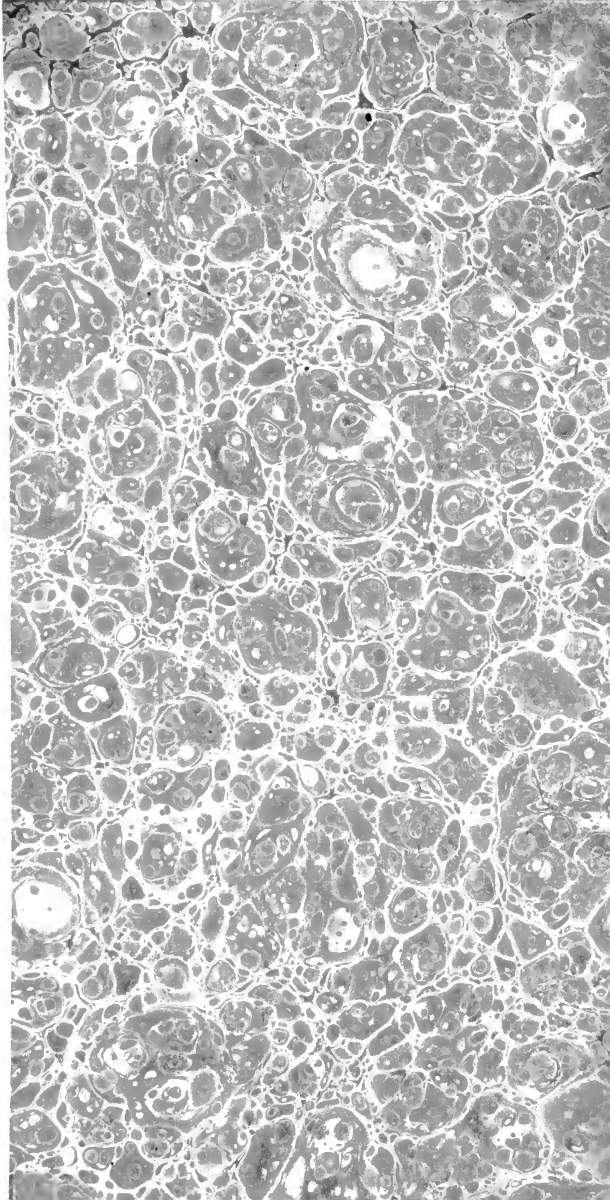


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Xmas 1972



Anne Swasey



ILLUSTRATIONS
OF
LYING,
IN
ALL ITS BRANCHES.

BY AMELIA OPIE.

IN TWO VOLUMES.

VOL I.

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TO

DR. ALDERSON, OF NORWICH.

TO thee, my beloved Father, I dedicated my first, and to thee I also dedicate my present, work ;—with the pleasing conviction that thou art disposed to form a favourable judgment of any production, however humble, which has a tendency to promote the moral and religious welfare of mankind.

AMELIA OPIE.

PREFACE.

I AM aware that a preface must be short, if its author aspires to have it read. I shall therefore content myself with making a very few preliminary observations, which I wish to be considered as apologies.

My first apology is, for having throughout my book made use of the words lying and lies, instead of some gentler term, or some easy paraphrase, by which I might have avoided the risk of offending the delicacy of any of my readers.

Our great satirist speaks of a Dean who was a favourite at the church where he officiated, because

“ He never mentioned hell to ears polite,—”

and I fear that to “ ears polite,” my coarseness, in uniformly calling lying and lies by their real names, may sometimes be offensive.

But, when writing a book against lying, I was obliged to express my meaning in the manner most consonant to the *strict truth*; nor could I employ any words with such propriety as those hallowed and sanctioned for use, on such an occasion, by the practice of inspired, and holy men of old.

Moreover, I believe that those who accustom themselves to call lying and lies by a softening appellation, are in danger of weakening their aversion to the fault itself.

My second apology is, for presuming to come forward, with such apparent boldness,

as a didactic writer, and a teacher of truths, which I ought to believe that every one knows already, and better than I do.

But I beg permission to deprecate the charge of presumption and self-conceit, by declaring that I pretend not to lay before my readers any new knowledge; my only aim is to bring to their recollection knowledge which they already possess, but do not constantly recall and act upon.

I am to them, and to my subject, what the picture-cleaner is to the picture; the restorer to observation of what is valuable, and not the artist who created it.

In the next place, I wish to remind them that a weak hand is as able as a powerful one to hold a mirror, in which we may see any defects in our dress or person.

In the last place, I venture to assert that there is not in my whole book a more com-

mon-place truth, than that kings are but men, and that monarchs, as well as their subjects, must surely die.

Notwithstanding, Philip of Macedon was so conscious of his liability to forget this awful truth, that he employed a monitor to follow him every day, repeating in his ear, “Remember thou art but a man.” And he who gave this salutary admonition neither *possessed* superiority of wisdom, nor *pretended* to possess it.

All, therefore, that I require of my readers is to do me the justice to believe that, in the following work, my pretensions have been as humble, and as confined, as those of the REMEMBRANCER of PHILIP OF MACEDON.

AMELIA OPIE.

CONTENTS OF VOL. I.

CHAP. I.

Introduction, - - - - -	<i>page</i> 1
-------------------------	------------------

CHAP. II.

On the Active and Passive Lies of Vanity—The Stage Coach—Unexpected Discoveries, -	4
---	---

CHAP. III.

On the Lies of Flattery—The Turban, - -	92
---	----

CHAP. IV.

Lies of Fear—The Bank Note, - - -	117
-----------------------------------	-----

CHAP. V.

Lies falsely called Lies of Benevolence—A Tale of Potted Sprats—An Authoress and her Au- ditors, - - - - -	136
--	-----

CHAP. VI.

Lies of Convenience—Projects Defeated, -	161
--	-----

CHAP. VII.

Lies of Interest—The Skreen, - - -	186
------------------------------------	-----

CHAP. VIII.

Lies of First-Rate Malignity—The Orphan, -	212
--	-----

CHAP. IX.

Lies of Second-Rate Malignity—The Old Gen- tleman and the Young One, - - - -	258
---	-----

CHAP. X.

Lies of Benevolence, - - - - -	284
--------------------------------	-----

CONTENTS OF VOL. II.

CHAP. X.—CONTINUED.

	<i>page</i>
Lies of Benevolence—Mistaken Kindness—Fa-	
ther and Son, - - - - -	1

CHAP. XI.

Lies of Wantonness and Practical Lies, -	58
--	----

CHAP. XII.

Our own Experience of the Painful Results of	
Lying, - - - - -	72

CHAP. XIII.

Lying the most common of all Vices, - -	91
---	----

CHAP. XIV.

Extracts from Lord Bacon, and others, - -	97
---	----

CHAP. XV.

Observations on the Extracts from Hawkesworth,	
and others, - - - - -	147

CHAP. XVI.

Religion the only Basis of Truth, - -	165
---------------------------------------	-----

CHAP. XVII.

The same subject continued, - - -	240
Conclusion, - - - - -	256

ILLUSTRATIONS OF LYING,

IN

ALL ITS BRANCHES.

CHAPTER I.

INTRODUCTION.

WHAT constitutes lying?

I answer—the *intention to deceive*.

If this be a correct definition, there must be *passive* as well as *active* lying; and those who withhold the truth, or do not tell the whole truth, with an intention to deceive, are guilty of lying, as well as those who tell a direct or positive falsehood.

Lies are many, and various in their nature and in their tendency, and may be arranged under their different names, thus :—

Lies of Vanity.

Lies of Flattery.

Lies of Convenience.

Lies of Interest.

Lies of Fear.

Lies of first-rate Malignity.

Lies of second-rate Malignity.

Lies, falsely called Lies of Benevolence.

Lies of real Benevolence.

Lies of mere Wantonness, proceeding from a depraved love of lying, or contempt for truth.

There are others probably ; but I believe that this list contains all those which are of the most importance ; unless, indeed, we may add to it—

Practical Lies ; that is, Lies acted, not spoken.

I shall give an anecdote, or tale, in order to illustrate each sort of lie in its turn, or nearly so, lies for the sake of lying *excepted*; for I should find it very difficult so to illustrate this the most despicable species of falsehood.

CHAP. II.

ON THE ACTIVE AND PASSIVE LIES OF VANITY.

I SHALL begin my observations by defining what I mean by the Lie of Vanity, both in its active and passive nature; these lies being undoubtedly the most common, because vanity is one of the most powerful springs of human action, and is usually the besetting sin of every one. Suppose, that in order to give myself consequence, I were to assert that I was actually acquainted with certain great and distinguished personages whom I had merely met in fashionable society.

Suppose also, I were to say that I was at such a place, and such an assembly on such a night, without adding, that I was there, not as an invited guest, but only because a benefit concert was held at these places for which I had tickets.—These would both be lies of vanity; but the one would be an active, the other a passive, lie.

In the first I should assert a direct falsehood, in the other I should withhold part of the truth; but both would be lies, because, in both, my intention was to deceive.*

But though we are frequently tempted to be guilty of the active lies of vanity, our temptations to its passive lies are more frequent still; nor

* This passive lie is a very frequent one in certain circles in London; as many ladies and gentlemen there purchase tickets for benefit concerts held at great houses, in order that they may be able to say, "I was at Lady such a one's on such a night."

can the sincere lovers of truth be too much on their guard against this constantly recurring danger. The following instances will explain what I mean by this observation.

If I assert that my motive for a particular action was virtuous, when I know that it was worldly and selfish, I am guilty of an *active*, or *direct* lie. But I am equally guilty of falsehood, if, while I hear my actions or forbearances praised, and imputed to decidedly worthy motives, when I know them to have sprung from unworthy, or unimportant ones, I listen with silent complacency, and do not positively disclaim my right to commendation; only, in the one case I lie *directly*, in the other *indirectly*: the lie is *active* in the one, and *passive* in the other. And are we not all of us conscious of having sometimes accepted

incense to our vanity, which we knew that we did not deserve?

Men have been known to boast of attention, and even of avowals of serious love from women, and women from men, which, in point of fact, they never received, and therein have been guilty of positive falsehood; but they who, without any contradiction on their own part, allow their friends and flatterers to insinuate that they have been, or are, objects of love and admiration to those who never professed either, are as much guilty of deception as the utterers of the above-mentioned assertion. Still, it is certain, that many, who would shrink with moral disgust from committing the latter species of falsehood, are apt to remain silent, when their vanity is gratified, without any overt act of deceit on their part, and are contented to let the flattering belief

remain uncontradicted. Yet, the turpitude is, in my opinion, at least, nearly equal, if my definition of lying be correct; namely, *the intention to deceive*.

This disingenuous passiveness, this deceitful silence, belongs to that extensive and common species of falsehood, *withholding the truth*.

But this *tolerated* sin, denominated *white lying*, is a sin which I believe that some persons commit, not only without being conscious that it is a sin, but, frequently, with a belief that, to do it readily, and without confusion, is often a merit, and always a proof of *ability*. Still, more frequently, they do it unconsciously, perhaps, from the force of habit; and, like Monsieur Jourdain, “the Bourgeois gentleman,” who found out that he had talked prose all his life without knowing it, these persons utter lie upon lie,

without knowing that what they utter deserves to be considered as falsehood.

I am myself convinced, that a passive lie is equally as irreconcilable to moral principles as an active one, but I am well aware that most persons are of a different opinion. Yet, I would say to those who thus differ from me, if you allow yourselves to violate truth—that is, to *deceive* for any purpose whatever—who can say where this sort of self-indulgence will submit to be bounded? Can you be sure that you will not, when strongly tempted, utter what is equally false, in order to benefit yourself at the expense of a fellow-creature?

All mortals are, at times, accessible to temptation; but, when we are not exposed to it, we dwell with complacency on our means of resisting it, on

our principles, and our tried and experienced self-denial : but, as the life-boat, and the safety-gun, which succeeded in all that they were made to do while the sea was calm, and the winds still, have been known to fail when the vessel was tost on a tempestuous ocean ; so those who may successfully oppose principle to temptation when the tempest of the passions is not awakened within their bosoms, may sometimes be overwhelmed by its power when it meets them in all its awful energy and unexpected violence.

But in every warfare against human corruption, habitual resistance to little temptations is, next to prayer, the most efficacious aid. He who is to be trained for public exhibitions of feats of strength, is made to carry small weights at first, which are daily in-

creased in heaviness, till, at last, he is almost unconsciously able to bear, with ease, the greatest weight possible to be borne by man. In like manner, those who resist the daily temptation to tell what are apparently trivial and innocent lies, will be better able to withstand allurements to serious and important deviations from truth, and be more fortified in the hour of more severe temptation against every species of dereliction from integrity.

The active lies of vanity are so numerous, but, at the same time, are so like each other, that it were useless, as well as endless, to attempt to enumerate them. I shall therefore mention one of them only, before I proceed to my tale on the ACTIVE LIE OF VANITY, and that is the most common of all; namely, the violation of truth which persons indulge in relative to their

age ; an error so generally committed, especially by the unmarried of both sexes, that few persons can expect to be believed when declaring their age at an advanced period of life. So common, and therefore so little disreputable, is this species of lie considered to be, that a sensible friend of mine said to me the other day, when I asked him the age of the lady whom he was going to marry, “ She *tells* me she is five-and-twenty ; I therefore *conclude* that she is five-and-thirty.” This was undoubtedly spoken in joke ; still it was an evidence of the toleration generally granted on this point.

But though it is *possible* that my friend believed the lady to be a year or two older than she owned herself to be, and thought a deviation from truth on this subject was of no consequence, I am very sure that he would

not have ventured to marry a woman whom he suspected of lying on any other occasion. This, however, is a lie which does not expose the utterer to severe animadversion, and for this reason probably, that all mankind are so averse to be thought old, that the wish to be considered younger than the truth warrants meets with complacent sympathy and indulgence, even when years are notoriously annihilated at the impulse of vanity

I give the following story in illustration of the ACTIVE LIE OF VANITY.

THE STAGE COACH.

AMONGST those whom great successes in trade had raised to considerable opulence in their native city, was a family of the name of Burford ; and

the eldest brother, when he was the only surviving partner of that name in the firm, was not only able to indulge himself in the luxuries of a carriage, country-house, garden, hot-houses, and all the privileges which wealth bestows, but could also lay by money enough to provide amply for his children.

His only daughter had been adopted, when very young, by her paternal grandmother, whose fortune was employed in her son's trade, and who could well afford to take on herself all the expenses of Annabel's education. But it was with painful reluctance that Annabel's excellent mother consented to resign her child to another's care ; nor could she be prevailed upon to do so, till Burford, who believed that his widowed, beloved parent, would sink under the loss of her hus-

band, unless Annabel was permitted to reside with her, commanded her to yield her maternal rights in pity to this beloved sufferer. She could therefore presume to refuse no longer ;—but she yielded with a mental conflict only too prophetic of the mischief to which she exposed her child's mind and character, by this enforced surrender of a mother's duties.

The grandmother was a thoughtless woman of this world—the mother, a pious, reflecting being, continually preparing herself for the world to come. With the latter, Annabel would have acquired principles—with the former, she could only learn accomplishments ; and that weakly judging person encouraged her in habits of mind and character which would have filled both her father and mother with pain and apprehension.

Vanity was her ruling passion ; and this her grandmother fostered by every means in her power. She gave her elegant dresses, and had her taught shewy accomplishments. She delighted to hear her speak of herself, and boast of the compliments paid her on her beauty and her talents. She was even weak enough to admire the skilful falsehood with which she embellished every thing which she narrated : but this vicious propensity the old lady considered only as a proof of a lively fancy ; and she congratulated herself on the consciousness how much more agreeable her fluent and inventive Annabel was, than the *matter-of-fact* girls with whom she associated. But while Annabel and her grandmother were on a visit at Burford's country house, and while the parents were beholding with sorrow the conceit and

flippancy of their only daughter, they were plunged at once into comparative poverty, by the ruin of some of Burford's correspondents abroad, and by the fraudulent conduct of a friend in whom he had trusted. In a few short weeks, therefore, the ruined grandmother and her adopted child, together with the parents and their boys, were forced to seek an asylum in the heart of Wales, and live on the slender marriage settlement of Burford's amiable wife. For her every one felt, as it was thought that she had always discouraged that expensive style of living which had exposed her husband to envy, and its concomitant detractions, amongst those whose increase in wealth had not kept pace with his own. He had also carried his ambition so far, that he had even aspired to represent his

native city in parliament ; and, as he was a violent politician, some of the opposite party not only rejoiced in his downfall, but were ready to believe and to propagate that he had made a fraudulent bankruptcy in concert with his friend who had absconded, and that he had secured or conveyed away from his creditors money to a considerable amount. But the tale of calumny, which has no foundation in truth, cannot long retain its power to injure ; and, in process of time, the feelings of the creditors in general were so completely changed towards Burford, that some of them who had been most decided against signing his certificate, were at length brought to confess that it was a matter for *re-consideration*. Therefore, when a distinguished friend of his father's, who had been strongly prejudiced against

him at first, repented of his unjust credulity, and, in order to make him amends, offered him a share in his own business, all the creditors, except two of the principal ones, became willing to sign the certificate. Perhaps there is nothing so difficult to remove from some minds as suspicions of a derogatory nature ; and the creditors in question were envious, worldly men, who piqued themselves on their shrewdness, could not brook the idea of being overreached, and were, perhaps, not sorry, that he whose prosperity had excited their jealousy, should now be humbled before them as a dependant and a suppliant. However, even they began to be tired at length of holding out against the opinion of so many ; and Burford had the comfort of being informed, after he had been some months in Wales,

that matters were in train to enable him to get into business again, with restored credit and renewed prospects.

“Then, who knows, Anna”, said he to his wife, “but that in a few years I shall be able, by industry and economy, to pay all that I owe, both principal and interest? for, till I have done so, I shall not be really happy; and then poverty will be robbed of its sting”.—“Not only so”, she replied,—“we could never have given our children a better inheritance than this proof of their father’s strict integrity; and, surely, my dear husband, a blessing will attend thy labours and intentions”.—“I humbly trust that it will”.—Yes”, she continued; “our change of fortune has humbled our pride of heart, and the cry of our contrition and humility has not ascended in vain”.—“*Our* pride

of heart"! replied Burford, tenderly embracing her; "it was *I*, I alone, who deserved chastisement, and I cannot bear to hear thee blame thyself; but, it is like thee, Anna,—thou art ever kind, ever generous; however, as I like to be obliged to thee, I am contented that thou shouldst talk of *our* pride and *our* chastisement". While these hopes were uppermost in the minds of this amiable couple, and were cheering the weak mind of Burford's mother, which, as it had been foolishly elated by prosperity, was now as improperly depressed by adversity, Annabel had been passing several months at the house of a school-fellow some miles from her father's dwelling. The vain girl had felt the deepest mortification at this blight to her worldly prospects, and bitterly lamented being no longer able to talk of

her grandmother's villa and carriages, and her father's hothouses and grounds; nor could she help repining at the loss of those indulgences to which she had been accustomed. She was therefore delighted to leave home on a visit, and very sorry when unexpected circumstances in her friend's family obliged her to return sooner than she intended. She was compelled also to return by herself in a public coach,—a great mortification to her still existing pride; but she had now no pretensions to travel otherwise, and found it necessary to submit to circumstances.—In the coach were one young man and two elderly ones; and her companions seemed so willing to pay her attention, and make her journey pleasant to her, that Annabel, who always believed herself an object of admiration, was soon convinced that she had made a

conquest of the youth, and that the others thought her a very sweet creature. She, therefore, gave way to all her loquacious vivacity; she hummed tunes in order to shew that she could sing; she took out her pencil and sketched wherever they stopped to change horses, and talked of her own *boudoir*, her own maid, and all the past glories of her state, as if they still existed. In short, she tried to impress her companions with a high idea of her consequence, and as if unusual and unexpected circumstances had led her to travel *incog.*, while she put in force all her attractions against their poor condemned hearts. What an odious thing is a coquette of sixteen! and such was Annabel Burford. Certain it is, that she became an object of great attention to the gentlemen with her, but of admiration, pro-

bably, to the young man alone, who, in her youthful beauty, might possibly overlook her obvious defects. During the journey, one of the elderly gentlemen opened a basket which stood near him, containing some fine hot-house grapes and flowers. "There, young lady", said he to her, "did you ever see such fruit as this before"? "Oh dear yes, in my papa's grapery." "Indeed! but did you ever see such fine flowers?" "Oh dear yes, in papa's succession-houses. There is nothing, I assure you, of that sort", she added, drawing up her head with a look of ineffable conceit, "that I am not accustomed to":—condescending, however, at the same time, to eat some of the grapes, and accept some of the flowers.

It was natural that her companions should now be very desirous of finding out what princess in disguise was

deigning to travel in a manner so unworthy of her; and when they stopped within a few miles of her home, one of the gentlemen, having discovered that she was known to a passenger on the top of the coach, who was about to leave it, got out, and privately asked him who she was. "Burford! Burford!" cried he, when he heard the answer; "what! the daughter of Burford the bankrupt?"—"Yes, the same."—With a frowning brow he re-entered the coach, and, when seated, whispered the old gentleman next him; and both of them, having exchanged glances of sarcastic and indignant meaning, looked at Anabel with great significance. Nor was it long before she observed a marked change in their manner towards her. They answered her with abruptness, and even with reluctance;

till, at length, the one who had interrogated her acquaintance on the coach said, in a sarcastic tone, "I conclude that you were speaking just now, young lady, of the fine things which were *once* yours. You have no graperies and succession-houses *now*, I take it." — "Dear me! why not, sir?" replied the conscious girl, in a trembling voice." — "Why not? Why, are you not the daughter of Burford the bankrupt?" Never was child more tempted to deny her parentage than Annabel was; but, though with great reluctance, she faltered out, "Yes; and, to be sure, my father was once unfortunate; but"—here she looked at her young and opposite neighbour; and, seeing that his look of admiring respect was exchanged for one of ill-suppressed laughter, she felt irresistibly urged to add, "But we are very

well off now, I assure you; and our present residence is so pretty! Such a sweet garden! and such a charming hothouse!"

"Indeed!" returned the old man, with a significant nod to his friend; "well, then, let your papa take care he does not make his house too hot to hold him, and that *another* house be not added to his list of residences." Here he laughed heartily at his own wit, and was echoed by his companion. "But, pray, how long has he been thus again favoured by fortune?"—"Oh dear! I cannot say; but, for some time; and I assure you our style of living is—very complete".—"I do not doubt it; for children and fools speak truth, says the proverb; and sometimes," added he in a low voice, "the child and the fool are the same person."—"So, so", he muttered aside to

the other traveller; “gardens! hot-house! carriage! swindling, specious rascal!” But Annabel heard only the first part of the sentence; and being quite satisfied that she had recovered all her consequence in the eyes of her young beau by two or three *white lies*, as she termed them (flights of fancy, in which she was apt to indulge), she resumed her attack on his heart, and continued to converse, in her most seducing manner, till the coach stopped, according to her desire, at a cottage by the road-side, where, as she said, her father’s groom was to meet her, and take her portmanteau. The truth was, that she did not choose to be set down at her own humble home, which was at the further end of the village, because it would not only tell the tale of her fallen fortunes, but would prove the falsehood of what she had

been asserting. When the coach stopped, she exclaimed, with well-acted surprise, "Dear me! how strange that the servant is not waiting for me! But, it does not signify; I can stop here till he comes." She then left the coach, scarcely greeted by her elderly companions, but followed, as she fancied, by looks of love from the youth, who handed her out, and expressed his great regret at parting with her.

The parents, meanwhile, were eagerly expecting her return; for, though the obvious defects in her character gave them excessive pain, and they were resolved to leave no measures untried in order to eradicate them, they had missed her amusing vivacity; and even their low and confined dwelling was rendered cheerful, when, with her sweet and brilliant tones, she went carolling about the house. Besides,

she was coming, for the first time, alone and unexpected; and, as the coach was later than usual, the anxious tenderness of the parental heart was worked up to a high pitch of feeling, and they were even beginning to share the fantastic fears of the impatient grandmother, when they saw the coach stop at a distant turn of the road, and soon after beheld Annabel coming towards them; who was fondly clasped to those affectionate bosoms, for which her unprincipled falsehoods, born of the most contemptible vanity, had prepared fresh trials and fresh injuries: for her elderly companions were her father's principal and relentless creditors, who had been down to Wynstaye on business, and were returning thence to London; intending, when they arrived there, to assure Sir James Alberry,—that friend of Bur-

ford's father, who resided in London, and wished to take him into partnership,—that they were no longer averse to sign his certificate ; being at length convinced he was a calumniated man. But now all their suspicions were renewed and confirmed ; since it was easier for them to believe that Burford was still the villain which they always thought him, than that so young a girl should have told so many falsehoods at the mere impulse of vanity. They therefore became more inveterate against her poor father than ever ; and, though their first visit to the metropolis was to the gentleman in question, it was now impelled by a wish to injure, not to serve, him. How differently would they have felt, had the vain and false Annabel allowed the coach to set her down at her father's lowly door ! and had they beheld the in-

terior arrangement of his house and family! Had they seen neatness and order giving attraction to cheap and ordinary furniture; had they beheld the simple meal spread out to welcome the wanderer home, and the Bible and Prayerbook ready for the evening service, which was deferred till it could be shared again with her whose return would add fervour to the devotion of that worshipping family, and would call forth additional expressions of thanksgiving!

The dwelling of Burford was now that of a man improved by trials past; — of one who looked forward with thankfulness and hope to the renewed possession of a competence, in the belief that he should now be able to make a wiser and holier use of it than he had done before. His wife had needed no such lesson; though, in the hu-

mility of her heart, she thought otherwise; and she had helped her husband to impress on the yielding minds of her boys, who (happier than their sister) had never left her, that a season of worldly humiliation is more safe and blessed than one of worldly prosperity — while their Welch cottage and wild mountain garden had been converted, by her resources and her example, into a scene of such rural industry and innocent amusement, that they could no longer regret the splendid house and grounds which they had been obliged to resign. The grandmother, indeed, had never ceased to mourn and to murmur; and, to her, the hope of seeing a return of brighter days, by means of a new partnership, was beyond measure delightful. But she was doomed to be disappointed, through those errors in the child of her

adoption which she had at least encouraged, if she had not occasioned them.

It was with even clamorous delight, that Annabel, after this absence of a few months, was welcomed by her brothers : the parents' welcome was of a quieter, deeper nature ; while the grandmother's first solicitude was to ascertain how she looked ; and having convinced herself that she was returned handsomer than ever, her joy was as loud as that of the boys.—“ Do come hither, Bell,” said one of her brothers—“ we have so much to show you ! The old cat has got such nice kittens !”—“ Yes ; and my rabbits have all young ones !” cried another. — “ And I and mamma,” cried the third boy, “ have put large stones into the bed of the mountain rill ; so now it makes such a nice noise as it flows over them ! Do come,

Bell ; do, pray, come with us !”—But the evening duties were first to be performed ; and performed they were, with more than usual solemnity : but after them Annabel had to sup ; and she was so engrossed in relating her adventures in the coach, and with describing the attentions of her companions, that her poor brothers were not attended to. In vain did her mother say, “ Do, Annabel, go with your brothers !” and add, “ Go now ; for it is near their bedtime !” She was too fond of hearing herself talk, and of her grandmother’s flatteries, to be willing to leave the room ; and though her mother was disappointed at her selfishness, she could not bear to chide her on the first night of her return.

When Annabel was alone with her grandmother, she ventured to communicate to her what a fearful conscious-

ness of not having done right had led her to conceal from her parents ; and, after relating all that had passed relative to the fruit and flowers, she repeated the cruel question of the old man, “ Are you not the daughter of Burford the bankrupt ? ” and owned what her reply was : on which her grandmother exclaimed, with great emotion, “ Unthinking girl ! you know not what injury you may have done your father ! ” She then asked for a particular description of the persons of the old men, saying, “ Well, well, it cannot be helped now—I may be mistaken ; but be sure not to tell your mother what you have told me.”

For some days after Annabel’s return, all went on well ; and their domestic felicity would have been so complete, that Burford and his wife would have much disliked any idea of change,

had their income been sufficient to give their boys good education ; but, as it was only just sufficient for their maintenance, they looked forward with anxious expectation to the arrival of a summons to London, and to their expected residence there. Still the idea of leaving their present abode was really painful to all, save Annabel and her grandmother. They thought the rest of the family devoid of proper spirit, and declared that living in Wales was not living at all.

But a stop was now put to eager anticipations on the one hand, or of tender regrets on the other ; for, while Burford was expecting daily to receive remittances from Sir James Alberry, to enable him to transport himself and his family to the metropolis, that gentleman wrote to him as follows :—

“ Sir,

“ All connection between us is for ever at an end ; and I have given the share in my business, which was intended for you, to the *worthy* man who has so long solicited it. I thought that I had done you injustice, Sir ; I wished therefore to make you amends. But I find you are what you are represented to be, a fraudulent bankrupt ; and your certificate *now will never be signed*. Should you wonder what has occasioned this change in my feelings and proceedings, I am at liberty to inform you that your daughter travelled in a stage coach, a few days ago, with your two principal creditors ; and I am desired to add, *that children and fools speak truth*.

“ JAMES ALBERRY.”

When Burford had finished reading this letter, it fell from his grasp, and, clasping his hands convulsively together, he exclaimed, “Ruined and disgraced for ever!” then rushed into his own chamber. His terrified wife followed him with the unread letter in her hand, looking the enquiries which she could not utter.—“Read that,” he replied, “and see that Sir James Alberry deems me a villain!” She did read, and with a shaking frame; but it was not the false accusation of her husband, nor the loss of the expected partnership, that thus agitated her firm nerves, and firmer mind; it was the painful conviction, that Annabel, by some means unknown to her, had been the cause of this mischief to her father;—a conviction which considerably increased Burford’s agony, when she pointed

out the passage in Sir James's letter alluding to Annabel, who was immediately summoned, and desired to explain Sir James's mysterious meaning. "Dear me! papa," cried she, changing colour, "I am sure, if I had thought,—I am sure I could not think,—nasty, ill-natured old man! I am sure I only said—". "But what *did* you say?" cried her agitated father.—"I can explain all," said his mother, who had entered uncalled for, and read the letter. She then repeated what Annabel had told, but softening it as much as she could;—however, she told enough to show the agonizing parents that their child was not only the cause of disappointment and disgrace to them, but a mean, vain-glorious, and despicable liar! "The only amends which you can now make us", said Burford, "is to tell the whole truth, unhappy child!

and then we must see what can be done; for my reputation must be cleared, even at the painful expense of exposing you." Nor was it long before the mortified Annabel, with a heart awakened to contrition by her mother's gentle reproofs, and the tender teachings of a mother's love, made an ample confession of all that had passed in the stage coach; on hearing which, Burford instantly resolved to set off for London. But how was he to get thither? He had no money; as he had recently been obliged to pay some debts of his still thoughtless and extravagant mother; nor could he bear to borrow of his neighbour what he was afraid he might be for some time unable to return. "Cruel, unprincipled girl!" cried he, as he paced their little room in agony; "see to what misery thou hast reduced thy

father! However, I must go to London immediately, though it be on foot.” —“ Well, really, I don’t see any very great harm in what the poor child did,” cried his mother, distressed at seeing Annabel’s tears. “ It was very trying to her to be reproached with her father’s bankruptcy and her fallen fortunes ; and it was very natural for her to say what she did.” —“ Natural!” exclaimed the indignant mother; “ natural for my child to utter falsehood on falsehood, and at the instigation of a mean vanity! Natural for my child to shrink from the avowal of poverty, which was unattended with disgrace! Oh! make us not more wretched than we were before, by trying to lessen Annabel’s faults in her own eyes! Our only comfort is the hope that she is ashamed of herself.” —“ But neither her shame nor peni-

tence", cried Burford, "will give me the quickest means of repairing the effects of her error. However, as I cannot ride, I must walk, to London;" and he turned away while he spoke, in order to hide from his anxious wife the dew of weakness which stood upon his brow, and the faint flush which overspread his cheek. "But will not writing to Sir James be sufficient?"—"No. My appearance will corroborate my assurances only too well. The only writing necessary will be a detail from Annabel of all that passed in the coach, and a confession of her fault."—"What! exact from your child such a disgraceful avowal, William!" cried the angry grandmother.—"Yes; for it is a punishment due to her transgression; and she may think herself happy if its consequences end here."—"Here's a fuss, indeed, about a little

harmless puffing and white lying !” —“ Harmless” ! replied Burford, in a tone of indignation, while his wife exclaimed, in the agony of a wounded spirit, “ Oh ! mother, mother ! do not make us deplore, more than we already do, that fatal hour when we consented to surrender our dearest duties at the call of compassion for your sorrows, and entrusted the care of our child’s precious soul to your erroneous tenderness ! But, I trust that Annabel deeply feels her sinfulness, and that the effects of a mistaken education may have been counteracted in time.”

The next day, having procured the necessary document from Annabel, Burford set off on his journey, intending to travel occasionally on the tops of coaches, being well aware that he was not in a state of health to walk the whole way, though he took care

to conceal from his wife how much his distress of mind had weakened his frame.

In the meanwhile, Sir James Alberry, the London merchant, to whom poor Burford was then pursuing his long and difficult journey, was beginning to suspect that he had acted hastily; and, perhaps, unjustly. He had written his distressing letter in the moments of his first indignation, on hearing the statement of the two creditors; and he had moreover written it under their dictation;—and, as the person who had long wished to be admitted into partnership with him happened to call at the same time, and had taken advantage of Burford's supposed delinquency, he had, without further hesitation, granted his request. But Sir James, though a *rash*, was a *kind-hearted*, man; therefore, when his angry

feelings had subsided, the rebound of them was in favour of the poor accused; and he reproached himself for having condemned and punished a supposed culprit, before he was even heard in his defence. Therefore, having invited Burford's accusers to return to dinner, he dismissed them as soon as he could, and went in search of his wife, wishing, but not expecting, his hasty proceeding to receive the approbation of her candid spirit and discriminating judgment. "What is all this?" cried Lady Alberry, when he had done speaking. "Is it possible that, on the evidence of these two men, who have shown themselves inveterate enemies of this poor bankrupt, you have broken your promise to him, and pledged it to another?" — "Yes; and my letter to Burford is gone. I wish I had shown it to you before it went; but, surely Burford's

child could not have told them falsehoods.”—“That depends on her education.”—“True, Jane; and she was brought up, you know, by that paragon, her mother, who cannot do wrong.”—“No; she was brought up by that weak woman, her grandmother, who is not likely, I fear, ever to do right. Had her pious mother educated her, I should have been sure that Annabel Burford could not have told a lie. However, I shall see, and interrogate the accusers. In the meanwhile I must regret your excessive precipitancy.”

As Lady Alberry was a woman who scrupulously performed all her religious and moral duties, she was, consequently, always observant of that holy command, “not to take up a reproach against her neighbour.” She was, therefore, very unwilling to believe the truth of this charge against

Burford; and thought that it was more unlikely an ill-educated girl should tell a falsehood, which had also, perhaps, been magnified by involuntary exaggeration, than that the husband of such a woman as Anna Burford should be the delinquent which his old creditors described him to be. For she had, in former days, been thrown into society with Burford's wife, and had felt attracted towards her by the strongest of all sympathies, that of entire unity on those subjects most connected with our welfare here, and hereafter; those sympathies which can convert strangers into friends, and draw them together in the enduring ties of pure, Christian love. "No, no," said she to herself; "the beloved husband of such a woman cannot be a villain:" and she awaited, with benevolent impatience, the arrival of her expected guests.

They came, accompanied by Charles Danvers, Annabel's young fellow-traveller, who was nephew to one of them; and Lady Alberry lost no time in drawing from them an exact detail of all that had passed. "And this girl, you say, was a forward, conceited, set-up being, full of herself and her accomplishments; in short, the creature of vanity."—"Yes," replied one of the old men, "it was quite a comedy to look at her and hear her!"—"But what says my young friend?"—"The same. She is very pretty; but a model of affectation, boasting, and vanity. Now she was hanging her head on one side—then looking languishingly with her eyes;—and when my uncle, *coarsely*, as I thought, talked of her father as a bankrupt, her expression of angry mortification was so ludicrous, that I could scarcely help

laughing. "Nay, I do assure you", he continued, "that had we been left alone a few minutes, I should have been made the confidant of her love-affairs; for she sighed deeply once, and asked me, with an affected lisp, if I did not think it a dangerous thing to have a too susceptible heart?" As he said this, after the manner of Annabel, both the old men exclaimed, "Admirable! that is she to the life! I think that I see her and hear her!"—"But, I dare say," said Lady Alberry gravely, "that you paid her compliments, and pretended to admire her notwithstanding."—"I own it; for how could I refuse the incense which every look and gesture demanded?"—"A principle of truth, young man! would have enabled you to do it. What a fine lesson it would be, for poor flattered women, if we could know how meanly

men think of us, even when they flatter us the most.”—“ But, dear Lady Alberry, this girl seemed to me a mere child; a coquette of the nursery: still, had she been older, her evident vanity would have secured me against her beauty.”—“ You are mistaken, Charles; this child is almost seventeen. But now, gentlemen, as *just men*, I appeal to you all, whether it is not more likely that this vainglorious girl told lies, than that her father, the husband of one of the best of women, should be guilty of the grossest dishonesty?”—“ I must confess, Jane, that you have convinced me,” said Sir James; but the two creditors only frowned, and spoke not. “ But consider,” said this amiable advocate; “ if the girl’s habitation was so beautiful, was it not inconsistent with her boasting propensities that she should not choose to be set

down at it? And if her father still had carriages and servants, would they not have been sent to meet her? And if he were really rich, would she have been allowed to travel alone in a stage-coach?—Impossible; and I conjure you to suspend your severe judgment of an unfortunate man, till you have sent some one to see how he really lives.”

“I am forced to return to Wynstaye to-morrow,” growled out Charles’s uncle; “therefore, suppose I go myself.” —“We had fixed to go into Wales ourselves next week,” replied Lady Alberry, “on a visit to a dear friend who lives not far from Wynstaye. Therefore, what say you, Sir James? Had we not better go with our friend? For if you have done poor Burford injustice, the sooner you make him reparation, and *in person*, the better.” To this pro-

posal Sir James gladly assented ; and they set off for Wales the next day, accompanied by the uncle and the nephew.

As Lady Alberry was going to her chamber, on the second night of their journey, she was startled by the sound of deep groans, and a sort of delirious raving, from a half-open door. “ Surely,” said she to the landlady, who was conducting her, there is some one very ill in that room.” — “ Oh dear ! yes, my lady ; a poor man who was picked up on the road yesterday. He had walked all the way from the heart of Wales, till he was so tired, he got on a coach ; and he supposes that, from weakness, he fell off in the night ; and not being missed, he lay till he was found and brought hither.” — “ Has any medical man seen him ? ” — “ Not yet ; for our surgeon lives a good way

off; and, as he had his senses when he first came, we hoped he was not much hurt. He was able to tell us that he only wanted a garret, as he was very poor; and yet, my lady, he looks and speaks so like a gentleman!"—"Poor creature! he must be attended to, and a medical man sent for directly, as he is certainly not sensible *now*."—"Hark! he is raving again, and all about his wife, and I cannot tell what."—"I should like to see him," said Lady Alberry, whose heart always yearned towards the afflicted; and I think that I am myself no bad doctor." Accordingly, she entered the room just as the sick man exclaimed, in his delirium, "Cruel Sir James! I a fraudulent Oh! my dearest Anna!" . . . and Lady Alberry recognized, in the poor raving being before her, the calumniated Burford!

“ I know him ! ” she cried, bursting into tears ; “ we will be answerable for all expenses.” She then went in search of Sir James ; and having prepared him as tenderly as she could for the painful scene which awaited him, she led him to the bedside of the unconscious invalid ;—then, while Sir James, shocked and distressed beyond measure, interrogated the landlady, Lady Alberry examined the nearly-threadbare coat of the *supposed rich man*, which lay on the bed, and searched for the slenderly-filled purse, of which he had himself spoken. She found there Sir James’s letter, which had, she doubted not, occasioned his journey and his illness ; and which, therefore, in an agony of repentant feeling, her husband tore *into atoms*. In the same pocket he found Annabel’s confession ; and when they left the cham-

ber, having vainly waited in hopes of being recognized by the poor invalid, they returned to their fellow-travellers, carrying with them the evidences of Burford's scanty means, in corroboration of the tale of suffering and fatigue which they had to relate. "See!" said Lady Alberry, holding up the coat, and emptying the purse on the table, "are these signs of opulence? and is travelling on foot, in a hot June day, a proof of splendid living?" While the harsh creditor, as he listened to the tale of delirium, and read the confession of Annabel, regretted the hasty credence which he had given to her falsehoods.

But what was best to be done? To send for Burford's wife;—and, till she arrived to nurse him, Sir James and Lady Alberry declared that they would not leave the inn. It was there-

fore agreed that the nephew should go to Burford's house in the barouche, and escort his wife back. He did so ; and while Annabel, lost in painful thought, was walking on the road, she saw the barouche driving up, with her young fellow-traveller in it. As it requires great suffering to subdue such overweening vanity as Annabel's, her first thought, on seeing him, was, that her youthful beau was a young heir, who had travelled in disguise, and was now come in state to make her an offer ! She, therefore, blushed with pleasure as he approached, and received his bow with a countenance of joy. But his face expressed no answering pleasure ; and, coldly passing her, he said his business was with her mother, who, alarmed, she scarcely knew why, stood trembling at the door ; nor was she less alarmed when

the feeling youth told his errand, in broken and faltering accents, and delivered Lady Alberry's letter. "An-nabel, then, must go with me!" said her mother, in a deep and solemn tone. Then, lowering her voice, because unwilling to reprove her before a stranger, she added, "Yes, my child! thou must go, to see the effects of thy errors, and take sad, but salutary, warning for the rest of thy life. We shall not detain you long, Sir," she continued, turning to Charles Danvers; "our *slender wardrobe* can be soon prepared."

In a short time, the calm, but deeply suffering, wife, and the weeping, humbled daughter, were on their road to the inn. The mother scarcely spoke during the whole of the journey; but she seemed to pray a great deal; and the young man was so affected, with the subdued anguish of the one, and

the passionate grief of the other, that, he declared to Lady Alberry, he had never been awakened to such serious thought before, and hoped to be the better for the journey through the whole of his existence; while, in her penitent sorrow, he felt inclined to forget Annabel's fault, coquetry, and affectation.

When they reached the inn, the calmness of the wife was entirely overcome at the sight of Lady Alberry, who opened her arms to receive her with the kindness of an attached friend; whispering, as she did so, "He has been sensible; and he knew Sir James; knew him as an affectionate friend and nurse!"—"Gracious heaven, I thank thee!" she replied, hastening to his apartment, leading the reluctant Annabel along. But he did not know them; and his wife was at first speech-

less with sorrow: at length, recovering her calmness, she said, "See! dear, unhappy girl! to what thy sinfulness has reduced thy fond father! Humble thyself, my child, before the Great Being whom thou hast offended; and own his mercy in the awful warning!" "I am humbled, I am warned, I trust," cried Annabel, falling on her knees; "but, if he die, what will become of me?"—"What will become of us *all*?" replied the mother, shuddering at the bare idea of losing him, but preparing, with forced composure, for her important duties. Trying ones indeed they were, through many days and nights, that the wife and daughter had to watch beside the bed of the unconscious Burford. The one heard herself kindly invoked, tenderly desired, and her *absence wondered at*; while the other never heard her name

mentioned, during the ravings of fever, without heart-rending upbraidings, and just reproofs. But Burford's life was granted to the prayers of agonizing affection; and, when recollection returned, he had the joy of knowing that his reputation was cleared, that his angry creditors were become his kind friends, and that Sir James Alberry lamented, with bitter regret, that he could no longer prove his confidence in him by making him his partner. But, notwithstanding this blight to his prospects, Burford piously blessed the event which had had so salutary an influence on his offending child; and had taught her a lesson which she was not likely to forget. Lady Alberry, however, thought that the lesson was not yet sufficiently complete; for, though Annabel might be cured of lying by the con-

sequences of her falsehoods, the vanity which prompted them might still remain uncorrected. Therefore, as Annabel had owned that it was the wish not to lose consequence in the eyes of her supposed admirer, which had led her to her last fatal falsehood, Lady Alberry, with the mother's approbation, contrived a plan for laying the axe, if possible, to the root of her vanity; and she took the earliest opportunity of asking Charles Danvers, in her presence, and that of her mother, some particulars concerning what passed in the coach, and his opinion on the subject. As she expected, he gave a softened and favourable representation; and would not allow that he did not form a favorable opinion of his fair companion. "What! Charles," said she, "do you pretend to deny that you mimicked her voice

and manner?" She then repeated all that he had said, and his declaration that her evident vanity and coquetry steeled his heart against her, copying, at the same time, his accurate mimicry of Annabel's manner; nor did she rest till she had drawn from him a full avowal that what he had asserted was true; for Lady Alberry was not a woman to be resisted; while the mortified, humbled, but corrected Annabel, could only hide her face in her mother's bosom; who, while she felt for the salutary pangs inflicted on her, mingled caresses with her tears, and whispered in her ear, that the mortification which she endured was but for a moment; and the benefit would be, she trusted, of eternal duration. The lesson was now complete indeed. Annabel found that she had not only, by her lies of vanity, depriv-

ed her father of a lucrative business, but that she had exposed herself to the ridicule and contempt of that very being whom the wish to please had led her to err so fatally and contemptibly; and, in the depth of her humbled and contrite heart, she resolved from that moment to struggle with her besetting sins, and subdue them. Nor was the resolve of that trying moment ever broken. But when her father, whose original destination had been the church, was led, by his own wishes, to take orders, and was, in process of time, inducted into a considerable living, in the gift of Sir James Alberry, Annabel rivalled her mother in performing the duties of her new station: and, when she became a wife and mother herself, she had a mournful satisfaction in relating the above story to her children; bidding them

beware of all lying; but more especially of that common lie, the lie of vanity, whether it be active or passive. "Not" said she, "that retributive justice in this world, like that which attended mine, may always follow your falsehoods, or those of others; but because all lying is contrary to the moral law of God; and that the liar, as scripture tells us, is not only liable to punishment and disgrace here, but will be the object of certain and more awful punishment in the world to come."

The following tale illustrates the
PASSIVE LIE OF VANITY.

UNEXPECTED DISCOVERIES.

THERE are two sayings—the one derived from divine, the other from

human, authority—the truth of which is continually forced upon us by experience. They are these:—“A prophet is not without honour, except in his own country;” and “No man is a hero to his valet-de-chambre.”—“Familiarity breeds contempt,” is also a proverb to the same effect; and they all three bear upon the tendency in our natures to undervalue the talents, and the claims to distinction, of those with whom we are closely connected and associated; an incapability of believing that they, whom we have always considered as our equals only, or perhaps as our inferiors, can be to the rest of the world objects of admiration and respect.

No one was more convinced of the truth of these sayings than Darcy Pennington, the only child of a pious and virtuous couple, who thought him

the best of sons, and one of the first of geniuses ; but, as they were not able to persuade the rest of the family of this latter truth, when they died, Darcy's uncle and guardian insisted on his going into a merchant's counting-house in London, instead of being educated for one of the learned professions. Darcy had a mind too well disciplined to rebel against his guardian's authority. He therefore submitted to his allotment in silence ; resolving that his love of letters and the muses should not interfere with his duties to his employer, but devoted all his leisure hours to literary pursuits ; and, as he had real talents, he was at length raised, from the unpaid contributor to the poetical columns in a newspaper, to the *paid* writer in a popular magazine ; while his poems, signed *Alfred*, became objects of eager expectation. But

Darcy's own family and friends could not have been more surprised at his growing celebrity than he himself was: for he was a sincere, humble christian; and, having been accustomed to bow to the opinion of those whom he considered as his superiors in intellect and knowledge, he could scarcely believe in his own eminence. But it was precious to his heart, rather than to his vanity; as it enabled him to indulge those benevolent feelings, which his small income had hitherto restrained. At length he published a duodecimo volume of poems and hymns, still under the name of Alfred, which was highly praised in reviews and journals, and a strong desire was expressed to know who the modest, promising, and pious writer was.

Notwithstanding, Darcy could not

prevail upon himself to disclose his name. He visited his native town every year, and in the circle of his family and friends, was still considered only as a good sort of lad, who had been greatly overrated by his parents—was just suited for the situation in which he had been placed—and was very fortunate to have been received into partnership with the merchant to whom he had been clerk. In vain did Darcy sometimes endeavour to hint that he was an author; he remembered the contempt with which his uncle, and relations, had read one of the earliest fruits of his muse, when exhibited by his fond father, and the advice given to burn such stuff, and not turn the head of a dull boy, by making him fancy himself a genius. Therefore, recollecting the wise sayings quoted above, he

feared that the news of his literary celebrity would not be received with pleasure, and that the affection with which he was now welcomed might suffer diminution. Besides, thought he, —and then his heart rose in his throat, with a choking painful feeling,—those tender parents, who would have enjoyed my little fame, are cold, and unconscious now; and the ears, to which my praises would have been sweet musick, cannot hear; therefore, methinks, I have a mournful pleasure in keeping on that veil, the removal of which cannot confer pleasure on them.”—He therefore remained contented to be warmly welcomed at D—for talents of an humble sort, such as his power of mending toys, making kites, and rabbits on the wall; which talents endeared him to all the children of his family and friends; and,

through them, to their parents. Yet, it may be asked, was it possible that a young man, so gifted, could conceal his abilities from observation?

Oh, yes. Darcy, to borrow Addison's metaphor concerning himself, though he could draw a bill for £1000, had never any small change in his pocket. Like him, he could write, but he could not talk; he was discouraged in a moment; and the slightest rebuff made him hesitate to a painful degree. He had, however, some flattering moments, even amidst his relations and friends; for he heard them repeating his verses, and singing his songs. He had also far greater joy in hearing his hymns in places of public worship; and then, too much choked with grateful emotion to join in the devotional chorus himself, he used to feel his own soul raised to heaven upon those

wings which he had furnished for the souls of others. At such moments he longed to discover himself as the author; but was withheld by the fear that his songs would cease to be admired, and his hymns would lose their usefulness, if it were known that he had written them. However, he resolved to *feel his way*; and once, on hearing a song of his commended, he ventured to observe, "I think I can write as good a one."—"You!" cried his uncle; "what a conceited boy! I remember that you used to scribble verses when a child; but I thought you had been laughed out of that nonsense."—"My dear fellow, nature never meant thee for a poet, believe me," said one of his cousins conceitedly,—a young collegian. "No, no; like the girl in the drama, thou wouldst make 'love' and 'joy' rhyme, and know no better."

—“But I have written, and I can rhyme,” replied Darcy, colouring a little.—“Indeed!” replied his formal aunt; “Well, Mr. Darcy Pennington, it really would be very amusing to see your erudite productions; perhaps you will indulge us some day.”—“I will; and then you may probably alter your opinion.” Soon after Darcy wrote an anonymous prose tale in one volume, interspersed with poetry, which had even a greater run than his other writings; and it was attributed first to one person, and then to another; while his publisher was excessively pressed to declare the name of the author; but he did not himself know it, as he only knew Darcy, *avowedly*, under a feigned name. But, at length, Darcy resolved to disclose his secret, at least, to his relatives and friends at D—; and just as the second edition

of his tale was nearly completed, he set off for his native place, taking with him the manuscript, full of the printer's marks, to prove that he was the author of it.

He had one *irresistible* motive for thus walking out from his *incognito*, like Homer's deities from their cloud. He had fallen in love with his second cousin, Julia Vane, an heiress, and his uncle's ward; and had become jealous of himself, as he had, for some months, wooed her in anonymous poetry, which she, he found, attributed to a gentleman in the neighbourhood, whose name he knew not; and she had often declared that, such was her passion for poetry, he who could woo her in beautiful verse was alone likely to win her heart.

On the very day of his arrival, he said in the family circle that he had

brought down a little manuscript of his own, which he wished to read to them. Oh! the comical grimaces! the suppressed laughter, growing and swelling, however, till it could be restrained no longer, which was the result of this request! And oh! the looks of consternation when Darcy produced the manuscript from his pocket! “Why, Darcy,” said his uncle, “this is really a word and a blow; but you cannot read it to-night; we are engaged.”—“Certainly, Mr. Darcy Pennington,” said his aunt, “if you wish to read your astonishing productions, we are bound in civility to hear them; but we are all going to Sir Hugh Belson’s, and shall venture to take you with us, though it is a great favour and privilege to be permitted to go on such an occasion; for a gentleman is staying there who has

written such a sweet book ! It is only just out, yet it cannot be had ; because the first edition is sold, and the second not finished. So Sir Hugh, for whom your uncle is exerting himself against the next election, has been so kind as to invite us to hear the author read his own work. This gentleman does not, indeed, *own* that he wrote it ; still he does not *deny* it ; and it is clear, by his *manner*, that he did write it, and that he would be very sorry not to be considered as the writer.” — “ Very well, then ; the pleasure of hearing another author read his own work shall be delayed,” replied Darcy, smiling. “ Perhaps, when you have heard this gentleman’s, you will not be so eager to read yours, Darcy,” said Julia Vane ; “ for you *used* to be a modest man.” Darcy sighed, looked significantly, but remained silent.

In the evening they went to Sir Hugh Belson's, where, in the Captain Eustace, who was to delight the company, Darcy recognised the gentleman who had been pointed out to him as the author of several meagre performances handed about in manuscript in certain circles ; which owed their celebrity to the birth and fashion of the writer, and to the bribery which is always administered to the self-love of those who are the *select few* chosen to see and judge on such occasions.

Captain Eustace now prepared to read ; but when he named the title of the book which he held in his hand, Darcy started from his seat in surprise ; for it was the title of his own work ! But there might be two works with the same title ; and he sat down again ; but when the reader continued, and he could doubt no longer, he again

started up, and, with stuttering eagerness, said, "Wh-wh—who, Sir, did you say, wrote this book?"—"I have named no names, Sir," replied Eustace conceitedly; "the author is unknown, and wishes to remain so."—"Mr. Darcy Pennington," cried his aunt, sit down and be quiet;" and he obeyed.—"Mr. Pennington," said Sir Hugh, affectedly, "the violet must be sought, and is *discovered* with difficulty, you know; for it shrinks from observation, and loves the shade." Darcy bowed assent; but fixed his eyes on the discovered violet before him with such an equivocal expression, that Eustace was disconcerted; and the more so, when Darcy, who could not but feel the ludicrous situation in which he was placed, hid his face in his handkerchief, and was evidently shaking with laughter. "Mr. Darcy Penning-

ton, I am really ashamed of you," whispered his aunt; and Darcy recovered his composure. He had now two hours of great enjoyment. He heard that book admirably read which he had intended to read the next day, and knew that he should read ill. He heard that work applauded to the skies as the work of another, which would, he feared, have been faintly commended, if known to be his; and he saw the fine eyes of the woman he loved drowned in tears, by the power of his own simple pathos. The poetry in the book was highly admired also; and, when Eustace paused to take breath, Julia whispered in his ear, "Captain Eustace is the gentleman who, I have every reason to believe, wrote some anonymous poetry sent me by the post; for Captain Eustace pays me, as you see, marked attention; and

as he denies that he wrote the verses, exactly as he denies that he wrote the book which he is now reading, it is very evident that he wrote both.”—“I dare say,” replied Darcy, colouring with resentment, “that he as much wrote the *one* as he wrote the *other*.”—“What do you mean, Darcy? There can be no doubt of the fact; and I own that I cannot be insensible to such talent; for poetry and poets are my passion, you know; and in his authorship I forget his plainness. Do you not think that a woman would be justified in loving a man who writes so morally, so piously, and so delightfully?”—“Certainly,” replied Darcy, eagerly grasping her hand, “provided his conduct be in unison with his writings; and I advise you to give the writer in question *your whole heart*.”

After the reading was over, every

one crowded round the reader, whose manner of receiving their thanks was such, as to make every one but Darcy believe the work was his own; and never was the PASSIVE LIE OF VANITY more completely exhibited; while Darcy, intoxicated, as it were, by the feelings of gratified authorship, and the hopes excited by Julia's words, thanked him again and again for the admirable manner in which he had read the book; declaring, with great earnestness, that he could never have done it such justice himself; adding, that this evening was the happiest of his life.

“Mr. Darcy Pennington, what ails you?” cried his aunt; “you really are not like yourself!”—“Hold your tongue, Darcy,” said his uncle, drawing him on one side; “do not be such a forward puppy;—who ever ques-

tioned, or cared, whether you could have done it justice or not? But here is the carriage; and I am glad you have no longer an opportunity of thus exposing yourself by your literary and critical raptures, which sit as ill upon you as the caressings of the ass in the fable did on him, when he pretended to compete with the lapdog in fondling his master."

During the drive home, Darcy did not speak a word; not only because he was afraid of his severe uncle and aunt, but, because he was meditating how he should make that discovery, on the success of which hung his dearest hopes. He was also communing with his own heart, in order to bring it back to that safe humility out of which it had been led by the flattering, and unexpected, events of the evening. "Well," said he, while

they drew round the fire, “as it is not late, suppose I read *my* work to you *now*. I assure you that it is quite as good as that which you have heard.”—“Mr. Darcy Pennington, you really quite alarm me,” cried his aunt. “Why so?”—“Because I fear that you are a little *delirious!*”—On which Darcy nearly laughed himself into convulsions. “Let me feel your pulse, Darcy,” said his uncle very gravely,—“too quick, too quick.—I shall send for advice, if you are not better to-morrow; you look so flushed, and your eyes are so bright!”—“My dear uncle,” replied Darcy, “I shall be quite well, if you will but hear my manuscript before we go to bed.” They now all looked at each other with increased alarm; and Julia, in order to please him, (for she really loved him) said, “Well, Darcy, if you

insist upon it ;”— but interrupting her, he suddenly started up, and exclaimed, “ No ; on second thoughts, I will not read it till Captain Eustace and Sir Hugh and his family can be present ; and they will be here the day after to-morrow.” — “ What ! read your nonsense to them !” cried his uncle, “ Poor fellow ! poor fellow !” But Darcy was gone ; he had caught Julia’s hand to his lips, and quitted the room, leaving his relations to wonder, to fear, and to pity. But as Darcy was quite composed the next day, they all agreed that he must have drunk more wine than he or they had been aware of the preceding evening. But though Darcy was willing to wait till the ensuing evening, before he discovered his secret to the rest of the family, he could not be easy till he had disclosed it to Julia ; for he was mortified to find that the

pious, judicious Julia Vane had, for one moment, believed that a mere man of the world, like Captain Eustace, could have written such verses as he had anonymously addressed to her; verses breathing the very quintessence of pure love; and full of anxious interest not only for her temporal, but her eternal welfare. “No, no,” said he; “she shall not remain in such a degrading error one moment longer:” and having requested a private interview with her, he disclosed the truth. —“What! are *you*—can *you* be—did you write all!” she exclaimed in broken accents; while Darcy gently reproached her for having believed that a mere worldly admirer could so have written; however, she justified herself by declaring how impossible it was to suspect that a man of honour, as Eustace seemed, could be so base as to assume

a merit which was not his own. Here she paused, turning away from Darcy's penetrating look, covered with conscious blushes, ashamed that he should see how pleased she was. But she readily acknowledged her sorrow at having been betrayed, by the unworthy artifice of Eustace, into encouraging his attentions, and was eager to concert with Darcy the best plan for revealing the surprising secret.

The evening, so eagerly anticipated by Darcy and Julia, now arrived; and great was the consternation of all the rest of the family, when Darcy took a manuscript out of his pocket, and began to open it. "The fellow is certainly possessed," thought his uncle. "Mr. Darcy Pennington," whispered his aunt, "I shall faint if you persist in exposing yourself!"—"Darcy, I will shut you up if you

proceed," whispered his uncle; "for you must positively be mad."—"Let him go on, dear uncle," said Julia; "I am *sure* you will be delighted, or *ought* to be so:" and, spite of his uncle's threats and whispers, he addressed Captain Eustace thus:—

"Allow me, Sir, to thank you again for the more than justice which you did my humble performance the other evening. Till I heard you read it, I was unconscious that it had so much merit; and I again thank you for the highest gratification which, as an author, I ever received." New terror seized every one of his family who heard him, except Julia; while wonder filled Sir Hugh and the rest of his party—Eustace excepted: he knew that he was not the author of the work; therefore he could not dispute the fact that the real author now

stood before him; and blushes of detected falsehood covered his cheek; but, ere he could falter out a reply, Darcy's uncle and sons seized him by the arm, and insisted on speaking with him in another room. Darcy, laughing violently, endeavoured to shake them off, but in vain. "Let him alone," said Julia, smiling, and coming forward. "Darcy's 'eye may be in a fine frenzy rolling', as you have all of you owned him to be a poet; but other frenzy than that of a poet he has *not*, I assure you—so pray set him at liberty; *I* will be answerable for his sanity."—"What does all this mean?" said his uncle, as he and his sons unwillingly obeyed. "It means" said Darcy, "that I hope not to quit this room till I have had the delight of hearing these yet unpublished poems of mine read by Captain Eustace. Look, Sir," con-

tinued he, "here is a signature well known, no doubt, to you; that of *Alfred*." — "Are you indeed Alfred, the celebrated Alfred?" faltered out Eustace. "I believe so," he replied with a smile; "though on some occasions, you know, it is difficult to prove one's *personal identity*." — "True," answered Eustace, turning over the manuscript, to hide his confusion. "And I, Captain Eustace," said Julia, "have had the great satisfaction of discovering that my unknown poetical correspondent is my long-cherished friend and cousin, Darcy Pennington. Think how satisfactory this discovery has been to *me*!" — "Certainly, Madam," he replied, turning pale with emotion; for he not only saw his *Passive Lies of Vanity* detected, though Darcy had too much Christian forbearance even to insinuate that he intended to ap-

propriate to himself the fame of another, but he also saw, in spite of the kindness with which she addressed him, that he had lost Julia, and that Darcy had probably gained her. "What is all this?" cried Sir Hugh at last, who with the uncle and aunt had listened in silent wonder. "Why, Eustace, I thought you owned that."—"That I deny; I *owned nothing*;" he eagerly replied.—"You *insisted* on it, nay, every body insisted, that I was the *author* of the beautiful work which I read, and of other things; and if Mr. Pennington asserts that he is the author, I give him joy of his genius and his fame."—"What do I hear!" cried the aunt; "Mr. Darcy Pennington a genius, and famous, and I not suspect it!"—"Impossible!" cried his uncle, pettishly; "that dull fellow turn out a wit! It cannot be:

What ! are you Alfred, boy ? I cannot credit it ; for if so, I have been dull indeed ;” while his sons seemed to feel as much mortification as surprise. “ My dear uncle,” said Darcy, “ I am now a professed author. I wrote the work which you heard last night. Here it is in the manuscript, as returned by the printer ; and here is the last proof of the second edition, which I received at the postoffice just now, directed to A. B. ; which is, I think, *proof positive* that I may be Alfred also, who, by your certainly *impartial* praises, is for *this* evening, at least, in his own eyes elevated into ALFRED THE GREAT.”

CHAP. IV.

ON THE LIES OF FLATTERY.

THE Lies of Flattery are next on my list.

These lies are, generally speaking, not only unprincipled, but offensive: and though they are usually told to conciliate good will, the flatterer often fails in his attempt: for his intended dupe frequently sees through his art, and he excites indignation where he meant to obtain regard. Those who know aught of human nature as it really is, and do not throw the radiance of their own christian benevo-

lence over it, must be well aware that *few* persons hear with complacency the praises of others, even where there is no competition between the parties praised and themselves. Therefore, the objects of excessive flattery are painfully conscious that the praises bestowed on them, in the hearing of their acquaintances, will not only provoke those auditors to undervalue their pretensions, but to accuse them of believing in and enjoying the gross flattery offered to them. There are no persons, in my opinion, with whom it is so difficult to keep up “the relations of peace and amity,” as flatterers by system and habit. Those persons, I mean, who deal out their flatteries on the same principle as boys throw a handful of burs. However unskilfully the burs are thrown, the chances are that some will stick;

and flatterers expect that some of their compliments will dwell with, and impose on, their intended dupe. Perhaps their calculation is not, generally considered, an erroneous one; but if there be any of their fellow-creatures with whom the sensitive and the discerning may be permitted to loathe association, it is with those who presume to address them in the language of compliment, too violent and inappropriate to deceive even for a moment; while they discover on their lips the flickering sneer of contempt contending with its treacherous smile, and mark their wily eye looking round in search of some responsive one, to which it can communicate their sense of the uttered falsehood, and their mean exultation over their imagined dupe. The lies of benevolence, even when they can be resolved into lies of

flattery, may be denominated amiable lies ; but the lie of flattery is usually uttered by the bad-hearted and censorious ; therefore to the term LIE OF FLATTERY might be added an alias ;—*alias*, the LIE OF MALEVOLENCE.

Coarse and indiscriminating flatterers lay it down as a rule, that they are to flatter all persons on the qualities which they have not. Hence, they flatter the plain, on their beauty ; the weak, on their intellect ; the dull, on their wit ; believing, in the sarcastic narrowness of their conceptions, that no one possesses any self-knowledge ; but that every one implicitly believes the truth of the eulogy bestowed.—This erroneous view, taken by the *flatterer* of the penetration of the *flattered*, is common only in those who have more cunning than intellect ; more shrewdness than penetration ;

and whose knowledge of the weakness of our nature has been gathered, not from deep study of the human heart, but from the depravity of their own, or from the pages of ancient and modern satirists;—those who have a mean, malignant pleasure, in believing in the absence of all moral truth amongst their usual associates; and are glad to be able to comfort themselves for their own conscious dereliction from a high moral standard, by the conviction that they are, at least, as *good as their neighbours*. Yes; my experience tells me that the above-mentioned rule for flattery is acted upon only by the half-enlightened, who take for superiority of intellect that *base, low cunning,*

..... which, in fools, supplies,
And amply too, the place of being wise.

But the deep observer of human na-

ture knows that where there is real intellect, there are discernment and self-knowledge also; and that the really intelligent are aware to how much praise and admiration they are entitled, be it encomium on their personal, or mental, qualifications.

I beg to give one illustration of the Lie of Flattery, in the following tale, of which the offending heroine is a *female*; though, as men are the *licensed* flatterers of women, I needed not to have feared the imputation of want of candour, had I taken my example from one of the wiser sex.

THE TURBAN; OR THE LIE OF FLATTERY.

SOME persons are such determined flatterers both by nature and habit, that they flatter unconsciously, and almost

involuntarily.—Such a flatterer was Jemina Aldred; but, as the narrowness of her fortune made her unable to purchase the luxuries of life in which she most delighted, she was also a *conscious* and *voluntary* flatterer whenever she was with those who had it in their power to indulge her favourite inclinations.

There was one distinguished woman in the circle of her acquaintance, whose favour she was particularly desirous of gaining, and who was therefore the constant object of her flatteries. This lady, who was rendered, by her situation, her talents, and her virtues, an object of earthly worship to many of her associates, had a good-natured indolence about her, which made her receive the incense offered, as if she believed in its sincerity. But the flattery of the young Jemima was so gross, and

so indiscriminate, that it sometimes converted the usual gentleness of Lady Delaval's nature into gall; and she felt indignant at being supposed capable of relishing adulation so excessive, and devotion so servile. But, as she was full of christian benevolence, and, consequently, her first desire was to do good, she allowed pity for the poor girl's ignorance to conquer resentment, and laid a plan, in order to correct and amend her, if *possible*, by salutary mortification.

Accordingly, she invited Jemima, and some other young ladies, to spend a whole day with her at her house in the country. But, as the truly benevolent are always reluctant to afflict any one, even though it be to *improve*, Lady Delaval would have shrunk from the task which she had imposed on herself, had not Jemima excited her

into perseverance, by falling repeatedly and grossly into her besetting sin during the course of the day. For instance: Lady Delaval, who usually left the choice of her ribands to her milliner, as she was not studious of her personal appearance, wore colours at breakfast that morning which she thought ill-suited both to her years and complexion; and having asked her guests how they liked her scarf and ribands, they pronounced them to be beautiful. “But, surely, they do not become my olive, ill-looking skin!”—“They are certainly not becoming,” was the ingenuous reply of all but Jemima Aldred, who persisted in asserting that the colour was as becoming as it was brilliant; adding, “I do not know what dear Lady Delaval means by undervaluing her own clear complexion.”—“The less

that is said about that the better, I believe," she dryly replied, scarcely trying to conceal the sarcastic smile which played upon her lip, and feeling strengthened, by this new instance of Jemima's duplicity, to go on with her design ; but Jemima thought she had endeared herself to her by flattering her personal vanity ; and, while her companions frowned reproach for *her insincerity*, she wished for an opportunity of reproofing *their rudeness*. After tea, Lady Delaval desired her maid to bring her down the foundation for a turban, which she was going to pin up, and some other finery prepared for the same purpose ; and in a short time the most splendid materials for millinery shone upon the table. When she began her task, her other guests, Jemima excepted, worked also, but she was sufficiently

employed, she said, in watching the creative and tasteful fingers of her friend. At first, Lady Delaval made the turban of silver tissue; and Jemima was in ecstasies; but the next moment she declared that covering to be too simple; and Jemima thought so too;—while she was in equal ecstasies at the effect of a gaudy manycoloured gauze which replaced its modest costliness. But still her young companions openly preferred the silver covering, declaring that the gay one could only be tolerated, if nothing else of showy ornament were superadded. They gave, however, their opinion in vain. Coloured stones, a gold band, and a green spun-glass feather, were all in their turn heaped upon this showy headdress, while Jemima exulted over every fresh addition, and admired it as a new proof of Lady Delaval's taste. “Now, then,

it is completed," cried Lady Delaval ; "but no ; suppose I add a scarlet feather to the green one ;" " Oh ! that would be superb ;" and having given this desirable finish to her performance, Lady Delaval and Jemima declared it to be perfect ; but the rest of the company were too honest to commend it. Lady Delaval then put it on her head ; and it was as unbecoming as it was ugly : but Jemima exclaimed that her dear friend had never worn any thing before in which she looked so well, adding, " But then *she* looks well in *every thing*. However, that lovely turban would become any one."—"Try how it would fit you !" said Lady Delaval, putting it on her head. Jemima looked in the glass, and saw that to her short, small person, little face, and little turned-up nose, such an enormous mass of finery was the destruction of

all comeliness; but, while the by-standers laughed immoderately at her appearance, Jemima entirely acquiesced in Lady Delaval's loud admiration, and volunteered a wish to wear it at some public place. "I do not wonder at it:" replied Lady Delaval, "your quick eye discovers that the turban suits that *petit nez retroussé*; and had Solyman the Great seen you, he might have made you his Empress, instead of his slave Roxalana."—"I think, I *do* look well in it," cried Jemima.—"Oh! yes;" said her hostess, certainly; and *you*, young ladies, on this occasion, have neither taste, nor eyes." They looked at each other, in wondering silence, when so addressed, and found it difficult to believe that Lady Delaval was in earnest; while Jemima danced about the room, exulting in her heavy head-

dress, in the triumph of her falsehood, and in the supposed superior ascendancy it had gained her over her hostess above that of her more sincere companions. Nor, when Lady Delaval expressed her fear that the weight might be painful, would she allow it to be removed ; but she declared that *Roxalana* liked her burden. At parting, Lady Delaval, in a tone of great significance, told her that she should *hear from her the next day*. The next morning Jemima often dwelt on these marked words, impatient for an explanation of them ; and between twelve and one o'clock a servant of Lady Delaval's brought a letter and a band-box.

The letter was first opened ; and was as follows :

“ DEAR JEMIMA,

“ As I know that you have long

wished to visit my niece Lady Ormsby, and also to attend the astronomical lecture on the grand transparent orrery, which is to be given at the public rooms this evening, for the benefit of the Infirmary; though your praiseworthy prudence prevented you from subscribing to it, I have great pleasure in enclosing you a ticket for the lecture, and in informing you that I will call and take you to dinner at Lady Ormsby's at four o'clock, whence you and I, and the rest of the party, (which will be a splendid one) shall adjourn to the lecture.” “How kind! how very kind!” exclaimed Jemima; but, in her heart, imputing these favours to her recent flatteries; and reading no farther, she ran to her mother's apartment to declare the joyful news. “Oh, mamma!” exclaimed she, “how fortunate it was that I

made up my dyed gauze when I did ! and I can wear natural flowers in my hair ; and they are so becoming, as well as cheap.” She then returned to her own room, to finish the letter and explore the contents of the box. But what was her consternation on reading the following words : “ But I shall take you to the dinner, and I give you the ticket for the lecture, only on this express condition,—that you wear the accompanying turban, which was decorated according to your taste and judgment, and in which you looked like the far-famed Roxalana !—Every additional ornament was bestowed to please you, for whose decoration it was alone intended ; and as I know that your wish will be not to deprive me of a headdress in which your *partial* eyes thought that I looked so *charmingly*, I positively assure you

that no consideration shall ever induce me to wear it ; and that I expect you to meet my summons, arrayed in your youthful loveliness and my turban. To *refuse* will be to *affront* me !” Jemima sat in a sort of stupor after perusing this epistle ; and when she started from it, it was to carry the letter and the turban to her mother. “ Read that ! and look at that !” she exclaimed, pointing to the turban.— “ Why, to be sure, Jemima, Lady Delaval must be making game of you,” she replied. “ What could produce such an absurd requisition ? When called upon to answer this question, Jemima blushed ; and, for the first time, feeling some compunctious visitings of conscience, she almost hesitated to own that the annoying conditions were the consequence of her flatteries. Still, to comply with them

was impossible ; and to go to the dinner and lecture without them, and thereby affront Lady Delaval, was impossible also.—“What! expect me to hide my pretty hair under that preposterous mountain! Never, never!” But then recollecting that Lady Delaval had likened her to Roxalana, she eagerly put on her Turkish headdress. Vainly, however, did she try to admire it ; and now, that she had no motive for enduring its weight, she felt it to be insupportable. “But then, to be sure,” said she to herself, “Captain Leslie and George Vaux will dine at Lady Ormsby’s, and go to the lecture ; but then they will not bear to look at me in this frightful headdress, and will so quiz me ; and I am sure they will think me too great a *quiz* to sit by! No, no ; much as I wish to go, and I do so very, very much wish it, I can-

not go on these cruel conditions.”—
“But what excuse can you make to Lady Delaval?”—“I must tell her that I have a bad toothach, and cannot go; and I will write her a note to say so; and at the same time return the ugly turban.” She did so;—but when she saw Lady Delaval pass to the fine dinner, and heard the carriages at night going to the crowded lecture, she shed tears of bitterness and regret, and lamented that she had not dared to go without the conditional and detestable turban. The next day she saw Lady Delaval’s carriage drive up to the door, and also saw the servant take a bandbox out. “Oh dear, mamma,” cried Jemima, “I protest that ridiculous old woman has brought her ugly turban back again!” and it was with a forced smile of welcome that she greeted Lady Delaval.

—That lady entered the room with a graver and more dignified mien than usual ; for she came to reprove, and, she hoped, amend an offender against those principles of truth which she honoured, and to which she uniformly acted up. Just before Lady Delaval appeared, Jemima recollected that she was to have the toothach ; therefore she tied up her face, adding a PRACTICAL LIE to the many already told ;—for one lie is sure to make many. “ I was sorry to find that you were not able to accompany me to the dinner and lecture,” said she ; “ and were kept at home by the toothach. Was that your only reason for staying at home ? ” “ Certainly, madam ; can you doubt it ? ”—“ Yes ; for I have a strong suspicion that the toothach is a pretence, not a reality.”—“ This from you, Lady Delaval ! my once kind friend.”

“Jemima, I am come to prove myself a far kinder friend than ever I did before. I am glad to find you alone; because I should not have liked to reprove a child before her mother.” Lady Delaval then reproached her astonished auditor with the mean habit of flattery, in which she was so apt to indulge; assuring her that she had never been for one moment her dupe, and had purposely made the turban a marvel of bad taste and ugliness, in order to punish her for her despicable duplicity. “Had you not acted thus,” continued Lady Delaval, “I meant to have taken you to the dinner and lecture, without conditions; but I wished to inflict on you a salutary punishment, in hopes of convincing you that there are no qualities so safe, or so pleasing as truth and ingenuousness.”—“I saw you cast an

alarmed look at the hat-box," she added, in a gayer tone ; but fear not ; the turban is no more ; and, in its stead, I have taken the liberty of bringing you a Leghorn bonnet ; and should you, while you wear it, feel any desire to flatter, in your usual degrading manner, may it remind you of this conversation, and its *cause*,—and make your present mortification the means of your future good." At this moment Jemima's mother entered the room, exclaiming : " Oh ! Lady Delaval ! I am glad you are come ! my poor child's toothach is so bad ! and how unfortunate that. . . ." Lady Delaval cast on the mistaken mother a look of severe reproof, and on the daughter one of pity and unavailing regret ; for she felt that, for the child who is hourly exposed to the contagion of an unprincipled parent's example, there can be

little chance of amendment ; and she hastened to her carriage, convinced that for the poor Jemima Aldred her labours of christian duty had been exerted in *vain*. She would have soon found how just her conviction was, had she heard the dialogue between the mother and daughter, as soon as she drove off. Jemima dried up her hypocritical tears, and exclaimed, “ A cross, methodistical creature ! I am glad she is gone ! ” — “ What do you mean, child ? and what is all this about ? ” Jemima having told her, she exclaimed, “ Why the woman is mad ! What ! object to a little harmless flattery ! and call that lying, indeed ! Nonsense ! it is all a pretence. She hate *flattery* ! no, indeed ; if you were to tell her the truth, she would hate you like poison. ” — “ Very likely ; but see, Mamma, what she has given me.

What a beautiful bonnet! But she owed it to me, for the trick she played me, and for her preaching.”—“ Well, child,” answered the mother, “ let her preach to you every day, and welcome, if she comes, as to-day, full-handed.”

Such was the effect of Lady Delaval’s kind efforts, on a mother so teaching, and a daughter so taught; for indelible indeed are those habits of falsehood and disingenuousness which children acquire, whose parents do not make a *strict adherence* to truth the *basis* of their children’s education; and punish all deviation from it with salutary rigour. But, whatever be the *excellences* or the *errors* of parents or preceptors, there is one necessary thing for them to remember, or their excellences will be useless, and their faults irremediable; namely, that they are not to form their children for the

present world alone ;—they are to educate them not merely as the *children of time*, but as the *heirs of eternity*.

CHAP. V.

LIES OF FEAR.

I ONCE believed that the lie of fear was confined to the low and uneducated of both sexes, and to children; but further reflection and observation have convinced me that this is by no means the case; but that, as this lie springs from the want of *moral courage*, and as this defect is by no means confined to any class or age, the result of it, that fear of man which prompts to the lie of fear, must be universal also; though the nature of the dread may be various, and of different de-

grees of strength. For instance ; a child or a servant (of course I speak of ill-educated children) breaks a toy or a glass, and denies having done so. Acquaintances forget to execute commissions intrusted to them ; and either say that they are executed, when they are not, or make some false excuses for an omission which was the result of forgetfulness only. No persons are guilty of so many of this sort of lies, in the year, as negligent correspondents ; since excuses for not writing sooner are usually *lies of fear*—fear of having forfeited favour by too long a silence.

As the lie of fear always proceeds, as I before observed, from a want of *moral courage*, it is often the result of want of resolution to say “ no”, when “ yes” is more agreeable to the feelings of the questioner. “ Is not my new gown pretty ?” “ Is not my new

hat becoming?" "Is not my coat of a good colour?" There are few persons who have courage to say "no", even to these trivial questions; though the negative would be *truth*, and the affirmative, *falsehood*. And still less are they able to be honest in their replies to questions of a more delicate nature. "Is not my last work the best?" "Is not my wife beautiful?" "Is not my daughter agreeable?" "Is not my son a fine youth?"—those insnaring questions, which contented and confiding egotism is only too apt to ask.

Fear of wounding the feelings of the interrogator prompts an affirmative answer. But, perhaps, a lie on these occasions is one of the least displeasing, because it may possibly proceed from a kind aversion to give pain, and occasion disappointment;

and has a *degree* of relationship, a distant family resemblance, to the LIE OF BENEVOLENCE; though, when accurately analysed, even this good-natured falsehood may be resolved into *selfish dread* of losing favour by speaking the truth. Of these *pseudo-lies* of benevolence I shall treat in their turn; but I shall now proceed to relate a story, to illustrate THE LIE OF FEAR, and its important results, under apparently unimportant circumstances.

THE BANK NOTE.

“ARE you returning immediately to Worcester?” said Lady Leslie, a widow residing near that city, to a young officer who was paying her a morning visit.—“I am; can I do any

thing for you there?"—"Yes; you can do me a great kindness. My confidential servant, Baynes, is gone out for the day and night; and I do not like to trust my new footman, of whom I know nothing, to put this letter in the postoffice, as it contains a fifty-pound note."—"Indeed! that is a large sum to trust to the post."—"Yes; but I am told it is the safest conveyance. It is, however, quite necessary that a person whom I can trust should put the letter in the box."—"Certainly," replied Captain Freeland. Then, with an air that showed he considered *himself* as a person to be trusted, he deposited the letter in safety in his pocketbook, and took leave; promising he would return to dinner the next day, which was *Saturday*.

On his road, Freeland met some of his brother-officers, who were going

to pass the day and night at Great Malvern ; and as they earnestly pressed him to accompany them, he wholly forgot the letter entrusted to his care ; and, having despatched his servant to Worcester, for his *sac-de-nuit** and other things, he turned back with his companions, and passed the rest of the day in that sauntering but amusing idleness, that *dolce far niente*†, which may be reckoned *comparatively* virtuous, if it leads to the forgetfulness of little duties only, and is not attended by the positive infringement of greater ones. But, in not putting this important letter into the post, as he had engaged to do, Freeland violated a real duty ; and he might have put it in at Malvern, had not the rencounter with his brother-officers banished the commission given him

* Night bag.

† Sweet doing nothing.

entirely from his thoughts. Nor did he remember it till, as they rode through the village the next morning, on their way to Worcester, they met Lady Leslie walking in the road.

At sight of her, Freeland recollected with shame and confusion that he had not fulfilled the charge committed to him; and fain would he have passed her unobserved; for, as she was a woman of high fashion, great talents, and some severity, he was afraid that his negligence, if avowed, would not only cause him to forfeit her favour, but expose him to her powerful sarcasm.

To avoid being recognized was, however, impossible; and as soon as Lady Leslie saw him, she exclaimed, "Oh! Captain Freeland, I am so glad to see you! I have been quite uneasy concerning my letter since I gave it to your care; for it was of

such consequence! Did you put it into the post yesterday?" "Certainly," replied Freeland, hastily, and in the hurry of the moment, "Certainly. How could you, dear Madam, doubt my obedience to your commands?"—"Thank you! thank you!" cried she, "How you have relieved my mind!" He had so; but he had painfully burdened his own. To be sure, it was only a white lie,—the LIE OF FEAR. Still he was not used to utter falsehood; and he felt the *meanness* and degradation of *this*. He had yet to learn that it was mischievous also; and that none can presume to say where the consequences of the most apparently trivial lie will end. As soon as Freeland parted with Lady Leslie, he bade his friends farewell, and, putting spur to his horse, scarcely slackened his pace till he had reach-

ed a general postoffice, and deposited the letter in safety. "Now, then," thought he, "I hope I shall be able to return and dine with Lady Leslie, without shrinking from her penetrating eye."

He found her, when he arrived, very pensive and absent; so much so, that she felt it necessary to apologize to her guests, informing them that Mary Benson, an old servant of hers, who was very dear to her, was seriously ill, and painfully circumstanced; and that she feared she had not done her duty by her. "To tell you the truth, Captain Freeland," said she, speaking to him in a low voice, "I blame myself for not having sent for my confidential servant, who was not very far off, and despatched him with the money, instead of trusting it to the post."—"It would have been better

to have done so, *certainly!*” replied Freeland, deeply blushing. “Yes; for the poor woman, to whom I sent it, is not only herself on the point of being confined, but she has a sick husband, unable to be moved; and as (but owing to no fault of his) he is on the point of bankruptcy, his cruel landlord has declared that, if they do not pay their rent by to-morrow, he will turn them out into the street, and seize the very bed they lie on! However, as you put the letter into the post *yesterday*, they must get the fifty-pound note to day, else they could not; for there is no delivery of letters in London on a *Sunday*, you know. “True, very true,” replied Freeland, in a tone which he vainly tried to render steady. “Therefore,” continued Lady Leslie, “if you had told me, when we met, that the letter was not gone, I

should have recalled Baynes, and sent him off by the mail to London; and then he would have reached Somerstown, where the Bensons live, in good time;—but now, though I own it would be a comfort to me to send him, for fear of accident, I could not get him back again soon enough;—therefore, I must let things take their chance; and, as letters seldom miscarry, the only danger is, that the note may be taken out.” She might have talked an hour without answer or interruption;—for Freeland was too much shocked, too much conscience-stricken, to reply; as he found that he had not only told a falsehood, but that, if he had had moral courage enough to tell the truth, the mischievous negligence, of which he had been guilty, could have been repaired; but now, as Lady Leslie said, it was too late!”

But, while Lady Leslie became talkative, and able to perform her duties to her friends, after she had thus unburthened her mind to Freeland, he grew every minute more absent, and more taciturn; and, though he could not eat with appetite, he *threw down*, rather than *drank*, repeated glasses of hock and champagne, to enable him to rally his spirits; but in vain.—A naturally ingenuous and generous nature cannot shake off the first compunctious visitings of conscience for having committed an unworthy action, and having also been the means of injury to another. All on a sudden, however, his countenance brightened; and as soon as the ladies left the table, he started up, left his compliments and excuses with Lady Leslie's nephew, who presided at dinner; said he had a pressing call to

Worcester; and, when there, as the London mail was gone, he threw himself into a postchaise, and set off for Somerstown, which Lady Leslie had named as the residence of Mary Benson. "At least," said Freeland to himself with a lightened heart, "I shall now have the satisfaction of doing all I can to repair my fault." But, owing to the delay occasioned by want of horses, and by finding the ostlers at the inns in bed, he did not reach London and the place of his destination till the wretched family had been dislodged; while the unhappy wife was weeping, not only over the disgrace of being so removed, and for her own and her husband's increased illness in consequence of it, but from the agonizing suspicion that the mistress and friend, whom she had so long loved, and relied upon, had disregarded the

tale of her sorrows, and had refused to relieve her necessities! Freeland soon found a conductor to the mean lodging in which the Bensons had obtained shelter; for they were well known; and their hard fate was generally pitied:—but it was some time before he could speak, as he stood by their bedside—he was choked with painful emotion at first; with pleasing emotions afterwards:—for his conscience smote him for the pain he had occasioned, and applauded him for the pleasuse which he came to bestow.—“I come,” said he, at length, (while the sufferers waited in almost angry wonder, to hear his reason for thus intruding on them) “I come to tell you, from your kind friend, Lady Leslie,”—“Then she has *not* forgotten me!” screamed out the poor woman, almost gasping for breath. “No, to be

sure not:—she could not forget you; she was incapable. . . .” here his voice wholly failed him. “Thank Heaven!” cried she, tears trickling down her pale cheek. “I can bear any thing now; for that was the bitterest part of all!” —“My good woman,” said Freeland, “it was owing to a mistake:—pshaw! no: it was owing to *my fault*, that you did not receive a 50£ note by the post yesterday:”—“50£!” cried the poor man, wringing his hands, “why that would have more than paid all we owed; and I could have gone on with my business, and our lives would not have been risked, nor I disgraced!” Freeland now turned away, unable to say a word more; but recovering himself, he again drew near them; and, throwing his purse to the agitated speaker, said, “there! get well! *only get well!* and whatever you want shall

be yours ! or I shall never lose this horrible choking again while I live !”

Freeland took a walk after this scene, and with hasty, rapid strides ; the painful choking being his companion very often during the course of it,—for he was haunted by the image of those whom he had disgraced ;—and he could not help remembering that, however blameable his negligence might be, it was nothing, either in sinfulness or mischief, to the lie told to conceal it ; and that, but for that LIE OF FEAR, the effects of his negligence might have been *repaired* in time.

But he was resolved that he would not leave Somerstown till he had seen these poor people settled in a good lodging. He therefore hired a conveyance for them, and superintended their removal that evening to apartments

full of every necessary comfort. “My good friends,” said he, “I cannot recall the mortification and disgrace which you have endured through my fault; but I trust that you will have gained, in the end, by leaving a cruel landlord, who had no pity for your unmerited poverty.—Lady Leslie’s note will, I trust, reach you to-morrow;—but if not, I will make up the loss; therefore be easy! and when I go away, may I have the comfort of knowing that your removal has done you no harm!

He then, but not till then, had courage to write to Lady Leslie, and tell her the whole truth; concluding his letter thus:

“If your interesting *protégés* have not suffered in their health, I shall not regret what has happened; because I trust that it will be a lesson to me through life, and teach me never to

tell even the most apparently *trivial* white lie again. How unimportant this violation of truth appeared to me at the moment! and how sufficiently motivated! as it was to avoid falling in your estimation; but it was, you see, overruled for evil;—and agony of mind, disgrace, and perhaps risk of life, were the consequences of it to innocent individuals;—not to mention my own pangs;—the pangs of an upbraiding conscience. But forgive me, my dear Lady Leslie. Now, however, I trust that this evil, so deeply repented of, will be blessed to us all; but it will be long before I forgive myself.”

Lady Leslie was delighted with this candid letter, though grieved by its painful details, while she viewed with approbation the amends which her young friend had made, and his modest disregard of his own exertions.

The note arrived in safety; and Freeland left the afflicted couple better in health, and quite happy in mind;—as his bounty and Lady Leslie's had left them nothing to desire in a pecuniary point of view.

When Lady Leslie and he met, she praised his virtue, while she blamed his fault; and they fortified each other in the wise and moral resolution, never to violate truth again, even on the slightest occasion: as a lie, when told, however unimportant it may at the time appear, is like an arrow shot over a house, whose course is unseen, and may be unintentionally the cause, to some one, of agony or death.

CHAP. VI.

LIES FALSELY CALLED LIES OF BENEVOLENCE.

THESE are lies which are occasioned by a selfish dread of losing favour, and provoking displeasure, by speaking the truth, rather than by real benevolence. Persons, calling themselves benevolent, withhold disagreeable truths, and utter agreeable falsehoods, from a wish to give pleasure, or to avoid giving pain. If you say that you are looking ill, they tell you that you are looking well. If you express a fear that you are growing corpulent, they say you are only just as fat as you

ought to be. If you are hoarse in singing, and painfully conscious of it, they declare that they did not perceive it. And this not from the desire of flattering you, or from the malignant one of wishing to render you ridiculous, by imposing on your credulity, but from the desire of making you pleased with yourself. In short, they lay it down as a rule, that you must never scruple to sacrifice the truth, when the alternative is giving the slightest pain or mortification to any one.

I shall leave my readers to decide whether the lies of fear or of benevolence preponderate, in the following trifling, but characteristic, anecdote.

A TALE OF POTTED SPRATS.

MOST mistresses of families have a family receipt-book ; and are apt to believe that no receipts are so good as their own.

With one of these notable ladies a young housekeeper went to pass a few days, both at her town- and country-house. The hostess was skilled, not only in culinary lore, but in economy ; and was in the habit of setting on her table, even when not alone, whatever her taste or carefulness had led her to pot, pickle, or preserve, for occasional use.

Before a meagre family dinner was quite over, a dish of POTTED SPRATS was set before the lady of the house, who, expatiating on their excellence,

derived from a family receipt of a century old, pressed her still unsatisfied guest to partake of them.

The dish was as good as much salt and little spice could make it; but it had one peculiarity;—it had a strong flavour of garlick, and to garlick the poor guest had a great dislike.

But she was a timid woman; and good breeding, and what she called Benevolence, said, “persevere and swallow,” though her palate said, no. “Is it not excellent?” said the hostess.—“Very;” faltered out the half-suffocated guest;—and this was lie the first. “Did you ever eat any thing like it before?”—“Never,” replied the other more firmly; for *then* she knew, that she spoke the truth, and *longing* to add, “and I hope I never shall eat any thing like it again.”—“I will give you the receipt,” said the lady

kindly; "it will be of use to you as a young housekeeper; for it is economical, as well as good, and serves to make out, when we have a scrap-dinner. My servants often dine on it."—"I wonder you can get any servants to live with you," thought the guest; "but I dare say you do not get any one to stay long!"—"You do not, however, *eat* as if you liked it."—"Oh yes, *indeed*, I do, very much (lie the second) she replied; but you forget I have already eaten a *good dinner*:" (lie the third. Alas! what had benevolence, *so called*, to answer for on this occasion!)

"Well, I am delighted to find that you like my sprats," said the flattered hostess, while the cloth was removing; adding, "John! do not let those sprats be eaten in the kitchen!" an order which the guests heard with indescribable alarm.

The next day they were to set off for the country-house, or cottage. When they were seated in the carriage, a large box was put in, and the guest fancied she smelt *garlick*; but

“ . . . where ignorance is bliss,

“ ’Tis folly to be wise.”

She therefore asked no questions; but tried to enjoy the present, regardless of the future. At a certain distance they stopped to bait the horses. There the guest expected that they should get out, and take some refreshment; but her economical companion, with a shrewd wink of the eye, observed, “ I always sit in the carriage on these occasions. If one gets out, the people at the inn expect one to order a luncheon. I therefore take mine with me.” So saying, John was summoned to drag the carriage out of

sight of the inn windows. He then unpacked the box, took out of it knives and forks, plates, &c., and also a *jar*, which, impregnating the air with its effluvia, even before it was opened, disclosed to the alarmed guest that its contents were the dreaded sprats!

“Alas!” thought she, “Pandora’s box was nothing to this! for in that, Hope remained behind; but, at the bottom of this, is Despair!” In vain did the unhappy lady declare (lie the fourth) that “she had no appetite, and (lie fifth) that she never ate in a morning.” Her hostess would take no denial. However she contrived to get a piece of sprat down, enveloped in bread; and the rest she threw out of the window, when her companion was looking another way—who, however, on turning round, exclaimed, “so, you have soon despatched the first! let me

give you another; do not refuse, because you think they are nearly finished; I assure you there are several left; and (delightful information!) we shall have a fresh supply to-morrow!" However, this time she was allowed to know when she had eaten enough; and the travellers proceeded to their journey's end.

This day, the sprats did not appear at dinner;—but, there being only a few left, they were kept for a *bonne bouche*, and reserved for supper! a meal, of which, this evening, on account of indisposition, the hostess did not partake, and was therefore at liberty to attend entirely to the wants of her guest, who would fain have declined eating also, but it was impossible; she had just declared that she was quite well, and had often owned that she enjoyed a piece of supper after an

early dinner. There was therefore no retreat from the maze in which her insincerity had involved her ; and eat she must : but, when she again smelt on her plate the nauseous composition which, being near the bottom of the pot, was more disagreeable than ever, human patience and human infirmity could bear no more ; the scarcely tasted morsel fell from her lips, and she rushed precipitately into the open air, almost disposed to execrate, in her heart, potted sprats, the good breeding of her officious hostess, and even Benevolence itself.

Some may observe, on reading this story, “What a foolish creature the guest must have been ! and how improbable it is that any one should scruple to say, the dish is disagreeable ; and, I hate garlic !” But it is my

conviction that the guest, on this occasion, was only a slightly-exaggerated specimen of the usual conduct of those who have been taught to conduct themselves wholly by the artificial rules of civilized society, of which, generally speaking, falsehood is the basis.

Benevolence is certainly one of the first of virtues; and its result is an amiable aversion to wound the feelings of others, even in trifles; therefore benevolence and politeness may be considered as the same thing; but **WORLDLY POLITENESS** is only a *copy* of benevolence. Benevolence is gold: this politeness a paper currency, contrived as its *substitute*; as society, being aware that benevolence is as rare as it is precious, and that few are able to distinguish, in any thing, the false from the true, resolved, in lieu of benevolence,

to receive **WORLDLY POLITENESS**, with all her train of deceitful welcomes, heartless regrets, false approbations, and treacherous smiles; those alluring seemings, which shine around her brow, and enable her to pass for **BENEVOLENCE** herself.

But how must the religious and the moral dislike the one, though they venerate the other! The kindness of the worldly Polite only lives its little hour in one's presence; but that of the Benevolent retains its life and sweetness in one's absence. The worldly polite will often make the objects of their greatest flatteries and attentions, when present, the butt of their ridicule as soon as they see them no more;—while the benevolent hold the characters and qualities of their associates in a sort of *holy keeping* at all times, and are as *indulgent* to the *absent*

as they were *attentive* to the *present*. The kindness of the worldly polite is the gay and pleasing flower worn in the bosom, as the ornament of a few hours ; then suffered to fade, and thrown by, when it is wanted no longer ;—but that of the really benevolent is like the fresh-springing evergreen, that blooms on through all times, and all seasons, unfading in beauty, and undiminishing in sweetness. But, it may be asked, whether I do not admit that the principle of never wounding the self-love or feelings of any one is a benevolent principle ; and whether it be not commendable to act on it continually. Certainly ; if sincerity goes hand in hand with benevolence. But where is your benevolence, if you praise those, to their faces, whom you abuse as soon as they have left you ?—where your benevolence, if you wel-

come those, with smiling urbanity, whom you see drive off with a "Well; I am glad they are gone?" and how common is it, to hear persons, who think themselves very moral, and very kind, begin, as soon as their guests are departed, and even when they are scarcely out of hearing, to criticise their dress, their manners, and their characters; while the poor unconscious visitors, the dupes of their deceitful courtesy, are going home delighted with their visit, and saying what a charming evening they have passed, and what agreeable and kind-hearted persons the master and mistress of the house, and their family, are!"—Surely, then, I am not refining too much when I assert that the cordial seemings, which these deluded guests were received, treated, and parted with, were any thing rather than the

LIES OF BENEVOLENCE. I also believe that those who scruple not, even from well-intentioned kindness, to utter spontaneous falsehoods, are not gifted with much judgment and real feeling, nor are they given to think deeply; for the virtues are nearly related, and live in the greatest harmony with each other;—consequently, sincerity and benevolence must always agree, and not, as is often supposed, be at variance with each other. The truly benevolent feel, and cultivate, such candid and kind views of those who associate with them, that *they* need not *fear* to be sincere *in their* answers; and if obliged to speak an unwelcome truth, or an unwelcome opinion, their well-principled kindness teaches them some way of making what they utter palatable; and benevolence is gratified without injury to sincerity.

It is a common assertion, that society is so constituted, that it is impossible to tell the truth *always*:—but, if those who possess good sense would use it as zealously to remove obstacles in the way of spontaneous truth as they do to justify themselves in the practice of falsehood, the difficulty would vanish. Besides, truth is so uncommon an ingredient in society, that few are acquainted with it sufficiently to know whether it be admissible or not. A pious and highly-gifted man said, in my presence, to a friend whom I esteem and admire, and who had asserted that truth cannot always be told in society, “ Has any one tried it?—We have all of us, in the course of our lives, seen dead birds of Paradise so often, that we should scarcely take the trouble of going to see one now. But the Marquis of Hastings has brought

over a *living* bird of Paradise; and every one is eagerly endeavouring to procure a sight of *that*. I therefore prognosticate that, were spontaneous truth to be told in society, where it now is rarely, if ever, heard, *real, living truth* would be as much sought after, and admired, as the living bird of Paradise."*

The following anecdote exhibits that Lie which some may call the lie of Benevolence, and others, the lie of *fear*;—that is, the dread of losing favour, by wounding a person's self-love. I myself denominate it the latter.

* I fear that I have given the words weakly and imperfectly; but I know I am correct, as to the sentiment and the illustration.—The speaker was EDWARD IRVING.

AN AUTHORESS AND HER AUDITORS.

A YOUNG lady, who valued herself on her benevolence and good breeding, and had as much respect for truth as those who live in the world usually have, was invited by an authoress, whose favour she coveted, and by whose attention she was flattered, to come and hear her read a manuscript tragi-comedy. The other auditor was an old lady, who, to considerable personal ugliness, united strange grimaces, and convulsive twitchings of the face, chiefly the result of physical causes.

The authoress read in so affected and dramatic a manner, that the young lady's boasted benevolence had no power to curb her propensity to laugh-

ter; which being perceived by the reader, she stopped in angry consternation, and desired to know whether she laughed at her, or her composition. At first she was too much fluttered to make any reply;—but as she dared not own the truth, and had no scruple against being guilty of deception, she cleverly resolved to excuse herself by a practical lie. She therefore trod on her friend's foot, elbowed her, and, by winks and signs, tried to make her believe that it was the grimaces of her opposite neighbour, who was quietly knitting and twitching as usual, which had had such an effect on her risible faculties; and the deceived authoress, smiling herself when her young guest directed her eye to her unconscious *vis-à-vis*, resumed her reading with a lightened brow and increased energy.

This added to the young lady's amusement; as she could now indulge her risibility occasionally at the authoress's expense, without exciting her suspicions; especially as the manuscript was sometimes intended to excite smiles, if not laughter; and the self-love of the writer led her to suppose that her hearers' mirth was the result of her comic powers. But the treacherous gratification of the auditor was soon at an end. The manuscript was meant to move tears as well as smiles; but, as the matter became more pathetic, the manner became more ludicrous; and the youthful hearer could no more force a tear than she could restrain a laugh; till the mortified authoress, irritated into forgetfulness of all feeling and propriety, exclaimed, "Indeed, Mrs. —, I must desire you to move your seat, and sit where Miss — does

not see you ; for you make such queer grimaces that you draw her attention, and cause her to laugh when she should be listening to me." The erring but humane girl was overwhelmed with dismay at the unexpected exposure ; and when the poor infirm old lady replied, in a faltering tone, " Is she indeed laughing at me ? " she could scarcely refrain from telling the truth, and assuring her that she was incapable of such cruelty. " Yes ; " rejoined the authoress, in a paroxysm of wounded self-love, " She owned to me, soon after she began, that you occasioned her ill-timed mirth ; and when I looked at you, I could hardly help smiling myself ; but I am sure you could help making such faces, if you would."—" Child ! " cried the old lady, while tears of wounded sensibility trickled down her pale cheeks, " and you, my

unjust friend, I hope and trust that I forgive you both; but, if ever you should be paralytic yourselves, may you remember this evening, and learn to repent of having been provoked to laugh by the physical weakness of a palsied old woman!" The indignant authoress was now penitent, subdued, and ashamed,—and earnestly asked pardon for her unkindness; but the young offender, whose acted lie had exposed her to seem guilty of a fault which she had not committed, was in an agony to which expression was inadequate. But, to exculpate herself was impossible: and she could only give her wounded victim tear for tear.

To attend to a farther perusal of the manuscript was impossible. The old lady desired that her carriage should come round directly; the authoress locked up the composition, that had

been so ill received ; and the young lady, who had been proud of the acquaintance of each, became an object of suspicion and dislike both to the one and the other ; since the former considered her to be of a cruel and unfeeling nature, and the latter could not conceal from herself the mortifying truth, that she must have felt her play to be wholly devoid of interest, as it had utterly failed either to rivet or to attract her young auditor's attention.

But, though this girl lost two valued acquaintances by acting a lie (a harmless white lie, as it is called), I fear she was not taught or amended by the circumstance ; but deplored her want of luck, rather than her want of integrity ; and, had her deception met with the success which she expected, she would probably have boasted of her ingenious artifice to her acquaint-

ance;—nor can I help believing that she goes on in the same way whenever she is tempted to do so, and values herself on the lies of SELFISH FEAR, which she dignifies by the name of LIES OF BENEVOLENCE.

It is curious to observe that the kindness which prompts to really erroneous conduct cannot continue to bear even a remote connexion with real benevolence. The mistaken girl, in the anecdote related above, begins with what she calls, a virtuous deception. She could not wound the feelings of the authoress by owning that she laughed at her mode of reading; she therefore accused herself of a much worse fault; that of laughing at the personal infirmities of a fellow-creature; and then, finding that her artifice enabled her to indulge her sense of the ridiculous with impunity,

she at length laughs treacherously and systematically, because she dares do so, and not *involuntarily*, as she did at first, at her unsuspecting friend. Thus such hollow unprincipled benevolence as hers soon degenerated into absolute *malevolence*. But, had this girl been a girl of principle and of *real benevolence*, she might have healed her friends' vanity at the same time that she wounded it, by saying, after she had owned that her mode of reading made her laugh, that she was now convinced of the truth of what she had often heard; namely, that authors rarely do justice to their own works, when they read them aloud themselves, however well they may read the works of others; because they are naturally so nervous on the occasion, that they are laughably violent, because painfully agitated.

This reply could not have offended her friend greatly, if at all; and it might have led her to moderate her *outré* manner of reading. She would in consequence have appeared to more advantage; and the interests of real benevolence, namely, the doing good to a fellow-creature, would have been served, and she would not, by a vain attempt to save a friend's vanity from being hurt, have been the means of wounding the feelings of an afflicted woman; have incurred the charge of inhumanity, which she by no means deserved; and have vainly, as well as grossly, sacrificed the interests of Truth.

CHAP. VI.

LIES OF CONVENIENCE.

I HAVE now before me a very copious subject: and shall begin by that most common *lie of convenience*; the order to servants, to say “Not at home;” a custom which even some moralists defend, because they say that it is no lying; as it deceives no one. But this I deny;—as I know that it is often *meant* to deceive. I know that if the person, angry at being refused admittance, says, at the next meeting with the denied person, “I am sure

you *were* at home such a day, when I called, but did not *choose to see me*, the answer is, “Oh dear, no;—how can you say so? I am *sure* I was not at home;—for I am never *denied to you*,” though the speaker is conscious all the while that “not at home” was intended to *deceive*, as well as to deny. But, if it be true that “not at home” is not intended to deceive, and is a form used merely to exclude visitors with as little trouble as possible, I would ask whether it were not just as easy to say, “my master, or my mistress, is engaged; and can see no one this morning.” Why have recourse even to the appearance of falsehood, when truth would answer every purpose just as well?

But, if “not at home” be understood, amongst *equals*, merely as a legitimate excuse, it still is highly ob-

jectionable ; because it must have a most pernicious effect on the minds of *servants*, who cannot be supposed parties to this implied compact amongst their superiours, and must therefore understand the order *literally* ; which is, “ go, and lie for my convenience ! ” How then, I ask, in the name of justice and common sense, can I, after giving such an order, resent any lie which servants may choose to tell me for their own convenience, pleasure, or interest ?

Thoughtless and injudicious (I do not like to add,) *unprincipled* persons, sometimes say to servants, when they have denied their mistress, “ Oh fye ! how can you tell me such a fib without blushing ! I am ashamed of you ! You know your lady *is* at home ;—well ;—I am really *shocked* at your having so much effrontery as to tell

such a lie with so grave a face! But, give my compliments to your mistress, and tell her, I hope that she will see me the next time I call ;”—and all this uttered in a laughing manner, as if this moral degradation of the poor servant were an *excellent joke*! But on these occasions, what can the effect of such joking be on the conscious liars? It must either lead them to think as lightly of truth as their reprovers themselves, (since they seem more amused than shocked at the detected violation of it,) or they will turn away distressed in conscience, degraded in their own eyes, for having obeyed their employer, and feeling a degree of virtuous indignation against those persons who have, by their immoral command, been the means of their painful degradation;—nay, their master and mistress will

be for ever lowered in their servant's esteem ; they will feel that the *teacher* of a lie is brought down on a level with the utterer of it ; and the chances are that, during the rest of their service, they will without scruple use *against their employers* the dexterity which they have taught them to use *against others*.*

* As I feel a great desire to lay before my readers the strongest arguments possible, to prove the vicious tendency of even the most tolerated lie of convenience ; namely, to servants to say " Not at home ;" and as I wholly distrust my own powers of arguing with *effect* on this, or any other subject, I give the following extracts from Dr. Chalmers's " Discourses on the Application of Christianity to the Commercial and Ordinary Affairs of Life ;"—discourses which abundantly and eloquently prove the sinfulness of deceit in general, and the fearful responsibility incurred by all who depart, even in the most common occurrences, from that undeviating practice of truth, which is every-where enjoined on Christians in the pages of holy writ. But I shall, though reluctantly, confine myself in these extracts to what bears immediately on the subject before us. I must however state, in justice to myself, that my remarks on the same points were not only written, but

But, amongst the most frequent lies of convenience are those which are told relative to engagements, which they who make them are averse to

printed and published, in a periodical work, before I knew that Dr. Chalmers had written the book in question.

You put a lie into the mouth of a dependant, and that for the purpose of protecting your time from such an encroachment as you would not feel to be convenient, or agreeable. Look to the little account that is made of a brother's and sister's eternity. Behold the guilty task that is thus unmercifully laid upon one who is shortly to appear before the judgment-seat of Christ. Think of the entanglement that is thus made to beset the path of a creature who is unperishable. That, at the shrine of Mammon, such a bloody sacrifice should be rendered, by some of his unrelenting votaries, is not to be wondered at; but, that the shrine of elegance and fashion should be bathed in blood;—that *soft and sentimental ladyship* should put forth her hand to such an enormity;—that she who can sigh so gently, and shed her grateful tear over the sufferings of others, should thus be accessory to the second and more awful death of her own domestics;—that one, who looks the mildest and loveliest of human beings, should exact obedience to a mandate which carries wrath, and tribulation, and anguish in its train. Oh! how it should confirm every Christian in his defiance of the authority of fashion, and lead him to spurn at all its folly and all its worthlessness.

keep. "Headachs, bad colds, unexpected visitors from the country," all these, in their turn, are used as lies of convenience, and gratify indolence, or caprice, at the expense of integrity.

ness. And it is quite in vain to say that the servant, whom you thus employ as the deputy of your falsehood, can possibly execute the commission without the conscience being at all tainted or defiled by it; that a simple cottage maid can so sophisticate the matter, as, without any violence to her original principles, to utter the language of what she assuredly knows to be a downright lie;—that she, humble and untutored soul! can sustain no injury, when thus made to tamper with the plain English of these realms;—that she can at all satisfy herself how, by the prescribed utterance of "not at home," she is not pronouncing such words as are substantially untrue, but merely using them in another and perfectly-understood meaning;—and which, according to their modern translation, denote that the person, of whom she is thus speaking, is securely lurking in one of the most secure and intimate of its receptacles.

You may try to darken this piece of casuistry as you will, and work up your minds into the peaceable conviction that it is all right, and as it should be. But, be very certain that, where the moral sense of your domestic is not already overthrown, there is, at least, one bosom within which you have raised a war of doubts and difficulties; and where, if the victory be on your

How often have I pitied the wives and daughters of professional men, for the number of lies which they are obliged to tell, in the course of the

side, it will be on the side of him who is the great enemy of righteousness.

There is, at least, one person, along the line of this conveyance of deceit, who condemneth herself in that which she alloweth; who, in the language of Paul, esteeming the practice to be unclean, to her will it be unclean; who will perform her task with the offence of her own conscience, and to whom, therefore, it will indeed be evil; who cannot render obedience in this matter to her earthly superior, but, by an act, in which she does not stand clear, and unconscious of guilt before God; and with whom, therefore, the sad consequence of what we can call nothing else than a barbarous combination against the principles and prospects of the lower orders, is—that, as she has not cleaved fully unto the Lord, and has not kept by the service of the one Master, and has not forsaken all but His bidding, she cannot be the disciple of Christ.

And let us just ask a master or a mistress, who can thus make free with the moral principle of their servants in one instance, how they can look for pure or correct principle from them in other instances? What right have they to complain of unfaithfulness against themselves, who have deliberately seduced another into a habit of unfaithfulness against God? Are they so utterly unskilled in the mysteries of our nature, as not to

year! "Dr. — is very sorry ; but he was sent for to a patient just as he was coming with me to your house"—
"Papa's compliments, and he is very

perceive, that the servant whom you have taught to lie, has gotten such rudiments of education at your hand, as that, without any further help, he can now teach himself to purloin?—and yet nothing more frequent than loud and angry complainings against the treachery of servants; as if, in the general wreck of their other principles, a principle of consideration for the good and interest of their employer, and who has at the same time been their seducer, was to survive in all its power and sensibility. It is just such a retribution as was to be looked for. It is a recoil, upon their own heads, of the mischief which they themselves have originated. It is the temporal part of the punishment which they have to bear for the sin of our text ; but not the whole of it : far better for them both that both person and property were cast into the sea, than that they should stand the reckoning of that day, when called to give an account of the souls that they have murdered, and the blood of so mighty a destruction is required at their hands."

These remarks at first made part of the chapter on the lie of convenience, but thinking them not suited to that *period* of my work, I took them out again, and not being able to introduce them in any subsequent chapter, because they treat of one particular lie, and of lying in general, I have been obliged to content myself with putting them in a note.

sorry ; but he was forced to attend a commission of bankruptcy ; but will certainly come, if he can, by-and-by ;” —when the chances are, that the physician is enjoying himself over his book and his fire, and the lawyer also, congratulating themselves on having escaped that terrible bore, a party, at the expense of teaching their wife, or daughter, or son, to tell what they call, a white lie ! But, I would ask those fathers and those mothers, who make their children the bearers of similar excuses, whether, after giving them such commissions, they could conscientiously resent any breach of veracity, or breach of confidence, or deception, committed by their children in matters of more importance. “ *Ce n’est que le premier pas qui coute*, says the proverb ; and I believe that habitual, permitted, and encouraged lying,

in little and seemingly unimportant things, leads to want of truth and principle in great and serious matters; for when the barrier, or restrictive principle, is once thrown down, no one can say where a stop will be put to the inroads and the destruction.

Here I beg leave to insert a short Tale, illustrative of *Lies of Convenience*.

PROJECTS DEFEATED.

THERE are a great many match-makers in the world; beings who dare to take on themselves the *fearful responsibility* of bringing two persons together into that solemn union which only death or guilt can dissolve; and thus make themselves answerable for the possible misery of two of their fellow-creatures.

One of these busy matchmakers, a gentleman named Byrome, was very desirous that Henry Sanford, a relation of his, should become a married man; and he called one morning to inform him that he had at length met with a young lady who would, he flattered himself, suit him in all respects as a wife. Henry Sanford was not a man of many words; nor had he a high opinion of Byrome's judgment. He therefore only said, in reply, that he was willing to accompany his relation to the lady's house, where, on Byrome's invitation, he found that he was expected to drink tea.

The young lady in question, whom I shall call Lydia L——, lived with her widowed aunt, who had brought her and her sister up, and supplied to them the place of parents, lost in their infancy. She had bestowed on them

an expensive and showy education ; had, both by precept and example, given every worldly polish to their manners ; and had taught them to set off their beauty by tasteful and fashionable dress :—that is, she had done for them all that she thought was necessary to be done ; and she, as well as Byrome, believed that they possessed every requisite to make the marriage state happy.

But Henry Sandford was not so easy to please. He valued personal beauty and external accomplishments far below christian graces and moral virtues ; and was resolved never to unite himself to a woman whose conduct was not entirely under the guidance of a strict religious principle.

Lydia L — was not in the room when Sandford arrived, but he very soon had cause to doubt the moral

integrity of her aunt and sisters ; for, on Byrome's saying " I hope you are not to have any company but ourselves to-day," the aunt replied, " Oh, no ; we put off some company that we expected, because we thought you would like to be alone ;" and one of the sisters added, " Yes ; I wrote to the disagreeable D——'s, informing them that my aunt was too unwell, with one of her bad headaches, to see company ;" and I, said the other, called on the G——s, and said that we wished them to come another day, because the beaux, whom they liked best to meet, were engaged."—" Admirable !" cried Byrome, " Let women alone for excuses !"—while Sanford looked grave, and wondered how any one could think admirable what to *him* appeared so reprehensible. " However," thought he, " *Lydia* had

no share in this treachery and white lying, but may dislike them, as I do." Soon after she made her appearance, attired for conquest; and so radiant did she seem in her youthful loveliness and grace, that Sandford earnestly hoped she had better principles than her sisters.

Time fled on rapid wings; and Byrome and the two elder sisters frequently congratulated each other that the disagreeable D——s and tiresome G——s had not been allowed to come, and destroy, as they would have done, the pleasure of the afternoon. But Lydia did not join in this conversation; and Sanford was glad of it. The hours passed in alternate musick and conversation, and also in looking over some beautiful drawings of Lydia's; but the evening was to conclude with a French game, a *jeu-de-*

société, which Sanford was unacquainted with, and which would give Lydia an opportunity of telling a story gracefully.

The L——s lived in a pleasant village near the town where Sanford and Byrome resided; and a long avenue of fine trees led to their door; when, just as the aunt was pointing out their beauty to Sanford, she exclaimed, “Oh dear, girls! what shall we do? there is Mrs. Carthew now entering the avenue!” “Not at home, John! not at home!” she eagerly vociferated. “My dear aunt, that will not do for her,” cried the eldest sister; “for she will ask for us all in turn, and inquire where we are, that she may go after us.”—“True,” said the other, “and if we admit her, she is so severe and methodistical, that she will spoil all our enjoyment.”

“However, in she must come,” observed the aunt; “for, as she is an old friend, I should not like to affront her.”

Sanford was just going to say, “If she be an old friend, admit her, by all means;” when, on looking at Lydia, who had been silent all this time, and was, he flattered himself, of his way of thinking, he saw her put her finger archly to her nose, and heard her exclaim, “I have it! there, there; go all of you into the next room, and close the door!” She then bounded gracefully down the avenue, while Sanford, with a degree of pain which he could have scarcely thought possible, heard one of the sisters say to Byrome, “Ah! Lydia is to be trusted; she tells a white lie with such an innocent look, that no one can suspect her.” “What a valuable accomplishment,” thought Sanford, “in a woman! what

a recommendation in a wife!" and he really dreaded the fair deceiver's return.

She came back, "nothing doubting," and, smiling with great self-complacency, said, "It was very fortunate that it was I who met her; for I have more presence of mind than you, my dear sister. The good soul had seen the D——s; and, hearing my aunt was ill, came to inquire concerning her. She was even coming on to the house, as she saw no reason why she should not; and I, for a moment, was at a loss how to keep her away, when I luckily recollected her great dread of infection, and told her that, as the typhus fever was in the village, I feared it was only too possible that my poor aunt had caught it!"—"Capital!" cried the aunt and Byrome! "Really, Lydia, that was even outdoing yourself," cried her eldest sister. "Poor

Carthewy ! I should not wonder, if she came at all near the house, that she went home, and took to her bed from alarm !”

Even Byrome was shocked at this unfeeling speech ; and could not help observing that it would be hard indeed if such was the result, to a good old friend, of an affectionate inquiry. “ True,” replied Lydia, “ and I hope and trust she will not really suffer but, though very good, she is very troublesome ; and could we but keep up the hum for a day or two, it would be such a comfort to us, as she comes very often, and now cannot endure cards, or any musick but hymn-singing.”

“ Then I am glad she was not admitted ;” said Byrome, who saw, with pain, by Sanford’s folded arms and grave countenance, that a change in

his feelings towards Lydia had taken place. Nor was he deceived:—Sanford was indeed gazing intently, but not, as before, with almost overpowering admiration, on the consciously-blushing object of it. No; he was likening her, as he gazed, to the beautiful apples that are said to grow on the shores of the Dead Sea, which tempt the traveller to pluck, and eat, but are filled only with dust and bitter ashes.

“But we are losing time,” said Lydia; “let us begin our French game!” Sanford coldly bowed assent; but he knew not what she said; he was so inattentive, that he had to forfeit continually;—he spoke not;—he smiled not;—except with a sort of sarcastic expression; and Lydia felt conscious that she had *lost him*, though she knew not why; for her moral

sense was too dull for her to conceive the effect which her falsehood, and want of feeling, towards an old and pious friend, had produced on him. This consciousness was a painful one, as Sanford was handsome, sensible, and rich; therefore, he was what match-seeking girls (odious vulgarity!) call *a good catch*. Besides, Byrome had told her that she might depend on making a conquest of his relation, Henry Sanford. The evening, therefore, which began so brightly, ended in pain and mortification, both to Sanford and Lydia. The former was impatient to depart as soon as supper was over, and the latter, piqued, disappointed, and almost dejected, did not join her sisters in soliciting him to stay.

“Well,” said Byrome, as soon as they left the house, “How do you

like the beautiful and accomplished Lydia?"—"She is beautiful and accomplished; but that is all."—"Nay, I am sure you seemed to admire her exceedingly, till just now, and paid her more animated attention than I ever saw you pay any woman before."—"True; but I soon found that she was as hollowhearted as she is fair." "Oh! I suppose you mean the deception which she practised on the old lady. Well; where was the great harm of that? she only told a white lie; and nobody, that is not a puritan, scruples to do that, you know."

"I am no puritan, as you term it; yet I scruple it: but, if I were to be betrayed into such a meanness, (and no one, perhaps, can be always on his guard) I should blush to have it known; but this girl seemed to glory in her shame, and to be proud of the disgrace-

ful readiness with which she uttered her falsehood.”—“ I must own that I was surprised she did not express some regret at being forced to do what she did, in order to prevent our pleasure from being spoiled.—“ Why should she? Like yourself, she saw no harm in a *white lie*; but, mark me, Byrome, the woman whom I marry shall not think there is such a thing as a white lie;—she shall think all lies *black*; because the intention of *all* lies is to *deceive*; and, from the highest authority, we are forbidden to deceive one another. I assure you, that if I were married to Lydia, I should distrust her expressions of love towards me;—I should suspect that she married my fortune, not me; and that, whenever strong temptation offered, she would deceive me as readily as, for a very slight one indeed, she deceived

that kind friend, who came on an errand of love, and was sent away alarmed, and anxious, by this young hypocrite's unblushing falsehood!—Trust me, Byrome, that my wife shall be a strict moralist.”—“What! a moral philosopher?”—“No; a far better thing. She shall be a *humble relying christian*;—thence she will be capable of speaking the truth, even to her own condemnation;—and, on all occasions, her fear of man will be wholly subservient to her fear of her Creator.”

“And, pray, how can you ever be able to assure yourself that any girl is this paragon?”—“Surely, if what we call chance could so easily exhibit to me Lydia — in all the ugliness of her falsehood, it may equally, one day or other, disclose to me some other girl in all the beauty of her truth. Till then, I hope, I shall have resolu-

tion enough to remain a bachelor.”—
“Then,” replied Byrome, shaking his head, “I may bid you good night, an old bachelor in prospect and in perpetuity!” And as he returned his farewell, Sanford sighed to think that his prophecy was only too likely to be fulfilled; since his observation had convinced him that a strict adherence to truth, on little as well as on great occasions, is, though one of the most **IMPORTANT**, the **RAREST** of all virtues.”

CHAP. VII.

ON LIES OF INTEREST.

THESE lies are very various, and are more excusable, and less offensive, than many others.

The pale, ragged beggar, who, to add to the effect of his or her ill looks, tells of the large family which does not exist, has a strong motive to deceive in the penury which does ;—and one cannot consider as a very *abandoned* liar, the tradesman, who tells you he cannot afford to come down to the price which you offer, because he gave almost as much for the goods

himself. It is not from persons like these that we meet with the most disgusting marks of interested falsehood. It is when habitual and petty lying profanes the lips of those whom independence preserves from any strong temptation to violate truth, and whom religion and education might have taught to value it.

The following story will illustrate the **LIES OF INTEREST.**

THE SKREEN, OR "NOT AT HOME."

THE widow of Governor Atheling returned from the East Indies, old, rich, and childless; and as she had none but very distant relations, her affections naturally turned towards the earliest friends of her youth; one of whom she found still living, and residing in a large country-town.

She therefore hired a house and grounds adjacent, in a village very near to this lady's abode, and became not only her frequent but welcome guest. This old friend was a widow in narrow circumstances, with four daughters slenderly provided for ; and she justly concluded that, if she and her family could endear themselves to their opulent guest, they should in all probability inherit some of her property. In the mean while, as she never visited them without bringing with her, in great abundance, whatever was wanted for the table, and might therefore be said to contribute to their maintenance, without seeming to intend to do so, they took incessant pains to conciliate her more and more every day, by flatteries which she did not see through, and attentions which she deeply felt. Still, the

Livingstones were not in spirit united to their amiable guest. The sorrows of her heart had led her, by slow degrees, to seek refuge in a religious course of life ; and, spite of her proneness to self-deception, she could not conceal from herself that, on this most important subject, the Livingstones had never thought seriously, and were, as yet, entirely women of the world. But still her heart longed to love something ; and as her starved affections craved some daily food, she suffered herself to love this plausible, amusing, agreeable, and seemingly-affectionate family ; and she every day lived in hope, that, by her precepts and example, she should ultimately tear them from that “ world they loved too well.” Sweet and precious to their own souls are the illusions of the good ; and the deceived East-Indian was happy, be-

cause she did not understand the true nature of the Livingstones.

On the contrary, so fascinated was she by what she fancied they were, or might become, that she took very little notice of a shamefaced, awkward, retiring, silent girl, the only child of the dearest friend that her childhood and her youth had known,—and who had been purposely introduced to her *only* as *Fanny Barnwell*. For the Livingstones were too selfish, and too prudent, to let their rich friend know that this poor girl was the orphan of Fanny Beaumont. *Withholding*, therefore, the most *important part of the truth*, they only informed her that Fanny Barnwell was an orphan, who was glad to live amongst her friends, that she might make her small income sufficient for her wants ; but they took care not to add that she was mistaken

in supposing that Fanny Beaumont, whose long silence and subsequent death she had bitterly deplored, had died childless ; for that she had married a second husband, by whom she had the poor orphan in question, and had lived many years in sorrow and obscurity, the result of this imprudent marriage ; resolving, however, in order to avoid accidents, that Fanny's visit should not be of long duration. In the mean while, they confided in the security afforded them by what may be called their PASSIVE LIE OF INTEREST. But, in order to make " assurance doubly sure," they had also recourse to the ACTIVE LIE OF INTEREST ; and, in order to frighten Fanny from ever daring to inform their visiter that she was the child of Fanny Beaumont, they assured her that that lady was so enraged against her poor

mother, for having married her unworthy father, that no one dared to mention her name to her; as it never failed to draw from her the most violent abuse of her once dearest friend. “And you know, Fanny,” they took care to add, “that you could not bear to hear your poor mother abused.”—“No; that I could not, indeed,” was the weeping girl’s answer; and the Livingstones felt safe and satisfied. However, it still might not be amiss to make the old lady dislike Fanny, if they could; and they contrived to render the poor girl’s virtue the means of doing her injury.

Fanny’s mother could not bequeath much money to her child; but she had endeavoured to enrich her with principles and piety. Above all, she had impressed her with the strictest regard for truth;—and the Livingstones art-

fully contrived to make her integrity the means of displeasing their East-Indian friend.

This good old lady's chief failing was believing implicitly whatever was said in her commendation: not that she loved flattery, but that she liked to believe she had conciliated *goodwill*; and that, being sincere *herself*, she never thought of distrusting the sincerity of *others*.

Nor was she at all vain of her once fine person, and finer face, or improperly fond of dress. Still, from an almost pitiable degree of *bonhommie*, she allowed the Livingstones to dress her as they liked; and, as they chose to make her wear fashionable and young-looking attire, in which they declared that she looked "so handsome! and so well!" she believed they were the best judges of what was

proper for her, and always replied, "Well, dear friends, it is entirely a matter of indifference to me ; so dress me as you please ;" while the Livingstones, not *believing* that it was a *matter of indifference*, used to laugh, as soon as she was gone, at her obvious credulity.

But this ungenerous and treacherous conduct excited such strong indignation in the usually gentle Fanny, that she could not help expressing her sentiments concerning it ; and by that means made them the more eager to betray her into offending their unsuspecting friend. They therefore asked Fanny, in her presence, one day, whether their dear guest did not dress most *becomingly* ?

The poor girl made sundry sheepish and awkward contortions, now looking down, and then looking up ;

—unable to lie, yet afraid to tell the truth.—“Why do you not reply, Fanny?” said the artful questioner. “Is she not well dressed?”—“Not in *my* opinion,” faltered out the distressed girl. “And, pray, Miss Barnwell,” said the old lady, “what part of my dress do you disapprove?” After a pause, Fanny took courage to reply, “all of it, madam.”—“Why? do you think it too young for me?”—“I do.” “A plain-spoken young person that!” she observed, in a tone of pique;—while the Livingstones exclaimed, impertinent! ridiculous!”—and Fanny was glad to leave the room, feeling excessive pain at having been forced to wound the feelings of one whom she wished to be permitted to love, because she had once been her mother’s dearest friend. After this scene, the Livingstones, partly from the love

of mischief, and partly from the love of fun, used to put similar questions to Fanny, in the old lady's presence, till, at last, displeased and indignant at her bluntness and ill-breeding, she scarcely noticed or spoke to her. In the meanwhile, Cecilia Livingstone became an object of increasing interest to her; for she had a lover to whom she was greatly attached; but who would not be in a situation to marry for many years.

This young man was frequently at the house, and was as polite and attentive to the old lady, when she was present, as the rest of the family; but, like them, he was ever ready to indulge in a laugh at her credulous simplicity, and especially at her continually expressing her belief, as well as her hopes, that they were all beginning to think less of the present world, and more

of the next; and as Lawrie, as well as the Livingstones, possessed no inconsiderable power of mimicry, they exercised them with great effect on the manner and tones of her whom they called the *over-dressed* saint, unrestrained, alas! by the consciousness that she was their present, and would, as they expected, be their *future*, benefactress.

That confiding and unsuspecting being was, meanwhile, considering that, though her health was injured by a long residence in a warm climate, she might still live many years; and that, as Cecilia might not therefore possess the fortune which she had bequeathed to her till "youth and genial years were flown", it would be better to give it to her during her lifetime. "I will do so," she said to herself (tears rushing into her eyes as she

thought of the happiness which she was going to impart), “and then the young people can marry directly!”

She took this resolution one day when the Livingstones believed that she had left her home on a visit. Consequently, having no expectation of seeing her for some time, they had taken advantage of her long vainly-expected absence to make some engagements which they knew she would have excessively disapproved. But though, as yet, they knew it not, the old lady had been forced to put off her visit; a circumstance which she did not at all regret, as it enabled her to go sooner on her benevolent errand.

The engagement of the Livingstones for that day was a rehearsal of a private play at their house, which they were afterwards, and during their saintly friend's absence, to perform at

the house of a friend ; and a large room, called the library, in which there was a wide, commodious skreen, was selected as the scene of action.

Fanny Barnwell, who disliked private and other theatricals as much as their old friend herself, was to have no part in the performance ; but, as they were disappointed of their prompter that evening, she was, though with great difficulty, persuaded to perform the office, for *that night only*.

It was to be a dress rehearsal ; and the parties were in the midst of adorning themselves, when, to their great consternation, they saw their supposed distant friend coming up the street, and evidently intending them a visit. What was to be done ? To admit her was impossible. They therefore called up a new servant, who only came to them the day before, and who did not

know the worldly consequence of their unwelcome guest ; and Cecilia said to her, “ you see that old lady yonder ; when she knocks, be sure you say that *we are not at home* ; and you had better add, that we shall not be home *till bedtime* ;” thus adding the *lie of CONVENIENCE* to other deceptions. Accordingly, when she knocked at the door, the girl spoke as she was desired to do, or rather she improved upon it ; for she said that her ladies had been out all day, and would not return till two o’clock in the morning.”—“ Indeed ! that is unfortunate ;” said their disappointed visiter, stopping to deliberate whether she should not leave a note of agreeable surprise for Cecilia ; but the girl, who held the door in her hand, seemed so impatient to get rid of her, that she resolved not to write, and then turned away.

The girl was really in haste to return to the kitchen; for she was gossiping with an old fellow-servant. She therefore neglected to go back to her anxious employers; but Cecilia ran down the back stairs, to interrogate her, exclaiming, "Well; what did she say? I hope she did not suspect that we were at home."—"No, to be sure not, Miss;—how should she?—for I said even more than you told me to say," repeating her additions; being eager to prove her claim to the confidence of her new mistress. "But are you sure that she is really gone from the door?"—"To be sure, Miss."—"Still, I wish you could go and see; because we have not seen her pass the window, though we heard the door shut."—"Dear me, Miss, how should you? for I looked out after her, and I saw her go down the street

under the windows, and turn . . . yes, —I am sure that I saw her turn into a shop. However, I will go and look, if you desire it.” She did so; and certainly saw nothing of the dreaded guest. Therefore, her young ladies finished their preparations, devoid of fear. But the truth was, that the girl, little aware of the importance of this unwelcome lady, and concluding she could not be a *friend*, but merely some *troublesome nobody*, shewed her contempt and her anger at being detained so long, by throwing to the street door with such violence, that it did not really close; and the old lady, who had ordered her carriage to come for her at a certain hour, and was determined, on second thoughts, to sit down and wait for it, was able, unheard, to push open the door, and to enter the library unperceived;—for the girl lied

to those who bade her lie, when she said that she saw her walk away.

In that room Mrs. Atherling found a sofa ; and though she wondered at seeing a large skreen opened before it, she seated herself on it, and, being fatigued with her walk, soon fell asleep. But her slumber was broken very unpleasantly ; for she heard, as she awoke, the following dialogue, on the entrance of Cecilia and her lover, accompanied by Fanny. “ Well—I am so glad we got rid of Mrs. Atherling so easily!” cried Cecilia. “ That new girl seems apt. Some servants deny one so as to shew one is at home.”—“ I should like them the better for it,” said Fanny. “ I hate to see any one ready at telling a falsehood.”—“ Poor little conscientious dear!” said the lover, mimicking her, “ one would think the dressed-up saint had made you as

methodistical as herself." What, I suppose, Miss Fanny, you would have had us let the old quiz in."—"To be sure I would ; and I wonder you could be denied to so kind a friend."—"Poor dear Mrs. Atherling! how hurt she would be, if she knew you were at home!"—" *Poor dear*, indeed! Do not be so affected, Fanny. How should you care for Mrs. Atherling, when you know that she dislikes you!"—" *Dislikes* me! Oh yes ; I fear she does !"—" I am *sure* she does," replied Cecilia ; " for you are downright rude to her. Did you not say, only the day before yesterday, when she said, There, Miss Barnwell, I hope I have *at last* gotten a cap which you like,—No ; I am sorry to say you have not?"—"To be sure I did ;—I could not tell a falsehood, even to please Mrs. Atherling, though she was my own dear

mother's dearest friend."—"Your mother's friend, Fanny! I never heard *that* before;" said the lover. "Did you not know that, Alfred!" said Cecilia; eagerly adding, "but Mrs. *Atherling* does not know it;" giving him a meaning look, as if to say, "and do not you *tell* her."—"Would she *did* know it!" said Fanny mournfully, "for, though I dare not tell her so, lest she should abuse my poor mother, as you say she would, Cecilia, because she was so angry at her marriage with my misguided father, still, I think she would look kindly on her once dear friend's orphan child, and like me, in spite of my honesty."—"No, no, silly girl; honesty is usually its own reward. Alfred, what do you think? Our old friend, who is not very penetrating, said one day to her, I suppose you think my caps too young for me;

and that true young person replied, "Yes, Madam, I do."—"And would do so again, Cecilia;—and it was far more friendly and kind to say so than flatter her on her dress, as you do, and then laugh at it when her back is turned. I hate to hear any one mimicked and laughed at; and more especially my mamma's old friend."—"There, there, child! your sentimentality makes me sick. But come; let us begin."—"Yes," cried Alfred, "let us rehearse a little, before the rest of the party come. I should like to hear Mrs. Atherling's exclamations, if she knew what we were doing. She would say thus:" Here he gave a most accurate representation of the poor old lady's voice and manner, and her fancied abuse of private theatricals, while Cecilia cried, "bravo! bravo!" and Fanny "shame!

shame!" till the other Livingstones, and the rest of the company, who now entered, drowned her cry in their loud applauses and louder laughter.

The old lady, whom surprise, anger, and wounded sensibility, had hitherto kept *silent* and *still* in her involuntary hiding-place, now rose up, and, mounting on the sofa, looked over the top of the skreen, full of reproachful meaning, on the conscious offenders!

What a moment, to them, of overwhelming surprise and consternation! The cheeks, flushed with malicious triumph and satirical pleasure, became covered with the deeper blush of detected treachery, or pale with fear of its consequences;—and the eyes, so lately beaming with ungenerous, injurious satisfaction, were now cast with painful shame upon the ground, unable to meet the justly in-

dignant glance of her, whose kindness they had repaid with such palpable and base ingratitude! “An admirable likeness indeed, Lawrie,” said their undeceived dupe, breaking her perturbed silence, and coming down from her elevation; “but it will cost you more than you are at present aware of.—But who art thou?” she added, addressing Fanny (who, though it might have been a moment of triumph to her, felt and looked as if she had been a sharer in the guilt), “Who art *thou*, my honourable, kind girl? And who was your mother?”—“Your Fanny Beaumont,” replied the quick-*feeling* orphan, bursting into tears. “Fanny Beaumont’s child! and it was concealed from me!” said she, folding the weeping girl to her heart. But it was all of a piece;—all treachery and insincerity, from the beginning to the

end. However, I am undeceived before it was too late." She then disclosed to the detected family her generous motive for the unexpected visit; and declared her thankfulness for what had taken place, as far as she was herself concerned; though she could not but deplore, as a christian, the discovered turpitude of those whom she had fondly loved.

"I have now," she continued, to make amends to one whom I have hitherto not treated kindly; but I have at length been enabled to discover an undeserved friend, amidst undeserved foes. . . . My dear child," added she, parting Fanny's dark ringlets, and gazing tearfully in her face, "I must have been *blind*, as well as blinded, not to see your likeness to your dear mother.—Will you live with me, Fanny, and be unto me as a DAUGHTER?"—"Oh, most

gladly !" was the eager and agitated reply. " You artful creature !" exclaimed Cecilia, pale with rage and mortification, " You knew very well that she was behind the skreen."—" I know that she could *not* know it," replied the old lady ; " and you, Miss Livingstone, assert what you do not yourself believe. But come, Fanny, let us go and meet my carriage ; for, no doubt, your presence here is now as unwelcome as mine." But Fanny lingered, as if reluctant to depart. She could not bear to leave the Livingstones in anger. They had been kind to her ; and she would fain have parted with them affectionately ; but they all preserved a sullen indignant silence, and scornfully repelled her advances.— " You see that you must not tarry here, my good girl," observed the old lady, smiling ; " so let us depart."

They did so; leaving the Livingstones and the lover, not deploring their fault, but lamenting their detection;—lamenting also the hour when they added the lies of CONVENIENCE to their other deceptions, and had thereby enabled their unsuspecting dupe to detect those falsehoods, the result of their avaricious fears, which may be justly entitled the LIES OF INTEREST.

CHAP. VIII.

LIES OF FIRST-RATE MALIGNITY.

LIES OF FIRST-RATE MALIGNITY come next to be considered ; and I think that I am right in asserting that such lies,—lies intended *wilfully* to destroy the reputation of men and women, to injure their characters in publick or private estimation, and for ever cloud over their prospects in life,—are less frequent than falsehoods of any other description.

Not that malignity is an unfrequent feeling ;—not that dislike, or envy, or jealousy, would not gladly vent itself in many a malignant falsehood,

or other efforts of the same kind, against the peace and fame of its often innocent and unconscious objects ;—but that the arm of the law, *in some measure* at least, defends reputations : and if it should not have been able to deter the slanderer from his purpose, it can at least avenge the slandered.

Still, such is the prevailing tendency, in society, to prey on the reputations of others (especially of those who are at all *distinguished*, either in publick or private life) ; such the propensity to impute BAD MOTIVES to GOOD ACTIONS ; so common the fiend-like pleasure of finding or imagining blemishes in beings on whom even a *motive-judging world* in general gazes with respectful admiration, and bestows the sacred tribute of well-earned praise ; that I am convinced there are

many persons, worn both in mind and body by the consciousness of being the objects of calumnies and suspicions which they have it not in their power to combat, who steal broken-hearted to their graves, thankful for the summons of death, and hoping to find refuge from the injustice of their fellow-creatures in the bosom of their God and Saviour.

With the following *illustration* of the LIE OF FIRST-RATE MALIGNITY I shall conclude my observations on this subject.

THE ORPHAN.

THERE are persons in the world whom circumstances have so entirely preserved from intercourse with the base and the malignant, and whose

dispositions are so free from bitterness, that they can scarcely believe in the existence of baseness and malignity. Such persons, when they hear of injuries committed, and wrongs done, at the instigation of the most trivial and apparently worthless motives, are apt to exclaim, "You have been imposed upon. No one could be so wicked as to act thus upon such slight grounds ; and you are not relating as a sober observer of human nature and human action, but with the exaggerated view of a dealer in fiction and romance !" Happy, and privileged beyond the ordinary charter of human beings, are those who can thus exclaim ;—but the inhabitants of the tropics might, with equal justice, refuse to believe in the existence of that thing called snow, as these unbelievers in the moral turpitude in question

refuse their credence to anecdotes which disclose it. All they can with propriety assert is, that such instances have not come under their cognizance. Yet, even to these favoured few, I would put the following questions:— Have you never experienced feelings of selfishness, anger, jealousy, or envy, which, though habits of religious and moral restraint taught you easily to subdue them, had yet troubled you long enough to make you fully sensible of their existence and their power? If so, is it not easy to believe that such feelings, when excited in the minds of those not under religious and moral guidance, may grow to such an unrestrained excess as to lead to actions and lies of terrible malignity?

I cannot but think that even the purest and best of my friends must answer in the affirmative. Still, they

have reason to return thanks to their Creator, that their lot has been cast amongst such “pleasant places;” and that it is theirs to breathe an atmosphere impregnated only with airs from heaven.

My lot, from a peculiar train of circumstances, has certainly been somewhat differently cast; and when I give the following story, to illustrate a lie of FIRST-RATE MALIGNITY, I do so with the certain knowledge that its foundation is truth.

CONSTANTIA GORDON was the only child of a professional man, of great eminence, in a provincial town. Her mother was taken from her before she had attained the age of womanhood, but not before the wise and pious precepts which she gave her had taken

deep root, and had therefore counteracted the otherwise pernicious effects of a showy and elaborate education. Constantia's talents were considerable ; and as her application was equal to them, she was, at an early age, distinguished in her native place for her learning and accomplishments.

Among the most intimate associates of her father, was a gentleman of the name of Overton ; a man of some talent, and some acquirement ; but, as his pretensions to eminence were not as universally allowed as he thought that they ought to have been, he was extremely tenacious of his own consequence, excessively envious of the slightest successes of others, while any dissent from his dogmas was an offence which his mean soul was incapable of forgiving.

It was only too natural that Con-

stantia, as she was the petted, though not spoiled, child of a fond father, and the little sun of the circle in which she moved, was, perhaps, only too forward in giving her opinion on literature, and on some other subjects, which are not usually discussed by women at all, and still less by girls at her time of life; and she had sometimes ventured to disagree in opinion with Oracle Overton—the nickname by which this man was known. But he commonly took refuge in sarcastic observations on the ignorance and presumption of women in general, and of blue-stockings girls in particular, while on his face a grin of conscious superiority contended with the frown of pedantic indignation.

Hitherto this collision of wits had taken place in Constantia's domestic circle only; but, one day, Overton

and the former met at the house of a nobleman in the neighbourhood, and in company with many persons of considerable talent. While they were at table, the master of the house said that it was his birthday; and some one immediately proposed that all the guests, who could write verses, should produce one couplet at least, in honour of the day.

But as Overton and Constantia were the only persons present who were known to be so gifted, they alone were assailed with earnest entreaties to employ their talents on the occasion. The latter, however, was prevented by timidity from compliance; and she persevered in her refusal, though Overton loudly conjured her to indulge the company with a display of her *wonderful genius*; accompanying his words with a sarcastic smile, which

she well understood. Overton's muse, therefore, since Constantia would not let hers enter into the competition, walked over the course ; having been highly applauded for a *médiocre* stanza of eight doggrel lines. But, as Constantia's timidity vanished when she found herself alone with the ladies in the drawing-room, who were most of them friends of hers, she at length produced some verses, which not only delighted her affectionate companions, but, when shown to the gentlemen, drew from them more and warmer encomiums than had been bestowed on the frothy tribute of her competitor ; while the writhing and mortified Overton forced himself to say they were very well, very well indeed, for a scribbling miss of sixteen ; insinuating at the same time that the pretended extempore was one written by

her father at home, and gotten by heart by herself. But the giver of the feast declared that he had forgotten it was his birthday, till he sat down to table; therefore, as every one said, although the verses were written by a girl of sixteen only, they would have done honour to a riper age. Overton gained nothing but added mortification from his mean attempt to blight Constantia's well-earned laurels, especially as his ungenerous conduct drew on him severe animadversions from some of the other guests. His fair rival also unwittingly deepened his resentment against herself, by venturing, in a playful manner, being emboldened by success, to dispute some of his paradoxes;—and once she did it so successfully, that she got the laugh against Overton, in a manner so offensive to his self-love, that he

suddenly left the company, vowing revenge, in his heart, against the being who had thus shone at his expense. However, he continued to visit at her father's house; and was still considered as their most intimate friend.

Constantia, meanwhile, increased not only both in beauty and accomplishments, but in qualities of a more precious nature; namely, in a knowledge of her christian duties. But her charities were performed in secret, and so fearful was she of being deemed righteous overmuch, and considered as an enthusiast, even by her father himself, that the soundness of her religious character was known only to the sceptical Overton, and two or three more of her associates, while it was a notorious fact, that the usual companions of her father and herself were

freethinkers and latitudinarians, both in politicks and religion. But, if Constantia did not lay open her religious faith to those by whom she was surrounded, she fed its lamp in her own bosom, with never-ceasing watchfulness; and, like the solitary light in a cottage on the dark and lonely moors, it beamed on her hours of solitude and retirement, cheering and warming her amidst surrounding darkness.

It was to do yet more for her. It was to support her, not only under the sudden death of a father whom she tenderly loved, but under the unexpected loss of income which his death occasioned. On examining his affairs, it was discovered that, when his debts were all paid, there would be a bare maintenance only remaining for his afflicted orphan.

Constantia's sorrow, though deep,

was quiet and gentle as her nature; and she felt, with unspeakable thankfulness, that she owed the tranquillity and resignation of her mind to her religious convictions alone.

The interesting orphan had only just returned into the society of her friends, when a Sir Edward Vandeleur, a young baronet of large fortune, came on a visit in the neighbourhood.

Sir Edward was the darling and pride of a highly-gifted mother, and several amiable sisters; and Lady Vandeleur, who was in declining health, had often urged her son to let her have the satisfaction of seeing him married before she was taken away from him.

But, it was no easy thing for a man like Sir Edward Vandeleur to find a wife suited to him. His feelings were

too much under a strong religious restraint, to admit of his falling violently in love, as the phrase is ; and beauty and accomplishments had no chance of captivating his heart, unless they were accompanied by qualities which fully satisfied his principles and his judgment.

It was at this period of his life that Sir Edward Vandeleur was introduced to Constantia Gordon, at a small conversation party, at the house of a mutual acquaintance.

Her beauty, her graceful manners, over which sorrow had cast a new and sobered charm, and her great conversational powers, made her presently an object of interest to Sir Edward ; and when he heard her story, that interest was considerably increased by pity for her orphan state and altered circumstances.

Therefore, though Sir Edward saw Constantia rarely, and never, except at one house, he felt her at every interview growing more on his esteem and admiration; and he often thought of the recluse in her mourning simple attire, and wished himself by her side, when he was the courted, flattered attendant on a reigning belle.

Not that he was in love;—that is, not that he had imbibed an attachment which his reason could not at once enable him to conquer, if it should ever disapprove its continuance;—but his judgment, as well as his taste, told him that Constantia was the sort of woman to pass life with. “Seek for a companion in a wife!” had always been his mother’s advice. “Seek for a woman who has understanding enough to know her duties, and piety and principle enough to

enable her to fulfil them ; one who can teach her children to follow in her steps, and form them for virtue here, and happiness hereafter !” “ Surely,” thought Sir Edward, as he recalled this natural advice, “ I have found the woman so described in Constantia Gordon !” But he was still too prudent to pay her any marked attention ; especially as Lady Vandeleur had recommended caution.

At this moment his mother wrote thus :—

“ I do not see any apparent objection to the lady in question.—Still, be cautious ! Is there no one at —— who has known her from her childhood, and can give you an account of her and her moral and religious principles, which can be relied upon ? Death, that great discoverer of secrets, proved that her father was not a very

worthy man, still, bad parents have good children, and *vice versa*; but, inquire and be wary."

The day after Sir Edward received this letter, at the house of a gentleman in the neighbourhood; and at the the most unfortunate period possible for Constantia Gordon, he was introduced to Overton. Overton had always pretended to have a sincere regard for the poor orphan, and no one was more loud in regrets for her reduced fortune; but, as he was fond of giving her pain, he used to mingle so many severe remarks on her father's thoughtless conduct with his pity, that had he not been her father's most familiar friend, she would have forbidden him her presence.

One day, having found her alone at her lodgings, he accompanied his expressions of affected condolence

with a proposal to give her a bank-note now and then, to buy her a new gown ; as he was (he said) afraid that she would not have money sufficient to set off her charms to advantage. To real kindness, however vulgarly worded, Constantia's heart was ever open ; but she immediately saw that this offer, prefaced as it was by abuse of her father, was merely the result of malignity and coarseness combined ; and her spirit, though habitually gentle, was roused to indignant resentment.

But who, that has ever experienced the bitterness of feeling excited by the cold, spiteful efforts of a malignant temper to irritate a gentle and generous nature, can withhold their sympathy and pardon from Constantia on this occasion ? At last, gratified at having made his victim a while forego her nature, and at being now enabled

to represent her as a vixen; he took his leave with hypocritical kindness, calling her his "*naughty scolding Con,*" leaving her to humble herself before that Being whom she feared to have offended by her violence, and to weep over the recollection of an interview which had added, to her other miseries, that of self-reproach.

Overton, meanwhile, did not retire unhurt from the combat. The orphan had uttered, in her agony, some truths which he could not forget. She had held up to him a mirror of himself, from which he found it difficult to turn away, while in proportion to his sense of suffering was his resentment against its fair cause; and his desire of revenge was in proportion to both.

It was on this very day that he dined in company with Sir Edward Vandeleur, who was soon informed, by the

master of the house, that Overton had been, from her childhood, the friend and intimate of Constantia Gordon; and the same gentleman informed Overton, in private, that Sir Edward was supposed to entertain thoughts of paying his addresses to Constantia.

Inexpressible was Overton's consternation at hearing that this girl, whose poverty he had insulted, whom he disliked because she had been a thorn to his self-love, and under whose just severity he was still smarting, was likely, not only to be removed from his power to torment her, but to be raised above him by a fortunate marriage.

Great was his triumph, therefore, when Sir Edward, before they parted, requested an interview with him the following morning, at his lodgings in the town of ——, adding, that he

wished to ask him some questions concerning their mutual friend, Constantia Gordon.

Accordingly they met ; and the following conversation took place. Sir Edward began by candidly confessing the high opinion which he had conceived of Constantia, and his earnest wish to have its justice confirmed by the testimony of her oldest and most intimate friend. “ Sir Edward,” replied the exulting hypocrite, with well-acted reluctance, “ you put an honourable and a kind-hearted man, like myself, into a complete *embarras*.” — “ Sir, what do I hear ?” cried Sir Edward, starting from his seat, “ Can you feel any embarrassment, when called upon to bear testimony in favour of Constantia Gordon ?” — “ I dare say *you* cannot think such a thing possible,” he replied with a sneer ; “ for men in

love are usually blind.”—“But I am not in love yet,” eagerly replied Sir Edward; “and it very much depends on this conversation whether I ever am so with the lady in question.”—“Well then, Sir Edward, however unpalatable, I must speak the truth. I need not tell you that Constantia is beautiful, accomplished, and *talented*, is, I think, the *new* word.”—“No, Sir; I already know she is all these; and she appears to me as gentle, virtuous, and pious, as she is beautiful.”—I dare say she does; but, as to her *gentleness*, however I might provoke her improperly;—but, I assure you, she flew into such a passion with me yesterday, that I thought she would have struck me!”—“Is it possible? I really feel a difficulty in believing you!”—“No doubt;—so let us talk of something else.”—“No, no,—

Mr. Overton; I came hither to be informed on a subject deeply interesting to me, and, at whatever risk of disappointment, I will await all you have to say.”—“I have nothing to say, Sir Edward, you know Con is beautiful and charming; and is not that enough?”—“No; it is *not* enough. Outward graces are not sufficient to captivate and fix me, unless they are accompanied by charms that fade not with time, but blossom to eternity.” “Whew!” exclaimed Overton, with well-acted surprise, “I see that you are a methodist, Sir Edward; and if so, my friend Con will not suit you.” “Does it follow that I am a methodist, because I require that my wife should be a woman of pious and moral habits?”—“Oh! for *morals*, these, indeed, my friend Con would suit you well enough. Let her morals pass;

—but as to her *piety*, religion will never turn her head.”—“What do you mean, Mr. Overton?”—“Why, Sir, our lovely friend has learned, from the company which she has kept, to think freely on such subjects ;—very freely ;—for women, you know, always go to extremes. *Men* keep within the rational bounds of *deism* ; but the female sceptic, weaker in intellect, and incapable of reasoning, never rests, till she loses herself in the mazes and absurdities of atheism.” Had Sir Edward Vandeleur seen the fair smooth skin of Constantia suddenly covered with leprosy, he would not have been more shocked than he was at being informed of this utter blight to her mental beauty in his rightly-judging eyes ;—and, starting from his seat, he exclaimed, “do you really mean to assert that your fair friend is

an atheist?"—"Sir Edward, I am Constantia's friend; and I was her father's friend; and I am sorry these things have been forced from me;—but I could not deceive an honourable man, who placed confidence also in my honour; though, as Constantia is the child of an old friend, and poor, it would be, perhaps, a saving to my pocket, if she were well married."—"Then, it is true!" said Sir Edward, clasping his hands in agony; and this lovely girl is what I hate to name! Yet, she looks so right-minded! and I have thought the expression of her dark blue eye was that of pious resignation!"—"Yes, yes; I know that look; and she knows that is her *prettiest* look. That eye, half turned up, shews her fine long dark eyelashes to great advantage!"—"Alas!" replied Sir Edward, deeply sighing, "if this

be so—oh! what are looks! Good morning. You have distressed, but you have *saved* me.—When Overton, soon after, saw Sir Edward drive past in his splendid curricule, he exulted that he had prevented Constantia from ever sitting there by his side.

Yet he was, as I have said before, one of the few who knew how deeply and sincerely Constantia was a believer; for he had himself, in vain, attempted to shake her belief, and thence, he had probably a double pleasure in representing her as he did.

Sir Edward was engaged that evening to meet Constantia at the accustomed house; and, as his attentions to her had been rather marked, and her friends, with the usual dangerous officiousness on such occasions, had endeavoured to convince her that she had made a *conquest*, as the phrase is,

of the young baronet, the expectation of meeting him was become a circumstance of no small interest to her; though she was far too humble to be convinced that they were right in their conjectures.

But the mind of Constantia was too much under the guidance of religious principle, to allow her to love any man, however amiable, unless she was sure of being beloved by him. She was too delicate, and had too much self-respect, to be capable of such a weakness; she therefore escaped that danger, of which I have seen the peace of some young women become the victim; namely, that of being talked and flattered into a hopeless passion by the idle wishes and representations of gossiping acquaintances. And well was it for her peace that she had been thus *holily* on her guard; for when

Sir Edward Vandeleur, instead of keeping his engagement, sent a note to inform her friend that he was not able to wait on her, as he thought of going to London the next day, Constantia felt that the idea of his attachment was as unfounded as it had been pleasing, and she rejoiced that the illusion had not been long enough to endanger her tranquillity. Still, she could not but own, in the secret of her heart, that the prospect of passing life with a being apparently so suited to herself, was one on which her thoughts had dwelt with involuntary pleasure; and a tear started to her eyes, at the idea that she might see him no more. But, she considered it as the tear of weakness, and though her sleep that night was short, it was tranquil, and she rose the next morning to resume the duties of the day

with her accustomed alacrity. In her walks she met Sir Edward, but, happily for her, as he was leaning on Overton's arm, whom she had not seen since she had parted with him in anger, a turn was given to her feelings, by the approach of the latter, which enabled her to conquer at once her emotion at the unexpected sight of the former. Still, the sight of Overton occasioned in her disagreeable and painful recollections, which gave an unpleasing and equivocal expression to her beautiful features, and enabled Overton to observe, "You see, Sir Edward, how her conscience flies in her face at seeing me!" "How are you? How are you?" said Overton, catching her hand as she passed.— "Have you forgiven me yet?" Oh! you vixen, how you scolded me the other day!" Constantia, too much

mortified and agitated to speak, and repel the charge, replied by a look of indignation; and, snatching her hand away, she bowed to Sir Edward, and hastened out of sight. “You see,” cried Overton, “that she resents still! and how like a fury she looked! You must be convinced that I told you the truth. Now, could you believe, Sir Edward, that pretty Con could have looked in that manner?”—“Certainly not; and appearances are indeed deceitful.” Still, Sir Edward wished Constantia had given him an opportunity of bidding her farewell; however, he left his good wishes and respects for her with their mutual friend, and set off that evening to join his mother at Hastings. “But are you sure, Edward,” said Lady Vandeleur, when he had related to her all that had passed, “that this Overton is

a man to be depended upon ?"—“ Oh, yes ! and he could have no *motive* for calumniating her, but the contrary, as it would have been a relief to his mind and pocket to get his old friend's daughter well married.”—“ But, does she appear to her other friends neglectful of her religious duties, and as if she had really no religion at all ?”—“ So far from it, that she has always been punctual in the *outward* performance of them ; therefore, no one but Overton, the confidential friend and intimate of the family, could suspect or *know* her real opinions ; thus she adds, I fear, *hypocrisy* to scepticism. Overton also accuses her of being violent in her temper ; and I was unexpectedly enabled to see the truth of this accusation, in a measure, confirmed. Therefore, indeed, dear mother, all I have to do is to forget her, and resume my

intention of accompanying you and my sisters to the continent." Accordingly they set off very soon on a foreign tour.

Constantia, after she left Overton and Sir Edward so hastily and suddenly, returned home in no enviable state of mind ; because she felt sure that her manner had been such as to convince the latter that she was the violent creature which Overton had represented her to be ;—and though she had calmly resigned all idea of being beloved by Sir Edward Vandeleur, she was not entirely indifferent to his good opinion. Besides, she feared that her quitting him, without one word of kind farewell, might appear to him a proof of pique and disappointment ; nor could she be quite sure that somewhat of that feeling did not impel her to hasten abruptly away ;

and it was some time before she could conquer her self-blame and her regret. But, at length, she reflected that there was a want of proper self-government in dwelling at all on recollections of Sir Edward Vandeleur; and she forced herself into society and absorbing occupation.

Hitherto Constantia had been contented to remain in idleness; but, as her income was, she found, barely equal to her maintenance, and she was therefore obliged to relinquish nearly all her charities, she resolved to turn her talents to account; and was just about to decide between two plans, which she had thought desirable, when an uncle in India died, and the question was decided in a very welcome and unexpected manner. Till this gentleman married, her father had such large expectations from him,

that he had fancied them a sufficient excuse for his profuse expenditure ; but, when his brother, by having children, destroyed his hopes of wealth from that quarter, he had not strength of mind enough to break the expensive habits which he had acquired. To the deserving child, however, was destined the wealth withheld from the undeserving parent. Constantia's uncle's wife and children died before he did, and she became sole heiress to his large fortune. This event communicated a sensation of gladness to the whole town in which the amiable orphan resided.

Constantia had borne her faculties so meekly, had been so actively benevolent, and was thence so generally beloved, that she was now daily overpowered with thankful and pleasing emotion, at beholding countenances

which, at sight of her, were lighted up with affectionate sympathy and joy.

Overton was one of the first persons whom she desired to see, on this accession of fortune. Her truly christian spirit had long made her wish to hold out to him her hand, in token of forgiveness; but she wished to do so more especially now, because he could not suspect her of being influenced by any mercenary views. Overton, however, meant to call on her, whether she invited him or not; as, such was his love and respect for *wealth*, that, though the *poor* Constantia was full of faults in his eye, the *rich* Constantia was very likely to appear to him, in time, impeccable. He was at this period Mayor of the place in which he lived; and, having been knighted for carrying up an address, he became desirous of

using the privilege, which, according to Shakespeare's Falconbridge, knight-hood gives a man, of making "any Joan a lady." Nor was it long before he entertained serious thoughts of marrying; and why not? as he was only fifty; was very young-looking for his age; was excessively handsome still; and had now a title, in addition to a good fortune. The only difficulty was to make a choice; for he was very sure that *he* must be the choice of any one to whom he offered himself.

But where could he find in one woman all the qualities which he required in a wife! She must have youth, and beauty, or he could not love her; good principles, or he could not trust her; and, though he was not religious himself, he had a certain consciousness that the best safeguard for a woman's principles was to be found in piety;

therefore, he resolved that his wife should be a *religious* woman. Temper, patience, and forbearance, were also requisites in the woman he married; and, as the last and best recommendation, she must have a large fortune. Reasonable man! youth, beauty, temper, virtue, piety, and riches! but what woman of his acquaintance possessed all these? No one, he believed, but that forgiving being whom he had represented as an atheist;—"that vixen, Con!" and while this conviction came over his mind, a blush of shame passed over even his brassy brow.—However, it was soon succeeded by one of pleasure, when he thought that, as Constantia was evidently uneasy till she had *made it up with him*, as the phrase is, it was not unlikely that she had a secret liking to him; and as to her

scribbling verses, and pretending to be literary, he would take care that she should not write when she was his wife; and he really thought he had better propose to her at once, especially as it was a duty in him to make her a lady himself, since he had prevented another man's doing so. There was perhaps another inducement to marry Constantia. It would give him an opportunity of tormenting her now and then, and making her smart for former impertinences. Perhaps, this motive was nearly as strong as the rest. Be that as it may, Overton had, at length, the presumption to make proposals of marriage to the young and *lovely* heiress, who, though ignorant of his base conduct to her, and the **LIE OF FIRST-RATE MALIG-NITY** with which he had injured her fame, and blighted her prospects,

had still a dislike to his manners and his character, which it was impossible for any thing to overcome. He was therefore refused,—and in a manner so decided, and, spite of herself, so haughty, that Overton's heart renewed all its malignity towards her; and his manner became so rude and offensive, that she was constrained to refuse him admittance, and go on a visit to a friend at some distance, intending not to return till the house which she had purchased in a village near to —— was ready for her. But she had not been absent many months, when she received a letter one evening, to inform her that her dearest friend at —— was supposed to be in the greatest danger, and she was requested to set off directly. To disobey this summons was impossible; and, as the mail passed the house

where she was, and she was certain of getting on faster that way than any other, she resolved, accompanied by her servant, to go by the mail, if possible; and, happily, there were two places vacant. It was night when Constantia and her maid entered the coach, in which two gentlemen were already seated; and, to the consternation of Constantia, she soon saw, as they passed near a lamp, that her *vis-à-vis* was Overton! He recognized her at the same moment; and instantly began, in the French language, to express his joy at meeting her, and to profess the faithfulness of his fervent affection. In vain did she try to force conversation with the other passenger, who seemed willing to talk, and who, though evidently not a gentleman, was much preferable, in her opinion, to the new Sir Richard. He would not allow

her to attend to any conversation but his own ; and, as it was with difficulty that she could keep her hand from his rude grasp, she tried to change seats with her maid ; but Overton forcibly withheld her ; and she thought it was better to endure the evil patiently, than violently resist it. When the mail stopped, that the passengers might sup, Constantia hoped *Overton* would, at least, leave her for a time ; but, though the other passenger got out, he kept his seat, and was so persevering, and was so much more disagreeable when the restraint imposed on him by the presence of others was removed, that she was glad when the coach was again full, and the mail drove off.

Overton, however, became so increasingly offensive to her, that, at length, she assured him, in language the most solemn and decided, that

nothing should ever induce her to be his wife; and that, were she penniless, *service* would be more desirable to her than union with him.

This roused his anger even to frenzy; and, still speaking French, a language which he was sure the illiterate man in the corner could not understand, he told her that she refused him only because she loved Sir Edward Vandeleur; “but,” said he, “you have no chance of obtaining him. I have taken care to prevent *that*. I gave him such a character of you as frightened him away from you, and” “Base-minded man!” cried Constantia; “what did you, what could you, say against my character?”—“Oh! I said nothing against your morals. I only told him you were an atheist, and a vixen, that is all;”—and, you know, you are the latter, though not the

former; but are more like a methodist than an atheist!" — "And you told him these horrible falsehoods! And if you had not, would he have did he then? but I know not what I say; and I am miserable! Cruel, wicked man! how could you thus dare to injure and misrepresent an unprotected orphan! and the child of your friend! and to calumniate me to *him* too! to Sir Edward Vandeleur! Oh! it was cruel indeed!" — "What! then you wished to please him, did you? answer me!" he vociferated, seizing both her hands in his; "Are you attached to Sir Edward Vandeleur?" But, before Constantia could answer no, and, while faintly screaming with apprehension and pain, she vainly tried to free herself from Overton's nervous grasp, a powerful hand rescued her from the ruffian gripe.

Then, while the dawn shone brightly upon his face, Constantia and Overton at the same moment recognized, in her rescuer, Sir Edward Vandeleur himself!

He was just returned from France; and was on his way to the neighbourhood of ———; being now, as he believed, able to see Constantia with entire indifference, when, as one of his horses became ill, he resolved to take that place in the mail which the other passenger had quitted for the box; and had thus the pleasure of hearing all suspicions, all imputations, against the character of Constantia cleared off, and removed, at once, and for ever! Constantia's joy was little inferior to his own; but it was soon lost in terror at the probable result of the angry emotions of Sir Edward and Overton. Her fear, however, vanished,

when the former assured the latter, that the man who could injure an innocent woman, by a lie of FIRST-RATE MALIGNITY, was beneath even the resentment of an honourable man.

I shall only add, that Overton left the mail at the next stage, baffled, disgraced, and miserable; that Constancia found her friend recovering; and that, the next time she travelled along that road, it was as the bride of Sir Edward Vandeleur.

CHAP. IX.

LIES OF SECOND-RATE MALIGNITY.

I HAVE observed, in the foregoing chapter, that LIES OF FIRST-RATE MALIGNITY are not frequent, because the arm of the law defends reputations;—but, against lies of second-rate malignity, the law holds out no protection; nor is there a tribunal of sufficient power either to deter any one from uttering them, or to punish the utterer. The lies in question spring from the spirit of detraction; a spirit more widely diffused in society than

any other; and it gives birth to satire, ridicule, mimickry, quizzing, and lies of second-rate malignity, as certainly as a wet season brings snails.

I shall now explain what I consider as lies of SECOND-RATE MALIGNITY;—namely, tempting persons, by dint of flattery, to do what they are incapable of doing well, from the mean, malicious wish of leading them to expose themselves, in order that their tempter may enjoy a hearty laugh at their expense. Persuading a man to drink more than his head can bear, by assurances that *the wine is not strong*, and that he has not drunk as much as he thinks he has, in order to make him intoxicated, and that his persuaders may enjoy the cruel delight of witnessing his drunken silliness, his probable vainglorious boastings, and those physical contortions, or mental weakness-

es, which intoxication is always sure to produce. Complimenting either man or woman on qualities which they do not possess, in hopes of imposing on their credulity; praising a lady's work, or dress, to her face; and then, as soon as she is no longer present, not only abusing both her work and her dress, but laughing at her weakness, in believing the praise sincere. Lavishing encomiums on a man's abilities and learning in his presence; and then, as soon as he is out of hearing, expressing contempt for his credulous belief in the sincerity of the praises bestowed; and wonder that he should be so blind and conceited as not to know that he was in learning only a snatterer, and in understanding just not a fool. All these are lies of *second-rate malignity*, which cannot be exceeded in *base and petty treachery*.

The following story will, I trust, explain fully what, in the common intercourse of society, I consider as LIES OF SECOND-RATE MALIGNITY.

THE OLD GENTLEMAN AND THE
YOUNG ONE.

NOTHING shews the force of habit more than the tenaciousness with which those adhere to economical usages who, by their own industry and unexpected good fortune, are become rich in the decline of life.

A gentleman, whom I shall call Dr. Albany, had, early in life, taken his degree at Cambridge, as a doctor of physick, and had settled in London

as a physician ; but had worn away the best part of his existence in vain expectation of practice, when an old bachelor, a college friend, whom he had greatly served, died, and left him the whole of his large fortune.

Dr. Albany had indeed *deserved* this bequest ; for he had rendered his friend the greatest of all services. He had rescued him, by his friendly advice, and enlightened arguments, from scepticism, apparently the most hopeless ; and, both by precept and example, had allured him along the way that leads to salvation.

But, as wealth came to Dr. Albany too late in life for him to think of marrying, and as he had no relations who needed all his fortune, he resolved to leave the greatest part of it to those friends who wanted it the most.

Hitherto, he had scarcely ever left

London; as he had thought it right to wait at home to receive business, even though business never came; but now he was resolved to renew the neglected acquaintances of his youth; and, knowing that some of his early friends lived near Cheltenham, Leamington, and Malvern, he resolved to visit those watering-places, in hopes of meeting there some of these well-remembered faces.

Most men, under his circumstances, would have ordered a handsome carriage, and entered Cheltenham in style; but, as I before observed, habits of economy adhere so closely to persons thus situated, that Dr. Albany could not prevail on himself to travel in a manner more in apparent accordance with the acquisition of such a fortune. He therefore went by a cheap day-coach; nor did he take a servant

with him. But, though still denying indulgences to himself, the first wish of his heart was to be generous to others ; and, surely, that economy which is unaccompanied by avarice may, even in the midst of wealth, be denominated a virtue.

While dinner was serving up, when they stopped on the road, Albany walked up a hill near the inn, and was joined there by a passenger from another coach. During their walk he observed a very pretty house on a rising ground in the distance, and asked his companion, who lived there.—The latter replied that it was the residence of a clergyman, of the name of Musgrave. “Musgrave!” he eagerly replied, “what Musgrave? Is his name Augustus?”—“Yes;”—“Is he married?”—“Yes;”—“Has he a family?”—“Oh yes; a large one; six daughters,

and one son; and he has found it a hard task to bring them up, as he wished to make them accomplished. The son is now going to college.” —“ Are they an amiable family?” —“ Very; the girls sing and play well, and draw well.” —“ And what is the son to be?” —“ A clergyman.” —“ Has he any chance of a living?” —“ Not that I know of; but he must be something; and a legacy which the father has just had, of a few hundred pounds, will enable him to pay college expenses, till his son gets ordained, and can take curacies.” —“ Is Musgrave,” said Albany after a pause, “ a likely man to give a cordial welcome to an old friend, whom he has not seen for many years?” —“ Oh yes; he is very hospitable; and there he is, now going into his own gate.” —“ Then I will not go on,” said Albany, hastening to the

stables. "There, coachman," cried he, "take your money; and give me my little portmanteau."

Augustus Musgrave had been a favourite college friend of Dr. Albany's, and he had many associations with his name and image, which were dear to his heart.

The objects of them were gone for ever; but, thus recalled, they came over his mind like strains of long-forgotten musick, which he had loved and carolled in youth; throwing so strong a feeling of tenderness over the recollection of Musgrave, that he felt an irresistible desire to see him again, and greet his wife and children in the language of glowing good-will.

But, when he was introduced into his friend's presence, he had the mortification of finding that he was not recognized; and was obliged to tell his name.

The name, however, seemed to electrify Musgrave with affectionate gladness. He shook his old friend heartily by the hand, presented him to his wife and daughters, and for some minutes moved and spoke with the brightness and alacrity of early youth.

The animation, however, was momentary. The cares of a family, and the difficulty of keeping up the appearance of a gentleman with an income not sufficient for his means, had preyed on Musgrave's spirits; especially as he knew himself to be involved in debt. He had also other cares. The weakness of his nature, which he dignified by the name of tenderness of heart, had made him allow his wife and children to tyrannize over him; and his son, who was an universal quizzer, did not permit even his

father to escape from his impertinent ridicule. But then Musgrave was assured, by his own family, that his son Marmaduke was a wit; and that, when he was once in orders, his talents would introduce him into the first circles, and lead to ultimate promotion in his profession.

I have before said that Dr. Albany did not travel like a gentleman; nor were his every-day clothes at all indicative of a well-filled purse. Therefore, though he was a physician, and a man of pleasing manners, Musgrave's fine lady wife, and her *tonish* daughters, could have readily excused him, if he had not persuaded their unexpected guest to stay a week with them; and, with a frowning brow, they saw the portmanteau, which the *strange person* had brought himself, carried into the best chamber.

But oh ! the astonishment and the comical grimaces with which Marmaduke Musgrave, on his coming in from fishing, beheld the new guest ! Welcome smiled on one side of his face, but scorn sneered on the other ; and when Albany retired to dress, he declared that the only thing which consoled him for finding such a person forced on them, was the consciousness that he could extract great fun out of the old quiz, and serve him up for the entertainment of himself and friends.

To this amiable exhibition the mother and daughters looked forward with great satisfaction ; while his father, having vainly talked of the dues of hospitality, gave in, knowing that it was in vain to contend ; comforting himself with the hope that, while Marmaduke was quizzing his guest,

he must necessarily leave him alone.

In the mean while, how different were the cogitations and the plans of the benevolent Albany! He had a long *tete-à-tete* walk with Musgrave, which had convinced him that his old friend was not happy, owing, he suspected, to his narrow income and expensive family.

Then his son was going to college; a dangerous and ruinous place: and, while the good old man was dressing for dinner, he had laid plans of action which made him feel more deeply thankful than ever for the wealth so unexpectedly bestowed on him. Of this wealth he had, as yet, said nothing to Musgrave. He was not purse-proud; and when he heard his friend complain of his poverty, he shrunk from saying how rich he himself was. He had therefore simply said that he

was enabled to retire from business ; and when Musgrave saw his friend's independent, economical habits, as evinced by his mode of travelling, he concluded that he had only gained a small independence, sufficient for his slender wants.

To those, to whom amusement is every thing, and who can enjoy fun even when it is procured by the sacrifice of every benevolent feeling, that evening at the rectory, when the family party was increased by the arrival of some of the neighbours, would have been an *exquisite treat* ; for Marmaduke played off the unsuspecting old man to admiration ; mimicked him even to his face, unperceived by him ; and having found out that Albany had not only a passion for musick, but unfortunately fancied that he could sing himself, he urged his guest, by his

flatteries, lies of SECOND-RATE MALIGNITY, to sing song after song, in order to make him expose himself for the entertainment of the company, and give him an opportunity of perfecting his mimickry.

Blind, infatuated, contemptible boy! short-sighted trifler on the path of the world! Marmaduke Musgrave saw not that the very persons who seemed to idolize his pernicious talents must, unless they were lost to all sense of moral feeling, despise and distrust the youth who could play on the weakness of an unoffending, artless old man, and violate the rights of hospitality to his father's friend.

But Marmaduke had no heart, and but little mind; for mimickry is the lowest of the talents; and to be even a successful quizzer requires no talent at all. But his father had once a heart,

though cares and pecuniary embarrassments had choked it up, and substituted selfishness for sensibility: the sight of his early companion had called some of the latter quality into action; and he seriously expostulated with his son on his daring to turn so respectable a man into ridicule. But Marmaduke answered him by insolent disregard; and when he also said, if your friend be so silly as to sing, that is, do what he *cannot* do, am I not justified in laughing at him? Musgrave assented to the proposition. He might however have replied, “but you are not justified in lying, in order to urge him on, nor in saying, to him, “you can sing,” when you know he *cannot*. If he be *weak*, it is not necessary that you should be *treacherous*.” But Musgrave always came off halting from a combat with his undutiful son: he therefore sighed, ceas-

ed, and turned away. On one point Marmaduke was right:—when vanity prompts us to do what we cannot do well, while conceit leads us to fancy that our efforts are successful, we are perhaps fit objects for ridicule. A consideration which holds up to us this important lesson; namely, that our *own weakness* alone can, for any length of time, make us victims of the satire and malignity of others. When Albany's visit to Musgrave was drawing near to its conclusion, he was very desirous of being asked to prolong it, as he had become attached to his friend's children, from living with them, and witnessing their various accomplishments, and was completely the dupe of Marmaduke's treacherous compliments. He was therefore glad when he, as well as the Musgraves, was invited to dine

at a house in the neighbourhood, on the very day intended for his departure. This circumstance led them all, with one accord, to say that he must remain at least a day longer, while Marmaduke exclaimed, “Go you shall not! Our friends would be so disappointed, if they and their company did not hear you sing and act that sweet song about Chloe! and all the pleasure of the evening would be destroyed to me, dear Sir, if you were not there!”

This was more than enough to make Albany put off his departure; and he accompanied the Musgraves to the dinner party. They dined at an early hour; so early, that it was yet daylight, when, tea being over, the intended amusements of the afternoon began, of which the most prominent was to be the vocal powers of the

mistaken Albany, who, without much pressing, after sundry flatteries from Marmaduke, cleared his throat, and began to sing and act the song of "Chloe." At first, he was hoarse, and stopped to apologize for want of voice ; " Nonsense ! cried Marmaduke, you were never in better voice in your life ! Pray go on ; you are only nervous !" while the side of his face *not* next to Albany was distorted with laughter and ridicule. Albany, believing him, continued his song, and Marmaduke, sitting a little behind him, took off the distorted expression of his countenance and mimicked his odd action. But, at this moment, the broadest splendour of the setting sun threw its beams into a large pier glass opposite, with such brightness, that Albany's eyes were suddenly attracted to it, and thence to his treacherous neighbour,

whom he detected in the act of mimicking him in mouth, attitude, and expression—while behind him he saw some of the company laughing with a degree of violence which was all but audible!

Albany paused, in speechless consternation—and when Marmaduke asked why “he did not go on, as every one was delighted,” the susceptible old man hid his face in his hands, shocked, mortified, and miserable, but taught and enlightened. Marmaduke however, nothing doubting, presumed to clap him on the back, again urging him to proceed; but the indignant Albany, turning suddenly round, and throwing off his arm with angry vehemence, exclaimed, in the touching tone of wounded feeling, “Oh! thou serpent, that I would have cherished in my bosom, was it for

thee to sting me thus? But I was an old fool; and the lesson, though a painful one, will, I trust, be salutary.” —“What is all this? what do you mean?” faltered out Marmaduke; but the rest of the party had not courage enough to speak; and many of them rejoiced in the detection of baseness which, though it amused their depraved taste, was very offensive to their moral sense. “What does it mean!” cried Albany, “I appeal to all present, whether they do not understand my meaning, and whether my resentment be not just!” —“I hope, my dear friend, that you acquit *me*,” said the distressed father. —“Of all,” he replied, “except of the fault of not having taught your son better morals and manners. “Young man!” he continued, “the next time you exhibit any one as your butt, take care that

you do not sit opposite a pier glass.”

“And now, Sir,” addressing himself to the master of the house, “let me request to have a postchaise sent for to the nearest town directly.”—

“Surely, you will not leave us, and in anger,” cried all the Musgraves, Marmaduke excepted. “I hope I do not go in anger, but I cannot stay,” cried he, “because I have lost my confidence in you.” The gentleman of the house, who thought Albany right in going, and wished to make him all the amends he could, for having allowed Marmaduke to turn him into ridicule, interrupted him, to say that his own carriage waited his orders, and would convey him whithersoever he wished. “I thank you, Sir, and accept your offer,” he replied, “since the sooner I quit this company, in which I have so lamentably exposed

myself, the better it will be for you, and for us all." Having said this, he took the agitated Musgrave by the hand, bowed to his wife and daughters, who hid their confusion under distant and haughty airs; *then*, stepping opposite to Marmaduke, who felt it difficult to meet the expression of that eye, on which just anger and a sense of injury had bestowed a power hitherto unknown to it, he addressed him thus: "Before we part, I must tell you, young man, that I intended, urged, I humbly trust, by virtuous considerations, to expend on your maintenance at college a part of that large income which I cannot spend on myself. I had also given orders to my agent to purchase for me the advowson of a living now on sale, intending to give it to you; here is the letter, to prove that I speak the truth;

but I need not tell you that I cannot make the fortune which was left me by a pious friend assist a youth to take on himself the sacred profession of a christian minister, who can utter falsehoods, in order to betray a fellow-creature into folly, utterly regardless of that christian precept, "Do unto others as ye would that others should do unto you." He then took leave of the rest of the company, and drove off, leaving the Musgraves chagrined and ashamed, and bitterly mortified at the loss of the intended patronage to Marmaduke, especially when a gentleman present exclaimed, "No doubt, this is the Dr. Albany, to whom Clewes of Trinity left his large fortune!"

Albany, taught by his misadventure in this worldly and treacherous family, went, soon after, to the abode of

another of his college friends, residing near Cheltenham. He expected to find this gentleman and his family in unclouded prosperity; but they were labouring under unexpected adversity, brought on them by the villany of others: he found them however bowed in lowly resignation before the inscrutable decree. On the pious son of these reduced but contented parents he, in due time, bestowed the living intended for the treacherous Marmaduke. Under their roof he experienced gratitude which he felt to be sincere, and affection in which he dared to confide; and, ultimately, he took up his abode with them, in a residence suited to their early prospects and his riches; for even the artless and unsuspecting can, without danger, associate and sojourn with those whose thoughts and actions are under

the guidance of religious principle, and who live in this world as if they every hour expected to be summoned away to the judgment of a world to come.

CHAP. X.

LIES OF BENEVOLENCE.

IN a former chapter I commented on those lies which are, at best, of a mixed nature, and are made up of worldly motives, of which fear and selfishness compose the principal part, although the utterer of them considers them as LIES OF BENEVOLENCE.

Lies of real benevolence are, like most other falsehoods, various in their species and degrees ; but, as they are, however in fact objectionable, the most amiable and respectable of all lies, and seem so like virtue that they may easily be taken for her children ; and as the illustrations of them,

which I have been enabled to give, are so much more connected with our tenderest and most solemn feelings, than those afforded by other lies ; I thought it right that, like the principal figures in a procession, they should bring up the rear.

The lies which relations and friends generally think it their duty to tell an unconsciously dying person, are prompted by real benevolence, as are those which medical men deem themselves justified in uttering to a dying patient; though, if the person dying, or the surrounding friends, be strictly religious characters, they must be, on principle, desirous that the whole truth should be told. *

* Richard Pearson, the distinguished author of the life of William Hey of Leeds, says, in that interesting book, p. 261, " Mr. Hey's sacred respect for truth, and his regard for the welfare of his fellow-creatures, never per-

Methinks I hear some of my readers exclaim, can any one suppose it a duty to run the risk of killing friends or relations, by telling the whole truth ;

mitted him intentionally to deceive his patients by flattering representations of their state of health, by assurances of the existence of no danger, when he conceived their situation to be hopeless, or even greatly hazardous. "The duty of a medical attendant," continues he, "in such delicate situations, has been a subject of considerable embarrassment to men of integrity and conscience, who view the uttering of a falsehood as a crime, and the practice of deceit as repugnant to the spirit of christianity. That a sacrifice of truth may sometimes contribute to the comfort of a patient, and be medicinally beneficial, is not denied ; but that a wilful and deliberate falsehood can, in any case, be justifiable before God, is a maxim not to be lightly admitted. The question may be stated thus : Is it justifiable for a man deliberately to violate a moral precept of the law of God, *from a motive of prudence and humanity*? If this be *affirmed*, it must be admitted that it would be no less justifiable to infringe the laws of his country from similar motives ; and, consequently, it would be an act of injustice to punish him for such a transgression. But, will it be contended, that the divine, or even the human legislature, must be subjected to the controul of this sort of casuistry? If falsehood, under these circumstances, be no crime, then, as no detriment can result from uttering it, very little merit can be attached to so

that is, informing them that they are dying! But, if the patients be not really dying, or in danger, no risk is incurred; and if they be near death,

light a sacrifice; whereas, if it were presumed that some guilt were incurred, and that the physician voluntarily exposed himself to the danger of future suffering, for the sake of procuring temporary benefit to his patient, he would have a high claim upon the gratitude of those who derived the advantage. But, is it quite clear that pure benevolence commonly suggests the deviation from truth, and that neither the low consideration of conciliating favour, nor the view of escaping censure, and promoting his own interest, have any share in prompting him to adopt the measure he defends? To assist in this enquiry, let a man ask himself whether he carries this caution, and shews this kindness, indiscriminately on all occasions; being as fearful of giving pain, by exciting apprehension in the mind of the poor, as of the rich; of the meanest, as of the most elevated rank. Suppose it can be shown that these humane falsehoods are distributed promiscuously, it may be inquired further, whether, if such a proceeding were a manifest breach of a municipal law, exposing the delinquent to suffer a very inconvenient and serious punishment, a medical adviser would feel himself obliged to expose his person or his estate to penal consequences, whenever the circumstances of his patient should seem to require the intervention of a falsehood. It may be pre-

which is it of most importance to consider,—their momentary quiet here, or their interests hereafter? Besides, many of those persons who would think that, for spiritual reasons merely, a disclosure of the truth was improper, and who declare that, on *such occa-*

sumed, without any breach of charity, that a demur would frequently, perhaps generally, be interposed on the occasion of such a requisition. But, surely, the laws of the Moral Governor of the universe are not to be esteemed less sacred, and a transgression of them less important in its consequences, than the violation of a civil statute; nor ought the fear of God to be less powerful in deterring men from the committing of a crime, than the fear of a magistrate. Those who contend for the necessity of violating truth, that they may benefit their patients, place themselves between two conflicting rules of morality; their obligation to obey the command of God, and their presumed duty to their neighbour: or, in other words, they are supposed to be brought by the Divine Providence into this distressing alternative of necessarily sinning against God or their fellow-creatures. When a moral and a positive duty stand opposed to each other, the Holy Scriptures have determined that obedience to the former is to be preserved, before compliance with the latter."

sions, falsehood is *virtue*, and concealment, humanity, would hold a different language, and act differently, were the unconsciously-dying person one who was known not *to have made a will*, and who had *considerable property to dispose of*. Then, consideration for their own temporal interests, or for those of others, would probably make them advise or adopt a contrary proceeding. Yet, who that seriously reflects can, for a moment, put worldly interests in any comparison with those of a spiritual nature? But, perhaps, an undue preference of worldly over spiritual interests might not be the leading motive to tell the truth in the one case, and withhold it in the other. The persons in question would probably be influenced by the conviction satisfactory to them, but awfully erroneous in my apprehension, that a

death-bed repentance, and death-bed supplication, must be wholly unavailing for the soul of the departing; that, as the sufferer's work, for himself, is wholly done, and his fate fixed for time, and for eternity, it were needless cruelty to let him know his end was approaching; but, that as his work for *others* is not done, if he has not made a testamentary disposal of his property, it is a duty to urge him to make a will, even, at all risks, to himself.

My own opinion, which I give with great humility, is, that the truth is never to be violated or withheld, in order to deceive; but I know myself to be in such a painful minority on this subject, that I almost doubt the correctness of my own judgment.

I am inclined to think that lies of Benevolence are more frequently pass-

ive, than active,—are more frequently instanced in withholding and concealing the truth, than in direct spontaneous lying. There is one instance of withholding and concealing the truth from motives of mistaken benevolence, which is so common, and so pernicious, that I feel it particularly necessary to hold it up to severe reprehension. It is withholding or speaking only half the truth in giving the character of a servant.

Many persons, from reluctance to injure the interests even of very unworthy servants, never give the whole character unless it be required of them, and then, rather than tell a positive lie, they disclose the whole truth. But are they not lying, that is, are they not meaning to *deceive*, when they *withhold* the truth?

When I speak to ladies and gen-

tlemen respecting the character of a servant, I of course conclude that I am speaking to honourable persons. I therefore expect that they should give me a correct character of the domestick in question ; and should I omit to ask whether he, or she, be honest, or sober, I require that information on these points should be given me unreservedly. They must leave me to judge whether I will run the risk of hiring a drunkard, a thief, or a servant otherwise ill-disposed ; but they would be dishonourable if they betrayed me into receiving into my family, to the risk of my domestick peace, or my property, those who are addicted to dishonest practices, or are otherwise of immoral habits. Besides, what an erroneous and bounded benevolence this conduct exhibits ! If it be benevolent towards the servant whom

I hire, it is *malevolent* towards *me*, and unjust also. True christian kindness is just and impartial in its dealings, and never serves even a friend at the expense of a third person. But, the masters and mistresses, who thus do what they call a benevolent action at the sacrifice of truth and integrity, often, no doubt, find their sin visited on their own heads ; for they are not likely to have trust-worthy servants. If servants know that, owing to the sinful kindness and lax morality of their employers, their faults will not receive their proper punishment—that of disclosure,—when they are turned away, one of the most powerful motives to behave well is removed ; for those are not likely to abstain from sin, who are sure that they shall sin with impunity. Thus, then, the master or mistress who, in mistaken kindness

conceals the fault of a single servant, leads the rest of the household into the temptation of sinning also; and what is fancied to be benevolent to one becomes, in its consequences, injurious to many. But, let us now see what is the probable effect on the servants so skreened and befriended? They are instantly exposed, by this withholding of the truth, to the perils of temptation. Nothing, perhaps, can be more beneficial to culprits, of all descriptions, than to be allowed to take the *immediate* consequences of their offences, provided those consequences stop short of death, that most awful of punishments, because it cuts the offender off from all means of amendment; therefore, it were better for the interests of servants, in every point of view, to let them abide by the certainty of not getting a new place,

because they cannot have a character from their last: by this means the humane wish to punish, in order to *save*, would be gratified, and, consequently, if the truth was always told on occasions of this nature, the feelings of REAL BENEVOLENCE would, in the end, be gratified. But, if good characters are given with servants, or incomplete characters, that is, if their good qualities are mentioned, and their bad withheld, the consequences to the beings so mistakingly befriended may be of the most fatal nature; for, if *ignorant* of their besetting sin, the heads of the family cannot guard against it, but, unconsciously, may every hour put temptations in their way; while, on the contrary, had they been made acquainted with that besetting sin, they would have taken care never to have risked its being called into action.

But who, it may be asked, would hire servants, knowing that they had any "besetting sins?"

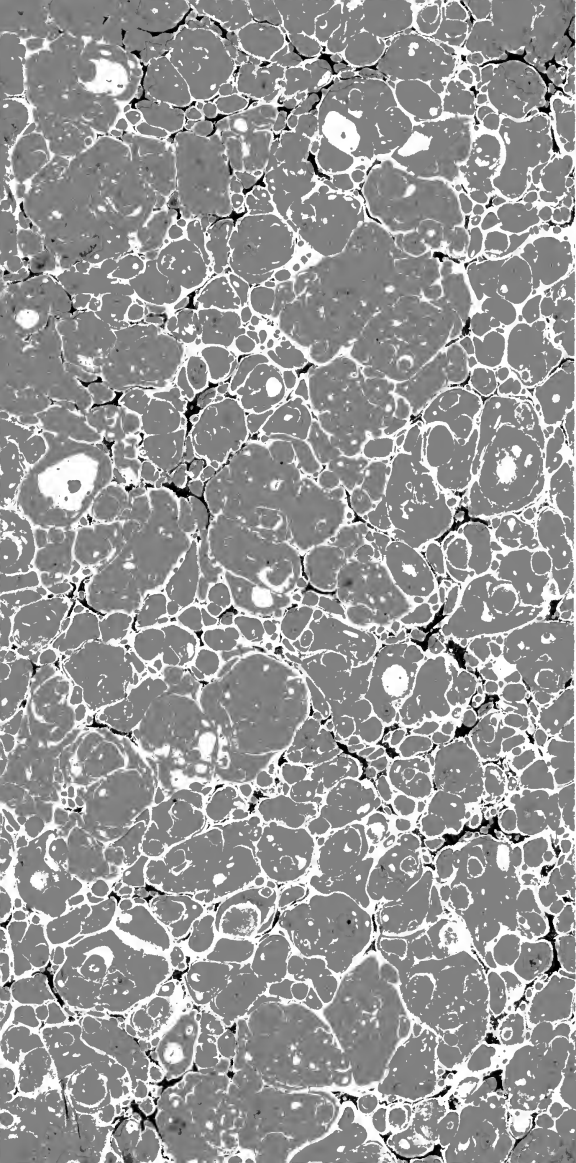
I trust that there are many who would do this from the pious and benevolent motive of saving them from further destruction, especially if penitence had been satisfactorily manifested.

I will now endeavour to illustrate some of my positions by the following story.

END OF THE FIRST VOLUME.







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Opie, Amelia (Alderson)
Illustrations of lying

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