

with him, I will not be wishing. In short, I will do my best.”

“Perhaps it will be as well if you discourage his coming here so very often. At least, you should not *remind* your mother of inviting him.”

“As I did the other day,” said Elizabeth with a conscious smile: “very true, it will be wise in me to refrain from *that*. But do not imagine that he is always here so often. It is on your account that he has been so frequently invited this week. You know my mother’s ideas as to the necessity of constant company for her friends. But really, and upon my honour, I will try to do what I think to be the wisest; and now I hope you are satisfied.”

Her aunt assured her that she was, and Elizabeth having thanked her for the kindness of her hints, they parted; a wonderful instance of advice being given on such a point, without being resented.

Mr. Collins returned into Hertfordshire soon after it had been quitted by the Gardiners and Jane; but as he took up his abode with the Lucases, his arrival was no great inconvenience to Mrs. Bennet. His marriage was now fast approaching, and she was at length so far resigned as to think it inevitable, and even repeatedly to say, in an ill-natured tone, that she “*wished* they might be happy.” Thursday was to be the wedding day, and on Wednesday Miss Lucas paid her farewell visit; and when she rose to take leave, Elizabeth, ashamed of her mother’s ungracious and reluctant good wishes, and sincerely affected herself, accompanied her out of the room. As they went downstairs together, Charlotte said:

“I shall depend on hearing from you very often, Eliza.”

“*That* you certainly shall.”

“And I have another favour to ask you. Will you come and see me?”

“We shall often meet, I hope, in Hertfordshire.”

“I am not likely to leave Kent for some time. Promise me, therefore, to come to Hunsford.”

Elizabeth could not refuse, though she foresaw little pleasure in the visit.

“My father and Maria are coming to me in March,” added Charlotte, “and I hope you will consent to be of the party. Indeed, Eliza, you will be as welcome as either of them.”

The wedding took place; the bride and bridegroom set off for Kent from the church door, and everybody had as much to say, or to hear, on the subject as usual. Elizabeth soon heard from her friend; and their correspondence was as regular and frequent as it had ever been; that it should be equally unreserved was