Precaution, Volume 2

James Fenimore Cooper

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CHAPTER I.

Although the affections of Jane had sustained a heavy blow, her pride had received a greater, and no persuasions of her mother or sister, could induce her to leave her room; she talked but little, but once or twice she yielded to the affectionate attentions of Emily, and poured out her sorrows into the bosom of her sister; at such moments, she would declare her intention of never appearing in the world again. One of these paroxysms of sorrow was witnessed by her mother, and, for the first time, self−reproach mingled in the grief of the matron; had she trusted less to appearances, and the opinions of indifferent and ill−judging acquaintances, her daughter might have been apprised in season, of the character of the man who had stolen her affections. To the direct exhibition of misery, Lady Moseley was always sympathetic, and for the moment, alive to its causes and consequences; but a timely and judicious safeguard against future moral evils, was a forecast neither her inactivity of mind or abilities were equal to.

We shall leave Jane to brood over her lover's misconduct, while we regret she is without the consolation, alone able to bear her up against the misfortunes of life, and return to the other personages of our history.

The visit to Mrs. Fitzgerald had been postponed in consequence of Jane's indisposition; but a week after the Colonel's departure, Mrs. Wilson thought, as Jane had consented to leave her room, and Emily really began to look pale from her confinement by the side of a sick bed, she would redeem the pledge she had given the recluse, on the following morning. They found the ladies at the cottage happy to see them, and anxious to hear of the health of Jane, of whose illness they had been informed by note. After offering her guests some refreshments, Mrs. Fitzgerald, who appeared labouring under a greater melancholy than usual, proceeded to make them acquainted with the incidents of her life.

The daughter of an English merchant at Lisbon, had fled from the house of her father to the protection of an Irish officer in the service of his Catholic Majesty; they were united, and the colonel immediately took his bride to Madrid. The offspring of this union were a son and daughter. The former, at an early age, had entered into the service of his king, and had, as usual, been bred in the faith of his ancestors; but the Signora M'Carthy had been educated, and yet remained, a protestant, and, contrary to her faith to her husband, secretly instructed her daughter in the same belief. At the age of seventeen, a principal grandee of the court of Charles, sought the hand of the general's child. The Conde D'Alzada was a match not to be refused, and they were united in that heartless and formal manner, marriages are too often entered into, in countries where the customs of society prevent an intercourse between the sexes. The Conde never possessed the affections of his wife; of a stern and unyielding disposition his harshness repelled her love; and as she naturally turned her eyes to the home of her childhood, she cherished all those peculiar sentiments she had imbibed from her mother. Thus, although she appeared to the world a catholic, she lived in secret a protestant. Her parents had always used the English language in their family, and she spoke it as fluently as the Spanish. To encourage her recollections of this strongest feature, which distinguished the house of her father from the others she entered, she perused closely and constantly those books which the death of her mother placed at her disposal; these were principally protestant works on religious subjects, and the countess became a strong sectarian, without becoming a christian. As she was compelled to use the same books in teaching her only child, the Donna Julia, English, the consequences of the originalfalse step of her grandmother, were perpetuated in the person of this young lady. In learning English, she also learnt to secede from the faith of her father, and entailed upon herself a life, of either persecution or hypocrisy. The countess was guilty of the unpardonable error of complaining to their child, of the treatment she received from her husband; and as these conversations were held in English, and were consecrated by the tears of the mother, they made an indelible impression on the youthful mind of Julia; who grew up with the conviction, that next to being a catholic herself, the greatest evil of life, was to be the wife of one.

On her attaining her fifteenth year, she had the misfortune (if it could be termed one) to lose her mother, and within the year, her father presented to her a nobleman of the vicinity as her future husband; how long the religious faith of Julia would have endured, unsupported by example in others, and assailed by the passions, soliciting in behalf of a young and handsome cavalier, it might be difficult to pronounce; but as her suitor was neither very young, and the reverse of very handsome, it is certain, the more he woo'd, the more confirmed she

became in her heresy, until, in a moment of desperation, and as an only refuge against his solicitations, she candidly avowed her creed. The anger of her father was violent and lasting; she was doomed to a convent, as both a penance for her sins, and a mean of reformation. Physical resistance was not in her power, but mentally, she determined never to yield. Her body was immured, but her mind continued unshaken, and rather more settled in her belief, by the aid of those passions which had been excited by injudicious harshness. For two years she continued in her noviciate, obstinately refusing to take the vows of the order, and at the end of that period, the situation of her country had called her father and uncle to the field, as defenders of the rights of their lawful prince; perhaps to this, it was owing that harsher measures were not adopted in her case.

The war now raged around them in its greatest horrors, until, at length, a general battle was fought in the neighbourhood, and the dormitories of the peaceful nuns were crowded with wounded British officers. Amongst others of his nation, was a Major Fitzgerald, a young man of strikingly handsome countenance, and pleasant manners; chance threw him under the more immediate charge of Julia; his recovery was slow, and for a time doubtful, and as much owing to good nursing, as science. The Major was grateful, and Julia, unhappy as she was beautiful. That love should be the offspring of this association, will excite no surprise. A brigade of British encamping in the vicinity of the convent, the young couple sought its protection from Spanish vengeance, and Romish cruelty. They were married by thechaplain of the brigade, and for a month they were happy.

As Napoleon was daily expected in person at the seat of war, his generals were alive to their own interests, if not to that of their master. The body of troops in which Fitzgerald had sought a refuge, being an advanced party of the main army, were surprised and defeated with loss. After doing his duty as a soldier at his post, the major in endeavouring to secure the retreat of Julia, was intercepted, and they both fell into the hands of the enemy. They were kindly treated, and allowed every indulgence their situation admitted of, until a small escort of prisoners were sent to the frontiers; in this they were included, and had proceeded to the neighbourhood of the Pyrenees, where, in their turn, the French were assailed suddenly, and entirely routed; and the captive Spaniards, of which the party, with the exception of our young couple, consisted, released. As the French guard made a resistance until overpowered by numbers, an unfortunate ball struck Major Fitzgerald to the earth——he survived but an hour, and died where he fell, on the open field. An English officer, the last of his retiring countrymen, was attracted by the sight of a woman weeping over the body of a fallen man, and approached them. In a few words Fitzgerald explained his situation to this gentleman, and exacted apledge from him to guard his Julia, in safety, to his mother in England.

The stranger promised every thing the dying husband required of him, and by the time death had closed the eyes of Fitzgerald, had procured from some peasants a rude conveyance, into which the body, with its almost equally lifeless widow, were placed. The party which intercepted the convoy of prisoners, had been out from the British camp on other duty, but its commander hearing of the escort, had pushed rapidly into a country covered by the enemy to effect their rescue; and his service done, was compelled to a hasty retreat to insure his own security; to this was owing the indifference, which left the major to the care of the Spanish peasantry who had gathered to the spot, and the retreating troops had got several miles on their return, before the widow and her protector commenced their journey; it was impossible to overtake them, and the inhabitants acquainting the gentleman that a body of French dragoons were already harassing their rear, he was compelled to seek another route to the camp; this, with some trouble, and no little danger, he at last effected, and the day following the skirmish, Julia found herself lodged in a retired Spanish dwelling, several miles within the advanced posts of the British army. The body of her husband was respectfully interred, and Julia left to mourn her irretrievable loss, uninterrupted by anybut hasty visits of the officer in whose care she had been left, which he stole from his more important duties as a soldier.

A month glided by in this melancholy manner, leaving to Mrs. Fitzgerald the only consolation she would receive——her incessant visits to the grave of her husband. The cells of her protector, however, became more frequent; and at length he announced to her his intended departure for Lisbon, on his way to England. A small covered vehicle, drawn by one horse, was to convey them to the city, at which place he promised to procure her a female attendant, and necessaries for the voyage home. It was no time or place for delicate punctilio; and Julia quietly, but with a heart nearly broken, prepared to submit to the wishes of her late husband. After leaving the dwelling, the manners of her guide sensibly altered: he became complimentary and assiduous to please, but in a way rather to offend than conciliate; until his attentions became so irksome, that Julia actually meditated stopping

at some of the villages through which they passed, and abandoning the attempt of visiting England entirely. But the desire to comply with Fitzgerald's wish, she would console his mother for the loss of an only child, and the dread of the anger of her relatives, determined her to persevere until they reached Lisbon, where she was resolved to separate forever from this disagreeable and unknown guardian, chance had thrown her into the keeping of.

The last day of their weary ride, in passing a wood, the officer so far forgot his own character and Julia's misfortunes, as to offer personal indignities. Grown desperate from her situation, Mrs. Fitzgerald had sprung from the vehicle, and by her cries, had attracted the notice of an officer, who was riding express on the same road with themselves. He advanced to her assistance at speed, but as he arrived near them, a pistol fired from the carriage brought his horse down, and the treacherous friend was enabled to escape undetected. Julia endeavoured to explain her situation to her rescuer; and by her distress and appearance, satisfied him at once of its truth. Within a short time, a strong escort of light dragoons came up, and the officer despatched some for a conveyance, and others in pursuit of that disgrace to the army, the villanous guide; the former was soon obtained, but no tidings could be had of the latter. The carriage was found at a short distance, without the horse and with the baggage of Julia, but no vestige of its owner. She never knew his name, and either accident or art had so completely enveloped him in mystery, that all efforts to unfold it then, were fruitless, and had continued so ever since.

On their arrival in Lisbon, every attention was shown to the disconsolate widow the most refined delicacy could dictate, and every comfort and respect procuredfor her, which the princely fortune, high rank, and higher character, of the Earl of Pendennyss, could command. It was this nobleman, who, on his way from head quarters with despatches for England, had been the means of preserving Julia from a fate worse than death. A packet was in waiting for the earl, and they proceeded in her for home. The Donna Lorenza was the widow of a subaltern Spanish officer, who had fallen under the orders and near Pendennyss, and the interest he took in her brave husband, had induced him to offer her, in the destruction of her little fortune by the enemy, his protection: for near two years he had maintained her at Lisbon, and now judging her a proper person, had persuaded her to accompany Mrs. Fitzgerald to England for a time.

On the passage, which was very tedious, the earl became more intimately acquainted with the history and character of his young friend, and by a course of gentle, yet powerful expedients, had drawn her mind gradually from its gloomy contemplation of futurity, to a just sense of good and evil. The peculiarity of her religious persuasion, being a Spaniard, afforded an introduction to frequent discussions of the real opinions of that church, to which Julia had hitherto belonged, although ignorant of all its essential and vital truths. These conversations, which were renewed repeatedly in their intercourse while under the protection of his sister in London, laidthe foundations of a faith, which left her nothing to hope for, but the happy termination of her earthly probation.

The mother of Fitzgerald was dead, and as he had no near relative left, Julia found herself alone in the world; her husband had taken the precaution to make a will in season; it was properly authenticated, and his widow, by the powerful assistance og Pendennyss, was put in quiet possession of a little independency. It was while waiting the decision of this affair, that Mrs. Fitzgerald resided for a short time near Bath; as soon as it was terminated, the earl and his sister had seen her settled in her present abode, and once since had they visited her; but delicacy had kept him away from the cottage, although his attempts to serve her had been constant, but not always successful. He had, on his return to Spain, seen her father, and interceded with him on her behalf, but in vain; his anger remained unappeased, and for a season she did not renew her efforts; but having heard that her father was indisposed, she had employed the earl once more to make her peace with him, without prevailing. The letter the ladies had found her weeping over, was from Pendennyss, informing her of his want of success on that occasion.

The substance of the foregoing narrative was related by Mrs. Fitzgerald to Mrs. Wilson, who repeated it to Emily in their ridehome. The compassion of both ladies was strongly moved in behalf of the young widow, yet Mrs. Wilson did not fail to point out to her niece the consequences of deception, and chiefly the misery which had followed from an abandonment of one of the primary duties of life——disobedience and disrespect to her parent. Emily, though keenly alive to all the principles inculcated by her aunt, found so much to be pitied in the fate of her friend, that her failings lost their proper appearance in her eyes; and for a while, she could think of nothing but Julia and her misfortunes. Previously to their leaving the cottage, Mrs. Fitzgerald, with glowing cheeks, and some hesitation, informed Mrs. Wilson she had yet another important communication to make, but would postpone it until her next visit, which Mrs. Wilson promised should be on the succeeding day.

CHAPTER II.

Emily threw a look of pleasure on Denbigh, as he handed her from the carriage, which would have said, if looks could talk, "in the principles you have displayed on more than one occasion, I have a pledge of your worth." As he led her into the house, he laughingly informed her, he had that morning received a letter which would make his absence from L——necessary for a short time, and that he must remonstrate against these long and repeated visits to a cottage, where all attendants of the male sex were excluded, as they encroached greatly on his pleasures——and improvements, bowing, as he spoke, to Mrs. Wilson. To this Emily replied, gayly, that possibly, if he conducted himself to their satisfaction, they would intercede for his admission. Expressing his pleasure for the promise, as Mrs. Wilson thought rather awkwardly, Denbigh changed the conversation. At dinner, he repeated to the family what he had mentioned to Emily of his departure, and also his expectation of meeting with Lord Chatterton during his journey.

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

"Yes sir, to−day; he had left DenbighCastle a fortnight since, and writes, he is to meet his friend, the duke, at Bath."

"Are you connected with his grace, Mr. Denbigh?" asked Lady Moseley.

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

"On the side of my father, madam."

"He has a sister," continued Lady Moseley, willing to know more of Chatterton's friends and Denbigh's relatives.

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

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

"Lady Harriet Denbigh?"

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

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

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

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

"Who will, my son?"

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

"Not particularly, I believe," said the baronet dryly. Denbigh again smiled; it was a smile different from any Mrs. Wilson had ever seen on his countenance, and gave an entirely novel expression to his face; it was full of meaning——it was knowing——spoke more of the man of the world than any thing she had before noticed in him, and left on her mind, one of those vague impressions she was often troubled with, that there was something about Denbigh in character, or condition, or both, that was mysterious.

The spirit of Jane was too great to leave her a pining or a pensive maiden; yet her feelings had sustained a shock that time alone could cure. She appeared again amongst her friends, but the consciousness of her expectations, with respect to the colonel, being known to them, threw around her a hauteur and distance, very foreign to her natural manner. Emily alone, whose every movement sprung from the spontaneous feelings of her heart, and whose words and actions were influenced by the finest and most affectionate delicacy, such as she was not conscious of possessing herself, won upon the better feelings of her sister so far, as to restore between them the usual exchange of kindness and sympathy. But Jane admitted no confidence; she found nothing consoling——nothing solid, to justify her attachment to Egerton; nothing, indeed, excepting such external advantages as she was now ashamed to admit, had ever the power over her, they in reality had possessed. The marriage of the fugitives, in Scotland, had been announced; and as the impression that Egerton was to be

connected with the Moseleys, was destroyed of course, their every day acquaintances, feeling the restraints removed such an opinion had once imposed, were free in their comments on his character. Sir Edward and Lady Moseley were astonished to find how many things to his disadvantage were generally known; that he gambled——intrigued—— and was in debt——were no secrets, apparently, to any body, but those who were most interested in knowing the truth; while Mrs. Wilson saw in these facts, additional reasons for examining and judging for ourselves; the world uniformly concealing from the party and his friends, their honest opinions of his character. Some of these insinuations had reached the ears of Jane: her aunt had rightly judged, that the surest way to destroy Egerton's power over the imagination of her niece, was to strip him of his fictitious qualities, and had suggested the expedient to Lady Moseley; and some of their visiters had thought, as the colonel had certainly been attentive to Miss Moseley, it would give her pleasure to know that her rival had not made the most eligible match in the kingdom. The project of Mrs. Wilson succeeded in a great measure; but although Egerton fell, Jane did not find she rose in her own estimation; and her friends wisely concluded, that time only would be the remedy that could restore her to her former serenity.

In the morning Mrs. Wilson, unwilling to have Emily present at a conversation she intended to hold with Denbigh, with a view to satisfy her annoying doubts as to some minor points in his character, after excusing herself to her niece, invited the gentleman to a morning ride; he accepted her invitation cheerfully; and Mrs. Wilson saw, it was only as they drove from the door without Emily, that he betrayed the faintest reluctance to the jaunt. When they had got a short distance from the lodge, she acquainted him with her intention of presenting him to Mrs. Fitzgerald, whither she had ordered the coachman to drive. Denbigh started as she mentioned the name, and after a few moments of silence, desired Mrs. Wilson to allow him to stop the carriage; he was not very well——was sorry to be so rude——but with her permission, he would alight and return to the house. As he requested in an earnest manner, that she would proceed without him, and by no means disappoint her friend, Mrs. Wilson complied; yet somewhat at a loss to account for his sudden illness, she turned her head to see how the sick man fared, a short time after he left her,and was not a little surprised to see him talking very composedly with John, who had met him on his way to the fields with his gun. Love−sick——thought Mrs. Wilson, with a smile; and as she rode on, she came to the conclusion, that, as Denbigh was to leave them soon, Emily would have an important communication to make on her return. "Well," thought Mrs. Wilson with a sigh, "if it is to happen, it may as well be done at once."

Mrs. Fitzgerald was expecting her, and appeared rather pleased than otherwise, that she had come alone. After some introductory conversation, the ladies withdrew by themselves, and Julia acquainted Mrs. Wilson with a new source of uneasiness. The day the ladies had promised to visit her, but had been prevented by the arrangements for the ball, the Donna Lorenza had driven to the village to make some purchases, attended, as usual, by their only man servant, and Mrs. Fitzgerald was sitting in the little parlour in momentary expectation of her friends by herself. The sound of footsteps drew her to the door, which she opened for the admission of——the wretch, whose treachery to her dying husband's requests, had given her so much uneasiness.
Horror——fear——surprise——altogether, prevented her from making any alarm at the moment, and she sunk into a chair. He stood between her and the door, as he endeavoured to draw her into a conversation; he assured her she had nothing to fear, that he lovedher, and her alone; that he was about to be married to a daughter of Sir Edward Moseley, but would give her up, fortune, every thing, if she would consent to become his wife ——That the views of her protector, he doubted not, were dishonourable——that he, himself, was willing to atone for his former excess of passion, by a life devoted to her.

How much longer he would have gone on, and what further he would have offered, is unknown; for Mrs. Fitzgerald having recovered herself a little, darted to the bell on the other side of the room; he tried to prevent he ringing it, but was too late; a short struggle followed, when the sound of the footsteps of the maid compelled him to retreat precipitately. Mrs. Fitzgerald added, that his assertion concerning Miss Moseley, had given her incredible uneasiness, and prevented her making the communication yesterday; but she understood this morning through her maid, that a Colonel Egerton, who had been supposed to be engaged to one of Sir Edward's daughters, had eloped with another lady; that Egerton was her persecutor, she did not now entertain a doubt, but that it was in the power of Mrs. Wilson probably to make the discovery, as in the struggle between them for the bell, a pocket book had fallen from the breast pocket of his coat, and his retreat was too sudden to recover it.

As she put the book into the hands of Mrs. Wilson, she desired she would takemeans to return it to its owner;

its contents might be of value, but she had not thought it correct to examine into it. Mrs. Wilson took the book, and as she dropped it into her work−bag, smiled at the Spanish punctilio of her friend, in not looking into her prize, under the peculiar circumstances.

A few questions as to the place and year of his first attempts, soon convinced her it was Egerton, whose unlicensed passion had given so much trouble to Mrs. Fitzgerald. He had served but one campaign in Spain, and in that year, and that division of the army; and surely his principles were no restraint upon his conduct. Mrs. Fitzgerald begged the advice of her more experienced friend as to the steps she ought to take; to which the former inquired, if she had made Lord Pendennyss acquainted with the occurrence: the young widow's cheek glowed as she answered, that at the same time she felt assured the base insinuation of Egerton was unfounded, it had created a repugnance in her, to troubling the early any more than was necessary in her affairs; and as she kissed the hand of Mrs. Wilson, she added——"besides, your goodness, my dear madam, renders any other adviser unnecessary to me now." Mrs. Wilson pressed her hand affectionately, as she assured her of her good wishes and unaltered esteem. She commended her delicacy, and plainly told the young widow, that however unexceptionable the character of Pendennyss might be, a female friend was the only one awoman in her situation could repose her confidence in, without justly incurring the sarcasms of the world.

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

The ladies parted, with a request and promise of meeting soon again, and an additional interest in each other by the communication of that and the preceding day.

Mrs. Wilson had ridden half the distance between the cottage and the lodge, before it occurred to her, they had not absolutely ascertained by the best means in their possession, the identity of Colonel Egerton with Julia's persecutor. She accordingly took the pocket book from her bag, and opened it for examination; a couple of letters fell from it into her lap, and conceiving their direction would establish all she wished to know, as they had been read, she turned to the superscription of one of them, and saw——−"George Denbigh, Esq." in the well known hand−writing of Dr. Ives.——−Mrs. Wilson felt herself overcome to a degree that compelled her to lower a glassof the carriage for air. She sat gazing on the letters until the characters swam before her eyes in undistinguished confusion; and with difficulty she rallied her thoughts to the necessary point of investigation. As soon as she found herself equal to the task, she examined the letters with the closest scrutiny, and opened them both to be sure there was no mistake. She saw the dates, the "dear George" at the commencements, and the doctor's name subscribed, before she would believe they were real: it was then the truth appeared to break upon her in a flood of light. The aversion of Denbigh to speak of Spain, or his services in that country——−his avoiding Sir Herbert Nicholson, and that gentleman's observations respecting him——−Colonel Egerton's and his own manners——−his absence from the ball, and startling looks on the following morning, and at different times before and since——−his displeasure at the name of Pendennyss on various occasions——−and his cheerful acceptance of her invitation to ride until he knew her destination, and singular manner of leaving her——−were all accounted for by this dreadful discovery, and Mrs. Wilson found the solution of her doubts rushing on her mind with a force and rapidity that sickened her.

The misfortunes of Mrs. Fitzgerald——− the unfortunate issue to the passion of Jane ——−were trifles in the estimation of Mrs. Wilson, compared to the discovery of Denbigh's unworthiness. She revolved in hermind his conduct on various occasions, and wondered how one who could behave so well in common, could thus yield to temptation on a particular occasion. His recent attempts——− his hypocrisy——−however, proved his villany was systematic, and she was not weak enough to hide from herself the evidence of his guilt, or its enormity. His interposition between Emily and death, she attributed now to natural courage, and perhaps in some measure, chance; but his profound and unvarying reverence for holy things——−his consistent charity——−his refusing to fight——−to what were they owing? And Mrs. Wilson mourned the weakness of human nature, while she acknowledged to herself, there might be men, qualified by nature, and even disposed by reason and grace, to prove ornaments to religion and the world, who fell beneath the maddening influence of their besetting sins. The superficial and interested vices of Egerton, vanished before these awful and deeply seated offences of Denbigh;

and the correct widow saw at a glance, that he was the last man to be entrusted with the happiness of her niece; but how to break this heart−rending discovery to Emily, was a new source of uneasiness to her, and the carriage stopt at the door of the lodge, ere she had determined on the first step her duty required of her.

Her brother handed her from it; and, filled with the dread that Denbigh had availed himself of the opportunity of her absence, topress his suit with Emily, she inquired after him: she was rejoiced to hear he had returned with John for a fowling piece, and together they had gone in pursuit of game, although she saw in it a convincing proof, that a desire to avoid Mrs. Fitzgerald, and not indisposition, had induced him to leave her. As a last alternative, she resolved to have the pocket book returned to him in her presence, to see if he acknowledged it to be his property; and accordingly she instructed her own man to hand it to him while at dinner, simply saying he had lost it.

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

While sitting at the dessert, her servant handed the pocket book, as directed by his mistress to its owner, saying, "your pocket book, I believe, Mr. Denbigh." Denbigh took the book, and held it in his hand for a moment in surprise, and then fixed his eye keenly on the man, as he inquired where he found it, and how he knew it was his: these were interrogatories Francis was not prepared to answer, and in his confusion he naturally turned his eyes on his mistress. Denbigh followed their direction with his own, and in encountering the looks of the lady, he asked in a stammering manner, and with a face of scarlet,

"Am I indebted to you, madam, for my property?"

"No, sir; it was given me by some one who found it, to restore to you," said Mrs. Wilson gravely in reply, and the subject was dropt, both appearing willing to say no more. Yet Denbigh was abstracted and absent during the remainder of the repast, and Emily spoke to him once or twice without obtaining an answer. Mrs. Wilson caught his eye several times fixed on her with an inquiring and doubtful expression, that convinced her, he was alarmed. If any confirmation of his guilt had been wanting, the consciousness he betrayed during this scene afforded it; and she sat seriously about considering the shortest and best method of interrupting his intercourse with Emily, before he had drawn from her an acknowledgment of her love.

CHAPTER III.

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

"Possibly, aunt," she said, with an involuntary shudder, "some of the many gentlemen we have lately seen, and one who has had art enough to conceal his real character from the world."

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

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

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

"Oh! no, dear aunt," exclaimed Emily, with glowing cheeks, and eyes dancing with pleasure, "he would hardly dare to be so very base——it would be profanity." Mrs. Wilson sighed heavily as she witnessed the confiding esteem of Emily, which would not permit her even to suspect, that an act, which in Denbigh had been so warmly applauded, could, even in another, proceed from unworthy motives; and found it would be necessary to speak in the plainest terms, to rouse her suspicion of his demerits;——willing, however, to come gradually to the distressing truth, she replied——

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

"Hypocrisy is so mean a vice, I should not think a brave man would stoop to it,"said Emily, "and Julia admits he was brave."

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

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

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

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

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

While speaking, Mrs. Wilson had taken the hand of Emily, and by her looks and solemn manner, had succeeded in creating an alarm in her niece, of some apprehended evil, although Denbigh was yet farthest from her thoughts as connected with danger to herself; the aunt reached her a glass of water, and willing to get rid of the hateful subject, she continued, "did you not notice the pocket−book Francis gave Mr. Denbigh?" Emily fixed her inquiring eyes on her aunt, wildly, as she added, "it was the one Mrs. Fitzgerald gave me to−day." Something

like an indefinite glimpse of the facts crossed the mind of Emily——and as it most obviously involved a separation from Denbigh, she sunk lifeless into the extended arms of her aunt. This had been anticipated by Mrs. Wilson, and a timely application of restoratives soon brought her back to a consciousness of her misery. Mrs. Wilson, unwilling any one but herself should witness the first burst of the grief of her charge, succeeded in getting her to her own room and in bed. Emily made no lamentations——shed no tears——asked no questions——her eye was fixed, and her every faculty appeared oppressed with the load on her heart. Mrs. Wilson knew her situation too well, to intrude with unseasonableconsolation or useless reflections, but sat patiently by her side, waiting anxiously for the moment she could be of service; at length the uplifted eyes and clasped hands of Emilly, assured her she had not forgotten herself or her duty, and she was rewarded for her labour and forbearance by a flood of tears; greatly relieved, Emily was now able to listen to a more full statement, of the reasons her aunt had for believing in the guilt of Denbigh; and she felt as if her heart was frozen up forever, as the proofs followed each other until they amounted to demonstration; as there was some indications of fever from her agitated state of mind, her aunt required she should remain in her room until morning, and Emily feeling every way unequal to a meeting with Denbigh, gladly assented; after ringing for her maid to sit in the adjoining room, Mrs. Wilson went below, and announced to the family the indisposition of her charge, and her desire to obtain a little sleep. Denbigh looked anxious to inquire after the health of Emily, but there was a visible restraint on all his actions, since the return of his book, that persuaded Mrs. Wilson, he apprehended a detection of his conduct had taken place. He did venture to ask, when they were to have the pleasure of seeing Miss Moseley again——hoping it would be that evening, as he had fixed the morning for his departure; and when he learnt that Emily had retired for the night, his anxietywas sensibly increased, and he instantly withdrew. Mrs. Wilson was alone in the drawing−room, and about to join her niece, as Denbigh entered it with a letter in his hand; he approached her with a diffident and constrained manner, as he commenced with saying——

"My anxiety and situation will plead my apology for troubling Miss Moseley at this time——may I ask you, madam, to deliver this letter——I dare not ask you for your good offices in my favour."

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

"I perceive, madam," said Denbigh, hesitatingly, "I have forfeited your good opinion ——that pocket−book——"

"Has made a dreadful discovery," echoed Mrs. Wilson, shuddering.

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

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

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

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

On opening the door of Emily's room, she found her in tears, and her anxiety for her health was alleviated; she knew or hoped, that if she could once call in the assistance of her judgment and piety to lessen her sorrows, Emily, however she might mourn, would become resigned to her situation; and the first step to attain this was the exercise of those faculties, which had at first been, as it were, annihilated. Mrs. Wilson kissed her with tenderness, as she placed in her hand the letter, and told her within an hour she would call for her answer. Employment, and the necessity of acting, would be, she thought, the surest means of reviving her energies; nor was she disappointed. When the aunt returned for the expected answer, she was informed by the maid in the antichamber, Miss Moseley was up, and had been writing she believed. On entering, Mrs. Wilson stood a moment in admiration of the picture before her. Emily was on her knees, and by her side, on the carpet, lay the letter and its answer; her face was hid by her hair, and her hands were closed in the fervent grasp of petition; in a minute sherose, and approaching her aunt, with an air of profound resignation, but great steadiness, handed her the letters, her own unsealed: "read them, madam, and if you approve of mine, I will thank you to deliver it." Her aunt folded her in her arms, until Emily finding herself yielding under the effects of sympathy, begged her to leave her alone.

On withdrawing to her own room, Mrs. Wilson read the contents of the two letters.

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

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

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

Perfectly satisfied with this answer of her niece, Mrs. Wilson went below in order to deliver it at once; she thought it probable, as Denbigh had already sent his baggage to a tavern, preparatory to his intended journey, they would not meet again; and as she felt a strong wish, both on account of Doctor Ives, and out of respect to his services, to conceal his conduct from the world entirely, she was in hopes his absence would make any disclosure unnecessary. He took the letter from her with a trembling hand, and casting one of his very expressive looks at her, as if to read her thoughts, he withdrew.

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

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

As all but Mrs. Wilson were anxiously waiting to know the meaning of this message, and Peter had many preparations to go through before his youthful eyes could make out its contents; John hastily caught it out of his hand, saying he would save him the trouble, and in obedience to his uncle's wishes, read aloud:

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

"Farewell," cried Mr. Benfield, "farewell——does he say farewell, John? here, Peter, run——no, you are too old——John, run——bring my hat, I'll go myself to the village——some love quarrel——Emmy sick——and Denbigh going away——yes——−yes, I did so myself——−LadyJuliana, poor dear soul, she was a long time before she could forget it——−but Peter"——−Peter Peter had disappeared the instant the letter was finished, and was quickly followed by John. Sir Edward and Lady Moseley were both lost in amazement at this sudden and unexpected movement of Denbigh, and the breast of each of the affectionate parents was filled with a vague apprehension, that the peace of mind of another child was at stake. Jane felt a renewal of her woes, in the anticipation of something similar for her sister—— for the fancy of Jane was yet alive, and she did not cease to consider the defection of Egerton, a kind of unmerited misfortune and fatality, instead of a probable consequence of want of principles; like Mr. Benfield, she was in danger of making an ideal idol to worship, and to spend the remainder of her days in devotion to qualities, rarely, if ever found, and identified with a person that never had an existence. The old gentleman was now entirely engrossed by a different object; and having in his own opinion decided there must have been one of those misunderstandings which sometimes had occurred to himself and Lady Juliana, he quietly composed himself to eat his sallad at the supper table; on turning his head, however, in quest of his first glass of wine, he observed Peter standing quietly by the sideboard with the favourite goggles over his eyes. Now Peter was troubled with two kinds of weakness about his organs of vision; one was age and weakness, and the other, was also a weakness——−of the heart however; this his master knew, and he took the

alarm——−again the wine glass dropt from his nerveless hand, as he said in a trembling tone——−"Peter, I thought you went"——

"Yes, master," said Peter laconically in reply.

"You saw him, Peter——he will return?" Peter was busily occupied at his glasses, although no one was dry.

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

Peter, thus assailed, was obliged to reply, and deliberately uncasing his eyes, and blowing his nose, he was on the point of opening his mouth, as John came into the room, and threw himself into a chair, with an air of great vexation; Peter pointed to him in silence, and retired.

"John," cried Sir Edward, "where is Denbigh?"

"Gone, Sir,"

"Gone!"

"Yes, my dear father," said John, "gone without saying good−by to one of us——without telling us whither, or when to return——it was cruel in him——unkind——I'll never forgive him"——and John, whose feelings were strong, and unusually excited, hid his face between his hands on the table.——As he raisedhis head to reply to a question of Mr. Benfield——"of how he knew he had gone, for the coach did not go until daylight?" Mrs. Wilson saw evident marks of the tears; such emotion excited in John Moseley by the loss of his friend, gave her the pleasure to know, if she had been deceived, it was by a concurrence of circumstances and depth of hypocrisy, almost exceeding belief; self−reproach added but little to her uneasiness of the moment.

"I saw the inn−keeper, uncle," said John, "who told me Mr. Denbigh left there at eight o'clock, in a post−chaise and four; but I will go to London in the morning myself;" and he immediately commenced his preparations for the journey. The family separated that evening with melancholy hearts; and the host and his privy counsellor were closeted for half an hour ere they retired to their night's repose. John took his leave of them, and left the lodge for the inn, with his man, in order to be ready for the mail. Mrs. Wilson looked in upon Emily before she withdrew herself, and found her awake, but perfectly calm and composed; she said but little——appeared desirous of avoiding all allusions to Denbigh; and after simply acquainting her with his departure, and her resolution to conceal the cause, the subject was dropped. Mrs. Wilson, on entering her own room, thought deeply on the discoveries of the day; it had interfered with her favouritesystem of morals——baffled her ablest calculations upon causes and effects, but in no degree had impaired her faith or reliance on providence——she knew one exception did not destroy a rule; she was certain without principles there was no security for good conduct, and the case of Denbigh proved it; to discover these principles, might be a difficult, but was an imperious task required at her hands, ere she yielded the present and future happiness of her pupil to the power of any man.

CHAPTER IV.

The day had not yet dawned, as John Moseley was summoned to take his seat in the mail for London; three of the places were already occupied, and John was compelled to get a seat for his man on the outside; an intercourse with strangers is particularly irksome to an Englishman, and none appeared disposed to break the silence. The coach had left the little village of L——far behind it, before any of the rational beings it contained, had thought it prudent or becoming, to bend in the least to the charities of our nature, in a communication with a fellow creature, whose name or condition they happened to be ignorant of. This reserve is unquestionably characteristic of our nation; to what is it owing?——modesty? did not our national and deep personal vanity appear at once to refute the assertion, we might enter into an investigation of it. The good opinion of himself in an Englishman is more deeply seated, though less buoyant, than that of his neighbours; in them it is more of manners, in us more of feeling; and the wound inflicted on the self−love of the two, is very different in effect—— The Frenchman wonders at its rudeness, but soon forgets the charge; while an Englishman broods over it in silence and mortification. It is said this distinction in character is owing to the different estimation of principles and morals, of the two nations. The solidity and purity of our ethics and religious creeds, may have given a superior tone to our moral feeling——but has that man a tenable ground to value himself on either, whose respect to sacred things, grows out of a respect to himself; on the other hand, is not humility the very foundation of the real christian. For our part, we would be glad to see this national reserve lessened, if not done away; we believe it is founded in pride and uncharitableness, and would wish to see men thrown accidentally together on the roads of our country, mindful that they are travelling also in company, the highway of life, and that the goal of their destination is alike attainable by all.

John Moseley was occupied with thoughts very different from any of his fellow−travellers, as they proceeded rapidly on their route, and it was only when roused from his meditations by the accidentally coming in contact with the hilt of a sword, he looked up, and in the glimmerings of the morning's light, recognised the person of Lord Henry Stapleton; their eyes met, and——"my lord"——"Mr. Moseley"——−were repeated in mutual surprise. John was eminently a social being, and he was happy to find recourse against his gloomy thoughts in the conversation of the dashing young sailor. Hisfrigate had entered the bay the night before, and he was going to town to the wedding of his sister; the coach of his brother the marquis, was to meet him about twenty miles from town, and the ship was ordered round to Yarmouth, where he was to rejoin her.

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

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

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

"It might be done, my lord," said John, with a smile, and the image of Kate Chatterton crossed his brain, but was soon succeeded by that of her more lovely sister. "But how do you manage on board your ship——hurried there too?"

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

ldquo;How came your lordship acquainted with her?" inquired Moseley, interrupting him in a little surprise.

"Chance, my dear fellow——chance——I was thirsty, and approached for a drink of water; she was sitting in the piazza, and being hurried for time, you know——saved the trouble of introduction——I expect she is troubled with the same complaint, for she managed to get rid of me in no time, and with a great deal of politeness——however, I found out her name at the next house."

During this rattle, John had fixed his eyes on the face of one of the passengers who sat opposite to him——he

appeared to be about fifty years of age, strongly pock−marked, with a stiff military air, and the dress and exterior of a gentleman——his face was much sun−burnt, though naturally very fair, and his dark, keen eye, was intently fixed on the sailor, as he continued his remarks——"Do you know such a lady, Moseley?

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

"Yourself," cried Lord Henry, with a laugh.

"Myself, once or twice, my lord, certainly,answered John, gravely, "but a lady visitedby Emily Moseley and Mrs. Wilson, is a proper companion for any one——Mrs Fitzgerald is very retired in her manner of living, and chance made us acquainted with her; but not being like your lordship, in want of time, we have endeavoured to cultivate her acquaintance, as we have found it agreeable."

The countenance of the stranger underwent several changes during this speech of John's, and at its close rested on him with a softer expression, than generally marked its rigid and compressed muscles.——Willing to change a discourse which was growing too delicate for a mail−coach, John addressed himself to the opposite passengers, while his eye yet dwelt on the face of the military stranger.

"We are likely to have a fine day, gentlemen;" the soldier bowed stiffly, as he smiled his assent, and the other passenger humbly answered, "very, Mr. John," in the well known tones of honest Peter Johnson—— Moseley started, as he turned his face for the first time on the lank figure, which was modestly compressed into the smallest possible compass in a corner of the coach, in such a way as not to come in contact with any of its neighbours.

"Johnson" exclaimed John, in astonishment, "you here——where are you going——to London?"

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

Both Moseley and Lord Henry, examined him closely as he spoke; the former wondering what could take the steward, at the age of seventy, for the first time into the vortex of the capital; and the latter in admiration at the figure and equipments of the old man before him——Peter was in full costume, with the exception of the goggles, and was in reality a subject to be gazed at by most people; but nothing relaxed the muscles, or attracted the particular notice of the soldier, who having regained his set form of countenance, appeared drawn up in himself, waiting patiently for the moment he was expected to act; nor did he utter more than as many words, in the course of the first fifty miles of their journey. His dialect was singular, and such as put his hearers at a loss to determine his country. Lord Henry stared at him every time he spoke, as if to say, what country−man are you? until at length he suggested to John he was some officer, whom the downfall of Bonaparte had driven into retirement; "indeed, Moseley," he added, as they were about to resume their carriage after a change of horses, "we must draw him out, and see what he thinks of his master now——but delicately, you know." The soldier was, however, impervious to his lordship's attacks, until he finally abandoned theproject in despair. Peter was too modest to talk in the presence of Mr. John Moseley, and a lord; so the young men had most of the discourse to themselves. At a village fifteen miles from London, a fashionable carriage and four, with the coronet of a marquis, was in waiting for Lord Henry; John refused his invitation to take a seat with him to town, as he had traced Denbigh from stage to stage, and was fearful of losing sight of him, unless he persevered in the manner he had commenced; they were put down safely at an inn, in the Strand, and Moseley hastened to make his inquiries after the object of his pursuit; such a chaise had arrived an hour before, and the gentleman had ordered his trunk to a neighbouring hotel; after obtaining the address, and ordering a hackney coach, he hastened to the house, and on inquiring for Mr. Denbigh, to his great mortification, was told they knew of no such gentleman; John turned away from the person he was speaking to, in visible disappointment, as a servant in a livery respectfully inquired, if the gentleman had not come from L——, in Norfolk, that day—— "he had," was the reply; "then follow me, sir, if you please"——they knocked at a door of one of the parlours, and the servant entered; he returned, and John was shown into a room, where was sitting Denbigh with his head resting on his hand, and apparently musing; on seeing who it was that requiredadmittance, he sprang from his seat as he exclaimed, "Mr. Moseley! do I see aright?" "Denbigh," cried John, as he stretched out his hand to him, "was this kind——was it like yourself——to leave us so unexpectedly, and for so long a time as your note mentioned;" Denbigh waved his hand to the servant to retire, and handed a chair to his friend; "Mr. Moseley," said he, struggling with his feelings, "you appear ignorant of my proposals to your sister."

"Perfectly," answered John.

"And her rejection of them."

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

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

"Yes, Mr. Moseley," said Denbigh, mournfully, "Your sister is faultless——but I am not worthy of her——−my deception"——−here the door again opened to the admission of Peter Johnson——both the gentlemen rose at the sudden interruption, and the steward advancing to the table, once more produced the formidable pocket−book——the spectacles——and a letter——he ran over its direction——"For George Denbigh, Esquire, London, by thehands of Peter Johnson, with care and speed;" and then delivered it to its lawful owner, who opened it, and rapidly perused its contents; he was much affected with whatever they might be, and kindly took the steward by the hand, as he thanked him for this renewed instance of the interest he took in him; if he would tell him where a letter would find him in the morning, he would send it to him, in reply to the one he had received; Peter gave his address, but appeared unwilling to go, until assured the answer would be as he wished——taking a small account−book out of his pocket, and referring to its contents, he said, "Master has with Coutts Co. £ 7,000; in the bank, £ 5,000; it can be easily done, sir, and never felt by us." Denbigh smiled in reply, as he assured the steward he would take proper notice of his master's offers in his letter. The door again opened, and the military stranger was admitted to their presence——he bowed——−appeared not a little surprised to find two of his mail−coach companions there, and handed Denbigh a letter, in quite as formal, although more silent manner, than the steward. He was invited to be seated, and the letter perused (after apologising to his guests) by their host. As soon as he ended it, he addressed the stranger, in a language, which John rightly judged to be Spanish, and Peter took to be Greek. For a few minutes the conversation was maintained between them with great earnestness; and his fellow−travellers marvelled at the garrulity of the soldier; he soon, however, rose to retire, as the door was thrown open for the fourth time, and a voice cried out,

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

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

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

"Yes," said Denbigh, and he again required of Peter his address, which was given, and the steward departed. The conversation between the two friends did not return to the course it was taking, when they were interrupted, as Moseley felt a delicacy in making any allusion to the probable cause of his sister's refusal. He had, however, began to hope it was not irremoveable, and, with a determination of renewing his visit in the morning, he took his leave, in order Denbighmight attend to his acquaintance, Lord Henry Stapleton.

About twelve on the following morning, John and the steward met at the door of the hotel Denbigh lodged in; both in quest of his person. The latter held in his hand the answer to his master's letter, but wished particularly to see its writer. On inquiring for him, to their mutual surprise they were told, the gentleman had left there early in the morning, having discharged his lodgings, and they were unable to say whither he had gone. To hunt for a man without some clue by which to discover him, in the city of London, is time misspent. Of this Moseley was perfectly sensible, and disregarding a proposition made by Peter, he returned to his own lodgings. The proposal of the steward's, if it did not do much credit to his sagacity, honoured his perseverance and enterprise not a little. It was no other than this; John should take one side of the street, and he the other, and they would thus inquire at every house, until the fugitive was discovered. "Sir," said Peter, with great simplicity, "when our neighbour White lost his little girl, this was the way we found her, although we went nearly through L——before we succeeded, Mr. John." Peter was obliged to abandon this expedient for want of an associate, and as no message was at the lodgings of Moseley, he started with a heavy heart on his return to Benefield Lodge. But Moseley's zealwas too warm in the cause of his friend, notwithstanding his unmerited desertion, not to continue his search for him. He

sought out the town residence of the Marquess of Eltringham, the brother of Lord Henry, and was told, both the Marquess and his brother had left town early that morning for his seat in Devonshire, to attend the wedding of their sister.

"Did they go alone?" asked John, musing.

"There were two chaises, the Marquess' and his Grace's."

"Who was his Grace?" inquired John.

"Why, the Duke of Derwent, to be sure."

"And the Duke? was he alone?"

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

As nothing further could be learnt, John withdrew. There was a good deal of irritation mixed with the vexation of Moseley at his disappointment, for Denbigh, he thought, evidently wished to avoid him. That he was the companion of his kinsman, the Duke of Derwent, he had now no doubt, and entirely relinquished all expectations of finding him in London or its environs. While retracing his steps, in no enviable state of mind, to his lodgings, with a resolution of returning immediately to L——, his arm was suddenly taken by his friend Chatterton. If any man could have consoled John at that moment, it was the Baron. Questions and answers wererapidly exchanged between them, and with increased satisfaction, John learnt that in the next square, he could have the pleasure of paying his respects to his kinswomen, the Dowager Lady Chatterton, and her daughters. Chatterton inquired warmly after Emily, and in a particularly kind manner concerning Mr. Denbigh, but with undisguised astonishment learnt his absence from the Moseley family.

Lady Chatterton had disciplined her feelings upon the subject of Grace and John, into such a state of subordination, that the fastidious jealousy of the young man now found no ground of alarm, in any thing she said or did. It cannot be denied the Dowager was delighted to see him again——and, if it were fair to draw any conclusions from colouring ——palpitations——and other such little accompaniments of female feeling——Grace was not excessively sorry. It is true, it was the best possible opportunity to ascertain all about her friend Emily and the rest of the family; and Grace was extremely happy to have so direct intelligence of their general welfare, as was afforded by this visit of Mr. Moseley. Grace looked all she expressed——and perhaps rather more——and John thought she looked very beautifully.

There was present an elderly gentleman, of apparently indifferent health, although his manners were extremely lively, and his dress particularly studied. A few minutes observation convinced Moseley this gentleman was a candidate for the favour of Kate, and as a game of chess was introduced, he also saw he was one thought worthy of peculiar care and attention. He had been introduced to him as Lord Herriefield, and soon discovered by his conversation, that he was a peer, of but little probability of rendering the house of incurables more convalescent, than it was before his admission. Chatterton mentioned him as a distant connexion of his mother; a gentleman who had lately returned from filling an official situation in the East−Indies, to take his seat among the lords, by the death of his brother. He was a bachelor and reputed rich, much of his wealth being personal property, acquired by himself abroad. The dutiful son might have added, if respect and feeling had not kept him silent——That his offers of settling a large jointure upon his elder sister had been accepted, and that the following week was to make her the bride of the emaciated debauchee, who now sat by her side. He might also have said, that when the proposition was made to himself and Grace, both had shrunk from the alliance with disgust; and that both had united in humble, though vain remonstrances to their mother, against the sacrifice, and in petitions to their sister, that she would not be accessary to her own misery. There was no pecuniary sacrifice they would not make to her, to avert such a connexion; but all was fruitless——Kate was resolved to be a viscountess——and her mother that she should be rich.

CHAPTER V.

A day elapsed between the departure of Denbigh and the appearance of Emily again amongst her friends. An indifferent observer would have thought her much graver and less animated than usual. A loss of the rich colour which ordinarily glowed on her healthful cheek might be noticed; but the same placid sweetness and graceful composure which regulated her former conduct, pervaded all she did or uttered——not so Jane: her pride had suffered more than her feelings—— her imagination had been more deceived than her judgment——and although too well bred and soft by nature, to become rude or captious, she was changed from a communicative——to a reserved; from a confiding——−to a suspicious companion. Her parents noticed this alteration with an uneasiness, that was somewhat imbittered by the consciousness of a neglect of some of those duties that experience now seemed to indicate, could never be forgotten with impunity.

Francis and Clara had arrived from their northern tour, so happy in each other, and contented with their lot, that it required some little exercise of fortitude in both Lady Moseley and her daughters, to expel unpleasant recollections while they contemplated it. Their relation of the little incidents of their tour, had,however, an effect to withdraw the attention of their friends in some degree from late occurrences; and a melancholy and sympathising kind of association, had taken place of the the unbounded confidence and gayety, which had lately prevailed at Benfield Lodge. Mr. Benfield mingled with his solemnity an air of mystery; and was frequently noticed by his relatives looking over old papers, and apparently employed in preparations that indicated movements of more than usual importance.

The family were collected in one of the parlours on an extremely unpleasant day, the fourth of the departure of John, when the thin personage of Johnson stalked in amongst them. All eyes were fixed on him in expectation of what he had to communicate, and all apparently dreading to break the silence, from an apprehension his communication would be an unpleasant one. In the mean time Peter, who had respectfully left his hat at the door, proceeded to uncase his body from the multiplied defences the wary steward had taken against the inclemency of the weather. His master stood erect, with an outstretched hand, ready to receive the reply to his epistle, and Johnson having liberated his body from thraldom, produced the black leather pocket−book, and from its contents a letter, as he read aloud——Roderic Benfield, Esq. Benfield Lodge, Norfolk; favoured by Mr.——here Peter's modesty got the better of his method; he had never been called Mr.Johnson by any body old or young; all knew him in that neighbourhood as Peter Johnson——−and he had very nearly been quilty of the temerity of arrogating to himself another title in the presence of those he most respected. A degree of self−elevation he had escaped from with the loss of a small piece of his tongue. Mr. Benfield took the letter with an eagerness that plainly indicated the deep interest he took in its contents, while Emily, with a tremulous voice and flushed cheek, approached the steward with a glass of wine, as she said,

"Peter, take this, it will do you good."

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

"Johnson, you must change your clothes immediately, or you will take cold; you look now, like old Moses, the Jew beggar." Peter sighed heavily as he listened to this comparison, and saw in it a confirmation of his fears; for he well knew, that to his being the bearer of unpleasant tidings, was he indebted to a resemblance to any thing unpleasant to his master——−and Moses was the old gentleman's aversion.

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

"Peter, you saw Mr. Denbigh; how did he look?"

"As usual, master," said Peter laconically, and a littled piqued at being likened to old Moses.

"And what did he say to the offer? did he not make any comments on it? he was not offended at it, I hope," cried Mr. Benfield.

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

"May I ask what the offer was?" inquired Sir Edward of his uncle, who, regarding him a moment in silence, said, "certainly, you are nearly concerned in his welfare; your daughter"——the old man stopped as he turned to his letter book, and handed the baronet the copy of the epistle he had sent to Denbigh for his perusal; it read as follows:

Dear Friend, Mr. Denbigh,

I have thought a great deal on the reason of your sudden departure from a house I had began to hope, you thought your own; and by calling to mind my own feelings when Lady Juliana became the heiress to her nephew's estate, take it for granted you have been governed by the same sentiments; which I know, both by my own experience and that of the bearer, Peter Johnson, is a never−failing accompanimentof pure affection. Yes, my dear Denbigh, I honour your delicacy in not wishing to become indebted to a stranger, as it were, for the money on which you subsist, and that stranger your wife——−who ought in reason to look up to you, instead of your looking up to her; which was the true cause Lord Gosford would not marry the countess——− on account of her great wealth, as he assured me himself; notwithstanding envious people, said it was because her ladyship loved Mr. Chaworth better: so in order to remove these impediments of your delicacy, I have to make three propositions——−that I bring you into parliament the next election for my borough——−that you take possession of the lodge the same day you marry Emmy, while I will live, for the little time I have to stay here, in the large cottage built by my uncle——− and that I give you your legacy of ten thousand pounds down, to prevent trouble hereafter.

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

"Roderic Benfield."

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

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

"Words are wanting to express the sensations which have been excited by Mr. Benfield's letter; but it would be impossible for any man to be so base as to avail himself of such liberality; the recollection of it, together with his many virtues, will long continue deeply impressed on the heart of him, who Mr. Benfield would, if within the power of man, render the happiest amongst human beings."

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

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

"Greek!" exclaimed Sir Edward in astonishment.

"Greek?" said the uncle, "Lord Gossford read Greek; but I believe never conversed in that language."

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

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

Mr. Benfield and his steward exchanged looks, and a new idea broke upon them at the instant; they had both suffered in that way, and after all, it might prove, Emily was the one, whose taste or feelings had subverted their schemes. The impression once made was indelible——and the party separated——the master thinking alternately on Lady Juliana and his niece, while the man——after heaving one heavy sigh to the memory of Patty Steele, proceeded to the usual occupations of his office.

Mrs. Wilson thinking a ride would be of service to Emily, and having the fullest confidence in her

self−command and resignation, availed herself of a fine day to pay a visit to their friend in the cottage. Mrs. Fitzgerald received them in her usual manner, but a single glance of her eye, sufficed to show the aunt, that she noticed the altered appearance of Emily and her manners, although without knowing its true reason, which she did not deem it prudent to explain——−Julia handed her friend a note she stated to have received the day before, and desired their counsel how to proceed in the present emergency; as Emily was to be made acquainted with its contents, her aunt read aloud as follows:

"My Dear Niece,

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

"Louis M'Carthy y Harrison."

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

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

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

"Oh! doubtless," replied Julia, shuddering, "but I am deservedly punished for my early disobedience, and bow in submission to the will of providence——I feel now all that horror of a change of my religion, I once only affected——I must live and die a protestant, madam."

"Certainly, I hope so, my dear," said Mrs. Wilson, "I am not a bigot, and think it unfortunate you were not, in your circumstances, bred a pious catholic. It would have saved you much misery, and might have renderedthe close of your father's life more happy; but as your present creed, embraces doctrines too much at variance with the Romish church, to renounce the one, or adopt the other, with your views, it will be impossible to change your church, without committing a heavy offence, against the opinions and practice of every denomination of christians; I should hope a proper representation of this to your uncle, would have its weight, or they might be satisfied with your being a christian, without becoming a catholic."

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

"Surely, surely," cried Mrs. Wilson, "parental affection is a stronger feeling than bigotry."

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

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

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

"And are the duties conflicting?" said Emily.

"The Condé makes them so," rejoined Mrs. Wilson; "Julia is, I trust, in sincerity a christian, and with what face can she offer up her daily petitions to her creator, while she wears a mask to her earthly father; orhow can she profess to honour doctrines, that she herself believes to be false, or practice customs she is impressed are improper."

"Never, never," exclaimed Julia, with fervour; "the struggle is dreadful, but I submit to the greater duty."

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

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

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

"It will be a sad blow to my poor uncle, too," said Mrs. Fitzgerald, "he who loved me so much once."

"When do you expect to see him?" inquired Emily——Julia informed them, she expected him hourly, as fearful a written statement of her views, would drive him from the country without paying her a visit before he departed, she had earnestly intreated him to see her without delay.

On taking their leave, the ladies promised to obey her summons whenever called to meet the general, as Mrs. Wilson thought she might be better able to give advice to her friend, in future, by knowing more of the character of her relatives, than she could do with her present information.

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

Our readers have probably anticipated, that the stage companion of John Moseley, was the Spanish general, who had then been making those inquiries into the manner of his niece's living, which terminated in her acquittal in his judgment. With that part of her history which relates to the injurious attempts on her before she arrived at Lisbon, he appears to have been ignorant, or his interview with Denbigh might have terminated very differently from the manner already related.

A description of the appearance of the gentleman presented to Mrs. Wilson is unnecessary, as it has been given already, and the discerning matron thought she read throughthe rigid and set features of the soldier, a shade of kinder feelings, which might be wrought into an advantageous intercession on behalf of Julia. The General was evidently endeavouring to keep his feelings within due bounds, before the decision of his niece might render it proper for him to indulge in that affection for her, his eye plainly shewed existed under the cover of his assumed manner.

It was an effort of great fortitude on the part of Julia to acquaint her uncle with her resolution; but as it must be done, she seized a moment after Mrs. Wilson had at some length defended her adhering to her present faith, until religiously impressed with its errors, to inform him such was her unalterable resolution;——he heard her patiently, and without anger, but in visible surprise; he had construed her summons to her house, as a preparatory measure to accepting his conditions; yet he betrayed no emotion, after the first expression of his wonder; he told her distinctly, a renunciation of her heresy was the only condition her father would own her, either as his heiress or his child. Julia deeply regretted the decision, but was firm——−and her friends left her to enjoy uninterruptedly for one day, the society of so near a relative. During this day, every doubt as to the propriety of her conduct, if any yet remained, was removed by a relation of her little story to her uncle, and after it wascompleted, he expressed great uneasiness to get to London again; in order to meet a gentleman he had seen there, under a different impression as to his merits, than what now appeared to be just;——who the gentleman was, or what the impressions were, Julia was left to conjecture——taciturnity being a favourite property in the general.

CHAPTER VI.

The sun had just risen on one of the loveliest vales of Caernarvonshire, as a travelling chaise and six swept proudly up to the door of a princely mansion, which was so situated as to command a prospect of the fertile and extensive domains, whose rental filled the coffers of its owner, with a beautiful view of the Irish channel in the distance.

Every thing around this stately edifice bespoke the magnificence of its ancient possessors and taste of its present master——It was irregular, but built of the best materials, and tastes of the different ages in which its various parts had been erected; and now in the nineteenth century, preserved the baronial grandeur of the thirteenth, mingled with the comforts of this later period.

The lofty turrets of its towers were tipt with the golden light of the sun, and the neighbouring peasantry had commenced their daily labours, as the different attendants of the equipage we have mentioned, collected around it at the great entrance to the building. The beautiful black horses, with coats as shining as the polished leather with which they were caparisoned——the elegant and fashionable finish of the vehicle——with its numerous grooms, postilions, and footmen, all wearing the livery of one master, gave evidence of his wealth and rank.

In attendance there were four outriders, walking leisurely about, awaiting the appearance of those for whose comforts and pleasures they were kept to contribute; while a fifth, who, like the others, was equipped with a horse, appeared to bear a doubtful station——his form was athletic and apparently drilled into a severer submission than could be seen in the movements of the liveried attendants; his dress was peculiar——it was neither menial nor military——− but partook of both; his horse was heavier and better managed than those of the others, and by its side was a charger, that was prepared for the use of no common equestrian. Both were coal black, as were all the others of the cavalcade; but the pistols of the two latter, and housings of their saddles, bore the aspect of use and elegance united.

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

The lady was also young, and resembledhim greatly both in features and expression——both were noble——−both were handsome——−the former was attired for the road——−the latter had thrown a shawl around her elegant form, and by her morning dress, showed a separation of the two was about to happen——−taking the hand of the gentleman with both her own, as the pressed it with fingers interlocked, the lady said, in a voice of music, and with great affection:

"Then, my dear brother, I shall certainly hear from you within the week, and see you next?"

"Certainly," replied the gentleman, as he tenderly paid his adieus, and throwing himself into the chaise, it dashed from the door, like the passage of a meteor——−the horsemen followed, the unridden charger, obedient to the orders of his keeper, wheeled gracefully into his station, and in an instant they were all lost amidst the wood, through which the road to the park gates conducted them.

After lingering without until the last of her brother's followers had receded from her sight, the lady retired through the ranks of liveried footmen and maids, whom curiosity or respect, had collected as spectators to the departure of their master.

It might be relevant to relate the subject of the young man's reflections; who wore a gloom on his expressive features amidst the pageantry that surrounded him, which showed the insufficiency of wealth and honours to fill thesum of human happiness. As his carriage rolled proudly up an eminence ere he had reached the confines of his extensive park, his eye rested for a moment, on a scene, in which meadows− forests——fields, waving with golden corn——comfortable farm houses, surrounded with innumerable cottages, were to be seen, in almost endless variety, and innumerable groups——all these owned him for their lord, and one quiet smile of satisfaction beamed on his face as he gazed on the unlimited view before him——−could the heart of that youth have been

read, it would at that moment have told a story different from the feelings such a scene is apt to excite; it would have spoken the consciousness of well−applied wealth——−the gratification of contemplating its own meritorious deeds, and a heartfelt gratitude to the being, which had enabled him to become the dispenser of happiness to so many of his fellow−creatures.

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

"To Eltringham, Sir Owen, to attend the marriage of my kinsman, Mr. Denbigh, to one of the sisters of the marquess." A few more questions and answers, and the gentlemen exchanging friendly adieus, pursued each his own course——−Sir Owen Ap Rice, for Cheltenham, and the Earl of Pendennyss to act as grooms−man to his cousin.

The gates of Eltringham were open to the admission of many an equipage on the following day, and the heart of the Lady Laura beat quick, as the sound of wheels, at different times, reached her ears; at last an unusual movement in the house drew her to a window of her dressing−room, and the blood rushed to her heart, as she beheld the equipages which were rapidly approaching, and through the mist which stole over her eyes, saw alight from the first, the Duke of Derwent and the bride−groom——−the next contained the Lord Pendennyss——−and the last the bishop of ——; Lady Laura waited to see no more, but with a heart filled with terror——−hope——−joy and uneasiness, threw herself into the arms of one of her sisters.

"Ah!" exclaimed Lord Henry Stapleton, about a week after the wedding of his sister, as he took John by the arm, suddenly, while the latter was taking his morning walk to the residence of the dowager Lady Chatterton, "Moseley, you dissipated youth, in town yet; you told me you should stay but a day, and here I find you at the end of a fortnight." John blushed a little at the consciousness of his reasons for sending a written, instead of carrying a verbal report, of the result of his journey, as he replied,

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

"Thank you——thank you," replied the sailor; "a jolly time we had of it, Moseley ——I wish, with all my heart, you had been there——no bolting or running away, as soon as spliced, but a regularly constructed, old fashioned wedding——all my doings——I wrote Laura that time was scarce, and I had noneto throw away on fooleries; so dear, good soul, she consented to let me have every thing my own way——we had Derwent and Pendennyss, the marquess, Lord William, and myself, for grooms−men, and my three sisters ——ah, that was bad, but there was no helping it——Lady Harriet Denbigh, and an old maid, a cousin of ours, for brides−maids——could not help the old maid either, upon my honour, or I would."

How much of what he said Moseley heard, we cannot say, for had he talked an hour longer he would have been uninterrupted—— Lord Henry was too much engaged with his description to notice his companions taciturnity or surprise, and after walking a square or two together they parted; the sailor being on the wing for his frigate at Yarmouth.

John continued his course, musing on the intelligence he had just heard——that Denbigh could forget Emily so soon, he would not believe, and he greatly feared he had been driven into a step, from despair, that he might hereafter repent of——his avoiding himself, was now fully explained——but would Lady Laura Stapleton accept a man for a husband at so short a notice? and for the first time a suspicion that something in the character of

Denbigh was wrong, mingled in his reflections on his sister's refusal of his offers.

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

John had been assiduous in his attentions, during the season of forced gayety which followed the nuptials of Kate; and as the dowager's time was monopolised with the ceremonials of that event, Grace had risen greatly in his estimation——if Grace Chatterton was not more unhappy than usual, at what she thought was the destruction of her sister's happiness, it was owing to the presence and evident affections of John Moseley.

The carriage of Lord Herriefield was in waiting as John rang for admittance; on opening the door and entering the drawing−room, he saw the bride and bride−groom, with their mother and sister, accoutred for an excursion amongst the shops of Bond−street; for Kate was dying to find a vent for some of her surplus pin−money——her husband to show his handsome wife in the face of the world—— the mother to witness the success of her matrimonial schemes——−and Grace was forced to obey her mother's commands, in accompanying her sister as an attendant, not to be dispensed with at all, in her circumstances.

The entrance of John at that instant, though nothing more than what occurred every day at that hour, deranged the whole plan: the dowager, for a moment, forgot her resolution, and forgot the necessity of Grace's appearance, as she exclaimed with evident satisfaction,

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

Lord Herriefield looked at his mother−in−law in some surprise as he listened to her injunctions, and threw a suspicious glance on his own rib at the moment, which spoke as plainly as looks can speak.

"Is it possible I have been taken in after all."

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

As they passed the porter, Lady Chatterton observed to him significantly——" nobody at home, Willis:"——"Yes, my lady," was the laconic reply, and Lord Herriefield, as he took his seat by the side of his wife in the carriage, thought she was not as handsome as usual.

Lady Chatterton that morning unguardedly laid the foundation of years of misery for her eldest daughter; or rather the foundations were already laid in the ill−assorted, and heartless, unprincipled union she had laboured with success to effect. But she had that morning stripped the mask from her own character prematurely, and excited suspicions in the breast of her son−in−law, time only served to confirm and memory to brood over.

Lord Herriefield had been too long in the world not to understand all the ordinary arts of match−makers and match−hunters. Like most of his own sex, who have associated freely with the worst part of the other, his opinions of female excellencies were by no means extravagant or romantic. Kate had pleased his eye; she was of a noble family; young, and at that moment interestingly quiet, having nothing particularly in view. She had a taste of her own, and Lord Herriefield was by no means in conformity with it; consequently she expended none of those pretty little arts upon him she occasionally practised, and which his experience would immediately have detected. Her disgust he had attributed to disinterestedness, and as Kate had fixed her eye on a young officer lately returned from France, and her mother, on a Duke who was mourning the death of his third wife, devising means to console him with a fourth——the Viscount had got a good deal enamoured with the lady, before either she or her mother, took any particular notice there was such a beingin existence. His title was not the most elevated——but it was ancient. His paternal acres were not numerous——but his East−India shares were. He was not very young——but he was not very old; and as the Duke died of a fit of the gout in his stomach——and the officer run away with a girl in her teens from a boarding−school—— the Dowager and her daughter, after thoroughly scanning the fashionable world, determined, for want of a better, he would do.

It is not to be supposed that the mother and child held any open communications with each other, to this effect. The delicacy and pride of both would have been greatly injured by such a suspicion; yet they arrived

simultaneously at the same conclusion, and at another of equal importance to the completion of their schemes on the person of the Viscount. It was to adhere to the same conduct which had made him a captive, as most likely to ensure the victory.

There was such a general understanding between the two, it can excite no surprise they co−operated so harmoniously, as it were by signal.

For two people, correctly impressed with their duties and responsibilities, to arrive at the same conclusion in the government of their conduct, would be merely a matter of course; and so with those who are more or less under the dominion of the world. They will pursue their plans with a degree of concurrence amounting nearly to sympathy; and thus had Kate and her mother——until this morning, kept up the masquerade so well, that the Viscount was as confiding as a country Corydon——when he first witnessed the Dowager's management with Grace and John, and his wife's careless disregard of a thing, which appeared too much a matter of course, to be quite agreeable to his newly awakened distrust.

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

As the party went down stairs, and Moseley had gone with them part of the way, she threw herself unconsciously on a seat, and began a beautiful song, fashionable at the time. Her feelings were in consonance with the words——and Grace was very happy in both execution and voice.

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

"Ah Grace," said John, and the lady's heart beat high, "you do sing as you do every thing, admirably."

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

John's eyes ran over her beauties, as with palpitating bosom and varying colour, shesat confused at the warmth of his language. and manner.

Fortunately, a remarkably striking likeness of the Dowager, which graced the room, hung directly over their heads——and John, taking her unresisting hand, continued: "Dear Grace, you resemble your brother very much in features, and, what is better, in character."

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

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

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

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

Grace burst into a flood of tears, as her lover, interested deeply in their cause, gently drew her towards him——her head sunk upon his shoulder, as she faintly whispered something, that was inaudible——but which her lover interpreted into every thing he mostwished to hear. John was in extacies——− every unpleasant feeling of suspicion had left him——−of Grace's innocence of manoeuvring, he never doubted, but John did not relish the idea of being entrapped into any thing, even a step which he desired——−an uninterrupted communication, between the young people, followed; it was as confiding as their affections——and the return of the dowager and her children, first recalled them to the recollection of other people.

One glance of the eye was enough for Lady Chatterton——she saw the traces of tears on the cheeks and in the eyes of Grace, and the dowager was satisfied; she knew his friends would not object; and as Grace attended her to her dressing room, she cried, on entering it, "well, child, when is the wedding to be? you will wear me out in so much gayety."

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

CHAPTER VII.

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

Jane yet continued reserved and distant to most of her friends, while Emily's conduct would have escaped unnoticed, did not her blanch'd cheek and wandering looks, at times, speak a language not to be misunderstood. With all her relatives she maintained the same affectionate intercourse she had always supported; but not even to her aunt did the name of Denbigh pass her lips. But in her most private and humble petitions to her God, she never forgot to mingle with her requests for spiritual blessings on herself, one fervent prayer for the conversion of the preserver of her life.

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

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

Peter took the paper, and after having adjusted his spectacles to his satisfaction, proceeded to obey his master's injunctions. But the same defect of vision as suddenly seized on the steward, as had affected his master. He turned the paper sideways, and appeared to be spelling the matter of the paragraph to himself. Peter would have given his three hundred a year, to have had the impatient John Moseley at hand, to have relieved him from his task; but the anxiety of Mr. Benfield, overcoming his fear of the worst, he inquired in a tremulous tone——

"Peter?"——hem!——"Peter, what do you think?"

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

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

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

"Married, by special licence, at the seat of the Most Noble, the Marquess of Eltringham, in Devonshire, by the Rt. Rev. Lord Bishop of——, George Denbigh, Esq. Lt. Col. of his Majesty's —— regiment of dragoons, to the Rt. Hon. Lady Laura Stapleton, eldest sister of the Marquess. Eltringham was honoured on the present happy occasion with the presence of his Grace of Derwent, and the gallant Lord Pendennyss, kinsmen of the bridegroom, and Capt. Lord Henry Stapleton, of the Royal Navy. We understand the happy couple proceed to Denbigh Castle immediately after the honey−moon."

Although Mrs. Wilson had given up the expectation of ever seeing her niece the wife of Denbigh, she felt an indescribable shock as she read this paragraph. The strongest feeling was horror at the nearness of Emily to an alliance with such a man. His avoiding the ball, at which he knew Lord Henry was expected, was explained to her by his marriage. For, with John, she could not believe a woman like Lady Laura Stapleton was to be won in the short space of one fortnight, or indeed less. There was, too evidently, a mystery yet to be developed, and she felt certain one, that would not elevate his character in her opinion.

Neither Sir Edward or Lady Moseley had given up the expectation of seeing Denbigh again, as a suitor for Emily's hand, and to both of them this certainty of his loss was a heavy blow. The Baronet took up the paper, and after perusing to himself the article, muttered in a low tone, as he wiped the tears from his eyes:——" Heaven bless him——I sincerely hope she is worthy of him." Worthy of him, thought Mrs. Wilson, with a feeling of indignation, as taking up the paper, she retired to her own room, whither Emily, at that moment returned from her walk, had proceeded. As her niece must hear this news, she thought the sooner the better. The exercise, and unreserved conversation of Francis and Clara, had restored, in some degree, the bloom to the cheek of Emily, as she saluted her aunt on joining her; and Mrs. Wilson felt it necessary to struggle with herself, before she could summon sufficient resolution, to invade the returning peace of her charge. However, having already decided on her course, she proceeded to the discharge of what she thought her duty.

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

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

There was a momentary struggle in Emily for self−command. She was obliged to find support in a chair. The returning richness of colour, excited by her walk, vanished——Butrecovering herself, she pressed the hand of her anxious guardian, and gently waving her back, proceeded to her own room.

On her return to the company, the same control of her feelings, which had distinguished her conduct of late, was again visible; and although her aunt most narrowly watched her movements, looks, and speeches, she could discern no visible alteration, by this confirmation of Denbigh's misconduct. The truth was, that in Emily Moseley, the obligations of duty were so imperative——her sense of her dependence on providence so humbling, and yet so confiding, that, as soon as she was taught to believe her lover unworthy of her esteem, that moment an insuperable barrier separated them. His marriage could add nothing to the distance between them. It was impossible they could be united; and although a secret lingering of the affections, over his fallen character, might and did exist, it existed without any romantic expectations of miracles in his favour, or vain wishes of reformation, in which self was the prominent feeling. She might be said, to be keenly alive to all that concerned his welfare or movements, if she did not harbour the passion of love; but it showed itself, in prayers for his amendment of life, and the most ardent petitions for his future and eternal happiness. She had set about, seriously, and with much energy, the task of erasing from her heart, sentiments which, however delightful she had found it to harbourin times past, were now, in direct variance with the path of her duty. She knew, that a weak indulgence of such passions, would tend to draw her mind from, and disqualify her to discharge, those various calls on her time and exertions, which could alone enable her to assist others, or effect in her own person, the great purposes of her creation. It was never lost sight of by Emily Moseley, that her existence here, was preparatory to an immensely more important one hereafter. She was consequently in charity with all mankind, and if grown a little more doubtful of the intentions of her fellow−creatures, it was a mistrust, bottomed in a clear view of the frailties of our nature; and self−examination, was amongst the not unfrequent speculations she made, on his hasty marriage of her former lover.

Mrs. Wilson saw all this, and was soon made acquainted by her niece in terms, with her views of her own condition, and although she had to, and did, deeply regret, that all her caution had not been able to guard against deception in character, where it was most important for her to guide aright; yet she was cheered with the reflection that her previous care, with the blessings of providence, had admirably fitted her charge to combat and overcome the consequences of their mistaken confidence.

The gloom which this little paragraph excited, extended to every individual in the family; for all had placed Denbigh by the side of John, in their affections, ever since his weighty services to Emily.

A letter from John announcing his intention of meeting them at Bath, as well as his new relation with Grace, relieved in some measure their depression of spirits.——−Mr Mr. Benfield alone found no consolation in these approaching nuptials. John he regarded as his nephew, and Grace he thought a very good sort of young woman; but neither of them beings of the same description with Emily and Denbigh.

"Peter," said he one day, after they had both been expending their ingenuity, in vain efforts to discover the cause of this so−much−desired marriage being so unexpectedly frustrated, "have I not often told you, fate governed these things, in order men might be humbled in this life. Now, Peter, had the Lady Juliana wedded with a mind congenial to her own, she might have been mistress of Benfield Lodge to this very hour."

"Yes, your honour——but there's Miss Emmy's legacy;" and Peter withdrew, thinking what would have been the consequences, had Patty Steele been more willing, when he wished to make her Mrs. Peter Johnson; an association by no means uncommon in the mind of the steward; for if Patty had ever a rival in his affections, it was in the person of Emily Moseley, though indeed with very different degrees and colouring of esteem.

The rides to the cottage had been continued by Mrs. Wilson and Emily, and as no gentleman was now in the family to interfere with their communications, a general visit to the young widow had been made, by the Moseleys, including Sir Edward and Mr. Ives.

The Jarvises had gone to London to receive their children, now penitent in more senses than one; and Sir

Edward learnt with pleasure, that Egerton and his wife had been admitted into the family of the merchant.

Sir Edgar had died suddenly, and the entailed estates had fallen to his successor the colonel, now Sir Harry——but the bulk of his wealth being in convertible property, he had given by will to his other nephew, a young clergyman, and son of a younger brother.——−Mary, as well as her mother, were greatly disappointed, by this deprivation, of what they considered their lawful splendour——but found great consolation in the new dignity of the Lady Egerton; who's greatest wish now was to meet the Moseleys, in order that she might precede them, in or out, of some place where such ceremonials are observed——−the sound of, Lady Egerton's carriage stops the way——was a delight ful one, and never failed to be used on all occasions, although her ladyship was mistress of no such vehicle.

A slight insight into the situation of things,amongst them, may be found in the following narrative of their views, and a discussion which took place about a fortnight after the re−union of the family under one roof.

Mrs. Jarvis was mistress of a very handsome coach, the gift of her husband for her own private use——after having satisfied herself, the baronet (a dignity he had enjoyed just twenty−four four hours) did not possess the ability to furnish his lady, as she termed her daughter, with such a luxury, she magnanimously determined to relinquish her own, in support of the new−found elevation of her daughter——accordingly a consultation on the alterations which were necessary, took place between the ladies——" the arms must be altered, of course," Lady Egerton observed, "and Sir Harry's, with the bloody hand and six quarterings, put in their place——then the liveries they must be changed."

"Oh, mercy——my lady——if the arms are altered, Mr. Jarvis will be sure to notice it—— and he would never forgive me——and perhaps——"

"Perhaps what?" exclaimed the new made lady, with a disdainful toss of her head.

"Why," replied the mother, warmly, "not give me the hundred pounds, he promised, to have it new lined and painted."

"Fiddlestick with the painting, Mrs. Jarvis," cried the lady with great dignity, "nocarriage shall be called mine that does not bear my arms and the bloody hand."

"Why your ladyship is unreasonable, indeed you are," said Mrs. Jarvis, coaxingly, and then after a moment's thought, she continued, "is it the arms or the baronetcy you want, my dear?"

"Oh, I care nothing for the arms, but I am determined, now I am a baronet's lady, Mrs. Jarvis, to have the proper emblem of my rank."

"Certainly, my lady, that's true dignity ——−well then——−we will put the bloody hand on your father's arms, and he will never notice it, for he never sees such things." The arrangement was happily completed, and for a few days, the coach of Mr. Jarvis bore about the titled dame——−her mother and sister, with all proper consideration for the dignity of the former——−until one unlucky day——−the merchant, who, occasionally, went on change, when any great bargain in the stocks was to be made, arrived at his own door suddenly, to procure a calculation he had made on a leaf of his prayer−book, the last Sunday during sermon——this he obtained after some search; in his haste, he drove to his broker's in the carriage of his wife, to save time, it happening to be in waiting at the moment, and the distance not great——in his hurry, Mr. Jarvis forgot to order the man to return, and for an hour it stood in one of the most public places in the city——the consequence was,when Mr. Jarvis undertook to examine into his gains, with the account rendered of the transaction by his broker, he was astonished to read, "Sir Timothy Jarvis, Bart. in account with John Smith, Dr."——Sir Timothy examined the account in as many different ways as Mr. Benfield had the marriage of Denbigh, before he would believe his eyes, and when assured of the fact, immediately caught up his hat, and went to find the man, who had dared to insult him, as it were, in defiance of the formality of business——he had not proceeded one square in the city, before he met a friend who spoke to him by the title ——−an explanation of the mistake followed, and the ci−devant barouet proceeded to his stables; here by examination he detected the fraud——−an explanation, with his consort followed——−and the painter's brush soon defaced the self−created dignity, from the pannels of the coach——−all this was easy, but with his waggish companions on change, and in the city, (where, notwithstanding his wife's fashionable propensities, he loved to resort,) he was Sir Timothy still.

Mr. Jarvis was a man of much modesty, but one of great decision, and determined to have the laugh on his side——−a newly purchased borough of his, sent up an address, flaming with patriotism——it was presented by his hands. The merchant seldom kneeled to his creator, but on this occasion he humbled himself dutifully before

his prince, and left the presence,with a legal right to the appellation, his old companions had affixed to him sarcastically.

The rapture of Lady Jarvis may be more easily imagined than faithfully described; the christian name of her husband alone, threw any alloy into the enjoyment of her elevation; but by a license of speech, she ordered, and addressed in her own practice, the softer and more familiar appellation of——−Sir Timo——two servants were discharged the first week, because unused to titles, they had addressed her as mistress——−and her son, the captain, then at a watering place, was acquainted express with the joyful intelligence.

All this time Sir Henry Egerton was but little seen amongst his new made relatives; he had his own engagements and haunts, and spent most of his time at a fashionable gaming house in the West End. As, however, the town was deserted, Lady Jarvis and her daughters having condescended to pay a round of city visits, to show off her airs and dignity to her old friends, persuaded Sir Timo——−the hour for their visit to Bath had arrived, and they were soon comfortably settled in that city.

Lady Chatterton and her youngest daughter had arrived at the seat of her son; and John Moseley, as happy as the certainty of love——returned, and the approbation of his friends could make him, was in lodgings in the town——Sir Edward had notified his son of his approaching visitto Bath, and John had taken proper accommodations for the family, which he occupied for a few days by himself as locum tenens.

Lord and Lady Herriefield had departed for the south of France; and Kate removed from the scenes of her earliest enjoyments, and the bosom of her own family, to the protection of a man she neither loved nor respected, began to feel the insufficiency of a name or a fortune, to constitute felicity in her own, or indeed, any other circumstances. Lord Herriefield was of a suspicious and harsh temper by nature; the first propensity was greatly increased by his former associations, and the latter, was not removed by the humility of his eastern dependants.——−But the situation of her child gave no uneasiness at present to her managing mother, who thought her placed in the high road to happiness, and was gratified at the result of her labours——−once or twice her habits had overcome her caution, so much, as to endeavour to promote, a day or two sooner than had been arranged, the wedding of Grace——−But her imprudence was checked instantly, by the recoiling of Moseley from her insinuations in disgust, and the absence of the young man for twenty−four hours, gave her timely warning of the danger of such an interference, with one of such fastidious feelings——−John punished himself as much as the dowager on these occasions, but the smiling face of Grace, with her hand frankly placedin his own at his return, never failed to do away the unpleasant sensations created by her mother's care.

The Chatterton and Jarvis families met in the rooms, soon after the arrival of the latter, when the lady of the knight approached the dowager with a most friendly salute of recognition, followed by both her daughters——−Lady Chatterton, really forgetful of the person of her B—— acquaintance, and disliking the vulgarity of her air, drew up into an appearance of great dignity as she hoped the lady was well. The merchant's wife felt the consciousness of rank too much to be repulsed in this manner, and believing the dowager had forgotten her face, added, with a simpering smile, in imitation of what she had seen better bred people practice with success,

"Lady Jarvis——my lady——−your ladyship dont remember me——−Lady Jarvis of the Deanery, B——, Northamptonshire, and my daughters, Lady Egerton and Miss Jarvis." Lady Egerton bowed stiffly to the recognising smile the dowager now condescended to bestow, but Sarah remembering a certain handsome lord in the family, was more urbane, determining at the moment to make the promotion of her mother and sister stepping−stones to greater elevation for herself.

"I hope my lord is well," continued the city lady, "I regret Sir Timo——−and Sir Harry——−and Captain Jarvis, are not here thismorning to pay their respects to your ladyship, but as we shall see a good deal of each other, it must be deferred to a more fitting opportunity."

"Certainly, madam," replied the dowager, as passing her compliments with those of Grace, she drew back from so open a conversation with creatures, of such doubtful standing in the fashionable world——−There is no tyranny more unyielding or apparently more dreaded than that of fashion——−one half the care to observe she laws of our maker, that is given, to adhere to the arbitrary decrees of this worldly tribunal, would make us, unexceptionable in morals, and useful in society; its influence is felt from the highest to the lowest;——without it——−virtue goes unnoticed; and with it——−vice unpunished; it is oscillatory, unreasonable, and capricious——− subjects men and morals, to the government of the idle, the vain, and the foolish——−and takes

its rise, from the error, of making man instead of God, the judge of our conduct and opinions.

CHAPTER VIII.

On taking leave of Mrs. Fitzgerald, Emily and her aunt settled a plan of correspondence; the deserted situation of this young woman, having created a great interest in the breasts of her new friends. General M'Carthy had returned to Spain without receding from his original proposal, and his niece was left to mourn in solitude, her early departure from one of the most solemn duties of life, though certainly under circumstances of great mitigation and temptation.

Mr. Benfield, thwarted in one of his most favourite schemes of happiness for the residue of his life, obstinately refused to make one of the party to Bath; and Ives and Clara having returned to Bolton, the remainder of the Moseleys arrived at the lodgings of John, a very few days after the interview of the preceding chapter, with hearts but ill qualified to enter into the gayeties of the place; but in obedience to the wishes of Lady Moseley, to see and be seen once more on that great theatre of fashionable amusement.

The friends of the family who had known them in times past, were numerous, and glad to renew their acquaintance, with those they had always esteemed; so that they found themselves immediately surrounded by a circle of smiling faces and dashing equipages.

Sir William Harris, the proprietor of the deanery, and a former neighbour, with his showy daughter, were amongst the first to visit them. Sir William was a man of handsome estate and unexceptionable character, but entirely governed by the whims and desires of his only child. Caroline Harris neither wanted sense or beauty, but expecting a fortune, had placed her views too high. She at first aimed at the peerage, and while she felt herself entitled to suit her taste as well as her ambition, had failed of her object by her ill concealed efforts to attain it. She had justly acquired the reputation of the reverse of a coquette or yet a prude; still she had never an offer, and at the age of twenty−six, had now began to lower her thoughts to the commonalty. Her fortune would have easily got her a husband here, but she was determined to pick amongst these lower supporters of the aristocracy of the nation. With the Moseleys she had been early acquainted, though some years their senior——−a circumstance, however, she took care never unnecessarily to allude to.

The meeting between Grace and the Moseleys was tender and sincere. John's countenance glowed with delight, as he witnessed his future wife, folded successively in the arms of those he loved, and Grace's tears and blushes added twofold charms to her native beauty. Jane relaxed from her reserve to receive her future sister, and determined with herself to appear in the world, in order toshew Sir Henry Egerton, that she did not feel the blow he had inflicted, as severely, as the truth would have proved.

The Dowager found some little occupation for a few days, in settling with Lady Moseley the preliminaries of the wedding; but the latter had suffered too much through her youngest daughters, to enter into these formalities with her ancient spirit. All things were, however, happily settled, and Ives, making a journey for the express purpose, John and Grace were united privately, at the altar of one of the principal churches in Bath, by the consent of its rector. Chatterton had been summoned on the occasion, and the same paper which announced the nuptials, contained, amongst the fashionable arrivals −the names of the Duke of Derwent and his sister——−the Marquess of Eltringham and sisters, amongst whom was to be found Lady Laura Denbigh; her husband——Lady Chatterton, carelessly remarking, in the presence of her friends, she heard was summoned to the death−bed of a relative, from whom he had great expectations. Emily's colour did certainly change as she listened to this news, but not allowing her thoughts to dwell on the subject, she was soon enabled to recall at least her serenity of appearance.

But Jane and Emily were delicately placed. The lover of the former, and the wives of the lovers of both, were in the way of daily, if not hourly meetings; and it required all theenergies of the young women to appear with composure before them. The elder was supported by pride——−the junior by principle.——− The first was restless——−haughty——−distant, and repulsive. The last——−mild——−humble——− reserved, but eminently attractive. The one was suspected by all around her——−the other, was unnoticed by any, but her nearest and dearest friends.

The first rencontre with these dreaded guests, occurred at the rooms one evening where the elder ladies had insisted on the bride's making her appearance. The Jarvis's were there before them, and at their entrance caught

the eyes of the group. Lady Jarvis approached immediately, filled with exultation——−her husband, with respect. The latter was received with cordiality——−the former, politely, but with distance. The young ladies and Sir Henry bowed distantly, and the gentleman soon drew off into another part of the room: his absence kept Jane from fainting. The handsome figure of Egerton standing by the side of Mary Jarvis, as her acknowledged husband, was near proving too much for her pride to endure; and he looked so like the imaginary being she had set up as the object of her worship, that her heart was in danger of rebelling also.

"Positively, Sir Edward and my lady, both Sir Timo——−and myself, and I dare say Sir Harry and Lady Egerton too, are delighted to see you at Bath among us. Mrs. Moseley, I wish you much happiness; Lady Chatterton too, I suppose your ladyship recollects me now——−I am Lady Jarvis. Mr. Moseley, I regret, for your sake, my son, Captain Jarvis, is not here; you were so fond of each other, and both so lov'd your guns."

"Positively, my Lady Jarvis," said Moseley dryly in reply, "my feelings on the occasion are as strong as your own; but I presume the captain is much too good a shot for me by this time."

"Why, yes; he improves greatly in most things he undertakes," rejoined the smiling dame, "and I hope he will soon learn like you, to shoot with the arrows of Cupid——−I hope the Honourable Mrs. Moseley is well."

Grace bowed mildly, as she answered to the interrogatory——and smiled as she thought of Jarvis, in competition with her husband, in this species of archery; when a voice immediately behind where they sat, caught the ears of the whole party; all it said was——

"Harriet, you forgot to show me Marian's letter."

"Yes, but I will to−morrow," was the reply.

It was the tone of Denbigh——−Emily almost fell from her seat as it first reached her, and the eyes of all but herself, were immediately turned in quest of the speaker. He had approached to within a very few feet of them, and supported a lady on each arm; a second look wass necessary to convince the Moseley's they were mistaken.It was not Denbigh——but a young man whose figure, face and air, resembled him strongly, and whose voice possessed the same soft, melodious tones, which had distinguished that of Denbigh. As they seated themselves within a very short distance of the Moseleys, they continued their conversation.

"Your Ladyship heard from the Colonel to−day too, I believe," continued the gentleman, turning to the lady, who sat next to Emily.

"Yes, he is a very punctual correspondent ——−I hear every other day," was the answer.

"How is his uncle, Laura?" inquired her female companion.

"Rather better; but I will thank your grace to find the Marquess and Miss Howard."

"Bring them to us," rejoined the other.

"Yes, duke," said the former lady with a laugh, "and Eltringham will thank you too, I dare say."

In an instant the duke returned, accompanied by a gentleman of thirty, and an elderly lady, who might have been safely taken for fifty, without offence to any thing but——herself.

During these speeches, their auditors had listened with very different emotions of curiosity or surprise, or some more powerful sensation. Emily had stolen a glance which satisfied her it was not Denbigh himself, and it greatly relieved her, but discovered with surprise that it was his wife by whose side she sat, and when an opportunity offered, dwelt on her amiable, frank countenance, witha melancholy satisfaction——at least she thought, he may yet be happy, and I hope penitent.

It was a mixture of love and gratitude which prompted this wish, both sentiments not easily gotten rid of, when once ingrafted in our better feelings. John eyed them with a displeasure he could not account for, and saw, in the ancient lady, the brides−maid, Lord Henry had so unwillingly admitted to that distinction.

Lady Jarvis was astounded with her vicinity to so much nobility, and drew back to her family, to study its movements to advantage; while Lady Chatterton sighed heavily, as she contemplated the fine figures of an unmarried Duke and Marquess——and she without a single child to dispose of. The remainder of the party viewed them with curiosity, and listened with interest to what they said.

Two or three young ladies had now joined them, attended by a couple of gentlemen, and their conversation became general The ladies declined dancing entirely, but appeared willing to throw away an hour in comments on their neighbours.

"Oh! Willian!" exclaims one of the young ladies, "there is your old messmate, Col. Egerton."

"Yes! I observe him," replied her brother, "I see him;" but, smiling significantly, he continued, "we are

messmates no longer."

"He is a sad character," said the Marquess;with a shrug. "William, I would advise you to be cautious of his acquaintance."

"I thank you, Marquess," replied Lord William. "But I believe I understand him thoroughly."

Jane had manifested strong emotion, during these remarks; while Sir Edward and his wife averted their faces, from a simultaneous feeling of self−reproach——their eyes met——and mutual concessions were contained in the glance they exchanged——yet their feelings were unnoticed by their companions ——over the fulfilment of her often repeated forewarnings of neglect of duty to our children——Mrs. Wilson had mourned in sincerity ——−but she had forgot to triumph.

"But when are we to see Pendennyss?" inquired the Marquess, "I hope he will be here, with George——−I have a mind to beat up his quarters in Wales this season——−what say you, Derwent?"

"I intend it, my lord, if I can persuade Lady Harriet to quit the gayeties of Bath so soon——−what say you, sister, will you be in readiness to attend me so early?" this question was asked in an arch tone, and drew the eyes of her friends on the person to whom it was addressed.

"Oh, yes, I am ready now, Frederick, if you wish," answered the sister, hastily, and colouring excessively as she spoke.

"But where is Chatterton? I thought he was here——−he had a sister married here lastweek," inquired Lord William Stapleton, addressing no one in particular.

A slight movement in their neighbours, excited by this speech, attracted the attention of the party.

"What a lovely young woman," whispered the duke to Lady Laura, "your neighbour is."

The lady smiled her assent, and as Emily overheard it, she rose with glowing cheeks, and proposed a walk round the room.

Chatterton soon after entered——−the young peer had acknowledged to Emily, that deprived of hope as he had been by her firm refusal of his hand, his efforts had been directed to the suppression of a passion, which could never be successful——−but his esteem——−his respect——−remained in full force. He did not touch at all on the subject of Denbigh, and she supposed that with her, he thought his marriage was a step that required justification.

The Moseleys had commenced their promenade round the room, as the baron came in——−he paid his compliments to them as soon as he entered, and walked on in their party ——−the noble visitors followed their example, and the two parties met——Chatterton was delighted to see them——−the duke was particularly fond of him, and had one been present of sufficient observation, the agitation of his sister, the lady Harriet Denbigh, wouldhave accounted for the doubts of her brother, as respects her willingness to leave Bath.

A few words of explanation passed; the duke and his friends appeared to urge something on Chatterton——−who acted as their ambassador——and the consequence was, an introduction of the two parties to each other. This was conducted with the ease of the present fashion——−it was general, and occurred, as it were incidentally, in the course of the evening.

Both Lady Harriet and Lady Laura Denbigh were particularly attentive to Emily. They took their seats by her, and manifested a preference for her conversation that struck Mrs. Wilson as remarkable——−could it be, that the really attractive manners and beauty of her niece had caught the fancy of these ladies——−or was there a deeper seated cause for the desire to draw Emily out, both of them evinced? Mrs. Wilson had heard a rumour, that Chatterton was thought attentive to Lady Harriet, and the other was the wife of Denbigh; was it possible the quondam suitors of her niece, had related to their present favourites, the situation they had stood in as regarded Emily——−it was odd, to say no more, and the widow dwelt on the innocent countenance of the bride with pity and admiration——−Emily herself was not a little abashed at the notice of her new acquaintances, especially Lady Laura——−but as their admiration appeared sincere, as well as their desire to be on terms of intimacy withthe Moseleys, they parted, on the whole, mutually pleased.

The conversation several times was embarrassing to the baronet's family, and at moments, distressingly so to their daughter.

At the close of the evening they formed one group at a little distance from the rest of the company, and in a situation to command a view of it.

"Who is that vulgar looking woman," cried Lady Sarah Stapleton, "seated next to Sir Henry Egerton,

brother?"

"No less a personage than my Lady Jarvis," replied the Marquess, gravely, "and the mother−in−law of Sir Harry and wife to Sir Timo——;" this was said with an air of great importance, and a look of drollery that showed the marquess a bit of a quiz.

"Married!" cried Lord William, "mercy on the woman, who is Egerton's wife——−he is the greatest latitudinarian amongst the ladies, of any man in England——nothing——−no nothing——−would tempt me to let such a man marry a sister of mine"——−ah, thought Mrs. Wilson, how we may be deceived in character, with the best intentions after all; in what are the open vices of Egerton, worse than the more hidden ones of Denbigh.

These freely expressed opinions on the character of Sir Henry, were excessively awkward to some of the listeners——−to whom they were connected with unpleasant recollections, of duties neglected, and affections thrown away.

Sir Edward Moseley was not disposed to judge his fellow creatures harshly, and it was as much owing to his philanthropy as to his indolence, that he had been so remiss in his attention to the associates of his daughters—— but the veil once removed, and the consequences brought home to him through his child——−no man was more alive to the necessity of caution on this important particular; and Sir Edward formed many salutary resolutions for the government of his future conduct, in relation to those, whom an experience nearly fatal in its results, had greatly qualified to take care of themselves:——−but to resume our narrative——−Lady Laura had maintained with Emily, a conversation which was enlivened by occasional remarks from the rest of the party, in the course of which the nerves as well as the principles of Emily were put to a severe trial.

"My brother Henry," said Lady Laura, "who is a captain in the navy, once had the pleasure of seeing you, Miss Moseley, and in some measure made me acquainted with you before we met."

"I dined with Lord Henry at L——, and was much indebted to his polite attentions in an excursion on the water, in common with a large party;" replied Emily simply.

"Oh, I am sure his attentions were exclusive," cried the sister; "indeed he told us that nothing but the want of time, prevented his being deeply in love——−he had even the audacity to tell Denbigh, it was fortunate for me he had never seen you, or I should have been left to lead Apes."

"And I suppose you believe him now," cried Lord William, laughing, as he bowed to Emily.

His sister laughed in her turn, but shook her head, in the confidence of conjugal affection, as she replied——

"It is all conjecture, for the Colonel said he had never the pleasure of meeting Miss Moseley, so I will not boast of what my powers could have done——−Miss Moseley," continued Lady Laura, blushing slightly at her inclination to talk of an absent husband——so lately her lover; "I hope to have the pleasure of presenting Colonel Denbigh to you soon."

"I think," said Emily, with a horror of deception, and a mighty struggle to suppress her feelings, "Colonel Denbigh was mistaken in saying we never met——he was of material service to me once, and I owe him a debt of gratitude, that I only wish I could properly repay."

Lady Laura listened in surprise; but as Emily paused, she could not delicately, as his wife, remind her further of the obligation, by asking what the service was——and hesitating a moment, continued——

"Henry quite made you the subject ofconversation amongst us——Lord Chatterton too, who visited us for a day, was equally warm in his eulogiums——I really thought they created a curiosity, in the Duke and Pendennyss, to behold their idol."

"A curiosity that would be ill rewarded in its indulgence," said Emily, abashed by the personality of the discourse.

"So says the modesty of Miss Moseley," said the Duke of Derwent, in the peculiar tone which distinguished the softer keys of Denbigh's voice——Emily's heart beat quick as she heard them——−and she was afterwards vexed to remember with how much pleasure she listened to this opinion of the duke;——−was it the sentiment?——−or was it the voice?——−she, however, gathered strength to answer, with a dignity that repressed further praises,

"Your Grace is willing to devest me of what little I possess."

"Pendennyss is a man of a thousand," continued Lady Laura, with the privilege of a married woman; "I do wish he would join us at Bath——is there no hope, duke?"

"I am afraid not," replied his Grace, "he keeps himself immured in Wales with his sister——who is as much

of a hermit as himself."

"There was a story of an inamorata in private, somewhere," cried the Marquess; "why at one time, it was said, he was privately married to her."

"Scandal, my lord," said the Duke gravely,"the Earl is of unexceptionable morals——and and the lady you mean, the widow of Major Fitzgerald− −whom you knew——−Pendennyss never sees her, and by accident, was once of very great service to her."

Mrs. Wilson breathed freely again, as she heard the explanation of this charge, and thought if the Marquess knew all——−how differently would he judge Pendennyss, as well as others.

"Oh! I have the highest opinion of Lord Pendennyss," cried the Marquess.

The Moseleys were not sorry, the usual hour of retiring, put an end to both the conversation and their embarrassments.

CHAPTER IX.

For the succeeding fortnight the intercourse between the Moseley's and their new acquaintances increased daily. It was rather awkward at first on the part of Emily, and her beating pulse and changing colour too often showed the alarm of feelings not yet overcome, when any allusions were made to the absent husband of one of the ladies. Still, as her parents encouraged the cequaintance, and her aunt thought the best way to get rid of the remaining weakness of humanity, with respect to Denbigh, was not to shrink from even an interview with the gentleman himself; Emily succeeded in conquering her reluctance; and as the high opinion entertained by Lady Laura of her husband, was expressed in a thousand artless ways, an interest was created in her by her affections, and the precipice over which, both Mrs. Wilson and her niece thought, she was suspended.

Egerton carefully avoided all collision with the Moseley's. Once, indeed, he endeavoured to renew his acquaintance with John, but a haughty repulse drove him instantly from the field.

What representations he had thought proper to make to his wife, we are unable to say, but she appeared to resent something——as she never approached the dwelling or persons of her quondam associates, although in her heart she was dying to be on terms of intimacy with their titled friends. Her incorrigible mother was restrained by no such or any other consideration, and had contrived to fasten on the Dowager and Lady Harriet, a kind of bowing acquaintance, which she made great use of at the rooms.

The Duke sought out the society of Emily wherever he could obtain it; and Mrs. Wilson thought her niece admitted his approaches with less reluctance, than that of any others of the gentlemen around her.

At first she was surprised, but a closer observation betrayed the latent cause to her.

Derwent resembled Denbigh greatly in person and voice, although there were distinctions, easily to be made, on an acquaintance. The Duke had an air of command and hauteur that was never to be seen in his cousin. But his admiration of Emily he did not attempt to conceal, and, as he ever addressed her in the respectful language and identical voice of Denbigh, the observant widow easily perceived, that it was the remains of her attachment to the one, that induced her niece to listen, with such evident pleasure, to the conversation of the other.

The Duke of Derwent wanted many of the indispensable requisites of a husband, in the eyes of Mrs. Wilson; yet, as she thought Emily out of all danger, at the present, of any new attachment, she admitted the association, under no other restraint, than theuniform propriety of all that Emily said or did.

"Your niece will one day be a Dutchess, Mrs. Wilson," whispered Lady Laura——as Derwent and Emily were running over a new poem one morning, in the lodgings of Sir Edward; the former——reading a fine extract aloud, in the air and voice of Denbigh, in so striking a manner, as to call all the animation of the unconscious Emily, into her expressive face.

Mrs. Wilson sighed, as she reflected on the strength of those feelings, which even principles and testimony, had not been able wholly to subdue, as she answered——−

"Not of Derwent, I believe. But how wonderfully the Duke resembles your husband, at times," she added, thrown off her guard.

Lady Laura was evidently surprised as she answered: "yes——−at times, he does; they are brother's children, you know; the voice in all that connection is remarkable. Pendennyss, though a degree farther off in blood, possesses it; and Lady Harriet, you perceive, has the same characteristic; there has been some syren in the family in days past."

Sir Edward and Lady Moseley saw the attentions of the Duke with the greatest pleasure; though not slaves to the ambition of wealth and rank, they were certainly no objections in their eyes; and a proper suitor, Lady Moseley thought the most probable means of drivingthe recollection of Denbigh from the mind of her daughter; this consideration had great weight in leading her to cultivate an acquaintance, so embarrassing on many accounts.

The Colonel, however, had written his wife the impossibility of his quitting his uncle while he continued so unwell, and the bride was to join him, under the escort of Lord William.

The same tenderness distinguished Denbigh on this occasion, that had appeared so lovely, when exercised to his dying father. Yet, thought Mrs. Wilson, how insufficient are good feelings to effect, what can only be the

result of good principles.

Caroline Harris was frequently of the parties of pleasure——−walks——−rides——−and dinners, which the Moseley's were compelled to join in; and as the Marquess of Eltringham had given her one day some little encouragement, she determined to make an expiring effort at the peerage, before she condescended to enter into an examination of the qualities of Capt. Jarvis; who, his mother had persuaded her, was an Apollo, and who she had great hopes of seeing one day a Lord, as both the Captain and herself had commenced laying up a certain sum quarterly, for the purpose of buying a title hereafter. An ingenious expedient of Jarvis to get into his hands a portion of the allowance of his mother.

Eltringham was strongly addicted to theridiculous, and, without committing himself in the least, drew the lady out on divers occasions, for the amusement of himself and the Duke——−who enjoyed, without practising that species of joke.

The collisions between ill−concealed art, and as ill−concealed irony, had been practised with impunity by the Marquess for a fortnight; and the lady's imagination began to revel in the delights of her triumph, when a really respectable offer was made to the acceptance of Miss Harris, by a neighbour of her father's in the country, one she would rejoice to have received a few days before, but which, in consequence of hopes created by the following occurrence, she haughtily rejected.

It was at the lodgings of the Baronet, that Lady Laura exclaimed one day:——

"Marriage is a lottery, certainly, and neither Sir Henry or Lady Egerton appear to have drawn prizes."——Here Jane stole from the room.

"Never, sister," cried the Marquess. "I will deny that. Any man can select a prize from your sex, if he only knows his own taste."

"Taste is a poor criterion, I am afraid," said Mrs. Wilson, gravely, "to bottom matrimonial felicity upon."

"What would you refer the decision to, my dear madam?" inquired Lady Laura.

"Judgment."

Lady Laura shook her head, doubtingly, as she answered,

"You remind me so much of Lord Pendennyss. Every thing, he wishes to bring under the subjection of judgment and principles."

"And is he wrong, Lady Laura?" asked Mrs. Wilson, pleased to find such correct views existed, in one she thought so highly of.

"Not wrong, my dear madam, only impracticable. What do you think, Marquess, of choosing a wife in conformity to your principles, and without consulting your taste."

Mrs. Wilson shook her head, with a laugh, as she disclaimed any such statement of the case——−but the Marquess, who disliked one of John's didactic conversations very much, gaily interrupted her by saying——

"Oh! taste is every thing with me. The woman of my heart against the world——if she suits my fancy, she satisfies my judgment too."

"And what is this fancy of your Lordship's," said Mrs. Wilson, willing to gratify his relish for trifling. "What kind of woman do you mean to choose? How tall, for instance?"

"Why, madam," cried the Marquess, rather unprepared for such a catechism, and looking round him, until the outstretched neck and eager attention of Caroline Harris caught his eye, he added, with an air of great simplicity——"about the height of Miss Harris."

"How old?" said Mrs. Wilson with a smile.

"Not too young, ma'am, certainly. I am thirty−two——my wife must be five or six and twenty. Am I old enough, do you think, Derwent?" he added, in a whisper to the Duke.

"Within ten years," was the reply.

Mrs. Wilson continued——

"She must read and write, I suppose?"

"Why, faith," said the Marquess, "I am not fond of a bookish sort of a woman, and least of all, of a scholar."

"You had better take Miss Howard," whispered his brother. "She is old enough—— never reads——−and just the height."

"No, no, William," rejoined the brother. "Rather too old, that. Now, I admire a woman who has confidence in herself.——One that understands the proprieties of life, and has, if possible, been at the head of an establishment,

before she takes charge of mine."

The delighted Caroline wriggled about in her chair, and unable to contain herself longer, inquired:——

"Noble blood, of course, you would require, my Lord?"

"Why, no! I rather think the best wives are to be found in a medium. I would wish to elevate my wife myself. A Baronet's daughter, for instance."

Here Lady Jarvis, who had entered during the dialogue, and caught the topic they were engaged in, drew near, and ventured to ask if he thought a simple Knight too low. The Marquess, who did not expect such an attack,was a little at a loss for an answer; but recovering himself, answered gravely——under the apprehension of another design on his person, "he did think that would be forgetting his duty to his descendants."

Lady Jarvis sigh'd, as she fell back in disappointment, and Miss Harris, turning to the nobleman, in a soft voice, desired him to ring for her carriage. As he handed her down, she ventured to inquire if his Lordship had ever met with such a woman as he had described.

"Oh, Miss Harris," he whispered, as he handed her into the coach, "how can you ask such a question. You are very cruel—— Drive on, coachman."

"How, cruel, my Lord," said Miss Harris, eagerly. "Stop John.——How, cruel, my Lord;" and she stretch'd her neck out of the window as the Marquess, kissing his hand to her, ordered the man to proceed.——"Don't you hear your lady, sir."

Lady Jarvis had followed them down, also with a view to catch any thing which might be said− −Having apologised for her hasty visit; and as the Marquess handed her politely into her carriage, she begged "he would favour Sir Timo——and Sir Henry with a call;" which, being promised, Eltringham returned to the room.

"When am I to salute a Marchioness of Eltringham," cried Lady Laura to her brother, onhis entrance, "one, on the new standard set up by your Lordship."

"Whenever Miss Harris can make up her mind to the sacrifice," replied the brother very gravely; "ah me! how very considerate some of your sex are, upon the modesty of ours."

"I wish you joy with all my heart, my Lord Marquess," exclaimed John Moseley; "I was once favoured with the notice of the lady for a week or two, but a viscount saved me from capture."

"I really think, Moseley," said the duke innocently, but speaking with animation, "an intriguing daughter, worse than a managing mother."

John's gayety for the moment vanished, as he replied in a low key, "O yes, much worse."

Grace's heart was in her throat, until, by stealing a glance at her husband, she saw the cloud passing over his fine brow, and happening to catch her affectionate smile, his face was lighted into a look of pleasantry as he continued,

"I would advise caution, my Lord; Caroline Harris has the advantage of experience in her trade, and was expert from the first."

"John——−John——−" said Sir Edward with warmth, "Sir William is my friend, and his daughter must be respected."

"Then, baronet," cried the Marquess, "she has one recommendation I was ignorant of, and as such, I am silent: but ought not Sir William to teach his daughter to respect herself. I view these husband−hunting ladies as pirates on the ocean of love, and lawful objects for any roving cruiser, like myself, to fire at. At one time I was simple enough to retire as they advanced, but you know, madam," turning to Mrs. Wilson with a droll look, "flight only encourages pursuit, so I now give battle in self−defence."

"And I hope successfully, my lord," observed the lady, "Miss Harris' brother, does appear to have grown desperate in her attacks, which were formerly much more masqued than at present. I believe it is generally the case, when a young woman throws aside the delicacy and feelings which ought to be the characteristics of her sex, and which teach her studiously to conceal her admiration, she either becomes in time, cynical and disagreeable to all around her from disappointment, or presevering in her efforts; as it were, runs a muck for a husband. Now, in justice to the gentlemen, I must say, baronet, there are strong symptoms of the Malay, about Caroline Harris."

"A muck——−a muck"——−cried the marquess, as, in obedience to the signal of his sister, he rose to withdraw.

Jane had retired to her own room, in mortification of spirit she could ill conceal, during this conversation, and felt a degree of humiliation, which almost drove her to the desperateresolution of hiding herself forever from the

world: the man she had so fondly enshrined in her heart, to be so notoriously unworthy, as to be the subject of unreserved censure in general company, was a reproach to her delicacy——−her observation——−her judgment——−that was the more severe, from being true; and she wept in bitterness over her fallen happiness, with a determination never again to expose herself to a danger, against which, a prudent regard to the plainest rules of caution would have been a sufficient safeguard.

Emily had noticed the movement of Jane, and waited anxiously the departure of the visiters to hasten to her room. She knocked two or three times before her sister replied to her request for admittance.

"Jane, my dear Jane," said Emily, soothingly, "will you not admit me?" Jane could not resist any longer the affection of her sister, and the door was opened; but as Emily endeavoured to take her hand, she drew back coldly, and cried——−

"I wonder you, who are so happy, will leave the gay scene below for the society of a humbled wretch like me;" and overcome with the violence of her emotion, she burst into tears.

"Happy!" repeated Emily in a tone of anguish——−"Happy, did you say, Jane?——−Oh little do you know my sufferings, or you would never speak so cruelly to me."

Jane, in her turn, surprised at the strengthof Emily's language, considered her now weeping sister, for a moment, with commisseration, and then her thoughts recurring to her own case, she continued with energy,

"Yes, Emily, happy; for whatever may have been the reason of Denbigh's conduct, he is respected; and if you do, or did love him, he was worthy of it.——−But I," said Jane wildly, "threw away my affections on a wretch——a mere impostor——and I am miserable forever."

"No, dear Jane," rejoined Emily, having recovered her self possession——"not miserable ——nor for ever. You have many——very many sources of happiness yet within your reach—— even in this world. I——I do think, even our strongest attachments may be overcome by energy, and a sense of duty. And oh! how I wish I could see you make the effort." For a moment the voice of the youthful moralist had failed her, but her anxiety on behalf of her sister overcame her feelings, and she ended the sentence with great earnestness.

"Emily," said Jane, with obstinacy, and yet in tears, "you don't know what blighted affections are:——−To endure the scorn of the world, and see the man you once thought near being your husband, married to another, who is showing herself in triumph before you, wherever you go."

"Hear me, Jane, before you reproach me further, and then judge between us." Emily paused a moment, to acquire nerve toproceed, and then related to her astonished sister the little history of her own disappointments. She did not affect to conceal her attachment to Denbigh. With glowing cheeks she acknowledged, that she found a necessity for all her efforts, to keep her rebellious feelings yet in subjection; and as she recounted generally his conduct to Mrs. Fitzgerald, she concluded by saying: "But, Jane, I can see enough to call forth my gratitude; and although, with yourself, I feel at this moment as if my affections were sealed forever, I wish to make no hasty resolutions, or act in any manner as if I were unworthy of the lot Providence has assigned me."

"Unworthy? no!——you have no reasons for self−reproach. If Mr. Denbigh has had the art to conceal his crimes from you, he did it to the rest of the world also, and has married a woman of rank and character. But how differently are we situated. Emily——I——I have no such consolation."

"You have the consolation, my sister, of knowing there is an interest made for you where we all require it most, and it is there I endeavour to seek my support," said Emily, in a low and humble tone. "A review of our own errors takes away the keenness of our perception of the wrongs done us, and by placing us in charity with the rest of the world, disposes us to enjoy, calmly, the blessings within our reach. Besides, Jane, we have parents, whose happiness is locked up in that of their children, and we should—— we must overcome those feelings which disqualify us for our common duties, on their account."

"Ah!" cried Jane, "how can I move about in the world, while I know the eyes of all are on me, in curiosity to discover how I bear my disappointments. But you, Emily, are unsuspected. It is easy for you to affect gayety you do not feel."

"I neither affect or feel any gayety," said her sister, mildly. "But are there not the eyes of one on us, of infinitely more power to punish or reward, than what may be found in the opinions of the world? Have we no duties? For what is our wealth——−our knowledge——− our time given us, but to improve our own, and the eternal welfare of those around us? Come, then, my sister, we have both been deceived——let us endeavour not to be culpable."

"I wish, from my soul, we could leave Bath," cried Jane. "The place——the people are hateful to me."

"Jane," said Emily, "rather say you hate their vices, and wish for their amendment. But do not indiscriminately condemn a whole community, for the wrongs you have sustained from one of its members."

Jane allowed herself to be consoled, though by no means convinced, as to her great error, by this effort of her sister; and they both found a temporary relief by the unburthening of the r hearts to each other, that in futurebrought them more nearly together, and was of mutual assistance in supporting them in the promiscuous circles they were obliged to mix in.

With all her fortitude and principle, one of the last things Emily would have desired was an interview with Denbigh; and she was happily relieved from the present danger of it, by the departure of Lady Laura and her brother, to the residence of the Colonel's sick uncle.

Both Mrs. Wilson and Emily suspected that a dread of meeting them had detained him from his intended journey to Bath, and neither were sorry to perceive, what they considered as latent signs of grace, which Egerton appeared entirely to be without. "He may yet see his errors, and make a kind and affectionate husband," thought Emily; and then, as the image of Denbigh rose in her imagination, surrounded with the domestic virtues, she roused herself from the dangerous reflection, to the exercise of duties, in which she found a refuge from unpardonable wishes.

CHAPTER X.

Nothing material occurred after the departure of Lady Laura, for a fortnight;——the Moseleys entering soberly into the amusements of the place, and Derwent and Chatterton becoming more pointed every day in their attentions——the one to Emily, and the other to Lady Harriet——when the dowager received a pressing intreaty from Catherine to hasten to her at Lisbon, where her husband had taken up his abode for a time, after much doubt and indecision as to his place of residence; Lady Herriefield stated generally in her letter, that she was miserable, and without the support of her mother could not exist under her present grievances; but what was the cause of those grievances, or what grounds she had for her misery, she left unexplained.

Lady Chatterton was not wanting in maternal regard, and promptly determined to proceed to Portugal in the next packet. John felt inclined for a little excursion with his bride, and out of compassion to the baron, who was in a dilemma between his duty and his love, (for Lady Harriet about that time was particularly attractive,) offered his services.

Chatterton allowed himself to be persuaded by the good−natured John, that his mother could safely cross the ocean, under the protectionof the latter——accordingly, at the end of the before mentioned fortnight, the dowager, John, Grace, and Jane, commenced their ride to Falmouth.

Jane had offered to accompany Grace, as a companion in her return, (it being expected Lady Chatterton would remain in the country with her daughter,) and her parents appreciating her motives, permitted the excursion, with a hope it would draw her thoughts from past events.

Although Grace shed a few tears at parting with Emily and her friends, it was impossible for Mrs. Moseley to be long unhappy, with the face of John smiling by her side; and they pursued their route uninterruptedly. In due season, they reached the port of their embarkation.

The following morning the packet got under weigh, and a favourable breeze soon wafted them out of sight of their native shores. The ladies were too much indisposed the first day to appear on the deck; but the weather becoming calm, and the sea smooth, Grace and Jane ventured out of the confinement of the state−room they shared between them, to respire the fresh air above.

There were but few passengers, and those chiefly ladies——the wives of officers on foreign stations, on their way to join their husbands; as these had been accustomed to moving in the world, their care and disposition to accommodate soon removed theawkwardness of a first meeting, and our travellers begun to be at home in their novel situation.

While Grace stood leaning on the arm of her husband, and clinging to his support, both from her affections and dread of the motion of the vessel, Jane had ventured with one of the ladies to attempt a walk round the deck of the ship; unaccustomed to such an uncertain foothold, the walkers had been prevented falling, by the kind interposition of a gentleman, who, for the first time, had shown himself among them, at that moment. The accident, and their situation, led to a conversation which was renewed at different times during their passage, and in some measure created an intimacy between our party and the stranger. He was addressed by the commander of the vessel as Mr. Harland; and Lady Chatterton exercised her ingenuity in the investigation of his history, and destination in his present journey——by which she made the following discovery:

The Rev. and Hon. Mr. Harland was the younger son of an Irish earl, who had early embraced his sacred profession in that church in which he held a valuable living in the gift of his father's family; his father was yet alive, and then at Lisbon with his mother and sister, in attendance on his elder brother, who had been sent there in a deep decline, by his physicians, a couple of months before. It had been the wish of his parents to have taken all their children with them;but the sense of duty in the young clergyman had kept him in the exercise of his office until a request of his dying brother, and the directions of his father, had caused him to hasten thither to witness the decease of the one, and afford the solace within his power to the others.

It may be easily imagined, the discovery, of the rank of this accidental acquaintance, with the almost certainty that existed, of his being heir to his father's honours, in no degree impaired his consequence in the eyes of the dowager; and it is certain, his visible anxiety and depressed spirits ——unaffected piety, and disinterested hopes, for his brother's recovery, no less elevated him in the opinions of her companions.

There was, at the moment, a kind of sympathy between Harland and Jane, notwithstanding the melancholy which gave rise to it proceeded from such very different causes; and as the lady, although with diminished bloom, retained all her personal charms, rather heightened than otherwise, by the softness of low spirits——the young clergyman sometimes relieved his apprehensions of his brother's death, by admitting the image of Jane in his moments of solitary reflection.

Their voyage was tedious, and some time before it was ended the dowager had given Grace an intimation of the probability there was of Jane's becoming, at some future day, a countess. Grace sincerely hoped that whatevershe became, she would be as happy as she thought all allied to John deserved to be.

They entered the bay of Lisbon early in the morning; and as the ship had been expected for some days, a boat came alongside with a note for Mr. Harland, before they had anchored; it apprised him of the death of his brother. The young man threw himself precipitately into it, and was soon employed in one of the loveliest offices of his vocation——−that of healing the wounds of the afflicted.

Lady Herriefield received her mother in a sort of sullen satisfaction; and her companions, with an awkwardness she could ill conceal. It required no great observation in the travellers to discover, that their arrival was entirely unexpected to the viscount——if it were not equally disagreeable; indeed, one day's residence under his roof assured them all, that no great degree of domestic felicity was ever an inmate of the dwelling.

From the moment Lord Herriefield became suspicious, that he had been the dupe of the management of Kate and her mother, he viewed every act of her's with a prejudiced eye. It was easy, with his knowledge of human nature, to detect the selfishness and wordly−mindedness of his wife; for as these were faults she was unconscious of possessing, so she was unguarded in her exposure of them; but her designs, in a matrimonial point of view, having ended with her marriage, had the viscount treated her with any of the courtesies due her sex and station, she might, with her disposition, have been contented in the enjoyment of rank and possession of wealth; but their more private hours were invariably rendered unpleasant, by the overflowings of her husband's resentment, at having been deceived in his judgment of the female sex.

There is no point upon which men are more tender than their privilege of suiting themselves in a partner for life, although many of both sexes are influenced, in this important selection, more by the wishes and whims of others than we suspect generally−yet as they imagine, what is the result of contrivance and management, is the election of free will and taste, so long as they are ignorant——−they are contented. But Lord Herriefield wanted the bliss of ignorance; and with his contempt of his wife, was mingled anger at his own want of foresight.

There are very few people who can tamely submit to self reproach; and as the cause of his irritated state of mind, was both present and completely within his power, the viscount seemed determined to give her as little reason to exult in the success of her plans as possible——jealous he was of her, from temperament−from bad association——and the want of confidence in the principles of his wife——−and the freedom of foreign manners had a tendency to excite this baneful passion to an unusual degree. It was thus abridged in her pleasures——reproached with motives she was incapable of harbouring, and disappointed in all those enjoyments, her mother had ever led her to believe as the invariable accompaniments of married life, where proper attention had been paid to the necessary qualifications of riches and rank——− that Kate had written to the dowager, with the hope, her presence might restrain, or her advice teach her successfully to oppose, the unfeeling conduct of the viscount.

As the Lady Chatterton had never implanted any of her favourite systems in her daughter so much by precept as the force of example in her own person, and indirect eulogiums on certain people who were endowed with those qualities and blessings she most admired——so, on the present occasion, Catherine did not unburthen herself in terms to her mother, but by a regular gradation of complaints, aimed more at the world than her husband——she soon let the knowing dowager see their application, and thus completely removed the veil from her domestic grievances.

The presence of John and Grace, with their example, for a short time awed the peer into dissembling of his disgusts for his spouse——but the ice once broken——their being auditors, soon ceased to affect either its frequency, or the severity of his remarks, when under its influence.

From such exhibitions of matrimonial discord, Grace shrunk timidly into the retirement of her room, and Jane, with dignity, would follow her example, while John, at times became a listener, with a spirit barely curbed within the bounds of prudence, and at others, sought in the company of his wife and sister, relief from the violence of his

feelings.

John never admired Catherine, or respected her, for the want of those very qualities, he chiefly loved in her sister; yet, as she was a woman, and one nearly connected with him——he found it impossible to remain quietly a spectator to the unmanly treatment she often received from her husband; he therefore made preparations for his return to England by the first packet, abridging his intended residence in Lisbon more than a month.

Lady Chatterton endeavoured all within her power to heal the breach between Kate and her husband, but it greatly exceeded her abilities; it was too late to implant such principles in her daughter, as by a long course of self−denial and submission, might have won the love of the viscount——−had the mother been acquainted with them herself—— so that having induced her child to marry with a view to obtaining precedence and a jointure, she once more sat to work to undo part of her former labours, by bringing about a decent separation between them, in such a manner as to secure to her child thepossession of her wealth, and the esteem of the world.

The latter, though certainly a somewhat difficult undertaking, was greatly lessened by the assistance of the former.

John was determined to seize the opportunity of his stay, to examine the environs of the city. It was in one of these daily rides, they met with their fellow traveller, Mr. now Lord Harland. He was rejoiced to find them again, and hearing of their intended departure, informed them of his being about to return to England, in the same vessel—— his parents and sister, contemplating ending the winter in Portugal.

The intercourse between the two families was kept up with a show of civilities between the noblemen, and much real goodwill on the part of the juniors of the circle, until the day arrived for the sailing of the packet.

Lady Chatterton was left with Catherine, as yet unable to circumvent her schemes with prudence——it being deemed by the world, a worse offence to separate, than to join together our children in the bands of wedlock.

The confinement of a vessel, is very propitious to those intimacies which lead to attachments; the necessity of being agreeable is a check upon the captious, and the desire to lessen the dulness of the scene, a stimulus to the lively; and though the noble divineand Jane could not possibly be ranked in either class——yet the effect was the same; the nobleman was much enamoured, and Jane unconsciously gratified——−it is true, love had never entered her thoughts in its direct and unequivocal form——but admiration is so consoling, to those labouring under self−condemnation, and flattery of a certain kind so very soothing to all, it is not to be wondered, she listened with increasing pleasure, to the interesting conversation of Harland on all occasions, and more particularly, as often happened, when exclusively addressed to herself.

Grace had, of late, reflected more seriously on the subject of her eternal welfare, than she had been accustomed to, in the house of her mother; and the example of Emily, with the precepts of Mrs. Wilson, had not been thrown away upon her——−it is a singular fact, that more women feel a disposition to religion soon after marriage, than at any other period of life——and whether it is, that having attained the most important station this life affords the sex, they are more willing to turn their thoughts to a provision for the next; or whether it be owing to any other cause, Mrs. Moseley was included in the number——she became sensibly touched with her situation, and as Harland was both devout and able, as well as anxious, to instruct, one of the party, at least, had cause to rejoice in the journey, for the remainder of her days——but precisely as Grace increased in her own faith, so did her anxiety after the welfare of her husband receive new excitement——and John, for the first time, became the cause of sorrow to his affectionate companion.

The deep interest Harland took in the opening conviction of Mrs. Moseley, did not so entirely engross his thoughts, as to prevent, the too frequent contemplation of the charms of her friend, for his own peace of mind—— and by the time the vessel had reached Falmouth, he had determined to make a tender of his hand and title, to the acceptance of Miss Moseley.——Jane did not love Egerton; on the contrary, she despised him——but the time had been, when all her romantic feelings——every thought of her brilliant imagination, had been filled with his image, and Jane felt it a species of indelicacy to admit the impression of another so soon, or even at all—— these objections would, in time, have been overcome, as her affections became more and more enlisted on behalf of Harland, had she admitted his addresses——but there was one impediment, Jane considered as insurmountable to a union with any man.

She had communicated her passion to its object——there had been the confidence of approved love, and she had now no heart for Harland, but one, that had avowedly been a slave to another——to conceal this from him would be unjust, and not reconcilable togood faith——to confess it, humiliating, and without the pale of

probability——−it was the misfortune of Jane to keep the world too constantly before her, and lose sight too much, of her really depraved nature, to relish the idea of humbling hereself so low, in the opinion of a fellow−creature; and the refusal of Harland's offer was the consequence——−although although she had begun to feel an esteem for him, that would, no doubt, have given rise to an attachment, in time, far stronger and more deeply seated than her fancy for Colonel Egerton had been.

If the horror of imposing on the credulity of Harland, a wounded heart, was creditable to Jane, and showed an elevation of character, that under proper guidance would have placed her in the first ranks of her sex; the pride which condemned her to a station nature did not design her for, was irreconcilable with the humility, a view of her condition could not fail to produce; and the second sad consequence of the indulgent weakness of her parents, was confirming their child in passions directly at variance with the first duties of a christian.

We have so little right to value ourselves on any thing, that we think pride a sentiment of very doubtful service, and certainly unable to effect any useful results which will not equally flow from good principles.

Harland was disappointed and grieved, butprudently judging that occupation and absence would remove recollections, which could not be very deep, they parted at Falmouth, and our travellers proceeded on their journey for B——, whither, during their absence, Sir Edward's family had returned to spend a month, before they removed to town for the residue of the winter.

The meeting of the two parties was warm and tender, and as Jane had many things to recount, and John as many to laugh at, their arrival threw a gayety round Moseley Hall it had for months been a stranger to.

One of the first acts of Grace, after her return, was to enter strictly into the exercise of all those duties, and ordinances, required by her church, and the present state of her mind——and from the hands of Dr. Ives she received her first communion at the altar.

As the season had now become far advanced, and the fashionable world had been some time assembled in the metropolis, the Baronet commenced his arrangements to take possession of his town−house, after an interval of nineteen years. John proceeded to the capital first, and the necessary domestics procured——−furniture supplied——−and other arrangements, usual to the appearance of a wealthy family in the world, completed; he returned with the information that all was ready for their triumphal entrance.

Sir Edward feeling a separation for so long a time, and at such an unusual distance, in thevery advanced age of Mr. Benfield, would be improper, paid him a visit, with the design of persuading him to make one of his family, for the next four months. Emily was his companion, and their solicitations were happily crowned with a success they had not anticipated——−for averse to a privation of Peter's society, the honest steward was included in the party.

"Nephew," said Mr. Benfield, beginning to waver in his objections to the undertaking, "there are instances of gentlemen, not in parliament, going to town in the winter, I know——you you are one yourself, and old Sir John Cowel, who never could get in, although he run for every city in the kingdom, never missed his winter in Soho. Yes, yes——the thing is admissible——but had I known your wishes before, I would certainly have kept my borough for the appearance of the thing—— besides," continued the old man shaking his head, "his Majesty's ministers require the aid of some more experienced members, in these critical times——what should an old man like me, do in the city, unless, aid his country with his advice?"

"Make his friends happy with his company, dear uncle," said Emily, taking his hand between both her own, and smiling affectionately on the old gentleman, as she spoke,

"Ah! Emmy dear?"——cried Mr. Benfield, looking on her with melancholy pleasure:—— "You are not to be resisted——just such anotheras the sister of my old friend Lord Gosford. She could always coax me out of any thing. I remember now, I heard the Earl, tell her once, he could not afford to buy a pair of diamond ear−rings; and she looked so—— only look'd——did not speak! Emmy!——that I bought them, with intent to present them to her myself.

"And did she take them! Uncle?" said his niece, in a little surprise."

"Oh yes! When I told her if she did not, I would throw them in the river, as no one else should wear what had been intended for her——poor soul! how delicate and unwilling she was. I had to convince her they cost, three hundred pounds, before she would listen to it, and then she thought it such a pity to throw away a thing of so much value. It would have been wicked, you know, Emmy dear. And she was much opposed to wickedness and sin in any shape."

"She must have been a very unexceptionable character indeed," cried the Baronet, with a smile, as he proceeded to make the necessary orders for their journey. But we must resume our narrative with the party we left at Bath.

CHAPTER XI.

The letters of Lady Laura informed her friends, that herself and Col. Denbigh, had decided to remain with his uncle, until his recovery was perfect, and then proceed to Denbigh Castle, to meet the Duke and his sister, during the approaching holy−days.

Emily was much relieved by this postponement of an interview, she would gladly have avoided for ever; and her aunt sincerely rejoiced that her niece was allowed more time to eradicate impressions, she saw, with pain, her charge had yet a struggle to overcome.

There were so many points to admire in the character of Denbigh; his friends spoke of him with such decided partiality; Dr. Ives, in his frequent letters, alluded to him with so much affection, that Emily had frequently detected herself, in weighing the testimony of his guilt, and indulging the expectation, that circumstances had deceived them all, in their judgment of his conduct. Then his marriage would cross her mind, and, with the conviction of the impropriety of admitting him to her thoughts at all, would come the collective mass of testimony, which had accumulated against him.

Derwent served greatly to keep alive the recollections of his person, however; and, as Lady Harriet seemed to live only in the societyof the Moseley's, not a day passed without giving the Duke some opportunity of indirectly preferring his suit.

Emily not only appeared, but in fact was, unconscious of his admiration, and entered into their amusements with a satisfaction that took its rise in the belief, the unfortunate attachment her cousin Chatterton had once professed for herself, was forgotten in the more certain enjoyments of a successful love.

Lady Harriet was a woman of very different manners and character from Emily Moseley; yet, had she in a great measure erased the impressions made by the beauty of his kinswoman, from the bosom of the Baron.

Chatterton, under the depression of his first disappointment, it will be remembered, had left B——in company with Mr. Denbigh.

The interest of the Duke had been unaccountably exerted to procure him the place he had so long solicited in vain, and gratitude required his early acknowledgments for the favour.

His manner, so very different from a successful applicant for a valuable office, had struck both Derwent and his sister as singular. Before, however, a week's intercourse had passed between them, his own frankness, had made them acquainted with the cause, and a double wish prevailed in the bosom of Lady Harriet——to know the woman who couldresist the beauty of Chatterton, and to relieve him, from the weight imposed on his spirits, by disappointed affection.

The manners of Lady Harriet Denbigh, were not in the least forward or masculine; but they had the freedom of high rank and condition, with a good deal of the ease of fashionable life.

Mrs. Wilson would have noticed, moreover, in her conduct to Chatterton, a something exceeding the interest of ordinary communications in their situation, which might possibly have been attributed to feeling, more than manner. It is certain, one of his surest methods to drive Emily from his thoughts, was to dwell on the perfections of some other lady; and Lady Harriet was so constantly before him in his visit into Westmoreland—— so soothing——so evidently pleased with his presence, that the Baron made rapid advances in attaining his object.

He had alluded, in his letter to Emily, to the obligation he was under to the services of Denbigh, in erasing his unfortunate partiality for her.——

But what those services were, we are unable to say, unless the usual arguments of the plainest dictates of good sense, on such occasions, enforced in the singularly, insinuating, and kind manner which distinguished that gentleman. In fact, Lord Chatterton was not formed by nature to lovelong, deprived of hope——−or to resist long, the flattery of a preferencefrom such a woman as Harriet Denbigh.

On the other hand, Derwent was warm in his encomiums on Emily, to all but herself; and Mrs. Wilson had again thought it prudent, to examine into the state of her feelings, in order to discover if there was danger of his unremitted efforts to please, drawing Emily into a connection, neither her religion or prudence could wholly approve.

Derwent was a man of the world——and a christian only in name; and the cautious widow determined to

withdraw in season, should she find grounds, for her apprehensions to rest upon.

It was about ten days after the departure of the Dowager and her companions, that Lady Harriet exclaimed, in one of her morning visits:——"Lady Moseley! I have now hopes of presenting to you soon, the most polished nobleman in the kingdom?"

"As a husband! Lady Harriet?" inquired the other, with a smile.

"Oh no!——only a cousin!——a second cousin! madam!" replied Lady Harriet, blushing a little, and looking in the opposite direction to the one Chatterton was placed in.

"But his name?——You forget our curiosity!——What is his name?" cried Mrs. Wilson; entering into the trifling for the moment.

"Pendennyss, to be sure, my dear madam; who else can I mean," said Lady Harriet, recovering her self−possession.

"And you expect the Earl at Bath?" said Mrs. Wilson, eagerly.

"He has given us hopes——and Derwent has written him to−day, pressing the journey," was the answer.

"You will be disappointed——I am afraid, sister," said the Duke. "Pendennyss has become so fond of Wales of late, that it is difficult to get him out of it."

"But," said Mrs. Wilson, "he will take his seat in parliament during the winter, my Lord?"

"I hope he will, madam; though Lord Eltringham holds his proxies in my absence, in all important questions before the house."

"Your Grace will attend, I trust," said Sir Edward. "The pleasure of your company is amongst my expected enjoyments in the town."

"You are very good, Sir Edward;" replied the Duke, looking at Emily. "It will somewhat depend on circumstances, I believe."

Lady Harriet smiled, and the speech seemed understood by all, but the lady most concerned in it, as Mrs. Wilson proceeded:——

"Lord Pendennyss is an universal favourite"——"and deservedly so," cried the Duke. "He has set an example to the nobility, which few are equal to imitating. An only son, with an immense estate,——−he has devoted himself to the profession of a soldier, and gained great reputation by it inthe world; nor has he neglected any of his private duties as a man——"

"Or a christian, I hope," said Mrs. Wilson, delighted with the praises of the earl.

"Nor of a christian, I believe," continued the duke; "he appears consistent, humble, and sincere; three requisites, I believe, for his profession."

"Does not your grace know," said Emily, with a benevolent smile——−Derwent coloured slightly as he answered,

"Not as well as I ought; but"——−lowering his voice for her ear alone, he added, "under proper instruction, I think I might learn."

"Then I would recommend that book to you, my lord," rejoined Emily, with a blush, pointing to a pocket bible which lay near her, and still ignorant of the allusion he meant to convey.

"May I ask the honour of an audience of Miss Moseley," said Derwent, in the same low tone, "whenever her leisure will admit of her granting the favour."

Emily was surprised; but from the previous conversation, and the current of her thoughts at the moment, supposing his communication had some reference to the subject before them, rose from her chair, and unobtrusively, but certainly with an air of perfect innocence and composure, went into the adjoining room, the door of which was open very near them.

Caroline Harris had abandoned all ideas of a coronet, with the departure of the Marquessof Eltringham and his sisters for their own seat; and as a final effort of her fading charms, had begun to calculate the capabilities of Captain Jarvis, who had at this time honoured Bath with his company.

It is true, the lady would have greatly preferred her father's neighbour, but that was an irretrievable step——he had retired, disgusted with her haughty dismissal of his hopes, and was a man who, although he greatly admired her fortune, was not to be recalled by any beck or smile which might grow out of her caprice.

Lady Jarvis had, indeed, rather magnified the personal qualifications of her son, but the disposition they had manifested, to devote some of their surplus wealth, to the purchasing a title, had great weight; for Miss Harris

would cheerfully, at any time, have sacrificed one half her own fortune to be called my lady. Jarvis would make but a shabby looking lord, 'tis true; but then what a lord's wife would she not make herself:——−His father was a merchant, to be sure, but then merchants were always immensely rich, and a few thousand pounds, properly applied, might make the merchant's son a baron——− she therefore resolved to inquire, the first opportunity, into the condition of the sinking fund of his plebeianism——−and had serious thoughts of contributing her mite towards the advancement of the desired object, did she find it within the bounds of probable success. An occasion soon offered, by the invitation of the Captain, to accompany him, in an excursion in the tilbury of his brother in law.

In this ride they passed the equipages of Lady Harriet and Mrs. Wilson, with their respective mistresses taking an airing. In passing the latter, Jarvis had bowed, (for he had renewed his acquaintance at the rooms without daring to visit at the lodgings of Sir Edward,) and Miss Harris had taken notice of both parties as they dashed by them.

"You know the Moseleys, Caroline?" said Jarvis, with the freedom her own and his manners had established between them.

"Yes," replied the lady, drawing her head back from a view of the carriages, "what fine arms those of the Duke's are——−and the coronet, it is so noble——so rich——I am sure if I were a man," laying great emphasis on the word——"I would be a Lord."

"If you could, you mean," cried the Captain, with a laugh.

"Could——why money will buy a title, you know——only most people are fonder of their cash than honour."

"That's right," said the unreflecting Captain, "money is the thing after all——now what do you suppose our last mess−bill came to?"

"Oh dont talk of eating and drinking," cried Miss Harris, in affected aversion, "it is beneath the consideration of nobility."

"Then any one may be a Lord for me," said Jarvis, drily, "if they are not to eatand drink——−why what do we live for, but such sort of things."

"A soldier lives to fight, and gain honour and distinction"——for his wife——Miss Harris would have added, had she spoken all she thought.

"A poor way that, of spending a man's time," said the Captain; "now there is a Captain Jones in our regiment, they say, loves fighting as much as eating; but if he does, he is a blood−thirsty fellow."

"You know how intimate I am with your dear mother," continued the lady, bent on her principal object, "she has made me acquainted with her greatest wish."

"Her greatest wish!" cried the Captain, in astonishment, "why what can that be——a new coach and horses?"

"No, I mean one much dearer to us——I should say, her——than any such trifles; she has told me of the plan."

"Plan," said Jarvis, still in wonder, "what plan?"

"About the fund for the peerage, you know——of course the thing is scared with me ——as, indeed, I am equally interested with you all, in its success."

Jarvis eyed her with a knowing look, and as she concluded, rolling his eyes in an expression of significance, he said——

"What, serve Sir William some such way, eh?"

"I will assist a little, if it be necessary,Henry," said the lady, tenderly, "although my mite cannot amount to a great deal."

During this speech, the Captain was wondering what she could mean, but, having had a suspicion from something that had fallen from his mother, the lady was intended for him as a wife, and she might be as great a dupe as the former, he was resolved to know the whole, and act accordingly.

"I think it might be made to do," he replied, evasively, to discover the extent of his companion's information.

"Do," cried Miss Harris, with fervour, "it cannot fail——how much do you suppose will be wanting to buy a barony, for instance?"

"Hem!" said Jarvis, "you mean more than we have already?"

"Certainly."

"Why, about a thousand pounds, I think, will do it, with what we have," said Jarvis, affecting to calculate.

"Is that all," cried the delighted Caroline; and the captain grew in an instant, in her estimation, three inches higher;——quite noble in his air, and, in short, very tolerably handsome.

From that moment, Miss Harris, in her own mind, had fixed the fate of Captain Jarvis; and had determined to be his wife, whenever——she could persuade him to offer himself——a thing she had no doubt of accomplishing with comparative ease;——not so theCaptain——like all weak men, there was nothing he stood more in terror of than ridicule; he had heard the manœuvres of Miss Harris laughed at by many of the young men in Bath, and was by no means disposed to add himself to the food for mirth to these wags; and, indeed, had cultivated her acquaintance; with a kind of bravado to some of his bottle companions, of his ability to oppose all her arts, when most exposed to them——for, it is one of the greatest difficulties, to the success of this description of ladies, that their characters soon become suspected, and do them infinitely more injury, than all their skill in the art, does them good in their vocation.

With these views in the respective champions, the campaign opened, and the lady on her return, acquainted his mother, with the situation of the privy purse, that was to promote her darling child to the enviable distinction of the peerage——indeed, Lady Jarvis was for purchasing a baronetcy with what they had, under the impression, that when ready for another promotion, they would only have to pay the difference, as they did in the army, when he received his captaincy ——−as, however, the son was opposed to any arrangement, that might make the producing the few hundred pounds he had obtained from his mother's folly, necessary——−she was obliged to postpone the wished−for day, until their united efforts could compass the means of effecting it——−as an earnest, however, ofher spirit in the cause, she gave him a fifty pound note, that morning obtained from her husband; and which the Captain lost at one throw of the dice, to his brother−in−law, the same evening.

During the preceding events, Egerton had either studiously avoided all danger of collision with the Moseleys, or his engagements confined him to such very different scenes——− they never met.

The Baronet had felt his presence a reproach, and Lady Moseley, rejoiced that Egerton yet possessed sufficient shame to keep him from insulting her with his company.

It was a month after the departure of Lady Chatterton, that Sir Edward returned to B——; as related in the preceding chapter——−and the arrangements for the London winter were commenced.

The day preceding their leaving Bath, the engagements of Chatterton with Lady Harriet were made public amongst their mutual friends——−and an intimation given that their nuptials would be celebrated, before the family of the Duke left his seat for the capital.

Something of the pleasure, she had for a long time been a stranger to, was felt by Emily Moseley, as the well−remembered tower of the village church of B—— struck her sight, on their return from their protracted excursion in pursuit of pleasure——− more than four months had elapsed, sincethey had commenced their travels, and in that period, what change of sentiments had she not witnessed in others——−of opinions of mankind in general, and of one individual in particular, had she not experienced in her own person——the benevolent smiles, the respectful salutations they received, in passing the little group of houses which, clustered round the church, had obtained the name of "the village," conveyed a sensation of delight, that can only be felt by the deserving and virtuous——and the smiling faces, in several instances glistening with tears, which met them at the Hall, gave ample testimony to the worth, of both the master and his servants.

Francis and Clara were in waiting to receive them, and a very few minutes had elapsed, before the rector and Mrs. Ives, having heard they had passed, drove in also—— in saluting the different members of the family, Mrs. Wilson noticed the startled look of the Doctor, as the change in Emily's appearance first met his eyes——her bloom, if not gone, was greatly diminished, and it was only when under the excitement of strong emotions, that her face possessed that character of joy and feeling, which had so eminently distinguished it, before her late journey.

"Where did you last see my friend George?" said the Doctor to Mrs. Wilson, in the course of the first afternoon, as he tooka seat by her side, apart from the rest of the family.

"At L——," said Mrs. Wilson, gravely, in reply.

"L——," cried the doctor, in evident amazement——−"Was he not at Bath, then, during your stay there?"

No——I understand he was in attendance on some sick relative, which detained him from his friends there," said Mrs. Wilson, wondering why the Doctor chose to introduce, so delicate a topic, between them——his guilt in relation to Mrs. Fitzgerald, he was doubtless ignorant of, but surely not of his marriage.

"It is now sometime since I heard from him," continued the Doctor, regarding Mrs. Wilson expressively, but to which the lady only replied with a gentle inclination of the body——and the Rector, after pausing a moment, continued:

"You will not think me impertinent, if I am bold enough to ask, has George ever expressed a wish to become connected with your niece, by other ties than those of friendship?"

"He did," answered the widow, after a little hesitation.

"He did, and——"

"Was refused," continued Mrs. Wilson, with a slight feeling for the dignity of her sex, which for a moment, caused her to lose sight of justice to Denbigh.

Dr. Ives was silent——but manifested, by his dejected countenance, the interest he had taken in this anticipated connection——−and as Mrs. Wilson had spoken with ill−concealed reluctance on the subject at all, the Rector did not attempt a renewal of the disagreeable subject, though she saw for some time afterwards, whenever the baronet or his wife mentioned the name of Denbigh, the eyes of the Rector were turned on them in intense interest.

CHAPTER XII.

"Stevenson has returned, and I certainly must hear from Harriet," exclaimed the sister of Pendennyss, with great animation, as she stood at a window, watching the return of a servant, from the neighbouring post−office.

"I am afraid," rejoined the Earl, who was seated by the breakfast table, waiting the leisure of the lady to give him his dish of tea——− "You find Wales very dull, sister. I sincerely hope both Derwent and Harriet will not forget their promise of visiting us this month."

The lady slowly took her seat at the table, engrossed in her own reflections, as the man entered with his budget of news; and having deposited sundry papers and letters, respectfully withdrew. The Earl glanced his eyes over the directions of the epistles, and turning to his servants, said, "answer the bell, when called." Three or four liveried footmen deposited their silver salvers, and different implements of servitude, and the peer and his sister were left by themselves.

"Here is one from the Duke to me, and one for your ladyship from his sister," said the brother smiling; "I propose they be read aloud for our mutual advantage;" to which the lady, whose curiosity to hear the contents of Derwent's letter, greatly exceeded his interest in that of the sister, cheerfully acquiesced, and her brother first broke the seal of his, and read aloud its contents as follows:

"Notwithstanding my promise of seeing you this month in Caernarvonshire, I remain here yet——my dear Pendennyss——unable to tear myself from the attractions I have found in this city; although the pleasure of their contemplation, has been purchased at the expense of mortified feelings, and unrequited affections. It is a truth, (though possibly difficult to be believed,) this mercenary age has produced a female, disengaged, young, and by no means very rich, who has refused a jointure of six thousand a year, with the privilege of walking at a coronation, within a dozen of royalty itself."

Here, the accidental falling of a cup from the hands of the fair listener, caused some little interruption to the reading of the brother; but as the lady, with a good deal of trepidation, and many blushes, apologised hastily for the confusion her awkwardness had made, the Earl continued to read——−"I could almost worship her independence; for I know the wishes of both her parents were for my success. I confess to you freely, that my vanity has been a good deal hurt, as I really thought myself agreeable to her; she certainly listened to my conversation, and admitted my approaches, with more satisfaction, than those of any of the other men around her; and when I ventured to hint to her this circumstance, assome justification for my presumption, she frankly acknowledged the truth of my impression, and without explaining the reasons for her conduct, deeply regretted the construction I had been led to place upon the circumstance. Yes, my lord, I felt it necessary to apologise to Emily Moseley, for presuming to aspire to the honour of possessing so much loveliness and virtue. The accidental advantages of rank and wealth, lose all their importance, when opposed to her delicacy, ingenuousness, and unaffected principles.

"I have heard it intimated lately, that George Denbigh was, in some way or other, instrumental in saving her life once, and that to her gratitude, and my resemblance to the colonel, am I indebted to a consideration with Miss Moseley, which, although it has been the means of buoying me up with false hopes, I can never regret, from the pleasure her society has afforded me. I have remarked, on my mentioning his name to her, she showed unusual emotion; and as Denbigh is already a husband, and myself rejected, the field is now fairly open to your lordship. You will enter on your enterprise with great advantage, as you have the same flattering resemblance; and, if any thing, the voice, which I am told is our greatest recommendation with the ladies, in greater perfection than either George or your humble servant."

Here the reader stopped of his own accord, and was so intently absorbed in his meditations, that the almost breathless curiosity of his sister, was obliged to find relief by desiring him to proceed: roused by the sound of her voice, the earl changed colour sensibly, and continued:

"But to be serious on a subject of great importance to my future life, (for I sometimes think, her negative has made Denbigh a duke,) the lovely girl did not appear happy at the time of our interview, nor do I think enjoys at any time, the spirits nature has evidently given her. Harriet is nearly as great an admirer of Miss Moseley, and takes her refusal at heart as much as myself——−she even attempted to intercede with her, on my behalf. But the

charming girl, though mild, grateful, and delicate, was firm and unequivocal, and left no grounds for the remotest expectation of success, from perseverance on my part.

"As Harriet had received an intimation, that both Miss Moseley and her aunt, entertained extremely rigid notions on the score of religion, she took occasion to introduce the subject in her conference with the former, and was told in reply, 'that other considerations would have determined her to decline the honour I intended her; but, that under any circumstances, a more intimate knowledge of my principles would be necessary, before she could entertain a thought of accepting my hand, or indeed that of any other man.' Think of that——−Pendennyss. The principles of a Duke!——now a dukedom and forty thousand a year, would furnish a character with most people, for a Nero.

"I trust the important object I have kept in view here, is a sufficient excuse for my breach of promise to you; and I am serious when I wish you, (unless the pretty Spaniard has, as I sometimes suspect, made a captive of you) to see, and endeavour to bring me in some degree, connected with the charming family of Sir Edward Moseley.

"The aunt, Mrs. Wilson, often speaks of you with the greatest interest, and from some cause or other, is strongly enlisted in your favour, and Miss Moseley hears your name mentioned with evident pleasure. Your religion or principles, cannot be doubted. You can offer larger settlements——−as honourable, it not as elevated a title——−a far more illustrious name, purchased by your own services——and personal merit, greatly exceeding the pretensions of your assured friend and relative,

—— DERWENT."

Both brother and sister were occupied with their own reflections, for several minutes after the letter was ended; and the silence was broken first, by the latter saying, with a low tone to her brother——−

"You must endeavour to become acquainted with Mrs. Wilson; she is, I know, very anxious to see you, and your friendship for the General requires it of you."

"I owe Gen. Wilson much," replied the brother in a melancholy voice; "and when we go to Annerdale House, I wish you to make the acquaintance with the ladies of the Moseley family, should they be in town this winter——−but you have the letter of Harriet to read yet." After first hastily running over its contents, the lady commenced the fulfilment of her part of the agreement.

"Frederic has been so much engrossed of late with his own affairs, that he has forgotten there is such a creature in existence as his sister, or indeed, any one else, but a Miss Emily Moseley, and consequently I have been unable to fulfil my promise of a visit, for want of a proper escort to see me into Wales, and——−and——−perhaps some other considerations, not worth mentioning in a letter, I know you will read to the earl.

"Yes, my dear cousin, Frederic Denbigh, has supplicated the daughter of a country baronet, to become a dutchess; and hear it, ye marriage−seeking nymphs and marriage−making dames! has supplicated in vain!

"I confess to you, when the thing was first in agitation, my aristocratic blood roused itself a little at the anticipated connexion; but finding, on examination, Sir Edward was of no doubtful lineage, and the blood of the Chattertons runs in his veins, and finding the young lady every thing that I could wish in a sister, my proud scruples soon disappeared with the folly that engendered them.

"There was no necessity for any alarm, for the lady very decidedly refused the honour offered her by Derwent, and what makes the matter worse, refused the solicitations of his sister also.

"I have fifty times been surprised at myself, for my condescension, and to this moment am at a loss to know, whether it was to the lady's worth——my brother's happiness——or the Chatterton blood——that I finally yielded. Heigho! this Chatterton is certainly much too handsome for a man; but I forget, you have never seen him." (Here an arch smile stole over the features of the listener, as his sister continued)——−"to return to my narration——I had half a mind to send for a Miss Harris there is here, to learn the most approved fashion of a lady's preferring a suit, but as fame said she was just now practising on a certain hero, yclep'd Captain Jarvis, heir to Sir Timo——−of of that name, it struck me her system might be rather too abrupt, so I was fain to adopt the best plan, that of trusting to nature and my own feelings for words.

"Nobility is certainly a very pretty thing, (for those who have it,) but I would defy the old Margravine of ——, to keep up the semblance of superiority with Emily Moseley. She is so very natural——−so very beautiful——−and and withal at times a little arch, that one is afraid to set up any other distinctions, than such as can be fairly supported.

"I commenced with hoping her determination, to reject the hand of Frederic wasnot an unalterable one. (Yes, I called him Frederic, what I never did out of my own family before in my life.) There was a considerable tremor in the voice of Miss Moseley, as she replied, 'I now perceive, when too late, that my indiscretion has given reason to my friends to think, that I have entertained opinions of his Grace and thoughts for the future. I entreat you to believe me, Lady Harriet, I am innocent of——−indeed——−indeed as any thing more than an agreeable acquaintance, I have never allowed myself to think of your brother'——and from my soul I believe her——we continued our conversation for half an hour longer——−and such was the ingenuousness——delicacy——and high religious feeling displayed by the charming girl, that if I entered the room with a spark of regret, I was compelled to solicit another to favour my brother's love——−I left it with a stronger feeling that my efforts had been unsuccessful——−Yes! thou peerless sister of the more peerless Pendennyss! I once thought of your ladyship for a wife to Derwent——"

A glass of water was necessary, to enable the reader to clear her voice, which grew husky from speaking so long.

"But I now openly avow——neither your birth——−your hundred thousand pounds——−or your merit——−would put you on a footing, in my estimation, with my Emily——−you may form some idea of her power to captivate, and indifference to her conquests——when I mention that she once refused——−but, I forget,you don't know him, and therefore cannot be a judge——the thing is finally decided, and we shortly go into Westmoreland, and next week, the Moseleys return to Northamptonshire——−I don't know when I shall be able to visit you, and think I may now safely invite you to Denbigh Castle, although a month ago I might have hesitated——love to the Earl, and kind assurances to yourself, of unalterable regard.

—— "Harriet Denbigh."

"P.S. I believe I forgot to mention, that Mrs. Moseley, a sister of Lord Chatterton, has gone to Portugal, and that the Baron himself, is to go into the country, with us—— there is, I suppose, a fellow−feeling between them just now——though I do not think Chatterton looks so very miserable as he might. ——−Adieu."

On the ending this second epistle, the same silence, which had succeeded the reading of the first, prevailed, until the lady, with an arch expression, interrupted it by saying,

"Harriet will, I think, soon grace the peerage."

"And happily, I trust," replied the brother.

"Do you know Lord Chatterton?"

"I do; he is very amiable, and admirably calculated to contrast with the lively gayety of Harriet Denbigh."

"You believe in loving our opposites, Isee," rejoined the Lady; and then affectionately stretching out her hand to him, she added, "but Pendennyss, you must give me for a sister, one as nearly like yourself as possible."

"That might please your affections," answered the Earl with a smile, "but how would it comport with my tastes——−will you suffer me to describe the kind of man you are to select for your future lord——−unless you have decided the point already."

The lady coloured violently, and appearing anxious to change the subject, tumbled over two or three unopened letters on the table, as she cried eagerly,

"Here is one from the Donna Julia." The Earl instantly broke the seal, and read aloud——no secrets existing between them in relation to their mutual friend.

"My Lord,

"I hasten to write to you, what I know will give you pleasure to hear, concerning my future prospects in life. My uncle, General M'Carthy, has written me the cheerful tidings, that my father has consented to receive his only child, without any other sacrifice, than a condition, of attending the public service of the Catholic Church——without any professions on my side, or even an understanding, that I am conforming to its peculiar tenets——−this may be, in some measure, irksome at times, and, possibly, distressing——but the worship of God, with a proper humiliation of spirit, I have learnt to consider as a privilege to us here——−and I owe a duty to my earthly father, of penitence and care, in his later years, that will justify the measure in the eyes of my heavenly one.——−I have, therefore, acquainted my uncle in reply, that I am willing to attend the Condé's summons, at any moment he will choose to make them, and thought it a debt due your care and friendship, to apprise your lordship of my approaching departure from this country; indeed, I have great reasons for believing, that your kind and unremitted efforts to attain this object, have already prepared you to expect this result.

"I feel it will be impossible to quit England without seeing yourself and sister——−to thank you for the many——very many favours, of both a temporal and eternal nature, you have been the agents of confering on me; the cruel suggestions, which I dreaded, and which it appears, had reached the ears of my friends in Spain, have prevented my troubling your lordship, of late, with my concerns unnecessarily.——−The consideration, of a friend to your character, (Mrs. Wilson,) has removed the necessity of my inexperience applying for your advice ——−She, and her charming niece, Miss Emily Moseley, have been, next to yourselves, the greatest solace I have had in my exile——and united, you will be remembered in myprayers——I will merely mention here, defering the explanation until I see you in London, that I have been visited by the wretch, from whom you delivered me in Portugal, and the means of ascertaining his name have fallen into my hands——−you will be the best judge of the proper steps to be taken——− but I wish, by all means, something may be done, to prevent his attempting to see me in Spain——−should it be discovered to my relations there, it would certainly terminate in his death, and, possibly, my disgrace.——−Wishing you, and your kind sister, all possible happiness, I remain your Lordship's obliged friend,

"Julia Fitzgerald."

"Oh!" cried the sister as concluding the letter, "we must certainly see her before she goes——what a wretch that persecutor of her must be——how persevering in his villainy."

"He does exceed my ideas of effrontery," said the Earl, in great warmth——"but he may offend too far; the laws shall interpose their power to defeat his schemes, should he ever repeat them."

"He attempted to take your life, brother," said the lady, shuddering——"if I remember the tale aright."

"Why, I have endeavoured to free him from that imputation," rejoined the brother musing——"he certainly fired a pistol, but it hit my horse at such a distance from myself, that I believe his object was to disable me from pursuit, and not murder;——his escape has astonished me;——he must have fled by himself into the woods, as Harmer was but at a short distance behind me, admirably mounted, on one of my chargers, and the escort was up, and in full pursuit, within ten minutes; after all, it may be for the best he was not taken, for I am persuaded the dragoons would have sabred him on the spot——and he may have parents of respectability, or a wife to kill, by the knowledge of his misconduct."

"This Emily Moseley must be a faultless being," cried his sister, as she run over the contents of Julia's letter to herself. "Three different letters, and each one containing her praises."

The Earl made no reply, but opening the Duke's letter again, appeared to be closely studying its contents. His colour slightly changed as he dwelt on the sense of its passages, and turning to his sister, he inquired with a smile, "if she had a mind to try the air of Westmoreland, for a couple of weeks or a month."

"As you say, my Lord"——replied the lady with cheeks of scarlet.

"Then I say, we will go. I wish much to see Derwent, and I somewhat think, there will be a wedding during our visit." He rang the bell, and the almost untasted breakfast was removed in a few minutes. A servant announced his horse in readiness. The Earlwished his sister a friendly good morning, and proceeded to the door, where was standing one of the noble black horses before mentioned, held by a groom, and the military looking attendant, ready mounted, on the other.

Throwing himself into the saddle, the young peer rode gracefully from the door, followed by no one but his attendant horseman. During this ride, the master suffered his steed to take whatever course most pleased himself, and his follower looked up in surprise more than once, to see the careless manner the Earl of Pendennyss, confessedly one of the best horsemen in Spain, managed the noble animal he rode. Having, however, got without the gates of his own park, and into the vicinity of numberless cottages and farm houses, the master recovered his recollection, and the man ceased to wonder.

For three hours the equestrians pursued their course through the beautiful vale, which opened gracefully opposite one of the fronts of the castle; and if faces of smiling welcome—— inquiries after his own and his sisters welfare, which evidently sprung from the heart—— or the most familiar but respectful representations of their own prosperity or misfortunes, gave any testimony of the feelings entertained by the tenantry of this noble estate for their landlord, the situation of the young nobleman might be justly considered one to be envied.

As the hour for dinner approached, theyturned the heads of their horses towards home; and on entering the park, removed from the scene of industry and activity, without, the Earl relapsed into his fit of musing. But a short distance from the house he suddenly called, "Harmer;" the man threw his spurs into the loins of his horse, and in

an instant was by the side of his master, which he signified by raising his hand to his cap with the palm opening outward. "You must prepare to go to Spain, when required, in attendance on Mrs. Fitzgerald."

The man received his order, with the indifference of one used to adventures and movements, and having laconically signified his assent, drew his horse back again, into his station in the rear.

CHAPTER XIII.

The day succeeding the arrival of the Moseley's, at the seat of their ancestors, Mrs. Wilson observed Emily silently putting on her pelisse, and walking out unattended by either of the domestics, or any of the family. There was a peculiar melancholy in her air and manner, that inclined the cantious aunt, to suspect her charge was bent on the indulgence of some ill−judged weakness; more particularly, as the direction she took led to the arbour——a theatre where Denbigh had been so conspicuous an actor. Hastily throwing a cloak over her own shoulders, Mrs. Wilson followed Emily, with the double purpose of ascertaining her views, and, if necessary, interposing her own authority against the repetition of similar excursions.

As Emily approached the arbour, whither in truth she had directed her steps, its faded vegetation and chilling aspect, so different from its verdure and luxuriance, when she last saw it, came over her heart as a symbol of her own blighted prospects and deadened affections;——the recollections of Denbigh's conduct on that spot——his general benevolence and assiduity to please, herself in particular, being forcibly recalled to her mind at the instant——forgetful of her object in visiting the arbour, Emily yielded for the moment to her sensibilities, and sunk on the seat, weeping as if her heart would break.

She had not time to dry her eyes, and collect her scattered thoughts under the alarm of approaching footsteps, before Mrs. Wilson entered the arbour. Eying her niece for a moment with a sternness unusual for the one to adopt, or the other to receive——she said,

"It is a solemn obligation we owe our religion and ourselves, to endeavour to suppress such passions as are incompatible with our professions. And there is no weakness greater than blindly adhering to the wrong, when we are convinced of our error——it is as fatal to good morals, as it is unjust to ourselves, to persevere, from selfish motives, in believing those innocent, whom evidence has convicted as guilty. Many a weak woman has sealed her own misery by such wilful obstinacy, aided by the unpardonable vanity, of believing herself able to control a man, the laws of God could not restrain."

"Oh, dear Madam, speak not so unkindly to me," sobbed the weeping girl, "I——−I am guilty of no such weakness, I assure you;" and looking up with an air of profound resignation and piety, she continued, "Here, on this spot where he saved my life, I was about to offer up my prayers for his conviction of the error of his ways, and the pardon of his too——too heavy transgressions."

Mrs. Wilson, softened almost to tears herself, viewed her for a moment with a mixture of delight, at her pious fervor, and pity, for the frailties of nature, which bound her so closely in the bonds of feeling, as she continued in a milder tone——−

"I believe you, my dear. I am certain, although you may have loved Denbigh much, you love your Maker and his ordinances more; and I have no apprehensions, that were he a disengaged man, and you alone in the world——−unsupported by any thing but your sense of duty——−you would ever so far forget yourself, as to become his wife. But does not your religion——−does not your own usefulness in society, require you wholly to free your heart, from the power of a man, who has so unworthily usurped a dominion over it."

To this Emily replied in a hardly audible voice, "Certainly——−and I pray constantly for it."

"It is well, my love," said the aunt soothingly, "you cannot fail with such means, and your own exertions, finally to prevail over your own worst enemies——−your passions. The task our sex has to sustain is, at the best, an arduous one; but so much the greater is our credit——−if we do it well."

"Oh! how is an unguided girl ever to judge right in her choice, if," cried Emily, clasping her hands and speaking with great energy——−and she would have said,——−"onelike Denbigh in appearance, be so vile." But shame kept her silent.

"Few men can support such a veil of hypocrisy, as with which I sometimes think Denbigh must deceive even himself. His case is an extraordinary exception to a very sacred rule——−'that the tree is known by its fruits,'" replied her aunt. "There is no safer way of judging of characters, your opportunities will not admit of more closely investigating, than by examining into, and duly appreciating, early impressions. The man or woman, who have constantly seen the practice of piety before them, from infancy to the noon of life, will seldom so far abandon the recollection of virtue, as to be guilty of great enormities. Even divine truth has promised, that his blessings or his

curses, shall extend to many generations. It is true, that with our most guarded prudence, we may be deceived." Mrs. Wilson paused and sighed heavily, as her own case, connected with the loves of Denbigh and her niece, occurred strongly to her mind: "yet," she continued, "we may lessen the danger much, by guarding against it; and it seems to me, no more than self−preservation requires, in a young woman. But for a religious parent to neglect it, is a wilful abandonment of a most solemn duty."

As Mrs. Wilson concluded, her neice, who had recovered the command of her feelings, pressed her hand in silence to her lips, andshewed a disposition to retire from a spot, she found recalled too many recollections of a man, whose image it was her imperious duty to banish, on every consideration, of propriety or religion.

Their walk into the house was a silent one ——−and their thoughts drawn from the unpleasant topic, by finding a letter from Julia, announcing her intended departure from this country, and her wish of taking her leave of them in London, before she sailed. As she had mentioned the probable day of that event, both the ladies were delighted to find it was posterior to the time, fixed by Sir Edward, for their own visit to the capital.

Had Jane, instead of Emily, been the one that suffered through the agency of Mrs. Fitzgerald, however innocently on the part of the lady, her violent and uncontrolled passions, would have either blindly united the innocent with the guilty, in her resentments, or, if a sense of justice had vindicated the lady in her judgment, yet her pride, and ill−guided delicacy, would have felt her name a reproach, that would have forbidden any intercourse with her, or any belonging to her.

Not so with her sister. The sufferings of Mrs. Fitzgerald had taken a strong hold on her youthful feelings, and a similarity of opinions and practices, on the great object of their lives, had brought them together, in a manner no misconduct in a third person, could weaken. It is true, the recollection ofDenbigh was intimately blended with the fate of Mrs. Fitzgerald. But Emily sought her support against her feelings, from a quarter, that rather required an investigation of them, than a desire to drown care, with thought.

She never indulged in romantic reflections in which the image of Denbigh was associated. This she had hardly done in her happiest moments; and his marriage, if nothing else had interfered, now absolutely put it out of the question. But, although a christian, and a humble and devout one, Emily Moseley was a woman, and had loved ardently——−confidingly——−and gratefully. Marriage is the business of life with most of her sex——−with all, next to a preparation for a better——−and it cannot be supposed that a first passion, in a bosom like that of our heroine, was to be erased, and leave no vestiges of its existence.

Her partiality to the society of Derwent——− her meditations, in which she sometimes detected herself drawing a picture of what Denbigh might have been, if early care had been taken to impress him with his situation in this world, and from which she generally retired to her closet and her knees, were the remains of feeling, too strong and too pure to be torn from her in a moment.

The arrival of John, with Grace and Jane, had enlivened not only the family, but the neighbourhood. Mr. Haughton and his numerous friends poured in on the young couplewith their congratulations, and a few weeks stole by insensibly, before the already mentioned journies of Sir Edward and his son ——the one to Benfield Lodge——and the other to St. James's Square.

On the return of the travellers, a few days before they commenced their journey to the capital——John laughingly told his uncle, "although he himself greatly admired the taste of Mr. Peter Johnson in dress, yet he doubted whether the present style of fashions, would not be scandalized, in the metropolis, by the appearance of the honest steward." John had, in fact, noticed in their former visit to London together, a mob of mischievous boys eyeing Peter with gestures and other indications of rebellious movements, which threatened the old man's ease with a violent disturbance, and from which he had retreated by taking a coach, and now made the suggestion from pure good nature, to save him any future trouble from a similar cause.

They were at dinner as Moseley made the remark, and the steward, in his place, at the sideboard——−for his master was his home——− drawing near at the mention of his name ——−and, after casting an examination over his figure to see if all was decent, Peter respectfully broke silence, in reply, determined to defend his own cause.

"Why! Mr. John!——−Mr. John Moseley? ——−if I might judge——−for an elderly man——− and a serving man——−," said the steward,bowing humbly, "I am no disparagement to my friends, or even my honoured master."

Johnson's vindication of his wardrobe, drew the eyes of the family upon him, and an involuntary smile passed from one to the other, as they admired his starched figure and drab frock; or rather doublet with sleeves and skirts.

And Sir Edward, being of the same opinion with his son, observed——−

"I do think with John, Uncle Benfield, there might be an improvement in the dress of your steward, without much trouble to the ingenuity of his tailor."

"Sir Edward Moseley——−honourable sir," said the steward, beginning to grow alarmed for the fate of his old companions; "If I may be so bold——−you, young gentlemen, may like your gay clothes, but as for me and his honour, we are used to such as we wear, and what we are used to, we love." The old man spoke with great earnestness, and drew the particular attention of his master to a review of his attire. After reflecting; in his own mind, that no gentleman in the house had been attended by any servitor in such a garb, Mr. Benfield thought it time to give his sentiments on the subject.

"Why, I remember that my Lord Gosford's gentleman, never wore a livery, nor can I say that he dressed exactly after the manner of Johnson. Every member had his body servant, and they were not unfrequently taken for their masters. Lady Juliana,too, she had, after the death of her nephew, one or two attendants out of livery, and in a different fashion from your attire. Peter, I think with John Moseley there; we must alter you a little, for the sake of appearance."

"Your honour?"——−stammered out Peter, in increased terror, seeing the way his master was inclining; "for Mr. John Moseley, and Sir Edward, and youngerly gentlemen like, ——−dress may do. Now, your honour, if——−" and Peter, turning to Grace, bowed nearly to the floor; ——−"I had such a sweet——−most beautiful young lady, to smile on me, I might wish to change; but, sir, my day has gone by," and Peter sigh'd as the recollection of Patty Steele, and his youthful love, floated across his brain. Grace blushed and thanked him for the compliment, as she gave her opinion, his gallantry deserved a better costume.

"Peter," said his master decidedly, "I think Mrs. Moseley is right. If I should call on the Viscountess, (the Lady Juliana, who yet survived, an ancient dowager of seventy) I will want your attendance, and in your present garb, you cannot fail to shock her delicate feelings. You remind me now, I think every time I look at you, of old Harry, the Earl's game−keeper; one of the most cruel men I ever knew."

This decided the matter. Peter well knew that his master's antipathy to old Harry, arose from his having pursued a poacher one day, in place of helping the Lady Juliana over a stile, in her flight from a bull, that was playing his gambols in the same field; and not for the world would the faithful steward retain even a feature, if it brought unpleasant recollections to his kind master; however, he at one time thought of closing his innovations on his wardrobe, with a change of his nether garment; as, after a great deal of study, he could only make out the resemblance between himself and the obnoxious game−keeper, to consist in the leather breeches. But fearful of some points escaping his memory in forty years, he tamely acquiesced in all John's alterations, and appeared at his station three days afterwards, newly deck'd from head to foot, in a more modern suit of snuff−colour.

The change once made, Peter admired himself in a glass greatly, and thought, that could he have had the taste of Mr. John Moseley, in his youth, to direct his toilet, the hard heart of Patty would not always have continued so obdurate.

Sir Edward wished to collect his neighbours round him once more, before he left them for another four months; and accordingly the Rector and his wife——−Francis and Clara——−the Haughtons, with a few others, dined at the Hall, by invitation, the last day of their stay in Northamptonshire; they had left the table after dinner to join the ladies,as Grace came into the drawing room with a face covered with smiles and beaming with pleasure.

"You look like the bearer of good news, Mrs. Moseley," cried the Rector, catching a glimpse of her countenance as she passed.

"Good——−I sincerely hope and believe," replied Grace. "My letters from my brother announce his marriage to have taken place last week, and give us hopes of seeing them all in town within the month."

"Married," exclaimed Mr. Haughton, casting his eyes unconsciously on Emily, "my Lord Chatterton married——−may I ask the name of the bride, my dear Mrs. Moseley."

"To Lady Harriet Denbigh——and at Denbigh Castle, in Westmoreland——−but very privately, as you may suppose, from seeing Moseley and myself here," answered Grace, with cheeks yet glowing with surprise and pleasure at the intelligence.

"Lady Harriet Denbigh?" echoed Mr. Haughton, "what! a kinswoman of our old friend?——−your friend?——−Miss Emily," the recollection of the service he had performed her at the arbour, fresh in his memory.

Emily commanded herself sufficiently to reply: "Brother's children, I believe, sir."

"But a lady——−how came she my lady," continued the good man, anxious to know the whole, and ignorant of any reasons for delicacy where so great a favourite as Denbigh was in the question.

"She is a daughter of the late Duke ofDerwent," said Mrs. Moseley, as willing as himself to talk of her new sister.

"How happens it that the death of old Mr. Denbigh, was announced, as plain Geo. Denbigh, Esqr. if he was the brother of a Duke," said Jane, forgetting, for a moment, the presence of Dr. and Mrs. Ives, in her yet surviving passion for genealogy; "should he not have been called Lord George, or honourable?"

This was the first time any allusion had been made to the sudden death in the church by any of the Moseley's, in the hearing of the rector's family; and the speaker sat in breathless terror at her own inadvertency, as Dr. Ives, observing a profound silence to prevail, soon as Jane ended, answered mildly, but in a way to prevent any further comments——−

"The late Duke succeeded a cousin−german in his title, was the reason, I presume. But, Emily, I am to hear from you, by letter, I hope, after you enter into the gayeties of the metropolis?" This Emily cheerfully promised, and the conversation took another turn

Mrs. Wilson had carefully avoided all communications with the rector, concerning his youthful friend, and the Doctor appeared unwilling to commence any thing, which might lead to his name being mentioned. He is disappointed in him as well as ourselves, thought the widow, and it must be unpleasantto him to have his image recalled. He saw his attentions to Emily, and he knows of his marriage to Lady Laura, of course——− and he loves us all, and Emily in particular, too well, not to feel hurt by his conduct.

"Sir Edward!" cried Mr. Haughton, with a laugh——−"Baronets are likely to be plenty. Have you heard how near we were to having another in the neighbourhood lately"——− and as Sir Edward answered in the negative, his neighbour continued——

"Why, no less a man than Capt. Jarvis promoted to the bloody hand."

"Capt. Jarvis?" exclaimed five or six at once——−"explain yourself, Mr. Haughton."

"My near neighbour, young Walker, has been to Bath on an unusual business——−his health——−and, for the benefit of the country, has brought back a pretty piece of scandal, with some surprising news. It seems that Lady Jarvis, as I am told she is since she left here, wished to have her hopeful heir made a Lord, and that the two united for some six months, in forming a kind of savings' bank between themselves, to enable them at some future day to bribe the minister, to honour the peerage with such a prodigy. After a while, the daughter of our late acquaintance, Sir William Harris, became an accessary to the plot, and a contributor too, to the tune of a couple of hundred pounds. Some circumstances, however, at length made this latter lady suspicious, and she wished to audit the books. The Captain prevaricated——−the lady remonstrated——−until the gentleman, with more truth than manners, told her she was a fool——the money he had expended or lost at dice; and that, he did not think the ministers quite so silly as to make him a lord——or himself, as to make her his wife——−so the whole thing exploded."

John listened to the story with a delight but little short of what he had felt, when Grace owned her love, and anxious to know all, inquired——

"But, is it true?——−how was it found out?"

"Oh, the lady complained of part——−and the Captain tells all, to get the laugh on his side; so that Walker says, the former is the derision, and the latter the contempt, of all Bath."

"Poor Sir William," said the Baronet, with feeling; "he is much to be pitied."

"I am afraid he has nothing to blame but his own weak indulgence," remarked the Rector.

"But you don't know the worst of it," cried Mr. Haughton. "We poor people are made to suffer——−Lady Jarvis wept, and fretted Sir Timo——out of his lease, which has been given up, and a new house is to be taken in another part of the kingdom, where neither Miss Harris or the story is known."

"Then Sir William has a new tenant to procure," said Lady Moseley, not in the least regretting the loss of the old one.

"No! my Lady?" continued Mr. Haughton, with a smile. "Walker is, you know, an attorney, and does some business, occasionally, for Sir William. When Jarvis gave up the lease, the Baronet, who finds himself a little short of money, offered the deanery for sale, it being a useless place to him——and the very next day, while

Walker was with Sir William, a gentleman called, and without higgling, agreed to pay down at once, his thirty thousand pounds for it."

"And who is he?" inquired Lady Moseley eagerly.

"The Earl of Pendennyss."

"Lord Pendennyss!" exclaimed Mrs. Wilson in rapture.

"Pendennyss!" cried the Rector, eying the aunt and Emily with a smile.

"Pendennyss!" echoed all in the room in amazement.

"Yes," said Mr. Haughton, "it is now the property of the Earl, who says he has bought it for his sister."

CHAPTER XIV.

Mrs. Wilson found time the ensuing day to ascertain, before they left the hall, the truth of the tale related by Mr. Haughton. The deanery had certainly changed its master, and a new steward had already arrived, to take possession in the name of his lord. What could induce Pendennyss to make this purchase, she was entirely at a loss to conceive; most probably some arrangement between himself and Lord Bolton; but whatever might be his motive, it in some measure insured his becoming for a season their neighbour; and Mrs. Wilson felt a degree of pleasure at the circumstance she had been a stranger to for a long time; and which was greatly heightened as she dwelt on the lovely face of her companion, who occupied the other seat in her travelling chaise.

The road to London led by the gates of the deanery, and near them they passed a servant in the livery, she thought, of those she had once seen following the equipage of the Earl; anxious to know any thing which might hasten her acquaintantance with this so long admired nobleman, Mrs. Wilson stopped her carriage, as she inquired,

"Pray, sir, whom do you serve?"

"My Lord Pendennyss, ma'am," replied the man, respectfully taking off his hat.

"The Earl is not here?" asked Mrs. Wilson with interest.

"Oh no, madam; I am here in waiting on his steward. My lord is in Westmoreland, with his grace and Colonel Denbigh, and the ladies."

"Does he remain there long?" continued the anxious widow, desirous of knowing all she could learn.

"I believe not, madam; most of our people have gone to Annerdale−House, and my lord is expected in town with the Duke and the Colonel."

As the servant was an elderly man, and appeared to understand the movements of his master so well, Mrs. Wilson was put in unusual spirits by this prospect, of a speedy termination to her anxiety, to meet Pendennyss.

"Annerdale−House is the Earl's town residence?" inquired Emily with a feeling for her aunt's partiality.

"Yes; he got the fortune of the last Duke of that title, but how I do not exactly know. I believe, however, through his mother. General Wilson did not know his family: indeed, Pendennyss bore a second title during his lifetime; but did you observe how very civil his servant was, and the one John spoke to before, a sure sign their master is a gentleman."

Emily smiled as she witnessed the strong partialities of her aunt in his favour, and replied,

"Your handsome chaise and attendants will draw respect from most men in his situation, dear aunt, be their masters as they may."

The expected pleasure of meeting the Earl was a topic frequently touched upon between her aunt and Emily during their journey. The former, beginning to entertain hopes, she would have laughed at herself for, could they have been fairly laid before her; and the latter entertaining a profound respect for his character, but chiefly governed by a wish to gratify her companion.

The third day they reached the baronet's handsome house in St. James's square, and found, that the forethought of John, had provided every thing for them in the best and most comfortable manner.

It was the first visit of both Jane and Emily to the metropolis, and under the protection of their almost equally curious mother, and escorted by John, they wisely determined to visit the curiosities, while their leisure yet admitted of the opportunity; and for the first two weeks, their time had been chiefly employed in the indulgence of this unfashionable and vulgar propensity; which, if it had no other tendency, served greatly to draw the thoughts of both the young women from the recollection of the few last months.

While her sister and nieces were thus employed in amusing themselves, Mrs. Wilson, assisted by Grace, was occupied in getting things in preparation to do credit to the baronet's hospitality.

The second week after their arrival,Mrs. Moseley was delighted by seeing advance upon her unexpectedly through the door of the breakfast parlour, her brother, with his bride leaning on his arm. After the most sincere greetings and congratulations, Lady Chatterton cried out gayly, "you see, my dear Lady Moseley, I am determined to banish ceremony between us, and so instead of sending you a card, have come myself, to notify you of my arrival. Chatterton would not suffer me even to swallow my breakfast, he was so impatient to show me off."

"You are placing things exactly on the footing I wish to see ourselves with all our connexions," replied Lady Moseley kindly; "but what have you done with the Duke, is he in your train?"

"Oh! he is gone to Canterbury, with George Denbigh, madam," cried the lady, shaking her head reproachfully, though affectionately, at Emily; "his grace dislikes London just now excessively he says, and the Colonel being obliged to leave his wife on regimental business, Derwent was good enough to keep him company during his exile."

"And Lady Laura, do we see her?" inquired Lady Moseley.

"She came with us——Pendennyss and his sister follow immediately; so, my dear madam, the dramatis personæ will soon all be on the stage."

"Cards and visits now began to accumulate on the Moseleys, and their time no longer admitted of that unfettered disposal of it,which they had enjoyed at their entrance on the scene. Mrs. Wilson, for herself and charge, had adopted a rule for the government of her manner of living, which was consistent with her duties and profession. They mixed in general society sparingly, and with great moderation; and above all, they rigidly adhered to their obedience to the injunction, which commanded them to keep the sabbath day holy——a duty of no trifling difficulty to perform in fashionable society in the city of London, or indeed any other place, where the influence of fashion has supplanted the laws of God.

Mrs. Wilson was not a bigot; but she knew and performed her duty rigidly. It was a pleasure to her to do so. It would have been misery to have to do otherwise. In the singleness of heart, and deep piety of her niece, she had a willing pupil to her system of morals, and a rigid follower of her religious practices. As they both knew the temptations to go astray were greater in town than in the country, they kept a strict guard over their tendency to err, and in watchfulness found their greatest security.

John Moseley, next to his friends, loved his bays: indeed, if the aggregate of his affections for these and Lady Herrifield had been put in opposite scales, we strongly suspect the side of the horses would preponderate.

One early Sunday, after being domesticated, John, who had soberly attendedmorning service with the ladies, came into a little room, where the more reflecting part of the family were assembled, occupied with their books, in search of his wife.

Grace, we have before mentioned, had become a real member of that church in which she had been educated, and entered, under the direction of Dr. Ives and Mrs. Wilson, into an observance of its wholesome ordinances. Grace was certainly piously inclined, if not devout——her feelings on the subject of religion, had been sensibly awakened during their voyage to Lisbon; and at the period we write of, Mrs. Moseley was as sincerely disposed to perform her duty as her powers admitted of. To the request of her husband, that she would take a seat in his phaeton, while he drove her round the park once or twice, Grace gave a mild refusal by saying "it is Sunday, my dear Moseley."

"Do you think I don't know that," cried John gayly, "there will be every body there, and, the better day——the better deed." Now Moseley, if he had been asked to apply this speech to the case before them, would have frankly owned his inability, but his wife did not make the trial——she was contented with saying, as she laid down her book, to look on a face she so tenderly loved,

"Ah! Moseley, you should set a better example to those below you in life."

"I wish to set an example," returned her husband with an affectionate smile, "to all above as well as below me——to find out the path to happiness, by exhibiting to the world a model of a wife in yourself, dear Grace."

As this was uttered with a sincerity which distinguished the manner of Moseley, his wife was more pleased with the compliment, than she would have been willing to have known; and John spoke no more than he thought, for a desire to show his handsome wife was a ruling passion for a moment.

The husband was too pressing, and the wife too fond, not to yield the point; and Grace took her seat in the carriage with a kind of half−formed resolution, to improve the opportunity, by a discourse on serious subjects——a resolution which terminated as all others do, that postpone one duty to discharge another of less magnitude——it was forgotten.

The experiment of Grace, to leave her own serious occupations, in hopes by joining in the gayety of another, to bring him to her own state of mind, ended in her becoming a convert to his feelings, in place of his entering into hers.

Mrs. Wilson had listened with interest to the efforts of John, to prevail on his wife to take the ride, and on her

leaving the room to comply she observed to Emily, with whom she now remained alone:

"Here is a consequence of a difference in religious views between man and wife, my child——John, in place of supporting Grace in the discharge of her duties, has been the actual cause of her going astray."

Emily felt the force of her aunt's remark, and saw its justice——yet her love for the offender, induced her to say——

"John will not lead her openly astray from her path——for he has a respect for religion, and this offence is not unpardonable, dear aunt."

"The offence is assuredly not unpardonable," replied Mrs. Wilson, "and to infinite mercy, it is hard to say what is——but it is an offence——and directly in the face of an express ordinance of the Lord——it is even throwing off the appearance of keeping the Sabbath−day holy——much less observing the substance of the commandment——and as to John's respect for holy things——in this instance it was injurious to his wife——had he been an open deist, she would have shrunk from the act in his company, in suspicion of its sinfulness——either John must become a Christian, or, I am afraid Grace will fall from her undertaking"——−and Mrs. Wilson shook her head mournfully, as she concluded, while Emily offered up a silent petition, the first might speedily be the case.

Lady Laura had been early in her visit to the Moseleys; and, as it now appeared Denbigh had both a town residence, and a seat in parliament——it appeared next to impossible to avoid meeting him, or to requite the pressing civilities of his wife, by harsh refusals, that might prove in the end injurious to themselves, by creating a suspicion thatresentment at his not choosing a partner from amongst them, governed the conduct of the Moseleys, towards a man, to whom they were under such a heavy obligation.

Had Sir Edward known as much as his sister and daughters, he would probably have discountenanced the acquaintance altogether; but in the ignorance of the rest of her friends, Mrs. Wilson and Emily, had not only the assiduities of Lady Laura, but the wishes of their own family to contend with, and consequently submitted to the association, with a reluctance that was, in some measure, counteracted by their regard for Lady Laura, and compassion for her abused confidence.

A distant connexion of Lady Moseley, had managed to collect in her house, a few hundred of her nominal friends, and as she had been particularly attentive in calling in person on her venerable relative, Mr. Benfield, soon after his arrival in town, out of respect to her father's cousin——or, perhaps, mindful of his approaching end, and remembering there were such things as codicils to wills——The old man, flattered by her notice, and yet too gallant to reject the favour of a lady——consented to accompany the remainder of the family, on the occasion.

Most of their acquaintances were there, and Lady Moseley soon found herself engaged in a party at quadrille, and the young people occupied by the usual amusements of their age, in such scenes——Emily alone, feelingbut little desire to enter into the gayety of general conversation with a host of gentlemen, who had collected round her aunt and sisters——had offered her arm to Mr. Benfield, on seeing him manifest a disposition to take a closer view of the company.

They had wandered from room to room, unconscious of the observation attracted in such a scene, by the sight of a man in the costume of Mr. Benfield, leaning on the arm of so young and lovely a woman as his niece——and many an exclamation of surprise ——ridicule——admiration and wonder, had been heard, unnoticed by the pair; until finding the crowd rather inconvenient to her companion, Emily gently drew him into one of the apartments, where the card−tables, and the general absence of beauty, had made room less difficult to be found.

"Ah! Emmy, dear," said the old gentleman, wiping his face, from the heat of the rooms, "times are much changed, I see, since my youth——then you would see no such throngs assembled in so small a space——Gentlemen shoving ladies——−and yes, Emmy——−" continued her uncle, in a lower tone, as if afraid of uttering something dangerous to be heard, "the ladies themselves, shouldering the men——I remember at a drum given by Lady Gosford——that, although I may without vanity, say, I was one of the gallantest men in the rooms——−I came in contact with but one of the ladies during the whole evening, excepting handing the Lady Juliana to a chair once——−and that" said her uncle, stopping short, and lowering his voice to a whisper, "was occasioned by a mischance in the old Dutchess in rising from her seat, where she had taken too much strong waters, as she was, at times, a little troubled with a pain in the chest."

Emily smiled at the casualty of her Grace, and they proceeded slowly through the tables, until their passage was stopped by a party at the game of whist, which by its incongruous mixture of ages, and character in the

players, forcibly drew her attention.

The party was composed of a young man of five or six and twenty, who threw down his cards in careless indifference of the game, and heedlessly played with the guineas which were either laid on the side of the table as markers, or the fruits of a former victory; or by stealing hasty and repeated glances through the vista of the tables, into the gayer scenes of the adjoining rooms——proved he was in duresse, and waited nothing but opportunity, to make his escape from the tedium of cards and ugliness, to the life of conversation and beauty.

His partner was a woman of doubtful age, and one whose countenance rather indicated, that the uncertainty was likely to continue, until the record of the tomb−stone divulged the so−often contested circumstance to the world——her eye also wandered attimes to the gayer scenes, but with an expression of censoriousness, mingled with her longings; nor did she neglect the progress of the game as frequently as her more heedless partner——−a cast of her eye, thrown often on the golden pair which was placed between her and her neighbour on her right, marked the importance of the corner, as the precision of that neighbour, had regarded as necessary an exhibition of the prize, as a quickener of the intellects, or, perhaps, a mean to remedy the defects of bad memories.

Her neighbour on the right, was a man of sixty, and his vestments announced him a servant of the sanctuary——−his intentness on the game, proceeded——from his habits of reflection; ——his smile at success,——from charity to his neighbours;——his frown in adversity——from displeasure at the triumphs of the wicked; for such, in his heart, he had set down Miss Wigram to be——−and his unconquerable gravity in the employment——from a profound regard to the dignity of his holy office.

The fourth performer in this trial of memories, was an ancient lady, gayly dressed, and intently eager on the game; between her and the young man was a large pile of guineas, and which appeared to be her exclusive property, from which she repeatedly, during the play, tendered one to his acceptance on the event of a hand or a trick, and to which she seldom failed, from the inadvertanceof her antagonist, to add his mite, as contributing to accumulate the pile.

"Two double and the rub, my dear Doctor," exclaimed the senior lady, in triumph ——"Sir William you owe me ten"——the money was paid as easily as it had been won, and the Dowager proceeded to settle some bets with her female antagonist.

"Too more, I fancy, ma'am," said she, scanning closely the contributions of the maiden.

"I believe it is right, my Lady," was the answer, with a look, that said pretty plainly, that or nothing.

"I beg pardon, my dear, here are but four ——and you remember——two on the corner, and four on the points——Doctor, I will trouble you for a couple of guineas from Miss Wigram's store by you——I am in haste to get to the Countess's route."

The Doctor was cooly helping himself from the said store, under the watchful eyes of its owner, and secretly exulting in his own judgment in requiring the stakes——−as the maiden replied in great warmth, "your ladyship forgets the two you lost me at Mrs. Howard's."

"It must be a mistake, my dear, I always pay as I lose," cried the Dowager, with great spirit, stretching over the table, and coolly helping herself to the disputed money.

Mr. Benfield and Emily had stood silent spectators of the whole scene, the latterin astonishment to meet such manners, in such society, and the former under feelings it would have been difficult to describe, for, in the face of the Dowager, which was inflamed, partly from passion, and more from high−living, he recognised the remains of his——Lady Juliana——now the Viscountess Dowager Haverford.

"Emmy, dear," said the old man, with a heavy−drawn sigh, as if awaking from a long and troubled dream, "we will go"——−the phantom of forty years had vanished before the truth; and the fancies of retirement——−simplicity——−and a diseased imagination——− yielded to the influence of life and common sense.

CHAPTER XV.

With Harriet, now closely connected with them by marriage as well as regard, the Baronet's family maintained a most friendly intercourse, and Mrs. Wilson, and Emily, a prodigious favourite with her new cousin, had consented to pass a day soberly with her, during an excursion, of her husband to Windsor, on business connected with his station. They had, accordingly, driven round to an early breakfast; and Chatterton politely regretting his loss, and thanking their consideration for his wife, made his bow.

Lady Harriet Denbigh had brought the Baronet a very substantial addition to his fortune; and as his sisters were both provided for by ample settlements, the pecuniary distresses which had existed a twelve−month before had been entirely removed; his income was now large; his demands upon it small, and they kept up an establishment in proportion to the rank of both husband and wife.

"Mrs. Wilson," cried their hostess, twirling her cup as she followed with her eyes the retreating figure of her husband to the door, "I am about to take up the trade of Miss Harris, and become a match maker."

"Not on your own behalf so soon, surely," rejoined the widow, returning her animated smile.

"Oh no, my fortune is made for life, or not at all," continued the other gayly, "but in behalf of our little friend Emily here."

"Me," cried Emily, starting from a reverie, in which the prospect of happiness to Lady Laura was the subject, "you are very good Harriet, and for whom does your consideration intend me!" she added with a faint smile.

"Who? why who is good enough for you, but my cousin Pendennyss. Ah!" she cried laughingly, as she caught Emily by the hand, "Derwent and myself have both settled the matter long since, and I know you will yield, when you come to know him."

"The Duke!" cried the other with a surprise and innocence, that immediately brought a blush of the brightest vermillion into her face, as she caught the expression of her companion.

"Yes, the Duke," said Lady Chatterton, "you may think it odd for a discarded lover to dispose of his mistress so soon in this way, but both our hearts are set upon it. The Earl arrived last night, and this day himself and sister dine with us in a sober way: now my dear madam," turning to Mrs. Wilson "have I not prepared an agreeable surprise for you?"

"Surprise indeed," said the widow, excessively gratified at the probable termination to her anxieties for this meeting, "but where are they from?"

"From Northamptonshire, where the earl has already purchased a residence, I understand, in your neighbourhood too; so, you perceive, he at least begins to think of the thing."

"A certain evidence, truly," cried Emily, "his having purchased the house. But was he without a residence, that he bought the Deanery."

"Oh no! he has a palace in town, and three seats in the country——−but none in Northamptonshire, but this," said the lady, with a laugh. "To own the truth, he did offer to let George Denbigh have it for the next summer, but the Colonel chose to be nearer Eltringham; and I take it, it was only a ruse in the Earl to cloak his own designs. You may depend upon it, we trump't your praises to him incessantly in Westmoreland."

"And is Col. Denbigh in town," said Mrs. Wilson, stealing an anxious glance towards her niece, who, in spite of all her efforts, sensibly changed colour.

"Oh yes! and Laura as happy——as happy——−as myself," said Lady Chatterton, with a glow on her cheeks, as she attended to the request of her housekeeper, and left the room.

Her guests sat in silence, occupied with their own reflections, while they heard a summons at the door of the house; it was opened, and footsteps approached the door of their own room. It was pushed partly open, as a voice on the other side said, speaking to a servant without,

"Very well. Do not disturb your lady. I am in no haste."

At the sound of its well known tones, both the ladies almost sprang from their seats——here could be no resemblance, and a moment removed their doubts. The speaker entered. It was Denbigh.

He stood for a moment as fixed as a statue. It was evident the surprise was mutual. His face was pale as death, as his eye first met the countenances of the occupants of the room, and then instantly was succeeded by a glow of

fire. Approaching them, he paid his compliments, with great earnestness, and in a voice in which his softest tones preponderated.

"I am happy——very happy, to be so fortunate in again meeting with such friends, and so unexpectedly,"——he continued, after his inquiries concerning the Baronet's family were ended.

Mrs. Wilson bowed in silence to his compliment, and Emily, pale as himself had been the moment before, sat with her eyes fixed on the carpet, without daring to trust her voice with an attempt to speak.

After struggling with his mortified feelings a moment, Denbigh rose from the chair he had taken, and drawing near the sopha on which the ladies were placed, exclaimed with fervour,

"Tell me, dear madam——−lovely——too lovely Miss Moseley, has one act of folly——of wickedness if you please——lost me your good opinions forever? Derwent had given me hopes that you yet retained some esteem for my character, lowered as I acknowledge it to be, in my own estimation."

"The Duke of Derwent? Mr. Denbigh!"

"Do not——do not use a name, dear madam, almost hateful to me," cried he, in a tone of despair.

"If," said Mrs. Wilson gravely, "you have made your own name disreputable, I can only regret it, but"——

"Call me by my title——oh! do not remind me of my folly——−I cannot bear it——−and from you"——he cried, interrupting her hastily.

"Your title!" exclaimed Mrs. Wilson in a cry of wonder, and Emily turned on him a face, in which the flashes of colour and succeeding paleness, were as quick, and almost as vivid, as the glow of lightning, while he caught this astonishment in equal surprise.

"How is this; some dreadful mistake I am yet in ignorance of," he cried, taking the unresisting hand of Mrs. Wilson, and pressing it with warmth between both his own, as he added, "do not leave me in suspense."

"For the sake of truth——for my sake——for the sake of this suffering innocent, say, in sincerity, who, and what you are?" said Mrs. Wilson in a solemn voice, and gazing on him in dread of his reply.

Still retaining her hand, he dropped on his knees before her, as he answered,

"I am the pupil——the child of your late husband——the companion of his dangers——sharer of his joys and griefs——and would I could add, the friend of his widow. I am the Earl of Pendennyss."

Mrs. Wilson's head dropped on the shoulder of the kneeling youth——her arms were thrown in fervor around his neck, and she burst into a flood of tears: for a moment, both were absorbed in their own feelings, but a cry from Pendennyss, aroused the aunt to the situation of her niece.

Emily had fallen back senseless on the sofa which supported her.

An hour elapsed, before her engagements admitted of the return of Lady Chatterton to the breakfast parlour, where she was surprised to find the breakfast equipage yet standing, and her cousin, the Earl; looking from one to the other in surprise, the lady exclaimed,

"Very sociable, upon my word; how long has your lordship honoured my house with your presence, and have you taken the liberty to introduce yourself to Mrs. Wilson and Miss Moseley."

"Sociability and ease are the fashion of the day.——I have been here an hour, my dear coz, and have taken the liberty of introducing myself to Mrs. Wilson and Miss Moseley," replied the Earl gravely, although a smile of great meaning lighted his handsome features, as he uttered the latter part of the sentence, which was returned by Emily with a look of archness and pleasure, that would have graced her happiest moments of juvenile joy.

There was such an interchange of looks, and such a visible alteration in the appearance of her guests, that it could not but attract the notice of Lady Chatterton; after listening to the conversation between them for some time in silence, and wondering what could have wrought so sudden a change below stairs, she broke forth with saying,

"Upon my word, you are an incomprehensible party to me——I left you ladies alone, and find a beau with you. I left you grave—— if not melancholy——and find you all life and gayety. I find you with a stranger, and you talk with him about walks and rides, and scenes and acquaintances; will you, madam, or you, my lord, be so kind as to explain these seeming inconsistencies?"

"No," cried the Earl gayly, "to punish your curiosity, I will keep you in ignorance; but Marian is in waiting for me at your neighbour's, Mrs. Wilmot, and I must hasten to her——you will see us both by five," and rising from his seat he took the offered hand of Mrs. Wilson, and pressed it to his lips: to Emily, he also extended his hand, and received hers in return, though with a face suffused with the colour of the rose. Pendennyss held it to his heart for a moment with fervor, and kissing it, precipitately left the room to hide his emotions. Emily concealed her

face with her hands, and dissolving in tears, sought the retirement of an adjoining apartment.

All these unaccountable movements, filledLady Chatterton with an amazement; that would have been too painful for further endurance; and Mrs. Wilson knowing that concealment with so near a connection would have been impossible, if not unnecessary, entered into a brief explanation of the Earl's masquerade, (although ignorant herself of its cause, or the means of supporting it,) and his present relation with her niece.

"I declare it is provoking," cried Lady Chatterton gayly, but with a tear in her eye, "to have such ingenious plans as Derwent and I had made, all lost from the want of necessity of putting them in force. Your demure niece, has deceived us all handsomely; and my rigid cousin too——I will rate him soundly for his deception."

"I believe he already repents sincerely of his having practised it," said Mrs. Wilson with a smile, "and is sufficiently punished for his errors by its consequence——a life of misery to a lover, for four months, is a serious penalty."

"Yes," said the other archly in reply, "I am afraid his punishment was not confined to himself alone; he has made others suffer from his misconduct. Oh! I will rate him famously, depend upon it I will."

If any thing, the interest felt by Lady Chatterton for her friend, was increased by this discovery of the affections of Pendennyss, and a few hours were passed by the three, in, we will not say sober delight, for transport would be a better word——Lady Chatterton declared she would rather see Emily the wife of the Earl than her brother, for he alone was good enough for her——−and Mrs. Wilson felt an exhiliration of spirits in this completion of her most sanguine wishes, that neither her years, her philosophy or her religion even, could entirely restrain: the face of Emily was a continued blush, her eye sparkled with the lustre of renewed hope, and her bosom was heaving with the purest emotions of happiness.

At the appointed hour the rattling of wheels announced the approach of the Earl and his sister, to fulfil their engagements.

Pendennyss came into the room with a young woman of great personal beauty, and extremely feminine manners, leaning on his arm. He first announced her to Mrs. Wilson as his sister, Lady Marian Denbigh, who received with a frank cordiality that made them instantly acquainted. Emily, although confiding in the fullest manner, in the truth and worth of her lover, had felt an inexplicable sensation of pleasure, as she had heard the Earl speak of his sister by the name of Marian——−love is such an unquiet, and generally such an engrossing passion, that few avoid unnecessary uneasiness while under its influence, unless so situated as to enjoy a mutual confidence.

As this once so formidable Marian approached to salute her, and with an extendedhand, Emily rose from her seat, with a face illumined with pleasure, to receive her——−Marian viewed her for a moment intently, and folding her arms around her, whispered softly as she pressed her to her heart, "my sister, my only sister."

Our heroine was affected to tears, and Pendennyss gently separating the two he loved best in the world——they soon became calm and attentive to the society they were in.

Lady Marian was extremely like her brother, and had a family resemblance to her cousin Harriet, but her manners were softer and more retiring, and she had a slight tinge of a settled melancholy——when her brother spoke, she was generally silent, not in fear but in love——she evidently regarded him amongst the first of human beings, and all her love was amply returned.

Both the aunt and niece studied the manners of the Earl closely, and found several shades of distinction between what he was, and what he had been——He was now the perfect man of the world, without having lost the frank sincerity, which inevitably caused you to believe all he said.——Had Pendennyss once told Mrs. Wilson with his natural air and manner, "I am innocent," she would have believed him, and an earlier investigation would have saved them months of misery——but the consciousness of his deception had oppressed him with the curse of the wicked——to whatever degree we err, so itbe proportionate in any manner to our habits and principles——a guilty conscience; and imagining her displeasure to arise from a detection of his real name by the possession of his pocket book——his sense of right would not allow him to urge his defence.

He had lost that air of embarrassment and alarm, which had so often startled the aunt, even in her hours of greatest confidence, and which had their original in the awkwardness of disguise——But he retained his softness ——his respect, his modest diffidence of his opinions——although somewhat corrected now, by his acknowledged experience and acquaintance with man.

Mrs. Wilson thought the trifling alterations in manner to be seen were great improvements; but it required

some days and a few tender speeches to reconcile Emily to any change in the appearance of the Earl, from what she had been fond to admire in Denbigh.

Lady Marian had ordered her carriage early, as she had not anticipated the pleasure she had found, and was engaged to accompany her cousin, Lady Laura, to a fashionable route that evening. Unwilling to be torn from his newly found friends, the Earl proposed the three ladies should accompany his sister to Annerdale House, and then accept himself as an escort to their own residence. To this, Harriet assented, and leaving a message for Chatterton, they enteredthe coach of Marian, and Pendennyss mounting the dickey, they drove off.

Annerdale House was amongst the best edifices of London. It had been erected within the preceding century, and Emily for a moment felt as she went through its splendid apartments, that it threw a chill around her domestic affections; but the figure of Pendennyss by her side, reconciled her to a magnificence she had been unused to——he looked the lord indeed, but with so much modesty and softness, and so much attention to herself, that before she left the house, Emily began to think it very possible to enjoy happiness even in the lap of splendour.

The names of Colonel Denbigh and Lady Laura, were soon announced, and this formidable gentleman made his appearance——he resembled Pendennyss more than the Duke even, and appeared about the same age.

Mrs. Wilson soon saw she had no grounds for pitying Lady Laura, in the manner she had done since their acquaintance. The Colonel was a polished, elegant man, of evident good sense, and knowledge of the world——and apparently devoted to his wife—— He was called George frequently by all his relatives, and he, not unfrequently, used the same term himself, in speaking to the Earl—— something was said of a much admired bust ——and the doors of a large library opened, to view it. Emily was running over the backs of a case of books, until her eye rested on one; and half smiling and blushing, she turnedto Pendennyss, who watched her every movement, as she said, playfully:——"Pity me, my Lord, and lend me this volume." "What is it you would read," he asked, as he bowed his cheerful assent. But Emily hid the book in her handkerchief. Pendennyss noticing an unwillingness, though an extremely playful one, to let him into the secret, examined the case, and perceiving her motive, smiled, as he took down another volume and said——

"I am not an Irish, but an English peer, Emily. You had the wrong volume." Emily laughed, as with deeper blushes, she found her wishes detected——while the Earl, opening the volume he held——the first of Debrett's Peerage; pointed, with his finger, to the article concerning his own family, and said to Mrs. Wilson, who had joined them at the instant——

"To−morrow, dear madam, I shall beg your attention to a melancholy tale, and which may, in some slight degree, extenuate the offence I was guilty of, in assuming, or rather maintaining an accidental disguise." As he ended, he went to the others, to draw off their attention while Emily and her aunt examined the paragraph. It was as follows:——

"George Denbigh——Earl of Pendennyss ——and Baron Lumley, of Lumley Castle—— Baron Pendennyss——Beaumaris, and Fitzwalter, born——, of ——, in the year of ——; a bachelor." The list of Earls andNobles occupied several pages, but the closing article was as follows:——

"George, the 21st Earl, succeeded his mother Marian, late Countess of Pendennyss, in her own right, being born of her marriage with George Denbigh, Esqr. a cousin−german to Frederic, the 9th Duke of Derwent."

"Heir apparent. The titles being to heirs general, will descend to his lordship's sister, Lady, Marian Denbigh, should the present Earl die without lawful issue."

As much of the explanation of the mystery of our tale is involved in the foregoing paragraphs, we may be allowed to relate in our own language, what Pendennyss made his friends acquainted with, at different times, and in a manner, suitable to the subject and his situation.

CHAPTER XVI.

It was at the close of that war which lost this country the wealthiest and most populous of her American colonies, that a fleet of ships were returning from their service, amongst the islands of the New World, to seek for their worn out, and battered hulks, and equally weakened crews, the repairs and comforts of England and home.

That latter, most endearing to the mariner of all sounds, had, as it were, drawn together by instinct, a group of sailors on the forecastle of the proudest ship of the squadron——who gazed with varied emotions on the land which gave them birth——−but with one common feeling of joy, that the day of their attaining it was at length arrived.

The water curled from the bows of this castle of the ocean, in increasing waves and growing murmurs, that at times drew the attention of the veteran tar to their quickening progress, and who having cheered his heart with the sight——−cast his experienced eye in silence on the swelling sails, to see if nothing more could be done to shorten the distance between him and his country.

Hundreds of eyes were fixed on the land of their birth, and hundreds of hearts were beating in that one vessel with the awakening delights of domestic love, and renewed affections, but no tongue broke the disciplined silenceof the ship, into sounds that overcame the propitious ripple of the water, they began smoothly and steadily to glide through.

On the highest summit of their towering mast, floated a small blue flag——the symbol of authority——and beneath it paced a man, to and fro the deck——deserted by his inferiors to his more elevated rank. His square built form, and care−worn features, which had lost the brilliancy of an English complexion——−and and hair whitened prematurely——spoke of bodily vigour——and arduous services, which had put that vigour to the severest trials.

At each turn of his walk, as he faced the land of his nativity, a lurking smile stole over his sun−burnt features, and then a glance of his eye would scan the progress of the far−stretched squadron, which obeyed his orders, and which he was now returning to his superiors, undiminished in numbers, and proud with victory.

By himself stood an officer in a uniform differing from all around him——−his figure was small——his eye restless, quick, and piercing, and bent on those shores to which he was unwillingly advancing, with a look of anxiety and mortification, that showed him the late commander of those vessels around them, which, by displaying their double flags, manifested to the eye of the seaman, a recent change of masters.

Occasionally the conqueror would stop, and by some effort of his well−meant but rather uncouth civility, endeavour to soften the bonds of captivity to his guest; and which were received with the courtesy of the most punctilious etiquette, but a restraint, that showed them civilities that were unwelcome.

It was, perhaps, the most unlucky moment that had occurred, within the two months of their association, for an exchange of their better feelings. The honest heart of the English tar, dilated with ill−concealed delight at his approach to the termination of labours, performed with credit and honour——−and his smiles and good humour, which partly proceeded from the feelings of a father and a friend, were daggers to the heart of his discomfited rival.

A third personage now appeared from the cabin of the vessel, and approached the spot where the adverse admirals were, at the moment, engaged in one of these constrained conferences

The appearance and dress of this gentleman differed yet more widely from the two just described. He was tall, graceful, and dignified; he was a soldier, and clearly of high rank. His carefully dressed hair, concealed the ravages of time; and on the quarter−deck of a first−rate, his attire and manners were suited to a field−day in the park.

"I really insist, Monsieur," cried the Admiral, good naturedly, "that you shall take part of my chaise to London; you are a stranger to the country, and it will help to keep up your spirits by the way."

"You are very good, Monsieur Howell," replied the Frenchman, with a polite bow, and forced smile' misconstruing ill−judged benevolence into a wish for his person to grace a triumph——−"but I have accepted the offer Monsieur le General Denbigh was so good as to make me."

"The Compte is engaged to me, Howell," said the General, with a courtly smile, "and indeed, you must leave

the ship to−night, or as soon as we anchor.——−But I shall take day−light, and to−morrow."

"Well——−well——−Denbigh," exclaimed the other, rubbing his hands with pleasure, as he viewed the increasing power of the wind, "only make yourselves happy, and I am contented."

A few hours yet intervened before they reached the Bay of Plymouth; and round the table, after their dinner, were seated the General and English Admiral.——The Compte, under the pretence of preparing his things for a removal, had retired to his apartment, for the concealment of his feelings;——and the Captain of the ship was above, superintending the approach of the vessel to the anchorage−ground. Two or three well emptied bottles of wine yet remained, but as the healths of all the branches of the House of Brunswick had been propitiated from their contents, with a polite remembrance of Louis the XVI., and Marie Antoinette, from GeneralDenbigh——neither of the superiors were much inclined for action.

"Is the Thunderer in her station?" said the Admiral, to his signal Lieutenant, who at that moment came below with a report.

"Yes sir, and has answered,"——was the reply.

"Very well——make the signal to prepare to anchor."

"Ay——ay, sir."

"And here, Bennett," to the retiring Lieutenant——"call the transports all in shore of us."

"Three hundred and eighty−four, sir," said the officer, looking at his signal−book.—— The Admiral cast his eye at the book, and nodded his assent.

"And let the Mermaid——Flora——Weasel—— Bruiser, and all the sloops, lie well off, until we have landed the soldiers; the pilot says the channel is full of luggers, and Jonathan is grown very saucy."

The Lieutenant made a complying bow, and was retiring to execute these orders, as Admiral Howell, taking up a bottle not yet entirely deserted by its former tenant——cried stoutly——"Here, Bennet——I forgot——take a glass of wine——drink success to ourselves, and defeat to the French all over the world."

The General pointed significantly to the adjoining cabin of the French Admiral, as he pressed his hand on his lips for silence.

"Oh!" cried Admiral Howell, recollecting himself; and continued in a whisper, "but you can drink it in your heart."

The signal−officer nodded, and drank the liquor; as he smacked his lips on going on deck, he thought to himself, these nabobs drink famous good wine.

Although the feelings of General Denbigh were under much more command, and disciplined obedience, than those of his friend, yet was he unusually elated with his return to his home, and expected honours. If the Admiral had captured a fleet, he had taken an island;——and hand in hand they had cooperated in unusual harmony, through the difficulties of an arduous campaign. This rather singular circumstance was owing to their personal friendship.——From their youth they had been companions, and although of very different characters and habits, chance had cemented their intimacy in their more advanced life;——while in subordinate stations, they had been associated together in service; and the now General and Admiral, in command of an army, and a fleet, had once before returned to England with lesser renown, as a Colonel and Captain of a frigate. The great family influence of the soldier, with the known circumstance of their harmony, had procured them this later command, and home with its comforts and rewards was close before them. Pouring out a glass of Madeira, the General, who always calculated what he said, exclaimed,

"Peter——we have been friends from boys."

"To be sure we have," said the Admiral, looking up in a little surprise, at this unexpected commencement——"and it will not be my fault, if we do not die such, Frederic."

Dying was a subject the General did not much delight in, although of conspicuous courage in the field; and he proceeded to his more important purpose——

"I could never find, although I have looked over our family tree so often, that we are in any manner related, Howell."

"I believe it is too late to mend that matter now," said the Admiral, musing.

"Why no——hem——I think not, Howell,—— take a glass of this Burgundy." The Admiral shook his head with a stubborn resolution to taste nothing French——but helped himself to a bountiful stock of Madeira, as he replied,

"I should like to know how you can bring it about, this time a−day, Denbigh."

"How much money will you be able to give that girl of yours, Peter?" said his friend, evading the point.

"Forty thousand down, my good fellow, and as much more when I die," cried the open−hearted sailor, with a nod of exultation.

"George, my youngest son, will not be rich——but Francis will be a Duke, and have a noble estate——yet" said the General, meditating——−"he is so unhappy in his disposition, and uncouth in his manners, I cannot think of offering him to your daughter as a husband.

"Isabel shall marry a good−natured man, like myself, or not at all," said the Admiral positively, but not in the least suspecting the drift of his friend——who was influenced by any thing but a regard to the lady's happiness.

Francis, his first born, was, in truth, as he had described——−but his governing wish was to provide for his favourite George—— Dukes could never want wives——but unportioned Captains in the Guards might.

"George is one of the best tempers in the world," said his father, with strong feeling, "and the delight of all——I could wish he had been the heir to the family honours."

"That it is certainly too late to help," cried the Admiral, wondering if the ingenuity of his friend could devise a remedy for this evil too.

"Yes, too late, indeed," said the other, with a heavy sigh, "but Howell, what say you to matching Isabel with my favourite George."

"Denbigh," cried the sailor, eyeing him keenly, "Isabel is my only child——and a dutiful, good girl——one that will obey orders if she breaks owners, as we sailors say——now. I did think of marrying her to a seaman,when a proper man came athwart my course; yet, your son is a soldier, and that is next to being in the navy——if−so−be you had made him come aboard me, when I wanted you to, there would have been no objection at all——however, when occasion offers, I will overhaul the lad, and if I find him staunch, he may turn in with Bell and welcome."

This was uttered in perfect simplicity, and no intention of giving offence; and partook partly of the nature of a soliloquy——so the General, greatly encouraged, was about to proceed to push the point, as a gun was fired from their own ship.

"There's some of them lubberly transports won't mind our signals——they have had these soldiers so long on board, they get as clumsy as the red−coats themselves," muttered the Admiral, as he hapened on deck to enforce his commands.

A shot or two, sent significantly, in the direction of the wanderers, but so as not to hit them, restored order; and within an hour, forty line of battle ships, and an hundred transports, were disposed in the best manner for convenience and safety.

On their presentation to their sovereign, both veterans were embellished with the ribbon of the Bath, and as their exploits filled the mouths of the news−mongers, and columns of the public prints of the day——− the new Knights began to think seriously of building a monument to their victories,in an union between their children; the Admiral, however, determined to do nothing with his eyes shut, and demanded a scrutiny.

"Where is the boy who is to be a Duke?" exclaimed he, one day, his friend had introduced the point with a view to a final arrangement. "Bell has good blood in her veins——−is a tight built little vessel——−clean heel'd and trim, and would make as good a Duchess as the best of them; so, Denbigh, I will begin by taking a survey of the senior"——−to this the General had no objection, as he well knew, Francis would be wide of pleasing the tastes of an open−hearted, simple man, like the sailor——−they met accordingly, for what the General facetiously called their review, and the Admiral, innocently termed, his survey——−at the house of the former, and the young gentlemen were submitted to his inspection.

Francis Denbigh was about four and twenty, of a feeble body, and face marked with the small−pox, to approaching deformity; his eye was brilliant and piercing, but unsettled, and, at times, wild——his manner awkward——constrained and timid; there would seem, it is true, an intelligence and animation, which occasionally lighted his countenance into gleams of sunshine, that caused you to overlook the lesser accompaniments of complexion and features, in the expression——but they were transient, and inevitablyvanished, whenever his father spoke, or in any manner mingled in his pursuits.

An observer, close as Mrs. Wilson, would have said——the feelings of the father and son, were not such as ought to exist between parent and child.

But the Admiral, who regarded model and rigging, a good deal, satisfied himself with muttering, as he turned his eyes on the junior.

"He may do for a Duke——−but I would not have him for a cockswain."

George was a year younger than Francis; in form——−stature, and personal grace, the counterpart of his father; his eye was less keen, but more attractive, than that of his brother——−his air open——−polished and manly.

"Ah!" thought the sailor, as he ended his satisfactory survey of the youth——−"what a thousand pities Denbigh did not send him to sea."

The thing was soon settled, and George was to be the happy man; Sir Peter concluded to dine with his friend, in order to arrange and settle preliminaries over their bottle, by themselves——the young men and their mother, being engaged to their uncle the Duke.

"Well, Denbigh," cried the Admiral, as the last servant withdrew, "when do you mean to have the young couple spliced?"

"Why," replied the wary soldier, who knew he could not calculate on obedience to his mandates, with as great a certainty, as hisfriend——"the better way is to bring the young people together, in order they may become acquainted, you know."

"Acquainted——together——" cried his companion, in a little surprise, "what better way is there to bring them together, than to have them up before a priest——or to make them acquainted, than by letting them swing in the same hammock?"

"It might answer the end, indeed," said the General, with a smile, "but, some how or other, it is always the best method to bring young folks together, to let them have their own way in the affair, for a time."

"Own way!" rejoined Sir Peter, bluntly, "did you ever find it answer to let a woman have her own way, Sir Frederic?"

"Not common women, certainly, my good friend," said the general, "but such a girl as my intended daughter is an exception."

"I don't know," cried the sailor, "Bell is a good girl, but she has her quirks and whims, like all the sex."

"You have had no trouble with her, as yet, I believe, Howell," said Sir Frederic, cavalierly, but throwing an inquiring glance on his friend.

"No, not yet——nor do I think she will ever dare to mutiny——but there has been one wishing to take her in tow already, since we got in."

"How!" said the other, in alarm——" who——what is he——some officer in the navy, I suppose."

"No, he was a kind of a chaplain——one Parson Ives——a good sort of a youth enough, and a prodigious favourite with my sister, Lady Hawker."

"Well, what did you answer, Peter?" cried his companion, in increasing uneasiness, "did you put him off?"

"Off! to be sure I did——do you think I wanted a barber's clerk for a son−in−law——−no ——no——Denbigh, a soldier is bad enough, without having a preacher."

The General compressed his lips, at this direct attack on a profession, he thought most honourable of any in the world, in some resentment——−but remembering the eighty thousand pounds——−and accustomed to the ways of the other, he curbed his temper, and inquired——

"But Miss Howell——your daughter——how did she stand affected to this said priest?"

"How?——why——how?——why I never asked her."

"Did not?"

"No——never asked——she is my daughter, you know——−and bound to obey my orders, and I did not choose she should marry a parson——but once for all, when is the wedding to be?"

General Denbigh had indulged his younger son, too blindly, and too fondly, to expect that implicit obedience, the Admiral calculatedto a certainty on, and with every prospect of not being disappointed, from his daughter ——Isabel Howell was pretty——mild and timid, and unused to oppose any of her father's commands——but George Denbigh was haughty——−positive and self−willed, and unless the affair could be so managed, as to make him a willing assistant in the courtship——his father knew it might be abandoned at once——he thought he might be led, but not driven——− and relying on his own powers for managing, the General saw his only safety in executing the scheme, in postponing his advances for a regular seige to the lady's heart.

Sir Peter chafed and swore at this circumlocution——−the thing could be done as well in a week as in a year; and the veterans, who had, for a miracle, agreed in their rival stations, and in doubtful moments of success——−were near splitting, on the point of marrying a girl of nineteen.

As Sir Peter both loved his friend, and had taken a prodigious fancy to the youth——he was fain to submit to a short probation.

"You are always for going a round−about way to do a thing," said the admiral, as he yielded the point, "now when you took that battery—— had you gone up in front as I advised you——−you would have taken it in ten minutes, instead of five hours"——−"Yes," said the other, with a friendly shake of the hand, at parting, "and lost fifty men, in place of one, by the step."

CHAPTER XVII.

The Hon. General Denbigh was the youngest of three sons. His seniors, Francis and George, were yet bachelors. The death of a cousin had made Francis a Duke, while a child, and both he and his favourite brother George, had decided on lives of inactivity and sluggishness.

"When I die, brother," the oldest would say, "you will succeed me, and Frederic can provide heirs for the name hereafter."

This arrangement had been closely adhered to, and the brothers had reached the ages of fifty−five and fifty−six, without altering their condition. In the mean time, Frederic had married a young woman of rank and fortune, and the fruits of their union, were the two young candidates for the hand of Isabel Howell.

Francis Denbigh, the eldest son of the General, was diffident of himself by nature, and in addition thereto, it was his misfortune to be the reverse of captivating in his external appearance. The small pox sealed his doom;——−ignorance, and the violence of his attack, left him indelibly impressed with the ravages of that dreadful disorder. On the other hand, his brother escaped without any vestiges of the complaint, and his spotless skin, and fine open countenance, met the gaze of his mother,as contrasted with the deformed lineaments of his elder brother. Such an occurrence is sure to excite one of two feelings in the breast of every beholder——−pity or disgust——−and, unhappily for Francis, maternal tenderness was unable to counteract the latter sensation in his case. George became a favourite, and Francis a neutral. The effect was now easy to be seen——−it was rapid, as it was indelible.

The feelings of Francis were tensitive to an extreme——−he had more quickness——−more sensibility——−more real talents than George——− and all these enabled him to perceive, and the more acutely to feel, the partiality of his mother, to his own prejudice.

As yet, the engagements and duties of the General, had kept his children, and their improvements, out of his sight; but at the ages of eleven and twelve, the feelings of a father, began to pride themselves in the possession of his sons.

On his return from a foreign station, after an absence of two years, his children were ordered from school to meet him. Francis had improved in stature, but not in beauty——− George had flourished in both.

The natural diffidence of the former was increased, by perceiving himself no favourite, and the effects began to show itself in his manners, at no time engaging. He met his father with doubts as to his impressing him favourably, and he saw with anguish, that the embrace received by his brother far exceededin warmth, what had been bestowed on himself.

"Lady Margaret," said the General to his wife, as he followed the retiring boys with his eyes from the dinner table, "it is a thousand pity's George had not been the elder. He would have graced a dukedom or a throne. Frank is only fit for a parson."

This ill−judged speech was uttered sufficiently loud to be overheard by both the sons; on the younger, it made a pleasurable sensation for the moment. His father——−his dear father, had thought him fit to be a king——−and his father must be a judge, whispered his native vanity——−but all this time the connexion between the speech and his brother's rights did not present themselves to his mind.——− George loved this brother too well——−too sincerely, to have injured him even in thought; and so far as Francis was concerned, his vanity was as blameless, as it was natural.

The effect produced on the mind of Francis, was both different in substance and degree. It mortified his pride——−alarmed his delicacy——−and wounded his already morbid sensibility to such an extent, as to make him entertain the romantic notion of withdrawing from the world, and yielding a birthright to one so every way more deserving of it than himself.

From this period, might be dated the opinion of Francis, which never afterwards left him; that he was doing injustice to another,and that other, a brother whom he ardently loved, by continuing to exist. Had he met with fondness in his parents, or sociability in his play−fellows, these fancies would have left him as he grew into life. But the affections of his parents were settled on his more promising brother, and his manners, daily increasing in their repulsive traits, drove his companions to the society of others, more agreeable to their own buoyancy and

joy.

Had Francis Denbigh, at this age, met with a guardian, clear−sighted enough to fathom his real character, and competent to direct his course onward, to his great and prominent duties in life, he would yet have become an ornament to his name and country, and a useful member of society. But no such guide existed. His natural guardians, in his particular case, were his worst enemies——−and the boys left school for college four years afterwards, each advanced in their respective properties of attraction and repulsion.

Irreligion is hardly a worse evil in a family than favouritism; when once allowed to exist, acknowledged, in the breast of the parent, though hid apparently from all other eyes——− its sad consequences begin to show themselves ——effects are produced, and we look in vain for the cause. The awakened sympathies of reciprocal caresses and fondness, are mistaken for uncommon feelings, and the forbidding aspect of deadened affections miscalled native insensibility.

In this manner the evil increases itself, until manners are formed, and characters created, that must descend, with their possessor, to the tomb.

In the peculiar formation of the mind of Francis Denbigh, the evil was doubly injurious. His feelings required sympathy and softness, when they met only with coldness and disgust. George alone was an exception to the rule. He did love his brother; but even his gayety and spirits, soon tired of the dull uniformity of the diseased habits of his elder.

The only refuge Francis found in his solitude, amidst the hundreds of the university, was in his muse and powers of melody. The voice of his family has been frequently mentioned in these pages. And if, as Lady Laura had intimated, there had ever been a syren in the race, it was a male one. He wrote prettily, and would sing these efforts of his muse, to music of his own, that would often draw crowds around his windows, in the stillness of the night, to listen to sounds, as melodious as they were mournful. His poetical efforts partook of the distinctive character of the man, and were melancholy—— wild——and sometimes pious.

George was always amongst the most admiring of his brother's auditors, and would feel a yearning of his heart towards him at such moments, that was painful. But George was too young, and too heedless, to supply the place of a monitor, or a guide, for Francis, to draw his thoughts into a more salutary train. This was the duty of his parents, and should have been their task. But the world ——his rising honours——and his professional engagements, occupied the time of his father; and fashion, parties and pleasure, killed the time of his mother——when they did think of their children, it was of George——the painful image of Francis, was as seldom admitted to disturb their serenity as possible.

George Denbigh was open−hearted, without suspicion, and a favourite. The first taxed his generosity——the second subjected him to fraud——and the third supplied him with the means. But these means sometimes failed. The fortune of the General, though handsome, was not more than competent to the support of his style of living. He expected to be a duke himself one day, and was anxious to maintain an appearance now, that would not disgrace his future elevation. A system of strict but liberal economy had been adopted in the case of his sons. They had, for the sake of appearance, a stated and equal allowance for each.

The Duke had offered to educate the heir himself, and under his own eye. But to this Lady Margaret had found some ingenious excuse in objection, and one that seemed to herself and the world, as honourable to her natural feeling; but had the offer been made to George, these reasons would have vanished in the desire to advance his interests, orgratify his propensities. Such decisions are by no means uncommon; as parents having once decided on the merits and abilities of their children, frequently decline the interference of third persons, as the improvement of their denounced offspring might bring their own judgment into question, if it did not convey an indirect censure on their justice.

The heedlessness of George, had brought his purse to a state of emptiness. His last guinea was gone, and two months was wanting to the end of his quarter. George had played and been cheated. He had ventured to apply to his mother for small sums, when his dress or some trifling indulgence required an advance; and always with success. But here were sixty guineas gone at a blow——and his pride——his candour, forbade his concealing the manner of his loss, if he made the application. This was dreadful——his own conscience reproached him——and he had so often witnessed the violence of his mother's resentments against Francis, for faults which appeared to him very trivial, not to stand in the utmost dread of her more just displeasure in his present case.

Entering the apartment of his brother, in this disturbed condition, George threw himself into a chair, and with

his face concealed between his hands, sat brooding over his forlorn situation.

"George!" said his brother, soothingly,"you are distressed at something?——−can I relieve you in any way?"

"Oh! no——−no——−no——−Frank; it is entirely out of your power."

"Perhaps not, my dear brother"——−continued the other, endeavouring to draw his hand into his own.

"Entirely!——−entirely!" said George. And then, springing up in despair, he exclaimed: "But I must live——−I cannot die."

"Live!——−die!"——−cried Francis, recoiling in horror. "What do you mean by such language. Tell me, George, am I not your brother?——−Your only brother and best friend?"

Francis felt he had none, if George was not that friend, and his face grew pale with emotion, as the tears flowed rapidly down his cheeks.

George could not resist such an appeal. He caught the hand of his brother, and made him acquainted with his losses and his wants.

Francis mused some little time over his narration, ere he broke silence with——−

"It was all you had?"

"The last shilling," cried George, beating his head with his hand.

"And how much will you require to make out the quarter?"

"Oh I must have at least fifty guineas, or how can I live at all."——The ideas of life in George were connected a good deal with the manner it was to be enjoyed——His brotherappeared struggling with himself, and then turning to the other, continued,

"But surely, under present circumstances you could make less do."

"Less, never——hardly that"——interrupted George vehemently; "If Lady Margaret did not enclose me a note now and then, how could we get along at all——dont you find it so yourself, brother?'

"I don't know," said Francis, turning pale——

"Don't know," cried George, catching a view of his altered countenance——"you get the money though."

"I do not remember it," said the other, sighing heavily.

"Francis," cried George, comprehending the truth, "you shall share every shilling I receive in future——you shall——indeed you shall."

"Well, then," rejoined Francis with a smile, "it is a bargain, and you will receive from me a supply in your present necessities."

Without waiting for an answer, Francis withdrew into an inner apartment, and brought out the required sum for his brother's subsistence for two months——George remonstrated——but Francis was positive; he had been saving, and his stock was ample for his simple habits without it.

"Besides, you forget we are partners, and in the end I shall be a gainer." George yielded to his wants and his brother's entreaties, although he gave him credit for the disinterestedness of the act——several weeks passed over without any further allusion to this disagreeable subject——which had at least the favorable result to make George more guarded and a better student in future.

The brothers, from this period, advanced gradually in the acquiring those distinctive qualities which were to mark the future men—— George daily improving in grace and attraction ——Francis in an equal ratio, receding from those very attainments, which it was only his too great desire to possess. In the education of his sons, General Denbigh had preserved the appearance of impartiality; his allowance to each was the same, they were at the same college——they had been at the same school—— and if Frank did not improve as much as his younger brother, it was his own obstinacy and stupidity, and surely not want of opportunity or favour.

Such, then, were the artificial and accidental causes, which kept a noble, a proud, an acute but diseased mind much below in acquirements, another, every way its inferior, excepting in the happy circumstance, of wanting those very excellencies, the excess and indiscreet management of which proved the ruin, instead of blessing of their possessor.

The Duke would occasionally rouse himself from his lethargy, and complain to the father, that the heir of his honours was far inferior to his younger brother in acquirements, and remonstrate against the coursewhich produced such an unfortunate inequality; on these occasions a superficial statement of his system, from the General, met the objection: they cost the same money, and he was sure he not only wished, but did, every thing an indulgent parent could, to render Francis worthy of his future honours—— another evil of the admission of

feelings of partiality, in the favour of one child, to the prejudice of another, is that the malady is contagious, as well as lasting: it exists without our own knowledge, and it seldom fails by its influence to affect those around us. The uncle soon learnt to distinguish George as the hope of the family, yet Francis must be the heir of its honours, and consequently its wealth.

The Duke and his brother were not much addicted to action, hardly to reflection——but if any thing could rouse them to either, it was the reputation of the house of Denbigh. Their ideas of reputation, it is true, were of their own forming, but constant dropping wears away the stone.——So long and confirmed habits were unsettled by incessant broodings on the character of their heir; matrimony became less formidable in their eyes, but the importance of the step still held them in suspence.

The hour at length drew near when George expected a supply from the ill−judged generosity of his mother; it came, and with a heart beating with pleasure, the youth flew to the room of Francis, with a determinationto force the whole of his twenty pounds on his acceptance. On throwing open his door, he saw his brother evidently striving to conceal something behind some books. It was at the hour of breakfast, and George had intended for a novelty to share his brother's morning repast. They always met at dinner, but their other meals were made in their own rooms. George looked in vain for the usual equipage of the table; the truth began to dawn upon him, he threw aside the books, and a crust of bread and glass of water met his eye——it now flashed upon him in all its force.

"Francis, my brother, to what has my extravagance reduced you," exclaimed the contrite George, with a heart nearly ready to burst with his emotion. Francis endeavored to explain, but a sacred regard to the truth held him tongue−tied, until dropping his head on the shoulder of George, he sobbed out—— "It is a trifle, nothing to what I would do for you, my brother."

George felt all the horrors of remorse, and was too generous to conceal his error any longer; he wrote a circumstantial account of the whole transaction to Lady Margaret.

Francis for a few days was a new being—— he had acted nobly, his conscience approved of his motives, and his delicate concealment of them; he in fact began to think there were in himself the seeds of usefulness, as his brother, who from this moment began to understand his character better, attached himself more closely to him as a companion.

The eye of Francis met that of George with the look of acknowledged affection, his mind became less moody, and his face sometimes embellished with a smile.

The reply of their mother to the communication of George threw a damp on these revived hopes of the senior, and drove him back into himself, with tenfold humility.

"I am shocked, my child, to find you have lowered yourself, and forgot the family you belong to, so much as to frequent those gambling houses, which ought not to be suffered in the neighbourhood of the universities; when at a proper age and in proper company, your occasional indulgence at cards I could not object to, as both your father and myself, sometimes resort to it as an amusement, but never in low company; the consequence of your mingling in such society is, that you were cheated, and such will always be your lot, unless you confine yourself to associates, more becoming your rank and illustrious name.

"As to Francis, I see every reason to condemn the course he has taken. He should, being the senior by a year, have taken the means to prevent your falling into such company; and he should have acquainted me immediately, with your loss, in place of wounding your pride, by subjecting you to the mortification of receiving a pecuniary obligation,from one so little older than yourself, and exposing his own health by a diet on bread and water, as you wrote me, for a whole month. Both the General and myself are seriously displeased with him, and think of separating you, as you thus connive at each others follies."

George was too indignant to conceal this letter, and the reflections of Francis on it were dreadful.

For a short time he actually meditated suicide, as the only method of removing a child, from the way of impeding the advancement of his more favoured brother, to the wishes of their common parents.

Had not George been more attentive and affectionate than formerly, the awful expedient might have been resorted to.

From college, the young men went, one into the army, and the other to the mansion of his uncle. George became an elegant——− gay——−open−hearted——−admired——captain in the guards; and Francis stalked through the halls of his ancestors, their acknowledged future Lord, but a misanthrope——−hateful to himself, and disagreeable to all around him.

This picture may be highly wrought, and the effects in the case of Francis, increased by the peculiar tone of his diseased state of mind. But the indulgence of favouritism always brings its sad consequences, in a greater or less degree, and seldom fails to give sorrow and penitence to the bosom of the parents.

CHAPTER XVIII.

No little art and management had been necessary, to make the Admiral auxiliary to the indirect plan, proposed by his friend, to bring George and Isabel together. This however effected, the General turned his whole movements, to the impression to be made on the heart of the young gentleman.

Sir Frederic Denbigh had the same idea of the virtue of management, as were entertained by the Dowager, Lady Chatterton—— but understood human nature better.

Like a prudent officer, his attacks were all masked, and like a great officer, seldom failed in their success.

The young couple were thrown in each other's way——and as Isabel was extremely attractive——somewhat the opposite to himself in ardour of temperament and vivacity ——modest and sensible, it cannot be expected, the association was maintained by the youth with perfect impunity. Within a couple of months, he fancied himself desperately in love with Isabel Howell; and in truth he had some reason for his supposition.

The General noticed every movement of his son with a wary and watchful eye—— occasionally adding fuel to the flame, by drawing his attention to projects of matrimony, in other quarters, until George began to think, he was soon to undergo the trial ofhis constancy——and in consequence, armed himself with a double portion of admiration for his Isabel, to enable him to endure the persecution; while the Admiral several times endangered the success of the whole enterprise, by his volunteer contributions to the hopes of the young man, which only escaped producing an opposite effect to what they were intended for, by being mistaken for the overflowings of good nature and friendship.

After suffering his son to get, as he thought, sufficiently entangled in the snares of cupid, Sir Frederic determined to fire a volley from one of his masked batteries, which he rightly judged would bring on a general engagement. They were sitting by the table after dinner, by themselves, as the General took the advantage of the name of Miss Howell being accidentally mentioned, to say——

"By−the−by, George, my friend the Admiral, said something yesterday on the subject of your being so much with his daughter.——− I wish you to be cautious, not to give the old sailor offence in any way, as he is my particular friend."

"He need be under no violent apprehensions," cried George in reply, colouring highly with shame and pride, "I am sure a Denbigh, is no unworthy match, for a daughter of Sir Peter Howell."

"Oh! to be sure not, boy——we are as old a house as there is in the kingdom, and as noble too; but the Admiral has queer notions, and perhaps, has some cub of a sailor in his eye for a son−in−law. Be prudent boy—— be prudent, is all I ask of you." And the General, satisfied with the effect he had produced, carelessly arose from his seat, and joined Lady Margaret in her drawing−room.

George remained for several minutes musing on his father's singular request, and the Admiral's caution——when he sprang from his seat, caught up his hat and sword, and in ten minutes rung at Sir Peter's door, in Grosvenor−Square. He was admitted, and on ascending to the drawing−room, met the Admiral on his way out. Nothing was farther from the thoughts of the veteran, than a finesse like the General's; and delighted to see George on the battle ground, he pointed significantly with his finger, over his shoulder, towards the door of the room Isabel was in, as he exclaimed with a good−natured smile,

"There she is, my hearty——lay her along side——and hang me, if she don't strike.——−I say, George, faint heart never won a fair lady; remember that, my boy——−no, nor a French ship."

George would have been at some loss to have reconciled this speech to his father's caution, if time had been allowed him to think at all, but as the door was open, he entered, and found Isabel endeavouring to hide her tears.

The Admiral, dissatisfied from the beginning, with the tardy method of dispatching things——had thought he might be of use in breaking the ice for George, by trumpeting his praises, on divers occasions, to his daughter. Under all circumstances, he thought she might be learning to love the man, as he was to be her husband; and speeches like the following, had been frequent of late, from the parent to the child: "There's that youngster George Denbigh, now, Bell, is he not a fine looking lad?——then I know he is brave. His father before him was good stuff, and a true Englishman. What a proper husband he would make for a young woman, he loves his king and country so—— none of your new−fangled notions about religion and government——but a sober, religious,

churchman——that is, as much so, girl, as you can expect in the guards. No Methodist, to be sure;——it's a great pity he was'nt sent to sea, don't you think so? but cheer up, girl, one of these days he may be taking a liking to you yet."

Isabel, whose fears taught her the meaning of these eloquent praises of Captain Denbigh, listened to his harangues in silence, and often meditated on their import, by herself, in tears.

George approached the sopha on which the lady was seated, before she had time to conceal the traces of her sorrow, and in avoice softened by emotion, took her hand gently, as he said,

"What can have occasioned this distress to Miss Howell? if any thing in my power to remove, or a life devoted to her service, can mitigate, she has only to command me, to find a cheerful obedience."

"The trifling causes of sorrow in a young woman," replied Isabel, endeavouring to smile, "will hardly require such serious services to remove them."

But the lady was extremely interesting at the moment. George was goaded by his father's caution, and urged on by his own feelings; with great sincerity, and certainly much eloquence, he proffered his love and hand, to the acceptance of his mistress.

Isabel heard him in painful silence; she respected him, and dreaded his power over her father; but unwilling to abandon hopes to which she yet clung, as to her spring of existence——she with a violent effort, determined to throw herself on the generosity of her lover.

During the late absence of her father, Isabel had, as usual, since the death of her mother, been left with his sister, and had formed an attachment for a young clergyman, a younger son of a baronet, and the present Dr. Ives;——their inclinations had been mutual, and as Lady Hawker knew her brother to be perfectly indifferent to money, she could see no possible objection to its indulgence.

Oh his return, Ives had made his proposals as related, and although warmly backed by the recommendations of the aunt, refused, out of delicacy. The wishes of Isabel had not been mentioned by her clerical lover, and the Admiral supposed he had only complied with his agreement with the General, without, in any manner affecting the happiness of his daughter, by his answer. But the feelings which prompted the request, still remained in full vigour in the lovers; and Isabel now, with many blushes, and some hesitation of utterance, made George fully acquainted with the state of her heart, giving him at the same time to understand, that he was the only obstacle to her happiness.

It cannot be supposed that George heard her without pain, and some mortification.——−The struggle with self−love, was a severe one, but his better feelings prevailed, and he assured the anxious Isabel, that from his importunities she had nothing to apprehend in future.——−The grateful girl overwhelmed him with her thanks, and George had to fly ——ere he repented of his own generosity.

Miss Howell intimated, in the course of her narrative, that a better understanding existed between their parents, than the caution of the General had discovered to his unsuspecting child; and George was determined to know the worst, at once.

At supper he mentioned, as if in rememberanceof his father's injunction, that he had been to take his leave of Miss Howell, since he found his visits gave uneasiness to her friends. "On the whole," he added, endeavouring to yawn carelessly, "I believe I shall visit there no more."

"Nay——nay——−" returned Sir Fredric, a little displeased at his son's indifference, "I meant no such thing; neither the Admiral or myself, have the least objection to your visiting in moderation; indeed, you may marry the girl, with all our hearts, if you can agree."

"But we can't agree, I take it," said George, looking up at the wall.

"Why not——−what hinders?" cried his father, hastily.

"Only——−only I don't like her," said the son, tossing off a glass of wine, which nearly strangled him.

"You don't," cried the General, with great warmth, thrown off his guard by this unexpected declaration, "and may I presume to ask the reason why you do not like Miss Howell, Sir?"

"Oh! you know one never pretends to give a reason for these sort of feelings, my dear sir," said George cooly.

"Then," cried his father, with increasing heat, "you must allow me to say, my dear sir, that the sooner you get rid of these sort of feelings the better. I choose you shall notonly like, but love Miss Howell; and this I have promised to her father."

"I thought," said the youth drily, "that the Admiral was displeased with my coming to his house so

much——−or did I not understand you this morning."

"I know nothing of his displeasure, and care less," rejoined his father. "He has agreed Isabel shall be your wife, and I have passed my word to the engagement; and if, sir, you wish to be considered as my son, you will prepare to comply."

George was expecting to discover some management on the part of his father, but by no means so settled an arrangement, and his anger was in proportion to the deception.

To annoy Isabel any farther, was out of the question——−to betray her——−base;——−and the next morning he sought an audience with the Duke. To him, he mentioned his wish for actual service, but hinted the maternal fondness of Lady Margaret, was averse to his seeking it. This was true——and George now pressed his uncle to assist him in effecting an exchange.

The boroughs of the Duke of Derwent were represented by loyal members of parliament——his two brothers being cotemporary with Mr. Benfield in that honour. And a request from a man who sent six members to the commons, besides a seat in the lords, in his own person, must be listened to.

Within the week, George ceased to be a captain in the guards, and became lieutenant−colonel of a regiment, under orders for America.

Sir Frederic soon became sensible of the error his warmth had led him into, and endeavoured, by soothing and indulgence, to gain the ground he had so unguardedly lost. But terrible was his anger, and bitter his denunciations, when his son acquainted him with his approaching embarkation with his new regiment for America. They quarrelled——and as the favourite child had never, until now, been thwarted, or spoken harshly to, they parted in mutual disgust. With his mother, George was more tender; and as Lady Margaret had never thought the match such as the descendant of two lines of Dukes was entitled to form, she almost pardoned the offence in the cause.

"What's this here I see!" cried Sir Peter Howell, as he ran over a morning paper at the breakfast table: "Capt. Denbigh, late of the guards, has been promoted to the Lieut. Colonelcy of the——foot, and sails to−morrow to join that regiment, now on its way to America."

"It's a lie! Bell?——its all a lie? not but what he ought to be there, too, serving his king and country, but he never would serve you so."

"Me?" said Isabel, with a heart throbbing with the contending feelings of admirationfor George's generosity, and delight at her own deliverance. "What have I to do with the movements of Mr. Denbigh?"

"What?" cried her father in astonishment! "a'nt you to be his wife, an't it all agreed upon——−that is, between Sir Frederic and me, which is the same thing you know."—— Here he was interrupted by the sudden appearance of the General, who had just learnt the departure of his son, and hastened, with the double purpose of breaking the intelligence to his friend, and making his own peace.

"See here, Denbigh," exclaimed the Admiral abruptly, pointing to the paragraph, "what do you say to that?"

"Too true——−too true, my dear friend," replied the General, shaking his head mournfully.

"Hark ye, Sir Frederic Denbigh," cried the Admiral fiercely; "did you not say your son George was to marry my daughter?"

"I certainly did, Peter," said the other mildly, "and am sorry to say, that in defiance of my intreaties and commands, he has deserted his home, and in consequence, I have discarded him for ever."

"Now, Denbigh," said the Admiral, a good deal mollified by this declaration:——− "have I not always told you, that in the army you know nothing of discipline. Why, Sir, if he was a son of mine, he should marry blind−folded, if I chose to order it. I wish, now, Bell had an offer, and dared to refuse it."

"There is the barbers's clerk, you know," said the General, a good deal irritated by the contemptuous manner of his friend.

"And what of that, Sir Frederic," said the sailor sternly, "if I choose her to marry a quill−driver, she shall comply."

"Ah! my good friend," said the General, willing to drop the disagreeable subject, "I am afraid we will both find it more difficult to control the affections of our children, than we at first imagined."

"You do, General Denbigh," said the admiral with a curl of contempt on his lip, and ringing the bell violently, he bid the servant send his young lady to him. On the appearance of Isabel, her father inquired with an air of settled meaning, where young Mr. Ives resided. It was only in the next street, and a messenger was sent to him, with Sir Peter Howell's compliments, and a request to see him without a moment's delay.

"We'll see, we'll see, my old friend, who keeps the best discipline," muttered the Admiral, as he paced up and down the room, in eager expectation of the return of his messenger.

The wondering general gazed on his friend, to see if he was out of his senses. He knew he was quick to decide, and excessively obstinate; but he did not think him so crazy, as to throw away his daughter in a fit of spleen. It never occurred to Sir Frederic,that the engagement with himself, was an act of equal injustice and folly, because it was done with more form and deliberation; which, to the eye of sober reason, would rather make the matter worse. Isabel sat in trembling suspense of the issue of the scene, and lves in a few minutes made his appearance in no little alarm.

On entering, the admiral addressed him abruptly, by inquiring if he still wished to marry that girl, pointing to his daughter: the reply was an eager affirmative. Sir Peter beckoned to Isabel, who approached covered with blushes; and her father having placed her hand in that of her lover——with an air of great solemnity gave them his blessing. The young people withdrew to another room at Sir Peter's request, as he turned to his friend, delighted with his own decision and authority, and exclaimed,

"There Frederic Denbigh, that is what I call being minded."

The General had penetration enough to see the result was agreeable to both the young people, a thing he had apprehended before; and being glad to get rid of the affair in any way, that did not involve him in a quarrel with his old comrade, gravely congratulated the Admiral on his good fortune, and retired.

"Yes, yes," said Sir Peter to himself, as he paced up and down his room, "Denbigh is mortified enough, with his joy, and felicity, and grand children. I never had any opinionof their manner of discipline at all——too much bowing and scraping——I'm sorry though he is a priest; not but what a priest may be as good a man as another——−but let him behave ever so well, he can only get to be a bishop at the most. Heaven forbid, he should ever get to be a Pope——after all, his boys may be admirals, if they behave themselves," and he went to seek his daughter, having in imagination, manned her nursery, with vice and rear admirals in embryo, by the half dozen.

Sir Peter Howell survived the marriage of his daughter, but eighteen months; yet that was sufficient to become attached to his invaluable son−in−law. Mr. Ives insensibly led the Admiral, during his long indisposition, to a more correct view of sacred things, than he had been wont to indulge; and the old man breathed his last, blessing both his children for their kindness, and with a humble hope of future happiness. Some time before his death, Isabel, whose conscience had always reproached her with the deception practised on her father, and the banishment of George from his country and home; threw herself at the feet of Sir Peter, and acknowledged her transgression.

The Admiral heard her in astonishment, but not in anger——his opinions of life had sensibly changed, and his great cause of satisfaction with his new son, removed all motives for regret for any thing, but the fate of poor George. With the noble forbearanceand tenderness of the young man to his daughter, the hardy veteran was sensibly touched; and his intreaties with Sir Frederic, made his peace with a father, already longing for the return of his only hope.

The Admiral left Colonel Denbigh his blessing, and his favourite pistols, as a remembrance of his esteem; but did not live to see the reunion with his family.

George had soon learnt, deprived of hope, and in the midst of novelty, to forget those passions which could no longer be prosperous; and two years from his departure, returned to England, glowing in health, and improved in person and manners, by a more extensive knowledge of the world and mankind.

CHAPTER XIX.

During the time occupied by the foregoing events, Francis had continued a gloomy inmate of his uncle's house. The Duke and his brother George, were too indolent and inactive in their minds to pierce the cloud, that mortification and deadened affections, had drawn around the real character of their nephew; and although he was tolerated as the heir, he was but little loved as a man.

In losing his brother, Francis lost the only human being, with whom he possessed any sympathies in common; and he daily drew more and more into himself, in gloomy meditation, on his forlorn situation, in the midst of wealth and expected honours. The attentions he received, were paid to his rank; and Francis had penetration enough to perceive it. His visits to his parents were visits of ceremony, and in time, all parties came to look to their termination with pleasure, as the discontinuance of heartless and forced civilities.

Affection even in the young man, could not endure, repulsed as his feelings were, forever; and in the course of three years, if his attachments were not alienated from his parents, his ardour had become much abated.

It is a dreadful truth, that the bonds of natural affection, can be broken by injustice and contumely; and it is yet more to be deplored;that where, from such causes, we loosen the ties habit and education have drawn around us, that a re−action in our feelings commences——we seldom cease to love, but we begin to hate. Against such awful consequences, it is one of the most solemn duties of the parent to provide in season; and what surer safeguard is there, than to inculcate those feelings, which teach the mind to love God, and in so doing, induces love to the whole human family.

Sir Frederic and Lady Margaret attended the church regularly——repeated the responses with much decency——toasted the church next to the king——even appeared at the altars of their God——and continued sinners. From such sowings, no good fruit could be expected to flourish: yet Francis was not without his hours of devotion; but his religion was, like himself, reserved——superstitious——ascetic and gloomy. He never entered into social worship: if he prayed, it was with an ill−concealed wish, to end this life of care. If he returned thanks, it was with a bitterness that mock'd the throne he was prostrate before. Such pictures are revolting; but their originals have, and do exist; for what enormity is there, that human frailty, unchecked by divine assistance, may not be guilty of?

Francis received an invitation to visit a brother of his mother's, at his seat in the country, about the time of the expected return of George from America; in compliancewith the wishes of his uncles, he accepted it. The house was thronged with visiters, and many of them were ladies; to these, the arrival of the unmarried heir of the house of Derwent, was a subject of no little interest: his character had, however, preceded him, and a few days of his awkward and, as they conceived, sullen deportment, drove them back to their former beaux, with the exception of one fair; and she was not only amongst the fairest of the throng, but decidedly of the highest pretensions, on the score of birth and fortune.

Marian Lumley, was the only surviving child of the last Duke of Annerdale, with whom had expired the higher honours of his house. But the Earldom of Pendennyss, with numerous ancient baronies, were titles in fe; and together with his princely estates, had descended to his daughter, as heir general to the family. A peeress in her own right, with an income far exceeding her utmost means of expenditure, the lovely Countess of Pendennyss, was a prize aimed at by all the young nobles of the empire.

Educated in the mids of flatterers and dependants, she had become haughty, vain, and supercilious; still she was lovely——and no one knew better how to practise the most winning arts of her sex, when whim or interest prompted her to the trial.

Her host was her guardian and relative; and through his agency, she had rejected, atthe age of twenty, numerous suitors for her hand. Her eyes were fixed on the ducal coronet; and unfortunately for Francis Denbigh, he was at the time, the only man of the proper age, who could elevate her to that enviable distinction, in the kingdom; and an indirect measure of her own, had been the means of his invitation to the country.

Like the rest of her young companions, Marian was greatly disappointed on the view of her intended captive, and for a day or two, with them, she abandoned him to his melancholy and himself. But ambition was her idol; and to its powerful rival, love, she was yet a stranger. After a few struggles with her inclinations, the

consideration, that their united fortunes and family alliances, would make one of the wealthiest and most powerful houses in the kingdom, prevailed; such early sacrifices of the inclinations in a woman of her beauty, youth, and accomplishments, may excite surprise—— but where the mind is left uncultivated by the hand of care——the soul untouched by the love of goodness, the human heart seldom fails to set up an idol of its own to worship. And, in the Countess of Pendennyss, it was pride.

The remainder of the ladies, from ceasing to wonder at the manners of Francis, had made them the subject of their mirth; and, nettled at his apparent indifference to their society, which they erroneously attributed to his sense of his importance, they overstepped thebounds of good−breeding, in manifesting their displeasure.

"Mr. Denbigh," cried one of the most thoughtless and pretty of the gay tribe, to him one day, as Francis sat in a corner abstracted from the scene around him, "when do you mean to favour the world with your brilliant ideas in the shape of a book?"

"Oh! no doubt soon," said a second," and I expect they will be homilies, or another volume to the Whole Duty of Man."

"Rather," cried a third, with bitter irony, "another canto to the Rape of the Lock ——his ideas are so vivid and full of imagery."

"Or, what do you think," said a fourth, speaking in a voice of harmony, and tones of the most soothing tenderness "of pity and compassion, for the follies of those inferior minds, who cannot enjoy the reflections of a good sense and modesty, peculiarly his own."

This might also be irony——and Francis thought it so; but the tones were so soft and conciliating, that with a face pale with his emotions, he ventured to look up, and met the eye of Marian, fixed on him in an expression that changed his death−like hue into the colour of vermilion.

He thought of this speech——he reasoned on it——he dreamt of it; but for the looks which accompanied it, like the rest of the party, he would have thought it the cruellest cut of them all. But that look——those eyes ——that voice——what a commentary on her language did they not afford.

Francis was not left long in suspense; the next morning a ride was proposed, which included all but himself in its arrangements. He was either too reserved, or too proud, to offer services which were not required, by even a hint, that they would be agreeable.

Several gentlemen had contended for the honour of driving the Countess, in a beautiful phaeton of her own. They grew earnest in their claims: one had been promised by its mistress, with an opportunity of trying the ease of the carriage——another, with the excellent training of her hourses; in short, all had some particular claim to the distinction, which were urged with a warmth and pertinacity, proportionate to the value of the prize to be obtained. Marian heard the several claimants with an ease and indifference natural to her situation, and ended the dispute by saying——

"Gentlemen, as I have made so many promises, from the dread of giving offence, I must throw myself on the mercy of Mr. Denbigh, who alone, with the best claims, from his modesty, does not urge them; to you, then," continued she, approaching him with the whip which was to be given the victor, "I adjudge the prize, if you will condescend to accept it." This was uttered by one of her most attractive smiles, and Francis received the whip with an emotion that he with difficulty could controul.

The gentlemen were glad to have the contestdecided, by adjudging the prize to one so little dangerous, and the ladies sneered at her choice, as they proceeded in their ride.

There was something so soothing in the manners of Lady Pendennyss——she listened to the little he said, with such a respectful attention——was so anxious to have him give his opinions, that the unction of flattery, so sweetly applied, and for the first time, could not fail of its wonted effects.

The communications thus commenced were continued——−it was so easy to be attentive, by being simply polite, to one unused to notice of any kind, that Marian found the fate of the young man in her hands, almost as soon as she attempted to controul it.

A new existence opened upon Francis, as day after day she insensibly led him to a display of powers he was unconscious, until now, of possessing himself. His self−respect began to increase——his limited pleasures to multiply, and he could now look around him with a sense of participation in the delights of life, as he perceived himself of consequence to this much admired woman.

Trifling incidents, managed on he part with consummate art, had led him to the daring inference, he was not

entirely indifferent to her; and Francis returned the incipient affection of his mistress, with a feeling but little removed from adoration. Week flew by after week, and still he lingered at the residence of his kinsman, unable to tear himselffrom a society of one, become so valuable, and yet afraid to take a step, which might involve him in disgrace or ridicule.

The condescension of the Countess increased, and she had indirectly given him the most flattering assurance of his success, when George just arrived from America, having first paid his greetings to his reconciled parents, and the happy couple of his generosity; flew to the arms of his brother in Suffolk.

Francis was overjoyed to see George, and George delighted in the visible improvement of his brother. Still Francis was far, very far behind his juniors in graces of mind and body. Few men in England were more adapted by nature and education for female society, than Colonel Denbigh was at the period we write of.

Marian witnessed all his attractions and deeply felt their influence——for the first time she felt the emotions of passion, and after having sported in the gay world, and trifled with the feelings of others for a course of years, the Countess in her turn became an unwilling victim to its power. George met her flame with a corresponding ardor, and the struggle between ambition and love became severe——the brothers unconsciously were rivals.

Had George for a moment suspected the situation of the feelings of Francis, his very superiority in the contest, would have taxed his generosity to a retreat from the unnatural rivalry. Had the elder dreamt of the views of his junior, he would have abandoned his dearest hopes, in despair for their success; he had so long been accustomed to consider George as his superior in every thing, a competition with him would have appeared desperate. Marian contrived to keep both in hopes, undecided herself which to choose, and perhaps ready to yield to the first applicant. A sudden event, however, removed all doubts, and decided the fate of the three.

The Duke of Derwent and his batchelor brother, became so dissatisfied with the character of their future heir, that they as coolly set about providing themselves with wives as they performed any other ordinary transaction of life; they married cousins, and on the same day, the choice of the ladies was assigned between them by lots, and if his Grace got the prettier, his brother certainly got the richest; under the circumstances, a very tolerable distribution of fortune's favours.

These double marriages dissolved the charms of Francis, and Lady Pendennyss determined to consult her wishes——a little pointed encouragement brought out the declaration of George, and he was accepted.

Francis, who had never communicated his feelings to any one but the lady, and that only indirectly, was crushed by the blow——he continued in public until the day of their union, was present, composed, and silent—— but it was the silence of a mountain whose volcanic contents had not reached the surface. The same day he disappeared, and every inquiry proved fruitless, search was baffled, and for seven years it was not known what had become of the General's eldest son.

George, on marrying, resigned his commission, at the earnest entreaties of his wife, and retired to one of her seats, to the enjoyment of ease and domestic love: the countess was enthusiastically attached to him, and as motives for the indulgence of her coquetry were wanting. her character became gradually improved, by the contemplation of the excellent qualities of her generous husband.

A lurking suspicion of the cause of Francis's sudden disappearance, rendered her uneasy at times; but Marian was too much beloved, too happy, in the enjoyment of too many honours and too great wealth, to be open to the convictions of conscience: it is in our hours of pain and privation that we begin to feel its sting; if we are prosperous, we fancy we reap the fruits of our merit, but if we are unfortunate, the voice of truth seldom fails to remind us that we are deserving of our fate. A blessed provision of Providence that often makes the saddest hours of our earthly career, the morn of a day, that is to endure forever.

General Denbigh and Lady Margaret both died within five years of the marriage of their favourite child, although both lived to see their descendant, in the person of the infant Lord Lumley.

The Duke and his brother George, were each blessed with offspring, and in these several descendants, of the different branches of the family of Denbigh, may be seen the different personages of our history. On the birth of her youngest child, the Lady Marian, the Countess of Pendennyss, sustained a shock in her health from which she never wholly recovered; she became nervous, and lost most of her energy of both mind and body; her husband was her solace——his tenderness remained unextinguished, his attention increased

As the fortune of Ives and his Isabel put the necessity of a living, out of the question, and as no cure offered for his acceptance, he was happy to avail himself of an offer to become domestic chaplain to his now intimate

friend Mr. Denbigh; for the first six years they were inmates of Pendennyss Castle; the rector of the parish was infirm and averse to a regular assistant; but the unobtrusive services of Mr. Ives, were not less welcome to the pastor than to his parishioners.

Employed in the duties which of right fell to the incumbent, and intrusted with the spiritual guardianship of the dependants of the castle, our young clergyman had ample occupation for all his time, if not a sufficient theatre for his usefulness. Isabel and himself remained the year round in Wales, and the first dawnings of education received by Lord Lumley, were those he acquired conjointly with Franciscis from the care of the latter's father. They formed, with the interval of the time spent by Mr. Denbigh and Lady Pendennyss, in town in winter, but one family. To the gentleman, the attachment of the grateful Ives was as strong as it was lasting. Mrs. Ives never ceased to consider him as the selfdevoted victim to her happiness, and although a far more brilliant lot had awaited him by the change, yet they could not think it a more happy one.

The birth of Lady Marian had already, in its consequences, begun to throw a dark gloom round the domestic comforts of Denbigh, when he was to sustain another misfortune in a separation from his friends.

Mr. now Dr. Ives, had early announced his firm intention, whenever an opportunity was afforded him, to enter into the fullest functions of his ministry, as a matter of duty—— such an opportunity now offered at B——, and the Doctor became its rector about the period Sir Edward became possessor of his paternal estate.

Denbigh tried every inducement within his power to keep the Dr. in his own society; if as many thousands, as his living would give him hundreds, would effect it, they would have been at his service; but Denbigh understood the character of the divine too well, to offer such an inducement; he however urged the claims of friendship to the utmost, but without success. The Doctor acknowledged the hold both himself and family had gained upon his affections, but he added——

"Consider, my dear Mr. Denbigh, what we would have thought, of one of the earlier followers of our Saviour, who from motives of convenience or worldly mindedness, could have deserted his sacred calling: although the changes in the times, may have rendered the modes of conducting them differently, necessary, the duties remain the same. The minister of our holy religion who has once submitted to the calls of his divine Master, must allow nothing but ungovernable necessity, to turn him from the path he has entered on; and should he so far forget himself, I greatly fear he would plead, when too late to remedy the evil, his worldly duties, his cares, or even his misfortunes, in vain. Solemn and arduous are his obligations to labour, but when faithfully he has discharged these duties—— oh! how glorious must be his reward."

Before such opinions of duty, every barrier must fall, and the Doctor entered into the cure of his parish, without further opposition, though not without unceasing regret on the part of his friend: their intercourse was however maintained by letter, and they also frequently met at Lumley Castle, a seat of the Countess, within two days' ride of the Doctor's parish, until her increasing indisposition rendered her journeying impossible; then, indeed, the Doctor extended his rides into Wales, but with longer intervals between hisvisits, though with the happiest effects to the objects of his journey.

Mr. Denbigh, worn down with watching and blasted hopes, under the direction of the spiritual watchfulness of the rector of B——, became an humble, sincere, and pious christian; although the spring of his sorrows bowed him down in years to the grave, he sunk into it with the hope of a joyful resurrection.

CHAPTER XX.

It has been already mentioned, that the health of Lady Pendennyss suffered a severe shock, in giving birth to a daughter——change of scene was prescribed as a remedy for her disorder, and Denbigh and his wife were on their return from a fruitless excursion amongst the northern lakes, in pursuit of amusement and relief for the latter, as they were compelled to seek a shelter from the fury of a sudden gust, in the first building that offered; it was a farm house of the better sort; and the attendants, carriages, and appearance of their guests, caused no little confusion to its simple inmates——a fire was lighted in the best parlour, and every effort made by the inhabitants to contribute to the comforts of the travellers.

The Countess and her husband were sitting, in that kind of listless melancholy, which had been too much the companion of their later hours, when in the interval of the storm, a male voice in an adjoining room commenced singing the following ballad——the notes were low——monotonous, but unusually sweet, and the enunciation so distinct, as to render every syllable intelligible:

Oh! I have liv'd, in endless pain,
And I have liv'd, alas! in vain,
For none regard my woe——
No Father's care, convey'd the truth,
No Mother's fondness, bless'd my youth,
Ah! joys too great to know——
And Marian's love, and Marian's pride,
Have crush'd the heart that would have died,
To save my Marian's tears——
A Brother's hand, has struck the blow,
Oh! may that Brother never know,
Such madly sorrowing years.
But hush my griefs——and hush my song,
I've mourn'd in vain——I've mourn'd too long,
When none have come to soothe——
And dark's the path, that lies before,
And dark have been the days of yore,
And all was dark in youth.

The maidens employed around the person of their comfortless mistress——the valet of Denbigh engaged in arranging a dry coat for his master——all suspended their employments to listen in breathless silence, to the mournful melody of the song.

But Denbigh, himself, had started from his seat, as the first notes struck his ear, and continued until the voice ceased, gazing in vacant horror, in the direction of the sounds. A door opened from the parlour to the room of the musician——he rushed through it, and there——−in a kind of shed to the building——−which which hardly sheltered him from the fury of the tempest——−clad in the garments of the extremestpoverty——with an eye roving in madness, and a body rocking to and fro, from mental inquietude, he beheld, seated on a stone, the remains of his long lost brother, Francis.

The language of the song, was too plain to be misunderstood. The truth glared around George, with a violence that dazzled his brains——−but he saw it all——−he felt it all——− and rushing to the feet of his brother, he exclaimed, in horror, pressing his hands between his own:

"Francis——my own brother——do you not know me?"

The maniac regarded him with a vacant gaze, but the voice and the person, recalled the compositions of his more reasonable moments to his recollection——pushing back the hair of George, so as to expose his fine forehead to his view, he contemplated him for a few moments, and then continued to sing, in a voice still rendered sweeter than before by his faint impressions.

His raven locks, that richly curl'd,

His eye, that proud defiance hurl'd,
Have stole my Marian's love!
Had I heen blest by nature's grace,
With such a form, with such a face,
Could I so treach'rous prove?
And what is man——and what is care——
That he should let such passions tear
The bases of the soul?
Oh! you should do, as I have done——
And having pleasure's summit won,
Each bursting sob controul.

On ending the last stanza, the maniac released his brother, and broke into the wildest laugh of madness.

"Francis!− −Oh! Francis, my brother"——− cried George, in bitterness of sorrow——− a piercing shriek drew his eye to the door he had passed through——−on its threshold lay the senseless body of his wife——the distracted husband forgot every thing, in the situation of his Marian——−and raising her in his arms, he exclaimed,

"Marian——−my Marian, revive——−look up——− know me."

Francis had followed him, and now stood by his side——−gazing intently on the lifeless body——−his looks became more soft——− his eye glanced less wildly——−he cried,

"Marian——−My Marian, too."

There was a mighty effort——−nature could endure no more——−he broke a blood−vessel, and fell at the feet of George——−they flew to his assistance, giving the Countess to her women——−he was dead.

For seventeen years, Lady Pendennyss survived the shock; but having reached her own abode, during that long period, she never left her room.

In the confidence of his reviving hopes, Doctor Ives and his wife were made acquainted with the real cause, of the grief oftheir friend——but the truth went no further.—— Denbigh was the guardian of his three young cousins——The Duke, his sister, and young George Denbigh; these, with his son, Lord Lumley, and daughter, Lady Marian, were removed from the melancholy of the Castle, to scenes better adapted to their opening prospects in life——yet Lumley was fond of the society of his father, and finding him a youth endowed beyond his years——the care of his parent, was early turned to the most important of his duties in that sacred office; and when he yielded to his wishes to go into the army——he knew he went a youth of sixteen, possessed of principles and self−denial, that would become a man of five and twenty.

General Wilson completed the work, his father had begun; and Lord Lumley formed a singular exception to the character of his companions.

At the close of the Spanish war, he returned home, and was just in time to receive the parting breath of his mother.

A few days before her death, the Countess requested her children might be made acquainted with her history and misconduct, and she placed in the hands of her son, a letter, with directions, for him to open it after her decease——it was addressed to both children, and after recapitulating generally, the principal events of her life, continued:

"Thus, my children, you perceive the consequences of indulgence and hardness ofheart, which made me insensible to the sufferings of others, and regardless of the plainest dictates of justice——self, was my idol——the love of admiration, which was natural to me, was increased by the flatterers who surrounded me——and had the customs of our country, suffered royalty to descend in their unions, to a grade in life below their own, your uncle would have escaped the fangs of my baneful coquetry.

"Oh! Marian, my child, never descend so low as to practice those arts, which have degraded your unhappy mother——I would impress on you, as a memorial of my parting affection, these simple truths——that coquetry, stands next the want of chastity, in the scale of female vices——it is in fact, a kind of mental prostitution——it is ruinous to all that delicacy of feeling, which gives added lustre to female charms——it is almost destructive to modesty itself——A woman who has been addicted to its practice, may strive long, and in vain, to regain that singleness of heart, which can bind her up so closely in her husband and children, as to make her a good wife, or a

mother; and if it should have degenerated into habit, may lead to the awful result of infidelity to her marriage vows.

"It is in vain for a coquette to pretend to religion——its practice involves hypocrisy, falsehood, and deception——every thing that is mean ——every thing that is debasing——in short, as it is bottomed on selfishness and pride, where it has once possessed the mind, it will only yield to the truth−displaying banners of the cross—— this, and this only, can remove the evil; for without it, she, whom the charms of youth and beauty, have enabled to act the coquette, will descend into the vale of life, altered, it is true, but not amended——as she will find the world, with its allurements, cling around her parting years, in vain regrets for days that are flown, and mercenary views for her descendants. Heaven bless you, my children——console and esteem your inestimable father, while he yet remains with you; and place your reliance on that Heavenly Parent, who will never desert those, who seek him in sincerity and love.——

Your dying mother, "M. Pendennyss."

This letter, evidently written under the excitement of deep remorse, for the errors of the writer, made a great impression on both her children; in Lady Marian it was pity, regret, and abhorrence of the fault, which had been the principal cause of the wreck of her mother's peace of mind; but in her brother, now Earl of Pendennyss, these feelings were united with a jealous dread of his own probable lot, in the chances of matrimony.

His uncle had been the supposed heir to a more elevated title than his own, but he was now the actual possessor of as honourable a name, and much larger revenues. The great wealth of his maternal grandfather,and considerable estate of his own father, were, or would soon be, centered in himself; and if a woman as amiable, as faultless, as his affection had taught him to believe his mother to be, could yield, in her situation, to the lure of wordly honours——had he not great reason to dread, a hand might be bestowed, at some day, upon himself, when the heart would point out some other destination, if the real wishes of its owner were consulted.

Pendennyss was modest by nature, and humble from principle——though by no means distrustful; yet the shock of discovering his mother's fault——the gloom of her death, and his father's declining health, sometimes led him into a train of reflections, which at others, he would have fervently deprecated.

A short time after the decease of the Countess, Mr. Denbigh, finding his constitution bending fast, under the wasting of a decline he had been in for a year, resolved to finish his days in the abode of his Christian friend, Doctor Ives. For several years they had not met; increasing duties and infirmities on both sides having interrupted their visits.

By easy stages he left the residence of his son in Wales, and accompanied by both his children, he reached Lumley Castle much exhausted; here he took a solemn and final leave of Marian, unwilling she should so soon witness again the death of another parent,and dismissing the Earl's equipage and attendants, a short day's ride from B——, they proceeded alone to the rectory.

A letter had been forwarded, acquainting the Doctor of his approaching visit, wishing it to be perfectly private, but not alluding to its object, and fixing the day, a week later than the one he arrived on; this he had altered, on perceiving the torch of life more rapidly approaching the socket, than he had at first supposed. Their unexpected appearance and reception are known. Denbigh's death and the departure of his son followed. Francis was his companion, to the tomb of his ancestors in Westmoreland.

The Earl had a shrinking delicacy under the knowledge of his family, history, that made him anxious to draw all eyes from the contemplation of his mother's conduct——how far the knowledge of it, had extended in society, he could not know, but he wished it buried with her in the tomb. The peculiar manner of his father's death would attract notice, and might recall attention to the prime cause of his disorder; they were unknown as yet, and he wished the Doctor's family to let them remain so; it was impossible the death of a man of Mr. Denbigh's rank, should be unnoticed in the prints, and the care of Francis, dictated the simple truth, without comments, as it appeared: what was more natural, than that the son of Mr. Denbigh, should also be Mr. Denbigh.

In the presence of the Rector's family, no allusions were made to their friends, and the villagers and the neighbourhood spoke of them as old and young Mr. Denbigh.

The name of Lord Lumley, now Earl of Pendennyss, was known to the whole British nation; but the long. retirement of his father and mother, had driven them almost from the recollection of their friends. Even Mrs. Wilson supposed her favourite hero a Lumley. Pendennyss castle had been for centuries the proud residence of that family; and the change of name in its possessor, was forgotten with the circumstances that led to it. When,

therefore, Emily met the Earl so unexpectedly the second time at the rectory, she, of course, with all her companions, spoke of him as Mr. Denbigh.

Pendennyss had called in proper person, in expectation of meeting his kinsman, Lord Bolton; but, finding him absent, could not resist his desire to visit the rectory——−accordingly he sent his carriage and servants on to London, leaving them at a convenient spot, and arrived on foot at the house of Dr. Ives. From the same motives which had influenced him before——−a wish to indulge, undisturbed by useless ceremony, his melancholy reflections——−he desired his name might not be mentioned.

This was an easy task; both Doctor and Mrs. Ives had called him when a child, George or Lumley, and were unused to his new appellation, of Pendennyss; indeed, it rather recalled painful recollections to them all.

It may be remembered, circumstances removed the necessity of any introduction to Mrs. Wilson and her party; and the difficulty in that instance was happily got rid of.

The Earl had often heard Emily Moseley spoken of by his friends, and in their letters they frequently mentioned her name, as connected with their pleasures and employments, always with an affection, Pendennyss thought exceeding that which they manifested——for their son's wife; and Mrs. Ives, the evening before, to remove unpleasant thoughts, had given him a lively description of her person and character. The Earl's curiosity had been a little excited to see this paragon of female beauty and virtues; and, unlike most curiosity on such subjects, he was agreeably disappointed by the examination. He wished to know more, and made interest with the doctor, to assist him to continue the incognito, accident had favoured him with.

The Doctor objected on the ground of principle, and the Earl desisted; but the beauty of Emily, aided by her character, had made an impression not to be easily shaken off, and Pendennyss returned to the charge.

His former jealousies were awakened in proportion to his admiration; and after some time, he threw himself on the mercy of the divine, by declaring his new motive, but without mentioning his parents. The Doctor pitied him, for he scanned his feelings thoroughly, and consented to keep silent, butlaughingly declared, it was bad enough for a divine, to be accessory to, much less aiding in a deception; and that he knew if Emily and Mrs. Wilson, learnt his imposition, he would lose ground in their favour by the discovery.

"Surely, George," said the doctor with a laugh, "you don't mean to marry the young lady as Mr. Denbigh?"

"Oh no! it is too soon to think of marrying her at all," replied the Earl with a smile, "but——somehow——I should like to see, what my reception in the world will be, as plain Mr. Denbigh——unprovided for and unknown."

"No doubt, my Lord," said the Rector archly, "in proportion to your merits very unfavourably indeed; but then your humility will be finely elevated, by the occasional praises, I have heard Mrs. Wilson lavish on your proper character, of late."

"I am much indebted to her partiality," continued the Earl mournfully; then throwing off his gloomy thoughts, he added; "I wonder, my dear Doctor, your goodness did not set her right in the latter particular."

"Why she has hardly given me an opportunity——delicacy and my own feelings, have kept me very silent on the subject of your family to any of that connexion; they think, I believe, I was a rector in Wales, instead of your father's chaplain, and somehow," continued the Doctor, smiling on his wife, "the association with your late parents, was soconnected in my mind, with my most romantic feelings; that although I have delighted in it——−I have seldom alluded to it in conversation at all. Mrs. Wilson has never spoken of you but twice in my hearing, and that since she has expected to meet you——your name has undoubtedly recalled the remembrance of her husband."

"I have many——many reasons to remember the General with gratitude," cried the Earl with fervour——"but Doctor, do not forget my incognito; only call me George, I ask no more."

The plan of Pendennyss was put in execution——−day after day he lingered in Northamptonshire, until his principles and character had grown upon the esteem of the Moseleys, in the manner we have mentioned.

His frequent embarrassments were from the dread and shame of a detection——−with Sir Hubert Nicholson, he had a narrow escape; and Mrs. Fitzgerald and Lord Henry Stapleton he of course avoided; for having gone so far, he was determined to persevere to the end. Egerton he thought knew him, and he disliked his character and manners.

When Chatterton appeared most attentive to Emily, the candour and good opinion of the young nobleman made the Earl acquainted with his wishes and his situation. Pendennyss was too generous not to meet his rival on

fair grounds. His cousin, the Duke, was requested to use their influence secretly, for thedesired station for the Baron——the result is known, and Pendennyss trusted his secret to Chatterton; he took him to London, gave him in charge to Derwent, and returned to prosecute his own suit. His note from Bolton Castle was a ruse, to conceal his character, as he knew the departure of the baronet's family to an hour, and had so timed his visit to the Earl, as not to come in collision with the Moseleys.

"Indeed, my Lord," cried the Doctor to him one day, "your scheme goes on swimmingly, and I am only afraid when your mistress finds the imposition, you will find your rank producing a different effect, from what you have apprehended."

CHAPTER XXI.

But Dr. Ives was mistaken——had he seen the sparkling eyes, and glowing cheeks of Miss Moseley——the smile of satisfaction and happiness, which played on the usually thoughtful face of Mrs. Wilson, when the Earl handed them into his own carriage, as they left his house, on the evening of the discovery; the Doctor would have gladly acknowledged the failure of his prognostics. In truth, there was no possible event, that under the circumstances, could have given both aunt and niece such heartfelt pleasure, as the knowledge that Denbigh and the Earl were the same person.

Pendennyss stood holding the door of the carriage in his hand, irresolute how to act, when Mrs. Wilson said,

"Surely, my Lord, you sup with us."

"A thousand thanks, my dear Madam, for the privilege," cried the Earl, as he sprang into the coach——the door was closed, and they drove off.

"After the explanation of this morning, my Lord," said Mrs. Wilson, willing to remove all doubts between him and Emily, and perhaps anxious to satisfy her own curiosity, "it will be fastidious to conceal our desire to know more of your movements. Howcame your pocket−book in the possession of Mrs. Fitzgerald?"

"Mrs. Fitzgerald!" cried Pendennyss, in astonishment, "I lost the book in one of the rooms of the Lodge, and supposed it had fallen into your hands, and betrayed my disguise, by Emily's rejection of me, and your own altered eye. Was I mistaken then in both?"

Mrs. Wilson now, for the first time, explained their real grounds of refusing his offers, which, in the morning, she had loosely mentioned, as owing to a misapprehension of his just character, and recounted the manner of the book's falling into the hands of Mrs. Fitzgerald.

The Earl listened in amazement, and after musing with himself, exclaimed, "I remember taking it from my pocket, to show Col. Egerton some singular plants I had gathered, and think I first missed it, when returning to the place I had then laid it——it was gone; in some of the side−pockets were letters from Marian, addressed to me, properly; and I naturally thought they had met your eye."

Mrs. Wilson and Emily immediately thought Egerton the real villain, who had caused both themselves and Mrs. Fitzgerald so much uneasiness, and the former mentioned her suspicions to the Earl.

"Nothing more probable, dear Madam," cried he, "and this explains to me his startlinglooks when we first met, and evident dislike to my society, for he must have seen my person, though the carriage hid him from my sight."

That Egerton was the wretch, and through his agency, the pocket−book had been carried to the Cottage, they all now agreed, and turned to more pleasant subjects.

"Master!——her——Master," said Peter Johnson, as he stood at a window of Mr. Benfield's room, stirring a gruel for the old gentleman's supper, and stretching his neck, and straining his eyes, to distinguish by the light of the lamps——"I do think there is Mr. Denbigh, handing Miss Emmy from a coach, covered with gold, and two foot−men, all dizzined with pride like."

The spoon fell from the hands of Mr. Benfield——he rose briskly from his seat, and adjusting his dress, took the arm of the steward, as he proceeded to the drawing−room. While these several movements were in operation, which consumed some time, the old bachelor relieved the tedium of Peter's impatience, by the following speech:

"Mr. Denbigh!——what, back?——I thought he never could let that rascal John shoot him, and forsake Emmy after all; (here the old gentleman suddenly recollected Denbigh's marriage) but now, Peter, it can do no good either.——I remember, that when my friend, the Earl of Gosford——(and again he was checked by the image of the card−table,and the Viscountess,) "but Peter," he said, with great warmth, "we can go down and see him though."

"Mr. Denbigh!" exclaimed Sir Edward, in astonishment, as he saw the companion of his sister and child, enter the drawing−room, "you are welcome once more to your old friends; your sudden retreat from us, gave us much pain, but we suppose Lady Laura had too many attractions, to allow us to keep you any longer in Norfolk."

The good Baronet sighed, as he held out his hand, to the man he had once hoped to receive as a son.

"Neither Lady Laura, nor any other lady, my dear Sir Edward," cried the Earl, as he took the Baronet's hand, "drove me from you, but the frowns of your own fair daughter; and here she is, ready to acknowledge her

offence——and, I hope, atone for it."

John, who knew of the refusal of his sister, and was not a little displeased with the cavalier treatment he had received at Denbigh's hands, felt indignant at such improper levity, as he thought he now exhibited, being a married man, and approached with——

"Your servant, Mr. Denbigh——I hope my Lady Laura is well."

Pendennyss understood his look, and replied very gravely, "Your servant, Mr. John Moseley——my Lady Laura is, or certainly ought to be, very well, as she has this moment gone to a route, accompanied by her husband."

The quick eye of John glanced from the Earl——−to his aunt——−to Emily; a lurking smile was on all their features——the heightened colour of his sister——the flashing eyes of the young man——the face of his aunt——all told him, something uncommon was about to be explained; and yielding to his feelings, he caught the hand, Pendennyss extended to him, as he cried,

"Denbigh, I see——I feel——there is some unaccountable mistake——we are——"

"Brothers!" said the Earl, emphatically. "Sir Edward——dear Lady Moseley, I throw myself on your mercy——I am an impostor—— when your hospitality received me into your house, it is true, you admitted George Denbigh, but he is better known as the Earl of Pendennyss."

"The Earl of Pendennyss!" exclaimed Lady Moseley, in a glow of delight, as she saw at once through some juvenile folly——−a deception, which promised both happiness and rank to one of her children; "is it possible, my dear Charlotte, this is your unknown friend."——

"The very same, Anne," replied the smiling widow, "and guilty of a folly, that at all events, removes the distance between us a little, by showing he is subject to the failings of mortality. But the masquerade is ended, and I hope you and Edward will not only treat him as an Earl, but receive him as a son."

"Most willingly——most willingly," cried the Baronet, with great energy; "be he prince ——peer——or beggar——he is the preserver of my child, and as such, he is always welcome."

The door now slowly opened, and the venerable bachelor appeared on its threshold.

Pendennyss, who had never forgotten the good will manifested to him by Mr. Benfield, met him with a look of pleasure, as he expressed his happiness at seeing him again and in London.

"I never have forgotten your goodness in sending honest Peter, such a distance from home, or the object of his visit. I now regret a feeling of shame occasioned my answering your kindness so laconically;" turning to Mrs. Wilson, he added, "for a time, I knew not how to write a letter even—— afraid to sign my proper appellation, and ashamed to use my adopted one."

"Mr. Denbigh, I am happy to see you. I did send Peter, it is true, to London, on a message to you——but it is all over now,"—— and the old man sighed——"Peter, however, escaped the snares of this wicked place; and if you are happy, I am content. I remember when the Earl of——"

"Pendennyss!" exclaimed the other, "imposed on the hospitality of a worthy man, under an assumed appellation, in order to pry into the character of a lovely female, who was only too good for him, and whonow is willing to forget his follies, and make him, not only the happiest of men, but the nephew of Mr. Benfield."

During this speech, the countenance of Mr. Benfield had manifested evident emotion—— he looked from one to another, until he saw Mrs. Wilson smiling near him; pointing to the Earl with his finger, he stood unable to speak, as she answered, simply,

"Lord Pendennyss."

"And Emmy dear——will you——will you marry him?" cried Mr. Benfield, suppressing his feelings, to give utterance.

Emily felt for her uncle, and blushing deeply, with great frankness, put her hand in that of the Earl, who pressed it with rapture again and again to his lips.

Mr. Benfield sunk into a chair, and with a heart softened by his emotions, burst into tears. "Peter," he cried, struggling with his feelings, "I am now ready to depart in peace——I shall see my darling Emmy, happy, and to her care, I shall commit you."

Emily, deeply affected with his love, threw herself into his arms in a torrent of tears, and was removed from them by Pendennyss, in consideration for the feelings of both.

Jane felt no emotions of envy for her sister's happiness; on the contrary, she rejoiced in common with the rest

of their friends in her brightening prospects, and they took their seats at the supper table, as happy a group, as was contained in the wide circle ofthe Metropolis; a few more particulars served to explain the mystery sufficiently, until a more fitting opportunity made them acquainted with the whole of the Earl's proceedings.

"My Lord Pendennyss," said Sir Edward, pouring out a glass of wine, and passing the bottle to his neighbour: "I drink your health—— and happiness to yourself and my darling child."

The toast was drank by all the family, and the Earl replied to them with his thanks and smiles, while Emily could only notice them, with her blushes and tears.

But this was an opportunity not to be lost by the honest steward, who had, from affection and long services, been indulged in familiarities, exceeding any other of his master's establishment. He very deliberately helped himself to a glass of wine, and drawing near the seat of the bride−elect, with a humble reverence, commenced his speech as follows:

"My dear Miss Emmy:——Here's hoping you'll live to be a comfort to your honoured father, and your honoured mother, and my dear honoured master, and yourself, and Madam Wilson." The steward paused to clear his voice, and cast his eye round the table to collect the names; "and Mr. John Moseley, and sweet Mrs. Moseley, and pretty Miss Jane," (Peter had lived too long in the world to compliment one handsome woman in the presence of another, without qualifyinghis speech a little) "and Mr. Lord Denbigh——Earl like, as they say he now is, and" ——Peter stopped a moment to deliberate, and then making another reverence, he put the glass to his lips; but before he had got half through its contents, recollected himself, and replenishing to the brim, with a smile, acknowledging his forgetfulness, continued, "and the Rev. Mr. Francis Ives, and the Rev. Mrs. Francis Ives." Here the unrestrained laugh of John interrupted him; and considering with himself that he had included the whole family, he finished his bumper. Whether it was pleasure at his eloquence, in venturing on so long a speech, or the unusual allowance, that affected the steward, he was evidently much satisfied with himself, and stepped back, behind his master's chair, in great good humour.

Emily, as she thanked him, noticed with a grateful satisfaction, a tear in the eye of the old man, as he concluded his oration, that would have excused a thousand breaches of fastidious ceremony. But Pendennyss rose from his seat, and took him kindly by the hand, as he returned his own thanks for his good wishes.

"I owe you much good will, Mr. Johnson, for your two journies in my behalf, and trust I never shall forget the manner in which you executed your last mission, in particular. We are friends, I trust, for life."

"Thank you——thank your honour's lordship," said the steward, almost unable to utter; "I hope you may live long, to make dear little Miss Emmy as happy——as I know she ought to be."

"But really, my lord," cried John, observing that the steward's affection for his sister, had affected her to tears, "it was a singular circumstance, the meeting of the four passengers of the stage, so soon at your hotel?" and Moseley explained his meaning to the rest of the company.

"Not so much so as you imagine," said the Earl in reply; "yourself and Johnson were in quest of me; Lord Henry Stapleton was under an engagement to meet me that evening at the hotel, as we were both going to his sister's wedding——I having arranged the thing with him, by letters previously;—— and the General, M'Carthy, was also in search of me, on business relating to his niece, the Donna Julia. He had been to Annerdale House, and through my servants, heard I was at a hotel. It was the first interview between us, and not quite as amicable an one as he has since paid me in Wales. In my service in Spain, I saw the Conde, but not the General. The letter he gave me, was from the Spanish ambassador, claiming a right to require Mrs. Fitzgerald from our government, and deprecating my using an influence, to counteract his exertions"——

"Which you refused," said Emily, eagerly.

"Not refused," answered the Earl, smiling at her warmth, at the same time he admired her friendly zeal, "for it was unnecessary—— there is no such power vested in the ministry; but I explicitly told the General, I would oppose any violent measures to restore her to her country and a convent. From the courts, I apprehended nothing for my fair friend."

"Your honour——my Lord," said Peter, who had been listening with great attention, "if I may presume, just to ask two questions, without offence."

"Say on, my good friend," said Pendennyss, with an encouraging smile.

"Only," continued the steward——hemming, to give proper utterance to his thoughts——"I wish to know, whether you staid in that same street, after you left the hotel——for Mr. John Moseley and I, had a slight

difference in opinion about it."

The Earl smiled, as he caught the arch expression of John, and replied——

"I believe I owe you an apology, Moseley, for my cavalier treatment——but guilt makes us all cowards. I found you were ignorant of my incognito, and I was equally ashamed to continue it, or become the relator of my own folly. Indeed," he continued, smiling on Emily as he spoke, "I thought your sister had pronounced the opinions of all reflecting people on my conduct. I went out of town, Johnson at day−break. What is your other query?"

"Why, my lord," said Peter, a little disappointed at finding his first surmise untrue, "that outlandish tongue, your honour used——"

"Was Spanish," cried the Earl.

"And not Greek, Peter," said his master, gravely. "I thought, from the words you endeavoured to repeat to me, you had made a mistake. You need not be disconcerted, however, for I know several members of the parliament of this realm, who could not talk the Greek language——that is, fluently. So it can be no disgrace, to a serving man to be ignorant of it."

Somewhat consoled to find himself as well off as the representatives of his country, Peter resumed his station in silence, when the carriages began to announce the return from the opera. The Earl took his leave, and the party retired to rest.

The thanksgivings of Emily that night, ere she laid her head on her pillow, were the purest offering of mortal innocence. The prospect before her was unsullied by a cloud, and she poured out her heart in the fullest confidence of pious love and heartfelt gratitude.

As early on the succeeding morning as good−breeding would allow, and much earlier than the hour sanctioned by fashion, the Earl and Lady Marian stopped in the carriage of the latter, at the door of Sir Edward Moseley. Their reception was the most flattering that could be offered to people of their stamp; sincere——cordial——and, with a trifling exceptionin Lady Moseley, unfettered with any of the useless ceremonies of high life.

Emily felt herself drawn to her new acquaintance, with a fondness, which doubtless grew out of her situation with her brother, but which soon found reasons enough in the soft, lady−like, and sincere manners of Lady Marian, to justify her attachment on her own account.

There was a very handsome suite of drawing−rooms in Sir Edward's house, and the doors communicating, were carelessly open. Curiosity to view the furniture, or some such trifling reason, induced the Earl to find his way, into the one adjoining that, in which the family were seated. It was unquestionably a dread of being lost in a strange house, that induced him to whisper a request to the blushing Emily, to be his companion; and lastly, it must have been nothing, but a knowledge that a vacant room was easier viewed, than one filled with company, that prevented any one from following them; John smiled archly at Grace, doubtless in approbation of the comfortable time his friend was likely to enjoy, in his musings on the taste of their mother. How the door became shut, we have ever been at a loss to imagine.

The company without were too good natured and well satisfied with each other, to miss the absentees, until the figure of the Earl appeared at the reopened door, beckoning, with a face of rapture, to Lady Moseleyand Mrs. Wilson. Sir Edward next disappeared——then Jane——then Grace——then Marian; until John began to think a tete−a−tete with Mr. Benfield, was to be his morning's amusement.

The lovely countenance of his wife, however, soon relieved his ennui, and John's curiosity was gratified by an order to prepare for his sister's wedding the following week.

Emily might have blushed more than common during this interview, but it is certain she did not smile less; and the Earl, Lady Marian assured Sir Edward, was so very different a creature, from what he had been, that she did hardly think it was the same sombre gentleman, she had passed the last few months with, in Wales and Westmoreland.

A messenger was despatched for Dr. Ives, and their friends at B——, to be witnesses to the approaching nuptials; and Lady Moseley at length found an opportunity of indulging her taste in splendour, on this joyful occasion.

Money was no consideration; and Mr. Benfield absolutely pined at the thought, the great wealth of the Earl, put it out of his power to contribute, in any manner, to the comfort of his Emmy. However, a fifteenth codicil was framed by the ingenuity of Peter and his master, and if it did not contain the name of George Denbigh, it did that

of his expected second son, Roderic Benfield Denbigh, to the qualifying circumstance of twenty thousand pounds, as a bribe for the name.

"And a very pretty child, I dare say it will be," said the steward, as he placed the paper in its repository. "I don't know I ever saw, your honour, a couple, that I thought, would make a handsomer pair, like——except"——and Peter's mind dwelt on his own youthful form, coupled with the smiling graces of Patty Steele.

"Yes! they are as handsome as they are good!" replied his master. "I remember now——when our speaker took his third wife, the world said——they were as pretty a couple as there was at court. But my Emmy and the Earl will be a much finer pair. Oh!—— Peter Johnson——they are young——and rich—— and beloved——but, after all, it avails but little, if they be not good."

"Good!" cried the steward in astonishment; "they are as good as angels."

The master's ideas of human excellence had suffered a heavy blow, in the view of his Viscountess——but he answered mildly, "as good as mankind can well be."

CHAPTER XXII.

The warm weather had now commenced, and Sir Edward, unwilling to be shut up in London, at a time the appearance of vegetation gave the country a new interest, and accustomed for many years of his life, to devote an hour in his garden each morning, had taken a little ready furnished cottage a short ride from his residence, with the intention of frequenting it, until after the birthday: thither then Pendennyss took his bride from the altar, and a few days were passed by the new married pair, in this little asylum.

Doctor Ives with Francis, Clara, and their mother, had obeyed the summons, with an alacrity in proportion to the joy they had felt on receiving it, and the former had the happiness of officiating on the occasion. It would have been easy for the wealth of the Earl to procure a licence to enable them to marry in the drawing room——the permission was obtained, but neither Emily or himself, felt a wish to utter their vows in any other spot than at the altar, and in the house of their maker.

If there was a single heart that felt the least emotion of regret or uneasiness, it was Lady Moseley, who little relished the retirement of the cottage, on so joyful an occasion——but Pendennyss silenced her objections, by good−humouredly replying——

"The Fates have been so kind to me, in giving me castles and seats, you ought to allow me, my dear Lady Moseley, the only opportunity, I shall probably ever have, of enjoying love in a cottage."

A few days, however, removed the uneasiness of the good matron, who had the felicity, within the week, of seeing her daughter initiated mistress of Annerdale−House.——

The morning of their return to this noble mansion——the Earl presented himself in St. James's square, with the intelligence of their arrival, and smiling, as he bowed to Mrs. Wilson, he continued——"And to escort you, dear Madam, to your new abode."

Mrs. Wilson started with surprise, and with a heart beating quick with emotion, required an explanation of his words.

"Surely, dearest Mrs. Wilson——more than aunt——my mother——you cannot mean, after having trained my Emily through infancy to maturity in the paths of her duty——to desert her in the moment of her greatest trial.——I am the pupil of your husband," he continued, taking her hands in his own with reverence and affection, "we are the children of your joint care——and one home, as there is but one heart, must, in future, contain us."

Mrs. Wilson had wished for, but hardly dared to expect this invitation——it was now urged from the right quarter, and in a manner that was as sincere as it was gratifying—— unable to conceal her tears, the good widowpressed the hand of Pendennyss to her lips, as she murmured out her thanks, and her acceptance——Sir Edward was prepared also to lose his sister, as an inmate, but unwilling to relinquish the pleasure of her society, he urged her making a common residence between the two families.

"Pendennyss has spoken truth, my dear brother" cried she, recovering her voice, "Emily is the child of my care and my love ——the two beings I love best in this world, are now united——but," she added, pressing Lady Moseley to her bosom, "my heart is large enough for you all; you are of my blood, and my gratitude for your affection is boundless——There shall be but one large family of us, and although our duties may separate us for a time——we will, I trust, ever meet in tenderness and love——but with George and Emily I will take up my abode."

"I hope your house in Northamptonshire is not to be vacant always," said Lady Moseley to the Earl, anxiously.

"I have no house there, my dear Madam," he replied; "when I thought myself about to succeed in my suit before, I directed a lawyer at Bath, where Sir William Harris resided most of his time, to endeavour to purchase the Deanery, whenever a good opportunity offered;——−in my discomfiture," he added, smiling, "I forgot to countermand the order, and he purchased it immediately on its being advertised;——−for a short time itwas an incumbrance to me——−but it is now applied to its original purpose——−It is the sole property of the Countess of Pendennyss, and I doubt not you will see it often, and agreeably tenanted."

This intelligence gave great satisfaction to his friends, and the expected summer, restored to even Jane, a gleam of her former pleasure.

If there be bliss in this life, approaching in any degree to the happiness of the blessed, it is the fruition of long

and ardent love, where youth——innocence——piety——and family concord, smile upon the union——and all these were united in the case of the new−married pair;——−buth appiness in this world cannot, or does not, in any situation, exist without alloy ——it would seem a wise and gracious ordering of Providence, to draw our attention to scenes void of care, and free, alike, from the infirmities and corruption of mortality.

The peace of mind and fortitude of Emily, were fated to receive a blow, as unlooked for to herself, as it was unexpected to the world. Buonaparte appeared in France, and Europe became in motion.

From the moment the Earl heard the intelligence——he saw his own course decided—— his regiment was the pride of the army, and that it would be ordered to join the Duke, he did not entertain a doubt.

Emily was therefore, in some little measure, prepared for the blow——it is at suchmoments, as our acts or events affecting us, become without our controul, that faith in the justice and benevolence of God, is the most serviceable in a worldly point of view to the Christian; when others spend their time in useless regrets——−he is piously resigned——−it even so happens, that when others mourn, he can rejoice.

The sound of the bugle, wildly winding its notes, broke on the stillness of the morning, in the little village in which was situated the cottage tenanted by Sir Edward Moseley ——−almost concealed by the shrubbery which surrounded its piazza, stood the forms of the Countess of Pendennyss, and her sister Lady Marian, watching eagerly the appearance of those, whose approach, was thus announced.

The carriage of the ladies, with its idle attendants, were in waiting at a short distance, and the pale face, but composed resignation of its mistress——indicated a struggle between conflicting duties.

File, after file, of heavy horse, passed them in all the pomp of military splendour, and the wistful gaze of the two females had scanned them in vain for the well−known—— much−beloved countenance, of their leader—— at length a single horseman approached them, riding deliberately and musing——their forms met his eye——and in an instant, Emily was pressed to the bosom of her husband.

"It is the doom of a soldier," said the earl, dashing a tear from his eye; "I had hoped the peace of the world would not again be assailed in years, and that ambition and jealousy would yield a respite to our bloody profession; but, cheer up, my love——hope for the best——−your trust is not in the things of this life, and your happiness is without the power of man."

"Ah! Pendennyss——−my husband," sobbed Emily, sinking on his bosom, " take with you my prayers——−my love——−every thing that can console you——−every thing that may profit you——−I will not tell you to be careful of your life——−your duty teaches you that——−as a soldier, expose it——as a husband, guard it——− and return to me as you leave me——−a lover ——the dearest of men, and a christian."

Unwilling to prolong the pain of parting, the Earl gave his wife a last embrace, held Marian affectionately to his bosom, and mounting his horse, was out of sight in an instant.

Within a few days of the departure of Pendennyss——−Chatterton was surprised with the entrance of his mother and Catherine. His reception of them, was that of a respectful child, and his wife exerted herself to be kind to connexions she could not love, in order to give pleasure to a husband she adored——−their tale was soon told——−Lord and Lady Herriefield were separated; and the Dowager alive to the dangers of a young woman in Catherine's situation, and without a single principle, on which to rest the assuranceof her blameless conduct in future——− had brought her to England, in order to keep off disgrace, by residing with her child herself.

There was nothing in his wife to answer the expectations with which Lord Herriefield married——she had beauty, but with that, he was already sated——−her simplicity and unsuspicious behaviour, which had, by having her attention drawn elsewhere, at first charmed him, was succeeded by the knowing conduct, of a determined follower of the fashions, and a decided woman of the world.

It had never struck the Viscount, as impossible, that an artless and innocent girl would fall in love with his faded and bilious face ——but the moment Catherine betrayed the arts of a manager, he saw at once the artifice that had been practised upon himself——− of course, he ceased to love her.

Men are flattered, for a season, with the notice of a woman, that has been unsought, but it never fails to injure her in the opinion of the other sex, in time——−without a single feeling in common, without a regard to any thing but self, in either husband or wife, it could not but happen that a separation must follow, or their days be spent in wrangling and misery.

Catherine willingly left her husband——her husband more willingly got rid of her.

During all these movements, the Dowager had a difficult game to play——it was unbecomingher to

encourage the strife, and it was against her wishes to suppress it——she therefore moralized with the peer, and frowned upon her daughter.

The viscount listened to her truisms, with the attention of a boy, who is told by a drunken father, how wicked it is to love liquor, and heeded them about as much; while Kate, mistress, at all events, of two thousand a year——minded her mother's frowns as little as she regarded her smiles——both were indifferent to her.

A few days after the ladies left Lisbon, the Viscount proceeded to Italy, in company with the repudiated wife of a British naval officer; and if Kate was not guilty, of an offence of equal magnitude, it was more owing to her mother's present vigilance, than to her previous care.

The presence of Mrs. Wilson was a great source of consolation to Emily in the absence of her husband; and as their abode in town any longer was useless, the Countess declining to be presented without the Earl, the whole family decided upon a return into Northamptonshire.

The deanery had been furnished by order of Pendennyss immediately on his marriage; and its mistress hastened to take possession of her new dwelling. The amusement and occupation of this movement ——−the planning of little improvements—— her various duties under her increased responsibilities, kept Emily from dwelling in her thoughts, unduly upon the danger of her husband. She sought out amongst the first objects of her bounty, the venerable peasant, whose loss had been formerly supplied by Pendennyss on his first visit to B——, after the death of his father; there might not have been the usual discrimination and temporal usefulness in her charities in this instance which generally accompanied her benevolent acts; but it was associated with the image of her husband, and it could excite no surprise in Mrs. Wilson, although it did in Marian, to see her sister, driving two or three times a week, to relieve the necessities of a man, who appeared actually to be in want of nothing.

Sir Edward was again amongst those he loved, and his hospitable board was once more surrounded with the faces of his friends and neighbours. The good−natured Mr. Haughton was always a welcome guest at the hall, and met, soon after their return, the collected family of the baronet, at a dinner given by the latter to his children, and one or two of his most intimate neighbours——

"My Lady Pendennyss," cried Mr. Haughton, in the course of the afternoon, "I have news from the Earl, which I know it will do your heart good to hear."

Emily smiled her pleasure at the prospect of hearing, in any manner, favourably of her husband, although she internally questioned the probability of Mr. Haughton's knowingany thing of his movements, which her daily letters did not apprise her of.

"Will you favour me with the particulars of your intelligence, sir?" said the Countess.

"He has arrived safe with his regiment near Brussels; I heard it from a neighbour's son who saw him in that city, enter the house occupied by Wellington, while he was standing in the crowd without, waiting to get a peep at the duke."

"Oh!" said Mrs. Wilson with a laugh, "Emily knew that ten days ago; could your friend tell us any thing of Bonaparte, we are much interested in his movements just now."

Mr. Haughton, a good deal mortified to find his news stale, mused a moment as if in doubt to proceed or not; but liking of all things to act the part of a newspaper, he continued——

"Nothing more than you see in the prints; but I suppose your ladyship has heard about Captain Jarvis too?"

"Why, no," said Emily laughing, "the movements of Captain Jarvis are not quite as interesting to me, as those of Lord Pendennyss——has the duke made him an aid−decamp?"

"Oh! no," cried the other exculting in his success in having something new, "as soon as he heard of the return of Boney,——he threw up his commission and got married."

"Married!" cried John, "not to Miss Harris, surely."

"No, to a silly girl he met in Cornwall, who was fool enough to be caught with his gold lace. He married one day, and the next, told his disconsolate wife, and panicstruck mother, the honour of the Jarvis's must sleep, until the supporters of the name became sufficiently numerous to risk losing them, in the field of battle.

"And how did Mrs. Jarvis and Sir Timo's lady relish the news?" inquired John, expecting something ridiculous.

"Not at all," rejoined Mr. Haughton; "the former sobbed, and said, she had only married him for his bravery and red coat, and the lady exclaimed against the destruction of his budding honours."

"How did it terminate?" asked Mrs. Wilson.

"Why, it seems while they were quarrelling about it, the war office cut the matter short by accepting his resignation. I suppose the commander in chief had learnt his character; but the matter was warmly contested——they even drove the captain to declare his principles."

"And what kind of ones might they have been, Haughton?" said Sir Edward dryly.

"Republican."

"Republican!" exclaimed two or three in surprise.

"Yes, liberty and equality, he contended,were his idols, and he could not find it in his heart to fight against Bonaparte."

"A somewhat singular conclusion," said Mr. Benfield musing. "I remember when I sat in the house, there was a party who were fond of the cry of this said liberty; but when they got the power, they did not seem to me to suffer people to go more at large than they went before——but I suppose they were diffident of telling the world their minds, after they were put in such responsible stations—— for fear of the effect of example."

"Most people like liberty as servants, but not as masters, uncle," cried John, with a sneer.

"Capt. Jarvis, it seems, liked it as a preserver against danger," continued Mr. Haughton; "to avoid ridicule in his new neighbourhood, he has consented to his father's wishes, and turned merchant in the city again."

"Where I sincerely hope he will remain," cried John, who since the accident of the arbour, could not tolerate the unfortunate youth.

"Amen!" said Emily, in an under tone, heard only by her smiling brother.

"But Sir Timo——−what has become of Sir Timo——−the good, honest merchant?" asked John.

"He has dropt the title, insists on being called plain Mr. Jarvis, and lives entirely in Cornwall. His hopeful son−in−law, has gone with his regiment to Flanders, and LadyEgerton, being unable to live without her father's assistance, is obliged to hide her consequence in the west also."

The subject became now disagreeable to Lady Moseley, and it was changed. The misfortune of such conversations, which unavoidably occurred, was, that it made Jane more reserved aud dissatisfied than ever. She had no one respectable excuse to offer for her partiality to her former lover, and when her conscience told her of this mortifying fact, her jealousy was apt to think others remembered it too.

The letters from the continent, now teemed with the preparations for the approaching contest, and the apprehensions of our heroine and her friends to increase, in proportion to the nearness of the struggle, on which hung not only the fate of thousands of individuals, but of adverse princes, and mighty empires. In this confusion of interests, and jarring of passions——−there were offered prayers almost hourly, for the safety of Pendennyss, which were as pure and ardent, as the love which prompted them.

CHAPTER XXIII.

Napoleon had commenced those daring and rapid movements, which for a time threw the peace of the world into the scale of fortune, and which nothing but the interposition of a ruling providence could avert from their threatened success; as the ——the Dragoons wheeled into a field already deluged with English blood, on the heights of Quartre Bras. The eye of its gallant Colonel saw a friendly battalion falling beneath the sabres of the enemy's Cuirassiers. The word was passed——the column opens——the sounds of the quivering bugle were heard for a moment, over the roar of the cannon and the shouts of the combatants; the charge sweeping, like a whirlwind——fell heavy on those treacherous Frenchmen, who to day had sworn fidelity to Louis, and to−morrow intended lifting their hands in allegiance to his rival.

"Spare my life in merey," cried an officer, already dreadfully wounded, who stood shrinking from the impending blow of an enraged Frenchman.——An English dragoon dashed at the Cuirassier, and with one blow severed his arm from his body——

"Thank God," sighed the wounded officer, as he sunk beneath the horse's feet.

His rescuer threw himself from the saddle to his assistance, and raising the fallen man,inquired into his wounds——It was Pendennyss——it was Egerton. The wounded man groaned aloud, as he saw the face of him who had averted the fatal blow——but it was not the hour for explanations or confessions, other than those with which the dying soldiers endeavoured to make their tardy peace with their God.

Sir Henry was given in charge to two slightly wounded British soldiers, and the Earl remounted——the scattered troops were rallied at the sound of the trumpet——and again and again——led by their dauntless Colonel, were seen in the thickest of the fray, with sabres drenched in blood, and voices hoarse with the shouts of victory.

The period between the battles of Quartre Bras and Waterloo, was a trying one to the discipline and courage of the British army. The discomfited Prussians on their flank, had been routed and compelled to retire, and in their front was an enemy, brave, skilful, and victorious——led by the greatest Captain of the age. The prudent commander of the English forces fell back with dignity and reluctance to the field of Waterloo; here the mighty struggle was to terminate, and the eye of every experienced soldier, looked on those eminences, as the future graves for thousands.

During this solemn interval of comparative inactivity, the mind of Pendenny ss dwelt on the affection, the innocence, the beauty andworth of his Emily, until the curdling blood, as he thought on her lot, should his life be the purchase of the coming victory, warned him to quit the gloomy subject, for the consolations of that religion which could only yield him the solace his wounded feelings required. In his former campaigns, the Earl had been sensible of the mighty changes of death, and had ever kept in view the preparations necessary to meet it with hope and joy; but the world clung around him now, in the best affections of his nature——and it was only as he could picture the happy reunion with his Emily in a future life, he could look on a separation in this, without despair.

The vicinity of the enemy admitted of no relaxation in the strictest watchfulness in the British lines, and the comfortless night of the seventeenth, was passed by the Earl, and his Lieutenant Colonel, George Denbigh, on the same cloak, and under the open canopy of Heaven.

As the opening cannon of the enemy gave the signal for the commencing conflict, Pendennyss mounted his charger with a last thought on his distant wife; with a mighty struggle he tore her as it were from his bosom, and gave the remainder of the day to his country and duty.

Who has not heard of the events of that fearful hour, on which the fate of Europe hung as it were suspended in a scale? On oneside supported by the efforts of desperate resolution, guided by the most consummate art; and on the other defended, by a discipline and enduring courage, almost without a parallel.

The indefatigable Blucher arrived, and the star of Napoleon sunk.

Pendennyss threw himself from his horse, on the night of the eighteenth of June, as he gave way by orders, in the pursuit, to the fresher battalions of the Prussians——with the languor that follows unusual excitement, and mental thanksgivings that his bloody work was at length ended. The image of his Emily again broke over the sterner feelings engendered by the battle, as the first glimmerings of light, which succeed the awful darkness of

the eclipse of the sun; and he again breathed freely, in the consciousness of the happiness which would await his now speedy return.

"I am sent for the Colonel of the——th Dragoons," said a courier in broken English to a soldier, near where the Earl lay on the ground, waiting the preparations of his attendants——"have I found the right regiment, my friend?"

"To be sure you have," answered the man, without looking up from his toil on his favourite animal, "you might have tracked us by the dead Frenchmen, I should think. So you want my Lord, my lad, do you? do we move again to−night?" suspending his labour for a moment in expectation of a reply.

"Not to my knowledge," rejoined the courier, "my message is to your Colonel, from a dying man; will you point out his station?" the soldier complied, and the message was soon delivered, and Pendennyss prepared to obey its summons immediately. Preceded by the messenger as a guide, and followed by Harmer, the Earl retraced his steps, over that ground he had but a few hours before been engaged on, in the deadly strife of man to man, hand to hand.

How different is the contemplation of a field of battle, during and after the conflict. The excitement——suspended success——shouts, uproar, and confusion of the former, prevent any contemplation of the nicer parts, of this confused mass of movements, charges and retreats; or if a brilliant advance is made, a masterly retreat effected, the imagination is chained by the splendour and glory of the act, without resting for a moment, on the sacrifice of individual happiness with which it is purchased. A battle ground from which the whir wind of the combat has passed, presents a different sight——it offers the very consummation of human misery.

There may be occasionally an individual, who from station, distempered mind, or the encouragement of chimerical ideas of glory, quits the theatre of life with at least the appearance of pleasure in his triumphs; if such there be in reality, if this rapture ofdeparting glory be any thing more than the deception of a distempered excitement, the subject of its exhibition, is to be greatly pitied.

To the Christian, dying in peace with both God and man, can it alone be ceded in the eye of reason, to pour out his existence, with a smile on his quivering lip.

And the warrior, who falls in the very arms of victory, after passing a life devoted to the world; even if he sees kingdoms hang suspended on his success, may smile indeed—— may utter sentiments full of loyalty and zeal—— may be the admiration of the world——and what is his reward? a deathless name, and an existence of misery, which knows no termination.

Christianity alone can make us good soldiers in any cause, for he who knows how to live, is always the least afraid to die.

Pendennyss and his companions pushed their way over the ground occupied before the battle by the enemy, descended into, and through that little valley, in which yet lay in undistinguished confusion, masses of dead and the dying of either side; and again over the ridge, on which could be marked the situation of those gallant Squares, which had so long resisted the efforts of the horse and artillery, by the groups of bodies, fallen where they had bravely stood, until even the callous Harmer, sickened with the sight of a waste of life, he had but a few hours before exultingly contributed to increase.

Appeals to their feelings as they rode through the field had been frequent, and their progress much retarded, by their attempts to contribute to the ease of a wounded or a dying man: but as the courier constantly urged their speed, as the only means of securing the object of their ride, these halts were reluctantly abandoned.

It was ten o'clock before they reached the farm house, where lay in the midst of hundreds of his countrymen, the former lover of Jane.

As the subject of his confession must be anticipated by the reader, we will give a short relation of his life, and those acts which more materially affect our history.

Henry Egerton had been turned early on the world, like hundreds of his countrymen, without any principle, to counteract the arts of infidelity, or resist the temptations of life. His father held a situation under government, and was devoted to his rise in the diplomatic line. His mother, a woman of fashion, who lived for effect, and idle competition with her sisters in weakness and folly. All he learnt in his father's house, was selfishness, from the example of one, and a love of high life and its extravagance, from the other, of his parents.

He entered the army young——−from choice. The splendour and reputation of the service, caught his fancy; and he was, by pride and constitution, indifferent to personal danger. Yet he loved London and its

amusementsbetter than glory; and the money of his uncle, Sir Edgar, whose heir he was reputed to be, had raised him to the rank of Lieutenant Colonel, without his spending an hour in the field.

Egerton had some abilities, and a good deal of ardour of temperament, by nature. The former from indulgence and example, degenerated into the acquiring the art to please in mixed society; and the latter, from want of employment, expended itself at the card table. The very irritability of genius, is dangerous to an idle man. It prompts to mischief, if it be not employed in good.

The association between the vices is intimate. There really appears to be a kind of modesty in sin, that makes it ashamed of good company. If we are unable to reconcile a favourite propensity to our principles, we are apt to abandon the unpleasant restraint on our actions, rather than admit the incongruous mixture——freed entirely from the fetters of our morals, what is there our vices will not prompt us to commit? Egerton, like thousands of others, went on from step to step in the abandonment of virtue, until he found himself in the world, free to follow all his inclinations, so he violated none of the decencies of life——and this consisted in detection——what was hid did no harm.

When in Spain, on service in his only campaign, he was accidentally, as has beenmentioned, thrown in the way of the Donna Julia, and brought her off the ground, under the influence of natural sympathy and national feeling——a kind of merit that makes vice only more dangerous, by making it sometimes amiable. He had not seen his dependant long, before her beauty, situation, and his passions, decided him to effect her ruin.

This was an occupation, his figure, manners and propensities had made him an adept in, and nothing was farther from his thoughts than the commission of any other, than the crime a gentleman might be guilty of (in his opinion) with impunity.

It is however the misfortune of sin, that from being our slave it becomes a tyrant, and Egerton attempted what in other countries, and where the laws ruled, might have cost him his life.

The conjecture of Pendennyss was true—— he saw the face of the officer who had interposed, between him and his villanous attempt, but was hid himself from view——he aimed not at his life, but his own escape; happily his first shot succeeded, for the Earl would have been sacrificed, to preserve the character of a man of honour; though no one was more regardless of the estimation he was held in by the virtuous than Colonel Egerton.

In pursuance of his plans on Mrs. Fitzgerald, the Colonel had sedulously avoided admitting any of his companions, into the secret of his having a female in his care.

When he left the army to return home, he remained until a movement of the troops to a distant part of the country, enabled him to effect his own purposes, without incurring their ridicule; and when he found himself obliged to abandon his vehicle, for a refuge in the woods, the fear of detection made him alter his course, and under the pretence of wishing to be in a battle about to be fought, he secretly rejoined the army, and the gallantry of Colonel Egerton was mentioned in the next despatches.

Sir Herbert Nicholson commanded the advanced guard, at which the Earl arrived with the Donna Julia, and like every other brave man (unless guilty himself) was indignant at the villany of the fugitive. The times, confusion and enormities, daily practiced in the theatre of the war, prevented any close inquiries into the subject, and circumstances had so enveloped Egerton in mystery, that nothing but an interview with the lady herself was likely to expose him.

With Sir Herbert Nicholson he had been in habits of intimacy, and on that gentleman's alluding in a conversation in the barracks at F——to the lady, brought into his quarters before Lishon, he accidentally omitted mentioning the name of her rescuer. Egerton had never before heard the transaction spoken of, and as he had of course never mentioned the subject himself, was ignorant of who interfered between him and his views,also of the fate of Donna Julia; indeed, he thought it probable that it had not much improved by a change of guardians.

In his object in coming into Northamptonshire he had several views; he wanted a temporary retreat from his creditors. Jarvis had an infant fondness for play, without an adequate skill, and the money of the young ladies, in his necessities, was becoming of importance; but the daughters of Sir Edward Moseley were of a description more suited to his taste, and their portions were as ample as the others: he had become in some degree attached to Jane, and as her imprudent parents, satisfied with his possessing the exterior and requisite recommendations of a gentleman, admitted his visits freely, he determined to make her his wife.

When he met Denbigh the first time, he saw chance had thrown him in the way of a man who might hold his character in his power; he had never seen Pendennyss, and it will be remembered, was ignorant of the name of

Julia's friend; he now learnt, for the first time, that it was Denbigh: uneasy at he knew not what, fearful of some exposure, he knew not how, when Sir Herbert alluded to the occurrence——with a view to rebut the charge, if Denbigh should choose to make one; with the near sightedness of guilt. he pretended to know the occurrence, and under the promise of secrecy, mentioned that the name of the officer was Denbigh; he hadnoticed Denbigh, avoiding Sir Herbert at the ball, and judging others from himself, thought it was a wish to avoid any allusions to the lady he had brought into the others quarters that induced the measure; he was in hopes that if Denbigh was not as guilty as himself, he was sufficiently so, to wish to keep the transaction from the eyes of Emily: he was however prepared for an explosion or an alliance with him, when the sudden departure of Sir Herbert removed the danger of a collision——believing at last they were to be brothers−in law, and mistaking the Earl for his cousin, whose name he bore, Egerton became reconciled to the association; while Pendennyss having in his absence heard on inquiring some of the vices of the Colonel, was debating with himself, whether he should expose them to Sir Edward or not.

It was in their occasional interchange of civilities that Pendennyss placed his pocket−book upon a table, while he exhibited the plants to the Colonel; the figure of Emily passing the window, drew him from the room, and Egerton having ended his examination, observing the book, put it in his own pocket, to return it to its owner when they next met.

The situation; name and history of Mrs. Fitzgerald were never mentioned by the Moseleys in public; but Jane, in the confidence of her affections, had told her lover who the inmate of the cottage was; the idea of her being kept there by Denbigh, immediately occurred to him, and although he was surprised at the audacity of the thing, he was determined to profit by the occasion.

To pay this visit, he staid away from the excursion on the water, as Pendennyss did to avoid his friend, Lord Henry Stapleton. An excuse of business which served for his apology, kept the Colonel from seeing Denbigh to return the book, until after his visit to the Cottage——his rhapsody of love, and offers to desert his intended wife, were nothing but the common place talk of his purposes; and his presumption in alluding to his situation with Miss Moseley, proceeded from his impressions as to Julia's real character; in this struggle for the bell, the pocket book of Denbigh accidentally fell from his coat——and the retreat of the Colonel was too precipitate to enable him to recover it.

Mrs. Fitzgerald was too much alarmed to distinguish nicely, and Egerton proceeded to the ball room with the indifference of a hardened offender. When the arrival of Miss Jarvis, to whom he had committed himself, prompted him to a speedy declaration, and the unlucky conversation of Mr. Holt brought about a probable detection of his gaming propensities, the Colonel determined to get rid of his awkward situation and his debts, by a coup−de−main——he eloped with Miss Jarvis.

What portion of the foregoing narrative made the dying confession of Egerton to the man he had lately discovered to be the Earl of Pendennyss, the reader can easily imagine.

CHAPTER XXIV.

The harvest had been gathered, and the beautiful vales of Pendennyss, were shooting forth a second crop of verdure. The husbandman was turning his prudent forethought to the promises of the coming year, while the castle itself exhibited to the gaze of the wondering peasant, a sight of cheerfulness and animation, which had not been seen in it since the days of the good duke. Its numerous windows were opened to the light of the sun——its halls teemed with the happy faces of its inmates. Servants, in various liveries, were seen gliding through its magnificent apartments, and multiplied passages. Horses, grooms, and carriages, with varied costume and different armorial bearings, crowded its spacious stables and offices.—— Every thing spoke——society——splendour—— and activity without. Every thing denoted order——propriety——and happiness within.

In a long range of spacious apartments, were grouped in the pursuit of their morning employments, or in arranging their duties and pleasures of the day, the guests and owners of the princely abode.

In one room was John Moseley, carefully examining the properties of some flints, submitted to his examination by his attending servant; while Grace, setting by his side,playfully snatches the stones from his hand, as she cries half reproachfully——half tenderly——

"You must not devote yourself to your gun so incessantly, Moseley; it is cruel to kill inoffensive birds for your amusement only."

"Ask Emily's cook, and Mr. Haughton's appetite," said John, cooly, extending his hand towards her for the flint——−"whether no one is gratified but myself. I tell you, Grace, I seldom fire in vain."

"That only makes the matter worse——−the slaughter you commit is dreadful," rejoined his wife, still refusing to return her prize.

"Oh!" cried John, with a laugh, "the ci−devant Captain Jarvis is a sportsman to your mind. He would shoot a month without moving a feather——−he was a great friend to," he continued, throwing an arch look to his solitary sister, who sat on a sopha at a distance perusing a book, "Jane's feathered songsters."

"But now, Moseley," said Grace, yielding the flints, but gently retaining the hand that took them; " Pendennyss and Chatterton intend driving their wives, like good husbands, to see the beautiful water−fall in the mountains; and what am I to do this long tedious morning?"

John stole an inquiring glance, to see if his wife was very anxious to join the party——−castone look of regret on a beautiful agate he had selected, and inquired:——−

"You don't wish to ride very much, Mrs. Moseley?"

"Indeed——−indeed, I do," said the other eagerly, "if"——−

"If what?"

"You will drive me?" continued she, with a cheek slightly tinged with an unusual vermilion.

"Well them," answered John, with deliberation, and regarding his wife with great affection, "I will go——−on one condition."

"Name it?" cried Grace, with still increasing colour, from the glow of hope.

"That you will not expose your health again, in going to the church on a Sunday, if it rains."

"The carriage is so close, Moseley," answered Grace, with a paler cheek than before, and eyes fixed on the carpet, "it is impossible I can take cold——−you see the Earl, and Countess, and aunt Wilson, never miss public worship, when possibly within their power."

"The Earl goes with his wife; but what becomes of poor me at such times," said John, taking her hand, and pressing it kindly. "I like to hear a good sermon——−but not in bad weather. You must consent to oblige me, who only live in your presence."

Grace smiled faintly, as John, pursuing the point, said——−"But what do you say to my condition?"

"Well, then, if you wish," replied Grace, without the look of gaiety, her hopes had first inspired: "I will not go if it rains."

John ordered his phaeton, and his wife went to her room to prepare for the ride, and regret her own resolution.

In the recess of a window, in which bloomed a profusion of exotics, stood the figure of Lady Marian Denbigh,

playing with a half blown rose of the richest colours; and before her stood leaning against the angle of the wall, her kinsman, the Duke of Derwent.

"You heard the plan at the breakfast table," said his Grace,——−"to visit the little falls in the hills. But I suppose you have seen them too often to undergo the fatigue for the pleasure?"

"Oh no?" rejoined the lady with a smile, "I love that ride dearly, and should wish to accompany the Countess in her first visit to it. I had half a mind to ask George to take me in his phæton with them."

"My curricle would be honoured with the presence of Lady Marian Denbigh," cried the Duke with animation, "if she would accept me for her Knight on the occasion."

Marian bowed her assent, in evident satisfaction to the arrangement, as the Duke proceeded——−

"But if you take me as your Knight, I should wear your ladyship's colours;" and he held out his hand towards the budding rose. Lady Marian hesitated a moment——−lookedout at the prospect——−up at the wall——−turned, and wondered where her brother was; and still finding the hand of the Duke extended, as his eye rested on her in admiration.——−She gave him the boon, with a cheek that vied with the richest tints of the flower. They separated to prepare, and it was on their return from the ride, the Duke seemed uncommonly gay and amusing, and the lady silent with her tongue, though her eyes danced in every direction, but towards her cousin.

"Really, my dear Lady Moseley," said the Dowager, as seated by the side of her companion, her eyes roved over the magnificence within, and widely extended domains without——"Emily is well established, indeed——−better even, than my Grace."

"Grace has an affectionate husband," replied the other, gravely, "and one that I hope will make her happy."

"Oh! no doubt happy?" said Lady Chatterton, hastily: "but they say Emily has a jointure of twelve thousand a year——by−the−bye," she added, in a low tone, though no one was near enough to hear what she said, "could not the Earl have settled Lumley Castle on her, instead of the deanery?"

"Upon my word I never think of such gloomy subjects, as provisions for widow−hood," cried Lady Moseley——but, with a brightening look, "you have been in Annerdale−House——is it not a princely mausion?"

"Princely, indeed," rejoined the Dowager with a sigh: "don't the Earl intend increasing the rents of this estate, as the leases fall in——I am told they are very low now?"

"I believe not," said the other. "He has enough, and is willing others should prosper ——but there is Clara, with her little boy——is he not a lovely child," cried the grandmother with a look of delight, as she rose to take the infant in her arms.

"Oh! excessively beautiful!" said the Dowager, looking the other way, and observing Catherine making a movement towards Lord Henry Stapleton——she called to her. "Lady Herriefield——come this way, my dear ——I wish you here."

Kate obeyed with a sullen pout of her pretty lip, and entered into some idle discussion about a cap, though her eyes wandered round the rooms in listless vacancy.

The Dowager had the curse of bad impressions in youth to contend with, and laboured infinitely harder now to make her daughter act right, than formerly she had ever done to make her act wrong.

"Here! uncle Benfield," cried Emily, with a face glowing with health and animation, as she approached his seat with a glass in her hands. "Here is the negus you wished; I have made it myself, and you must praise it of course."

"Oh! my dear Lady Pendennyss," said the old gentleman, rising politely from hisseat to receive his beverage; "you are putting yourself to a great deal of trouble for an old bachelor, like me——−too much indeed——− too much."

"Old bachelors are sometimes more esteemed than young ones," cried the Earl gaily, as he joined them in time to hear this speech to his wife. "Here is my friend, Mr. Peter Johnson, who knows when we may dance at his wedding."

"My Lord——−and my Lady——and my honoured master," said Peter gravely in reply, and bowing respectfully where he stood, with a salver to take his master's glass——"I am past the age to think of a wife; I am seventy−three, come next lammas——counting by the old style."

"What do you intend to do with your three hundred a year," said Emily with a smile, "unless you bestow it on some good woman, for making the evening of your life comfortable?"

"My Lady——hem——my Lady," said the steward, blushing; "I had a little thought, with your kind

ladyship's consent, as I have no relations, chick or child, in the world, what to do with it."

"I should be happy to hear your plan," said the Countess, observing the steward anxious to communicate something.

"Why, my Lady, if my Lord and my honoured master's agreeable, I did think of putting another codicil to master's will in order to dispose of it."

"Your master's will," said the Earl laughing; "why not your own, my good Peter?"

"My honoured Lord," said the steward, with great humility, "it don't become a poor serving man like me to make a will."

"But how will you prove it," said the Earl kindly, willing to convince him of his error; "you must be both dead to prove it."

"Our wills," said Peter, gulping his words, "will be proved on the same day." His master looked round at him with great affection, and both the Earl and Emily were too much struck with his attachment to say any thing. Peter had, however, the subject too much at heart to abandon it, just as he had broke the ice. He anxiously wished the Countess's consent to the scheme, for he would not affront her even after he was dead.

"My Lady——Miss Emmy," said Johnson, eagerly, "my plan is——−if my honoured master's agreeable——−to make a codicil——−and give my mite to a little——−Lady Emily Denbigh."

"Oh! Peter, you and uncle Benfield are both too good," cried Emily, laughing and blushing, as she hastened to Clara and her mother.

"Thank you——thank you," cried the delighted Earl, following his wife with his eyes, and shaking the steward cordially by the hand——"and if no better expedient be adopted by us, you have full permission to do as you please with your money"——−andthe husband joined some of his other guests.

"Peter," said his master to him, in a low tone, "you should never speak of such things prematurely——now I remember when the Earl of Pendennyss, my nephew, was first presented to me, I was struck with the delicacy and propriety of his demeanour—— and the Lady Pendennyss, my niece too——− you never see any thing forward or——Ah! Emmy, dear," said the old man tenderly, interupting himself, "you are too good——to remember your old uncle," taking one of the fine peaches she handed him from a plate——−the Countess handed the steward one also, though with an averted face, and expression of archness and shame.

"My Lord," said Mr. Haughton to the Earl, "Mrs. Ives and myself, have had a contest about the comforts of matrimony——− she insists she may be quite as happy at Bolton Parsonage, as in this noble castle, and with this rich prospect in view."

"I hope," said Francis, "you are not teaching my wife to be discontented with her humble lot——if so, both, her's and your visit will be an unhappy one."

"It would be no easy task, if our good friend intended any such thing, by his jests," said Clara, smiling; "I know my true interests, I trust, too well, to wish to change my fortune."

"You are right," said Pendennyss; "it is wonderful how little our happiness dependson our temporal condition——−when here, or at Lumley Castle, surrounded by my tenantry, there are, I confess, moments of weakness, in which the loss of my wealth or rank, would be missed greatly——−but when on service——−subjected to great privations, and surrounded by men superior to me in military rank, and who say unto me——go, and I go——−come, and I come——−I find my enjoyments intrinsically the same."

"That," said Francis, "may be owing to your Lordship's tempered feelings——−which have taught you to look beyond this world for your pleasures and consolation."

"It has doubtless an effect," said the Earl, "but there is no truth I am more fully persuaded of, than, that our happiness here, does not depend upon our lot in life, so we are not suffering for necessaries——−even changes bring less real misery than they are supposed to."

"Doubtless;" cried Mr. Haughton, "under the circumstances, I would not wish to change, even with your Lordship, unless, indeed," he continued, with a smile, and bow to the Countess, "it were the temptation of your lovely wife."

"You are quite polite," said Emily, laughing, "but I have no desire to deprive Mrs. Haughton of a companion she has made out so well with these twenty years past."

"Thirty, my Lady, if you please."

"And thirty more, I hope," continued Emily, as a servant announced the several carriages at the door. The

younger part of the company now hastened to their different engagements, and Chatterton handed Harriet; John, Grace; and Pendennyss, Emily, into their respective carriages; the Duke and Lady Marian following, but at some little distance from the rest of the party.

As the Earl drove from the door, the Countess looked up to a window, at which were standing her aunt and Doctor Ives; and kissed her hand to them, with a face, in which glowed the mingled expressions of innocence——love and joy.

Before leaving the Park, the party passed Sir Edward, with his wife leaning on one arm and Jane on the other——pursuing their daily walk——The Baronet followed the carriages with his eyes, and exchanged looks of the fondest love with his children, as they drove slowly and respectfully by him, and if the glance which followed on Jane, did not speak equal pleasure——it surely denoted its proper proportion of paternal love.

"You have much reason to congratulate yourself, on the happy termination of your labours," said the Doctor, with a smile, to the widow; "Emily is placed, so far as human foresight can judge, in the happiest of all stations a female can be in——the pious wife of a pious husband——beloved, and deserving of it."

"Yes," said Mrs. Wilson, drawing back from following the phaeton with her eyes,"they are as happy as this world will admit of, and, what is better, they are well prepared to meet any reverse of fortune which may occur——and discharge the duties they have entered on;——I do not think," continued she musing,"that Pendennyss can ever doubt the affections of such a woman as Emily."

"I should think not," said the Doctor, with a smile, "but what can excite such a thought in your breast, and one so much to the prejudice of George?"

"The only unpleasant thing, I have ever observed in him," said Mrs. Wilson, gravely, "is the suspicion which induced him to adopt the disguise he entered our family with."

"He did not adopt it, Madam——chance, and circumstances drew it around him accidentally——and when you consider the peculiar state of his mind from the discovery of his mother's misconduct——his own great wealth and rank——it is not surprising he should yield to a deception, rather harmless than injurious."

"Dr. Ives," said Mrs. Wilson, "is not wont to defend deceit."

"Nor do I now, Madam," replied the Doctor, with a smile, "I acknowledge the offence of George——myself, wife, and son—— I remonstrated at the time upon principle—— I said the end would not justify the means—— that a departure from ordinary rules of propriety, was at all times dangerous, and seldom practised with impunity."

"And you failed to convince your hearers," cried Mrs. Wilson, gayly;"a novelty in your case, my good rector."

"I thank you for your compliment," said the Doctor, "I did convince them as to the truth of the principle, but the Earl contended his case might make an innocent exception——he had the vanity to think, I believe, that by concealing his real name, he injured himself more than any one else, and got rid of the charge in some such way——he is, however, thoroughly convinced of the truth of the position by practice——his sufferings, growing out of the mistake of his real character, and which could not have happened had he appeared in proper person—— were greater than he is free to acknowledge."

"If they study the fate of the Donna Julia, and his own weakness," said the widow, "they will have a salutary moral always at hand, to teach them the importance of two cardinal virtues at least——obedience and truth."

"Julia has suffered much," replied the Doctor, "and although she has returned to her father, the consequences of her imprudence are likely to continue——when once the bonds of mutual confidence and respect are broken——they may be partially restored it is true; but never with a warmth and reliance, such as existed previously——to return, however, to yourself——do you not feel a sensationof delight at the prosperous end of your exertions in behalf of Emily?"

"It is certainly pleasant to think we have discharged our duties——and the task is much easier than we are apt to suppose," said Mrs. Wilson; "it is only to commence the foundation, so that it will be able to support the superstructure——I have endeavoured to make Emily a christian——I have endeavoured to form such a taste, and principles in her——that she would not be apt to admire an improper suitor——and I have laboured to prepare her to discharge her continued duties through life, in such a manner and with such a faith, as will, under the providence of God, result in happiness far exceeding any thing she now enjoys——in all these, by the blessings of Heaven, I have succeeded——and had occasion offered, I would have assisted her inexperience through the more delicate decisions of her sex—— though in no instance would I attempt to control them."

"You are right, my dear madam," said the Doctor, taking her kindly by the hand, "and had I a daughter, I

would follow a similar course——give her delicacy——religion, and a proper taste, aided by the unseen influence of a prudent parent's care——the chances of women for happiness would be much greater than they are——and I am entirely of your opinion——"That prevention is at all times better than cure."

THE END.