



This is a digital copy of a book that was preserved for generations on library shelves before it was carefully scanned by Google as part of a project to make the world's books discoverable online.

It has survived long enough for the copyright to expire and the book to enter the public domain. A public domain book is one that was never subject to copyright or whose legal copyright term has expired. Whether a book is in the public domain may vary country to country. Public domain books are our gateways to the past, representing a wealth of history, culture and knowledge that's often difficult to discover.

Marks, notations and other marginalia present in the original volume will appear in this file - a reminder of this book's long journey from the publisher to a library and finally to you.

Usage guidelines

Google is proud to partner with libraries to digitize public domain materials and make them widely accessible. Public domain books belong to the public and we are merely their custodians. Nevertheless, this work is expensive, so in order to keep providing this resource, we have taken steps to prevent abuse by commercial parties, including placing technical restrictions on automated querying.

We also ask that you:

- + *Make non-commercial use of the files* We designed Google Book Search for use by individuals, and we request that you use these files for personal, non-commercial purposes.
- + *Refrain from automated querying* Do not send automated queries of any sort to Google's system: If you are conducting research on machine translation, optical character recognition or other areas where access to a large amount of text is helpful, please contact us. We encourage the use of public domain materials for these purposes and may be able to help.
- + *Maintain attribution* The Google "watermark" you see on each file is essential for informing people about this project and helping them find additional materials through Google Book Search. Please do not remove it.
- + *Keep it legal* Whatever your use, remember that you are responsible for ensuring that what you are doing is legal. Do not assume that just because we believe a book is in the public domain for users in the United States, that the work is also in the public domain for users in other countries. Whether a book is still in copyright varies from country to country, and we can't offer guidance on whether any specific use of any specific book is allowed. Please do not assume that a book's appearance in Google Book Search means it can be used in any manner anywhere in the world. Copyright infringement liability can be quite severe.

About Google Book Search

Google's mission is to organize the world's information and to make it universally accessible and useful. Google Book Search helps readers discover the world's books while helping authors and publishers reach new audiences. You can search through the full text of this book on the web at <http://books.google.com/>

10
the 6^d

Pat. from Mr. R. L. Chapman



M^YGEN^Y STEWART

256

f. 2505



**INTERESTING
MEMOIRS.**

VOL. I.

INTERESTING
MEMOIRS.

BY A LADY.

IN TWO VOLUMES.

VOL. I.

LONDON:

PRINTED FOR A. STRAHAN, AND T. CADELL
IN THE STRAND; J. BALFOUR, AND
W. CREECH, EDINBURGH.

MDCCLXXXV.



TO THE
QUEEN.

MADAM,

TO Your MAJESTY, as the illustrious pattern of every female virtue, and more particularly of those that add dignity even to the most exalted stations, I presume to dedicate a Work, intended for the
improve-

vi DEDICATION.

improvement as well as amusement
of Youth.

I present it to Your MAJESTY, in
hopes of your approbation, and as a
small, though sincere testimony, of
that profound respect and admiration
with which I am

Your MAJESTY'S

Most faithful, devoted, and

Obedient humble Servant,

EDINBURGH,

September 16, 1785.

The AUTHOR.

P R E F A C E.

TAKING advantage of the prevailing rage for Novels, the vehicles by which the most fatal poison is often conveyed to the heart, I send these Volumes into the world, with the humane intention, perhaps presumptuous hope, of counteracting the effects of such productions, by inspiring my young Readers with juster sentiments, and a more correct taste, than what is usually acquired by perusing books of mere amusement.

To beguile the remembrance of real and recent misfortunes, by narrating a story, the incidents of which are partly fictitious, I have been insensibly led to
7 compile

compile this little Work: But though the story is indebted to fancy, the reflections with which it is interspersed, are those of sentiment, and flow directly from the heart.

Should the friends in whom mine is most tenderly interested, reap either pleasure or improvement from this Work—should I, by means of it, inspire one virtuous aim, or cherish one pious sentiment in the minds of youth, I shall submit contentedly to the award of an impartial Public with respect to its literary merit, of which I am not qualified to judge; but which, in my estimation, is comparatively of little importance.

I N T E.

INTERESTING
MEMOIRS.

THE spirit of true valour which animated the heroes in the age of Louis XIV. was not confined to France. The contagious manners of a voluptuous monarch, and a licentious court, had not yet diffused themselves through the people of England; and their ancient spirit seemed to revive, at the very moment when the rival powers of Europe required that England should take a decided part in their quarrels, in order to preserve that balance on which their mutual safety depends.

VOL. I.

B

Adversity

2 INTERESTING MEMOIRS.

Adversity is often the parent of virtue. The domestic troubles in which that kingdom had lately been involved, not only gave a check to the progress of vice and luxury, but led men to think justly, which is the first step towards acting nobly.

Amongst those who, disgusted with the pursuit of pleasure, or indulgence of sloth, wished to distinguish themselves in the field of glory and fame, were the young Earl of Granville, and his friend Mr. Seymour.—The name of a Condé inspired them with an ardent ambition, not only to share in his glory, but to emulate his virtues. Accordingly, having no parents to controul them, or combat what some would deem a romantic enthusiasm, they embarked for France; reached the army which was then encamped at Siennes, and introduced themselves to the Prince, as two young

INTERESTING MEMOIRS. 3

young soldiers of fortune, who wished to fight under his banner, whilst opposing their common enemies.

It is needless to say that our young heroes suffered no opportunity to escape of signalizing themselves; and so successful were they in their various enterprises, that at the peace of Lord Granville was possessed of a Captain's, and Mr. Seymour of a Colonel's commission. The former returned to England, but the latter entered into the service of the Dutch.

Tired at length with the fatigues of war, Colonel Seymour determined to abandon them for a life of domestic quiet. He returned to his native country, which acquaintance with others had only served to endear. With part of his paternal fortune he purchased a retired and beautiful farm. He married

* INTERESTING MEMOIRS.

an amiable woman, reflected on the various blessings he possessed, and resolved to be happy.

Habit, however, is often more powerful than principle. Accustomed to an active life, the powers of his mind languished for want of employment. His haughty and imperious temper, which he had been at no pains to subdue, having now no objects for its exercise, degenerated into peevishness, caprice, and discontent.

His gentle partner bore her share of this unequal yoke with patient submission. Perhaps, had she exerted a little more spirit, the demands made on her forbearance would neither have been so numerous, nor so frequent; but her soul was of that sensitive nature, which shrinks from the approach of strife or unkindness; and she resolved quietly to
bear,

bear, what she had neither strength to oppose, nor skill to remedy.

Colonel Seymour was determined in the choice of his residence, from its vicinity to the Castle of Hastings; the seat of his ancient friend Lord Granville, who was in truth one of the most respectable characters of that age. He had early imbibed those just notions of honour, that fortitude, magnanimity, and love of true glory, and all those exalted virtues which were displayed in the conduct of a Villeroy, a Condé, and a Turenne. But, along with these, he had cherished also the gentler virtues of the heart: The former serve to recommend us to the esteem of others; but it is from the latter we must derive our self-enjoyment.

With all these advantages, the character of Lord Granville was strongly
 B 3 marked

● INTERESTING MEMOIRS.

marked by ambition and high notions of birth. Conscious of having deserved the favour of his sovereign, his claims, perhaps, bore a juster proportion to his deserts than to the power of his master; whose profusion and love of pleasure deprived him of the means of rewarding merit, by leading him to bestow his favours chiefly on those who contributed at once to his enjoyment and his infamy.

Disgusted with the Court, whose manners incurred both his hatred and contempt, he retired to the seat of his ancestors, where, following the natural bias of his exalted mind, he strove to promote the happiness, as he had formerly done the glory, of his country.

He married his cousin Lady Louisa Howard; who, by the prudence of her mother, had been sheltered in the quiet of retirement from the general contagion;

INTERESTING MEMOIRS: 7

gion; that lady choosing rather, by living in the country, to deprive her daughter of the high polish of a court, than to stain the purity of her mind, by exposing her to its corrupting manners and example.

A year after their marriage, Lord Granville's happiness received a greater addition than he thought it could admit of, by the birth of a son; and before other two expired, his lady presented him likewise with a daughter. But the last only survived long enough to make her excellent parents experience the whole bitterness of sorrow; by giving early proofs of talents fitted to adorn a public station, and virtues to endear a domestic character.

The strictest intimacy had subsisted in early life, between Lady Granville and Mrs. Seymour, whose education had

8 INTERESTING MEMOIRS.

been carried on together under the inspection of Lady Howard. And though neither of these young ladies possessed that sanguine temper and lively imagination, which give birth to the enthusiasm of friendship, they felt for each other that settled esteem and complacency which often forms the most lasting attachments.

Theirs was afterwards strengthened and confirmed by constant intercourse between the two families, and acquired a peculiar tenderness from their mutual distresses: For it is certain, those amicable connections are ever the most lasting, which take their rise from mutual dependence and sympathy.

In the kind and gentle bosom of Mrs. Seymour, Lady Granville reposed that tender sorrow which the loss of her daughter occasioned, and which the fear
of

of increasing the distress of a husband she fondly loved, made her repress in his presence.

The sufferings of Mrs. Seymour from the constant bad humour of the Colonel, were of a very different nature; and though they could not be concealed from the observation of her friend, yet so sacred did she hold the weakness of a character, with which she was so nearly connected, that she never mentioned them, but with a view to palliate what she vainly endeavoured to hide, and never could hope to amend.

The temper of Colonel Seymour, however, seemed sensibly changed, by an event equally agreeable and unexpected. After having been several years married without children, Mrs. Seymour was delivered of a fine girl, who awakened in the bosom of her father sensations the

most tender and delightful ; and agreeably employed his mind in forming schemes for her future education and improvement.

The birth of this child was considered by Lady Granville as the happiest circumstance that could befall her friend ; nor did it seem of much less consequence to herself. The young Lord Hastings having been sent about this time on a visit to his grandmother, Lady Granville felt, that the death of her daughter, and absence of her son, was a trial too great for her weak spirits to support : Heaven seemed to have sent this child to supply, in some measure, the void thus left in her heart. She visited Springwood every day, and never failed to caress the sweet innocent with all a mother's fondness. Mrs. Seymour, well knowing the attachment Lady Granville had to the name of Louisa, which her lamented child

child had born, requested her to become godmother to the little stranger, and to allow it to be baptized by that name.

“ I receive with gratitude this instance of your delicate attention,” replied Lady Granville; “ but, indeed, my beloved friend, though I accept the name, you must pardon me for declining the office of godmother. An oath is of too sacred a nature to be unnecessarily undertaken; the parents are certainly the most proper sponsors for their children: I have never asked any person to stand for mine; because I think this not only a useless ceremony, but, with the generality of the world, a criminal profanation of a most sacred engagement.”

For some time the lovely Louisa seemed to restore peace and even cheerfulness to the bosom of her parents,

B 6

Their

Their fondness for her was great, but it was justified by the beauty and sweetness of their little darling. Her time was divided between them and Lord and Lady Granville, whose affection for her seemed almost equal to that which nature inspires.

Her education, during the first years of her life, agreeably occupied those hours which used to hang heavy on the hands of her fond father; and he afterwards continued to superintend himself, her progress in those branches which required the aid of superior masters. In the midst of these agreeable occupations, however, the family at Springwood received a shock, which being alike unfortunate and unforeseen, produced the most fatal consequences.

The Colonel's fortune, consisting of fifteen thousand pounds, he was advised
to

to secure in the funds; and for that purpose had collected and placed it in the hands of an eminent broker, who was to have transacted the business the very day on which he died. His affairs were found in the greatest confusion; and after every attempt to assert his just claims, the Colonel could only recover three of the fifteen thousand.

This blow, to a man advanced in years, chagrined in temper, and declining in health, was indeed a dreadful one. The Colonel was neither possessed of that philosophy which teaches us to bear patiently what we cannot escape, nor soothed with that religion which palliates the bitterness of disappointed hope with the assurance of certain felicity.

To a person about to quit life, one would think the goods of fortune would seem

14 INTERESTING MEMOIRS.

seem trivial and insignificant; but the mind grasps at those objects in which it has long delighted, and feels its fondness for them increase, by the near prospect of a separation.

The Colonel strove to brave the storm, and support this stroke with the resolution of a soldier. The hardy oak proudly opposes the whole fury of the elements, and is scorched by the lightning, or overthrown by the tempest; whilst the humble willow, by gently yielding to its force, preserves secure its unenvied station. Such were the different tempers with which the Colonel and his amiable wife encountered adversity, and such too were the different effects produced by it.— Colonel Seymour did not long lament his loss of fortune; a sudden stroke of the palsy put a period to that life, which was already wearing towards its close.

Though

INTERESTING MEMOIRE. 17

Though the distress and constant inquietude which his caprice and ill-humour had inflicted on his gentle partner, were now no more; yet after his death, she experienced pangs a thousand times more severe than any his harshness had occasioned. In the grave of a friend we bury all his foibles; there we sacrifice our little disgusts and resentments: Time, whilst it throws a sacred veil over his errors, serves also greatly to magnify his virtues. We remember them without those shades which the imperfection of human nature had mingled with them,—we feel our irreparable loss,—we deplore it,—and the tenderness of melancholy, uniting with the admiration of virtue, gives birth to a sentiment too exquisite to be defined; and which, by constantly accompanying the idea of our departed friend, renders our mournful recollection of past pleasures often more delightful

16 INTERESTING MEMOIRS.

ful than the enjoyment of such as are present,

At leisure to reflect on the various situations and infirm health of Colonel Seymour, his afflicted wife found a thousand reasons to excuse, and even justify his capricious temper. A thousand proofs of his tenderness rushed on her mind; and she accused herself continually of having been impatient under the one, and ungrateful for the other. Unhappy effect of an excess of the most amiable virtues, humility and ingenuity!

The friendship of Lady Granville sustained at this trying juncture the feebleness of her mind, and aided the efforts of her reason, to dispel the cloud with which grief had enveloped it. Her heart found its chief consolation in the innocent endearments and watchful attentions of her charming daughter, who
was

was now become the only source of her comfort, the only object of her care.

The singular beauty of her person, whilst it flattered the vanity of a mother, awakened in her bosom a variety of apprehensions. She never regretted the loss of fortune on her own account; but when she considered the dangers and mortifications to which it would subject her child, accustomed to associate with people in a superior rank, and educated with the prospect of an independent fortune, her heart died within her; nor was this the chief source of her inquietude. She early discovered in Louisa, that refined and ingenuous sensibility, which would at once expose her to the most exquisite sufferings, and incapacitate her for supporting them.

The various anxieties that preyed on her mind, enfeebled her body, and impaired her
her

18. INTERESTING MEMOIRS:

her health. Louisa saw her daily declining with terror and anguish. Afraid to awaken those apprehensions in the bosom of her mother, which she could no longer banish from her own, she communicated her fears to her sympathising friend Lady Granville; who, on pretence of a call in passing, brought an eminent physician to visit Mrs. Seymour. He made no scruple to pronounce her in danger of a decline, and advised immediate change of climate as the only possible means of prolonging her life.

It was a necessary, but painful office, to communicate this information to Mrs. Seymour. Lady Granville did so in the most cautious manner.—“ Think not; my watchful friend,” replied she, “ that I am either ignorant of my malady, or shocked with my danger. Death has for some time been familiar to my thoughts, and, as far as was allowable, the

“ the object of my wishes. That I have
 “ hitherto been silent on this subject,
 “ proceeded entirely from aversion to
 “ give you pain, and to afflict my be-
 “ loved child, whose heart, alas! is but
 “ too sensible to every distress of her
 “ mother’s.

“ If we must part, to you I confide
 “ my treasure; on you I rely for sup-
 “ plying her loss, and even teaching
 “ her to forget it, by your generous con-
 “ stant friendship.”

Lady Granville was deeply affected by this conversation, and after the most solemn assurances of fidelity to the trust reposed in her, urged Mrs. Seymour, in the strongest terms, to consent to going abroad without delay. She opposed her arguments with a variety of pleas; at last, looking tenderly at her friend, and pausing for a moment, “ Why, why, my
 “ dearest

“ dearest Lady Granville, should you be
 “ thus anxious to preserve a life, which
 “ is evidently hastening to a period;
 “ and which I cannot even prolong, but
 “ at an expence which my little fortune
 “ can ill support. You know the whole
 “ amount of Colonel Seymour’s effects
 “ does not exceed three thousand pounds;
 “ a sum by no means adequate to the ex-
 “ pensive education of Louisa, and which,
 “ if I cannot increase by my œconomy,
 “ I will at least never diminish in the
 “ way of a doubtful experiment. With
 “ me, indeed, its effects are not doubt-
 “ ful, since I am convinced by my feel-
 “ ings, that I never can recover.”

Lady Granville ceased to urge her
 friend; but on her returning home, wrote
 her the following letter, inclosing a
 draught on her banker for a thousand
 pounds.

To Mrs. Seymour.

“ I trust my dear Mrs. Seymour is not to learn that the only advantage which wealth can confer on her friend, is the power of bestowing it on others. I never knew till now the value of money ; much, indeed, shall I feel myself indebted to Providence, if it can in the smallest degree contribute to your health or enjoyment.

“ I will not injure your friendship, by supposing that you will refuse this small testimony of mine ; but should you feel the slightest hesitation about accepting it, think for a moment what you would suffer, if you saw me in distress which you could alleviate ; but which a false and cruel delicacy on my part opposed, and rendered impracticable. Make this appeal

22 INTERESTING MEMOIRS.

peal to your own ingenuous heart, and I will trust my cause to its decision.

“ I ever am, with confirmed esteem, and tender affection,

Yours,

LOUISA GRANVILLE.”

To Lady Granville.

“ Did I stand in need of proofs of the most generous and constant attachment, the letter before me would supply incontestible evidence of yours.

“ With a mind weakened by disease, I dare hardly trust to the appeal you require. Something within this bosom, whether pride or delicacy I know not, revolts at the idea of receiving a gift of this nature, which it is utterly impossible I can ever repay. But from whatever principle

principle these feelings are derived, I shall readily sacrifice them to the certainty of giving you pleasure, and the hope of proving myself worthy of the greatest of all blessings, your esteem and approbation.

“These have long constituted the chief enjoyment of

Your devoted friend,

ELIZA SEYMOUR.”

To Lady Granville.

“My mother has just informed me of the letter you have sent her. O Lady Granville! O my dearest second parent! how can I restrain my gratitude, my admiration of your goodness, or rather how can I express it? Your noble generosity quite overpowers my heart. This gift to my mother, so surprising, so unexpected—

pected—but why do I talk in this manner? Is there any thing great or good that is not familiar to Lady Granville? Dearest Madam! I can only thank you with my tears; but do not restrain them; they are accompanied with a feeling so delightful, that I would rather weep with you than rejoice with all the world. Could envy find a place in the bosom of her whom you honour with your friendship, I should certainly envy you your present feelings. But I can truly say, had I the power, I should know no delight equal to that of obliging you.

“ Perhaps it may prove that I am not altogether unworthy of your goodness, when I declare, that though yours inspires me with equal pleasure and gratitude, you are the only person in the world from whom I could receive such an obligation, without feeling sensible pain. May I never forfeit your esteem, or forget your goodness;

goodness; and may you, dear Madam, long live to fulfil the benevolent purposes of your heart; where, I trust, you will ever find a place for your much obliged, obedient, and grateful

LOUISA SEYMOUR."

It being now the month of September, there was no time to lose in making preparations for the departure of Mrs. Seymour and her daughter. About this time, Lord and Lady Granville received the most lively satisfaction by the return of Lord Hastings from an academy where he had spent the last six years. The master of it, having long officiated as chaplain in the regiment commanded by Colonel Seymour, had recommended himself to the esteem of all the officers, by his good sense, liberal sentiments, and unaffected piety; and by his unassuming manners and strict regard to his duty, was revered even by those who lived in

the constant violation of theirs—Such is the power of real goodness !

The advantages to be reaped from such an instructor, were too many, not to overbalance, in minds like Lord and Lady Granville's, the natural desire of having their only son placed near them. And as Dr. Melville complained, that the frequent avocations occasioned by the holidays, had a bad effect in dissipating the minds of his young pupils, and giving them habits of inattention, his fond parents sacrificed their indulgence to his improvement, and never brought him home but at Christmas.

Nine months had elapsed since his last visit at the castle, and the change which that time had produced on his person, was remarked with admiration by all its inhabitants.

He

He had just reached his twenty-second year; a period, when young men of rank too often appear in a disagreeable light, either from the rude indifference or affected petulance of their manners. Equally remote from the clown and the coxcomb, Lord Hastings appeared with that modesty and reserve which agreed so well with the dignity of his aspect, and singular elegance of his person, that it was as impossible to behold him without complacency, as to listen to him without admiration. His fine intelligent eyes convinced one before he spake, that one had every thing noble to expect from the mind that informed them; and as their expression varied with every varying sentiment, the feeling heart took an immediate interest in their language.

It is highly flattering to our self-love, to find our first impressions confirmed. The character of Lord Hastings did more
 C 2 than

INTERESTING MEMOIRS.

than fulfil the agreeable presages to which the first sight of his person gave birth.

It was impossible that two young people so perfectly amiable as Miss Seymour and Lord Hastings could behold each other with indifference; but wholly unaccustomed to the society of women, he felt himself embarrassed in her presence; and from a sort of secret consciousness, appeared deficient even in such little attentions as politeness teaches those who do not feel their propriety; but which his natural sensibility and good taste would certainly have led him to pay any other woman. The admiration her beauty excited was a sentiment wholly new and delightful; but his heart was in no danger from any other, as the opportunities of seeing Miss Seymour seldom occurred; and her attention was so entirely engrossed by her mother, that she

she scarcely ever spent an hour at the castle.

Every thing being adjusted for their departure, Mrs. Seymour and her charming daughter took a very tender leave of Lord and Lady Granville. Lord Hastings was present at this interview, and felt himself deeply affected by the behaviour of Louisa; who, on embracing her benefactress, seemed wholly to forget that there were any witnesses of her emotions, and bursting into tears, with much difficulty articulated these words: "Oh Lady Granville! what do I not owe you? —Perhaps the life of my beloved parent!—But heaven will reward you,—I never, never can."

Lord Hastings presented her his hand, her's trembled exceedingly from the agitation of her mind. He conveyed her to the chaise, in which her mother waited

for her; he wished Mrs. Seymour every advantage she could possibly desire from her journey; he would have said something to Louisa, but the sight of her lovely face, bedewed with tears, deprived him of utterance. He had time only to bid her adieu, the chaise drove off, and left him in a state of mind equally new and agitating; the cause of which he did not discover, because, perhaps, he was at no pains to enquire.

On his entering the parlour, the conversation naturally turned on the travellers. Both Lord and Lady Granville joined in the highest encomiums on the character of Mrs. Seymour, and the singular beauty and sweetness of her daughter; whose filial piety Lady Granville praised, with the enthusiasm of a friend; and the fondness of a mother.

The

The speech Louisa had made at parting dwelt on the mind of Lord Hastings; and no sooner did his father leave the room, than he eagerly demanded an explanation of it from Lady Granville.

She hesitated a few moments, and then taking out of her pocket the two letters she had received a fortnight before—
 “The occasion of these, my dear Henry,” said she, “was my sending a draught to my valuable friend, to defray the expence of a journey, which she would not undertake, for fear of encroaching too far on her daughter’s slender fortune.—Heaven grant this journey success!”

Lord Hastings read the letters with the most earnest attention; on finishing that from Louisa, he arose with visible emotion, returned them to his mother, and grasping her hand, which he pressed to his lips, he looked at her for some mo-

ments with eyes that spoke both love, gratitude, and admiration; then, heaving a sigh, he exclaimed,—“ Oh may I never, never give pain to a soul so tender, so generous as yours !” and hastily quitted the room.

He retired to his own apartment, and full of the scenes which had just passed, took up his pen, and addressed his friend Mr. Beaufort, with whom he had long been accustomed to share every thought; and who had gone lately to the university at Cambridge, whither he was soon to follow :

To Mr. Beaufort.

“ As I never can enjoy any satisfaction in which my dear Beaufort does not partake, I hasten to tell you, that the tenderness with which I am treated
by

by the best of parents, makes me almost forget the absence of my friend. Often have we admired together, the great, the awful virtues of a Cato, a Brutus, and a Fabius : but with what superior delight do I contemplate those of a mild, gentle, domestic nature, which are daily displayed at the castle of Hastings ! With what reverence do I behold the generosity, with what gratitude feel the affection of Lord and Lady Granville ; who, forgetting the authority of parents, condescend to treat me with the confidence and familiarity of friends.

“ Upon my arrival here, I was introduced by my mother to her most intimate friend, the widow of Colonel Seymour ; and her daughter, a beautiful girl about seventeen. The former appears to be sensible, modest, and agreeable, but in a very declining state of health. I would attempt a description

C 5

of

of the latter, but am aware of your rail-
lery. I will confess, however, I never
saw so interesting a countenance, or so
much beauty joined with such engaging
simplicity. For the last quality, she is
probably indebted to her retired manner
of life, which has been spent here at
a sweet romantic farm called Spring-
wood, purchased by Colonel Seymour,
on account of its nearness to the castle;
he and my father having been intimately
acquainted when abroad.

“ These ladies are just set out on a
visit to the Continent, as change of cli-
mate is thought essentially necessary for
poor Mrs. Seymour.

“ With much pleasure should I have
accompanied them, but my father wishes
me to spend one year at Cambridge, in
the midst of my friends, before setting
out on my travels. Adieu.”

INTERESTING MEMOIRS.

To the same.

“ You rally me, Beaufort, as I for
saw would be the case; you even pro-
nounce me downrightly in love, and
affirm, that my wound is already too
deep to bear being probed: You tell
me, that consciousness alone could make
me fear the raillery of my friend, and
that it would have been more natural
twenty-two to have launched out in
praise of a young beauty, than to
range on the virtues of an old father
and mother.

“ Well, enjoy your fancied pen-
sion; to dispute your opinion, I do not
perceive, would be to confirm your
error. Yet spite of your malice, I will
attempt a description of this charming
girl, were I not conscious that I am
early incapable of doing justice,
to her mind or person.

C 6

“ B

“ Brought up at a distance from the gay world, she blends the modesty of innocence with the ease of politeness; she is a stranger to its customs; but from the readiness of her apprehension, the elegance of her manners, and the warmth of her heart, appears only to be ignorant of its vices and follies.

“ The delicacy of her form agrees with that of her mind; I fear she possesses too great a share of that sensibility, which, though the source of our most exquisite enjoyments, often too occasions our most lasting inquietudes; by exposing us to danger from every quarter, and rendering us vulnerable on every side. To be serious, Beaufort, I should reckon an attachment to Miss Seymour a very real misfortune. She seems perfectly amiable, and qualified to adorn any station; but you are no stranger to the high spirit of my father, and cannot
doubt

doubt that he would greatly disapprove of his only son entertaining a serious passion for the daughter of a private gentleman, with scarce any other patrimony than the liberal education he has bestowed on her.

“ I am extremely concerned for the situation of poor Talbot; his misfortunes will not be the less severely felt, for being the consequence of his own folly.

“ Poor fellow! he has many good qualities; but a certain pliancy of disposition, joined to an intemperate love of pleasure, is his ruin. Could you wean him from the worst of all vices, gaming, I should still have hopes of his reformation; but that I fear is impossible. Take what method you judge most proper of conveying the inclosed to him; do not mention my name; but, if possible, prevent

went its being lavished on villains and sharpers.

“ I shall be with you on Tuesday ; till then adieu.

HASTINGS.”

To Lord Hastings at Cambridge.

“ I am pleased, my dear Henry, by my promise to you, to be under the necessity of indulging myself. You may be assured no employment can be half so agreeable as that by which, my son may reap either pleasure or improvement.

“ It was with peculiar satisfaction I remarked during your last visit, that your studies had not been confined to what was only elegant and entertaining, but that you had made science rather than literature the object of your pursuit.

“ The

“ The possessors of the former are ever modest and reserved ; those of the latter are generally proud and loquacious. The sphere of real knowledge is very narrow, but the immensity of space lies open to hypothesis, the favourite business of Literature.

“ The extent of her domain renders her insolent, and the deference paid to her opinions teaches her to over-rate her powers. The case is quite different with Science. Not content with the information of others, she explores truth by the help of her own eyes ; but conscious that these are liable to deception, and take in only a very limited prospect, she is afraid to pronounce dogmatically on any question. She never impiously attempts to pass the boundaries which have been assigned her by Heaven, and is ever more ready to assume the character

character of the pupil than the preceptor.

“ Good taste, my dear Henry, is a powerful co-adjutor to reason in the conduct of life. The perception of moral beauty is much a-kin to that of natural; and a mind capable of receiving vivid impressions of the latter, will easily feel the influence of the former. Strive then to cultivate the love of every thing great, sublime, and beautiful, whether in the natural or moral world; you will find this a powerful preservative against those dangers to which your youth, rank, and fortune peculiarly expose you. Unhappily they attack us most powerfully at that period, when we have neither strength to resist, nor skill to elude their force; but good taste, uniting with good principles, will enable you to stand your ground, and even baffle all the arts of seduction. Farewel. To preserve
you

you virtuous, in order to render you happy, is the constant aim of your affectionate father,

GRANVILLE."

To the same.

Castle Hastings.

" I fend my dear Henry the draught he desires, but have doubled the sum, that he may be under no temptation to repress one wish of his generous heart.

" Polished, or, in other words, luxurious nations, are peculiarly favourable to the growth of self-love; there, individuals feel so many wants, that their attention is chiefly engrossed by private concernments. Hence it arises, that men acquire an extraordinary importance in their own eyes, and center all their views in the single point of selfish gratification.

" But

“ But though I hope you will ever find your highest enjoyment in the exercise of benevolence, yet let me warn you, not to be imposed on by those who are improper objects of your bounty. In this case, your intended charity not only deprives the virtuous poor of their claims, but proves an encouragement to vice and sloth. It is necessity, not choice, that incites the lower classes of mankind to action; and were the indigent secure of food and clothing from the opulent, there would be a final cessation of industry; and then what dreadful disorders would ensue?

“ The desire of knowledge at your age is both natural and proper; but take care that your pursuit be properly directed. Metaphysical refinements and disquisitions, whilst they flatter the pride of man, mislead his judgment, and corrupt his heart; and whilst they deceive him

him

INTERESTING MEMOIRS.

him with promises of superior light, ste from him insensibly those hopes and fear which Omniscience has assigned as the great springs of human conduct; and plunge him at length in darkness and despair. Religion is the only sure basis of morality. Do not even its enemies confess this, when they term it a political engine? In truth, human society cannot subsist without the aid of religion and the wisest legislatures have acknowledged, that it was safer for the populace to have a fabulous creed, than no at all.

“ Make religion then, my dear Henry a subject of attentive enquiry; but always remember it is its evidence, not its doctrines, of which you are to consider the judge. Whatever is derived from a Being of infinite wisdom must supposed to contain many things a human comprehension. The pa

duty is plain; be that your chief study.

“ Your mother had a letter yesterday from Mrs. Seymour, who has born the journey to Dover pretty well. She and her amiable daughter present their compliments to you. Adieu.

GRANVILLE.”

To the same.

Castle Hastings.

“ I have just been examining with attention, the absurd and monstrous opinions entertained by the heathen world, of the nature and attributes of the Deity, and confess myself shocked beyond expression, at human weakness and error. Where was that reason which philosophers proudly boasted as an infallible guide in their researches after truth, when

when they adopted notions so repugnant to her dictates ?

“ I am persuaded, we who are enlightened by revelation are very incompetent judges of the extent of unassisted reason ; and often attribute to her natural force, what is the effect of supernatural illumination. Some trifling critics have condemned the antient poets for ascribing the victories of their heroes to the interposition of their gods. “ What merit,” say they, “ is there in obtaining a conquest by the assistance of Jove ? ” Homer has had juster notions of the importance of divine aid, than many who call themselves Christians. He saw that it was absolutely necessary to the performance of any great or good action.

“ The study of history I would particularly recommend to my dear Henry. It presents a wide field, in which you may collect

collect a variety of materials, highly useful for the conduct of life. It has likewise the strongest tendency to exalt our ideas of the Divine government, by displaying to us the supreme disposer of all events, educing good from evil, order from confusion, and rendering the deepest laid plans of treachery and violence, not only subversive of the ends proposed, but evidently conducive to the contrary.

“ There too, you will discover the superior excellency of Christianity wherever it has had its full effect. Its internal evidence, and natural tendency, is what I would chiefly have you to consider. In truth, my son, however abused by the weakness or wickedness of mankind, the Christian scheme is indubitably the only one worthy of its great Author. Adopt its principles, cherish its hopes, rely on its promises; they will give dignity and consistency to your character. Fre-
quently

quently contrast that of a man who joins piety to God with benevolence to men, and maintains his integrity through life, with that of the boasting infidel so strikingly described in these words :

Vois tu ce Libertin en public intrepide,
 Qui preche contre un Dieu que dans son ame il
 croit ;
 Il iroit embrasser la verité qu'il voit,
 Mais des ses faux amis il craint la raillerie,
 Et ne brave ainsi Dieu que par poltronnerie.

“ To apologize to you for being serious, would be to affront your judgment, and injure that esteem and confidence, with which I am your sincere friend, as well as your affectionate father,

GRANVILLE.”

Mrs. Seymour and her daughter reached Dover without any cross accident. While they waited for the packet, a coach drove into the yard, the liveries

liveries of which Mrs. Seymour instantly recollected to belong to the Honourable Mr. Stanhope, with whose family she had become acquainted, whilst on a visit at London. He was possessed of an ample fortune, but had the affliction to see his only son in so alarming a state of health after a fall from his horse, that, by advice of his physicians, Mr. and Mrs. Stanhope were resolved to carry him abroad, to try the effect of a warmer climate.

Few things could have proved more fortunate or agreeable to the two families, than this rencounter ; they immediately joined companies ; the anxieties of Mrs. Stanhope's mind were considerably alleviated by communicating them to her sensible friend ; and the languor inseparable from bad health, awakened in the compassionate bosom of Louisa a degree
of

of solicitude to amuse young Mr. Stanhope, which often made him forget that he had any cause of complaint.

They arrived at Paris at a time when travellers would have found objects sufficient to gratify both taste and curiosity ; but, health being the sole end of their pursuit, they declined accepting the many polite invitations they received from people of the first fashion, to whom they had brought letters of recommendation. In consequence of one of these, the Marchioness de St. Croix waited on Mrs. Seymour, and urged her in such strong, yet polite terms, to accompany her for a few days to her delightful villa on the borders of the Forest of St. Germain's, that it was impossible to refuse her request.

The Marchioness was a widow ; her family consisted of a son and three daughters,

VOL. I.

D

ters,

ters, all of whom were educated in a manner suitable to their birth ; but their fortune being very small, as is customary in France, two of them were destined to the conventual life.

Adelaide the youngest, who had been some time a boarder in the Nunnery of St. Cire, was now on a visit to her mother, before entering on her noviciate there. She was about two years older than Miss Seymour ; alike amiable and engaging, though not possess of such regular beauty. When these two ladies met, the impression they made on each other was too strong ever to be erased. Philosophers tell us, when kindred souls come within the sphere of each other's influence, they as naturally attract and are attracted by each other, as homogeneous bodies.

An air of melancholy, spread over the soft features of Adelaide, sensibly touch-
ed

ed the heart of Louisa, which vibrated to every expression of tenderness.

Strangers to suspicion or disguise, the unhappy fruits of commerce with the world, their friendship commenced at first sight.

In forming an amicable connection, there is no need of laying down rules, or specifying the duties incumbent on the several parties. The soul which is capable of that exalted union, will itself suggest every sentiment, and lead to every action, which real friendship involves in it.

During her residence at the Villa de St. Croix, Mrs. Seymour was so much recruited, that she sometimes prevailed with her daughter to accompany the Marchioness to Paris, in order to share in the public amusements. But how in-

spid to her were the most brilliant assemblies; in which her heart took no interest, compared with those placid hours which she spent with her favourite Adelaïde in the country! Indeed, the hurry and bustle of public life only serve, with persons of her character, more to endear the quiet of retirement.

She returned to St. Germain, with a double relish for its peaceful shades and innocent amusements; and looked back with pity on those who pursue pleasure with such eagerness, that they generally run it down in the chace.

Mrs. Seymour received a letter from Mrs. Stanhope, informing her of her resolution of spending the remainder of the winter at Montpelier, and entreating her to accompany her thither. The heart of Louisa was divided on this occasion; as her mother was sensibly better,

ter, she was strongly tempted to yield to the solicitations of her gentle friend, who urged her to spend some time with her in the Convent before the awful ceremony of her admission.

As there were some branches of education, particularly music, in which Louisa required still further instructions, Mrs. Seymour joined her entreaties with those of Adelaide; and at last persuaded her dutious and affectionate child, to commit her, for a short time, to the care of Mr. and Mrs. Stanhope, and return with Adelaide to St. Cire.

By an application to the respectable foundress of this noble institution, Miss Seymour was admitted there as a boarder; though not being of the noblesse, this was an infringement of the established rules; but that convent being then in

its infancy, engaged Madam Maintenon to dispense with them on this occasion.

She was greatly struck with the first view of this noble edifice, and the magnificent park of Versailles in which it is situated; but her walks were chiefly confined to the gardens, where alone she could enjoy the society of her beloved friend.

The melancholy which Louisa had formerly remarked in Adelaide, seemed to increase every day; and was become so habitual, that she could not help suspecting it arose from dislike to the manner of life on which she was about to enter.

She questioned her with much earnestness on the subject; and conjured her, by their mutual friendship, to lay open her heart to her without reserve; to receive

ceive the consolation of her sympathy, and confide in her inviolable attachment.

Adelaide appeared so much affected during this discourse, that Louisa began to repent having introduced it. At length, bursting into tears, "O my Louisa, cried she, why should I longer strive to conceal from you the sorrow that preys upon my heart! Yes, my friend, I am indeed unhappy, but not from the cause you imagine.

"You have a claim to my utmost confidence; and believe me, the only reason for withholding it, has been a regard to your ease and honour. I feared lest my mother should have questioned you on a subject, which would have forced you either to have sacrificed your own ingenuity, or the peace of your friend.

D 4

"You

“ You have heard my brother mention the name of Grammont, with those encomiums which are due to his merit. Before joining his regiment, in which he holds only the rank of a captain, he came to spend some weeks with my brother at St. Germain. Prepared to admire his talents by the enthusiastic praises of his friend, I soon learnt also to love his virtues by acquaintance with himself. Oh, Louisa! what science is so easily acquired as that of admiring merit; what transition is so natural as from admiring to loving it?

“ But I will not tire you with a repetition of the various circumstances which confirmed my opinion of Grammont’s uncommon virtues; suffice it to say, that I revered them in my heart, which could not withhold its most tender affection from a man, who solicited, with timid modesty, that esteem he had
a right

a right to claim, and implored my forgiveness for presuming to love me; a fault which my own experience proved to be involuntary, my own feelings taught me to excuse.

“ For some time we were so intoxicated with the delightful indulgence of our mutual tenderness, that we forgot the obstacles which opposed our union. I am convinced, Louisa, the world affords not a happiness equal to that of indulging a tender reciprocal affection, founded in virtue, approved by reason, endeared by confidence, and secured by delicacy. There is even a peculiar charm connected with the secret possession of joys, that are not common. Our youth, want of fortune, and the life to which I was destined, were obstacles in the eye of reason, which were altogether insurmountable; but,

Love bids us hope, where Reason bids despair;—

D 5

and

and either from a natural activity, or conscious elevation of mind, we take pleasure in conquering difficulties in the attainment of our favourite pursuits.

“ The time for joining his regiment drew near. Already the King’s troops had taken the field, and those of the Marshal invested the fortrefs of ——. What a separation for two hearts that so greatly loved and feared as ours did! The evening before his departure, Grammont prevailed on me to meet him in the garden, at an hour when the rest of the family were engaged with cards and music, that our parting might be without witnesses.—Oh, Louisa! shall I ever forget that hour? How often, when sitting in the arbour that borders the canal, have you chid me for my pensive looks and wandering incoherent expressions! Ah, my friend! you know not the tender recollections that then overpowered

powered my soul. Alas! at this moment I am almost tempted to wish I had never known him who occasioned them.

“After a thousand protestations of inviolable affection and fidelity, a thousand adieus interrupted by our sighs, and prolonged by our apprehensions, Grammont, dropping on his knees, and holding both my hands, which he bathed with his tears, pronounced this solemn farewell: “Almighty God! the protector of virtue and innocence, protect and bless my Adelaide; and grant that the stroke of death alone may divide two hearts, which from this moment are eternally devoted to each other.” He arose, clasped me to his bosom, which seemed bursting with the violence of his emotions, and hastily withdrew.

D 6

“There

“ There was no need for pretending indisposition, in order to account for my retiring to my apartment; I was indeed violently ill for some hours. In the morning, however, I arose, about the time I supposed Grammont would set out. From the window of my dressing-room there was a view of the courtyard. He had once seen me there, on occasion of looking at a beautiful horse which my brother had purchased, and was desirous to shew me. I leaned my aching head against the shutter, which I kept half closed for fear of observation: I had not stood long, before the servant appeared with the horses; Grammont followed slowly, pale and dejected, with his eyes fixed on the ground; when suddenly recollecting himself, he stopt, and waving his hand for the servant to go on, he turned towards the window. I ventured to open the shutter; he instantly perceived me; a blush overspread

spread his pale cheeks, and clasping his hands together, he raised his fine eyes to Heaven; then, turning them on me with a look—O, Louisa! that had something I fear of prophetic sadness in it; gave a deep sigh, flew to the gate, mounted his horse, and disappeared in a moment.

“ Pardon, my friend, this minute detail of circumstances, the recollection of which supports my weak spirits, and forms all my enjoyment.

“ For three months, Grammont contrived to write to me almost every post. How soothing, how delightful is that secret intercourse, to which an attachment like ours gives birth! The whole creation, animate and inanimate, seems subservient to the happiness of those whose hearts love hath joined, but whose hands fortune hath put asunder.

“ Averse

62 INTERESTING MEMOIRS.

“Averse to entrust our secret with a third person, and resolved never to require from any of my domestics, for my convenience, a violation of that duty which they might plead my example for sacrificing to their own, I made Grammont address his letters under cover to a young lady in the convent; from whence I received them without incurring suspicion, as I corresponded with several of the boarders.

“Ah, my Louisa! how tender, how sensible, how pathetic is the language they breathe! But you shall judge for yourself. The two last which I received about a month before leaving St. Germain, I have now in my pocket: Judge of the happiness they afforded me; and oh! tell me, what am I to think of the dreadful silence by which it has been succeeded?

To Adelaide de St. Croix.

“ How little, my charming Adelaide, do they know of the tender tie which binds our very souls in one, who dread absence as injurious to the ardour and delicacy of real love ! Ours has been but short, yet it has proved, that the right I derive from affection to the undivided heart of the most amiable of women, is still stronger than I could have believed. It has convinced me more than ever, that I love you,—O Adelaide ! that I love you with a fondness, an admiration, an unremitting constancy, which no words can express. Surely, nothing should disturb me, whilst I read assurances of your happiness, and the most enchanting expressions of your affection ; yet, Oh, my Adelaide ! my heart is a prey to numberless anxieties. The distance that divides us, my dangerous

gerous situation, our circumstances—yet let me not cruelly add my inquietudes to those of my gentle love. Hope is the sweetest as well as the most salutary ingredient in the cup of life. Let us cherish hope.

“ Let us trust, that the beneficent Author of our being, who hath conducted us to each other, and blended our fates in that delightful union in which our chief happiness consists, will continue our present felicity, till that period arrive, when age shall ripen both of us for an unreluctant passage into that world, where love, secure against all apprehension, is indulged without measure and without fear..

“ The time I employ in reading your letters seems the only valuable portions of my existence. Write to me then, my beloved Adelaide, every little plan
you.

you form, and every incident that occurs in the execution of it. Think nothing that regards you too trivial for me. It will gratify me in a thousand ways; particularly by assisting that constant propensity of my imagination to accompany you in every situation. The heavenly bodies are now the only objects which we can behold at the same time; they are vehicles of a kind of silent intercourse between those who sigh at a distance from each other. Look up, and remember me at the hour of nine; the last we spent together. I will not fail, at the same hour, to think of my Adelaide, and fervently commend her to the protection of Heaven.

“ We have often agreed, that to us there are pleasures even in absence, more exquisite, more refined, than any of those which bear that name in the world.— What then, O Adelaide! will be our
felicity

66 INTERESTING MEMOIRS.

felicity when we meet?—When, every anxious care and apprehension banished from our hearts, they shall glow with the constant aim, the delightful consciousness of rendering each other completely happy?

“ If these expectations are romantic and extravagant, time alone can correct them; for reason assures me, that there is no wish my heart can form, which the merit and tenderness of the most excellent of women is not capable of fulfilling.

“ Farewel! Let us support each other with reflecting, that every hour is lessening the period that divides us, whilst it is adding strength to that delightful tenderness which shall bind us to each other for ever.

J. GRAMMONT.”

To

To the same.

“ At length, most beloved of women ! your fond lover, your faithful friend, tastes of real transport, by being able to communicate it to you. A few moments are all I can at present command, to express to you an affection which occupies my whole soul, and shall be as lasting as my life. On occasion yesterday of a fally from the fort, I obtained permission to head a small party. We were successful beyond my hopes : The Marechal applauded my conduct, in terms better suited to his generosity than my merit ; and promised to advance me to the rank of major on the very first vacancy.

“ See, my best love ! does not fortune already relent, and cease to oppose our wishes ? Or rather, does not Heaven

ven

ven itself smile on an affection, which at once it inspires and approves? Cherish those hopes which now wholly possess my delighted bosom; beguile the tedious lingering hours of absence, by constantly writing to me: Your letters animate me with the love of virtue, as well as of fame. What would the latter avail towards that felicity to which we aspire, if not deserved by the former?

“ Adieu, dear sharer of all my joys; soon may they be redoubled by participation; soon may my eyes and my throbbing heart tell you, how tenderly, how constantly, you are beloved! Your own will best convince you, how unspeakably dear you are to

Your ever faithful devoted,

“ I purposely avoid subscribing this, as it goes by a courier, and I know not into whose hands it may fall.”

While

While Louisa was perusing this letter, a lay-sister entered hastily, and acquainted Adelaide, that a young man in the habit of a domestic, demanded to see her alone, and was waiting in the parlour.

Louisa put the letter in her pocket, and was about to retire; but Adelaide entreated her to accompany her to the grate, as she found herself seized with so universal a tremour, that she could hardly walk, and was afraid of fainting. Miss Seymour supported her friend into the parlour; on entering which, they perceived a genteel young man, in a suit of plain clothes, with whose face, though concealed in part by a handkerchief, Adelaide thought she was not entirely unacquainted.

On seeing Louisa, he paused, as if averse to communicate his message before any witness. Adelaide guessed the
cause

cause of his silence: This is my friend, Sir, said she, you may acquaint me with your commands without hesitation.

He moved towards the grate; and presenting a letter to Adelaide with inimitable grace, "I am sorry, Madam, said he, in a low voice, to be the bearer of this: I wish the contents could have been for ever concealed from you; but that cannot be. May this be the last pang that shall wound your gentle bosom; and in this asylum, if you cannot hope for happiness, may you at least attain resignation!"

The young man retired; but the astonishment into which his words and manner had plunged the two friends, left them neither power to detain, nor resolution to interrogate him concerning their mysterious meaning. Adelaide unfolded

unfolded the letter, from which something dropt on the ground, which her agitation prevented her from observing. The hand was unknown to her, but the name of Rochelle at the bottom was not so; she instantly recollected that the young Count who bore that name, had accompanied Grammont on his first visit to St. Germain, and she had heard him lavish in his praise.

A thousand confused and terrible images crowded into her mind; and she trembled so violently, that it was with the utmost difficulty she perused these lines.

To Adelaide de St. Croix.

“Unable to witness the affliction of the beautiful Adelaide, which can only be equalled by my own, I take this method of conveying to her the last adieu of the noblest, best of men.

“ O !

“ O ! may Heaven support you here, and unite you hereafter to him you loved ! Of all the world, ye were alone worthy of each other.

RAYMOND DE ROCHELLE.”

The letter dropt from the hand of Adelaide, and she fell without life into the arms of her friend.

After a few moments she opened her eyes, and fixing them on Louisa, with a look that pierced her to the soul : “ At length, said she, my fears are confirmed, my happiness is no more. O God, why was I permitted to enjoy supreme felicity, that I might feel the whole misery of being deprived of it ! But I will not murmur. I know I am blind and ignorant ; thou art ever just and good.”

Afraid

Afraid of being observed in this distressing situation, Louisa raised her friend from the ground, in order to convey her to her cell. At that moment she observed the billet which had dropt out of the letter, and which she immediately slipt into her pocket. Having given orders that nobody should enter till called, she put Adelaide to bed; and throwing herself down by her side, gave free course to those tears which served to relieve her bursting heart. Adelaide remained a long time without sense or motion. Her eyes were open, but neither sighs nor tears escaped her. A coldness, like that of death, seized her trembling limbs, and Louisa became so terrified with her danger, that she had recourse to the bell for assistance. Having procured some cordials, which Adelaide swallowed without opposition or remonstrance, she became somewhat easier; and at last so far recollected herself,

VOL. I. E self,

self, as to inquire about the billet, whose contents she at once dreaded and longed to peruse.

Louisa knew it would be in vain to deny her request, and hoped by granting it, she might procure her friend the relief of tears. Besides, she was not ignorant of the danger Adelaide would incur, if nature, thus wholly overpowered and insensible, should not be awakened, to feel and to deplore its own wretchedness. What a mournful proof of human imbecility does such a situation exhibit, when to a total suspension of its powers, the mind is indebted for their preservation; and when our boasted reason, restored to its seat, instead of combating our sorrows, only supplies new excuses for indulging them. She presented her with the billet, which Adelaide requested her to read aloud, but the task was impracticable. Almost suffocated

suffocated with the violence of her emotions, she returned it to Adelaide, who, on perusing its melancholy contents, caught the infectious tenderness of sorrow from her friend, and dissolved in a flood of tears.

To Adelaide de St. Croix.

“ A few moments are granted me by Heaven, to take a long, a last farewell. Oh, Adelaide! Oh, my adored mistress!—my fondly expected wife!—where are now our dreams of happiness? They are fled for ever; and have left me equally unable to tear myself from this world, or to prepare for another. Even whilst I write, my vital current stops; a wound in my side has almost drained its sources. The hope of soon returning to you, inspired me with a courage too ardent and impetuous. Forgive me, Adelaide!

E 2

I have

I have ruined your peace by my rashness.

“ Strive to moderate your sorrow; the thought of it distracts me. Make now a voluntary sacrifice of yourself to Heaven, to which the zeal of your friends was impelling you. I trust it will be accepted.—The pen drops from my trembling hand.—Yet a few years, Adelaide, and we shall meet, never to fear separation more! Let this console you.—My soul! my Adelaide, farewell! Oh, farewell for ever! Love, pity, and forgive me; but never, O never forget.

Language can but faintly express the mingled emotions of grief, admiration, and despair, which alternately agitated the bosom of the unhappy Adelaide.

Louisa

Louisa was not ignorant, that to attempt by reasoning to moderate a sorrow so just, was only to add to its violence. In truth, she knew not to reason, though exquisitely to feel; and the silence of her sympathy produced that effect on the heart of Adelaide, which neither religion nor philosophy for some time could have wrought. The passions exhaust themselves with their own violence; and where so many contend for dominion in the human soul, the powers of each are weakened.—God is to the moral and intellectual, what the sun is to the natural world,—the source of light, life, and joy. And man can no more be happy without intercourse with his Maker, than plants can thrive and vegetate without the benign influences of that glorious luminary. Cold and darkness are felt by the heavenly bodies in proportion to their distance from the sun; just so does it fare with the soul

of man. In prosperity, the bountiful Giver is obscured by the multiplicity of his gifts. These, like vapours from the heated earth, rise and interpose between man and his Maker. But no sooner does the tempest of adversity descend, than the cloud is dispersed, and desolate and forlorn, he feels all the necessities of his nature; his weakness and dependence, his hopelessness and need of Divine aid; and returns, repentant, to duty, to happiness, and God.

A few weeks saw Adelaide restored to that calm and settled melancholy, which arises from the hopelessness of enjoyment, but is often mistaken by the world for a species of it. One yet remained to her, that of pouring her sorrows without restraint into the faithful bosom of friendship, and indulging continually those tender recollections, which were so soothing to her mind, that at times they
made

made her almost forget the fatal event which gave them birth.

During the remaining months of her noviciate, which was shortened at her request, Adelaide strove to prepare her mind for the solemn dedication of herself to Heaven. It required but little resolution to abandon a world, where her peace had been wrecked, and from which she neither expected nor wished to receive happiness.

As the spring was now advanced, and Mrs. Seymour felt her strength rather decreasing, she became extremely anxious to return to England.

Her young fellow-traveller had experienced much happier effects from change of climate; the pain in his side, occasioned by the fall, had entirely left
E 4 him,

him, and his impatience to return seemed to equal Mrs. Seymour's.

It originated, however, from a secret and very different cause. The humane attentions bestowed on him by her charming daughter, at a time when the dejected spirits and softened heart are particularly sensible to kindness, had made a lasting impression on Mr. Stanhope's; and esteem and admiration, combined with gratitude to inspire him with a passion, which he was at no pains to suppress; because he was conscious of nothing which should have opposed his indulging it.

At length the day was fixed, on which the unfortunate and afflicted Adelaïde was to enter those sacred walls, which, like the grave, were for ever to conceal her sorrows: Happy, if like the grave
 they

they could have banished the remembrance of them.

The travellers hastened their departure from Montpellier, that they might witness the awful ceremony; Louisa found this a very severe trial to her weak spirits, as the concourse of nobility assembled for that purpose was very great, Madam Maintenon, as abbess, had a seat placed near the altar, round which the young princesses attended. Miss Seymour was allowed to support her afflicted friend during the whole ceremony. She alone knew what need she had of support. The solemn service began:—The pealing organ, responsive to the enchanting voices of the choiristers, alternately dissolved the soul in tenderness, elevated it with hope, or rapt it in adoration and praise:—The music ceased: The prayers of all present were requested to aid those of the young saint;

82 INTERESTING MEMOIRS.

and the grace of the Most High implored to animate her faith, and confirm her resolutions.

The priest arose, and conducted her to the door of the cell where she was to be stripped of all those ornaments with which, as is customary, her friends had richly adorned her for the occasion. A solemn and affecting silence ensued. The lovely victim returned, clad in her dismal habit, and walking steadily up to the altar, kneeled before it to receive the veil.

One proof only remained to shew her fixed resolution of renouncing the vanities of the world, and to complete the ceremony of her dedication;—that of parting with her fine hair, which flowed in abundance over her neck and shoulders, and shaded a face, whose beauty the traces of recent affliction had rendered unspeakably

ably touching. As she bent her head forward for this purpose, with a look of patient and peaceful resignation, she was startled by a heavy groan, which proceeded from the gallery appointed for those who were only spectators of this solemnity.

A bustle ensued, which directed the eyes of all towards the gallery. Hers instantly recognized there the face of the Count de Rochelle, who, yielding to his extreme curiosity to behold this affecting scene, felt himself so violently agitated with the sight of Adelaide, and recollection of her misfortunes, that he fainted in the arms of young Stanhope, whom chance had placed next him.

Various were the conjectures occasioned by this accident: The effect produced by it on the mind of Adelaide, is not to be described. She alone knew

84. INTERESTING MEMOIRS.

the nature of those sentiments which occasioned it, and her grateful, though oppressed heart, sighed in sympathy with that of the generous and compassionate Rochelle. The interruption to the ceremony caused by this affair, gave her time a little to recover herself, and she went through the remaining part of it with tolerable composure.

As nothing is so irksome to a mind in deep affliction, as the exertion necessary for mixing with an unfeeling world, Adelaide found the solitude of a convent not only agreeable but salutary. The consolations of religion operated there with full force, and knowing how prone the mind is, after being violently agitated with passion, to sink into listlessness, she endeavoured to occupy her time with such employments and amusements as recommended themselves at once by their novelty and importance.

By

By degrees, the gloom of misfortune was exchanged for the serenity of hope; and though she seldom tasted of pleasure, peace became the constant inmate of her bosom.

A few days after seeing her friend profest, Miss Seymour took a last affecting farewell of St. Cire and its beloved inhabitants. We feel a sort of sacred enthusiasm for the place, where first our tender passions have been awakened. The anguish she felt on bidding Adelaide adieu, was extreme; but it was soon in great measure obliterated, by fear and anxiety about her mother, whose worst symptoms now recurred with redoubled violence.

During their journey to Calais, young Stanhope had an opportunity of repaying the former attentions of Miss Seymour, and of shewing the goodness of his own heart, whilst every day increased his admiration of hers.

The

The absence of her friend was now severely felt by Louisa; and as they were obliged to remain some days at Calais to recruit Mrs. Seymour, she employed every spare moment in communicating to her the distress with which she was overwhelmed.

To Adelaide de St. Croix.

“ I am divided from you, my beloved friend, at the very instant when I most required your pious instructions and tender sympathy. My mother’s complaints daily increase, and fear and suspense are now added to the affliction with which your misfortunes almost overwhelmed me. Oh! why am I not permitted to dwell with you at a distance from the world, or armed with more courage to encounter its dangers! Without parents—without fortune—almost without friends,—what, my Adelaide,

laide, will become of me?—Strive to inspire me with a portion of your heavenly resignation, to arm me with the fortitude necessary for my present trying situation; and Oh! if possible, teach me to check those evil forebodings of a disturbed imagination, which are a thousand times more insupportable than real calamity.

“ Write to me constantly, my beloved friend; the tenderness of your sympathy will at least alleviate my sorrow, if the influence of your example does not entirely regulate my conduct. Adieu.

LOUISA SEYMOUR.”

To Miss Seymour.

“ My heart shares tenderly in the distress of my friend; but, alas! I am neither qualified by years nor experience
to

to be her-conductress through the difficult mazes of life. I am not yet arrived at that blissful tranquillity on which you congratulate me. Officious memory still awakens such dear, yet dangerous recollections, as convey to my soul all the bitterness of disappointed hope. Oh, Louisa! there is a charm in loving and being beloved, in feeling one's self the continual source of joy and happiness to the object of one's best and most tender affections, that takes such hold of the imagination, as none of the subsequent evils of life have power to obliterate. Experience has taught me too, that the heart will continue to sigh, even after the soul is resigned. Ah, my friend! what arrow pierces so deep, what wound bleeds so often, what anguish lasts so long, as that occasioned by the death of those we love? With what a tender mixture of pleasure and regret do we dwell on their virtues; with what eagerness

eagerness listen to their praise; whilst fame does justice to their merit, and envy is silent, for there is no competition in the grave? Grammont! tears are the only tribute I can pay to thy merit; tears, due to youth, virtue, and bravery! Common laurels wither and decay, but that which is watered by such a stream shall never fade; it towers above the skies, and flourishes to immortality.

“ Do not, my Louisa, covet a life of seclusion from the world; we ought ever to be contented with the station allotted us by Providence. In retirement, we possess at best a kind of negative virtue: There our affections languish for want of proper objects to excite them; and our goodness consists rather in the absence of evil, than in any positive habits of rectitude or exertions of benevolence. It is in society alone that the genuine character can be ascertained. There,
our

our virtue is tried; and if it stands the test, from that trial results our highest intellectual enjoyment,—the pleasing consciousness of superior worth, and the lasting meed of self-approbation.

“Philosophy, my dear Louisa, may enable us to talk of fortitude, but religion empowers us to exercise it. Think often, my afflicted friend, on that glorious period, when freed from the mist of error, the perplexity of doubt, and the sophistry of passion, we shall contemplate with astonishment, and acquiesce with rapture, in the unerring decrees of eternal Providence.

“Adieu, dear and amiable friend. You have the prayers, the best wishes, and most lasting affection, of your

ADELAIDE DE ST. CROIX.”

We

We shall now leave the travellers to pursue their journey, which they did by very slow stages, and return to give some account of what passed at the Castle of Hastings during their absence.

The frequent letters Lady Granville received from Louisa, and which she generally communicated to Lord Granville, served agreeably to amuse their winter evenings, and to increase their esteem and affection for the amiable writer. The admirable descriptions they contained, of the curiosities of Paris and its environs, and the reflections blended with them, shewed, that while Miss Seymour suffered nothing worthy of curiosity to escape her notice, she made objects of sentiment her chief study, and from them derived her highest enjoyment.

The

The Marquis of Winchester, who had a fine seat in that neighbourhood, came with his daughter Lady Charlotte Villiers, to reside there during the autumn, about the time Mrs. Seymour and her daughter set out for France. Lord and Lady Granville waited on the Marquis and Lady Charlotte, and requested the favour of their Company at the Castle. As they did not propose returning to London till after Christmas, they spent most of their time there. The Marquis's fortune was inadequate to his rank, which induced him to spend much of his time in the country; as his strict notions of honour forbade his plunging into expence, which he knew must either ruin his family or injure society.

Lady Charlotte possessed so many advantages from nature, that she seemed in no want of those of fortune. To a fine person, and a good understanding, she

she added such a share of vivacity and polished manners; as rendered her one of the most agreeable companions in the world. Lord Granville beheld in Lady Charlotte the very woman he wished for a daughter-in-law; and entertained little doubt of obtaining the approbation of the Marquis to a marriage, which, in respect of fortune, was all he could desire for his daughter. Conscious, however, of the waywardness of the human heart, he deferred communicating his plan to his son, till he should see the young people on such a footing of intimacy, as should give room to hope for their concurrence with it.

In consequence of the following letter from his father, Lord Hastings returned to the Castle, about a month before the arrival of the travellers.

“Though

“ Though I wished my dear Henry to have made a longer stay at Cambridge, an accident has happened which obliges me to request his immediate return home. Dr. Melville, who has been lately threatened with a decline, has, at my desire, agreed to give up his academy, and attend you on your tour. As he fears risking next winter in our northern climate, I propose that you shall set out in a few months hence, and wish to enjoy your society during the summer. Besides, I would wish to introduce you to some of the neighbouring families, many of whom are highly respectable; and to inspire you with that preference for your own country that will dispose you to return to it with pleasure.”

On his arrival, Lord Hastings found the Marquis and his daughter at the Castle. Wholly ignorant of his father's views,
and

and free from that embarrassing consciousness which the presence of Miss Seymour had occasioned, he appeared with all the advantages of a fine person, a cultivated mind, elegant manners, and a most engaging address.

Lady Charlotte was perfectly qualified to judge of his merit. Notwithstanding of her early introduction into the gay world, her good sense had preserved her from adopting its follies; whilst, by mixing with it, she had acquired a degree of frankness and ease peculiarly agreeable to a temper like that of Lord Hastings. Her constant good humour and vivacity made him find a thousand charms in her society; and as she excelled in music, an art in which he had made considerable progress, and of which he was greatly enamoured,

moured, their time passed most agreeably.

One morning, when Lord Granville and his son were together in his study, concerting the plan of his future travels, he addressed him in the following manner:—“ My dear Henry, I will not deny you the pleasure of knowing, that hitherto your conduct has been such, as affords me the most real satisfaction. To complete it, one object only remains, that of seeing you marry, and form such an alliance as will do credit both to your judgment and your heart. I know, by experience, that the whole happiness of life depends on this connection. I do not consider myself as authorised to constrain your choice, but, as your friend, would wish to direct it. Lady Charlotte Villiers appears to me both worthy and agreeable; her birth is
“ suitable

“suitable to your own; and if I am
 “not mistaken, your merit has not
 “been beheld by her with indiffer-
 “ence.”

Lord Hastings expressed the most lively sense of his father's goodness, and joined very cordially in praise of Lady Charlotte, who, together with the Marquis, was that very moment announced by a servant. He flew to hand her from her carriage; but the conversation which had just passed, gave an awkward consciousness to his manner, which did not escape the penetrating eyes of Lady Charlotte, who felt herself too deeply interested in all his feelings, to permit the slightest of them to pass unobserved.

She rallied him with much spirit and good humour on the visible change in his manner. And after a variety of

VOL. I.

F

sprightly

sprightly sallies, "Come, come, said she, I will not question you any farther on this subject, for I suppose your father has been catechising you sufficiently already, as I saw you come out of his study just now." The face of Lord Hastings was crimsoned over by this speech, which served at once to increase his embarrassment and Lady Charlotte's curiosity. She was too well bred, however, to persist in her raillery, which she saw produce such visible emotion in Lord Hastings. But though several topics were started, the conversation grew languid; and on returning home, Lady Charlotte bewildered herself in vainly striving to unravel the mystery of his behaviour. As we are prone to believe what we wish, and as Lord Hastings had been uncommonly assiduous about this Lady, she hardly doubted of having made an impression

on

On a heart whose affections she sincerely wished to engage. But though his visits were as frequent as ever, the ease of his manner was exchanged for a caution which was unnatural at his time of life, and foreign to his character, and which threw a constraint into all their conversations, highly prejudicial to those sentiments which Lady Charlotte felt and wished to inspire.

Things were in this train when Mrs. Seymour and her daughter arrived at Springwood.

Lady Granville flew to welcome her friend, but, alas! she knew not in what terms to speak that welcome, when she beheld in her pale face and emaciated figure, every symptom of approaching dissolution.

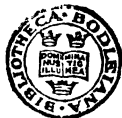
Tears of mingled tenderness and grief bedewed the bosom of Louisa, as Lady Granville pressed her to her affectionate heart. She did not attempt to deceive her with vain hopes, but to arm her with fortitude and resignation.

As Louisa never quitted her mother's apartment, Lord Hastings had no opportunity of gratifying his curiosity, which was become painfully ardent, by the daily encomiums bestowed by his mother, both on the mind and person of Miss Seymour; the latter of which, she said, had acquired inexpressible graces, whilst at the same time she had lost nothing of that amiable ingenuity and simplicity of manners which was her greatest charm.

The anxious mind of Louisa was soothed, soon after her arrival, by the following letter from her friend :

To

To Miss Seymour.



“ How many are the sources of elegant delight which memory opens to a mind fraught with sensibility ! Who would forego the tenderness of melancholy for the tumults of pleasure, or the meltings of sympathy for the noise of applause ?

“ Deprived of your dear society, Louisa, I have recourse to the past. I wander through those solemn scenes which witnessed the reciprocations of our mutual confidence and friendship. I strive to recollect not only your words, but your looks and placid smiles. I listen to the soothing language of heavenly hope and pious resignation ; I still hear you breathe the sigh of sympathetic tenderness ; I still see your mild eyes
 F 3 bedimmed

bedimmed with the tear of sincere compassion. Ah, Louisa! it is still due to the secret sorrows of your friend! Nor is the present forgotten in the recollection of the past. I follow you in imagination through every stage of your painful journey. I strive to support and assist you in the melancholy duties of soothing and comforting a dying parent.

“O! may the Father of the afflicted himself vouchsafe to strengthen you for every duty, and support you under every trial!

“Let me entreat my Louisa to strive against melancholy; it will unfit you for the offices of social life. The cause of your present depression is an amiable one, and for this reason you ought to be on your guard with respect to its effects. We are apt to condemn ourselves when
any

any personal affliction depresses our spirits ; but when we languish by a sympathetic pang, a ray of self-approbation beams through the soul ; we are flattered by our own sensibility, and cherish the sadly pleasing sensations, till they acquire a dangerous strength.

“ Let us reflect, my love ! that the beneficent Parent of the universe can, in no sense, be the author of evil ; that the more wisdom which is displayed in his moral government, the less can we possibly comprehend it ; and what we, from ignorance or blindness, perhaps too from perverseness, denominate evil, must certainly be good in his sight, who shall cause all the seeming disorders of the present scene to issue in the final perfection and felicity of his intelligent creation.

“As one earthly prop is withdrawn, the heart of man fondly clings to another, till insensibly they drop one by one, and he is left desolate and solitary to encounter the storms of life. What were then the anguish of his soul, could he rest on no firmer stay than a mortal like himself,—could he look towards no more stable inheritance than this land of shadows, which even to his corporeal sight is fast passing away? Yes, my Louisa, though the streams of happiness flow here in narrow channels, are interrupted by accident, and embittered by misfortune, to the pious it is matter of everlasting consolation, that the great Fountain of existence and felicity is immutable, inexhaustible, and eternal. Farewel!”

Mrs. Seymour's illness increased so quickly, that a few weeks brought her to the verge of the grave. One day, whilst

whilst Lady Granville was sitting by her bedside, having desired Louisa to take a turn in the garden for the benefit of the fresh air, she grasped her hand, and with a voice enfeebled by sickness and interrupted by sorrow, thus addressed her:—" I am persuaded, my beloved
 " friend, this scene is by no means un-
 " expected to you ; to me, be assured,
 " it is welcome : One only tie binds me
 " to earth—that dear, that amiable
 " child ! But I know, whilst Lady
 " Granville lives, Louisa will never
 " want a mother. The Almighty hath
 " given me many gracious warnings of
 " that fate which is fast approaching ;—
 " I trust I am prepared to meet it.—
 " You know I have had but little sa-
 " tisfaction in reviewing some part of
 " my past life ; perhaps I have scanned
 " my errors with too severe an eye,—
 " that of Omniscience is now upon me !
 " I presume not to repose on the recti-

“tude of my intentions or regulari-
 “ty of my conduct; my hope is that
 “of a Christian, and it will never de-
 “ceive me.”

Lady Granville said every thing that piety, friendship, and good sense could dictate, to calm the anxieties of Mrs. Seymour; she even ventured to assure her, that while she lived she would never suffer Louisa to have any other home than her house.

Mrs. Seymour only survived a week after this conversation, during which she strove to reconcile Louisa to a separation, which would confessedly be for her happiness.

“Do not, my dearest child, said she,
 “O do not embitter my last moments
 “by indulging excessive sorrow for my
 “death! Consider it in the light of a
 “short

“ short absence;—look on me as having
 “ gone a little before in a journey in
 “ which you are soon to follow me.
 “ Perhaps our separation will neither be
 “ so real nor entire, as that occasioned
 “ by absence while on earth: Perhaps
 “ I may still be permitted to watch over
 “ my child; at least I will not long
 “ be disjoined from her.”

There was something unspeakably
 soothing in the idea suggested by the
 last part of this discourse: Louisa dwelt
 on it with peculiar delight; but, in the
 midst of the extreme dejection occasion-
 ed by the solemnity of a deathbed, her
 drooping heart required a firmer support
 than a pleasing dream or a doubtful hope.
 Her mother perceived this; and in di-
 recting her to the light of revelation
 and the prospect of immortality, gave
 patience to her sufferings, and mingled
 consolation with her sorrows.

“ I leave you, my beloved child,”
 said she, a few hours before her death ;
 “ but I leave you under the protection
 “ of that God who sees it good for us
 “ to part ; who is in a peculiar man-
 “ ner the Father of the fatherless, and
 “ shield of the orphan.

“ Earthly friends fail us at our great-
 “ est need ; but this heavenly friend will
 “ never forsake us. Earthly friends can
 “ only pity our misfortunes ; but God
 “ is able to avert them. Fear God,
 “ then, my dearest child, and you need
 “ have no other fear.”

Though the first transports of grief on the death of her mother prevented Louisa from deriving all that consolation from these discourses which they were calculated to inspire, they returned to her thoughts in the calmer hours, when passion began to subside, and
 carried

carried the sweetest consolation to her heart.

Lady Granville was very desirous that Miss Seymour should return with her to the Castle the evening her mother expired; but she would by no means consent to leave Springwood, till she had fulfilled the last duties to her respected parent. That humane friend did not urge her, but, revering her pious sorrows, left her a while in quiet to indulge them; and sending for her own maid, a prudent sensible woman, to attend her, returned to the Castle to give orders for the funeral, which Louisa intreated might be as private as possible. Accordingly, in three days afterwards, the corpse was interred early in the morning, in a burial-place erected by his lady on the death of Colonel Seymour.

Nothing

Nothing could be more soothing to the afflicted Louisa, than the frequent letters she received from Adelaide during her distress. When the dark clouds of adversity surround us, they exclude every ray of pleasure, but that which reaches and cheers the soul from tender and sincere sympathy.

The following was brought her the evening of that day which deprived her of the best of mothers.

To Miss Seymour.

“ The stillness and quiet of my present situation grows every day more agreeable. Methinks, Louisa, at the age of twenty-two, I feel as strong a conviction, that ALL IS VANITY, as Solomon did after a long life, in which all the wishes of his heart and powers of his
his

his imagination were exhausted, in pursuit of a felicity, which, alas! these shadows of real good could never yield.

“ Affliction, I trust, has taught me true wisdom. It has brought upon me a sort of premature old age, which serves instead of experience. Though neither fatiated with the pleasures of the world, nor disgusted by its disappointments, I shall rise satisfied from life’s feast, and leave the banquet to those for whom it has the charm of novelty, and whose ignorance of its dangers makes them behold it with desire.

“ With what calm indifference, Louisa! do I mark the silent lapse of time, and behold its several periods come to a close! Why should we indulge immoderate sorrow for the loss of those who are gone before us, when every day, every hour, every moment,
is

is accelerating the blissful period of our re-union ?

“ Books are now my chief amusement: Some of these represent life as bright and cheerful ; others teach me to despise its storms, or inform me that they are salutary ; whilst experience adds, that they are transient too. Methinks this consideration ought to silence both our peevish discontents and fantastic wishes.

“ Sometimes I direct my solitary walks to the silent mansions of the dead ; and, forgetful of the world, and all its vexing inquietudes, seem to share for a while their blissful repose. But I advance a step farther, my Louisa, and find, even among the dominions of death, proofs of the soul's immortality.

“ Here

“ Here is evinced, the amazing truth, that it is the same matter, variously modified, which constitutes both the earth and its inhabitants. Animals derive their subsistence from plants, which are nourished by the common mould; at the appointed season all these return to this their first principle. But since, in the visible creation, there exists nothing analogous to mind, let us not imagine that the soul can ever be reduced to a state like that of beings which are altogether different from it.— Themes like these; my Louisa, cannot fail to be in harmony with your present feelings, since your last letter assures me that your dear deserving parent is past all hope of recovery. Let reflections like these support your soul in view of that afflicting event which either awaits you, or is already arrived. Oh, my Louisa! how much need have I to dwell on them myself! This day completes my twenty-

second

second year, the most eventful of my life. How little did I dream, at its commencement, that the fabric my fond hopes had reared was so soon to tumble into ruins! That he, for whose sake alone I welcomed its arrival, and wished its continuance, should, ere its close, be torn from my bosom, and hidden for ever from my eyes! But though these bodily organs no more behold thee, best and dearest of men; thou art ever present to my mind's eye, in thy exalted virtues, thy spotless manners, and thy fair fame: These shall justify the tears with which I embalm thy memory, and convert my sorrows into virtue.

“ Write constantly to me, my amiable afflicted friend! You know how tenderly I partake in your sorrows. Believe me, Louisa, to soften one pang of yours, even at the expence of sharing it, will
be

be preferable, in my estimation, to all that the world calls pleasure.

To Adelaide de St. Croix.

“ Your letter has reached me, my friend, and conveyed to my soul the only consolation of which at present it is capable. Yesterday, all my cares for the best of women ended ;—she is happy :—Shall I not then be resigned ?—I trust I am so. Yet, Oh, my Adelaide ! it is difficult, it is impossible, to restrain the tears of nature, when the long endeared sacred tie of kindred and of friendship is rudely broken by death ! Till that cruel moment, when the grave closes over those we love, we cannot sufficiently admire the excellence of that religion which teaches us to look beyond it. Ah, my friend, do they act agreeably to their own principles, who contend

tend for the dignity of human nature, and yet believe that the soul of man—advancing daily in virtue and knowledge—aspiring after perfection—longing for immortality—cut off in the midst of its pursuits and wishes,—shall share the same fate with the meanest reptile that crawls on the face of the earth?

“ Alas! how dismal, how hopeless, must be the sorrow of such gloomy, such benighted minds!

“ Books, you say, supply your favourite amusement. Our opinion, both of books and characters, is influenced by the tone of our mind at the time we become acquainted with them. Perhaps it is owing to this circumstance that I have perused the following fable with peculiar satisfaction this morning; and
in

in the hope of its producing the same effect on you, I shall here transcribe it.

“ In ancient times, says the fabulist, when the Creator of the world placed our first parents in Paradise, to prevent them from growing weary of each other, he appointed Happiness, the fairest of his offspring, to reside with them.

“ For some time her charms were beheld with admiration, and her merit treated with respect. But beauty, by growing familiar, ceased to excite pleasure; and merit, from want of novelty, soon incurred neglect. The favourite, even of celestial beings, Happiness, could ill brook so unkind a reception from mortals; and one day, on occasion of a quarrel between her associates, in which they both betrayed marks of altered dispositions, she was so disgusted, that she hastily bade them adieu; and ascending
to

to her former abode, entreated the great Ruler of the Universe that she might never more be sent to dwell with those who knew so ill to value her society.

“ The moment she was gone, her companions became sensible of their error. They deplored her absence, and conjured her to return, in terms of the most earnest supplication. But Happiness was inexorable; and the utmost they could obtain from her, was a promise, that provided they were never again heard to quarrel, she would depute her younger sister Contentment to reside with them, and even occasionally visit them herself.

“ How far our primogenitors complied with these terms, we are still ignorant; but it would appear that Happiness, like other injured females, not only continued to resent former ill-usage,

usage, but even entertained constant suspicions of future mal-treatment. For it is universally known, that whenever she deigns to visit these lower regions, she never stays longer than, just like those mortals who pretend to emulate her perfections, to receive the homage of her admirers, to make a display of her charms, and by bestowing some slight favours on each, to heighten the desires and secure the admiration of all her votaries."

Immediately after the funeral, Lady Granville prepared to go to Springwood, in order to bring her young charge to the Castle. But the agitating scenes she had lately witnessed, and the loss of a friend she dearly loved, had so sensibly affected her health, that, just as she was stepping into the coach, she was seized with such a faintness, that

that it was with difficulty Lord Hastings could get her supported back to her apartment. Unwilling to add affliction to the oppressed heart of Louisa; and flattering herself this indisposition would quickly go off, she sent a note to acquaint her, that she was prevented from coming for her at that hour, as she intended, but would certainly call for her in the evening, when she expected to find every thing in readiness to be moved to her apartment at the Castle, where she should still find a tender indulgent mother, ready with open arms to receive her.

The last sentence dissolved the whole soul of Louisa in gratitude and tenderness, and gave birth to a thousand ideas, which, though confused and indistinct, left no traces but such as were pleasing. She hastened to prepare for her removal; and expecting Lady Granville every minute,

nute, took out her mother's picture, bathed it with her tears, and implored the Almighty to enable her to tread in the steps of his departed servant !

It was now the beginning of May ; the air was perfectly mild, and the beautiful woods and meadows were gilded with the last trembling rays of the sun. It disappeared ; and was succeeded by that serene glowing sky which marks the evenings of that enchanting season with peculiar beauty.

Louisa, from the window of her mother's apartment, had long contemplated this scene ; if it did not banish her sorrows, at least it becalmed and soothed them. She had marked the brightly setting sun, and traced in her mind a pleasing resemblance between the progress of that heavenly orb and that of a

good life. The departure of that bright luminary inspired feelings perfectly congenial with those impressed on her mind by the scenes she had lately witnessed. "After cheering this world with his beams, said she, and diffusing health and beauty around him, this glorious image of his Maker retires, perhaps, to renew his strength, and blefs other regions." But the comparison would extend no farther. A few hours would restore to the eyes of men the cheering light of the world; but, with a pang almost insupportable, she recollected, that her eyes must no more behold the parent she so fondly loved.

Resolved, before quitting Springwood, to visit her lowly dwelling, she passed, unnoticed, through the garden, and opening a door which led into the park, walked slowly towards the burial-place. The silence which prevailed around,
 the

the deepening shades of evening, and the sudden appearance of the moon from behind a cloud, which gave an uncouth appearance to almost every object, affected her weak spirits so much, that she stopt, and for some moments hesitated about going forward; but, recollecting how seldom she might find so favourable an opportunity of indulging her solemn meditations, she entered the little inclosure, and, kneeling at the side of the grave, strove to raise her thoughts from the gloomy object before her, and to fix them on those which she felt convey peace and even joy to her soul.

She continued some moments in this attitude, when, starting at the rustling of a bush behind her, she hastily arose, and, turning towards the door, exclaimed,—“ All gracious Heaven! Lord “ Hastings!”

Terrified beyond expression with his sudden and unexpected appearance, she fell lifeless on the grave of her mother. Reduced almost to the same condition, the astonished Hastings, kneeling by her side, endeavoured to raise her up, and recal her to life. Several minutes elapsed before his cares had the desired effect. He attempted in vain to offer some excuse for this intrusion; his words were so incoherent, and Louisa appeared so incapable of attending to them, that he forbore talking. His looks, however, sufficiently expressed the perturbation of his mind, whilst he strove to prevail on her to accept of his arm; by the help of which, with a staggering pace, she walked slowly towards the house.

Whilst the maid was employed in putting Louisa's little wardrobe into the coach, she recollected herself so far as to
 enquire

enquire after Lady Granville. Lord Hastings replied, that being a little indisposed, she had desired him to wait on her, and attend her to the Castle. "I greatly fear Miss Seymour, added he, that my visit at this time has proved an unwelcome one." Louisa attempted a reply, but the words died on her lips.

They entered the coach; and a silence ensued, which would have been painfully embarrassing, had not the presence of the maid seemed to authorise it. — When they alighted, Lord Hastings again pressed Louisa to accept of his arm, that he might conduct her to his mother's apartment; but she declined it, saying, with a tone of the sweetest acknowledgment, that she thanked his Lordship, but was now, she believed, able to walk by herself.

Afraid to witness a meeting so tender, he retired to his apartment, and took up his pen to indulge the feelings of his heart, by pouring it out to his friend.

To Mr. Beaufort, Cambridge.

“Beaufort! I am most unhappy.—Your suspicions are justified:—I love;—but spare your friend, and let the acknowledgment of my weakness obtain for me your pity, as well as indulgence. Believe me, the knowledge of this secret is new to myself.—My thoughts are all confusion, else would I describe to you the scene of this evening; till death shall expunge every trace from my memory, even that which it shall lose the latest—the image of Louisa, I will never, never forget it.

“At eight this morning, I witnessed the interment of poor Mrs. Seymour;
but,

but, though my desire to see her charming daughter was inexpressibly great, I could not intrude on her at a moment so solemn. In the evening, my mother being indisposed, she desired me to go and attend Miss Seymour to the Castle.

“ On arriving at Springwood, and enquiring for her young lady, the maid told me, that she believed she was walking in the garden. I followed; but not seeing her in any of the walks, I pursued that which leads to the park; in a retired part of which stands the family burial-place, surrounded with high trees and a wall, which concealed her from sight.

“ The evening was delightfully still; I stopt and listened to the sound of a distant cascade, which alone interrupted the awful silence. Having looked in vain for Miss Seymour, I was just about to return, when I observed the door of the burial-place open. My heart throb-

bed with strange emotions: I approached without noise, and beheld—O Beaufort! an object that almost deprived me of my senses. It was Louisa herself, clothed in her mourning habit, and kneeling at the foot of her mother's grave. At her side lay the picture of her revered parent: Her hands were folded over her bosom, in an attitude of devotion, and her mild eyes, streaming with tears, were fixed on Heaven.—
 Beaufort! think what I felt at that moment! The lovely Saint was startled by the suddenness of my appearance, and occasioned me dreadful alarms, by fainting at a distance from all help. She is now, thank Heaven, in health and safety, in the next apartment with my mother, to whose care she was entrusted by her own, on her death-bed.

“ Oh, Beaufort! what will become of your friend? I recal to mind my
 father's

father's conversation,—his views,—my attentions to Lady Charlotte,—perhaps her partiality!—Oh! can I offend against honour, duty, gratitude! Yet what do I say? I have never deceived Lady Charlotte; my father only wishes to direct, not constrain my choice. But I bewilder myself in a variety of reflections, and dare not trust to the decisions of my own mind in its present distracted state.—Write to me, Beaufort, without a moment's delay. Calm the agonies of my mind,—assure me I have not acted dishonourably,—and Oh! say, if you can, that I may yet hope for Louisa's love;—without that hope I am miserable! Farewel.

HASTINGS."

On enquiring after his mother, Lord Hastings was informed that she was still greatly indisposed, and wished to see
 G 5 him.

him. His agitation was not lessened, when on entering the room, he beheld Louisa sitting by her bedside, and holding a hand of Lady Granville in hers, which she bathed with her tears. Lord Hastings approached the bed, and enquiring anxiously about her complaints, took hold of the other hand, which he was surpris'd to feel very hot and feverish. " Henry, said she, this dear child, " has been too much accustomed of late " to scenes of distress. Try to amuse " her. Go, my dear, continued she, " Hastings will attend you to the draw- " ing-room, and shew you some beauti- " ful prints I have just purchased. " Those of your favourite Salvator I " intend for your apartment: Chuse " out the landscapes you admire most; " and flatter me, by discovering that " your taste agrees with my own."

Louisa

Louisa arose, and walked with Lord Hastings into the drawing-room; but thought not of the prints. She read his apprehensions in his dejected countenance; and instantly catching the alarm, entreated him to tell her what he thought of Lady Granville's situation?

Perhaps, Miss Seymour, said he, my fears magnify her danger; but at present, she certainly has every symptom of a fever. Louisa's affliction was inexpressible; and she could not help sighing in a low voice,—“How unhappy am I!—will Heaven deprive me of every friend?”—“No, Miss Seymour,” replied Lord Hastings, with much emotion, “you will never want friends:—Virtues like yours secure the friendship of Heaven itself.”

This affecting conversation was interrupted by the arrival of Lord Gran-

ville, who had spent the day at the house of a neighbouring gentleman.— He was extremely shocked, at his return, to hear of his Lady's illness: Gave orders that Dr. Lewis should instantly be sent for; and never quitted her room till he came. The Doctor pronounced Lady Granville's disorder to be a fever, probably occasioned by the late agitation of her spirits; but, the cause being now removed, he hoped the complaint would neither be formidable nor lasting.

Louisa implored her permission to watch by her during the night; but this Lady Granville absolutely refused. She retired to her apartment, but not to bed.

Just as the clock struck one, she ventured to slip softly down, and listen at the door of Lady Granville's apartment.

Having to pass that of Lord Hastings, which he had left open with the same intention, he saw her go down stairs, and supposing his mother grown worse, followed her in the greatest agitation. All being quiet, Louisa was returning softly, when she met Lord Hastings in the passage. At sight of him she started with surprise. The eagerness of his enquiries after his mother, the fears he expressed for her own health, in a tone of peculiar tenderness, and the earnest manner in which he urged her to go immediately to rest, affected the weak spirits of Louisa in such a degree, that she could not restrain her tears. She pulled out her handkerchief to conceal them, and hastily retired. By an involuntary movement, he followed her some steps; as he was slowly returning towards his apartment, he saw a slip of paper lying in the passage, which he picked up without knowing what he did,

did, and laid on his dressing-table. He sat down, and, revolving in his mind, the various scenes of the past day, found his admiration of Louisa increase, with every new light in which her exalted character was placed.

He was about to undress, when the paper caught his eye; he unfolded it, and perceived that it was written in a female hand; and instantly knew from the contents, that it must be that of Miss Seymour. In reality she had dropt it, by pulling her handkerchief quickly out of her pocket.

It was dated Midnight; contained the last words of her affectionate mother; and concluded with this solemn address:
“ Almighty God! shield of the orphan,
“ be thou my guide and protector
“ through the dangerous paths of life:
“ And having removed from me the
“ best

“ best of parents, spare in mercy the
 “ kindest of friends !”

The piety of Louisa,* and tenderness of her attachment to his mother, melted the soul of Lord Hastings in love and gratitude; nor did the late proofs of his filial piety and solicitude for her safety less sensibly affect hers. Unable wholly to restrain his emotions, he inclosed the paper in a billet, which contained these words :—“ This paper, which I found a
 “ few hours ago, can belong only to
 “ Miss Seymour. Pardon a curiosity
 “ which I found it impossible to re-
 “ strain : I knew not the hand when I
 “ presumed to read it, but could be at
 “ no loss with regard to the writer.—
 “ O Miss Seymour ! may your prayer
 “ be accepted ! May you, indeed, be
 “ the care of Heaven ; and may peace
 “ for ever inhabit that gentle bosom,
 “ where such singular piety resides !”

This

This letter he presented to her unobserved, as she retired from the breakfasting parlour. The air of secrecy with which it was delivered, alarmed her conscious heart with a variety of confused emotions, and it throbbed with such violence, that it was some minutes after she reached her apartment before she found courage to open and read it. When she did so, her eye impatiently sought for somewhat there, which it could not discover; and she sighed at the close of it, without knowing the cause of her disappointment.

Lady Granville's fever was violent, and her recovery long doubtful. During that tedious languor which usually succeeds severe illness, her son and Louisa scarcely ever left her apartment. For them it had a thousand sweet and secret attractions;—united in the same tender cares, their hearts sympathized in the same delightful

delightful emotions. The bitterness of grief had yielded to the softness of melancholy, in the gentle bosom of Louisa, and she experienced a calm so delicious, that she would not have exchanged it for the tumult of pleasure.

This serenity, however, was not of long duration: The following letter from Adelaide, in answer to that one which acquainted her with Mrs. Seymour's death, revived in the affectionate heart of Louisa those anxious solitudes to which it had long been subjected.

To Miss Seymour.

“ Though the heart of my dearest gentle friend shared tenderly in all my sorrows, yet, perfectly to sympathise with the afflicted, we must ourselves
have

have experienced affliction. Now my Louisa will know what it is to shed the tear of hopeless unutterable grief over the grave of her best friend. Thank God! many yet remain to you; may Heaven increase their number! But let not the merits of any, however deserving, blot from your memory the image of your fond and faithful Adelaide.

“ I know your sorrow, my dearest Louisa, must be extreme; but allow me at least to endeavour to console you. Suffer me to remind you, that the traveller who has a long journey to accomplish, must not allow himself to be too much engrossed by any object, however pleasing, that he may meet with on his way. Friends, fortune, health, are blessings which a bountiful Providence supplies, to beguile the length of this weary pilgrimage, not to betray us into a forgetfulness

getfulness of that better country to which we are hastening.

“ We are ever selfish in our sorrows : Were it not so, would we repine when the truly good are taken from a world unhealthful to their virtues ? especially when in advanced life, and approaching to a second childhood.

“ If it requires our utmost fortitude to behold this beautiful fabric dissolving into dust, ought we not to rejoice, when we are spared the humbling spectacle of the soul also, as it were, in ruins ?

“ 'Tis true, amidst the decays of her uncomfortable mansion, we know that the heavenly inhabitant remains unhurt ; but as her powers all lie dormant, when proper agents are wanting to execute her
will,

will, she appears to us to partake in the ruin of her earthly habitation.

“ My health is very infirm, but my spirits calm and my soul resigned. From this quiet harbour, Louisa, I look back with pity on those who still toil on the ocean of life, and felicitate myself, that my little bark will be so soon ashore. In the soothing recollection of past happiness, and the hope that it will ere long be restored, I acquire a peace which resembles the repose of the blessed.—Yes, my Louisa! the prayer of the amiable and compassionate Rochelle is granted.—Yes, “ though I can never expect “ happiness, I have at least attained re-
“ signation.”

To the same.

“ I have always considered it as a greater proof of heroism, to submit to
live

live for a friend than to die for one.—A few hours after dispatching my last letter, I was relieved from an illness that threatened my life; and the first sentiment of which I was conscious after my recovery, was gratitude, not on my own account, but yours. Yes, my gentle friend, I know that at present my death would have greatly added to your affliction, and therefore I am thankful that life is lent me a little longer.

“ The quiet of a cloister, my Louisa, where there are few objects to engage attention, forces the mind to seek employment at home. In the words of your admired English Poet, I strive to find

Friends in the trees, books in the running brooks,
Sermons in stones, and good in every thing.

“ There is something peculiarly delightful to the mind in tracing such analogies between the natural and moral world,

world, as tend to throw light on many important subjects, and to confirm our faith in the sublime doctrines of our holy religion.

“ The origin and progressive stages of the butterfly’s existence are beautifully illustrative of the nature, changes, and future destination of man. The butterfly is produced from a caterpillar, which devours garden plants, and which, having moved for a season in its lowly narrow sphere, falls into a state of torpid insensibility. Thus it continues during the gloom of winter; but when the gladsome beam of spring appears, it is re-animated, — bursts its confinement, soars aloft, acquires new beauty, power, and vigour. Its scene of action, its relishes, its exercises are changed; the substance is retained, but the modification is totally altered:—It is at once another and the same.—Have recourse then,

then, ye infidels, to the demonstrations of annual experience, and then say,— Why should it be thought incredible that God should raise the dead?

“ Themes like these, my Louisa, cannot be supposed frequently to employ your thoughts, in the midst of company and amusements. Let me, from the quiet of a cloister, sometimes obtrude them upon you. Though my Louisa cannot expect amusement from the walls of a convent, yet that situation, as it inspires the most solemn reflections, will plead my excuse, if mine should at any time seem officious and impertinent.

“ Deprived of your beloved society, I naturally seek for that of the gentle Constance. Though her conversation cannot console me for the loss of yours, her amiable dispositions bring you continually to my remembrance. In her,
good

good sense and sweetness of temper do more than compensate for the absence of those shining talents,—which dazzle, but do not warm,—which awaken envy, but rarely conciliate affection.

“ Adieu, my dearest friend ! May the cup of prosperity long be yours, unim-bittered by any mixture of peculiar affliction ;—may those that are necessary prove healthful ;—and may its flavour be heightened, and its relish endeared, by the cordial friendship of your

ADELAIDE.”

Before Lady Granville was able to take an airing in the coach, she was advised by Dr. Lewis to be carried into the garden for the benefit of fresh air ; where there was an elegant little pavilion, fitted up in the most exquisite taste,

taste, and which commanded one of the finest prospects in the world. There, whilst Louisa sat at work with Lady Granville, or amused herself with training the honeysuckle and jessamine round the windows, Lord Hastings usually read aloud. One day he took up a volume of Shakespear, his favourite author, and chance directing him to the *Twelfth Night*, he began to read.

It was impossible for Louisa not to perceive that there was something particular in the whole manner of Lord Hastings towards her; and the various incidents of the last month had left her in no doubt with respect to the nature of her own sentiments. As his expressions, however, might be all justified on the score of friendship and gratitude, she did not dare to encourage hope, though she often felt the torment of suspense, and suffered extreme uneasiness from the

dread of Lord Hastings entertaining the slightest suspicion of the truth.

As he advanced in the play, she felt herself greatly affected. When he came to that pathetic description, "She never told her love," &c. the colour forsook her cheeks, and her heart palpitated with the most painful apprehensions. It instantly occurred to her, that Lord Hastings had artfully contrived this method of discovering her real sentiments, —the thought was agony.

On pronouncing this sentence,—"A murderous guilt shows not itself more soon, than love that would seem hid,"—he stopt, he sighed; and venturing to steal a look at Louisa, saw her pale and breathless, just sinking from her chair. He flew to her, and catching her in his arms, prevented her from falling. Lady Granville, who was not an unconcerned
spectator

spectator of this scene, assisted her son in carrying her out to the air.—“ My “ love,” said she, “ your long confine- “ ment in a sick-room, has, I fear, in- “ jured your health. Indeed, Louisa, the “ journey to Bath, which Dr. Lewis “ urges, is not less necessary for you “ than myself.”

From that moment Louisa resolved to keep the strictest watch over herself; and conscious of her inability to dissemble, to avoid for the future the company of Lord Hastings, with as much earnestness as she had formerly wished for it. He perceived the coldness and alteration in her manner; but far from suspecting the real cause, with that diffidence which often accompanies true merit, and always genuine love, he sought for it in his own conduct; some part of which, though unknown to himself, he feared had offended her.

The consciousness that haunted Louisa, when in company with him, gave her a feeling so exquisitely painful, that it even threw an air of peevishness into her conversation. When he enquired anxiously about her health, it increased her anguish and perplexity, by making her suspect that her secret distress was become apparent; and every attempt to soothe her inquietude, carried in it, to her disordered imagination, the air of an insult.

Lord Hastings sought in vain to unravel the mystery of her behaviour; he was convinced of her indifference; he felt dissatisfied and unhappy; but though he knew too well the cause of his inquietude, he was utterly unconscious of having done any thing to merit the anguish he suffered.

To Adelaide de St. Croix.

“ Your tender solicitude to spare my anxiety, and reconcile me to my loss, merits my unfeigned acknowledgment. Oh, Adelaide ! I have indeed wept over the grave of my best friend ; but I have not, like you, buried there my hopes, wishes, and inquietudes. My bosom is not formed for the restless passions and pursuits of the world ; it relishes peace even more than pleasure. In a few days we set out for Bath ; and I confess to you, the prospect of mixing with the gay world, loads me with a dejection I cannot shake off. But like the bee, I must strive to improve my little hour of life, and to extract honey from weeds as well as flowers.

“ Happily, my Adelaide, the eyes of imagination are not fettered by the laws
 H 3 that

that limit the corporeal sense. Though many hundred miles now divide us, still I behold the friend of my heart, still do I partake with you the delightful solitude of St. Cire. I tread in fancy the same path we have often trod together; the same trees which have witnessed our mutual expressions of friendship, seem to shade me; and I still stop to listen to the same profound silence, which used to inspire us with a pleasing dread, whilst wandering through the cloisters by the pale lamp of evening. I look back with regret on those hours, Adelaide, which shall never, never return!—Hours, which we often suffered to elapse in vain regrets for their short duration.—Such is the weakness, the inconsistency of human nature!—You would be equally unjust to your own merit and my friendship, did you believe that I could ever suffer your image to be banished from
my

my heart. No, Adelaide; others may engage my attention, or engross my time, but you will ever possess the confirmed esteem, and tender affection of

Your faithful friend,

LOUISA SEYMOUR."

As Bath waters were thought necessary for re-establishing Lady Granville's health, she prepared to set out with her family, all of whom wished to attend her.

About a week before their departure, the Marquis of Winchester and his daughter came to congratulate Lady Granville on her recovery, and spend a few days at the Castle. Lady Charlotte, who had never seen Miss Seymour before, was so struck with her beauty, that

she could not help expressing her admiration of it. Her admiration indeed was sincere, and unmixed with envy; but would probably have been attended with a feeling equally painful, had she not instantly perceived the coldness with which Louisa treated Lord Hastings, and recollected that the change in his manner took place before her return from France.

Nothing is more common than to see people of opposite tempers become fond of each other. In all connections of the heart, there must be a similarity in taste and sentiment between the parties; but diversity of tempers, like diversity of musical tones, serve, when properly combined, to make the harmony more complete. The timid and reserved are relieved from the necessity of any painful exertions, by the frank and complacent, who derive a generous pleasure
from

from the consciousness of bringing forth the merit of others to view, and of removing that veil which excessive modesty throws over their good qualities. These two Ladies derived mutual pleasure and advantage from each other's society; and before they parted, Lady Charlotte entreated Louisa to write to her, in such pressing terms, as left her no pretence for declining a correspondence, which she by no means thought herself qualified to support.

One day, when the two young ladies and Lord Hastings were walking in the garden, Lady Charlotte, with her usual vivacity, began to rally Miss Seymour on the number of conquests she would make at Bath. The conversation happening to turn on the marriage of a young lady there to a rich, disagreeable old miser, Louisa expressed her detestation of a conduct so interested, in the

strongest terms. "Very well," replied her lively friend, "all this is mighty pretty talking: Nay, I doubt not but you will carry your romantic folly so far, as to marry some gentle generous youth, who believes himself as capable of living on love, and hope, and vows, and nonsense, as you do. But indeed, my dear girl, we mortals require some grosser aliment; and I'll venture to wager, you shall be of my opinion before ten years are expired: Nay, perhaps, as many weeks at Bath, will be sufficient to effect this marvellous change. Consider, child, you have never yet seen the world. Oh! you know not the dear delight of being followed, admired, and flattered! Don't you think, my Lord, that Miss Seymour will soon be of my opinion?" — "I should rather hope, madam," replied he gravely, "that the empty adulation of mere admirers, would

“would serve to give Miss Seymour a
“juster value for the esteem and admira-
“tion of her real friends.”

Though Lady Charlotte paid little attention to this speech, Louisa perfectly comprehended the meaning of it. Indeed, the whole of this conversation introduced into the minds of Lord Hastings and Miss Seymour, a train of ideas so unpleasing, that they were glad to put an end to it, by returning to the Castle.

A few hours after the Marquis and his daughter went away, a genteel young woman demanded to see Miss Seymour alone, and was accordingly conducted to her apartment. It being then the dusk, Louisa could not see the face of the person who waited for her; and was not a little alarmed on seeing her bolt the door, and then, falling on her knees,

H 6

burst

burst into a flood of tears, accompanied with such violent agitation, as for a while robbed her of the power of utterance. Louisa begged to know what she wanted. "Oh, Miss Seymour," cried she, with a feeble voice, interrupted with sighs, "have you forgotten your once "virtuous, once happy Sally Vernon?" "Good Heavens! Sally," exclaimed Louisa, "is it you? But how came "you here at this late hour?—Why "have you left Cambridge?—What is "the cause of your distress?" — "O!" continued the afflicted mourner, "why "did you send me from you! You "know, dear Miss Seymour, I was not "a vain or giddy creature. Had I still "been at Springwood, I would have "been the happiest, as I am now the "most miserable, of the human race."— She then proceeded, with much difficulty, to give Miss Seymour the melancholy relation contained in the following letter,

letter, which Louisa dispatched to her friend early next morning, before setting out for Bath :

To Lady Charlotte Villiers.

“ Our correspondence, my dear Lady Charlotte, is about to commence in a manner I little thought of. I will make no apology for engaging you in an act of humanity, because I am persuaded I cannot give you a higher proof of my esteem, than soliciting a favour ; or confer a greater obligation on you, than by putting it in your power to do good.

“ The affair I am requesting your assistance in, has given me inexpressible affliction. Perhaps you may remember to have seen at the Castle a beautiful young girl named Sally Vernon, who staid there some days at Lady Granville’s desire,

desire, waiting my mother's return from France. She was the only child of a favourite servant, who dying, bequeathed her to my mother's care. Sally waited on me, till the loss of my father's fortune obliged us to dismiss all our supernumerary domestics. My worthy parent, unwilling to expose this innocent girl to the dangers of the world, placed her with a chamber milliner at Cambridge. There she has continued for several years past, and behaved in a manner which gained her the affection of the whole family.

“ Some time ago, a young gentleman of the name of Talbot called to look at some ruffles: He saw the unfortunate Sally, wrote several letters to her, pretending he was the son a wealthy farmer in the next county; and by various arts, prevailed on the unsuspecting girl to correspond

respond with him, and listen to his addresses.

“ I cannot pretend to give you all the particulars of this shocking affair; I had them from her own lips, and spared her the painful relation. Suffice it to say, that in return for the most tender and confiding affection, he has betrayed her to ruin, and loaded her with shame.

“ Oh, my dear Lady Charlotte! how my heart swells with indignation against the perpetrator of this most cruel, this premeditated villainy!—What will become of this wretched orphan I know not. He set off a few days ago for France, without saying farewell, or leaving one guinea for her support, notwithstanding her present deplorable situation.—How mean! how despicable does vice render the human character!

“ She

“ She asked to see me alone yesterday; and after throwing herself at my feet, and ingenuously acknowledging her fault, which indeed would admit of many palliations, she conjured me by the memory of my revered parent, to save her from infamy and want. Her words were few, but the eloquence of her distress was irresistible. I dismissed her with a promise of soon finding an asylum proper for her, and desired her to say to the milliner, that having heard of something greatly to her advantage, I was about to remove her from Cambridge.

“ It immediately occurred to me, that your good old nurse whom we visited together, would be a proper person for such a charge, especially as she has no family, and her cottage stands remote from any other.—If Sally’s ill-fated infant sees the light, I can easily find a
nurse

nurse for it in this neighbourhood.—
Let me know if this plan meets with
your approbation.

“ Whatever lines Society is obliged
to draw between the strictly virtuous of
our sex and such as err, O let not
us, my dear Lady Charlotte! by too
rigid a regard to its laws, debar un-
happy wanderers from again returning
to the peaceful path from which they
have unfortunately strayed.

“ Your letter, which I shall impa-
tiently expect, must be addressed to me
at Bath. Adieu.

LOUISA SEYMOUR.”

To Miss Seymour.

“ I am shocked beyond expression,
my dear Miss Seymour, at your account
of

of the credulous and unfortunate Sally. Poor girl! we must at least try to preserve her from public shame, if we cannot save her from self-reproach. Your plan meets my highest approbation, and shall have every assistance in my power.

“ Ah, Louisa! should the gallows be erected for the thief and robber, whom necessity, perhaps, has impelled to deprive the rich of what they can easily spare, and ought voluntarily to bestow;—and shall no punishment be inflicted on him, who steals the affection of the gentle, unsuspecting heart, robs it of its innocence, and ruins its peace?—Yes, my friend! for such, punishment is prepared—a tribunal erected,—Conscience is the accuser, and God himself the judge:—From his power and justice there is no escaping,—from his righteous sentence, there lies no appeal!

“ Whence

“ Whence comes it, my friend, that men, who pride themselves on their integrity in their transactions with each other, should nevertheless hold themselves excusable for practising perpetual impositions on the whole race of females?—There must certainly be some physical cause of this, for in morals there is none.—I would apply to philosophers for a solution of this enigma—but, alas! are not philosophers men? and will not they then impose some fallacy upon us?—Indubitably they will. Upon a little reflection, however, I cease to wonder at it: “ That power confers “ right,” is a favourite maxim with that tender-conscienced sex; and from hence they derive their title, to enslave one part of their species, and cheat the other.

“ I cannot express my admiration of your noble sentiments, and generous conduct,

conduct, so superior to vulgar prejudice, and to the weakness of our sex in particular. May your humanity be its own reward, and your exemplary goodness lead others to emulate your conduct.— Adieu!—try to shake off a little of your monastick gravity; it is unnatural at your early age. I shall dispense with your tasting the waters at Bath; but I insist on your taking a Lethæan draught of its pleasures, that, like those who frequent it, you may forget, or seem to forget, all your cares! Impress your memory, however, at all times, with the assurance that I love you; and never forget

Your admiring friend,

CHARLOTTE VILLIERS.”

To

To Lady Charlotte Villiers.

“ In what terms shall I thank my dear Lady Charlotte, for her ready concurrence with my plan for poor Sally ! I have written, to acquaint her with your intended goodness, of taking her hereafter into your own service : I dare answer for her gratitude, and will trust to you for having her conveyed privately to ——— as soon as possible.

“ I fear my conduct in this affair has not been so disinterested as you suppose : Your approbation I have looked to as part of my reward ; and, perhaps, even the indulgence of benevolence has self-gratification in view.—Were we at due pains, my dear friend, to examine the motives of our actions, we would often have cause to blush for those, on account of which, we proudly arrogate to ourselves

ourselves the praise due to superior merit.

“ Though I wish to obey you in all things, I shall find it impossible to forget my cares in the midst of a scene so full of them. Here, care takes possession of all ranks and denominations: The young care for amusement, and the old for money—the gay care for dress, and the serious for cards—the handsome care for admirers, and the ugly for want of them—the coquettes care for coxcombs, and the coxcombs for coquettes—the women care for every thing, and the men for nothing—but themselves. For my part, instead of casting away care, I have got a huge addition to my former stock—the care of pleasing you; which I am so anxious to do, that, knowing affection to be of an assimilating nature, I am striving to imitate you; and, in hope of making you what you have

never appeared to be—fond of yourself—am encroaching on your province, and affecting your style. Do not be afraid, however, that I shall rival you in it: I am so awkward an impostor, that every child might detect the cheat.

“ The only thing of which every person here seems careless, is that health, which they profess to make the sole object of their care.—One, I shall ever anxiously preserve—that of endeavouring to merit your friendship, and to justify to the world your kind partiality for me. Perhaps, in this instance alone, your judgment could ever be called in question: Be it my constant care to vindicate it. Adieu.”

To Adelaide de St. Croix.

“ I now address my beloved friend, from the very centre of fashion and folly. Is this then the world, so much desired, so eagerly pursued, at the expence of health, peace—nay, even virtue itself?—Ah, my Adelaide! it has no charms for me; it never will have.

“ I am alarmed and disconcerted at every step: I am disgusted with the extravagant levity of the women, and the fulsome adulation of the men; who, in praising others, seem to be wholly engrossed by the care of displaying their own talents, and placing their superficial accomplishments in the most advantageous light.—That indiscriminating politeness, which the courtesy of the world dignifies with the title of good-breed,

breeding, appears to me to be nothing better than a refined species of hypocrisy. I shrink from the view of those harsh and unamiable qualities, which the generality of our species are neither at pains to correct nor conceal; and seek in vain for the beloved circle of friends, with whom I am accustomed to converse with freedom and delight, in the quiet of the country. “My heart
 “is ever ready to speak, but there
 “are none to hear or answer it:” All here seem to have but one care, one object, one idol—and that is self—to whom they pay unceasing homage.

“How thankful to Providence ought we to be, my Adelaide, who hath preserved our hearts from being corrupted by the world!—who hath endowed them with relishes too exalted, too refined, to be comprehended by those who are enslaved by fashion, and whose taste is depraved by vice and luxury!—How

VOL. I.

I

thankful,

thankful, that the view of the sublime, the useful, and the beautiful, both in the natural and moral world, excites in our souls the most pure pleasure, the most devout gratitude, the most lively adoration and praise!—These are emotions at once exquisite and ennobling! Emotions which, alas! are but little known to the bulk of our species! Pleasures which escape the regards even of those who profess no other pursuit but pleasure! Reserved by God himself for those who love him—by rightly loving themselves; who fear him—by fearing to commit what is offensive to him; and who obey him—by following the best instincts of nature, the clearest deductions of freedom; all which coincide with our only unerring guide, the divine light of revelation.

“ Your friendship for me, Adelaide, gives me a jealousy of myself, to which
I was

I was formerly a stranger. She who hopes to maintain a place in that heart, where such noble candour, generosity, and friendship inhabit, ought to possess no vulgar share of these virtues. I fear to be unjust to a friendship like yours, by admitting another candidate for mine; yet, after all, my Adelaide, I feel, that though I may esteem and admire others for various good qualities, you, and you alone, are the friend of my heart.

“ About a week before we set out for Bath, the Marquis of Winchester, who has a fine seat in this neighbourhood, came with his daughter, to spend some days with Lord and Lady Granville.— I have never seen more dignity and grace united, than in Lady Charlotte Villiers: She is extremely handsome, and possesses a ready wit, which, as it is never displayed either to attract admira-

tion, or give unnecessary pain, has the effect of rendering her conversation in the highest degree entertaining. She distinguishes me by her notice; and, when we parted, solicited my friendship and correspondence, in a manner truly pleasing, and which did me much honour. But shall I confess to my Adelaide, I feel more admiration than complacency for Lady Charlotte. I cannot shake off the restraint which difference of rank imposes; and, through the nobleness of her sentiments, I can yet perceive that she values herself on the superiority of her birth. Besides, though highly accomplished, and extremely agreeable, Lady Charlotte wants that irresistible charm which sensibility adds to the female character. She sometimes amuses herself with laughing at the guiltless weaknesses of her species, but never exposes them to public view. She despises popularity, and testifies her
friendship,

friendship, by placing your foibles in a light at once so striking and ridiculous; that being neither able to excuse nor deny, you have no way left but to abjure them.

“ I often draw a comparison between my beloved friend, and this admired beauty : Her perfections, like the meridian sun, dazzle and fatigue the sight—Your’s, my Adelaide, resemble the soft mild lustre of the queen of Heaven, whose charming aspect we used to contemplate together, with such ineffable delight, in the gardens of St. Cire.—Oh! with what pleasing melancholy, what tender regret, do I recall the hours spent there!—Is there not, my beloved friend, something inexplicable in these sadly soothing frames of mind, when it pleases us to be pain’d, and when sorrow is mingled with satisfaction ?”

Soon after the arrival of the Granville family at Bath, they went to visit the rooms. Whilst they were walking there, a lady entered, leaning on a genteel young man, both in deep mourning; whom Louisa instantly discovered to be her travelling companions, Mrs. Stanhope and her son. They mutually expressed their satisfaction on occasion of this unexpected meeting; and Mr. Stanhope, with marks of the tenderest sensibility, condoled with Louisa on the loss she had sustained, acquainting her at the same time with the death of his father, which had likewise happened since they parted at Dover.

As Miss Seymour looked very pale and dejected, he could not help expressing great solicitude about her health, the loss of which he feared had induced her to visit Bath at that unfashionable season.—

season.—Louisa, after proper acknowledgments, and informing him of the cause of her journey, turning to Lady Granville, “Permit me, Madam,” said she, “to introduce Mrs. Stanhope and her son to your acquaintance; their merit claims your esteem, and my obligations to their kindness will secure them your friendship.”

Lord Hastings, from the opposite side of the room, had observed with attention the pleasing surprise Louisa expressed on seeing Mr. Stanhope. He came up to them at the moment she uttered the last sentence, and was lost in amazement at her speech, the import of which he could not possibly comprehend, as he had not heard the name of Stanhope, and knew of no friends with whom Miss Stymour could be on so familiar a footing.

He soon observed the constant and pointed attention paid her by Mr. Stanhope, which she received with the sweetest complacency; and jealousy was now added to the other restless passions that distracted his soul. But, though divided by turns between fear, suspense, and jealousy, love maintained its empire there. Louisa appeared with superior advantages in every new point of light. Modesty, humility, and ingenuity, were the constant inmates of her gentle bosom; and she appeared with the same unconscious sweetness, and dignified composure, in public crowds of the gay and the dissipated, as when seated in the private circle of her chosen friends.

As soon as they returned home, Lord Hastings enquired eagerly after the name and quality of the strangers. Louisa readily informed him; and at the same time

time mentioned the kindness shewn by them to her mother, in terms of such lively gratitude, as excited his envy, and confirmed his suspicions.

Louisa observed, with extreme pain, the uneasiness of his mind, and depression of his spirits.—The diffidence of his manner; whenever he addressed her, and the respectful attention with which he treated her, convinced her that she had injured him by her former suspicions. No sooner did her judgment make this concession, than her heart eagerly seized it; to justify a thousand little kindnesses, which she thought were due to a passion so tender and disinterested as that of Lord Hastings.

To Miss Seymour.

“ There is a tender pleasure, my Louisa, in reflecting, that perhaps at the same instant, though divided by many hundred miles, the same glowing affection is animating our hearts, the same pleasing task employing our hands.

“ Believe me, it is with real satisfaction, I hear of your forming new intimacies. Do not be afraid, my amiable, my ingenuous friend, to admit Lady Charlotte to a share of your affection; I am confident I shall not be a loser on that account. You cannot be unjust; and the unequalled fondness I bear you, is my security for the strength and constancy of your attachment.—Long accustomed to the study of those valuable characters who compose our favourite
 5 circle,

circle, and who are all the world to us, we come at length to believe, that within this circle is comprised all that is valuable in the world. Friendship annihilates their foibles and magnifies their virtues: Others lose greatly by comparison; and hence the social and benevolent affections come at length to be confined to a sphere far too narrow and limited for their healthful exercise. Intimacy with a variety of characters gives the mind more enlarged ideas, and a more liberal turn; and by discovering various great and good qualities in individuals, we are induced to give credit to our species for many more which we want opportunity to develop.

“ Let me warn my beloved friend against cherishing that false delicacy and excessive refinement, which would wholly unfit her for commerce with the world, and that station which Providence

hath assigned her there. Philanthropy, in some measure, conforms the human to the divine nature: Though there are harsh features in some characters, there are good qualities in all; and though the vices of individuals excite a virtuous indignation, for our species, as a collective body, let us ever cherish the sweet glow of benevolence.

“ Though sensibility adds grace to virtue, if it becomes so exquisite as to occasion more pain and disgust than pleasure to its possessor, it can no longer be regarded as a blessing. Approbation is a pleasant sentiment; but it is a real misfortune to have acquired that degree of refinement, which gives us a distaste for the ordinary pursuits and satisfactions of life.—When we enter the great theatre of the world, we find two representations of human life: One the work of imagination, a young giddy enthusiast,

thusiast,—the other, that of experience, a sober skilful artist. The first presents you only with exaggerated features, deceitful proportions, and random strokes, which confound and mislead the judgment. In the work of the other, light and shade are judiciously blended; and through the whole you may trace beauty, symmetry, and design: Every feature is mellowed by time; and if you are not dazzled with its lustre, neither will you be disgusted with its faults.

“ To view this picture in the fairest light; in other words, to make the best of every thing, is the great art of life.

To Miss Seymour.

“ Professions of esteem and affection, are among those truths which we find so agreeable to the interests of self-love,
that

that we seldom incline to question their sincerity. Yours I receive with implicit faith, and hold them as sacred as my creed, in spite of surly conscience, who cavils at the foundation on which they are built.—I wish, Louisa, you would get rid of that antiquated useless virtue modesty, which every body admires, and nobody rewards. How often shall I assure you, that your letters give me pleasure;—that I peruse them with eagerness;—that I sigh when I come to their close? Oh! I anticipate your malicious inference; but I assure you, it is the shortness, not length, of your letters which occasions my sighing. Perhaps, I ought rather to applaud, than blame your generous caution; you know sweet morsels are apt to pall, and tremble lest you should give me a surfeit.

“With that diffidence which always accompanies genuine merit, you disclaim
the

the praise due to your late conduct to poor Sally, and allege that your generosity proceeded from a desire to indulge yourself. You wrong yourself, my Louisa; pleasure has been the reward, whilst virtue was the source of your conduct.

“ I know there are some who arrogate to themselves the title of Philosophers, but who in fact are no lovers of wisdom, but mere lovers of paradox, that derive all our actions from the selfish principle. Let us detect the fallacy. No man could rightly estimate the pleasure of goodness, till he had himself been good. From what motive then arose the first benevolent action ?”

“ Again, you affirm, that your charity was not disinterested, because you hoped by it to obtain my approbation. Our actions, my dear Miss Seymour, are
feldom

seldom the result of a single principle, but flow from a complex variety of motives. To wish for the approbation of the good, is at least innocent, and cannot therefore contaminate the action to which it gives rise. And, although your charity may have looked to this as a part of its reward, yet a deed which in part was prompted by compassion, is not therefore to be stripped quite naked of merit. Let us guard against pride, by an impartial examination of the hidden springs of our conduct; but let us shun also too severe a scrutiny, lest deprived of the support of self-approbation, the vigour of our minds fail, for want of that reviving cordial which our benignant Creator hath provided as an encouragement to perseverance in virtue.

“ You tell me, “ you are surprised
 “ that a person with my advantages,
 “ and

“ and living so much in the gay world,
 “ should have nothing of the coquette
 “ in her disposition.”—To my father,
 Louisa, I am indebted for this. De-
 prived in infancy of my mother, his
 whole attention has been bestowed on
 me, and I have been his constant com-
 panion from a child.

“ He knows human nature; and hav-
 ing made my temper his peculiar study,
 took advantage of my high spirit, to in-
 spire me early with the laudable ambi-
 tion of excelling in mental, rather than
 personal qualifications. He opposed one
 passion to another, and taught the pride
 of superior intelligence to combat the
 rage for admiration.

“ Perhaps you will think he has still
 much to conquer, when, in the course
 of one letter, I can betray two foibles,
 vanity

vanity and loquacity.—See the confidence I have in your friendship!

“ Though your last very flattering letter would not perhaps have gratified the very learned and curious Athenians, who delighted chiefly in hearing something new, yet it contained some old truths which one never tires of hearing. Repeat them often, my dear Louisa, and be assured, that to obtain your affection and esteem, will gratify the highest ambition of

Your sincere, though aspiring friend,

CHARLOTTE VILLIERS.”

To Lady Charlotte Villiers.

You rally me, my dear Lady Charlotte, on my seriousness and love of retirement, which you term unnatural at my

my age. Truth is, though we may live in the world without adopting its prejudices, or being corrupted by its vices, we can hardly avoid being conformed to its customs and manners, which are utterly repugnant both to my principles and taste.

“The absurdity of these will not strike your mind, because they have long been familiar to you; but permit me to ask, what can be more unnatural, ridiculous, disingenuous, and even criminal, than the whole life and conduct of a fine lady?—Let me attempt the picture: At the expence of health and duty, she wastes in sleep or sloth those skill, serene, delightful hours, which ought to be devoted to the improvement of her mind and regulation of her family. She gets up with uneasy reflections on the losses, disappointments, and mortifications of the preceding day.

OF

or else with no reflections at all. Her temper is fretted during the tedious duties of the toilette, by discovering in her face the sure, though silent, ravages of time and dissipation. Chagrined with herself, she vents her ill-humour indiscriminately on all who approach her; and her caprice and injustice teach even her children and domestics to despise her. Utterly ignorant of happiness, she wastes the precious hours of life in vainly contriving the means of rendering them happy. To dissipate that time, which she knows not to enjoy, yet whose silent lapse she marks with terror, and deploras with anguish, she sets out on a round of visits, in full confidence of being denied admittance by all who call themselves her friends, and whom she would indeed rank as enemies, did they consent to see her. But if, by some unfortunate mistake, their doors are opened to receive her, she

she execrates the fault; and with consummate art, and heroic dissimulation, instantly converts her frowns into smiles, and flies with open arms to meet the very person, whom in her heart she hates, despises, envies, and defames.— Company joins her at her superb, but joyless and inhospitable meal. There, want of confidence and esteem throws restraint and coldness into conversation; for where there is no mutual desire to please and be pleased, disgust and indifference must take place of social intercourse, harmony, and cheerfulness.— Public amusements fill up the tedious night;—amusements! grown not only tasteless but burthensome by repetition. Frivolous conversation, unmeaning gallantry, insipid pleasures, and ruinous gaming, sum up the joys of a fine lady.— She may, indeed, be said to walk in a vain show; for her life is a train of unsuccessful deceit, which cannot impose upon

on the world, and which neither promotes her interest nor comfort. Her rankling passions increase with her years; her heart is the receptacle of pride, envy, malevolence, and disgust:—Her youth is wasted in folly, her age has no friends: She lives without enjoyment, she dies without hope!

“ Perhaps, my dear Lady Charlotte, you think me too severe. Believe me, it was Truth that guided the pencil, and Experience that finished the piece. The glowing colours of Imagination had no place there.

“ I confess I am shocked and disgusted beyond expression with the levity, and even rudeness, of those, who call themselves the polite world. Would you believe it, I have been frequently ridiculed here, for my present mourning habit? The only outward testimony I
can

can give, of that reverence I shall ever feel, for the memory of the best of mothers!

“ Two young ladies of fashion stood near me last night; when, after disconcerting me extremely, by scanning me from head to foot, with looks of ineffable contempt, “ This deep mourning
 “ for a mother,” said one of them,
 “ who has already been dead two
 “ months, is absurd affectation.”——
 “ Ah, my dear,” replied the other,
 “ this mushroom beauty, whom no-
 “ body knows, is not so ignorant as not
 “ to perceive the effect black has, in
 “ heightening the delicacy of such a
 “ skin and complexion.”

“ I am not conscious of being vain or conceited, Lady Charlotte; but if I am, this is not the proper way of correcting me.—I will not allow myself,
 however,

however, to feel lasting resentment, where, perhaps, no insult was intended. These young ladies were not conscious of the pain they were inflicting; and, besides—they had not lost a mother!—With respect to changing my dress, I shall not regulate my conduct by their opinion. I can never regard the practice of wearing mourning solely in the light of compliance with custom: It seems intended as a security against those wounds, which a heart, yet sore from recent distress, would feel, from witnessing the extravagance of mirth, or thoughtlessness of levity.—Intemperate must that mind be, which the presence of a person, whose countenance and habit express the real mourner, will not awe for a little into something like seriousness.—Another custom, too, prevails in the world, which I think both cruel and unnecessary—That of admitting
into

into the presence of one in deep affliction, all those who, under the presence of sympathy, seek only to gratify an impertinent and most disgusting curiosity. None but those who intimately know the heart, are qualified deeply to sympathise in its sorrows; and the sorrows of the heart are of too sacred a nature to be laid open to the inspection of every superficial acquaintance and idle visitor.

“ Adieu, my dear Lady Charlotte; the friendship with which you honour me, gives me a right to share in both the pains and pleasures of yours. To alleviate the one, and augment the other, will ever add to the enjoyment of

Your sincere friend,

LOUISA SEYMOUR.”

To Miss Seymour.

“ You tell me, my amiable friend, that my letters at once amuse and delight you : I can easily believe that a heart so tender, will find sensible pleasure in sympathising in the feelings of mine ;—but indeed, Louisa, the quiet and uniform tenour of the conventual life, furnishes but very few topics of amusement.—There is nothing, however, from which a contemplative mind may not derive instruction. Whether we confine our views to earth, or raise them to Heaven, we shall find new cause to admire the wisdom and extol the goodness of the Creator, God !

“ Like you, I am a passionate admirer of the simple beauties of nature. Artless expressions are ever the most pathetic ;

thetic; and therefore those objects which owe their charms to nature alone, are most in harmony with my present feelings.—But whilst we, my friend, felicitate ourselves on possessing a taste which can derive pleasure from so many sources, ought we not to adore that Being, who, attentive not only to the necessities, but enjoyment of his creatures, hath adjusted these to their various capacities and relishes of happiness?

“ The scenes, my Louisa, which contribute to my instruction, as well as pleasure, are those to which I most frequently resort. The weak state of my health making change of air necessary, my mother, with permission of the Abbess, has brought me once more to the scenes of my earliest, happiest years. With what mournful pleasure, what tender regret, do I look back on those years?—Happy! healthful! and inno-

gent!—Ah! my friend, how ignorant are we then of the value of these blessings?—It is not till the streams of prosperity are dried up, that we are sensible how plenteously they have flowed: Mine, Louisa, are cut off for ever!

“ Nothing presents a more striking emblem of Time, than a silent and smooth-flowing river; such as that I have just been contemplating. To the careless and inattentive eye, it seems always the same; but the various portions of which it is composed, are gliding imperceptibly away, whilst the little flowerets that enamel its banks, and which it matures in its course, are likewise secretly undermined by its current.

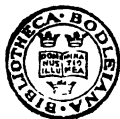
But a few months are passed, since we traced together the course of this river: Its waters were then pure and transparent;—we admired its beauty, and were
I
refreshed

refreshed with its coolness. How is the scene changed? Swollen by a torrent of descending rains, it hath burst its bounds; and, dark, troubled, impetuous, it rolls along, involving, in its wasteful progress, every herb and flower which it formerly nourished!—So fares it with the human soul—There, whilst the affections flow in their smooth and natural course, the seeds of virtue spring, and its flowers blossom. But no sooner does the storm of passion arise, than every noble thought, and generous wish, and useful aim, are swept away into the gulph of oblivion!

“ Be it our care, my Louisa, to preserve the stream of our affections pure from every stain; and to cherish those virtues which Heaven hath committed to our care, till they shall grow up to beauty and perfection, and be transplanted to a milder clime, where they

shall imbibe the rays of a never-fetting sun, and flourish, with increasing strength, beauty, and vigour, for ever!

“ Adieu, my amiable friend—Let us think oftener of the blessings which remain, than of those which are taken away from us; and of the calamities we escape, than on the slight evils we are obliged a little while to endure.—Adieu.”



To Miss Seymour.

—“ Well, Louisa, I shall positively become a convert to modern philosophy, if I continue long in this world; and, disclaiming all confidence in the testimony of my senses, believe that there is nothing real in the universe, but that all we see, and hear, and act, is nothing more than a bundle of fallacious impressions;

pressions;

pressions, inconceivable ideas, unperceivable perceptions, and I know not what.

“ Do you know I have for ever offended Miss —, by my reserved behaviour yesterday. You may remember, when she left the country, she was a little, thin, red-haired, puny girl;— but mark what metamorphoses one winter in London produces!—Not Ovid, nay, nor Circe herself, could effect what lead-combs, paint, and powder atchieve in that mart of vanity, and school of deceit.—I was surpris'd to be address'd yesterday, on coming out of church, by a stranger, in a manner so vulgarly familiar, as quite shocked me. It was a tall, rosy, brisk, bourgeois figure, with dark eye-brows and chesnut hair; and whom I should just as soon have taken for the Cham of Tartary as Miss —.

K 4

“ Pray,

“ Pray, my dear, do you think in your conscience, that one is obliged to know one’s friends under such disguises? Who shall hereafter pretend to determine on identity of person, when it is in the power of the milliner, mantua-maker, perfumer, and friseur, to new-model and make us just what they please?

“ You have drawn such a true, but shocking picture of fashionable life, that I am terrified with the view of it;—and now, being heartily sick of this world, and not yet quite ready for a better, you must positively reconcile me to my allotted station here, by giving me, in opposition to the “unnatural, ridiculous, disingenuous, and criminal character of a woman of fashion,” a just representation of what you deem a natural, proper, agreeable, and virtuous tenour of conduct;—

conduct;—in other words, the picture of an unfashionable woman.

“ Having succeeded so happily in your portrait of a fine lady, I must insist on immediately seeing her counterpart—a lifeless, sober, insipid dowdy, I suppose, commonly called “ a good sort of woman;” but, in my opinion, the worst woman in the world—who tires one to death with narrating facts which every body knows—affirming truths which nobody disputes—descanting on characters which nobody cares for—and proving herself beyond dispute a woman good for nothing but plain work, cookery, and breeding.

“ Like your fine lady, and every body who is displeased with themselves, I can be pleased with nothing besides. Hasten then to restore me to temper, by a more agreeable picture than that

K 5

you

you have set before me.—Ah! Louisa, though Bath doubtless contains many such caricaturas as you represent, it is at Bath at present I would look for virtue in her fairest form.—You need not take that trouble; for in some cases you are so obstinately blind, that I know you will never discover her, under the veil which modesty throws over every perfection of that object, who is often present to the thoughts, and always dear to the heart of her

CHARLOTTE VILLIERS.”

To Lady Charlotte Villiers.

“ You are resolved to punish me for my presumption, my dear Lady Charlotte, by imposing on me a task, to which I am by no means equal.—Your approbation flatters me exceedingly; but beware how you nourish my self-conceit.

conceit. I may dispute my own merit, but cannot question your judgment; and your influence over mine, renders you in some measure responsible for my conduct.—Though my power to amuse you is very limited, my inclination to oblige you is boundless: As a proof of it, at your desire, I resume my pen, in order to delineate, in the best manner I can, my idea of a reasonable woman.

“ Your model of a good sort of woman is every where to be found; but where are we to look for a reasonable one? Perhaps you will allege it has no existence but in my own imagination. Let us try at least, my admired friend, by our conduct, to realize it.

“ After a night spent in healthful repose, the reasonable woman rises in that happy tranquil frame of mind, which results from pleasant reflections on the

past day, and anticipating the temperate pleasures and important duties of the commencing one. Its first moments are devoted as due to that Being whom she regards with filial love, gratitude, and reverence; and whom she approaches, not with the lifeless prostrations of fear, but with the devout and cheerful homage of the heart. Before engaging in domestic cares, she prepares her mind for meeting with firmness, or bearing with patience, the little rubs and vexations of the day: She plans a thousand schemes of benevolence and utility, and the good she cannot perform, but generously intends, is recorded in Heaven as virtue.—The time necessarily spent at her toilette, is short; it is, however, rendered pleasing by the delightful hope of becoming, by means of its adventitious aids, more agreeable in the eyes of a husband, whom she loves too tenderly to omit a single opportunity of complying

complying with his taste, or confirming his esteem.—Books, work, and above all, the important duty of impressing the infant minds of her children with that love of goodness which insensibly leads to the practice of it; fill up the rest of the morning.—Through the day, she checks the little fallies of her own temper, and unobserved, steals from others, by the influence of her good humour, every disquieting care. To them her time, her taste, are often sacrificed; but conscious benevolence does more than repay her.—Her conversation, equally remote from chilling reserve and petulant loquacity, has no aim, but to instruct or amuse; and in her care to please others, she seems wholly to forget herself.—Her elegant, yet frugal board, presents a striking emblem of her mind. There, plenty is seen without profusion, and neatness without ostentation. Good-taste, good-breeding, good-sense, and mild

mild complacency, teach her guests to forget they are strangers, and to feel they are friends.—Her husband beholds her with mingled pride and pleasure; and his approbation, though silent, diffuses joy through her heart, and cheerfulness through her conversation.—The evening is spent amidst the chosen circle, with whom she knows no reserves, and whose accumulated happiness becomes her own. Conversation, if useful or agreeable, is encouraged; if dull, relieved by the aids which the fine arts supply to those who cultivate them. Music, dancing, cards, are occasionally called in; and even those amusements for which she has no relish herself, she cheerfully adopts, in the hope of contributing to the enjoyment of others.—Public diversions are sometimes visited, but always tend with the reasonable woman to increase her love of social and domestic pleasures.—When in public, she appears with propriety and

and modesty. She envies not beauty,—she covets not grandeur,—she seeks not to engage attention; for, in the pleasing consciousness of discharging her duty, in the love of her husband, and esteem of her friends, she finds complete happiness. Such is a reasonable woman! The very opposite of a fashionable one. If we hesitate to which to give the preference, we may, perhaps, with much propriety, deserve to be ranked in the latter class; but we certainly can form no pretensions to the name or character of the former.

“After all, my dear Lady Charlotte, is it not astonishing that we are at so little pains to become reasonable women? We, whose limited and domestic situation renders the cultivation of the lesser morals, the mild and gentle virtues, essential to our comfort. There are few people who are not capable of great
and

and generous actions, when they know by them they will excite admiration and obtain applause; but in private life, where our virtues pass unheeded, we are at little pains to become disinterested, benevolent, or self-denied. It is in private life, however, that opportunities are constantly occurring for the exercise of these virtues, and where we can at once witness and profit by their effects: But mankind, in general, prefer the unmeaning voice of the multitude to the soothing approbation of their own minds.

“ Adieu, my friend! If I continue to moralize any longer, you will with justice pronounce me, a most UNREASONABLE WOMAN.

LOUISA SEYMOUR.”

About

About this time, Mr. Valois, a very eminent miniature painter, arriving at Bath, Lady Granville felt the strongest desire to have a picture of her son, as the time fixed for his going abroad fast approached.

When she made this request to Lord Hastings, he expressed the greatest reluctance to having his likeness taken at that time; conscious, perhaps, that the state of his mind was not such as would give an agreeable expression to his features. Miss Seymour was not present when this subject was mentioned. On entering the room, "Come hither, my
 " dear Louisa," said Lady Granville,
 " and help me to persuade this perverse
 " son of mine to do his duty: Sure I
 " am he can never have a fitter pattern
 " or more able instructor. This is the
 " first time he ever opposed my will;
 " and as he can form no reasonable pre-
 " text

“text for his non-compliance, I am re-
 “solved to assert the prerogative of a
 “mother, and insist on his immediate
 “performance of his duty; or else I
 “shall certainly punish him as a rebel.”

Louisa's colour went and came during this speech, the meaning of which it was impossible for her to divine. Looking first at Lady Granville, and then at Lord Hastings, her timid eyes seemed to demand an explanation of it. “My mother is very desirous, Miss Seymour,” said he, “of having my picture; but there is only one condition that will prevail on me to submit to this tiresome operation. You must set the example of my duty, and reward me for performing it, by having your own done at the same time.”

Lady Granville was not aware of the consequence of her request, else her
 prudence

prudence would have prevented her from making it. Several circumstances combined to persuade her, that Lord Hastings took a more lively interest in her young favourite, than she thought consistent, either with his present ease or future prospects. She could not avoid, however, seconding her son's proposal, and added, with equal prudence and politeness, "I shall envy nobody when
" I shall have two such pleasant friends
" in my possession."—Lord Hastings urged his request with a warmth and importunity that exceedingly disconcerted Louisa. Ever fearful of betraying her secret sentiments, though she knew not how to refuse, she greatly dreaded complying; but in this instance her prudence was overborne, by her strong inclination to oblige him. Though Lord Hastings remarked her hesitation and embarrassment, without knowing the cause,

cause, he was sensibly gratified by her obliging compliance.

The coach was immediately ordered, and they drove to the lodging of Mr. Valois; who being then disengaged, begged leave to take the outlines of the two pictures, as his time at Bath was very uncertain.

A little dispute now arose between Miss Seymour and Lord Hastings, with respect to who should sit first. Louisa said, that as Mr. Valois's time was uncertain, it was undoubtedly proper, that the picture of Lord Hastings should be first finished; but he recurring to his mother's speech, insisted on her setting the example. This little altercation gave an agreeable heightening to the delicate complexion of Louisa. As she was dressed in a large morning cap, the
painter

painter found it necessary to have it removed, in order to obtain a full view of her cheek, as she was to be drawn in profile. This trifling circumstance exceedingly disconcerted the modest and gentle Louisa, whose elegant mind was exquisitely sensible to every feeling of propriety. She looked abashed, her colour increased; Lady Granville saw her embarrassment; and in order to relieve it, "Come, my love," said she, "we will retire a moment, and I will myself try to perform the office of friend: Mr. Valois will excuse me, though I should not prove very dexterous in my new profession."

During their short absence, the scene in the Park at Springwood occurred to the memory of Lord Hastings. He was seized with the most passionate desire to have Louisa drawn in the very attitude in which he had beheld her at the grave,
of

of her mother. Afraid of the penetrating eyes of his own, he had not courage to propose it; and not having a moment to lose,—“As this Lady, Sir,” said he, “is in the habit of a mourner, “I should imagine the attitude most favourable for the character of her face “would be that of devotion.” The painter being perfectly of his opinion, he proposed, on return of the ladies, that Miss Seymour should take a seat near the window, and fix her eyes on the ceiling for a few minutes.

What were the agitating emotions which Lord Hastings experienced during their progress! An association of ideas, altogether delightful, occupied his mind, and his eyes were rivetted to a face, whose whole loveliness he had never till that time had an opportunity of observing.—Her fine chestnut hair, contrasted with the whiteness and delicacy of

of her skin, and the glow of exquisite sensibility, occasioned by the novelty of her situation, rendered her so inimitably beautiful, that the artist, as well as the lover, was rapt in silent admiration.

She arose, and Lord Hastings unwillingly took her place.—Some difficulty now occurred about the attitude in which he should be drawn; the painter having remarked the uncommon and animated expression of his fine eyes, requested permission to take his full face.

No time could have been more favourable to do justice both to the excellency of the subject and skill of the artist. The countenance of Lord Hastings was lighted up by a variety of the sweetest and most tender sensations; and the object on whom his eyes were chiefly fixed was not likely to dissipate them.

The

The pictures were finished, and met with universal approbation. But as they were confessedly the most beautiful and highly finished pieces in his collection, Mr. Valois begged permission to detain them a little while in his possession, as they did him much credit by being shewn. One morning when Mrs. Stanhope called to take Miss Seymour out an airing, she expressed the greatest curiosity to see the pictures, on which, she said, she heard the highest encomiums lavished wherever she went. Accordingly they drove to the painter's, who appeared to be extremely hurried.—

“ I have just received accounts, ‘Ma-
 “ dam,” said he, to Miss Seymour, “ of
 “ the death of a relation, which obliges
 “ me to set out this very night for Lon-
 “ don. I was about to send the pic-
 “ tures, but perhaps you will take the
 “ trouble of carrying them home your-
 “ self.”

“self.” Louisa took out her purse; but Mr. Valois prevented her, by saying they were already paid for. Then stepping to the table, and taking out of the drawer a little sealed packet, he said, in a low voice, “May I beg, Madam, that you will have the goodness to present this to Lord Hastings, when nobody is present.”—The astonished Louisa hesitated a moment, not knowing what answer to make, but afraid of being observed by her companion, she put it hastily into her pocket. Her desire to know the contents of this little parcel was extreme, but it proceeded not from curiosity alone; a sentiment a thousand times more powerful, more irresistible, excited it. She shuddered at the bare idea of doing a mean or dishonourable action; she determined to conquer her present temptation to it; but an accident instantly occurred, that left her no time for hesitating about what conduct

she ought to pursue. Having set down Mrs. Stanhope at her own lodgings, she proceeded in her coach to those of Lord Granville; on stepping out, the foot-board being much lower than that to which she was accustomed, her foot slipped, and she fell to the ground with violence. The bustle this accident occasioned in the hall reached Lord Hastings, who, on hearing Louisa's voice, flew to her assistance. On seeing her pale and trembling, "Good Heaven, Miss Seymour," cried he, eagerly, "what is the matter?" "Nothing at all, my Lord," answered she, smiling, but with a voice still faltering with fear and agitation; "Indeed, I shall be quite well presently." He supported her into the parlour, and spoke to her in a manner, and with a tone so softened with compassion, that she was tempted to regret she had so little excuse for exciting it. As Lady Granville was abroad, he

2

contrived,

contrived, under pretence of giving her time to recover from the shock she had got by her fall, to detain her in the parlour for half an hour; during which, an interesting conversation took place; and he found opportunity of testifying to her those watchful and quiet attentions that flow directly from the heart, and of which the heart knows the full value.

Though there never could have been a more favourable opportunity than the present for complying with the request of the painter, Louisa could not find courage to give Lord Hastings the packet herself; but delayed fixing on the proper means of conveying it to him till she should reach her own apartment. As soon as she did so, she took it out of her pocket; and discovered, with great emotion, that the seal had been broken by her fall. Her curiosity now became

L 2 irresistible.

irresistible.—“ Surely,” whispered she to herself, “ there can be nothing in a parcel from Mr. Valois to Lord Hastings that I may not see !” — In any other instance but this, Miss Seymour would have argued in a different manner. Too well do we know how reason will weigh and judgment determine, when inclination holds the balance.— She unfolded a paper, in which was a picture sealed up, and an open billet containing these words :

“ I have strictly observed your Lordship’s injunctions ;—no eye but my own has seen this picture. I have folded the hands in the form of adoration, as you directed, and think the whole piece improved by this circumstance. Your Lordship’s generous present I accept with gratitude, as a proof that my labours have obtained your approbation.

“ I am

“I am, my Lord, with respect and esteem,

Your Lordship's

Obliged humble servant.

J. VALOIS.”

Whilst Louisa perused this billet, she was seized with such a faintish sickness, and her hand trembled so violently, that for some minutes she was unable to unclasp the picture. At last she did so; and with a feeling of mingled delight and astonishment, perceived that it was a copy of her own.

The pure and animated pleasure with which this discovery inspired the gentle bosom of Louisa, is not to be described. She now indulged, without restraint, the enchanting conviction, that

L 3

she

she was beloved; and the soothing hope, of being one day at liberty to avow to the deserving object of her tenderness, those sentiments which at present she so carefully concealed. She grudged every moment till the picture should be in the possession of Lord Hastings; yet knew not how to convey it to him, without incurring suspicion of having herself been the bearer. Consciousness made her cowardly; and in her eagerness to contrive the means of executing her purpose and avoiding suspicion, she overlooked the one least liable to it.—At length it occurred to her thoughts.—“O!” whispered she, as she wrapt up the picture, “may this lifeless image
 “often recal me to his memory, and
 “preserve me a place in his heart, dur-
 “ing the long, long hours of absence!
 “Would it could convey to that heart
 “the tender gratitude of mine!”

Recol-

Recollecting that there could be no danger of any eclaircissement between Lord Hastings and Mr. Valois, she inclosed the letter and picture in a blank cover; and ringing for her maid, desired her to give the parcel to Lord Hastings's servant, and to bid him acquaint his master, that it came from Mr. Valois, who was gone out of town.— The maid returned, and informed her, that she had obeyed her orders; and at the same time presented her with the following letter from Lady Charlotte; which, being in perfect unison with the present cheerful tone of her mind, tended not a little to heighten the charms of her animated countenance.

To Miss Seymour.

“How happy, Louisa, should I be, if, in loving you, I durst believe I was loving myself! But you are an artful little sophist; and by imposing this fallacy upon me, are sily pilfering away the little remains of that heart, of which you had almost entirely robbed me.—

“But why do I talk of love? Envy and jealousy now wholly possess me!—You not only successfully imitate, you excel me at my own weapons! What mortal could bear to be thus outshone?—Not even your reasonable woman, Louisa;—how much less a fashionable one?

“I verily believe the word love will be expunged from the English vocabulary, and pride, vanity, and interest placed

placed in its stead. You know I hate to be pitied; but how can you withhold your pity, when you behold your poor friend, rivalled at once in genius, love, fortune, and fame? I do not wish to kill you with surprise; but whatever is the consequence, I must inform you, that Miss Nelson, the young—the gay—the beautiful—the ALL FOR LOVE! is married to the old—the gouty—the peevish—the good-for-nothing Lord Westdale. She has wedded wealth and grandeur:—May she taste all the happiness they are calculated to bestow!—Is not this wish, Louisa, like a REASONABLE WOMAN?

“ But I must tell you all in due order. I went to dine to-day at ——. A bustle on the street drew me to the window: I threw up the sash; but, Heavens! what was my astonishment, my mortification, when I beheld my

L 5

quondam

quondam lover, Lord Westdale, setting out with his bride, with all the charming apparatus of marriage finery—carriages—liveries—favours! My heart died within me, and my pangs were increased by the bitter reflection, that all this happiness might have been my own. In the midst of my affliction, however, I have derived some consolation from the prudent suggestions of good aunt Gertrude. She is of opinion, that there is still room for hope, since he has already buried three wives; and kindly adds, that if I am fortunate enough to be successor to the present incumbent, I shall probably see him out, and remain mistress of the field.

“ I shall be with you in a few days, that I may be able to judge of the effects of Bath. I doubt not it has produced a total revolution in your opinions, and fitted you for living in that world

world where you are so well qualified to shine. May your reformation become every day more complete; may I see you spend the whole morning at your toilette, the whole evening at cards, the whole night in dancing, and the whole day in sleep.—Nay, not contented with seeing you become exemplary in fashion, and eminent in folly, may I live to hear you transmitting your precepts and improvements to posterity; and instructing your favourite grand-daughter in the manner following:

“ You ask me, my dear child, the
 “ name and history of that pretty boy
 “ with a bow and quiver, whom you see
 “ in the arras?—You must know, that
 “ long, long ago, this roguish archer
 “ was a mighty favourite, especially
 “ among the little misses. But, in pro-
 “ cess of time, their wise parents began
 “ to discover, that he taught them a
 L. 6 “ thousand

“ thousand mischievous tricks, by means
 “ of these very arrows; which they used
 “ to steal from him, and shoot at the
 “ poor harmless boys, who were mind-
 “ ing not one earthly thing but their
 “ book and exercises. To say truth, I
 “ believe he had no ill intention; but
 “ being forbid the house, whenever he
 “ ventured to revisit his old compa-
 “ nions, they were obliged to conceal
 “ him with the utmost care. Unluckily,
 “ some of them, who had been express-
 “ ly ordered to dismiss him (and you
 “ know good children always do as
 “ they are bid) were discovered har-
 “ bouring him in a secret corner, where
 “ they thought no one could see him.—
 “ Upon which it was agreed by their
 “ papas and mammas, to bring a great
 “ tall fellow, called Interest, to chase
 “ him out of the world.—The poor
 “ boy, in terror for his life, fled with
 “ the utmost precipitation, till he was
 “ met

“ met by Poverty, who took him along
 “ with her into her hovel: His inno-
 “ cent prattle used to sweeten her toil,
 “ and he assisted her in her labour, in
 “ reward for the shelter she afforded
 “ him. It is greatly doubted whether
 “ he still exists; and as he has not been
 “ seen in the world these many years,
 “ if he does live, it must certainly be in
 “ some remote corner, with this poor
 “ ragged companion.”——“ Indeed,
 “ Grandmama,” says Louisa the third,
 with tears in her eyes, “ I am very sorry
 “ for poor little Master Cupid; and if
 “ I knew where to find him, I would
 “ feed him with my own victuals, and
 “ carry him in my bosom like my doll.”
 —“ No, no, my good child,” answers
 grandy, “ your doll is a much more
 “ harmless toy; besides, you’ll soon
 “ grow up, and become a fine lady, and
 “ get acquainted with Interest, who, to
 “ say truth, since he has been univer-
 “ sally

“ fully received into genteel company,
 “ is grown a very handsome and agree-
 “ able fellow.”

“ Now, my dear Louisa, to complete the sum of my pious wishes, may both your instructions and example have their full effect in the world; and, for the good of others, I pray Heaven that your children, and grand-children, and latest posterity, may in all things exactly resemble YOURSELF.

CHARLOTTE VILLIERS.”

On coming down to dinner, Miss Seymour found Mrs. Stanhope and her son in the parlour, whom Lady Granville had met in her morning excursion. The moment Lord Hastings entered the room, he enquired after Louisa's health, with marks of the most tender solicitude.—“ How,” demanded Lady Granville,

ville,

ville, "has Miss Seymour been indisposed?"—"Indeed, Madam," replied Lord Hastings, "though Miss Seymour is always averse to give pain, I am confident she must have suffered by the violence of her fall this morning." He then proceeded to give his mother an account of it; but was interrupted by Louisa, who, seeing Lady Granville look anxious and uneasy, rose, and taking hold of her hand, "I am quite ashamed," said she, "that Lord Hastings should make this so serious an affair: I assure you, my dear Madam, I do not feel the slightest uneasiness—I am perfectly well."—"I confess I am disposed to credit Miss Seymour, Madam," said Mrs. Stanhope, turning to Lady Granville, "for in spite of his Lordship's apprehensions, I really think I never saw her look so well in my life." A conscious blush overspread the fine features of

of Louisa, which tended not a little to render all the company of Mrs. Stanhope's opinion.

After dinner, the subject of the pictures was introduced, and occasioned, in the hearts both of Lord Hastings and Miss Seymour, a variety of the sweetest emotions. The former could not resist the pleasure of talking on it: "I know no art," said he, "which furnishes the mind with so many pleasing ideas as painting."—"I should certainly except that of writing, my Lord," said Mr. Stanhope.—"Writing, indeed," replied his Lordship, "presents us with an image of the soul, as painting does of the person of our friend: But the former is not always open for our inspection; besides, a letter is liable to a thousand accidents, and may never reach the person for whom it is designed;—a picture

“ picture accompanies us at all times,
 “ and in all places ;—a letter does not
 “ always accord with our sentiments—
 “ we can make a picture speak the very
 “ language of our wishes.”—“ I have
 “ heard so many encomiums bestowed
 “ on those of Miss Seymour and your
 “ Lordship,” said Mr. Stanhope, “ that
 “ I confess I am become very desirous
 “ of seeing them.”—“ You must apply
 “ to me for that favour,” said Lady
 Granville, “ for I value them too highly
 “ ever to trust them out of my posses-
 “ sion.”—She gave him the pictures :
 On looking at Miss Seymour’s, “ Your
 “ Ladyship surely cannot be so uncon-
 “ scionable,” said he, “ as to keep pos-
 “ session both of this copy and the
 “ charming original?”—“ Indeed, Mr.
 “ Stanhope,” she replied, “ I shall find
 “ very great difficulty in parting with
 “ either ; but as a time will probably
 “ arrive when I must resign my right
 “ in

“ in Miss Seymour, I am resolved at
 “ least to retain her image in my posses-
 “ sion.”—“ That image, Madam,” re-
 joined he, “ is so dear to her friends,
 “ that I am persuaded you will not re-
 “ fuse them a share in your pleasure,
 “ by permitting them to have copies
 “ taken of this admirable picture.—
 “ You know, Miss Seymour,” conti-
 nued he, addressing himself to Louisa,
 “ it is long since you allowed my claim
 “ to the title of friend: I flatter myself
 “ you will not be so unkind as to dis-
 “ pute it on this occasion.”—“ Indeed,
 “ Sir,” answered she, with unaffected
 sweetness and modesty, “ my friends
 “ and I think very differently, I be-
 “ lieve, on this subject; and, to pre-
 “ vent any dispute about the matter,
 “ I must beg Lady Granville, from
 “ whose partiality to the original the
 “ picture derives its chief merit, to
 “ take it again into her possession:” So
 saying,

saying, she returned the picture to Lady Granville, with a look and manner which convinced her, that she wished the subject to be dropped. Lady Granville accordingly put the pictures into her pocket.

Lord Hastings felt all the pleasure of a successful rival on this occasion. To be possessed, even though by stealth, of that picture which Miss Seymour had refused to Mr. Stanhope, gave him a joy so sincere, that it brightened his countenance, and enlivened his conversation during the whole evening.—Mr. Stanhope, on the contrary, appeared absent, thoughtful, and uneasy. The coldness of Louisa's manner to Lord Hastings, on their coming to Bath, had removed from his mind all fear of his being a favoured rival; but he could not help remarking the mutual complacency they now shewed for each other, and

and his jealousy and apprehension gave weight to a thousand circumstances, which, to an unconcerned spectator, would have appeared as nothing. He had long sought in vain for an opportunity of speaking to Miss Seymour alone; and hearing that the day was fixed for her leaving Bath, he resolved to be relieved from the torment of suspense, and to convey to her, by means of a letter, those sentiments which he found it impossible any longer to conceal.

Afraid of this letter being delivered to her before company, he contrived to convey it to her himself, when coming out of the rooms; yet not so privately as not to be observed by Lord Hastings, whose watchful eyes were continually fixed on Louisa, and who instantly perceived the agitation produced in her mind by this circumstance.

Miss

Miss Seymour had indeed begun to suspect, that Mr. Stanhope's sentiments for her were of a nature still more tender than friendship; and was so sincerely his friend, that she was greatly afflicted at the thought of giving him pain. She therefore resolved, by constantly avoiding any private conversation with him, to shew him the improbability of succeeding in his suit; to prevent his urging it, and, if possible, to save him the mortification of a refusal.

This generous conduct, however, had not the desired effect. The following letter at once confirmed her suspicions, and shewed her the inefficacy of her measures:

To Miss Seymour.

“ MADAM,

“ With judgment and penetration like yours, I cannot suppose that you are ignorant of the sentiments which have long
taken

taken possession of my heart : With such constant opportunities of discovering the excellence of your's, how could I remain insensible to your merit?—Conscious, however, of the presumption of cherishing those hopes it inspired, I have long struggled to conceal a passion, which was painful to me, only because I feared it would be displeasing to you. A certain coldness and restraint, but too visible of late in your manner, leaves me no room to doubt either of your knowledge or disapprobation of the most respectful, sincere, and constant, though, I fear, unfortunate attachment.

“ Think not, dear Miss Seymour, that hope has dictated this confession—Ah! no; it is fear—it is apprehension alone, which has forced it from me: It is the dread of losing your esteem, which is impelling me to a measure that may, perhaps, for ever forfeit it. I hardly know what I write—Oh! Miss Seymour,

mour, pity the distraction of my mind ; say, you forgive my presumption : If possible, allow me to hope, from time, assiduity, and, above all, the exalted generosity of your heart, that it will one day reply to the sentiments of mine. If you cannot do this, teach me to abandon the only hope which could make life desirable !—Ah ! Miss Seymour, rather teach me to forget it, in the enjoyment of that peace, which I possessed before I rashly aspired to a dearer name than that of friend !—Alas ! I fear, you never can restore my lost tranquillity ; yet do not, I beseech you, by your chilling indifference, add the bitterness of felt contempt to the anguish of disappointment.

“ I will not offend you with my complaints—only do not banish me from your sight—do not deprive me of my only consolation, that of justifying to myself

myself the indulgence of a passion I cannot conquer, by daily beholding new proofs of those virtues which first inspired it."

Louisa's distress, on perusing this letter, was extreme; nor was it lessened on being told next morning, by Lady Granville, that she had just been to wait on Mrs. Stanhope, to request she and her son would accompany them to Castle-Hastings, and spend a few weeks there.—She was perplexed beyond measure, with respect to the conduct she ought to hold; and, with a degree of injustice, of which love often makes us guilty, felt resentment against Mr. Stanhope, on account of the uneasiness she then suffered, from a passion which too well she knew to excuse in herself; and which merited compassion in proportion to its hopelessness; and actually disliked him,

him, on account of that preference, for which her reason told her, both esteem and gratitude were due.

“ Though no occasion of speaking to Miss Seymour in private, occurred before leaving Bath, it was easy for Mr. Stanhope to discover how unwelcome the contents of his letter had been to her: But though, from her studiousness to avoid him, he was convinced of her indifference, and even apprehensive of her dislike, he could not resist the desire he felt to accompany her; the pleasure of beholding her, and the hope with which he flattered himself that the ardour and constancy of his attachment would at length make a favourable impression, on a mind so generous, and a heart so susceptible, as that of Miss Seymour.

Accordingly, the two families set off for the Castle; and, after making several

ral agreeable excursions in their way, arrived there in safety.

The first employment in which Louisa engaged, was that of writing to Adelaide; accustomed to share with her every thought of her soul, she felt as if guilty of treasonable concealment, till she should discover to that faithful friend, the various sentiments with which her's was agitated.



END OF THE FIRST VOLUME.

