal, and his detestable temper be more commented upon and abused than ever. But the guilt of his sister, and the disclosure which followed, put it in his power to prevent such an offer being made, and to cause his innocent nephew to appear at least as much in fault as himself in dropping the acquaintance of the family at the White Cottage. While his pride was irritated to madness by Mr. Egerton's proposal of emancipating St. Aubyn from his tyranny by maintaining both the son and the mother, the soothing consciousness came over his mind, that the reputation of his unhappy sister was now in his power, and by that means his noble-minded nephew also.

The day after that fatal business of the banknote, he called his nephew into his study, and told him that he saw very clearly his devoted attachment to Miss Castlemain; but as he never would consent to his union with her, he peremptorily forbade him to think of her more, or even to continue his acquaintance with any one of those three disagreeables, as he chose to call them; while St. Aubyn, who, had learnt from him the preceding evening Mr. Egerton's offer in his favour, and who thought he might at least accept from that gentleman's bounty the means of procuring a livelihood for himself, though he shrank from the idea of incurring a pecuniary obligation without the prospect of returning it, coolly assured his uncle, that he could not and would not resign those hopes and that society which alone gave a value to existence; but accepting Mr. Egerton's offer for his mother till by his aid he could, by labouring in a profession, be rich enough to maintain her himself, he should, though reluctantly, resign his claims to his uncle's favour and support, if they could be retained only at the expense of sacrificing his dearest affections and friendships.

"Then this is your decision, is it?" asked Mr. Hargrave with the smile of a demon.

“It is.”

“Then hear me, sir,” he replied. “I will this instant take the most dreadful and solemn oath that ever passed the lips of man, that if you persist in refusing to give up, gradually indeed, but finally, and without assigning any reason, all intercourse with those accursed people who have seduced your affections from me to fix them on themselves, I will proclaim to the whole town of Keswick and to its neighbourhood, that the mother who is the beloved object of your filial, nay, I might say, your paternal care, that mother bequeathed to you and your protecting love by your father on his death-bed, is an unprincipled wretch, and a detected thief. Her reputation, sir, shall be blasted wherever her person is known, till even the sentimentalists at the White Cottage shrink from her with aversion, and she pines away under the agonies of wounded vanity and pride, till she sinks into the shelter of the grave!”

St. Aubyn, on hearing this dreadful threat, which he well knew that Mr. Hargrave was capable of executing, sunk on a chair horror-struck, and almost heart-broken; and it was some minutes before he was composed enough even to think; and when he was, misery seemed to encompass him, till that filial piety, which in him was a principle as much as a feeling, held out to him consolation for the sorrows to which it doomed him; and convinced that in time, at least, every sacrifice to duty is rewarded, he faintly assured his uncle that his wishes should be obeyed, and he would gradually, but ultimately, break off all intercourse with the family at the White Cottage.

“But I must have your oath, sir!” cried Mr. Hargrave. And St. Aubyn, firmly grasping and devoutly kissing that book, whence his courage to devote himself was derived, took the oath required, and a few hours after wrote the letter which alarmed and distressed Mr. Egerton.

But spite of his oath, he felt that even the fear of betraying himself would make him do so involuntarily, if he continued to see or converse at all even with Mr. Egerton; and rigidly indeed did this

most exemplary son fulfil the painful duty that his cruel relation imposed.

Now, however, the moment was come when the grave was in reality opening to shelter his mother from every evil that a tyrant could inflict, and free his noble victim from the chains that had galled him so long; but yet not, alas! time enough to restore to him those hopes which once he had delighted to indulge.

Mr. Hargrave, averse to believe the unwelcome truth, that the hour of St. Aubyn's deliverance approached, persisted to think his sister was in no danger; and, as he had never condescended to visit her, he could not be convinced of her situation by ocular demonstration.

But three days after St. Aubyn's return, and while he was watching in silent sorrow over that fading parent, who little suspected that she was the unworthy cause of his separation from the friends whom he loved best, he was informed that his uncle was in the next room, and desired to see him; and St. Aubyn, wondering at this unusual visit, waited on him in the adjoining apartment.

Mr. Hargrave met him with smiles unusually gracious; and after asking how the old girl was, more from habit than feeling, (for he did not wait to hear the answer,) he told St. Aubyn, that he came to speak to him on important business, and to put him in the way of making his fortune with very little trouble, and that of the most agreeable kind.

St. Aubyn, shocked at his levity at a moment so serious, only bowed his head as awaiting an explanation. It came too soon; for Mr. Hargrave called to propose to him a marriage with a young lady, the heiress of a very rich tradesman, who had seen him, and admired him prodigiously, and whose father was very desirous of the connexion. "For my part," added Mr. Hargrave, "it suits me exactly; for the girl's father is a man of yesterday like myself, and therefore can't be always throwing his rotten old ancestors in my face, like her majesty of Castlemain. So hark ye, my boy! I desire

you will, as soon as your mother gets better, set off for town, and fall a courting with all your might.”

“Never, never, sir,” replied St. Aubyn. “To your will I resigned every hope of earthly happiness, except what arose from the consciousness of duty fulfilled; but never will I marry at the bidding of any created being, though utter ruin of every worldly prospect were the instant result of my determination.”

“Do not provoke me, sir!” replied Mr. Hargrave, “remember, remember who is in my power.”

“I do remember,” solemnly replied St. Aubyn; “but at the same time I know that you dare not use that power against her.”

“Dare not! It is false. If you refuse to obey me, before I return home, I will blast your mother’s fame for ever!”

“No, sir, no,” again resumed St Aubyn, “I defy you to be so base and so brutal! Sir, I will not allow you to calumniate yourself thus. You are not the cruel and wicked man that you represent yourself to be. You have a heart capable of human feelings and human sympathies; and once more I *defy* you, at a moment like this, to utter aught against my dying mother, and your dying sister! Look there, sir!” he added, throwing open the door of his mother’s chamber.

Mrs. St. Aubyn was sitting up in the bed, and looking at herself in a pocket-glass. On seeing her brother, an exclamation of joy escaped her, and she eagerly begged him to come in. At first he did not, for he could not obey her. With her face fallen away, even to the slender dimensions of sickly infancy, her teeth frightfully white from the transparency incident to disease, her eyes radiant from fever, and her cheeks glowing with the unwholesome bloom of consumption, while her oppressed breathing betrayed the nature and the danger of her illness,—Mr. Hargrave beheld that Henrietta, whose beauty had once been his pride, whose weakness had made her his dependant, and whose days he was conscious of haying embittered by the terrible inflictions of his oppressive temper.

“Why do you not come to my bedside?” repeated Mrs. St. Aubyn, while Mr. Hargrave stood gazing on her in silence, the big tear swelling in his eye, and his voice choked by strong emotion. At length he drew near, and, grasping her meagre and burning hand, just articulated, “I did not think you had been so ill,” and burst into tears.

“No; I thought you did not, or you would have come to see me,” said Mrs. St. Aubyn, who always esteemed a visit from her rich brother as a great favour. “But I am getting well fast now,—only see what a fine colour I have got! all my own, too, I assure you—not rouge—you don’t like rouge, you know. And Henry has brought me such beautiful gowns! and such pretty things! The first time I come to dine with you, brother, I shall put some of them on.”

Mr. Hargrave, overcome by surprise and a variety of emotions, vainly endeavoured to answer her. At last, he grasped her hand convulsively, kissed that cheek, now becoming as wan as it was red before, then, without looking at St. Aubyn, left the room and the house.

“Well, did you ever see the like?” cried Mrs. St. Aubyn, as soon as he was gone. “But that is so like my brother! When I was very ill, he never came near me, as if he did not care a farthing for me; and now that I am so much better, he comes to see me, and cries as if I was dying!”

St. Aubyn could not answer her, but he felt certain in his own mind that his mother’s reputation would remain *unhurt*.

The next day Mr. Hargrave sent a confidential servant to offer St. Aubyn any sum of money that he wanted, to defray the expenses of illness, and begging that he would send for a physician from London, if he thought any thing could save her. St. Aubyn was affected even to tears, at this proof of remorseful affection; but returned for answer, that the physician in the neighbourhood, on whose judgment he could rely, had assured him that all hope was over. The surgeon, meanwhile, who was brother to the rector of

the parish, had thought it right to hint to Mrs. St. Aubyn, that she had better settle her affairs; and ventured to ask her, if he should request his brother to read prayers to her. On hearing this, her surprise and her anger were beyond description.

“What, sir, are you ignorant enough to think me dying,” she exclaimed, “and cruel enough to tell me so? No, sir, I am not dying; and when I want you and your brother, I will send for you. Till then I desire you not to come near my house.” This scene, when related to St. Aubyn, gave him increased pain; and he told the surgeon that those religious rites, which, when desired, were soothing and salutary to the conscious sufferer, would be only irritating and alarming to a being who persisted in the belief that her danger was over, and whose mind was therefore not in a state to profit by the visit he recommended.

Another month Mrs. St. Aubyn struggled with her disorder; but at the end of that period she sunk unconsciously into the sleep of death, breathing her last on the bosom of him whom, in the pride of her heart, she had proclaimed to be “the best of sons.”

Though her death freed St. Aubyn from a thralldom that was become insupportable, he felt it with bitterness. He too felt as if he were alone in the world; as if he had lost the only being that really loved him, and whose interests were the same as his own. Besides, as we are all, I am convinced, more attached by the sense of the benefits we confer, than of those which we receive, St. Aubyn felt himself bound to his mother the more, from the consciousness of the sacrifices which he had made for her sake. He had not seen his uncle since his visit to desire him to marry; he now wrote to him to tell him all was over, and to say that he wished his mother to be buried by his father in the family vault at St. Aubyn, if he could gain leave to do so from its present possessor, that estate having passed again to a new owner.

Mr. Hargrave did not write an answer; but he sent his confidential servant again to say, that Mr. St. Aubyn was welcome to bury his mother how and where he pleased, and to draw on him for any



sum that he desired. The servant at the same time informed him that his uncle was on the point of marriage with a young lady, who, with her mother, was then staying at the Vale-House; but that, out of compliment to his sister's memory, he meant to delay the ceremony a month.

It was indeed true that Mr. Hargrave, finding that St. Aubyn would now be no longer the slave of his will, resolved to marry, hoping to have a child of his own, in order to disinherit and punish his nephew.

But St. Aubyn felt more surprise than mortification at the news, and instantly prepared to fulfil the mournful task that awaited him; and having obtained leave from a Mr. Browne, the agent of the gentleman to whom St. Aubyn now belonged, and who was at that time abroad, to let his mother be interred in the family vault, he set off for that estate, which though only twelve miles off, he had not seen since the death of his father, to perform the last duties to the parent whom he had lost.

St. Aubyn was too conversant with the virtue of self-command to disturb the sacred solemnity by any bursts of grief, and in calm and silent melancholy he witnessed the last rites, and listened to the affecting service; but when it was over he desired to be shown into the vault, and suffered to remain there a short time alone. Then he gave vent to the long-smothered agony of his soul, and then he gratified his affectionate triumph also; then too he reaped the reward of his patient and self-denying virtue, for he threw himself on the coffin of his father; and as he did so his heart throbbed with the proud consciousness that he had punctually fulfilled the promise given to that dying father, and, to save the mother confided to his care, had not hesitated a moment to sacrifice himself. St. Aubyn had followed the dictates of a blind impulse, and had for the bravery that he displayed been honoured with the title of hero, and the praises of a hero. But his claims to that name were founded on a better right; he was a hero in domestic life; in the rugged field of self-denial he had fought the

most difficult of all fights, he had warred against temper and his own conflicting interests and passions, he had struggled for, and had obtained the greatest of *all victories*, a conquest over *himself*.

When St. Aubyn had taken his last look at all that now remained of his parents, he asked permission to see once more the well-remembered house; and on entering it, he found that the servant who took care of it, had with officious civility provided refreshments for him and the surgeon who accompanied him. But St. Aubyn could not eat; and outstepping his guide, he passed with eager and breathless emotion from one room to another, till he entered an apartment decorated with family pictures, amongst which, the first that met his eye was a fine whole-length of his mother, with him, a child, on her lap. St. Aubyn looked at it, shuddered, and turned away; but recovering himself, he turned round again, and gazed on its companion, a whole-length picture of his father, the eyes of which, as they looked directly forward, seemed to meet the glistening eyes and affectionate glance of his son. St. Aubyn continued to gaze on this picture, and with a self-approving feeling that almost recompensed him for all his sorrows, "Thank God, I can bear to look him in the face!" he exclaimed aloud; then bursting into tears, he hurried through the other rooms, and hastened to the garden to visit the best-remembered walks.

"It was here," thought he, "that I bounded along with all the vivacity of childhood; and there, I remember, I used to sit while I learned my first lessons."

The sound of the village-clock had a peculiarity in it which he had not forgotten; and as it struck, it seemed to his ear like the voice of a long-separated friend. But at last the painful present proved superior to the pleasant associations and remembrances of past times; and not daring to trust himself in the manor-house again, he beckoned his companion, jumped into the morning coach, and bade, as he believed, an eternal adieu to the scenes of his childhood, and the last home of his beloved parents.

They were not above six miles on their return to Keswick, when the coachman was desired to stop, and a horseman rode up to the window. It was one of Mr. Hargrave's servants, who came to desire St. Aubyn to gallop with all possible expedition to the Vale-House, as his uncle, just as he had taken the pen in his hand to sign the marriage articles, was seized with a paralytic stroke, and his life was despaired of, though his senses were returned; that, when asked whether his nephew should be sent for, his countenance expressed pleasure, and with a nod of approbation, he tried to say "Yes—Henry;" and the servant came off immediately. St. Aubyn instantly mounted the servant's horse, and was out of sight in a moment.

He found his uncle quite sensible, but nearly speechless; and St. Aubyn, whose heart was rendered more than usually susceptible, sobbed audibly, as he leaned over the pillow of the invalid, who appeared evidently gratified by the emotion he expressed; and pressing his hand with that which was unstricken with disease, he said with difficulty, "Good—Henry—kind—" and he seemed uneasy whenever St Aubyn left the bedside.

This chamber of death was not at all cheered by those quiet, yet touching attentions which sickness usually insures; and St. Aubyn could not help contrasting it with the sick chamber of his mother. He had found Mrs. St. Aubyn, whose manners had always been kind and unoffending, surrounded by all the little comforts which her sick state required. Her servant and her nurse were tender and attentive, her neighbours and friends assiduous and profuse in their offers of service; and all that could be done to save and assist her had been done even before he arrived. But no such anxiety, no such actively kind feelings had been called forth in Mr. Hargrave's family and acquaintance, by his sudden and mortal illness.

The violence and obliquities of his temper had alienated all hearts from him; and as it was soon ascertained that his recovery was impossible, his servants and dependants, no longer actuated either by fear or hope, administered to his wants with apathy and neglect;

and like the beasts in the fable, trampled on the lion when dead, whom living they dreaded to encounter. While Mrs. Beaumont, the lady who was going to sacrifice her daughter to Mr. Hargrave, believing that he had made a will in favour of the latter, did not wish to have his life preserved, and therefore gave no orders to that purpose; and the servants, who loved St. Aubyn as much as they disliked their master, felt their indifference towards him increased by their resentment at his having resolved to marry, in order to injure the interest of his nephew.

But as soon as St. Aubyn arrived the scene changed; the first tears which he shed over the restless bed of the invalid, softened their hearts towards him also; and when he ordered the same physician to be sent for who had attended his mother, blaming at the same time their remissness in not having sent for him immediately, his orders were obeyed with the most exemplary alacrity, and all that attendance could do for the sufferer was instantly put in action.

Mr. Hargrave appeared evidently disturbed and angry when Mrs. Beaumont, the mother of his intended wife, came into the room; and when with officious civility she offered to shift his pillow, or give him any medicine, he waved her from him with a sort of horror, and would take nothing from any hand but that of his nephew. Here again was a triumph for St. Aubyn! His years of patient forbearance, and the fulfilment of painful duties, had won for him even the affection of this strange, wayward, and misanthropical relation; and at that awful moment when ourselves and others appear to us as they really are, St. Aubyn's virtues rose in full remembrance before Mr. Hargrave, and he coveted and enjoyed to receive from him those affectionate aids and attentions which forcibly spoke that all his unkindness was forgotten, and his cruelties forgiven.

The next day he grew evidently weaker and weaker, and seemed in great pain because he could not articulate what he wished to say; but towards evening he grasped St. Aubyn's hand repeatedly, and indistinctly uttered,

“You—all—love—you—give—all—yours.”—In a day or two after it was St. Aubyn’s mournful task to close the eyes of his last surviving relation.

St. Aubyn, now accompanied by the medical attendants and the confidential servant, made a strict search for a will; for though what his uncle seemed struggling to say implied that there was no will, and he consequently would inherit every thing, yet he could not believe that, in his anger for his disobedience, Mr. Hargrave had not willed away his fortune from him. But he was mistaken. No will could be found. Therefore, after writing to the Cumberland and London bankers to inquire whether they had a will in their custody and receiving an answer in the negative, St. Aubyn was convinced that his uncle meant him to be his sole heir, and he proceeded accordingly.

Poor St. Aubyn! How often, while reflecting on the immense possessions which now were his, did he recollect Mr. Egerton’s expression, as he grieved by the cold corpse of Clara Ainslie! “It comes too late!” said he in the bitterness of his heart, when he found that the long-expected living was his; and the same expression often hovered on the lip of St. Aubyn, for the same consciousness throbbed powerfully at his heart.

As Mrs. Beaumont had not offered to leave the house, and St. Aubyn, out of respect to his uncle’s memory, wished to show her and her daughter every possible civility, he suffered them to continue his guests, and three days before the funeral was to take place he requested an interview with the ladies.

Mrs. Beaumont was a vulgar, unfeeling, tyrannical, avaricious, rapacious woman, and she had forced her mild and timid daughter to sacrifice herself for riches to an old and unamiable man; knowing too, as she did so, that her daughter was engaged to another whom she loved with the tenderest affection. Nothing could exceed Mrs. Beaumont’s anger and disappointment when she heard that no will could be found; and she did not scruple to hint that wills had been known to be spirited away; for she knew

that Mr. Hargrave's chief motive for marrying was pique against his nephew; and she flattered herself that, when every thing was fixed for his marriage with her niece, whom he met with during his last journey to London at the house of his broker, he would have made a will immediately in her favour. This idea had made her contented with the very paltry settlement of five hundred per annum, which this rich man offered her daughter, being much too wise not to make it his young wife's interest to behave well to him, that his will might remedy the scantiness of the settlement. But Mrs. Beaumont was apt to flatter herself, and her disappointments were of course frequent and violent.

When St. Aubyn waited on her, she was still so angry that he expected she would every minute declare that it was a scandalous shame his uncle should have presumed to die before he married her daughter; and she certainly did say she had never met with such usage before in her life. But seeing St. Aubyn looking at her daughter with admiring eyes, she changed her tone; and wisely considering that the nephew would make a much better son-in-law than the uncle, she took care to let St. Aubyn know that a marriage with Mr. Hargrave was much against Miss Beaumont's will; for, like all young women, she would have preferred a *young* man. Then followed a detail of all her daughter's qualifications to render the marriage state happy; and when it was ended, she had the pleasure of seeing St. Aubyn take her blushing and distressed child by the hand, and request a private conversation with her in another room, whither he conducted her. But while the delighted Mrs. Beaumont was saying to herself, "Ay; I am the woman to manage after all; let me alone; I am always sure of my market," St. Aubyn, with many apologies for the liberty he was taking, requested to know whether it was really against her will that the engagement with his uncle was entered into? And the poor girl with many tears assured him, that she would much rather have died than have been the wife of Mr. Hargrave.

“May I now venture to ask, if there was any man whom you preferred?” And her silence, her downcast eye, and blushing cheek evidently told that there was.

“Your silence answers my question sufficiently,” replied St. Aubyn; “and I can only excuse to you my freedom in asking you the question, by telling you my reasons for it.—Had death delayed his summons to my poor uncle only a short time, you would have been enabled, by independence, to resist in future any attempt of your no doubt fond, but mistaken parent to force you into a hated, and, in my mind, unprincipled marriage; and marriages of such a nature are so abhorrent to my feelings, that I will always do all in my power to prevent them. Therefore, for my own sake, my dear Miss Beaumont, I beg you to accept from me a deed of settlement of two hundred a year on you for life.” He could not go on; for the poor girl, overcome with his generosity, interrupted him with such clamorous expressions of feeling, that it was doubtful whether he must not have summoned her mother to her assistance. St. Aubyn had heard from his uncle’s physician a very high character of this poor girl; and wishing to free her from the tyranny of her mother, of whom report spoke ill, he resolved to give her what he could not possibly miss from his income, in order to insure her the independence which she deserved. He felt also still more inclined to serve her, when he learnt that she was in love; and suspected that poverty might be the cause that that love was hopeless. As soon, therefore, as she recovered her composure, he asked her if her lover (politely saying that he concluded she was beloved in return) would have any objection to take orders; and the artless girl, thrown off her guard, replied, “Sir, Mr. Alton has been in orders some time.”

“Alton!” cried St. Aubyn; “Alton! Was he of Trinity College, Cambridge?”

“He was, sir; and I have often heard him mention your kindness to him.”

This information delighted St. Aubyn, for he found the lover of Miss Beaumont was that very Alton whom he used to defend against the vulgar, low-life banter of Popkison and his friends. St. Aubyn then informed her that he had long esteemed her lover, and that he now liked him still better for the choice that he had made; assuring her at the same time, that when the incumbent on a living in his gift was dead, (and he was at the point of death,) he would bestow the living on Mr. Alton.

“And now,” added he, while Miss Beaumont could only weep her thanks, “do you wish that I should tell Mrs. Beaumont all that has passed?” And as she gladly acceded to this considerate offer, he led her back into the room where they had left her mother.

Mrs. Beaumont was quite amazed to behold her daughter in tears, and reproved her for her folly in spoiling her pretty eyes. But when St. Aubyn told her that he had taken the liberty to request Miss Beaumont’s acceptance of two hundred pounds a-year for life, she thought it proper to squeeze a few tears into her eyes too, and to thank him for his generosity, which, in her heart, she could scarcely help suspecting was owing to a qualm of conscience for having suppressed a will. St. Aubyn, then, instead of hinting, as she hoped he would do, his wish to cultivate her acquaintance, in order to forward his intended suit to her daughter, began to plead the cause of Mr. Alton; which threw Mrs. Beaumont into a most violent passion, and she declared, she wondered at her daughter’s want of spirit, for that with two hundred pounds a-year in her pocket, “who knew but that she might marry well!”

“But, madam, how do you know,” replied St. Aubyn, “that I shall give your daughter this potent two hundred a-year, if she does not marry this identical Mr. Alton, my friend, to whom I destine a very fine living, now on the point of being vacated?”

“Oh! cried Mrs. Beaumont; “your friend! Mr. Alton is your friend, is he, sir? Oh! that alters the case entirely; and I shall be happy to call my daughter Mrs. Alton as soon as she chooses.”



To be brief; St. Aubyn having made a short will, but according to the dictates of justice, affection, and benevolence, wisely considering that things of such importance should never be delayed a day, and having in that will settled the two hundred pounds a-year on the future Mrs. Alton, set off for France, buoyed up only too often by the idea that perhaps something had occurred to break off the engagement between Emma and Balfour, and thereby preparing for himself all the *bitterness of disappointment*.

But while he is on his way to Paris, let us return to our heroine. She had passed a quiet fortnight at Montmorenci, during which time she had been visited by Mrs. Castlemain, Mr. Egerton, and Mrs. Felton, who had, she observed, an air of great anxiety, and was very desirous of knowing how soon her marriage was to take place; when, just as she was preparing to return to Paris, Fanny Balfour, and her governess also, became alarmingly ill, and so did the other inhabitants of the chateau; and in three days' time it was known beyond dispute, that the disorder was that terrible scourge, the scarlet fever. Emma, who was busily employed in nursing Fanny, was excessively distressed on hearing what her complaint was, because she well knew the anxiety of mind that Mrs. Castlemain and Mr. Egerton would feel at knowing that she was exposed to such danger, especially as her grandmother had a decided horror and fear of infection, which her good sense could scarcely keep in any bounds. But hoping that neither they nor Balfour would learn the true state of the case, she wrote to them to say that Fanny Balfour was too unwell for her to think of her leaving her yet, and to wish that they would delay their next visit till she was better. In the meanwhile, she took upon herself the office of chief nurse both night and day.

It was several days before Fanny was declared entirely out of danger; and the disorder left her so weak, that she still required attentive nursing. But in the meanwhile the public papers had not been so discreet as Emma; and her affectionate friends and her impetuous lover had both read in the newspaper that an infectious

fever had broken out in the chateau de Montmorenci! Mrs. Castlemain, though she had received a letter from Emma only the day before, expressing herself to be in perfect health, could scarcely retain her senses, at the idea of the danger she was in; and affection getting the better of all personal fear, she insisted on going to Montmorenci immediately. But Mr. Egerton fancying that in the present state of her feelings, she would be almost sure to catch the disorder, if she breathed the infectious air, insisted on being allowed to go alone to fetch back Emma to Paris; and to this proposal Mrs. Castlemain reluctantly agreed.

As soon as Emma saw what was published, she expected a summons to Paris, and was consequently on the watch for the arrival of her grandmother's carriage. Therefore, when she saw it approaching, she ran down stairs to prevent its coming near the door, and also to forbid whoever was in it to alight. Mr. Egerton, though charmed to see her so well, was quite agitated at beholding her, and conjured her to let him convey her immediately to Paris.

"I feel as I ought," replied Emma, "the kindness which dictates this request; but I am not the less resolved to refuse compliance with it."

"To refuse!"

"Yes. Would you have me so base and so selfish as to leave my young friend here at a time when she wants my assistance; and, in order to procure very problematical safety to myself, (for perhaps I should carry the seeds of the disorder away with me,) run the risk of spreading infection, and of infecting both you and my grandmother, and all the inhabitants of our hotel? No, my dear sir, thanks to you, far from me has ever been, and ever shall be, such sordid selfishness.—I am at my post, and never will I desert it;" while Mr. Egerton, though agonized at her probable danger, forbore to combat what his principles told him was just, and with a heavy heart returned again to Paris.

I will not attempt to describe the anxiety which he and Mrs. Castlemain experienced while the disorder lasted; and during six successive weeks it kept breaking out in different persons; consequently, Emma was obliged to remain where she was, lest she should, by removing, carry infection along with her.

During that period, Balfour had come over twice, and the first time he had with difficulty been prevented entering the house, and insisting on helping Emma to nurse his sister; but meeting him at the gates, she had at length succeeded in bringing him to reason, and had even prevailed on him to let three weeks pass before he came again.

His father, meanwhile, had come through Paris, and was gone to a lodging at Versailles, the air there being thought better for him than that of the metropolis; but he had been too ill to see any one on his way, and he still remained very much indisposed, though better, he believed, for the change of air.

When Emma had been at *Montmorenci* about a fortnight, an East Indian family took apartments in the castle; and in about three weeks after, an elderly mulatto woman, their servant whom illness had detained at Paris, joined them there when the fever was at its height.

At this time, so many both of servants and their masters and mistresses were ill of the disorder, that they had not nurses and attendants sufficient; and it was difficult to prevail on any new ones to come, so great was the panic occasioned by the disease. It is not to be supposed, therefore, that when the poor mulatto became in her turn attacked with this terrible disorder, she could receive proper attendance while persons of more consequence and more use than herself required it equally.

Dr. M——, a very skilful English physician, was regular in his attendance at the chateau, and Emma gave her friend nothing without his advice and approbation.

One morning, recollecting that she had forgotten to ask him a question of some importance, she lay wait for him on the landing-place which communicated with the mulatto's room, and as she stood there she overheard the following conversation in French:—

“Then you think this poor Indian is so bad that she must die?”

“I think,” said Dr. M——, “poor creature, that she must die, because she cannot, I find, have attendance sufficient to save her. If you could get some good nurse who can be depended upon to sit up with her to-night, which is the crisis of the fever, and who can get medicine and wine down in large quantities, she might live; but I cannot sit up myself, as I must perform that duty by a patient at Paris; therefore, I fear, the poor woman stands a bad chance for her life.”

Emma now heard the voice of the mulatto, who, in the hoarse impeded utterance of disease, said in broken English,

“Ah! I must die, for nobody cares for and comes near poor Lola!”

Dr. M—— hearing this, kindly spoke words of encouragement to her; then turned away in some emotion, being conscious how fallacious were the hopes he gave.

Emma met him as he left the room, and drew from him a statement of the mulatto's case, like that she had overheard; but she found that though she had the fever worse than any one, the constant care of one night alone might give a favourable turn to the disorder. She then asked the question she wanted relative to Fanny Balfour; and finding that she was so well that she did not want her attendance, she went to bed, though it was noon, and soon fell into a sound and refreshing sleep.

It was evening before she awoke, and she found that Dr. M——, anxious about some of his patients, was come to visit them again. Emma immediately arose, hastily dressed herself in a long white bed-gown, and, fastening up her fine hair under a close morning cap, stole out of her room, and unseen took a seat by the bedside of

the mulatto; being resolved to sit up herself with the poor neglected Lola.

Dr. M—— started with surprise when he saw Emma, who, with firmness not to be overcome, assured him, that as he believed attention might save the poor woman's life, and she was able and willing to afford that attention, she should consider herself as accessory to the death of a fellow-creature if she did not do all in her power to save her; "and," added she, "as I have already adjusted her pillow for her, and given her some drink, I conclude that I have incurred sufficient danger to make it a matter of no moment whether I remain here or not."

Dr. M——, rendered silent by respect for feelings so virtuous and benevolent, ceased to make any further objections; and having given Emma his directions in writing, she hung them up against the chimney piece along with her watch, that she might implicitly obey the instructions she received; and he took his leave, having promised to account for her absence to Fanny Balfour and her governess.

"Who are you?" said the mulatto, looking earnestly at Emma as she offered her a medicine at a stated time.

"I am your nurse," she replied, "and you must do as I bid you."

"You! Oh! what a pretty nurse!" Then, without much difficulty, she swallowed the medicine, though not before Emma, wisely concluding that she would be more likely to obey her if she knew she was a lady, and not a servant, told her she was a lady of fortune who liked mulattoes, and therefore came to nurse her. But during the greater part of the night, her delirium ran so high, that Emma could not without difficulty get down the necessary quantity of wine and physic. In the middle of the night, Emma finding sleep only too likely to overpower her, and that reading increased her drowsiness, was at first at a loss what expedient to fix upon in order to keep herself awake; at length she resolved to go in search of her brush, and rouse herself by brushing her hair. Like her poor

mother's, her hair was of a rich auburn, thick, waving, and glossy; and whenever she let it loose over her shoulders, as Agatha often wore hers, her likeness to her mother became unusually striking.

She was busily employed in the above-mentioned office, when she heard the mulatto talking very loud; and fearful lest she should attempt to get out of bed, as she had once done before, she threw down her brush and ran to the bedside, where she saw the poor woman sitting up in the bed in the height of delirious agitation; but as soon as the mulatto looked on her, she gave a loud and fearful shriek, and hid her head under the bedclothes, ever and anon lifting up her head, and saying, "Go, go! Pray don't kill me! Go, go! take her away, take her away!"

The noise brought one of the nurses from the next chamber into the room; and Emma, while this woman stayed by the bed, twisted her hair under her cap again; and feeling chilly as morning began to dawn, she threw a red shawl round her, and, dismissing the nurse, resumed her station.

"Is she gone? is she gone?" whispered the mulatto, looking fearfully round; and Emma asked her whom she meant.

"Oh! I know! but I will not tell;—a terrible lady!" Then, examining Emma's face and dress minutely, she said, "No, it was all a dream; and I am easy."

By the time she expected to see Dr. M—— Emma had, with unwearied perseverance, forced the poor creature to take all the medicine and all the wine that he had ordered; and when he came, she had the inexpressible satisfaction of hearing him declare that the pulse was fallen from 140 to 130, and that she had, to the best of his belief, saved the mulatto's life.

"And now," said he, "go and do all you can to save your own more valuable life;—go and lie down, that if you persist, as I see you will do, in watching half another night, you may be prepared to encounter the fatigue." And Emma, with a light heart and self-approving conscience, obeyed him.

In another week or ten days, the fever seemed to have done its worst, and no fresh person was seized with its symptoms; while, whether she had had the disease in her infancy, or from whatever cause, Emma herself as yet remained in perfect health.

But to return to St. Aubyn.—As soon as he reached Paris, he set off for the hotel of Mrs. Castlemain, and, I believe, never recollected that Mrs. Felton was in being. His intimacy with that lady was owing to her having had art enough to draw from him the secret of his love, and cunning enough to indulge him in talking of it; by which means he preferred her society to that of any one; while she flattered herself that it was very common for the confidante of a passion to become the object of it. It was true, that he refused, in a fit of jealousy, to accompany her into Flanders, but not jealousy of *her*. The truth was, that he had heard Sir Charles Maynard had followed Emma from K——, and was her declared lover in London; and, when Mrs. Felton, finding Sir Charles a passenger in their boat, pressed him to join them on their Flemish tour, he owned to Mrs. Felton, that the society of a man who might one day or other succeed with Emma, was so insupportable, that he should proceed directly to Paris. As love for Mrs. Felton, therefore, had nothing to do with the motives that led him to associate with that lady, it is not to be wondered at that he should go to the Rue de la Concorde rather than to the Rue Vivienne. But on his way thither he met an English acquaintance, who was that odious being, a male gossip, and one of those idlers and loungers who will, if they meet you, insist on bestowing their tediousness upon you.

“Which way are you going, St. Aubyn?” cried this man.

“To the Rue de la Concorde.”

“Oh! well, I don’t care if I go that way, too.”

Then, seizing St. Aubyn’s arm, he began to tell him all the French and English gossip he had heard since he had been gone.

“So,” said he, “I suppose you know the match between Balfour and Miss Castlemain is entirely off!”

“Off!” cried St. Aubyn, breathless with emotion.

“Oh! yes, quite. Egad, death was very near getting the lady, for she has been at Montmorenci all the time the bad fever has been raging there. However, she has escaped, and is coming soon to Paris, I believe.”

St. Aubyn waited to hear no more; but rushing hastily from his astonished companion, he returned to his hotel, to write a letter to Emma, at Montmorenci. The letter, though almost incoherent from emotion, told her that every obstacle to his explanation of whatever had appeared ambiguous and capricious in his conduct towards his friends at the White Cottage was now removed, and there was not a secret of his heart, that, if allowed to see her, he would not reveal to one who always was, and ever would be, the sole unrivalled object of a passion ardent and eternal, even while it appeared entirely hopeless; but that now, as he understood, she was again *free*, he flattered himself that she would allow him to endeavour to win her affections from his now discarded rival. This letter he put in the post, directed to the Chateau de Montmorenci, and with a beating heart he went to the Hotel des Etrangers, and inquired for Mr. Egerton.

He found him and Mrs. Castlemain together, and amazed beyond expression at his appearance and his emotion; for he could not speak; but seizing Mrs. Castlemain’s hands he pressed them to his lips and burst into tears.

“I conclude from your dress, what has happened,” said Mrs. Castlemain kindly.

“No, not all,” replied St. Aubyn. “I have lost both my mother and my uncle;” and Mrs. Castlemain thought in her heart he was a very fortunate person. He then begged to see Mr. Egerton alone, who immediately withdrew with him.

St. Aubyn then, as succinctly as possible, explained to him the reasons of his conduct; while Mr. Egerton interrupted him:



“I thought so,—I knew your reasons when explained would redound to your honour. But, O that ever Emma should have been so rash and inconsiderate!”

“Rash! what do you mean?” cried St. Aubyn turning very pale.

“That Emma is irrevocably engaged to Balfour!”

“And I was told,” faltered out St. Aubyn, “that that affair was entirely at an end, or I certainly should not have written to her at Montmorenci!”

“And have you done so?”

“Yes, just before I came hither.”

“Poor, lost Emma!” exclaimed Mr. Egerton wringing his hands; “how she will lament her hard fate! for I know but too well that her heart is still fondly yours!” Mr. Egerton, when he had uttered these words, earnestly wished he could have recalled them; but he could scarcely repent of them when he saw the joy they had given St. Aubyn, and heard him say, that he hoped Emma would feel the impropriety and dishonour of marrying Balfour, if in her heart she preferred him.

“There is one chance for you,” said Mr. Egerton, after a pause; “I know that she will, on every principle of honour and justice, show your letter to Balfour, whom she will see to-morrow, and tell him whatever feelings that letter has revived in her bosom; and on his decision, in consequence, depends your fate.”

St. Aubyn, then, too much agitated to pursue the subject further, tried to divert his attention by describing all that had passed since he saw him at the Palace. But he declined seeing Mrs. Castlemain again, as she was, Mr. Egerton said, very fond of Emma’s marriage with Balfour, and would be greatly distressed at the straggle which she would foresee in Emma’s mind between love and honour. St. Aubyn, therefore, returned to his own hotel, and endeavoured to fortify his mind against the dreaded morrow.

Emma, meanwhile, as she was preparing her mind to consider her union with Balfour as at no very distant period, (lord Clonawley having expressed a wish to see his son married and settled before his death, an event which his increasing infirmities made only too likely to occur,) received St. Aubyn's letter. With perturbation not to be described, she gazed on the well known characters, and, having perused the contents, sat for some moments in a state of seeming stupefaction. But uppermost of all her feelings seemed the joy of knowing she was so tenderly beloved; for every jealous thought vanished before the assurance of that word never pledged to a falsehood; and though St. Aubyn did not allege a single fact in his own justification, he was already, to the well-motivated confidence of Emma, completely justified. But though the first moments were moments of pleasure, the succeeding ones were those of agony and despair.

At length she resolved, as Mr. Egerton had said she would do, to show Balfour the letter, and own to him all the feelings it had called forth.

After a night of restless anguish, she arose, and was told that Mr. Balfour awaited her in the parlour. As soon as she appeared, he ran to her, alarmed at her discoloured cheeks and swelled eyelids; and she answered him by putting St. Aubyn's letter into his hand.

"Well, madam," replied he, when he had read it, "what is this given to me for? Surely you cannot yet hesitate between Mr. St. Aubyn and me?"

"I wish you to decide," faintly returned Emma; "for I own to you, that this surety of his fidelity and entire innocence, has revived in their full force, my former feelings in his favour."

"Shame on you then!" replied Balfour, with fiercest indignation. "Where is your surety for this gentleman's innocence and fidelity? Does he even condescend to name a single proof of this vaunted innocence? But you, forsooth, merciful and credulous being, are no sooner informed that he is tired of his Mrs. Felton, (his convenient

mistress,) and wishes to return to you, but you, condescending creature, are ready at his beck, to receive him again into favour, forgetful of the sacred claims of one who never loved any other woman than yourself, and whose honour and tenderness you have never had any reason to doubt.”

What could Emma oppose to arguments so plausible as these? Not that she knew St. Aubyn’s word was as sacred as the oaths of others; for he would be justified in answering that she only spoke from the partiality of a fond woman; and she could not but feel, that, all the circumstances considered, her ready acquiescence with the wishes of St. Aubyn, (which could only be the result of her discarding for ever the faithful lover before her, who told her he was convinced the pretence of her being free was only made as an excuse for his temerity in addressing her,) would be a degradation which pride and delicacy most powerfully forbade; and after a long, long struggle with her feelings, she told Balfour, whose deportment was more that of a maniac than of a rational being, that she hesitated no longer, but was willing to attend him to the altar as soon as they returned to England.

“When, then, shall we return to England?” said Balfour, his eyes sparkling with delight at this triumph over St. Aubyn.

“In four days’ time, if my friends can get passports so soon, and are willing to go,” replied Emma. And Balfour left her immediately, to expedite the means of their departure.

As soon as Balfour was gone, she wrote to Mr. Egerton, feeling that duty now forbade her to address St. Aubyn. She begged him to tell the latter that her engagement with Balfour had never been broken off, and that a very short time would make her his wife. More, every good feeling forbade her to say; except, that she wished the companion of her childhood and her youth as happy as he deserved to be, and greater welfare she could not wish him.

In another letter to Mr. Egerton, under the same cover, meant for his eye alone, she was more communicative. She told him all

that had passed between her and Balfour, and her determination and wishes in consequence; but owning that she believed all St. Aubyn's declarations; and that, convinced too late that her first choice had been wise, and her second rash, she must request that in future the name of St. Aubyn should never be mentioned before her, nor the reasons of his conduct explained, as she was resolved to avoid every chance of having emotions excited which most militate against her duty to a fond and confiding husband. Mr. Egerton obeyed her wishes, and read the whole of her letter to St. Aubyn, (I mean that designed for his perusal,) except that part which mentioned that a very short time would make her the wife of Balfour. That overwhelming intelligence he had not the heart to communicate to him.

Mr. Egerton's sufferings were certainly next in degree to those of St. Aubyn; and even Mrs. Castlemain herself, who, by the death of Mr. Hargrave and Mrs. St. Aubyn, saw her sole objections to him as a husband for Emma entirely removed, felt the sincerest pity for his distress, and almost wished Emma had never met Balfour.

Soon after Emma had written her letter to Mr. Egerton, she retired to her room to dress; but feeling her head considerably oppressed by the anxiety and watchfulness of the preceding night, she resolved to walk in the garden, in hopes that the air might revive her; and, throwing on a long, white wrapping-gown, she put her intention in execution. As the wind was high, and she walked rapidly backwards and forwards, the comb that fastened up her hair soon fell to the ground, loosened by the wind and the exercise, and her long tresses floated on her shoulders. At this moment she looked up at one of the windows, and saw at it the woman of colour; on which she was about to bow to her with a smile of congratulation on her being well enough to get up; when the smile was checked by a violent scream from Lola, who seemed, on seeing her, to shriek and fall back in the arms of her nurse. Emma immediately ran up stairs to inquire what had agitated her. She found the mulatto full of emotion, which increased still more

on her entrance into the chamber, and she overheard her say, “But is that indeed the blessed angel who saved my life? Tell me, answer me,” cried she, fixing her wild eyes on Emma—”Who are you? What’s your name?”

“My name is Emma Castlemain,” she replied.

“But your mother’s name, your mother’s name!”

“My mother’s name was Agatha Torrington.”

“‘Tis she, ‘tis she,” cried the mulatto, clasping her hands and falling on her knees; “and I did not see your mother in a dream, but you awake. O blessed angel! you saved my life, while I did all I could to injure you, and your poor mother!”

Emma, at first, thought she was again uttering the rhapsodies of a disturbed brain; but, on reflection, she was convinced that she beheld the *woman of colour* who had been employed by her father to deceive both her mother and her grandmother; and, as she gazed on her with this consciousness, she almost shrank from the being whose success in deceiving Mrs. Castlemain had been productive of such pernicious consequences to her much injured parent. But when she recollected that the poor penitent, agitated, and ignorant wretch before her had only obeyed the will of her master, and that the crime, therefore, had been chiefly that of her father, she felt all her resentment vanish; and when Lola earnestly entreated her forgiveness, she granted it with as much solemn earnestness as it had been implored. But it was not from any compunction for the mischievous falsehoods she had uttered that Lola’s conscience was haunted by the image of Agatha, and wounded by the certainty of the misery she had occasioned. Had the result of her obedience to her employer been what she expected, and that Danvers, on casting off Agatha, had resumed his connexion with her, or not taken another wife or mistress, she would never have thought of Agatha, or the probable result of her falsehoods, again. But Danvers, as soon as she had answered his purpose, paid her a small sum of money, and insisted on her returning to India by the next ship,

as servant to a family to which he recommended her; and she also at the same time discovered, that Danvers was on the point of marriage with a lady, but one whose name and address she could not learn; else, it is most likely, she would have informed her, in revenge, that he had a wife living. But to India she was forced to return unrevenged, and haunted by feelings of painful and compunctious pity for the victim of Danvers's cruelty; who, as his first wife had been, was endeared to her by the conviction that she, like herself, had been deserted by him when his passion was extinguished. Vainly did she then wish that she had not obeyed Danvers, and endeavoured to learn whither Agatha had fled; and often very often had her dreams been haunted by the image of Agatha, as with wild eyes, pale cheek, dishevelled hair, and almost terrifying violence of mien and gesture, she had addressed Danvers on that fatal day, when, leading his little boy, she had followed him into her presence. It was no wonder, therefore, that in her delirium she should mistake Emma for Agatha, when with hair falling loosely on her neck she had approached her bedside; nor that on beholding Emma in the garden, dressed in every respect as Agatha was when she had seen her, she should experience emotion and surprise sufficient to occasion the scream which had led Emma to her apartment. Emma, indeed, had scarcely seen her since the night that she had watched by her bedside, as the mulatto had been in a state of mental derangement almost ever since her fever had left her; and it was therefore now for the first time that Lola had a perfect view of her "pretty nurse," and that "blessed angel," as she always called her, who had, she was told, been the preserver of her life.

"But where is the poor lady, your mother?" cried Lola.

"Dead!"

"Dead! Did she die from the sorrow I helped to occasion her?"

"No, she lived many years after; but on this very painful subject I must beg not to be questioned."

“And that poor lady, her mother, is she dead too?”

“No; she is now at Paris.”

“Then perhaps I may see her, and ask her pardon also,” said the mulatto with great eagerness.

“Perhaps you may,” returned Emma, starting from a reverie; for it had occurred to her, that the singular coincidence that had thus made her acquainted with a being who had been one of the agents of Agatha’s destiny, might lead her to some knowledge of her father’s fate, and connexions, and perhaps clear away the stain upon the honour of her mother; for Emma had never believed in the report of his death. Still terror, lest she should hear her father was living, and too infamous for her not to shrink with horror from being acknowledged and claimed as his daughter, made her hesitate for a while to put the necessary questions; and before she had resolution to do it, the mulatto, overcome by the violent emotions which she had experienced, became again deranged, and was for some days too ill to be seen or spoken to.

In a short time the passports were obtained, and Mr. Egerton and Mrs. Castlemain left Paris in the carriage of the latter, Emma having preferred meeting them on the road, to joining them at Paris, owing perhaps to a fear of seeing St. Aubyn by chance. Accordingly, attended by Fanny Balfour, who had obtained leave to accompany her to England, while her governess joined her sisters at Versailles, Emma set off with Balfour in a landaulet and four, and Mrs. Castlemain had once more the happiness of pressing Emma to her bosom, endeared to her by a long separation, and by the danger which she had dared and surmounted.

The mulatto was so ill and so delirious when Emma left Montmorenci, that she could not bid her farewell; but she left a kind message for her, and a considerable present, as a proof of her entire forgiveness of her conduct towards her poor mother.

But now, in full view, and approaching nearer and nearer every day, was that trial, whose magnitude Emma was not conscious of

before, and from which, now she was conscious of it, she shrank with agony and dismay, wondering, as she did so, that she could have been blind so long to the true state of her motives and her feelings, and have disdained to profit by the calmer reason of that admirable friend, who had vainly but conscientiously held up the mirror to her heart. She saw herself on the point of marriage with a man whose addresses, whatever were his charms and his talents, she was now conscious that she should never have admitted, had she not been influenced, however unconsciously to herself, by the suggestions of wounded self-love, wounded pride, irritated jealousy, and female pique; in short, by all those pernicious impulses to action, which, however called, are all to be resolved into one master feeling denominated Temper. But it was too late to retract, even though she felt her health impaired by the corrosion of her mind, especially as when, on her asking Balfour how he could think of persisting in his design of marrying her now she was become a sickly, pale, nervous being, he tenderly replied, because her sufferings endeared her the more to him, and that no one could prove to her so good and affectionate a nurse, as the husband who doted on her with the truest and best principled affection!

“Well then,” replied Emma faintly smiling, “I will no longer hesitate to name a day for our union.” And it was fixed for the day after this conversation took place. On which Balfour wrote to his father, informing him of the near approach of his happiness, he having sometime before caused articles to be drawn up preparatory to a regular marriage settlement; and Mr. Egerton wrote to St. Aubyn informing him, as he promised to do, that the day was really *fixed*, but sparing him the unnecessary pang of knowing that before he received the letter the ceremony would be over.

When Mr. Egerton and Mrs. Castlemain left Paris, St. Aubyn, knowing the cause of their return to England was the intended marriage, too wretched to remain stationary, mounted his horse, and rode towards the south of France, for no other purpose but to ride away from himself, if he could; and conscious occasionally



of no pleasure but what resulted from the power his wealth gave him of relieving the distress which occasionally met his view on the road. He had, however, one source of enjoyment which he could impart to no one, but over which he brooded in solitude, like a miser over his treasure. And that was the assurance which had escaped Mr. Egerton, that Emma loved him! In vain did St. Aubyn say to himself, that if she loved him, she could not be happy with another man. Imperious love got the better of generosity; and when he dwelt on this idea, he felt that his misery diminished. But, as I before observed, this source of pleasure, honour and delicacy both, forbade him to impart to any one; therefore he avoided Mrs. Felton, with whom he formerly used to find relief in talking of his love, as he was happier alone than he could be in communicating to her his feelings, now he could divulge only half of them; and withstanding all that lady's almost frantic solicitations to an interview, he convinced her at length, that her hopes of succeeding Emma in his heart, were, at present at least, even more groundless than ever.

At length St. Aubyn, being impatient to hear some news from England, returned to Paris, and received Mr. Egerton's letter! Well indeed may the true lover be said,

“To hope, though hope were lost.”

St. Aubyn, till he received that letter, had unconsciously flattered himself that something might happen to prevent the marriage; but now that the day was fixed, and that, though Mr. Egerton did not say so, by the time that he received that letter the ceremony might perhaps be over, he felt, from the anguish of his disappointment, the extent of the hope he had indulged, and he traversed Paris from one end to the other, too full of restless anguish to remain in his own apartment, experiencing the acutest of all misery, save that which springs from the agonies of remorse. So keen were his pangs that they seemed to change for a while his mild and compassionate nature, giving him feelings of petulance and hardness of heart, to

him before unknown, and making creation itself appear “nothing hut a pestilential congregation of vapours.”

After long and almost unconscious wanderings, St. Aubyn found himself at midnight in the gardens of the Thuilleries; but as the sound of its trickling waters was painful to his feelings, he left the gardens, and turned his steps towards the Place de la Concorde. The night was stormy and starless; and at another time the quick emotions and busy fancy of St. Aubyn would have led him no unmoved wanderer over that scene of recent horrors and of guilt. The murdered great, the murdered good, would at another time have passed in rapid succession before his almost startled memory, and the oblivious dust would again have seemed reeking and red with the blood of the innocent and the unfortunate.

Absorbed either in misery or happiness must they be who can pass over the place where the guillotine stood, in the solemn silence of night, without a thrill of horror which probably no other spot in the creation can call forth. St. Aubyn was indeed absorbed in misery, and he forgot his youth, his talents, his possessions; and the wish to sink unnoticed into a quiet grave, was the only one that his sick soul delighted to indulge.

Being unable to retire to his hotel, as rest did not await him there, he turned his steps from the Place de la Concorde to the neighbouring Champs Elysées, and was just hailing the congenial gloom of its tall trees, when he heard a quick footstep behind him, whose solitary tread alone broke the deep stillness of night. St. Aubyn instinctively turned to face the danger, if any danger was nigh; and a feeble voice, in very imperfect French, exclaimed, “Charity, sir; for God’s sake give me some relief.” St. Aubyn, with all the savageness of grief, replied, that he had no money; and angrily bade the man begone. But he had scarcely indulged this sudden effusion of temper, so unlike his usual habits, before he bitterly repented of it, and was just going, in the words of Esdras, to exclaim, “Sufferer, what aileth thee, and why art thou so

disquieted?” when the poor man faltered out in English, “O God, what will become of me, and all of us!”

“Ha! A countryman too!” cried St. Aubyn. “My poor fellow, tell me what you want, and what I can do for you;” and that love of life, which anguish had for a while suspended, re-returned immediately with the consciousness of being able to do good, and the inclination to put that ability in practice.

As soon as tears would allow the poor youth to speak, he told St. Aubyn that he, his mother, and sisters were starving, and his father in a high delirium; while for want of money, he could procure his unhappy parent neither food, medicine, nor advice.

“Well, well, I will remedy all these miseries,” cried the revived St. Aubyn; and seeing some lights still glimmering in the Hemeau de Chantilly,<sup>[7]</sup> he led the way thither, desiring the young man to follow.

It was as he expected. The company who had assembled there had nearly all departed, and the owners of the house were very glad to dispose of what remained of their provision. The woman at the bar, seeing the greedy eye with which the youth regarded a dish of ham that stood by, desired him to take a piece, and St. Aubyn authorized him to eat all there was. He devoured the whole in an instant, in a manner so ravenous, as to call a tear into the eye of St. Aubyn, (who read in this a sad proof of the truth of his story,) and make the French woman exclaim, “Mon Dieu! que ce pauvre enfant a faim!”<sup>[8]</sup>

As soon as the poor youth had in a degree satisfied his hunger, and drunk two full goblets of the vin du pay, St. Aubyn desired to be furnished with a small basket, into which he put cold fowls and wine; then paying for all the different articles whatever the lady’s conscience allowed her to ask, he desired the now-elated young man to take the basket on his arm, and to show him the way to his father’s habitation. It was in the Rue Boulois, the very centre of Paris; and in a miserable garret, up three pair of stairs, St.

Aubyn beheld a woman and three girls attempting, but with great difficulty, to confine down in his bed a man in all the violence of delirium.

“Joy, joy!” cried the youth as he entered; “I have brought you food, wine, and an angel!” Then, setting down and opening the basket, the hungry and eager group leaving the invalid, and too ravenous to wait, began to tear in pieces the relief that was set before them. The mother, however, had more self-command, and began to bless and thank St. Aubyn in the fulness of a grateful heart; while he put several questions to her relative to the state of her husband, and, writing a note to his servant, directed the son to carry it immediately to his hotel, and bring the man back with him.

St. Aubyn was now obliged to assist in confining the invalid, who was continually addressing some invisible object; “Ah, rascal!” he exclaimed; “so you pretended not to know me, did you? But I knew you, though you are grown so old, and so ugly, and are become a great man; and I will be revenged! I’ll ‘peach! So look to it! Here it is, here it is!” So saying, he took an old dirty pocket-book from under his pillow, and with a grin of maniacal defiance, hugged it, and hid it in his bosom.

This language, and this action, were repeated so often, that St. Aubyn at last asked what the pocket-book contained; but the wife assured him she did not know, and that it never was out of her husband’s possession.

“What does he mean, think you, by ‘peaching?’” said he.

“I do not know,” replied the woman; “I am sure I wish I had never seen his face; for I suspect he has done something that lies very heavy on his conscience.”

“Woman,” said St. Aubyn, sternly, “it is not for you to judge your husband. And whatever crime he may have committed, he is now a severe sufferer, and by you, at least, ought only to be considered as such.”

Here the unhappy wretch began to rave again; and the eagerly-attentive St. Aubyn fancied he heard him utter names familiar to his ear. Again he spoke, again St. Aubyn listened; and at length was sure that he was not deceived; while breathless with agitated expectation, he hung upon the words of the unconscious speaker.

“Yes, yes,” cried he, “I know you well, Miss Torrington! Agatha Torrington! Ha, ha, ha! I was revenged, but don’t say I crazed you; I did not do it. And that fool Jones! But that rascal to refuse me money, and pretend not to know me! In black and white, you rascal, I have it, I have it, I have it!” Then, again was the book hugged and hidden; and St. Aubyn blessed the hour which led him to that spot; for, having heard every particular of Agatha’s history, he had no doubt but he beheld that Cammell, who had been bribed by Danvers to destroy the registry of his marriage. But had he really destroyed it? St. Aubyn suspected not; and that the pocket-book contained it, Cammell having preserved it probably in order to extort money from Danvers wherever he should meet him. It seemed, then, that Danvers was *not* dead, and that Cammell met him, recently met him. Where then, and under what name, was the father of Emma to be found? And before St. Aubyn lost sight of Cammell, he was resolved to ascertain this fact; while sweet to his soul was the certainty that he should be able essentially to serve the woman he adored.

“Who are those people that he is talking of?” asked St. Aubyn.

“I am sure I don’t know,” said the woman, sulkily; “but for this last month he has done nothing but talk of some man who refused to give him money the other day, and against whom he has sworn to be revenged; while often he has started from his sleep, talking of one Agatha Torrington.”

“Pray, what is your name?” said St. Aubyn. The woman hesitated, and answered, in some confusion, that their name was Williams.

“No, it is not,” replied St. Aubyn, looking at her steadily. “Your name, I am convinced, is Cammell.”

“Who speaks to me?” cried the invalid. “Who wants Cammell?” And the wife, assured that all further concealment was vain, dropped the food she was conveying to her mouth, and in a tone of terror exclaimed, “I see, sir, you know all about us; but pray, pray, sir, be merciful!”

“Did you,” asked St. Aubyn, “ever hear your husband talk of having torn from a book the registry of a marriage?”

“Never, when in his senses; but very likely you will hear him talk of a marriage-register in one of his raving fits.”

“Have you,” said St. Aubyn, who saw the poor wretch sink back exhausted on his pillow, “have you any objection to my opening that pocket-book? for I have heard enough to induce me to set a guard on your husband, in order to bring him to justice for an act of a most wicked nature, by which he has greatly injured some of the dearest friends I have.” The terrified woman, falling on her knees, begged he would do as he thought proper; and St. Aubyn, getting possession of the pocket-book, had the inexpressible delight to draw forth from it, doubled in many folds, and each fold ready to fall in pieces, the registry of the marriage of George Danvers and Agatha Torrington; with the date and every thing perfect. There would now, then, he believed, be no difficulty in publicly proving Agatha to be the lawful wife of Danvers, as Mr. Egerton had in his custody the letter from Jamaica to prove the day and hour when the first wife died; therefore the date of the marriage register would show, beyond dispute, the truth of what Agatha had always asserted, that when Danvers led her to the altar, his wife had been dead three weeks!

“Thus, then,” thought St. Aubyn, “have I been the instrument to clear the fame of Mrs. Danvers from even a shadow of suspicion; and to prove that much-injured woman worthy to be the daughter of Mrs. Castlemain, and the mother of Emma!” For St. Aubyn felt, as every virtuous and unsophisticated Englishman must feel, that a stain on the chastity of its females, is a blot on the proudest

escutcheon of the proudest family, which not even the splendour of royal descent and royal alliances can ever obliterate.

By this time the youth had returned with St. Aubyn's servant, whom he instantly despatched with a note describing Cammell's disorder to Dr. M——, he himself resolving not to leave the house till he had learnt where Emma's father was to be found.

In a short time Dr. M—— arrived; and having given his patient a composing medicine, he soon sunk into a profound sleep, from which Dr. M—— assured St. Aubyn that he would probably recover in a sane mind. But it was nine the next morning before Cammell awoke. However, when he did wake, St. Aubyn's tedious watchfulness was well repaid; for he appeared quite calm and sensible, though most alarmingly weak. He seemed excessively terrified at seeing a stranger, and turned pale as death on missing his pocket-book.

“Compose yourself, said St. Aubyn, mildly, “and look on me as your friend.”

He then told him why he came, what discoveries he had made, and finally that the torn leaf was in his possession; while the poor abject wretch humbly begged for mercy at his hands.

“I am not able to grant it,” said St. Aubyn; “but I think that as you were, in this affair, only the agent of a greater villain still, one whom I hope to make as penitent as yourself, I trust that you have nothing to fear; but you I must make all the reparation in your power, by telling me where I can find Mr. Danvers.”

“Mr. Danvers!” cried Cammell. “There never was such a person. To be sure, his christian names were George Danvers; but his surname was BALFOUR, and he has been many years LORD CLONAWLEY!”

At this dreadful intelligence, St. Aubyn was for a moment speechless with horror; but he at length exclaimed, “Perhaps it is not yet too late! Lord Clonawley the father of Emma, and of

——!” Then, learning from the astonished Cammell that Lord Clonawley was at Versailles, he told his servant not to lose sight of Cammell, but remain where he was till he saw him again. He then ran to his hotel, ordered a horse to be saddled, and set off full speed for Versailles.

“And who knows,” said St. Aubyn to himself, “but that the present Lord Clonawley may not be the man in question?”

Lord Clonawley’s mind was little prepared for the dreadful trial which awaited him. Though he had often inflicted misery he had never experienced it, except when he lost the mother of his daughters, a wife whom he had tenderly loved.

When St. Aubyn arrived at Versailles, he desired to be shown to Lord Clonawley’s lodgings; while the hope he had indulged when he began his journey vanished entirely now the moment of explanation was at hand.

Having sent in to inquire for Lord Clonawley, the servant returned, saying his lord begged to see him instantly; for, on being told that a stranger in great agitation desired to see him, he feared something had happened to his son, and therefore resolved to admit him immediately.

“I beg pardon, my lord, for this intrusion,” cried St Aubyn on entering, “but may I beg to know where Mr. Balfour now is?”

“Sir!” replied Lord Clonawley, much relieved in mind on hearing this question, “my son is in England, and at this moment,” parental affection lighting up his face as he spoke, “and at this moment, sir, he is one of the happiest of men;” (here St. Aubyn’s heart misgave him;) “for, by a letter just received from him, he informs me that he was the next day to be united to the woman of his affections.”

St. Aubyn, on hearing this overwhelming intelligence, reeled to a chair, and hid his face with his hands.



“What is the matter, sir?” exclaimed Lord Clonawley, little anticipating the wretchedness he was about to experience. “You seem distressed.”

“I am indeed distressed,” cried St. Aubyn, raising his head; “but wretched as I am, your fate is far more terrible than mine.”

“This is strange, mysterious language, sir; and from a stranger too,” replied Lord Clonawley, alarmed yet irritated.

“Answer me, my lord,” returned St. Aubyn; “had you not a child, a daughter, by Agatha Torrington?”

“By what right, sir, do you ask that question?”

“Question me not, but answer me, my lord! Your fate hangs upon your answer; and I conjure you, by all your hopes of pardon for your crimes, to answer me truly.”

And Lord Clonawley, awed and influenced, in spite of his haughtiness, by the air and words of St. Aubyn, replied,

“I had a daughter by Agatha Torrington, but not born in wedlock.”

St. Aubyn’s indignant eye momentarily reproved the despicable falsehood; but its fire was as instantly quenched in tears of anguish as he uttered, “Lord Clonawley, terrible is the retribution that has overtaken you! for your DAUGHTER, by Agatha Torrington, is, in all probability, at this moment, the wife of your SON!”

“Who are you,” demanded the wretched man, terrified and averse to be convinced, “that dare to come hither to distract me with impossibilities? My son’s wife is the daughter of Mrs. Castlemain.”

“The granddaughter, my lord, bequeathed to her on her deathbed by the unfortunate Agatha. Mrs. Torrington’s name became Castlemain on her second marriage; and as you had deprived your child of her rightful name, her grandmother gave her hers.”

Lord Clonawley, on hearing this, could doubt no longer, but sat the tearless image of hopeless woe, not being so fortunate as to lose in happy forgetfulness the sense of suffering.

“But perhaps it is not too late,” suddenly cried St. Aubyn, struggling against despondence.

“Perhaps not,” answered Lord Clonawley reviving; “the marriage has once been delayed by the illness of—of the lady.”

“Enough!” cried St. Aubyn. “At all events I set off for England as soon as ever I can get a passport. But let me first inform you, sir, that I have *here* (showing it as he spoke) the registry of your *marriage* with Miss Torrington, and that CAMMELL is in my custody.”

Lord Clonawley gazed at him with added horror and amazement, but spoke not; and St. Aubyn continued;—

“Therefore, before I go, I expect that you, in a letter to Mr. Balfour, which I shall deliver into his own hands, acknowledge Agatha Torrington to have been your lawful wife, and Emma to be your legitimate daughter.”

Thus lord Clonawley at once beheld himself not only detected in all his guilt, but fully punished for it; and convinced that unconditional compliance was his only resource, he wrote the letter required, received St. Aubyn’s address in London,—and in a moment after St. Aubyn set off for Paris.

It was lucky, perhaps, for his intellects, that his passport was expedited as it was, and that in a much less time than could have been expected, he was on his road towards England; having previously witnessed the last moments of Cammell, and received his dying confession.

When he reached Boulogne, he found a packet ready to sail; but just as he was going on board, the wind completely changed, and he was forced to return to his hotel. But motion being better for

him than rest, and Calais at no great distance, he again took horses, and reached Calais in a few hours.

The wind, however, still continuing contrary, he resolved not to go to bed, as to rest was impossible, but to walk up and down the pier till a favourable breeze came up. It did so about day-break, and at length St. Aubyn hailed the fast-approaching shores of England.

But to return to lord Clonawley, who, after St. Aubyn was gone, feeling himself unable to remain sole depositary of his sad secret, summoned his daughters into his room, and went through the painful and mortifying task of owning to them his past guilt, and informing them of its terrible results. At present he had not the heart to tell them they were born of a marriage which he had contracted during the existence of his second wife, and that therefore Emma was his only legitimate daughter.

Three days after St. Aubyn was on the road to England, the mulatto, being restored to health and sanity, inquired why Emma had left Montmorenci so suddenly; and, on being informed that she was gone to England to be married, she fervently prayed that the blessed angel, as she always called her, might have a husband as good as she was. She then asked the name of her husband, and being informed that he was the honourable George Frederic Balfour, only son of lord Clonawley, she uttered a scream of horror, and jumping out of bed, insisted on setting off for England directly. The bystanders concluded she was again delirious, and did not alter their opinion when she added that she must go to prevent incest, as Balfour and Miss Castlemain were brother and sister. But the nurse, who had witnessed her recognition of Emma, was of a different opinion, and so were they all, when the mulatto becoming more calm, produced *proof* of the truth of what she asserted. However, they convinced her that it was too late to prevent the union; but as lord Clonawley was at Versailles, it was judged right by the mulatto's mistress, that she should go over and inform him of her discovery.

Accordingly, one day, while lord Clonawley, in all the horrors of remorse and despair, was pacing with feeble yet agitated steps his solitary apartment, the mulatto, in spite of the servants, forced open the door and tottered into his presence.

He knew her instantly; though time in the one, and time and vice in the other, had impaired in both that beauty of person, which in both had been the means of misery and guilt; and as lord Clonawley raised this self-condemned accomplice from the ground, addressing her by the kind appellation of “Is it you, my poor Lola!” he turned away his head, and gave way to a violent burst of anguish and remorse.

Lola was immediately convinced, by this kind greeting, so different from the one which she expected to receive, that lord Clonawley already knew what she came to inform him of; for nothing but misery and horrors great as these, were, she thought, likely to have so softened the destroyer of Agatha.

“I see, I see,” said Lola, “that you know all I came to say; and that *blessed angel* is indeed the wife of her brother!”

“No; God forbid!” cried lord Clonawley, “there is yet a ray of hope,—and——”

“Indeed!” cried Lola; then falling on her knees in transport, she blessed God for having saved from destruction the dear preserver of her life!

“Whom do you mean,” asked lord Clonawley impatiently, “by the blessed angel, and the preserver of your life? Do you mean my daughter, my poor injured Emma?”

“I do,” replied Lola. Then, with all the eager animation of gratitude, and the eloquent exaggeration of her race, she detailed to lord Clonawley his daughter’s beauty, and her active virtue; her generous nature, and her compassionate forgiveness; while the feeling of parental pride, which would, under other circumstances, have led the agitated parent to exclaim, “And this is MY child!”

was checked in lord Clonawley by a consciousness too agonizing for expression. At the same time, as the slave of selfish passions can only be made to feel deeply through the certainty of incurred privations, his regret for his guilty conduct towards Agatha and her child, was rendered doubly acute by the idea, that if that child was capable of volunteering, and incurring a dangerous and a painful duty from the mere benevolent wish of saving the life of a distressed and *unknown fellow-creature*, what would she not have done for a sick, a helpless, and a long-suffering *parent!* And as he thought this, most painfully did he contrast his deserted and disowned daughter with his owned and cherished children. Bitterly did he remember how often Harriet and Mary Ann, though good and affectionate girls, had left him to the care of hired nurses, on pretence of being worn out by one night of watchfulness; and bitterly did he regret that the self-denying and benevolent being, who had so kindly watched by the bedside of an infected menial, was one whose tender offices he should have had a right to claim, had he not been deaf to every demand of affection, of justice, and of honour. And amply, injured and unfortunate Agatha, did thy child's virtues revenge thee on the vices of its unnatural father.

“Oh, Lola!” cried lord Clonawley, “think what I endure at the idea that this angel, as you call her, has probably been brought up to hate me, and will never deign to see or to forgive me!”

“You don't know her,” cried Lola eagerly; “she forgave me, I tell you, and I doubt not but she will forgive you. Write to her, I say,—write to her.” And lord Clonawley, in all the anguish of a contrite spirit, did write to Emma, and felt his mind relieved by the effort.

At this moment he received St. Aubyn's letter announcing his being landed at Dover; and both he and the mulatto felt a little comforted by the news.

But when lord Clonawley had despatched his letter, he resolved to follow it as soon as he could in person, not only because he was unable to bear the suspense he must undergo till he could hear from

St. Aubyn again, but because he flattered himself, that if his letter produced any effect on Emma's heart, he might, by being ready on the spot, induce her to see him, and pronounce his pardon in person. He immediately, therefore, got all things in readiness for his journey, and was soon on his road to England.

But to return to St. Aubyn, who, on reaching Rochester, happened unfortunately, while waiting for horses, to take up a paper, by which he received a terrible confirmation that every hope of arriving in time was vain; for he read in that paper as follows:

“Yesterday was married by special license at St. George's, Hanover-square, the honourable G. F. Balfour, to Emma, granddaughter of the honourable Mrs. Castlemain.”

But he endeavoured to give himself courage to proceed, by the reflection that such paragraphs were often false, and only anticipations; and in a degree revived by this nearly frantic hope, he had courage to pursue his journey. When he reached London, he drove instantly to Balfour's lodgings; and almost too much agitated to be intelligible, he asked for Mr. Balfour.

“My master, sir,” replied the servant with a look of great and complacent meaning, “is gone to church.”

“To church!” said St. Aubyn.

“Yes, sir, to be married; he has been gone about twenty minutes to St. George's, Hanover-Square.”

I will not attempt to describe St. Aubyn's feelings at hearing this, while agitated nature vented and relieved itself in a passionate flood of tears. He did not then come too late! and he passed from absolute despair to hope.

“Drive to St. George's church,” cried St. Aubyn. But as the motion of the post-chaise was not rapid enough for him, he opened the door, jumped out, and in a few minutes was at the church-door.

“I *must* come in,” he exclaimed to the man who opposed his entrance, “I come to Mr. Balfour from his father Lord Clonawley. And stop me at your peril!”

On hearing this, the man dared to oppose him no longer, and he walked up the middle isle. The minister who was officiating had just got to the words, “If any of you know cause or impediment, why these two persons are not to be joined together in holy matrimony, ye are now to declare it;” when St. Aubyn appeared in sight, loudly exclaiming, “I do”—and advanced to the altar.

At sight of him the same apprehension was felt by all who knew him; namely, that St. Aubyn, distracted by the loss of Emma, was come thither in a fit of frenzy; but this idea vanished, when the latter, premising that he came thither deputed by Lord Clonawley to forbid the marriage, presented his father’s letter to Balfour, desiring him to read it immediately.

Then, while Balfour, pale and trembling, perused the unwelcome contents, St. Aubyn, as much agitated as himself, turned to Mrs. Castlemain.

“It has been my blessed lot, dear madam,” said he, “to be the instrument to save those I most love from destruction! and in addition I am enabled to assure you that the fact of your daughter’s marriage is established beyond a doubt; here is the registry of that marriage, (presenting it to her,) and here the dying confession of Cammell himself, and——” here his voice and strength began to fail——”Lord Clonawley owns your beloved Emma to be his legitimate daughter, by ——” Then, exhausted by several nights devoid of rest, and passed in misery and fatigue, he sunk into the arms of the person who stood near him, and was conveyed in a swoon into the vestry. Meanwhile his words had excited in his auditors, Balfour excepted, surprise the most unbounded and feelings the most varied. To Balfour, his father’s letter had already told the same; but Balfour’s feelings had, unlike those of Mr. Egerton, Mrs. Castlemain, and Emma, nothing of pleasure mixed with agony, except that of joy and thankfulness at being

prevented the commission of a crime; he even sometimes doubted the fact of Emma's being his sister; which however his previous knowledge of her history, and now the testimony of Mr. Egerton, confirmed too strongly for him to doubt any longer; and unable to bear the various emotions that assailed him, he attempted to leave the church alone. But this Mr. Egerton would not suffer; and accompanying him to his hotel, he did not leave him till he was composed, and his sister Fanny was come to bear him company. Mrs. Castlemain and Emma, during this time, were anxiously awaiting the recovery of St. Aubyn; while Emma, though at a loss to guess how St. Aubyn had been the means of saving her from an incestuous marriage, felt happy at owing her preservation to him; and both ladies mingled, with pious thankfulness to heaven, blessings on their earthly friend and preserver.

It was therefore with almost overwhelming agony they found, on St. Aubyn's recovering from his fainting fit, that his eyes were wild, and his language incoherent; and that, not knowing any one about him, he raved of not getting to England in time; and was evidently so ill, that Mrs. Castlemain conveyed him to her own lodgings, and desired a physician to be sent for immediately. It was some days before St. Aubyn was conscious of his happiness in being nursed by Mr. Egerton and Mrs. Castlemain with even parental tenderness; while Emma, unseen, hovered near the bed that contained the being endeared to her heart by every tie that can bind one fellow-being to another.

At length St. Aubyn's danger was over, and he once more recognized the friends who, worn with anxiety, hung over his restless pillow. Emma's happiness amounted almost to agony; and she wondered what was become of those internal *intimations* of approaching *dissolution* which she had contemplated with such calm complacency, just before she fixed the day to be married to Balfour. The marriage day had been fixed as for the morrow, when Balfour wrote to his father; but Emma's health had yielded at length completely to uneasiness of mind; and on the morning fixed



for the wedding, she was declared to be suffering under that painful disorder, a low and nervous fever.

When she recovered, however, she persisted in marrying Balfour; for she felt a conviction, perhaps *dear* to her mind, that she should not long survive the union, and she thought it her duty to let Balfour call her his before she died, as his persevering tenderness still desired to obtain this privilege. Weak, faded, and, in her own opinion, dying, she was therefore conveyed to church, and was about to pronounce the most sacred of all vows, when she was so happily prevented, and by a circumstance which in a few hours restored her love, and even her hope of life; and in a few days, that is, as soon as St. Aubyn was declared out of danger, her delighted friends saw colour restored to her cheek, and spirit to her eye.

As soon as St. Aubyn was sufficiently recovered to bear conversation, Mrs. Castlemain, who had hung over his sick bed with even a mother's tenderness, and bathed his unconscious face with many a tear of affectionate alarm, could no longer restrain her expressions of gratitude to him, for the signal services he had been enabled to render her, and those most dear to her; and she listened with painful interest to his explanation of the circumstances which led to it. When he had ended his narration, she exclaimed, "there is one way, Henry, and only one, in which I can ever hope to reward you; and it shall not be my fault, if all the happiness that is in my power to bestow, is not yours, whenever decorum warrants it." So saying, she left the room, and returned with Emma; then joining their hands, she said with great emotion,

"There, Henry, plead your own cause, and believe me that to witness your union with that object of my fondest care, will give me the highest happiness which an anxious parent can experience; for to whom can a parent confide the welfare of her child with such confidence of securing it, as to a man whose whole life has been an exemplary series of duties fulfilled!"

It cannot be supposed that Henry pleaded his cause in vain; and day after day glided by unheeded, while mutual and satisfactory

explanations took place between the lovers. Still, as Emma had been so recently on the point of marriage with another, it was thought only proper that a year should elapse before she became the bride of St. Aubyn. When St. Aubyn was well enough to go out in the carriage, his first airing was to Kensington.

Emma had taken the earliest opportunity after her return to England, to call on the Orwells, and introduce Balfour to them as her future husband. Mr. Egerton, and she herself, had informed them by letter of her approaching marriage; but as it was not a subject on which either of them was fond of dilating, the good old couple had not heard enough of the intended bridegroom to satisfy either their affections or their curiosity; and they were particularly anxious to know whether Balfour was that handsome, benevolent-looking young man who had called on them and would not tell his name.

Accordingly they were delighted to see Mrs. Castlemain's carriage stop at their door, and Mr. Orwell eagerly ran out to receive his welcome visitors; while Mrs. Orwell, seeing from the window that the gentleman on whose arm Emma leaned was tall and blooming, readily believed what she wished, and concluded that Balfour was the identical unknown, who had so much charmed both her and her husband. Hastening therefore to the door, she eagerly exclaimed, "Well! this is just what I——" but there she paused, for Balfour turned his face towards her, and with a look of disappointment she made him a cold courtesy; while Emma, conscious of what the old lady was about to say, and understanding the change in her countenance, hastily passed her, and, complaining of fatigue, leaned her head for a moment on the side of the sofa.

This visit to the Orwells was short, for Balfour was impatient to be gone; but it was long enough to convince Mrs. Orwell that Emma was not in love with the man whom she was going to marry, and with great bitterness did she inveigh against Mrs. Castlemain's cruelty in sacrificing her granddaughter for the sake of a title; while Mr. Orwell, though he angrily reproved his wife for what might be

unjust suspicions, could not help entertaining similar ones himself, and he reluctantly owned that Emma looked alarmingly ill.

But now feelings of a very different nature awaited them. Emma had previously informed them, that she was coming to introduce to them her friend, Mr. St. Aubyn, to whom they all owed so much.

Impatiently, therefore, was this visit expected; and when in the pale, languid, but happy-looking invalid, whom Mrs. Castlemain and Emma fondly supported, and whose looks they affectionately watched, the Orwells recognised their unknown visiter, they exchanged looks of triumph and delight, and Mrs. Orwell could not help exclaiming, “Ay, this is just what I wished to see, and I am not disappointed *now*.”

When their guests departed, after a long and satisfactory visit, Mr. Orwell, as he re-entered the house, exclaimed, rubbing his hands, as he always did when he was particularly gratified, “Well, old woman, I hope you are pleased *now*; and that our dear young lady is enough in love, and looks happy enough to satisfy even YOU?”

One morning, St. Aubyn received a letter, forwarded to him from Ibbetson’s Hotel, the address which he had given to Lord Clonawley. It was from that unhappy man, and contained the unexpected intelligence that he was arrived at a hotel in Albemarle street, and begged to see St. Aubyn immediately; but adding, that having driven to his son’s lodgings, as soon as he reached town, where Balfour’s grateful anxiety made him remain till St. Aubyn was declared out of danger, he had had the happiness to find he was not married, and that that dreadful punishment for his offences was remitted. I shall observe here, that the already *improved* Lord Clonawley had made one of his daughters transmit this good news immediately to the *poor anxious Lola*.

St. Aubyn had only been abroad once since his illness. It was, therefore, on that account, and on many others, thought proper that Mr. Egerton only should go to him; and with a heart full of

indescribable emotion, he prepared himself for an interview with the destroyer of Agatha, and the father of her deserted child.

It was late in the evening before Mr. Egerton returned; and never had either St. Aubyn, or Emma, or Mrs. Castlemain beheld him so deeply affected as he now was. For he had been endeavouring to awake a sinner to repentance; he had been listening to the painful narration of a life of profligacy. The profligate too, was the father of the child of his adoption and his love!

“However,” thought Mr. Egerton, “his son, luckily for him, was never long enough with his father to be corrupted by his example; and the future Lord Clonawley will, I trust, be an honour, instead of a disgrace to his family!”

But even for Lord Clonawley, Mr. Egerton, who, like all good men, was indulgent to the faults of others, could make considerable excuses.

His father, a man of family, but of small fortune, married his mistress, a woman taken from the dregs of the people; but he kept his marriage a secret many years, and brought up his son, though born in wedlock, in the obscurity and humble education usually attendant on illegitimate children. The young man, therefore, instead of associating with his father’s, lived with his mother’s relations; instead of passing his time with gentlemen, was the companion of men whose manners were as vulgar as their morals were depraved. When he was eighteen, his father, having owned his marriage, gave him a private tutor, and at twenty sent him to College; but he had not one feeling or principle of a gentleman, on which to found the conduct of one, though his discernment, and his talents of imitation, soon taught him the necessity and the power of acquiring a gentleman’s manners.

Shortly after his leaving the University, he was summoned to join his father in India, where he married, and remained a few years. Soon after, by the death of three persons, who were even in the prime of life, Mr. Balfour senior saw four lives only between him

and the title of Clonawley, and there was only one life between Balfour and the succession at the time of his father's and mother's death, which was at the period of his rupture with Agatha. The fortune, therefore, which Agatha was heiress to, held out too remote a temptation to him to influence his conduct towards her, as a greater fortune would soon, in all likelihood, be in his grasp; and as he was most passionately in love with another woman, he was resolved to spare no villany to obtain possession of her. When he saw Agatha at the race-ball, he had dropped his surname, and was known by his christian name alone, in order to avoid a prosecution, with which he was threatened, for having seduced a farmer's daughter, in which guilt Cammell had assisted him; and while he was supposed on the continent, he was on a visit to one of his profligate friends. Captain Bertie, who was in his secret, and kept it most sacredly. The name of Danvers, he thought it advisable to retain, even when the idea of a prosecution was dropped; but after he had married his third wife, he owned his real name, telling her and her weak father, as they were sailing to Jamaica, where the latter had large plantations, that as he was next heir to a title, he concealed his name, that he might be sure his daughter did not marry him for the sake of his rank; and soon after he became Lord Clonawley. His son, meanwhile, was left in England, under the care of a tutor, of rigid morals, though not fitted to form the temper and correct the selfish habits which Balfour had contracted in childhood. Still, however, the outline was good, and only the filling-up defective; and Balfour certainly had none of his father's vices.

Mr. Egerton found from Lord Clonawley's discourse, that he had tenderly loved his third wife, whose sweetness of temper had won his affection; but that Agatha, instead of soothing, had always irritated him; and by the reproaches of her wounded pride, and her dictatorial, contemptuous manner, had changed all the passionate fondness which her person and her talents had first excited in him, into fear and aversion. Such were the bitter fruits to Agatha of an uncorrected temper.

Still, never without painful remorse, had Lord Clonawley remembered Agatha; and terror lest he should hear that some harm had happened to her and her child, in consequence of his desertion, had always prevented him from making any inquiries concerning them, in order to ascertain whether the mother of Agatha, in consequence of his letter, had received her and the little Emma to her favour and protection.

Bitterly now did Lord Clonawley lament the turpitude of his conduct towards her; and he listened to the narration of her despair, her poverty, her industry, her sufferings, and her death, with agonies that completely revenged her on her betrayer.

“But you tell me she forgave me,” he repeated, “forgave and prayed for me!” And from that idea alone he derived consolation; but he had reparation to make to the living; and there again his punishment was severe; for he saw himself forced to punish the children whom he knew and loved, for the guilt he alone had perpetrated, by depriving them of their rank and name in society; and to own publicly, as his only lawful daughter, a child whom he never saw, and who had probably been brought up to detest him.

Mr. Egerton left him, however, calmed and composed, and Balfour with him, who, thinking he had better quit London, and not see Emma till he could behold her without emotion, determined to set off on a tour the next day. Balfour had been violent in his anger towards his erring parent, forgetting that Lord Clonawley had something to forgive his son.

Balfour, knowing how particular his father was with respect to family and connexions, was well convinced that, if he informed him Emma’s claim to legitimate birth was equivocal, he would do all in his power to prevent the marriage. Actuated therefore by the impulse of that unyielding temper, which could not endure the slightest opposition, he suppressed Mrs. Castlemain’s letter, explaining her relationship to Emma, and suffered Lord Clonawley to remain in the belief that she was Mrs. Castlemain’s daughter. Nor, till Balfour confessed what he had done to Mr. Egerton, could

the latter imagine why the discovery had not taken place as soon as Lord Clonawley received that letter. Thus the disingenuousness of Balfour, like all conduct of that nature, was very near being the cause of irreparable misery; and thus was Mrs. Castlemain convinced how judiciously Mr. Egerton thought and spoke, when he opposed Emma's being called Castlemain instead of Danvers; adding, "that he never knew any good the result of deception, and praying that from this deception no material mischief might ensue."

"Emma," said Mr. Egerton, "I have promised for you, that you will see your father."

"I am sorry for it, sir," replied Emma, proudly, "for never can I bear to behold the destroyer of my mother!"

"That mother," solemnly replied Mr. Egerton, "delayed to forgive her offending parent, till death made it impossible for her to see that parent, and pronounce the forgiveness which she then earnestly wished to bestow. Take warning by her mournful example, and remember that it is not for a child to take upon itself to punish even a guilty parent!" Here Emma, in great emotion, precipitately left the room; but, after a long struggle with herself, she returned, and going up to Mr. Egerton, assured him that whenever Lord Clonawley was willing to admit her, she would be willing to visit him; and the satisfaction which her lover and her friend expressed, amply repaid her for the conquest she had gained over her resentments.

Mr. Egerton immediately wrote to Lord Clonawley, desiring him to fix a day for seeing his daughter; but that very evening he was seized with a mortal malady. Agitation of mind brought on a return of bleeding at the lungs to which he had long been subject, and it was soon decided that all aid was vain. Just before this news reached Emma, she received Lord Clonawley's letter, which by some strange chance had not yet reached her.

Mr. Egerton, having sent an express for Balfour, who had left town two days preceding, came to inform Emma of her father's situation, and she instantly exclaimed,

"Oh! how glad I am that before I received his letter, and heard of his danger, I had consented to see him!"

"I come also to tell you," added Mr. Egerton, "that he cannot die in peace without beholding you, and asking your pardon in person for the wrongs he did you." And Emma, though pale and trembling with emotion, eagerly begged to be immediately conducted to him.

"No, my dear child," replied Mr. Egerton, "I will not conduct you to him, but I will follow soon. You shall go, supported and encouraged by the presence of that man, who was an example of filial piety himself, and who will have a pride and pleasure in seeing you fulfil the painful duty which filial piety now imposes on you."

"I have informed Lord Clonawley of St. Aubyn's claims and pretensions, which he warmly admits and approves; and he wishes to pronounce his dying blessing on your union."

This intelligence softened Emma's heart still more towards her dying parent; and with more emotion and less reluctance she set off for Albemarle-street, and was led by St. Aubyn to the presence of Lord Clonawley.

As soon as he beheld her, he exclaimed, "'Tis she! my injured wife herself seems to stand before me!" Then, hiding his face in his hands, he sobbed audibly and convulsively.

From the generous and feeling nature of Emma, every trace of resentment vanished as she beheld the self-judged object before her, and no feeling but of pity remained. Lord Clonawley at length becoming able to bear to look at her, raised his eyes imploringly to hers, and extended towards her his damp and meagre hand.

"Will you, can you forgive me, my child?" he faintly exclaimed.

"From my very soul!" cried Emma, throwing herself beside him.



“Thanks! thanks!” he replied in a hurried manner, “her very voice too! and in the same sweet mournful tone as when I heard it last.”

Emma now raised herself, and sat on the side of the bed, holding her father’s hand in hers, while her sisters leaned over him on the other side, vainly trying to engage a little of his attention; but that attention was now so completely riveted on Emma, that he saw not St. Aubyn, whom he had wished so much to see, nor Mr. Egerton, who now entered the room, and for whom he had repeatedly inquired.

The delirium of death was indeed fast approaching; and mistaking Emma for her mother, lord Clonawley eagerly and repeatedly addressed her by the name of Agatha, and begged her to forgive her guilty husband all his trespasses against her.

“Pray for me, Agatha, pray for me, my beloved wife,” he wildly cried; and Emma willing to indulge a delusion that might give him comfort, fell on her knees, and raising one hand to Heaven, while he grasped the other in his cold convulsive grasp,

“Merciful author of my existence,” she exclaimed, “forgive this penitent sufferer as freely as I forgive him!”

The eyes of the dying man beamed with momentary brightness as she spoke; then, turning to the last on her, they soon after closed for ever.

Mr. Egerton immediately desired St. Aubyn to lead Emma away, while he remained with the poor orphans, in whose sullen grief he evidently beheld no heart-yearnings, but the contrary, towards their new-found sister, and therefore thought it best for the present to remove her from their sight.

Fanny, whose spirits were too weak to bear the scene that awaited Emma, had remained with Mrs. Castlemain, whom lord Clonawley had, luckily for her, not wished to see; and when Emma returned, the poor girl, who loved her tenderly, flew to her arms with every sentiment of tenderness towards her that Emma could desire; and

they together wept, though with different feelings, the parent whom they had lost.

Lord Clonawley made a will the day before he died, in which he left only 2000*l.* each to his daughters, Mary Ann, Harriet, and Fanny; his estates of course coming to his son, who was, as my readers must be sensible of, the identical little boy, the only child by his first marriage, whom he had himself introduced to Agatha. To *Emma*, designated expressly by the name of Emma Balfour, his sole legitimate daughter by Agatha Torrington, his lawful wife, he gave the sum of 10,000*l.*

“Did you talk to my father *much* of me?” said Emma as soon as she recovered the violent emotion which she felt, on hearing the contents of the will.

“I did,” he replied, “and spoke of you as I thought.”

“I suspected as much,” said Emma, bursting into tears, and hastening to her own room, where with a trembling hand she penned the following letter:

“My dear sisters,

“Our lost father, by willing to me so disproportionate a share of his fortune, relieved his conscience from a painful burthen. Now then let me relieve mine, and prove myself worthy of the reliance which, I evidently see, lord Clonawley placed on my justice and my affection. I insist on sharing equally with you the fortune he has bequeathed to me, and I conjure you to accept the offer as a proof of the affectionate regard of

“Your new-found sister,

“EMMA BALFOUR.”

For this offer, which Balfour allowed them to accept, his sisters employed him to express to Emma their grateful acknowledgments, promising to visit her at the White Cottage

on their return from Ireland, whither they were going, with their brother, to follow the corpse of their father.

Mrs. Castlemain and Emma then set off for the White Cottage, and Mr. Egerton and St. Aubyn soon followed them to Cumberland.

On their road thither, as St. Aubyn was talking over his affairs, and telling Mr. Egerton what settlements he meant to make on Emma, the latter said,

“As I find, Henry, that you are now a much richer man than I am, I shall trouble you to pay me the little debt you owe me.”

“A debt! my dear sir, I was not conscious that I ever owed you one.”

“Very likely,” replied the other, “nevertheless you do owe me a trifle.”

“Name the sum, that I may repay it,” cried St. Aubyn, taking out his purse.

“Pho! not a hundred purses could contain your debt to me; you owe me *only* the little sum of £80,000!” and while St. Aubyn, dumb with amazement, did not attempt to speak, Mr. Egerton proceeded to inform him, that hearing the St. Aubyn estate was again to be disposed of, he had purchased it for that money, meaning to restore it, either during his life, or at his death, to its original inheritor.

Next to the possession of Emma, there was nothing so near to the heart of St. Aubyn, as the recovery of his paternal estate; though he had never flattered himself with being able to effect it. His delight and his gratitude, therefore, were in proportion to this desire.

“Best of friends!” he exclaimed.

“Nonsense!” replied Mr. Egerton, “not the *best* of friends, but a *friend*; one who has not only the inclination but the power to prove his friendship by his actions. You had not money enough to buy St. Aubyn, and I had; and I am very sure that had you been me and I you, you would have done the same.”

“Well,” said St. Aubyn, “I have only to hope that you will always consider St. Aubyn as your own residence, and make Emma and me happy, by accepting apartments there.”

“No,” replied Mr. Egerton, “I will never be more than your guest, and my little cottage shall still be my *all* of mansion.”

At length the time fixed on for the union of St. Aubyn and Emma, arrived; and Balfour, now lord Clonawley, accompanied his sisters, when they came to witness it; and having convinced himself that he mistook the instinctive regard of a brother for the impulse of passion, he felt no emotions but those of proper affection for the betrothed bride of St. Aubyn; and now he no longer looked upon him as a rival, his heart, which was really virtuous, and formed to love virtue, did ample justice to the merits of his new relation.

“Every wish of my heart is so completely filled,” said St. Aubyn to Mr. Egerton, some months after his marriage, “that I wish, and so does Emma, to pass life between St. Aubyn and the Vale-House, and never, except for a few weeks at a time, encounter the busy scenes of the metropolis.”

“I should approve your decision,” replied Mr. Egerton, “if you had neither talents, virtues, nor energy enough to fit you for some public situation of life; but when I consider what you are, and the usefulness that you are capable of, I must condemn, as inexcusable selfishness, those wishes which would lead you to bury yourself in retirement. I well know that the duties of a country gentleman are many, and that you can do much good by fulfilling those duties; but as the senate is the place where an upright and independent man can render the greatest service to his country at large, it is the wish of my heart, approved most warmly by my judgment, that you should divide your time between the metropolis and your estates, and exert in the House of Commons those powers of mind, and that rectitude of feeling and principle, which in a country life could only be exercised in duties comparatively of slender importance.”

St. Aubyn, whose life had hitherto been spent in a surrender of his own wishes to those of others, was now naturally enough inclined to live, during his succeeding years, for his own good alone, and that of those whom he loved best.

But at length Mr. Egerton's reasoning, and Mrs. Castlemain's ambition, urged him to accept a seat in parliament; and Emma's first child was born in the metropolis.

Varley, meanwhile, returned from his wanderings, and had embarked for England in the same boat with Mrs. Felton, who remained in France long after our travellers, and left it just after she had heard of the discovery of Emma's birth from Mrs. Fitz-Walter; who had a pleasure in adding that St. Aubyn, to whom that discovery was owing, was supposed to be the betrothed lover of Emma. It was with great joy, therefore, that, when she recognized Varley, and asked why he had so suddenly displeased his friends, and left Paris, he told her he could not account for their behaviour, except in a way to call his modesty in question; insinuating, very adroitly, that Emma, the pure and precise Emma, had made him such advances as had alarmed the prudence of Mr. Egerton, and the jealousy of Balfour. And though Mrs. Felton did not in her heart believe the tale, she was delighted to act as if she did, and to give hints of the sort when she arrived in England, where Varley became a constant guest at her parties; and some confidential few he amused by mimicking Mrs. Castlemain's dignity, Mr. Egerton's long speeches, and Emma's girlish vivacity, which, to those who did not know them, appeared admirable likenesses. But it was at length suggested to Mrs. Felton, by a male friend, that the youth who thus made free with the reputation of his former acquaintance, Miss Castlemain, might be as free with his present one, Mrs. Felton; and hearing, from undoubted authority, that he had boasted of favours from her which he never received, and also called her, when speaking of her, his lovely Lucy, she indignantly forbade him her house; and as the lady, at whose house Emma first saw him in town, was now reconciled to her, and once more become her

intimate friend, she also ceased to invite him to her conversation parties out of respect to Mrs. Felton. Thus Varley was restored to his original obscurity, and absence from those fashionable circles in which it was his first ambition to shine. But Mr. Egerton, just in his wrath, did not suffer the industrious and indigent mother to suffer for the faults of her son, and he sent her occasionally very handsome presents from an unknown hand.

But to return to St. Aubyn:

However averse he might originally have been to a residence of many months at a time in the metropolis, he could not help feeling his pride and tenderness amply gratified while there, by the flattering attention and admiration which his beautiful and accomplished wife excited; for it was such as could not have called forth one angry or unpleasant feeling in the most jealous of husbands, or most delicate of men, and was not only a tribute to the charms of her mind and person, but to the propriety of her conduct and her manners. Well and justly indeed, was it said of Emma, that though any one might have fallen in love with her before marriage, no one would have thought of doing so after it; the highest eulogium that can be passed on a young and beautiful woman.

While the delighted St. Aubyn seemed to follow his graceful wife, wherever she moved, with eyes of approving fondness, Mrs. Fitz-Walter had great satisfaction in observing to her dear friend, Mrs. Felton, with whom the St. Aubyns were on civil though distant terms,

“Was there ever such a dotting husband as Mr. St. Aubyn? I am sure he is not conscious there is another woman in the world besides his wife! and, indeed, I do not think there is another woman in it worthy of such a man!” and Mrs. Felton, by exclaiming,

“Ridiculous! absurd!” her only answer on these occasions, sufficiently betrayed, that she felt all the mortification which her kind friend meant to inflict.

Mrs. Castlemain, though much distressed at a separation from Emma, had wisdom and self-denial enough to refuse to accompany her to London. For, as she felt the most certain conviction that Emma was worthy of implicit confidence, she thought it but right that she should mix in London society without any other guard than her husband, and her own prudence.

Mr. Egerton, too, now he had reaped the reward of his own paternal care of her, in seeing her the wife of St. Aubyn, felt that it was no longer necessary for him to forego his own tastes and pursuits. And having no surviving relations, or even friends, who required his society or assistance, he resolved to pass in studious retirement, and in benevolent exertions for the instruction and benefit of the poor in the neighbourhood of the White Cottage, those hours hitherto passed in superintending and accompanying his beloved pupil. But though he and Mrs. Castlemain had persisted to remain behind in the still shades of Cumberland, it was always with affectionate and almost painful impatience that they awaited the hour that should restore to them their best treasures. And when they beheld their carriages and servants winding down the opposite mountain, the tear of ill-restrained delight glistened in the eye of both.

“See,” said Emma to Mr. Egerton, when she returned from the metropolis the second time after her residence there; “see, my dear sir, (giving her little boy into his arms,) I have brought you another pupil; and I trust that, by dint of my own watchful care, your precepts, and his father’s example, he will be in temper and disposition all that he ought to be.”

“You are too modest,” replied Mr. Egerton as he kissed the babe, and returned it to its mother; “you omit to mention the probable usefulness of your own example, as well as watchfulness.”

“Mine!” exclaimed Emma; “mine! Surely you must forget to what a violent, headstrong creature you are talking.”

“Pardon me,” returned he; “I do remember you were once what you describe; but I also remember how readily you undertook the difficult task of conquering your temper, and how admirably you succeeded in it. Sweetness of temper is often, as I have before observed, the result of a happy conformation and perfect health, and is no more a virtue in its possessor than beauty of person. But when a sense of duty leads the self-judged slave of an unhappy temper to conquer that irritability, then is good temper exalted into a virtue; and this virtue I have seen so often exhibited by you, that I shall, if I live to see your child old enough to understand my advice, have no scruple in holding up his mother, as well as his father, as a model to be imitated.”

“The author of that interesting poem, *The Triumphs of Temper*,” observed Mrs. Castlemain, “is of your opinion, Mr. Egerton, with regard to the importance of good temper, for he says;

‘Virtue’s an ingot of Peruvian gold;  
Sense, the bright ore Potosi’s mines unfold;  
But Temper’s image must their use create,  
And give these precious metals sterling weight.’”

“I thank you, madam,” replied Mr. Egerton, “for reminding me of my coincidence in opinion with the author of that poem; but I should wonder if any one, who thinks at all, were to deny the truth of this sentiment. There is no situation in life in which fine temper is not of use. In affliction it disposes the sufferer to dwell more on the blessings it still retains, than on those which it has lost, and thereby prepares the mind for the influence of pious resignation. In sickness it induces patience and quiet endurance, lest complaint should wound the feelings of affectionate attendants; while it disposes those affectionate attendants themselves to bear with the often provoking and ungrateful petulance of disease; for though religion and principle may in time clear away every obstacle to their desirable ends, the way to them is made easy and quick at once if Temper be the guide.”



“But surely,” said St. Aubyn, who entered the room at this moment, “it is not enough to consider what temper can enable us to do; one should reflect how many things without its assistance one cannot do. Without command of temper no one can be sure of always speaking truth; for many persons, of both sexes, utter, while under the dominion of passion, what they are glad to disown and to explain away when their passion is over.”

“True,” observed Emma laughing, “as for instance, in the Commons house of parliament, when one honourable member gets up and begs to know whether the honourable gentleman on the other side of the house meant really, by such and such words, what such and such words really mean; on which the honourable gentleman appealed to, assures the honourable appellant, that by such and such words he did not mean what such and such words really mean, (to translate these things into the language of truth,) on which the honourable appellant professes himself entirely satisfied that *black is not black but white.*”

“Fy, Emma, fy!” replied St. Aubyn, laughing, “this is more severe than true; for, after all, these explanations are understood to be only modes of speech.”

“So, so,” cried Mr. Egerton, “I see you have acquired an esprit du corps, Henry, already, and do not like to have your respectable body attacked even by a joke.”

“I have surely a right, sir,” returned St. Aubyn, “to insist on Emma’s extending her remark to the Lords, and owning that respectable body to be as liable as our own to these faons de parler, which she chooses to call falsehoods.

“Oh! by all means,” answered Emma, “and I dare say similar scenes occur among them as frequently as amongst you; for no doubt there is nothing so like a commoner in a passion as a lord in one; and I beg leave to add to the list of what one cannot do without command of temper, that one cannot be always *well-bred* without such self-command; for both gentlemen and gentlewomen when

angry, say and do what, for the time being, makes them neither the one nor the other.”

“I am inclined to think also,” resumed St. Aubyn, “that one cannot *love* perfectly without temper. We often hear that there is nothing so like *hatred* as *love*; and that lovers have a great delight in tormenting each other. Now, though I admit that love, and lovers as we see them every day, exemplify the truth of these observations, still I am convinced, that were the cultivation of good temper as universal as it ought to be, these fine definitions of love, and these descriptions of lovers, would be known no more. The truth is, that our habits of temper and feeling are formed in childhood, and long before the passion of love can be felt; consequently, however powerful love may be, temper being still more so, it gives its *own* obliquity to the *tender* passion as it is called. And when love resembles hate, and lovers take delight in tormenting each other, such horrors are to be explained thus; that, in the first instance, temper has more sway over the individual so erring than real affection; and in the second, that the lover who torments and tyrannizes over his mistress, or the mistress who torments and tyrannizes over her lover, would, if they could and dared, torment and tyrannize over the rest of their species; and that they take this liberty chiefly with one alone, because they believe that, as the tormented being loves them, they can give way to their temper with impunity.”

“Well, Mr. St. Aubyn,” replied Emma, “you are sure of my assent to this doctrine; for, as I can safely declare that you never yet thought proper to torture me in order to convince me of your love,—if I did not believe in its truth, I must doubt the sincerity of your affection, and that would be rather disagreeable.”

“I agree entirely, and without such an inducement,” said Mr. Egerton, “in all that Henry has advanced.”

“But who can be always on their guard?” cried Mrs. Castlemain. “Occasional irritability of nerves, or secret anxiety, may sometimes overset the finest temper.”

“True,” replied St. Aubyn; “and after all, we must denominate as fine-tempered, not those who are never out of humour, for where are they to be found? but those who are most rarely thrown off their guard.”

“I think,” said Emma, “that Temper, like other great potentates, has her levées and her gala days. I know, sir, (addressing Mr. Egerton,) that you consider a revolution as a time when Temper is seated on her throne of state, with all her ugly ministers around her. And what think you, sir, of a contested election? That surely is one of her gala times; but then she wears ribands, and goes about with flags and music, and looks so pretty and so animated, and so like something very charming, that we forget what her real nature is.”

“I am glad,” returned Mr. Egerton, “to find that you are so conscious of the influence of Temper at elections, Mrs. St. Aubyn, as this knowledge will enable you, should your husband ever be opposed, to keep a guard over *your* temper; for those only are safe from falling who are conscious of their danger.”

“And that danger lies more in trifles than great events,” returned Emma. “I have often heard the trials of Serena blamed as being too trivial; but I have considered the critics on this occasion, as no attentive observers of human nature and life; for it is very certain that trifles irritate the temper more than things of importance; and that great trials call for that higher order of exertion and virtue known by the name of fortitude and resignation. But the man or woman who can support loss of relations and fortune with dignified calmness, might very likely give way to impatience and angry fretfulness at the carelessness of a servant, a peevish contradiction from a relation, or a spiteful remark from a companion.”

“True,” replied Mr. Egerton; “and I feel very happy in the consciousness that you are thus deeply impressed with the importance of a well-governed temper, as this impression will constantly influence you in the management of your children. To borrow the words of a great man,

‘Tis not in mortals to command success.’

But you’ll do more, my Emma, you’ll deserve it. Events over which we have no power often cloud the prospects of us all, and change our joy to sorrow. But parents, in giving their children good habits, bestow on them the best chance of virtuous prosperity; and good habits are gifts which it is chiefly in a mother’s power to bestow, and what her offspring are capable of being benefited by, even in the earliest stages of childhood, since that is the time to begin the formation of the Temper; for, considering *happiness* as the goal in view, VIRTUE and TALENT are two Arabian coursers, which, however fleet and powerful, would never reach the desired and destined point unless managed and guided by the hand of TEMPER.”

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[1]

"Fair scenes, where Condé fixed the source of  
pleasure,  
One's happiness would consist in never leaving  
you,  
If you were not to our purse  
Still *dearer* than you are to our heart."

[2]

should be a coward!"

[3]

"Probably the gentleman is a clergyman."

[4]

"Ah! poor credulous being!"

[5]

*Salle* is the French word.

[6]

See Miss Plumtree's Narrative of a Three Tears' residence in France, and also an edition of

Madame de Sevigne's Letters, published in 1801.

[7] A sort of Vauxhall in the Champs Elysées.

[8] "My God! how hungry the poor child is!"

#### THE END OF TEMPER.

##### **Transcriber's Notes**

1. Obvious typographical errors have been silently changed.
2. Unconventional/archaic spellings have not been changed.
3. The word ingenuous(ness) was consistently misspelled ingenous(ness) but has been changed for the benefit of the reader.

[The end of *Temper* by Amelia Alderson Opie]