Persuasion  
  
This friend, and Sir Walter, did not marry,  
whatever might have been anticipated on that  
head by their acquaintance. Thirteen years  
had passed away since Lady Elliot’s death,  
and they were still near neighbours and inti-  
mate friends, and one remained a widower,  
the other a widow.  
  
That Lady Russell, of steady age and  
character, and extremely well provided for,  
should have no thought of a second marriage,  
needs no apology to the public, which is rather  
apt to be unreasonably discontented when a  
woman does marry again, than when she does  
not; but Sir Walter’s continuing in singleness  
requires explanation. Be it known then, that Sir  
Walter, like a good father, (having met with one  
or two private disappointments in very unrea-  
sonable applications), prided himself on  
remaining single for his dear daughters’ sake.  
For one daughter, his eldest, he would really  
have given up any thing, which he had not  
been very much tempted to do. Elizabeth had  
succeeded, at sixteen, to all that was possible,  
of her mother’s rights and consequence; and  
being very handsome, and very like himself,  
her influence had always been great, and they  
had gone on together most happily. His two  
other children were of very inferior value. Mary  
had acquired a little artificial importance, by  
becoming Mrs Charles Musgrove; but Anne,  
with an elegance of mind and sweetness of  
character, which must have placed her high  
with any people of real understanding, was