Frontispiece.

A Walker del. et sculp.

Millenium Hall.

A DESCRIPTION of

MILLENIUM HALL,

AND THE

COUNTRY ADJACENT:

Together with the

CHARACTERS of the INHABITANTS,

And such Historical

ANECDOTES and REFLECTIONS,

AS

May excite in the READER proper Sentiments of Humanity, and lead the Mind to the Love of VIRTUE.

BY

A GENTLEMAN on his Travels.

LONDON:

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M DCC LXII.

ADVERTISEMENT.

THE Publiſher of this Volume is under ſome Difficulties; not from any Apprehenſions of loſing by the Book; for great part of the Impreſſion is beſpoke; his Anxiety ariſes from the Author's addreſſing the Volume to him, and making him a Compliment in the Beginning; which, as he is conſcious he does not deſerve, he hopes the Reader will impute to its proper Cauſe, namely, to the Warmth of Friendſhip, which is too apt to exalt the Object it eſteems. The Gentleman who wrote this Volume, is of too much Conſequence to be obſtinately contradicted; and as the Bookſeller could not prevail on him to leave out the Compliment above-mentioned, he hopes his publiſhing of it will not be imputed to any other Motive, but that of his Readineſs to obey.

A DESCRIPTION of

MILLENIUM HALL.

DEAR SIR,

THOUGH, when I left London, I promised to write to you as soon as I had reached my northern retreat, yet, I believe, you little expected instead of a letter to receive a volume; but I should not stand excused to myself, were I to fail communicating to you the pleasure I received in my road hither, from the sight of a society, whose acquaintance I owe to one of those fortunate, though in appearance trifling, accidents, from which sometimes arise the most pleasing circumstances of our lives; for as such I must ever esteem the acquaintance of that amiable family, who have fixed their abode at a place which I shall nominate Millenium Hall, as the best adapted to the lives of the inhabitants, and to avoid giving the real name, fearing to offend that modesty which has induced them to conceal their virtues in retirement.

In giving you a very circumstantial account of this society, I confess I have a view beyond the pleasure, which a mind like yours must receive from the contemplation of so much virtue. Your constant endeavours have been to inculcate the best principles into youthful minds, the only probable means of mending mankind; for the foundation of most of our virtues, or our vices, are laid in that season of life when we are most susceptible of impression, and when on our minds, as on a sheet of white

 paper,

paper, any characters may be engraven; these laudable endeavours, by which we may reasonably expect the rising generation will be greatly improved, render particularly due to you, any examples which may teach those virtues that are not easily learnt by precept, and shew the facility of what, in meer speculation, might appear surrounded with a discouraging impracticability: you are the best judge, whether, by being made public, they may be conducive to your great end of benefiting the world. I therefore submit the future fate of the following sheets entirely to you, and shall not think any prefatory apology for the publication at all requisite; for though a man who supposes his own life and actions deserve universal notice, or can be of general use, may be liable to the imputation of vanity, yet, as I have no other share than that of a spectator, and auditor, in what I purpose to relate, I presume no apology can be required; for my vanity must rather be mortified than flattered in the description of such virtues as will continually accuse me of my own deficiencies, and lead me to make an humiliating comparison between these excellent ladies and myself.

You may remember, Sir, that when I took leave of you with a design of retiring to my native county, there to enjoy the plenty and leisure for which a few years labour had furnished me with the necessary requisites, I was advised by an eminent physician to make a very extensive tour through the western part of this kingdom, in order, by frequent change of air, and continued exercise, to cure the ill effects of my long abode in the hot and unwholsome climate of Jamaica, where, while I increased my fortune, I gradually impaired my constitution; and though one, who like me, has dedicated all his application to mercantile gain,

will

will not allow that he has given up the ſubſtance for the ſhadow, yet perhaps it would be difficult to deny, that I thus ſacrificed the greater good in purſuit of the leſs.

The eargerneſs with which I longed to fix in my wiſhed for retirement, made me imagine, that when I had once reached it, even the purſuit of health would be an inſufficient inducement to determine me to leave my retreat, I therefore choſe to make the adviſed tour before I went into the north. As the pleaſure ariſing from a variety of beautiful objects is but half enjoyed, when we have no one to ſhare it with us, I accepted the offer Mr. Lamont (the ſon of my old friend) made of accompanying me in my journey. As this young gentleman has not the good fortune to be known to you, it may not be amiſs, as will appear in the ſequel, to let you into his character.

Mr. Lamont is a young man of about twenty-five years of age, of an agreeable perſon, and lively underſtanding; both perhaps have concurred to render him a coxcomb. The vivacity of his parts ſoon gained him ſuch a degree of encouragement as excited his vanity, and raiſed in him an high opinion of himſelf. A very generous father enabled him to partake of every faſhionable amuſement, and the natural bent of his mind ſoon led him into all the diſſipation which the gay world affords. Uſeful and improving ſtudies were laid aſide for ſuch deſultory reading, as he found moſt proper to furniſh him with topics for converſation, in the idle ſocieties he frequented. Thus that vivacity, which, properly qualified, might have become true wit, degenerated into pertneſs and impertinence. A conſciouſneſs of an underſtanding, which he never exerted, rendered him conceited; thoſe talents which nature kindly beſtowed upon him, by

being perverted, gave rise to his greatest faults. His reasoning faculty, by a partial and superficial use, led him to infidelity, and the desire of being thought superiorly distinguishing, established him an infidel. Fashion, not reason, has been the guide of all his thoughts and actions. But with these faults he is good-natured, and not unentertaining, especially in a tête à tête, where he does not desire to shine, and therefore his vanity lies dormant, and suffers the best qualifications of his mind to break forth. This induced me to accept of him as a fellow traveller.

We proceeded on our journey as far as Cornwall, without meeting with any other than the usual incidents of the road, till one afternoon, when our chaise broke down. The worst circumstance attending this accident was our being several miles from a town, and so ignorant of the country, that we knew not whether there was any village within a moderate distance. We sent the postilion on my man's horse to the next town to fetch a smith, and leaving my servant to guard the chaise, Mr. Lamont and I walked towards an avenue of oaks, which we observed at a small distance. The thick shade they afforded us, the fragrance wafted from the woodbines with which they were encircled, was so delightful, and the beauty of the grounds so very attracting, that we strolled on, desirous of approaching the house to which this avenue led. It is a mile and a half in length, but the eye is so charmed with the remarkable verdure and neatness of the fields, with the beauty of the flowers which are planted all round them, and seem to mix with the quickset hedges, that time steals away insensibly.

When we had walked about half a mile in a scene truly pastoral, we began to think ourselves in the days of Theocritus, so sweetly did the sound of a flute come wafted through the air. Never did

did paſtoral ſwain make ſweeter melody on his oaten reed. Our ears now afforded us freſh attraction, and with quicker ſteps we proceeded, till we came within ſight of the muſician that had charmed us. Our pleaſure was not a little heightened, to ſee, as the ſcene promiſed, in reality a ſhepherd, watching a large flock of ſheep. We continued motionleſs, liſtening to his muſic, till a lamb ſtraying from its fold demanded his care, and he laid aſide his inſtrument, to guide home the little wanderer.

Curioſity now prompted us to walk on; the nearer we came to the houſe, the greater we found the profuſion of flowers which ornamented every field. Some had no other defence than hedges of roſe trees and ſweet-briars, ſo artfully planted, that they made a very thick hedge, while at the lower part, pinks, jonquills, hyacinths, and various other flowers, ſeemed to grow under their protection. Primroſes, violets, lillies of the valley, and polyanthuſes enriched ſuch ſhady ſpots, as, for want of ſun, were not well calculated for the production of other flowers. The mixture of perfumes which exhaled from this profuſion compoſed the higheſt fragrance, and ſometimes the different ſcents regaled the ſenſes alternately, and filled us with reflections on the infinite variety of nature.

When we were within about a quarter of a mile of the houſe, the ſcene became ſtill more animated. On one ſide was the greateſt variety of cattle, the moſt beautiful of their kinds, grazing in fields whoſe verdure equalled that of the fineſt turf, nor were they deſtitute of their ornaments, only the woodbines and jeſſamine, and ſuch flowers, as might have tempted the inhabitants of theſe paſtures to crop them, were defended with roſes and ſweet-briars, whoſe thorns preſerved them from all attacks.

Though Lamont had hitherto been little accuſtomed to admire nature, yet was he much captivated with this ſcene, and with his uſual levity cried out, 'If Nebuchadnezzar had ſuch paſtures as theſe to 'range in, his ſeven years expulſion from human 'ſociety might not be the leaſt agreeable part of his 'life.' My attention was too much engaged to criticize the light turn of Lamont's mind, nor did his thoughts continue long on the ſame ſubject, for our obſervation was ſoon called off, by a company of hay-makers in the fields on the other ſide of the avenue. The cleanlineſs and neatneſs of the young women thus employed, rendered them a more pleaſing ſubject for Lamont's contemplation than any thing we had yet ſeen; in them we beheld rural ſimplicity, without any of thoſe marks of poverty and booriſh ruſticity, which would have ſpoilt the paſtoral air of the ſcene around us; but not even the happy amiable innocence, which their figures and countenances expreſſed, gave me ſo much ſatisfaction as the ſight of the number of children, who were all exerting the utmoſt of their ſtrength, with an air of delighted emulation between themſelves, to contribute their ſhare to the general undertaking. Their eyes ſparkled with that ſpirit which health and activity can only give, and their roſy cheeks ſhewed the benefits of youthful labour.

Curioſity is one of thoſe inſatiable paſſions that grow by gratification; it ſtill prompted us to proceed, not unſatisfied with what we had ſeen, but deſirous to ſee ſtill more of this earthly paradiſe. We approached the houſe, wherein, as it was the only human habitation in view, we imagined muſt reſide the Primum Mobile of all we had yet beheld. We were admiring the magnificence of the ancient ſtructure, and inclined to believe it the abode of the genius which preſided over this fairy land, when

when we were ſurprized by a ſtorm, which had been for ſome time gathering over our heads, though our thoughts had been too agreeably engaged to pay much attention to it. We took ſhelter under the thick ſhade of a large oak, but the violence of the thunder and lightening made our ſituation rather uncomfortable. All thoſe whom we had a little before ſeen ſo buſy, left their work on hearing the firſt clap of thunder, and ran with the utmoſt ſpeed to Millenium Hall, ſo I ſhall call the noble manſion of which I am ſpeaking, as to an aſſured aſylum againſt every evil.

Some of theſe perſons, I imagine, perceived us; for immediately after they entered, came out a woman, who, by her air and manner of addreſs, we gueſſed to be the houſe-keeper, and deſired us to walk into the houſe till the ſtorm was over. We made ſome difficulties about taking that liberty, but ſhe ſtill perſiſting in her invitation, had my curioſity to ſee the inhabitants of this hoſpitable manſion been leſs, I could not have refuſed to comply, as by prolonging theſe ceremonious altercations I was detaining her in the ſtorm, we therefore agreed to follow her.

If we had been inclined before to fancy ourſelves on enchanted ground, when after being led through a large hall, we were introduced to the ladies, who knew nothing of what had paſſed, I could ſcarcely forbear believing myſelf in the Attick ſchool. The room where they ſat was about forty-five feet long, of a proportionable breadth, with three windows on one ſide, which looked into a garden, and a large bow at the upper end. Over againſt the windows were three large book-caſes, upon the top of the middle one ſtood an orrery, and a globe on each of the others. In the bow ſat two ladies reading, with pen, ink, and paper on a table before them, at

which was a young girl tranſlating out of French. At the lower end of the room was a lady painting, with exquiſite art indeed, a beautiful Madona; near her another, drawing a landſcape out of her own imagination; a third, carving a picture-frame in wood, in the fineſt manner; a fourth, engraving; and a young girl reading aloud to them; the diſtance from the ladies in the bow-window being ſuch, that they could receive no diſturbance from her. At the next window were placed a group of girls, from the age of ten years old to fourteen. Of theſe, one was drawing figures, another a landſcape, a third a perſpective view, a fourth engraving, a fifth carving, a ſixth turning in wood, a ſeventh writing, an eighth cutting out linnen, another making a gown, and by them an empty chair and a tent, with embroidery, finely fancied, before it, which we afterwards found had been left by a young girl who was gone to practiſe on the harpſichord.

As ſoon as we entered they all roſe up, and the houſe-keeper introduced us, by ſaying, ſhe ſaw us ſtanding under a tree to avoid the ſtorm, and ſo had deſired us to walk in. The ladies received us with the greateſt politeneſs, and expreſſed concern, that when their houſe was ſo near, we ſhould have recourſe to ſo inſufficient a ſhelter. Our ſurprize at the ſight of ſo uncommon a ſociety, occaſioned our making but an awkward return to their obliging reception; nor when we obſerved how many arts we had interrupted, could we avoid being aſhamed that we had then intruded upon them.

But before I proceed farther, I ſhall endeavour to give you ſome idea of the perſons of the ladies, whoſe minds I ſhall afterwards beſt deſcribe by their actions. The two who ſat in the bow window were called Mrs. Maynard and Mrs. Selvyn. Mrs. Maynard is between forty and fifty years of age, a little

little woman, well made, with a lively and genteel air, her hair black, and her eyes of the ſame colour, bright and piercing, her features good, and complexion agreeable, though brown. Her countenance expreſſes all the vivacity of youth, tempered with a ſerenity which becomes her age.

Mrs. Selvyn can ſcarcely be called tall, though ſhe approaches that ſtandard. Her features are too irregular to be handſome, but there is a ſenſibility and delicacy in her countenance which render her extremely engaging; and her perſon is elegant.

Mrs. Mancel, whom we had diſturbed from her painting, is tall and finely formed, has great elegance of figure, and is graceful in every motion. Her hair is of a fine brown, her eyes blue, with all that ſenſible ſweetneſs which is peculiar to that colour. In ſhort, ſhe excels in every beauty but the bloom, which is ſo ſoon faded, and ſo impoſſible to be imitated by the utmoſt efforts of art, nor has ſhe ſuffered any farther by years than the loſs of that radiance, which renders beauty rather more reſplendant than more pleaſing.

Mrs. Trentham, who was carving by her, was the talleſt of the company, and in dignity of air particularly excels, but her features and complexion have been ſo injured by the ſmall pox, that one can but juſt gueſs they were once uncommonly fine; a ſweetneſs of countenance, and a very ſenſible look, indeed, ſtill remain, and have baffled all the moſt cruel ravages of that diſtemper.

Lady Mary Jones, whom we found engraving, ſeems to have been rather pleaſing than beautiful. She is thin and pale, but a pair of the fineſt black eyes I ever ſaw, animate, to a great degree, a countenance, which ſickneſs has done its utmoſt to render languid, but has, perhaps, only made more delicate and amiable. Her perſon is exquiſitely

genteel, and her voice, in common ſpeech, enchantingly melodious.

Mrs. Morgan, the lady who was drawing, appears to be upwards of fifty, tall, rather plump, and extremely majeſtic, an air of dignity diſtinguiſhes her perſon, and every virtue is engraven in indelible characters on her countenance. There is a benignity in every look, which renders the decline of life, if poſſible, more amiable that the bloom of youth. One would almoſt think nature had formed her for a common parent, ſuch univerſal and tender benevolence beams from every glance ſhe caſts around her.

The dreſs of the ladies was thus far uniform, the ſame neatneſs, the ſame ſimplicity and cleanlineſs appeared in each, and they were all in luteſtring night-gowns, though of different colours, nor was there any thing unfaſhionable in their appearance, except that they were free from any trumpery ornaments. The girls were all clothed in camblet coats, but not uniform in colour, their linnen extremely white and clean though courſe. Some of them were pretty, and none had any defect in perſon, to take off from that general pleaſingneſs which attends youth and innocence.

They had been taught ſuch an habit of attention, that they ſeemed not at all diſturbed by our converſation, which was of that general kind, as might naturally be expected on ſuch an occaſion, though ſupported by the ladies with more ſenſible vivacity and politeneſs, than is uſual, where part of the company are ſuch total ſtrangers to the reſt; till by chance one of the ladies called Mrs. Maynard by her name.

From the moment I ſaw her, I thought her face not unknown to me, but could not recollect where, or when I had been acquainted with her, but her

name

name brought to my recollection, that ſhe was not only an old acquaintance, but a near relation. I obſerved, that ſhe had looked on me with particular attention, and I begged her to give me leave to aſk her, of what family of Maynards ſhe was? her anſwer confirmed my ſuppoſition, and as ſhe told me, that ſhe believed ſhe had ſome remembrance of my face, I ſoon made her recollect our affinity and former intimacy, though my twenty years abode in Jamaica, the alteration the climate had wrought in me, and time had made in us both, had almoſt effaced us from each other's memory.

There is great pleaſure in renewing the acquaintance of our youth; a thouſand pleaſing ideas accompany it; many mirthful ſcenes and juvenile amuſements return to the remembrance, and make us, as it were, live over again what is generally the moſt pleaſing part of life. Mrs. Maynard ſeemed no leſs ſenſible of the ſatisfaction ariſing from this train of thoughts than myſelf, and the reſt of the company were ſo indulgently good-natured, as in appearance, to ſhare them with us. The tea table by no means interrupted our converſation, and I believe I ſhould have forgot that our journey was not at an end, if a ſervant had not brought in word, that my man, who had obſerved our motions, was come to inform us, that our chaiſe could not be repaired that night.

The ladies immediately declared, that though their equipage was in order, they would not ſuffer it to put an end to a pleaſure they owed to the accident which had happened to ours, and inſiſted we ſhould give them our company till the ſmith had made all neceſſary reparations, adding, that I could not be obſtinately bent on depriving Mrs. Maynard ſo ſoon of the ſatisfaction ſhe received, from having recovered ſo long loſt a relation. I was little in-

clined to reject this invitation: pleasure was the chief design of my journey, and I saw not how I could receive more, than by remaining in a family so extraordinary, and so perfectly agreeable. When both parties are well agreed, the necessary ceremonies previous to a compliance are soon over, and it was settled that we should not think of departing before the next day at soonest.

The continuance of the rain rendered it impossible to stir out of the house; my cousin, who seemed to think variety necessary to amuse, asked if we loved music? which being answered in the affirmative, she begged the other ladies to entertain us with one of their family concerts, and we joining in the petition, proper orders were given, and we adjourned into another room, which was well furnished with musical instruments. Over the door was a beautiful saint Cecilia, painted in crayons by Mrs. Mancel, and a fine piece of carved work over the chimney, done by Mrs. Trentham, which was a very artificial representation of every sort of musical instruments.

While we were admiring these performances, the company took their respective places. Mrs. Mancel seated herself at the harpsichord, Lady Mary Jones played on the arch lute, Mrs. Morgan on the organ, Mrs. Selvyn and Mrs. Trentham each on the six-stringed bass; the shepherd who had charmed us in the field was there with his German flute; a venerable looking man, who is their steward, played on the violincello, a lame youth on the French horn, another, who seemed very near blind, on the bassoon, and two on the fiddle. My cousin had no share in the performance except singing agreeably, wherein she was joined by some of the ladies, and where the music could bear it, by ten of the young girls, with two or three

three others whom we had not ſeen, and whoſe voices and manner were equally pleaſing. They performed ſeveral of the fineſt pieces of the Meſſiah and Judas Maccabeus, with exquiſite taſte, and the moſt exact time. There was a ſufficient number of performers to give the choruſes all their pomp and fullneſs, and the ſongs were ſung in a manner ſo touching and pathètic, as could be equalled by none, whoſe hearts were not as much affected by the words, as their ſenſes were by the muſic. The ſight of ſo many little innocents joining in the moſt ſublime harmony, made me almoſt think myſelf already amongſt the heavenly choir, and it was a great mortification to me to be brought back to this ſenſual world, by ſo groſs an attraction as a call to ſupper, which put an end to our concert, and carried us to another room, where we found a repaſt more elegant than expenſive.

The evening certainly is the moſt ſocial part of the day, without any of thoſe exceſſes which ſo often turn it into ſenſeleſs revelry. The converſation after ſupper was particularly animated, and left us ſtill more charmed with the ſociety into which chance had introduced us; the ſprightlineſs of their wit, the juſtneſs of their reflexions, the dignity which accompanied their vivacity, plainly evinced with how much greater ſtrength the mind can exert itſelf in a regular and rational way of life, than in a courſe of diſſipation. At this houſe every change came too ſoon, time ſeemed to wear a double portion of wings, eleven o'clock ſtruck, and the ladies ordered a ſervant to ſhew us our rooms, themſelves retiring to theirs.

It was impoſſible for Lamont and I to part till we had ſpent an hour in talking over this amiable family, with whom he could not help being much delighted, though he obſerved, 'they were very

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'deficient in the bon ton, there was too much 'solidity in all they said, they would trifle with 'trifles indeed, but had not the art of treating more 'weighty subjects with the same lightness, which 'gave them an air of rusticity; and he did not 'doubt, but on a more intimate acquaintance we 'should find their manners much rusticated, and 'their heads filled with antiquated notions, by 'having lived so long out of the great world.'

I rose the next morning very early, desirous to make the day, which I purposed for the last of my abode in this mansion, as long as I could. I went directly into the garden, which, by what I saw from the house, was extremely pretty. As I passed by the windows of the saloon, I perceived the ladies and their little pupils were earlier risers than myself, for they were all at their various employments. I first went into the gayest flower garden I ever beheld. The rainbow exhibits not half the variety of tints, and they are so artfully mingled, and ranged to make such a harmony of colours, as taught me how much the most beautiful objects may be improved by a judicious disposition of them. Beyond these beds of flowers rises a shrubbery, where every thing sweet and pleasing is collected. As these ladies have no taste but what is directed by good sense, nothing found a place here from being only uncommon, for they think few things are very rare but because they are little desirable; and indeed it is plain they are free from that littleness of mind, which makes people value a thing the more for its being possessed by no one but themselves. Behind the shrubbery is a little wood, which affords a gloom, rendered more agreable by its contrast with the dazzling beauty of that part of the garden that leads to it. In the high pale which encloses this wood I observed a little door; curio-

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ſity induced me to paſs through it; I found it opened on a row of the neateſt cottages I ever ſaw, which the wood had concealed from my view. They were new and uniform, and therefore I imagined all dedicated to the ſame purpoſe. Seeing a very old woman ſpinning at one of the doors, I accoſted her, by admiring the neatneſs of her habitation.

'Ay, indeed, ſaid ſhe, it is a moſt comfortable 'place, God bleſs the good ladies! I and my neigh-'bours are as happy as princeſſes, we have every 'thing we want and wiſh, and who can ſay more?'

'Very few ſo much, anſwered I, 'but pray what 'ſhare have the ladies in procuring the happineſs 'you ſeem ſo ſenſible of.'

'Why Sir, continued the old woman, it is 'all owing to them. I was almoſt ſtarved when 'they put me into this houſe, and no ſhame of 'mine, for ſo were my neighbours too; perhaps 'we were not ſo pains-taking as we might have 'been; but that was not our faults, you know, as 'we had not things to work with, nor any body 'to ſet us to work, poor ſolks cannot know every 'thing as theſe good ladies do; we were half dead 'for want of victuals, and then people have not 'courage to ſet about any thing. Nay, all the 'pariſh were ſo when they came into it, young 'and old, there was not much to chuſe, few of 'us had rags to cover us, or a morſel of bread 'to eat, except the two 'Squires; they indeed grew 'rich, becauſe they had our work, and paid us not 'enough to keep life and ſoul together; they live 'above a mile off, ſo perhaps they did not know 'how poor we were, I muſt ſay that for them; 'the ladies tell me I ought not to ſpeak againſt 'them, for every one has faults, only we ſee other 'peoples, and are blind to our own; and certainly

'it

'it is true enough, for they are very wise ladies
'as well as good, and must know such things.'

As my new acquaintance seemed as loquacious as her age promised, I hoped for full satisfaction, and asked her, 'How she and her neighbours employed 'themselves?' 'Not all alike, replied the good 'woman, I will tell you, all about it. There are 'twelve of us that live here. We have every one 'a house of two rooms, as you may see, beside 'other conveniences, and each a little garden, but 'though we are separate, we agree as well, per-'haps better, than if we lived together, and all 'help one another. Now, there is neighbour 'Susan, and neighbour Rachel; Susan is lame, 'so she spins cloaths for Rachel; and Rachel 'cleans Susan's house, and does such things for her 'as she cannot do for herself. The ladies settled 'all these matters at first, and told us, that as they, 'to please God, assisted us, we must in order to 'please him serve others; and that to make us happy 'they would put us in a way, poor as we are, to 'do good to many. Thus neighbour Jane, who 'poor woman is almost stone deaf, they thought 'would have a melancholy life if she was to be al-'ways spinning and knitting, seeing other people 'around her talking, and not be able to hear a word 'they said, so the ladies busy her in making broths 'and caudles, and such things, for all the sick poor 'in this and the next parish, and two of us are 'fixed upon to carry what they have made to those 'that want them; to visit them often, and spend 'more or less time with them every day accord-'ing as they have, or have not relations to take 'care of them; for though the ladies always hire 'nurses for those who are very ill, yet they will 'not trust quite to them, but make us overlook

'them,

'them, so that in a sickly time we shall be all day 'going from one to another.'

'But, said I, there are I perceive many children amongst you, how happens that? your 'ages shew they are not your own.'

'Oh! as for that, replied my intelligencer, I 'will tell you how that is. You must know these 'good ladies, heaven preserve them! take every 'child after the fifth of every poor person, as 'soon as it can walk, till when they pay the 'mother for nursing it; these children they send 'to us to keep out of harm, and as soon as they 'can hold a knitting-needle to teach them to knit, 'and to spin, as much as they can be taught before 'they are four or five years old, when they are re-'moved into one of the schools. They are pretty 'company for us, and make us mothers again, as it 'were, in our old age; then the childrens rela-'tions are all so fond of us for our care of them, 'that it makes us a power of friends, which you 'know is very pleasant, though we want nothing 'from them but their good wills.'

Here I interrupted her by observing, that it must take up a great deal of time, and stop their work, consequently lessen their profits.

'There is nothing in that, continued the good 'woman, the ladies steward sends us in all we 'want in the way of meat, drink, and firing; 'and our spinning we carry to the ladies; they 'employ a poor old weaver, who before they came 'broke for want of work, to weave it for us, and 'when there is not enough they put more to it, so 'we are sure to have our cloathing; if we are not 'idle that is all they desire, except that we should 'be cleanly too. There never passes a day that one 'or other of the ladies does not come and look 'all over our houses, which they tell us, and cer-

'tainly

'tainly with truth, for it is a great deal of trouble to 'them, is all for our good, for that we cannot be 'healthy if we are not clean and neat. Then 'every ſaint's day, and every Sunday after church, 'we all go down to the hall, and the ladies read 'prayers, and a ſermon to us, and their own family; 'nor do they ever come here without giving us 'ſome good advice. We uſed to quarrel, to be 'ſure, ſometimes when we firſt came to theſe 'houſes, but the ladies condeſcended to make it 'up amongſt us, and ſhewed us ſo kindly how 'much it was our duty to agree together, and to 'forgive every body their faults, or elſe we could not 'hope to be forgiven by God, againſt whom we 'ſo often ſinned, that now we love one another 'like ſiſters, or indeed better, for I often ſee ſuch 'quarrel. Beſide, they have taught us that we are 'generally in fault ourſelves; and we find now 'that we take care not to be perverſe, our neigh-'bours are ſeldom in the wrong, and when they 'are, we bear with it in hopes they will bear with 'us when we are as much to blame, which we 'may be ſure enough will happen, let us try ever 'ſo much to the contrary. Then the ladies ſeem 'ſo pleaſed when we do any kindneſs to one ano-'ther, as to be ſure is a great encouragement; and 'if any of us are ſick they are ſo careful and ſo 'good, that it would be a ſhame if we did not do 'all we can for one another, who have been always 'neighbours and acquaintance, when ſuch great 'ladies, who never knew us, as I may ſay, but 'to make us happy, and have no reaſon to take 'care of us but that we are poor, are ſo kind and 'condeſcending to us.'

I was ſo pleaſed with the good effect which the charity of her benefactors had on the mind, as well as the ſituation of this old woman, whoſe neighbours by

by her own account were equally benefitted by the bleſſings they received, that I ſhould have ſtayed longer with her, if a bell had not rang at Millenium Hall, which ſhe informed me was a ſummons to breakfaſt. I obeyed its call, and after thanking her for her converſation, returned with a heart warmed and enlarged, to the amiable ſociety. My mind was ſo filled with exalted reflections on their virtues, that I was leſs attentive to the charms of inanimate nature than when I firſt paſſed through the gardens.

After breakfaſt the ladies propoſed a walk, and as they had ſeen the courſe I took when I firſt went out, they led us a contrary way, leſt, they ſaid, I ſhould be tired with the repetition of the ſame ſcene. I told them with great truth, that 'what I had be-held could never weary, for virtue is a ſubject we muſt ever contemplate with freſh delight, and as ſuch examples could not fail of improving every witneſs of them, the pleaſure of reflection would encreaſe, as one daily grew more capable of enjoying it, by cultivating kindred ſenſations.' By ſome more explicit hints they found out to what I alluded, and thereby knew where I had been, but turning the converſation to preſent objects, they conducted us to a very fine wood, which is laid out with ſo much taſte, that Lamont obſerved the artiſt's hand was never more diſtinguiſhable, and perceived in various ſpots the direction of the perſon at preſent moſt famous for that ſort of improvement.

The ladies ſmiled, and one of them anſwered, 'He did their wood great honour, in thinking art had lent her aſſiſtance to nature, but that there was little in that place for which they were not ſolely obliged to the latter.' Mrs. Trentham interrupted her who was ſpeaking, and told us, that, 'As ſhe

'had

'had no ſhare in the improvements which had been 'made, ſhe might with the better grace aſſure Mr. 'Lamont, that lady Mary Jones, Mrs. Mancel, and 'Mrs. Morgan, were the only perſons who had laid 'out that wood, and the commoneſt labourers in 'the country had executed their orders.' Lamont was much ſurprized at this piece of information, and though he would have thought it ſtill more exquiſitely beautiful had it been the deſign of the perſon he imagined, yet truth is ſo powerful, that he could not ſuppreſs his admiration and ſurprize. Every cut in it is terminated by ſome noble object. In ſeveral places are ſeats formed with ſuch ruſtic ſimplicity, as have more real grandeur in them, than can be found in the moſt expenſive buildings. On an eminence, 'boſomed high in tufted trees,' is a temple dedicated to ſolitude. The ſtructure is an exquiſite piece of architecture, the proſpect from it noble and extenſive, and the windows ſo placed, that one ſees no houſe but at ſo conſiderable a diſtance, as not to take off from that ſolitary air, which is perfectly agreable to a temple declaredly dedicated to ſolitude. The moſt beautiful object in the view is a very large river, in reality an arm of the ſea, little more than a quarter of a mile diſtant from the building; about three miles beyond it lies the ſea, on which the ſun then ſhone, and made it dazzlingly bright. In the temple is a picture of Contemplation, another of Silence, two of various birds and animals, and a couple of moon-light pieces, the workmanſhip of the ladies.

Cloſe by the temple runs a gentle murmuring rivulet, which flows in meanders through the reſt of the wood, ſometimes concealed from view, and then appearing at the next turning of the walk. The wood is well peopled with pheaſants, wild turkies, ſquirrels and hares, who live ſo unmoleſted, that they

they ſeem to have forgot all fear, and rather to welcome than fly thoſe who come amongſt them. Man never appears there as a mercileſs deſtroyer; but the preſerver, inſtead of the tyrant of the inferior part of the creation. While they continue in that wood, none but natural evil can approach them, and from that they are defended as much as poſſible. We there 'walked joint tenant of the ſhade,' with the animal race; and a perfect equality in nature's bounty ſeems enjoyed by the whole creation. One could ſcarcely forbear thinking thoſe happy times were come, when 'The wolf ſhall dwell with the 'lamb, and the leopard ſhall lye down with the 'kid; and the calf, and the young lion, and the 'fatling together, and a young child ſhall lead 'them. The wilderneſs and the ſolitary place 'ſhall be glad for them, and the deſart ſhall rejoice, 'and bloſſom as the roſe.'

At the verge of this wood, which extends to the river I have mentioned, without perceiving we were entering a building, ſo well is the outſide of it concealed by trees, we found ourſelves in a moſt beautiful grotto, made of foſſils, ſpars, coral, and ſuch ſhells, as are at once both fine and ruſtic; all of the glaring, tawdry kind are excluded, and by the gloom and ſimplicity preſerved, one would imagine it the habitation of ſome devout anchoret. Ivy and moſs in ſome places cover, while they ſeem to unite, the ſeveral materials of the variegated walls. The rivulet which runs through the wood, falls down one ſide of the grotto with great rapidity, broken into various ſtreams by the ſpar and coral, and paſſing through, forms a fine caſcade juſt at the foot of the grotto, from whence it flows into the river. Great care is taken to prevent the place from growing damp, ſo that we ſat

ſome

ſome time in it with ſafety, admiring the ſmooth ſurface of the river, to which it lies very open.

As the ladies had ſome daily buſineſs on their hands which they never neglect, we were obliged to leave this lovely ſcene, where I think I could have paſſed my life with pleaſure, and to return towards the houſe, though by a different way from that we came, traverſing the other ſide of the wood. In one ſpot where we went near the verge, I obſerved a pale, which, upon examination, I found was continued for ſome acres, though it was remarkable only in one place. It is painted green, and on the inſide a hedge of yews, laurel, and other thick evergreens, riſe to about ſeven or eight feet high. I could not forbear aſking what was thus ſo carefully encloſed? the ladies ſmiled on each other, but evaded anſwering my queſtion, which only encreaſed my curioſity. Lamont, not leſs curious, and more importunate, obſerved, that 'the incloſure bore ſome reſemblance to one of 'Lord Lamore's, where he kept lions, tygers, 'leopards, and ſuch foreign animals, and he would 'be hanged, if the ladies had not made ſome ſuch 'collection, intreating that he might be admitted 'to ſee them; for nothing gave him greater enter-'tainment than to behold thoſe beautiful wild 'beaſts, brought out of their native woods, where 'they had reigned as kings, and here tamed and 'ſubjected by the ſuperior art of man. It was a 'triumph of human reaſon, which could not fail 'to afford great pleaſure.'

'Not to us, I aſſure you, Sir, replied Mrs. 'Mancel, when reaſon appears only in the exer-'tion of cruelty and tyrannical oppreſſion, it is 'ſurely not a gift to be boaſted of. When a man 'forces the furious ſteed to endure the bit, or 'breaks oxen to the yoke, the great benefits he re-

'ceives

‘ ceives from, and communicates to the animals,
‘ excuſes the forcible methods by which it is ac-
‘ compliſhed. But to ſee a man, from a vain deſire
‘ to have in his poſſeſſion the native of another
‘ climate and another country, reduce a fine and
‘ noble creature to miſery, and confine him within
‘ narrow incloſures whoſe happineſs conſiſted in
‘ unbounded liberty, ſhocks my nature. There
‘ is I confeſs ſomething ſo amiable in gentleneſs,
‘ that I could be pleaſed with ſeeing a tyger careſs
‘ its keeper, if the cruel means by which the
‘ fierceſt of beaſts is taught all the ſervility of a
‘ fawning ſpaniel, did not recur every inſtant to
‘ my mind; and it is not much leſs abhorrent to
‘ my nature, to ſee a venerable lion jumping over
‘ a ſtick, than it would be to behold an hoary phi-
‘ loſopher forced by ſome cruel tyrant to ſpend his
‘ days in whipping a top, or playing with a rattle.
‘ Every thing to me looſes its charm when it is put
‘ out of that ſtation wherein nature, or to ſpeak
‘ more properly, the all-wiſe Creator has placed it.
‘ I imagine man has a right to uſe the animal race
‘ for his own preſervation, perhaps for his conveni-
‘ ence, but certainly not to treat them with wanton
‘ cruelty, and as it is not in his power to give them
‘ any thing ſo valuable as their liberty, it is, in
‘ my opinion, criminal to enſlave them, in order
‘ to procure ourſelves a vain amuſement, if we
‘ have ſo little feeling as to find any while others
‘ ſuffer.’

‘ I believe madam, replied Lamont, it is moſt
‘ adviſeable for me not to attempt to defend what
‘ I have ſaid; ſhould I have reaſon on my ſide,
‘ while you have humanity on yours, I ſhould make
‘ but a bad figure in the argument. What advan-
‘ tage could I expect from applying to the under-
‘ ſtanding, while your amiable diſpoſition would

‘ captivate

'captivate even reason itself? but still I am puz-
'zled; what we behold is certainly an inclosure,
'how can that be without a confinement to those
'that are within it?'

'After having spoken so much against tyranny,
'said Mrs. Mancel smiling, I do not know whe-
'ther I should be excusable, if I left you to be ty-
'rannized by curiosity, which I believe can inflict
'very severe pains, at least, if I may be allowed to
'judge by the means people often take to satisfy it.
'I will therefore gratify you with the knowledge of
'what is within this inclosure, which makes so ex-
'traordinary an impression upon you. It is, then,
'an asylum for those poor creatures who are ren-
'dered miserable from some natural deficiency or
'redundancy. Here they find refuge from the ty-
'ranny of those wretches, who seem to think that
'being two or three feet taller gives them a right
'to make them a property, and expose their un-
'happy forms to the contemptuous curiosity of the
'unthinking multitude. Procrustes has been brand-
'ed through all ages with the name of tyrant;
'and principally, as it appears, from fitting the
'body of every stranger to a bed which he kept as
'the necessary standard, cutting off the legs of
'those whose height exceeded the length of it,
'and stretching on the rack such as fell short of
'that measure, till they attained the requisite pro-
'portion. But is not almost every man a Pro-
'crustes? we have not the power of shewing our
'cruelty exactly in the same method, but actuated
'by the like spirit, we abridge of their liberty,
'and torment by scorn, all who either fall short,
'or exceed the usual standard, if they happen to
'have the additional misfortune of poverty. Per-
'haps we are in no part more susceptible than in our
'vanity, how much then must those poor wretches
'suffer,

‘ ſuffer, whoſe deformity would lead them to wiſh
‘ to be ſecluded from human view, in being ex-
‘ poſed to the public, whoſe obſervations are no
‘ better than expreſſions of ſcorn, and who are ſur-
‘ prized to find that any thing leſs than themſelves
‘ can ſpeak, or appear like intelligent beings:
‘ But this is only part of what they have to en-
‘ dure. As if their deficiency in height deprived
‘ them of the natural right to air and ſunſhine,
‘ they are kept confined in ſmall rooms, and becauſe
‘ they fill leſs ſpace than common, are ſtuffed into
‘ chairs ſo little, that they are ſqueezed as cloſe as a
‘ pair of gloves in a walnut-ſhell.

‘ This miſerable treatment of perſons, to whom
‘ compaſſion ſhould ſecure more than common in-
‘ dulgence, determined us to purchaſe theſe worſt
‘ ſort of ſlaves, and in this place we have five who
‘ owed their wretchedneſs to being only three foot
‘ high, one grey-headed toothleſs old man of ſixteen
‘ years of age, a woman of about ſeven foot in
‘ height, and a man who would be ſtill taller, if
‘ the extreme weakneſs of his body, and the
‘ wretched life he for ſome time led, in the hands
‘ of one of theſe monſter-mongers, did not make
‘ him bend almoſt double, and oblige him to walk
‘ on crutches; with which infirmities he is well
‘ pleaſed, as they reduce him nearer the common
‘ ſtandard.’

We were very deſirous of ſeeing this enfranchiſed company; but Mrs. Morgan told us it was what they ſeldom granted, for fear of inflicting ſome of the pains from which they had endeavoured to reſcue thoſe poor creatures, but ſhe would ſtep in, and aſk if they had no objection to our admiſſion, and if that appeared really the caſe ſhe would gratify us.

This tenderneſs to perſons who were under ſuch high obligations, charmed me. She ſoon returned with the permiſſion we wiſhed, but intreated us to pay all our attention to the houſe and garden, and to take no more than a civil notice of its inhabitants. We promiſed obedience, and followed her. Her advice was almoſt unneceſſary, for the place could not have failed of attracting our particular obſervation. It was a quadrangle of about ſix acres, and the inward part was divided by nets into eight parts, four of which alternatively were filled with poultry of all ſorts, which were fed here for the uſe of the hall, and kept with the moſt exact cleanlineſs. The other four parts were filled with ſhrubs and flowers, which were cultivated with great delight by theſe once unfortunate, but now happy beings. A little ſtream ran acroſs the quadrangle, which ſerved for drink to the poultry, and facilitated the watering of the flowers. I have already ſaid, that at the inward edge of the pale was a row of ever-greens; at their feet were beds of flowers, and a little gravel walk went round the whole. At each corner was an arbour made with woodbines and jeſſamine, in one or two of which there was always an agreeable ſhade.

At one ſide of the quadrangle was a very neat habitation, into which a dwarf invited us to enter, to reſt ourſelves after our walk; they were all paſſing backwards and forwards, and thus gave us a full view of them, which would have been a ſhocking ſight, but for the reflexions we could not avoid making on their happy condition, and the very extraordinary humanity of the ladies to whom they owed it; ſo that inſtead of feeling the pain one might naturally receive from ſeeing the human form ſo diſgraced, we were filled with admiration of the human mind, when ſo nobly exalted by virtue,

tue, as it is in the patroneſſes of theſe poor creatures, who wore an air of chearfulneſs, which ſhewed they thought the churliſhneſs wherewith they had been treated by nature ſufficiently compenſated. The tender inquiries the ladies made after their healths, and the kind notice they took of each of them, could not be exceeded by any thing but the affection, I might almoſt ſay adoration, with which theſe people beheld their benefactreſſes.

This ſcene had made too deep an impreſſion on our minds, not to be the ſubject of our diſcourſe all the way home, and in the courſe of converſation, I learnt, that when theſe people were firſt reſcued out of their miſery, their healths were much impaired, and their tempers more ſo: to reſtore the firſt, all medicinal care was taken, and air and exerciſe aſſiſted greatly in their recovery; but to cure the malady of the mind, and conquer that internal ſource of unhappineſs, was a work of longer time. Even theſe poor wretches had their vanity, and would contend for ſuperior merit, of which, the argument was the money their keepers had gained in exhibiting them. To put an end to this contention, the ladies made them underſtand, that what they thought a ſubject for boaſting, was only a proof of their being ſo much farther from the uſual ſtandard of the human form, and therefore a more extraordinary ſpectacle. But it was long before one of them could be perſuaded to lay aſide her pretenſions to ſuperiority, which ſhe claimed on account of an extraordinary honour ſhe had received from a great princeſs, who had made her a preſent of a ſedan chair.

At length, however, much reaſoning and perſuaſion, a conviction of principles, of which they had before no knowledge, the happineſs of their

ſituation, and the improvement of their healths, concurred to ſweeten their tempers, and they now live in great harmony. They are entirely miſtreſſes of their houſe, have two maids to wait on them, over whom they have ſole command, and a perſon to do ſuch little things in their garden as they cannot themſelves perform; but the cultivation of it is one of their great pleaſures; and by their extraordinary care, they have the ſatisfaction of preſenting the fineſt flowers of the ſpring to their benefactreſſes, before they are blown in any other place.

When they firſt came, the ladies told us, that the horror they had conceived of being exhibited as public ſpectacles, had fixed in them ſuch a fear of being ſeen by any ſtranger, that the ſound of a voice, with which they were not acquainted at the outſide of the pailing, or the trampling of feet, would ſet them all a running behind the buſhes to hide themſelves, like ſo many timorous partridges in a mew, hurrying behind ſheaves of corn for ſhelter; they even found a convenience in their ſize, which, though it rendered them unwilling to be ſeen, enabled them ſo eaſily to find places for concealment.

By degrees the ladies brought them to conſent to ſee their head ſervants, and ſome of the beſt people in the pariſh; deſiring, that to render it more agreeable to their viſitors, they would entertain them with fruit and wine; adviſing them to aſſiſt their neighbours in plain work; thus to endear themſelves to them, and procure more frequent viſits, which as they choſe to confine themſelves within ſo narrow a compaſs, and enjoyed but precarious health, their benefactreſſes thought a neceſſary amuſement. Theſe recommendations, and the incidents wherewith their former lives had furniſhed them to amuſe their company, and which they

now

now could relate with pleasure, from the happy sense that all mortifications were past, rendered their conversation much courted among that rank of people.

It occurred to me, that their dislike to being seen by numbers, must prevent their attendance on public worship, but my cousin informed me that was thus avoided. There was in the church an old gallery, which from disuse was grown out of repair; this the ladies caused to be mended, and the front of it so hightened, that these little folks when in it could not be seen; the tall ones contrived by stooping when they were there, not to appear of any extraordinary height: To this they were conveyed in the ladies coach, and set down close to covered stairs, which led up to the gallery.

This subject employed our conversation till we approached the hall; the ladies then, after insisting that we should not think of going from thence that day, all left us except Mrs. Maynard. It may seem strange that I was not sorry for their departure; but, in truth, I was so filled with astonishment, at characters so new, and so curious to know by what steps women thus qualified both by nature and fortune to have the world almost at command, were brought thus to seclude themselves from it, and make as it were a new one for themselves, constituted on such very different principles from that I had hitherto lived in, that I longed to be alone with my cousin, in hopes I might from her receive some account of this wonder. I soon made my curiosity known, and beseeched her to gratify it.

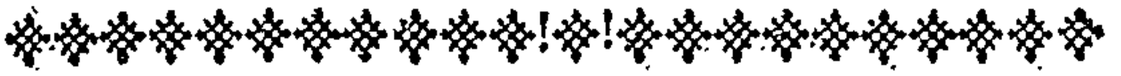
'I see no good reason, said she, why I should 'not comply with your request, as my friends are 'above wishing to conceal any part of their lives,

'though themſelves are never the ſubject of their 'own converſation. If they have had any follies 'they do not deſire to hide them; they have not 'pride enough to be hurt with candid criticiſms, 'and have too much innocence to fear any very 'ſevere cenſures. But as we did not all reach 'this paradiſe at the ſame time, I ſhall begin with 'the firſt inhabitants of, and indeed the founders 'of this ſociety, Mrs. Mancel and Mrs. Morgan, 'who from their childhood have been ſo connected, 'that I could not, if I would, diſunite them in my 'relation; and it would be almoſt a ſin to endea-'vour to ſeparate them even in idea.'

We ſat down in an arbour, whoſe ſhade invited us to ſeek there a defence againſt the ſun, which was then in its meridian, and ſhone with uncommon heat. The woodbines, the roſes, the jeſſamines, the pinks, and above all, the minionette with which it was ſurrounded, made the air one general perfume; every breeze came loaded with fragrance, ſtealing and giving odour. A rivulet ran bubbling by the ſide of the arbour, whoſe gentle murmours ſoothed the mind into compoſure, and ſeemed to huſh us to attention, when Mrs. Maynard thus began, to ſhew her readineſs to comply with my requeſt.

THE

THE HISTORY OF Miſs MANCEL, AND Mrs. MORGAN.



YOU may perhaps think I am preſuming on your patience, when I lead you into a nurſery, or a boarding-ſchool; but the life of Louiſa Mancel, was ſo early chequered with that various fate, which gives this world the motley appearance of joy and ſorrow, pain and pleaſure, that it is not in my power to paſs over the events of her infancy. I ſhall, however, ſpare you all that is poſſible, and recommend her to your notice only when ſhe attracted the obſervation of Mr. Hintman. This gentleman hearing that a perſon who rented ſome land of him was come to London, and lodged at one of thoſe public houſes which by the landlord is called an inn, at the out-ſkirts of London, on the Surry-ſide; and having ſome occa-

ſion to ſpeak to him, he went thither. The people of the houſe called the man Mr. Hintman enquired for, who immediately came down ſtairs, wiping tears from his eyes; the continuance of which he could hardly reſtrain. Mr. Hintman aſking the reaſon of thoſe appearances of ſorrow, the good-natured old man told him, his viſit had called him from a ſcene which had ſhocked him exceſſively. 'The firſt day I came here, ſaid he, 'I was induced by the frequent groans which iſſued 'from the next chamber, to enquire who lodged 'there; I learnt, it was a gentlewoman, who ar-'rived the day before, and was immediately taken 'ſo ill that they apprehended her life in danger; 'and, about two hours ago, the maid of the houſe 'ran into my room, begging me to come to her 'aſſiſtance, for the gentlewoman was in ſuch ſtrong 'fits, ſhe was not able to hold her. I obeyed the 'ſummons, and found the poor woman in fits in-'deed; but what appeared to me the laſt agonies 'of a life, which near exhauſted, laviſhes away its 'ſmall remains in ſtrong convulſions.

'By her bed-ſide ſtood the moſt beautiful child I 'ever beheld, in appearance about ten years of 'age, crying as if its little heart would break; not 'with the rage of an infant, but with the ſettled 'grief of a perſon mature both in years and afflicti-'on. I aſked her if the poor dying woman was 'her mother; ſhe told me, no,—ſhe was only her 'aunt; but to her the ſame as a mother; and ſhe 'did not know any one elſe that would take care 'of her.

'After a time the poor woman's convulſions left 'her;—ſhe juſt recovered ſenſe enough to embrace 'the lovely girl, and cried out, Oh! my dear child, 'what will become of you! a friendleſs, helpleſs in-'fant; and ſeeing me at her bed-ſide, ſhe lifted up

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'her hands in a ſuppliant poſture; and with eyes 'that petitioned in ſtronger terms than words could 'expreſs, Oh! Sir, ſaid ſhe, though you are a ſtran-'ger to me, yet I ſee you are not ſo to humanity; '—take pity on this forlorn child;—her amiable diſ-'poſition will repay you in this world,—and the 'great Father of us all will reward you in the next, 'for your compaſſion on a wretched friendleſs 'girl!—but why do I call her friendleſs!—her 'innocence has the beſt of friends in heaven;—the 'Almighty is a parent ſhe is not left to ſeek for; 'he is never abſent;—Oh! bleſſed Lord!—cried 'ſhe, with a degree of extacy and confidence, 'which moſt ſenſibly affected us all,—to thy care I 'reſign her;—thy tender mercies are over all thy 'works,—and thou, who careſt for the ſmalleſt part 'of thy creation, will not deny her thy protection. 'Oh! Lord defend her innocence!—let her obtain 'a place in thy kingdom after death; and,—for all 'the reſt—I ſubmit to thy providence; nor pre-'ſumptuouſly pretend, to dictate to ſupreme wiſdom. 'Thou art a gracious father;—and the afflictions 'thou ſendeſt are—— Here her voice failed her; '—but, by her geſtures, we could perceive ſhe con-'tinued praying; and, having before taken the 'child in her arms;—the little angel continued 'there for fear of diſturbing her.—By looks 'ſometimes turned towards the poor infant, and 'ſometimes with her hand on her own heart, and 'then her eyes lifted up as it were to heaven, 'we ſaw ſhe mixed prayers for the little mourner, 'with interceſſions for herſelf, till ſenſe and mo-'tion ſeemed to fail her; ſhe then fell into a 'convulſion, and expired.

'The little girl perceived ſhe was dead; and 'became, almoſt as ſenſeleſs, as the lump of 'clay which had ſo lately been her only friend.

'We had but just taken her from the body 'sir, when you came; and this was the occasion of the emotions you observed in me.

'The cause was indeed sufficient, replied Mr. 'Hintman, but I am glad your sorrow proceeded 'from nothing more immediately concerning yourself:—Misery will strike its arrows into a humane heart; but the wounds it makes are not so lasting, as those which are impressed by passions 'that are more relative to ourselves.—Oh sir,—'said the old man,—you cannot form an adequate idea of the effect this scene must have on 'every spectator, except you had seen the child! 'surely nature never formed so lovely a little creature!' He continued his praises of Louisa, till at length he excited Mr. Hintman's curiosity; who expressing a desire of seeing this miracle, he was carried up into the good man's room, to which they had removed her. She, who had cried most bitterly before the fatal stroke arrived, was now so oppressed, as not to be able to shed a tear. They had put her on the bed, where she lay sighing with a heart ready to break; her eyes fixed on one point, she neither saw nor heard.

Though her countenance expressed unutterable woe, yet she looked so extremely beautiful, that Mr. Hintman, highly as his expectation had been raised, was struck with surprize. He allowed he never saw any thing so lovely; and the charms of which her melancholy might deprive her, were more than compensated in his imagination by so strong a proof of extreme sensibility, at an age when few children perceive half the dreadful consequences of such a misfortune.

He advised that she should be blooded, to prevent any ill effects from so severe a shock; for as she felt it as strongly as one of a more mature age, the

the ſame precautions ſhould be uſed. In this he was obeyed; and it gave her ſuch relief that ſhe burſt into a flood of tears; a change which appeared ſo ſalutary, that Mr. Hintman would not immediately interrupt her. But his curioſity did not ſuffer him long to forbear aſking her name, and many other particulars; ſeveral of which ſhe could not anſwer;—all the account ſhe was able to give of herſelf was, that 'her name was Mancel; 'that the perſon for whom ſhe grieved was her 'aunt; but had had the ſole care of her from her 'earlieſt remembrance. This aunt, ſhe ſaid, 'had often told her ſhe had a father and mother 'living; but when ſhe enquired why ſhe never ſaw 'or heard from them; ſhe could get no ſatisfac-'tory anſwer, but was put off with being told 'they were not in England;—and that ſhe ſhould 'know when ſhe grew older.

'This perſon had bred her up with the utmoſt 'tenderneſs, and employed the moſt aſſiduous care 'in her education; which was the principal ob-'ject of her attention. They had lived in a 'neat cottage in the moſt retired part of Surry 'from Miſs Mancel's earlieſt remembrance, till 'her aunt, after having been ſome time in a 'bad ſtate of health, fell into a galloping 'conſumption. As ſoon as ſhe apprehended 'the danger with which her life was threatned, 'ſhe prepared every thing for her removal to Lon-'don; but as ſhe did not expect ever to return, 'this took more time than the quickneſs of her 'decay could well allow. The haſty approach of 'her diſſolution affected her extremely on the ac-'count of her little neice, and ſhe often expreſſed 'her concern in terms intelligible to her who was 'the occaſion of it, who gathered from the ex-'preſſions which fell from her aunt, that the

'motive for the journey was to find out ſome 'of Miſs Mancel's relations, to whom ſhe 'might deliver her before death had put a pe-'riod to her own life;—and where ſhe might 'ſafely remain till the return of her parents into 'England.

'In this reſolution ſhe diſcharged the only 'ſervant ſhe kept, delivered up her houſe to her 'landlord, and, after having ſettled all her pecu-'niary affairs, ſhe ſet out on her journey with 'her little charge; but grew ſo ill on the road, 'that ſhe deſired to be ſet down at the firſt 'inn; and her illneſs encreaſed ſo faſt ſhe 'had no thought of removing; nor was ſhe 'able to make any very exact enquiries after 'the perſons of whom ſhe came in ſearch.'

This account was interrupted with many tears, which ſerved to render it more affecting, and Mr. Hintman—as much touched as the good old man, who was the occaſion of his having heard it,—agreed with him, that it would be proper to examine into the effects of which the deceaſed was then poſſeſſed; and to ſee if they could find any paper which would in a degree clear up the myſterious part of this affair.

This was accordingly performed; but as to the latter intention without any ſucceſs; for after all the examination they could make, they remained as much in the dark as ever.

They found in her trunk rather more money than was requiſite to bury her in a manner becoming her rank; to defray the expences of her ſickneſs; and to reward thoſe that had attended her.

The old man expreſſed a willingneſs to take the child;—he ſaid, 'it was a legacy left him by one 'who had conceived ſome confidence in his hu-'manity,

'manity, and he could not in conſcience diſap-
'point an opinion which did him honour; though,
'having children of his own, he did not pretend to
'breed her up in the genteel manner to which ſhe
'ſeemed by birth entitled.'

Mr. Hintman replied, that, 'he ſhould have
'great reaſon to reproach himſelf, if with the
'ample fortune he enjoyed, and having no chil-
'dren, or family to partake of it, he ſhould ſuf-
'fer another to take that charge, to whom it
'could not be ſo convenient; he therefore would
'immediately receive her as his child; and ſee
'her educated in all accompliſhments proper for
'a young perſon of faſhion and fortune; as he
'ſhould be able to ſupply all deficiency, if ne-
'ceſſary, in the latter particular.'

The old man was very glad to have the child better eſtabliſhed than with him; though he had for ſome hours looked with ſo much pleaſure on her as his adopted daughter, that no conſideration, but the proſpect of her greater advantage, could have reconciled him to parting with her.

In purſuance of the reſolution Mr. Hintman had taken, he carried Miſs Mancel to a French boarding ſchool, which he had heard commended; very prudently judging, that his houſe was not a proper place for education, having there no one fit to take care of a young perſon.

Louiſa was ſo oppreſſed by the forlornneſs of her ſituation, that ſhe felt none of that reluctance to going amongſt ſtrangers, ſo uſual with children of her age. All the world was equally unknown to her, therefore ſhe was indifferent where ſhe was carried, only ſhe rather wiſhed not to have been taken from the good old man, whoſe venerable aſpect, and compaſſionate behaviour,

viour, had in some degree attached her to him; —but she felt the generosity of Mr. Hintman's declared intentions; and, young as she was, had too much delicacy to appear ungrateful, by shewing an unwillingness to accompany him. Mademoiselle d'Avaux, the mistress of the school, was pleased with the appearance of her young scholar, whose tears had ceased for some time; and her face bore no disfiguring signs of sorrow; the dejection which overspread it, giving charms equal to those of which it robbed it.

Mr. Hintman desired Mademoiselle d'Avaux to take the trouble of providing Miss Mancel with all things requisite, and to put her in proper mourning; those minute feminine details being things of which he was too ignorant to acquit himself well; and gave strict charge that her mind should be cultivated with the greatest care, and no accomplishment omitted which she was capable of acquiring.

What contributed much towards gratifying this wish of Mr. Hintman's, was Mademoiselle d'Avaux's house being so full, that there was no room for Louisa, but a share of the apartment which Miss Melvyn had hitherto enjoyed alone, and of which she could not willingly have admitted any one to partake but the lovely child who was presented to her for this purpose. Her beautiful form prejudiced every one in her favour; but the distress and sorrow which were impressed on her countenance, at an age generally too volatile and thoughtless to be deeply affected, could not fail of exciting a tender sensibility in the heart of a person of Miss Melvyn's disposition.

This young lady was of a very peculiar turn of Mind. She had been the darling daughter of

Sir

Sir Charles and Lady Melvyn, whoſe attachment to her had appeared equal; but, in the former, it was rather the reſult of habit, and compliance with Lady Melvyn's behaviour, than a deep-rooted affection, of which his heart was not very ſuſceptible; while Lady Melvyn's aroſe from that entire fondneſs which maternal love, and the moſt diſtinguiſhing reaſon could excite in the warmeſt and tendereſt of hearts.

Sir Charles was an eaſy tempered weak man, who gave no proof of good ſenſe, but the ſecret deference he had to his wife's judgment, whoſe very ſuperior underſtanding was on nothing ſo aſſiduouſly employed, as in giving conſequence to the man with whom ſhe was united, by the deſire of her parents, contrary to her inclination. Their authority had been neceſſary to reduce her to compliance, not from any particular diſlike to Sir Charles, who had deſervedly the reputation of ſobriety, and great good-nature, and whoſe perſon was remarkably fine; but Lady Melvyn perceived the weakneſs of his underſtanding, and ignorant of the ſtrength of her own, was unwilling to enter into life without a guide, whoſe judgment was equal to the deſire he might naturally be ſuppoſed to have to direct her right, through all the various paths in which ſhe might be obliged to walk; an aſſiſtance ſhe had always expected from an huſband; and thought, even a neceſſary part of that character. She was beſides ſenſible of the difficulty of performing a promiſe ſo ſolemnly made, as that of honour and obedience to one who, though ſhe knew not half her own excellence, ſhe muſt be ſenſible was her inferior.

Theſe reaſons had deterred Lady Melvyn from marrying Sir Charles, but when ſhe could no longer avoid it without violating her duty to her parents,

rents, ſhe reſolved to ſupply the apparent deficiencies in her huſband's underſtanding, by a moſt reſpectful deference to his opinions, thus conferring diſtinction on him, whom ſhe wiſhed every one to eſteem and honour; for as there was no affectation in this part of her conduct, any more than in the reſt of her behaviour, all were convinced, that the man who was reſpected by a woman of an underſtanding ſo ſuperior to moſt of her own ſex, and the greateſt part of the other, muſt have great merit, though they could not perceive wherein it conſiſted.

In company Lady Melvyn always endeavoured to turn the converſation on ſuch ſubjects as ſhe knew were beſt ſuited to Sir Charles's capacity, more deſirous that he ſhould appear to advantage, than to diſplay her own talents. She contrived to make all her actions appear the reſult of his choice, and whatever he did by her inſtigation, ſeemed even to himſelf to have been his own thought. As their way of life was in every circumſtance conſonant to reaſon, religion, and every virtue which could render them uſeful and reſpectable to others, Sir Charles acquired a character in the neighbourhood, which Lady Melvyn thought a ſufficient reward for the endeavours ſhe uſed to ſecure it to him;—and, for that purpoſe, fixed her abode entirely in the country, where his conduct might give him the reſpect, which would not be ſo eaſily obtained in a gayer ſcene, where talents are in higher eſtimation than virtue.

Sir Charles and Lady Melvyn had no other child than the daughter I have mentioned, whoſe education was her mother's great care; and ſhe had the pleaſure of ſeeing in her an uncommon capacity, with every virtue the fondeſt parent could wiſh;

wiſh; and which indeed ſhe had by inheritance; but her mother's humility, made them appear to her, as a peculiar gift of providence to her daughter.

Lady Melvyn ſoon began to inſtil all the principles of true religion into her daughter's infant mind; and, by her judicious inſtructions, gave her knowledge far ſuperior to her years; which was indeed the moſt delightful taſk of this fond parent; for her daughter's uncommon docility and quick parts, continually ſtimulated by her tenderneſs for the beſt of mother's, made her improve even beyond Lady Melvyn's expectation.

In this happy ſituation Miſs Melvyn continued till near the end of her fourteenth year, when ſhe had the misfortune to loſe this excellent parent, nor was ſhe the only ſufferer by Lady Melvyn's death; every poor perſon within her knowledge loſt a benefactreſs;—all who knew her, an excellent example;—and, ſome, the beſt of friends; but her extraordinary merit was but imperfectly known till after her deceaſe; for ſhe had made Sir Charles appear ſo much the principal perſon, and director of all their affairs; that till the change in his conduct proved how great her influence had been, ſhe had only ſhared the approbation, which, afterwards, became all her own.

Human nature cannot feel a deeper affliction than now overwhelmed Miſs Melvyn; wherein Sir Charles bore as great a ſhare, as the eaſineſs of his nature was capable of;—but his heart was not ſuſceptible, either of ſtrong, or laſting impreſſions. He walked in the path Lady Melvyn had traced out for him; and ſuffered his daughter to imitate her mother in benevolent duties; and

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ſhe had profitted too much by the excellent pattern, whereby ſhe had endeavoured to regulate her actions, not to acquit herſelf far beyond what could have been expected at her years.

Miſs Melvyn was not long indulged in the only conſolation her grief could receive,—that of being permitted to aim at an imitation of her mother,—for Sir Charles had not been a widower quite a year, when he married a young lady in the neighbourhood, who had deſigned him this honour from the hour of Lady Melvyn's death; and to procure better opportunity for affecting her purpoſe, had pretended a moſt affectionate compaſſion for Miſs Melvyn's deep affiction; ſhe viſited her continually; and appeared ſo tenderly attached to her, that Miſs Melvyn,—who had neither experience, nor any guile in her own heart to inſpire her with ſuſpicions of an attempt to deceive her, made that return of affection which ſhe thought gratitude required; nor was ſhe at all diſturbed when ſhe found ſhe was ſoon to look on this lady in another light, than that in which ſhe had hitherto ſeen her; it was eaſy for her to reſpect one whom ſhe before loved; and ſhe had been taught ſo true a veneration for her father, that ſhe felt no averſeneſs to obey whomſoever he thought proper to give a title to her duty.

Miſs Melvyn had but very little time to congratulate herſelf on having acquired for a mother, a friend in whoſe converſation ſhe hoped to enjoy great ſatisfaction, and to feel the tenderneſs of an intimate changed into the fondneſs of a parent. She behaved to her with the ſame perfect reſpect, and all the humility of obedience, as if nature had placed her in that parental relation; fearing, if ſhe gave way to the familiarity which had ſubſiſted between them when they were on an equality,

lity, it might appear like a failure in the reverence due to her new ſituation.

But this behaviour, amiable as it was, could not make the now Lady Melvyn change the plan ſhe had formed for her future conduct. She had not been married above a month, before ſhe began to intimate to Sir Charles, 'that Miſs Melvyn's education had been very imperfect;—that a young lady of her rank ought to be highly accompliſhed; but that after ſhe had been ſo long indulged by her parents, if a mother-in-law were to pretend to direct her, it might not only exaſperate Miſs Melvyn, but prejudice the world againſt herſelf; as people are too apt to determine againſt perſons in that relation, without examining the merits of the cauſe; and though, ſhe ſaid, ſhe was little concerned about the opinion of the world, in compariſon with her tender regard for any one that belonged to him; yet ſhe was much influenced by the other reaſon ſhe had alledged, for not appearing to dictate to Miſs Melvyn, being very deſirous of keeping on affectionate terms with her; and ſhe was already much mortified, at perceiving that young lady had imbibed too many of the vulgar prejudices againſt a mother-in-law; though, for her part, ſhe had endeavoured to behave with ſubmiſſion to her daughter, inſtead of pretending to aſſume any authority.' The conſequence and concluſion of all theſe inſinuations was, that 'it would be adviſeable to ſend Miſs Melvyn to a boarding ſchool.'

Sir Charles was ſoon prevailed with to comply with his lady's requeſt; and his daughter was acquainted with the determination; which Lady Melvyn aſſured her, 'was very contrary to her inclination, who ſhould find a great loſs of ſo agreeable a friend, but that Sir Charles had declared his intention

'tention in ſo peremptory a manner, that ſhe 'dared not contend.'

Miſs Melvyn had before obſerved, that marriage had made a great alteration in Lady Melvyn's behaviour; but this was a ſtroke ſhe did not expect, and a very mortifying one to her, who had long laid aſide all childiſh amuſements; had been taught to employ herſelf as rationally as if ſhe had arrived at a maturer age, and been indulged in the exerciſe of a moſt benevolent diſpoſition, having given ſuch good proofs of the propriety with which ſhe employed both her time and money, that ſhe had been diſpenſed from all reſtraints; and now to commence a new infancy, and be confined to the ſociety of children, was a very afflicting change; but it came from a hand ſhe too much reſpected to make any reſiſtance, though ſhe eaſily perceived that it was entirely at her mother's inſtigation; and knew her father too well, to believe he could be peremptory on any occaſion.

A very ſhort time intervened between the declaration and execution of this deſign, and Miſs Melvyn was introduced to mademoiſelle d'Avaux by her kind mother-in-law, who with ſome tears, and many aſſurances of regret, left her there. Miſs Melvyn had been at this ſchool three months when Louiſa Mancel was brought thither, and though a ſeparation from a father ſhe ſincerely loved, and the fear of the arts Lady Melvyn might uſe to alienate his affections from her, after having thus removed her from his preſence, greatly affected her ſpirits, and ſhe found no companions fit to amuſe her rational mind, yet ſhe endeavoured to ſupport her mortifications with all the chearfulneſs ſhe could aſſume; and received ſome ſatisfaction from the converſation of Mademoiſelle d'Avaux, a

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woman of tolerable underſtanding, and who was much pleaſed with Miſs Melvyn's behaviour.

Miſs Mancel's dejected air prejudiced Miſs Melvyn much in her favour; the uſual conſequence of a ſimilitude of mind or manners; and when by a farther knowledge of her, ſhe perceived her uncommon ſhare of underſtanding; her deſire to learn; the ſtrength of her application; the quickneſs of her apprehenſion; and her great ſweetneſs of temper, ſhe grew extremely fond of her; and as Miſs Mancel's melancholy rendered her little inclined to play with thoſe of her own age, ſhe was almoſt always with Miſs Melvyn, who found great pleaſure in endeavouring to inſtruct her; and grew to feel for her the tenderneſs of a mother, while Miſs Mancel began to receive conſolation from experiencing an affection quite maternal.

At the beginning of the winter, Lady Melvyn, who had leſs ambition to imitate the real merit of her predeceſſor, than to exhibit her own imaginary perfections, brought Sir Charles to London, there to fix their reſidence for the enſuing half year. This made little alteration in Miſs Melvyn's way of life. Sir Charles and his lady would ſometimes call upon her, the latter not choſing to truſt Sir Charles alone with his daughter, leſt ſhe ſhould repreſent to him, how unworthily ſhe was treated; but as he was not devoid of affection for her, he would ſometimes viſit her privately; concealing it from his lady, who endeavoured to prevent this, by telling him, that 'ſchool-miſtreſſes were apt to 'take amiſs a parent's viſiting his children too often, conſtruing it as a diſtruſt of their care; and 'therefore if he offended in that way, Mademoiſelle 'd'Avaux's diſguſt might affect her behaviour to 'Miſs Melvyn, and render her reſidence there very diſagreeable, which Lady Melvyn's *great tender-*

'*neſs*

'*ness* made her ardently wish to avoid, as she was 'desirous every thing should be agreeable to her 'dear daughter.' Sir Charles could not be entirely restrained by these *kind* admonitions, from indulging himself with the sight of Miss Melvyn.

His lady had little reason to be afraid of these interviews, for her daughter-in-law had too strong a sense of filial obedience, and too delicate a regard for her father's happiness, to suffer the least intimation of a fault in his wife to escape her lips, as a good opinion of her was so necessary to his ease; but as she soon found out these visits were made by stealth, they gave her great pleasure, as a plain proof of his affection. Lady Melvyn thought her daughter's coming abroad would be as *hurtful* as her being visited at home, and therefore very seldom sent for her to her house; and when she did, took care to have her carried home before the hour that she expected company, on pretence of preserving the regularity of hours, which she knew would be agreeable to Mademoiselle d'Avaux.

The true reason of this great caution, was an unwillingness to be seen with one whose person, all her vanity could not prevent her from being sensible, was more attractive than her own. Miss Melvyn was very pretty, had an engaging sweetness in her countenance, and all the bloom which belongs to youth, though it does not always accompany it. Her person was elegant, and perfectly genteel.

Lady Melvyn was void of delicacy; she had a regular set of features, but they wanted to be softened into effeminacy, before they could have any just pretence to beauty. Her eyes were black, and not void of vivacity, but they neither expressed penetration nor gentleness. Her person was well proportioned,

proportioned, but ſhe was formed on too large a ſcale, and deſtitute of grace. She was not ill bred, but had none of that ſoftneſs of manners which gives riſe to all the ſweet civilities of life. In ſhort, Lady Melvyn was one, who, by herſelf, and many others, would be eſteemed a fine woman, and by many more, ranked only under the denomination of a ſhewey woman; like Mr. Bayes's hero, ſhe was unamiable, but ſhe was great; ſhe excited the admiration of ſome, but pleaſed none.

As ſoon as ſhe appeared in the world as Lady Melvyn, ſhe began to exerciſe what ſhe thought only lively coquetry; but her entire want of grace and delicacy, often made that appear like boldneſs, which ſhe deſigned for vivacity. As her ambition to charm was as great as if ſhe had been better qualified for ſucceſs, it is not ſtrange, that ſhe did not chooſe to give opportunities of compariſon between herſelf and a daughter, who, though not ſo ſtriking at firſt ſight, was filled with attractions.

The contempt which her ladyſhip thought ſhe muſt in juſtice to her own underſtanding ſhew for her huſband's, and the ſupercilious coldneſs with which ſhe treated Miſs Melvyn, made that young lady very glad that ſhe was ſo ſeldom ſent for to her father's houſe. But ſhe wiſhed to learn ſuch accompliſhments, as whilſt ſhe lived in the country were out of her power, and therefore intimated to lady Melvyn her deſire of being taught muſic and drawing, with the better hope of ſucceſs, as the neceſſity of compleating her education had been made the excuſe for ſending her to a boarding ſchool; but this requeſt was denied her on frivolous pretences, the real cauſe, when ſhe perceived the very extravagant turn of her mother-in-law, ſhe ſoon underſtood was to avoid expence.

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She had flattered herself she might obtain permission to have her books sent to her; but upon enquiry, found that Lady Melvyn had removed them to her dressing-room, and intermixed them with china, in so ornamental a manner, so truly expressive of the turn of her mind, where a pretended love of reading was blended with a real fondness for trifles, that she had no chance for this indulgence.

While Miss Melvyn was suffering all these mortifications from a parent, Miss Mancel was receiving every proof of the most tender affection from one bound to her by no paternal ties. Mr. Hintman, as soon as the season of the year brought him to town, visited his little charge, and was charmed with the vivacity which was now restored to her. He called upon her frequently, and seldom without some present, or a proposal of some pleasure. He would continually entreat her to make him some request, that he might have the pleasure of gratifying her. He frequently gave Mademoiselle d'Avaux tickets for the play and the opera, that the young Louisa might have somebody to accompany her; but as Miss Melvyn did not think it proper at her age to go often with only her school-mistress, or, according to the language of schools, her governess, Miss Mancel frequently declined being of the party, rather than leave her amiable friend and instructor.

There was no one who shewed any particular civility to Miss Mancel, but received some return from Mr. Hintman. Miss Melvyn was very deservedly the chief object of his gratitude; but as she declined accepting the presents he offered her, he chose a way more agreeable to himself, as it would make his little Louisa the rewarder of the favours she received. He therefore was lavish of

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his money to her, and entreated her to lay it out in ſuch manner, as would be moſt agreeable to her-ſelf and Miſs Melvyn; at the ſame time aſking her, 'by what means ſhe could moſt gratify that young 'lady?'

Miſs Mancel ſaid, 'ſhe knew nothing that 'would be ſo acceptable to Miſs Melvyn as books.' To this Mr. Hintman replied, 'Since that was 'the caſe, he could very eaſily accommodate them, 'for he had by him a very pretty library left him 'by his ſiſter about a year before, which he had 'never unpacked, having moſt of the ſame books 'in his own ſtudy.'

This accordingly he ſent to Miſs Mancel, with proper book-caſes to contain them, which they immediately put up in their apartments. This was the moſt agreeable acquiſition imaginable; for Miſs Hintman having been a very ſenſible young lady, the collection was extremely valuable.

Mr. Hintman's great indulgence could not fail of receiving from Miſs Mancel the wiſh'd for return of affection and gratitude; whenever he came ſhe flew to him with delight, careſſed him with all the fondneſs ſo enchanting at that age, and parted from him with the extremeſt reluctance. Her great obligations to him were the frequent ſubjects of her diſcourſe with Miſs Melvyn, who had the higheſt admiration of his generoſity.

His allowance to Miſs Mancel was ſufficient to have defrayed all her expences, but thoſe were to be the care of Mademoiſelle d'Avaux, for the money he gave Louiſa was for no other purpoſe than her gratifications; neceſſity, or even uſefulneſs was out of the queſtion; every thing of that kind being provided for her. Nor was he more ſparing in what concerned her education, ſhe learnt dancing, muſic, and drawing; beſides other things generally

taught at ſchools; but her greateſt improvement was from reading with Miſs Melvyn, who inſtructed her in geography, and in ſuch parts of philoſophy of which her age was capable; but above all, ſhe was moſt attentive to inculcate into her mind the principles of true religion.

Thus her underſtanding opened in a ſurprizing degree, and while the beauty and graces of her perſon, and her great progreſs in genteel accompliſhments, charmed every eye, the nice diſcernment, and uncommon ſtrength of reaſon which appeared in her converſation, aſtoniſhed every judicious obſerver; but her moſt admirable qualities were her humility and modeſty; which, notwithſtanding her great internal and external excellencies, rendered her diffident, mild, baſhful, and tractable; her heart ſeemed as free from defects, as her underſtanding was from the follies, which in a degree are incident to almoſt every other perſon.

Miſs Melvyn and her little companion received a conſiderable encreaſe of happineſs from the preſent of books Mr. Hintman had made them; the latter had no wiſh, but that Miſs Melvyn might receive equal indulgence from parents, that ſhe enjoyed from one who bore no relation to her. The firſt deſire that occurred to her on Mr. Hintman's profuſe preſents of money, was to treat her friend with maſters for muſic and drawing, and ſuch other things as ſhe knew ſhe had an inclination to learn; but as ſhe was not unacquainted with her delicacy on that ſubject, as ſoon as Mr. Hintman left her, ſhe ran to Miſs Melvyn with ſome of the impatience in her countenance, though ſhe endeavoured to conceal it, with which her heart was filled, and tried every tender careſs, every fond and humble petition, to obtain a promiſe from that young lady, that ſhe would grant her a requeſt ſhe had to make.

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She hung round her neck, and endeavoured to prevail by a thouſand engaging infantine arts; and when ſhe found they would not ſucceed, ſhe knelt down before her, and with all the grace and importunity of the moſt amiable ſuppliant, tried to win her to compliance. Nothing would avail, for Miſs Melvyn was convinced by her earneſtneſs, that her deſign was to confer ſome favour; ſhe knew the generoſity of her youthful mind too well to believe ſhe ſo ardently aimed at any thing that was for her own private gratification.

Thus Louiſa found herſelf reduced to explain the uſe ſhe intended to have made of the promiſe ſhe wanted to obtain; and having acquainted Miſs Melvyn with Mr. Hintman's generous allowance, and of the payment ſhe had received of the firſt quarter, ſhe in explicit terms told her, 'Mr. Hintman has indeed given me money, but it depends on you to make that money yield me pleaſure, by ſuffering me to apply it to ſuch uſes, as will procure me the inexpreſſible joy of contributing in ſome degree to the pleaſure of one who renders my life ſo very happy.'

Miſs Melvyn was ſo pleaſed with the generoſity of her little pupil, that ſhe gave her as many careſſes as the other had laviſhed on her, in order to obtain the promiſe ſhe ſo much wiſhed for; but ſhe could not be induced to grant her requeſt. Miſs Melvyn was void of that pride which often conceals itſelf under the name of ſpirit and greatneſs of ſoul; and makes people averſe to receiving an obligation, becauſe they feel themſelves too proud to be grateful, and think that to be obliged, implies an inferiority which their pride cannot ſupport. Had Louiſa been of the ſame age with herſelf, ſhe would have felt a kind of property in all ſhe poſſeſſed; friendſhip, the tenure by which ſhe

held it; for where hearts are ſtrictly united, ſhe had no notion of any diſtinction in things of leſs importance, the adventitious goods of fortune. The bourdaries and barriers raiſed by thoſe two watchful and ſuſpicious enemies, Meum and Tuum, were in her opinion broke down by true friendſhip; and all property laid in one undiſtinguiſhed common; but to accept Miſs Mancel's money, eſpecially in ſo great a proportion, appeared to her like taking advantage of her youth; and as ſhe did not think her old enough to be a ſufficient judge of the value of it, ſhe did not look upon her as capable of being a party in ſo perfect a friendſhip, as was requiſite to conſtitute that unity of property.

Poor Louiſa by this diſappointment of the firſt wiſh of her heart, found what older people often experience, that her riches inſtead of pleaſure procured her only mortification. She could ſcarcely refrain from tears at a refuſal which ſhe thought muſt ariſe from want of affection, and told Miſs Melvyn, ſhe ſaw that ſhe loved her but imperfectly; for, added ſhe, 'Could we change places, with how much 'pleaſure ſhould I have accepted it from you! and 'the ſatisfaction that learning theſe things now 'give me would be turned into delight, by reflect-'ing on the gratification you would receive in hav-'ing been the means of procuring them for me. 'I ſhould not envy you the joy of giving, becauſe 'I as receiver ſhould not have the leſs ſhare of that 'ſatisfaction, ſince by reflecting on yours I muſt par-'take of it, and ſo encreaſe my own.'

Miſs Melvyn could not forbear bluſhing at finding a ſuperior degree of delicacy, and a generoſity much more exalted, in one ſo young, than ſhe had felt in herſelf. She plainly ſaw, that the greateſt proof of a noble mind is to feel a joy in gratitude; for thoſe who know all the pleaſures of conferring

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an obligation, will be ſenſible, that by accepting it they give the higheſt delight the human mind can feel, when employed on human objects; and therefore while they receive a benefit, they will taſte not only the comforts ariſing from it to themſelves, but ſhare the gratification of a benefactor, from reflecting on the joy they give to thoſe who have conferred it: thus the receiver of a favour from a truly generous perſon, 'by owing owes not, and is at once 'indebted and diſcharged.'

As Miſs Melvyn felt her little friend's reproach, and ſaw that ſhe had done her injuſtice in thinking her youth rendered her incapable of that perfection of friendſhip, which might juſtify the accepting of her offer; ſhe acknowledged her error, and aſſured her, 'ſhe would comply if ſhe had no other means 'of obtaining the inſtruction ſhe propoſed to pur-'chaſe for her; but that was not the caſe, for ſhe 'found ſhe could very well learn from ſeeing the 'maſters teach her, and practiſing in their ab-'ſence.'

Mr. Hintman expreſſed a deſire that Miſs Mancel ſhould learn Italian, if ſhe had no objection to it; for he never dictated to her, but offered any advice he had to give, or any inclination which he choſe to intimate, with the humility of a dependant, rather than the authority of a benefactor; and indeed it was ſufficient; for the ſlighteſt hint that any thing would be agreeable to him, met with the moſt impatient deſire in Miſs Mancel to perform it: actuated by ſincere affection, and the ſtrongeſt gratitude, nothing made her ſo happy, as an opportunity to ſhew him the readineſs of her obedience.

But as they were at a loſs for a maſter to teach her that language, Miſs Melvyn told them ſhe knew an Italian gentleman, who had been at Sir Charles's

house near two months before she had the misfortune of losing the best of mothers. Lady Melvyn had begun to teach her daughter Italian, but desirous that she should speak it with great propriety, she invited this gentleman to her house, who was reduced to great distress of circumstances, and whose person, as well as his many virtues, she had known from her childhood. He had been a friend of her father's, and she was glad of this excuse for making him an handsome present, which otherwise it was not easy to induce him to accept.

Mr. Hintman was not long before he procured this Italian master for Miss Mancel; nor did she delay making use of his instructions; but I shall not describe her progress in the acquisitions of this, any more than her other accomplishments, in all which she excelled to a surprizing degree; nor did Miss Melvyn fall very short of her, though she was at such disadvantage in her method of learning many of them, not having the assistance of a master. Their time was so entirely engrossed by these employments, that they had little leisure, and still less desire to keep company with the rest of the school; but they saved themselves from the dislike which might naturally have arisen in the minds of the other scholars, from being thus neglected, by little presents which Miss Mancel frequently made them.

These two young ladies were very early risers, and the time which was not taken up by Miss Mancel's masters, and that wherein it was requisite to practise what they taught her, they employed in reading, wherein Mr. d'Avora, their Italian master, often accompanied them.

Mr. d'Avora was a man of excellent understanding, and had an incomparable heart. Misfortunes had softened common humanity into a most tender disposition;

diſpoſition; and had given him a thorough knowlege of mankind, without leſſening his benevolence for individuals; though ſuch as learn it by adverſity, the ſureſt ſchool for that ſcience, ſeldom ſee them in an amiable light.

Mr. d'Avora was not leſs acquainted with particular nations than with mankind in general; he had travelled through all the countries in Europe, ſome parts of Aſia and Africa, and having traverſed them with diſcernment, and the curioſity of wiſdom, not of impertinence, he received ſuch improvement of underſtanding, as few travellers can boaſt.

He had an affection for Miſs Melvyn, both for her own merits and the obligations he had to her family, and a very ſhort acquaintance with Miſs Mancel made him extremely fond of her. He took great pleaſure in aſſiſting them in the improvement they ſo induſtriouſly laboured for, and as he was a man of univerſal knowlege, he was capable of being very uſeful to them in that reſpect. For this purpoſe he often read with them, and by explaining many books on abſtruſe ſubjects, rendered ſeveral authors intelligible to them, who, without his aſſiſtance, would have been too obſcure for perſons of their age. He had very few ſcholars, therefore had much leiſure, and with great ſatisfaction dedicated part of it to our young ladies, as he ſaw he thereby gave them a very ſincere pleaſure; and he was much gratified with thinking that by his care, and inſtruction of Miſs Melvyn, he made ſome return for the friendſhip he had received from her family; and that could her mother be ſenſible of his attendance on her much-loved and now neglected daughter, it would be highly agreeable to her.

In the manner I have mentioned, these two young ladies past their time, till Miss Mancel reached her fifteenth year, with little alteration, except the encrease of her charms, and her great improvement in every accomplishment. Her appearance began to grow womanly, she was indeed,

'In the bloom of beauty's pride,'

Dazzlingly handsome at first view; but such numerous and various charms appeared on a more intimate acquaintance, that people forgot how much they had been struck by the first sight of her, lost in wonder at her encreasing attractions, to the force of which she was the only person that was insensible. Humble piety rendered her indifferent to circumstances, which she looked upon rather as snares than blessings, and like a person on the brink of a precipice could not enjoy the beauty of the prospect, over-awed by the dangers of her situation.

She had indeed too much of human nature in her not to feel sometimes a *little* flush of vanity on seeing herself admired; but she immediately corrected the foible, by reflecting, that whatever advantages of mind or form had fallen to her share, they were given her by one who expected she should not suffer her thoughts or attention to be withdrawn thereby from him, who was the perfection of all excellence, while she at best could but flatter herself with being less imperfect than many of her fellow creatures.

She considered flattery and admiration as the rocks on which young people, who are at all superior to the multitude, are apt to be wrecked; deprived of quiet happiness in this world, and exalted felicity in the next; and as she was really convinced, that she had only a few obvious external advantages over

over others, ſhe oppoſed to the praiſes laviſhed on her, reflections on her imperfections, which, though not apparent to any one but herſelf, ſhe verily believed were uncommonly great, as ſhe beheld them with very ſcrutinizing and rigid eyes, while ſhe looked on thoſe of others with the greateſt lenity. But of all the means ſhe uſed to preſerve her humility, ſhe was the moſt aſſiduous in praying to him who made her heart, to preſerve it humble.

Though the degree of piety I mention, may ſound in the ears of many too grave for ſo young a perſon, yet it by no means rendered her ſo; ſhe had great vivacity; a lively imagination; an uncommon ſhare of wit; and a very happy manner of expreſſing herſelf. She had all the amiable gaiety of youth, without the leaſt tendency to imprudence; and when ſhe talked moſt, and, in appearance, let fancy aſſume the reins, ſaid nothing to repent of. Her heart was all purity, univerſal benevolence and good-nature; and as out of its abundance her mouth ſpake, ſhe was in little danger of offending with her tongue.

It is not ſtrange that Mr. Hintman's fondneſs ſhould increaſe with Miſs Mancel's excellencies, but the careſſes which ſuited her earlier years were now become improper; and Mr. Hintman, by appearing inſenſible of the neceſſary change of behaviour, reduced her to great difficulties; ſhe could not reconcile herſelf to receiving of them; and yet to inform him of the impropriety, implied a forward conſciouſneſs which ſhe was not able to aſſume.

She communicated the vexation of her mind to Miſs Melvyn, who was ſtill more alarmed, as her ſuperior age and experience rendered her more apprehenſive; but ſhe knew not what to adviſe.

In this dilemma Miſs Melvyn had recourſe to their good friend, whoſe knowledge of mankind, his integrity and prudence, rendered him the ſafeſt guide. Accordingly one day when Louiſa was called from them to Mr. Hintman, who came to make her a viſit, Miſs Melvyn inform'd Mr. d'Avora, of the reaſon why her friend obeyed the ſummons with leſs joy, than he had obſerved in her on the like occaſion the year before.

Mr. d'Avora was much diſturbed at this information; but not chuſing to increaſe the uneaſineſs the young ladies ſeemed to be under till he had more certain foundation for his opinion, he only intimated, that 'cuſtoms were hard to break, but he 'ſhould hope, that when Mr. Hintman reflected on 'the impropriety of behaving to a young woman 'as if ſhe was ſtill a child, he would alter it, and 'if he was not immediately ſenſible of the differ-'ence a ſmall addition of age makes, yet her be-'haviour would lead him to recollect it.'

Although Mr. d'Avora ſeemed to pay little regard to what Miſs Melvyn ſaid, yet it made great impreſſion on him, and as ſoon as he left her, he took all proper meaſures to enquire into the character, and uſual conduct of Mr. Hintman.

This ſcrutiny did not turn out at all to his ſatisfaction, every account he received was the ſame; he had not the pleaſure of finding what is uſually aſſerted, that 'all men have two characters;' for Mr. Hintman had but one, and that the moſt alarming that could be for Miſs Mancel. Every perſon told him, 'that Mr. Hintman had a very 'great fortune, which he ſpent entirely in the gra-'tification of his favourite vice, the love of wo-'men; on whom his profuſeneſs was boundleſs. 'That as he was eaſily captivated, ſo he was ſoon 'tired; and ſeldom kept a woman long after he

'had

'had obtained the free poſſeſſion of her; but ge-
'nerally was more bountiful than is cuſtomary
'with men of his debauched principles at parting
'with them.'

This, Mr. d'Avora was aſſured, was Mr. Hintman's only vice; that he was good-natured, and generous on all occaſions. From this account he ſaw too great reaſon to fear, that all the care which had been taken to improve Miſs Mancel, aroſe only from a ſort of epicuriſm in his predominant vice, but yet this was too doubtful a circumſtance to be the ground-work of any plan of action. A man of acknowledged generoſity and good-nature, however vicious, might do a noble action without having any criminal deſign. In this uncertainty of mind he knew not what to adviſe her, and was unwilling to excite ſuch fears in the breaſts of theſe two young friends, as might be groundleſs; but yet would entirely deſtroy their peace; therefore, he only told Miſs Melvyn in general terms, that, 'Mr. Hintman's character was ſuch, as rendered it 'very neceſſary that Louiſa ſhould be much on her 'guard; but that whether more than prudent cau-
'tion, and decent reſerve were requiſite, her own
'obſervation muſt diſcover, for no one elſe could
'determine that point, ſince he had the reputation
'of being generous as well as debauched; there-
'fore his actions towards her might be, and he
'hoped were, the reſult of his greateſt virtue, rather
'than of his predominant vice.'

Miſs Melvyn made a faithful report of what Mr. d'Avora had ſaid to her, which filled both herſelf and her friend with inexpreſſible uneaſineſs.

Louiſa was in great difficulty how to act, between gratitude and affection on the one ſide, and neceſſary caution and reſerve on the other. She was

almoſt as much afraid of appearing ungrateful, as of being imprudent. She found little aſſiſtance from the advice of her friends, who declared themſelves incapable of directing her, therefore ſhe was obliged to lay aſide all dependance on her own care, and to truſt in that of heaven, convinced that her innocence would be guarded by that power who knew the integrity and purity of her heart; and that while ſhe preſerved it unblemiſhed, even in thought and inclination, her prayers for his protection would not be unavailing.

The remainder of the winter paſſed like the former part, only that the encreaſe of her apprehenſions, ſo far leſſened her eaſy vivacity, that Mr. Hintman obſerved the alteration, and complained of the conſtraint and awe which damped her converſation.

As the ſchool broke up at Eaſter, he entreated her to accompany him that ſhort time into the country, from which ſhe would gladly have excuſed herſelf, both on account of her fears, and of her unwillingneſs to leave Miſs Melvyn, of whoſe converſation ſhe was now more particularly tenacious, as lady Melvyn had determined to ſuffer her to return home in a ſhort time, not knowing how to excuſe her remaining longer at ſchool, as ſhe was entered into her one and twentieth year. Miſs Melvyn would have been glad that her ladyſhip had not ſhewn this token of regard to popular opinion; for ſince ſhe had enjoyed Miſs Mancel's company, and been in poſſeſſion of ſo good a collection of books, ſhe was grown perfectly contented with her ſituation.

Louiſa, to make Mr. Hintman deſiſt from the requeſt he urged with ſo much importunity, tried every means that did not appear like a total diſinclination to accompany him, for any thing that bore

bore the air of ingratitude could not be ſupported by her, whoſe heart was ſo void of it, and who thought ſhe could never feel enough for her benefactor, if his deſigns were not ſo criminal, as ſhe feared, but ſcarcely could ſuffer herſelf to ſuſpect.

Mr. Hintman was too ardent in his purpoſes to give up his favourite ſcheme, and Louiſa beheld with inexpreſſible concern the day approach, when ſhe muſt either accompany him into the country, or diſoblige him for ever, and make herſelf appear extremely ungrateful in the eyes of a man, whom ſhe loved and honoured like a father. Her addreſſes to heaven for protection now became more vehement and continual, and the greateſt part of her time was ſpent on her knees in praying to that power in whom ſhe truſted. Miſs Melvyn and Mr. d'Avora were ſcarcely leſs anxious, or under fewer apprehenſions than herſelf, but could ſee no reſource except in the protection of the Almighty, to whom we ſeldom apply with entire faith and reſignation while we have any hopes in human aſſiſtance.

Two days before that fixed on for the purpoſed journey, when Louiſa's anxiety was riſen to the utmoſt height, the ſchool-miſtreſs entered the room, with a countenance ſo melancholy, as was more ſuitable to the ſituation of mind in which the two young friends were then in, than to any reaſon they apprehended ſhe could have for an air of ſo much ſorrow. She ſoon began a diſcourſe, which they immediately apprehended was preparatory to the opening of ſome fatal event, and which, as is uſual in ſuch caſes, was, if poſſible, more alarming than any misfortune it could precede. The ladies expreſſed their fears, and begged to be acquainted with what had befallen them. After conſiderable efforts to deliver her of the ſecret with which

ſhe

ſhe was pregnant, they learnt that a gentleman was in the parlour, who came to inform Miſs Mancel, that Mr. Hintman died the day before in a fit of an apoplexy.

All Louiſa's fears and ſuſpicions vaniſhed at once, and grief alone took poſſeſſion of her heart. The ſhock ſo entirely overcame her, that ſhe was not able to ſee the fatal meſſenger of ſuch melancholy tidings as the death of her benefactor, and ſecond father. Miſs Melvyn was obliged to undertake this office, and learnt from the gentleman, that Mr. Hintman died without a will, and therefore left the poor Louiſa as deſtitute, except being enriched by various accompliſhments, as he found her, and at a much more dangerous time, when her beauty would ſcarcely ſuffer compaſſion to ariſe unaccompanied with ſofter ſentiments. This gentleman proceeded to inform Miſs Melvyn, that 'his father and another perſon of equal relation to Mr. Hintman, were heirs at law. He expreſſed great concern for Miſs Mancel, and wiſhed he had his father's power of repairing Mr. Hintman's neglect, but that his influence extended no farther than to obtain a commiſſion to pay the expences of another year at that ſchool, that the young lady might have time to recollect herſelf after ſo fatal a change, and determine at leiſure on her future courſe of life.'

Miſs Melvyn was ſo ſenſibly touched at the proſpect of the approaching diſtreſs with which her friend was threatened, that ſhe burſt into tears, and uttered ſome exclamations concerning 'the inconſiſtency of that affection, which could ſuffer a man to reſt a moment without ſecuring a proviſion in caſe of death, to a young woman he ſeemed to love with the greateſt exceſs of tenderneſs.' 'Believe me, madam, ſaid the young gentleman,

tleman, ‘ Mr. Hintman was capable of no love ‘ that was not entirely ſenſual, and conſequently ‘ ſelfiſh; all who knew him lamented the fate of a ‘ young woman, who by every account is ſo ſu- ‘ periorly lovely. Among his friends he made no ‘ ſecret of his deſigns in all he had done for her, ‘ and boaſted frequently of the extraordinary charms ‘ which were ripening for his poſſeſſion. It was ‘ but two days ago, that he was exulting in the ‘ preſence of ſome of them, that the time was now ‘ approaching, when he ſhould be rewarded for ‘ long expectation, and boundleſs expence; for he ‘ ſhould then, he ſaid, be ſure of her perſon, and ‘ had long ſecured her heart. He knew he had ‘ ſtrong prejudices and ſtrange ſcruples to combat; ‘ but was prepared, and ſhould not find them diffi- ‘ cult to conquer; at worſt, his ſteward in a par- ‘ ſon's habit would lull them all to ſleep.’

‘ Good heaven! cried Miſs Melvyn, could there ‘ be ſuch a wretch, and were there men who ‘ would keep company with him, who would bear ‘ the diſgrace of being called his friends?

‘ Your notions, madam, replied the gentleman, ‘ are too refined for perſons who live in the world: ‘ ſhould a man inſiſt on ſtrict morals in all his ac- ‘ quaintance, he might enjoy a ſolitude in the moſt ‘ populous city; though, I confeſs, nothing but ‘ ties of kindred could have made me intimate with ‘ one of Mr. Hintman's character, which I ſhould ‘ not thus have expoſed to you, but as I imagined ‘ a better knowledge of the man, might alleviate ‘ the affliction you ſeemed to feel for Miſs Mancel's ‘ having loſt one whom you eſteemed ſo ſincere a ‘ friend. I ſhould have been glad, continued he, ‘ could I have ſeen the young lady, of whom Mr. ‘ Hintman told ſuch wonders; but I will not pre- ‘ ſume to preſs it, time may offer me ſome oppor-

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'tunity for satisfying my curosity without paining 'her, I therefore take my leave, with only request-'ing your permission to remit the money of which 'I was made the bearer.'

Miss Melvyn was so much affected with her friend's situation, that she took the paper the gentleman offered her, without having power to reflect whether she ought to accept it, or being able to make him any acknowledgment; and he retired directly. She was obliged to stay some time to compose her spirits before she went to her friend, that she might be the better able to comfort her. On examining the paper, she found it a bank-note of an hundred pounds, which was now become all Miss Mancel's fortune.

Lamont could not forbear interrupting Mrs. Maynard in this place, by some very severe reflexions on Mr. Hintman's having neglected to make a provision for Miss Mancel in case of his death, which I believe was the part of his conduct that to Lamont appeared most inexcusable; for though he is too fashionable to think intriguing very criminal, yet he is naturally generous, as far as money is concerned. 'I cannot think, replied my cousin, that 'Mr. Hintman's behaviour in that particular can 'be much wondered at. Death to such a man 'must be so dreadful an event, that he will natu-'rally endeavour to banish it from his mind, when-'ever it attempts to intrude, and when a person 'takes so little care to make provision for his own 'happiness after death, is it strange he should be 'unmindful of what shall befall another after that 'fatal period? when a man neglects his own soul, 'and deprives himself of all hope of everlasting 'felicity, can we expect he should take any trou-'ble to provide for the temporal convenience of 'another person?

'Besides,

'Beſides, could he, who aimed at reducing an 'innocent and amiable young woman to guilt and 'infamy in this world, and eternal perdition in the 'next, be under any concern left ſhe ſhould fall 'into the leſſer miſeries of poverty? it would 'have been an inconſiſtency in ſuch a cha-'racter.'

'You ſee gallantry in a very ſerious light, ma-'dam, ſaid Lamont.'

'I do indeed, ſir, anſwered Mrs. Maynard, I 'look on it as the moſt dangerous of vices, it de-'ſtroys truth, honour, humanity, it is directly 'contrary to the laws of God, is the deſtruction 'of ſociety, and almoſt as inconſiſtent with mo-'rality as with religion.'

'I beg pardon, madam, interrupted Lamont, '(who felt himſelf a little touched with what ſhe 'ſaid) for breaking into your narrative, and muſt 'beg you will continue it.'

Miſs Melvyn, reſumed Mrs. Maynard, was too well acquainted with the ſtrength of Louiſa's mind, to think it neceſſary to conceal from her any part of what had paſſed between herſelf and Mr. Hintman's relation.

Louiſa, much affected by Mr. Hintman's dying, with a heart ſo unfit to appear at the tribunal before which he was ſo ſuddenly ſummoned, thought not immediately of herſelf; but when ſhe reflected on the dangers ſhe had eſcaped, ſhe bleſſed her poverty, ſince it was the conſequence of an event which delivered her from ſo much greater evils, and ſent up many ſincere and ardent thankſgivings to heaven, for ſo ſignal a preſervation. Theſe thoughts poſſeſſed our young friends for the firſt three or four days after Mr. Hintman's death; but then they began to think it requiſite to conſult with Mr. d'Avora, on what courſe of life it was

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moſt adviſable for Miſs Mancel to enter. This was a difficult point to determine; though her underſtanding and attainments were far ſuperior to her years, yet they were ſenſible her youth would be a great impediment to her in any undertaking. Mr. d'Avora therefore adviſed, that ſhe ſhould continue a little longer at the ſchool, and then fix in the moſt private manner imaginable for three or four years, by which time he hoped to be able to eſtabliſh her in ſome widow's family, as governeſs to her children; for he told her ſhe muſt not expect, while her perſon continued ſuch as it then was, that a married woman would receive her in any capacity that fixed her in the ſame houſe with her huſband.

As Miſs Mancel had many jewels and trinkets of value, ſhe had no doubt but that with œconomy, ſhe might ſupport herſelf for the term Mr. d'Avora mentioned, and even longer if requiſite, as ſhe could add to her little fund by the produce of her induſtry. As Miſs Melvyn's return home drew near, it was agreed, that ſhe ſhould ſeek out ſome place in Sir Charles's neighbourhood, where Louiſa might lodge cheaply and reputably; and in the mean time Mr. d'Avora ſhould diſpoſe of whatever ſhe had of value, except her books and her harpſicord; theſe ſhe reſolved not to part with till the produce of her other things, and the money ſhe had by her, was ſpent, as they would not only amuſe her in the country, but afford her the power of improving herſelf in thoſe accompliſhments which were to be her future proviſion.

This plan ſoftened the pangs of ſeparation when the time of Miſs Melvyn's departure arrived. It was not long before ſhe found out an apartment at a reputable farmers, where Miſs Mancel might lodge conveniently. Had it been a leſs tolerable place, its vicinity to Sir Charles's houſe, from which

it

it was but a quarter of a mile diſtant, would have made it a very delightful abode to her, and ſhe ſoon repaired thither.

Great was the joy of the two friends at meeting. Miſs Melvyn's ſituation at home was rendered as irkſome as poſſible, by Lady Melvyn's behaviour both to her and Sir Charles, who, notwithſtanding her ill treatment, was extremely fond of, and totally guided by her. His mind was ſo entirely enſlaved, that he beheld nothing but in the light wherein ſhe pleaſed to repreſent it, and was ſo eaſy a dupe, that ſhe could ſcarcely feel the joys of ſelf triumph in her ſuperior art, which was on no ſubject ſo conſtantly exerted, as in keeping up a coldneſs in Sir Charles towards his daughter; this ſhe had with tolerable facility effected in her abſence, and was aſſiduouſly careful to preſerve now ſhe was preſent. To thoſe who know not the power an artful woman can obtain over a weak man, it would appear incredible, that any father could be prejudiced againſt a daughter, whoſe whole attention was to pleaſe him. She had ſo perfect a command over her temper, that ſhe never appeared to take offence at any thing Lady Melvyn ſaid or did, though that lady endeavoured by every provocation to throw her off her guard. This behaviour only encreaſed her hatred, which was not in the leaſt abated by Miſs Melvyn's taking every opportunity of being ſerviceable to her brothers and ſiſters-in-law. Lady Melvyn perſuaded Sir Charles, that his daughter's calmneſs was only aſſumed in his preſence, and continually complained of her inſolence, when he was not by. If he ever appeared to doubt the truth of her report, ſhe would burſt into tears, complain of his want of love, and little confidence in her; and ſometimes thought proper to ſhew her grief at ſuch treatment, by a pretended hyſteric fit, always

always ready at call to come to her assistance, though really so unnecessarily lavished on one easily duped without those laborious means, that it appeared a wantonness of cunning, which was thus exerted only for its own indulgence. She soon perceived that Miss Melvyn rather chose to submit to any aspersions, than to render her father unhappy, by undeceiving him; and taking advantage of this generosity, would sometimes, to establish his opinion of her veracity, accuse Miss Melvyn to her face of offences which she had never committed, and things she had never said.

In such a situation the arrival of a friend, into whose sympathetic bosom she could pour all her griefs, and in whose delightful society she could forget them, was the highest blessing. But Lady Melvyn contrived to make her feel mortifications even in this tendercst particular, for though she was in her heart glad to have her out of the house, that she might not be witness of much improper behaviour, yet she would sometimes mortify herself in order to teaze Miss Melvyn, by preventing her from going to her beloved friend; and continually alledged, her spending so much time with Louisa, as a proof of that aversion she had made Sir Charles believe Miss Melvyn had to her.

Louisa felt deeply her friend's uneasiness, but when they were together they could not be unhappy. They seldom passed a day without seeing each other, but as Lady Melvyn had taken no notice of Louisa, she could not go to her house, therefore their meetings were at her lodgings, where they often read together, and at other times would apply to music to drive away melancholy reflexions. As Louisa wished to remain near her friend as long as possible, she endeavoured, by taking in plain-work, to provide for some part of her current expences, the less to diminish

miniſh the little fund ſhe had by her. She likewiſe employed part of her time in painting, having reaſon to hope, that if ſhe could find a means of offering her pictures to ſale, ſhe might from them raiſe a very convenient ſum. While ſhe was thus contriving to enable herſelf to enjoy for many years the converſation of her friend, Lady Melvyn was as induſtriouſly laying ſchemes that, if ſucceſsful, muſt diſappoint all the young ladies hopes.

Towards the end of the autumn, Mr. Morgan, a man of fortune, who had ſpent above half a year in a fruitleſs purſuit after health, made a viſit to a gentleman in the neighbourhood. Unfortunately Miſs Melvyn's charms made a conqueſt of this gentleman, in whom age had not gained a victory over paſſion. Miſs Melvyn's humility occaſioned her being the laſt perſon who perceived the impreſſion ſhe had made on his heart, and his age would ſcarcely ſuffer her to believe her ſenſes when the ſymptoms became moſt apparent. A girl may find ſome amuſement in a young lover, though ſhe feels no diſpoſition in herſelf to return his paſſion, her vanity is flattered by his addreſſes, and a woman muſt be very little diſpoſed to be pleaſed, who receives no pleaſure from one who is continually endeavouring to oblige and amuſe her; but the moſt whimſical of the poets never fancied a grey-bearded Cupid, or repreſented Hymen with a torch in one hand, and a crutch in the other. I allow that,

'Oft the matrimonial Cupid,
'Laſh'd on by time grows tir'd and ſtupid,'

And does not always wear that blooming joyous countenance, which the painters give him; but ſhould any capricious artiſt take the ſickle out of the hand of old Time, and in its place put Hymen's torch,

torch, the picture might be thought very unnatural, yet would represent a proper hymeneal Cupid to attend Mr. Morgan to the altar.

Such a lover could excite no emotion in his mistress's heart but disgust. Miss Melvyn's principles were too delicate to suffer her to think she had any title to ridicule a man for his partiality to her, however ill-suited to himself; but no consideration could prevent his addresses from being extremely disagreeable: however, she could without any great difficulty have so far commanded herself, as to have treated him with complaisance, till he gave her an opportunity of rejecting his courtship, had she not been apprehensive that this affair would give Lady Melvyn a new subject for persecution. She was pretty certain, that lady would be glad to settle her in another county; and that her averseness to so ill-suited a marriage would only serve as an additional recommendation to her mother. She was indeed determined in justice to Mr. Morgan, and compassion to herself, not to be induced by any sollicitations to marry a man whom she could not hope, that even the strongest attachment to duty could render so well as indifferent to her, but she dreaded the means that might be taken to oblige her to accept Mr. Morgan's proposal.

Little did she guess what those means would be. She expected to be attacked alternately with all the violence of passion, the affected softness of dissimulation, and every art that cunning could devise, to force Sir Charles to concur in her persecution. These indeed were employed as soon as Mr. Morgan made his proposals; but her ladyship had too many resources in her fertile brain to persevere long in a course she found unavailing. The farmer where Miss Mancel lodged had a son, who was in treaty with Lady Melvyn for a farm, which at the end of the

the year would become vacant. This perſon ſhe thought fit for her purpoſe, as Miſs Melvyn's going ſo frequently to Miſs Mancel, might give ſome colour to her invention. She therefore took care to be found by Sir Charles drowned in tears; he preſſed to know the occaſion of her grief, but ſhe reſiſted his importunity in ſuch a manner, as could not fail to encreaſe it, ſtill ſhe declared, that 'ſhe 'loved him to that exceſs ſhe could not communi-'cate a ſecret which ſhe knew muſt afflict him, 'even though the ſuppreſſion and inward preyings 'of her ſorrow ſhould prove fatal to her life.'

Sir Charles now on his knees intreated her 'to 'acquaint him with the misfortune ſhe endeavour-'ed to conceal, aſſuring her, that nothing could 'give him ſo much concern as ſeeing her in that 'condition.' She told him, 'ſhe was ſenſible, that 'as his wife it was her duty to obey him; (a duty 'newly diſcovered, or at leaſt newly performed by her 'ladyſhip) but ſhe feared ſhe had not ſtrength left 'to give it utterance.' The endeavour threw her into an hyſteric fit, which was ſucceeded by ſo many others, that Sir Charles was almoſt frantic with his fears for ſo tender a wife, who was thus reduced to the laſt agonies by her affectionate apprehenſions of giving him pain.

After rubbing her hands and feet till they were ſore, ſuffocating her with burnt feathers, and half poiſoning her with medicines, Sir Charles and her ſervants ſo far brought her to life, that after ſending her attendants out of the room, ſhe had juſt power to tell him, 'ſhe had diſcovered an intrigue 'between his daughter and Simon the young farmer,' and then immediately ſunk into another fit, which however did not laſt ſo long; for as ſhe had removed the heavy burden off her mind, ſhe ſoon began to recover.

Sir

Sir Charles was very much ſhocked at what Lady Melvyn told him, but could not doubt the reality of the fact, when he had ſeen the very violent effect it had had on his tender wife. He aſked her advice how to proceed; and it was ſoon determined that it was neceſſary, either to oblige Miſs Melvyn to marry Mr. Morgan directly, or to diſclaim her for ever, and remove the diſgrace of ſo infamous a conduct as far from themſelves as poſſible. With this reſolution ſhe was to be immediately acquainted.

Miſs Melvyn was accordingly called in, and bitterly reproached by Sir Charles; to which my Lady added frequent lamentations, that ſhe ſhould ſo far forget herſelf, and diſgrace ſo worthy a family, interſperſing with them many expreſſions of the undeſerved tenderneſs ſhe had always had for her, and her great confidence in Miſs Melvyn's prudence and virtue, ſhedding tears for her having ſo unhappily ſwerved from them.

As all this paſſed for ſome time in general terms, Miſs Melvyn was in doubt whether ſhe or her parents had loſt their ſenſes; convinced there muſt be diſtraction on one ſide or the other. As ſoon as ſhe could recover her ſurprize, ſhe begged to know what crime ſhe had committed? her aſtoniſhment was ſtill increaſed by the anſwer ſhe received, which was an accuſation of this ſtrange intrigue; and her frequent viſits to Miſs. Mancel were brought as proofs of it. The ſubmiſſive and mild temper which had hitherto moſt ſtrongly characteriſed her, vaniſhed at ſo injurious a charge, and ſhe denied the fact with that true ſpirit which innocence inſpires. She told Lady Melvyn, that 'though ſhe 'had hitherto ſilently ſubmitted to all her ill uſage, 'yet it was her duty to repel an injury like this, 'and when her reputation was ſo cruelly aſperſed, 'it would be criminal to ſuffer the vile inventors

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'to paſs unexpoſed. She inſiſted on being con-
'fronted with her accuſers, a privilege allowed to
'the greateſt criminals, and by the ſevereſt judges,
'therefore ſurely could not be refuſed by a father
'to a daughter, on a charge ſo highly improbable,
'and for which no lightneſs in her conduct ever
'gave the leaſt ground.'

As Mrs. Maynard was in this part of her narrative a bell rang, which informed us that dinner was ready, and we were unwillingly obliged to poſtpone the continuation of the hiſtory of the two young friends, till a more convenient opportunity.

In the afternoon before we roſe from table, four ladies came to drink tea with this admirable ſociety. No addition was neceſſary to render the converſation amuſing; but the ſtrangers ſeemed to look on the ladies of the houſe with ſuch gratitude and veneration, and were treated by them with ſo much friendly politeneſs, as gave me pleaſure. I found by the various enquiries after different perſons, that theſe viſitors likewiſe lived in a large ſociety. When they roſe up to take leave, Mrs. Trentham propoſed to walk part of the way home with them. No one objected to it, for the evening was inviting, and they had deſigned to ſpend it in the park, through which theſe Ladies were to paſs; for Lady Mary obſerved, that 'after having ſhewn us the 'beauties of the place, they ought to exhibit the 'riches of it.'

The park is cloſe to one ſide of the houſe; it is not quite three miles round; the inequality of the ground much increaſes its beauty, and the timber is remarkably fine. We could plainly perceive it had been many years in the poſſeſſion of good œconomiſts, who unprompted by neceſſity, did not think the profit that might ariſe from the ſale, a

ſufficient inducement to deprive it of ſome fine trees, which are now decaying, but ſo happily placed, that they are made more venerable, and not leſs beautiful by their declining age. This park is much ornamented by two or three fine pieces of water; one of them is a very noble canal, ſo artfully terminated by an elegant bridge, beyond which is a wood, that it there appears like a fine river vaniſhing from the eye.

Mrs. Morgan ſtopped us in one ſpot, ſaying, 'from hence, as Lady Mary obſerved, you may 'behold our riches, that building, (pointing to 'what we thought a pretty temple) which perhaps 'you imagine deſigned only for ornament or plea-'ſure, is a very large pidgeon houſe, that affords a 'ſufficient ſupply to our family, and many of our 'neighbours. That hill on your right-hand is a 'warren, prodigiouſly ſtocked with rabbits; this 'canal, and theſe other pieces of water, as well 'as the river you ſaw this morning, furniſh our 'table with a great profuſion of fiſh. You will 'eaſily believe from the great number of deer you 'ſee around us, that we have as much veniſon as 'we can uſe, either in preſents to our friends, or 'our own family. Hares, and all ſorts of game 'likewiſe abound here; ſo that with the help of a 'good dairy, perhaps no ſituation ever more amply 'afforded all the neceſſaries of life. Theſe are in-'deed our riches; here we have almoſt every thing 'we can want, for a very ſmall proportion of that 'expence which others are at to procure them.

'Such a ſituation, ſaid I, would be dangerous 'to many people, for if, as ſome have ſuppoſed, 'and, in regard to a great part of the world, I 'fear with truth, mutual wants are the great bands 'of ſociety, a perſon thus placed, would be in 'danger of feeling himſelf ſo independant a being,

'as

'as might tempt him to diſclaim all commerce 'with mankind, ſince he could not be benefitted 'by them. He would look on himſelf in the light of 'a rich man gaming with ſharpers, with a great 'probability of loſing, and a certainty of never be-'ing a gainer.'

'I do not think the danger, replied Lady Mary, 'ſo great as you imagine, even though we allow 'that ſociety ariſes from the motive you mention. 'However fortune may have ſet us above any bo-'dily wants, the mind will ſtill have many which 'would drive us into ſociety. Reaſon wiſhes for 'communication and improvement; benevolence 'longs for objects on which to exert itſelf; the ſo-'cial comforts of friendſhip are ſo neceſſary to our 'happineſs, that it would be impoſſible not to en-'deavour to enjoy them. In ſickneſs the langour 'of our minds makes us wiſh for the amuſements 'of converſation; in health the vivacity of our 'ſpirits leads us to deſire it. To avoid pain we 'ſeek after corporeal conveniencies, to procure 'pleaſure we aim at mental enjoyments; and I be-'lieve, if we obſerve the general courſe of men's 'actions, we ſhall ſee them at leaſt as ſtrongly ac-'tuated by the deſire of pleaſure, as by the fear 'of pain; though philoſophers, who have formed 'their judgments more on reaſon than the know-'lege of mankind, may have thought otherwiſe.'

'I think, ſaid Mrs. Selwyn, ſomebody has aſ-'ſerted, that he who could live without ſociety 'muſt be more than a God, or leſs than a man; 'the latter part of this aſſertion would have held 'good had he carried it farther, and ſaid lower 'than a brute, for there is no creature in the uni-'verſe that is not linked into ſome ſociety, except 'we allow the exiſtence of that exploded and un-'ſociable bird the Phœnix.'

'I am ſurprized, interrupted Lamont, to hear 'Ladies, who ſeclude themſelves from the world 'in this ſolitary though beautiful place, ſo ſtrongly plead for ſociety.'

'Do you then, replied Mrs. Mancel, miſtake a 'croud for ſociety? I know not two things more 'oppoſite. How little ſociety is there to be found 'in what you call the world? It might more properly be compared to that ſtate of war, which 'Hobbes ſuppoſes the firſt condition of mankind. 'The ſame vanities, the ſame paſſions, the ſame 'ambition, reign in almoſt every breaſt; a conſtant deſire to ſupplant, and a continual fear of 'being ſupplanted, keep the minds of thoſe who 'have any views at all in a ſtate of unremitted 'tumult and envy; and thoſe who have no aim in 'their actions are too irrational to have a notion 'of ſocial comforts. The love, as well as the 'pleaſures of ſociety, is founded in reaſon, and cannot exiſt in thoſe minds which are filled with irrational purſuits. Such indeed might claim a place 'in the ſociety of birds and beaſts, though few 'would deſerve to be admitted amongſt them, but 'that of reaſonable beings muſt be founded in reaſon. What I underſtand by ſociety is a ſtate of 'mutual confidence, reciprocal ſervices, and correſpondent affections; where numbers are thus united, there will be a free communication of ſentiments, and we ſhall then find ſpeech, that peculiar bleſſing given to man, a valuable gift indeed; 'but when we ſee it reſtrained by ſuſpicion, or 'contaminated by detraction, we rather wonder 'that ſo dangerous a power was truſted with a 'race of beings, who ſeldom make a proper uſe of 'it.

'You will pity us perhaps becauſe we have no 'cards, no aſſemblies, no plays, no maſquerades,

'in

'in this ſolitary place. The firſt we might have if 'we choſe it, nor are they totally diſclaimed by us; 'but while we can with ſafety ſpeak our own 'thoughts, and with pleaſure read thoſe of wiſer 'perſons, we are not likely to be often reduced to 'them. We wiſh not for large aſſemblies, becauſe 'we do not deſire to drown converſation in noiſe; 'the amuſing fictions of dramatic writers are not 'neceſſary where nature affords us ſo many real de-'lights; and as we are not afraid of ſhewing our 'hearts, we have no occaſion to conceal our per-'ſons, in order to obtain either liberty of ſpeech or 'action,'

'What a ſerious world ſhould we have, madam, 'replied Lamont, if you were to regulate our con-'duct!'

'By no means, ſir, anſwered Mrs. Mancel, I 'wiſh to make only theſe alterations, to change 'noiſe for real mirth, flutter for ſettled chearfulneſs, 'affected wit for rational converſation; and would 'but have that degree of diſſipation baniſhed, which 'deprives people of time for reflection on the mo-'tives for, and conſequences of, their actions, that 'their pleaſures may be real and permament, and 'followed neither by repentance nor puniſhment. 'I would wiſh them to have leiſure to conſider by 'whom they were ſent into the world, and for 'what purpoſe, and to learn, that their happineſs 'conſiſts in fulfilling the deſign of their Maker, in 'providing for their own greateſt felicity, and 'contributing all that is in their power to the 'convenience of others.'

'You ſeem, madam, anſwered Lamont, to 'chooſe to make us all ſlaves to each other?

'No, ſir, replied Mrs. Mancel, I would only 'make you friends. Thoſe who are really ſuch 'are continually endeavouring to ſerve and oblige

'each other; this reciprocal communication of be-
'nefits ſhould be univerſal, and then we might
'with reaſon be fond of this world.'

'But, ſaid Lamont, this reciprocal communi-
'cation is impoſſible; what ſervice can a poor man
'do me? I may relieve him; but how can he re-
'turn the obligation?'

'It is he, anſwered Mrs. Mancel, who firſt con-
'ferred it, in giving you an opportunity of reliev-
'ing him. The pleaſure he has afforded you, is
'as far ſuperior to the gratification you have pro-
'cured him; as it is more bleſſed to give than to
'receive. You will perhaps ſay of him, as the
'apothecary in Romeo and Juliet does of himſelf,
'and tell me that,

"His poverty and not his will conſents."

'So let it be, and do you

"Pay his poverty and not his will."

'But certainly the higheſt ſatisfaction is on your
'ſide, and much obliged you are to that poverty,
'which enables you to obtain ſo great a gratifica-
'tion. But do not think the poor can make no ade-
'quate return. The greateſt pleaſure this world
'can give us is that of being beloved, but how
'ſhould we expect to obtain love without deſerving
'it? Did you ever ſee any one that was not fond
'of a dog that fondled him? Is it then poſſible to
'be inſenſible to the affection of a rational be-
'ing?'

'If Mr. Lamont, ſaid one of the viſitors, has
'not ſo high a ſenſe of the pleaſure of being grate-
'fully loved and eſteemed, we ought not to blame
'him; he, perhaps, like the greateſt part of the
'world,

'world, has not ſufficiently tried it, to be a pro-
'per judge; Mrs. Mancel is certainly very deep in
'this knowledge, and her opinion may be received
'as almoſt an infallible deciſion, ſince it is found-
'ed on long experience; and how nobly does ſhe
'calm the eager wiſhes of impotent gratitude, in
'declaring herſelf to be the moſt benefitted when
'ſhe confers obligations.'

This was uttered with ſo much warmth, and accompanied by looks ſo expreſſive of affection and grateful ſenſibility, that I plainly ſaw it proceeded from ſomething more than mere ſpeculative approbation. Lamont declared, that 'he was well-con-
'vinced of the juſtneſs of what Mrs. Mancel had ſaid;
'at firſt it appeared rather a ſentiment uttered in
'ſport, than an opinion which could be proved by
'argument; but that a little reflection on ones own
'ſenſations, would afford ſufficient conviction of
'the truth of her aſſertion, and that the general
'errors in the conduct of mankind plainly evinced
'they were of the ſame opinion, though they of-
'ten miſtook the means; for what, continued he,
'do people ruin themſelves by pomp and ſplendor,
'hazard their lives in the purſuits of ambition,
'and, as Shakeſpear ſays,

"Seek the bubble reputation even in the can-
"non's mouth;"

'But to gain popular applauſe and eſteem? For
'what do others throw away their time in uſeleſs
'civilities, and politely flatter all they meet, but
'in hopes of pleaſing? Even thoſe who make it
'their buſineſs to ſlander merit, and exaggerate
'the faults of others, do it from a deſire of raiſing
'themſelves in the opinion of mankind, by low-

'ering those who may be brought into comparison 'with them.'

During this conversation we had advanced within a field of the house, and the ladies stopped to take their leave, saying, 'as the evening was too 'far advanced to suffer them to make any stay with 'their good friends, they would not disturb them 'by just entering their doors.' But as some parley ensued, several ladies who had seen us from the windows ran out, just to pay their compliments to the worthy inhabitants of Millenium-Hall. The pleasure of this short meeting seemed reciprocal, and both sides appeared unwilling to part, but the setting sun admonished us to return.

The house to which we had so nearly approached was a very large old mansion, and its inhabitants so numerous, that I was curious to know how so many became assembled together. Mrs. Maynard said, that 'if she did not satisfy my inquiries, I 'was in great danger of remaining ignorant of the 'nature of that society, as her friends would not 'be easily prevailed with to break silence on that 'subject.

'These ladies, said she, long beheld with com-'passion the wretched fate of those women, who 'from scantiness of fortune, and pride of family, 'are reduced to become dependant, and to bear all 'the insolence of wealth, from such as will receive 'them into their families; these, though in some 'measure voluntary slaves, yet suffer all the evils 'of the severest servitude, and are, I believe, the 'most unhappy part of the creation. Sometimes 'they are unqualified to gain a maintenance, edu-'cated as is called, genteelly, or in other words 'idly, they are ignorant of every thing that might 'give them superior abilities to the lower rank of 'people, and their birth renders them less accept-'able

‘ able ſervants to many, who have not generoſity
‘ enough to treat them as they ought, and yet do
‘ not chooſe while they are acting the miſtreſs,
‘ perhaps too haughtily, to feel the ſecret reproach-
‘ es of their own hearts. Poſſibly pride may ſtill
‘ oftener reduce theſe indigent gentlewomen into
‘ this wretched ſtate of dependance, and therefore
‘ the world is leſs inclined to pity them; but my
‘ friends ſee human weakneſs in another light.

‘ They imagine themſelves too far from perfec-
‘ tion to have any title to expect it in others, and
‘ think, that there are none in whom pride is ſo ex-
‘ cuſable as in the poor; for if there is the ſmalleſt
‘ ſpark of it in their compoſitions, and who is en-
‘ tirely free from it, the frequent neglects and in-
‘ dignities they meet with muſt keep it continually
‘ alive. If we are deſpiſed for caſual deficiencies,
‘ we naturally ſeek in ourſelves for ſome merit, to
‘ reſtore us to that dignity in our own eyes, which
‘ thoſe humiliating mortifications would otherwiſe
‘ debaſe. Thus we learn to ſet too great a value
‘ on what we ſtill poſſeſs, whether advantages of
‘ birth, education, or natural talents; any thing
‘ will ſerve for a reſource to mortified pride; and
‘ as every thing grows by oppoſition and perſecu-
‘ tion, we cannot wonder, if the opinion of our-
‘ ſelves increaſes by the ſame means.

‘ To perſons in this way of thinking, the pride
‘ which reduces many to be, what is called with too
‘ little humanity, toad-eaters, does not render them
‘ unworthy of compaſſion. Therefore for the re-
‘ lief of this race they bought that large manſion.

‘ They drew up ſeveral regulations, to ſecure the
‘ peace and good order of the ſociety they deſigned
‘ to form, and ſending a copy of it to all their ac-
‘ quaintance, told them, that any gentleman's
‘ daughter, whoſe character was unblemiſhed,

'might, if she desired it, on those terms be received 'into that society.'

I begged, if it was not too much trouble, to know what the regulations were.

'The first rule, continued Mrs. Maynard, was, 'that whoever chose to take the benefit of this 'asylum, for such I may justly call it, should 'deposite, in the hands of a person appointed for 'that purpose, whatever fortune she was mistress 'of, the security being approved by her and her 'friends, and remaining in her possession. Whenever she leaves the society, her fortune should be 'repaid her, the interest in the mean time being 'appropriated to the use of the community. The 'great design of this was to preserve an exact 'equality between them; for it was not expected, 'that the interest of any of their fortunes should 'pay the allowance they were to have for their 'cloaths. If any appeared to have secreted part of 'her fortune she should be expelled the society.

'Secondly, Each person to have a bed-chamber to 'herself, but the eating-parlour and drawing-room 'in common.

'Thirdly, All things for rational amusement 'shall be provided for the society; musical instruments, of whatever sort they shall chuse, books, 'tents for work, and in short conveniences for every 'kind of employment.

'Fourthly, They must conform to very regular 'hours.

'Fifthly, An house-keeper will be appointed to 'manage the household affairs, and a sufficient 'number of servants provided.

'Sixthly, Each person shall alternately, a week 'at a time, preside at the table, and give what family orders may be requisite.

'Seventhly, Twenty five-pounds a year shall be 'allowed

‘ allowed to each perſon for her cloaths and pocket
‘ expences.

‘ Eighthly, Their dreſs ſhall be quite plain and
‘ neat, but not particular nor uniform.

‘ Ninthly, The expences of ſickneſs ſhall be diſ-
‘ charged by the patroneſſes of this ſociety.

‘ Tenthly, If any one of the ladies behaves with
‘ imprudence ſhe ſhall be diſmiſſed, and her fortune
‘ returned; likewiſe if any ſhould by turbulence or
‘ pettiſhneſs of temper, diſturb the ſociety, it ſhall
‘ be in the power of the reſt of them to expel
‘ her; a majority of three parts of the community
‘ being for the expulſion, and this to be performed
‘ by ballotting.

‘ Eleventhly, A good table and every thing ſuit-
‘ able to the convenience of a gentlewoman, ſhall
‘ be provided.

‘ Theſe were the principal articles; and in leſs
‘ than two months a dozen perſons of different ages
‘ were eſtabliſhed in the houſe, who ſeemed tho-
‘ roughly delighted with their ſituation. At the
‘ requeſt of one of them, who had a friend that
‘ wiſhed to be admitted, an order was ſoon added,
‘ by the conſent of all, that gave leave for any
‘ perſon who would conform exactly to the rules
‘ of the houſe, to board there for ſuch length of
‘ time, as ſhould be agreeable to herſelf and the
‘ ſociety, for the price of an hundred pounds
‘ a year, fifty for any child ſhe might have, twenty
‘ for a maid-ſervant, and thirty for a man.

‘ The number of this ſociety is now increaſed to
‘ thirty, four ladies board there, one of whom
‘ has two children, and there are five young
‘ ladies, the eldeſt not above twelve years old,
‘ whoſe mothers being dead, and their families
‘ related to ſome of the ſociety, their kinſwomen
‘ have undertaken their education; theſe likewiſe

'pay an hundred pounds a year each. It has 'frequently happened, that widow ladies have 'come into this ſociety, till their year of deep 'mourning was expired.

'With theſe aſſiſtances the ſociety now ſubſiſts 'with the utmoſt plenty and convenience, without 'any additional expence to my good friends, ex-'cept a communication of what this park affords; 'as our ſteward provides them with every thing, 'and has the entire direction of the houſehold 'affairs, which he executes with the moſt ſenſible 'œconomy.'

'I ſhould imagine, ſaid I, it were very difficult to 'preſerve a comfortable harmony among ſo many 'perſons, and conſequently ſuch variety of tem-'pers?'

'Certainly, anſwered Mrs. Maynard, it is not 'without its difficulties. For the firſt year of this 'eſtabliſhment my friends dedicated moſt of their 'time and attention to this new community, who 'were every day either at the hall, or theſe ladies 'with them, endeavouring to cultivate in this 'ſiſterhood that ſort of diſpoſition which is moſt 'productive of peace. By their example and 'ſuggeſtions, (for it is difficult to give unreſerved 'advice where you may be ſuſpected of a deſign to 'dictate) by their examples and ſuggeſtions there-'fore, they led them to induſtry, and ſhewed it 'to be neceſſary to all ſtations, as the baſis of 'almoſt every virtue. An idle mind, like fallow 'ground, is the ſoil for every weed to grow in; in 'it vice ſtrengthens, the ſeed of every vanity 'flouriſhes unmoleſted and luxuriant; diſcontent, 'malignity, ill humour, ſpread far and wide, and the 'mind becomes a chaos, which it is beyond hu-'man power to call into order and beauty. This 'therefore my good friends laboured to expel from

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'their infant eſtabliſhment. They taught them 'that it was the duty of every perſon to be of ſer-'vice to others. That thoſe whoſe hands and 'minds were by the favours of fortune exempt 'from the neceſſity of labouring for their own ſup-'port, ought to be employed for ſuch as are deſti-'tute of theſe advantages. They got this ſiſterhood 'to join with them in working for the poor people, 'in viſiting, in admoniſhing, in teaching them 'wherever their ſituations required theſe ſervices. 'Where they found that any of theſe ladies had a 'taſte for gardening, drawing, muſic, reading, 'or any manual or mental art, they cultivated it, 'aſſiſted them in the pleaſanteſt means, and by va-'rious little ſchemes have kept up theſe inclinations 'with all the ſpirit of purſuit, which is requiſite to 'preſerve moſt minds from that ſtate of languidneſs 'and inactivity, whereby life is rendered wearisome 'to thoſe who have never found it unfortunate.

'By ſome regulations made as occaſions occurred, 'all burdenſome forms are expelled. The whole 'ſociety indeed muſt aſſemble at morning and 'evening prayers, and at meals, if ſickneſs does 'not prevent, but every other ceremonious depen-'dance is baniſhed; they form into different 'parties of amuſement as beſt ſuit their inclina-'tions, and ſometimes when we go to ſpend the 'afternoon there, we ſhall find a party at cards in 'one room, in another ſome at work, while one is 'reading aloud, and in a ſeparate chamber a ſet 'joining in a little concert, though none of them 'are great proficients in muſic; while two or three 'ſhall be retired into their own rooms, ſome go 'out to take the air, for it has ſeldom happened 'to them to have leſs than two boarders at a time 'who each keep an equipage; while others ſhall be 'amuſing themſelves in the garden, or walking in

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‘ the very pleasant meadows which surround their
‘ house.

‘ As no one is obliged to stay a minute longer in
‘ company than she chuses, she naturally retires
‘ as soon as it grows displeasing to her, and does
‘ not return till she is prompted by inclination, and
‘ consequently well disposed to amuse and be amused.
‘ They live in the very strict practice of all religious
‘ duties; and it is not to be imagined how much
‘ good they have done in the neighbourhood; how
‘ much by their care the manners of the poorer
‘ people are reformed, and their necessities relieved,
‘ though without the distribution of much money;
‘ I say much, because, small as their incomes are,
‘ there are many who impart out of that little to
‘ those who have much less.

‘ Their visits to us are frequent, and we are on
‘ such a footing, that they never impede any of our
‘ employments. My friends always insisted when
‘ they waited on the community, that not one of
‘ the sisterhood should discontinue whatever they
‘ found her engaged in; this gave them the hint
‘ to do the same by us, and it is a rule, that no
‘ book is thrown aside, no pen laid down at their
‘ entrance. There are always some of us manually
‘ employed, who are at leisure to converse, and
‘ if the visit is not very short, part of it is generally
‘ spent in hearing one of the girls read aloud, who
‘ take it by turns through a great part of the day;
‘ the only difference made for this addition to the
‘ company is a change of books, that they may
‘ not hear only part of a subject, and begin by a
‘ broken thread. Thus they give no interruption,
‘ and therefore neither trouble us, nor are them-
‘ selves scrupulous about coming, so that few days
‘ pass without our seeing some of them, though fre-

‘ quently

'quently only time enough to accompany us in 'our walks, or partake of our muſic.'

'Have you not, ſaid Lamont, been obliged to 'expel many from the community? Since you do 'not allow petulancy of temper, nor any light-'neſs of conduct, I ſhould expect a continual 'revolution.'

'By no means, anſwered Mrs. Maynard, ſince 'the eſtabliſhment of the community, there has 'been but one expelled; and one finding ſhe was 'in danger of incurring the ſame ſentence, and I 'believe inwardly diſguſted with a country life, 'retired of her own free choice. Some more have 'rendered themſelves ſo diſagreeable, that the 'queſtion has been put to the ballot; but the fear 'of being diſmiſſed made them ſo diligent to get 'the majority on their ſide, before the hour ap-'pointed for deciſion arrived, that it has been de-'termined in their favour, and the earneſt deſire 'not to be brought into the ſame hazard again, 'has induced them to mend their tempers, and 'ſome of theſe are now the moſt amiable people 'in the whole community.

'As for levity of conduct they are pretty 'well ſecured from it, by being expoſed to few 'temptations in this retired place.

'Some, as in the courſe of nature muſt happen, 'have died, and moſt of them bequeathed what 'little they had towards conſtituting a fund for the 'continuation of the community. More of them 'have married; ſome to perſons who knew them 'before, others to gentlemen in the neighbourhood, 'or ſuch as happened to come into it; to 'whom their admirable conduct recommended 'them.'

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I could not help exclaiming, 'In what a heaven do you live, thus surrounded by people who owe all their happiness to your goodness! This is, indeed, imitating your Creator, and in such proportion as your faculties will admit, partaking of his felicity, since you can no where cast your eyes, without beholding numbers who derive every earthly good from your bounty, and are indebted to your care and example for a reasonable hope of eternal happiness.'

'I will not, said Mrs. Maynard, give up my share of the felicity you so justly imagine these ladies must enjoy, though I have no part in what occasions it. When I reflect on all the blessings they impart, and see how happiness flows, as it were, in an uninterrupted current from their hands and lips, I am overwhelmed with gratitude to the Almighty disposer of my fate, for having so mercifully thrown me into such a scene of felicity, where every hour yields true heart-felt joy, and fills me with thanksgivings to Him, who enables them thus to dispense innumerable blessings, and so greatly rewards them already by the joyful consciousness of having obeyed him.'

The Ladies at this time were at too great a distance to hear our conversation; for not chusing to be present while their actions were the subjects of discourse, they had gradually strayed from us. Upon enquiring of my cousin, whether the persons in the large community we had been talking of brought any fortunes with them, she told me that 'most of them had a trifle, some not more than an hundred pounds. That in general the ladies chose to admit those who had least, as their necessities were greatest, except where some particular circumstances rendered protection more re-

'quisite

'quiſite to others. That the houſe not being 'large enough to contain more than were already 'eſtabliſhed in it, they have been obliged to refuſe 'admiſſion to many, and eſpecially ſome young 'women of near two thouſand pounds fortune, 'the expenſive turn of the world now being ſuch, 'that no gentlewoman can live genteelly on the 'intereſt of that ſum, and they prefer this Society 'to a retirement in a country town. Some who 'wiſhed to board, have likewiſe been refuſed. As 'the expences of the firſt community, fall ſo far 'ſhort of their expectation, and the ſums appro-'priated for that purpoſe, they determined to haz-'ard another of the ſame kind, and have juſt con-'cluded a treaty for a ſtill larger manſion, at about 'three miles diſtance, and by the perſons now 'waiting for it, they have reaſon to believe it will 'not be leſs ſucceſsful than the other, nor more 'expenſive; but ſhould they be miſtaken in that 'particular, they have laid aſide a fund ſufficient 'to diſcharge it.' Their ſcheme I find is to have ſome of the ladies down to Millennium Hall, as ſoon as they have made the purchaſe, and there they are to remain, while the neceſſary repairs and additions are making to the houſe deſigned for their habitation, which they imagine will not be compleated in leſs than half a year. They hope, by having the firſt admitted part of the community thus in the houſe with them for ſo long a time, to compenſate, in a good degree, for the diſadvantages of being ſettled ſo much farther from them. The ſiſterhood of the other ſociety, likewiſe, in pity to thoſe who are expoſed to the ſame ſufferings from which they have been delivered, have offered to croud themſelves for a few months, to leave vacant rooms for ſome who are deſtined to the other houſe, till they can be there accommodated. Theſe

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alſo will be fitted for their new way of life, and taught to aim at the happineſs enjoyed in this community, by the ſame means that they have attained to it.

Our ſubject ended with our walk. Supper was ſerved as ſoon as we entered the houſe, and general converſation concluded the evening.

Had I not been led by ſeveral facts to repeat already ſo many converſations, I ſhould be induced not to bury all that paſſed at this time in ſilence; but though I have taken the liberty, when the relation of facts naturally led to it, to communicate ſuch diſcourſes as were pertinent to the ſubject, it would be preſuming too far on your time, to repeat converſations which did not ſerve to illuſtrate any particular actions, however worthy they may be of recollection. I ſhall therefore only ſay, that it was not with leſs reluctance I retired to my chamber, at the hour of bed-time, than the night before.

The next morning proved rainy, which prevented me from making any early excurſion. But as it cleared up about eleven o'clock, Lamont and I went into the garden, to enjoy the fragrance which every herb and flower exhales at this time of the year, after the deſirable refreſhment of gentle ſhowers. I conducted him to the flower garden, which had ſo much delighted me the morning before; and we had not paid due admiration to all the vegetable beauties there exhibited to our view, when Mrs. Maynard joined us.

I told her, 'It was but a poor compliment to 'her converſation, to ſay, I longed for her com-'pany, ſince now my curioſity might occaſion that 'impatience, which I ſhould nevertheleſs have 'felt, had I not been left in painful ſuſpence, by

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'the interruption we had received the day before, 'in the midſt of her narrative.'

'It would be unnatural, ſaid ſhe, for a woman 'to quarrel with curioſity; ſo far from complain- 'ing of yours, I am come merely with a deſign 'to gratify it, and only expect you will judge of 'my deſire to oblige you, by my readineſs in obey- 'ing your commands, were I myſelf the ſub- 'ject, the motive for my obedience might be equi- 'vocal.'

Miſs MANCEL and Mrs. MORGAN's Hiſtory continued.

I Think, continued Mrs. Maynard, we left Miſs Melvyn requiring to be confronted by her accuſer, a requeſt which her mother-in-law was not inclined to grant; for though in her dealings with young Simon, ſhe had perceived ſuch a degree of ſollicitude for his own intereſt, and ſuch flagrant proofs of want of integrity, that ſhe did not doubt but that by promiſing him the farm, on rather better terms than ſhe had yet conſented to, he might be prevailed with to join ſo far in her ſcheme, as to aſſert any thing to Sir Charles, yet ſhe dared not venture to produce him face to face to Miſs Melvyn, fearing leſt his aſſurance ſhould fail him on ſo ſevere a trial.

She replied, therefore, that, 'the proofs were 'too ſtrong to admit of doubt, but ſhe could not 'think of expoſing Miſs Melvyn to the mortifica- 'tion of hearing her depravity witneſſed by, per-

'haps

'haps, the laſt perſon whom ſhe expected ſhould 'acknowledge it. Beſides, that by ſuch an eclat the 'diſgrace muſt infallibly become public, and ſhe 'be deprived of the only means left her of reſcuing 'her reputation from that infamy, to which, in a 'very ſhort time, it muſt have been irrecoverably 'condemned; for it could not be ſuppoſed, that Mr. 'Morgan would accept as his wife a woman with 'a ſullied character.'

Miſs Melvyn was almoſt diſtracted, at being both ſo injuriouſly accuſed, and denied the liberty of defending herſelf; ſhe begged, ſhe intreated, on her knees, that Sir Charles would not ſuffer her to fall a prey to ſuch undeſerved malice. She aſſerted her innocence in the ſtrongeſt and moſt perſuaſive terms, and inſiſted ſo warmly on her demand of being confronted with her accuſers, that her father grew inclined to grant her juſt requeſt. Lady Melvyn perceiving he began to comply, repeated her refuſal in the moſt peremptory manner; and declaring to Miſs Melvyn, that ſhe had no other choice left her, but either to reſolve to marry Mr. Morgan, or to be expoſed to ſhame, in being publicly diſclaimed by her parents, who would no longer ſuffer her to remain in their houſe, led Sir Charles out of the room; and he, though reluctant, dared not refuſe to accompany her.

Miſs Melvyn was now left to reflect on this dreadful alternative. Filled with horror at the ſhocking conduct of her mother-in-law, terrified with her threats, and ſenſible there was no villany ſhe was not capable of perpetrating, rather than give up a point ſhe was thus determined to carry, ſhe was incapable of forming any reſolution. She ran to her friend, to ſeek from her that advice and conſolation, which her own diſtracted thoughts could not afford her.

Miſs

Miſs Mancel was ſo ſtruck with the terror and amazement which were ſtill impreſſed on Miſs Melvyn's countenance, that ſhe had not for ſome time courage to aſk the cauſe. Trembling with fears of ſhe knew not what, ſhe embraced her diſtreſſed friend with an air of ſuch tender, though ſilent ſympathy, as ſoftened the horror of Miſs Melvyn's mind, and brought a ſhower of tears to her relief, which at length enabled her to relate all that had paſſed between her and her parents. Louiſa found it much eaſier to join in her friend's grief than to adminiſter conſolation. She knew not what to adviſe; two artleſs, virtuous young women were ill qualified to contend with lady Melvyn, eſpecially in an affair which could not be rendered public without hazarding Miſs Melvyn's character; for reputation is ſo delicate a thing, that the leaſt ſurmize caſts a blemiſh on it; the woman who is ſuſpected is diſgraced; and though lady Melvyn did not ſtand high in the public opinion, yet it was ſcarcely poſſible for any one to believe ſhe could be guilty of ſuch flagrant wickedneſs.

Miſs Melvyn had a very ſtrong diſlike to Mr. Morgan, whoſe diſpoſition appeared as ill ſuited to her's as his age; to enter into wedlock without any proſpect of ſocial happineſs, ſeemed to her one of the greateſt misfortunes in life; but what was ſtill of more weight in her eſtimation, ſhe thought it the higheſt injuſtice to marry a man whom ſhe could not love, as well as a very criminal mockery of the moſt ſolemn vows. On the other ſide ſhe conſidered, that to preſerve her reputation was not only neceſſary to her own happineſs, but a duty to ſociety. 'It is true, ſaid ſhe, I am not placed in a very 'conſpicuous ſphere of life, but I am far from being 'of a rank ſo obſcure, that my actions will affect no 'one but myſelf; nor indeed do I know any ſo low,

'but

‘ but that they have their equals who may copy ‘ after them, if they have no inferiors. The care ‘ of our virtue we owe to ourſelves, the preſerva- ‘ tion of our characters is due to the world, and ‘ both are required by Him, who commands us to ‘ preſerve ourſelves pure and unpolluted, and to ‘ contribute as far as we are able to the well-being ‘ of all his creatures. Example is the means given ‘ univerſally to all whereby to benefit ſociety. I ‘ therefore look on it as one of our principal duties, ‘ to avoid every imputation of evil; for vice ap- ‘ pears more or leſs hateful, as it becomes more or ‘ leſs familiar. Every vicious perſon abates the ‘ horror which it ſhould naturally excite in a vir- ‘ tuous mind. There is nothing ſo odious, to which ‘ cuſtom will not in ſome degree reconcile us; can ‘ we expect then, that vice, which is not without ‘ its allurements, ſhould alone retain all its defor- ‘ mity, when we are familiarized to its appear- ‘ ance. I ſhould never therefore eſteem myſelf in- ‘ nocent, however pure my actions, if I incurred ‘ the reputation of being otherwiſe, when it was in ‘ my power to avoid it. With this way of think- ‘ ing, my Louiſa, you may imagine that I might ‘ be brought to believe it my duty to ſacrifice my ‘ eaſe of mind, to the preſervation of my charac- ‘ ter; but in my caſe, there is no choice; I muſt ‘ either add to the contamination of a very profli- ‘ gate world, or, in the face of Heaven, enter into ‘ the moſt ſolemn vows to love a man, whom the ‘ moſt I can do, is not to hate. This is wilful ‘ perjury. In ſuch an alternative duty cannot direct ‘ me, and miſery muſt follow my deciſion, let me ‘ determine as I will.’

In this irreſolution, Miſs Melvyn left her friend, but the vent ſhe had given to her grief had greatly calmed her ſpirits, and reſtored her to the power of reflection.

reflexion. At her entrance into the houſe, ſhe met Lady Melvyn, who with a very ſtern countenance, ordered her to go and entertain Mr. Morgan, who waited for her in the parlour. She found him alone, and as he began to renew his addreſſes, which a repulſe from her had not diſcouraged, ſince he hoped to ſucceed by the influence her parents had over her, ſhe immediately formed the reſolution of endeavouring to make him relinquiſh his pretenſions, in hopes, that if the refuſal came from him, he might become the object of her mother's indignation, and her perſecution might drop, at leaſt for a time. She therefore frankly told him, that 'Tho' 'her affections were intirely diſengaged, yet he 'was ſo very repugnant to them, that it was im-'poſſible ſhe ſhould ever feel that regard for him, 'which he had a right to expect from his wife; 'and therefore intreated him, in conſideration of 'his own happineſs, if her's were indifferent to 'him, not to perſiſt in a purſuit, which, if ſucceſs-'ful, could not anſwer his hopes, nor reduce her 'to render herſelf wretched by becoming his wife, 'or to exaſperate her parents by refuſing him.' She then added all her heart could ſuggeſt to flatter him into compliance with this requeſt.

Mr. Morgan's foible was not an exceſs of delicacy; he told her plainly, 'He admired her elo-'quence prodigiouſly, but that there was more rhe-'toric in her beauty, than any compoſition of 'words could contain; which pleading in direct 'contradiction to all ſhe had ſaid, ſhe muſt excuſe 'him, if he was influenced by the more pow-'erful oratory of her charms; and her good 'ſenſe and unexceptionable conduct convinced 'him, that when it became her duty to love him, 'ſhe would no longer remain indifferent.'

All

All Miſs. Melvyn could urge to ſhew him this was but a very poor dependance, had no ſort of weight, and he parted from her only more determined to haſten the concluſion of their marriage.

Lady Melvyn had not been idle all this time; ſhe had prevailed on young Simon to acquieſce in the queſtions ſhe put to him before Sir Charles, either by giving ſhort anſwers, or by down caſt eyes, which ſignified aſſent. With this Sir Charles acquainted Miſs Melvyn, and inſiſted on her not thinking of expoſing herſelf to the indignity of having the whole affair diſcuſſed in her preſence. All the indignation that undeſerved calumny can excite in an innocent mind, could not have enabled Miſs Melvyn to bear being charged before ſo low a creature, with a paſſion for him, and ſtill leſs to have heard the ſuborned wretch pretend to confeſs it. She therefore found no difficulty in obeying her father in that particular, and rather choſe to ſubmit to the imputation, than to undergo the ſhame which ſhe muſt have ſuffered in endeavouring to confute it. She attempted to perſuade Sir Charles, 'To permit her to ſtay in the houſe under 'what reſtrictions he and his lady ſhould think pro-'per, till her conduct ſhould ſufficiently convince 'him of her innocence, and not to force her into 'a hated marriage, or unjuſtly expoſe her to diſ-'grace and infamy.' Her tears and intreaties would ſoon have ſoftened his heart; and as far as he dared, he ſhewed an inclination to comply with ſo reaſonable a propoſal; but his lady eaſily obliged him to retract, and to deprive Miſs Melvyn of all hopes of any mitigation of the ſentence already pronounced againſt her.

Could ſhe without the loſs of reputation have fled to a remote part of the kingdom, and have hid herſelf in ſome obſcure cottage, though reduced to labour

labour for a ſubſiſtence, ſhe would have thought it a ſtate far more eligible than becoming Mr. Morgan's wife; but if ſhe thus turned fugitive and wanderer, in what light could ſhe expect to be ſeen by the world; eſpecially, as Lady Melvyn would infallibly, to remove any blame from herſelf, be liberal in her aſperſions? Where ſhe ſhould be unknown, whatever diſgrace might be affixed to her name, ſhe herſelf might eſcape cenſure; but yet ſhe would not be leſs guilty of a violation of her duty to ſociety, ſince ſhe muſt appear very culpable to thoſe who knew her, and contribute to the depravity of others, as far as was in her power, by an example, which her motives being unknown, would appear a very bad one.

This conſideration determined her to ſacrifice her peace to her character; for by having told Mr. Morgan the true ſtate of her heart, ſhe had acquitted herſelf from any charge of attempting, by the gift of her hand, to deceive him into a belief that he was the object of her affections. She ſtill had ſcruples about entering into the matrimonial ſtate, on motives ſo different from thoſe which ought to influence every one in an union of that kind: theſe were not to be removed, but ſhe imagined this might in ſome meaſure be excuſed, as the leaſt culpable part ſhe could act; and ſince man was herein neither her judge nor accuſer, ſhe hoped the integrity of her mind would be received as ſome alleviation of a fault ſhe was thus forced to commit, ſince ſhe was determined in the ſtricteſt manner to adhere to every duty of her ſtation.

Having formed this reſolution, ſhe went to conſult her friend upon it, who was a perſon leſs perplexed, though ſcarcely leſs concerned, as their affections were ſo ſtrongly united, that one could not ſuffer without the other's feeling equal

pain,

pain, might poſſibly be a calmer judge in ſo delicate a point. Louiſa ſubſcribed to her friend's ſentiments on the occaſion, only 'deſired her to con-
'ſider well, whether ſhe ſhould be able to bear all
'the trials ſhe might meet with in the married
'ſtate, when ſhe was entirely indifferent to her
'huſband.'

'My proſpect, ſaid Miſs Melvyn, I am ſenſible
'is extremely melancholy. All inclination muſt
'now be laid aſide, and duty muſt become my ſole
'guide and director. Happineſs is beyond my
'view; I cannot even hope for eaſe, ſince I muſt
'keep a conſtant reſtraint on my very thoughts.
'Indifference will become criminal; and if I can-
'not conquer it, to conceal it at leaſt will be a
'duty. I have learnt to ſuffer, but was never yet
'taught diſguiſe and hypocriſy; herein will conſiſt
'my greateſt difficulty; I abhor deceit, and yet
'muſt not ſhew the real ſentiments of my heart.
'Linked in ſociety with a man I cannot love, the
'world can afford me no pleaſure, indeed no com-
'fort, for I am inſenſible to all joy but what ariſes
'from the ſocial affections. The grave, I confeſs,
'appears to me far more eligible than this marri-
'age, for I might there hope to be at peace. Mr.
'Morgan's fortune is large, but his mind is nar-
'row and ungenerous, and his temper plainly not
'good. If he really loved me, he could not ſuffer
'me to be forced into a marriage which he well
'knows I deteſt: a knowledge which will not
'mend my fate, moſt certainly.

'Could I enjoy the pleaſures of ſelf-approbation,
'it would be impoſſible to be very wretched, but
'the moſt exact performance of my duty will not
'yield me that gratification, ſince I cannot be per-
'fectly ſatisfied that I do right, in marrying a man
'ſo very diſagreeable to me. I fear the pride of

'reputation

'reputation influencies me more than I imagine, 'and though it is as juſtifiable as any pride, yet 'ſtill it is certainly no virtue.'

'When I reflect, ſaid ſhe, afterwards, on the 'ſtep I am going to take, my terrors are inexpreſ-'ſible; how dreadful is it at my age, when nature 'ſeems to promiſe me ſo many years of life, to 'doom myſelf to a ſtate of wretchedneſs, which 'death alone can terminate, and wherein I muſt 'bury all my ſorrows in ſilence, without even the 'melancholy relief of pouring them forth in the 'boſom of my friend, and ſeeking, from her tender 'participation, the only conſolation I could receive! 'for after this dreaded union is compleated, duty 'will forbid me to make my diſtreſſes known, even 'to my Louiſa; I muſt not then expoſe the faults 'of him whoſe ſlighteſt failings I ought to conceal. 'One only hope remains, that you, my firſt and 'deareſt friend, will not abandon me; that what-'ever cloud of melancholy may hang over my 'mind, yet you will ſtill bear with me, and remove 'your abode to a place where I may have the con-'ſolation of your company. If it be in my power 'to make my houſe a comfortable habitation to my 'Louiſa, I cannot be entirely wretched.'

Miſs Mancel gave her the tendereſt aſſurances of fixing at leaſt in her neighbourhood, ſince a ſecond paradiſe could not recompenſe her for the loſs of her ſociety; and that on no terms could ſhe prevail on herſelf to continue in a houſe where ſhe muſt ſee that wretched Simon, who had been a vile inſtrument in reducing her friend to that diſtreſsful ſituation. This gleam of comfort was a very ſeaſonable relief to Miſs Melvyn's dejected ſpirits, and gave ſome reſpite to her tears.

As soon as she returned home, she acquainted Sir Charles and Lady Melvyn with her resolution, who soon communicated it to Mr. Morgan; and nothing was now thought of but hastening the wedding as much as possible.

'I wonder, interrupted Lamont, how Miss 'Melvyn could bring herself to let her mother-in-'law have such an opportunity of exulting in the 'success of her detestable arts.'

'That, replied Mrs. Maynard, was a consideration which had no weight with her, nor should 'it indeed be any mortification to our pride, that 'deceit and cunning have triumphed over us. 'Wickedness serves itself by weapons which we 'would not use, and if we are wounded with them, 'we have no more reason to be mortified, than a 'man would have to think his courage disgraced, 'because when he lay sleeping in his bed, he was 'taken prisoner by a body of armed men. To be 'circumvented by cunning, must ever be the fate, 'but never the disgrace of the artless.'

As Miss Melvyn's compliance procured her a greater degree of favour at home than she had ever before enjoyed, Miss Mancel was suffered to come to the house, and met with an obliging reception from the whole family. Her continual presence there was a great support to her friend in her very disagreeable situation, and after indulging her sorrow in their private conversation, and mingling their sympathetic tears, she was the better able to endure the restraint which she was obliged to undergo, when any other person was present.

The dreaded day fixed on for this unhappy union soon came, and Miss Melvyn received Mr. Morgan's hand and name with all the fortitude she could assume; but her distress was visible to all, even

even to Mr. Morgan, who was ſo little touched with it, that it proved no abatement to his joy; a ſymptom of ſuch indelicacy of mind, as increaſed his bride's grief and apprehenſions.

The day after their marriage, Mrs. Morgan aſked his permiſſion to invite Miſs Mancel to his houſe, to which he anſwered, 'Madam, my wife muſt 'have no other companion or friend but her huſ-'band; I ſhall never be averſe to your ſeeing com-'pany, but intimates I forbid; I ſhall not chooſe 'to have my faults diſcuſſed between you and your 'friend.'

Mrs. Morgan was not much leſs ſtunned by this reply, than if ſhe had been ſtruck with lightening. Practiſed as ſhe had long been in commanding her paſſions and inclinations, a torrent of tears forced their way.

'I did not want this proof, reſumed Mr. Mor-'gan, that I have but a ſmall ſhare of your affecti-'ons; and were I inclined to grant your requeſt, 'you could not have found a better means of pre-'venting it; for I will have no perſon in my houſe 'more beloved than myſelf. When you have no 'other friend, added he with a malicious ſmile, I 'may hope for the honour of that title.'

Mrs. Morgan was ſo well convinced before of the littleneſs of his mind, that ſhe was more afflicted than ſurprized at this inſtance of it, and wiſhed he would not have rendered it more difficult to eſteem him, by ſo openly profeſſing his ungenerous temper. However ſhe ſilently acquieſced; but that her friend might not feel the pain of believing herſelf neglected, ſhe was obliged to tell her what had paſſed.

The new married couple ſtaid but two days longer at Sir Charles's. Fortunately Mr. Morgan ſpent the laſt day abroad in paying viſits in the neighbourhood, which gave the two unhappy friends lei-

ſure to lament their ill fortune in this cruel ſeparation, without giving the cauſe of it any new offence. They took a melancholy leave that night, fearing that even a correſpondence between them might be conſiderably reſtrained by this arbitrary huſband, who ſeemed to think his wife's affections were to be won by force, not by gentleneſs and generous confidence.

This was the ſevereſt affliction they had ever yet experienced, or indeed were capable of feeling. United from their childhood, the connection of ſoul and body did not ſeem more indiſſoluble, nor were ever divided with greater pain. They foreſaw no end to this cruel ſeparation; for they could not expect that a huſband's complaiſance to his wife ſhould increaſe after he ceaſed to be a bridegroom. Louiſa indeed, who wiſhed if poſſible to reconcile her friend to her fate, pretended to hope that her good conduct might in time enlarge his mind, and cure him of that mean ſuſpicious temper, which then made him fear to have his faults expoſed by a wife, whoſe chief endeavour would be to conceal them.

But ſuch diſtant views afforded no conſolation to Mrs. Morgan's affectionate heart; the preſent pain engaged her thoughts too much to ſuffer her to look ſo far off for comfort. She had flattered herſelf not only with the hopes of enjoying Miſs Mancel's company, but of delivering her from all the difficulties of her ſituation, in offering her a protection from inſult or poverty. To be diſappointed of ſo delightful a proſpect was her greateſt affliction, and ſat much heavier on her mind, than the loſs of her beloved ſociety.

The evening was far ſpent, when Lady Melvyn found them drowned in tears, anticipating the pangs of parting, the employment of that whole day;

day; and as her Ladyſhip's hatred for her daughter-in-law was much fulſilled, ſince ſhe no longer feared the obſervation of her too-virtuous eye, her natural diſpoſition inclined her to prevent the wife's diſcovering her real ſentiments to her huſband; ſhe therefore reminded them, that Mr. Morgan muſt then be on his way home, and adviſed, that by all means they ſhould part before his return, leſt he ſhould be witneſs of a ſorrow which he would take amiſs. They were ſenſible that in this her Ladyſhip judged well, and Louiſa's fear of occaſioning any additional uneaſineſs to her friend, gave her reſolution and ſtrength to take a laſt farewel. Mrs. Morgan's maid attended her home, as ſhe was too much affected to be able to perform that little walk without ſome ſupport. Mrs. Morgan's condition was ſtill more deplorable; more dead than alive, ſhe followed Louiſa's ſteps with eager eyes, till a turning in the road robbed her of the ſight of her friend; and then, as if her eyes had no other employment worthy of them left, they were again overwhelmed in tears. Lady Melvyn found her incapable of conſolation; but more ſucceſsfully endeavoured to make her ſuppreſs the indulgence of her grief, by alarming her fears with the approach of Mr. Morgan. As ſoon as ſhe was a little compoſed, ſhe led her into the garden for air. The night was fine, and the moon ſhone very reſplendent, the beauty of the ſcene, and the freſhneſs of the air a little revived her; and as Mr. Morgan ſtaid out later than they expected, ſhe had time to acquire a ſufficient command over herſelf to receive him with an air of tolerable chearfulneſs.

The new-married pair ſet out early the next morning, and arrived at Mr. Morgan's ſeat the following day. The houſe was large and old, the furniture not much leſs ancient, the ſituation drea-

ry, the roads every where bad, the foil a ftiff clay, wet and dirty, except in the midft of fummer; the country round it difagreeable, and in fhort, deftitute of every thing that could afford any fatisfaction to Mrs. Morgan. Nature no where appears graced with fewer charms. Mrs. Morgan however had vexations fo fuperior, that fhe paid little regard to external circumftances, and was fo fully determined to acquit herfelf properly in her new fphere, that fhe appeared pleafed with every thing around her. Hypocrify, as fhe obferved, was now become a virtue, and the only one which fhe found it difficult to practife. They were received on their arrival by a maiden fiftar of Mr. Morgan's, who till then had kept his houfe, and he intended fhould ftill remain in it; for as through the partiality of an aunt, who had bred her up, fhe was poffeffed of a large fortune, her brother, in whom avarice was the ruling paffion, was very defirous of keeping in her favour.

Mrs. Sufanna Morgan had lived immaculate to the age of fifty-five. The ftate of virginity could not fo much be faid to her charge as an offence againft fociety, for it had not been voluntary. In her youth fhe was rather diftinguifhed for fenfibility. Her aunt's known riches gave the niece the reputation of a great fortune, an attraction to which fhe was indebted for many lovers, who conftantly took their leave on finding the old lady would not advance any part of the money which fhe defigned to bequeath her niece. Miffs Sufanna, extremely fufceptible by nature, was favourably difpofed to all her admirers, and imagining herfelf fucceffively in love with each, lived in a courfe of difappointments. In reality, the impreffion was made only on her vanity, and her heart continued unengaged; but fhe felt fuch a train of mortifications very feverely,

and

and perhaps ſuffered more upon the whole, than if ſhe had been ſtrongly impreſſed with one paſſion. In time the parcimony of her old aunt became generally known, and the young lady then was left free from the tender importunity of lovers, of which nothing elſe could probably have deprived her; for as ſhe never had any natural attractions, ſhe was not ſubject to a decay of charms; at near fifty-three her aunt departed this life, and left her in poſſeſſion of twenty-thouſand pounds, a fortune which ſerved to ſwell her pride, without increaſing her happineſs.

Nature had not originally beſtowed upon her much ſweetneſs of temper, and her frequent diſappointments, each of which ſhe termed being croſſed in love, had completely ſoured it. Every pretty woman was the object of her envy, I might almoſt ſay every married woman. She deſpiſed all that were not as rich as herſelf, and hated every one who was ſuperior or equal to her in fortune. Tormented inwardly with her own ill-nature, ſhe was incapable of any ſatisfaction but what aroſe from teazing others; nothing could diſpel the frown on her brow, except the ſatisfaction ſhe felt when ſhe had the good fortune to give pain to any of her dependants; a horrid grin then diſtorted her features, and her before lifeleſs eyes gliſtened with malice and rancorous joy. She had read juſt enough to make her pedantic, and too little to give her any improving knowledge. Her underſtanding was naturally ſmall, and her ſelf-conceit great. In her perſon ſhe was tall and meagre, her hair black, and her complexion of the darkeſt brown, with an additional ſallowneſs at her temples and round her eyes, which were dark, very large and prominent, and entirely without luſtre; they had but one look, which was that of gloomy ſtupid ill-nature, except, as I have already ſaid, when they were enlivened

by the ſupreme ſatisfaction of having made ſomebody uneaſy, then what before was but diſagreeable became horrible. To complete the deſcription of her face, ſhe had a broad flat noſe, a wide mouth, furniſhed with the worſt ſet of teeth I ever ſaw, and her chin was long and pointed. She had heard primneſs ſo often mentioned as the characteriſtic of an old maid, that to avoid wearing that appearance, ſhe was flatternly and dirty to an exceſs; beſides ſhe had great addition of filthineſs, from a load of Spaniſh ſnuff, with which her whole dreſs was covered, as if, by her profuſion in that particular, ſhe thought to compenſate for her general parſimony.

This lady, Mrs. Morgan found in poſſeſſion of her houſe, and was received by her with that air of ſuperiority, to which Mrs. Suſanna thought herſelf intitled by her age and fortune. Mrs. Morgan's charms, though drooping like a blighted flower, excited much envy in Suſanna's breaſt, and ſhe ſoon congratulated her, on her extraordinary happineſs in having captivated a gentleman of ſo large a fortune, when her own was at preſent ſo very ſmall.

At firſt ſhe commended her, for not being elated with ſo great an acquiſition, but in a little time taxed her with ungrateful inſenſibility to ſo prodigious a bleſſing. She continually criticized her œconomy, accuſing her of indolence; repreſenting, how 'ſhe uſed every morning to rouſe the ſervants 'from their idleneſs, by giving each ſuch a ſcold, 'as quickened their diligence for the whole day; 'nor could a family be well managed by any one 'who omitted this neceſſary duty.' Mrs. Morgan's deſire that her ſervants ſhould enjoy the comforts of plenty, and when ſick, receive the indulgence which that condition requires, brought her continual admonitions againſt extravagance, wherein Mr. Morgan readily joined; for his avarice was ſo great,

great, that he repined at the moſt neceſſary expences.

His temper was a mixture of paſſion and peviſhneſs, two things that ſeldom go together; but he would fret himſelf into a paſſion, and then through wearineſs of ſpirits cool into fretfulneſs, till he was ſufficiently recovered to riſe again into rage. This was the common courſe of his temper, which afforded variety, but no relief.

Senſible that his wife married him without affection, he ſeemed to think it impoſſible ever to gain her love, and therefore ſpared himſelf all fruitleſs endeavours. He was indeed fond of her perſon; he admired her beauty, but deſpiſed her underſtanding, which in truth was unavoidable; for his ideas and converſation were ſo low and ſordid, that he was not qualified to diſtinguiſh the charms of her elegant mind. Thoſe who know Mrs. Morgan beſt, are convinced that ſhe ſuffered leſs uneaſineſs from his ill-humour, brutal as it was, than from his nauſeous fondneſs. But the account I give of him, I have received from others; Mrs. Morgan never mentions his name, if it can poſſibly be avoided; and when ſhe does, it is always with reſpect. In this ſituation, a victim to the ill-humour both of her huſband and his ſiſter; we will leave Mrs. Morgan, and return to that friend whoſe letters were her only conſolation.

Miſs Mancel's perſon was ſo uncommonly fine, that ſhe could not be long ſettled in the country without attracting general notice. Though the lower rank of people may be leſs refined in their ideas, yet her beauty was ſo very ſtriking, that it did not eſcape their admiration, and *the handſome lady*, as they called her, became the general ſubject of diſcourſe. As church was the only place where ſhe was expoſed to public view, ſhe had from the

first endeavoured to elude observation, by mingling in the croud, and sitting in the most obscure seat; but when fame had awakened the curiosity of those of higher rank, she was easily distinguished, and in a short time many inhabitants of the neighbouring parishes came to that church to see her. She more than answered every expectation; for such perfection of beauty scarcely ever came out of the hands of nature. Many ladies in the neighbourhood introduced themselves to her, and found her behaviour as enchanting as her person. She could not be insensible of the approbation which every eye significantly expressed; but she was abashed, and in some degree more mortified than delighted by it. She well remembered what Mr. d'Avora had said to her on that subject, and saw that in her situation beauty was a disadvantage. He often repeated the same thing to her in letters, (for she and Miss Melvyn keeping up a constant correspondance with him, the latter had acquainted him with the general admiration paid to Louisa) and told her, that he feared the plan they had formed for her future way of life, was at a still greater distance than they had hoped, since her beauty was the great obstacle to its being put in execution.

The ladies of the best fashion in the neighbourhood begged leave to visit her; and though she more than ever wished to have her time uninterrupted, since as she had no prospect of any other means of support, it was necessary, by such little additions as she could make to her small fund, to prevent its quick diminution, yet she could not decline the civilities so obligingly offered her, but avoided all intimacy with any of them as foreign to her plan, and hurtful to her interest. Thus was she circumstanced in respect to the neighbourhood when Miss Melvyn married.

As

As after this event Louiſa was determined to change her habitation; ſhe began to enquire for ſome family, where ſhe might be accommodated in the ſame manner, as in that where ſhe was then fixed. Among the perſons who had taken moſt notice of her was Lady Lambton, a perſon of admirable underſtanding, polite, generous and good-natured; who had no fault, but a conſiderable ſhare of pride. She piqued herſelf upon the opulence of her family, and a diſtinguiſhed birth, but her good ſenſe, and many virtues, ſo qualified this one blemiſh, that it did not prevent her being a very amiable woman.

When ſhe found Miſs Mancel deſigned to change her abode, ſhe told her, that at an honeſt farmer's near her houſe, ſhe might be accommodated, but that as ſome little alterations would be requiſite to make the place fit for her, ſhe, in the moſt obliging manner, deſired her company till the apartment was ready; which would give her opportunity to ſee that ſuch things were done to it, as would be moſt convenient and agreeable. Lady Lambton inſiſted ſo ſtrongly on Miſs Mancel's accepting this invitation, that ſhe could not without incivility refuſe it; and, as after the loſs of her friend, all places were alike to her, ſhe had no reaſon to decline ſo obliging an offer.

No great preparations were required for this removal of abode. Lady Lambton came herſelf to fetch Miſs Mancel home. The old lady was charmed with her new gueſt; many of whoſe accompliſhments were unknown to her till ſhe came under the ſame roof, and would not ſuffer any preparations to be made for another lodging, but inſiſted on her continuing much longer with her.

Lady

Lady Lambton behaved in so very obliging a manner, and Louisa found so much pleasure and improvement in the conversation of a woman, whose admirable understanding and thorough knowledge of the world are seldom to be parallelled, that she could not be more agreeably placed; as she dared not go even into Mrs. Morgan's neighbourhood, for fear of giving additional uneasiness to one, whose situation she plainly perceived was by no means happy; for though Mrs. Morgan suppressed all complaints, never hinted at the treatment she received, and endeavoured to represent her way of life in the best colours, to save her friend the sympathetic pangs of heart, which she knew she would feel for her sufferings; yet the alteration in her stile, the melancholy turn of mind, which in spight of all her care, was visible in her letters, could not escape the observation of one whose natural discernment was quickened by affection.

The full persuasion of Mrs. Morgan's unhappiness, and that anxious sollicitude which arose from her ignorance as to the degree of her wretchedness, was a source of continual grief to her mind, which Lady Lambton's sincere friendship could scarcely alleviate. But she knew too well, how few people can bear the unhappy, to suffer her uneasiness to appear. She stifled therefore every expression of that kind; for if Lady Lambton had generously sympathized in her affliction, it would have given her pain to know she had occasioned that lady's feeling any; and if she had been insensible to it, complaints would not fail to disgust her.

Lady Lambton was fond of music, and not void of taste for painting; Miss Mancel's excellence in these arts, therefore afforded her the highest entertainment. Her ladyship was likewise a mistress of languages, and was pleased to find Louisa equally acquainted

acquainted with them. In this houſe Miſs Mancel had paſſed above a twelve month, when Sir Edward Lambton returned from his travels, in which he had ſpent four years. As ſoon as he arrived in the kingdom he came to wait on Lady Lambton, his grandmother; who was likewiſe his guardian, his father and mother being both dead. She had longed with impatience for his return, but thought herſelf well repaid for his abſence by the great improvement which was very viſible both in his manner and perſon.

Sir Edward was extremely handſome, his perſon fine and graceful, his converſation lively and entertaining, politeneſs adding charms to an excellent underſtanding. His behaviour, I have been told, was particularly engaging, his temper amiable, though ſomewhat too warm, and he had all his grandmother's generoſity, without any of her pride.

It would have been ſtrange if a man of three and twenty years old (for that was Sir Edward's age) had not been much charmed with ſo lovely a woman as Miſs Mancel. That he was ſo, ſoon became viſible, but ſhe, as well as his grandmother, for ſome time imagined the attentions he paid her were only the natural reſult of the gallantry uſual at his age, and improved into a ſofter addreſs, by a manner acquired in travelling through countries where gallantry is publicly profeſſed. Lady Lambton however, knowing her own diſcernment, expreſſed ſome fears to Louiſa, leſt her grandſon ſhould become ſeriouſly in love with her, in order to diſcover by her countenance, whether there was really any ground for her apprehenſions, which ſhe founded on the impoſſibility of his marrying a woman of ſmall fortune, without reducing himſelf to the greateſt inconvenience, as his eſtate was extremely incumbered, and he was by an intail deprived

prived of the liberty of ſelling any part of it to diſcharge the debt. She was too polite to mention her chief objection to Miſs Mancel, which was in reality the obſcurity of her birth.

Louiſa, who ſincerely believed Sir Edward had no real paſſion for her, anſwered with a franknefs which entirely convinced Lady Lambton that ſhe had received no ſerious addreſs from him; but Louiſa, who ſaw herſelf now in the ſituation which Mr. d'Avora had warned her againſt, begged permiſſion to leave Lady Lambton's, to prevent her ladyſhip's being under any uneaſineſs, and to avoid all danger of Sir Edward's receiving any ſtrong impreſſion in her favour.

Lady Lambton was unwilling to part with her amiable companion; and beſides, thought if her grandſon was really enamoured, ſhe ſhould increaſe the danger rather than leſſen it, by not keeping Louiſa under her eye; ſhe therefore told her ſhe could not conſent to loſe her company, and was certain ſhe might depend on her honour. Louiſa thanked her for her good opinion, and aſſured her ſhe would never do any thing to forfeit it.

Sir Edward was more captivated than either of the ladies imagined, and every day increaſed his paſſion. Louiſa's beauty, her converſation, and accomplifhments were irreſiſtible; but as he knew the great occaſion he had to marry a woman of fortune, he long endeavoured to combat his inclinations. He might have conceived hopes of obtaining any other woman in her circumſtances on eaſier terms; but there was ſuch dignity and virtue ſhone forth in her, and he was ſo truly in love, that ſuch a thought never entered his imagination. He reverenced and reſpected her like a divinity, but hoped that prudence might enable him to conquer his paſſion, at the ſame time that it had not force

enough

enough to determine him to fly her preſence, the only poſſible means of leſſening the impreſſion which every hour engraved more deeply on his heart, by bringing ſome new attractions to his view. He little conſidered, that the man who has not power to fly from temptation, will never be able to reſiſt it by ſtanding his ground.

Louiſa was not long before ſhe grew ſenſible, that what ſhe had offered to Lady Lambton for the eaſe of her ladyſhip's mind, was adviſable to ſecure the peace of her own. Sir Edward's merit, his ſincere reſpect for her, which certainly is the moſt powerful charm to a woman of delicacy, could ſcarcely fail to make an impreſſion on a heart ſo tender, ſo generous as her's. She kept ſo ſtrict a watch over herſelf, that ſhe ſoon perceived her ſenſibility, and endeavoured to prevail on Lady Lambton to part with her; but the old lady imagining it was only in order to quiet her apprehenſions, would not conſent; and the difficulty in finding a place where ſhe could be properly received, ſtrongly diſcouraged her from inſiſting on it. If ſhe continued in the neighbourhood, her purpoſe would not be anſwered; for ſhe could not avoid Sir Edward's viſits; her only friend was denied the liberty of protecting her, and to go into a place where ſhe was unknown, would ſubject a young woman of her age and beauty to a thouſand dangers.

Theſe difficulties detained her, though unwillingly, at Lady Lambton's for above half a year after Sir Edward's return; who, at length, unable to confine in ſilence a paſſion which had long been obvious to every obſerver, took an opportunity, when alone with Louiſa, to declare his attachment in the moſt affecting manner. She received it not with ſurprize, but with real ſorrow. She had no tincture of coquettry in her compoſition; but if ſhe had

had been capable of it, her affections were too deeply engaged to have suffered her to retain it. Her sensibility was never so strongly awakened; all her endeavours to restrain it were no longer of force, her heart returned his passion, and would have conquered every thing but her justice and her honour; these were deeply engaged to Lady Lambton; and she would have detested herself, if she could have entertained a thought of making that lady's goodness to her, the occasion of the greatest vexation she could receive. She therefore never hesitated on the part she should act on this trying occasion; but the victories which honour gains over the tender affections, are not to be obtained without the severest pangs. Thus tormented by the struggles between duty and affection, she was not immediately capable of giving him an answer; but finding that her difficulties were increasing, by his repeated professions, and animated by the necessity of silencing a love, which too successfully sollicited a return of affection, she assumed a sufficient command over herself to conceal her sentiments, and with averted eyes, lest her heart should through them contradict her words, she told him, 'he 'distressed her to the greatest degree; that the 'respect she had for him on account of his own 'merit, and not less for the relation he bore to 'Lady Lambton, made her extremely concerned 'that he should have conceived a passion for her, 'which it was not in her power to return; nor 'could she listen to it in justice to Lady Lambton, 'to whom she was bound in all the ties of grati-'tude; neither should any thing ever prevail with her 'to do any thing prejudicial to the interests of a 'family into which she had been so kindly re-'ceived.'

Sir

Sir Edward was too much in love to acquieſce in ſo nice a point of honour; but Louiſa would not wait to hear arguments which it was ſo painful to her to refute, and retired into her own chamber, to lament in ſecret her unhappy fate in being obliged to reject the addreſſes of a man, whoſe affections, were ſhe at liberty, ſhe would think no ſacrifice too great to obtain.

Miſs Mancel endeavoured as much as poſſible to avoid giving Sir Edward any opportunity of renewing his addreſſes; but his vigilance found the means of ſeeing her alone more than once, when he warmly urged the partiality of her behaviour, repreſenting 'how much more his happineſs was concerned in 'the ſucceſs of a paſſion which poſſeſſed his whole 'ſoul, than his grandmother's could be in diſap-'pointing it. She, he obſerved, was actuated 'only by pride, he by the ſincereſt love that ever 'took place in a human heart. In accepting his 'addreſſes Louiſa could only mortify Lady Lamb-'ton; in rejecting them, ſhe muſt render him mi-'ſerable. Which, he aſked, had the beſt title to 'her regard, the woman who could ungenerouſly 'and injudiciouſly ſet a higher value on riches and 'birth than on her very ſuperior excellencies, or 'the man who would gladly ſacrifice fortune, and 'every other enjoyment the world could afford, to 'the poſſeſſion of her; of her who alone could 'render life deſirable to him?' By theſe, and many other arguments, and what was more prevalent than all the arguments that could be deduced from reaſon, by the tendereſt intreaties that the moſt ardent paſſion could dictate, Sir Edward endeavoured to perſuade Louiſa to conſent to marry him, but all proved unavailing. She ſometimes thought what he ſaid was juſt, but aware of her partiality, ſhe could not believe herſelf an unprejudiced

diced judge, and feared that she might mistake the sophistry of love, for the voice of reason. She was sure, while honour, truth, and gratitude, pleaded against inclination they must be in the right, though their remonstrances were hushed into a whisper by the louder sollicitations of passion. Convinced that she could not be to blame, while she acted in contradiction to her secret choice, since the sincerity of her intentions were thereby plainly, though painfully evinced, she persisted in refusing to become Sir Edward's wife, and told him, that 'if he did 'not discontinue his addresses, he would force her to 'leave the house, and retire to any place that would 'afford her a quiet refuge from his importunity.'

A hint of this sort was sufficient to drive Sir Edward almost to distraction, and Louisa dared not pursue the subject. When he found she could not be induced to consent to an immediate marriage, he endeavoured to obtain a promise of her hand after Lady Lambton's decease; though to a man of his impatient and strong passions such a delay was worse than death; but Miss Mancel told him, 'by 'such an engagement she should be guilty of a 'mean evasion, and that she should think it as great 'a breach of honour as marrying him directly.'

The despair to which Louisa's conduct reduced Sir Edward, whose love seemed to increase with the abatement of his hopes, was very visible to his grandmother, but her pride was invincible; neither her affection for him, nor her great esteem for Miss Mancel's merit, could conquer her aversion to their union. She saw them both unhappy, but was convinced the pangs they felt would not be of very long continuance, trusting to the usual inconstancy of young persons, while the inconveniencies attending an incumbered fortune, and the disgrace which she imagined must be the consequence

quence of Sir Edward's marrying a woman of obſcure birth, would be permanent, and influence the whole courſe of his life.

Louiſa, unable to ſupport ſo hard a conflict, continually reſiſting both her lover, and her love, was determined to ſeek ſome relief from abſence. She wrote Mr. d'Avora a faithful account of all the difficulties of her ſituation, and intreated him to receive her into his houſe, till he could find ſome proper place wherein to fix her abode.

This worthy friend approved her conduct, while he grieved for her diſtreſs; his honeſt heart felt a ſecret indignation againſt Lady Lambton, who could, by falſe pride, be blinded to the honour which he thought ſuch a woman as Miſs Mancel muſt reflect on any family into which ſhe entered. He wrote that young lady word, that 'ſhe might 'be aſſured of the beſt reception his houſe could 'afford, and every ſervice that it was in his power 'to render her; deſiring that ſhe would let him 'know when ſhe propoſed ſetting out, that he 'might meet her on the road, not thinking it pro-'per ſhe ſhould travel alone.'

This letter gave Miſs Mancel much ſatisfaction; ſhe was now ſecure of an aſylum; but the great difficulty ſtill remained, ſhe knew not how to get away from Lady Lambton's in a proper manner; for to go clandeſtinely was not ſuitable to her character, and might bring it into ſuſpicion. In this dilemma ſhe thought it beſt to apply to that lady, and with her uſual frankneſs told her, (what had not eſcaped her diſcernment) the affection Sir Edward had conceived for her, and the return her own heart made to it; only ſuppreſſing his ſolicitations, as her ladyſhip might be offended with his proceeding ſo far without her conſent. She repreſented 'the imprudence of her continuing in the houſe

with

'with Sir Edward, whereby both his paſſion and 'her own muſt be increaſed; and yet ſhe was at 'a loſs how to depart privately, but was convinced 'it could not be affected with his knowledge, with-'out ſuch an eclat as muſt be very diſagreeable to 'them all; nor could ſhe anſwer for her own re-'ſolution, when put to ſo ſevere a trial; as ſhe 'ſhould have more than her full meaſure of affic-'tion in going from thence, without being witneſs 'to its effect on him.'

One ſhould have imagined that the generoſity of Miſs Mancel's conduct, might have influenced Lady Lambton in her favour; but though it increaſed her eſteem, it did not alter her reſolution. With inexcuſable inſenſibility ſhe concerted meaſures with her, and engaged to procure Sir Edward's abſence for a ſhort time. Some very neceſſary buſineſs indeed demanded his preſence in a neighbouring county, where the greateſt part of his eſtate lay, but he had not been able to prevail on himſelf to leave Louiſa; too much enamoured to think any pecuniary advantage could compenſate for the loſs of her company. But as it was natural that an old grandmother ſhould ſee the matter in another light; her preſſing him to go and ſettle his affairs, gave him no cauſe to ſuſpect any latent meaning, and was too reaſonable to be any longer oppoſed.

Though Sir Edward was reſolved on ſo quick a diſpatch of buſineſs, as promiſed him a ſpeedy return, yet any ſeparation from Miſs Mancel, however ſhort, appeared a ſevere misfortune. The evening before the day of his departure, he contrived to ſee her alone, and renewed his importunities with redoubled ardour, but with no better ſucceſs than before. He lamented the neceſſity he was under of leaving her, though but for a little

time,

time, with an agony of mind better fitted to an eternal ſeparation. She, who ſaw it in that light, was overcome with the tender diſtreſs which a perſon muſt feel at taking a final leave of one who is extremely dear to her. Her own grief was more than ſhe could have concealed; but when ſhe anticipated in her thoughts, what he would ſuffer when he knew he had loſt her for ever, and judged from the pain he felt on the approach of what he thought ſo ſhort an abſence; how very great his diſtreſs would be, ſhe was unable to ſupport the ſcene with her uſual ſteadineſs. Tears inſenſibly ſtole down her face, and beſtowed on it ſtill greater charms than it had ever yet worn, by giving her an air of tenderneſs, which led him to hope that ſhe did not behold his paſſion with indifference. This thought afforded him a conſolation which he had never before received; and though it increaſed his love, yet it abated his diſtreſs, and rendered him more able to leave her, ſince he flattered himſelf ſhe would with pleaſure ſee him return, which he was now more than ever reſolved to do as ſpeedily as poſſible.

The day of his departure ſhe ſpent chiefly in her own room, to conceal, as far as ſhe was able, a weakneſs ſhe was aſhamed of, but could not conquer. She had written the day before to inform Mr. d'Avora, that ſhe ſhould ſet out for London four days after her letter. Accordingly at the time appointed, after having agreed with Lady Lambton, that Sir Edward muſt be kept ignorant of the place to which ſhe was gone, ſhe ſet out with that lady, who carried her in her coach twelve miles of the way, and then delivered her to Mr. d'Avora, who was come thither to receive her. Lady Lambton could not part with her amiable companion without regret, and expreſſed her true ſenſe of her merit

rit in ſuch ſtrong terms to Mr. d'Avora, who could not forgive that pride which occaſioned ſo much pain both to Louiſa and Sir Edward, that he told her in plain terms, how very happy, and how much honoured any man muſt be, who had her for his wife. Perhaps Lady Lambton would have ſubſcribed to his opinion, had any one but her grandſon been concerned; but the point was too tender, and it was no ſmall command over herſelf, that prevented her giving the good old man a hint that ſhe thought him impertinent.

Our travellers arrived in town the next day, after a melancholy journey, for even the company of a friend ſhe ſo much loved and eſteemed, could not reſtore Miſs Mancel's natural vivacity, though in compaſſion to the good old man, who ſympathiſed tenderly in her diſtreſs, ſhe endeavoured to the utmoſt of her power, to conceal how very deeply ſhe was afflicted. It was ſome little time before her ſpirits were ſufficiently compoſed to form any ſcheme for her future life, nor were they benefitted by a letter from Lady Lambton, which acquainted her that Sir Edward, at his return, finding ſhe had left the place, that his grandmother had conſented to her departure, and refuſed to tell him where ſhe was gone, was for ſome days frantic with rage and grief, and had juſt then left Lady Lampton, with a determination to ſerve as volunteer in the army in Germany, in hopes, he ſaid, to find there a releaſe from his afflictions, which nothing but the hand of death could beſtow.

The old lady was much ſhocked at this event, but hoped a little time would reſtore his reaſon, and enable him to bear his diſappointment with patience. 'There was room to believe, ſhe ſaid, that 'the reſt of the campaign would paſs over without

'a battle

'a battle, and if ſo the change of ſcene might 'abate his paſſion.'

Louiſa's heart was too tenderly engaged to reaſon ſo philoſophically, ſhe was almoſt diſtracted with her fears, and was often inclined to blame her own ſcruples, that had driven ſo worthy a man to ſuch extremities. All Mr. d'Avora could urge to reconcile her to herſelf, and to calm her apprehenſions for Sir Edward, were ſcarcely ſufficient to reſtore her to any eaſe of mind; but at length he brought her to ſubmit patiently to her fate, and to ſupport her preſent trial with conſtancy.

They were ſtill undetermined as to her future eſtabliſhment, when Mr. d'Avora one day met an old acquaintance and countryman in the ſtreet. As this perſon had many years before returned to his native country, Mr. d'Avora inquired what had again brought him into England? His friend replied, that he was come in quality of factotum to a widow lady of fortune. In the courſe of their converſation he aſked Mr. d'Avora, if he could recommend a waiting woman to his lady, her's having died on the road. The character this man gave of his miſtreſs inclined Mr. d'Avora to mention the place to Miſs Mancel, who readily agreed, that he ſhould endeavour to obtain it for her.

Mr. d'Avora had engaged the man to call on him the next day, by telling him he believed he might be able to recommend a moſt valuable young perſon to his lady. He was punctual to his appointment, and conducted Mr. d'Avora and Louiſa to Mrs. Thornby's, that was the name of the lady in queſtion.

Miſs Mancel was dreſſed with care, but of a very different ſort from what is uſually aimed at; all her endeavours had been to conceal her youth and beauty as much as poſſible under great gravity

of dress, and to give her all the disadvantages consistent with neatness and cleanliness. But such art was too thin a veil to hide her charms. Mrs. Thornby was immediately struck with her beauty, and made some scruple of taking a young person into her service, whom she should look upon as a great charge, and she feared her maid might require more attention from her, than she should think necessary for any servant to pay to herself. Mr. d'Avora represented to her, 'how cruel it was that 'beauty, which was looked upon as one of the 'most precious gifts of nature, should disqualify 'a young woman for obtaining a necessary provi-'vision. That this young person's prudence was 'so irreproachable, as sufficiently secured her from 'any disadvantages, which might naturally be 'feared from it. But still he allowed, her person 'would justly deter a married woman from receiv-'ing her, and might make a cautious mother 'avoid it, since her good conduct would rather add 'to, than diminish her attractions, therefore it was 'only with a single lady she could hope to be placed; 'and he was well convinced, that such an one 'would have reason to think herself happy, in so 'accomplished a servant; since her mind was still 'more amiable than her person.'

Mrs. Thornby allowed what he said to be reasona-and was so charmed with Louisa's appearance, that she assured him she would receive her with pleasure. She was in haste for a servant, and Miss Manel had no reason to delay her attendance, therefore it was agreed she should enter into her place the next day.

When Lady Lambton took leave of Louisa, she would have forced her to receive a very handsome present; Louisa had accepted many while she lived with her ladyship, but at this time she said, 'it 'would

'would look like receiving a compenſation for the 'loſs of Sir Edward; and as ſhe choſe to ſacrifice 'both her inclinations and happineſs to her regard 'for Lady Lambton, ſhe could not be induced to 'accept any thing that looked like a reward for an 'action, which if ſhe had not thought it her duty, 'nothing could have prevailed with her to per-'form.' The tendereſt affections of her heart were too much concerned in what ſhe had done, to leave her the power of feeling any apprehenſions of poverty; all the evils that attend it then appeared to her ſo entirely external, that ſhe beheld them with the calm philoſophy of a ſtoic, and not from a very contrary motive; the inſenſibility of each aroſe from a ruling paſſion; the ſtoic's from pride, her's from love. But though ſhe feared not poverty, ſhe ſaw it was adviſable to fix upon ſome eſtabliſhment, as ſoon as it could be obtained; and therefore received great ſatisfaction from being aſſured of Mrs. Thornby's acceptance of her ſervices. Mr. d'Avora was not without hopes, that if Sir Edward continued conſtant till Lady Lambton's death, Louiſa might then, without any breach of honour or gratitude, marry him; though to have engaged herſelf to do ſo, would, as ſhe obſerved, have been ſcarcely leſs inexcuſable than an immediate conſent; therefore he adviſed her to aſſume another name, as Sir Edward might not chooſe, after ſhe was his wife, to have it known that ſhe had been reduced to ſervitude.

Louiſa was accordingly received at Mrs. Thornby's by the name of Menil. Her good ſenſe and aſſiduity enabled her to acquit herſelf ſo well in her new place, as greatly delighted her miſtreſs; and though ſhe concealed the greateſt part of her accompliſhments, ſenſible they could be of no aſſiſtance, and might on the contrary raiſe a prejudice

against her; yet her behaviour and converſation ſo plainly indicated a ſuperior education, that before ſhe had been there a week, Mrs. Thornby told her, ſhe was certain ſhe had not been born for the ſtation ſhe was then in, and begged a particular account of her whole life.

Louiſa fearing that a compliance would render her leſs agreeable to her miſtreſs, who already treated her with a reſpect, which ſeemed more than was due to her ſituation, and often appeared uneaſy at ſeeing her perform the neceſſary duties of her place; intreated to be ſpared a taſk, which, ſhe ſaid, was attended with ſome circumſtances ſo melancholy, as greatly affected her ſpirits on a particular recollection.

Mrs. Thornby's curioſity was not abated by this inſinuation, and ſhe repeated her requeſt in a manner ſo importunate, and at the ſame time ſo kind, that Louiſa could no longer, without manifeſt diſreſpect, decline it.

She began then by acquainting her, that ſhe went by a borrowed name; but had proceeded no farther in her narration, than to tell her that her real name was Mancel, and that ſhe had been left to the care of an aunt, in her earlieſt infancy, by parents who were obliged, for reaſons ſhe could never learn, to leave their country, when Mrs. Thornby exclaimed, My child! my child! and ſinking on her knees, with eyes and hands lifted up towards heaven, poured forth a moſt ardent thankſgiving, with an extacy of mind not to be deſcribed. Her firſt ſenſation was that of gratitude to the Almighty Power, who had reſerved ſo great a bleſſing for her; maternal tenderneſs alone gave riſe to the ſucceeding emotions of her heart; ſhe threw her arms round Louiſa, who on ſeeing her fall on her knees, and not comprehending the meaning

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of her action ran to her; but ſtruck with aſtoniſhment and reverence at the awful piety in her countenance and addreſs, bent ſilent and motionleſs over her. Mrs Thornby leaning her head on Louiſa's boſom, burſt into ſuch a flood of tears, and was ſo oppreſſed with joy, that the power of ſpeech totally failed her. Louiſa raiſed her from the ground, crying, 'Dear madam, what can all this mean; 'What does this extreme agitation of your mind give 'me room to hope?'

'Every thing, my child! my angel! that a fond 'parent can beſtow, replied Mrs. Thornby. I 'am that mother, that was obliged to leave thee to 'another's care; and has Heaven preſerved my 'daughter, and reſtored her to me ſo lovely, ſo 'amiable! Gracious Providence! Merciful beyond 'hope! Teach me to thank thee as I ought for this 'laſt inſtance of thy goodneſs!' And then her whole ſoul ſeemed again poured forth in grateful adoration.

Louiſa could ſcarcely believe this event was real; thus unexpectedly to meet with a parent, whom ſhe ſuppoſed loſt to her for ever, almoſt ſtunned her; her thoughts were ſo engroſſed by the raptures of her joyful mother, that ſhe did not feel half her good fortune; and the delight ſhe received in ſeeing her mother's happineſs, robbed her of every other ſenſation.

It was ſome hours before Mrs. Thornby's mind was ſufficiently compoſed to enter into any connected converſation. From broken ſentences Miſs Mancel learnt, that 'her father and mother, by 'the complicated diſtreſs of ruined fortune, and 'the too fatal ſucceſs of a duel, in which Mr. 'Mancel was unwillingly engaged, had been 'obliged to abſent themſelves from England. They 'went to one of the American colonies, in hopes

'of finding means to improve their circumstances, 'leaving the young Louisa then in her cradle, with 'a sister of Mr. Mancel's, who readily undertook 'the care of her. They were scarcely arrived in 'America, when Mr. Mancel was seized with a 'fever, of which he soon died, and with him all 'their hopes. Mrs. Mancel was left entirely de-'stitute, at a loss how to hazard the tedious pas-'sage home, without the protection of a husband, 'and with hardly a sufficient sum remaining to dis-'charge the expences of it.

'Her melancholy situation engaged some of the 'inhabitants of the place to offer her all necessary 'accommodations, till she could find a proper op-'portunity of returning to England. During this 'time, Mr. Thornby, a gentleman who had ac-'quired a fortune there, saw her, and was so well 'pleased with her person and conduct, that he very 'warmly solicited her to marry him. Every person 'spoke in his favour, and urged her to consent; her 'poverty was no faint adviser, and with general 'approbation, at the conclusion of the first year of 'her widowhood, she became his wife.

'His affairs soon called him into a more inland 'part of the country, to which she attributed her 'never having heard from her sister, to whom she 'wrote an account of her husband's death; but 'by what Miss Mancel told her she imagined her 'letter had not been received.

'Mr. and Mrs Thornby continued in the same 'place, till about two years before her arrival in 'England; but his health growing extremely bad, 'he was advised by his physicians to return to 'Europe. He wished to re-visit his native country, 'but was persuaded, for the re-establishment of his 'constitution, to spend some time in Italy. The climate

'climate at firſt ſeemed to relieve him, but his 'complaints returning with greater violence, he died 'in the latter part of the ſecond year of his abode 'there.

'His eſtate in the Indies he bequeathed to a 'nephew, who lived upon the ſpot; but the money 'he had ſent before him into England, which 'amounted to about forty thouſand pounds, he left 'to his widow. He had deſired to be interred at 'Florence, where he died. As ſoon as the fune-'ral was over, and ſome other neceſſary affairs ſet-'tled, Mrs. Thornby ſet out for England, where 'ſhe no ſooner arrived than ſhe employed intelli-'gent perſons to find out her ſiſter-in-law and 'daughter, but had not received any account from 'them, when her daughter was reſtored to her as 'the free gift of providence.'

Mrs. Thornby was now more deſirous than ever, to hear each minute particular that had befallen her Louiſa; but Louiſa begged that before ſhe obeyed her orders, ſhe might have permiſſion to communicate the happy event to Mr. d'Avora, whoſe joy ſhe knew would be nearly equal to her own. A meſſenger was diſpatched for this purpoſe, and then ſhe related circumſtantially all the incidents in her ſhort life, except her partial regard to Sir Edward Lambton, which filial awe induced her to ſuppreſs.

Mrs. Thornby grew every day more delighted with her daughter, as her acquired accompliſhments, and natural excellencies, became more conſpicuous on longer acquaintance. Her maternal love ſeemed to glow with greater warmth for having been ſo long ſtifled, and Louiſa found ſuch delight in the tender affection of a mother, that ſhe was ſcarcely ſenſible of the agreeable change in her ſituation, which was now in every circumſtance

the moſt deſirable. All that fortune could give, ſhe had it in her power to enjoy, and that eſteem which money cannot purchaſe, her own merit ſecured her, beſides all the gratification a young woman can receive from general admiration. But ſtill Louiſa was not happy, her fears for Sir Edward's life, while in ſo dangerous a ſituation, would not ſuffer her mind to be at peace. She might hope every thing from her mother's indulgence, but had not courage to confeſs her weakneſs, nor to intimate a wiſh, which might occaſion her ſeparation from a parent, whoſe joy in their re-union ſtill roſe to rapture. Chance, that deity, which though blind, is often a powerful friend, did what ſhe could not prevail on herſelf to do.

One morning the news paper of the day being brought in, Mrs. Thornby taking it up, read to her daughter a paragraph, which contained an account of a battle in Germany, wherein many of the Engliſh were ſaid to be ſlain, but few of their names ſpecified. Louiſa immediately turned pale, her work dropped out of her hand, and an univerſal trembling ſeized her. Mrs. Thornby was too attentive not to obſerve her daughter's diſtreſs, and ſo kindly inquired the reaſon, that Louiſa ventured to tell her for whom ſhe was ſo much intereſted; and gave an exact account of Sir Edward's addreſs to her, her behaviour upon it, and the great regard ſhe had for him.

Mrs. Thornby affectionately chid her for having till then concealed a circumſtance whereon ſo much of her happineſs depended, and offered to write to Lady Lambton immediately, and acquaint her, that if want of fortune was her only objection to Miſs Mancel, it no longer ſubſiſted, for that ſhe was ready to anſwer any demands of that ſort, which her ladyſhip ſhould chuſe to make, as ſhe thought

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ſhe ſhould no way ſo well ſecure her daughter's happineſs, as by uniting her with a gentleman of Sir Edward's amiable character, and whoſe affection for her had ſo evidently appeared.

Louiſa could not reject an offer which might reſcue Sir Edward from the dangers that threatened him, and with pleaſure thought of rewarding ſo generous and ſo ſincere a paſſion. Perhaps ſhe found ſome gratification, in ſhewing that gratitude alone dictated her refuſal. The letter was immediately diſpatched, and received with great pleaſure by lady Lambton, whoſe eſteem for Miſs Mancel, would have conquered any thing but her pride. She accepted the propoſal in the politeſt manner, and that Sir Edward might be acquainted with his happineſs as ſoon as poſſible, diſpatched her ſteward into Germany, ordering him to travel with the utmoſt expedition, and gave him Mrs. Thornby's letter, with one from herſelf, containing an account of the great change in Louiſa's fortune.

The ſervant obeyed the directions given him, and performed the journey in as ſhort a time as poſſible; but as he entered the camp, he met Sir Edward indeed, but not as a future bridegroom. He was borne on mens ſhoulders, pale and almoſt breathleſs, juſt returned from an attack, whereby his too great raſhneſs, he had received a mortal wound. He followed him with an aching heart to his tent, where Sir Edward recovering his ſenſes, knew him, and aſked, 'What brought him there ſo opportunely, 'to cloſe his eyes, and pay the laſt duties, to one of 'whoſe infancy he had been ſo careful?' for this ſervant lived in the family when Sir Edward was born, and loved him almoſt with paternal fondneſs, which occaſioned his deſire of being himſelf the meſſenger of ſuch joyful news.

The poor man was ſcarcely able to anſwer a queſtion expreſſed in ſuch melancholy terms, and was doubtful whether he ought to acquaint him with a circumſtance, which might only increaſe his regret at loſing a life, which would have been bleſſed to his utmoſt wiſh, but incapable in that ſtate of mind of inventing any plauſible reaſon, he told him the truth, and gave him the two letters.

The pleaſure Sir Edward received at the account of Louiſa's good fortune, and the ſtill greater joy he felt at ſo evident a proof of her regard for him, made him for a time forget his pains, and flattered the good old ſteward with hopes, that his caſe was not ſo deſperate as the ſurgeons repreſented it; but Sir Edward told him, 'he knew all hope was vain.' 'I muſt accuſe myſelf, ſaid he, of loſing 'that lovely generous woman, what a treaſure 'would have gladdened my future days, had I not 'raſhly, I fear criminally ſhortened them, not by 'my own hand indeed, but how little different! 'Mad with deſpair, I have ſought all means of obtaining, what I imagined the only cure for my 'diſtempered mind. Weary of life, ſince I could 'not poſſeſs her, in whom all my joys, all the 'wiſhes of my ſoul were centered, I ſeized every 'occaſion of expoſing myſelf to the enemy's ſword. 'Contrary to my hopes, I eſcaped many times, 'when death ſeemed unavoidable; but grown more 'deſperate by diſappointment, I this morning went 'on an attack, where inſtead of attempting to conquer, all my endeavour was to be killed, and at 'laſt I ſucceeded, how fatally!' Oh! my Louiſa, 'continued he, and do I then loſe thee by my own 'impatience! Had I, like thee, ſubmitted to the 'diſpoſition of providence, had I waited, from its 'mighty power, that relief which it alone can 'give, I might now be expecting with rapture the

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'hour that ſhould have united us for ever, inſtead 'of preparing for that which ſhall ſummon me to 'the grave, where even thou ſhalt be forgotten, 'and the laſt traces of thy lovely image effaced from 'my too faithful remembrance. How juſt are the 'decrees of the Almighty! Thy patience, thy re-'ſignation, and uncommon virtues are rewarded 'as they ought; my petulance, my impatience, 'which, as it were, flew in the face of my Maker, 'and ſought to loſe a life which he had intruſted to 'my keeping, and required me to preſerve, is de-'ſervedly puniſhed. I am deprived of that exiſt-'ence, which I would now endure whole ages of 'pain to recal, were it to be done, but it is paſt, 'and I ſubmit to thy juſtice, thou all wiſe diſpoſer 'of my fate.'

The agitation of Sir Edward's mind had given him a flow of falſe ſpirits, but at length they failed, leaving him only the more exhauſted. He kept Mrs. Thornly's letter on his pillar, and read it many times. Frequent were his expreſſions of regret for his own raſhneſs, and he felt much concern from the fear that Louiſa would be ſhocked with his death. Her mother's proceedings convinced him ſhe was not void of regard for him; he now ſaw that he had not vainly flattered himſelf, when he imagined, from many little circumſtances, that her heart ſpoke in his favour; and the force ſhe muſt have put on her affections, raiſed his opinion of her almoſt to adoration. He often told his faithful attendant, that in thoſe moments he felt a joy beyond what he had ever yet experienced, in believing Louiſa loved him; but theſe emotions were ſoon checked by reflecting, that if ſhe did ſo, ſhe could not hear of his death without ſuffering many heart-felt pangs.

He lingered for three days, without the leaſt encouragement to hope for life, and on the laſt died with great reſignation, receiving his death as a puniſhment juſtly due to his want of ſubmiſſion in the divine will, and that froward petulance which drove him to deſperation, in not ſucceeding to his wiſhes, juſt at the time, that to his impetuous paſſions, and ſhort-ſighted reaſon, appeared moſt deſirable.

The afflicted ſteward wrote an account of this melancholy event to Lady Lambton, and ſtaid to attend Sir Edward's body home, that his laſt remains might be depoſited in the family vault.

Lady Lambton received theſe mournful tidings with exceſſive grief, and communicated them to Mrs. Thornby. Louiſa, from the time of the meſſenger's ſetting out for Germany, had been pleaſing herſelf with reflecting on the joyful reception he would meet with from Sir Edward, and had frequently anticipated, in imagination, the pleaſures ſhe and Sir Edward would receive at ſeeing each other, after ſo melancholy a ſeparation. She now every hour expected him, and when Mrs. Thornby began to prepare her againſt ſurprize, ſhe imagined he was arrived, and that her kind mother was endeavouring to guard her againſt too ſudden joy. She attempted to break through the delay, which muſt ariſe from all this caution, by begging to know if he was in the houſe, deſiring her not to fear any ill effects from his ſudden appearance, and roſe from her ſeat, in order to attend her mother to Sir Edward. Mrs. Thornby made her ſit down again, and with a countenance which ſpoke very different things from what ſhe expected, acquainted her with the fatal end of all her hopes.

Louiſa was ſhocked in proportion to the degree to which ſhe was before elated. She ſunk lifeleſs

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in the arms of her mother, who had claſped her to her breaſt, and it was a conſiderable time before their cruel endeavours to bring her to her ſenſes ſucceeded. Her firſt ſenſation was an agony of grief; ſhe accuſed herſelf of being the occaſion of Sir Edward's death, and from the unfortunate conſequences of her actions, arraigned her motives for them. Mrs. Thornby and Mr. d'Avora, whom ſhe had ſent for on this occaſion, endeavoured to convince her, ſhe was no way to blame, that what ſhe had done was laudable, and ſhe ought not to judge of an action by its conſequences, which muſt always remain in the hands of the Almighty, to whom we are accountable for our motives, but who beſt knows when they ought to be crowned with ſucceſs. When they had prevailed with her to exculpate herſelf, her piety and patience made it the more eaſy to perſuade her calmly to ſubmit to the decrees of providence. She ſoon ſaw, that to ſuffer was her duty, and though ſhe might grieve, ſhe muſt not repine. The good advice of her two friends was ſome ſupport to her mind, but her chief ſtrength aroſe from her frequent petitions to him who tried her in ſufferings, to grant her patience to bear them with due reſignation. Such addreſſes, fervently and ſincerely made, can never be unavailing, and ſhe found the conſolation ſhe aſked for. Her affliction was deep, but ſilent and ſubmiſſive, and in no part of her life did ſhe ever appear more amiable than on this trying occaſion, when her extreme ſenſibility could never extort one word or thought which was not dictated by humble piety, and the moſt exemplary reſignation. That Sir Edward had had ſo juſt a ſenſe of his own error, and ſo properly repented his impatience was a great conſolation, and ſhe hoped to meet him whom ſhe

she had so soon lost, in a state of happiness, where they should never more be parted.

Mrs Morgan had borne a tender share in all Louisa's joys and sorrows; for in the frequency of her correspondence, every circumstance that attended the latter was faithfully imparted, though the communication was less free on Mrs. Morgan's side, who, contrary to her natural temper, acted with reserve on this particular; induced by a double motive, a belief that it was her duty to conceal her husband's faults, and a desire to spare her friend the pain of suffering participation in her vexations. She longed to attend Miss Manced in her affliction, but dared not urge a request with which she knew Mr. Morgan would not comply. He lived intirely in the country, and seemed to be totally insensible to the pleasure of contributing to the happiness of others. All his tenderness was confined within the narrow circle of himself. Mrs. Morgan daily beheld distress and poverty without the power of relieving it, for his parcimony would not let him trust her with the disposal of what money was necessary for her own expences, his sister always bought what they in their wisdoms judged requisite, and Mrs. Morgan was treated in those affairs like a little child.

In matters too trifling to come within Mr. Morgan's notice, Mrs. Susanna, fearing her sister should enjoy a moment's ease, took care to perform her part in teazing, as if their joint business was only to keep that poor woman in a constant state of suffering. To compleat her vexation, Mr. Morgan, who had always drank hard, increased so much in that vice, that few days passed wherein he was not totally intoxicated. Mrs. Morgan saw no means of redress, and therefore thought it best

beſt to ſuffer without complaint; ſhe conſidered, that, by contention, ſhe could not prevail over their ill temper, but muſt infallibly ſour her own, and deſtroy that compoſure of mind, neceſſary to enable every one to acquit herſelf well in all Chriſtian duties. By this patient acquieſcence her virtues were refined, though her health ſuffered, and ſhe found ſome ſatisfaction in reflecting, that him whom ſhe moſt wiſhed to pleaſe, would graciouſly accept her endeavours; however unavailing they might be towards obtaining the favour of thoſe on whom her earthly peace depended.

At this part of Mrs. Maynard's narration we were again interrupted by dinner, but the arrival of ſome viſitors in the afternoon, afforded Lamont and myſelf an opportunity of begging her to give us the ſequel, and for that purpoſe we choſe a retired ſeat in the garden; when ſhe thus proceeded.

The next ſix years of Miſs Mancel's life paſſed in a perfect calm; this may appear too cold an expreſſion, ſince her ſituation was ſuch, as would by moſt people have been thought conſummate happineſs. Mrs. Thornby's ample fortune enabled them to live in great figure, and Miſs Mancel's beauty and underſtanding rendered her the object of general admiration. Had her conduct been leſs amiable, ſhe could not but have acquired many lovers; it is not ſtrange then, ſuch as ſhe was, that ſhe ſhould be addreſſed by many men of diſtinguiſhed rank and fortune. Wherever ſhe appeared, ſhe attracted all eyes, and engroſſed the whole attention. Mrs. Thornby, more delighted with the admiration paid her daughter than ſhe herſelf, carried her frequently into public, and kept a great deal of company. Louiſa could not be in-

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ſenſible to the general approbation, but was hurt with the ſerious attachment of thoſe who more particularly addreſſed her. As ſhe was determined never to marry, thinking it a ſort of infidelity to a man, whoſe death was owing to his affection for her, ſhe always took the firſt opportunity of diſcouraging every purſuit of that kind; and reſtrained the natural vivacity of her temper, leſt it ſhould give riſe to any hopes which could end only in diſappointment. She endeavoured to make publickly known her fixed determination never to marry; but as thoſe reſolutions are ſeldom thought unalterable, many men flattered themſelves, that their rank and fortunes, with their perſonal merits, might conquer ſo ſtrange an intention, and therefore would not deſiſt without an expreſs refuſal.

In the ſeventh year after Mrs. Thornby's return into England, ſhe was taken off by a fever, and left Miſs Mancel, at twenty four years of age, in poſſeſſion of forty thouſand pounds, a fortune which could not afford her any conſolation for the loſs of ſo tender a parent. Having nothing to attach her to any particular part of the kingdom, ſhe more than ever longed to ſettle in Mrs. Morgan's neighbourhood, but feared to occaſion ſome new uneaſineſs to her friend, and was ſenſible, that if, when vicinity favoured them, they ſhould be denied the pleaſure of each others company, or very much reſtrained in it, the mortification would be ſtill greater than when diſtance would not permit them to meet. She had the ſatisfaction of hearing from her friend, that Mr. Morgan ſeemed to eſteem her more than for ſome years after their marriage, and often gave her reaſon to think he did not deſpiſe her underſtanding, and was well pleaſed with her conduct. The truth was, this gentleman's eyes were at laſt opened to the merits

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of his wife's behaviour, the long trial he had made of her obedience, which was implicit, and performed with apparent chearfulneſs; if compared with his ſiſter's conduct, could not fail of appearing in an amiable light, when he was no longer beſet with the malicious inſinuations of Suſanna, who had beſtowed herſelf on a young enſign, whoſe ſmall hopes of preferment in the army, reduced him to accept that lady and her fortune as a melancholy reſource, but his only certain proviſion. This alteration in Mr. Morgan's temper gave Mrs. Morgan and Louiſa room to hope that he might not always continue averſe to their becoming neighbours.

While they were flattering themſelves with this agreeable proſpect, Mr. Morgan was ſeized with a paralytic diſorder, which at firſt attacked his limbs, but in a very ſhort time affected his head ſo much, as almoſt to deprive him of his ſenſes. He was totally confined to his bed, and ſeemed not to know any one but his wife. He would take neither medicine nor nouriſhment except from her hands; as he was entirely lame, ſhe was obliged to feed him, and he was not eaſy if ſhe was out of the room. Even in the night he would frequently call to her; if ſhe appeared at his bed-ſide, he was then contended, being ſure ſhe was in the chamber, but would fall into violent paſſions, which he had not words to expreſs (for he was almoſt deprived of his ſpeech) if ſhe did not inſtantly appear.

When Miſs Mancel heard of his deplorable ſituation, ſhe was under the greateſt apprehenſions for her friend's health, from ſo cloſe and ſo fatiguing an attendance, and begged ſhe might come to her, as he was then incapable of taking umbrage at it. The offer was too agreeable to be rejected, and theſe ladies met after ſo long an enforced ſepara-

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tion, with a joy not to be imagined by any heart less susceptible than theirs, of the tender and delicate sensations of friendship. Louisa was almost as constantly in Mr. Morgan's room in the day time, as his wife, though she kept out of his sight, and thus they had full opportunity of conversing together; for though the sick man often called Mrs. Morgan, yet as soon as he saw she was in the chamber, he sunk again into that state of stupefaction, from which he never recovered. Mrs. Morgan put a bed up in his room, and lay there constantly, but as he was as solicitious to know she was present in the night, as in the day, she could never quite undress herself the whole time of his sickness.

In this condition Mr. Morgan lay for three months, when death released him from this world; and brought a seasonable relief to Mrs. Morgan, whose health was so impaired by long confinement, and want of quiet rest, that she could not much longer have supported it; and vexation had before so far impaired her constitution, that nothing could have enabled her to undergo so long a fatigue, but the infinite joy she received from Miss Mancel's company.

When Mr. Morgan's will was opened, it appeared, that he had left his wife an estate which fell to him about a month before the commencement of his illness, where we now live. The income of it is a thousand pounds a year; the land was thoroughly stocked, and the house in good repair. Mr. Morgan had at his marriage settled a jointure on his wife of four hundred pounds a year rent charge, and in a codicil made just after his sister's wedding, he bequeathed her two thousand pounds in ready money.

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After Mrs. Morgan had ſettled all her affairs, it was judged neceſſary, that, for the recovery of her health, ſhe ſhould go to Tunbridge, to which place Miſs Mancel accompanied her. As Mrs. Morgan's dreſs confined her entirely at home, they were not in the way of making many acquaintance; but lady Mary Jones being in the houſe, and having long been known to Miſs Mancel, though no intimacy had ſubſiſted between them, they now became much connected. The two friends had agreed to retire into the country, and though both of an age and fortune to enjoy all the pleaſures which moſt people ſo eagerly purſue, they were deſirous of fixing in a way of life where all their ſatisfactions might be rational, and as conducive to eternal, as to temporal happineſs. They had laid the plan of many things, which they have ſince put into execution, and engaged Mr. D'Avora to live with them, both as a valuable friend, and an uſeful aſſiſtant, in the management of their affairs.

Lady Mary was at that time ſo much in the ſame diſpoſition, and ſo charmed with ſuch part of their ſcheme as they communicated to her, that ſhe begged to live with them for half a year, by which time they would be able to ſee whether they choſe her continuance there, and ſhe ſhould have experienced how far their way of life was agreeable to her. Lady Mary's merit was too apparent not to obtain their ready conſent to her propoſal, and when they had the ſatisfaction of ſeeing Mrs. Morgan much recovered by the waters, and no farther benefit was expected, they came to this houſe.

They found it ſufficiently furniſhed, and in ſuch good order, that they ſettled in it without trouble. The condition of the poor ſoon drew their attention, and they inſtituted ſchools for the young, and alms-houſes for the old. As they ordered every thing

thing in their own family with great œconomy, and thought themselves entitled only to a part of their fortunes, their large incomes allowed them full power to assist many, whose situations differed very essentially from theirs. The next expence they undertook, after these establishment of schools and alms-houses, was that of furnishing a house for every young couple that married in their neighbourhood, and providing them with some sort of stock, which by industry would prove very conducive towards their living in a comfortable degree of plenty. They have always paid nurses for the sick, sent them every proper refreshment, and allow the same sum weekly which the sick person could have gained, that the rest of the family may not lose any part of their support, by the incapacity of one.

When they found their fortunes would still afford a larger communication, they began to receive the daughters of persons in office, or other life-incomes, who, by their parent's deaths, were left destitute of provision; and when, among the lower sort, they meet with an uncommon genius, they will admit her among the number. The girls you see sit in the room with us are all they have at present in that way; they are educated in such a manner as will render them acceptable, where accomplished women of an humble rank and behaviour are wanted, either for the care of a house or children. These girls are never out of the room with us, except at breakfast and dinner, and after eight o'clock in the evening, at which times they are under the immediate care of the house-keeper, with whom they are allowed to walk out for an hour or two every fine day; left their being always in our company should make them think their situation above a menial state; they attend us while we are dressing, and we endeavour that the time they

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are thus employed ſhall not paſs without improvement. They are clad coarſe and plain for the ſame reaſon, as nothing has a ſtronger influence on vanity than dreſs.

Each of us takes our week alternately of more particular inſpection over the performances of theſe girls, and they all read by turns aloud to ſuch of us, as are employed about any thing that renders it not inconvenient to liſten to them. By this ſort of education my friends hope to do extenſive good, for they will not only ſerve theſe poor orphans, but confer a great benefit on all who ſhall be committed to their care, or have occaſion for their ſervice; and one can ſet no bounds to the advantages that may ariſe from perſons of excellent principles, and enlarged underſtandings, in the ſituations wherein they are to be placed. In every thing their view is to be as beneficial to ſociety as poſſible, and they are ſuch œconomiſts even in their charities, as to order them in a manner, that as large a part of mankind as poſſible ſhould feel the happy influence of their bounty.

In this place, and in this way of life, the three ladies already mentioned have lived upwards of twenty years; for Lady Mary Jones joined her fortune to thoſe of the two friends, never chuſing to quit them, and is too agreeable not to be very deſirable in the ſociety. Miſs Mancel has often declared, that ſhe plainly ſees the merciful hand of providence bringing good out of evil, in an event, which ſhe, at the time it happened, thought her greateſt misfortune; for had ſhe married Sir Edward Lambton, her ſincere affection for him would have led her to conform implicitly to all his inclinations, her views would have been confined to this earth, and too ſtrongly attached to human objects, to have properly obeyed the giver of the bleſſings

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ſhe ſo much valued, who is generally leſs thought of, in proportion as he is more particularly bountiful. Her age, her fortune, and compliant temper, might have ſeduced her into diſſipation, and have made her loſe all the heart-felt joys ſhe now daily experiences, both when ſhe reflects on the paſt, contemplates the preſent, or anticipates the future.

I think I ought to mention Mrs. Morgan's behaviour to her half ſiſters. Sir Charles died about five years ago, and through his wife's extravagance, left his eſtate over-charged with debts, and two daughters and a ſon unprovided for. Lady Melvyn's jointure was not great; Sir George, her eldeſt ſon, received but juſt ſufficient out of his eſtate to maintain himſelf genteelly. By the firſt Lady Melvyn's marriage ſettlements, ſix thouſand pounds were ſettled on her children, which, as Mrs. Morgan was her only child, became her property; this ſhe divided between her mother-in-law's three younger children, and has beſides conferred ſeveral favors on that family, and frequently makes them valuable preſents. The young gentlemen and ladies often paſs ſome time here; Lady Melvyn made us a viſit in the firſt year of her widowhood, but our way of life is ſo ill ſuited to her taſte, that, except during that dull period of confinement, ſhe has never favoured us with her company.

My couſin, I believe, was going to mention ſome other of the actions of theſe ladies, which ſeemed a favorite topic with her, when the reſt of he company came into the garden, and we thought ourſelves obliged to join them.

The afternoons, in this family, generally concluded with one of their delightful concerts; but as ſoon as the viſitors were departed, the ladies ſaid, they would amuſe us that evening with an entertainment,

tertainment, which might poſſibly be more new to us, a ruſtic ball. The occaſion of it was the marriage of a young woman, who had been brought up by them, and had for three years been in ſervice, but having for that whole time been courted by a young farmer of good character, ſhe had been married in the morning, and that evening was dedicated to the celebration of their wedding.

We removed into the ſervants hall, a neat room, and well lighted, where we found a very numerous aſſembly; ſixteen couple were preparing to dance; the reſt were only ſpectators. The bride was a pretty genteel girl, dreſſed in a white callico gown, white ribbons, and in every particular neat to an exceſs. The bridegroom was a well looking young man, as clean and ſprucely dreſſed as his bride, though not with ſuch emblematic purity. This couple, contrary to the cuſtom of finer people on ſuch occaſions, were to begin the ball together; but Lamont aſked leave to be the bride's partner for two or three dances, a compliment not diſagreeable to the ladies, and highly pleaſing to the reſt of the company, except the bride, whoſe vanity one might plainly ſee did not find gratification enough in having ſo genteel a partner, to recompence her for the loſs of her Colin; he, however, ſeemed well ſatisfied with the honour conferred on his wife.

That the bridegroom might not be without his ſhare of civility, the ladies gave him leave to dance with the eldeſt of the young girls more particularly under their care, till his wife was reſtored to him.

We ſat above an hour with this joyous company, whoſe mirth ſeemed as pure as it was ſincere, and I never ſaw a ball managed with greater decorum. There is a coquettry and gallantry appropriated to

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all conditions, and to ſee the different manner in which it was expreſſed in this little ſet, from what one is accuſtomed to behold in higher life, afforded me great amuſement; and the little arts uſed among theſe young people to captivate each other, were accompanied with ſo much innocence, as made it exceſſively pleaſing. We ſtaid about an hour and half in this company, and then went to ſupper.

My couſin told me that Mrs. Mancel gave the young bride a fortune, and that ſhe might have her ſhare of employment, and contribute to the proviſion for her family, had ſtocked her dairy, and furniſhed her with poultry. This, Mrs. Maynard added, was what they did for all the young women they brought up, if they proved deſerving; ſhewing, likewiſe, the ſame favor to any other girls in the pariſh, who, during their ſingle ſtate, behaved with remarkable induſtry and ſobriety. By this mark of diſtinction they were incited to a proper behaviour, and appeared more anxious for this benevolence, on account of the honour that aroſe from it, than for the pecuniary advantage,

As the ladies conduct in this particular was uncommon, I could not forbear telling them, that 'I 'was ſurpriſed to find ſo great encouragement given 'to matrimony by perſons, whoſe choice ſhewed 'them little inclined in its favour.'

Does it ſurprize you, anſwered Mrs. Melvyn ſmiling, 'to ſee people promote that in others, which 'they themſelves do not chuſe to practiſe? We 'conſider matrimony as abſolutely neceſſary to the 'good of ſociety; it is a general duty; but as, according to all antient tenures, thoſe obliged to 'perform knight's ſervice, might, if they choſe 'to enjoy their own fire-ſides, be excuſed by 'ſending deputies to ſupply their places; ſo we,

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'uſing the ſame privilege ſubſtitute many others, 'and certainly much more promote wedlock, than 'we could do by entering into it ourſelves. 'This may wear the appearance of ſome devout 'perſons of a certain religion, who equally indo-'lent and timorous, when they do not chuſe to 'ſay ſo many prayers as they think their duty, 'pay others for ſupplying their deficiencies.'

'In this caſe, ſaid I, your example is ſomewhat 'contradictory, and ſhould it be intirely followed, 'it would confine matrimony to the lower rank of 'people, among whom it ſeems going out of fa-'ſhion, as well as with their ſuperiors; nor indeed 'can we wonder at it, for diſſipation and extra-'vagance are now become ſuch univerſal vices, that 'it requires great courage in any to enter into an 'indiſſoluble ſociety. Inſtead of being ſurpriſed 'at the common diſinclination to marriage, I am 'rather diſpoſed to wonder when I ſee a man ven-'ture to render himſelf liable to the expences of a 'woman, who laviſhes both her time and money 'on every faſhionable folly, and ſtill more, when 'one of your ſex ſubjects herſelf to be reduced 'to poverty, by a huſband's love for gaming, and 'to neglect by his inconſtancy.'

'I am of your opinion, ſaid Mrs. Trentham, 'to face the enemy's cannon appears to me a leſs ef-'fort of courage, than to put our happineſs into the 'hands of a perſon, who perhaps will not once 'reflect on the importance of the truſt committed 'to his or her care. For the caſe is pretty equal 'as to both ſexes, each can deſtroy the other's 'peace. Ours ſeems to have found out the means 'of being on an equallity with yours. Few for-'tunes are ſufficient to ſtand a double expence. 'The huſband muſt attend the gaming-table and 'horſe-races; the wife muſt have a profuſion of

'ornaments for her perſon, and cards for her en-
'tertainment. The care of the eſtate and family
'are left in the hands of ſervants, who, in imita-
'tion of their maſters and miſtreſſes, will have
'their pleaſures, and theſe muſt be ſupplied out of
'the fortunes of thoſe they ſerve. Man and wife
'are often nothing better than aſſiſtants in each
'others ruin; domeſtic virtues are exploded, and
'ſocial happineſs deſpiſed, as dull and inſipid.

'The example of the great infects the whole
'community. The honeſt tradeſman who wiſhes
'for a wife to aſſiſt him in his buſineſs, and to
'take care of his family, dare not marry, when
'every woman of his own rank, emulating her ſu-
'periors, runs into ſuch faſhions of dreſs, as re-
'quire great part of his gains to ſupply, and the
'income which would have been thought ſuffi-
'cient ſome years ago for the wife of a gentleman
'of large eſtate, will now ſcarcely ſerve to enable
'a tradeſman's wife to appear like her neigh-
'bours. They too muſt have their evening par-
'ties, they muſt attend the places of public di-
'verſion, and muſt be allowed perpetual diſſipation
'without controul. The poor man ſighs after the
'days when his father married; then cleanlineſs
'was a woman's chief perſonal ornament, half the
'quantity of ſilk ſufficed for her cloaths, variety
'of trumpery ornaments were not thought of, her
'huſband's buſineſs employed her attention, and
'her children were the objects of her care. When
'he came home, wearied with the employment of
'the day, he found her ready to receive him, and
'was not afraid of being told ſhe was gone to the
'play or opera, or of finding her engaged in a
'party at cards, while he was reduced to ſpend
'his evening alone. But in a world ſo chang
'ed, a man dare not venture on marriage which

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'promiſes him no comfort, and may occaſion his 'ruin, nor wiſhes for children, whoſe mother's ne-'glect may expoſe them to deſtruction.

'It is common to blame the lower ſort of peo-'ple for imitating their ſuperiors; but it is equally 'the fault of every ſtation, and therefore thoſe of 'higher rank ſhould conſider it is their duty to ſet 'no examples that may hurt others. A degree 'of ſubordination is always acquieſced in, but 'while the nobleman lives like a prince, the gen-'tleman will riſe to the proper expences of a no-'bleman, and the tradeſman take that vacant 'rank which the gentleman has quitted; nor will 'he be aſhamed of becoming a bankrupt, when 'he ſees the fortunes of his ſuperiors mouldering 'away, and knows them to be oppreſſed with 'debts. Whatever right people may have to make 'free with their own happineſs, a beneficial ex-'ample is a duty which they indiſpenſibly owe to 'ſociety, and the profuſe have the extravagance 'of their inferiors to anſwer for. The ſame may 'be ſaid for thoſe who contribute to the diſſipa-'tion of others, by being diſſipated themſelves.'

'But, madam, interrupted Lamont, do you 'think it incumbent on people of faſhion to re-'linquiſh their pleaſures, leſt their example ſhould 'lead others to neglect their buſineſs?'

'I ſhould certainly, replied Mrs. Trentham, 'anſwer you in the affirmative, were the caſe as 'you put it, but much more ſo in the light I ſee 'it. Every ſtation has its duties, thoſe of the 'great are more various than thoſe of their infe-'riors. They are not ſo confined to œconomical 'attentions, nor ought they to be totally without 'them; but their more extenſive influence, their 'greater leiſure to ſerve their Creator with all the 'powers of their minds, conſtitute many duties on

'their part, to which diſſipation is as great an e-
'nemy, as it can be to thoſe more entirely domeſ-
'tic; therefore on each ſide there is an equal neg-
'lect; and why ſhould we expect that ſuch as we
'imagine have fewer advantages of education,
'ſhould be more capable of reſiſting temptations,
'and dedicating themſelves ſolely to the perform-
'ance of their duties, than perſons whoſe minds
'are more improved?'

'I cannot deny, anſwered Lamont, but what
'you ſay is juſt, yet I fear you have uttered truths
'that muſt continue entirely ſpeculative; though
'if any people have a right to turn reformers,
'you ladies are beſt qualified, ſince you begin by
'reforming yourſelves; you practiſe more than
'you preach, and therefore muſt always be liſtened
'to with attention.'

'We do not ſet up for reformers, ſaid Mrs.
'Mancel, we wiſh to regulate ourſelves by the
'laws laid down to us, and as far as our influence
'can extend, endeavour to inforce them; beyond
'that ſmall circle all is foreign to us; we have
'ſufficient employment in improving ourſelves; to
'mend the world requires much abler hands.'

'When you talk of laws, madam, by which
'you would regulate your actions, ſaid Lamont,
'you raiſe a juſt alarm; as for matter of opinion,
'every one may demand an equal power, but laws
'ſeem to require obedience; pray, from whence
'do you take thoſe which you wiſh to make your
'rule of life?'

'From whence, anſwered Mrs. Mancel, ſhould
'a Chriſtian take them, from the Alcoran, think
'you, or from the wiſer Confucius, or would you
'ſeek in Coke on Littleton, that you may eſcape
'the iron hand of the legiſlative power? No, ſure-
'ly, the Chriſtian's law is written in the Bible,
'there,

'there, independent of the political regulations of 'particular communities, is to be found the law 'of the ſupreme Legiſlator. There, indeed, is 'contained the true and invariable law of nati-'ons; and according to our performance of it, we 'ſhall be tried by a Judge, whoſe wiſdom and im-'partiality ſecure him from error, and whoſe power 'is able to execute his own decrees. This is the 'law I meant, and whoever obeys it, can never 'offend eſſentially againſt the private ordinances 'of any community. This all to whom it has 'been declared are bound to obey, my conſent to 'receive it for the rule of my actions is not ma-'terial; for as whoever lives in England muſt ſub-'mit to the laws of the country, though he may 'be ignorant of many of the particulars of them; 'ſo whoever lives in a Chriſtian land is obliged to 'obey the laws of the Goſpel, or to ſuffer for in-'fringing them; in both caſes, therefore, it is 'prudent for every man to acquaint himſelf tho-'roughly with theſe ordinances, which he cannot 'break with impunity.'

'If ſuch obedience be neceſſary, ſaid Lamont, 'what do you imagine will be the fate of moſt 'of the inhabitants of Chriſtendom; for you will 'allow, that they do not regulate their conduct by 'ſuch ſevere commands?'

'What will be their fate, replied Mrs. Man-'cel, I do not pretend even to ſuppoſe, my buſi-'neſs is to take care of my own. The laws a-'gainſt robbery are not rendered either leſs juſt, 'or leſs binding, by the numbers that daily ſteal, 'or who demand your purſe on the high-way. Laws 'are not abrogated by being infringed, nor does 'the diſobedience of others make the obſervance 'of them leſs my duty. I am required to anſwer 'only for myſelf, and it is not man whom I am

'ordered to imitate. His failings will not excuse 'mine. Humility forbids me to censure others, 'and prudence obliges me to avoid copying them.'

'Lamont thought Mrs. Mancel too severe in 'her doctrine; but there was something so respect-'able in her severity, that he forbore to contest it, 'and owned to me afterwards, that, while she 'spoke, and he contemplated that amiable society, 'his heart silently acquiesced in the justness of her 'sentiments.'

We parted at our usual hour; and at the same time the company in the lower part of the house broke up, eleven o'clock being the stated hour for them on those occasions to return to their respective homes.

The next morning, as I went down stairs, I met the house-keeper, and entered into conversation with her, for which the preceding night's festivity furnished me with topics. From her I learnt, that since the ladies had been established in that house, they had given fortunes from twenty to an hundred pounds, as merit and occasion directed, to about thirty young women, and that they had seldom celebrated fewer than two marriages in a year, sometimes more. Nor does their bounty cease on the wedding-day, for they are always ready to assist them on any emergency; and watch with so careful an eye over the conduct of these young people, as proves of much greater service to them than the money they bestow. They kindly, but strongly, reprehend the first error, and guard them by the most prudent admonitions against a repetition of their fault. By little presents they shew their approbation of those who behave well, always proportioning their gifts to the merits of the person: which are therefore looked upon as the most honourable testimony of their conduct, and are treasured

ſured up as valuable marks of diſtinction. This encouragement has great influence, and makes them vye with each other in endeavours to excel in ſobriety, cleanlineſs, meekneſs and induſtry. She told me alſo, that the young women bred up at the ſchools theſe ladies ſupport, are ſo much eſteemed for many miles round, that it is not uncommon for young farmers, who want ſober good wives, to obtain them from thence, and prefer them to girls of much better fortunes, educated in a different manner, as there have been various inſtances wherein their induſtry and quickneſs of underſtanding, which in a great meaſure ariſes from the manner of their education, has proved more profitable to their huſbands than a more ample dower.

She added, that ſhe keeps a regiſter of all the boys and girls, which, by her good ladies means, have been eſtabliſhed in the world; whereby it appears, that thirty have been apprenticed out to good trades, threeſcore fixed in excellent places, and thirty married. And it ſeldom happens, that any one takes an apprentice or ſervant, till they have [illegible] her ladies to know if they [illegible] mend.

I expreſſed a deſire to [illegible] obligingly offered to [illegible] not then have time to [illegible] juſt ready. While I [illegible] ſerved, that the fingers of [illegible] contracted quite cloſe to the palm. I took notice of it to her, On! ſir, ſaid ſhe, 'it was the luckieſt 'accident that could poſſibly be; as I was obliged 'to work for my ſupport, I was very much ſhock-'ed at my recovery from a fever, to find myſelf 'deprived of the uſe of an hand, but ſtill tried if 'I could get myſelf received into ſervice; as I was 'ſenſible I could, notwithſtanding my infirmity,

'perform the bufinefs of an houfe-keeper; but no
'one would take me in this maimed condition.
'At laft I was advifed to apply to thefe ladies, and
'found what had hitherto been an impediment,
'was a ftronger recommendation than the good
'character I had from my laft place; and I am
'fure I have reafon to value thefe diftorted fingers,
'more than ever any one did the handfomeft hands
'that ever nature made. But, added fhe, fmil-
'ing, few of my fellow-fervants are better quali-
'fied; the cook cannot walk without crutches,
'the kitchen maid has but one eye, the dairy maid
'is almoft ftone-deaf, and the houfe maid has but
'one hand; and yet, perhaps, there is no family
'where the bufinefs is better done; for gratitude,
'and a conviction that this is the only houfe into
'which we can be received, makes us exert our-
'felves to the utmoft; and moft people fail not
'from a deficiency of power, but of inclination.
'Even their muficians, if you obferved it, fir, are
'much in the fame condition. The fteward, in-
'deed, muft be excepted; he is one whom the
'good Mr. d'Avora chofe for the fake of his inte-
'grity fome years before he died, as his fucceffor
'in the care of the ladies affairs, and employed
'him for fome time under his own infpection, that
'he might be fure he was fit for the purpofe,
'though he perfuaded the ladies to receive their
'own rents, and direct all the chief concerns of
'their eftates, which they have done ever fince,
'fo that theirs is rather an houfhold than a land
'fteward. But, except this gentleman and the
'fhepherd, there is not one of their muficians,
'that is not under fome natural difadvantage; the
'defects of two of them are fo vifible, I need not
'point them out, but of the other two, one is
'fubject to violent fits of the ftone, and the other

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'to the aſthma. Thus diſabled from hard labour, 'though they find ſome employment in the ma-'nufacture, yet the additional profit which accrues 'from their playing here, adds much to their com-'fort, as their infirmities render greater expences 'neceſſary to them than to others in their ſta-'tion.'

There was ſomething ſo whimſically good in the conduct of the ladies in theſe particulars, as at firſt made me ſmile; but when I conſidered it more thoroughly, I perceived herein a refinement of charity, which, though extremely uncommon, was entirely rational. I found, that not contended with meerly beſtowing on the indigent as large a part of their fortunes as they can poſſibly ſpare, they carry the notion of their duty to the poor ſo far as to give continual attention to it, and endeavour ſo to apply all they ſpend, as to make almoſt every ſhilling contribute towards the ſupport of ſome perſon in real neceſſity; by this means every expence bears the merit of a donation, in the ſight of him who knows their motives; and their conſtant application is directed towards the relief of others, while to ſuperficial obſervers they ſeem only providing for their own convenience. The faſhionable tradeſman is ſure not to have them in the liſt of his cuſtomers; but ſhould he, through the caprice of the multitude, be left without buſineſs, and ſee his elated hopes blaſted, in all probability he will find theſe ladies his friends. Thoſe whoſe youth render them diſregarded, or whoſe old age breeds neglect, will here meet with deſerved encouragement. This ſort of œconomy pleaſes me much, it is of the higheſt kind, ſince it regards thoſe riches which neither moth nor ruſt can corrupt, nor thieves break through and ſteal; and is within the reach of every perſon's imitation, for

the poorest may thus turn their necessary expences into virtuous actions. In this they excel others, as much as the bee does the common butterfly; they both feed on the same flowers; but while the butterfly only gains a transient subsistence, and flies and flutters in all its gaudy pride, the bee lays up a precious store for its future well being, and may brave all the rigours of winter. Man, indeed, often encroaches on the labours of the bee, and disappoints it of its reasonable hope; but no one without our own concurrence can despoil us of the treasures laid up in heaven.

As the good house-keeper foretold, the bell soon summoned me to breakfast; which, like every other hour spent in that society, was rendered delightful by their rational chearfulness, and polite freedom. We offered to take our leave, but should have been disappointed had we not been asked to prolong our visit; nor were we so insincere as to make much resistance to this agreeable invitation; we expressed some fears of interrupting their better employments; to which Mrs. Morgan replied, by assuring us, that we did not do so in the least; but added, 'I will tell you plainly, gentlemen, the only 'alteration we shall wish to make, if you will fa-'vour us with your company a few days longer. 'Our family devotions are regular, as you were 'strangers we have not summoned you to them, 'but for the rest of your visit we must beg leave 'to alter that method; for we do not think it a 'proper example to our servants, to suffer any one 'in this house to be excluded from them; though 'as your coming was sudden, and has been pro-'longed only, as it were, from hour to hour, we 'at first did not think it necessary to require your 'presence.'

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You may imagine we expreſſed ourſelves obliged by this franknefs; and, for my own part, I was glad of what appeared to me like being received into a community of ſaints; but was forced to wait for it till night, the devotion of the morning having been paid before breakfaſt, as was uſual in that family.

Mrs. Maynard accompanied us that morning into the park, and having placed ourſelves on a green bank under an elm, by the ſide of the canal, I called on her to perform her promiſe, and increaſe my acquaintance with the reſt of the ladies, by giving ſome account of them.

'I ſhall not the leſs readily comply, ſhe anſwer-
'ed, for being able to bring what I have to ſay of
'them into leſs compaſs, than I did my hiſtory of
'Mrs. Morgan and Miſs Mancel, of whom, when
'I begin to ſpeak, I always find it difficult to leave
'off, and am led by my fondneſs for the ſubject into
'a detail, perhaps too circumſtantial. Lady Mary
'Jones, by what I have already ſaid, you may
'have perceived muſt come next in order.'

THE HISTORY OF Lady MARY JONES.

LADY Mary was daughter to the Earl of Brumpton by his ſecond wife, who ſurvived the birth of her child but a few hours. The earl died when his daughter was about ten years old, and having before his ſecond marriage mortgaged to its full value all of his eſtate which was not ſettled on a ſon born of his firſt lady, his daughter was left entirely deſtitute of proviſion. But as ſhe was too young to be much affected with this circumſtance, ſo ſhe had little reaſon to regret it, when an increaſe of years might have awakened a ſenſibility to that particular. Immediately on her father's death ſhe [illegible] taken by her aunt Lady Sheerneſs, who decl[illegible] ſhe ſhould look upon her as her own child. [illegible] indeed her indulgence verified the truth of her [illegible]claration.

Lady Sheerneſs was a widow; her jointure conſiderable; and her lord at his deceaſe left her ſome thouſand pounds in ready money. When he died ſhe was about twenty five years old, with a good perſon, and infinite vivacity. An unbridled imagination,

gination, ungovernable ſpirits, with a lively arch countenance, and a certain quaintneſs of expreſſion, gained her the reputation of being poſſeſſed of a great deal of wit. Her lord, in the decline of life, had been captivated by her youthful charms, when ſhe was but ſixteen years old. His extreme fondneſs for her, led him to indulge her vivacity in all its ſallies; and frequently while he was laid up at home in the gout, her ladyſhip was the fineſt and gayeſt woman at every place of public reſort. Often, when the acuteneſs of his pains obliged him to ſeek relief from the ſoporific influence of opium, ſhe collected half the town, and though his reſt was diſturbed every moment by a ſucceſſion of impetuous raps at the door, he was never offended; on the contrary, he thought himſelf obliged to her for ſtaying at home, which ſhe had aſſured him was, 'becauſe ſhe could not bear to go abroad 'when he was ſo ill.' This, as the greateſt mark of her tenderneſs he ever received, he failed not to acknowledge with gratitude. She ſcarcely took more pleaſure in having a train of admirers, than his lordſhip felt from it; his vanity was flattered in ſeeing his wife the object of admiration, and fancied himſelf much envied, for ſo valuable a poſſeſſion. Her coquettry charmed him, as the ſallies of that vivacity of which he was ſo fond. He had no tincture of jealouſy in his whole compoſition; and acknowledged, as favors conferred on himſelf, the attentions paid to his wife.

Though Lord Sheerneſs's conduct may appear rather uncommon, yet it ſeemed the reſult of ſome diſcernment, or at leaſt his lady's diſpoſition was ſuch as juſtifies this opinion; ſhe had received a genteel education; no external accompliſhments had been neglected; but her underſtanding and principles were left to the imperfection of nature cor-

rupted

rupted by cuſtom. Religion was thought too ſerious a thing for ſo young a perſon. The opinion of the world was always repreſented to her as the true criterion by which to judge of every thing, and faſhion ſupplied the place of every more material conſideration. With a mind thus formed, ſhe entered the world at ſixteen, ſurrounded with pomp and ſplendor, with every gratification at her command, that an affluent fortune, and an indulgent huſband could beſtow: by nature inclined to no vice, free from all dangerous paſſions, the charm of innocence accompanied her vivacity; undeſigning and artleſs, her follies were originally the conſequences of her ſituation, not conſtitutional, though habit engrafted them ſo ſtrongly, that at length they appeared natural to her. Surrounded with every ſnare that can entrap a youthful mind, ſhe became a victim to diſſipation, and the love of faſhionable pleaſures; deſtitute of any ſtable principles, ſhe was carried full ſail down the ſtream of folly. In the love of coquetry and gaming, few equalled her; no one could exceed her in the purſuit of every trifling amuſement; ſhe had neither leiſure nor inclination to think, her life paſſed in an uninterrupted ſucceſſion of engagements, without reflexion on the paſt, or conſideration on the future conſequences.

The lightneſs of her conduct expoſed her to the addreſſes of many gay men during the life of her lord; but an attachment was too ſerious a thing for her; and while her giddineſs and perpetual diſſipation expoſed her to ſuſpicion, they preſerved her from the vice of which ſhe was ſuſpected: ſhe daily paſſed through the ordeal trial; every ſtep ſhe took was dangerous, but ſhe came off unhurt. Her reputation was indeed doubtful, but her rank and fortune, and the continual amuſements which her

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houſe yielded to her acquaintance, rendered her generally carreſſed.

Her lord's death made no alteration in her way of life; and as her mind was never fixed an hour on any ſubject, ſhe thought not long enough of marriage, to prepare for that ſtate, and therefore continued a widow. She was upwards of forty years old, unchanged in any thing but her perſon, when ſhe took lady Mary Jones, I will not ſay into her care, for that word never entered into her vocabulary, but into her houſe. Lady Mary had naturally a very good underſtanding, and much vivacity, the latter met with every thing that could aſſiſt in its increaſe in the company of Lady Sheerneſs, the other was never thought of: ſhe was initiated into every diverſion at an age, when other girls are confined to their nurſery. Her aunt was fond of her, and therefore inclined to indulgence, beſides ſhe thought the knowledge of the world, which in her opinion was the moſt eſſential qualification for a woman of faſhion, was no way to be learnt, but by an early acquaintance with it.

Lady Mary's age and vivacity rendered this doctrine extremely agreeable; ſhe was pretty, and very lively and entertaining in her converſation, therefore at fifteen years of age ſhe became the moſt carreſſed perſon in every company. She entered into all the faſhionable taſtes, was coquettiſh and extravagant; for Lady Sheerneſs very liberally furniſhed her with money, and felt a ſort of pride in having a niece diſtinguiſhed by the fineneſs of her dreſs, and her profuſion in every expence, as it was well known to have no oth[illegible] ſource, but in her Ladyſhip's generoſity. Th[illegible]gh Lad[illegible]ary received much adulation, and [illegible]s the ob[illegible] of general courtſhip, yet ſhe had [illegible]rious lov[illegible]de to her, till ſhe was between [illegible]teen and ſeventeen, when

ſhe

ſhe accompanied her aunt to Scarborough: ſhe was there very aſſiduoſly followed by a gentleman, reputed of a large fortune in Wales. He was gay and well-bred, his perſon moderately agreeable, his underſtanding ſpecious, and his manner inſinuating. There was nothing very engaging in the man, except the appearance of a very tender attachment. She had before found great pleaſure in being admired; but her vanity was ſtill more flattered in being loved: ſhe knew herſelf capable of amuſing; but till now had never been able to give either pleaſure or pain, according to her ſovereign decree. She grew partial to Mr. Lenman (that was the name of her lover) becauſe he raiſed her conſequence in her own eyes: ſhe played off a thouſand airs of coquettry, which ſhe had never yet had an opportunity to exerciſe for want of a real lover. Sometimes ſhe would elate him by encouragement; at others, freeze him into deſpair by her affected coldneſs: ſhe was never two hours the ſame, becauſe ſhe delighted in ſeeing the variety of paſſions ſhe could excite.

Mr. Lenman was certainly ſufficiently tormented; but ſo great a proficiency in coquettry, at ſo early an age, was no diſcouragement to his hopes. There are no people ſo often the dupe of their own arts as coquets; eſpecially when they become ſo very early in life; therefore, inſtead of being damped in his purſuit, he adapted his behaviour to her foible, vanity, and by aſſuming an air of indifference; could, when he pleaſed, put an end to her affected reſerve; though he was not ſo unpolite a lover, as quite to deny her the gratification ſhe expected from her little arts. He found means, however, to command her attention, by the very ſerious propoſal of matrimony. She had no great inclination for the ſtate, but the novelty pleaſed

her,

her. The pleasure she received from his addresses she mistook for love, and imagined herself deeply enamoured, when she was in reality only extremely fluttered; the common error of her age. In the company she had kept matrimony appeared in no very formidable light; she did not see that it abridged a woman of any of the liberties she already enjoyed; it only afforded her an opportunity of chusing her own diversions; whereas her taste in those points, sometimes differed from her aunt's; to whom, however, she was obliged to submit. Thus prepossessed, both in favour of her lover and his proposal, she listened to him with more attention than she chose he should perceive; but he was too well acquainted with the pretty arts of coquettry, not to see through them. He therefore took courage to insinuate his desire of a private marriage, and ventured to persuade her to take a trip with him to the northern side of Berwick upon Tweed.

Lady Mary could not see as Mr. Linman's fortune was considerable, and her's entirely precarious, why he was so apprehensive of not being accepted by her aunt, but there was something spirited in those northern journies, that had always been the objects of her envy. An adventure was the supreme pleasure of life, and these pretty flights gave marriage all the charms of romance. To be forced to fly into another kingdom to be married, gave her an air of consequence; vulgar people might tie the knot at every parish-church, but people of distinction should do every thing with an eclat. She imagined it very probable, that her aunt would consent to her union with Mr. Lenman; for, though he was not equal to her in birth, yet he was her superior in fortune; but yet she looked upon his fears of a refusal as meritorious, since he assured her they arose from his extreme affection, which filled

filled him with terrors, on the leaſt proſpect of loſing her. 'Should Lady Sheerneſs, he urged, 'reject his propoſal, ſhe might then be extremely 'offended with their marrying, after they knew 'her diſapprobation; but if they did it without 'her knowlege, ſhe would not have room to com-'plain of downright diſobedience, and if it was 'diſpleaſing to her, yet being done, and paſt re-'medy, ſhe would be inclined to make the beſt of 'what was unavoidable, and forgive what ſhe 'could not prevent.'

Theſe arguments were ſufficiently ſolid for a girl of ſixteen, who never thought before, and could ſcarcely be ſaid to do ſo then. Lady Mary complied with his plan, and the day was fixed when they were to take this lively ſtep; their ſeveral ſtages ſettled, and many more arts and contrivances to avoid diſcovery concerted, than they were likely to have any occaſion for; but in that variety of little ſchemes, and romantic expedients, her chief pleaſure in this intended marriage conſiſted.

The day before that on which Lady Mary and her lover were to ſet out for Scotland, ſhe was airing with Lady Sheerneſs, when one of the horſes taking fright, they were overturned down a very ſteep declivity. Lady Sheerneſs was but very little hurt, but Lady Mary was extremely bruiſed; one ſide of her face received a blow, which ſwelled it ſo violently, that her eye was quite cloſed, and her body was all over contuſions. She was taken up ſenſeleſs, entirely ſtunned by the ſhock. As ſoon as ſhe was carried home, ſhe was put to bed; a fever enſued, and ſhe lay a fortnight in a deplorable condition, though her life was not thought to be in danger. Her pain, for the greateſt part of that time, was too acute to ſuffer her to reflect much

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on the different manner in which ſhe had intended to employ that period; and when her mind became more at liberty, her diſappointment did not ſit heavy on her ſpirits; for as her heart was not really touched, ſhe conſidered the delay which this ill-timed accident had occaſioned without any great concern, and rather pleaſed herſelf with thinking, that ſhe ſhould give an uncommon proof of ſpirit, in undertaking a long journey, ſo ſoon after ſhe was recovered, from a very evident proof, that travelling is not free from danger. As ſhe had during this confinement, more time to think than all her life had yet afforded her, a doubt would ſometimes occur, whether ſhe did right in entering into ſuch an engagement without the conſent of her aunt, to whom ſhe was much obliged. But theſe ſcruples ſoon vaniſhed, and ſhe wondered how ſuch odd notions came into her head, never having heard the word duty uſed, but to ridicule ſomebody who made it the rule of their conduct. By all ſhe had been able to obſerve, pleaſure was the only aim of perſons of genius, whoſe thoughts never wandered but from one amuſement to another, and, 'why ſhould not ſhe be guided by inclination as well as other people?' That one queſtion decided the point, and all doubts were baniſhed.

Before the blackneſs which ſucceeded the ſwelling was worn off her face, and conſequently before ſhe could appear abroad, a young Lady of her acquaintance, who, out of *charity*, relinquiſhed the diverſions of the place, to ſit an afternoon with Lady Mary, told her, as a whimſical piece of news ſhe had juſt heard (and to tell which was the real motive for her kind viſit, having long felt a ſecret envy of Lady Mary) that, 'her lover, Mr. Lenman, had been married ſome years, to a young

'lady

'lady of ſmall fortune, whom he treated on that 'account with ſo little ceremony, that for a con-'ſiderable time he did not own his marriage, and 'ſince he acknowleged it, had kept her conſtantly 'at his houſe in Wales.'

This was indeed news of conſequence to Lady Mary, but ſhe was little inclined to believe it, and enquired what proof there was of this fact. The young lady replied, that 'ſhe had it from a rela-'tion of her's lately arrived at Scarborough, who 'having been often in Mr. Lenman's neighbour-'hood, was well acquainted both with him and 'his wife, and had in a pretty large company, 'where ſhe was preſent, aſked him after Mrs. Len-'man's health, to which he made as ſhort an an-'ſwer as he could, but ſuch as ſhewed there was 'ſuch a perſon, and his confuſion on this queſtion 'made her relation enquire what could be the 'meaning of it, which all the company could ea-'ſily explain.'

Lady Mary was prodigiouſly diſconcerted with this intelligence; her informer imagined the viſible agitation of her ſpirits proceeded from her attachment to Mr. Lenman, but in reality it was the effect of terror. She was frighted to think how near ſhe was becoming the object of general ridicule and diſgrace, wedded to a married man, and duped by his cunning; for ſhe immediately perceived why her aunt was not to be let into the ſecret. How contemptible a figure muſt ſhe afterwards have made in the world! There was ſomething in this action of Mr. Lenman's very uncommon, faſhionable vices and follies had in her opinion received a ſanction from cuſtom, but this was of a different and a deeper dye; and little as ſhe had been uſed to reflect on good and evil, in any other light

light than as pleasant and unpleasant, she conceived an horror at this action.

After her visitor departed, she began to reflect on the luckiness of the overturn, which had obstructed her rash design, and admiring her good fortune, would certainly have offered rich sacrifices on the shrine of Chance, had there been a temple there erected to that deity.

While her mind was filled with these impressions, the nurse, who had attended her in her sickness, and was not yet dismissed, entered the room, crying with joy, and told her, that 'she had just received the news of the ship's being lost wherein 'her son was to have embarked, had he not been 'seized with a fit of sickness two days before it set 'sail, which made it impossible for him to go on 'board.' The poor woman was profuse in her acknowledgements for God's great mercy, who had by this means prevented the destruction of her dear child; 'to be sure, added she, I shall never 'again repine at any thing that happens to me. 'How vexed I was at this disappointment, and 'thought myself the most unfortunate creature in 'the world, because my son missed of such a good 'post as he was to have had in this ship; I was 'continually fretting about it, and fancied that so 'bad a setting out was a sign the poor boy would 'be unlucky all his life. How different things 'turn out from what we expect! Had not this 'misfortune, as I thought it, happened, he would 'now have been at the bottom of the sea, and my 'poor heart would have been broken. Well, to 'be sure God is very kind! I hope my boy will 'always be thankful for this providence, and love 'the Lord who has thus preserved him.'

This

This poor woman ſpoke a new language to Lady Mary. She knew, indeed, that God had made the world, and had ſent her into it, but ſhe had never thought of his taking any farther care about her. She had heard, that he had forbidden murder, and ſtealing, and adultery, and that, after death, he would judge people for thoſe crimes, and theſe ſhe ſuppoſed was the utmoſt extent of his attention. But the joy ſhe felt for her own deliverance, from a misfortune into which ſhe was ſo near involving herſelf, and the reſemblance there was in the means of her preſervation, to that for which her nurſe was ſo thankful, communicated to her ſome of the ſame ſenſations, and ſhe felt a gratitude to him who, ſhe imagined, might poſſibly be more careful over his creatures than ſhe had ever yet ſuppoſed.

Theſe impreſſions, though pretty ſtrong at the time, wore off after ſhe got abroad. A renewal of the ſame diſſipation ſcattered them with every other ſerious thought; and ſhe again entered into the hurry of every trifling amuſement. Mr. Lenman, as ſoon as he found that his marriage was become public, deſpairing of the ſucceſs of his ſcheme, left the place before Lady Mary was out of her confinement, afraid of meeting the reproachful glances of a woman, whom he deſigned to injure; and whoſe innocence, notwithſtanding her levity, gave her dignity in the eyes of a man, who had really conceived an ardent paſſion for her.

Lady Sheerneſs and her niece ſtaid but a ſhort time at Scarborough after the latter was perfectly recovered, the ſeaſon being over. They returned to London, and all the gaiety it affords; and though the town was at that time not full, yet they had ſo general an acquaintance, and Lady Sheerneſs rendered her houſe ſo agreeable, that ſhe never

never wanted company. Every ſeaſon has its different amuſements, and theſe ladies had an equal taſte for every thing that bore the name of diverſion. It is true, they were not always entertained; but they always expected to be ſo, and promiſed themſelves amends the following day, for the diſappointment of the preſent. If they failed of pleaſure, they had diſſipation, and were in too continual a hurry to have time to aſk themſelves whether they were amuſed; if they ſaw others were ſo, they imagined themſelves muſt be equally entertained; or if the dullneſs of the place was too great to be overlooked, they charged it on their own want of ſpirits, and complained of a languor, which rendered them incapable of receiving pleaſure.

Lady Mary fortunately had had no confidant in her deſign of running away with Mr. Lenman, and the part he had acted was ſo diſhonourable, he could not wiſh to publiſh it; her imprudence was therefore known only to herſelf; and the fear of diſobliging her aunt, by letting her intended diſobedience reach her ears, induced her to conceal it; otherwiſe, moſt probably, in ſome unguarded hour, ſhe would have amuſed her acquaintance with the relation, embelliſhed with whatever circumſtances would have rendered it amuſing; for the love of being entertaining, and the vanity of being liſtened to with eagerneſs, will lead people of ungoverned vivacity to expoſe their greateſt failings.

Lady Mary's levity encouraged her admirers to conceive hopes, which her real innocence ſhould have repreſſed. Among this number was Lord Robert St. George. He was both in perſon and manner extremely pleaſing; but what was a ſtronger charm to a young woman of Lady Mary's turn of mind, he was a very faſhionable man, much careſſed by the ladies, and ſuppoſed to have been ſucceſsful

ceſsful in his addreſſes to many. This is always a great recommendation to the gay and giddy; and a circumſtance which ſhould make a man ſhuned by every woman of virtue, ſecures him a favourable reception from the moſt faſhionable part of our ſex.

Lady Mary would have accuſed herſelf of want of taſte, had ſhe not liked a man, whom ſo many others had loved: She ſaw his attachment to her in the light of a triumph over ſeveral of her acquaintance; and when a man raiſes a woman in her own eſteem, it is ſeldom long before he gains a conſiderable ſhare of it for himſelf. Vanity repreſented Lord Robert as a conqueſt of importance, and his qualifications rendered him a very pleaſing dangler. Lady Mary liked him as well as her little leiſure to attend to one perſon would permit: She felt that pleaſure on his approach, that pain at his departure, that ſollicitude for his preſence, and that jealouſy at the civilities he paid any other woman, which girls look upon as the ſymptoms of a violent paſſion, whereas if they were to examine their hearts very nicely they would find, that only a ſmall part of it proceeded from love.

Lord Robert was too well ſkilled in theſe matters, to remain ignorant of the impreſſion he had made; and if he had been leſs quick-ſighted, the frequent intelligence he received of it, would not have ſuffered him long to remain in ignorance. Lady Mary, vain of her conqueſt, and proud of being in love, as is uſual at her age, let every intimate into her confidence, and by mutual communication they talked a moderate liking into a paſſion. Each of theſe young Ladies were as ready to tell their friend's ſecrets as their own, till the circle of that confidence included all their acquaintance.

From

From many of these Lord Robert heard of Lady Mary's great attachment to him, which served not a little to flatter his hopes. He imagined he should meet with an easy conquest of a giddy, thoughtless girl, entirely void of all fixed principles, and violently in love with him; for his vanity exaggerated her passion. In this persuasion he supposed nothing was wanting to his success but opportunity, for which he took care not to wait long.

He was intimately acquainted with an old lady, whom he often met at Lady Sheerness's, whose disposition he knew well suited to his purpose; she had before proved convenient to him and others; not indeed by unrewarded assistance; for as her fortune was too small to supply the expences of the genteel way of life she aimed at, she was glad to have that deficiency made up by presents, which she was therefore very assiduous to deserve. This lady, as she was a woman of fashion, and lived in figure, was politely received in all gay companies, who were not disposed to take the trouble of examining scrupulously into her character. She had one material recommendation; she played high at cards, and omitted nothing to make her house agreeable; and few were more crouded.

This Lady had often been visited by Lady Sheerness and her niece, though generally at the same time with the multitude; but one day, when she knew the former was confined at home by indisposition, she invited Lady Mary, whose aunt's complaisance would not suffer her to refuse the invitation on her account.

Lord Robert was there, and as it was only a private party, there was no card-tables but in the outward room. The mistress of the house drew Lady Mary into the inner, on pretence of having some-

thing particular to say to her; Lord Robert soon followed. The conversation grew lively between him and Lady Mary; and when the convenient gentlewoman saw them thoroughly engaged and animated in discourse, she quietly withdrew, returning to the company, whose attention was too much fixed on the cards, to perceive that any one was missing; and to keep their thoughts more entirely engrossed, she betted with great spirit at every table.

Lady Mary did not perceive she was left alone with Lord Robert, till the growing freedom of his address made her observe it; but as prudence was not one of her virtues, she was not at all disconcerted with this *tête à tête*; nor did it lessen her vivacity. Lord Robert, encouraged by her easiness on the occasion, declared himself so plainly, that she was no longer able to blind herself to his views, and with surprize found seduction was his aim, if that word may be used for a man's designs against the honour of a woman who seems so careless of it. Her heart was entirely innocent of vice, and she could not imagine how his lordship could conceive it possible to succeed with her in intensions of that sort. She had always thought such imprudence in a woman a very great folly, for in a graver light she had never beheld it, and shewed herself offended at his supposing her capable of such a weakness; but without that honest indignation which a woman would have felt, who had acted on better principles.

Lord Robert was not much discouraged; a woman is under great disadvantage, when her lover knows himself to be so much beloved, that she dare not let her anger continue long, for fear of losing

losing him for ever. He was well convinced, that meer worldly prudence could not make a lasting resistance against a strong passion, and such he flattered himself her's was. He therefore ventured to resume the subject; but his perseverance increased Lady Mary's surprize, and she began to think herself affronted. Her partiality pleaded in his favour some time; but at length she thought it necessary to retire, notwithstanding his utmost endeavours to detain her. As she left him, she desired him to learn to believe better of her understanding: she perceived it no otherwise an insult; her education had deprived her of that delicacy, which should have made her feel a severe mortification at the little share she had of the good opinion of a man she loved; on the contrary, she esteemed the affront she had received a proof of his affection. She had often indeed heard the name of virtue, but by the use she had known made of the word, it appeared to her to have no other signification than prudence. She was not at all shocked with Lord Robert's conduct; but resolved not to concur in his views, because she had no inclination to do so, that overbalanced her very moderate degree of prudence. On this account she determined to avoid being again alone with him.

Lady Mary's natural sense gave rise to some doubts, whether the very open professions of gallantry, which Lord Robert had made to her were common; she had been frequently addressed with freedom, but his behaviour seemed more than commonly presuming. In order to find what others would think of it; she often turned the conversation to those sort of subjects, and was a good deal startled one day by a lively, but amiable and modest young lady, who said, she believed no man that was not an ab-

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folute fool, or at the time intoxicated, ever infulted a woman with improper behaviour or difcourfe; if he had not from fome impropriety in her conduct feen reaion to imagine it would not be ill received; and I am fure, added fhe, 'if fuch a thing 'was ever to befal me, it would convert me into a 'ftarched prude, for fear that hereafter innocent 'vivacity might be miftaken for vicious levity: I 'fhould take myfelf very feverely to tafk, convinced the offence was grounded on my conduct; for 'I am well perfuaded there is fomething fo re'fpectable in virtue, that no man will dare to in'fult it, except when a great difparity in circum'ftances encourages an abandoned wretch to 'take advantage of the neceffity of the indigent.'

Lady Mary was greatly affected by this fentiment: fhe began to reflect on her own behaviour; and could not but fee, that Lord Robert might, without any great danger of offending, hazard the behaviour he had been guilty of; fince in effect fhe had not conceived much anger againft him, and though fhe had hitherto avoided being again alone with him, yet fhe had not fhewn any very great marks of difpleafure. She now watched with attention the conduct of other young ladies; many of them feemed to act on the fame principles as herfelf; but fhe obferved that fhe who had by her declaration, firft raifed in her fufpicions about her own behaviour, had a very different manner from her's. She was indeed gay and lively; but her vivacity feemed under the direction of modefty. In her greateft flow of fpirits, fhe hazarded no improper expreffion, nor fuffered others to do fo without a manifeft difguft: fhe faw that the gentlemen who converfed with her, preferved an air of refpect and deference, which they laid afide when

they

they addressed women, whose vivacity degenerated into levity. She now began to perceive some impropriety in her own behaviour, and endeavoured to correct it; but nothing is more difficult than to recover a dignity once lost. When she attempted to restrain her gaiety within proper bounds, she was laughed at for her affectation: if, when the conversation was improper, she assumed an air of gravity, she was accused of the vapours, or received hints that she was out of humour.

These were great discouragements in her endeavours to correct the errors of her conduct, but gave her less pain than the difficulties she was under about Lord Robert St. George. He still continued to address her with a freedom of manners which she now perceived was insulting; she wanted to discourage his insolence, but feared giving a total offence to a man who had too great a share of her affections; she was apprehensive, that if she quite deprived him of his hopes, she should entirely lose him, and he would attach himself to some other woman. This situation was dangerous, and Lord Robert knew the power he had over her. The dilemma she was in really abated the vivacity she wished to restrain, but it was immediately attributed to the anxiety of a love-sick mind, and she was exposed to continual raillery on that subject. Her lover secretly triumphed, flattering himself, that her passion was now combating on his side.

In this situation she was unable to determine what part to act, and all her intimates were too much like herself, to be capable of advising her. Thus distressed, she resolved to cultivate the acquaintance of the young lady who had opened her eyes to her own conduct, and try what relief she could

obtain from her advice. This was eafily effected; Lady Mary was too amiable, not to have any advances fhe made anfwered with pleafure. An intimacy foon enfued.

Lady Mary communicated to her new friend all the difficulties of her fituation, and confeffed to her the true ftate of her heart. That young lady was not void of compaffion for her uneafinefs; but told her, that, 'while fhe was encouraging Lord Robert's paffion, fhe was lofing his efteem, which 'alone was worth preferving. I allow, faid fhe, 'that by depriving him of his hopes, you may put 'an end to his addreffes; but confider, my dear 'Lady Mary, what fatisfaction they can afford 'you, if they are only the refult of a fondnefs for 'your perfon, which would lofe all its charms for 'him, as foon as it became familiarized by poffeffi-'on. You would then at once find yourfelf both 'neglected and defpifed by the man, for whofe 'fake you had rendered yourfelf truly defpicable. 'I know you are incapable of an action that 'would at the fame time rid you of his efteem, 'and of the more valuable confciousnefs of know-'ing yourfelf to be truly eftimable. I am not of 'the opinion of thofe, who think chaftity the only 'virtue of confequence to our fex; but it is cer-'tainly fo very effential to us, that fhe who vio-'lates it, feldom preferves any other. And how 'fhould fhe? for if there are others as great, 'greater there cannot be, there is none fo necef-'fary. But herein I know you are of my opini-'on; I only therefore intreat you to fhew Lord 'Robert that you are fo; do not let him miftake 'your real fentiments; nor in order to preferve 'his love, if cuftom will oblige me to call his 'paffion by that name, leave him reafon to flatter

himfelf

'himself that you will fall a victim to his arts, 'and your own weakness.

'Consider with yourself, continued she, which 'is most desirable, his esteem or his courtship? if 'you really love him, you can make no comparison between them; for surely there cannot be a 'greater suffering than to stand low in the opinion 'of any person who has a great share of our affections. If he neglects you, on finding that his 'criminal designs cannot succeed, he certainly 'does not deserve your love, and the consciousness of having raised yourself in his opinion, and 'forced him to esteem you, together with the 'pleasure of reflecting that you have acted as you 'ought, will afford you consolation.'

These arguments had due weight with Lady Mary; she determined to follow her friends advice, and submit to the consequences. Lady Sheerness had company that evening, and among the rest Lord Robert. He was, as usual, assiduous in his addresses to Lady Mary, who withdrawing to a little distance from the company, told him, that, 'she 'had too long suffered his lordship to continue a 'courtship, which he had plainly acknowledged 'was made with such views, as gave her great 'reason to blame herself, for ever having listened 'to it. She acknowledged, that the levity of her 'conduct had been such, as lessened her right to 'reproach him. Encouraged by her errors, and 'presuming perhaps on a supposition, that he was 'not unpleasing to her, he had ventured to insult 'her in a flagrant manner; but without complaining of what was past, she thought herself obliged to tell him his pursuit was in vain; that 'the errors in her conduct were the fault of education; nor might she so soon have been con-

'vinced of them, if his behaviour had not awakened 'ed her to a ſenſe of ſome impropriety in her own 'conduct, which, conſcious of the innocence of 'her intentions, ſhe had never ſuſpected: ſhe then 'told him, that if he did not entirely deſiſt from 'all addreſſes to her, ſhe ſhould be obliged to ac-'quaint her aunt with his behaviour, who could 'not ſuffer ſuch an inſult on her niece to paſs un-'reſented.'

As ſoon as ſhe had thus explained herſelf to Lord Robert, ſhe mingled with the croud, though with a mind little inclined to join in their converſation; but her young friend was there, and endeavoured to ſupport her ſpirits, which were overcome by the effort ſhe had made. This young lady ſoon after went into the country, and returned no more to London.

Lord Robert was ſo diſconcerted, that he left the room as ſoon as Lady Mary had thus given him his diſmiſſon. As their acquaintance lay much in the ſame ſet, they frequently ſaw each other. Lord Robert endeavoured to conquer Lady Mary's reſolution, by ſometimes exciting her jealouſy, and at others making her the object of his addreſſes; but ſhe continued ſteady in her conduct, though with many ſecret pangs. He began at laſt to converſe with her with greater eaſe to himſelf, as his paſſion abated when no longer nouriſhed by hope; and notwithſtanding a remainder of pique, he could not forbear treating her with a reſpect which her conduct deſerved; for he plainly ſaw ſhe had acted in contradiction to her own heart. This alteration in his behaviour afforded her great ſatisfaction; and though her love was not extinguiſhed, it ceaſed to be very painful, when ſhe was perſuaded ſhe had obtained ſome ſhare of his eſteem.

When

When Lady Mary was in her twentieth year, Lady Sheerness was seized with a lingering, but incurable disorder. It made little alteration in her mind. In this melancholy situation she applied to cards and company to keep up her spirits, as assiduously as she had done during her better health. She was incapable indeed of going so much abroad, but her acquaintance, who still found her house agreeable, applauded their charity in attending her at home. Cards even employed the morning, for fear any intermission of visitors should leave her a moment's time for reflection. In this manner she passed the short remainder of her life, without one thought of that which was to come. Her acquaintance, for I cannot call them as they did themselves, friends, were particularly careful to avoid every subject that might remind her of death. At night she procured sleep by laudanum; and from the time she rose, she took care not to have leisure to think; even at meals she constantly engaged company, lest her niece's conversation should not prove sufficient to dissipate her thoughts. Every quack who proposed curing what was incurable was applied to, and she was buoyed up with successive hopes of approaching relief.

She grew at last so weak, that unable even to perform her part at the card-table, Lady Mary was obliged to deal, hold her cards, and sort them for her, while she could just take them out one by one, and drop them on the table. Whist and quadrille became too laborious to her weakened intellects, but loo supplied their places, and continued her amusement to the last, as reason or memory were not necessary qualifications to play at it.

Her acquaintance ſhe found at length begin to abſent themſelves, but ſhe re-animated their charity, by making frequent entertainments for them, and was reduced to order genteel ſuppers to enliven the evening, when ſhe herſelf was obliged to retire to her bed. Though it was for a conſiderable time doubtful whether ſhe ſhould live til morning, it was no damp to the ſpirits of any of the company from which ſhe had withdrawn, except to Lady Mary, who, with an aching heart, was obliged to preſide every evening at the table, and to ſhare their unfeeling mirth, till two or three o'clock in the morning.

She was greatly afflicted with the thought of her aunt's approaching death, whoſe indulgence to her, however blameable, had made a deep impreſſion on her heart; as this gave a more ſerious turn to her mind, ſhe could not ſee Lady Sheerneſs's great inſenſibility to what muſt happen after death without much concern. The great care that was taken to rob her of leiſure to reflect on matters of ſuch high importance ſhocked her extremely; and ſhe was diſguſted with the behaviour of thoſe ſhe called her friends, who ſhe plainly perceived would have fallen into a total neglect of her, had ſhe not found means to render her houſe more amuſing to them, than any into which they could enter. She now ſaw that friendſhip exiſted not without eſteem; and that pleaſurable connections would break at the time they were moſt wanted.

This courſe of life continued, till one evening Lady Sheerneſs was ſeized with a fainting fit at the card-table; and being carried to her bed, in half an hour departed to a world of which ſhe had never thought, and for which ſhe was totally unprepared.

As

As Lady Mary was not able to return to the company, they in decency, not in affliction, retired.

Having long expected this event, her grief was greater than her surprize. She sent for the gentleman who she knew was her aunt's executor, that her will might be opened, and necessary directions given for the funeral. Lady Mary had no doubt of succeeding to an easy fortune, and when the will was read it confirmed her in that supposition, by appointing her sole heiress. But the executor told her he feared she would find no inheritance. The will was made on her first coming to Lady Sheerness, when there was some remains of the money her lord had left her; but he was well convinced, it had since been not only entirely expended, but considerable debts incurred.

This account was soon proved true, by the demands of numerous creditors. Lady Mary gave up all her aunt's effects, which fell short of the debts, and remained herself in the same destitute condition from which Lady Sheerness had rescued her. This was a very severe shock; she had seen sufficient proof of the little real friendship to be found in such fashionable connexions as she had been engaged in, to know that she had nothing to hope from any of her acquaintance. Her father had been at varience with most of his relations, and Lady Sheerness had kept up the quarrel. She had therefore little expectation of assistance from them, in the only wish she could form, which was to obtain a pension from the government, whereto her rank seemed to entitle her. She saw no resource but in the pride of some insolent woman, who would like to have a person of her quality dependant on her; a prospect far worse than death.

Or possibly, good-nature might procure her a reception among some of her acquaintance; but as she had nothing even to answer her personal expences, how soon would they grow weary of so chargeable a visitor?

While she was oppressed with these reflexions, and had nothing before her eyes but the gloomy prospect of extreme distress, she received a message from Lady Brumpton, who waited in her equipage at the door, desiring to be admitted to see her, for Lady Mary had given a general order to be denied, being unfit to see company, and unwilling to be exposed to the insulting condolence of many, whose envy at the splendor in which she had lived, and the more than common regard that had usually been shewn her, would have come merely to enjoy the triumph they felt on her present humiliation.

Lady Brumpton was widow to Lady Mary's half brother. She had been a private gentlewoman of good family, but small fortune; by marrying whom, her lord had given such offence to his father, that he would never after admit him to his presence. Lady Sheerness had shewn the same resentment, and there no longer subsisted any communication between the families. Lord Brumpton had been dead about three years, and left no children.

His widow was still a fine woman. She was by nature generous and humane, her temper perfectly good; her understanding admirable. She had been educated with great care, was very accomplished, had read a great deal, and with excellent taste; she had great quickness of parts, and a very uncommon share of wit. Her beauty first gained her much admiration; but when she was better known, the charms of her understanding seemed to eclipse

those

thoſe of her perſon. Her converſation was generally courted, her wit and learning were the perpetual ſubjects of panegyric in verſe and proſe, which unhappily ſerved to increaſe her only failing, vanity. She ſought to be admired for various merits. To recommend her perſon ſhe ſtudied dreſs, and went to a conſiderable expence in ornaments. To ſhew her taſte, ſhe diſtinguiſhed herſelf by the elegance of her houſe, furniture, and equipage. To prove her fondneſs for literature, ſhe collected a conſiderable library; and to ſhew that all her eſteem was not engroſſed by the learned dead, ſhe careſſed all living genius's; all were welcome to her houſe, from the ragged philoſopher, to the rhiming peer; but while ſhe only exchanged adulation with the latter, ſhe generouſly relieved the neceſſities of the former. She aimed at making her houſe a little academy; all the arts and ſciences were there diſcuſſed; and none dared to enter who did not think themſelves qualified to ſhine, and partake of the luſtre which was diffuſed round this aſſembly.

Though encircled by ſcience and flattery, Lady Mary's diſtreſs reached Lady Brumpton's ears, and brought her to that young lady's door, who was ſurprized at the unexpected viſit, but could not refuſe her admittance. Lady Brumpton began by apologizing for her intruſion, but excuſed herſelf on the great deſire ſhe had of being acquainted with ſo near a relation of her lord's, who, as ſhe was too young to have any ſhare in the unhappy diviſions in the family, ſhe was perſuaded was free from thoſe ill-grounded reſentments, which the malice and impertinence of tale-bearers are always watchful to improve; and when ſhe conſidered herſelf as the firſt occaſion of the quarrel, ſhe thought it her duty, in regard to her deceaſed lord's memory,

mory, to offer that protection his ſiſter might juſtly demand from her, and which her youth rendered neceſſary.

Lady Mary was charmed with the politeneſs of Lady Brumpton's addreſs, but ſtill more with the generoſity of her behaviour in ſeeking her out, at a time when ſo many were diligent to avoid her. The acknowledgments ſhe made for the favour done her, ſpoke as much in her recommendation as her perſon. Lady Brumpton after ſome converſation told her ſhe had a requeſt to make, to which ſhe could not well ſuffer a denial; this was no other than that, 'ſhe would leave that melancholy houſe, 'and make her's the place of her fixed abode; for 'as, by Lord Brumpton's will, he had bequeathed 'her his whole fortune, ſhe ſhould not enjoy it 'with peace of mind, if his ſiſter did not ſhare in 'the poſſeſſion.'

This very agreeable invitation filled Lady Mary with joy and ſurprize. She made a proper return to Lady Brumpton for her generoſity, and they agreed, that Lady Mary ſhould remove to her houſe the next day.

When Lady Mary was left alone to reflect on this unexpected piece of good fortune, and conſidered the diſtreſs ſhe had been in but two hours before, and from which ſhe was now ſo happily delivered; when ſhe reflected on the many calamities wherewith from her childhood ſhe had been threatened, and by what various means ſhe had been ſaved ſo often from ruin, ſhe could not forbear thinking that ſhe was indeed the care of that Being, who had hitherto employed ſo little of her thoughts. Such frequent mercies as ſhe had received, ſometimes in being preſerved from the fatal conſequences of her own follies, at others from

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the unavoidable diſtreſſes to which ſhe had been expoſed, awakened in her mind a lively gratitude to the ſupreme Diſpoſer of all human events. The poor conſolations to which her aunt had been reduced in the melancholy concluſion of her life, ſhewed her, that happineſs did not conſiſt in diſſipation, nor in tumultuous pleaſures, and could alone be found in ſomething which every age and every condition might enjoy. Reaſon ſeemed this ſource of perpetual content, and ſhe fancied that alone would afford a ſatisfaction ſuitable to every ſtate of mind and body. Some degree of religion ſhe imagined neceſſary, and that to perform the duties it required was requiſite to our peace. But the extent of true religion ſhe had never conſidered, though her great good fortune told her, that ſhe ought to be thankful for the bleſſings conferred, and not diſtruſt the care of providence, of which ſhe had received ſuch ſignal proofs.

She had often heard Lady Brumpton ridiculed under the appellation of a genius, and a learned lady; but when ſhe recollected who thoſe perſons were, no other than the open profeſſors of folly, it did not prejudice that lady in her opinion, but rather raiſed her expectation of being introduced into a ſuperior race of beings, for whoſe converſation ſhe knew herſelf unqualified, but from whom ſhe hoped for ſome improvement to her underſtanding, too long neglected.

In this diſpoſition of mind Lady Brumpton found her at the hour that ſhe had appointed to fetch her. They went directly into Lady Brumpton's dreſſing room, who preſented Lady Mary with a ſettlement ſhe had prepared of a hundred pounds a year, which ſhe begged her to accept for her cloaths; and deſired, that whenever ſhe found it inſufficient,

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ſhe would draw on her for more: ſhe at the ſame time, made her the firſt payment.

Lady Mary now entered into a new ſet of company, frequently found herſelf entirely at a loſs; for ſhe was ſo totally unacquainted with the ſubjects of their diſcourſe, that ſhe underſtood them almoſt as little as if they had talked another language; ſhe told Lady Brumpton how much ſhe was concerned at her own ignorance, and begged ſhe would give her ſome directions what ſhe ſhould read. That Lady, whoſe chief aim was to ſhine, recommended to her the things moſt likely to fall into converſation, that ſhe might be qualified to bear her part in it. Lady Mary took her advice, and read ſome moral eſſays, juſt publiſhed; then a new play; after that the hiſtory of one ſhort period; and ended with a volume of ſermons then much in faſhion. When ſhe began to examine what ſhe had acquired by her ſtudies, ſhe found ſuch a confuſion in her memory, where an hiſtorical anecdote was crouded by a moral ſentiment; and a ſcrap of a play interwoven into a ſermon, that ſhe determined to diſcontinue that miſcellaneous reading, and begin a regular and improving courſe, leaving to others the privilege of ſetting in judgment on every new production.

In this ſituation Lady Mary continued ſome years, without any mortification, except what ſhe felt from ſeeing the conſequences of Lady Brumptons too great vanity. It led her into expences, which though they did not conſiderably impair her fortune, yet ſo far ſtraightened it, that ſhe frequently had not power to indulge the generoſity of her mind, where it would have done her honour, and have yielded her ſolid ſatisfaction. The adulation which ſhe received with too much viſible complacency,

complacency, inspired her with such an opinion of herself, as led her to dispise those of less shining qualities, and not to treat any with proper civility, whom she had not some particular desire to please, which often gave severe pangs to bashful merit, and called her real superiority in question; for those who observed so great a weakness, were tempted to believe her understanding rather glittering than solid. The desire of attracting to her house every person who had gained a reputation for genius, occasioned many to be admitted, whose acquaintance were a disgrace to her, and who artfully taking advantage of her weakness, by excess of flattery, found means of imposing on her to any degree they pleased.

The turn of conversation at her house was ridiculed in every other company, by people who appeared most desirous of being in her parties. And indeed it was capable of being so; the extreme endeavour to shine, took off from that ease in conversation which is its greatest charm. Every person was like a bent bow, ready to shoot forth an arrow; which had no sooner darted to the other side of the room, than it fell to the ground, and the next person picked it up, and made a new shot with it. Like the brisk lightning in the Rehearsal, they gave flash for flash; and they were continually striving whose wit should go off with the greatest report. Lady Mary, who has naturally a great deal of vivacity, and a sufficient share of wit, made no bad figure in the brilliant assembly; for though she perceived an absurdity in these mock skirmishes of genius, yet she thought proper to conform to her company; but saw plainly that a sprightly look, and lively elocution, made the chief

chief merit of the beſt *bons mots* that were uttered among them.

After ſhe had ſpent about five years with Lady Brumpton, this lady was ſeized with a nervous fever, which all the art of her phyſicians could not entirely conquer. Her ſpirits were extremely affected, and her friends decreaſed in their attentions, as her vivacity decayed. She had indeed always been ſuperior to her company, in every requiſite to pleaſe and entertain, therefore when ſhe could not bear her part the converſation flagged; they dwindled from ſomething like wit into oddity, and then ſunk into dullneſs. She was no longer equally qualified to pleaſe or to be pleaſed; her mind was not at uniſon with ſhallow jeſters, and therefore they could make no harmony.

Her diſorder wore her extremely, and turned to an atrophy. In that gradual decay ſhe often told Lady Mary, 'ſhe was awakened from a dream of 'vanity; ſhe ſaw how much a deſire to gain the 'applauſe of a few people, had made her forget 'the more neceſſary aim of obtaining the approbation of her Creator. She had indeed no criminal actions to lay to her charge; but how 'ſhould ſhe? vanity preſerved her from doing 'any thing which ſhe imagined would expoſe her 'to cenſure. She had done ſome things commendable, but ſhe feared the deſire of being commended was part of her motive. The humility 'and calmneſs of a true chriſtian diſpoſition had 'appeared to her meanneſs of ſpirit or affectation, 'and a religious life as the extremeſt dullneſs; but 'now too late ſhe ſaw her error, and was ſenſible 'ſhe had never been in the path of happineſs. 'She had not erred from want of knowledge, but 'from the ſtrong impulſe of vanity, which led her

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'to neglect it; but sickness, by lowering her spirits, 'had taken away the false glare which dazled her 'eyes, and restored her to her sight.'

Lady Brumpton was sensible of her approaching death some weeks before she expired, and was perfectly resigned. Lady Mary had a second time the melancholy office of closing the eyes of a benefactress and relation whom she sincerely loved. Lady Brumpton, to remove from her any anxiety on her own account, acquainted her, as soon as her disease became desperate, that she had bequeathed her ten thousand pounds, and all her plate and jewels.

Lady Mary found this information true, and received the sum. She was tenderly concerned for the loss of so good a friend; and by the various circumstances of her life, and the many blessings bestowed on her, had a heart so touched with the greatness of divine mercy, that her mind took a more serious turn than common; and tired of the multitude in which she had so long lived, she was seeking for a retirement, when she met Mrs. Morgan and Mrs. Mancel at Tunbridge; and as I have already told you, came hither with them.

Mrs. Maynard was not a little wearied with so long a narrative, and therefore did not continue much longer with us; but Lamont and I remained in the park till dinner.

In the afternoon the Ladies proposed we should go upon the water, a scheme very agreeable to us all; some of the inhabitants of the other community were of the party. We got into a very neat boat, of a size sufficient to contain a large company, and which was rowed by the servants of the family. We went about three miles up the river, with great pleasure, and landed just by a

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neat houſe, where we underſtood we were to drink tea. The miſtreſs of it received us with great joy, and told the ladies ſhe had longed to ſee them, their young folks having quite finiſhed her houſe, which ſhe begged leave to ſhew us. Its extreme neatneſs rendered it an object worthy obſervation; and I was particularly attentive, as its ſize ſuiting my plan of life, I determined to copy it.

The rooms were neither large nor numerous, but moſt of them hung with paper, and prettily adorned. There were ſeveral very good drawings framed with ſhells, elegantly put together; and a couple of cabinets deſigned for uſe, but they became ornamental by being painted, and ſea-weeds ſtuck thereon, which by their variety, and the happy diſpoſition of them, rendered the doors, and each of the drawers, a diſtinct landſcape. Many other little pieces of furniture were by the ſame art made very pretty and curious. I learnt in a whiſper from Mrs. Maynard, that this gentlewoman was widow to the late miniſter of the pariſh, and was left at his death with five ſmall children, in very bad circumſtances. The ladies of Millenium Hall immediately raiſed her drooping ſpirits, ſettled an income upon her, took this houſe, furniſhed it, and lent her ſome of their girls to aſſiſt in making up the furniture, and decorating it, according to the good woman's taſte. She carried us into her little garden, that was neat to an exceſs, and filled with flowers, which we found ſome of her children tying up, and putting in order, while the younger were playing about, all dreſſed with the ſame exact neatneſs as herſelf.

When we had performed this little progreſs we found tea ready, and ſpent the afternoon with greater pleaſure, for obſerving the high gratification

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which this visit seemed to afford the mistress of the house. In the room where we sat was a book-case well flocked; my curiosity was great to see what it contained, and one of the ladies, to whom I mentioned it, indulged me by opening it herself, and looking at some of the books, I found they consisted of some excellent treatises of divinity, several little things published for the use of children, and calculated to instill piety and knowledge into their infant minds, with a collection of our best periodical papers, for the amusement of lighter hours. Most of these books, I found, were Mrs. Mancel's present.

The fineness of the evening made our return very delightful, and we had time for a little concert before supper.

The next morning I called up Lamont very early, and reminded the house-keeper of her promise of shewing us the schools; which she readily performing, conducted us first to a very large cottage, or rather five or six cottages laid together. Here we found about fifty girls, clad in a very neat uniform, and perfectly clean, already seated at their respective businesses. Some writing, others casting accounts, some learning lessons by heart, several employed in various sorts of needle-work, a few spinning, and others knitting, with two school-mistresses to inspect them. The school-room was very large, and perfectly clean, the forms and chairs they sat on were of wood, as white as possible; on shelves were wooden bowls and trenchers equally white, and shining pewter and brass seemed the ornaments of one side of the room; while pieces of the children's work of various kinds decorated the other; little samples of their performances being thus exhibited as encouragement to their ingenuity.

I asked many questions as to their education, and learnt, that they are bred up in the strictest piety; the ladies by various schemes, and many little compositions of their own, endeavour to inculcate the purest principles in their tender minds. They all by turns exercise themselves in the several employments which we saw going forward, that they may have various means of gaining their subsistence, in case any accident should deprive them of the power of pursuing any particular part of their business. The ladies watch their genius's with great care; and breed them up to those things, which seem most suitable to the turn of their minds. When any are designed for service, they are taught the business of the place they are best fitted for, by coming down to the hall, and performing the necessary offices under the direction of the excellent servants there.

A very large kitchen garden belongs to the house, which is divided into as many parts as there are scholars; to weed, and keep this in order, is made their principal recreation; and by the notice taken of it, they are taught to vye with each other which shall best acquit themselves, so that perhaps never was a garden so neat. They likewise have no small share in keeping those at the hall in order; and the grotto and seats are chiefly their workmanship.

I gave them due praise upon their performances at the clergyman's widow's, and delighted two of them very much by my admiration of a little arbour, which they had there planted with woodbines and other sweet shrubs. In their own garden they are allowed the indulgence of any little whim which takes not up too much room; and it is pretty

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to see their little seats, their arbours and beds of flowers, according to their several tastes. As soon as school breaks up, they run with as much eagerness and joy to their garden, as other children do to their childish sports; and their highest pleasure is the approbation their patronesses give to their performances. They likewise take it by turns to do the business of the house, and emulation excites them to a cleanliness, which could not by any other means be preserved.

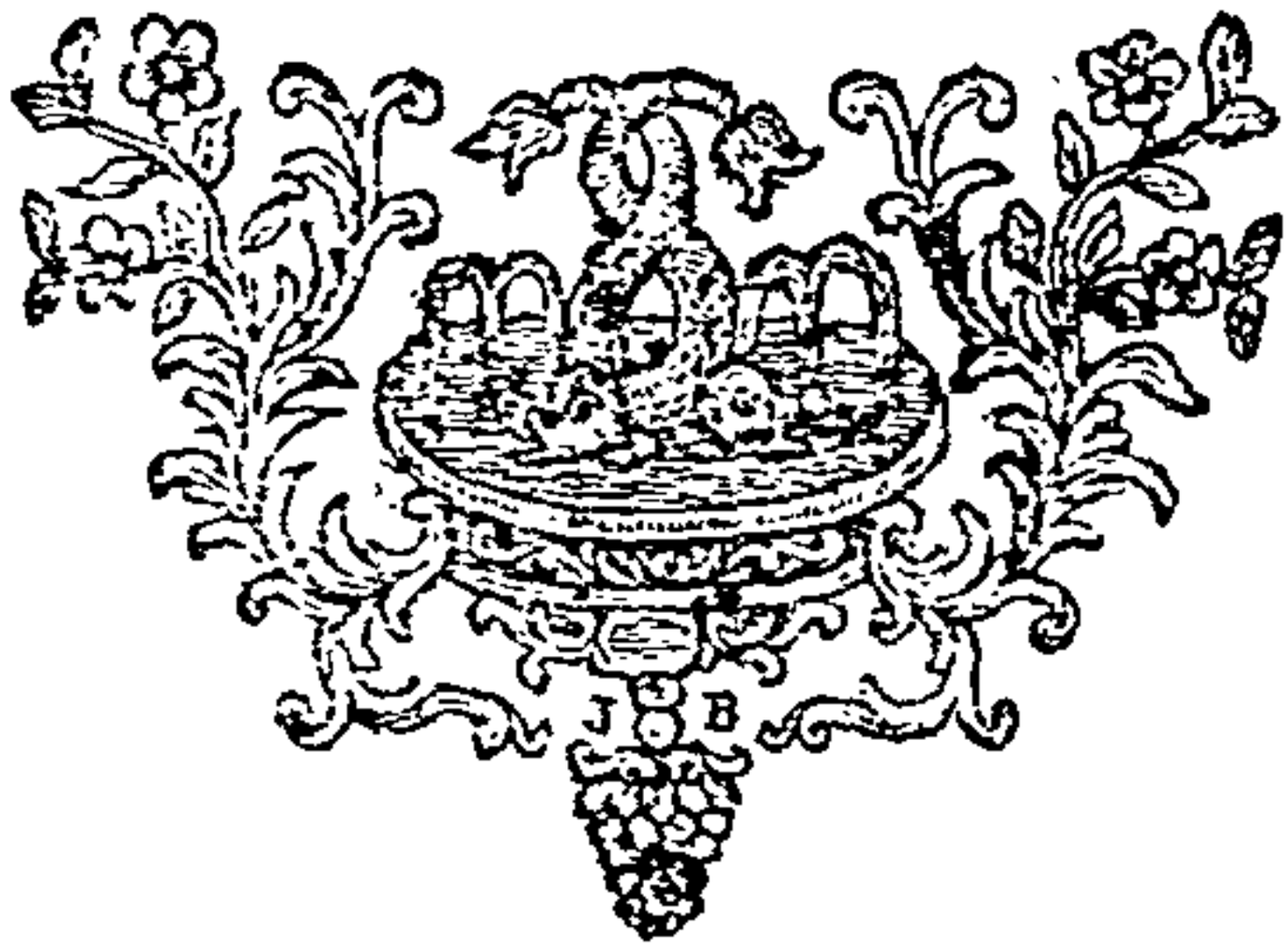
From this school we went to one instituted for boys, which consisted of about half the number, and most of them small, as they are dismissed to labour as soon as they are able to perform any work, except incapacitated by ill health. This is instituted on much the same principles as the other, and every boy of five years old has his little spade and rake, which he is taught to exercise.

We returned from our little tour time enough for prayers, with minds well prepared for them, by the view of such noble fruits of real piety. Indeed the steward who reads them, does it with such extreme propriety, and such humble and sincere devotion, as is alone sufficient to fix the attention, and warm the hearts of his hearers.

After breakfast was over, we got Mrs. Maynard to accompany us into the garden, she in complaisance to us, abstaining while we were at the hall, from her share in the daily visits the ladies pay to their several institutions, and to the poor and sick in their village. Their employments are great, but their days are proportionable; for they are always up by five o'clock, and by their example the people in the village rise equally early; at that hour one sees them all engaged

gaged in their ſeveral buſineſſes, with an aſſiduity, which in other places is not awakened till much later.

I called on Mrs. Maynard to continue her taſk, which without any previous ceremony ſhe did as follows.



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THE HISTORY OF Mrs. SELVYN.

MR. Selvyn, the younger brother of an ancient family, whose fortune was inferior to the rank it held in the country, where it had long been fixed, was placed in trade in London; but his success not answering his hopes, he gave it up before it was too late to secure himself a small subsistence, and retired into the country, when Miss Selvyn was about five years old. His wife had been dead two years; thus his little girl's education devolved entirely on himself.

He bred her up genteely, though his fortune was small, and as he was well qualified for the part, became himself her tutor, and executed that office so well, that at twelve years old she excelled all the young ladies in the neighbourhood of her own age, in French, and writing, either for hand or stile; and in the great propriety and grace with which she read English. She had no small knowledge of accounts; and had made some progress

in the ſtudy of hiſtory. Her perſon was elegant and pleaſing, and her temper and manner perfectly engaging; but yet theſe charms could not induce the neighbouring families, to forgive her for excelling other girls in her accompliſhments.

They cenſured Mr. Selvyn, 'for giving his 'daughter an education, to which her fortune was 'ſo little ſuited, and thought he would have done 'better to have bred her up to houſewifery, and 'qualified her for the wife of an honeſt tradeſman;' for part of what he had was known to be a life income; a ſmall *fine cure* having been procured him by his friends in town, before he retired into the country.

The cenſures of thoſe who love to ſhew their own wiſdom by blaming others, had little effect on Mr. Selvyn; he continued his diligence in cultivating his little girl's mind; and even taught himſelf many things, that he might be able to inſtruct her. If he did not breed her up in a manner to gain a ſubſiſtence by the moſt uſual means, he however qualified her to ſubſiſt on little; he taught her true frugality without narrowneſs of mind; and made her ſee how few of all the expences the world ran into were neceſſary to happineſs. He deprived her of all temptation to purchaſe pleaſures, by inſtructing her to ſeek only in herſelf for them; and by the various accompliſhments he had given her, prevented that vanity of mind, which leads people to ſeek external amuſements. The day was not ſufficient for her employments, therefore ſhe could not be reduced to trifle away any part of it, for fear of its lying heavy on her hands.

Thus Miſs Selvyn was bred a philoſopher from her cradle; but was better inſtructed in the doctrine

true of the ancient moralists, than in the principles of christianity. Mr. Selvyn was not absolutely a free-thinker; he had no vices that made him an enemy to christianity; nor that pride which tempts people to contradict a religion generally received; he did not apprehend that disbelief was a proof of wisdom, nor wished to lessen the faith of others, but was in himself sceptical; he doubted of what he could not entirely comprehend, and seemed to think those things at least improbable which were not level to his understanding. He avoided the subject with Miss Selvyn, he could not teach her what he did not believe; but chose to leave her free to form that judgment, which should in time seem most rational to her.

I could not forbear interrupting Mrs. Maynard, to signify my approbation of Mr. Selvyn's conduct in this particular, as the only instance I had ever met with of a candid mind, in one who had a tendency towards infidelity; for 'I never knew 'any who were not angry with those that believed 'more than themselves, and who were not more 'eager to bring others over to their opinions than 'most foreign missionaries; yet surely nothing 'can be more absurd, for these men will not dare 'to say that the virtues which christianity requires 'are not indispensible duties; on the contrary, 'they would have us imagine they are most sincerely attached to them; what advantage then 'can accrue to any one, from being deprived of 'the certainty of a reward for his obedience? 'If we deny revelation, we must acknowledge 'this point to be very uncertain; it was the subject of dispute and doubt among all the philosophers of antiquity; and we have but a poor 'dependance for so great a blessing, if we rest 'our expectation where they did theirs. Can a

'man therefore be rendered happier by being de-
'prived of this certainty? Or can we suppose he
'will be more virtuous, because we have removed
'all the motives that arise from hope and fear?
'And yet, what else can excuse an infidel's desire
'to make converts? Nothing. Nor can any thing
'occasion it but a secret consciousness that he is
'in the wrong, which temps him to wish for the
'countenance of more associates in his error; this
'likewise can alone give rise to his rancour against
'those who believe more than himself; he feels
'them a tacit reproach to him, which to his pride
'is insupportable.'

'But, said Lamont, do you imagine that a
'free-thinker may not be certain of a future
'state?'

'Not positively, answered Mrs. Maynard; if he
'is certain of that point, he is a believer without
'owning it; he must have had his certainty from
'Scripture; all the reason he boasts can only shew
'it probable, and that probability is loaded with so
'many difficulties, as will much weaken hope.
'Where can reason say immortality shall stop?
'We must allow that Omnipotence may bestow it
'on such ranks of being as he pleases: But how
'can reason tell us to whom he has given it?
'Whether to all creation, or no part of it? Pride
'indeed makes man claim it for himself, but deny
'it to others; and yet the superior intelligence
'perceivable in some brutes, to what appears in
'some of his own species, should raise doubts in
'him who has nothing but the reasonings of his
'own weak brain to go upon. But to proceed
'with my subject.'

The minister of the parish wherein Mr. Selvyn dwelt, was a gentleman of great learning and strict probity. He had every virtue in the most

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amiable degree, and a gentleness and humility of mind which is the most agreeable characteristic of his profession. He had a strong sense of the duties of his function, and dedicated his whole time to the performance of them. He did not think his instructions should be confined to the pulpit; but sensible that the ignorant were much more effectually taught in familiar conversation, than by preaching; he visited frequently the very poorest of his parishioners; and by the humility of his behaviour, as much as by his bounty (for he distributed great part of his income among the necessitous) he gained the affections of the people so entirely, that his advice was all-powerful with them.

This gentleman's great recreation was visiting Mr. Selvyn, whose sense and knowledge rendered his conversation extremely entertaining, and Miss Selvyn's company was a great addition to the good minister's pleasure; he took delight in seeing her, as Hamlet says, 'bear her faculties so meekly.' She was entirely void of conceit and vanity, and did not seem to have found out that her knowledge exceeded that of most persons of her age, at least she looked upon it as a casual advantage, which reflected no honour to herself, but was entirely owing to Mr. Selvyn. Her youthful chearfulness enlivened the party, without rendering the conversation less solid; and her amiable disposition made the good minister particularly anxious for her welfare.

He soon found out Mr. Selvyn's scepticism, and endeavoured to remove it. He represented to him that, 'his not being able to understand the most 'mysterious parts of christianity was no argument 'against the truth of them. That there were 'many things in nature, whose certainty he by no 'means doubted, and yet was totally ignorant of

'the methods whereby many of them operated, 'and even of the use of some of them. Could 'he say what purpose the fiery comet answers? 'How is its motion produced, so regular in its 'period, so unequal in its motion, and so ex-'centric in its course? Of many other things man 'is in reality as ignorant, only being able to form 'a system, which seems to suit in some particulars, 'he imagines he has discovered the whole, and 'will think so till some new system takes place, 'and the old one is exploded. He asked Mr. 'Selwyn, If they descended to the meanest objects, 'in what manner could they account for the poly-'pus's property of supplying that part of its body 'which shall be cut away? That insect alone, of 'all the creation, does not continue maimed by 'amputation, but multiplies by it. To what can 'we attribute this difference in an insect, which in 'all particulars beside, resembles so many others? 'Yet who doubts of the reality of these things? 'If we cannot comprehend the smallest works of 'almighty wisdom, can we expect to fathom that 'wisdom itself? And say, that such things he can-'not do, or cannot chuse, because the same effects 'could be produced by other means? Man no 'doubt might exert the same functions under ano-'ther form, why then has he this he now wears? 'Who will not reply, because his Maker chose it, 'and chose it as seeing it best. Is not this the 'proper answer on all occasions, when the decrees 'of the Almighty are discussed? Facts only are 'obvious to our reason; we must judge of them 'by the evidence of their reality; if that is suffi-'cient to establish the facts; why, or how they 'were produced, is beyond our comprehension. 'Let us learn that finite minds cannot judge of 'infinite wisdom, and confine our reason within

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'its proper ſphere.' By theſe, and many other arguments, Mr. Selvyn was brought to believe the poſſibility of what he did not comprehend; and by this worthy clergyman's care, Miſs Selvyn was early taught the truths of chriſtianity, which though the moſt neceſſary of all things, was at firſt the only one neglected.

In this retired ſituation they continued till Miſs Selvyn was near ſeventeen years old; Mr. Selvyn then determined to remove to London; and taking a ſmall houſe in Park-ſtreet, fixed his abode there. Lady Emilia Reynolds lived next door; and ſoon after their arrival made them a viſit; a compliment ſhe ſaid, ſhe looked upon as due to ſo near a neighbour. Some other ladies in the ſame ſtreet followed her example, and in a very ſhort time Miſs Selvyn was introduced into as large an acquaintance as was agreeable to her, for ſhe was naturally averſe to much diſſipation.

Lady Emilia Reynolds was a ſingle lady of very large fortune, her age upwards of thirty, her perſon fine, her manner gentle and pleaſing, and an air of dejection did not render her countenance the leſs engaging. She was grave and ſenſible, and kept a great deal of good company, without entering into a gay way of life. Miſs Selvyn's modeſty and good ſenſe ſeemed to have great charms for her; ſhe cultivated a friendſhip with her, notwithſtanding ſome diſparity in their ages; and neither of them appeared ſo happy as when they were together.

Mr. Selvyn could not be diſpleaſed at an intimacy ſo deſirable; nor could Miſs Selvyn be more properly introduced into the world, than by a perſon of Lady Emilia's reſpectable character.

At her houſe Miſs Selvyn ſaw a great deal of good company, and was ſo generally liked, that many intreated Lady Emilia to bring her to them, whenever her ladyſhip favoured them with a viſit. Theſe invitations were generally complied with, as under ſuch a protectreſs Miſs Selvyn might properly venture to any place. Lady Sheerneſs was one of this number, whoſe rank, and ſome degree of relationſhip, brought acquainted with Lady Emilia, though the different turn of their minds, and their very oppoſite taſte of life, prevented any intimacy between them. Lady Emilia was not blind to Lady Sheerneſs's follies, but ſhe eſteemed them objects of her compaſſion, not of her cenſure; nicely circumſpect in her own conduct, ſhe judged with the extremeſt lenity of the behaviour of others, ready to attempt excuſing them to the world, and not even ſuffering herſelf to blame what ſhe could not approve; ſhe ſincerely pitied Lady Mary Jones, who ſeemed by fortune ſacrified to folly; and ſhe was in continual fear leſt ſhe ſhould fall a victim to that imprudence, which in her caſe was almoſt unavoidable.

By this means Miſs Selvyn became acquainted with Lady Mary, and was the young woman I before mentioned, as Lady Mary's adviſer and conductor, in putting an end to Lord Robert St. George's courtſhip.

Not long after ſhe had the ſatisfaction of thus aſſiſting a young lady, whoſe failings gave her almoſt as many charms as they robbed her of, ſhe had the misfortune to loſe Mr. Selvyn. All that a child could feel for the loſs of a tender parent Miſs Selvyn ſuffered. His death was not ſo ſudden, but that it afforded him time to ſettle his affairs, and to give every direction to Miſs Selvyn, which he thought might ſave her from all embaraſſment on the

the approaching event. He recommended to her, as her fortune would be but ſmall, to attach herſelf as much as poſſible to Lady Emilia, ſince ſhe now became ſtill more neceſſary as a protectreſs, than ſhe had before been deſirable as a friend, and that intereſt as much as gratitude required her cultivating the affection that Lady had already ſhewn her.

The latter motive was ſufficient to influence Miſs Selvyn, whoſe heart ſincerely returned the regard Lady Emilia had for her; but at that time ſhe was too much affected with Mr. Selvyn's approaching diſſolution to think of any thing elſe. His care for her in his laſt moments, ſtill more endeared him, who through life had made her happineſs his principal ſtudy. Her affliction was extreme, nor could Lady Emilia by the tendereſt care for ſome time afford her any conſolation.

Miſs Selvyn found herſelf heireſs to three thouſand pounds, a fortune which exceeded her expectation, though it was not ſufficient to ſuffer her to live in London with convenience. Lady Emilia invited her to her houſe; and as the ſpring advanced, her ladyſhip inclining to paſs the fine ſeaſon in the country, hired a houſe about a hundred miles from London, which ſhe had formerly been fond of, and was but juſt become empty. She had been but little out of town for ſome years, and went to her new habitation with pleaſure. Miſs Selvyn bid adieu without regret to every thing but Lady Mary Jones, for whom ſhe had conceived a real affection, which firſt took its riſe from compaſſion, and was ſtrengthened by the great docility with which ſhe followed her advice about Lord Robert, and the reſolution with which ſhe conquered her inclination. Lady Mary grieved to loſe one whom ſhe

eſteemed ſo prudent and faithful a friend, and conſidered her departure as a real misfortune; but they agreed to keep up a regular correſpondence as the beſt ſubſtitute to converſation.

The country was perfectly agreeable to Lady Emilia and her young friend. The life they led was moſt ſuitable to their inclinations, and winter brought with it no deſires to return to London; whereupon Lady Emilia diſpoſed of her houſe there, and ſettled quite in the country. They were both extremely fond of reading, and in this they ſpent moſt of their time. Their regular way of life, and the benefits of air and exerciſe, ſeemed to abate the dejection before ſo viſible in Lady Emilia; and ſhe never appeared to want any other converſation than that of Miſs Selvyn, whom ſhe loved with a tenderneſs ſo juſtly due to her merit.

After they had been ſettled about two years in the country, Lord Robert St. George, who was colonel of a regiment quartered in a town not far from them, came to examine into the ſtate of his regiment; and having at that time no other engagement, and the lodgings he had taken juſt out of the town being finely ſituated, he determined to make ſome ſtay there. Here he renewed his ſlight acquaintance with Lady Emilia and Miſs Selvyn; and by favour of his vicinity ſaw them often. Lord Robert's heart was too ſuſceptible of ſoft impreſſions, not to feel the influence of Miſs Selvyn's charms. He was ſtrongly captivated by her excellent underſtanding and engaging manner; as for her perſon, he had known many more beautiful, though none more pleaſing; but the uncommon turn of her mind, her gentleneſs, and ſenſible modeſty, had attractions that were irreſiſtible.

Lord

Lord Robert's attachment ſoon became viſible; but Miſs Selvyn knew him too well to think his addreſſes very flattering, and by his behaviour to Lady Mary Jones, feared ſome inſulting declaration; but from theſe apprehenſions he ſoon delivered her. Real affection conquering that aſſurance which nature had firſt given, and ſucceſs encreaſed, he had not courage to declare his paſſion to her, but applied to Lady Emilia, to acquaint her friend with his love, and begged her intereſt in his behalf, fearing that without it, Miſs Selvyn's reſerve would not ſuffer her to liſten to his addreſſes.

Lady Emilia promiſed to report all he had ſaid, and accordingly gave Miſs Selvyn a circumſtantial account of the whole converſation, wherein Lord Robert had laid before her the ſtate of his fortune, which was ſufficient for a woman of her prudence; and ſhe added, that 'ſhe did not ſee how Miſs 'Selvyn could expect to be addreſſed by a man 'more eligible, whether ſhe conſidered his birth, 'his fortune, or his perſon and accompliſhments.'

Miſs Selvyn was a little ſurprized, that ſo gay a man ſhould take ſo ſerious a reſolution. She allowed the juſtneſs of what Lady Emilia ſaid in his favour, and confeſſed, that it was impoſſible Lord Robert could fail of pleaſing; but added, that 'it 'could not be adviſable for her to marry; for en-'joying perfect content, ſhe had no benefit to ex-'pect from change; and happineſs was ſo ſcarce a 'commodity in this life, that whoever let it once 'ſlip, had little reaſon to expect to catch it again. 'For what reaſon then ſhould ſhe alter her ſtate? 'The ſame diſpoſition which would render Lord 'Robert's fortune ſufficient, made her's anſwer all 'her wiſhes, ſince if ſhe had not the joy of living

'with her ladyſhip, it would ſtill afford her every 'thing ſhe deſired.'

Lady Emelia ſaid ſome things in recommendation of marriage; and ſeemed to think it improbable Miſs Selvyn ſhould not be a little prejudiced in favour of ſo amiable a lover as Lord Robert, which tempted that young lady to tell her, that 'though 'ſhe allowed him exceſſively pleaſing, yet by ſome 'particulars, which formerly came to her know-'ledge, ſhe was convinced his principles were 'ſuch, as would not make her happy in a huſ-'band.'

Lady Emilia allowed the force of ſuch an objection, and did not preſs a marriage, for which ſhe had pleaded only out of an apprehenſion leſt Miſs Selvyn's reſerve might lead her to act contrary to her inclinations; and therefore ſhe had endeavoured to facilitate her declaration in favour of Lord Robert, if ſhe was in reality inclined to accept his propoſals. She acquieſced then readily in her friend's determination; only deſired ſhe would herſelf acquaint Lord Robert with it, as he would not eaſily be ſilenced by a refuſal which did not proceed from her own lips.

His lordſhip came in the evening to learn his fate, and Lady Emilia having contrived to be abſent, he found Miſs Selvyn alone. Though this was what he had wiſhed, yet he was ſo diſconcerted, that Miſs Selvyn was reduced to begin the ſubject herſelf, and to tell him, that 'Lady Emilia 'had acquainted her, with the honour he had done 'her, that ſhe was much obliged to him, for his good 'opinion, and hoped he would be happy with ſome 'woman much more deſerving than herſelf; but ſhe 'could by no means accept the favour he intended 'her, being ſo entirely happy in her preſent ſituation, 'that nothing in the world ſhould induce her to 'change it.'

This

This declaration gave rise to a very warm contest; Lord Robert solliciting her to accept his love, with all the tenderness of the strongest passion, and she with equal perseverance persisting in her refusal. He could not be persuaded, that her motive for doing so was really what she alledged, but as she continued to affirm it, he begged however to know, 'if she had not made so strange a 'resolution in favour of a single life, whether she 'should have had any particular objection to 'him?'

Miss Selvyn shewed the uselessness of this question, since the reason of her refusing the honour he intended her, would have made her reject the addresses of every other man in the world. Lord Robert could not believe this possible, and therefore desisted not from urging a question so disagreeable to answer.

When Miss Selvyn found it impossible to avoid satisfying him in this particular, she told him, that 'if he were entirely unexceptionable, she should 'be fixed in the same determination; but since he 'insisted on knowing if she had any objection to 'him, she was obliged to confess, that had she 'been better inclined to enter into the matrimo-'nial state, his lordship was not the man she 'should have chosen, not from any dislike to his 'person or understanding, but from disapproba-'tion of his principles; that, in regard to her sex 'he had a lightness in his way of thinking, and 'had been so criminal in his conduct, that of all 'men she knew, she thought him most improper 'for an husband.'

Lord Robert was surprised at so new an objection, and told her, that 'he did not apprehend 'himself more blamable in those respects than most 'young men. Gallantry was suitable to his age,

'and

'and he never imagined, that any woman would 'have reproached him with his regard for her sex, 'when he gave so strong a proof of an inclination 'to leave them all for her.'

'I am sorry, replied Miss Selvyn, that your 'Lordship thinks me mean enough to take plea-'sure in such a triumph, or so vain as to imagine 'I can reform a man of dissolute manners, the 'last thing I should hope or endeavour to succeed 'in. Such a tincture of corruption will always 'remain in the mind of what you are pleased to 'term a gallant man, to whom I should give the 'less polite appellation of vicious, that I could 'not be happy in his society. A reformed rake 'may be sober, but is never virtuous.'

Lord Robert growing very urgent to know what she had particularly to lay to his charge; she told him frankly, that 'his treatment of Lady Mary 'Jones had disgusted her, as she, and perhaps 'she only, had been acquainted with the whole.'

Lord Robert endeavoured to excuse himself on the encouragement Lady Mary's levity had given to his hopes; observing, that 'when a woman's 'behaviour was very light, his sex were not apt 'to imagine there was any great fund of virtue; 'nor could it be expected, that any one else should 'guard that honour, of which she herself was 'careless.'

'I am sure, replied Miss Selvyn, your lordship's 'hopes must have been founded on Lady Mary's 'folly, not her real want of innocence; a folly 'which arose from the giddiness of youth, and the 'hurry of dissipation; for by nature Lady Mary's 'understanding is uncommonly good. By what 'you say, you imagined her honour was lawful 'prize, because she appeared careless of it; would 'this way of arguing be allowed in any other

'case;

‘ case? If you observed a man who neglected to
‘ lock up his money, and seemed totally indifferent what became of it, should you think yourself thereby justified in robbing him? But how much more criminal would you be, were you to deprive him of his wealth, because he was either so thoughtless or so weak, as not to know its value? And yet surely the injury in this case would be much less than what you think so justifiable. If the world has but the least sense of real honour, in this light they must see it; and to that tribunal I imagine you only think yourself answerable; for did you reflect but one moment, on another bar, before which you will be summoned, you would see, there can be no excuse for violating the laws by which you are there to be tried. If you could justify yourself to the world, or to the women of whose folly you take advantage, by the fallacious arguments which you have so ready for that purpose, such cobweb sophistry cannot weaken the force of an express command.’

‘ I will not pretend, answered Lord Robert, to deny the truth of what you say, but must beg you will consider it is more easy for you to urge these truths, than for those to obey them who are exposed to, and susceptible of temptations. When a woman has no title to our respect, how difficult is it to consider her in the light you require! levity of conduct we are apt to look upon as an invitation, which a man scarcely thinks it consistent with his politeness to neglect.’

‘ I wish, replied Miss Selvyn, that women were better acquainted with the ways of thinking so common with your sex; for while they are ignorant of them, they act to a great disadvantage. They obtain by that levity which deprives them

‘ of

'of your esteem, a degree of notice and pretended 'liking, which they mistake for approbation; did 'they but know that you in your hearts despise 'those most, to whom you are most assiduously 'and openly attached, it would occasion a great 'change in their behaviour; nor would they suffer 'an address, to which they cannot listen without 'incurring your contempt. How criminally de-'ceitful is this behaviour? And what real virtue 'can a man truly boast, who acts in this manner? 'What woman in her senses can enter into an union 'for life with such a man?'

'Why not, madam? said Lord Robert, my be-'haviour to you shews, that we yield to merit the 'homage it deserves; you would lose all your 'triumph, were we to put you and the lighter part 'of your sex on an equality in our opinions. We 'are always ready to esteem a woman who will 'give us leave to do so; and can you require us 'to respect those who are not in the least respect-'able?'

'No, answered Miss Selvyn, I only wish you 'would cease your endeavours to render those wo-'men objects of contempt, who deserve only to be 'neglected, and particularly not to deprive them 'of the very small portion of regard they are en-'titled to, by the fallacious appearance of an at-'tachment of the tendereſt kind; which in reality 'arises from contempt, not love. But, added she, 'I have said more than I designed on the subject; 'I only meant to answer the question you put to 'me with so much importunity; and must now 'confirm what I have already declared, by telling 'you, that were I inclined to marry, I would not 'on any account take an husband of your lord-'ship's principles; but were you endowed with 'all the virtues that ever man possessed, I would

'not

'not change my present happy situation for the un-
'certainties of wedlock.'

When Lord Robert found all his sollicitations unavailing, he left the country, and returned to London, where he hoped, by a series of diversions, to efface from his heart the real passion he had conceived for Miss Selvyn; she forbore informing Lady Mary Jones, though their correspondence was frequent, of Lord Robert's courtship; she did not doubt but her ladyship was sincere, when she assured her, she now beheld him with the indifference he deserved, but thought that to tell her she had received so very different an address from him, would bear too much the air of a triumph, a meanness which her heart abhorred.

Lady Emilia and Miss Selvyn had lived several years in the country with great rational enjoyment, when the former was seized with a fever. All the skill of her physicians proved ineffectal, and her distemper encreased daily. She was sensible of the danger which threatened her life, but insisted on their telling her, if they had any great hopes of her recovery, assuring them, that it was of importance to her, to know their opinions with the utmost frankness. Thus urged, they confessed they had but little hopes. She then returned them thanks for their care, but still more for their sincerity; and with the greatest composure took leave of them, desiring to be left alone with Miss Selvyn, who was in tears at her bed-side. Every one else withdrew, when taking Miss Selvyn in her arms, and shedding a few silent tears, she afterwards thus addressed her.

'At the moment that I must bid you a long
'farewel, you will know, that you have a mother
'in her whom you before thought only your
'friend. Yes, my dearest Harriot, I am your
'mother

'mother, ashamed of my weakness, and shocked 'at my guilt, while your gentle but virtuous eyes 'could reproach your unhappy parent, I could not 'prevail on myself to discover this secret to you, 'but I cannot carry to my grave, the knowledge 'of a circumstance which concerns you. Yes, 'you are my daughter, my child, ever most dear 'to me, though the evidence and continual remem-'brancer of my crime.'

Miss Selvyn imagined the distemper had now seized Lady Emilia's brain, which it had hitherto spared; and entreated her 'to compose herself, as-'suring her, that what so much agitated her decay-'ing frame, was only the phantom of an over-'heated imagination; for her parents were well 'known, neither was there any mystery in her 'birth.'

'Oh! interrupted Lady Emilia, do not suspect 'me of delirium; it has pleased the Almighty to 'spare my senses throughout this severe disorder, 'with a gracious design of allowing me even the 'last moments of my life to compleat my repent-'ance. What I tell you is but true, Mr. Selvyn 'knew it all, and like a man of honour saved me 'from shame, by concealing the fatal secret; and 'acted the part of a father to my Harriot, without 'having any share in my guilt. But I see you do 'not yet believe me; take this, pulling a pa-'per from under her pillow, herein you will find 'an account of the whole unfortunate affair, 'written a year ago; left at the time of my death 'I should not be able to relate it; this will prove, 'by the nice connexion of every circumstance, 'that the words therein contained are not the sug-'gestions of madness.'

Miss Selvyn accordingly read as follows,

'When

'When I was seventeen years old, Lord Peyton asked me of my father, but not till after he had secured my tendereſt affections. His eſtate was ſufficient to content a parent who was not regardleſs of fortune and ſplendor; and his propoſals were accepted. But while the tedioufneſs of the lawyers made us wait for the finiſhing of ſettlements, Lord Peyton, who was in the army, was commanded to repair immediately to his regiment, then ſtationed in Ireland. He endeavoured to prevail with my father to haſten our marriage, offering every kind of ſecurity he could deſire, inſtead of the ſettlements ſo long delayed; my wiſhes concurred with his, rather than ſuffer him to go without me into a kingdom, which I imagined would not prove very amuſing to him. But my father, who was a very exact obſerver of forms, would not conſent to any expedient. No ſecurity appeared to him equivalent to ſettlements; and many trifling circumſtances requiſite to the ſplendor of our firſt appearance were not ready; which to him ſeemed almoſt as important, as the execution of the marriage writings.

'When Lord Peyton found my father inexorable, he attempted to perſuade me to agree to a private marriage; only deſiring, he ſaid, to ſecure me entirely his before he left the kingdom; and propoſed, that after his return, we ſhould be publickly married, to prevent my father's ſuſpecting that we had anticipated his conſent. But this I rejected; diſobedience to a parent, and other objections, were ſufficient to make me refuſe it; and we ſaw ourſelves reduced to ſeparate when we were ſo near being united. As Lord Peyton was an accepted lover, and our intended marriage was publickly known, and generally

'approved,

'approved, he paſſed great part of his time with 'me. My father was obliged to go out of town 'on particular buſineſs, the day before that ap-'pointed for Lord Peyton's departure. It is natu-'ral to ſuppoſe we paſſed it intirely together. The 'concern we were both under, made us wiſh to 'avoid being ſeen by others, and therefore I was 'denied to all viſitors. Lord Peyton dined and 'ſupped with me; and by thus appropriating the 'day to the ceremony of taking leave, we ren-'dered the approaching ſeparation more afflicting 'than in reaſon it ought to have been, and indeed 'made it a laſting affliction; a grief never to be 'waſhed away.

'Lord Peyton left London at the appointed 'hour, but the next days, and almoſt every ſuc-'ceeding poſt, brought me the tendereſt expreſſi-'ons of regret for this inforced abſence, and the 'ſtrongeſt aſſurances of the conſtancy of his af-'fection. Mine could not with truth be written 'in a more indifferent ſtrain, my love was the 'ſame, but my purpoſe was much altered; as ſoon 'as I had calmneſs of mind enough to reflect on 'what had paſſed, I reſolved never to be Lord 'Peyton's wife. I ſaw my own miſconduct in all 'its true colours. I deſpiſed myſelf, and could 'not hope for more partial treatment from my 'huſband. A lover might in the height of his 'paſſion excuſe my frailty, but when matrimony, 'and continued poſſeſſion had reſtored him to his 'reaſon, I was ſenſible he muſt think of me as I 'was conſcious I deſerved. What confidence, 'what eſteem could I hope from an huſband, who 'ſo well knew my weakneſs; or how could I 'ſupport being hourly expoſed to the ſight of a 'man, whoſe eyes would always ſeem to reproach 'me! I could ſcarcely bear to ſee myſelf; and I

'was

was determined not to depend on any one who was equally conſcious of my guilt.

I ſoon acquainted Lord Peyton with this reſolution, which he combated with every argument love could dictate. He aſſured me in the moſt ſolemn manner of his entire eſteem, inſiſted that he only was to blame, and that he ſhould never forgive himſelf for the uneaſineſs he had already occaſioned me; but intreated me not to puniſh him ſo ſeverely, as ever again to give the leaſt intimation of a deſign not to confirm our marriage. As I reſiſted my own paſſion, it may be ſuppoſed that, although too late, I was able to reſiſt his. I ſaw that a generous man muſt act as he did, but no generoſity could reſtore me to the ſame place in his eſteem I before poſſeſſed. His behaviour on this occaſion, fixed my good opinion of him, but could not reſtore my opinion of myſelf. All he could urge therefore was unavailing; the ſtronger my affection, the more determined I was in my purpoſe; ſince the more I valued his eſteem, the greater would my ſuffering be, at knowing that I had forfeited it. I acquainted my father with my reſolution, alledging the beſt excuſes I could make. He was at firſt angry with my inconſtancy, charged me with capriciouſneſs, and want of honour; but at laſt was pacified, by my aſſuring him I would never marry any man. As he had been ſorry to part with me, the thought of my continuing with him as long as he lived, made my peace.

Lord Peyton's impatience at being detained in Ireland, increaſed with his deſire of perſuading me to relinquiſh a deſign ſo very grievous to my own heart, as well as to his; but he could not obtain leave to return into England, before I

found

'found, to my inexpreſſible terror, that the miſ-
'fortune I ſo ſincerely lamented, would have con-
'ſequences that I little expected. In the agony of
'my mind I communicated my diſtreſs to Lord
'Peyton, the only perſon whom I dared truſt with
'ſo important a ſecret.

'Inſtead of condoling with me on the ſubject of
'my affliction, he expreſſed no ſmall joy in a cir-
'cumſtance, which he ſaid muſt reduce me to ac-
'cept the only means of preſerving my reputation;
'and added, that as every delay was now of ſo
'much importance, if the next packet did not bring
'him leave of abſence, he ſhould ſet out without
'it; and rather run the hazard of being called to
'account for diſobedience, than of expoſing me to
'one painful bluſh.

'I confeſs his delicacy charmed me; every letter
'I received increaſed my eſteem and affection for
'him, but nothing could alter my purpoſe. I
'looked upon the execution of it as the only means
'of re-inſtating myſelf in *his* good opinion, or my
'*own*, in comparison of which even reputation
'ſeemed to loſe its value. But ſevere was the
'trial I had to undergo upon his return into Eng-
'land, which was in a few days after his aſſurance
'of coming at any hazard. He uſed every means
'that the tenderest affection and the niceſt honour
'could ſuggeſt, to perſuade me to marry him; and
'the conflict in my own heart very near reduced
'me to my grave; till at length pitying the con-
'dition into which I was reduced, without the
'leaſt approach to a change of purpoſe, he pro-
'miſed to ſpare me any farther ſollicitation, and to
'bury his affliction in ſilence; after obtaining a
'promiſe from me, that I would ſuffer him to
'contrive the means for concealing an event,

'which

'which muſt ſoon happen; as my unintriguing 'ſpirit made me very incapable of managing it 'with tolerable art and ſecrecy.

'Lord Peyton had maintained his former friend-'ſhip with my father, who thought himſelf obliged 'to him, for not reſenting my behaviour in the 'manner he imagined it deſerved. When the me-'lancholy and much dreaded time approached, 'Lord Peyton gave me ſecret information that he 'would invite my father into the country, on pre-'tence of aſſiſting him by his advice in ſome al-'terations he was going to make there; and aſſu-'red me of careful attendance, and the moſt ſe-'cret reception, from a very worthy couple, to 'whoſe houſe he gave me a direction, if I could 'contrive, under colour of ſome intended viſit, 'to leave my own.

'All was executed as he had planned it; and 'when my ſervants thought I was gone to viſit a 'relation ſome miles diſtant from London, I went 'as directed, and was received with the greateſt 'humanity imaginable by Mr. and Mrs. Selvyn; 'not at their own houſe, but at one taken for that 'purpoſe, where the affair might be more ſecretly 'managed. Lord Peyton had concealed my name 'even from them; and ſecured their care of me 'under a borrowed appellation.

'The day after I got to them I was delivered of 'you, my deareſt child, whom I beheld with ſor-'row as well as affliction; conſidering you as the 'melancholy memorial and partner in my ſhame.

'Mr. and Mrs. Selvyn attended me with the 'greateſt care, and were never both abſent at a 'time; they acquainted Lord Peyton with the 'ſtate of my health by every poſt; and I was en-'abled, by the neceſſity of the caſe, to write to

'my

'my father as frequently as I usually did, when 'absent from him. Within the fortnight from 'the time of my departure from my own house 'I returned to it again, after delivering my dear 'Harriot into the care of these good people, who 'promised to treat her as their own child. Un-'der pretence of a cold I confined myself till I 'was perfectly recovered.

'Lord Peyton detained my father till he heard 'I was entirely well; and then went with impa-'tience to see his little daughter, over whom he 'shed many tears, as Mr. Selvyn afterwards in-'formed me; telling it that it was a constant 'memorial of the greatest misfortune of his life, 'and could never afford him a pleasure that was 'not mingled with the deepest affliction.

'Mrs. Selvyn had lain in about six weeks before 'I went to her, the child she brought into the 'world lived but a few months; upon its death, 'at Lord Peyton's desire, they took you from 'nurse, and pretending you their own, privately 'buried their child, who was likewise nursed 'abroad. Mr. Selvyn was a merchant, but had 'never been successful, his wife died when you 'were about three years old. Having no children 'to provide for, and not being fond of trade, he 'was desirous of retiring into the country. Lord 'Peyton to facilitate the gratification of his wish, 'procured him a small *fine cure*; gave into his pos-'session three thousand pounds, which he secured 'to you; and allowed him an hundred a year for 'the trouble of your education; with an unlimited 'commission to call on him for any sums he should 'want.

'The constant sense of my guilt, the continual 'regret at having by my own ill conduct forfeited

'the

‘ the happineſs, which every action of Lord Peyton’s proved that his wife might reaſonably expect, fixed a degree of melancholy on my mind, which no time has been able to conquer. I lived with my father till his death, which happened not many years ago; at his deceaſe, I found myſelf miſtreſs of a large fortune, which enabled me to ſupport the rank I had always enjoyed. Though Lord Peyton had provided ſufficiently for Mr. Selvyn’s and our convenience, yet I conſtantly ſent him a yearly preſent; till no longer able to deny myſelf the pleaſure of ſeeing my dear child, I prevailed on him to remove to London, and to fix in the ſame ſtreet with me, taking care to ſupply all that was requiſite to enable him to appear there genteelly. You know with what appearance of accident I firſt cultivated a friendſhip with you, but you cannot imagine, with how much difficulty I concealed the tenderneſs of a mother under the ceremonies of an acquaintance.

‘ Of late I have enjoyed a more eaſy ſtate of mind: I have ſometimes been inclined to flatter myſelf, that your uncommon merit, and the great comfort I have received in your ſociety, are ſigns that Heaven has forgiven my offence, and accepted my penitence, which has been ſincere and long, as an atonement for my crime; in which bleſſed hope I ſhall, I truſt, meet death without terror, and ſubmit, my dear daughter, whenever I am called hence, in full confidence to that Power, whoſe mercy is over all his works. I ought to add a few words about your dear father, who ſeemed to think my extreme regular conduct, and the puniſhment I had inflicted on myſelf, ſuch an extenuation of my weakneſs, that he ever behaved to me with the tendereſt

 reſpect,

'respect, I might almost say reverence, and till 'his death gave me every proof of the purest and 'the strongest friendship. By consent we avoided 'each others presence for three years, by which 'time we hoped the violence of our mutual passion 'would be abated. He spent the greatest part of 'it abroad; and at the end of that period we met 'with the sincerer joy, from finding we were not 'deceived in our hopes. Our attachment was 'settled into the tendereſt friendship; we forbore 'even the mention of your name, as it must have 'reminded us of our crime; and if Lord Peyton 'wanted to communicate any thing concerning 'you, he did it by letter; avoiding with the ex-'tremest delicacy ever to take notice, that any 'such letters had passed between us; and even in 'them he consulted about his child, in the stile of 'a man who was writing to a person that had no 'other connexion with it than what her friendship 'for him must naturally occasion, in a point where 'he was interested by the tendereſt ties of the most 'extreme paternal love.

'I have often with pleasure heard you mention 'his great fondness for you in your childhood, when 'he visited at your father's; your growing years 'encreased it, though it obliged him to suppress 'the appearance of an affection which you would 'have thought improper. I need not tell you, that 'I had the misfortune to lose this worthiest of 'friends, about half a year before you came to 'London, which determined me to send for you, 'that I might receive all the consolation the world 'could give me, and see the inheritor of her dear 'father's virtues. While he lived I dared not have 'taken the same step; your presence would have 'been too painful a testimony against me, and 'continually reminded my lord of a weakness,

'which

'which I hope time had almost effaced from his re-
'membrance.'

Miss Selvyn was extremely affected with the perusal of this paper; she was frequently interrupted by her tears; grieved to the heart to think of how much uneasiness she had been the cause. As soon as she had concluded it, she threw herself on her knees at Lady Emilia's bed-side, and taking one of her hands, which she bathed with her tears, 'Is it possible then, said she, that I have 'thus long been ignorant of the best of parents? 'And must I lose you when so lately found? Oh! 'my dear mother, how much pleasure have I lost 'by not knowing that I might call you by that 'endearing name! What an example of virtue 'have you set me! How noble your resolution! 'How uniform and constant your penitence! Blest 'you must be supremely by him who loveth the 'contrite heart; and you and my father I doubt 'not will enjoy eternal felicity together, united 'never more to part. Oh! may your afflicted 'daughter be received into the same place, and 'partake of your happiness; may she behold your 'piety rewarded, and admire in you the blessed 'fruits of timely repentance; a repentance so im-'mediately succeeding the offence, that your 'soul could not have received the black im-'pression!'

'Can you, who have never erred, said Lady 'Emilia, see my offence in so fair a light? What 'may I not then hope from infinite mercy? I do hope; 'it would be criminal to doubt, when such conso-'latory promises appear in almost every page of 'holy writ. With pleasure I go where I am call-'ed, for I leave my child safe in the Divine Pro-'tection, and her own virtue; I leave her, I hope, 'to a happy life, and a far more happy death;

'when joys immortal will bless her through all 'eternity. I have now my love discharged the 'burden from my mind; not many hours of life 'remain, let me not pass them in caressing my 'dear daughter, which, though most pleasing to my 'fond heart, can end only in making me regret 'the loss of a world which will soon pass from 'my sight. Let me spend this hour, as I hope to do 'those that will succeed it through all eternity. 'Join with me in prayers to, and praises of him, 'in whom consists all our lasting happiness.'

Miss Selvyn sent for the Minister of the parish, at Lady Emelia's desire, and the remainder of her life passed in religious exercises. She expired without a groan, in the midst of a fervent prayer, as if her soul was impatient to take its flight into the presence of him, whom she was addressing with so much ardour.

Miss Selvyn's affliction was at first extreme, but when she reflected on her mother's well-spent life, and most happy death, it much abated the excess of her grief. By that lady's will, she found herself heir to twelve thousand pounds, and all her personal estate. She had been charmed with the account Lady Mary Jones had sent her of this society, and wished to increase her acquaintance with that lady, and therefore offered, if proper, to make her a short visit, as soon as her necessary affairs were settled. This met with the most welcome reception, and she came hither as a visitor. Her stay was gradually prolonged for near two months; when having reason, from the great regard shewn her, to think she should be no disagreeable addition, she asked leave to join her fortune to the common stock, and to fix intirely with them. Nothing could be more agreeable to the other three ladies than this offer, and with extream satisfaction she settled here.

Upon

Upon this increaſe of income it was that my friends eſtabliſhed the community of indigent gentlewomen, which gave you ſo much pleaſure.

Lamont was much ſtruck with the conduct of Lady Emilia; ſhe had ſhewn, he ſaid, a degree of delicacy and prudence, which exceeded what he had a notion of; he never met with a woman who foreſaw the little chance ſhe had for happineſs, in marrying a man who could have no inducement to make her his wife, but a nice, often a too nice, ſenſe of honour; and who certainly could have no great opinion of her virtue. The folly of both men and women in theſe late unions was the ſubject of our converſation till we ſeparated.

In the afternoon the ladies aſked us to accompany them to the houſe they had juſt taken for the new community, to which they were obliged to go that day, as they had ſet ſeveral perſons to work there. They keep a poſt-coach and poſt-chaiſe, which with the help of our's, were ſufficient to accommodate us all. A ſhort time brought us to the houſe, a very old, and formerly a very fine manſion, but now much fallen to decay. The outſide is greatly out of repair, but the building ſeems ſtrong. The inſide is in a manner totally unfurniſhed; for though it is not empty, yet the rats and mice have made ſuch conſiderable depredations on what time had before reduced to a very tattered condition, that the melancholy remains can be reckoned little better than lumber.

The laſt inhabitant of this houſe we were informed was an old miſer, whoſe paſſion for accumulating wealth, reduced him into almoſt as unfortunate a ſtate as Midas, who, according to the fable, having obtained the long deſired power of turning every thing he touched to gold, was ſtarved by the immediate tranſmutation of all food into

that metal, the instant it touched his lips. The late possessor of the house I am speaking of, when he was about fifty years old, turned away every servant but an old woman, who if she was not honest, was at least too weak to be able to put any dishonesty in practise. When he was about threescore, she died, and he never could venture to let any one supply her place. He fortified every door and window with such bars of iron, that his house might have resisted the forcible attack of a whole army. Night and day growled before his inhospitable door a furious Dutch mastiff, whose natural ferocity was so increased by continual hunger, for his master fed him most sparingly, that no stranger could have entered the yard with impunity.

Every time this churlish beast barked, the old gentleman, with terror and dismay in his countenance, and quaking limbs, ran to the only window he ever ventured to unbar, to see what danger threatened him; nor could the sight of a barefoot child, or a decrepid old woman, immediately dispel his fears. As timorous as Falstaff, his imagination first multiplied, and then cloathed them in buckram; and his panic ceased not till they were out of view.

This wretched man upon the death of his only servant, agreed with an old woman to buy food for him, and bring it to the well defended door of his yard; where informing him of her arrival, by a signal agreed upon between them, he ventured out of his house to receive it from her; and dressed it himself; till worn out by anxiety of mind he grew too weak to perform that office, and ordered the woman to bring it ready prepared; this continued for a little time, till at last he appeared no more at

his

his gate. After the old woman had knocked three days in vain, the neighbourhood began to think it necessary to take some measures thereupon; but not chusing to run the hazard of breaking open the house, they sent to the old gentleman's nephew, whose father had been suffered to languish in extreme poverty many years before his death; nor was the son in much better condition; but he had acquainted some of the neighbours with the place of his abode, in hopes of the event which now induced them to send for him.

As soon as he arrived, he prepared to force his way into the house, but it was found so impracticable, that at length they were obliged to untile part of the roof, from whence a person descended, and opened the door to those who did not chuse so dangerous an entrance, as that through which he had passed.

They found the old man dead on a great chest which contained his money, as if he had been desirous to take possession even in death.

His nephew was just of age, and having till then been exposed to all the evils of poverty, was almost distracted with joy at the sudden acquisition of a large fortune. He scarcely could be prevailed with to stay long enough in this house to pay the last duties to an uncle, who had no right to any thing more from him than just the decent ceremonies; and without giving himself time to look over his estate, hastened to London.

He hired a magnificent house in Grosvenor-Square; bespoke the most elegant equipages; bought the finest set of horses he could hear of, at double their real value; and launched into every expence the town afforded him. He soon became one of the most constant frequenters of Whites;

kept ſeveral running horſes; diſtinguiſhed himſelf at Newmarket, and had the honour of playing deeper, and betting with more ſpirit, than any other young man of his age. There was not an occurrence in his life about which he had not ſome wager depending. The wind could not change, or a ſhower fall without his either loſing or gaining by it. He had not a dog or cat in his houſe on whoſe life he had not bought or ſold an annuity. By theſe ingenious methods in one year was circulated through the kingdom, the ready money which his uncle had been half his life ſtarving himſelf and family to accumulate. The ſecond year obliged him to mortgage great part of his land, and the third ſaw him reduced to ſell a conſiderable portion of his eſtate, of which this houſe, and the land belonging to it made a part.

I could not help obſerving the various fate of this manſion, originally the ſeat of ancient hoſpitality; then falling into the hands of a miſer, who had not ſpirit to enjoy it, nor ſenſe enough to ſee, that he was impairing ſo valuable a part of his poſſeſſions, by grudging the neceſſary expences of repairs; from him devolving to a young coxcomb, who by neglect let it ſink into ruin, and was ſpending in extravagance, what he inherited from avarice; as if one vice was to pay the debt to ſociety which the other had incurred; and now it was purchaſed to be the ſeat of charity and benevolence. How directly were we led to admire the ſuperior ſenſe, as well as tranſcendent virtue of theſe ladies, when we compared the uſe they made of money, with that to which the two late poſſeſſors had appropriated it! While we were in doubt which moſt to blame, he who had heaped it up without comfort, in ſordid inhumanity; or he who ſquandered it in the gratification of gayer vices. Equal-

ly

ly ſtrangers to beneficence, ſelf-indulgence was their ſole view; alike criminal, though not equally unfaſhionable, one endeavoured to ſtarve, the other to corrupt mankind; while the new owners of this houſe had no other view, than to convenience, and to reform all who came within their influence, themſelves enjoying in a ſupreme degree, the happineſs they diſperſed around them.

It was pleaſing to ſee numbers at work to repair the building, and cultivate the garden, and to obſerve, that at length from this inhoſpitable manſion "Health to himſelf, and to his children bread, the "labourer bears." Within it were all the biggeſt ſchool girls, with one of their miſtreſſes to direct them in mending ſuch furniture as were not quite deſtroyed; and I was pleaſed to ſee with how much art they repaired the decays of time, in things which well deſerved better care, having once been the richeſt part of the furniture belonging to the opulent poſſeſſors.

In our way home we called at a clergyman's houſe, which was placed in the fineſt ſituation imaginable, and where we beheld that profuſion of comforts, which ſenſe and œconomy will enable the poſſeſſors of narrow fortunes to enjoy. This gentleman and his wife have but a ſmall living, and ſtill leſs paternal eſtate; but the neatneſs, prettineſs, and convenience of their habitation, were enough to put one out of humour with riches, and I ſhould certainly have breathed forth Agar's prayer with great ardour, if I had not been ſtopped in the beginning, by conſidering how great a bleſſing wealth may be when properly employed, of which I had then ſuch hourly proof.

At our return to Millenium-Hall we found ſome of the neighbouring ſociety, who were come to ſhare the evening's concert, and ſup with us.

But at ten o'clock they departed; which I underſtood was ſomewhat later than uſual, but they conformed to the alteration of hours our arrival had occaſioned.

The next day being very hot, we were aſked to breakfaſt in a delightful arbour in the Flower garden. The morning dew, which ſtill refreſhed the flowers, increaſed their fragrance to as great an exceſs of ſweetneſs as the ſenſes could ſupport. Till I went to this houſe, I knew not half the charms of the country. Few people have the art of making the moſt of nature's bounty; theſe ladies are epicures in rural pleaſures, and enjoy them in the utmoſt exceſs to which they can be carried. All that romance ever repreſented in the plains of Arcadia, are much inferior to the charms of Millenium-Hall, except the want of ſhepherds be judged a deficiency, that nothing elſe can compenſate; there indeed they fall ſhort of what romantic writers repreſent, and have formed a female Arcadia.

After breakfaſt all the ladies left us except Mrs. Maynard. We were ſo charmed with the ſpot we were in, that we agreed to remain there, and I called on my couſin to continue the taſk ſhe had undertaken; which ſhe did in the following manner.

The

THE HISTORY OF Mrs. TRENTHAM.

MRS. Trentham never knew the bleſſing of a mother's care, her's died the ſame month which gave her daughter birth; and Mr. Trentham ſurvived his wife but eight years. He left his little girl eleven thouſand pounds, recommending both her perſon and fortune to his Mother Mrs. Alworth.

Mrs. Alworth was an old lady of good ſenſe and merit. She had felt the moſt melancholy, but not unuſual effect of long life, having outlived all her children. This misfortune ſhe alleviated in the beſt manner ſhe was able, by receiving her grandchildren into her family. Her ſon by her ſecond huſband left behind him a boy and girl, the former at the time I ſpeak of, about eleven years old, the latter ten. Her daughter had married Mr. Denham, and at her death left two girls. Mr. Denham entering into wedlock a ſecond time,

very willingly complied with Mrs. Alworth's desire of having his two daughters. The eldest of these was twelve years old, the youngest eleven.

These children had lived with the old lady some years, when she took home Harriot Trentham. As their grand-mother was rich, there had been a strong contention among them for her favour, and they could not without great disgust see another rival brought to the house. Harriot was extremely handsome and engaging. The natural sweetness of her temper rendered her complying and observant; but having been bred under the care of a sensible and indulgent father, she had never been taught the little arts of behaviour, which mothers too commonly inculcate with so much care, that children are as void of simplicity at eight, as at eight and twenty years old. The first thing a girl is taught is to hide her sentiments, to contradict the thoughts of her heart, and tell all the civil lies which custom has sanctified, with as much affectation and conceit as her mother; and when she has acquired all the folly and impertinence of a riper age, and apes the woman more ungracefully than a monkey does a fine gentleman, the parents congratulate themselves with the extremest complacency, on the charming education they have given their daughter.

Harriot had been taught no such lessons. Her Father had a strong dislike to prematurity, and feared that communication with the world would too soon teach her art and disguise, the last things he would have chosen to anticipate.

By teaching her humanity, he initiated her into civility of manners. She had learnt, that to give pain was immoral; and could no more have borne to have shocked any person's mind, than to have racked his body. Any thought therefore that could

could hurt ſhe ſuppreſſed as an indiſpenſable duty, and to pleaſe by her actions, and not offend by her words, was an eſſential part of the religion in which ſhe was educated: but in every thing whereby no one could ſuffer, ſhe was innocence and ſimplicity itſelf; and in her nature ſhone pure and uncorrupted, either by natural or acquired vices.

Mrs. Alworth, though fond of all her grand-children, could not conquer a degree of partiality for Harriot, whoſe attractions, both perſonal and mental, were very ſuperior to thoſe of her couſins. Her beauty ſecured her the particular attention of all ſtrangers, ſhe gained their favour at firſt ſight, and ſecured it by her amiable diſpoſition when they became more acquainted with her.

Envy is one of the firſt paſſions that appears in the human mind. Had Miſs Alworth and Miſs Denhams been much younger, Harriot would not have paſſed unenvied. Every day increaſed their diſlike to her, as ſhe grew daily more beloved by others, and they let no opportunity eſcape of making her feel the effects of their little malice. Their hatred to her produced an union among themſelves; for the firſt time they found ſomething in which they all agreed. They were continually laying little plots to leſſen her in their grand-mother's opinion; frequent were the accuſations againſt her, but her innocence always triumphed, though it never diſcouraged them from repeating the ſame unſucceſsful attempts. Mrs. Alworth was extremely fond of them all, but yet ſhe ſaw through their malice, and their behaviour only ſerved to endear Harriot the more, who defended herſelf without anger, and retained no rancour in her mind. Free from reſentment or ſuſpicion ſhe was ever open to their arts, and experience did not teach her to be on her

guard

guard against them, which often occasioned their having appearances on their side, and might have raised prejudices against her in Mrs. Alworth's mind, had she not found a defender in Master Alworth, who alone of all her cousins was free from envy. He was naturally of an honest and sweet disposition, and being fond of Harriot, for beauty has charms for all ages, felt great indignation at the treatment she received, and would often express a resentment from which she was wholly free.

Mrs. Alworth's great fondness for her grandson, and strong prejudices against schools, from a belief that boys acquire there more vice than learning, had determined on a private education. She therefore provided a tutor for him before he was seven years old; a man of learning and sense, with a great deal of religion and good humour; and who was very attentive to the employment for which he had been chosen.

Master Alworth, by being thus kept at home, had frequent opportunities of observing the malice of his sister and Miss Denham against Harriot, and never failed exposing their practices to his grandmother; who from thence learnt to suspect their reports about things which passed in his absence, and consequently could not be cleared up by him. His fondness for Harriot soon made him beloved by her, and as she found little pleasure in the society of her other cousins, she sought his company, but as he was much engaged by his studies, she seldom found him at leisure to play. The tutor greatly delighted with her, tried to awaken in her mind a desire of improvement, and found it an easy task; she was inclined to learn, and capable of doing it with great quickness. Mrs. Alworth readily entered into the good man's views, and was pleased with the eagerness of Harriot's application. Master

Alworth

Alworth was far enough advanced in learning to assist his favourite, and from him she received instruction with double pleasure, and more easily comprehended his explanations than those of their tutor, who found it difficult to divest himself sufficiently of scientific terms, which greatly retard the increase of knowlege in a youthful mind.

Thus beloved by her grand-mother and Mr. Alworth, and hated and traduced by her female cousins, Harriot lived till she was sixteen. Years had still improved her person, and she had made considerable progress in learning, when Mrs. Alworth judged it proper that her grandson should go abroad, to compleat an education which she flattered herself was hitherto faultless. He had no objection to the scheme but what arose from his unwillingness to leave Harriot, who saw his departure approach with great concern. She loved and respected her grand-mother, but Mr. Alworth was the only person whom she could look upon in the tender and equal light of a friend. To be deprived of his society was losing the chief pleasure of her life, and her best guardian against her enemies.

Mrs. Alworth was pleased with the affection which so evidently appeared between these two young people, she hoped to see an happy union arise from it. Their fortunes and ages were properly suited, and a love which had taken root in childhood, and grown with their encreasing years, seemed to promise a lasting harmony, of which the sweetness of their dispositions would be no bad security. These pleasing ideas amused this worthy woman, but the two friends themselves had not extended their views so far. Bred up like brother and sister, a tenderer degree of relation had not entered

ed their thoughts, nor did any thing more appear neceſſary to their happineſs, than a conſtant enjoyment of each others friendſhip.

In this diſpoſition they parted when Mr. Alworth went abroad. His tutor thinking himſelf not properly qualified to conduct him in his travels, recommended another gentleman, and Mr. Alworth, at Harriot's requeſt, prevailed with their grandmother to detain his old tutor till Harriot's education was compleated.

Mr. Alworth continued abroad two years, during which time Harriot had applied with ſuch unwearied diligence, that ſhe was perfect miſtreſs of the living languages, and no leſs acquainted with Greek and Latin. She was well inſtructed in the ancient and modern philoſophy, and in almoſt every branch of learning.

Mr. Alworth found his couſin not alone improved in underſtanding, her beauty was juſt then in its perfection, and it was ſcarcely poſſible to conceive any thing handſomer. She had great elegance of manner, a point wherein her grand-mother excelled, and was as far removed from conceit as from ignorance. Her ſituation was much mended by the marriage of the eldeſt Miſs Denham; and Miſs Alworth waited only for her brother's arrival and approbation, to enter into the ſame ſtate. The gentleman to whom ſhe was going to be married had firſt made his addreſſes to Harriot; but, as well as ſeveral others, was refuſed by her. She was not inclined to change her ſituation, or this gentleman's fortune, perſon, and character were unexceptionable; however one circumſtance without any other objection would have been ſufficient to have rendered his ſuit unſucceſsful; ſhe perceived that Miſs Alworth was in love with him,

him, and though ſhe had little reaſon to have much regard for her, yet good nature made her anxious for the ſucceſs of a paſſion which ſhe ſaw was deeply rooted.

She therefore, while ſhe diſcouraged his addreſſes, took every means of recommending Miſs Alworth, whoſe treatment of her ſhe believed rather proceeded from compliance with Miſs Denham's than from ill temper.

This gave her hopes that ſhe might make a good wife to Mr. Parnel, the object of her affections. He ſoon perceived, that Miſs Alworth did not behold him with indifference; but as he was much captivated by Harriot's charms, it at firſt had no other effect, than leading him to indulge in complaints of her cruelty to Miſs Alworth, who liſtened with compaſſion. Harriot often repreſented to him how little he ought to wiſh for her conſent to marry him, which he ſo ſtrongly ſollicited; for ſhould ſhe grant it, he would be miſerable with a wife who did not love him. She told him, that 'were he indifferent, her being ſo might do very 'well, and they live on together in that eternal '*ennui*, which muſt ever ſubſiſt between a married 'couple who have no affection for each other, and 'while natural good temper and prudence enabled 'them to dream away a dull life in peace and dead 'inſenſibility, the world might call them happy; 'but that if he really loved her, her indifference 'would render him more wretched than the moſt 'blameable conduct.' She would then repreſent the advantages of marrying a woman whoſe ſole affections he poſſeſſed, though at firſt he felt for her only eſteem and gratitude; and adviſed him by all means to ſeek for one whoſe heart was in that ſituation, which he was well qualified to find.

Though

Though Harriot forbore to mention Miſs Alworth's name, Mr. Parnel well underſtood to whom ſhe alluded, but found it difficult to take her advice. At length however, deprived of all hope of obtaining the woman he loved, and moved to compaſſion by the viſible unhappineſs of one who loved him, he began to liſten to it, and frankly told Harriot, that he underſtood the aim of what ſhe had ſaid. She was not ſorry to throw off all reſtraint, as it gave her the power of ſpeaking more to the purpoſe; and at length brought him to ſay, that he ſhould not be unwilling to marry her. Harriot feared leſt the belief of Mr. Parnel's ſtill retaining an affection for her, might render Miſs Alworth uneaſy, and therefore adviſed him gradually to ſlacken his addreſſes to her, and at the ſame time to increaſe in proportion his attentions for Miſs Alworth, that he might appear to prefer her, ſince a ſymptom of inconſtancy ſhe knew would not ſo much affect her as any ſign of indifference, and Harriot's generoſity ſo far exceeded her vanity, that ſhe very ſincerely deſired to be thought neglected, rather than give any alloy to the happineſs of her couſin.

There was the more colour for this ſuppoſition, as Mr. Parnel had never been publicly diſcarded by her, ſince for the completion of her views ſhe had found it neceſſary to preſerve his acquaintance.

Miſs Alworth was happy beyond expreſſion when ſhe found herſelf the object of Mr. Parnel's addreſſes. Her wiſhes ſo far blinded her, that ſhe really believed Harriot was neglected for her; but yet knew ſhe had long been endeavouring to ſerve her, and was obliged to her for ſome inſtructions how to behave ſo to Mr. Parnel as to ſecure his eſteem and confidence, the beſt foundation for love. As her brother was then ſoon expected over, Mrs. Alworth

worth thought that to wait for his approbation was but a proper compliment.

Mr. Alworth was not at all inclined to object to so good a match, especially as it was much desired by his sister, and the marriage was celebrated soon after his return. This ceremony did not so engage his attention, as to render him less sensible of the pleasure of renewing his friendship with Harriot, who received him with the sincerest joy. He found her greatly improved, and every hour passed agreeably that was spent in her company. They were continually together, and never happy but when they were so. Every one talked of their mutual passion; and they were so often told of it that they began to fancy it was true, but were surprized to find that name should be given to an affection calm and rational as theirs, totally free from that turbulency and wildness, which had always appeared to them the true characteristics of love. They were sensible however, that nothing was so dear to them as each other, they were always sorry to part, uneasy asunder, and rejoiced to meet; a walk was doubly pleasing when they both shared it; a book became more entertaining if they read together; every thing was insipid that they did not mutually enjoy. When they considered these symptoms, they were inclined to think the general opinion was just, and that their affection, being free from passion, proceeded from some peculiarity of temper.

Mrs. Alworth thought she should give them great satisfaction in proposing a speedy marriage; and rejoiced to see the first wish of her heart, which had been for their union, so nearly compleated. The old lady's proposal made them a little thoughtful; they saw no very good reason for their marrying; they

they enjoyed each others ſociety already, and did not wiſh for any more intimate tie. But neither knew how to refuſe, ſince the other might take it for an affront, and they would not for the world have had the ſincerity and tenderneſs of their affection brought into doubt. Beſides they began to think, that as their love was ſo generally looked upon as certain, it might become difficult to continue the ſame degree of intimacy without expoſing themſelves to cenſure. This thought was ſufficient to determine them to marry; and their entire affection for, and confidence in each other, convinced them they ran no hazard in this ſtep; and that they could not fail of being happy as man and wife, who had ſo long enjoyed great felicity in the moſt intimate friendſhip.

In conſequence of this reſolution, lawyers were employed to draw up ſettlements, and every thing requiſite for a proper appearance on their marriage was ordered; but they were ſo very patient on the ſubject, that the preparations went on ſlowly. Some who hoped to have their diligence quickened, in a manner uſual on ſuch occaſions, affected delays, but were ſurprized to find that no complaint enſued. They grew ſtill more dilatory, but the only conſequence that aroſe from it was a decent ſolicitation to diſpatch, without any of thoſe more effectual means being uſed, which impatient love or greedy avarice ſuggeſt.

Theſe young people were perfectly happy and contented, and therefore waited with compoſure for the concluſion of preparations, which however ſlowly did however proceed. The old lady indeed was leſs patient, but a grandmother's ſollicitations have no very powerful effect on lawyers; therefore her's availed little.

During

During thefe delays Mrs. Tonfton, formerly the eldeft Mifs Denham, having been extremely ill, was fent to Buxton for the recovery of her health. As this place was but a day's journey from Mrs. Alworth's houfe, fhe expreffed a defire to fee her grand-daughter, and Mr. Alworth and Harriot, as well as Mifs Denham, very readily accompanied her thither.

The accommodations at Buxton allow very little feclufion; and as Mrs. Tonfton was fufficiently recovered to conform to the cuftoms of the place, they joined in the general fociety. The firft day at dinner Mr. Alworth's attention was much engroffed by Mifs Melman, a very pretty woman. She was far from a perfect beauty, but her countenance expreffed an engaging vivacity, and great good humour, though a wandering unfixed look, indicated a light and unfteady mind. Her perfon was little but elegant; there was a fprightlinefs in her whole figure which was very attractive: her converfation was fuitable to it, fhe had great life and fpirit, all the common *rontine* of difcourfe, and a fafhionable readinefs to fkim lightly over all fubjects. Her underftanding was fufficiently circumfcribed; but what fhe wanted in real fenfe, fhe made up in vivacity, no unfuccefsful fubftitute in general eftimation.

This young lady was almoft a new character to Mr. Alworth. He had lived conftantly at his grand-mother's till he went abroad, and as foon as he returned into the kingdom he went thither; from which, as it was the middle of fummer, and confequently London had no temptations, he had never ftirred. He therefore had been little ufed to any woman but his fober and fenfible grand-mother's two coufins who were pretty enough, but had no great charms of underftanding; a fifter rather filly,

and

and the incomparable Harriot, whose wit was as sound as her judgment solid and sterling, free from affectation, and all little effeminate arts and airs. Reason governed her thoughts and actions, nor could the greatest flow of spirits make her for a moment forget propriety. Every thing in her was natural grace, she was always consistent and uniform, and a stranger to caprice.

Miss Milman was a compleat coquet, capricious and fantastical. As Mr. Alworth was the prettiest man at the place, and known to have a good fortune, she soon singled him out as a conquest worthy of her, and successfully played off all her arts. By appearing to like him, she inticed him to address her; and by a well managed capriciousness of behaviour kept up the spirit of a pursuit. She frequently gave him reason to believe her favourably disposed towards him, and as often, by obliging him to doubt of it, encreased his desire to be certain it was true. She kept him in a state of constant anxiety, and made him know her consequence by the continual transition from pleasure to pain in which he lived.

He had not been much more than a fortnight at Buxton, when his attachment to Miss Melman became very apparent. Harriot saw an assiduity in his behaviour very different from what he had ever shewn to her. He felt that in the circumstances wherein he and Harriot then were, his conduct must appear injurious, and shame and the secret reproaches of his conscience made him take all possible opportunities of avoiding her presence: if he was obliged to converse with her, it was with an air so restrained and inattentive, as made her fear his regard for her was entirely vanished. The sincere affection she had for him rendered this apprehension

hension extremely painful. She would have been contented to have seen another woman his wife, but could not bear the thought of losing his friendship. At first she passed over this change in silence, and appeared even not to observe it; but when they received an account that the marriage writings were finished, she thought an affected blindness highly unseasonable, and told him, in the most friendly and generous manner, that, 'nothing remained to be done but to cancel them, that, 'she plainly perceived another had obtained the 'heart she never possessed; that, the measures taken 'for their marriage were of no sort of consequence, 'and she flattered herself she might retain his 'friendship, though he gave his hand to another.'

Mr. Alworth at first appeared confounded, but recovering himself, confessed to her frankly, 'he 'never knew the weakness and folly of the human 'heart, till his own convinced him of it; that, 'he had always felt for her the most perfect esteem, 'joined with the tendercst affection; but his passions had had no share in his attachment. On 'the contrary, he found them strongly engaged 'on the side of Miss Melman, and felt an ardour 'for her which he had never before experienced. 'That, he could not think of being her husband 'without rapture, though he saw plainly she was 'inferior to his Harriot both in beauty and understanding; and as for her principles, he was totally ignorant of them. He now, he said, perceived the difference between friendship and love, 'and was convinced, that esteem and passion were 'totally independant, since she entirely possessed 'the one, while Miss Melman totally engrossed 'the other.'

Harriot

Harriot was pleaſed with the frankneſs of Mr. Alworth's confeſſion, and wiſhed only to be ſecure of his eſteem, but ſhe ſaw him ſo wholly taken up with Miſs Melman, that ſhe was convinced paſſion had greater power over his ſex than eſteem, and that while his mind was under the tumultuous influence of love, ſhe muſt expect very little ſatisfaction from his friendſhip.

She took upon herſelf the taſk of breaking off their treaty of marriage, and acquainted her grandmother with her reſolution, who ſaw too plainly the reaſon for her doing ſo to blame her conduct, though ſhe grieved at the neceſſity for it, and could not ſincerely forgive her grandſon's levity and want of judgment, in preferring a wild fantaſtic girl, to the extreme beauty, and ſolid well-known merit of Harriot, an error for which ſhe prophetically ſaw he would in time be ſeverely puniſhed.

Harriot, from the intended bride, now became the confidant of Mr. Alworth, though with an aching heart; for ſhe feared that after experiencing the more active ſenſations of a ſtrong paſſion, friendſhip would appear too inſipid to have any charms for him. She accompanied Mrs. Alworth home before the lovers choſe to leave Buxton, but not till ſhe had prevailed with her grandmother to conſent to the marriage between Miſs Melman and Mr. Alworth ſhould be celebrated at her houſe.

When every thing requiſite for the ceremony was ready, they came to Mrs. Alworth's, where the indiſſoluble knot was tied, and in the bridegroom's opinion the moſt perfect happineſs ſecured to his future years. They ſtaid but a few days after the marriage, and then went to her father's houſe, till the approaching winter called them to London.

Harriot

Harriot found a great loſs of a friend ſhe ſo ſincerely loved, but ſhe hoped he would be as happy as he expected, and had the ſatisfaction of believing he retained a tender regard for her. They correſponded frequently; and his letters aſſured her of his felicity. After he had been ſome time fixed in London, he grew indeed leſs eloquent on the ſubject, which did not ſurprize her, as the variety of his engagements ſhortened his letters, and denied him leiſure to expatiate on the moſt pleaſing topics.

Miſs Denham had accompanied her ſiſter home, and in the winter Mrs. Alworth was informed by Mrs. Tonſton, that Miſs Denham had received a propoſal from a gentleman of a good eſtate, but he inſiſted on a fortune of nine thouſand pounds, which was two more than ſhe was poſſeſſed of; and as they wiſhed the old lady to make that addition, Mrs. Tonſton as an inducement added, that the gentleman was extremely agreeable to her ſiſter.

Mrs. Alworth was not inclined to comply with their views, and made no other anſwer to all Harriot urged to prevail with her to give the requiſite ſum, than that it was more than perhaps would at her death fall to Miſs Denham's ſhare, and ſhe ſaw no temptation to purchaſe ſo mercenary a man. When Harriot found that all ſhe could ſay was unavailing, ſhe told Mrs. Alworth, that, 'if ſhe would give her leave, ſhe was determined to make the required addition out of her fortune; for ſhe could not bear her couſin ſhould be diſappointed in a particular ſhe thought eſſential to her happineſs, by the want of a ſum of money which ſhe could very well ſpare; adding, that the treatment ſhe had received from her couſins, ſhe attributed to childiſhneſs and folly,

'and ſhould be far worſe than they were, if ſhe 'could remember it with reſentment.'

Mrs. Alworth was greatly touched with this inſtance of Harriot's generoſity, and finding that nothing but the exertion of her authority, which her grand-daughter acknowleged abſolute, and always obeyed implicity, could prevent her from performing her purpoſe; ſhe determined to take the moſt effectual means of hindering it, by advancing the money herſelf, and invited Miſs Denham and her lover to her houſe; where the marriage was performed, and they departed.

Mrs. Alworth began to feel the infirmities of age, and now that ſhe and Harriot were left to continual *tête à tête*, abſolute quiet might have degenerated into ſomething like dullneſs; but the diſturbance they found not at home, reached them from abroad. Mr. Parnel was wearied with his wife's fondneſs, who not conſidering that he had married her more out of gratitude than affection, had diſguſted him with the continual profeſſions of a love, to which his heart would not make an equal return. This fondneſs teazed a temper, naturally good, into peeviſhneſs, and was near converting indifference into diſlike. Mrs. Parnel diſtreſſed beyond meaſure at an effect ſo contrary to what ſhe intended, reproached him with ingratitude, and tormented him with tears and complaints.

Harriot, who conſidered this match as in a great meaſure her own work, was particularly deſirous of redreſſing theſe grievances, and took great pains to perſuade Mrs. Parnel to reſtrain her fondneſs, and ſuppreſs her complaints, while ſhe endeavoured to make her huſband ſenſible, that he ought, in conſideration for the cauſe, to pardon the troubleſome effects, and not to ſuffer himſelf to be diſ-

guſted

gusted by that affection in his wife, which to most husbands would appear a merit. Mrs. Alworth joined to Harriot's persuasion, the influence her age and respectable character gave her, and though not without great difficulty, they at last saw Mr. and Mrs. Parnel live in peace and amity, without any of the pleasures arising from strong and delicate affections, or the sufferings occasioned by ill humour and hatred; and whatever void they might find in their hearts, they were so happy as to have well filled by two very fine children, which Mrs. Parnel brought her husband; who always treated her with great indulgence, in hopes of fixing Harriot's good opinion; for though despair had damped his passion, yet he still loved her with the tendereſt respect and reverence.

Towards the latter end of the second year of Mr. Alworth's marriage, his grand-mother died, much regretted by Harriot, whom she left mistress of her own fortune, with the addition of four thousand pounds, part of it the accumulated interest of her paternal inheritance, the rest Mrs. Alworth's legacy. Her grandson succeeded to her house, and intreated Harriot, that he might find her there when he came to take possession.

Their correspondence had been regular, but they had never met since his mariage. Mrs. Alworth was not fond of the conversation of an old lady; and from seeing herself not very agreeable to her grandmother, felt an uncommon awe in her presence. Harriot had received repeated invitations from them, but could not be prevailed with to leave old Mrs. Alworth, who had no other companion.

The only relief she found in her affliction for the loss of so worthy a parent, was putting the house, and all belonging to it, in order, for the reception of her first friend, in whose society she expected to renew the happiness she had so long enjoyed from it. Nor was she disappointed in her hopes of finding him still her friend; they met with mutual joy, and Mrs. Alworth seemed at first as much pleased with her new possession, as they were with each other. But Harriot soon found her happiness considerably damped. Mr. Alworth, unwilling to let his grandmother know the ill success of an union which he was sensible she disapproved, had been silent on that subject in his letters, but he was too well acquainted with the generosity of Harriot's temper, to fear she would triumph at the natural consequence of his ill-grounded passion, and therefore concealed not from her any part of the uneasiness which his wife's disposition gave him. He too late saw the difference between sensible vivacity and animal spirits, and found Mrs. Alworth a giddy coquet, too volatile to think, too vain to love; pleased with admiration, insensible to affection, fond of flattery, but indifferent to true praise; imprudently vivacious in mixed companies, lifeless when alone with him; and desirous of charming all mankind except her husband, who of his whole sex seemed the only person of no consequence to her. As her view was to captivate in public, she covered a very pretty complexion with pearl-powder and rouge, because they made her more resplendent by candle-light, and in public places. Mr. Alworth had in strong terms expressed his abhorence of that practice; but, 'she was surprized 'he should intermeddle in an affair that was no

'business

'buſineſs of his, ſurely ſhe might wear what com-
'plexion ſhe pleaſed.' The natural turn of his temper inclined him to rational ſociety, but in that his wife could bear no part. The little time ſhe was at home was employed in dreſſing, and a multitude of coxcombs attended her toilet. Mr. Alworth's extreme fondneſs for her made him at firſt very wretched; he ſoon found himſelf the moſt diſregarded of all mankind, and every man appeared his rival; but on nearer obſervation he perceived his jealouſy was groundleſs, and that ſhe was too giddy to love any thing. This made his pride eaſy, but his tenderneſs ſtill had much to endure, till at length contempt produced ſome degree of indifference, and his ſufferings became leſs acute, though he lived in continual grief, at finding himſelf diſappointed of all his airy hopes of happineſs.

Harriot was ſcarcely leſs afflicted than himſelf, ſhe endeavoured to render him more contented with his ſituation, and attempted to teach Mrs. Alworth to think, but in both was equally unſucceſsful. However this was not all ſhe had to endure. When Mr. Alworth began with unprejudiced eyes to compare her he had loſt, with the woman for whom he relinquiſhed her; when he ſaw how greatly Harriot's natural beauty eclipſed Mrs. Alworth's, notwithſtanding the addition of all her borrowed charms, he wondered what magic had blinded him to her ſuperiority. But when he drew a compariſon between the admirable underſtanding of the one, her great fund of knowlege, the inexhauſtible variety in her converſation, with the inſipid dulneſs, or unmeaning vivacity of the other, he was ſtill more aſtoniſhed, and could not forgive his ſtrange infatuation. This train of