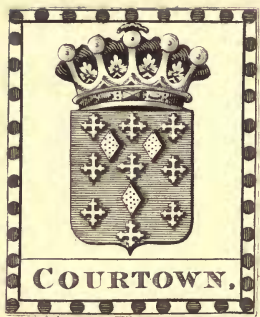


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PRECAUTION,

A

NOVEL.

IN THREE VOLUMES.

“I cannot forbear to flatter myself that prudence and benevolence will make marriage happy. What can be expected, but disappointment and repentance, from a choice made in the immaturity of youth — without judgment — without foresight — without inquiry after conformity of opinions — rectitude of judgment — or purity of sentiment?”

RASSELAS.

VOL. II.

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PRECAUTION.

CHAPTER I.

A MONTH having now elapsed since the unfortunate accident by which Denbigh had been confined, he took an opportunity one morning at breakfast, where he was well enough now to meet the family, to announce his intention of trespassing no longer on their kindness, but of returning that day to the rectory.

This communication distressed the whole family, and the baronet turning to him in the most cordial manner, as he took one of his hands, said, with an air of solemnity,

“ Mr. Denbigh, I could wish you to make this house your home ; Doctor Ives may have known you longer, and may have ties of blood upon you, but I am certain he cannot love you better : and are not the ties of gratitude as binding as those of blood ? ”

Denbigh was affected by the kindness of Sir Edward's manner, as he replied,

“ The regiment to which I belong, Sir Edward, will be reviewed next week, and it has become my duty to leave you ; there is one it is proper I should visit, a near connexion, who is acquainted with my providential escape, and wishes, naturally, to see me : besides, my dear Sir Edward, she has many causes of sorrow, and it is a debt I owe her affection, to endeavour to relieve them. ”

It was the first time he had ever spoken of his family, or hardly even of himself ; and the silence which prevailed, plainly showed the interest the listeners took in the little he uttered.

That connexion, thought Emily, I wonder if her name be Marian! But nothing further passed, excepting the affectionate regrets of her father, and the promises of Denbigh, to visit them again before he left B——, and of joining them at L—— immediately after the review to which he had alluded. As soon as he had breakfasted, John drove him in his phaeton to the rectory.

Mrs. Wilson, like the rest of the baronet's family, had been too deeply impressed with their debt to this young man, to interfere with her favourite system of caution, against too great an intimacy between her niece and her preserver. Close observation, and the opinion of Dr. Ives, had prepared her to give him her esteem; but the gallant self-devotion he had displayed towards Emily, was calculated to remove weightier objections than she could imagine as likely to exist, to his becoming her husband — that he meant it, was of late evident, from his whole deportment.

Since the morning that the portfolio was produced, Denbigh had given a more decided preference to her niece. The nice discrimination of Mrs. Wilson, would not have said his feelings had become stronger, but that he laboured less to conceal them. That he loved her niece, she suspected, from the first fortnight of their acquaintance; and it had given additional stimulus to her investigation of his character—but to doubt it, after interposing his person between Emily and death, would have been to mistake human nature. There was one qualification, which before this accident, she would have held indispensable; but the gratitude, the affections, of Emily, she believed now to be too deeply engaged to make the strict inquiry she otherwise would have instituted into the principles of Denbigh, who, if not a professing christian, was at least—a strictly moral man. Mrs. Wilson, in truth, like others, on finding it impracticable to conduct her arrangements to that reason might

justify all she did, began to find reasons for what she thought best to be done under the circumstances. Denbigh, both by his conduct and his opinions, had created such an estimate of his worth, in the breast of Mrs Wilson, that there would have been but little danger of a repulse, had no fortuitous accident helped him in his way to her favour.

“Who have we here,” said Lady Moseley; a landaulet and four—the Earl of Bolton, I declare;” turning from the window, with that collected grace, she so well loved, and so well knew how to assume, to receive her noble visitor.

Lord Bolton was a bachelor of sixty-five, who had long been attached to the court, and retained much of the manners of the old school; his principal estate was in Ireland, and most of that time which his duty at Windsor did not require, he gave to the improvement of his Irish property; thus, although on perfectly good terms with the baronet’s family, they sel-

dom met. With General Wilson he had been at college, and to his widow, he always showed much of the regard which he had invariably professed to her husband. The obligation he had conferred, unasked, on Francis Ives, was one conferred on all his friends; and his reception was now warmer than usual.

“My Lady Moseley,” said the earl, bowing on her hand, “your looks do ample justice to the air of Northamptonshire. I hope your ladyship enjoys your usual health;” and then waiting her equally courteous answer, he paid his compliments, in succession, to all the members of the family: a mode undoubtedly well adapted to discover their several conditions, but not a little tedious in its operations, and somewhat tiresome to the legs.

“We are under a debt of gratitude to your lordship,” said Sir Edward, in his unaffected and warm-hearted manner; “that I am sorry it is not in our power to repay more amply than by our thanks.”

The earl was, or affected to be, surprised, as he required an explanation.

“The living at Bolton, my lord,” said Lady Moseley, with dignity.

“Yes,” continued her husband; “your lordship, in giving the living to Frank, did me a favour, equal to what you would have done, had he been my own child—and unsolicited, too, my lord, it was an additional compliment.”

The earl sat rather uneasy during this speech—but the love of truth prevailed; for he had been too much round the person of our beloved sovereign, not to retain all the best impressions of his youth: and after a little struggle with his self-love, replied,

“Not unsolicited, Sir Edward; I have no doubt, had my better fortune allowed me the acquaintance of my present rector, his own merit would have obtained, what a sense of justice requires I should say was granted to an applicant, to whom the ear of royalty would not have been deaf.”

It was the turn of the Moseleys now to look surprised, and Sir Edward ventured to ask an explanation.

“It was my cousin, the Earl of Pendennyss, who applied to me for it, as a favour done to himself; and Pendennyss is a man not to be refused any thing.”

“Lord Pendennyss!” exclaimed Mrs. Wilson, with animation, “and in what way came we to be under this obligation to his lordship?”

“He did me the honour of a call, during my visit to Ireland, madam,” replied the earl, “the reason assigned by him for his application in favour of Mr. Ives, was, his interest in the widow of General Wilson,” bowing with much solemnity to the lady as he spoke.

“I am grateful that the earl should yet remember us,” said Mrs. Wilson, struggling to restrain her tears; “are we to have the pleasure of seeing him soon?”

“I received a letter from him yesterday, saying he should be here some time in the

ensuing week, madam ;” and, turning pleasantly to Jane and her sister, he continued, “ Sir Edward, you have here rewards fit for heavier services, and the earl is a great admirer of female charms.”

“ Is he not married, my lord ?” asked the baronet, with great simplicity.

“ No baronet, nor engaged ; but how long he will remain so, after his hardihood in venturing into this neighbourhood, will, I trust, depend on one of these young ladies.”

Jane looked grave—for trifling on love, was heresy in her estimation ; but Emily laughed, with an expression in which a skilful physiognomist might have read—if he mean me, he is mistaken.

“ Your cousin, Lord Chatterton, has found interest, Sir Edward,” continued the peer, “ to obtain his father’s situation ; and if report speak truth, he wishes to become more nearly related to you.”

“ I do not well see how that can happen,” said Sir Edward, with a smile, and

who had not art enough to conceal his thoughts, “ unless he takes my sister, here.”

The cheeks of both the young ladies now vied with the rose ; and the peer observing he had touched on forbidden ground, added, “ Chatterton was fortunate to find friends able to bear up against the powerful interest of Lord Haverford.”

“ To whom was he indebted for the place, my lord ?” asked Mrs. Wilson.

“ It was whispered at court, madam,” said the earl, sensibly lowering his voice, and speaking with air of mystery, “ that His Grace of Derwent threw the whole of his parliamentary interest into the scale on the baron’s side—but you are not to suppose,” raising his hand gracefully, with a wave of rejection, “ that I speak from authority ; only a surmise, Sir Edward— only a surmise, my lady.”

“ Is not the name of the Duke of Derwent, Denbigh ?” inquired Mrs. Wilson, with a thoughtful manner.

“Certainly, madam — Denbigh,” replied the earl, with a gravity that he always preserved when speaking of dignities, “one of our most ancient names, and descended on the female side from the Plantagenets, and Tudors.”

He now rose to take his leave, and on bowing to the younger ladies, laughingly repeated his intention of bringing his cousin (an epithet he never omitted) Pendenys to their feet.

“Do you think, sister,” said Lady Moseley, after the earl had retired, “that Mr. Denbigh is of the house of Derwent?”

“I cannot say,” observed Mrs. Wilson, musing, “yet it is odd—Chatterton told me of his acquaintance with Lady Harriet Denbigh, but not with the duke.” As this was spoken in the manner of a soliloquy, it received no answer, and was in fact but little attended to, by any of the party, excepting Emily, who glanced her eye once or twice at her aunt as she was speaking, with an interest, the name of Denbigh

never failed to excite. Harriet she thought a pretty name—but Marian was a prettier; if, thought Emily, I could know a Marian Denbigh, I could love her, and her name too.

The Moseleys now began to make their preparations for their journey to L—, and the end of the succeeding week was fixed for the period of their departure.

Mrs. Wilson urged a delay of two or three days, in order to give her an opportunity of meeting with the Earl of Pendenness, a young man, in whom—although she had relinquished her former romantic wish of uniting him to Emily—she yet felt a deep interest, growing out of his connexion with the last moments of her husband, and his uniformly high character.

Sir Edward accordingly acquainted his uncle, that on the following Saturday he might expect the arrival of himself and family—intending to leave the hall in the afternoon of the preceding day, and reach Benfield Lodge to dinner.

This arrangement once made, and Mr. Benfield apprised of it, was unalterable—the old gentleman holding a variation from an engagement, a deadly sin.

The week succeeding the accident, which had so nearly proved fatal to Denbigh, the inhabitants of the hall were surprised with the approach of a being, as singular in his manners and dress, as the equipage which conveyed him to the door of the mansion. This vehicle was a high-backed, old-fashioned sulky, strongly fortified with leather, and large headed brass nails; wheels at least a quarter larger in diameter than those of the present day—and wings on each side, large enough to have supported a full grown roc, in the highest regions of the upper air.

It was drawn by a horse once white, but whose milky hue was tarnished through age: with large and numerous spots of red, and whose mane and tail did not appear to have suffered by the shears during the present reign.

The being who alighted from this antiquated machine, was tall and excessively thin, wore his own hair—drawn over his almost naked head, into a long thin cue--which reached half way down his back, closely entwined in numerous involutions of leather, or the skin of some fish. His drab coat was in shape between a frock and a close-body—close-body indeed, it was; for the buttons—in size about equal to an old-fashioned China saucer—were buttoned to the very throat, thereby setting off his shapes to peculiar advantage. His breeches were buckskin, and much soiled; his stockings—although it was midsummer—blue yarn; and his shoes provided with buckles, of dimensions proportionate to the aforesaid buttons; his age might be seventy, but his step was quick—and the movements of his whole system showed great activity both of body and mind.

This figure being ushered into the room where the gentlemen were sitting, made a low and extremely modest bow, and deli-

berately putting on his spectacles, thrust his hand into an outside pocket of his coat, from beneath the huge flaps of which he produced a black leather pocket-book, about as large as a good-sized octavo volume ; after carefully examining the multitude of papers it contained, he selected a letter, and having returned the pocket-book to its ample apartment, read aloud—
“ For Sir Edward Moseley, bart. of Moseley Hall, B——, Northamptonshire—with care and speed, by the hands of Mr. Peter Johnson, steward of Benfield Lodge, Norfolk ;” and, dropping his sharp voice, he stalked up to where the baronet stood, and presented the epistle, with another reverence.

“ Ah, my good friend Johnson,” said Sir Edward, as soon as he delivered his errand (for until he saw the contents of the letter, he had thought some accident had occurred to his uncle), “ this is the first visit you have ever honoured me with ; come, take a glass of wine before you go to

your dinner—drink, that you hope it may not be the last.”

“Sir Edward Moseley, and you honourable gentlemen, will pardon me,” replied the steward, in his solemn key, “this is the first time I was ever out of his Majesty’s county of Norfolk, and I devoutly wish it may prove the last—Gentlemen, I drink your honourable healths.”

This was the only real speech the old man made during his visit, unless an occasional monosyllabic réply to a question could be thought so. He remained by Sir Edward’s positive injunction, until the following day; for having delivered himself of his message, and received its answer, he was about to take his departure that evening, “thinking he might get a good piece on his road homeward, as it wanted half an hour yet to sundown.”

In the evening, as he was ushered by John (who had known him from his own childhood, and loved to show him attentions) to the room in which he was to

sleep, he broke, what the young man called, his inveterate silence, with, "young Mr. Moseley—young gentleman—might I presume—to ask—to see the gentleman."

"What gentleman?" cried John, in astonishment, both at the request, and his speaking so much.

"That saved Miss Emmy's life, sir." John now fully comprehended him, and led the way to Denbigh's room; he was asleep, but they were admitted to his bedside; the steward stood for good ten minutes, gazing on the sleeper in silence; and John observed, as he blew his nose, on regaining his own apartment, his little gray eyes twinkling with a lustre that could be taken for nothing but a tear.

As Mr. Benfield's letter was not less characteristic of the writer, than the bearer of his vocation, we give it at length.

"Dear Sir Edward and Nephew,

"Your letter reached the lodge too late to be answered that evening, as I was

about to step into bed ; but I hasten to write my congratulations ; remembering the often repeated maxim of my kinsman, Lord Gosford, that letters should be answered immediately ; indeed, a neglect of it had very nigh brought about an affair of honour, between the earl and Sir Stephens Hallet. Sir Stephens was always opposed to us in the House of Commons of this realm ; and I have often thought it might have been something passed in the debate itself, which commenced the correspondence, as the earl certainly told him as much, as if he were a traitor to his king and country.

“ But it seems that your daughter Emily, has been rescued from death, by the grandson of General Denbigh, who sat with us in the house. Now I always had a good opinion of this young Denbigh, who reminds me, every time I look at him, of my late brother, your father-in-law, that was ; and I send my steward, Peter Johnson, express to the hall, in order that

he may see the sick man, and bring me back a true account of how he fares; for should he be wanting for any thing within the gift of Roderick Benfield, he has only to speak to have it; not that I suppose, nephew, you would willingly allow him to suffer for any thing, but Peter is a man of close observation, although he is of few words, and may suggest something beneficial, that might escape younger heads.

“ I pray for—that is, I hope the young man will recover, as your letter gives great hopes, and if he should want any little matter to help him along in his promotion in the army—as I take it he is not over wealthy—you have now a good opportunity to offer your assistance handsomely; and that it may not interfere with your arrangements for this winter, your draft on me for five thousand pounds will be paid at sight.

“ For fear he may be proud, and not choose to accept your assistance, I have

this morning detained Peter, while he has put a codicil to my will, leaving him ten thousand pounds. You may tell Emily she is a naughty child, or she would have written me the whole story; but, poor dear, I suppose she has other things on her mind just now. God bless Mr. —— that is, God bless you all—and try if you cannot get a lieutenant-colonelcy at once—the brother of Lady Juliana's friend was made a lieutenant-colonel at the first step.

“**RODERICK BENFIELD.**”

On the following morning—with the sun—Peter was on his way to the house, in which he had been born, and, until this visit, had never, at any one period, left for twenty-four hours.

The result of his reconnoitering expedition has never reached our knowledge; but the arrival of a servant some days after he took his leave, with a pair of enormous goggles, which the old gentleman

assured his nephew in a note, both Peter and himself had found useful occasionally, to weak eyes, might have been owing to the prudent forecast of the sagacious steward.

CHAPTER II.

The morning on which Denbigh left B—— was a melancholy one to all the members of the little circle, in which he had been so eminently distinguished, for his modesty, his intelligence, and disinterested intrepidity. Sir Edward, took an opportunity, solemnly to express his gratitude for the services he had rendered him, and retiring with him to the library, delicately, and earnestly pressed his availing himself of the liberal offer of Mr. Benfield, to advance his interest in the army.

“Look upon me, my dear Mr. Denbigh,” said the good baronet, pressing him by the hand, while the tears stood in his eyes, “as a father, to supply the place of

the one you have so recently lost. You *are* my child; I feel as a parent to you, and must be suffered to act as one."

To this affectionate offer of Sir Edward, Denbigh replied, with an emotion equal to that of the baronet, as he declined, with respectful language, his offered assistance as unnecessary; he had powerful friends to advance his interest, without resorting to the use of money; and on taking Sir Edward's hand, as he left the apartment, he added, with great warmth, "yet, my dear Sir, the day will come, I hope, when I shall ask a boon from your hands, that no act of mine, but a life of devoted service, could entitle me to receive." The baronet smiled his assent, to a request he already understood, and Denbigh withdrew.

John Moseley had insisted on putting the bays into requisition, to carry Denbigh for the first stage, and they now stood caparisoned for the jaunt, with their master—in a less joyous mood than common—

waiting the appearance of his companion.

Emily, delighted in their annual excursion to Benfield Lodge ; she was beloved so warmly, and returned the affection of its owner so sincerely, that the arrival of the day, never failed to excite that flow of spirits which generally accompanies anticipated pleasures, 'ere experience has proved, how trifling are the greatest enjoyments the scenes of this life bestow. Yet as it approached, her spirits sank in proportion, and on the morning of Denbigh's taking leave, Emily seemed any thing but excessively happy ; there was a tremour in her voice, and redness about her eyes, that alarmed Lady Moseley with the apprehension she had taken cold : but as the paleness of her cheeks was immediately succeeded with as fine a brilliancy of colour, as the heart could wish, the anxious mother allowed herself to be persuaded by Mrs. Wilson, there was no danger, and accompanied her sister to her own room

for some purpose of domestic economy. It was at this moment that Denbigh entered; he had paid his adieus to the matrons at the door, and been directed by them to the little parlour in quest of Emily.

“ I have come to make my parting compliments, Miss Moseley,” said he, in a tremulous voice, as he ventured to hold forth his hand : “ may heaven preserve you,” he continued, holding her’s in fervour to his bosom, and then dropping it, he hastily retired, as if unwilling to trust himself any longer to utter all he felt. Emily stood a few moments, pale, and almost inanimate, as the tears flowed rapidly from her eyes, and then sought shelter in a seat of the window, for her person, and her sorrows. Lady Moseley, on returning, was again alarmed lest the draught should increase her indisposition ; but her sister, observing that the window commanded a view of the road, thought the air too mild to do her injury.

The personages who composed the so-

ciety at B——, had now, in a great measure, separated, in pursuit of their duties or their pleasures. The merchant and his family had left the Deanery for a watering place. Francis and Clara, had gone on a little tour of pleasure in the northern counties, to take L—— in their return homeward; and the morning arrived for the commencement of the baronet's journey to the same place.

The carriages had been ordered, and servants were running in various directions, busily employed in their several occupations, when Mrs. Wilson, accompanied by John and his sisters, returned from a walk they had taken, to avoid the bustle of the house. A short distance from the park gates, an equipage was observed approaching, creating by its numerous horses and attendants a dust which drove the pedestrians to one side of the road; an uncommonly elegant and admirably fitted travelling barouche and six rolled by, with the graceful steadiness of an English equipage: several ser-

vants on horseback were in attendance, and our little party were struck with the beauty of the whole *establishment*.

“ Can it be possible, Lord Bolton drives such elegant horses,” cried John, with the ardour of a connoisseur in that noble animal ; “ they are the finest set in the kingdom.”

Jane’s eye had seen, through the clouds of dust, the armorial bearings, which seemed to float in the dark glossy pannels of the carriage, and answered, “ it is an earl’s coronet, but they are not the Bolton arms.” Mrs. Wilson and Emily had noticed a gentleman reclining at his ease, as the owner of the gallant show ; but its passage was too rapid to enable them to distinguish the features of the courteous old earl ; indeed, Mrs. Wilson remarked, she thought him a younger man than her friend.

“ Pray, sir,” said John, to one of the grooms, as he civilly walked his horse by

the ladies, "who has passed us in the barouche?"

"My lord Pendennyss, sir."

"Pendennyss!" exclaimed Mrs. Wilson, with a tone of regret, "how unfortunate!" she had seen the day named for his visit pass without his arrival, and now, when it was too late to profit by the opportunity, he had come for the second time into her neighbourhood. Emily had learnt by the solicitude of her aunt, to take an interest in the young peer's movements, and desired John to ask a question or two of the groom.

"Where does your lord stop, to-night?"

"At Bolton Castle, sir, and I heard my lord tell his valet that he intended staying one day hereabouts, and on the day after to-morrow he goes to Wales, your honour."

"I thank you, friend," said John, and the man spurred his horse after the cavalcade.

The carriages were at the door, and Sir Edward had been hurrying Jane to enter, as a servant in a rich livery, and well mounted, galloped up and delivered a letter for Mrs. Wilson, who on opening it read the following :

“The Earl of Pendennyss, begs leave to present his most respectful compliments to Mrs. Wilson, and the family of Sir Edward Moseley — Lord Pendennyss will have the honour of paying his respects in person, at any moment that the widow of his late invaluable friend, lieutenant-general Wilson, will please to appoint.

“Bolton Castle, Friday morning.”

To this note Mrs. Wilson, bitterly regretting the necessity which compelled her to forego the pleasure of meeting her paragon, wrote in reply a short letter—disliking the formality of a note :—

“ MY LORD,

“ I sincerely regret, that an engagement which cannot be postponed, compels us to leave Moseley Hall within the hour, and must, in consequence, deprive us of the pleasure of your intended visit. But, as circumstances - have connected your lordship with some of the dearest, although the most melancholy events of my life, I earnestly beg you will no longer consider us as strangers to your person, as we have long ceased to be to your character. It will afford me the greatest pleasure to hear that there will be a prospect of our meeting in town this winter, where I may find a more fitting opportunity of expressing those grateful feelings so long due to your lordship, from your sincere friend,

“ CHARLOTTE WILSON.

“ Moseley Hall, Friday morning.”

With this answer, the servant was despatched, and the carriages moved on. John had induced Emily to trust herself

once more to the bays and his skill; but, on perceiving the melancholy of her aunt, she insisted on exchanging seats with Jane, who had accepted a place in the carriage of Mrs. Wilson. No objection being made; the widow and her niece rode the first afternoon together in her travelling chaise. The road run within a quarter of a mile of Bolton Castle, and the ladies endeavoured, in vain, to get a glimpse of the person of the young nobleman. Emily was willing to gratify her aunt's propensity to dwell on the character and history of her favourite, and hoping to withdraw her attention gradually from more unpleasant recollections, asked several trifling questions relating to those points.

“The earl must be very rich, aunt, from the style he maintains.”

“Very, my dear; his family I am unacquainted with, but I understand his title is an extremely ancient one: and some one, I believe Lord Bolton, mentioned that

his estates in Wales alone, exceeded fifty thousand a year."

"Much good might be done," said Emily, thoughtfully, "with such a fortune."

"Much good *is* done," cried her aunt with fervour. "I am told by every one who knows him, his donations are large and frequent. Sir Herbert Nicholson said he was extremely simple in his habits, from which circumstance large sums were left at his disposal every year."

"The bestowal of money is not always charity," said Emily, with an arch smile and slight colour. Mrs. Wilson smiled in her turn, as she answered, "not always, but it is charity to hope for the best."

"Sir Herbert knew him then?" said Emily.

"Perfectly well; they were associated together in the service for several years, and he spoke of him with a fervour equal to my warmest expectations."

The Moseley Arms in F——, was kept by an old butler of the family, and Sir Edward every year, going and coming to L——, spent a night under its roof. He was received by its master, with a respect that none who ever knew the baronet well, could withhold, from his goodness of heart, and many virtues.

“ Well, Jackson,” said the baronet kindly, as he was seated at the supper table, “ how does custom increase with you — I hope you, and the master of the Dun Cow, are more amicable than formerly.”

“ Why, Sir Edward,” replied the host, who had lost a little of the deference of the servant in the landlord, but none of his real respect, “ Mr. Daniels and I are more upon a footing of late, than we were, when your goodness enabled me to take the house ; then, he got all the great travellers, and for more than a twelvemonth I had not a title in my house but yourself and a great London doctor, that was

called here to see a sick person in the town. He had the impudence to call me the knight, barrowknight, your honour, and we had a quarrel upon that account."

"I am glad, however, to find you are gaining in the rank of your customers, and trust, as the occasion has ceased, you will be more inclined to be good-natured to each other."

"Why as to good-nature, Sir Edward, I lived with your honour ten years, and you must know somewhat of my temper," said Jackson, with the self-satisfaction of an approving conscience; "but Sam Daniels is a man who is never easy unless he is left quietly at the top of the ladder; however," continued the host, with a chuckle, "I have given him a dose lately."

"How so, Jackson?" inquired the baronet, willing to gratify the man's evident wish to relate his triumphs.

"Your honour must have heard mention made of a great lord, one Duke of Derwent; well, Sir Edward, about six

weeks ago he past through with my Lord Chatterton."

"Chatterton!" exclaimed John, interrupting him, "has he been so near us again, and so lately?"

"Yes, Mr. Moseley," replied Jackson, with a look of importance; "they dashed into my yard with their chaise and four, with five servants, and would you think it, Sir Edward, they hadn't been in the house ten minutes, before Daniels' son was fishing from the servants, who they were; I told him, Sir Edward — dukes don't come every day."

"How came you to get his grace away from the Dun Cow — chance?"

"No, your honour," said the host, pointing to his sign, and bowing reverently to his old master, "the Moseley Arms did it. Mr. Daniels used to taunt me with having worn a livery, and has said more than once, he could milk his cow, but that your honour's arms would never lift me into a comfortable seat for

life ; so I just sent him a message by the way of letting him know my good fortune, your honour."

" And what was it ?"

" Only that your honour's arms had shoved a duke and a baron into my house—that's all."

" And I suppose Daniels' legs shoved your messenger out of his house," said John, with a laugh.

" No, Mr. Moseley ; Daniels would hardly dare do that : but yesterday, your honour, yesterday evening, beat every thing. Daniels was seated before his door, and I was taking a pipe at mine, Sir Edward, as a coach and six, with servants upon servants, drove down the street ; it got near us, and the boys were reining the horses into the yard of the Dun Cow, as the gentleman in the coach saw my sign : he sent a groom to inquire who kept the house ; I got up your honour, and told him my name, sir. Mr. Jackson, said his lordship, my respect for Sir Edward Moseley

is too great not to give my custom to an old servant of his family."

"Indeed," said the baronet; "pray who was my lord?"

"The Earl of Pendennyss, your honour, Oh, he is a sweet gentleman, and he asked all about my living with your honour, and about madam Wilson."

"Did his lordship stay the night," inquired Mrs. Wilson, excessively gratified at a discovery of the disposition manifested by the earl towards her.

"Yes, madam, he left us after breakfast."

"What message did you send the Dun Cow this time, Jackson?" cried John, laughing.

Jackson looked a little foolish, but the question being repeated, he answered — "Why, sir, I was a little crowded for room, and so your honour, so I just sent Tom across the street, to know if Mr. Daniels could'nt keep a couple of the grooms."

“ And Tom got his head broke.”

“ No, Mr. John, the tankard missed him ; but if—”

“ Very well,” cried the baronet, willing to change the conversation, “ you have been so fortunate of late, you can afford to be generous ; and I advise you to cultivate harmony with your neighbour, or I may take my arms down, and you may lose your noble visitors—see my room prepared.”

“ Yes, your honour,” said the host, and bowing respectfully, he withdrew.

“ At least, aunt,” cried John, pleasantly, “ we have the pleasure of supping in the same room with the puissant earl, albeit there be twenty-four hours difference in the time.”

“ I sincerely wish there had not been that difference,” observed his father, taking his sister kindly by the hand.

“ Such an equipage must have been a harvest indeed to Jackson,” remarked the mother ; and they broke up for the evening.

The whole establishment at Benfield Lodge were drawn up to receive them on the following day in the great hall, and in the centre was fixed the upright and lank figure of its master, with his companion in leanness, honest Peter Johnson, on his right.

“ I have made out, Sir Edward and my Lady Moseley, to get as far as my entrance, to receive the favour you are conferring upon me. It was a rule in my day, and one invariably practised by all the great nobility, such as Lord Gosford — and — and — his sister, the Lady Juliana Dayton, always to receive and quit their guests in the country at the great entrance; and in conformity — ah, Emmy dear,” cried the old gentleman, folding her in his arms as the tears rolled down his cheeks, forgetting his speech in the warmth of his feeling, you are saved to us again; God be praised — there, that will do, let me breathe — let me breathe” — and then by the way of getting rid of his softer feelings,

he turned upon John ; “ so, youngster, you would be playing with edge tools, and put the life of your sister in danger. No gentleman held a gun in my day ; that is, no gentleman about the court. My Lord Gosford had never killed a bird in his life, or drove his horse ; no, sir, gentlemen then were not coachmen. Peter, how old was I before I took the reins of the chaise, in driving round the estate — the time you had broke your arm ; it was—”

Peter, who stood a little behind his master, in modest retirement, and who had only thought his elegant form brought thither to embellish the show, when called upon, advanced a step, made a low bow, and answered in his sharp key :

“ In the year 1798, your honour, and the 38th of his present majesty, and the 64th year of your life, sir, June the 12th, about meridian.” Peter had dropped back as he finished ; but recollecting himself, regained his place with a bow, as he added, “ new style.”

“How are you, old style?” cried John, with a slap on the back, that made the steward jump again.

“Mr. John Moseley — young gentleman” — a term Peter had left off using to the baronet within the last ten years, “did you think—to bring home—the goggles?”

“Oh yes,” said John, gravely, and he produced them from his pocket, most of the party having entered the parlour, and put them carefully on the bald head of the steward — “There, Mr. Peter Johnson, you have your property again, safe and sound.”

“And Mr. Denbigh said he felt much indebted to your consideration in sending them,” said Emily, soothingly, as she took them off with her beautiful hands.

“Ah, Miss Emmy,” said the steward with one of his best bows, “that was — a noble act; God bless him;” and then holding up his finger significantly, “but the fourteenth codicil — to master’s will,”

and Peter laid finger alongside his nose, as he nodded his head in silence.

“ I hope the thirteenth contains the name of honest Peter Johnson,” said the young lady, who felt herself uncommonly well pleased with the steward’s conversation just then.

“ As witness, Miss Emmy — witness to all — but God forbid,” said the steward with solemnity, “ I should ever live to see the proving of them ; no, Miss Emmy, master has done for me what he intended, while I had youth to enjoy it. I am rich, Miss Emmy — good three hundred a year.” Emily, who had seldom heard so long a speech as the old man’s gratitude drew from him, expressed her pleasure to hear it, and shaking him kindly by the hand, left him for the parlour.

“ Niece,” said Mr. Benfield, having examined the party closely with his eyes, “ where is Colonel Denbigh ?”

“ Colonel Egerton, you mean, sir,” interrupted Lady Moseley.

“ No, my Lady Moseley,” replied her uncle, with great formality, “ I mean Colonel Denbigh. I take it he is a colonel by this time,” looking expressively at the baronet; “ and who is fitter to be a colonel or a general, than a man who is not afraid of gunpowder?”

“ Colonels must have been scarce in your youth, sir,” said John, who had rather a mischievous propensity to start the old man on his hobby.

“ No, jackanapes, gentlemen killed one another then, although they did not torment the innocent birds: honour was as dear to a gentleman of George the Second’s court, as to those of his grandson’s, and honesty too, sirrah — ay, honesty. I remember when we were in, there was not a man of doubtful integrity in the ministry, or on our side even; and then again, when we went out, the opposition benches were filled with sterling characters, making a parliament that was correct throughout; can you show me such a thing at this day?”

CHAPTER III.

A FEW days after the arrival of the Moseleys at the lodge, John drove his sisters to the little village of L——, which at that time was thronged with an unusual number of visitors.

It had, among other fashionable arrangements for the accommodation of its guests, one of those circulators of good and evil, a public library.

Books are, in a great measure, the instruments of controlling the opinions of a nation like ours. They are an engine, alike powerful to save, as to destroy. It cannot, indeed, be denied, that our libraries contain as many volumes of the latter, as of the former description; for we rank

amongst the latter, that long catalogue of idle productions, which, if they can produce no other evil, lead to the mis-spending of time — *our own* — perhaps, included.

But we cannot refrain from expressing our regret, that such formidable weapons in the cause of morality, should be suffered to be wielded by any indifferent or mercenary dealer, who will probably consult, rather the taste, than the moral advantage of the public; the evil may be remediless, yet we love to express our sentiments, though we should suggest nothing new, or even profitable.

Into one of these haunts of the idle then, John Moseley entered with a lovely sister leaning on either arm. Books, were the amusement of Jane, and the instructors of Emily.

Sir Edward was fond of reading of a certain sort — that which required no great depth of thought, or labour of research; and like most others who are averse to con-

tention, and disposed to be easily satisfied, the baronet sometimes found he had harboured opinions on things not exactly reconcilable with the truth, or even with each other.

It is quite as dangerous to give up your faculties to the guidance of the author you are perusing, as it is unprofitable to be captiously scrutinizing every syllable he may happen to advance ; and Sir Edward was, if any thing, a little inclined to the dangerous propensity. Unpleasant Sir Edward Moseley never was.

Lady Moseley very seldom took a book in her hand : her opinions were established, to her own satisfaction, on all important points, and on minor ones, she made it a rule to coincide with the popular feeling.

Jane had a mind, more active than her father, and more brilliant than her mother ; and if she had not imbibed injurious impressions from her unlicensed and indiscriminate reading, it was more owing to the fortunate circumstance that the baronet's

library contained nothing extremely offensive to a pure taste, or dangerous to good morals, than to any precaution of her parents against the deadly, the irretrievable injury, to be sustained from uncontrolled liberty in this respect to a female mind.

On the other hand, Mrs. Wilson had so strenuously inculcated in Emily the necessity of restraint, in selecting books for her perusal, that what at first had been the effect of obedience and submission, had now settled into taste and habit.

Emily seldom opened a book, unless in search of information; or if it were the indulgence of a less commendable spirit, it was an indulgence chastened by a taste and judgment that lessened, if it did not entirely remove the danger.

The room was filled with ladies and gentlemen; and while John was exchanging his greetings with several of the neighbouring gentry of his acquaintance, and his

sisters were running hastily over a catalogue of the books kept for circulation, an elderly lady, of foreign accent and dress, entered, and depositing a couple of religious works on the counter, inquired for the remainder of the set.

The peculiarity of her idiom, and her nearness to the sisters, caused them both to look up at the moment, and to the surprise of Jane, her sister uttered a slight exclamation of pleasure. The foreigner was attracted by the sound, and, after a moment's hesitation, respectfully curtsied. Emily, advancing, kindly offered her hand, and the usual inquiries after each other's welfare succeeded.

To the questions asked after the friend of the matron, Emily learnt, with not less satisfaction than surprize, that she resided with her in a retired cottage, about five miles from L——, where they had been for the last six months, and should probably remain, until she could prevail on

Mrs. Fitzgerald to return to Spain, of which, now that there was peace, she did not despair."

Emily asked permission to call on them in their retreat, and exchanging good wishes, the Spanish lady withdrew; and, Jane having made her selection, was followed immediately by John Moseley and his sisters.

In their walk home, Emily acquainted her brother, that the companion of their Bath incognita, had been at the library, and she had now learnt, for the first time, their young acquaintance was, or had been, married, and her name.

John listened to his sister, with the interest which the beautiful Spaniard had excited at the time they first met; and laughingly told her, he could not believe their unknown friend had ever been a wife. To satisfy this doubt, and gratify a wish they both had to renew their acquaintance with the foreigner, they agreed to drive to the cottage the following morning, accompa-

nied by Mrs. Wilson, and Jane, if she would go; but the next day being that appointed by Egerton for his arrival at L——, Jane, under a pretence of writing letters, declined the ride.

She had carefully examined the papers since his departure, and had seen his name included in the arrivals at London: subsequently she had read an account of a review by the commander in chief, of the regiment to which he belonged. He had never written to any of her friends of his movements, but judging from her own feelings, she did not in the least doubt he would be as punctual as love could make him.

Mrs. Wilson listened with pleasure to her niece's account of the unexpected interview in the library, and cheerfully promised to accompany them in their morning's excursion, as she had both a wish to alleviate sorrow, and a desire to better understand the character of this accidental acquaintance of Emily.

Mr. Benfield, and the baronet, had a

long conversation in relation to Denbigh's fortune the morning after their arrival; and the old man was loud in his expression of dissatisfaction at the younger's pride. As, however, the baronet, in the fulness of his affection and simplicity, betrayed his expectation of an union between Denbigh and his daughter, Mr. Benfield became contented with this reward—one fit, he thought, for any services. On the whole, “it was best, as he was to marry Emmy, that he should sell out of the army, and as there would be an election soon, he would bring him into parliament — yes — yes — it did a man so much good to sit one session in the parliament of this realm — to study human nature; all his own knowledge in in that way, was raised on the foundations laid in the house.” To this, Sir Edward cordially assented, and the gentlemen separated, mutually happy in their arrangements, to advance the welfare of two beings they so sincerely loved.

Although the care and wisdom of Mrs. Wilson had prohibited the admission of romantic, or enthusiastic expectations of happiness into the day-dreams of her charge, yet the buoyancy of health, of hope, of youth, of innocence—had elevated Emily to a height of enjoyment, hitherto unknown to her usually placid and disciplined pleasures. Denbigh certainly mingled in most of her thoughts, both of the past and future, and she stood on the threshold of that fantastic edifice—in which Jane ordinarily resided.

Emily was in that situation which is, perhaps, the most dangerous to a young female christian; her heart, her affections, were given to a man, apparently in every respect worthy of possessing them. But she had admitted a rival in her love to her Maker; and to keep those feelings distinct, to bend the passions in due submission to the more powerful considerations of endless duty, of pious gratitude, is one of the most trying struggles of chris-

tian fortitude. We are much more apt to forget our God in prosperity, than in adversity ; — the weakness of human nature drives us to seek assistance in distress, but vanity and worldly mindedness, often induce us to imagine that we control the happiness which we only enjoy.

Sir Edward and Lady Moseley could see nothing in the prospect of the future, but lives of peace and contentment for their children.

Clara was already happily settled, and her sisters on the eve of making connexions with men of family, condition, and character ; what more could be done for them ? they must, like other people, take their chances in the lottery of life ; they could only hope and pray for their prosperity, and this they did with great sincerity.

Not so Mrs. Wilson ; she had guarded the invaluable charge entrusted to her keeping with too much assiduity, too keen an interest, too just a sense of the awful

responsibility she had undertaken, to desert her post at the moment her watchfulness was most required.

By temperate, but firm and well-chosen conversations, she kept alive the sense of her real condition in her niece, and laboured hard to prevent the blandishments of life from supplanting the lively hope of enjoying another existence; she endeavoured, by her pious example, her prayers, and her judicious allusions, to keep the passion of love in the breast of Emily secondary to the more important object of her creation, and by the aid of a kind and Almighty Providence, her labours, though arduous, were crowned with success.

As the family were seated round the table after dinner, on the day of their walk to the library, John Moseley, awaking from a reverie, exclaimed suddenly to his sister—

“Which do you think the handsomest, Emily, Grace Chatterton or Mrs. Fitzgerald?”

Emily laughed aloud as she answered, "Grace, certainly; do you not think so, brother?"

"Why, sometimes; but don't you think Grace looks like her mother at times?"

"Oh, no; she is the image of Chatterton."

"She is very like yourself, Emmy dear," said Mr. Benfield, who was listening to their conversation.

"Me, dear uncle; I have never heard it remarked before."

"Yes, yes, she is as much like you as she can stare; I never saw so great a resemblance excepting between you and Lady Juliana — Lady Juliana, Emmy, was a beauty in her day; very like her uncle, old Admiral Griffin — you can't remember the admiral — he lost an eye in a battle with the Dutch, and part of his cheek in a frigate, when a young man, fighting the Dons. Oh, he was a pleasant old gentleman; many a guinea has he given me when I was a boy at school."

“And he looked like Grace Chatterton, uncle, did he?” cried John with a smile.

“No, sir, he did not; who said he looked like Grace Chatterton, jackanapes?”

“Why, I thought you made it out, sir; but perhaps it was the description that deceived me — his eye and cheek.”

“Did Lord Gosford leave children, uncle?” inquired Emily, at the same time casting a look of reproach at John.

“No, Emmy dear; his only child, a son, died at school; I shall never forget the grief of poor Lady Juliana. She postponed a visit to Bath three weeks on account of it. A gentleman who was paying his addresses to her at the time, offered then, and was refused — indeed, her self-denial raised such an admiration of her in the men, that immediately after the death of young Lord Dayton, no less than seven gentlemen offered, and were refused, in one week. I heard Lady Juliana say, that what between lawyers

and suitors, she had not a moment's peace."

"Lawyers!" cried Sir Edward, "what had she to do with lawyers?"

"Why, Sir Edward, six thousand a year fell to her by the death of her nephew; and there were trustees to appoint, and deeds to be made out—poor young woman, she was so affected, Emmy, I don't think she went out for a week—all the time at home reading papers, and attending to her important concerns. Oh! she was a woman of taste; her mourning, and liveries, and new carriage, were more admired than those of any one about the court. Yes, yes, the title is extinct; I know of none of the name now. The Earl did not survive his loss but six years, and the countess died broken-hearted, about a twelvemonth before him."

"And Lady Juliana, uncle," inquired John, "what became of her, did she marry?"

The old man helped himself to a glass of wine, and looked over his shoulder to see if Peter was at hand. Peter, who had been originally butler, had made it a condition of his preferment, that whenever there was company he should be allowed to preside at the sideboard, was now at his station. Mr. Benfield seeing his old friend near him, ventured to talk on a subject he seldom trusted himself with in company.

“Why, yes — yes — she did marry, it’s true, although she did tell me she intended to die a maid; but — hem — I suppose — hem — it was compassion for the old viscount, who often said he could not live without her; and then it gave her the power of doing so much good, a jointure of five thousand a year added to her own income: yet — hem — I do confess I did not think she would have chosen such an old and infirm man — but — Peter, give me a glass of claret.” Peter handed the

claret, and the old man proceeded.—
“They say he was very cross to her, and that, no doubt, must have made her unhappy, she was so very tender-hearted.”

How much longer the old gentleman would have continued in this strain, it is impossible to say; but he was interrupted by the opening of the parlour door, and the sudden appearance of Denbigh. Every countenance glowed with pleasure, at this unexpected return of their favourite; and but for the prudent caution in Mrs. Wilson, of handing a glass of water to her niece, the surprise might have proved too much for Emily.

His salutations were returned by the different members of the family, with a cordiality that must have told him how much he was valued by all its branches. After briefly informing them that his review was over, and that he had thrown himself into a chaise, and travelled post until he had rejoined them, he took his seat by Mr. Benfield, who received him

with a marked preference, exceeding what he had shown to any man who had ever entered his doors, Lord Gosford himself not excepted.

Peter removed from his station behind his master's chair, to one where he could face the new comer; and continuing to wipe his eyes until they filled rapidly with water, he at last put on the identical goggles, which his care had provided for Denbigh in his illness. The laugh of John, who had noticed this circumstance, attracted the attention of the company to the honest steward, and when Denbigh learnt that this was Mr. Benfield's ambassador to the Hall on his account, he rose from his chair, and taking the old man by the hand, kindly thanked him for his thoughtful consideration for his weak eyes.

Peter took the offered hand in both his own, and after making one or two unsuccessful efforts to speak, he uttered, "thank you, thank you, may Heaven bless you," and burst into tears. This stopped the laugh,

and John followed the steward from the room, while his master exclaimed, wiping his eyes, "kind and condescending; just such another as my old friend, the Earl of Gosford."

CHAPTER IV.

AT the appointed hour, the carriage of Mrs. Wilson was ready to convey herself and niece to the cottage of Mrs. Fitzgerald. John was left behind, under the pretence of keeping Denbigh company in his morning avocations, but really, because Mrs. Wilson doubted the propriety of his becoming a visiting acquaintance, at a house tenanted as the cottage was represented to be. John was too fond of his friend to make any serious objection, and was satisfied for the present, by sending his compliments, and requesting his sister to ask permission for him to call in one of his early morning excursions, in order to pay his personal respects.

They found the cottage a beautiful and genteel, though very small and retired dwelling, almost hid by the trees and shrubs which surrounded it, and its mistress in its little piazza, expecting the arrival of Emily.

Mrs. Fitzgerald was a Spaniard under twenty, of a melancholy, yet highly interesting countenance; her manners were soft and retiring, but evidently bore the impression of good company, if not of high life.

She was extremely pleased with this renewal of attention on the part of Emily, and expressed her gratitude to both ladies, for their kindness in thus seeking her out in her solitude. She presented her more matronly companion to them, by the name of Donna Lorenza; and as nothing but good feeling prevailed, and useless ceremony was banished, the little party were soon on terms of friendly intercourse.

The young widow — for such her dress indicated her to be — did the honours of

her house with graceful ease, and conducted her visitors over her little grounds, which, together with the cottage, gave evident proofs of the taste and elegance of its occupant.

Her establishment she represented as very small ; two women and an aged man servant, with, occasionally, a labourer for her garden and shrubbery. They never visited ; it was a resolution she had made on fixing her residence, but if Mrs. Wilson and Miss Moseley would forgive her rudeness in not returning their call, nothing could give her more satisfaction than a frequent renewal of their visits.

Mrs. Wilson took a deep interest in the misfortunes of so young a female, and was so much pleased with the modest resignation of her manner, that it required little persuasion on the part of the recluse, to obtain a promise of repeating her visit soon. Emily mentioned the request of John, and Mrs. Fitzgerald received it with a mournful smile, as she replied, that Mr.

Moseley had laid her under such an obligation in their first interview, she could not deny herself the pleasure of again thanking him for it; but she must be excused if she desired they would limit their attendants to him, as there was but one gentleman in England whose visits she admitted, and it was seldom indeed he called: he had seen her but once since she had resided in Norfolk.

After giving an assurance not to suffer any one else to accompany them, and promising an early repetition of their call, they returned to Benfield Lodge, in time to dress for dinner.

On entering the drawing-room, they found the elegant person of Colonel Egerton leaning on the back of Jane's chair. He had arrived during their absence, and sought immediately the baronet's family.

His reception, if not so warm as that given to Denbigh, was cordial from all but the master of the house; and even he

was in such spirits by the company around him, and the prospect of Emily's marriage (which he considered as settled), that he forced himself to an appearance of good will he did not feel. Colonel Egerton was either deceived by his manner, or too much a man of the world to betray his suspicion; and every thing, in consequence, was very harmoniously, if not sincerely, conducted between them.

Lady Moseley was completely happy: if she had the least doubt before, as to the intentions of Egerton, they were now removed. His journey to that unfashionable watering-place, was owing to his passion; and however she might at times have doubted as to Sir Edgar's heir, Denbigh she thought a man of too little consequence in the world, to make it possible he would neglect to profit by his situation in the family of Sir Edward Moseley. She was satisfied with both connexions.

Mr. Benfield had told her, General Sir Frederic Denbigh was nearly allied to the

Duke of Derwent, and Denbigh had said the general was his grandfather.

Wealth, she knew, Emily would possess from both her uncle and aunt; and the services of the gentleman had their due weight upon the feelings of the affectionate mother. The greatest care of her maternal anxiety was removed; and she looked forward to the peaceful enjoyment of the remnant of her days in the bosom of her descendants.

John, the heir to a baronetcy, and 15,000 pounds a year, might suit himself; and Grace Chatterton she thought would be likely to prove the future Lady Moseley.

Sir Edward, without entering so deeply into anticipation of the future as his lady, experienced an equal degree of contentment; and it would have been a difficult task to have discovered in the island a roof under which there resided at the moment more happy personages than at Benfield Lodge; for as its master had

insisted on Denbigh's becoming an inmate, he was obliged to extend his hospitality in an equal degree to Colonel Egerton.

This subject had been fully canvassed between Peter and his master on the morning of the Colonel's arrival, and was near being decided against his admission, when the steward, who had picked up all the incidents of the harbour scene from the servants — and of course with many exaggerations — observed that the colonel had been very active in his assistance, and even contrived to bring water to revive Miss Emmy a great distance in the hat of Captain Jarvis, “ which was full of holes, Mr. John having blown it off the head of the captain without hurting a hair, in firing at a woodcock.”

This mollified the master a little ; and he agreed to suspend his decision, for further observation.

At dinner, the colonel happening to admire the really handsome face of Lord

Gosford, as delineated by Sir Joshua Reynolds, and which graced the dining room of Benfield Lodge, its master, in a moment of unusual kindness, gave the invitation; it was politely accepted, and the colonel at once domesticated.

The face of John Moseley alone, at times, exhibited evidences of care and thought; and at such moments it might be a subject of doubt, whether he thought the most of Grace Chatterton, or her mother: if of the latter, the former was sure to lose ground in his estimation — a serious misfortune to John, not to be able to love Grace without alloy.

His letters from her brother, mentioned his being still at Denbigh Castle, in Westmoreland, the seat of his friend the Duke of Derwent; and John thought one or two of his encomiums on Lady Harriet Denbigh, the sister of his grace, augured that the unkindness of Emily might in time be forgotten.

The dowager and her daughters were at

the seat of a maiden aunt in Yorkshire, where, as John knew, no male animal was allowed admittance, he was tolerably easy at the disposition of things. Nothing but legacy-hunting, he knew, would induce the dowager to submit to such a banishment from the other sex; but that was preferable to husband-hunting, and he was satisfied.

“I wish,” said John, mentally, as he finished the perusal of his letter, “mother Chatterton would get married herself, and she might let Kate and Grace manage for themselves: Kate would do very well, I dare say, and perhaps Grace would make out.” John sighed, and whistled for Dido and Rover.

In the manners of Colonel Egerton there was still the same general disposition to please, and the same unremitting attention to the wishes and amusements of Jane; they had renewed their poetical investigations, and Jane eagerly encouraged a taste

which afforded her delicacy some little colouring for the indulgence of an association different from the real truth, and which in her estimation was necessary to her happiness.

Mrs. Wilson thought the distance between the two suitors for the favour of her nieces, was, if any thing, increased by their short separation, and particularly noticed, on the part of the colonel, an aversion to Denbigh, that at times alarmed her, by exciting apprehensions for the future happiness of the precious treasure which she had prepared herself to yield to his solicitations, whenever properly proffered.

In the intercourse between Emily and her preserver, as there was nothing to condemn, so there was much to admire. The attentions of Denbigh were pointed, although less exclusive than those of the colonel; and the aunt was pleased to observe, that if the manners of Egerton had more of the gloss of life, those of Denbigh

were certainly distinguished by a more finished delicacy and propriety.

The manners of the one appeared to result from the influence of custom and association, with a tincture of artifice — of the other from benevolence, with a just perception of what was due to others: accompanied, too, with an air of sincerity when speaking of sentiments and principles, that was particularly pleasing to the watchful widow.

At times, however, she could not but observe an air of restraint, if not of awkwardness, about Denbigh, that was a little surprising. It was most observable in mixed society, and once or twice, her imagination pictured his sensations into something like alarm.

These unpleasant interruptions to her admiration of the manners and appearance of Denbigh, were soon forgotten in her just appreciation of the more solid parts of his character — which appeared abso-

lutely unexceptionable; and when momentary uneasiness would steal over her, the remembrance of the opinion of Dr. Ives, his behaviour with Jarvis, his charity, and chiefly his self-devotion to her niece, would not fail to drive the disagreeable thought from her mind.

Emily herself moved about, the image of joy and innocence — if Denbigh was near her, she was happy; if absent, she suffered no uneasiness: her feelings were so ardent, and yet so pure, that jealousy had no admission. Perhaps no circumstances existed to excite this never-failing attendant of the passion; but as the heart of Emily was more enchained than her imagination, her affections were not of the restless nature of ordinary attachments, though more dangerous to her peace of mind in the event of an unfortunate issue.

With Denbigh, she never walked or rode alone. He had never made the re-

quest, and her delicacy would have shrunk from such an open manifestation of her preference; but he read to her and her aunt; he accompanied them in their little excursions; and once or twice John noticed that she took the offered hand of Denbigh to assist her over any little impediment in their course, instead of her usual unobtrusive custom of taking his arm on such occasions.

“Well, Miss Emily,” thought John, on her doing this three times in succession in one of their walks, “you appear to have chosen another favourite; how strange it is, women will quit their natural friends for a face they have hardly seen.”

John forgot his own — “there is no danger, dear Grace,” — when his sister was almost dead with apprehension. But John loved Emily too well to witness her preference of another with satisfaction, even though Denbigh was the favourite — a feeling which soon wore away by custom and reflection.

Mr. Benfield had taken it into his head, that if the wedding of Emily could be solemnised while the family was at the Lodge it would render him the happiest of men, and how to compass this object, was the subject of a whole morning's contemplation.

Happily for Emily's blushes, the old gentleman harboured the most fastidious notions of female delicacy, and never in conversation, made the most distant allusion to the expected connexion. He, therefore, in conformity with these feelings, could do nothing openly; all must be the effect of management, and as he thought Peter one of the best contrivers in the world, to his ingenuity he determined to refer the arrangement.

The bell rang — “ send Johnson to me, David;” in a few minutes the drab coat and blue yarn stockings entered his dressing-room with the body of Mr. Peter Johnson snugly cased within them.

“ Peter,” commenced Mr. Benfield, pointing kindly to a chair, which the steward respectfully declined, “ I suppose you know that Mr. Denbigh, the grandson of General Denbigh, who was in parliament with me, is about to marry my little Emmy.”

Peter smiled as he bowed assent.

“ Now, Peter, a wedding would of all things make me most happy; that is, to have it here in the Lodge: it would remind me so much of the marriage of Lord Gosford, and the bridemaids—I wish your opinion how to bring it about before they leave here: Sir Edward and Anne decline interfering, and Mrs. Wilson I am afraid 'o speak to on the subject.”

Peter was not a little alarmed by this sudden requisition on his inventive faculties, especially as a lady was in the case; but as he prided himself on serving his master, and loved the hilarity of a wedding in his heart, he cogitated for some time in silence, when, having thought a

preliminary question or two necessary, he broke it with saying,

“Every thing, I suppose, master, is settled between the young people?”

“Every thing, I take it, Peter.”

“And Sir Edward and my lady.”

“Willing; perfectly willing.”

“And Madam Wilson, sir?”

“Willing, Peter, willing.”

“And Mr. John and Miss Jane?”

“All willing; the whole family willing, to the best of my belief.”

“There is the Rev. Mr. Ives and Mrs. Ives, master.”

“They wish it, I know; don't you think they wish others as happy as themselves, Peter?”

“No doubt they do, master: well then, as every body is willing, and the young people agreeable, the only thing to be done, sir, is —”

“Is what, Peter?” exclaimed his impatient master, observing him to hesitate.

“ Why, sir, to send for the priest, I take it.”

“ Pshaw! Peter Johnson; I know that myself,” replied the dissatisfied old man; “ cannot you help me to a better plan?”

“ Why, master,” said Peter, “ I would have done as well for Miss Emmy and your honour, as I would have done for myself: now, sir, when I courted Patty Steele, your honour, in the year of our Lord one thousand seven hundred and sixty-five, I should have been married but for one difficulty, which your honour says is removed in the case of Miss Emmy.”

“ What was that, Peter?” asked his master in a tender tone.

“ She wasn’t willing, sir.”

“ Very well, poor Peter,” replied Mr. Benfield, mildly, “ you may go;” and the steward, bowing low, withdrew.

The similarity of their fortunes in love, was a strong link in the sympathies which

bound the master and man together, and the former never failed to be softened by an allusion to Patty. Peter's want of tact, on the present occasion, after much reflection, he attributed to his never sitting in parliament.

CHAPTER V.

Mrs. Wilson and Emily, in the fortnight they had been at Benfield Lodge, had paid frequent and long visits to the cottage. Each succeeding interview left a more favourable impression of the character of its mistress, and a greater certainty that she was unfortunate; she, however, alluded very slightly to her situation or former life.

To the surprize of Mrs. Wilson, she was a protestant; and one whom misery had made nearly acquainted with the religion she professed.

Their conversations chiefly turned on the customs of her own, as contrasted with those of her adopted country, or in a

pleasant exchange of opinions, which the ladies possessed in complete unison.

One morning John had accompanied them, and been admitted; Mrs. Fitzgerald received him with the frankness of an old acquaintance, though with the reserve of a Spanish lady. His visits were permitted, under the direction of his aunt, but no other gentleman had been hitherto included in the number of her guests.

Mrs. Wilson had one day casually mentioned, in the absence of her niece, the interposition of Denbigh between her and death; and Mrs. Fitzgerald was so greatly pleased at the noble conduct of the gentleman, as to express a desire to see him; but the impressions of the moment appeared to have died away, as nothing more was said by either lady on the subject, which apparently was forgotten.

Mrs. Fitzgerald was found one morning, weeping over a letter she held in her hand, and the Donna Lorenza endeavouring to console her.

The situation of this latter lady was somewhat doubtful ; she appeared neither wholly a friend nor yet a menial : in the manners of the two there was a striking difference ; although the Donna was not vulgar, she was far below the polish of her more juvenile friend, and Mrs. Wilson ranked her in a station between a house-keeper and a companion.

After hoping that no unpleasant intelligence occasioned the distress they witnessed, the ladies were about delicately to take their leave, but Mrs. Fitzgerald entreated them to remain.

“ Your kind attention to me, dear madam, and the goodness of Miss Moseley, give you a claim to know more of the unfortunate being whom your sympathy has so greatly assisted to attain her present peace of mind ; this letter is from the gentleman you have heard me speak of, as once visiting me, and though it has struck me with an unusual force, it contains no

more than I expected to hear, perhaps no more than I deserve to hear."

"I hope your friend has not been unnecessarily harsh; severity is not the best way, always, of effecting repentance, and I feel certain, that you, my young friend, can have been guilty of no offence that does not rather require gentle than stern reproof," said Mrs. Wilson.

"I thank you, dear madam, for your indulgent opinion of me, but although I have suffered much, I am free to confess, it is a merited punishment; you are, however, mistaken as to the source of my present sorrow, Lord Pendennyss is the cause of grief, I believe, to no one, much less to me."

"Lord Pendennyss!" exclaimed Emily, in surprize, unconsciously looking at her aunt.

"Pendennyss!" reiterated Mrs. Wilson, with animation, "and is he *your* friend too?"

“ Yes, madam ; to his lordship I owe every thing — honour—comfort—religion —and even life itself.”

Mrs. Wilson’s cheek glowed with an unusual colour, at this discovery of an another act of benevolence and virtue in the young nobleman, whose character she had so long admired, and whose person she had in vain wished to meet.

“ You know the earl then,” inquired Mrs. Fitzgerald.

“ By reputation, only, my dear,” said Mrs. Wilson ; “ but that is enough to convince me a friend of his must be a worthy character, if any thing were wanting to make us your friends.”

The conversation continued for some time, and Mrs. Fitzgerald, after observing that she did not at that moment feel equal to the undertaking, promised, if they would honour her with another call the next day, to make them acquainted with the incidents of her life, and the reasons

she had for speaking in such terms of Lord Pendennyss.

The promise was cheerfully made by Mrs. Wilson, and her confidence accepted; not from a desire to gratify an idle curiosity, but from a belief, that in order to cure a wound it was necessary first to probe it: added to a conviction that she would be a more proper adviser to a young and lovely woman, than Pendennyss, or even the Donna Lorenza. During the ride, Emily broke the silence by exclaiming,

“Wherever we hear of Lord Pendennyss, aunt, we hear of him favourably.”

“A certain sign, my dear, he is deserving of it; there is hardly any man who has not his enemies, and those are seldom just; but we have met with none of the earl’s yet.”

“Fifty thousand a year will make many friends,” observed Emily, with a smile.

“Doubtless, my love, or as many enemies; but honour, life, and religion, my child, are debts not owing to money, in this country, at least.”

To this remark Emily assented; and after expressing her own admiration of the character of the young nobleman, dropped into a reverie; — how many of his virtues she identified with the person of Mr. Denbigh, it is not, just now, our task to enumerate: but judges of human nature may easily determine — and that, without having sat in the parliament of this realm.

The same morning that this conversation occurred at the cottage, Mr. and Mrs. Jarvis, with their daughters, made their unexpected appearance at L——.

The arrival of a post-chaise and four, with a gig, was an event soon circulated through the little village; and the names of its owners reached the Lodge, just as Jane had allowed herself to be persuaded by the colonel to take her first walk with him, unaccompanied by a third person.

Walking is much more propitious to declarations of love than riding.

Whether it was premeditated on the part of the colonel or not, or whether he

was afraid that Mrs. Jarvis, or some one else would interfere, he availed himself of his opportunity, and had hardly got out of hearing of her brother and Denbigh, before he made Jane an explicit offer of his hand.

The surprize was so great, that some time elapsed before the distressed girl could reply; this she, however, at length did, but incoherently; she referred him to her parents, as arbiters of her fate, well knowing that her wishes had been those of her father and mother:—and with this the colonel was obliged to be satisfied for the present.

But their walk had not ended, before he gradually drew from the confiding girl, an acknowledgment, that should her parents decline his offer, she would be very little less miserable than himself; indeed, the most tenacious lover might have been content with the proofs of regard, that Jane, unused to controul her feelings, allowed herself to manifest on this occasion.

Egerton was in raptures; a life devoted

to her would never half repay her condescension ; and as their confidence increased with their walk, Jane re-entered the Lodge with a degree of happiness in her heart, she had never before experienced : the much dreaded declaration — her own distressing acknowledgments were made, and nothing remained but to live — to be happy.

She flew into the arms of her mother, and hiding her blushes in her bosom, acquainted her with the colonel's offer, and her own wishes. Lady Moseley, who was prepared for such a communication, and had rather wondered at its tardiness, kissed her daughter affectionately, as she promised to speak to her father for his approbation.

“ But,” she added, with a degree of formality and caution, which had better have preceded than followed the courtship, “ we must make the usual inquiries, my child, into the fitness of Colonel Egerton as a husband for our daughter ; and once

assured of that, you have nothing to fear."

The baronet was requested to grant an audience to Colonel Egerton, who now appeared as determined to expedite things, as he had been dilatory before. On meeting Sir Edward, he made known his pretensions and his hopes. The father, who had been previously notified by his wife of what was forthcoming, gave a general answer, similar to her speech to their daughter, and the colonel bowed in acquiescence.

In the evening, the Jarvis family favoured the inhabitants of the Lodge with a visit, and Mrs. Wilson, noticed their singular reception of the colonel — Miss Jarvis especially was rude to both him and Jane; and it struck all who witnessed it, as a burst of jealous feeling for disappointed hopes: but to no one, excepting Mrs. Wilson, did it occur, that the conduct of the gentleman could be at all implicated in the transaction.

Mr. Benfield was happy to see again under his roof the best of the trio of Jarvises he had known, and something like sociability prevailed in the party.

There was to be a ball, Miss Jarvis remarked, at L——, on the following day, which would help to enliven the scene a little, especially as there were a couple of frigates lying at anchor, a few miles off, and the officers were expected to join the party.

This intelligence had but little effect on the ladies of the Moseley family; yet, as their uncle desired, that if invited they would go, out of respect to his neighbours, they cheerfully assented.

During the evening, Mrs. Wilson, to whom the offer of Egerton had been communicated, observed him in familiar conversation with Miss Jarvis. Her curiosity was naturally excited to ascertain the cause of so singular a change of deportment in the young lady, and she determined to keep a scrutinizing eye upon both of them.

Mrs. Jarvis, who appeared to retain in full force her respect for the colonel, called out to him, across the room, a few minutes before she departed—

“ Well, colonel, I am happy to tell you I have heard very lately from your uncle, Sir Edgar.”

“ Indeed, madam,” replied the colonel, starting, “ he was well, I hope.”

“ Very well, the day before yesterday ; his neighbour, old Mr. Holt, is a lodger in the same house with us at L——, and as I thought you would like to hear, I made particular inquiries about the baronet” — the word baronet was pronounced with emphasis, and a look of triumph, as if it would say, you see *we* have baronets as well as you.

Egerton answered only by an acknowledging bow, and the merchant and his family departed.

“ Well, John,” cried Emily, with a smile, “ we have heard more good, to-day

of our trusty and well-beloved cousin the Earl of Pendennyss."

"Indeed," exclaimed her brother; "positively, aunt, you must keep Emily for his lordship; she is almost as great an admirer of him as yourself."

"I apprehend it is necessary she should be quite as much so to become his wife," said Mrs. Wilson.

"Really," said Emily, more gravely, "if all one hears of him be true, or half even, it would be no difficult task to admire him."

Denbigh was standing leaning on the back of a chair, in a situation where he could view the animated countenance of Emily as she spoke; and Mrs. Wilson noticed a restlessness and changing of colour in him, that appeared uncommon from so trifling an excitement.

Is it possible, she thought, "so mean a passion as envy can be harboured in the breast of Denbigh"—who quickly walked

away, as if unwilling to hear more, and appeared much engrossed with his own reflections for the remainder of the evening.

There were moments of doubting which crossed the mind of Mrs. Wilson, with a keenness of apprehension proportionate to her deep interest in Emily, with respect to certain traits in the character of Denbigh; and this display of what she thought unworthy feeling, was one of them.

In the course of the evening, the cards for the expected ball arrived, and were accepted; and as this new arrangement for the morrow, interfered with their intended visit to Mrs. Fitzgerald, a servant was sent with a note of explanation in the morning, and a request that the promised communication might be postponed to the following day — to which the recluse assented.

Emily now prepared for the ball, with a pleasure not unmingled with melancholy

recollections of the consequences which grew out of the last she had attended; melancholy at the fate of Digby, and pleasure at the principles manifested by Denbigh on the occasion.

The latter, however, with a smile, excused himself from the party, telling Emily he was so awkward, that he feared some unpleasant consequences to his friends or to himself might arise from his inadvertencies, should he venture again with her into such an assembly.

Emily sighed gently, as she entered the carriage of her aunt early in the afternoon, leaving Denbigh at the door of the Lodge, and Egerton absent on the execution of some business; the former to amuse himself as he could until the following morning, and the latter to join them in the dance in the evening.

The arrangement included, an excursion on the water, attended by the bands from the frigates, a collation, and, in the evening, a ball.

One of the vessels was commanded by a Lord Henry Stapleton, a fine young man, who, struck with the beauty and appearance of the sisters, sought an introduction with the baronet's family, and engaged the hand of Emily for the first dance.

His frank and gentlemanlike deportment, was pleasing to his new acquaintances; the more so, as being peculiarly suited to their situation at the moment.

Mrs. Wilson was in unusual spirits, and maintained an animated conversation with the noble sailor, in the course of which he spoke of his cruising on the coast of Spain, and by accident mentioned his having carried out to that country, upon one occasion, Lord Pendennyss; this was common ground between them, and Lord Henry was as enthusiastic in his praises of the earl, as Mrs. Wilson's partiality could have hoped.

He also knew Colonel Egerton slightly, and expressed his pleasure, in polite terms, when they met in the evening in the

ball-room, at being able to renew his acquaintance.

The evening passed off as such evenings generally do — in gaiety — listlessness — dancing — gaping — and heart-burnings, according to the dispositions, and good or ill fortune of the several individuals who compose the assembly.

Mrs. Wilson, while her nieces were dancing, moved her seat to be near a window, and found herself in the vicinity of two elderly gentlemen, who were commenting on the company; after making several common-place remarks, one of them inquired of the other—“Who is that military gentleman, amongst the naval beaux, Holt?”

“That is the hopeful nephew of my friend and neighbour, Sir Edgar Egerton; he is here dancing, and mis-spending his time and money, when I know Sir Edgar gave him a thousand pounds six months ago, on express condition he should not

leave the regiment, or take a card in his hand for a twelvemonth."

"He plays, then?"

"Sadly; he is, on the whole, a bad young man."

As they changed their topic, Mrs. Wilson joined her sister, dreadfully shocked at this intimation of the vices of a man so near an alliance with her brother's child; she was thankful it was not too late to avert part of the evil, and determined to acquaint Sir Edward, at once, with what she had heard, in order that an investigation might establish the colonel's innocence or guilt.

CHAPTER VI.

THEY returned to the lodge at an early hour, and Mrs. Wilson, after meditating upon the course she ought to take, resolved to have a conversation with her brother that evening after supper ; accordingly, as they were amongst the last to retire, she mentioned her wish to detain him, and when left by themselves, the baronet taking his seat by her on a sofa, she commenced as follows — anxious to avert her unpleasant information until the last moment.

“ I wished to say something to you, brother, relating to my charge, and other matters ; you have, no doubt, observed the attentions of Mr. Denbigh to Emily ?”

“Certainly, sister, and with great pleasure; you must not suppose I wish to interfere with the authority I have so freely relinquished to you, Charlotte, when I inquire, if Emily favours his views, or not?”

“Neither Emily, or myself, my dear brother, wish ever to question your right, not only to inquire into, but control the conduct of your child;—she is yours, Edward, by a tie nothing can break, and we both love you too much to wish it. There is nothing of which you may be more certain, than that, without the approbation of her parents, Emily would accept of no offer, however splendid or agreeable to her own wishes.”

“Nay, sister, I would not wish unduly to influence my child in an affair of so much importance to herself; but my interest in Denbigh is little short of what I feel for my daughter.”

“I trust,” continued Mrs. Wilson, “Emily is too deeply impressed with her duty to forget the impressive mandate, ‘to

honour her father and mother ;' yes, Sir Edward, I am mistaken if she would not relinquish the dearest object of her affections, at your request ; and at the same time, I am persuaded she would, under no circumstances, approach the altar, with a man she did not both love and esteem."

The baronet did not appear exactly to understand his sister's distinction, as he observed, " I am not sure that I rightly comprehend the difference you make, Charlotte."

" Only, brother, that she would feel a promise made at the altar — to love a man to whom she felt averse—or to honour one she could not esteem — as a breach of a duty, paramount to all earthly ones," replied his sister ; " but to answer your question — Denbigh has never offered, and when he does, I do not think he will be refused."

" Refused !" cried the baronet, " I sincerely hope not ; I wish, with all my heart, they were married already."

“Emily is very young,” said Mrs. Wilson, “and need not hurry; I was in hopes she would remain single a few years longer.”

“Well,” said the baronet, “you and Lady Moseley, sister, have different notions on this subject of marrying the girls.”

Mrs. Wilson replied, with a good-humoured smile, “you have made Anne so good a husband, baronet, that she forgets there are any bad ones in the world; *my* greatest anxiety is, that the husband of my niece may be a Christian; indeed, I know not how I could reconcile it to my conscience, as a Christian, myself, to omit this important qualification.”

“I am sure, Charlotte, both Denbigh and Egerton appear to have a great respect for religion; they are punctual at church, and very attentive to the service;” Mrs. Wilson smiled, as he proceeded, “but religion may come after marriage, you know.”

“Yes, brother, and I know it may not come at all; no really pious woman can

be happy, without her husband is in what she deems the road to future happiness himself ; and it is idle — it is worse — it is almost impious, to marry with a view to reform a husband ; indeed, she thereby greatly endangers her own safety ; for there are few of us, I believe, but what find the temptation to err, quite as much as we can contend against, without calling in the aid of example against us, in an object we love : the life of such a woman must, in truth, be an unceasing struggle between conflicting duties.”

“ Why,” said the baronet, “ if your plan were generally adopted, I am afraid it would give a deadly blow to matrimony.”

“ I have nothing to do with generals, brother ; I am acting for individual happiness, and discharging individual duties : at the same time I cannot agree with you, in its effects on the community. I think no man who dispassionately examines the subject, will be other than a Christian ; and rather than remain bachelors, they would

take even that trouble : if the competition in our sex, was less for husbands, wives would increase in value."

" But how is it, Charlotte," said the baronet pleasantly, " your sex do not use your power, and reform the age?"

" The work of reformation, Sir Edward," replied his sister gravely, " is an arduous one indeed, and I despair of seeing it general in my day ; but much, very much, might be done towards it, if those who have the guidance of youth would take that trouble with their pupils, which good faith requires of them, to discharge the lesser duties of life."

" Women ought to marry," observed the baronet, musing.

" Marriage is certainly the natural and most desirable state for a woman," rejoined his sister ; " but how few are there, who, having entered it, know how to discharge its duties ; more particularly those of a mother. On the subject of marrying our daughters, for instance, instead of qualify-

ing them to make a proper choice, they are generally left to pick up such principles and opinions as they may come at, as it were by chance ; it is true, if the parent be a Christian in name, certain of the externals of religion are observed ; but what are these, if not enforced by a consistent example in the instructor ?”

“ Useful precepts are seldom lost, I believe, sister,” said Sir Edward, confidently.

“ Always useful, my dear brother ; but young people are more observant than we are apt to imagine, and always wonderfully ingenious in devising excuses to themselves for their conduct. I have often heard it offered as an excuse, that their father or mother knew it, or perhaps did it, and therefore it could not be wrong ; association is all-important to a child.”

“ I believe no family of consequence admits of improper associates, within my knowledge,” said the baronet.

Mrs. Wilson smiled as she answered, “ I am sure I hope not, Edward ; but are the

qualifications we require in companions for our daughters; always such as are most reconcilable with our good sense or our consciences; a single communication with an objectionable character is a precedent, if known and tolerated, which will be urged in excuse of acquaintances with worse ones: with the other sex especially, their acquaintance should be very guarded and select."

"You would make many old maids, sister," cried Sir Edward, with a laugh.

"I doubt it greatly, brother; it would rather bring female society in demand. I often regret that selfishness, cupidity, and a kind of contention, which prevails in our sex, on the road to matrimony, have brought celibacy into disrepute; for my part I never see an old maid, but I am willing to think she is so from choice or principle: and although not in her proper place, serviceable, by keeping alive feelings, necessary to exist, that marriages may not become curses, instead of blessings."

“ A kind of Eddystone, to prevent matrimonial shipwrecks,” said the brother gaily.

“ Their lot may be solitary, baronet, and in some measure cheerless, but it is infinitely preferable to a marriage that might lead themselves astray from their duties, or give birth to a family, which are to be turned on the world — without any religion but form—without any morals, but truisms— or without even a conscience which has not been seared by indulgence. I hope that Anne, in the performance of her indulgent system, will have no cause to regret its failure.”

“ Clara chose for herself, and has done well, Charlotte; and so, I doubt not, will Jane and Emily; and I confess I think it is their right.”

“ Clara, certainly,” said Mrs. Wilson, has done well, though under circumstances of but little risk; she might have jumped into your fishpond and escaped with life,

but the possibility certainly is that she might.

“ I do not dispute their right to chuse for themselves : but I say their rights extend to their requiring us to qualify them to make their choice. I am sorry, Edward, to be the instigator of doubts in your breast of the worth of any one, especially as it may give you pain.”

Here Mrs. Wilson took her brother affectionately by the hand as she communicated what she had overheard that evening.

Although the impressions of the baronet were not so vivid or so deep as those of his sister, his parental love was too great not to make him extremely uneasy under the intelligence ; and after thanking her for her attention to his children's welfare, he kissed her and withdrew.

In passing to his own room, he met Egerton, that moment returned from escorting the Jarvis ladies to their lodgings ; a task he had undertaken at the request of

Jane, as they were without any male attendant

Sir Edward's heart was too full not to seek immediate relief, and as he cherished strong presumption of the colonel's innocence, though he could give no reason for his expectation, he returned with him to the parlour, and in a few words acquainting him with the slanders which had been circulated at his expence; entreated him by all means to disprove them as soon as possible.

The colonel—who at first appeared forcibly struck with the communication, but had soon regained his composure—assured Sir Edward it was entirely untrue—he never played, as he might have noticed, and Mr. Holt was his ancient enemy—and he would in the morning take measures to convince Sir Edward, that he stood higher in the estimation of his uncle than Mr. Holt had thought proper to state.

Greatly relieved by this explanation, the baronet, forgetting that this heavy charge

removed, he only stood where he did before he took time for his inquiries, assured him; that if he could convince him, or rather his sister, that he did not gamble, he would receive him as a son-in-law, with pleasure.

The gentlemen shook hands and parted.

Denbigh had retired to his room early, telling Mr. Benfield he did not feel well, and thus missed the party at supper; and by twelve, silence prevailed in the house.

As usual, after a previous day of pleasure, the party were somewhat late in assembling on the following morning, yet Denbigh was the last who had entered the room, Colonel Egerton not having yet made his appearance.

Mrs. Wilson thought Denbigh threw an inquiring look round the room, which prevented his saluting the company in his usual easy and polished manner; in a few minutes, however, his apparent awkward-

ness was dissipated, and they took their seats at the table.

At that moment the door of the room was thrown hastily open, and Mr. Jarvis entered abruptly, and with a look bordering on wildness in his eye—"Is she not here?" exclaimed the merchant, looking earnestly round the breakfast table.

"Who?" inquired all in a breath.

"Polly—my daughter—my child," said the merchant, endeavouring to control his feelings; "did she not come here this morning with Colonel Egerton?"

He was answered in the negative, and then briefly explained the cause of his anxiety—the colonel had called very early, and sent her maid up to his daughter, who rose immediately; they had left the house, leaving word, that the Miss Moseleys had sent for her to breakfast, for a particular reason. Such was the latitude allowed by his wife, that nothing was suspected, until one of the servants of the

house said he had seen Colonel Egerton and a lady drive out of the village that morning in a post-chaise and four. Then the old gentleman first took the alarm, and proceeded instantly to the Lodge in quest of his daughter.

Of their elopement there now remained no doubt, and an examination into the state of the colonel's room, gave, at once, sad confirmation that the opinion of Mr. Holt was not erroneous.

Although every heart felt for Jane, during this dreadful explanation, no eye was turned on her, excepting the stolen and anxious glances of her sister; but when all was confirmed, and nothing remained but to reflect or act upon the circumstances, she naturally engrossed the whole attention of her fond parents.

Jane had listened in silent indignation to the commencement of Mr. Jarvis's narrative, and so firmly was Egerton enshrined in purity within her imagination, that not until it was ascertained that both his ser-

vant and clothes were missing, would she admit a thought injurious to his truth. Then, indeed, the feelings of Mr. Jarvis, his plain statement—corroborated by this testimony—dissipated every doubt, and rising to leave the room, she fell senseless into the arms of Emily, who observing her movement and loss of colour, had flown to her assistance.

Denbigh had previously drawn the merchant out, in vain endeavouring to appease him, so that happily no one witnessed this consequence of Jane's ill-judged passion but her nearest relatives.

She was immediately removed to her own room, and in a short time to her bed, burning with fever. The bursts of her grief were uncontrolled and violent. At times she reproached herself—her friends—Egerton:—in short, she was guilty of all the inconsistencies that disappointed hopes, accompanied by an innate consciousness of weakness, seldom fail to excite.

The presence of her friends was irk-

some ; and it was only to the soft and insinuating blandishments of Emily's love, that she would listen.

Perseverance and affection at length prevailed, and as Emily took the opportunity of giving some refreshments to infuse a strong soporific, Jane lost her consciousness of misery in a temporary repose.

In the mean time, a more minute inquiry had traced out the manner, and direction, of the journey of the fugitives.

It appeared that the colonel left the Lodge, immediately after his conversation with Sir Edward, and slept at a tavern, having previously ordered his servant to remove his baggage at day-light. Having provided a chaise and horses, he then proceeded, as already mentioned, to the lodgings of Mr. Jarvis. What arguments he might have used with Miss Jarvis to urge her to so sudden a flight, remained a secret ; but from the remarks of Mrs. Jarvis and Miss Sarah, there was reason for believing that he had induced them to think, from

the commencement, that his intentions were single, and Mary Jarvis their object. How he had contrived to gloss his attentions to Jane, in such a manner as to deceive those ladies, caused no little surprise. It was however clear, that this object, so indispensable to the views of the colonel, had been achieved, and from the successful duplicity of Egerton, the Moseleys were not without a hope, that his situation with Jane might remain unknown to the world.

In the afternoon a letter was handed to Mr. Jarvis, and by him immediately communicated to the baronet and Denbigh, both of whom he considered as among his best friends. It was from Egerton, and written in a respectful manner; he apologised for his elopement, and excused it on the ground of a wish to avoid the delay of a licence, or the publishing of banns, as he was in hourly expectation of a summons to his regiment; with many promises of making an attentive husband, and an affec-

tionate son : — they were on the road to Scotland, whence they intended to return to London, and wait the commands of their parents.

The baronet, in a voice trembling with emotion at the sufferings of his own child, congratulated the merchant that things were no worse ; while Denbigh curling his lips as he read the epistle, could not restrain the expression of an opinion, that “ settlements” might have proved a greater inconvenience than even “ the banns :” — for it was not unknown to Egerton, that a maiden aunt had left the Jarvises twenty thousand pounds between them !

CHAPTER VII.

ALTHOUGH the affections of Jane had been severely wounded; her pride was still more deeply affected, and no persuasions of her mother or sister could induce her to leave her room. She talked but little, yet once or twice, yielding to the affectionate attentions of Emily, she poured out her sorrows into the bosom of her sister; and, at such moments, she would declare her intention of never appearing in the world again.

One of these paroxysms of sorrow was witnessed by her mother, and, for the first time, self-reproach mingled in the grief of the matron; had she trusted less to appearances, and the opinions of indifferent

and ill-judging acquaintances, her daughter might have been apprised in season of the character of the man who had stolen her affections.

To the direct exhibition of misery Lady Moseley was always sympathetic, and, for the moment, alive to its causes and consequences ; but a timely and judicious safeguard against future moral evils, was a forecast to which her inactivity of mind rendered her wholly unequal.

We shall leave Jane to brood over her lover's misconduct, regretting that she is without that consolation which can alone enable us to bear her up against the misfortunes of life, and return to the other personages of our history.

The visit to Mrs. Fitzgerald had been postponed in consequence of Jane's indisposition ; but, a week after the colonel's flight, Mrs. Wilson thought, that as Jane had, at last, consented to leave her room, and Emily really began to look pale from her confinement by the side of a sick bed, she

would redeem her pledge to the recluse on the following morning. They found the ladies at the cottage happy to see them, and anxious to hear of the health of Jane, of whose illness they had been apprized by note. After offering her guests refreshments, Mrs. Fitzgerald, who appeared labouring under a greater melancholy than usual, proceeded to narrate the incidents of her life.

The daughter of an English merchant at Lisbon, had fled from the house of her father to the protection of an Irish officer in the service of his Catholic Majesty; they were united, and the colonel immediately took his bride to Madrid. The offspring of this union were a son and daughter. The former entered at an early age into the service of his king, having been bred in the faith of his ancestors. But the Signora M'Carthy had been educated a protestant; and yet adhering to her faith, had, contrary to a solemn pledge to her husband, secretly inculcated

the same principles in her daughter — whose hand, at the age of seventeen, was solicited by a grandee of the court of Charles. The Conde D'Alzada was a match not to be refused, and they were united in that heartless and formal manner, into which marriages are too often entered, in countries where the customs of society prevent an intercourse between the sexes. The Conde — of a stern and unyielding disposition — never possessed the affections of his wife, his harshness repelled her love; and as she naturally turned her eyes to the home of her childhood, she cherished the religious sentiments she had imbibed from her mother. Thus, although in appearance to the world a catholic, she lived in secret a protestant. Her parents had always used the English language in their family, and she spoke it as fluently as the Spanish. To encourage her recollections of this strongest feature, which distinguished the house of her father from the others she occasionally en-

tered, she perused closely and constantly, the books which her brother's death had placed at her disposal. These were chiefly the controversial works of protestant divines on religious subjects, and the countess became a strong sectarian, without becoming a christian. As she was compelled to use the same books in teaching her only child, the Donna Julia, English, the consequences of the original false step of her grandmother, were perpetuated in the person of this young lady.

In acquiring a knowledge of the English language, she learnt to secede from the faith of her father, thus entailing upon herself a life, of either persecution or hypocrisy.

The countess was guilty too of the unpardonable error of complaining to their child of the treatment she received from her husband; and as these conversations, held in English, were consecrated by the tears of the mother, they made an indelible impression on the youthful mind of Julia;

who grew up with the conviction, that next to being herself a catholic, the greatest evil of life was to be the wife of one.

On attaining her fifteenth year, she had the misfortune to lose her mother, and within twelve months, her father presented to her a nobleman of high rank as her future husband.

How long the religious faith of Julia would have endured, unsupported by either counsel or example, it might be difficult to pronounce; but as her father's suitor was not very young, and the reverse of very handsome, it is certain that the more he wooed, the more confirmed she became in her heresy, until, in a moment of desperation, and as an only refuge against his solicitations, she candidly avowed her creed. The anger of her father was violent and lasting; she was doomed to a convent, both as a penance for her sins, and to effect her conversion. Physical resistance was not in her power, but, mentally, she determined never to yield. Her body

was immured, but her mind continued unshaken, and even more settled in her belief, by the stimulus of those passions which had been excited by injudicious harshness.

For two years she continued in her noviciate, obstinately refusing to take the vows of the order, and at the end of that period, the situation of her country had called her father and uncle to the field, as defenders of the rights of their lawful prince. Perhaps to this, it might be owing that harsher measures were not adopted.

The war now raged around them in its greatest horrors, until, at length, a general battle being fought in the neighbourhood, even the peaceful dormitories of the nuns were crowded with wounded British officers.

Amongst others of his nation, was Major Fitzgerald, a young man of strikingly handsome countenance, and pleasant manners; chance threw him under the

more immediate charge of Julia ; his recovery was slow, and for a time doubtful, but eventually confirmed ; probably more in consequence of her unremitting attentions than of scientific skill.

The major was grateful, and Julia, unhappy as she was beautiful. That love should be the offspring of this association, will excite no surprise.

A brigade of British encamping in the vicinity of the convent, the young couple sought its protection, from Spanish vengeance, and Romish cruelty. They were married by the chaplain of the brigade, and for a month were happy.

As Napoleon was daily expected in person at the seat of war, his generals were alive to their own interests, if not to that of their master. The body of troops in which Fitzgerald had sought refuge, being an advanced party only of the main army, were surprised and defeated with loss.

After doing his duty as a soldier at his post, the major in endeavouring to secure

the retreat of Julia, was intercepted, and they both fell into the hands of the enemy. They were kindly treated, and allowed every indulgence of which their situation admitted, until a small escort of prisoners was sent to the frontiers ; in this they were included, and had proceeded to the neighbourhood of the Pyrennees, when, in their turn, the French being assailed suddenly, were entirely routed ; and the captive Spaniards, of which the party, with the exception of our young couple, consisted, released.

As the French guard resisted until overpowered by numbers, an unfortunate ball struck Major Fitzgerald to the earth — he survived but an hour, and died where he fell, on the open field.

A British officer, the last of his retiring countrymen, attracted by the sight of a woman weeping over the body of a fallen man, approached them a few moments previous to the last breath of Fitzgerald, who had only sufficient strength remain-

ing to exact from his countryman a pledge to protect Julia, and deliver her in safety, to his mother in England.

The stranger promised what the dying husband required, and by the time death had closed the eyes of Fitzgerald, he had procured from some peasants a rude conveyance, into which the body, with its almost equally lifeless widow, were placed.

The party which intercepted the convoy of prisoners, had been out from the British camp on other duty, but its commander hearing of the escort, had pushed rapidly into a country covered by the enemy to effect their rescue; and that service completed, he was compelled to retreat rapidly, in order to insure his own security. Julia was thus left, with the corpse of her husband, to the care of her protector and the Spanish peasantry: and the retreating troops were several miles on their march, before the widow and her guardians commenced their journey.

To overtake them was impossible, and the inhabitants acquainting the gentleman that a body of French dragoons were already harassing their rear, he was compelled to seek another route to the camp; this, with some trouble, and no little danger, he at last effected, and the day following the skirmish, Julia found herself lodged in a retired Spanish dwelling, several miles within the advanced posts of the British army. The body of her husband was respectfully interred, and Julia left to mourn her irretrievable loss, uninterrupted but by hasty visits of the officer in whose care she had been left, which he stole from his more important duties as a soldier.

A month passed by in this melancholy manner, leaving to Mrs. Fitzgerald the only consolation she would receive — uninterrupted visits to the grave of her husband. The calls of her protector, however, became more frequent; and at length

he announced his intended departure for Lisbon, on his way to England.

A small covered vehicle, drawn by one horse, was to convey them to that city, at which place he promised to procure her a female attendant, and necessaries for the voyage home. It was no time or place for delicate punctilio; and Julia quietly, but with a heart nearly broken, prepared to acquiesce in the wishes of her departed husband.

Shortly after leaving their habitation, the manners of her companion became sensibly altered: he grew complimentary and assiduous to please, but with a freedom that was offensive rather than insinuating. His attentions at length became so irksome, that Julia actually meditated stopping at one of the villages through which they passed, and abandoning the attempt of visiting England entirely. But her desire to comply with Fitzgerald's wish, that she would console his mother for the loss of an only child, and dread of the anger of her

relatives, determined her to persevere until they reached Lisbon, where she was resolved to separate for ever from the disagreeable and unknown guardian, into whose keeping chance had thrown her.

On the last day of their weary ride, in passing a wood, the officer so far forgot his own character and Julia's misfortunes, as to offer personal indignities. Grown desperate from her situation, Mrs. Fitzgerald had sprung from the vehicle, and by her cries, happily attracted the notice of an officer, who was riding express on the same road with themselves. He advanced to her assistance at speed, but as he approached the carriage, a pistol fired from it brought his horse down, and the treacherous friend seized that moment to escape.

Julia endeavoured to explain her situation to her rescuer; and by her distress and appearance, satisfied him at once of its truth. Within a short time, a strong escort of light dragoons came up, and the

officer despatched some for a conveyance, and others in pursuit of that disgrace to the army, the villainous self styled protector ; the former was soon obtained, but no tidings could be had of the latter. The carriage was found at a short distance, with the baggage of Julia, but without the horse, and with no vestige of its owner. She had never known his name, and either accident or art had so completely enveloped him in mystery, that every effort to unfold it then, was fruitless, and had continued so ever since.

On their arrival in Lisbon, every attention was shown to the disconsolate widow that the most refined delicacy could dictate: while every comfort was procured for her, which the princely fortune, high rank, and higher character, of the Earl of Pendennyss, could command. It was this nobleman, who, on his way from head quarters with despatches for England, had been the means of preserving Julia from a fate worse than death. A packet was in

waiting for the earl, in which they proceeded for England.

The Donna Lorenza was the widow of a subaltern Spanish officer, who had fallen fighting under the command of Pendenyss, and the interest he took in her brave husband, had induced him to offer her his protection. For nearly two years he had maintained her in a convent at Lisbon, and judging her a proper person, had now persuaded her to accompany Mrs. Fitzgerald to England.

On their passage, which was very tedious, the earl became more intimately acquainted with the history and character of his young friend, and by a course of gentle, yet powerful arguments, had gradually drawn her mind from its gloomy contemplation of futurity, to a more correct sense of good and evil.

The peculiarity of her religious opinions, being a Spaniard, afforded an introduction to frequent discussions of the real tenets of the protestant church, to which Julia

professedly belonged, although she was ignorant of its vital and essential truths. These conversations, which were renewed repeatedly, in their intercourse while under the protection of his sister in London, laid the foundations of a faith, which enabled her to look forward with a lively hope to the happy termination of her earthly probation.

The mother of Fitzgerald was dead, and as he had no near relative left, Julia found herself alone in the world ; her husband had however taken the precaution to make a will, which having been properly authenticated, his widow, by the powerful assistance of Pendennyss, was put in quiet possession of a small independency.

It was while waiting the decision of this affair, that Mrs. Fitzgerald resided for a short time near Bath ; as soon as it was terminated, the earl and his sister had seen her settled in her present abode, and once since had visited her. Delicacy had restrained him from visiting at the cottage ;

nevertheless his attempts to serve her had been unremitting, although not always successful. On his return to Spain, he had seen her father, and interceded with him in her behalf, but ineffectually; his anger remained unappeased, and for a season she discontinued her efforts; but having heard that he was dangerously ill, she had employed the earl once more to make her peace with him, — yet still without success. The letter over which the ladies had found her weeping, was from Pendennyss, informing her of his failure on that occasion.

The substance of the foregoing narrative was related by Mrs. Fitzgerald to Mrs. Wilson, who repeated it to Emily in their ride home. The compassion of both ladies was strongly moved in behalf of the young widow, yet Mrs. Wilson did not fail to point out to her niece the consequences of deception, and chiefly the misery which had followed from an abandonment of one

of the primary duties of life—by disobedience and disrespect to her parent.

Emily, though keenly alive to all the principles inculcated by her aunt, found so much to be pitied in the fate of her friend, that her failings lost their real character in her eyes; and for a while, she could think of nothing but Julia and her misfortunes.

Previously to their leaving the cottage, Mrs. Fitzgerald, with glowing cheeks, and some hesitation, informed Mrs. Wilson she had yet another important communication to make, but would postpone it until her next visit, which Mrs. Wilson promised should be on the succeeding day.

CHAPTER VIII.

EMILY cast a look of pleasure on Denbigh, as he handed her from the carriage, which would have said, if looks could talk, “in the principles you have displayed on more than one occasion, I have a pledge of *your* worth.”

As he led her into the house, he laughingly informed her, he had that morning received a letter which would make his absence from L—— necessary for a short time; adding that he must remonstrate against these long and repeated visits to a cottage, where all attendants of the male sex were excluded, as they encroached greatly on his pleasures — and improvement, bowing, as he spoke to Mrs. Wil-

son. To this Emily replied, gaily, that possibly, if he conducted himself to their satisfaction, they might intercede for *his* admission. Expressing his pleasure for this promise — rather awkwardly, as Mrs. Wilson thought — Denbigh changed the conversation. At dinner, he repeated to the family what he had mentioned to Emily of his departure, and his expectation of meeting with Lord Chatterton during his journey.

“Have you heard from Chatterton lately, John?” inquired Sir Edward of his son.

“Yes, sir, to-day; he had left Denbigh Castle a fortnight since, and writes, that he is to meet his friend, the duke, at Bath.”

“Are you connected with his grace’s family, Mr. Denbigh?” asked Lady Moseley.

A smile of indefinite meaning played on the expressive face of Denbigh as he answered slightly,

“On the side of my father, madam.”

“He has a sister,” continued Lady

Moseley, willing to know more of Chatterton's friends, and Denbigh's relatives.

"He has, my lady," was the brief reply.

"Her name is Harriet," observed Mrs. Wilson — Denbigh bowed his assent in silence, as Emily timidly remarked,

"Lady Harriet Denbigh?"

"Lady Harriet Denbigh, Miss Emily; will you do me the favour to take wine?"

The manner of the gentleman during this dialogue, though any thing but unpleasant, had been peculiar; it prohibited further pursuit of the subject, and Emily was obliged to be content without knowing who Marian was; or whether her name was to be found in the list of the Denbigh family. She was not jealous, but she wished to know all to whom her lover was dear.

"Do the dowager and the young ladies accompany Chatterton?" asked Sir Edward, as he turned to John, who was eating his fruit in silence.

“ Yes, sir — I hope — that is, I believe she will,” was the answer.

“ Who will, my son ?”

“ Grace Chatterton,” said John, starting from his meditations ; “ did you not ask me about Grace, Sir Edward ?”

“ Not particularly, I believe,” said the baronet dryly.

Denbigh again smiled ; it was a smile different from any Mrs. Wilson had ever seen on his countenance, and gave an entirely novel expression to his face ; it was full of meaning—it was intelligent—spoke more of the man of the world than any thing she had before noticed in him, and left on her mind the vague impression, with which she was often troubled, that there was something mysterious about Denbigh, in character, or condition, or both.

The spirit of Jane was too great to leave her a pining or a pensive maiden ; yet her feelings had sustained a shock that time alone could cure. She appeared again

amongst her friends, but the consciousness that her expectations, with respect to the colonel, were known to them, threw around her a haughty and defying distance, quite foreign to her natural manner.

Emily alone, whose every movement sprung from the spontaneous feelings of her heart, and whose words and actions were influenced unconsciously by the finest and most affectionate delicacy, won upon the better feelings of her sister so far, as to restore between them the usual exchange of sympathy and kindness. Jane admitted no confidence; she found nothing consoling — nothing solid, to justify her attachment to Egerton; nothing, indeed, excepting such external advantages as she was now ashamed to admit, had ever had that power over her, which they in reality had possessed.

The marriage of the fugitives, in Scotland, had been publicly announced; and as the impression that Egerton was to be connected with the Moseleys, was now de-

stroyed, their every day acquaintances, feeling the restraint removed, which such an opinion had once imposed, were, of course, pretty free in their comments on his character.

That he gambled — intrigued — and was in debt — were no secrets, apparently, to any body, but those who were most interested in knowing the truth.

Mrs. Wilson saw in these facts, additional reasons for examining and judging for ourselves; the world uniformly concealing from the parties really interested, their honest opinions of his character.

Some of these insinuations had been suffered to reach the ears of Jane; her aunt rightly judging, that the surest way to destroy Egerton's power over the imagination of her niece, was to strip him of his fictitious qualities; and some of their visitors thinking that as the colonel had certainly been attentive to Miss Moseley, it might give her pleasure to know that her rival had not made the most eligible match

in the kingdom. The expectations of Mrs. Wilson were in some measure justified ; but although Egerton fell, Jane did not find that she rose in her own estimation ; and her friends wisely concluded, that time only would be the remedy that could restore her to her former serenity.

In the morning Mrs. Wilson, unwilling to have Emily present at a conversation she intended to hold with Denbigh, with a view to satisfy her harassing doubts as to some minor points in his character, after excusing herself to her niece, invited the gentleman to a morning ride. He accepted her invitation cheerfully ; and it was only as they drove from the door without Emily, that he betrayed the faintest reluctance to the jaunt.

When they had got a short distance from the Lodge, she acquainted him with her intention of presenting him to Mrs. Fitzgerald, whither she had ordered the coachman to drive. Denbigh started as she mentioned the name, and after a few

moments of silence, desired Mrs. Wilson to allow him to stop the carriage; he was not very well—was sorry to be so rude—but with her permission he would alight and return to the house.

As he requested in an earnest manner, that she would proceed without him, and by no means disappoint her friend, Mrs. Wilson complied; yet, somewhat at a loss to account for his sudden illness, she turned her head to see how the sick man fared, after he left her, and was not a little surprised to see him talking very composedly with John, who had met him on his way to the fields with his gun. Love-sick!—thought Mrs. Wilson with a smile; and as she rode on, she came to the conclusion, that as Denbigh was to leave them soon, Emily would have an important communication to make on her return. “Well,” thought Mrs. Wilson with a sigh, “if it is to happen, it may as well be done at once.”

Mrs. Fitzgerald was expecting her, and appeared rather pleased than otherwise,

that she had come alone. After some introductory conversation, the ladies withdrew, and Julia acquainted Mrs. Wilson with a new source of uneasiness.

The day on which the ladies had promised to visit her, but had been prevented by the arrangements for the ball, the Donna Lorenza had driven to the village to make some purchases, attended, as usual, by their only man servant, and Mrs. Fitzgerald was sitting by herself, in the little parlour, in momentary expectation of her friends. The sound of footsteps drew her to the door, which she opened for the admission of — the wretch, whose treachery to her dying husband's request, had given her so much anguish.

Horror — fear — surprise — altogether, prevented her making any alarm at the moment, and she sunk into a chair. He stood between her and the door, as he endeavoured to draw her into a conversation; he assured her she had nothing to fear, that he loved her, and her alone: that he

was about to be married to a daughter of Sir Edward Moseley, but would give her up, fortune, every thing, if she would consent to become his wife — that the views of her protector, he doubted not, were dishonourable—and that he himself was willing to atone for his former excess of passion by a life devoted to her.

What further he might have offered is unknown ; for Mrs. Fitzgerald having a little recovered herself, darted to the bell on the other side of the room ; he tried to prevent her ringing it, but was too late ; a short struggle followed, when the sound of the footsteps of the maid compelled him to retreat precipitately.

Mrs. Fitzgerald added, that his assertion concerning Miss Moseley had given her incredible uneasiness, and alone prevented her from making the communication yesterday ; but she understood this morning, through her maid, that a Colonel Egerton, who had been supposed to be engaged to one of Sir Edward's daughters, had eloped

with another lady. That he was her persecutor, she did not now entertain a doubt, but that it was in the power of Mrs. Wilson, probably, to make the discovery, as in the struggle between them for the bell, a pocket-book had fallen from the breast pocket of his coat, and his retreat was too sudden to recover it.

As she put the book into the hands of Mrs. Wilson, she desired she would take means to return it to its owner; its contents might be of value, but she had not thought it correct to examine into it.

Mrs. Wilson took the book, and as she dropped it into her work-bag, smiled at the Spanish punctilio of her friend, in not looking into her prize, under the peculiar circumstances in which she stood.

A few questions as to the place and year of their first acquaintance, soon convinced Mrs. Wilson that it was Egerton whose unlicensed passion had given so much trouble to Mrs. Fitzgerald. He had served but one campaign in Spain, and in that

year, and that division of the army; and surely *his principles* were no restraint upon his conduct.

Mrs. Fitzgerald solicited the advice of her more experienced friend as to the steps she ought to take; to which she answered by inquiring whether she had made Lord Pendennyss acquainted with the occurrence: the young widow's cheeks glowed as she answered, that although she felt assured the base insinuation of Egerton was unfounded, it had created a repugnance in her to troubling the earl further than was absolutely necessary in her affairs; and, as she kissed the hand of Mrs. Wilson, she added — “besides, your goodness, my dear madam, now renders any other adviser unnecessary.” Mrs. Wilson pressed her hand affectionately, as she assured her of her good wishes and unaltered esteem. She commended her delicacy, and plainly told the young widow, that, however unexceptionable the character of

Pendennyss might be, a female friend was the only one in whom a woman in her situation could repose her confidence, without justly incurring the censorious observation of the world.

As Egerton was now married, and would not probably offer any further molestation to Mrs. Fitzgerald, it was concluded to be unnecessary, for the present at least, to take any immediate measures of precaution; and, Mrs. Wilson thought, the purse of Mr. Jarvis might be made the means of keeping him within proper bounds in future. The merchant was prompt, decisive, and not easily intimidated, and the slightest intimation of the truth, would, she knew, be sufficient to engage him on their side, heart and hand.

The ladies parted, with a mutual promise of meeting soon again, feeling, naturally, an additional interest in each other by their recent communications.

Mrs. Wilson had rode half the distance

between the cottage and the Lodge, before it occurred to her, that they had not yet decisively ascertained, by the means now in their possession, the identity of Colonel Egerton as Julia's persecutor. She accordingly took the pocket book from her bag, and opened it for examination; a couple of letters fell from it into her lap, and conceiving their directions would establish all she wished to know, as they had been read, she turned to the superscription of one of them; and saw—"George Denbigh, Esq." in the well known hand-writing of Dr. Ives!

Mrs. Wilson felt herself overcome to a degree that compelled her to lower a glass of the carriage for air. She sat gazing on the letters until the characters swam before her eyes in undistinguished confusion; and it was with difficulty she could rally her thoughts to the necessary point of investigation.

As soon as she found herself equal to the task, she examined the letters with the

closest scrutiny, and opened them both to be sure there was no mistake. She saw the dates, the "dear George" at the commencements, and the doctor's name subscribed, before she would believe they were real: it was then that the truth appeared to break upon her in a flood of light.

The aversion of Denbigh to speak of Spain, or of his services in that country — his avoiding Sir Herbert Nicholson, and that gentleman's observations respecting him — Colonel Egerton's and his own manners — his absence from the ball, and startling looks on the following morning, and at different times before and since — his embarrassment at the name of Pendennyss on various occasions — and his cheerful acceptance of her invitation to ride until he knew her destination, with his sudden manner of leaving her — were all accounted for by this dreadful discovery, and Mrs. Wilson found the solution of her doubts rushing on her mind with a force and rapidity perfectly overwhelming.

The misfortunes of Mrs. Fitzgerald — the unfortunate issue to the passion of Jane — were trifles in the estimation of Mrs. Wilson, compared to the discovery of Denbigh's unworthiness. She revolved in her mind his conduct on various occasions, and wondered how one, who could behave so well in general, could thus yield to temptation on a particular occasion. His recent attempts — his hypocrisy — however, proved his villainy to be systematic, for she was not weak enough to hide from herself the evidence of his guilt, or its enormity.

His interposition between Emily and death, she now attributed to natural courage, perhaps, in some measure, to chance; but his profound and unvarying reverence for holy things — his consistent charity — his refusing to fight — to what were they owing? And Mrs. Wilson mourned the weakness of human nature, while she acknowledged to herself there might be men, qualified by nature, and even disposed by

reason and by grace, to prove ornaments to religion and the world, who fell beneath the maddening influence of their besetting sins.

The superficial and interested vices of Egerton, vanished before the awful and deeply seated offences of Denbigh ; and the penetrating widow saw, at a glance, that he was the last man to be entrusted with the happiness of her niece. But how to break this heart-rending discovery to Emily, was a new source of uneasiness, and the carriage stopped at the door of the Lodge, ere she had determined in what manner to proceed.

Her brother handed her out ; and, filled with the dread that Denbigh had availed himself of the opportunity of her absence, to press his suit with Emily, she inquired after him : she was rejoiced to hear he had returned with John for a fowling piece, and that they had gone out together in pursuit of game, although she saw in it a confirming proof that the desire to avoid

Mrs. Fitzgerald, and not indisposition, had induced him to leave her. As a last alternative, she resolved to have the pocket book returned to him in her presence, to see if he acknowledged it to be his property; and accordingly she instructed her own man to hand it to him while at dinner.

The open and unsuspecting air with which her niece met Denbigh on his return, gave an additional shock to Mrs. Wilson, who could hardly command herself sufficiently to extend the common courtesies of good-breeding to Mr. Benfield's guest.

While sitting at the desert, her servant handed the pocket book, as directed by his mistress, to its owner, saying, "your pocket book, I believe, Mr. Denbigh." Denbigh took the book, and held it in his hand for a moment in surprise, and then fixed his eye keenly on the man, as he inquired where he found it, and how he knew it was his: these were interroga-

tories Francis was not prepared to answer, and in his confusion he naturally turned his eyes on his mistress. Denbigh followed their direction with his own, and in encountering the looks of the lady, he asked, in a stammering manner, and with a face of scarlet,

“Am I indebted to you, madam, for my property?”

“No, sir; it was given me by one who found it, to restore to you,” said Mrs. Wilson, gravely, in reply, and the subject was dropped, both appearing unwilling to say more.

Yet Denbigh was abstracted and absent during the remainder of the repast, and Emily spoke to him once or twice, without obtaining an answer. Mrs. Wilson caught his eye several times fixed on her with an inquiring and doubtful expression, that convinced her he was alarmed.

Had confirmation of his guilt been wanting, the consciousness he betrayed during

this scene afforded it; and she began seriously to consider of the shortest and best method of interrupting his intercourse with Emily, before he had drawn from her an acknowledgment of her love.

CHAPTER IX.

ON withdrawing to her dressing-room after dinner, attended by Emily, Mrs. Wilson commenced her painful duty, of removing the veil from the eyes of her niece, by recounting to her the substance of Mrs. Fitzgerald's last communication. To the innocence of Emily, such persecution could excite no other sensations but those of surprise and horror; and as her aunt omitted the part concerning the daughter of Sir Edward Moseley, she naturally expressed her wonder at who the wretch could be.

“Possibly, aunt,” she said, with an involuntary shudder, “some of the many gentlemen we have lately seen, and one

who has had art enough to conceal his real character from the world."

"Concealment, my love," replied Mrs. Wilson, "would be hardly necessary; such is the fashionable laxity of morals, that I doubt not many of his associates would laugh at his misconduct, and that he would still continue to pass with the world as an honourable man."

"And ready," cried her niece, "to sacrifice human life, in the defence of any ridiculous punctilio of that honour."

"Or," added Mrs. Wilson, striving to draw nearer to her subject, "with a closer veil of hypocrisy wear even an affectation of principle and moral feeling, that would seem to forbid such a departure from duty in favour of custom."

"Oh! no, dear aunt," exclaimed Emily, with glowing cheeks, and eyes dancing with pleasure, "he would hardly dare to be so very base—it would be profanity." Mrs. Wilson sighed heavily as she witnessed the confiding esteem of Emily,

which would not permit her even to suspect, that an act, which in Denbigh had been so warmly applauded, could, even in another, proceed from unworthy motives; and found it would be necessary to speak in the plainest terms, to rouse her suspicion of his demerits; — willing, however, to come gradually to the distressing truth, she replied —

“And yet, my dear, men who pride themselves greatly on their morals, nay, even some who wear the mask of religion, and perhaps deceive themselves, admit and practise this very appeal to arms; such inconsistencies are by no means uncommon; and why then might there not, with equal probability, be others, who would revolt at murder, and yet not hesitate at being guilty of lesser enormities; this is in some measure the case of every man: and it is only to consider killing in unlawful encounters as murder, to make it one in point.”

“Hypocrisy is so mean a vice, I should

not think a brave man could stoop to it," said Emily, "and Julia admits that he was brave."

"And would not a brave man revolt at the cowardice of insulting an unprotected woman; and your hero did that too," replied Mrs. Wilson bitterly, losing her self-command in indignation."

"Oh! do not call him my hero, I beg of you, dear aunt," said Emily, starting; and then losing the unpleasant sensations, in the delightful consciousness of the superiority of the man on whom she bestowed her admiration.

"In fact, my child," continued her aunt, "our natures are guilty of the grossest inconsistencies — the vilest wretch has generally some property on which he values himself; and the most perfect are too often frail on some tender point; long and tried friendships are those only which can be trusted to, and these oftentimes fail."

Emily looked at her aunt in surprise, to

hear her utter such unusual sentiments ; for Mrs. Wilson, at the same time that she had, by divine assistance, deeply impressed her niece with the frailty of her nature, had withheld the disgusting representation of human vices from her view, as unnecessary to her situation, and dangerous to her humility.

After a short pause, Mrs. Wilson continued, “ marriage is, with the woman, a fearful step ; and one in which she is compelled, in some measure, to adventure her happiness, without fitting opportunities always of judging of the merit of the man in whom she confides. Jane is an instance, and I hope you are not doomed to be another.”

While speaking, Mrs. Wilson had taken the hand of Emily, and by her looks and solemn manner, had succeeded in creating an alarm in her niece, of some apprehended evil, although Denbigh was yet farthest from her thoughts, as connected with danger to herself.

The aunt reached her a glass of water, and anxious at once to get rid of the hateful subject, she continued, "did you not notice the pocket-book Francis gave Mr. Denbigh?" Emily fixed her inquiring eyes on her aunt, wildly, as she added, "it was the one Mrs. Fitzgerald gave me to-day." Something like an indefinite glimpse of the truth crossed the mind of Emily — and as it most obviously involved a separation from Denbigh, she sunk lifeless into the extended arms of her aunt.

This had been anticipated by Mrs. Wilson, and a timely application of restoratives soon brought her back to a consciousness of her misery. Mrs. Wilson, averse from any one but herself witnessing the first burst of grief in her niece, succeeded in getting her to her own room, and to bed. Emily made no lamentations—shed no tears—asked no questions—her eye was fixed, and her every faculty appeared oppressed with the load on her heart. Mrs. Wilson knew her situation too well,

to intrude with unseasonable consolation or useless reflections, but sat patiently by her side, waiting anxiously for the moment she could be of service.

At length the uplifted eyes and clasped hands of Emily, assured her she had not forgotten herself or her duty, and she was rewarded for her labour and forbearance by a flood of tears.

Greatly relieved, Emily was now able to listen to a more full statement, of the reasons her aunt had for believing in the guilt of Denbigh; and she felt as if her heart was frozen up for ever, as the proofs followed each other until they amounted to demonstration. Her agitated state of mind having produced some indication of fever, her aunt required that she should continue in her room until morning, and Emily feeling every way unequal to a meeting with Denbigh, gladly assented; after ringing for her maid to sit in the adjoining room, Mrs. Wilson went below, and announced to the family the indisposition of

her charge, and her desire to obtain a little sleep.

Denbigh looked anxious to inquire after the health of Emily, but there was a visible restraint on all his actions, since the return of his pocket book; that persuaded Mrs. Wilson, he felt conscious a detection of his conduct had taken place. - He did venture to ask, when they were to have the pleasure of seeing Miss Moseley again — hoping it would be that evening, as he had fixed the morning for his departure; and when he learnt that Emily had retired for the night, his anxiety was sensibly increased, and he instantly withdrew.

Mrs. Wilson was alone in the drawing-room, and about to join her niece, as Denbigh returned with a letter in his hand; approaching her with a diffident and constrained manner, as he commenced with saying—

“ My anxiety and situation will plead my apology for troubling Miss Moseley at this time — may I ask you, madam, to de-

liver this letter — I dare not ask you for your good offices in my favour.”

Mrs. Wilson took the letter as she coldly replied, “certainly, sir, and I sincerely wish I could be of any real service to you.”

“I perceive, madam,” said Denbigh, hesitatingly, “I have forfeited your good opinion — that pocket-book” —

“Has made a dreadful discovery,” echoed Mrs. Wilson, shuddering.

“Will not one offence be pardoned, dear madam?” cried Denbigh with warmth; “if you knew my circumstances — the cruel reasons — why — why did I neglect the paternal advice of Doctor Ives.”

“It is not yet too late, sir,” said Mrs. Wilson, more mildly, “for your own good — but as for us, your deception” —

“Is unpardonable — I see it — I feel it,” cried he, with the accent of despair; “yet Emily — Emily may relent — you will give her my letter — any thing is better than this suspense.”

“You shall have an answer from Emily

this evening, and entirely unbiassed by me," said Mrs. Wilson; and as she closed the door, she observed Denbigh standing gazing on her retiring figure, with a countenance of despair, that excited a mingled feeling of pity, with her detestation of his vices.

On opening the door of Emily's room, she found her in tears, and her anxiety for her health was alleviated; she knew or hoped, that if she could once call in the assistance of judgment and piety to lessen her sorrows, Emily, however she might mourn, would become resigned to her situation; and the necessary step to attain this was the exercise of those faculties, which had at first been, as it were, annihilated. Mrs. Wilson kissed her with tenderness, as she placed in her hand the letter, and told her within an hour she would call for her answer.

Employment, and the necessity of acting, would be, she thought, the surest

means of reviving her energies; nor was she disappointed.

When the aunt returned for the expected answer, she was informed by the maid in the anti-chamber, that Miss Moseley was up, and had been writing, she believed. On entering, Mrs. Wilson stood for a moment in admiration of the picture before her. Emily was on her knees, and by her side, on the carpet, lay the letter and its answer; her face was hid by her hair, and her hands were closed in the fervent grasp of petition; in a minute she rose, and approaching her aunt with an air of profound resignation, but great steadiness, handed her the letters, her own unsealed: "read them, madam, and if you approve of mine, I will thank you to deliver it." Her aunt folded her in her arms, until Emily finding herself yielding under the effects of sympathy, begged her to leave her alone. On withdrawing to her own room, Mrs. Wilson read the contents of the two letters.

“ I rely greatly on the goodness of Miss Moseley, to pardon the liberty I am taking, at a moment she is so unfit for such a subject ; but my departure — my feelings — must plead my apology. From the moment of my first acquaintance with you, I have been a cheerful subject to your loveliness and innocence ; I feel, I know I am not deserving of such a blessing ; but knowing you, as I do, it is impossible, not to strive to win you — you have often thanked me as the preserver of your life, but you little knew the deep interest I had in its safety—without it my own will be unhappy ; and it is by accepting my offered hand, you will place me amongst the happiest, or rejecting it, the most wretched of men.”

To this note, which was unsigned, and evidently written under great agitation of mind, Emily had penned the following reply :

“ Sir—It is with much regret that I find

myself reduced to the possibility of giving uneasiness to one I am under such heavy obligations to: It will never be in my power to accept the honour you have offered me; and I beg you to receive my thanks for the compliment conveyed in your request, as well as my good wishes for your happiness in future, and prayers that you may be ever found worthy of it.—
Your humble servant,

EMILY MOSELEY.”

Perfectly satisfied with this answer of her niece, Mrs. Wilson went below, in order to deliver it at once; she thought it probable, as Denbigh had already sent his baggage to an inn, preparatory to his intended journey, that they might not meet again; and as she felt a strong wish, both on account of Doctor Ives, and out of respect to Denbigh's services, to conceal his conduct from the world entirely, she was in hopes his absence would make any disclosure unnecessary.

He took the letter from her with a trembling hand, and casting one of his very expressive looks at her, as if to read her thoughts, withdrew.

Emily had fallen asleep free from fever, and Mrs. Wilson descended to the supper room. As Mr. Benfield was first struck with the absence of his favourite — an inquiry after Denbigh was instituted, and it was while they were waiting his appearance, to be seated at the table, that a servant handed Mr. Benfield a note — “From whom?” cried the old gentleman, in surprise, “Mr. Denbigh, sir;” and the bearer withdrew.

“Mr. Denbigh!” exclaimed Mr. Benfield, in added amazement, “no accident I hope—I remember when Lord Gosford—here, Peter, your eyes are young, do you read it for me—read aloud.”

As all but Mrs. Wilson were anxiously waiting to know the meaning of this message, and Peter had many preparations to go through before his youthful eyes could

make out its contents; John hastily caught it out of his hand, saying he would save him the trouble, and in obedience to his uncle's wishes, read aloud :

“ Mr. Denbigh, being under the necessity of leaving L—— immediately, and unable to endure the pain of taking leave, avails himself of these means of tendering his warmest thanks to Mr. Benfield for his hospitality, and his amiable guests for their many kindnesses; as he contemplates leaving England, he desires to wish them all a long and affectionate farewell.”

“ Farewell,” cried Mr. Benfield, “ farewell—does he say farewell, John? here, Peter, run — no, you are too old — John, run — bring my hat, I'll go myself to the village — some love quarrel — Emmy sick and Denbigh going away — yes — yes, I did so myself — Lady Juliana, poor dear soul, she was a long time before she could forget it — but Peter” — Peter had disap-

peared the instant the letter was finished, and was quickly followed by John.

Sir Edward and Lady Moseley were both lost in amazement at this sudden and unexpected movement of Denbigh, and the breast of each of the affectionate parents was filled with a vague apprehension, that the peace of mind of another child was at stake.

Jane felt a renewal of her woes, in the anticipation of something similar for her sister — for the fancy of Jane was yet alive, and she did not cease to consider the defection of Egerton, a kind of unmerited misfortune and fatality, instead of a probable consequence of want of principles; like Mr. Benfield, she was in danger of making an ideal idol to worship, and to spend the remainder of her days in devotion to qualities, rarely, if ever found, and identified, with a person that never had an existence.

The old gentleman was now entirely engrossed by a different object; and having

in his own opinion decided that there must have been one of those misunderstandings which sometimes had occurred between himself and Lady Juliana, he quietly composed himself to eat his sallad at the supper table ; on turning his head, however, in quest of his first glass of wine, he observed Peter standing quietly by the side-board with the favourite goggles over his eyes. Now Peter was troubled with two kinds of weakness ; one from age and weakness, as applied to his corporeal faculties, and the other from a debility—of the heart. This his master knew, and he again took the alarm, the wine glass dropped from his nerveless hand, as he said in a trembling tone—“ Peter, I thought you went”—

“ Yes, master,” replied Peter laconically.

“ You saw him, Peter—will he return?”

Peter was busily occupied with his glasses, although none had been asked for.

“ Peter,” repeated Mr. Benfield, rising from his seat, “ is he coming in time for supper ?”

Peter, thus urged, was at length compelled to reply, and deliberately uncasing his eyes, he was on the point of opening his mouth, as John entered the room, and threw himself into a chair with an air of great vexation. Peter pointed to him in silence, and retired.

“John,” demanded Sir Edward, “where is Denbigh?”

“Gone, Sir.”

“Gone!”

“Yes, my dear father,” said John, gone without saying good-bye to one of us — without informing us whither, or when he should return — it was cruel in him — unkind — I’ll never forgive him” — and John, whose feelings were strong, and unusually excited, hid his face between his hands, and leaned upon the table. When he raised his head to answer a question from Mr. Benfield of — “how he knew he had gone, for the coach did not go until daylight?” — Mrs. Wilson perceived he had shed tears. The emotion excited in John

Moseley by the loss of his friend, impressed her with the pleasing conviction, that if she had been deceived, it was by a concurrence of circumstances and depth of hypocrisy, almost exceeding belief; so that her uneasiness was at least unembittered by self-reproach.

“ I saw the inn-keeper, uncle,” said John, “ who told me Mr. Denbigh quitted his house, at eight o’clock, in a post-chaise and four; but I will go to London in the morning myself;” and he immediately commenced his preparations for the journey.

The family separated that evening with melancholy hearts; and the host and his privy counsellor were closeted for half an hour ’ere they retired to rest. John took his leave, and left the Lodge for the inn, attended by his servant, in order to be in readiness for the mail. Mrs. Wilson looked in upon Emily before she withdrew, and found her awake, but perfectly calm and composed; she said but little — ap-

peared desirous of avoiding all allusions to Denbigh; and after simply acquainting her with his departure, and her resolution to conceal the cause, the subject was dropped.

Mrs. Wilson, when alone, reflected deeply on the discoveries of the day. This unexpected event had interfered with her favourite system of morals—baffled her ablest calculations upon causes and effects, but had in no degree impaired her faith or reliance on Providence. She knew that one exception did not destroy a rule; she felt convinced that without principles there was no security for good conduct—as was most strikingly evinced in the inexplicable conduct of Denbigh. To ascertain men's principles might be a task of considerable difficulty, but it was imperatively required from herself, ere she could feel justified in confiding to any man, the present and future felicity of her pupil.

CHAPTER X.

MORNING had not yet dawned when John Moseley was summoned to take his seat in the mail, three of the places in which he found already occupied. None of the passengers seemed inclined to break the characteristic silence of the English towards strangers. The coach had therefore left the little village of L—— far behind it, ere any of the rational beings it contained had ventured upon one communication with a fellow creature of whose name or condition they were ignorant. To attribute this our national taciturnity to modest diffidence, might perhaps be inconsistent with our lofty pride as Englishmen, which presents an obvious

refutation to this view of the subject. Perhaps an Englishman's good opinion of himself is as deeply seated, though less buoyant, than that of his neighbours, in whom it is more connected with manners, in us more with feeling; and the wound inflicted on the self-love produces very different effects in the two nations. The Frenchman wonders at its rudeness, but soon forgets the circumstance; while an Englishman broods over it in silence and mortification.

This distinction of character has been said to arise from the different estimation of principles and morals in the two nations. The solidity and purity of our ethics and religious creed, may have given a superior tone to our moral feeling — but has that man a tenable ground to value himself on either, whose respect for sacred things grows out of a regard for himself? and is not humility the very foundation of the real christian? It were desirable to see this national reserve diminished, if,

as some assert, it is founded in pride and uncharitableness : and (if not too *Utopian* for the hope of its realization) who but must feel an ardent wish to behold men, thus travelling together on the roads of their common country, imbued with the reflection that they are also journeying as companions along the path of life, and that the goal of their destination is alike attainable by all !

John Moseley was occupied with thoughts very different from those of his fellow travellers, as they proceeded rapidly on their route, and it was only when roused from his meditations by accidentally coming in contact with the hilt of a sword that he looked up, and, by the glimmerings of the morning's light, recognised the person of Lord Henry Stapleton ; their eyes met, and — “ my lord ” — and “ Mr. Moseley ” — were repeated with mutual surprise. John was eminently a social being, and he was happy to find himself diverted from his gloomy thoughts by the

conversation of the dashing young sailor. His frigate had entered the bay on the preceding night, and he was going to town to the wedding of his sister; the coach of his brother the marquis was to meet him about twenty miles from town, and the ship was ordered round to Yarmouth, where he was to rejoin her.

“But how are your lovely sisters, Moseley?” cried the young sailor, in a frank and careless manner; “I should have been half in love with one of them, if I had time—and money;—both are necessary to marriage now-a-days, you know.”

“As to time,” said John, with a laugh, “I believe that may be dispensed with, but money is a different thing.”

“Oh, time too,” replied his lordship; “I have never time enough to do any thing as it ought to be done—always hurried—I wish you could recommend me a lady who would take the trouble off my hands.”

“It might be done, my lord,” said

John, with a smile, and the image of Kate Chatterton crossed his brain, but was soon succeeded by that of her more lovely sister. “But how do you manage on board your ship — hurried there too?”

“Oh! never there,” replied the captain, gravely, “that’s duty, you know, and every thing must be regular of course; but on shore it is a different thing — there I am only a passenger; but L—— has a charming society, Mr. Moseley. A week or ten days ago I was shooting, and about five miles from the village, came to a beautiful cottage, the abode of a much more beautiful woman — a Spaniard — a Mrs. Fitzgerald. I am positively in love with her — so soft — so polished — so modest!” —

“How did your lordship become acquainted with her?” inquired Moseley, interrupting him in a tone of surprise.

“Chance, my dear fellow — chance — I was thirsty, and approached for a drink of water; she was sitting in the piazza, and I being hurried for time, you know — saved

the trouble of introduction. But she managed to get rid of me in no time, and with a great deal of politeness—however I found out her name at the next house.”

During this rattle, John had fixed his eyes on the face of one of the passengers who sat opposite to him. He appeared to be about fifty years of age, deeply marked by the small pox, with a stiff military air, and the dress and exterior of a gentleman. His face was much sun-burnt, though naturally very fair, and his dark, keen eye, was intently fixed on the sailor, as he continued his remarks—“ Do you know such a lady, Moseley ?”

“ Yes,” said John, “ very slightly ; she is visited by one of my sisters, and”—

“ Yourself,” cried Lord Henry, with a laugh.

“ Myself, once or twice, my lord, certainly,” answered John, gravely, “ but a lady visited by Emily Moseley and Mrs. Wilson, is a proper companion for any one. Mrs. Fitzgerald lives in great retire-

ment, and chance made us acquainted with her; but not being, like your lordship, in want of time, we have endeavoured to cultivate her acquaintance, as we have found it agreeable."

The countenance of the stranger underwent several changes during this speech of John's, and at its conclusion rested on him with a softer expression than generally marked its rigid and unvarying muscles. Willing to change a discourse which was becoming too delicate for a mail-coach, John addressed himself to the opposite passengers, while his eye still observed the face of the military stranger.

"We are likely to have a fine day, gentlemen;" the soldier bowed stiffly, as he smiled his assent, and the other passenger humbly answered, "verily, Mr. John," in the well known voice of honest Peter Johnson. Moseley started, as he turned his face for the first time on the lank figure, which was modestly compressed into the smallest possible compass in a cor-

ner of the coach, so as not to come in contact with any of its neighbours.

“Johnson!” exclaimed John, in astonishment, “you here — where are you going — to London?”

“To London, Mr. John,” replied Peter, with a look of much importance; and then, as if to prevent further interrogatories, he added, “on my master’s business, sir.”

Both Moseley and Lord Henry examined him closely as he spoke; the former wondering what could take the steward, at the age of seventy, for the first time into the vortex of the capital; and the latter in admiration of the figure and equipments of the old man before him. Peter was in full costume, with the exception of the goggles, and was in reality a subject to be gazed at by most people; but nothing relaxed the features, or attracted the particular notice of the soldier, who having regained his fixed cast of countenance, appeared drawn up in himself, waiting

patiently for the moment he was expected to act ; nor did he utter more than as many words, in the course of the first fifty miles of their journey. His dialect was singular, and such as made it difficult for his hearers to determine his country. Lord Henry stared at him whenever he spoke, as if to say what countryman are you ? until at length he suggested to John that he was probably some officer, whom the downfall of Buonaparte had driven into retirement. “ Indeed, Moseley,” added he, as they were about to re-enter the coach, after a change of horses, “ we must draw him out, and see what he thinks of his master now — but delicately, you know.” The soldier was, however, impervious to his lordship’s attacks, until he finally abandoned the project in despair. Peter was too modest to talk in the presence of Mr. John Moseley and a lord ; so the young men had most of the discourse to themselves. At a village fifteen miles from London, a fashionable carriage and four,

with the coronet of a marquis, was in waiting for Lord Henry; John refused his invitation to take a seat with him to town, as he had traced Denbigh from stage to stage, and was fearful of losing sight of him, unless he persevered in the manner he had commenced. They were set down safely at an inn in the Strand, and Moseley hastened to make his inquiries after the object of his pursuit. Such a chaise had arrived an hour before, and the gentleman had ordered his trunk to a neighbouring hotel. After obtaining the address, and ordering a hackney coach, John hastened to the house, and, on inquiring for Mr. Denbigh, to his great mortification, was told they knew of no such gentleman, and John turned away from the person he was addressing in visible disappointment, when a servant in livery respectfully inquired, if the gentleman had not come from L——, in Norfolk, that day? — “He had,” was the reply; “then follow me, sir, if you please.” They

knocked at a parlour door, and the servant entered; he returned, and John was shown into a room, where was sitting Denbigh, with his head resting on his hand, and apparently musing. On perceiving who it was that required admittance, he sprang from his seat, exclaiming, "Mr. Moseley! do I see aright?" "Denbigh," cried John, as he stretched out his hand to him, "was this kind—was it like yourself—to leave us so unexpectedly, and for so long a time as your note mentioned?" Denbigh waved his hand to the servant to retire, and handed a chair to his friend; "Mr. Moseley," said he, struggling with his feelings, "you appear ignorant of my proposals to your sister."

"Perfectly," answered John.

"And her rejection of them."

"Is it possible?" cried the brother, pacing about the room; "I acknowledge I did expect you to offer, but not to be refused."

Denbigh placed in his hand the letter of

Emily, which, having read, he returned with a sigh; "this then is the reason you left us," continued he; "Emily is not capricious — it cannot be a sudden pique — she means as she says."

"Yes, Mr. Moseley," said Denbigh, mournfully, "your sister is faultless — but I am not worthy of her — my deception" — here the door again opened for the admission of Peter Johnson — both the gentlemen rose at the sudden interruption, and the steward, advancing to the table, once more produced the formidable pocket book — the spectacles — and a letter. He ran over its direction — "For George Denbigh, Esquire, London, by the hands of Peter Johnson, with care and speed;" and then delivered it to its owner, who hastily perused its contents, by which he seemed much affected, and kindly took the steward by the hand, thanking him for this additional instance of the interest he took in his welfare, and stating that if he would inform him where a letter would

find him in the morning, he would send it in reply to the one he had received. Peter gave his address, but appeared unwilling to retire until assured the answer would be as he wished; and taking a small account-book out of his pocket, and referring to its contents, he said, "Master has with Coutts and Co. £7,000; in the bank £5,000; it can be easily done, sir, and never felt by us." Denbigh smiled in reply, as he assured the steward he would take proper notice of his master's offers in his letter.

The door again opened, and the military stranger was admitted—he bowed—appeared not a little surprised to find two of his mail-coach companions there, and handed Denbigh a letter in a manner quite as formal, although more silent, than that of the steward. He was invited to be seated, and, having perused the letter, Denbigh addressed the stranger, in a language, which John rightly judged to be Spanish, and Peter took to be Greek.

For a few minutes the conversation was maintained between them with great earnestness; and his fellow-travellers marvelled at the garrulity of the soldier, who again, however, quickly rose to retire, as the door was opened, and a voice exclaimed—

“Here I am, George, safe and sound—ready to kiss the bridemaids, if they will let me—and I can find time. Bless me, Moseley!—old marling-spike!—general!—whew—where is the coachman and guard?” It was Lord Henry Stapleton. The Spaniard bowed again in silence, and withdrew; while Denbigh threw open the door of an adjoining room, and excused himself, as he desired Lord Henry to walk in there for a few minutes.

“Upon my word,” cried the heedless sailor, as he complied, “we might as well have stuck together. We were bound to one port, it seems.”

“You know Lord Henry?” said John, as he withdrew.

“Yes,” said Denbigh, and he again required of Peter his address, which was given, and the steward departed. The conversation of the two friends did not resume the subject they were discussing when they had been interrupted, as Moseley felt a delicacy in making any allusion to the probable cause of his sister’s refusal. He had, however, began to hope it was not final; and, with a determination of renewing his visit in the morning, he took his leave, that Denbigh might attend to his acquaintance, Lord Henry Stapleton.

About twelve on the following day, John and the steward met at the door of the hotel, both in search of Denbigh. Peter held in his hand the answer to his master’s letter, but wished particularly to see its writer. On inquiring for him, to their mutual surprise they were told, the gentleman had discharged his lodgings early in the morning, and gone away, but whither, they were unable to state. To

attempt the discovery of a man in the city of London, without some clue by which to discover him, is obviously time mispent. Of this Moseley was perfectly sensible; and disregarding a proposition made by Peter, he returned to his own lodgings. The steward's proposal, if not greatly indicating sagacity, was at least honorable to his perseverance and enterprise. It was this:—John should take one side of the street, and he the other, and they would thus enquire at every house, until the fugitive was discovered! “Sir,” said Peter, with great simplicity, “when our neighbour White lost his little girl, this was the way we found her, although we went nearly through L—— before we succeeded, Mr. John.” Peter was obliged to abandon this expedient for want of an associate; and as no message had reached Moseley's lodgings, he set out with a heavy heart on his return to Benfield Lodge. But the warmth of Moseley's zeal in the cause of his friend, notwith-

standing his unmerited desertion, prompted him to continue his search for him. He sought out the town-residence of the Marquess of Eltringham, the brother of Lord Henry ; and was told, that both the Marquess and his brother had left town early that morning for his seat in Devonshire, to attend the wedding of their sister.

“ Did they go alone ? ” asked John, musing.

“ There were two chaises, the Marquess’s and his Grace’s.

“ Who was his Grace ? ” inquired John.

“ Why, the Duke of Derwent, to be sure.”

“ And the Duke ? was he alone ?

“ There was a gentleman with his Grace, but they did not know his name.”

As nothing further could be learnt, John withdrew. There was some little irritation mixed with the vexation of Moseley at his disappointment, for Denbigh, he thought, evidently wished to avoid him. That he was the companion of his kins-

man, the Duke of Derwent, he had now no doubt, and entirely relinquished all expectations of finding him in London or its environs. While retracing his steps, in no enviable state of mind, to his lodgings, with a resolution of returning immediately to L—, his arm was suddenly taken by his friend Chatterton. If any man could have consoled John at that moment, it was the Baron. Questions and answers were rapidly exchanged between them, and with increased satisfaction, John learnt that, in the next square, he could have the pleasure of paying his respects to his kinswoman, the Dowager Lady Chatterton and her daughters. Chatterton inquired warmly after Emily, and in a particularly kind manner concerning Mr. Denbigh, but with undisguised astonishment learnt his absence from the Moseley family.

Lady Chatterton had disciplined her feelings upon the subject of Grace and John, into such a state of subordination, that the fastidious jealousy of the young

man now found no ground of alarm in any thing she said or did. The dowager was beyond doubt delighted to see him again; and, if it were fair to draw any conclusions from colouring, palpitations, and other similar manifestations of female feeling, Grace was not affected by any great excess of sorrow. It is true, it was the best possible opportunity to ascertain all that related to her friend Emily and the rest of the family; and Grace was extremely happy to have such direct intelligence of their general welfare as was afforded by this visit of Mr. Moseley. Grace looked all she expressed—and perhaps rather more—and John thought she looked very beautiful.

There was present an elderly gentleman, of apparently indifferent health, although his manners were extremely lively, and his dress particularly studied. A few minute's observation convinced Moseley this gentleman was a candidate for the favour of Kate; and as a game of chess was introduced, he also saw he was considered

worthy of peculiar care and attention. He had been introduced to him as Lord Herrieffield; and Moseley soon discovered, by his conversation, that he was a peer. Chatterton mentioned him as a distant connexion of his mother, who had lately returned from filling an official situation in the East Indies, to take his seat among the lords, by the death of his brother. He was a bachelor, and reputed rich, much of his wealth being personal property, acquired by himself abroad. The dutiful son might have added, if respect and feeling had not kept him silent—that his offers of settling a large jointure upon his elder sister had been accepted, and that the following week was to make her the bride of the emaciated debauchee, who now sat by her side. He might also have said, that when the proposition was made to himself and Grace, both had shrunk from the alliance with disgust; and that both had united in humble, though vain remonstrances to their mother, against the

sacrifice, and in petitions to their sister, that she would not be accessory to her own misery. There was no pecuniary sacrifice they would not make, to avert such an union; but all was fruitless—Kate was resolved to be a viscountess, and her mother that she should be rich.

CHAPTER XI.

A DAY elapsed between the departure of Denbigh and the re-appearance of Emily amongst her friends. An indifferent observer would have thought her much graver and less animated than usual. The absence of the rich colour which usually glowed on her healthful cheek was obvious; but the same placid sweetness and graceful composure which regulated her former conduct, pervaded all she did or uttered. Not so Jane: her pride had suffered more than her feelings—her imagination had been more deceived than her judgment—and although too well bred and too mild by nature, to become rude or captious,

she was transformed from a communicative, into a reserved—from a confiding, into a distrustful companion. Her parents noticed this alteration with an uneasiness that was somewhat embittered by the consciousness of a neglect of some of those duties which experience now shewed could never be forgotten with impunity.

Francis and Clara had returned from their northern tour, so happy in each other, and contented with their lot, that it required some little exercise of fortitude in both Lady Moseley and her daughters, to exclude unpleasant recollections on its contemplation. Their relation of the little incidents of their tour, however, produced the effect of withdrawing the attention of their friends, in some degree, from late occurrences; and a melancholy and sympathising kind of association had substituted itself for the unbounded confidence and gaiety which had previously prevailed at Benfield Lodge. Mr. Benfield mingled with his solemnity an air of mys-

tery ; and was frequently noticed by his relatives looking over old papers, and apparently employed in preparations that indicated movements of more than usual importance.

The family were collected in one of the parlours, on an extremely pleasant day, the fourth of the departure of John, when the thin personage of Johnson stalked in amongst them. All eyes were fixed on him, in expectation of what he had to communicate, and all apparently dreading to break the silence, from an apprehension his communication would be an unpleasant one. In the mean time Peter, who had respectfully left his hat at the door, proceeded to divest himself of the multiplied defences the wary steward had assumed, against the inclemency of the weather. His master stood erect, with an outstretched hand, ready to receive the reply to his epistle, and Johnson produced the black leather-pocket-book, and from its contents a letter, as he read aloud :—

“Roderic Benfield, Esq. Benfield Lodge, Norfolk; favoured by Mr. ——.” Here Peter’s modesty got the better of his method. He had never been called Mr. Johnson by any body, old or young; all knew him in that neighbourhood as Peter Johnson—and he had very nearly been guilty of the temerity of arrogating to himself another title in the presence of those he most respected. Mr. Benfield took the letter with an eagerness that plainly indicated the deep interest he felt in its contents, while Emily, with a tremulous voice, and flushed cheek, approached the steward with a glass of wine, as she said—

“Peter, take this, it will do you good.”

“Thank you, Miss Emmy,” said Peter, casting his eyes from her to his master, as the latter, having finished his letter, exclaimed, with a strange mixture of consideration and disappointment—

“Johnson, you must change your clothes immediately, or you will take cold; you

look, now, like old Moses, the Jew beggar." Peter sighed profoundly on hearing this comparison, and saw in it a confirmation of his fears; for he well knew, that to his being the bearer of unpleasant tidings, was to be imputed his resemblance to any thing unpleasant to his master—and Moses was the old gentleman's aversion.

The baronet followed his uncle from the room to his library, and entered it at the same moment with the steward, who had been summoned by his master to an audience; pointing to a chair for his nephew, Mr. Benfield said—

“Peter, you saw Mr. Denbigh. How did he look?”

“As usual, master,” said Peter, laconically, and a little piqued at being likened to old Moses.

“And what did he say to the offer? Did he make no comments on it? He was not offended at it, I hope,” continued Mr. Benfield.

“ He said nothing more than what he has written to your honour,” replied the steward, losing a little of his constrained manner, in real good feeling to his master.

“ May I ask what the offer was?” inquired Sir Edward of his uncle, who, regarding him a moment in silence, said, “ Certainly, you are nearly concerned in his welfare ; your daughter”—the old man stopped as he turned to his letter-book, and handed the baronet the following copy of the epistle he had sent to Denbigh.

“ DEAR FRIEND, MR. DENBIGH,

“ I have thought a great deal on the reason of your sudden departure from a house I had began to hope you thought your own ; and by calling to mind my own feelings when Lady Juliana became the heiress to her nephew’s estate, take it for granted you have been governed by the same sentiments ; which I know, both

by my own experience and that of the bearer, Peter Johnson, is a never-failing accompaniment of pure affection. Yes, my dear Denbigh; I honour your delicacy in not wishing to become indebted to a stranger, as it were, for the money on which you subsist, and that stranger your wife—who ought, in reason, to look up to you, instead of your looking up to her; which was the true cause Lord Gosford would not marry the countess—on account of her great wealth, as he assured me himself; notwithstanding envious people said it was because her ladyship loved Mr. Chaworth better; so in order to remove these impediments of your delicacy, I have to make three propositions:—That I bring you into parliament the next election for my borough—that you take possession of the lodge the same day you marry Emmy; while I will live, for the little time I have to stay here, in the large cottage built by my uncle—and that I give

you your legacy of ten thousand pounds down, to prevent trouble hereafter."

"As I know it was nothing but delicacy which has driven you away from us, I make no doubt you will find all objections removed, and that Peter will bring the joyful intelligence of your return to us, as soon as the business you left us on is completed. — Your uncle, that is to be,

"RODERIC BENFIELD.

"N. B. As Johnson is a stranger to the ways of the town, I wish you to advise his inexperience, particularly against the arts of designing women, Peter being a man of considerable estate."

"There, nephew," cried Mr. Benfield, as the baronet finished reading the letter aloud, "is it not unreasonable to refuse my offers? now read his answer."

"Words are wanting to express the sensations which have been excited by Mr. Benfield's letter; but it would be impossi-

ble for any man to be so base as to avail himself of such liberality; the recollection of it, together with his many virtues, will long continue deeply impressed on the heart of him, whom Mr. Benfield would, if within the power of man, render the happiest amongst human beings."

The steward listened eagerly to this answer, but was as much at a loss to know its contents, as before its perusal. He knew it was unfavourable to their wishes, but could not comprehend its meaning or expressions, and immediately attributed their ambiguity, to the strange conference he had witnessed between Denbigh and the military stranger.

"Master," exclaimed Peter, with something of the elation of a discoverer, "I know the cause, it shows itself in the letter; there was a man talking Greek to him while he was reading your letter."

"Greek!" exclaimed Sir Edward, in astonishment.

"Greek?" said the uncle; "Lord Gos-

ford read Greek ; but I believe never conversed in that language.”

“ Yes, Sir Edward — yes, your honour — pure wild Greek ; it must have been something of that kind,” added Peter, with positiveness, “ that would make a man refuse such offers — Miss Emmy — the Lodge — £10,000” — and the steward shook his head with much satisfaction at having discovered the cause.

Sir Edward smiled at the simplicity of Johnson, but disliking the idea attached to the refusal of his daughter, said, “ perhaps, after all, uncle, there has been some misunderstanding between Emily and Denbigh, which may have driven him from us so suddenly.”

Mr. Benfield and his steward exchanged looks, and a new idea instantly struck them ; they had both been similarly circumstanced, and, after all, it might prove Emily was the one whose taste or feelings had subverted their schemes. The impression once made was indelible — and

the party separated — the master thinking alternately on Lady Juliana and his niece; while the man — after sighing deeply to the memory of Patty Steele, proceeded to his usual occupations.

Mrs. Wilson, having the fullest confidence in her self-command and resignation, availed herself of a fine day to pay a visit, together with Emily, to their friend at the cottage. Mrs. Fitzgerald received them in her usual manner, but a single glance of her eye sufficed to show the aunt that she noticed the altered appearance of Emily and her manners, although without knowing its true reason, which she did not deem it prudent to explain. Julia handed her friend a letter received the day before, and requested advice as to the mode of procedure most prudent to be adopted. As Emily was to be made acquainted with its contents, her aunt read aloud as follows :

“ MY DEAR NIECE,

“ Your father and myself had been in-

duecd to think you were leading a disgraceful life, with the officer to the care of whom your husband had consigned you ; for hearing of your captivity, I had arrived, with a band of Guerillas, on the spot where you were rescued, early the next morning, and there learnt of the peasants your misfortunes and retreat ; the enemy pressed us too much to deviate from our route at the time ; but natural affection, and the wishes of your father, have induced me to visit England to satisfy our doubts as to your conduct. I have seen you — heard your character in the neighbourhood, and after much and long search, found out the officer, and am satisfied, that, so far as concerns your deportment, you are an injured woman. I have therefore to propose to you, on my own behalf and that of the condé, that you adopt the faith of your country, and return with me to the arms of your parent, whose heiress you will be, and whose life you may be the means of prolonging. Direct your

answer to me, to the care of our ambassador; and, as you decide, I am your mother's brother,

“LOUIS M'CARTHY Y HARRISON.”

“On what point is it you wish my advice,” said Mrs. Wilson, kindly, after she finished reading the letter, “and when do you expect to see your uncle?”

“Would you have me to accept the offer of my father, dear madam, or am I to remain separated from him for the short residue of his life?” Mrs. Fitzgerald was affected to tears, as she asked this question of her friend, and awaited her answer, in silent apprehension of its nature.

“Is the condition of a change of religion, an immoveable one?” inquired Mrs. Wilson, in a thoughtful manner.

“Oh! doubtless,” replied Julia, shuddering; “but I am deservedly punished for my early disobedience, and bow with submission to the will of Providence. I now feel all that horror of a change of my

religion which I once only affected: I must live and die a Protestant, madam."

"Certainly, I hope so, my dear," said Mrs. Wilson, "I am not a bigot, and think it unfortunate you were not, in your circumstances, bred a pious Catholic. It would have saved you much misery, and might have rendered the close of your father's life more happy; but your present creed embraces doctrines so much at variance with those of the Romish church, that you cannot change your religious faith without committing a heavy offence against the opinions and practice of every denomination of Christians. I should hope a proper representation of this to your uncle, would have its weight, and that he might be satisfied with your being a Christian, without becoming a Catholic."

"Ah! my dear madam," answered Mrs. Fitzgerald, despairingly, "you little know the opinions of my countrymen on this subject."

"Surely, surely," cried Mrs. Wilson,

“parental affection is a stronger feeling than bigotry.”

Mrs. Fitzgerald shook her head, in silence, and in a manner which evinced both her apprehensions and filial regard.

“Julia ought not — must not — desert her father, dear aunt,” said Emily, as her face glowed with the ardency of her feelings.

“And ought she to desert her heavenly father, my child?” asked the aunt, mildly.

“And are the duties conflicting?” said Emily.

“The condé makes them so,” rejoined Mrs. Wilson. “Julia is, I trust, sincerely a Christian, and with what face can she offer up her daily petitions to her Creator, while she wears a mask to her earthly father; or how can she profess to honour doctrines that she herself believes to be false, or practice customs she condemns as improper?”

“Never, never,” exclaimed Julia, with

fervour; “the struggle is dreadful, but I submit to the greater duty.”

“And you decide right, my friend,” said Mrs. Wilson, soothingly: “but you need relax no efforts to convince the condé of your wishes; truth and nature will finally conquer.”

“Ah!” cried Mrs. Fitzgerald, “the sad consequences of one false step in early life!”

“Rather,” added Mrs. Wilson, “the sad consequences of one false step in your grandmother, who, had she listened to the voice of prudence and duty, would never have deserted her parents for a comparative stranger, and entailed upon her descendants a train of evils, which yet exist in your person.”

“It will be a sad blow to my poor uncle, too,” said Mrs. Fitzgerald; “he who once so dearly loved me.”

“When do you expect to see him?” inquired Emily, to which Julia replied, that she expected him hourly; for, being appre-

hensive that a written explanation of her views would cause his immediate departure—she had earnestly intreated him to see her without delay.

On taking their leave, the ladies promised to attend her on the general's arrival; as Mrs. Wilson conceived she might be more able to advise her friend, when acquainted with the character of her relatives, than she could do with her present information.

One day intervened, and was spent in the united society of Lady Moseley and her daughters; while Sir Edward and Francis rode to a neighbouring town on business; and on the succeeding morning Mrs. Fitzgerald communicated the arrival of General M'Carthy. Immediately after breakfast, Mrs. Wilson and Emily drove to the cottage, and her aunt hoped that the scene would have a tendency to prevent her niece from indulging in reflections dangerous to her peace of mind, and at variance with her duty.

Our readers will probably have anticipated, that the stage companion of John Moseley, was the Spanish general, who had then been making those inquiries into his niece's mode of life, which terminated in her acquittal in his judgment. Of the injurious attempts directed against her, previous to her arrival at Lisbon, he appears to have been ignorant, or his interview with Denbigh might have terminated very differently from the manner already related.

A description of the appearance of the gentleman presented to Mrs. Wilson has been given already, and the discerning matron thought she perceived in the rigid and unbending features of the soldier, a shade of kinder feelings, which might be wrought into an advantageous intercession on behalf of Julia. The general was evidently endeavouring to constrain his feelings until the decision of his niece might permit him to indulge in that affection for her

which his eye discovered, notwithstanding the coldness of his assumed manner.

It required an effort of great fortitude on the part of Julia to declare her resolution to her uncle, since the task was imperative; but after Mrs. Wilson had at some length defended her adherence to her present faith, until religiously convinced of its errors, she informed him such was her unalterable resolution. He heard her patiently, and without anger, but visibly surprised; he had construed her request to see him as a preliminary to her acceptance of the proposed conditions of her return; yet he betrayed no emotion after the first expression of his wonder. He told her distinctly that a renunciation of her heresy was the sole condition on which her father would acknowledge her, either as his heiress or his child. Julia deeply regretted the decision, but continued firm—and her friends left her to enjoy uninterruptedly for one day, the society of so near a relative. During this day, every doubt as to

the propriety of her conduct, if any yet remained, was removed by a relation of her little story to her uncle, who, after its conclusion, expressed his impatience to reach London; in order to meet a gentleman whom he had seen there, under a different impression as to its merits, than what now appeared to be just. Who the gentleman was, or what her uncle's sentiments regarding him were, Julia was left to conjecture; mysterious taciturnity being one of the general's most peculiar characteristics.

CHAPTER XII.

THE sun had just risen on one of the loveliest vales of Caernarvonshire, as a travelling carriage and six swept proudly up to the door of a princely mansion, which was so situated as to command a prospect of the fertile and extensive domains, whose rental filled the coffers of its owner, while in the distance, the eye was bounded by a beautiful view of St. George's channel.

Every thing around this stately edifice bespoke the magnificence of its ancient possessors, and the taste of its present master. It was of an irregular form, but constructed of the best materials, and in the most correct style of the different ages in which its various parts had been erected ;

and now, in the nineteenth century, it presented the baronial grandeur of the thirteenth, combined with the comforts of this latter period.

The lofty turrets were tipped with the golden light of the sun, and the neighbouring peasantry had commenced their daily labours, as the different attendants of the equipage we have mentioned, collected around it at the grand entrance. The beauty of the horses, and high polish of their harness — the elegant and fashionable finish of the vehicle — with its numerous grooms, postilions, and footmen, all wearing the livery of one master, gave evidence of his wealth and rank.

In attendance there were four outriders, awaiting the appearance of those for whose comfort and pleasure they were maintained; while a fifth appeared to fill a doubtful station — his form was athletic and seemed as if drilled into a severer submission than attended the movements of the liveried attendants: his dress was pe-

cular—it was neither menial nor military—but partook of both; his horse was heavier, and better managed than those of the others, and by its side was a charger, equipped apparently for the use of no common equestrian. Both were coal black, as were all the others of the cavalcade, but the pistols of the two latter, and housings of their saddles, bore the aspect of utility and elegance united.

The postilions were mounted, and listlessly awaiting the leisure of their superiors; when the laughs and jokes of the menials were instantly succeeded by a respectful and profound silence, as a gentleman and lady appeared on the portico of the building. The former was a young man of commanding stature, and genteel appearance; and his air—although that of one used to command, was softened by a character of benevolence and gentleness, that might be rightly judged as giving birth to the willing alacrity, with which all his requests and orders were fulfilled.

The lady was also young, and resembled him greatly, both in features and expression — both were noble — both were handsome. The gentleman wore a traveling dress, which when contrasted with the morning *dishabille* of the lady — bespoke their approaching separation. Taking the hand of the gentleman with both her own, the lady said, in a voice of music, and with great affection,

“Then, my dear brother, I shall certainly hear from you this week, and see you in the next?”

The gentleman replied in the affirmative, as he tenderly paid his adieus, and, throwing himself into the chaise, it dashed from the door, with the rapidity of a meteor — the horsemen followed — the unriden charger, obedient to the orders of his keeper, wheeled gracefully into his station, and in an instant they were all lost amidst the woods, through which the road to the park gates conducted them.

After lingering until the last of her bro-

ther's followers had disappeared, the lady retired through the ranks of liveried footmen and maids, whom curiosity or respect had collected on the departure of their master.

It might be not uninteresting were we to relate the subject of the young man's reflections. He wore a gloom on his expressive features amidst the pageantry that surrounded him, which showed the insufficiency of wealth and honours to complete the sum of human happiness. As his carriage rolled proudly up an eminence near the confines of his extensive park, his eye rested for a moment on a scene in which meadows — forests — fields, waving with golden corn — comfortable farm-houses, surrounded with innumerable cottages, were seen, in almost endless variety, and innumerable groups. All these owned him for their lord, and one quiet smile of satisfaction beamed on his face as he gazed on the unlimited view before him. Could the heart of that youth have been read, it

would at that moment have told a story far different from the feelings such a scene was calculated to excite; although it might also have spoken the consciousness of well-applied wealth—the gratification of contemplating its own meritorious deeds, and a heartfelt gratitude to the Being which had enabled him to become the dispenser of happiness to so many of his fellow creatures.

“Which way, my lord, so early?” demanded a gentleman in a phaeton, as he drew up, to pay his own parting compliments, on his way to a watering place.

“To Eltringham, Sir Owen, to attend the marriage of my kinsman, Mr. Denbigh, to one of the sisters of the marquess.” A few more questions and answers, and the gentlemen exchanged friendly adieus, pursued each his own course — Sir Owen Ap Rice for Cheltenham, and the Earl of Pendenness to act as groom’s-man to his cousin.

The gates of Eltringham were opened to the the admission of many an equipage on

the following day, and the heart of Lady Laura beat quickly, as the sound of wheels, at different times, reached her ears. At length an unusual movement in the house drew her to a window of her dressing-room, and the blood rushed to her heart, as she beheld the equipages which were rapidly approaching, and through the mist which stole over her eyes, saw alight from the first, the Duke of Derwent and the bridegroom, while the next contained Lord Pendennyss—and the last the Bishop of ——. Lady Laura waited to see no more, but with a heart filled with terror — hope — joy and uneasiness, threw herself into the arms of one of her sisters.

About a week after the wedding of his sister, Lord Henry Stapleton took John Moseley by the arm suddenly, while the latter was taking his morning walk to the residence of the dowager Lady Chatterton, and exclaimed—“ Ah ! Moseley, you dissipated youth, in town yet ; you told me

you should stay but a day, and here I find you at the end of a fortnight." John blushed a little at the consciousness of his reasons for sending a written, instead of carrying a verbal report, of the result of his journey, as he replied,

"Yes, my lord, my friend Chatterton, unexpectedly arrived, and so — and so" —

"And so you did not go, I presume you mean," cried Lord Henry, with a laugh.

"Yes," said John, "and so I staid—but where is Denbigh?"

"Where? — why with his wife, where every well-behaved man should be, especially for the first month," rejoined the sailor, gaily.

"Wife!" echoed John, as soon as he felt able to give utterance to his words — "wife! is he married?"

"Married!" cried Lord Henry, imitating his manner, "are you yet to learn that; why did you ask for him?"

“ Ask for him,” said Moseley, yet lost in astonishment; but when — how — where did he marry—my lord?”

Lord Henry looked at him for a moment, with a surprise little short of his own, as he answered more gravely,

“ When?—last Tuesday; how? by special licence, and the Bishop of ———; where?—at Eltringham; — yes, my dear fellow,” continued he, with his former gaiety, “ George is my brother now — and a fine fellow he is.”

“ I really wish your lordship much joy,” said John, struggling to command his feelings.

“ Thank you — thank you,” replied the sailor; “ a jolly time we had of it, Moseley — I wish, with all my heart, you had been there — no bolting or running away, as soon as spliced, but a regularly constructed, old fashioned wedding — all my doings — I wrote Laura that time was scarce, and I had none to throw away upon fooleries; so dear, good soul, she consented to let me

have my own way — we had Derwent and Pendennyss, the marquess, Lord William, and myself, for groom's-men, and my three sisters — ah, that was bad, but there was no helping it—Lady Harriet Denbigh, and an old maid, a cousin of ours, for bride's-maids—could not help the old maid either, upon my honour, or I would.”

How much of all this Moseley heard, it were difficult to decide ; for had his friend talked an hour longer, he would have been uninterrupted. Lord Henry was too much engaged with his description to notice his companion's taciturnity or surprise, and after walking together for a short distance, they parted ; the sailor being on the wing for his frigate at Yarmouth.

John continued his course, musing on the intelligence he had just heard. That Denbigh could so soon forget Emily, he could not believe, and he greatly feared despair had driven him to a step, of which he might hereafter repent. His avoiding himself, was now fully explained

—but would Lady Laura Stapleton accept a man for a husband at so short a notice? and for the first time, a suspicion that something equivocal marked the character of Denbigh, mingled in his reflections on his sister's refusal of his addresses.

Lord and Lady Herrieffield were on the eve of their departure for the Continent (for Catherine had been led to the altar the preceding week), as a southern climate was prescribed by his physicians as necessary to his lordship's constitution; and the dowager and Grace were about to proceed to one of the baron's seats near Bath. Chatterton himself had his own engagements, but promised to be there in company with his friend Derwent within a fortnight; their former visit having been postponed by the marriages in their respective families.

John had been assiduous in his attentions during the season of gaiety which succeeded the nuptials of Kate; and as the dowager's time was monopolised with the

ceremonials of that event, Grace had risen greatly in his estimation — so that, if Grace Chatterton was not more unhappy than usual, at what she deemed the destruction of her sister's felicity, it was owing to the presence and evident attachment of John Moseley.

The carriage of Lord Herrielfield was in waiting as John rang for admittance ; and on entering the drawing-room, he found the bride and bridegroom, with their mother and sister, accoutred for a shopping excursion to Bond-street ; for Kate was dying to find a vent for some of her surplus pin-money — her husband to show off his handsome wife — the mother to witness the success of her matrimonial schemes — and Grace to obey her mother's commands, in accompanying her sister.

John's appearance, though nothing more than what had daily occurred at that hour, deranged the whole plan : the dowager, for a moment, forgot her resolution,

and also the necessity of Grace's appearance, as she exclaimed with evident satisfaction,

“Here is Mr. Moseley come to keep you company, Grace, so after all you must consult your head-ache, and stay at home. Indeed, my love, I never can consent you should go out. I not only wish, but insist that you remain within this morning.”

Lord Herrielfield looked at his mother-in-law with some surprise as he listened to her injunctions, and threw a suspicious glance on his own rib at the moment, which plainly inquired,

“Is it possible I have been taken in after all?”

Grace was unused to resist her mother's commands, and throwing off her hat and shawl, re-seated herself with more composure than she would have done, had not the attentions of Moseley been more delicate and pointed of late than formerly.

As they passed the porter, Lady Chatterton observed to him significantly—“no-

body at home, Willis :”—“ Yes, my lady,” was the reply, and Lord Herriefield, as he took his seat by the side of his wife in the carriage, thought she was less handsome than usual.

Lady Chatterton that morning unguardedly laid the foundation of years of misery for her eldest daughter; if they had not been already laid in the ill-assorted, heartless, and unprincipled union she had laboured so successfully to effect. But she had that morning prematurely stripped the mask from her own character, and excited suspicions in the breast of her son-in-law, which time only served to confirm, and memory to brood over.

Lord Herriefield had been too long in the world not to understand all the ordinary arts of match-makers and match-hunters. Like most of his own sex who have associated freely with the worst part of the other, his opinions of female excellence were by no means extravagant or romantic. Kate had pleased his eye; she was

of a noble family ; young, and at that moment interestingly placid; having no particular object in view. She had a taste of her own, and Lord Herriefield was by no means in conformity with it ; consequently she expended none of those pretty little arts upon him which she occasionally practised, and which his experience would immediately have detected. Her disgust he attributed to disinterestedness, and while Kate had fixed her eye on a young officer lately returned from France, and her mother on a duke, who was mourning the death of his third wife— the viscount had become enamoured of the lady, before either she or her mother had observed the circumstance. His title was not the most elevated — but it was ancient. His paternal acres were not numerous — but his East India shares were. He was not very young — but he was not very old ; and as the duke died of a fit of the gout in his stomach — and the officer ran away with a girl in her teens from a boarding-school

—the dowager and her daughter determined that, for want of a better, *he* would do.

It would be incorrect to suppose that the mother and child held any open communication with each other to this effect. The delicacy and pride of both would have been greatly injured by such a suspicion ; yet they arrived simultaneously at the same conclusion, and at another of equal importance to the completion of their schemes on the person of the viscount. It was to adhere to the same conduct which had made him a captive, as most likely to retain him.

There was such a tacit understanding between the two, that their harmonious co-operation will excite but little surprise.

Two people, correctly impressed with their duties and responsibilities, must naturally arrive at the same conclusion in the government of their conduct ; and perhaps the same remark is equally appli-

cable to those whose characters are governed by a parity of worldly-mindedness and self-interest. They will pursue their plans with a degree of concurrence amounting nearly to sympathy; and thus had Kate and her mother so strictly kept up the masquerade, that the viscount was as confiding as a country Corydon, until the moment when he first witnessed the dowager's management with Grace and John, and his wife's careless disregard of a thing, which appeared too much a matter of course, to be quite agreeable to his newly awakened distrust.

Grace Chatterton both sang and played exquisitely; it was, however, seldom that she could sufficiently command her feelings when John was her auditor, to appear to her usual advantage.

As the party descended, and Moseley had accompanied them part of the way, she threw herself unconsciously on a seat, and began a beautiful song, fashionable at the time. Her feelings were in conso-

nance with the words—and Grace was very happy in both execution and voice.

John had reached the back of her seat before she was sensible of his return, and Grace lost her self-command immediately. She rose, and took her seat on a sofa, whither the young man took his by her side.

“ Ah, Grace,” said John, and the lady’s heart beat high, “ you sing as you do every thing — admirably.”

“ I am happy you think so, Mr. Moseley,” returned Grace, looking every where but in his face.

John passionately regarded her, as with palpitating bosom and varying colour, she sat confused at the warmth of his language and manner.

A remarkably striking likeness of the baron, which graced the room, hung directly before them — and John, taking her unresisting hand, continued: “ Dear Grace, you resemble your brother very

much in features, and, what is better, in character."

"I would wish," said Grace, venturing to look up, "to resemble your sister Emily in the latter."

"And why not to be her sister, dear Grace?" said he with ardor. "You are worthy to become her sister. Tell me, Grace — dear Miss Chatterton — can you — will you make me the happiest of men — may I present another inestimable daughter to my parents?"

As John paused for an answer, Grace looked up, and he waited her reply with impatient anxiety; but as she continued silent — now pale as death, and now the colour of the rose — he added,

"I hope I have not offended you, dearest Grace — you are all that is dear to me — my hopes — my happiness — are centered in you — unless you consent to become mine, I must be wretched."

Grace burst into a flood of tears, as her lover, deeply interested in their cause,

gently drew her towards him; her head sunk upon his shoulder, as she faintly whispered something that was inaudible — but which her lover interpreted into every thing he most wished to hear. John was in extacies — every unpleasant feeling of suspicion was banished — of Grace's innocence of manœuvring he never doubted; but John did not relish the idea of being entrapped into any thing, even a step which he desired. An uninterrupted communication between the young people followed; it was as confiding as their affections — and it was not until the return of the dowager and her children, that they regained their recollection of other people.

One glance of the eye was enough for Lady Chatterton — she saw the traces of tears on the cheeks and in the eyes of Grace, and she was satisfied; she knew his friends would not object; and as Grace attended her to her dressing-room, she cried, on entering it, “ well, child,

when is the wedding to be? you will wear me out with so much gaiety."

Grace was shocked, but did not, as formerly, weep over her mother's interference in agony and dread. John had opened his whole soul to her, observing the greatest delicacy to her mother, and she now felt her happiness placed in the keeping of a man, whose honour, she believed, far exceeded that of any other human being.

CHAPTER XIII.

THE seniors of the party at Benfield Lodge were all assembled one morning in the parlour, when its master and the baronet were occupied in the perusal of the London papers. Clara had persuaded her sisters to accompany her and Francis in an excursion as far as the village.

Jane still continued reserved and distant to most of her friends, while Emily's conduct would have escaped unnoticed, did not her blanched cheek and wandering looks, at times, speak a language not to be misunderstood. With all her relatives she maintained the same affectionate intercourse she had always supported; yet not even to her aunt did the name of Denbigh pass her lips. But in her most private

and humble petitions to her God, she never forgot to mingle with her requests for spiritual blessings on herself, one fervent prayer for the conversion of the preserver of her life.

Mrs. Wilson, as she sat by the side of her sister, discovered an unusual uneasiness in their venerable host, while he turned his paper over and over, as if unwilling or unable to comprehend some part of its contents, until he rang the bell violently, and bid the servant send Johnson to him, without a moment's delay.

“Peter,” said Mr. Benfield, doubtingly, as he entered, “read that — your eyes are young.”

Peter took the paper, and, after having adjusted his spectacles to his satisfaction, proceeded to obey his master's injunctions. But the same defect of vision, which had affected his master, suddenly seized on the steward. He turned the paper sideways, and appeared to be spelling the paragraph to himself. Peter would

have given his three hundred a year, to have had the impatient John Moseley at hand, to relieve him from his task ; but the anxiety of Mr. Benfield, overcoming his fear of the worst, he inquired in a tremulous tone —

“ Peter ? ” — hem ! — “ Peter, what do you think ? ”

“ Why, your honour,” replied the steward, stealing a look at his master, “ it does seem so indeed.”

“ I remember,” said the master, “ when Lord Gosford saw the marriage of the countess announced he —.” Here the old gentleman was obliged to stop, and rising with dignity, and leaning on the arm of his faithful servant, he left the room.

Mrs. Wilson immediately took up the paper, and her eye catching the paragraph at a glance, she read aloud as follows to her expecting friends :

“ Married, by special licence, at the seat of the most noble the Marquess of

Eltringham, in Devonshire, by the Right Rev. Lord Bishop of ———, George Denbigh, Esq. Lieut. Col. of his Majesty's ——— regiment of Dragoons, to the Right Hon. Lady Laura Stapleton, eldest sister of the Marquess. Eltringham was honoured on the present happy occasion with the presence of his Grace of Derwent and the gallant Lord Pendennyss, kinsmen of the bridegroom, and Capt. Lord Henry Stapleton, of the Royal Navy. We understand the happy couple proceed to Denbigh Castle immediately after the honey-moon."

Although Mrs. Wilson had given up the expectation of ever seeing her niece the wife of Denbigh, she felt an indescribable shock as she read this paragraph. The strongest feeling was horror at Emily's narrowly-escaped alliance with such a man. His avoiding the ball, at which he knew Lord Henry was expected, was explained to her by his marriage. For, with John, she could not believe a woman like Lady

Laura Stapleton was to be won in the short space of less than a fortnight. There was, too evidently, a mystery yet to be developed, and she felt certain that it would not elevate his character in her opinion.

Neither Sir Edward or Lady Moseley had given up the expectation of seeing Denbigh again as a suitor for Emily's hand, and to both of them this piece of news was a heavy blow. The baronet took up the paper, and after perusing to himself the article, muttered in a low tone, as he wiped the tears from his eyes:—"Heaven bless him—I sincerely hope she is worthy of him." Worthy of him, thought Mrs. Wilson, with a feeling of indignation, as, taking up the paper, she retired to her own room, whither Emily, at that moment returned from her walk, had proceeded.

As her niece must hear this news, she thought the sooner the better. The exercise, and unreserved conversation of

Francis and Clara, had restored, in some degree, the bloom to the cheek of Emily, as she saluted her aunt on joining her; and Mrs. Wilson felt it necessary to struggle with herself, before she could summon sufficient resolution, to invade the returning peace of her charge. However, having already decided on her course, she proceeded to the discharge of what she thought her duty.

“Emily — my child,” she whispered, pressing her affectionately to her bosom, “you have been all I could wish, and more than I expected, under your arduous struggles. But one more pang, and I trust your recollections on this painful subject, will be obliterated.”

Emily looked at her aunt in anxious expectation of what was coming, and quietly taking the paper, followed the direction of Mrs. Wilson’s finger, to the article on the marriage of Denbigh.

There was a momentary struggle in Emily for self command. She was obliged

to find support in a chair. The returning richness of colour, excited by her walk, vanished — but recovering herself, she pressed the hand of her anxious guardian, and gently waving her back, proceeded to her own room.

On her return to the company, the same control of feeling, which had hitherto distinguished her conduct, was again visible ; and although her aunt narrowly watched her movements, looks, and speeches, she could discern no visible alteration in her conduct.

The truth was, that in Emily Moseley, the obligations of duty were so imperative — the sense of her dependence on Providence so humbling, and yet so confiding, that from the moment she had believed her lover unworthy of her esteem, an insuperable barrier separated them. His marriage could add nothing to the distance between them. It was impossible they could be united ; and although a secret lingering of the affections, over his fallen character,

might, and perhaps did, exist—yet it existed without any romantic expectations of miracles in his favour, or vain wishes of reformation, in which self was the prominent feeling.

She might be said to feel an interest in what concerned his welfare or his conduct, though far from cherishing the passion of love; but it showed itself, in prayers for his amendment of life, and ardent petitions for his future and eternal happiness. She had set about the task of erasing from her heart, with energy, sentiments which, however delightful in times past, were now in direct opposition to her duty—well-knowing that a weak indulgence of such feelings, would disqualify her from discharging the various claims on her time and exertions, which could alone enable her to assist others, or effect, in her own person, the great purposes of her creation.

It was never lost sight of by Emily Moseley, that her existence here was preparatory to one immensely more impor-

tant hereafter. She was consequently in charity with all mankind, and if grown a little more doubtful of the intentions of her fellow-creatures, it was a mistrust, grounded on a clear view of the frailties of our nature,

Mrs. Wilson, who saw this, was acquainted by her niece in terms, with her views of her own condition ; and although she had deeply to regret that all her caution had not been able to guard against deception in character, where it was most important for her to guide aright ; yet she was cheered with the reflection, that her previous care, with the blessing of Providence, had admirably fitted her charge to combat and overcome the consequences of their mistaken confidence.

The gloom which this little paragraph excited, extended to every individual in the family ; for all had placed Denbigh by the side of John, in their affections, ever since his preservation of Emily.

A letter from John, announcing his in-

tention of meeting them at Bath, as well as his new relation with Grace, relieved in some measure their depression of spirits, from which, however, Mr. Benfield derived no consolation. John he regarded as his nephew, and Grace he thought a very good sort of young woman; but neither of them beings of the same description with Emily and Denbigh.

“Peter,” said he one day, after exhausting every conjecture to discover the cause of this marriage being so unexpectedly frustrated, “have I not often told you, fate governed these things, in order that men might be humbled in this life. Now, Peter, had the Lady Juliana wedded with a mind congenial to her own, she might have been mistress of Benfield Lodge to this very hour.”

“Yes, your honour—but there’s Miss Emmy’s legacy;” and Peter withdrew, thinking what would have been the consequences, had Patty Steele been more willing, when he wished to make her Mrs.

Peter Johnson; an association by no means uncommon in the mind of the steward: for if Patty ever had a rival in his affections, it was in the person of Emily Moseley, though indeed with very different degrees and colouring of esteem.

The rides to the cottage had been continued by Mrs. Wilson and Emily, and as no gentleman was now in the family to interfere with their communications, a general visit to the young widow had been made, by the Moseleys, including Sir Edward and Mr. Ives.

The Jarvises had gone to London to receive their children, now penitent in more senses than one; and Sir Edward learnt with pleasure, that Egerton and his wife had been admitted into the family of the merchant.

Sir Edgar died suddenly, and the entailed estates had fallen to his successor the colonel, now Sir Harry—but the bulk of his wealth which was in personal property, he had given by will to his other nephew,

a young clergyman, and son of a younger brother.

Mary, as well as her mother, were greatly disappointed by this deprivation, of what they considered their lawful splendour—but found great consolation in the new dignity of the Lady Egerton; whose greatest wish now was to meet the Moseleys, in order that she might precede them, in or out, of some place where such ceremonies are observed—the sound of, Lady Egerton's carriage stops the way—was delightful, and never failed to be used on all occasions—although her ladyship was mistress of no such vehicle.

A slight insight into the situation of things, amongst them, may be found in the following narrative of a discussion which took place about a fortnight after the re-union of the family under one roof.

Mrs. Jarvis was mistress of a very handsome coach, the gift of her husband for her own private use. Having satisfied herself that the baronet—a dignity he had

enjoyed just twenty-four hours—did not possess the ability to furnish his lady with such a luxury, she magnanimously determined to relinquish her own, in support of the new-found elevation of her daughter. A consultation on the alterations which were necessary accordingly took place between the ladies—“the arms must be altered, of course,” Lady Egerton observed, “and Sir Harry’s, with the bloody hand and six quarterings, put in their place—then the liveries, they must be changed.”

“Oh, mercy—my lady—if the arms are altered, Mr. Jarvis will be sure to notice it—and he would never forgive me—and perhaps—”

“Perhaps what?” exclaimed the new made lady, with a disdainful toss of her head.

“Why,” replied the mother, warmly, “not give me the hundred pounds, he promised, to have it new lined and painted.”

“Fiddlestick with the painting, Mrs. Jarvis,” cried the *lady*, with great dignity,

“no carriage shall be called mine that does not bear my arms and the bloody hand.”

“Why, your ladyship is unreasonable, indeed you are,” said Mrs. Jarvis, coaxingly; and then, after a moment’s thought, she continued, “is it the arms or the baronetcy you want, my dear?”

“Oh, I care nothing for the arms; but I am determined, now that I am a baronet’s lady, Mrs. Jarvis, to have the proper emblem of my rank.”

“Certainly, my lady, that’s true dignity. Well, then, we will put the bloody hand on your father’s arms, and he will never notice it, for he never sees such things.”

This arrangement was happily completed, and for a few days the coach of Mr. Jarvis bore about the titled dame, her mother, and sister, with all proper consideration for the dignity of the former. Until, one unlucky day, the merchant, who occasionally went on ’change when any great bargain in the stocks was to be made, ar-

rived at his own door suddenly, to procure a calculation he had made on a leaf of his prayer-book, the last Sunday, during sermon. This he obtained after some search; and stepping hastily into his wife's carriage, which stood at the door, he drove to his broker's.

Mr. Jarvis, forgetting to order the man to return—for more than an hour, the equipage, bearing on the pannel the bloody hand, had stood in one of the most public places in the city; and great was his astonishment, on unfolding the account which he had brought with him from his broker's office, to read, “Sir Timothy Jarvis, Bart. in account with John Smith, Dr.”

Sir Timothy examined the account in as many different ways as Mr. Benfield had the paragraph containing the marriage of Denbigh, before he would believe his eyes; and when assured of the fact, he caught up his hat, and sallied forth to find the man who had dared to insult him, as it were, in defiance of the forma-

lity of business. He had not proceeded far, before he met a friend, who, addressing him by his new title, an explanation followed, and the *ci-devant* baronet proceeded to his stables.

Here the truth came out. An explanation with his consort followed; and the painter's brush soon defaced the self-created dignity from the pannels of the coach.

All this was easily effected; but with his waggish companions on 'change, and in the city—where, notwithstanding his wife's fashionable propensities, he loved to resort—he was still Sir Timothy.

But Mr. Jarvis, though a man of much modesty, possessed great decision, and determined to have the laugh on his side.

A newly-purchased borough having sent up an address, flaming with loyalty, it was presented by his hands.

The merchant seldom kneeled, even to his Creator; but on this occasion humbling himself dutifully before his prince,

he left the presence with a legal right to that appellation by which his old companions sarcastically still persisted in addressing him.

The rapture of Lady Jarvis may be more easily imagined than described—the Christian name of her husband alone threw any alloy into the enjoyment of her elevation; but by a licence of speech, she ordered, and addressed him in her own practice, by the softer and more familiar appellation of—Sir Timo. Two servants were discharged in the first week of Sir Timothy's creation, because, unused to titles, they had addressed her as mistress; and her son the captain, then at a watering-place, was acquainted by express with the joyful intelligence.

During this time Sir Henry Egerton was but little seen amongst his new-made relatives: he had his own engagements and haunts, and spent most of his time at a fashionable gaming-house. As, however, the town was deserted, Lady Jarvis and

her daughters having condescended to pay a round of city visits, to show off her airs and dignity to her old friends, persuaded Sir Timo that the hour for their visit to Bath had now arrived, and they were soon comfortably settled in that city.

Lady Chatterton and her youngest daughter had arrived at the house of her son; and John Moseley, as happy as the certainty of love returned, and the approbation of his friends could make him, was in lodgings there.

Sir Edward had apprised his son of his approaching visit to Bath, and John had secured proper accommodations for the family.

Lord and Lady Herrieffield had departed for the south of France; and Kate, removed from the scenes of her earliest enjoyments, and the bosom of her own family, to the protection of a man she neither loved nor respected, began to feel the insufficiency of a name or a fortune to constitute felicity

in her own, or indeed any other circumstances.

Lord Herrieffield was of a harsh and suspicious temper by nature; but the situation of her child gave no uneasiness at present to the managing mother, who, thinking her placed in the high road to happiness, was gratified at the result of her labours.

Once or twice her habits had so far overcome her caution, that she endeavoured to promote, by a day or two sooner than had been arranged, the wedding of Grace. But her imprudence had been instantly checked by Moseley, who recoiled in disgust from her insinuations; and the absence of the young man, for twenty-four hours, gave her timely warning of the danger of interference with one of such fastidious feelings.

On these occasions John punished himself as much as the dowager; but the smiling face of Grace, with her hand frankly placed in his own at his return,

never failed to obliterate the unpleasant impressions created by her mother's art.

The Chatterton and Jarvis families met in the rooms, soon after the arrival of the latter, when the lady of the knight approached the dowager with a most friendly salute of recognition, followed by both her daughters.

Lady Chatterton, really not recollecting, the person of her B—— acquaintance, and disliking the vulgarity of her air, drew up with an appearance of dignity, as she hoped the lady was well.

The merchant's wife felt the consciousness of rank too much to be repulsed in this manner, and rightly conjecturing that the dowager had forgotten her face, added, with a simpering smile, in imitation of what she had seen better bred people practice with success.

“Lady Jarvis, my lady—your ladyship don't remember me—lady Jarvis, of the Deanery, B——, Northamptonshire, and my daughters, Lady Egerton and Miss

Jarvis." Lady Egerton bowed stiffly to the recognising smile the dowager now condescended to bestow; but Sarah, remembering a certain handsome lord in the family, was more urbane, determining, at the moment, to make the promotion of her mother and sister stepping-stones to greater elevation for herself.

"I hope my lord is well," continued the city lady—"I regret Sir Timo—and Sir Harry—and Captain Jarvis—are not here this morning to pay their respects to your ladyship; but, as we shall see a good deal of each other, it must be deferred to a more fitting opportunity."

"Certainly, madam," replied the dowager, as passing her compliments with those of Grace, she drew back from so open a conversation with creatures of such doubtful standing in the fashionable world.

There is no tyranny more unyielding, or apparently more dreaded, than that of fashion, the arbitrary influence of which is

felt from the highest to the lowest. Without it—virtue goes unnoticed; and with it—vice unpunished. It is oscillatory, unreasonable, and capricious—subjects men and morals to the government of the idle, the vain, and the foolish—and takes its rise from the error of making man, instead of God, the judge of our conduct and opinions.

CHAPTER XIV.

ON taking leave of Mrs. Fitzgerald, Emily and her aunt settled a plan of correspondence; the deserted situation of this young woman, having created a great interest in the breasts of her new friends. General M'Carthy had returned to Spain without receding from his original proposition, leaving his niece to mourn in solitude her early departure from one of the most solemn duties in life, though certainly under circumstances of great mitigation and temptation.

Mr. Benfield, thwarted in one of his most favourite schemes of happiness for the residue of his life, obstinately refused to

make one of the party to Bath; and Ives and Clara having returned to Bolton, the remainder of the Moseleys arrived at the lodgings of John, a very few days after the interview of the preceding chapter, with hearts but ill qualified to enter into the gaieties of the place; but in obedience to the wishes of Lady Moseley, to see and be seen once more on that great theatre of fashionable amusement.

The friends of the family were numerous, and glad to renew their acquaintance with those whom they had ever esteemed; so that they found themselves immediately surrounded by a circle of smiling faces and dashing equipages.

Sir William Harris, the proprietor of the Deanery, formerly their neighbour, with his showy daughter, were amongst the first to visit them.

Sir William was a man of handsome estate and unexceptionable character, but entirely governed by the whims and desires of his only child. Caroline Harris

neither wanted sense nor beauty, but, expecting a large fortune, had placed her views too high. At first she aimed at the peerage, and while she felt herself entitled to suit her taste as well as her ambition, had failed of her object chiefly by her ill concealed efforts to attain it.

She had justly acquired the reputation of the reverse of a coquette, or yet a prude; still she never had an offer, and at the age of twenty-six, had now began to lower her thoughts to the commonalty.

Her fortune would have easily got her a husband here, but she was determined to pick amongst the lower supporters of the aristocracy of the nation. With the Moseleys she had been early acquainted, though some years their senior—a circumstance, however, to which she never unnecessarily alluded.

The meeting between Grace and the Moseleys was tender and sincere. John's countenance glowed with delight, as he witnessed his future wife, folded succes-

sively in the arms of those he loved; and Grace's tears and blushes added twofold charms to her native beauty.

Jane relaxed her reserve in receiving her future sister, and determined with herself to appear in the world, in order to shew Sir Henry Egerton that she did not feel the blow he had inflicted, so severely as the truth would have proved.

The Dowager found some little occupation for a few days, in settling with Lady Moseley the preliminaries of the wedding; but the latter had suffered too much through her youngest daughters, to enter into these formalities with her ancient spirit.

All things were, however, happily settled, and Ives, making a journey for the express purpose, John and Grace were united privately, at the altar of one of the principal churches in Bath.

Chatterton had been summoned on the occasion, and the same paper which announced the nuptials, contained, amongst

the fashionable arrivals, the names of the Duke of Derwent and his sister ; the Marquis of Eltringham and sisters, amongst whom was to be found Lady Laura Denbigh ; whose husband—Lady Chatterton, carelessly remarked, in the presence of her friends, she heard was summoned to the death-bed of a relative, from whom he had great expectations. Emily's colour did certainly change as she listened to this news, but not allowing her thoughts to dwell on the subject, she was soon enabled to recall at least the appearance of serenity.

But Jane and Emily were both delicately placed. The lover of the former, and the wives of the lovers of both, were in the way of daily, if not hourly meetings ; and it required all the fortitude of the young women to appear with composure in their presence.

The elder was supported by pride—the younger by principle. The first was restless, haughty, distant, and repulsive. The last, mild, humble, reserved, but eminently

attractive. The feelings of the one were suspected by all around her—while those of the other were unnoticed by any but her nearest and dearest friends.

The first rencontre occurred at the rooms one evening, where the elder ladies had insisted on the bride's making her appearance.

The Jarvises were there before them, and at their entrance caught the eyes of the group. Lady Jarvis approached immediately, filled with exultation—her husband with respect. The latter was received with cordiality—the former, politely, but with distance. The young ladies and Sir Henry bowed distantly, and the gentleman soon drew off into another part of the room: his absence kept Jane from fainting. The handsome figure of Egerton standing by the side of Mary Jarvis, as her acknowledged husband was near proving too much for her pride to endure; and he looked so like the imaginary being she had set up as the object

of her worship, that her heart also was in danger of rebelling.

“Positively, Sir Edward and my lady, both Sir Timo—and myself, and I dare say Sir Harry and Lady Egerton too, are delighted to see you at Bath among us. Mrs. Moseley, I wish you much happiness; Lady Chatterton, too, I suppose your ladyship recollects me now—I am Lady Jarvis. Mr. Moseley, I regret, for your sake, my son, Captain Jarvis, is not here; you were so fond of each other, and both so loved your guns.”

“Positively, my Lady Jarvis,” said Moseley, dryly, in reply, “my feelings on the occasion are as strong as your own; but I presume the captain is much too good a shot for me by this time.”

“Why, yes; he improves greatly in most things he undertakes,” rejoined the smiling dame, “and I hope he will soon learn, like you, to shoot with the arrows of Cupid. I hope the Honourable Mrs. Moseley is well.”

Grace bowed mildly as she answered to the interrogatory, and smiled as she thought of Jarvis, in competition with her husband, in this species of archery; when a voice immediately behind where they sat, caught the ears of the whole party; all it said was,

“Harriet, you forgot to show me Marian’s letter.”

“Yes; but I will to-morrow,” was the reply.”

It was the tone of Denbigh—Emily almost fell from her seat as it first reached her; and the eyes of all but herself were immediately turned in quest of the speaker.

He had approached to within a very few feet of them, and supported a lady on each arm: a second look was necessary to convince the Moseleys they were mistaken. It was not Denbigh, but a young man whose figure, face, and air, resembled him strongly, and whose voice possessed the same soft, melodious tones, which had distinguished that of Denbigh. As they seated themselves within a very short dis-

tance of the Moseleys, they continued their conversation.

“Your ladyship heard from the colonel to-day too, I believe,” continued the gentleman, turning to the lady, who sat next to Emily.

“Yes, he is a very punctual correspondent—I hear every other day,” was the answer.

“How is his uncle, Laura?” inquired her female companion.

“Rather better; but I will thank your grace to find the marquis and Miss Howard.”

“Bring them to us,” rejoined the other.

“Yes, duke,” said the former lady, with a laugh, “and Eltringham will thank you too, I dare say.”

In an instant the duke returned, accompanied by a gentleman of thirty, and an elderly lady, who might have been safely taken for fifty, without offence to any body but—herself.

During these speeches, their auditors

had listened with very different emotions of curiosity or surprise, or some more powerful sensation. Emily had stolen a glance which satisfied her it was not Denbigh himself, and it greatly relieved her; but discovered with surprise, that it was his wife by whose side she sat: and when an opportunity offered, dwelt on her amiable frank countenance, with a melancholy satisfaction; at least, she thought, he may yet be happy, and I hope penitent.

It was a mixture of love and gratitude which prompted this wish—sentiments not easily eradicated, when once ingrafted in our better feelings. John eyed them with a displeasure for which he could not account, and saw, in the ancient lady, the bride's-maid Lord Henry had so unwillingly admitted to that distinction.

Lady Jarvis, astounded with her vicinity to so much nobility, drew back to her family, to study its movements to advantage; while Lady Chatterton sighed heavily, as she contemplated the fine figures

of an unmarried Duke and Marquis—and she without a single child to dispose of. The remainder of the party viewed them with curiosity, and listened with interest to what they said.

Two or three young ladies had now joined them, attended by a couple of gentlemen, and their conversation became general. The ladies declined dancing, but appeared willing to throw away an hour in comments on their neighbours.

“ Oh! William!” exclaims one of the young ladies, “ there is your old messmate, Col. Egerton.”

“ Yes! I observe him,” replied her brother, “ I see him;” but, smiling significantly, he continued, “ we are messmates no longer.”

“ He is a sad character,” said the Marquess, with a shrug. “ William, I would advise you to be cautious of his acquaintance.”

“ I thank, you, marquess, replied Lord

William ;” but I believe I understand him thoroughly.”

Jane had manifested strong emotion during these remarks ; while Sir Edward and his wife averted their faces, from a simultaneous feeling of self-reproach—their eyes met—and mutual concessions were contained in the glance they exchanged—yet their feelings were unnoticed by their companions.

Over the fulfilment of her oft repeated forewarnings of neglect of duty to our children, Mrs. Wilson had mourned in sincerity, but she had forgot to triumph.

“ But when are we to see Pendennyss ?” inquired the marquess ; “ I hope he will be here with George. I have a mind to beat up his quarters in Wales this season—what say you, Derwent ?”

“ I intend it, my lord, if I can persuade Lady Harriet to quit the gaieties of Bath so soon—what say *you*, sister, will you be in readiness to attend me so early ?” This

question was asked in an arch tone, and drew the eyes of her friends on the person to whom it was addressed.

“ Oh, yes, I am ready now, Frederick, if you wish,” answered the sister, hastily, and colouring excessively as she spoke.

“ But where is Chatterton? I thought he was here — he had a sister married here last week,” inquired Lord William Stapleton, addressing no one in particular.

A slight movement in their neighbours, excited by this speech, attracted the attention of the party.

“ What a lovely young woman,” whispered the duke to Lady Laura, “ your neighbour is.”

The lady smiled her assent, and as Emily overheard it, she rose with glowing cheeks, and proposed a walk round the room.

Chatterton soon after entered — the young peer had acknowledged to Emily, that deprived of hope as he had been by her firm refusal of his hand, his efforts

had been directed to the suppression of a passion, which could never be successful—but his esteem—his respect—remained in full force. He did not touch at all on the subject of Denbigh, and she supposed that with her, he thought his marriage was a step that required justification.

The Moseleys had commenced their promenade round the room, as the baron came in—he paid his compliments to them as soon as he entered and walked on in their party—the noble visitors followed their example, and the two parties met—Chatterton was delighted to see them—the duke was particularly fond of him, and the agitation of his sister, the lady Harriet Denbigh, seemed to account for the doubts of her brother, as respected her willingness to leave Bath.

A few words of explanation passed; the duke and his friends appeared to urge something on Chatterton—who acted as their ambassador—and the consequence was, an introduction of the two parties to

each other. This was conducted with the ease of the present fashion—it was general, and occurred, as it were incidentally, in the course of the evening.

Both Lady Harriet and Lady Laura Denbigh were particularly attentive to Emily. They took their seats by her, and manifested a preference for her conversation that struck Mrs. Wilson as remarkable. Could it be, that the really attractive manners and beauty of her niece had caught the fancy of these ladies—or was there a deeper seated cause for the desire, both of them evinced, to draw Emily out.

Mrs. Wilson had heard a rumour, that Chatterton was thought attentive to Lady Harriet, and the other was the wife of Denbigh; was it possible the quondam suitors of her niece, had related to their present favourites, the situation they had stood in as regarded Emily—it was odd, to say no more, and the widow dwelt on the innocent countenance of the bride with pity and admiration.

Emily herself was not a little abashed at the notice of her new acquaintances, especially Lady Laura — but as their admiration appeared sincere, as well as their desire to be on terms of intimacy with the Moseleys, they parted, on the whole, mutually pleased.

The conversation several times was embarrassing to the baronet's family, and at moments, distressingly so to their daughters.

At the close of the evening they formed one group at a little distance from the rest of the company, and in a situation to command a view of it.

“Who is that vulgar looking woman,” cried Lady Sarah Stapleton, “seated next to Sir Henry Egerton, brother?”

“No less a personage than my Lady Jarvis,” replied the Marquess, gravely, “and the mother-in-law of Sir Harry and wife to Sir Timo—:” this was said with an air of great importance, and a look of

drollery that showed the marquess a bit of a quiz.

“ Married ?” cried Lord William, “ mercy on the woman, who is Egerton’s wife — he is the greatest latitudinarian amongst the ladies, of any man in England—nothing—no nothing—would tempt me to let such a man marry a sister of mine” — ah, thought Mrs. Wilson, how we may be deceived in character, with the best intentions after all ; in what are the open vices of Egerton, worse than the more hidden ones of Denbigh.

These freely expressed opinions on the character of Sir Henry, were excessively awkward to some of the listeners — to whom they were connected with unpleasant recollections, of duties neglected, and affections thrown away.

Sir Edward Moseley was not disposed to judge his fellow creatures harshly, and it was as much owing to his philanthropy as to his indolence, that he had been so remiss in his attention to the associates of

his daughters—but the veil once removed, and the consequences brought home to him through his child—no man was more alive to the necessity of caution on this important particular; and Sir Edward formed many salutary resolutions for the government of his future conduct, in relation to those, whom an experience nearly fatal in its results, had greatly qualified to take care of themselves.

But to resume our narrative — Lady Laura had maintained with Emily, a conversation that was enlivened by occasional remarks from the rest of the party, in the course of which the nerves as well as the principles of Emily were put to a severe trial.

“ My brother Henry,” said Lady Laura, “ who is a captain in the navy, once had the pleasure of seeing you, Miss Moseley, and in some measure made me acquainted with you before we met.”

“ I dined with Lord Henry at L——, and was much indebted to his polite atten-

tion in an excursion on the water, in common with a large party," replied Emily, simply.

"Oh, I am sure his attentions were exclusive," said the sister; "indeed he told us that nothing but the want of time, prevented his being deeply in love—he had even the audacity to tell Denbigh, it was fortunate for me he had never seen you, or I should have been left to lead apes."

"And I suppose you believe him now," cried Lord William, laughing, as he bowed to Emily.

His sister laughed in her turn, but shook her head, in the confidence of conjugal affection, as she replied—

"It is all conjecture, for the Colonel said he had never the pleasure of meeting Miss Moseley, so I will not boast of what my attractions have done. Miss Moseley," continued Lady Laura, blushing slightly at her inclination to talk of an absent husband—so lately her lover; "I

hope shortly to have the pleasure of presenting Colonel Denbigh to you."

"I think," said Emily, with a hatred of deception, and a severe struggle to suppress her feelings, "Colonel Denbigh was mistaken in saying we never met—he was of material service to me once, and I owe him a debt of gratitude, that I only wish I could properly repay."

Lady Laura listened in surprise; but as Emily paused, she could not delicately, as his wife, remind her farther of the obligation, by asking what the service was—and hesitating a moment, continued—

"Henry quite made you the subject of conversation amongst us: Lord Chatterton too, who visited us for a day, was equally warm in his eulogiums. I really thought they created a curiosity, in the Duke and Pendennyss, to behold their idol."

"A curiosity that would be ill rewarded in its indulgence," said Emily, abashed by the personality of the discourse.

“So says the modesty of Miss Moseley,” observed the Duke of Derwent, in the peculiar tones which distinguished the softer keys of Denbigh’s voice — Emily’s heart beat quick as she heard them — and she was afterwards vexed to remember with how much pleasure she listened to this opinion of the duke; — was it the sentiment?—or was it the voice?—she, however, possessed sufficient self-command to answer, with a dignity that repressed further praises.

“Your Grace is willing to divest me of what little I possess.”

“Pendennyss is a man of a thousand,” continued Lady Laura, with the privilege of a married woman; “I do wish he would join us at Bath — is there no hope, duke?”

“I am afraid not,” replied his Grace, “he keeps himself immured in Wales with his sister — who is as much of a hermit as himself.”

“There was a story of an inamorata in

private, somewhere," observed the Marquess; "and at one time, it was said, he was privately married to her."

"Scandal, my lord," said the Duke, gravely; "the Earl is of unexceptionable morals—and the lady you mean, the widow of Major Fitzgerald—whom you knew—Pendennyss never sees her, and, by accident, was once of very great service to her."

Mrs. Wilson again breathed freely, as she heard the explanation of this charge, and thought—if the Marquess knew all—how differently would he judge Pendennyss, as well as others.

"Oh! I have the highest opinion of Lord Pendennyss," cried the Marquess.

The Moseleys were not sorry, when the usual hour of retirement put an end at once to the conversation and their embarrassment.

CHAPTER XV.

IN the succeeding fortnight the intercourse between the Moseleys and their new acquaintances daily increased. At first it was somewhat embarrassing on the part of Emily, and her beating pulse and changing colour too often showed the alarm of feelings not yet overcome, when any allusions were made to the absent husband of one of the ladies. Still, as her parents encouraged the acquaintance, and her aunt thought the most effectual mode of conquering the remaining weakness of humanity, with respect to Denbigh, was not to shrink from even an interview with him — Emily succeeded in

overcoming her reluctance; and as the high opinion entertained by Lady Laura of her husband was expressed in a thousand artless ways, an interest was created in her by her affections, and the precipice over which, both Mrs. Wilson and her niece feared she was suspended.

Egerton carefully avoided all collision with the Moseleys. Once, indeed, he endeavoured to renew his acquaintance with John, but a haughty repulse drove him instantly from the field.

We know not what representations he thought proper to make to his wife — but she appeared to resent something — as she never approached the residence or persons of her former associates, although in her heart she was most anxious to be on terms of intimacy with their titled friends. Her incorrigible mother was unrestrained by this or any other consideration, and had contrived to fasten on the Dowager and Lady Harriet, a kind of bowing ac-

quaintance, which she amply employed at the rooms.

The Duke sought the society of Emily wherever he could obtain it, and Mrs. Wilson thought her niece admitted his approaches with less reluctance, than that of any other of the gentlemen around her.

At first she was surprised, but a closer observation betrayed the latent cause to her.

Derwent greatly resembled Denbigh in voice and person, although there were distinctions, easily perceptible, on a nearer acquaintance. The Duke had an air of command and hauteur never seen in his cousin. He did not attempt to conceal his admiration of Emily; and, as he ever addressed her in the respectful language and identical voice of Denbigh, the observant widow quickly perceived, that the remains of her attachment to the one, alone induced her niece to listen, with such evident pleasure, to the conversation of the other.

The Duke of Derwent wanted many of the indispensable requisites of a husband, in the eyes of Mrs. Wilson; yet, as she at present thought her niece out of all danger of any new attachment, she admitted the association, without restraint, confiding in the uniform propriety that invariably marked Emily's conduct.

“Your niece will one day be a Duchess, Mrs. Wilson,” whispered Lady Laura — as Derwent and Emily were one morning perusing a new poem; the former — reading a fine extract aloud in a manner so strikingly resembling the air and voice of Denbigh, as to call all the animation of the unconscious Emily, into her expressive face.

Mrs. Wilson sighed, when she reflected on the strength of those feelings, which no effort or principle had hitherto been able wholly to subdue, and answered—

“Not of Derwent, I believe — but how wonderfully the Duke sometimes re-

sembles your husband," she added, thrown off her guard.

Lady Laura was evidently surprised as she answered: "yes — at times, he does; they are brother's children, you know; the voice in all that connection is remarkable. Pendennyss, though a degree more distant in blood, possesses it; and Lady Harriet, you perceive, has the same characteristic; there must formerly have been some syren in the family."

Sir Edward and Lady Moseley saw with the greatest pleasure the attentions of the Duke; for although not slaves to the ambition of wealth and rank, these extrinsic qualifications were certainly no objections in their eyes; and Lady Moseley thought that another attachment to a worthy object, would be the most probable means of expelling the recollection of Denbigh from the mind of her daughter; which consideration had chiefly induced her to cultivate an acquaintance, on other accounts so embarrassing.

The Colonel, however, had communicated to his wife the impossibility of quitting his uncle during the continuance of his indisposition, and the bride was to join him, under the escort of Lord William.

On this occasion the same tenderness distinguished Denbigh, that had appeared so amiable, when exercised towards his dying father. Yet, thought Mrs. Wilson, how insufficient are good feelings to effect, what can only be the result of good principles!

Caroline Harris was frequently present at the parties of pleasure — walks — rides — and dinners, in which the Moseleys joined; and as the Marquess of Eltringham had one day given her some little encouragement, she determined to make a final effort at the peerage, before she condescended to enter into an examination of the qualities of Capt. Jarvis. His mother had persuaded Caroline he was an Apollo, and she had great hopes of seeing him one

day a Lord, as they both had began to lay by a certain sum quarterly, for the purpose of hereafter buying a title : — an ingenious expedient of Jarvis to get into his hands a portion of the allowance of his mother !

Eltringham had a strong propensity to the ridiculous, and, without ever committing himself, frequently drew the lady out, for the amusement of himself and the Duke — who enjoyed, without practising, that species of joke.

The collisions between ill-concealed art, and as ill-concealed irony, had been practised with impunity by the Marquess for a fortnight ; and the lady's imagination began to revel in the delights of her triumph, when a gentleman residing near her father's in the country made Miss Harris a most respectable offer, and, one she would have rejoiced to receive a few days previously, but which, in consequence of hopes created by the following occurrence, she haughtily rejected.

It was at the lodgings of the baronet, that Lady Laura exclaimed one day—

“Marriage is certainly a lottery, and neither Sir Henry nor Lady Egerton appear to have drawn prizes.” Here Jane quitted the room.

“I deny that, sister,” said the marquess. “Any man can select a prize from your sex, if he does but know his own taste.”

“I fear,” observed Mrs. Wilson, “that taste would prove a weak foundation on which to erect the edifice of matrimonial felicity.”

“To what decision would you refer, my dear madam?” inquired Lady Laura.

“Judgment.”

Lady Laura shook her head, doubtingly, as she answered—

“You remind me so much of Lord Pendenyss. He wishes to bring every thing under the subjection of judgment and principle.”

“And is he wrong, Lady Laura?” asked Mrs. Wilson, pleased to find such correct

views existing, in one of whom she thought so highly.

“Not *wrong*, my dear madam, only *impracticable*. What do you think, marquess, of choosing a wife in conformity to your principles, and without consulting your taste.”

Mrs. Wilson shook her head, with a laugh, as she disclaimed any such statement of the proposition; but the marquess, who had a great dislike of didactic discussions, gaily interrupted her, by saying—

“Oh! taste is every thing with me. The woman of my heart against the world—if she suits my fancy, she satisfies my judgment too.”

“And what is this fancy of your lordship’s?” said Mrs. Wilson, willing to gratify his relish for trifling; “what kind of woman do you mean to choose? How tall, for instance?”

“Why, madam,” cried the marquess, rather unprepared for such a catechism, and looking round him, until the outstretched

neck and eager attention of Caroline Harris caught his eye, he added, with an air of great simplicity—"about the height of Miss Harris."

"How old?" said Mrs. Wilson, with a smile.

"Not too young, madam, certainly. I am thirty-two—my wife must be five or six and twenty. Am I old enough, do you think, Derwent?" he added, in a whisper to the Duke.

"Within ten years," was the reply.

Mrs. Wilson continued—

"She must read and write, I suppose?"

"Why, faith," said the marquess, "I am not fond of a bookish sort of woman, and, least of all, of a scholar."

"You had better take Miss Howard," whispered his brother; "she is old enough—never reads—and just the height."

"No, no, William," rejoined the brother, "rather too old, that. Now, I admire a woman who has confidence in herself; one who understands the proprieties

of life, and has, if possible, been at the head of an establishment before she takes charge of mine.”

The delighted Caroline moved about in her chair, and unable to contain herself longer, inquired:—

“ Noble blood, of course, you would require, my lord ?”

“ Why, no ! I rather think the best wives are to be found in a medium. I would wish to elevate my wife myself. A baronet’s daughter, for instance.”

Here Lady Jarvis, who had entered during the dialogue, and caught the topic on which they were engaged, ventured to ask, “ if he thought a simple knight too low ?” The marquess, who did not expect such an attack, was at some loss for an answer ; but recovering himself, answered gravely, under the apprehension of another design on his person, “ he feared that would be forgetting his duty to his descendants.”

Lady Jarvis sighed, as she fell back in

disappointment ; and Miss Harris, turning to the nobleman, in a soft voice, desired him to ring for her carriage. — As he handed her down, she ventured to inquire if his lordship had ever met with such a woman as he had described ?

“ Oh, Miss Harris,” he whispered, as he handed her into the coach, “ how can you ask such a question ? You are very cruel — drive on, coachman.”

“ How cruel, my lord !” said Miss Harris, eagerly. “ Stop, John. — How cruel, my lord ?” and she stretched her neck out of the window, as the marquess, kissing his hand to her, ordered the man to proceed. “ Don’t you hear your lady, sir ?”

Lady Jarvis had followed them down, partly with a view to catch any thing which might be said ; and as the marquess handed her politely into her carriage, she begged “ he would favour Sir Timo—and Sir Henry with a call ;” which, being promised, Eltringham returned to the room.

“When am I to salute a Marchioness of Eltringham?” asked Lady Laura of her brother, on his entrance; “I mean, one according to the new standard set up by your lordship.”

“Whenever Miss Harris can make up her mind to the sacrifice,” replied the brother, very gravely; “Ah me! how very considerate some of your sex are, towards the modesty of ours.”

“I wish you joy with all my heart, my lord marquess,” exclaimed John Moseley; “I was once favoured with the notice of the lady for a week or two, but a viscount saved me from capture.”

“I really think, Moseley,” said the duke; innocently, but speaking with animation, “an intriguing daughter worse than a managing mother.”

John’s gaiety vanished for the moment, as he replied, in a low key, “O yes, much worse.”

Grace evinced deep emotion, until, on stealing a glance at her husband, she saw

a cloud passing over his fine brow; but catching her affectionate smile, his face was lighted into a look of pleasantry as he continued,

“ I would advise caution, my lord; Caroline Harris has the advantage of experience in her trade; and was expert from the first.”

“ John—John—” said Sir Edward, with warmth, “ Sir William is my friend, and his daughter must be respected.”

“ Then, baronet, observed the marquess, “ she possesses one recommendation of which I was ignorant, and I am therefore silent: but should not Sir William teach his daughter to respect herself? I view these husband-hunting ladies as pirates on the ocean of love, and lawful objects for any roving cruiser, like myself, to fire at. At one time I was simple enough to retire as they advanced; but you know, madam,” turning to Mrs. Wilson with a droll look, “ flight only encourages pursuit, so I now give battle in self-defence.”

“ And I hope successfully, my lord,” observed the lady ; “ Miss Harris appears indeed to have grown desperate in her attacks, which were formerly much more masqued than at present. I believe it usually happens, that, when a young woman throws aside the delicacy and feelings which ought to be the characteristics of her sex, she either becomes, in time, cynical and disagreeable to all around her from disappointment ; or, persevering in her efforts, throws off all decorum and reserve.

Jane had retired to her own room, in a mortification of spirit she could ill conceal, during this conversation, and felt a degree of humiliation, which almost drove her to the desperate resolution of hiding herself for ever from the world. That the man she had so fondly enshrined in her heart, should be so notoriously unworthy as to be the subject of unreserved censure in general company, was a reproach to her delicacy — her observation — her judg-

ment; and she wept bitterly over her fallen happiness, with a determination never again to expose herself to a danger against which a prudent regard to the plainest rules of caution would have been a sufficient precaution.

Emily had noticed Jane's departure, and waited anxiously for that of the visitors, to hasten to her room. She knocked two or three times before her sister replied to her request for admittance.

"Jane, my dear Jane," said Emily, soothingly, "will you not admit me?" Jane could not resist any longer the affection of her sister, and the door was opened; but as Emily endeavoured to take her hand, she drew back coldly, and cried—

"I wonder you, who are so happy, will leave the gay scene below for the society of a humbled wretch like me;" and, overcome with the violence of her emotion, she burst into tears.

"Happy!" repeated Emily, in a tone of anguish—"Happy, did you say, Jane?"

— Oh, little do you know my sufferings, or you would never speak so cruelly to me.”

Jane regarded her now weeping sister, for a moment, with commiseration, and her thoughts then recurring to her own case, she continued, with energy,

“ Yes, Emily, happy ; for whatever may have been the reason of Denbigh’s conduct, he is respected ; and if you do, or did love him, he was worthy of it. But, alas ! I threw away my affections on a wretch—a mere impostor—and am miserable for ever !”

“ No, dear Jane,” rejoined Emily, having recovered her self-possession — “ not miserable — nor for ever. You have many — very many sources of happiness yet within your reach — even in this world. I — I do think, even our strongest attachments may be overcome by energy and a sense of duty. And oh ! how I wish I could see you make the effort.” For a moment the voice of the youthful moralist

had failed her, but her anxiety on behalf of her sister overcame her feelings, and she completed the sentence with peculiar earnestness.

“Emily,” pursued Jane, with obstinacy, and yet in tears, “you don’t know what blighted affections are. To endure the scorn of the world, and see the man you once hoped on the point of becoming your husband, married to another, who is showing herself in triumph before you, wherever you go!”

“Hear me, Jane, before you reproach me further, and then judge between us.” Emily paused a moment, to acquire nerve to proceed, and then related to her astonished sister, the history of her own disappointments. She did not affect to conceal her attachment to Denbigh. With glowing cheeks, she acknowledged that she found a necessity for all her efforts to subdue her rebellious feelings; and as she recounted his conduct to Mrs. Fitzgerald, she concluded by saying: “But, Jane, I

can see enough to call forth my gratitude: and although, with yourself, I feel at this moment as if my affections were sealed for ever, I wish to make no hasty resolutions, or act in any manner as if I were unworthy of the lot Providence has assigned me."

"Unworthy? no!—you have no reasons for self-reproach. If Mr. Denbigh has had the art to conceal his crimes from you, he also concealed them from the rest of the world, and has married a woman of rank and character. But how differently are we situated! Emily—I—have no such consolation."

"You have the consolation, my sister, of knowing there is an interest made for you where we shall require it most, and it is there I endeavour to seek my support," said Emily, in a low and humble tone. "A review of our own errors takes away the keenness of our perception of the wrongs done us, and by placing us in charity with the rest of the world, disposes us

to enjoy, calmly, the blessings within our reach. Besides, Jane, we have parents, whose happiness is dependent on that of their children, and we should — we *must*, for their sakes, overcome those feelings which disqualify us for our common duties.”

“ Ah !” cried Jane, “ how can I appear before the world, while I know the eyes of all are upon me, inquisitive to discover how I bear my disappointments? But you, Emily, are unsuspected. It is easy for you to affect a gaiety you do not feel.”

“ I neither affect nor feel any gaiety,” answered her sister, mildly; “ But are there not the eyes of one upon us, of infinitely greater power to punish or reward, than exists in the opinions of the world? Have we no duties? For what purposes are our wealth—our knowledge—our time given us, but to improve our eternal welfare, and that of those around us? Come, then, my sister, we have both been de-

ceived — let us endeavour not to be culpable.”

“ I wish, from my soul, we could leave Bath,” cried Jane ; “ the place — the people are hateful to me.”

“ Jane,” said Emily, “ rather say you hate their vices, and wish for their amendment. But do not indiscriminately condemn a whole community, for the wrongs you have sustained from one of its members.”

Jane allowed herself to be consoled, though by no means convinced, as to her great error ; and they both found a sympathetic relief from having unburthened their hearts to each other, which in future brought them more nearly together, and was of mutual assistance in supporting them, amidst the promiscuous circles in which they were obliged to mix.

With all her fortitude and principle, one of the last things Emily would have desired was, an interview with Denbigh ; and

she was happily relieved from the present danger of such a circumstance by the departure of Lady Laura and her brother to the residence of the colonel's sick uncle.

Both Mrs. Wilson and Emily suspected that a dread of meeting them had prevented his intended journey to Bath, and neither were sorry to perceive, what they considered as latent signs of grace, of which Egerton had appeared to be intirely divested. "He may yet see his errors, and make a kind and affectionate husband," thought Emily; and then, as the image of Denbigh rose in her imagination, surrounded with the domestic virtues, she roused herself from the dangerous reflection, to the exercise of duties in which she found a refuge from wishes that her judgment must condemn.

END OF VOL. II.

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