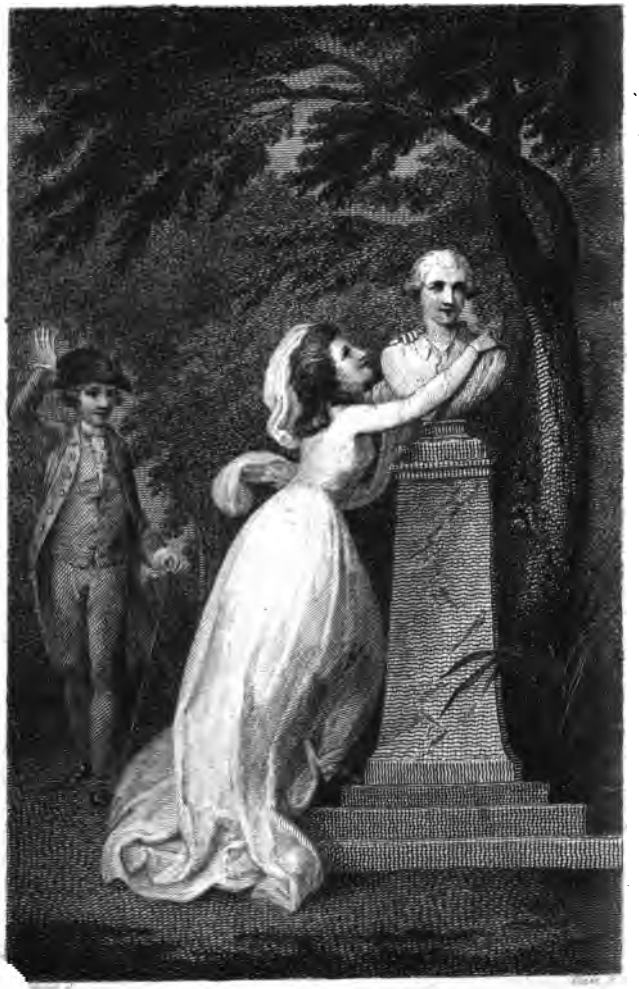

MARIA:

A NOVEL.

IN TWO VOLUMES.

BY THE AUTHOR OF

GEORGE BATEMAN.

VOL. I.

LONDON:
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TO THE

HONOURABLE

MRS. WARD.

MADAM,

THOSE who have the happineſs of being acquainted with the liberal graces of your mind, and that elegant ſimplicity of character you have ſo happily preſerved, amidſt the glare of unfeeling diſſipation and the contagious influence of faſhionable affectation, will not wonder that I ſhould have ſolicited the honour

of inſcribing with your Name a Work, in which my leading aim has been to pourtray, in the ſimple but impaſſioned colouring of nature, the operations of a mind unacquainted with the world—young, artleſs, ſenſible, and refined—under the impulſe of a lively and inſuperable attachment;—and to inculcate the principle of *Active Benevolence*, by diſplaying its beneficial effects.

They, Madam, who know you beſt, will inſtantly feel the propriety of dedicating to you a performance which perſonifies Goodneſs in the mild form of female Beauty.

If the characters and incidents of a ſprightlier caſt, which diverſify theſe little volumes, ſhould appear to you copied from the Book of Nature, with a hand ſufficiently ſkilful to afford you entertainment, I ſhall eſteem myſelf happy in the publication:—and have the honour to remain,

MADAM,

Your moſt reſpectful,

obliged, and devoted,

humble Servant,

St. James's Place,
May 10th, 1785.

E. B.

A

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MARIA.

MARIA.

CHAPTER I.

DR. Edgeware was a man of genius, taſte, and learning; he poſſeſſed a ſoul ſtable and generous, and a heart alive to the beſt and even the tendereſt impreſſions of humanity; he had nevertheleſs an unconquerable ſhyneſs in diſcovering this laſt amiable attribute, and as carefully concealed the *reality*, as the generality of people aim to diſplay the ſemblance of ſenſibility.

His virtues were univerſally reſpected, and his company ſolicited, as conferring both honour and improvement: yet, though all gave him the applauſe of virtue, and the meed of genius, that affectionate regard and attachment, created by the milder graces of the ſoul, could only be felt for him by his domeſtic dependants.

His ſituation in early life was contracted; but his great talents, united with a lucky coincidence of circumſtances, had given him independence. He ſupported himſelf and a ſiſter (the widow of a clergyman left in indigence) by a handſome annuity, and the ſale of his writings.

The Doctor was returning, about the middle of July 17—, from the ſeat of Sir ——— ———, and on the road to London, the place of his reſidence; when, paſſing through the city of ——, he had

had the curioſity to inquire after the family of a deceaſed phyſician, with whom he had lived in an intercourſe of friendſhip at college.

Though theſe gentlemen had (for reaſons immaterial to the reader) ſeldom met ſince the period in which they purſued their ſtudies at the ſame ſeminary, yet a reciprocal regard and eſteem had ever exiſted between them.

Dr. Edgeware had been previouſly informed, that the death of Dr. Mordaunt had involved his family in calamities of a peculiar nature; and that this diſtreſsful event had ſhortened the life of his amiable partner, who had left behind her a ſon and a daughter.

He was told, that young Mordaunt was gone to the Eaſt Indies; and that his ſiſter, an elegant girl of nineteen, lived in a family of diſtinction in the neighbourhood, as governeſs to a

young lady.—It was with a wiſh to ſerve, if in his power, the orphans of this worthy pair, that Dr. Edgeware had made inquiry after their ſituation.

Having been informed of her reſidence, he paid Maria Mordaunt a viſit.—"I am come, young lady," ſaid he, with his uſual frankneſs, and ſoftening his voice to the tone of friendſhip, "to ſee the daughter of an old collegiate friend; and to know if there is any thing in which I can ſerve you:—my name is Edgeware; you may have heard your father mention me."

"You do me a great deal of honour, Sir," replied Miſs Mordaunt, "I have indeed heard my father ſpeak of you with high reſpect; and have likewiſe had the pleaſure, and I hope I may add, improvement, of reading ſome of thoſe valuable works with which

which you have enriched the literary world."

The judicious turn of this little compliment drew the hard features of the Doctor into a ſtill more complacent form; and he replied, "Indeed!—Aye, aye, and do you like reading, child?"—"My books and my muſic are my chief, almoſt my only, amuſement, Sir," replied ſhe, "in the little time I have to ſpare from the duties of my employment."—"And pray, young lady, how do you like that employment?" ſaid the Doctor, who had received a very favourable impreſſion of her underſtanding, from the unaffected turn of her language and behaviour: beſides which, there was an air of ſadneſs about her that intereſted his ſenſibility. "It is by no means an unpleaſant one," returned Maria. "My pupil, Doctor, is ſenſible and docile,

and I have the happineſs of knowing I give ſatisfaction in my ſtation; but there is a painful motive which impels me to wiſh a removal, and is at the ſame time of a nature that precludes my communicating it to my amiable patroneſs, whoſe eſteem I am ſo happy as to have obtained. I am perpetually ruminating for an *excuſe* to leave her, but can hit upon none that will not ſubject me to the imputation of ingratitude and caprice in her opinion; and I fear I ſhall at length be neceſſitated to tell her the true one."

"Though giving language to irkſome ideas, only ſerves to impreſs them more ſtrongly on the imagination," ſaid the Doctor, "yet as I have a ſincere wiſh to ſerve you, if my requeſt is not improper, I ſhould be glad if you would make me acquainted with the cauſe of your anxiety."

Maria,

Maria, whom his manners had inſpired with eſteem and veneration, told him, with a frankneſs that was natural to her, that the cauſe of her inquietude was a paſſion which the huſband of the lady with whom ſhe lived had conceived for her; and the profeſſions of which gave her continual uneaſineſs.

The pathetic tone of her voice, the intereſting expreſſion of her countenance, wrought ſenſibly upon the affectionate heart of Doctor Edgeware, but he did not chuſe ſhe ſhould ſee he was ſo much affected as he in reality was; he drew up his breath, ſtrove to repel a ſigh, and to diſperſe a tear; and after a moment's pauſe—"I have a female relation who lives with me," ſaid he, "ſhe will be glad of a young companion; and you will, at my houſe, have an opportunity of more extenſively cultivating thoſe talents you have

received from nature; at leaſt, it will give you a pretext for leaving your preſent ſituation: and if you are not happy with us, we will endeavour to promote your farther advancement in life."

Maria received this invitation with every demonſtration of gratitude; the character of the Doctor had been long eſtabliſhed, and was well known to her friends, he had been the intimate friend of her father; ſhe knew no objection to the benevolent propoſal he had made her; for ſhe ſought improvement, and ſhe loved inſtruction; but above all, it afforded her an eligible opportunity of leaving her preſent ſituation, without wounding the feelings of her patroneſs, or incurring the imputation of ingratitude.

The friends of Maria were happy to commit her to the care of Doctor Edgeware and his ſiſter; and this invitation

vitation being made known to her patroneſs, it was agreed that our heroine ſhould leave her, as ſoon as ſhe ſhould have accommodated herſelf with a perſon to fill her place. When the Doctor, taking a friendly leave of his young charge, ſet forward on his journey, and arrived ſafe in London.

CHAP. II.

STORY OF MARIA.

THE father of Maria was a phyſician of great eminence in one of our moſt capital provincial cities; a man of conſiderable learning, nice honour, great talents, and a moſt prepoſſeſſing addreſs. He was a deſcendant of a younger branch of an ancient and honourable family; but marrying, ſoon after his return from the univerſity, a woman without fortune, and of obſcure birth, his father diſinherited, and his relations diſowned him; ſo that he found himſelf wholly dependant, for the ſupport of his family, on the practice of the art of medicine, which had been his moſt favourite ſtudy.

At

At the period this hiſtory commences, Dr. Mordaunt's family conſiſted of a wife and two children, a ſon and a daughter, all virtuous and amiable; in addition to theſe bleſſings, he ſaw his fame and fortune increaſing daily, and bidding fair to riſe to the height of his well-regulated wiſhes.—His ſon, a youth of excellent parts, was receiving his education at one of the univerſities. Our fair heroine was three years younger than her brother, ſhe was juſt entering into her eighteenth year; her underſtanding was of the firſt rate; her diſpoſition ſoft, delicate, and flexible; her eyes were blue, and beautifully formed; her other features were ſoft, lively and engaging. Added to theſe attractions, ſhe poſſeſſed the rare gift of a figure that blended dignity with all the ſprightly grace and eaſy negligence which poets aſcribe to nymphs

of ſylvan race. She had received her education in the houſe of her parents, who had themſelves been her chief inſtructors in many of the elegant accompliſhments ſhe had acquired.

She had, from her earlieſt youth, aſſociated with the politeſt families in the city in which ſhe lived, and had ſpent three months in London, under the guidance of a genteel family, who had been the early friends of her parents; ſo that her manners were as diſtant from ruſticity, as they were from the frivolous affectation of faſhionable refinement.

It happened one day that Dr. Mordaunt was called upon to attend a gentleman who lay ſick at one of the principal inns in the city; having been ſeized with a fever as he was purſuing a journey. The ſtranger was attended only by his valet, who informed Mr. Mordaunt that his maſter was the

ſon

ſon of Lord Aubrey, and recently returned from Paris, where he had ſpent ſeveral months with his father, who reſided there in a public capacity.

Mr. Aubrey appeared about twenty-eight, his perſon had every claim to the title of manly beauty. The uncommon dignity of his deportment, and the ſtrength of his underſtanding, which had received every aid from art, joined to the fine poliſh his manners had acquired from travel, and the air of courts, inſpired Dr. Mordaunt with a reſpectful attachment for ſo accompliſhed a being.

The mind of Aubrey ſeemed to have a caſt of melancholy, which Dr. Mordaunt, who could penetrate into the ills of the mind as well as thoſe of the body, ſoon diſcovered had brought on the diſorder which had introduced him to his acquaintance.

As

As the ſtranger began to recover, and take the air, Dr. Mordaunt begged he would do him the honour of viſiting at his houſe while he remained in the city of ——: and in one of his morning excurſions, Aubrey accepted the invitation.

Our heroine was the only perſon at home.—She had heard Mr. Aubrey's eulogium repeatedly from her father, but every thing he had ſaid ſhe found exceeded.

His countenance was peculiarly marked with an expreſſion of ſtrong ſenſe, yet diſplayed a ſpirit mild, benevolent, and plaintive; a ſoul that wiſhed happineſs to all around, though moſt wanting comfort and conſolation itſelf.

His ill health inſpired her with a tender pity for, and a wiſh to amuſe him; her *forte piano* lay open; he aſked her

to touch it, and to ſing; ſhe did both, with a readineſs that ſhewed her good-breeding, and a wiſh of giving pleaſure. If Aubrey was charmed with her ſkill in muſic, her beauty, and the harmony of her voice, the air of elegant attraction diffuſed over her perſon and manners, compleated her conqueſt.

A poem he had not peruſed lay on the table, ſhe read two or three paſſages with an enthuſiaſm that delighted him. —She requeſted his opinion, which he gave. The perſpicuity of his judgment, and the delicacy of his taſte, claimed and won her higheſt admiration.

Mrs. Mordaunt returned from a viſit ſhe had been making, ere he left the houſe; and, after ſome little time ſpent in converſation with that lady, Mr. Aubrey retired.

The moment he had quitted the room

room Maria's vivacity withdrew itſelf; ſhe involuntarily reclined her head on the back of the chair on which he had been ſitting, and a ſenſation of penſive regret took poſſeſſion of her ſoul. Mrs. Mordaunt, having taken up ſome needle-work, did not perceive this change in her daughter, but began to expatiate in praiſe of the ſtranger; which rouſing Maria, ſhe joined with the moſt animated warmth in the applauſe beſtowed on Aubrey by her mother. A gentleman with whom the family were intimate, and one to whoſe literary taſte Maria had ever paid a particular deference, came in; he took up the book mentioned before, he aſked her to read aloud; ſhe evaded it, by ſaying ſhe had fatigued herſelf with ſo doing. He read himſelf; he commented as he read; but his remarks, though juſt, no longer intereſt-

ed her; ſhe left her mother to compliment him upon them, and withdrew to indulge her own reflections.

The mind of Aubrey had, as hath been ſaid before, a deep tincture of melancholy; and it was evident that he ſought relief from it in the ſociety of the Mordaunts.

CHAP.

CHAP. III.

IT chanced one day, whilſt Aubrey was with them, that there came to ſpend a ſchool vacation at Dr. Mordaunt's, a young gentleman who had been committed to the Doctor's care by his parents, who were Engliſh ſettlers in the Weſt Indies.

As they had aſſociated together from their infancy, Maria had for young Robinſon the affection of a ſiſter;—when he entered ſhe flew towards him, and giving him her hand, with a lively warmth, that was natural to her—

"My dear Charles," cried ſhe, "I rejoice to ſee you.—Come, you muſt tell me all the adventures you have met with ſince I ſaw you."—

The

The young gentleman kiſſing her hand led her to a ſeat, and the moment he had paid his compliments to the company, they entered into a lively dialogue, and by their humorous method of rallying each other afforded great entertainment to Mr. and Mrs. Mordaunt.

But Aubrey, who now for the firſt time began ſeriouſly to find his heart entangled in the mazes of a paſſion which he dared not to avow or indulge, joined not in the converſation. His features expreſſed the keeneſt emotion of ſpirit; with his teeth fixed together, his hands graſped cloſe, he leant forward, whilſt his eyes dwelt with the moſt piercing anguiſh on the countenances of both.

Maria, perhaps, perceived ſomething of this agitation, for ſhe roſe from her ſeat, and telling young Robinſon he ſhould

ſhould be a judge if ſhe had not improved her ſkill in muſic, ran to the *piano forte*, and giving him a book, bid him chuſe a ſong—the book opened at,

" Say mighty Love, and teach my ſong,
" To whom thy ſweeteſt joys belong."

" That is an old ſong," cried Robinſon," " ſet to an Italian tune.

Whilſt Maria ſung the following ſtanza ſhe perceived on the face of Aubrey indications of the moſt poignant diſtreſs :—

" Not ſordid ſouls of earthly mold,
" Who, drawn by kindred charms of gold,
" To dull embraces move ;
" So two rich mountains of Peru
" Might grow to wealthy marriage too,
" And make a world of love."

Fearing ſhe had noticed his anxiety, Aubrey withdrew to a window, exclaiming,

claiming, "What a wretched fate is mine!"

This interjection was not heard distinctly by any one present; but his emotion was apparent to all.

That night, whilst the maid was undressing her, the mystery was unravelled to Maria.

"Bless me! Ma'am," said the girl, "what news I have heard to day!"

"What news?" said Maria.

"Why, Ma'am, as I was going across the street to-day, who should come after me, but Mr. Richards, Mr. Aubrey's servant.—So, says he, Mrs. Jenny, I have wanted to see you this day or two; I wanted to invite you to be my partner in a dance which we are going to have.—So I said I was vastly obliged to him, and invited *him* (as I could do no less, you know, Ma'am) to drink tea with me this afternoon;—so, while we

was

was at tea it fell into converſation that we talked about his maſter, and he told me (I'm ſure I never was ſo aſtoniſh'd) that Mr. Aubrey was married. —Good gracious, Mr. Richards! (ſaid I) why you don't tell me ſo?—I am ſure I am quite diſappointed, for I was thinking that there would be a match between our young lady and him."—

"Surely!" cried Maria, haſtily interrupting her, "ſurely you did not take the liberty of making ſo impertinent a ſpeech."

"Oh, dear Ma'am, I am ſure I did not mean to give offence—it came in quite natural, and I only ſaid it by way of talking in a pitying way; for Mr. Richards told me a long ſtory of his maſter's marrying a diſagreeable old crab of a woman to oblige his father."

"Well, what did he ſay?" cried Maria, impatiently.

"Why,

"Why, Ma'am, he told me that old Lord Aubrey was a man of great eſtate, but that his eſtate was very much encumbered with mortgages; and ſo, Ma'am, Mr. Richards told me he heard it was always his father's plan to get his ſon a great poſt under government; and then, Ma'am, that he ſhould marry a woman of great fortune, to clear the family eſtate—and ſo, Ma'am, the firſt of theſe ſchemes was quite demoliſhed by Lord Aubrey being turned out of the miniſtry—and then there was nothing to be done but to put t'other in practice.—Well, Ma'am, whilſt the family was in Paris (for the old gentleman's poſt obliged him to live there) there was an old maid that was ſiſter to ſome Lord (I forget his name) ſhe had a monſtrous great fortune, and uſed to viſit the family, and ſhe fell in love with Mr. Aubrey (as well ſhe might, for

for to be ſure he is extraordinary handſome, and the moſt of a gentleman I ever ſaw)—well, Ma'am, and ſo ſhe fell in love with him; and though ſhe's vaſtly ugly, and old, and diſagreeable, the family perſuaded him to marry her, for ſhe was in ſuch a bad ſtate of health that they did not expect her to live long.—But Mr. Richards ſays, he don't think his maſter ever would have been perſuaded, hadn't he been induced by his father's refuſing to diſcharge his debts:—And he told me in *confidence*, that poor Mr. Aubrey, before he married, was dunned and plagued off his life—I believe, by what I hear, when he firſt went abroad he had a rage for gaming; but ſince he returned from Italy, Mr. Richards ſays he never ſeem'd to have any liking for it."—

"You didn't ſay any more, I hope," cried ſhe a little tartly, but with a look which

made Jenny ſuppoſe ſhe wiſhed to hear all that *was* ſaid.

"No, Ma'am, I did not ſay any thing elſe;—but it was after he had told me this that I happened to ſay, *I was quite diſappointed, for I was in hopes there would have been a match between our young lady and Mr. Aubrey, as he was ſo great an admirer of her, and ſo well deſerving.* — So ſays Mr. Richards, Why, as to the matter of that, Mrs. Jenny, it may be more likely to happen now than if they had met before, for the old woman is gone to Bath very ill indeed; and when ſhe kicks the bucket (as the ſaying is) Mr. Aubrey will be his own maſter, and may chuſe for himſelf; and I'm ſure, for *my* part, *I* don't know where he can chuſe a more elegant young lady than your's.——No, ſays I, that's what he could not; ſhe's a moſt excel-

lent young lady as ever lived.—Yes, I think ſo, ſaid Mr. Richards, for I really"—

"Pray let me hear no more of the fellow's impertinence," ſaid Maria; "I believe you will never finiſh talking of him.—You did wrong, Jane, to encourage ſo much prating."

Notwithſtanding the apparent indifference with which Maria had heard this intelligence, ſhe was no ſooner alone, than a guſh of tears relieved the ſorrow which oppreſſed her heart. She perſuaded herſelf ſhe wept for the ſufferings of Aubrey, abſtracted from every other conſideration; and under the idea of ſympathizing pity, indulged the poignant ſenſations of diſappointed love. If (as hath often been obſerved) "pity melts the ſoul to love," when a heart already attached feels its influence, how much more

ſtrongly muſt it endear the object! —The information Maria had received, threw a ſadneſs over her manners the next day. As ſhe ſeemed low-ſpirited, Doctor Mordaunt propoſed their going to the play that evening, there being a tolerable company of players at that time in the city. The comedy of "The Recruiting Officer" was to be performed, by deſire of the officers of a regiment then quartered at ———. The Mordaunts went; Aubrey was of their party; the houſe, as they expected, was extremely full; the abilities of ſome of the performers decent; and every thing went off pretty ſmoothly, till the actor who *did* the character of Bullock, either through ignorance of the words of his part, or by way of an attempt at wit, inſtead of ſaying, in the fourth act, to Sylvia, "I thought you were a captain, by

your cockade and your courage," exchanged the word *courage* for *impudence*. The gentlemen of the army, incenſed at his audacity, which they conſtrued into an inſult upon their *profeſſion*, would not ſuffer the performance to go on, until the fellow had begged pardon on his knees, for his inſolence; this he refuſed to do, ſtanding on the ſtage with an air of heroiſm, amidſt hiſſes, groans, &c. till ſeeing two or three officers attempting to get upon the ſtage, with their ſwords drawn, he thought proper to make a precipitate retreat behind the ſcenes; and the manager, coming forward, told the audience that the performer had made his eſcape, and aſſuring them he ſhould not appear any more, unleſs he made the ſubmiſſion exacted by them. This account of his decampment only incenſed them the more;

more; they thought his eſcape a connivance between the manager and player, and ſaid they would accept of no apology but what came from the latter, and that on his knees, or the company ſhould never be permitted to perform there again. The manager bowed ſubmiſſively, ſaid he would endeavour to find him, and retired, and the audience again became tolerably quiet; but a conſiderable time having elapſed, and no one appearing, the houſe once more became a ſcene of riot;—ſeveral of the officers jumped upon the ſtage, and ran behind the ſcenes; but not finding the object of their diſpleaſure there, cut the ſcenery all to pieces with their ſwords, kicked the lamps about the ſtage, &c. &c. The pacific part of the audience ſtrenuouſly endeavoured to make their eſcape from this ſcene of clamour and outrage. Mrs.

Mordaunt and Maria, among the reſt, were impatient to get out, expecting every moment to ſee ſomebody murdered. Aubrey ſtrove to force a paſſage for Maria, and in the ſtruggle they loſt ſight of the Doctor and his lady; and juſt as they were getting to the threſhold of the door, the crowd which hemmed them about gave way for a moment, and ſomebody accidentally treading on the train of Maria's gown, ſhe ſunk down, and the throng cloſing round her, deprived her of the power of calling for aſſiſtance. What were the horrors of Aubrey's ſoul at that moment!—Terror lent him incredible ſtrength;—by his exertions and his cries he forced back the crowd for a moment, and ſnatching her (rendered almoſt totally inſenſible by the violent concuſſions ſhe had received) momentaneouſly from the ground, held her in his

his arms till they got out of the play-houſe; when lifting her into his chariot, and ſeating himſelf beſide her, he ordered the coachman to drive to Dr. Mordaunt's. During their little ride, Aubrey, ſtill ſupporting her, gave a looſe to the excruciating motions this alarming accident had inſpired. Maria, beginning to recover from the ſtate of ſtupefaction into which ſhe had been thrown, to a ſenſibility of his ſolicitude, heard the involuntary effuſions of his grief; which were too anxiouſly tender, too fondly impaſſioned, to proceed from any but the lips of love. She liſtened with a pleaſing tranſport to the heart-ſoothing ſounds, which for ſome moments baniſhed from her mind all remembrance of his ſituation, and even ſuſpended, for the time, the operation of pain. But memory, faithful to propriety, ſoon reminded her of her

fault in indulging theſe too ſoftening ſenſations, and recalled her from a ſeductive dream to a lively ſenſe of bodily anguiſh. She had received a violent bruiſe on one ſide of her head, and a complaint of this was the firſt words ſhe articulated to Aubrey. Delighted to hear the ſound of her voice once again, he expreſſed his joy in the moſt animated terms, painting to her the deſpair in which he had been involved, by beholding her in danger of expiring at his feet. Maria, who had before but a very imperfect idea of what had happened to her, had but juſt time to thank him for the preſervation of her life, ere the carriage ſtopped at the door of her father's houſe. Fortunately for our fair heroine perhaps was this interruption;—ſhe might, in the flow of her gratitude, have uttered expreſſions which would have too faithfully

fully painted to Aubrey the ſtate of her heart. Mr. and Mrs. Mordaunt had happily got home a few minutes before them, unhurt; and the Doctor was ſetting out again in ſearch of his daughter, for whoſe ſafety they were keenly alarmed. Mrs. Mordaunt was greatly affected at ſight of the contuſion her daughter had received: Maria reclined on a ſopha, whilſt the Doctor anxiouſly examined the bruiſe on her temple, which, to the extreme joy of Aubrey and Mrs. Mordaunt, he did not apprehend would prove of dangerous conſequence; he then gave orders for ſomething proper to be applied, and in the interval our fair heroine related, as well as ſhe was able, to her parents the obligations ſhe owed to Mr. Aubrey. Their expreſſions of gratitude were oppreſſingly lively to Aubrey, who thought himſelf amply

repaid for the effort he had made, by preſerving from deſtruction a woman whoſe life he would have died to have redeemed. As ſoon as the application had been made to her temple, Mrs. Mordaunt conducted her daughter to her chamber; and Aubrey, after ſitting a few minutes with Dr. Mordaunt, took his leave, and returned home much perturbed in mind.

CHAP.

CHAP. IV.

HE was announced at Dr. Mordaunt's the next morning; that gentleman was gone out, and Mrs. Mordaunt engaged: but ſhe told the ſervant to ſhew Mr. Aubrey into her dreſſing-room, where he would find her daughter. Maria had reclined herſelf on a ſopha; and the fatigue of a ſleepleſs night had thrown her into a gentle ſlumber; her dreſs was white muſlin, and, to ſhade the light from her face, ſhe had thrown careleſsly over it a gauze veil, which heightening the natural delicacy of her features, gave an extreme of ſoftneſs to her perſon, that had a moſt enchanting effect. Aubrey

approached her with the ſame reverence an ancient Roman would have felt, had he been admitted into the preſence of a veiled virgin of the temple of *Veſta*. A ſmall lock of her fine auburn hair had ſtrayed from its confinement, and waved on her ſhoulder; —the ſight of a pair of ſciſſars which happened to lay on a table, tempted him to make himſelf maſter of this beautiful treaſure: juſt as he had done ſo Maria opened her eyes, and detected him in the act of conveying it into his pocket-book. A lovely bluſh of ſurprize, of confuſion, ſhot acroſs her cheeks, which her indiſpoſition had before rendered paler than common, whilſt, with a heſitating voice, and extending her hand, ſhe exclaimed, "Pray, Mr. Aubrey, return me the lock;—indeed you have done wrong; I cannot conſent to your taking it."—

"Pardon

"Pardon me, deareſt Miſs Mordaunt," returned Aubrey; "the liberty I have taken I am ſenſible needs many apologies; but ſurely you cannot be ſo cruel, ſo extremely rigid, as to deprive me of this little *memento* of the friendſhip you have profeſſed to honour me with, when I tell you that I muſt this day bid adieu to your charming ſociety, as I ſhall leave this city to-morrow, and am now come to take my leave of you and your amiable family, to whoſe humanity and politeneſs I owe ſo many obligations." The information of his deſign of leaving the place effected his purpoſe much ſooner than any thing elſe he could have urged; for Maria's mind became ſo wholly engroſſed by this idea, that having tremulouſly uttered the words, "Indeed, Mr. Aubrey! ſo ſoon!" ſhe remained ſilent for ſome minutes, ſtriving to

conceal the agitation the intelligence had occaſioned in her boſom. During this interval Mrs. Mordaunt entered, whom Aubrey likewiſe made acquainted with his intended journey. She expreſſed her great regret in very polite terms, and begged he would do the Doctor and herſelf the honour of ſpending the day with them. The invitation was accepted by Aubrey; but, though ſhe had ſo many opportunities of renewing the ſubject, Maria never once again alluded to the lock of hair he had taken from her: whether the compaſſion ſhe felt for the diſtreſs which was viſible in the countenance of Aubrey the whole day, prevented her from ſeeking to deprive him of what ſhe apprehended he felt ſome ſatisfaction in poſſeſſing, or whether ſhe really did not *recollect* the circumſtance, we pretend not to determine.

Maria,

Maria, fearful of ſhewing too plainly her feelings, if ſhe was preſent when he took his final leave of them, withdrew ſoon after dinner, under pretence of indiſpoſition, wiſhing him a ſafe and pleaſant journey, with all the eaſe ſhe could aſſume; when, retiring to her own apartment, ſhe gave way to the ſad luxury of woe her ſituation inſpired.

CHAP.

CHAP. V.

IT happened, about a year after theſe occurrences, that a dreadful diſorder raged in one of our Weſt India iſlands, which being taken into conſideration by government, it was deemed expedient to ſend over a certain number of ſkilful phyſicians; among whom, the father of our fair heroine obtained an appointment. When he received orders to prepare for his departure, he was adviſed by his moſt judicious friends, to convert what poſſeſſions and effects he could ſpare into money to carry with him, with which he was aſſured he might purchaſe lands in the Indies,

Indies, that would in time far ſurpaſs its preſent worth in England.

Dr. Mordaunt acceded to theſe admonitions; and, leaving only ſufficient to enable his family to ſupport, during the term of his abſence, the ſituation they had hitherto held in life, he undertook a dangerous voyage, with the hope of benefiting his beloved family.

By the ſpirited and ſkilful efforts of the medical gentlemen ſent abroad, this epidemic malady was ſpeedily overcome. But alas! at the time Dr. Mordaunt was preparing to return to the boſom of domeſtic happineſs, and anticipating the reward of his toils, an unfortunate accident put a period to his valuable exiſtence, and precipitated his family into the deepeſt abyſs of woe.

Superadded to the irremediable affliction

fliction they ſuſtained in the loſs of ſo wiſe, indulgent, and affectionate a protector, through the fatal contingency that deprived him of life happening before he had properly ſecured his newly-purchaſed lands, all was loſt to them.

To attempt a deſcription of the heart-rending ſorrows of this afflicted family would be in vain!—The ſon of this excellent man having juſt at this period finiſhed his ſcholaſtic learning, ſome of his father's friends procured him an appointment as a writer to the Eaſt India Company, and fitted him out for the voyage.

The departure of her ſon was a very poignant addition to the griefs of Mrs. Mordaunt; and her anguiſh of mind brought on a diſorder, which (in a few months after the death of her huſband) terminated in her final diſſolution.

Our

Our fair and diſconſolate heroine, after her mother's death, received invitations from ſeveral of thoſe who had been the particular friends of her parents, to ſpend her time amongſt them till ſome plan could be thought of for her future eſtabliſhment. But a lady of faſhion in the neighbourhood requeſting her to aſſiſt in the education of her children, ſhe preferred a regular ſituation in that capacity to a rambling dependance on the hoſpitality of friends. Here ſhe might have been as happy as the ſtate of her mind would admit of, had it not been for the circumſtance ſhe related on her firſt interview with Doctor Edgeware, and which the reader is already poſſeſſed of.

The mind of Maria had not (at the time the incident occurred which we have recorded in the firſt chapter of this

this volume) in any degree recovered its uſual tone; the tumult of her griefs had, it is true, conſiderably abated; but the painful remembrance of the irreparable loſſes ſhe had ſuſtained ſtill ſaddened her ſoul; her future proſpects were, beſides, chearleſs and uncomfortable; of independance ſhe had no proſpect, but from marriage: ſeveral reſpectable and advantageous propoſals of that nature had been made to her, both before and after the death of her parents; but the perfections of Aubrey (notwithſtanding her earneſt endeavours to controul this partiality) had made too deep an impreſſion on her heart, to ſuffer her to liſten with compoſure to overtures of that kind. She ſtrove unceaſingly to baniſh thoſe perfections from her mind; but alas! unavailingly.—She ſaw nothing elegant, attractive, and commanding, that did not

not recall to her imagination the ſame graces, heightened and glowing with redoubled luſtre, in the poliſhed exterior, and exalted ſoul of the too intereſting Aubrey.—In this dejection of ſpirit ſhe arrived in London.

CHAP.

CHAP. VI.

DOCTOR EDGEWARE was on a viſit at a friend's habitation a few miles out of town, when Maria arrived at his houſe in London; but Mrs. Tonto, his ſiſter, received her with many expreſſions of pleaſure.

This lady's figure was long, dry, and unintereſting; her noſe narrow and pinched in at the bottom; her lips were remarkably thin, and her eyes in colour, ſize, and power of expreſſion, pretty much reſembled a couple of black cherries.

Her mind had caught a tinge of ſcience from the converſation of her brother, and her deceaſed huſband, who

who was a clergyman; but poſſeſſing neither ſtrength of underſtanding, nor brilliant parts, the ſcattered rays of knowledge ſhe had thus acquired, ſerved only to augment her natural ſelf-ſufficiency; and taught her to look with contempt on perſons of better capacity and ſuperior judgment, who had moved in a different circle.

All ſcandal being barred in the preſence of the Doctor, Mrs. Tonto's converſation generally turned on ſentimental ſubjects; and ſhe would (as Polly Honeycombe expreſſes it) expatiate for ſeveral hours together on "*the ſenſibility of delicate feeling*;" adorning her remarks ſometimes with a few ſtolen criticiſms, that had occaſionally dropped from the Doctor in his *tête-à-tête* converſations with her; but theſe decorations ſhe uſually reſerved for days of *Gala*, I mean thoſe periods when

when ſhe diſplayed her acquirements at the literary aſſembly, or *converſazione*, held at her brother's houſe one day in every week.

And I aſſure you, reader, Mrs. Tonto had no little portion of celebrity;—for a ſmall poem, ſaid to have been compoſed by her, had been handed about in manuſcript; which (having undergone numberleſs alterations and corrections from the pen of the Doctor, inſomuch that ſcarcely any of the original matter remained) when it was at length turned into the wide world, made no diſreputable figure.

This piece had indeed been of ſingular ſervice to her fame; for if any dared but to hint that they could diſcern no ſymptoms of genius in her *converſation*, they were immediately anſwered, "*Oh, ſhe* MUST *be a woman of talents,*

talents, for I saw a very ingenious poem of her writing."

Beside this, she had had another considerable advantage; namely, the having a very fine compliment upon her wit and beauty sent to her, in a poetical dress, by the ingenious Mr. Nigglepen, and inserted in all the periodical papers. The fact was, she had taken various opportunities of expressing a strong and unaccountable curiosity (people of genius have strange whims) to see in what manner the most celebrated wits and writers of the age formed the letter *A*. Mr. Nigglepen, who had long wished to be ranked among those who had the honour of visiting Dr. Edgeware, and had penetration enough to see into Mrs. Tonto's stratagem, happening to hear of that lady's passion for great *A*'s, immediately sat down and addressed the before-mentioned compli-

ment to her, which begun, "Ah! lovely black-eyed nymph"—It was wonderfully well received by Mrs. Tonto, and, at her particular requeſt, an invitation was ſent to Mr. Nigglepen by the Doctor. The ſucceſs of Mr. Nigglepen made many more of the inferior wits practiſe the ſame trick, but not with the like ſucceſs; for Dr. Edgeware directly perceived the *fineſſe*, and told Mrs. Tonto, ſhe muſt be contented with the high admiration of thoſe gentlemen at a *diſtance*; for that he could not think of a perſonal acquaintance with all her multifarious admirers.

How ſtriking an inſtance of the ſuperiority of modern over ancient modeſty does the delicate obliquity of Mrs. Tonto's conduct exhibit, when contraſted with the behaviour of Cicero on a ſimilar occaſion? that great orator writing

writing point blank to requeſt an hiſtorian to celebrate him in his work, and even dictating his own eulogium!

Mrs. Tonto was ſitting, when Maria came in, ſurrounded by animals of various kinds: in one corner of the room ſtood a cage with a pair of turtle doves; on a cuſhion by her ſide lay a dog; and over her head hung a noiſy parrot; at her feet a large cat, and from the oppoſite ſide of the room ſhrilly warbled a canary bird.

As ſoon as Mrs. Tonto had paid her compliments to Maria, and informed her that the Doctor was from home, ſhe enquired if ſhe was fond of animals: and, before Maria could reply, told her it was a certain ſign of a tender and amiable diſpoſition.

Maria anſwered, that ſhe had not made obſervations enough to determine whether it was a *rule*, but ſaid ſhe had

ſeen ſeveral inſtances of the ſagacity and faith of dogs, and knew ſeveral very excellent people who were fond of them.

"Oh, my dear Miſs Mordaunt," cried Mrs. Tonto, "I have ſuch a peculiar tenderneſs for animals of all kinds, you can't conceive what I undergo through it. I met with an affair laſt Michaelmas that affected me in a moſt ſhocking manner: I happened to call at our poulterer's in Newport Market, and a boy was going to kill a gooſe, and he was jerking and ſqueezing the poor creature in the moſt excruciating ſtile your imagination can form an idea of.—I aſſure you, Miſs Mordaunt, the gooſe ſent forth ſuch piteous ſighs, and gave ſuch horrid gaſps, as the cruel wretch held the knife to his throat, that (as my beloved Sterne ſays) *they pierced my very heart*;

heart; and, to increaſe the anguiſh of the whole, a parcel of geeſe that were confined in a great baſket, ſet up ſuch horrid ſhrieks, as if deploring the fate of their unhappy companion, that I could ſtand the ſcene no longer. I put a ſhilling into the boy's hand, and begged him to deſiſt till I had got out of the market: he did deſiſt, and all was quiet; but only continued ſo till I had quitted the ſhop; for the moment my back was turned, he again put the knife to the poor being's throat, when immediately every gooſe in the baſket rent the air with its cries. I ſtopped my ears with my fingers, and walked as hard as I was able out of the market; and, the Doctor knows, when I got home I was ſo affected that I fell into an hyſteric fit, and, I dare ſay, ſhrieked as loud as the poor miſerable geeſe for a couple of hours."

She had hardly ended when a woman ſervant entered, and began to lay the cloth, but was interrupted by Mrs. Tonto's ſaying, "Cook, where is Jenny?—you know I don't like to have you come into the parlour;—ſhe knows it is her place to wait at table when John is gone out with his maſter."

"She is not well, Madam," anſwered the woman, "and gone to lie down upon the bed. She has got a fever and head-ache, Ma'am."

"I ſhould not have thought of her indolence," ſaid Mrs. Tonto; "that girl is always feigning ſickneſs out of idleneſs; pray go and tell her to come down;—you know I don't like to have you do any thing in the parlour."

The cook retired, and Jenny came in. The girl was thin, and of a conſumptive

ſumptive habit; her eyes appeared heavy and ſunken with the head-ache; her cheeks had a hectic glow, and her lips were parched.

"What makes you hold down your head and look ſo ill-tempered?" ſaid Mrs. Tonto; "you know I cannot bear ſulky people about me."

Maria, who had not yet learnt that difficult leſſon (ſo neceſſary for a dependant) to ſee, to hear, and to ſay nothing, ſhocked at Mrs. Tonto's want of humanity, exclaimed, "Dear Madam, ſurely you don't ſee that the young woman looks ill."

Mrs. Tonto, after having made ſo great a parade of tenderneſs, was not pleaſed with Maria for this reproof; which only made her the more obſtinately perſiſt in ſaying, it was all the pretext of indolence.

"If I thought," continued ſhe,

" that ſhe *was* ill, no one would do more for her; for my part, I am not one of thoſe who think ſervants a different ſpecies; *I* look upon them as unfortunate *brothers* and *ſiſters*; and, when they are *really* ill, treat them accordingly."

Juſt before they ſat down to dinner, Maria was agreeably ſurprized by the entrance of Dr. Edgeware, who had returned ſooner than was expected; he gave her, in few words, a very friendly and affectionate reception.

The moment he had ſeated himſelf, he called for a glaſs of wine: as the ſick ſervant brought it to him, he caſt his eyes upon her face, and immediately, with a look of compaſſion and the tone of ſurpriſe, articulated the words, " You are ſick;—why are you here?" This laconic ſentence, contraſted with the long and futile harangue ſhe had ſo recently

recently heard from Mrs. Tonto, on the ſubject of ſympathy and benevolence, filled her breaſt with an affectionate veneration for the heart of her patron; and whilſt ſhe mentally repeated the words, "You are ſick;—why are you here?" a tear of admiration ſprung to her eye.

Mrs. Tonto felt the greateſt awe in the preſence of the Doctor, and the ſlighteſt hint from him was a law with her; ſhe accordingly joined in diſmiſſing Jenny, and went to her cloſet, from whence ſhe diſburſed ſomething to make a cordial for the ſick girl.

CHAP. VII.

THE next morning, as Maria deſcended the ſtaircaſe to breakfaſt, ſhe heard a noiſe which ſeemed to proceed from the lower regions; and, ſtopping a moment to liſten, ſhe diſcovered that Mrs. Tonto differed from other European commanders, whoſe cuſtom it has been, time immemorial, to inſpirit their people to action with pleaſant and elevating muſic, ſhe having adopted the mode of the ancient Parthians, who (as Plutarch relates) choſe rather, on thoſe occaſions, harſh, hollow, diſmal ſounds, ſomething between the craſhing of thunder and the howling of wild beaſts.

To ſpeak without metaphor, Miſs Mordaunt heard Mrs. Tonto, in a loud

loud and querulous tone, reprimanding her ſervants for neglect of orders the antecedent day, and enforcing thoſe of the preſent hour with great warmth and energy.

Maria, wiſhing to hear as little as poſſible of the engagement, haſtened into the breakfaſt parlour, and in a few minutes the Doctor made his appearance. Mrs. Tonto no ſooner heard his voice in the parlour, than ſhe aſcended, and began to apologize for ſome *loud talking*, ſhe ſaid, ſhe ſuppoſed they muſt have heard, telling them that the cook had been ſo impertinent ſhe could *not bear her*: "And this creature I took," continued ſhe, "out of mere compaſſion, when ſhe was out of place and in great diſtreſs; —ſhe perfectly begged *herſelf in*, for I did not think ſhe would do for us; and now after all, ſhe hath turned out

the moſt *ungrateful* creature in the world. But this is the way I am always rewarded:—I meet with nothing but inſtances of ingratitude. It is not only from ſervants that one experiences it; there's the ingenious Mrs. Hemiſtich (from whom one might have expected a better *ſtile* of behaviour) hath uſed me very unfeelingly. Her beautiful lines upon friendſhip, ſo conſonant to my own feelings, had won my heart, and, as the poet ſays,

"Made it all her own."

I thought to have formed a pure and lively friendſhip with her; but I had no ſooner been introduced to her, and had viſited her a few times, than I perceived ſhe began to ſlight me; and once when I called, ſhe was not at home to me, though I had not got many ſteps from the door before I ſaw Mrs. ——, the celebrated writer, admitted.

mitted. I declare I was ill for a fortnight after; it threw me into a fever that had like to have coſt me my life; for the Doctor knows I was confined to my chamber for ſeveral weeks."

"If ſhe did not wiſh the acquaintance," ſaid the Doctor mildly, "it ſhewed a ſincerity of diſpoſition to drop the intercourſe at once, rather than to pretend to what ſhe did not feel. As to her lines on friendſhip,—it betrays a want of diſcernment, to be ſurpriſed that the mind can conceive and repreſent beauties in character, which it does not exhibit in its own. One might as naturally expreſs amazement, that a painter could conceive and pourtray graces and proportions directly oppoſite to his own figure."

"I believe," ſaid Maria, "we generally expect too much from friendſhip."

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P. VIII.

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"True;" replied the Doctor, "for my own part, I never ſuffer my imagination, on a firſt acquaintance, to conceive any one, however outwardly poliſhed and *urbane*, as poſſeſſing ſuperior excellence of heart, till I have ſeen proofs that evince it in their conduct. Till then, I ſuppoſe that any appearance of pre-eminent goodneſs may reſult from the graces of deportment, or the glow of ſhining talents. Thus every noble action I, on a nearer view of them, diſcover, is a ſource of glad ſurprize: and familiarity with friends, which to others often brings diſappointment and diſguſt, to me unfolds unexpected claims for admiration and eſteem.

The Doctor now put an end to the converſation, by propoſing that they ſhould call upon an eminent ſtatuary of his acquaintance.—This propoſal was acceded to, and they went.

CHAP.

CHAP. VIII.

WHILST our little party were admiring a beautiful piece of ſculpture, in which the artiſt had delineated the affecting meeting of Pompey and Cornelia, after the battle of Pharſalia, there came in an elderly man of ſedate and methodical appearance, accompanied by a lad of about ſeventeen or eighteen years of age, whom they ſpeedily perceived to be his ſon.

Mr. Hardwick (for ſo was this viſitor called) enquired with great ſolemnity if the wax portrait of himſelf, he had ordered, was finiſhed: it was ſhewn to him, and received the ſanction of his approbation; his ſon at the ſame time

time pronouncing it "*a prodigious fine thing, and fifty per cent.* better than any likeneſs that had hitherto been taken of him;" and felicitating his father upon being handed down to poſterity with exactneſs, among other *geniuſes* of his day.

The Doctor lifted up his eyes at the ſound of the words "*Geniuſes of his day*;" and as ſoon as he ſaw Mr. Hardwick engaged in earneſt converſation with the ſtatuary, enquired of his ſon, in a low voice, "who that gentleman was."

"Bleſs me, Sir," cried young Hardwick, "don't you know my father? why, Sir, he's one of the greateſt *geniuſes* in all our buſineſs: Sir, he was the original inventor of *le grand pomade* for the hair: Sir, he has found out things that nobody elſe before ever found out, and has made a great fortune by his diſcoveries.

diſcoveries.—We keep the great perfumer's ſhop in —— ſtreet."

The Doctor ſtarted back involuntarily at this piece of information, and uttering the interjection, "humph," and, half ſuppreſſing a ſmile, returned to what he had before been viewing.

"I think, Sir," ſaid Mr. Hardwick gravely to the ſtatuary, "I think I ſhould like to have a *dozen* of theſe portraits of *myſelf*, for I have promiſed them to all my particular friends; but I think I ſhall keep a couple to put in my own dining room, though I don't rightly know where I ſhall hang them *both*."

"Oh Lord, father! why hang them up of each ſide the glaſs," cried the ſon, "they'll make exceeding pretty *companions*."

"Why yes, Dick," ſaid he, looking thoughtfully, "that's not a bad notion of

of thine; but I don't think it will be quite clever neither, upon ſecond thoughts; for I don't recollect I ever ſaw two things of a ſort hung up together."

"Oh Lord, father! did you never ſee two horns full of flowers, nor two lions heads hung up of each ſide a looking-glaſs?"

"True, Dick, true;" ſaid Mr. Hardwick, "I believe you have hit the thing—you are right; and, by way of variety, you know, ſir (turning to the ſtatuary) ſuppoſe we have one in *white* and one in *coloured* wax."

"Very proper, ſir," returned the artiſt.——"That's a fine conceit of your's, father," ſaid Dick, "becauſe then your friends, you know, will ſee you in all colours.—Hah! hah! he! he!"

"Don't

"Don't be too forwardly, Dick," ſaid Mr. Hardwick.—

Here they were interrupted by the entrance of a footman, bearing in his arms ſomething clad in a ſcarlet cloth cloak trimmed with gold fringe, which they ſuppoſed to be a child in long coats; but upon the wrapper being opened, they diſcovered a lap-dog almoſt worn out with old age.

"Mrs. Aubrey's compliments," ſaid the ſervant, "and ſhe has ſent the dog ſhe talked to you about yeſterday, ſir; and ſhe begs and intreats, ſir, that you will pleaſe to take as ſtrong a likeneſs as poſſible, as the *dear creature* is given over by the phyſician, who ſays it cannot live above a week longer; and ſhe begs you'll pleaſe to contrive, ſir, not to let it ſit to be modelled any where but in a warm room, wrapt in its cloak; for if it ſhould be expoſed to the

the dampneſs ariſing from a large body of clay, ſhe fears it will be taken off before the ſtatue is compleated; and my miſtreſs ſays ſhe cannot exiſt after its deceaſe, if ſhe has not a ſtrong reſemblance of the ſweet original to conſole her for its loſs."

The footman, with great difficulty, ſuppreſſed an exploſion of mirth, whilſt he deliver'd the meſſage; and his auditors were in a ſituation little leſs inclined to the indulgence of the riſible faculty.

The ſtatuary, however, compoſed his muſcles ſufficiently to tell him, "that he was particularly engaged *then*; but deſired he would carry the dog into the parlour, and he would *attend it* preſently."

The whole company now ſacrificed freely to the laughter-loving goddeſs, except Mrs. Tonto, who was hurt that an extravagant fondneſs for animals

ſhould

ſhould be conſidered in ſo ridiculous a light.

"I cannot, I own," ſaid ſhe, "ſee any thing ſo very diverting in this affair;—it gives *me* a very high idea of the lady's excellence of diſpoſition.—For even the poor beetle that we tread upon, in corporal ſufferance, feels a pang as great as when a giant dies. I think there is ſomething very pretty and affecting in having a ſtatue of an animal that one doated upon in its lifetime, to conſole one after its departure. For my part, if my poor little Pug was to die, I ſhould be moſt happy to have a ſtatue of it to weep over in my retirement."

"Certainly, madam," ſaid the ſculptor, with an ironical gravity, "it would be a charming *luxury*; the idea is truly ſublime, and calculated to inſpire a ſweet and pathetic melancholy."

"As to the lady ſpoke of, madam," ſaid Mr. Hardwick, "I cannot ſay I ever heard any thing of the excellence of her diſpoſition, though I know a good deal of the hiſtory of the Aubrey family."

"Yes," ſaid Dick, "we ought to know, for we ſerves the old lady with all her perfumery; and ſhe uſes a vaſt quantity."

"Don't interrupt me, Dick," ſaid old Hardwick, reſuming his diſcourſe; "by what I am informed of Mrs. Aubrey, 'tis a pity but ſhe was laid in cold clay till eternity, or had never taken a fancy to any companions but dogs and monkeys—For I am told the fine young gentleman ſhe married in France, though he is reckoned one of the beſt tempered men in England, has ſuch a diſlike to living with the old crabbed cat, that he has taken himſelf to travel into foreign parts,

and

and is now making the beſt of his way to the *tower* of Italy."

Maria had heard too much:—ſhe turned from the company to conceal her emotion! and Hardwick entering upon another ſubject, gave her an opportunity to recover herſelf. "Well, Sir," ſaid he, turning to the artiſt, "now, if you pleaſe, we'll talk about this monument for my father, that I was ſpeaking to you about the other day."

"If you'll give me leave, Sir, I'll ſhow you ſome *deſigns*."

"Oh, Sir, there's no occaſion for much of a *deſign*," replied he; "I would not go to much *expence*; a good large head, ſuch as one ſees againſt the walls in Weſtminſter Abbey, would do extremely well."

"Have you any portrait of the gentleman, from which I could take the reſemblance, Sir?"

"Why yes, Dick, I believe there is a bit of a *profile*, (is not there child?) which thy aunt Betty cut in paper? But, dear heart, ſir, I believe there is no occaſion for it: I'll tell you exactly what ſort of face he had; and then you can make a bit of a ſketch, and Dick and I can judge directly of the likeneſs. Let me ſee; his *noſe* was exceedingly like mine; was it not, Dick? (you remember your grandfather, child): then his *eyes*, as far as I can remember, were ſomewhat like thine, Dick; however, I know they were grey."

"Well, Sir, his mouth and chin?" ſaid the ſculptor, without relaxing a muſcle.

"His mouth and chin!—why let me ſee; I think, Dick, there was nothing very particular about *them*;—ſuch a mouth and chin as you ſee very often

often, Sir,—I dare ſay you could eaſily give a gueſs at them, Sir."

"Lord, Sir, grandfather was the very *moral* of father,"—cried Dick.

The artiſt was inſpired with a lucky thought; diſcovering from their converſation that there was a reſemblance between the father and the ſon, he drew a ſketch of the face of Mr. Hardwick, and it was immediately pronounced, by both old and young Hardwick, as like the old man as ever were two *pins heads*.

"Well, Sir," ſaid Mr. Hardwick, "I muſt take another opportunity of calling upon you, to ſettle finally about this monument; for I muſt haſte away, having another artiſt to call upon, before I go home to dinner.—You muſt know, Sir, I have compoſed a Treatiſe upon *Pomatums*; to which I intend to *perfix* a Diſſertation upon *the moſt efficacious*

cacious methods of preſerving and beautifying that moſt lovely ornament of the human head, the hair—till it has attained a perfection greatly ſurpaſſing nature."

"A ſubject well worthy a philoſophical diſcuſſion," replied the ſculptor, whoſe ironic gravity was invincible; "but ſo great a *work* will, no doubt, bring upon you much envious criticiſm."

"Oh yes, Sir, I ſuppoſe I ſhall have the critics ſtriking at my book; but lord, Sir, I ſhall only laugh at *their* ignorant pretenſions; for what the devil ſhould they know about making pomatums."

"True, Sir, moſt true."—

"But all this while," reſumed Hardwick, "I have been running from the ſubject; I was telling you, Sir, that I am going to call upon another artiſt, who is *engraving* my *head*, which

which I intend to have *perfixed* to my book. You muſt know, Sir, that this thought ſtruck me as I was going up Piccadilly t'other day, for there I ſaw in a book-ſeller's window, the head of an hiſtorian, a poet, a philoſopher, a divine, a gardener, a lord chief juſtice, and the cook at the London Tavern; ſo I thought, if theſe men (and I am ſure ſome of them are ugly enough) have their heads *perfixed* to *their* books, ſure a man that has written a diſſertation upon *hair* need not be *aſhamed to ſhow his head.*"

The philoſophical perfumer and his ſon now made a haſty retreat; and our party, much entertained with the characters they had ſeen, took a polite leave of the ſtatuary, and returned home.

CHAP. IX.

THE three following days they paſſed at home; which period Maria ſpent almoſt wholly tête-a-tête with Mrs. Tonto, except at eating-times, for the Doctor gave himſelf up to his ſtudies with an application almoſt unparalleled. The intelligence of the Aubrey family Maria had received at the ſtatuary's, had *revived*, or rather *augmented* a train of aſſociated ideas that conſiderably heightened the melancholy which uſually appeared on her countenance. The Doctor obſerved it; he thought the company of Mrs. Tonto, which he knew to be fatiguing enough, might contribute to it; and therefore he ſaid, "Staying at home ſo much, child, ſeems

to have caſt a gloom over your mind; I am ſorry that almoſt all our acquaintance, to whom it would give you pleaſure to be introduced, are in the country."—"Indeed," continued he, "now I recollect, I ſaw Lady Melmoth a few days before you arrived;—I have often met her Ladyſhip in company, and ſhe hath as often ſolicited me to viſit her. She told me ſome law buſineſs had retarded her going into the country:—ſhe begged I would call upon her before ſhe went out of town. I told her Ladyſhip, I had a young perſon whom I ſhould ſhortly wiſh to introduce to her, and gave her a little hiſtory of your family and ſituation;—on which ſhe ſaid, ſhe ſhould be happy to render you any ſervice in her power, and deſired me to bring you to her. She is almoſt the only perſon I know, to whom that

air of melancholy you wear would be intereſting. There is nothing, I am told, conciliates her affection and regard ſo cloſely. Sorrow, from which moſt people retreat, ſhe purſues. She hath been a widow five years; her jointure is large; the company ſhe aſſociates with chiefly conſiſts of perſons eminent for their worth and talents, to whom ſhe is a beneficent patroneſs. She appears to be a woman of bright parts, and a philoſophic ſoul. Her turn of mind hath led her to literary purſuits. She is a warm admirer of the fine arts, and a liberal patroneſs of their profeſſors."

"Yes," ſaid Mrs. Tonto, "I believe ſhe has known enough of ſorrow herſelf, not to feel for others. She married Sir Robert Melmoth at the expreſs command of her father; and he was of a rough, unfeeling nature—

ill-ſuited

ill-ſuited to her Ladyſhip's tender turn of thinking:—ſhe has lately taken to reſide with Miſs Hampden, a lady of literature."

"Miſs Hampden," ſaid the Doctor, "is a woman of talents; and, from the account given of her by Lady Melmoth, hath, I doubt not, an excellent heart. The friendly union of theſe ladies ſeems to bid fair for permanency—which is not often the caſe in connections of this nature. Perſons of diſtinguiſhed abilities ill brook domeſtic dependence; and the patroneſs of ſanguine ideas, (even though poſſeſſed of an enlarged mind) is often diſappointed in not finding the object of her admiration in all points anſwerable to her high-raiſed expectations. Whilſt, on the other hand, the protectreſs of more *moderate* capacity, feels the glare of talents, whoſe bril-

liance ſhe cannot enjoy; and as novelty glides away, envy or indifference inſenſibly takes place of admiration and wonder!"

"Yet, I confeſs," ſaid Mrs. Tonto, "I am rather ſurprized that Lady Melmoth ſhould chooſe Miſs Hampden for her companion. She ſeems to me to be of an odd temper. I met her once at my dear friend, Mrs. Blackwell's:—we were a ſmall party of ladies;—ſhe ſaid very little, and ſeemed to me to have a great deal of pride; at leaſt, ſhe has a great deal of that reſerve about her, which I think very unbecoming in young ladies in her ſituation; who ought always to ſtudy a mild, chatty, and ingratiating behaviour. I imputed it to timidity at firſt, and endeavoured to engage her in converſation; but every word ſhe uttered ſeemed to come from her like

water

water dragged out of a well. But I ſuppoſe my ſociety was not good enough for her; for I afterwards was in her company, and my brother being of the party, ſhe engroſſed him in a converſation almoſt the whole afternoon. I think ſhe certainly muſt have an extremely odd temper, from what I have heard Mrs. Blackwell ſay of her."

"Odd temper!" reiterated the Doctor, with ſomewhat more aſperity than Maria had ever before heard him ſpeak to his ſiſter, "She has *talents*, and is dependent; and that is excuſe enough for a hundred *peculiarities*, where there is no *vice*."

So ſaying, he roſe from his ſeat; and telling Matilda he would be ready to attend her to Lady Melmoth's in an hour, withdrew to his library.

CHAP. X.

DR. EDGEWARE's name was no ſooner announced to Lady Melmoth, than he was admitted. If the character given of her ladyſhip by the Doctor had prejudiced Maria in her favour, the noble and majeſtic air of her figure and countenance, joined to the melodious and endearing cadence of her voice, ſtrengthened her prepoſſeſſion. When they entered, Miſs Hampden was reading to her ladyſhip. This young lady appeared in the ſpring of life; her form was eaſy and *ſymmetrical*; her eyes were piercing; and the upper part of her face had that elevation, which denotes great ſenſe and a haughty grandeur of ſoul; whilſt there was in the turn of her other fea-

tures a ſoft roundneſs, that evinced a ſpirit warm, generous, and ſincere.

"Dr. Edgeware," ſaid Lady Melmoth, "I am moſt happy to ſee you; this is an honor I have been long ſoliciting you to confer upon me." The Doctor bowed to Lady Melmoth's compliment, and taking Maria by the hand, led her forward.

"Here is a ſenſible little girl, the orphan daughter of a worthy collegiate friend of mine, whom I muſt beg leave to introduce to your ladyſhip's notice; any portion of which that you may honour her with, I think, if I have any penetration, ſhe will not forfeit; for I know your ladyſhip is too intimately acquainted with the philoſophy of the human heart to expect to find in it *perfection*; and from what I have heard and ſeen of her, the child has little

more than the common foibles of humanity."

"No more;" ſaid Lady Melmoth, with vivacity, "if the expreſſion of the eyes be an emanation of the ſoul! —This is the young lady, I preſume, Doctor, you mentioned to me the other day. Give me leave, Miſs Mordaunt, to introduce to you Miſs *Hampden*, my particular friend."

The young ladies exchanged mutual compliments, and temporary ſubjects having been exhauſted, the converſation accidentally turned on phyſiognomy, which was a favourite topic of Lady Melmoth's.

"I am of opinion," ſaid her Ladyſhip, "that a perſon of obſervation is ſeldom deceived in judging of the mind by the countenance, though it generally happens that the moſt penetrative

in

in this reſpect ſuffer by artifice and diſſimulations as often as thoſe who have no pretenſions to ſkill in that particular. The cauſe, I fancy, may be traced to an innate love of flattery; for let us diſcover, on a firſt interview, ever ſo many unprejudicing lines in the countenance, no ſooner has the object in queſtion practiſed upon us the uſual arts of inſinuation, than we are inſenſibly lulled into ſecurity, and forget (till reminded of them by too fatally ſuffering) our firſt ſenſations of diſlike."

"It does not appear to me," ſaid *Miſs Hampden*, "that a pre-eminent ſkill in phyſiognomy is (as is generally ſuppoſed) the conſtant attendant of a mind deeply acquainted with the operations of the human heart; but a diſtinct faculty of itſelf. It is an endowment which, I apprehend, nature ſeldomer beſtows

beſtows in a large proportion than any other."

"I differ from you, Madam," ſaid the Doctor. "I am inclined to think this faculty is always a *pre-eminent* concomitant of a philoſophic mind; but ſpirits inquiſitive and penetrating enough to analize, with boldneſs and preciſion, the heart of man, act from general principles deduced from their own reaſonings. Such perſons are apt to look upon an attempt to read the heart by the countenance as at beſt but an ingenious method of trifling; and hence ariſes their neglect to furniſh and ſtrengthen, by ſtudy and exerciſe, this valuable faculty."

"One would hope then," ſaid Lady Melmoth, ſmiling, "that the gift of reading countenances is poſſeſſed in an extraordinary degree, by thoſe perſons of brilliant and refined genius, who uſu-

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ally hate the fatigue of minute diſquiſitions, as a more rapid and more amuſive method of attaining the knowledge of mankind than by ſtudying to diſcriminate the paſſions."

No more being ſaid on this ſubject, the Doctor told Lady Melmoth, he hoped the tedious law buſineſs, ſhe ſpoke to him of, was finiſhed to her ſatisfaction.

"I thank you, Doctor, for your good wiſhes," returned her ladyſhip, "it is happily compleated, and we are going into Dorſetſhire within a few days; it has been a great penance to me to ſtay ſo long in town, for my brother and Lord Newry (a relation of our family) who are on a viſit a few miles diſtant, have promiſed to ſpend a few weeks with me at Dunlough Caſtle. And as to poor Miſs Hampden (continued ſhe ſmiling) having never

never yet ſeen Dunlough, ſhe is impatient to enjoy the delightful horrors of Gothic galleries, winding avenues, gaping chimnies, and dreary vaults; and by way of enlivening the ſcene, ſhe intends to take with her the tragedies of Eſchylus, the poems of Oſſian, Caſtle of Otranto, &c. &c. and I dare ſay will, by the aid of imagination, behold gigantic hands and legs; and hear the voices of other times come whiſtling in the winds, and ſee the grey miſts riſing ſlowly from the lake, like an aged man ſupported by a ghoſt in mid-air, and preſently diſſolving in a ſhower of blood.—Are you, Miſs Mordaunt," continued her ladyſhip, "a lover of this kind of ſublimity?"

"I am indeed, Madam," ſaid Maria; there is not a piece of antiquity of that kind in my native ſhire I have not explored."

"Oh,

"Oh, I am glad of it," returned her ladyſhip; "for then we may perhaps prevail upon you to accompany us thither. I wiſh we could. I am ſure it would greatly add to any pleaſure we might receive there, if the Doctor and Mrs. Tonto would be kind enough to ſpare you to us."

"Lady Melmoth having made this requeſt, both her ladyſhip and Miſs Hampden waited with a look of friendly impatience for her anſwer. Maria returned the moſt polite acknowledgments of her ladyſhip's kindneſs ſhe could command; and Dr. Edgeware looking extremely well-pleaſed, undertook to make her apologies to his ſiſter.

"I am rejoiced," ſaid the Doctor, "your ladyſhip has conceived ſo favourable an opinion of my young charge; and I am ſure Mrs. Tonto will

will be equally ſenſible of the advantage ſhe will derive from your ladyſhip's ſociety, and that of your ingenious friend, Miſs Hampden. There are but few of her own ſex I am acquainted with, whoſe notice and friendſhip I would wiſh her to cultivate, however they might imagine they honoured her by their notice: for it is a truth that cannot be too often inculcated, that on the diſpoſitions of her *female friends*, depends the good or ill-ſucceſs of a young woman, on her outſet in life."

"Moſt aſſuredly," replied Lady Melmoth; "there are but few cauſes, beſides avarice or an addiction to gallantry, which can inſtigate a man of general good reputation, to injure the character or fortunes of a woman. But in intimacies with her own ſex, ſhe has a thouſand ſhoals to avoid; ſhe will

will meet with women, whoſe ſituations in life give them infinite reſpectability in the world's eye, who will, even under the ſemblance of friendſhip, exert every effort to the ruin of her fortunes, for the trivial circumſtance, perhaps, of being excelled by her in external appearance; whilſt the utterance of a lively repartee in their preſence, or obtaining the victory over them in an argument, ſhall ſometimes raiſe their envy to that height, that not being able to rob her of the fame of a brilliant imagination, they ſhall, by the blackening efforts of low cunning, tear from the unſuſpecting victim of their treacherous arts, the meed due to a good heart—the eſteem of the worthy."

Other company being here announced, Dr. Edgeware and Maria having made their viſit pretty long, roſe to take their leave; and Lady Melmoth

moth having told Matilda the day ſhe had fixed upon to ſet out on her journey, they politely bid each other adieu; the former promiſing to call at Dr. Edgeware's within a day or two.

CHAP. XI.

WHEN they got home Mrs. Tonto was abroad paying viſits; the Doctor went to his library, and Maria ſeated herſelf in a ſtreet parlour. In a few minutes a knocking was heard at the door, and a perſon enquired for Mrs. Tonto; the ſervant ſaid ſhe was from home, but was expected in a few minutes; upon which the viſitor ſaid ſhe would wait her return, and was accordingly ſhewn into the parlour where

where Miſs Mordaunt was ſitting. The perſon who entered to Maria was a woman of a dark and heavy aſpect, with a ſmall pair of eyes that emitted from the corners, for ſhe ſeldom looked any one full in the face, the ſly glances of malignant obſervation; her dreſs was parſimonious and formal; and her unpoliſhed and ſideling gate, as ſhe made her *entrée*, united to a certain battered air in her whole appearance, gave Maria ſomewhat the idea of a woman who had made a campaign in the ſtation of corporal's wife and lawndreſs to the officers.

This lady was no other than Mrs. Arachne Blackwell (Mrs. Tonto's particular friend). After the uſual civilities had paſſed, the ſtranger, who was generally barren enough of converſation, ſunk into a ſtupid ſilence; alternately amuſing herſelf with poring over a book

a book that lay in the window ſeat, and looking into the ſtreet: whilſt Matilda, who was diſguſted by her forbidding aſpect from attempting to force a converſation with her, pulled out her work-bag. At length this gloomy *tête-a-tête* was interrupted; Mrs. Blackwell ſaw her huſband (who, it ſeems, had promiſed to call upon her at Dr. Edgeware's) leading Mrs. Tonto acroſs the ſtreet; and no ſooner was the door opened to them, and they had entered the threſhold, than Mrs. Blackwell flew out of the parlour, exclaiming, "I thought you would never have come, love!" And ruſhing between Mrs. Tonto and the footman, ran her ſharp chin right againſt her huſband's; when there immediately proceeded from the contact, for ſeveral minutes, a ſound very much reſembling that occaſioned by the lapping of

two

two canine animals in a ſoup-pot. Having made his apologies with great ſubmiſſion to Mrs. Blackwell for his delay in coming to her, he delivered himſelf a formal compliment to Maria, (whom Mrs. Tonto introduced to him) and then ſat down; at the ſame time taking hold of a hand belonging to a long yellow arm of Mrs. Blackwell's, which he preſſed to his lips with great energy and preciſion. Theſe kind of manœuvres obliged Maria to turn more towards the window, and applying herſelf more cloſely to the needle-work ſhe had in her hand.

The inducements of Mr. and Mrs. Blackwell to this ſhew of fondneſs, originated, we have good cauſe to ſuſpect, not from on overflow of affection, but from pride and vanity. Mr. Blackwell thought it a means of raiſing him a character for uncommon tender-

neſs

neſs and benignity of nature; and his wife imagined it gave her a ſort of ſuperiority in the eyes of other women, to be able to make a man of ſenſe look ridiculous. Mr. Blackwell, however, had for ſome time ſeen that his conduct had brought upon him the ridicule of his acquaintance, and began to think it would be better to abſtain from performing (at leaſt ſome part of) this *farce*, which had not all the *effect* he wiſhed; but Mrs. Blackwell, who was too ſtupid to ſee the matter in the light he did, inſiſted upon the exhibition going on as uſual; and he was obliged to comply, in order to prevent tumults. But to return.

"My dear Mrs. Blackwell," ſaid Mrs. Tonto, in a whining tone, "how glad am I to ſee you. What an age it is ſince I have had the pleaſure of your company. 'Tis a moſt affecting thought

thought to me, that we, who have but one ſoul, ſhould be ſo widely ſeparated in the body. I wiſh you lived nearer to me. I am never ſo happy as when I ſee you and your amiable ſpouſe together. You remind me ſo much of the manner in which my dear departed Doctor Tonto and I lived together. And indeed we want all the endearing intercourſes of friendſhip, to enable us to endure the rugged path of life, in which we meet with nothing but diſappointments.—You remember that family I *took up?*"

"I heard you mention the circumſtance, Madam," ſaid Mr. Blackwell; "'twas an uncommon inſtance of benevolence."

"Well, Sir, they all turned out ungrateful, and uſed me in the worſt manner you can conceive."

"What! did they all prove ungrateful,

grateful, Madam?" ſaid Maria, with ſurprize.

"Yes, my dear, *all*; and I believe there were a *dozen* in family."

"What an affecting inſtance of the depravity of human nature," ſaid Maria. "But diſappointments of this kind will never deter a liberal mind from ſeeking occaſions to render ſervices. There is a pleaſure of the higheſt and nobleſt kind annexed to the performance of a generous action; a pleaſure which the gratitude of the objects obliged may ſomewhat increaſe, but which their *ingratitude* can never deſtroy."

"Yes, Madam," ſaid Mrs. Blackwell, turning to Mrs. Tonto, without attending to Matilda's obſervation, "I am continually obſerving to Mr. Blackwell, one gets nothing but ill-treatment for one's generoſity and kindneſs.

neſs. You know how I have been uſed in one or two inſtances lately; however, for my own part, I have always a pleaſure, that I cannot deſcribe, both in *thinking* and *talking* of favours I have conferred;—and 'tis ſo agreeable of a night to lie awake, and think of all the good things one has done in the day."

"A very fine obſervation, my ſweeteſt Arachne," cried Mr. Blackwell.

"Oh yes, Madam," ſaid Mrs. Tonto; "the idea of a benevolent action is a divine ſenſation; it diſſolves the ſoul in a kind of tranſport. I don't know how to deſcribe it—but ſometimes I've been ready to go into an hyſteric fit."

"Oh, my dear friend, you quite affect me," ſaid Mrs. Blackwell; "you ſpeak my very ſoul."

Here the ladies applied their pocket

handkerchiefs; and Mr. Blackwell, with ſome difficulty, jerked a few tears into his eyes.

"Yes, Madam," continued Mrs. Blackwell, "you have juſt deſcribed my feelings. I was in ſuch a ſituation the other day; wasn't I, love?"

"Yes, my poor Arachne, you made ſuch a noiſe in your fit, that I expected every minute the neighbours would come in to inquire what was the matter; and I was obliged to throw cold water upon you, till I thought I ſhould have drowned you, my ſweeteſt Arachne."

"So you did, love," ſaid ſhe; and after again embracing him, ſhe entered upon a new ſubject with Mrs. Tonto; ſuffering Mr. Blackwell to walk towards the window. He aſked the opinion of Maria on ſeveral ſubjects, and paid her many high-flown compliments,

pliments, inſomuch that Mrs. Blackwell's vanity began to take the alarm, thinking Maria engroſſed too much of his attention; and ſhe accordingly called him off, by ſaying,

"Mrs. Tonto, love, wants to know your opinion of Mrs. Epigram's Poems."

"Oh, mere bombaſt and fuſtian, Madam!" ſaid he croſſing the room to them.

"You have been in her company, Sir," ſaid Mrs. Tonto.

"I have, Madam."

"Do pray, love, give Mrs. Tonto a deſcription of Mrs. Epigram's *perſon*."

"Yes ſurely, my dear," anſwered he, ſeating himſelf at the edge of his chair in an erect poſition; "Mrs. Epigram is a ſhort ſquat woman; her face, in the ſhape of a full moon, looks like a

piece of baker's dough, with little round button features pinched out of it; her eyes are like two bits of painted glaſs; and her figure is the expreſs image of a couple of quartern loaves placed one upon another."

Here the ladies laughed violently; and Mr. Blackwell, turning to Maria, aſked her if ſhe ſaw the laſt new comedy.—She told him that the winter theatres had cloſed before ſhe came to town, and begged he would favour her with the ſtory of it, and his opinion of its merits; upon which Mr. Blackwell was entering into a critical diſcuſſion; but was called off a ſecond time, by Mrs. Blackwell's deſiring him "to come and give Mrs. Tonto an account of what ſort of a man Mrs. Epigram's *huſband* was."

"Mrs. Epigram's huſband, Madam," ſaid he, "is a little *outre* fellow,

low, as mis-ſhapen as the famed Scarron, with a ſtrong aukward modification of his legs and arms; he ſometimes utters good things in an agreeable tone of voice, and has a handſome face, ſo that, if he could always be brought into company in a ſort of caſe made in the ſhape of a tea caniſter, he might be endured, as we ſhould then only ſee his face and hear his voice."

"Very good, Sir, indeed!" ſaid Mrs. Tonto, "a very fine ſtile of *ridicule* upon my word."

Mrs. Blackwell was giving her huſband a new ſubject for ludicrous animadverſion, but the entrance of Dr. Edgware put an end to this kind of converſation, Mr. Blackwell being no ways ambitious of diſplaying his talent for caricature before that gentleman, contenting himſelf with the applauſe he had already received from the ladies.

The Doctor ſaid little after the cuſtomary civilities had paſſed, having a very painful head-ache. Maria, on hearing him complain, roſe from the corner of the ſopha and begged he would take her ſeat, telling him ſhe would fetch ſome drops that would give him almoſt inſtant relief; ſo ſaying ſhe ſlipped out of the room and ran up ſtairs: in two or three minutes ſhe returned, and, with an air of filial attention, poured ſome of the drops into his hand, deſiring him to apply it to his head. Mrs. Blackwell at this inſtant gave Mrs. Tonto a glance from the corner of her eye, ſo ænigmatical that we pretend not to decypher it.

"Well my dear," ſaid Mrs. Tonto to Maria, "how did you like your viſit this morning?"

"I am charmed with Lady Melmoth," ſaid Maria, "ſhe appears to unite

unite all that is great and amiable in woman."

"Was Miſs Hampden with her?—How do you like that young lady?" aſked Mrs. Tonto.

"Very much indeed, Madam," returned Maria; "ſhe has great good ſenſe, ſoft manners, and a very attractive perſon; and, if one may judge from her countenance, a benevolent heart.—I admire her infinitely."

Here Mrs. Blackwell gave Mrs. Tonto another corner glance (which we doubt not had a vaſt deal of poignant meaning) accompanied by a moſt ſagacious ſhrug of the ſhoulders; which, though it might be purely the effect of the wiſe obſervations that ſtruck her mind at that time, had ſomewhat the appearance of malignity. However that matter was, the look gave Maria a much more unfavourable idea of

Mrs. Blackwell, than of the perſon it apparently alluded to.

The Doctor being ſo much indiſpoſed, his gueſts ſoon took their leave. Mrs. Tonto attended her beloved friend even to the ſtreet door; and as they croſſed the paſſage, Mr. Blackwell ſaid to Mrs. Tonto,

"A very fine young lady you have got with you, Madam."

"A very great favourite of the Doctor's too, ſeemingly," ſaid his wife."

"She is the daughter of a Gentleman with whom the Doctor had an intimate acquaintance in the earlier part of his life," ſaid Mrs. Tonto; "ſhe is a deſcendant from a younger branch of one of the firſt families in the kingdom."

"Indeed ſhe ſeems a ſenſible, genteel behaved, humane young creature,"

ture," ſaid Mr. Blackwell, formally."

"I believe ſhe is a young lady of a very ſentimental and *pathetic* turn of mind," ſaid Mrs. Tonto; "I hope ſhe will make an agreeable addition to our friendly circle."

"Yes, I hope you will be very happy in her ſociety," ſaid Mrs. Blackwell.—"Oh yes! I don't doubt but ſhe is an extremely good-natured young perſon; but only for my part (though perhaps I'm wrong) I don't much like officious people; ſometimes they are apt to be deſigning;—I don't mean in regard to this young perſon—no!—I don't mean any reflection upon any body!—Only I know you have met with ſo many ungrateful people, that one can't help wiſhing a perſon of your open, unſuſpecting, *ſentimental* turn of mind, to be more upon your

guard; becauſe ſometimes, you know, the wiſeſt are deceived.—People are ſometimes prevailed upon, when they get in years, to leave their ſubſtance from their own relations;—*men*, you know my dear friend, have odd fancies."

Before Mrs. Tonto had time to make any reply to theſe *friendly* hints, Mr. Blackwell looked at his watch, and told his wife that he feared they ſhould be late home to dinner; upon which, after a very tender adieu had paſſed between the ladies, Mr. Blackwell and his ſpouſe departed.

CHAP. XII.

THE day before that which was fixed upon for their journey to Dunlough, our fair heroine ſpent with lady Melmoth.

Her ladiſhip, accompanied by Miſs Hampden, called in the morning and took Maria with her to Wedgewood's rooms. Maria, who had never before been there, was charmed with the claſſical taſte, and Attic elegance that pervaded every thing ſhe ſaw.—Lady Melmoth purchaſed a beautiful tea-ſervice, ornamented with curious baſs-relief figures; and gave orders for a chimney piece for her library. Ma-

ria

ria bought a buſt of Pericles as a preſent for Mrs Tonto, ſhe having repeatedly heard that lady expreſs a moſt profound veneration for the character of that celebrated ancient; one *trait* in particular was the object of her admiration, namely, that he never went out upon buſineſs, or returned without ſaluting his *Aſpaſia*; a point in which ſhe ſaid her dear departed Doctor Tonto ſo much reſembled him, that ſhe could never read that paſſage, in the life of Pericles, without weeping.

As they were leaving the rooms.—"I know not," ſaid Lady Melmoth, turning to Miſs Hampden, "what I ſhall do:—I ought to call upon poor Mrs. Benſon before I go out of town, and if I do ſo, I muſt leave ſome very particular buſineſs undone, or we ſhall not get home to dinner, in any reaſonable time." "If the viſit can be paid

by

by proxy, I beg your ladyſhip will depute me," ſaid Miſs Hampden.

"Your offer is very obliging, my dear," returned her ladyſhip, "and I will gladly accept it."

"Perhaps Miſs Mordaunt will be kind enough to accompany me," ſaid Miſs Hampden.

"With a great deal of pleaſure, Madam."

"You are very good indeed, ladies;" ſaid Lady Melmoth; "I believe you know the ſtreet in Picadilly, Miſs Hampden?"

"I once went there with your ladyſhip."

Lady Melmoth now ſent the footman for a hackney coach, to carry her young friends; and ſpeaikng to Miſs Hampden, aſide, for two or three minutes, told her the particulars of her embaſſy.—They then ſtept into the coach, which carried them to the

lodgings of a very worthy woman, who had formerly lived as houſe-keeper with Lady Melmoth, and was at that time partly ſupported by her bounty: this woman had, for ſome few years, been confined to her bed by a diſorder, which had deprived her of the uſe of her limbs.

Miſs Hampden had been repreſented to Maria, by Mrs. Tonto, as proud and gloomy; a remark which had ariſen, either from a want of ſenſibility, or a malignity of diſpoſition, in the obſerver. Early diſappointments had ſhaded with melancholy, a mind naturally ardent and lively; but there are moments when the mind will dilate itſelf in ſpite of every ſorrow: in theſe moments, when participated by ſpirits congenial to her own, Miſs Hampden diſplayed a fund of native humour and manners, gay almoſt to infantine

fantine. hilarity. It is true, on a firſt acquaintance, or in company where ſhe feared the attacks of familiarity, or the ſlights of inſolence, ſhe often incircled herſelf with an air of reſerve, which ſerved as a kind of intrenchment againſt both. But her heart was humane, her converſation untinctured with the ſmalleſt portion of *unprovoked* ſatire, and her deportment natural and unaſſuming, except when deteſtation, at beholding vice or meanneſs, kindled into rage the native ardour of her ſpirit. But, to return:—

Miſs Hampden communicated to Mrs. Benſon the cauſe of Lady Melmoth's not calling upon her as uſual, before ſhe left town, informing her at the ſame time, it was that lady's wiſh to know if there was any thing which would contribute to make her life more comfortable ſhe could procure for

for her. The acknowledgements of Lady Melmoth's kindneſs, which fell from the good woman, ſerved to heighten the high prepoſſeſſion Maria already entertained in favour of her ladyſhip's character.—The perſon who uſually attended on Mrs, Benſon being out of the way, Miſs Hampden, bidding her to conſider her as an old acquaintance, performed ſeveral little offices with the ready ſweetneſs, and commiſerating aſpect of a miniſtring ſpirit, ordained to hover round the bed of ſickneſs; and on her reiterating Lady Melmoth's offers of ſervice, Mrs. Benſon replied:—

"Her ladyſhip is all goodneſs, Madam; ſhe leaves me without a wiſh upon my own account; but I know her delight is in acts of benevolence, and there is a family in this houſe, whoſe diſtreſs I think would recommend

mend them to her ladyſhip's notice. It is the widow of a tradeſman, whoſe huſband died inſolvent ſome months ago, and her two daughters (who ſeem to have been well brought up) the one about eighteen, and the other ten; the mother is ſick in bed, and ſeems almoſt worn out with fretting and anxiety. She is ſiſter to a Mr. Hardwick, whoſe ſhop I know her ladyſhip uſes; and as he is a perſon of conſiderable property, it is a pity but he could be induced to do ſomething to make his ſiſter's life more comfortable, and put his nieces into ſome creditable employment, as they ſeem extraordinarily well diſpoſed young people; Mr. Hardwick is an odd kind of man, but I believe he has not a bad heart;—and I think, if Lady Melmoth would condeſcend to ſend Mrs. Jennings* to ſpeak to

* Lady Melmoth's houſe-keeper.

him

him on the ſubject, her ladyſhip's benevolent irterference might be of great ſervice to thoſe diſtreſſed people; who, from what I learn from my niece who is acquainted with them, deſerve a better fate."

"Lady Melmoth," ſaid Miſs Hampden, "is at all times ready to be of ſervice to the afflicted; and I am ſure your good opinion, Mrs. Benſon, will be a very favourable recommendation of this unhappy family; and I will not fail to inform her ladyſhip of the particulars you have related."

"Pray, Mrs. Benſon," ſaid Maria, "is not this Mr. Hardwick a perfumer?"

"Yes, Madam."

"Oh, then I recollect I once accidentally ſaw him at the houſe of a ſtatuary of Dr. Edgeware's acquaintance. He is a very peculiar character—

ter—I remember we were much entertained with the oddity of his converſation and manners." She then deſcribed to Miſs Hampden ſome part of his ludicrous dialogue with the ſculptor.

"Heavens!" cried Miſs Hampden, "what pity it is, that his ridiculous ideas of taſte and philoſophy ſhould ſo wholly ingroſs his thoughts, and bewilder his brain, as to prevent him from attending to the wants and the ſorrows of thoſe entitled to his protection and ſuccour, both by the ties of conſanguinity and humanity."

Having taken their leave of Mrs. Benſon, as they were croſſing the paſſage to go down ſtairs, they were ſtopped by an incident which intereſted their compaſſionate feelings.

At the door of one of the apartments on the ſame floor, ſtood a coarſe

vulgar looking woman, exclaiming to two young girls, of neat and genteel appearance, whom they ſaw as the door ſtood a-jar—

"Fine gentlefolks, indeed!—can't pay a chandler-ſhop bill of ten ſhillings! Fine gentry!—however, if it is not paid immediately, I'll have ye taken to jail—I've ſent finer folks than you there—Clean linen and white hands indeed!—I ſhould be aſhamed of having ſuch things, if I could not pay my debts, but muſt live upon other people's ſubſtance."

"Do but have patience, good woman, for a few days; I ſhall then receive ſome money, and you ſhall immediately be paid," ſaid the elder girl.

"Patience indeed!" replied the woman, raiſing her voice;—"humph! ſo you've put me off for this fortnight paſt; but I'll not be made ſuch a fool

of

of again, not I.—Any body may be gentlewomen, if they have impudence enough to turn ſharpers, and bilk people of their ſubſtance: *I* could be a gentlewoman, if I choſe it!—nothing ſo eaſy."

"No, that you could not!" ſaid the little girl, with very pointed expreſſion.

But the elder, whoſe ſpirit ſeemed ſubdued by affliction and the world, by a *look* intreated her to be ſilent, and anſwered the woman:

"You give very ill language, and without the leaſt cauſe: we have hitherto paid you very punctually, and meant to do ſo now; but the expences of my mother's illneſs have ſtraitened us a good deal lately:—however, in a few days I will aſſuredly pay you."—Having now a glimpſe of Miſs Hampden and Maria, ſhe continued with increaſed

—Maria, during this, advanced towards the young girls, the eldeſt of whom appeared ſinking with confuſion, and taking their hands, with the voice of tenderneſs, begged them to excuſe their intruſion.

The woman, having received her money, began to mutter a ſort of apology for her behaviour; but Miſs Hampden reiterating her former command, ſhe retreated with celerity. When that lady, approaching the objects of her ſympathy, her eyes, which had till then been illumined by the ſpirit of diſdain, were now melted by the ſoft drops of tender pity.

"I intreat ye," ſaid ſhe, "to pardon my abrupt procedure, which appears indelicate; but my feelings are rapid, and that woman's audacity enraged me beyond the power of attending to forms."

The

The eldeſt of the young women expreſſed her gratitude with great ſimplicity and propriety; adding, that ſhe could take nothing amiſs from ſpirits ſo benevolent and kind. Whilſt the younger ſeizing Miſs Hampden's hand, preſſed it to her lips, exclaiming with vivacity,—"Oh, Madam, you have the charmingeſt ſpirit in the world; you ſerved that horrid creature juſt as ſhe deſerved. I'm ſure we are for ever obliged to your goodneſs."

When they went away, the little girl attended them down ſtairs, with whom our ladies left a farther teſtimony of their benevolent diſpoſitions. As ſoon as they got home, they informed Lady Melmoth of what they had ſeen and heard, which affected her ladyſhip very forcibly; and as ſhe was to go out of town the next day, ſhe ſent to Mrs. Benſon a ſum of money, to enable the

family to diſcharge their little debts, which ſhe begged her to get her niece to deliver to them in the manner ſhe thought beſt. But Lady Melmoth's generoſity was not of that partial kind which contents itſelf with the mere diſtribution of a portion of the gifts of fortune, without the fatigue of exertion to render ſervices: it had, on the contrary, an *elaſticity*, (if I may ſo expreſs myſelf) which made it a double benefit to ſociety. And ſhe accordingly propoſed calling herſelf upon Hardwick, thinking it might have a greater effect than ſending a domeſtic, which would be more likely to wound the pride of this wealthy cit, than ſtimulate him to an act of generoſity.—Notwithſtanding, therefore, ſhe was to begin her journey the next morning early, ſhe took her coach immediately after

after dinner, and was driven into the city.

Lady Melmoth's barely announcing the cauſe of her viſit, had a much ſtronger effect on the feelings of Hardwick, than the moſt eloquent oration from the diſtreſſed party, or from any perſon of inferior rank and faſhion; the fear of cenſure from the rich and powerful having, in caſes like this, too frequently a far more potent effect, than the moſt pathetic ſupplications of the ſuffering object.—Hardwick acknowledged that he ought to do ſomething for them; and ſaid, that he had intended it; but the variety and number of his avocations had prevented him from attending to them —but gave her ladyſhip his word, that he would ſettle an annuity of fifty pounds a year upon his ſiſter for her life, and endeavour to place the elder

daughter about ſome lady of faſhion, as an attendant; and in the mean time would take her into his own houſe.—Lady Melmoth greatly approved of his determination; and now made an end of her viſit, condeſcendingly telling him, as he attended her to her coach, ſhe would herſelf do all in her power to aſſiſt him, in his intention of providing for his eldeſt niece.

CHAP.

CHAP. XIII.

IT was not till late in the evening of the ſecond day of their journey, that our little party reached Dunlough Caſtle, a venerable ſeat of the Melmoth family. Lady Melmoth immediately diſpatched a ſervant to inform her brother of their arrival; who returned to her ladyſhip's billet a polite and affectionate anſwer, informing her that he meant himſelf the pleaſure of breakfaſting with her the next morning.

Maria and Miſs Hampden ſlept in the ſame apartment; for notwithſtanding the fondneſs theſe ladies had expreſſed for ſombrous horrors, neither of them felt much pleaſure in the thought

of paſſing the night alone in the wide chambers of this Gothic manſion.—They both roſe at the ſame hour the next morning.—Lady Melmoth was not yet ſtirring; and Miſs Hampden ſat down to amuſe herſelf with a book. The windows of their chamber looked into the garden, which retained (notwithſtanding ſeveral parts of it had been recently laid out under the direction of Lady Melmoth) many veſtiges of antiquity.

Maria remembered to have ſeen the preceding evening, a back ſtair-caſe which led into that part of the garden. She deſcended it; and having paſſed a large green plot, in the centre of which ſtood a little arbour, compoſed of rude lattice-work and flowering-ſhrubs, ſhe ſtruck into a walk of tall yew trees, whoſe branches blending at top, formed a ſhade ſufficient to ex-

clude the ſun at mid-day.—A train of ideas, ſuch as the place might naturally be ſuppoſed to inſpire, took poſſeſſion of her ſoul.

The ſad picture of Aubrey's domeſtic life, drawn by the rough pencil of Hardwick, recurred to her mind; ſhe checked not her tender reflections upon his merits, as ſhe was wont to do; for ſhe now conſidered him as an hapleſs wanderer, whoſe peculiar diſtreſs well-warranted her ſofteſt ſympathy.

"How hard the fate of that amiable being!" cried ſhe, "what pity, that a ſpirit mild, tender, and refined!—a ſoul ſo alive to all the ſweets that are found in the circle of domeſtic friendſhip, ſhould be conſtrained to roam to foreign climes, in ſearch of that tranquility which home-bred diſquietude had deprived him of here.—Alas!

Why was it not permitted me once again to behold the poſſeſſor of ſo many enchanting excellencies, ere he quitted, perhaps for ever, his native iſle?"—As ſhe uttered theſe words, claſping her hands with an impaſſioned air, ſhe lifted up her eyes ſwimming with tears of hopeleſs ſorrow.—

This laſt action diſcovered to her, what ſhe had not perceived before—that ſhe had nearly reached the end of the walk, which was terminated by a marble buſt, large as life: the ſurprize made her ſtart back a few paces—but what were her ſenſations, when, on re-approaching to examine what the hand of ſculpture had placed there, ſhe beheld the features of—Aubrey.

His ſpectre, ſhown by the pale reflex of the moon, gliding through her chamber at the dread hour of midnight,

night, would not have had a more terrific effect upon her imagination; ſhe ſtarted back appalled;—her frame alternately experienced the extremes of heat and cold—tears of horror guſhed to her eyes, and the violent emotions of her heart would inevitably have conſigned her to a ſtate of inſenſibility, had not an impaſſioned burſt of hyſterical tears, accompanied by the ſhrill ſhrieks of woe, prevented that effect. She claſped, with her ſhivering arms, this death-like and moſt awful of all imitations of nature—ſhe preſſed with her pallid lips, the heart-chilling reſemblance of *thoſe* from whence ſhe had ſo often heard diſpenſed the tender accents of perſuaſive ſoftneſs, the ſoul of manly ſenſe, and the vivid graces of Attic wit.—Whilſt ſhe yet gazed in an agony of dumb deſpair on each memory-treaſured feature, a form majeſ-

tic, elegant and noble, drew near (unobſerved by her) that ſide of the pedeſtal on which ſhe leant.—"Great God! what do I behold!" cried ſhe.

Maria knew it to be the voice of Aubrey, and, in the diſtraction of her tone, fancied ſhe had beheld the lips of the buſt quiver with the articulation of the ſounds.—Terrified with the idea, her limbs tottered, and ſhe ſunk half lifeleſs on the ground, one ſide of her head reclining on the foot of the pedeſtal—Aubrey darted forward—ſhe turned her dying eyes upon him—they cloſed for a moment.—He threw himſelf upon the turf beſide her, and raiſing her lovely head from the marble, preſſed it to his breaſt, his lips tenderly declining on her forehead—"Oh! look upon me once again, lovely Maria!" cried he; "it is thy adoring Aubrey calls; he who loved

loved from the firſt moment he beheld thy angelic charms." Theſe emotions of new ſurprize! of ſudden joy! acted as reſtoratives to her fleeting ſpirits.

"Explain to me the wonders I ſee.—They told me you were gone abroad," cried Maria, with the voice of pathetic tenderneſs, not knowing what ſhe ſaid.

"The buſt, my ſweet angel," returned he, "was placed here by the affectionate deſire of my ſiſter, who ſaid, ſhe ſhould feel a melancholy pleaſure in having ſuch a *memento* of me, whilſt I was performing my propoſed tour; which unavoidable accidents have for ſome weeks retarded, to give me this moment of bliſsful anguiſh."

"Is Lady Melmoth your ſiſter?" exclaimed Maria.

"She is," returned Aubrey.

How

"How happy is Lady Melmoth!—how happy are you!" cried Maria, diſengaging herſelf from his arms, and making an effort to riſe from the ground.

As her ſpirits recovered, the painful conſciouſneſs of having diſcovered the ſecret of her ſoul *to him*, from whom ſhe would have given worlds to have concealed it, overwhelmed her with the deepeſt confuſion. Aubrey would not increaſe it by endeavouring to detain her. He aſſiſted her in riſing, and with an air of the moſt diffident reſpect, led her forward, her limbs trembling every ſtep ſhe took. They had ſcarcely proceeded a few paces, ere Maria, without looking upon him, drew her hand gently out of his; and juſt then they ſaw enter the walk Miſs Hampden. The uſual compliments and enquiries reſpecting

reſpecting the ſtate of their health paſſed between that lady and Aubrey.

"I am very well, I thank you, Sir," ſaid ſhe; "but *you* look extremely pale, Miſs Mordaunt: have you ſeen any *ſpectre* in this gloomy place?"

Maria turned ſtill paler at this ſpeech; which was, however, merely accidental.

"Something of that kind, Madam, I believe," ſaid Aubrey, with admirable preſence of mind; "for not having ſeen me ſince I had the honour of viſiting her family in ——ſhire, ſurpriſed at viewing ſo unexpectedly, in a buſt, features ſhe had once known, Miſs Mordaunt miſtook it for a preternatural appearance, and gave a loud ſhriek, which brought me from another part of the garden to ſee what had occaſioned it."

Miſs

Miſs Hampden having no cauſe to ſuſpect any thing further, ſmiled at the incident; and the converſation turning upon the antiquity of the caſtle, Aubrey entertained them with legendary tales reſpecting it, till they reached the parlour in which breakfaſt was prepared, and Lady Melmoth waited for them.

CHAP.

CHAP. XIV.

WHEN they entered the breakfaſt-room, they found with Lady Melmoth the relation, whom the reader may recollect, her Ladyſhip told Maria was to accompany her brother in his viſit to Dunlough.

Lord Newry was a native of the kingdom of Ireland, about the age of five and twenty; his figure was tall and manly; his eyes were dark, and had a fire and wildneſs bordering upon ferocity; his complexion was florid; his features prominent and maſculine; and his profile, of the Grecian turn, gave an inſinuating ſoftneſs to the lower

part

part of his face; which, united with the apparent openneſs of his demeanor, rendered his perſon generally pleaſing to the ladies; though his manners had more of eaſe than elegance, and his converſation diſplayed a greater degree of ſpirit and vivacity than wit or ſolid underſtanding.

The introductory forms having paſſed, Aubrey expreſſed to Lady Melmoth his pleaſure at ſo unexpected a meeting with Miſs Mordaunt, from whoſe family he had received ſo many polite attentions; and, relating the circumſtance which firſt brought him acquainted with the Mordaunts, begged leave to re-introduce Maria, as the daughter of a gentleman, and to whoſe friendſhip and phyſical ſkill he owed his life."

"Then I am doubly bound to love Miſs Mordaunt," ſaid Lady Melmoth,

"from

"from gratitude to her family, and admiration of her merits."

Maria replied, "that had Mr. Aubrey owed her family a thouſand obligations, they would have been repaid by the important ſervice he had rendered her; and then deſcribed to them the incident which had happened at the play. Lady Melmoth and Miſs Hampden uttered the natural expreſſions of ſurpriſe at the diſaſtrous adventure, and Lord Newry ſeemed much entertained with the account of the *riot*.

"Your ſtory, Madam," ſaid he laughing, "reminds me of the firſt time I fell in love, which happened when I was about ſixteen years of age, and with a *ſtrolling princeſs*. I chanced to be riding through a ſmall village in the vicinity of Belfaſt with my governor; for ſome cauſe or other we ſtopped

ped at a little hedge ale-houſe; on entering the kitchen, I ſaw a handſome young woman tawdrily dreſſed, with a parcel of dirty feathers and a coronet on her head, walking backwards and forwards, and waving a white handkerchief in great agitation. Enquiring into the cauſe (whilſt my governor's back was turned) ſhe told me ſhe belonged to a company of ſtrolling players in the village; that the tragedy of The Mourning Bride was to be performed that evening, and the exhibition was to begin in about half an hour; and that ſhe was dreſſed for the part of the *captive queen*; but a *chain* for her hands being abſolutely neceſſary to render her habiliment compleat, the diſtreſs in which I found her, aroſe from her not being able to procure one of a decent and reſpectable appearance, without paying for it.

"*I uſed,*"

"*I uſed,*" *ſaid ſhe,* in a tragic tone, and weeping bitterly, "*to borrow an excellent jack-chain of my landlady, which ſuited me exactly; but that, alas! cannot now be; for ſhe will be preſently compelled to put a gooſe on the ſpit, which is beſpoke for ſupper.*"

"Touched with her affliction (for nothing melts me like beauty in diſtreſs) I preſſed her to accept of money to purchaſe a *chain*, which ſhe, after ſome heroic refuſals, complied with. I begged her permiſſion to viſit her the following day, which my lovely Zara likewiſe condeſcendingly granted. Accordingly ſcraping together all the money I could, I gave my governor the ſlip the next day, and flew to my beauteous queen, with whom I ſpent nine or ten days incog. At the end of that time my ſtock of caſh being drained to the laſt ſhilling, and my ſtock of love

love ſomewhat leſſened, I was reduced to the alternative of either ſtarving or returning, like the prodigal, to my father's manſion. By my ſoul I was not long in determining, for I began to be heartily tired of truanting."

"And pray how were you received at home, my Lord?" ſaid Lady Melmoth.

"Why, Madam, my mother received me with open arms, forgetting, in her joy at my return, the *cauſe* of my *abſence*: my father commanded me from his preſence, deſiring my governor to correct me ſeverely; but before I got out of the room, I overheard his Lordſhip ſay, *The dog had a fine promiſing ſpirit, and was juſt ſuch another as he himſelf was at the ſame age.* My governor too heard this, and mitigated my puniſhment accordingly."

Lady Melmoth and Miſs Hampden (tho'

(tho' ſhocked) could not help being diverted with ſome part of Lord Newry's ſtory; and Maria, low-ſpirited as ſhe was, forced a ſmile into her countenance.

The efforts which Aubrey had made to appear chearful, and hide his chagrin, had exhauſted his ſpirits, and he ſat leaning his arm on the window, in a ſupine and melancholy attitude. Lady Melmoth, who ſat next him, ſpoke twice; and offered him a diſh of tea without being heard. At laſt, her ladyſhip ſaid, ſmiling, "Miſs Mordaunt, be kind enough to try what you can do."—Maria handed him the tea, with a trepidation that was greatly heightened by perceiving his eyes fixed on a ring he wore upon his finger, ornamented with a ſmall ſpray of cypreſs, woven in hair of the ſame colour as her own, and which ſhe immediately concluded to be the ſame he had taken

from her at ——. As Maria pronounced, "Mr. Aubrey!"—he ſtarted, and looking in her face a moment, without comprehending the cauſe of her calling upon him, took hold of one of her hands, with a wildneſs that witneſſed an inattention to every other object. Maria, bluſhing extremely, withdrew her hand haſtily; Lord Newry burſt into a laugh; and Lady Melmoth and Miſs Hampden ſmiled.

"I beg your pardon for my inattention, Miſs Mordaunt," ſaid Aubrey, recovering himſelf.

"You ought indeed to make many apologies," ſaid Lady Melmoth.

"Oh, not at all," ſaid Lord Newry; "your ladyſhip ſees my friend Aubrey has always recollection enough to prefer the hand of a beautiful lady to a diſh of tea. Faith, Aubrey, 'tis my opinion your thoughts at that moment were

were worth more than a penny.—I ſhould like extremely to know if you were thinking of an old woman, or a young one."

"Perhaps of neither, my Lord," ſaid Aubrey, colouring with vexation at this aukward obſervation.

"Oh, I'll lay my life you were thinking of a woman; and by —— you are in the right—for there is nothing elſe that is worth beſtowing a thought upon."

"Bravo! my Lord," ſaid Aubrey, careleſsly; "you are welcome to this opportunity of recommending yourſelf to the ladies, even though you rally at my expence."

"Faith, it is nothing," returned my Lord, "but the truth I ſpeak—for there is not a perſon in the univerſe hates flouriſhes ſo much as I do."

Our young Hibernian ſeemed charm-

ed to extacy in the ſociety of our beautiful trio; repeatedly exclaiming,—"You have introduced me to the Graces, Aubrey—you have introduced me to the Graces!"—and, loſt in admiration, knew not on which to fix, as the object of his particular adoration; never doubting, however, from the eaſineſs of ſome conqueſts he had made in his own country, but that either might be brought by his aſſiduities to liſten with complacence to his ſuit.—Whilſt in this uncertainty, he conducted himſelf with the moſt ſubmiſſive and reſpectful gallantry to all; failing not at the ſame time, *ſeparately*, to entertain them with proteſtations of a moſt violent paſſion; ſwearing to each, that ſhe was the only woman who had ever made the leaſt impreſſion on his heart; and not forgetting to interlard his diſcourſe with hints, that although

although he had never before himſelf been touched by the tender paſſion, he had made great havock among the hearts of his own countrywomen.

Lady Melmoth replied to theſe intimations with that ſort of genteel raillery, with which women of wit, acquainted with the world, uſually return the effuſions of common-place gallantry.—Maria, with her uſual *naivete*, told him, ſhe was extremely ſorry if he really felt for her what he deſcribed, as ſhe could not flatter him with having inſpired her with ſentiments at all accordant; and hoped he would endeavour to philoſophize away his attachment to her, in the ſpeedieſt manner he could deviſe.—The coldneſs and reſerve of Miſs Hampden's carriage to him, had hitherto cauſed him to be more diſtant in his behaviour to her, than to either of the other

ladies. But one morning, after having tired himſelf with making ſpeeches to no purpoſe to Maria and Lady Melmoth, who happened to be then walking in the garden, he found Miſs Hampden alone, and began his addreſs in a ſtile more vehement than he had ever before uſed.

"How happy," cried he, ſeating himſelf beſide her, "am I to find the idol of my ſoul thus alone—how anxiouſly have I languiſhed for ſuch an opportunity of breathing out my paſſion, and telling you how I have adored ſince the firſt moment I beheld you.—Oh, divine Miſs Hampden! you have robbed my ſoul of reſt—I cannot live without you:—and will you, charming creature! ſuffer me to wander about this wide caſtle, like a gloomy ghoſt, as I ſhall ſhortly be, if you kill me with your frowns.—Come, be generous,

generous, lovely angel! and confeſs ſome little return of affection at leaſt." Saying which, (taking the ſilence in which aſtoniſhment held her, for a tacit permiſſion of his addreſſes) he ſeized one of her hands, and preſſed it rapturouſly to his lips.

Had Miſs Hampden been Lord Newry's equal in rank, ſhe would probably have thought with Lady Melmoth, that ridicule was a weapon ſufficiently ſevere to repel his attacks:—but her delicacy and pride catching the alarm, ſhe conſtrued his freedom into an inſult on her dependant ſituation.—The book ſhe had been reading fell from her hand; ſhe roſe haſtily from her ſeat, and, with a look of contempt, vaniſhed from his preſence, (to ſpeak in the ſublime ſtile of Oſſian) like a meteor ſhooting athwart the dun horrors of midnight, leaving Lord

Newry in a ſtate of ſurprize and wonder; from which he had not recovered, when Lady Melmoth's waiting gentlewoman, a pretty pert-faced little girl, came into the room with a large quantity of flowers in her hands, with which ſhe was going to decorate the apartment.

"Come hither, my little heart," ſaid his Lordſhip, ſeating her on a ſopha beſide him; "you are a charming girl!—Pray be ſo kind as to inform me of what rank that young lady may be, that has juſt left the room."

"That lady, Sir," replied ſhe, ſimpering, "is my lady's *humble* companion."

"Nay, there, my life, I am afraid you make a ſmall miſtake; for I am rather inclined to think ſhe is her *proud* one."

"Yes, Sir," returned ſhe, with great glee,

glee, "that's juſt what I ſay; for now, tho' ſhe's always civil to me, yet I always think there's ſomething about her that ſays, I am above you!—Proud minx!—ſome people are as fit for companions as ſhe; though they are forced to take up with being waiting maids. I have had as good education as ſhe, for aught I know. I'm ſure I learnt French and dancing; and I don't ſee why I have not as good pretenſions as ſhe to be a companion."

"Aye, my beautiful divinity, and ſo you have; and you ſhall be *my* companion, and *my* goddeſs; and you ſhall ſpend half my fortune.—Come, take a faithful, generous lover; and you'll never have any occaſion to complain.—Conſider, that I have been dying for you ever ſince I have been at the Caſtle."

"Lord! where could your lordſhip

ſee me; I thought I had not been ſeen by any body but my Lady and the ſervants ſince I came down.—Dear me, where could your Lordſhip ſee me?"

"Oh, in the garden, my heart; or ſomewhere or other."

"No; I don't think it could be there, my Lord; for I don't recollect I have been in the garden ſince we came here; I've been ſo buſy unpacking my Lady's cloaths, and putting them in order, &c.—but perhaps it might be in croſſing the gallery you ſaw me."

"You have juſt hit the thing, my dear;—it *was* in croſſing the gallery, now I recollect:—you had on a red gown."

"Oh, no, my Lord, I've got never a *red* gown; I fancy it muſt be my *blue* tabby."

"Right! right! *blue* it was—I'll take

take my oath it was *blue*;—but no matter whether blue, black, green, or yellow; for I ſhould have loved and adored you juſt the ſame, if I had ſeen you without any gown *at all*."

"Lord, my Lord! you are ſuch ſtrange *adrupt* gentleman."

"Come, come, my darling goddeſs, be *my* companion; for, upon my ſoul, I cannot live without you.—Come, be generous, and give yourſelf freely; and then you never need ſleep alone in this wide Gothic place."

"Oh dear! to be ſure it is a horrid ugly old place; and do you know, my Lord, I am ſo frightened of a night, I do nothing but fancy I hear *ſcreeches* and groans, and then I ſhrink under the cloaths, and my teeth go nick knock, nick knock; and I do ſo *dither* and ſhake; for I lie in a great flaſh room, at the bottom of the long

larum old gallery. I am ſure I am ready to die with the thoughts of it."

"So, ſo—ſhe has given me her addreſs," ſaid Lord Newry internally.

"Aye, my life," continued he, "you muſt let me protect you.—"Come, ſilence gives conſent."

"Oh, indeed, but it does not indeed, my Lord.—I am quite ſhocked at your propoſal.—I am ſure if you was to come, and I was to ſee you, I ſhould give a great *ſcreech*, and *inſpire* down dead directly."

"Yes, yes, you'd inſpire me with all manner of joy and rapture."

Here the ſound of approaching feet interrupted further diſcourſe of this kind; and Lord Newry having prevailed upon her to accept a diamond ring he had on his finger, ſhe tripped haſtily away; intreating him not to come—for that "if he did, ſhe was ſure

ſure ſhe ſhould give a great *ſcreech*, and *inſpire* directly."

CHAP. XV.

MISS Hampden, fatigued with a viſit they had been making that evening, went to bed immediately on their retiring for the night; but Maria, who had a letter to write to Dr. Edgeware, ſat down to her pen, and in reflecting and writing ſpent near a couple of hours:—having, at length, finiſhed her letter, ſhe was beginning to undreſs, when the mellifluous notes of the nightingale ſaluted her ears. The night being extremely hot, and one of

the windows left open, ſhe looked out, and was charmed with the ſweet ſerenity which poſſeſſed all nature. The little arbour (heretofore deſcribed) that ſtood oppoſite the window, ſeemed ſo charming a ſituation to enjoy the delightful breezes which fanned the air, that Maria threw a cloak over her ſhoulders, and repeating ſoftly from Milton—

"Sweet bird, that ſhun'ſt the noiſe of folly,
"Moſt muſical, moſt melancholy"—

ſtole gently out of the room to ſeek the back ſtair-caſe.

It happened, however, that inſtead of opening the door which led to this deſcent, ſhe opened one that conducted into a long gallery, which communicated with the principal apartments of the Caſtle. The ſtillneſs of the night added a terrific ſolemnity to the place. The moon-beams, which pierced faintly through the Gothic windows, gave a ſha-

a ſhadowy view of ſome old paintings, that were thinly ſcattered about the walls; and here and there, a wide-yawning chimney, reſembling a gloomy cave, preſented itſelf; from one of which, whilſt ſhe ſtood with the door in her hand, Maria ſaw a lighted torch fall on the ground—the fright deprived her of the power of motion; the door ſlipped from her hand, and cloſed upon her; and preſently after, ſomething all black, and large as the moſt maſculine human figure, followed the torch with an equal velocity of deſcent, and lay proſtrate, ſeemingly ſtunned by the violence of the fall.

Whether the terror Maria felt at this moment originated from her ſuppoſing the object in queſtion to be a diabolic appearance, or from her alarm, leſt a thief had concealed himſelf there with an intention of robbing the Caſtle, we know

know not; but the operation of her fear was so powerful, that she turned with breathless agitation to unclose the door, but in the confusion of her ideas opened another, that conducted into a long narrow passage; which resembling that which led into her own apartment, caused her not to perceive her error till she had attained the middle of it, when its extraordinary length convinced her of her mistake.—She stood a moment irresolute whether to proceed or retreat, when she heard the sound of feet coming hastily towards her, and in an instant felt somebody clasp her round the waist, and by the expression—"Oh! my lovely angel! were you coming like a kind star to conduct me to the goal of happiness?"—discovered it was Lord Newry who held her.

"Unhand me, my lord," cried Maria,

ria, "I know not what you mean! I came here with no ſuch intention; I have loſt my way, and am trying to regain my apartment."

"Oh! bleſs my ſoul," cried our Hibernian, vexed at the miſtake he had made, "Oh! bleſs my ſoul, Miſs Mordaunt, is it you? I am vaſtly ſorry for the accident—give me leave to help you to find your chamber—it would give me the greateſt pleaſure in life."

"You will oblige me far more, my lord," ſaid Maria, who dreaded the thought of rambling about the caſtle at that time of night with him, "if you will leave me to purſue my way alone."

"I am diſtracted, my deareſt Miſs Mordaunt, that you will not let me accompany and aſſiſt you; but I would not intrude myſelf if you deſire

me

me not; for I declare to you upon my honour, Madam, I am one of the modeſteſt fellows in the univerſe. Though upon my ſoul, Madam, I am diſtreſſed to let you go running about by yourſelf."

Thus went he on, inwardly rejoiced however that ſhe would not let him accompany her; for, as he had no expectation of receiving any favours from her, he was impatient to get to a more complying charmer. And if the reader is not very dull indeed, he will be at no great loſs to divine the goal to which his lordſhip was haſtening.

Having broke from his impriſoning arms, Maria purſued her way to the extremity of the avenue; the attainment of which introduced her to a ſmall gallery ſhe had never ſeen before; and here, by the light of the moon, which ſhone with reſplendent luſtre

through

through a broken window oppoſite to the place where ſhe ſtood, ſhe beheld a man lying beſide the wall, all pale, ghaſtly, and weltering in his blood. Maria ſhrieked aloud at the ſight of this dreadful ſpectacle, exclaiming, with the deep tone of terror—

"Horror and death obſtruct my paſſage!"

when, turning haſtily from the ſight of ſo terrific an object, with an intention of regaining the gallery ſhe had left, an aperture in the floor caught her foot, and brought her haſtily on her knees to the ground. Whilſt endeavouring to diſengage herſelf, Maria heard a deep groan, and an uneaſy movement; her head was turned from the ſpot where it lay, but ſhe concluded it to proceed from the body.—At that inſtant of alarm and diſmay, Aubrey, who had heard her ſhriek, and who for ſome reaſon or other

other had not been in bed, came haſtily out of one of the adjoining chambers, and appeared before her.

"Miſs Mordaunt!" exclaimed he, haſtening to aſſiſt in diſengaging her foot from its painful confinement.

"Oh! Mr. Aubrey," cried Maria, "what is the meaning of that dreadful ſpectacle."

"What ſpectacle, lovely Miſs Mordaunt," cried Aubrey, who had remarked nothing but the agitation in which he had ſeen her involved, and the diſagreeable ſituation from which he had relieved her foot, happily unhurt by the accident;—"Surely the gloom of the place hath affected your imagination."

"See there!" cried Maria, pointing to the lifeleſs figure, with horror in her countenance.

Aubrey directed his eyes to the ſpot

ſhe

ſhe marked with her hand, and, turning to her again—

"May every terror which ſhall aſſail your breaſt, charming Maria! be as eaſily removed as this!" So ſaying, he led her nearer to the cauſe of her affright, which, on approaching the wall, ſhe diſcovered, to her infinite amazement, had proceeded from the wonder-working effects of an antique portrait of a wounded man.

Maria, relieved from this diſtreſs, proceeded to relate the cauſe of her loſing herſelf, and the fright ſhe had been thrown into in the gallery. Aubrey attempted to rally her out of the idea of what ſhe had ſeen being any thing more than the illuſion of fancy; and, running haſtily into his own apartment to fetch a candle, ſaid, he would conduct her through the place where ſhe

ſhe had ſeen theſe alarming appearances, to her own chamber, in order to convince her of her miſtake. As he returned with a candle in one hand, and his ſword in the other, he ſaid ſmiling, "We will have yet another guard, Miſs Mordaunt;" and, calling Florio! Florio! pretty loudly, a ſpaniel jumped up from one corner of the gallery, and came bounding towards its maſter, on whom it laviſhed the fondeſt careſſes. Maria now beheld the body from which the alarming groan had iſſued, and was ready to think with Aubrey, that all ſhe had ſeen in the great gallery had been merely ideal. Aubrey took her by the hand, and had led her through the paſſage, when they ſaw at the bottom of it Lord Newry. "Good heavens!" ſaid Maria, provoked at this encounter,

"here

"here is that wild being Lord Newry—I forbad him to follow me, and perhaps he'll imagine that——"

She had not time to finiſh the ſentence; the Iriſhman ran towards them with a look of ſurprize and diſtraction.

"Hell and furies," cried he, "I met the devil croſſing the gallery, with a flaming fire-brand in his hand."

So ſaying, he was ruſhing paſt them, but Aubrey caught hold of his arm to ſtay him.

"Fie, fie, my Lord, will not you draw your ſword, and accompany me to ſearch into the myſtery of this appearance? which I fear is ſomething more dangerous than a ſpectre of the imagination."

"Upon my ſoul, Aubrey," cried Lord Newry, ſomewhat recollecting his ſcattered ſenſes, "upon my ſoul I

am

am inclined to be of your opinion; I am afraid ſo too."

"Come along then," ſaid Aubrey; upon which Lord Newry, drawing his ſword, marched after them.

After a ſtrict examination, they found the ſource of their dread concealed behind a door, in one of the chambers near the gallery, with the torch extinguiſhed on the floor. The ſuppoſed goblin no ſooner beheld a couple of naked ſwords pointed at its breaſt, than it fell proſtrate on the floor, crying loudly for mercy, in a voice which Aubrey knew to be that of his own ſervant.

Aubrey, aſtoniſhed, commanded him, in an authoritative tone, to confeſs the meaning of his ſtrange conduct and appearance.

The poor frightened wretch raiſed himſelf upon his knees, and begun,

"Oh, Sir! I hope you'll be ſo good as to overlook this little affair;—I believe the devil bewitched me to go up the chimney."

"I believe ſo too," cried Lord Newry, "pray go on and tell us how this *little affair*, as you call it, came about."

"I believe, Sir, the devil bewitched me," reſumed the man, "but I heard Lady Melmoth's ſervants ſaying, they had heard *that* chimney in the gallery, that I attempted to go up, was only a *ſham*, for that there was a door in one ſide of it that led into a *ſuite* of rooms.—

"I believe *this* is all a *ſham*;—you deſerve to be hanged, by —— do you, you impertinent dog," interrupted Lord Newry.

"Be ſo good to let the fellow proceed, my Lord;—Go on Frederick," ſaid Aubrey.

"I heard,

daunt, how greatly you have been terrified and fatigued."

"Faith, I am quite ſhocked to think of it," ſaid Lord Newry; "how could it happen that you ſhould loſe yourſelf, Madam?—it was very lucky you met with my friend Aubrey, or you would have been in a terrible ſituation, after you had refuſed to let me be your *eſcorte*."

"Lucky indeed," ſaid Maria; "but had I accepted your Lordſhip's offer, it would only have been the blind leading the blind."

"Well, my deareſt Madam, now you are ſo happy in a guide you *prefer*, will you permit me humbly to be your candle-bearer? But faith I cannot help laughing to think how fortunate it was that you ſhould meet Aubrey, after you had rejected my offer."—Saying this, he took up the candle, and in

ſo

ſo doing contrived, whether by deſign or accident I cannot exactly ſay, to put out the light.

"Oh good God!" ſaid Maria, "what ſhall we do now?"

"Don't be alarmed, Madam," ſaid Aubrey; "I know the way; give me your hand."

"Oh never fear, we'll take care of you, Madam," cried Lord Newry, ſeizing her other hand;—and away they went.

As they paſſed along the gallery, Lord Newry took advantage of the dark neſs to ſqueeze her hand repeatedly, and to preſs it alternately to his heart and his lips; Maria ſtruggled hard to withdraw it, but found ſhe could not without alarming Aubrey. At length, as they were going through the narrow paſſage which led to Maria's chamber, he had the audacity to apply

his lips to her cheek. Maria (who, notwithſtanding the natural mildneſs and ſoftneſs of her diſpoſition, never wanted ſpirit on proper occaſions) was ſo much exaſperated that ſhe would have given him a ſevere reprimand, had ſhe not feared to irritate Aubrey; ſhe kept ſilence therefore, but puſhed him indignantly from her, with a force that cauſed his body to preſs rather too cloſe againſt the wainſcot. Aubrey, thinking his foot had ſlipped, bid him take care. This miſtake ſo highly diverted his Lordſhip that he burſt into a violent fit of laughter. They had now, to the great joy of Maria, reached the door of her apartment, when, wiſhing her peaceful ſlumbers, they bade her adieu.

CHAP.

CHAP. XVI.

THE opening of her chamber door awakened Miſs Hampden, who had ſlept the whole time of Maria's abſence. As our fair heroine approached her, ſhe ſaid,

"I hope, my dear Miſs Mordaunt, you wrapt your cloak cloſe about your throat; I am afraid the night air ſhould give you cold."

Maria, thanking her for her friendly anxiety, replied, "that ſhe had not been out of the caſtle," and proceeded, whilſt ſhe undreſſed, to tell her the adventure of the night.

The converſation on this ſubject held them ſo long that they had talked themſelves

ſelves out of all inclination to ſleep. And as the tongue of women (as hath been obſerved at leaſt *once or twice* before, by MALE authors) is an active member, they ſoon fell upon different topics.

Among other things, Maria, prompted poſſibly by the accidental recollection of certain glances recorded in the eleventh chapter of this volume, aſked Miſs Hampden if ſhe was acquainted with a gentleman and a lady of the name of Blackwell, who viſited at Dr. Edgeware's; and being anſwered in the affirmative, enquired what kind of people ſhe thought they were; to which Miſs Hampden replied,

"Not *exactly* what they wiſh to appear."

"I confeſs," ſaid Maria, "there appeared to me ſomewhat ænigmatical about Mr. Blackwell; but the character

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ter of his wife, may, I think, plainly enough be diſcovered at a firſt interview; for ſhe hath neither wit nor addreſs ſufficient to ſhade the badneſs of her temper from obſervation."

"There is nothing peculiar in her character," replied Miſs Hampden, "to diſtinguiſh her from other malicious women of mean intellects and low breeding."

"But as that of Mr. Blackwell is not ſo obvious in a ſhort conference," ſaid Maria, "I ſhould be obliged to you if you will give me your opinion of his diſpoſition."

"I will tell you ſincerely," returned Miſs Hampden, "all I *know* of his mind, manners, and fortunes:—Mr. Blackwell was born and bred in a ſtation rather below mediocrity; but a laudable application to the acquirement of ſcientific knowledge hath raiſed him

to a reſpectable ſituation. He at preſent enjoys a ſmall poſt under government, procured for him by a gentleman who admired his talents, and reſpected his induſtry. Mr. Blackwell profeſſes himſelf a rapturous admirer of the ancients, and his ſupreme ambition is (one may diſcover on a cloſe inſpection) to paſs himſelf upon the world as an exact caſt from the model of Cato the Younger; but his natural temper is at continual variance with his deſire of fame in that way; he is too deficient in true greatneſs of mind to ſupport, in the preſence of his *ſuperiors*, the ſevere dignity of that memorable ancient; and he blends a ſort of glavering politeneſs with his ſtarched attempts at the ſimplicity of his model, which forms an aukward ſervility of deportment, highly ridiculous and diſguſting to thoſe who are ſo ſituated as

to

to view the operations of his mind without diſguiſe; for even on the ſlighteſt diſſention with any one on whom he apprehends he has conferred an obligation, or whom he eſtimates his inferior, the maſk of ſelf-denying politeneſs is quickly diſplaced, by his native auſtereneſs and vulgarity. And on theſe occaſions, he gives the humorous ſpectator a much ſtronger idea of a player burleſquing the part of Cato the Cenſor, than of the real manners of his deſcendant.

It is related of Cato the Younger, that he tinctured his moſt ſerious diſcourſes with a turn of humour; in this too Mr. Blackwell affects to copy him; but in the place of attic wit and well-aimed ſatire, ſubſtitutes an indiſcriminating ſpecies of ridicule, generally turning on ſome natural defect of perſon, organs, or deportment of the *ab-*

ſent. He has ſome talent at ludicrous deſcriptions of the characteriſtic *traits* of thoſe with whom he converſes; but his knowlege of the human heart is ſcanty in the extreme; he affects to talk of friendſhip with enthuſiaſm, but he has an inſtability of diſpoſition, and a proneneſs to judge haſtily and harſhly, which render him incapable of laſting amity, where his puſillanimity has nothing to dread from the diſpleaſure of the object.

His criticiſms on books and the fine arts diſplay conſiderable taſte, and ſome reading; but he often introduces them aukwardly and pedantically, in company where they can neither be reliſhed nor underſtood.

"You have placed his portrait ſtrongly before me," ſaid Miſs Mordaunt.

"I aſſure you I have not exaggerated

rated the lines," returned Miſs Hampden; "neither have I, I confeſs, ſoftened them. I have endeavoured to give a true likeneſs; and this, I think, is but doing juſtice to myſelf; as it will enable you to judge how far thoſe dark hints, which I underſtand they are continually throwing out againſt me, are to be attended to; and which *you*, amongſt others, have, I doubt not, heard, by your inquiries of me concerning theſe people."

"I profeſs, my dear Miſs Hampden," ſaid Maria, "I never *heard* either of them *utter* any thing to your prejudice; though I cannot ſay I have never ſeen Mrs. Blackwell *look* diſpraiſingly; but the malice which appeared in thoſe glances intirely deſtroyed their effect."

"Short as my life hath been," ſaid Miſs Hampden, "I have ſeen enough

of the world; and felt too many of its bittereſt diſappointments, not to know the abſolute impoſſibility of eſcaping the envenomed ſhafts of malice, if we are deſtined to mix with mankind at large; more eſpecially if we ſuffer under the tyrant hand of adverſity. Yet, though I have overcome ſome part of that extreme anxiety to maintain the good opinion of all, which perſons of well-turned and ingenuous minds feel on their firſt entrance into life, I am anxious to explain every thing that may appear dubious to a ſpirit ſo upright, amiable, and kind as yours."

Maria, with the utmoſt earneſtneſs, aſſured her that explanations were unneceſſary; as ſhe had never felt more eſteem or affection for any one, than her excellent conduct and juſt ſentiments, on all occaſions, had created in her breaſt.

"I thank

"I thank you, my dear Miſs Mordaunt, for theſe friendly aſſurances; and to convince you of the ſincerity of *my* attachment and confidence, as well as to explain ſome peculiarities you may have obſerved in my manners, I would give you the particulars of my little hiſtory, was I not fearful of ſaddening your mind, by relating a narrative, the latter part of which you will find marked by peculiar misfortunes."

"Your conduct needs no explanation," ſaid Maria; "but if you ſhould give me ſuch a proof of your confidence, aſſure yourſelf that the tears of a ſympathiſing friend, will accompany the recital of your every ſorrow."

"I will rely," ſaid Miſs Hampden, "on the goodneſs of your heart, to excuſe the prolixity I am apprehenſive

I ſhall

I ſhall be drawn into. By the latter part of my relation, however, you will diſcover ſome *traits* of the Blackwells, which will corroborate what I have before deſcribed."

Having thus ſaid, ſhe began as will be related in the next chapter.

CHAP.

CHAP. XVII.

STORY of Miſs HAMPDEN.

MY father was born in the middle rank of life; he poſſeſſed an employment under government, which afforded him an income of about two hundred *per annum*, when he married my mother, who died in giving birth to myſelf, her firſt child.

Juſt at the period I had attained my ſeventh year, Mr. G—, a gentleman of a large eſtate in Wales, with his lady, came from their ſeat in that country, where they uſually dwelt all the year, to ſpend a few months in town, about a chancery ſuit which was then depending.

The

The houſe my father occupied being large, and his family only conſiſting of myſelf and one ſervant, he, at the requeſt of a friend of theirs, accommodated Mr. and Mrs. G— with apartments for themſelves and ſervants, whilſt they ſtaid in town.

Mrs. G— having for ſeveral years, as I obſerved before, reſided wholly in the country, had few intimate acquaintance in London, and for this reaſon uſed frequently to ſend for me to amuſe ſome of her vacant hours; my infantine ſprightlineſs, joined to that pity and fondneſs a tender heart feels for a child, (eſpecially of the ſofter ſex) deprived of the maternal care and protection, won ſo much upon her affections, that when ſhe was to return to Wales, ſhe requeſted my father would permit her, as ſhe had no child of her own, to take upon her the care of my education.

As

As my father's mind was not of the domeſtic caſt, he eagerly embraced an offer, that ſo ſatisfactorily took from him the care of a daughter's education.

Mr. G— had a heart replete with all the gentle and domeſtic virtues; he was beſides a man of ſenſe, an excellent claſſical ſcholar, and a lover of the fine arts.

As I early diſcovered an aptitude for learning, he took pleaſure in being my preceptor; and inſtructed me himſelf in the Latin, French, and Italian languages. Mrs. G—'s woman taught me all kinds of needle-work; and for the other accompliſhments neceſſary for my ſex, I had the beſt maſters the country afforded.—Thus bleſſed in my indulgent protectors, I lived 'till the age of ſeventeen; when Mr. G— was ſeized with an illneſs, that in a few months put a period to his valuable exiſtence.

My

Hampden, with your beautiful and animated deſcription," cried Maria; "but excuſe my interruption—pray proceed."

"The likeneſs is not at all flattered, if you will believe me, Miſs Mordaunt," returned Miſs Hampden, bluſhing.

"I dare ſay not, my dear," ſaid Maria;—"be kind enough to proceed; for I am vaſtly intereſted for your amiable hero."

Mrs. G— (continued Miſs Hampden) introduced me to Lord Henry, as the favourite companion of the laſt ten years of her life.

Lord Henry, as he turned to make his compliments to me, gazed fixedly on my face a moment without ſpeaking, but with a look that will never be effaced from my memory. He ſeemed to penetrate the inmoſt folds of my heart; but at the ſame time inſpired none

none of that embarraſſment one uſually experiences, when under particular obſervation. My ſoul ſeemed to ſubmit itſelf with pleaſure to his ſcrutiny, as if conſcious the heart of its judge beat with ſentiments congenial to its own, as if certain of candour and lenity. Recollecting himſelf, he bowed to me with the moſt reſpectful politeneſs; and in anſwer to Mrs. G—'s introductory intelligence, that "I had ſpent the laſt ten years with her," he replied, with a quickneſs of reſpiration that flattered me extremely, as it ſeemed to indicate that his words flowed from the heart,—"You muſt have been very happy, Madam!"

The tone of voice in which this intereſting compliment was paid, ſtill vibrates in my ear; the ſame words might have been ſpoken five hundred

times in any other cadence, and never have reached the heart.

After ſupper, (for it was evening when he arrived) I remember the converſation turned upon the art of letter-writing; when Mrs. G—, remarking how much the female ſex excelled in that part of literature, did me the honour, in the warmth and flow of her partiality, which (as I have before obſerved) was often unbounded in favour of thoſe ſhe loved, gave *me* as an inſtance.

"You are cruel, Madam," ſaid Lord Henry; "for you raiſe a curioſity which, it is moſt probable, cannot be gratified—familiar letters generally turning on ſubjects of a private and domeſtic nature."

"I ſee no cauſe why your curioſity may not be regaled, my dear Henry," returned Mrs. G—; "for I have now

in

in my poſſeſſion fifty letters from Miſs Hampden, which contain nothing that ſhould make her object to any one's ſeeing them;" and thus ſaying, in ſpite of my intreaties to the contrary, ſhe pulled two or three out of her pocket-book, and laughing at me, gave them to Lord Henry. It had been a cuſtom with Mrs. G— and myſelf to write frequently to each other, though under the ſame roof; a practice which had been ſuggeſted by my kind preceptor, Mr. G—, as a method to lead me inſenſibly to write a free and unembarraſſed ſtile: our ſubjects were uſually drawn from occurrences within the limits of our own acquaintance. The enthuſiaſm with which Lord Henry praiſed my letters, induced Mrs. G— to ſhew him ſome tranſlations I had made from the Latin and Italian poets. The admiration he expreſſed

expreſſed of theſe juvenile attempts, was a ſtrong argument of that partiality he afterwards profeſſed for me; ſince the ſtrength of his unbiaſſed judgment was unqueſtionable.

Every day gave us new cauſe to admire the ſweet urbanity of Lord Henry's diſpoſition, the extent of his knowledge, and the variety of his accompliſhments. Mrs. G— contemplated, with the higheſt fraternal rapture, the luſtre of his talents, which promiſed, when matured by time, and brought into their proper ſphere of action, to become the ornament and glory of his illuſtrious family. Alas! for my own part, the ſhare I took in her happineſs on this occaſion, (for to this cauſe I then attributed the pleaſure I experienced from hearing the praiſes of Lord Henry) was the grand ſource of all my future miſery.

CHAP.

CHAP. XVIII.

ONE morning, I happened to be reading to Mrs. G— and Lord Henry, from a volume of the writings of the admirable Fielding; and after reciting a paſſage that charmed me particularly, I exclaimed involuntarily, with a force of expreſſion that was natural to the ardency of my feelings,—"If ever painting ſhould give *my* form, *my* features to poſterity, let me be ſeen—my hair unbound, and my brows wreathed with cypreſs—in the attitude of a mourner at thy tomb, oh thou bright ſpirit of heart-chearing humour, endearing ſympathy, poignant wit, and daring obſervation!"

Mrs. G— laughed at this poetical rant, as ſhe called it; and turning to Lord Henry, who ſometimes amuſed himſelf with drawing,—"There is a ſubject for your pencil, my Lord," ſaid ſhe. Lord Henry urged that he was unequal to the taſk, and would have declined it; but Mrs. G— inſiſted that he ſhould make an attempt.

His Lordſhip ſucceeded extremely well in drawing a likeneſs of my perſon, which ſeemed to give him great ſatisfaction; the deſign itſelf was ſimple, elegant, and pathetic.

Mrs. G— liked it extremely, and requeſted ſhe might have it; but Lord Henry evaded giving it to her that morning, by ſaying he would take an opportunity of endeavouring to make it more worthy her acceptance.

About two days after, as I was croſſing the veſtibule to go into the garden, I picked

I picked up a ſmall roll of paper, which on opening I found to contain the drawing I have been ſpeaking of, much improved, and another exactly copied from it. Whilſt I ſtood with the paper in my hand, Lord Henry came out of the garden, and approached me.

"You have juſt found what I came back to look for, Miſs Hampden," ſaid he, heſitatingly, and ſomewhat confuſed; "I was going to amuſe myſelf with my pencil in the Gothic temple, and loſt it by the way."

"This accident, my Lord," ſaid I, in a raillying tone, "has diſcovered to me that you are not abſolutely blind to your own perfections.—You told Mrs. G— you thought the piece unworthy her preſerving; and yet I find your Lordſhip has taken the trouble of *copying* it."

"You rally me too ſeverely, Miſs Hampden, replied Lord Henry; could you aſcribe my copying the drawing to no cauſe but vanity?—however, your not conceiving the motive is a new proof, charming Emilia, that you at leaſt are totally blind to your own perfections."

This ſpeech I might eaſily have miſtaken for that tribute of flattery uſually paid to female youth, when accompanied with any ſhare of perſonal attractions, had not the expreſſive look which attended it plainly evinced, that Lord Henry wiſhed me to think it meant a great deal more than a cuſtomary compliment. I confeſs I felt myſelf greatly embarraſſed; I would have given the world for one ſprightly idea, with which to have changed the converſation; my cheeks glowed with a confuſion I could not ſuppreſs;—I

ſtood a moment or two without articulating a ſyllable, when Mrs. G—'s woman paſſing us to go into the garden, I inſtantaneouſly recollected myſelf, returned the papers into Lord Henry's hand, and, turning round, opened the door of the parlour in which Mrs. G— was ſitting, and entered it, leaving Lord Henry to purſue his intended walk.

Whilſt I ſat at my toilet that morning, dreſſing for a viſit we were to make after dinner, I received a letter directed by Lord Henry. I had frequently received letters in the hand-writing of his Lordſhip, Mrs. G— having conſtituted him her ſecretary in our correſpondence; but then they had always been delivered to me, either by Mrs. G— herſelf, or by Lord Henry in her preſence. The peculiar introduction, therefore, of this, joined to the

recollection of his behaviour this morning, and on ſome other occaſions, brought the colour into my cheeks ſcarlet deep. I durſt not open the letter immediately, leſt Mrs. G—'s woman, who ſtood beſide me placing ſome ornaments in my hair, ſhould peruſe the contents; and I feared to bid her retire, leſt the command ſhould create ſuſpicion. Aſſuming, therefore, all the eaſe I could ſummon, I threw the letter careleſly on the toilet, where I let it remain till ſhe had finiſhed my head-dreſs and left me, when, almoſt breathleſs with agitation, I broke the ſeal. It was a declaration of his ſentiments, written with the romantically tender enthuſiaſm of youthful love and honour.

He intreated me to inform him if my heart was totally diſengaged, proteſting, that ſhould my affections be free, and

I thought

I thought him worthy of my favour, he ſhould be the happieſt being upon earth: adding, that when he returned from his travels he ſhould then be of age, and in poſſeſſion of an eſtate left him by his grandfather, Sir William W———; and if I would condeſcend to ſhare the moderate fortunes of a younger brother, nothing ſhould impede an indiſſoluble union.

The nobleneſs, the generoſity of his ſentiments, penetrated my very ſoul: my regard roſe almoſt to adoration; and it was ſome time before I had any other ſenſations than thoſe of joy at being beloved by ſo uncommon and exalted a being. But theſe thoughts were ſoon diſſipated.—A reflection on the diſparity of our birth and fortune ſhot rapidly through my heart, and, in a kind of phrenzy, the words—"Who am I?—How dare I preſume?" burſt

from my impaſſioned heart.—"Good God! how ungrateful a return am I making for the long years of ſervices rendered me by my dear Mrs. G—, by thus rejoicing at what, were ſhe apprized of, would fill her with the utmoſt inquietude!"

As I ſpoke theſe words, the agony which had almoſt ſtifled me broke forth into tears, and whilſt pulling out my handkerchief to wipe my eyes, I ſaw, from the bow window in which I ſat, and which commanded the garden, Lord Henry walking on the graſs terrace. This ſight added to my diſtreſs;—I retreated from the window, determined at all events to put a negative upon his Lordſhip's addreſſes; but then again I could not think of doing this, without at the ſame time expreſſing my admiration of his generoſity, and the ſatisfaction I felt in his good opinion;

opinion; and I feared my feelings might lead me to ſay more than would be ſtrictly conſiſtent with the plan I had laid down for my conduct. I reſolved, therefore, to write a letter expreſſive of my ſentiments, and give it to Lord Henry at a convenient opportunity.—I took up a pen and attempted to write, but could not pleaſe myſelf; I thought my language wanted force; —I wrote again;—but the expreſſions I had uſed in making the denial rent my heart as I re-peruſed them; but the more reluctant my heart was, the more I determined it ſhould go. The letter, however, was ſo blotted with my tears, that to have given it to him in the ſtate it then was, would have been putting into his hands a monument of my weakneſs. I took a freſh ſheet of paper, ſtifled my tears, and, ſummoning up all the reſolution I could com-

mand, began to tranſcribe it. I had ſcarcely finiſhed a line before I received a ſummons to dinner; and, having locked my papers in my cabinet, I deſcended, trembling leſt Lord Henry ſhould gain an opportunity of ſpeaking to me before I had prepared the letter for him.

CHAP.

CHAP. XIX.

DURING dinner-time, Lord Henry viewed me ſeveral times with apprehenſion and concern. I thought he perceived by my looks that I had been weeping, and the idea greatly added to my embarraſſment; which was ſtill to admit of augmentation; for after dinner Mrs. G— complained violently of a head-ach, and at length ſaid, ſhe muſt beg we would make an apology to the family we were going to viſit, for her abſence. I was diſtreſſed beyond meaſure at the idea of a *tête-à-tête* with Lord Henry, and intreated ſhe would ſuffer me to attend her at home.

"By no means, by no means," ſaid ſhe; "as there is to be a rural ball in the evening, I cannot think of keeping you away, Emilia; beſides, what will Lord Henry ſay to my depriving him of a partner?"

I again ſupplicated her with much earneſtneſs to permit me to ſtay with her, ſaying, I was certain there would be ladies diſengaged, infinitely more worthy the honour of his Lordſhip's hand than myſelf. Theſe words were pronounced with a ſingularity of emphaſis which only Lord Henry comprehended. He returned me no other anſwer than a deep ſigh, and a look that ſo tenderly reproached me for my eagerneſs to deprive him of an opportunity of converſing with me, that it drew the ſtarting tears into my eyes, and I was obliged to have recourſe to a feigned

feigned fit of coughing to hide my agitation.

Lord Henry now propoſed, that, as neither his aunt nor myſelf choſe to go, a ſervant ſhould be ſent to excuſe the appearance of all three, averring that he ſhould take no pleaſure in paying the viſit under ſuch circumſtances; to this propoſal Mrs. G— would give no ear, but abſolutely laid her injunctions upon me to go. Lord Henry preſſed my hand as he put me into the coach, and when he had ſeated himſelf beſide me, and it had rolled off, I ſaw him anxiouſly endeavouring to catch my eye, which I ſtrove to prevent by taking out my knotting bag, and buſily employing myſelf; and whilſt ſo doing, anxiouſly deliberated on what I ſhould ſay. At length Lord Henry broke ſilence by exclaiming,

"Have I totally offended you, Miſs Hampden,

Hampden, by the liberty I took this morning?"

I was unable to make a reply; the ſhuttle with which I was knotting dropped from my hand; Lord Henry ſtooped down on one knee to pick it up, and in that attitude, as he gave it into my trembling hand, reiterated the queſtion.

"Offended me!" I at laſt returned, "Oh no, my Lord! believe me, ſo noble a proof of your partiality has a quite contrary effect upon my mind; it gives me both pride and pleaſure. Your liberal offers and generous forgetfulneſs of the inequality of our conditions, are new proofs of the ſuperiority of your Lordſhip's ſentiments over much the larger part of mankind, and equally deſerve my gratitude and my admiration."

[At that inſtant ſo animated a joy took

took poſſeſſion of his countenance, that (I confeſs to you my weakneſs) it was not without difficulty I ſummoned up reſolution enough to proceed.]

"But the ſame forgetfulneſs, my Lord," continued I, "which is noble in you, would be a weakneſs in me; and I ſhould be unworthy the partiality you honour me with, were I capable of wounding the heart of my benefactreſs, by encouraging an attachment which would diſunite the affections, and diſappoint the hopes of that part of her family, for whoſe intereſt and happineſs ſhe is moſt nearly concerned."

Lord Henry ſtrove with all the eloquence he was maſter of to combat my reſolve, but I ſteadily maintained it. He bid me conſider my own merits, and think how ſoon thoſe would, when known,

known, insure me the love and respect of his family."

"I thank you, my Lord, I sincerely thank you," said I, "for the honour of your esteem; but I must intreat you will not distress me, by renewing a subject to which I am determined not to listen."

"Oh do not impose so severe an injunction upon me, lovely Emilia!" cried Lord Henry; "answer me one question, at least: Does not a prior attachment influence the steadiness of this command? if so, I will be dumb for ever on the subject, nor give you another moment's uneasiness with the recital of my hopeless sorrows."

This question, and the air with which he spoke, touched me to the heart; I knew not how to reply; but luckily at that moment we drove into the court-

yard

yard of the gentleman's houſe whom we were going to viſit.

As he led me into the houſe, Lord Henry again conjured me to eaſe his ſuſpence. I was in the utmoſt perplexity how to anſwer, in ſuch a manner as ſhould prevent his further importunities. At length, I replied, "My heart as yet hath made NO *choice*, my Lord."

A ray of ſatisfaction dawned in his eyes for a moment, but quickly diſappeared; for though this confeſſion eaſed him of the fears of a rival, yet the manner in which I had pronounced the words, *no choice*, precluded his hoping I entertained a prepoſſeſſion in his favour. The dejection which appeared in the aſpect and manner of Lord Henry, ſpread a gloomineſs over my ſoul, which, though I combated hard, I could not overcome. Diſpirited

as

as I was, I fatigued myſelf with dancing almoſt the whole evening, to prevent him from obtaining opportunities of converſing with me. When we went home, I begged a young lady, who lived near Mrs. G—, to let us convey her home in the coach, and ſhe accepted the offer.

We found Mrs. G— much recovered from her indiſpoſition. An open letter lay on the table, and likewiſe a ſealed one directed for Lord Henry, which ſhe gave him, telling him ſhe gueſſed at the contents, and was very ſorry to put it into his hands.

It was from the Duke of C——, deſiring his ſon to return home with all convenient ſpeed, his uncle, General L—— (who was lately returned from America and earneſtly wiſhed to ſee his Lordſhip) being then on a viſit at C— manor.

manor. Lord Henry ſeemed a good deal agitated whilſt he read the letter; but could not form any excuſe to diſobey the mandate, eſpecially as he had already ſpent a fortnight longer with Mrs. G— than the time at firſt propoſed. When he had read the letter, "I muſt then take leave of you to-night, my dear ladies," ſaid his Lordſhip, "for it will be proper for me to ſet out to-morrow morning between ſix and ſeven o'clock."

"No, my dear Henry," ſaid Mrs. G—, "that muſt not be; I ſhall riſe to breakfaſt with you."

Lord Henry begged he might not diſturb her before her uſual time; but ſhe would take no leave of him that night, but adviſed him to go immediately to reſt, that he might get as much refreſhment as poſſible, to enable him

to

to endure the fatigues of the enſuing day.

We were in the breakfaſt room at the hour appointed; Lord Henry looked pale and agitated, and his heart ſeemed ſo full that it was with difficulty he forced himſelf to take any thing.

Mrs. G— went to the door for two or three minutes to give ſome private orders to a ſervant; and at that moment Lord Henry took from his boſom a letter, which he would have put into my hand, but I refuſed to take it. Notwithſtanding this, he ſtill held the letter, as if he hoped I ſhould be intimidated to receive it, by the fear that Mrs. G— ſhould turn ſuddenly round and find him in the attitude of offering it to me; but I was reſolute, and, with an angry wafture of my hand, turned from him.

He

He now ſeemed doubly diſtreſſed at having offended me, and, bending on one knee, ſupplicated, by an affecting look, my forgiveneſs. This attitude alarmed me; I glanced my eye to the door, and by the action of my hands, and the perturbed expreſſion of my countenance, beſought him to riſe, and ſpare me the painful ſenſations this "dumb-diſcourſive *" eloquence occaſioned. He roſe, and turning from me, leant his head againſt the chimney-piece, in a poſture ſo dejected that it pierced me to the ſoul. Mrs. G— now returned to her ſeat, and in a few minutes after Lord Henry's valet came to inform him that the horſes were at the door.

"Now then," ſaid he, "my moſt dear Ladies, I muſt bid you a ſincerely regretful farewel."

* Shakeſpeare.

Mrs.

Mrs. G— tenderly embraced her nephew; Lord Henry affectionately and reſpectfully thanked her for all her kindneſſes; and, turning to me, kiſſed my hands, with a look in which tenderneſs and reproach were ſo ſtrongly mingled, that it affected me beyond meaſure; he ſighed deeply, bowed again to each of us, and, hurrying away, haſtened out of the houſe.

The emotious of her own mind, had prevented Mrs. G— from obſerving the behaviour of Lord Henry and myſelf; and the moment he was gone I complained of a head-ach, which ſhe imputing to my riſing ſomewhat earlier than common, gave me a pretence for retiring to my own apartment. I attempted not at firſt to ſtem the torrent of my grief, but gave full ſcope to its effuſions.

CHAP.

CHAP. XX.

A Fortnight had now elapſed; during which time I had eagerly partook of every amuſement that preſented itſelf, both at home and abroad; and when amuſement was not to be attained, I applied myſelf with redoubled aſſiduities to my ſtudies; reſolved, if I could not totally obliterate the partiality I felt for Lord Henry, at leaſt not to indulge it.

One morning, as Mrs. G— and myſelf were croſſing a field near the houſe, unattended, a man, who had followed us at a little diſtance all the way, took an opportunity, when ſhe had advanced a few paces before me,

to

to attempt to put a letter into my hand. I concluded it was from Lord Henry, and, frowning upon the meſſenger, put back the hand which offered it, with an air of haughtineſs that I hoped would ſufficiently intimidate him, without alarming Mrs. G—. As I would not take the letter, he dropped it on the ground, and, turning about, walked back as faſt as he was able. I was in the utmoſt conſternation; when Mrs. G—, accidentally turning round, ſaw the letter.

"What is this, Emilia?" ſaid ſhe.

"I know not, Madam," returned I, bluſhing;—"the man who is now croſſing the field, dropped it at my feet."

"It is a very ſtrange affair, indeed," ſaid ſhe, calling aloud to the man to return;—but he, without heeding her invocation,

invocation, continued his courſe, and in a few minutes got out of ſight.

"A ſtrange affair, indeed!" cried Mrs. G—, opening the letter, whilſt I ſtood trembling beſide her, anxiouſly waiting the conſequence of this diſcovery.—Having glanced her eyes over it, ſhe tore the letter in ten thouſand pieces, exclaiming, with an enraged tone of voice—

"Heavens! could I ever have thought the ſoul of Emilia Hampden could have ſtooped to ſuch a meanneſs! Could I ever have ſuppoſed that ſhe, whom I had nouriſhed next my heart for ſuch a ſeries of years, would have encouraged a clandeſtine correſpondence, which ſhe muſt know would inevitably kindle a perpetual flame of diſcord in my family!"

"What have you ſeen in me, Madam," replied I, "that you ſhould con-

demn me unheard?—Emilia Hampden has deſcended to no ſuch baſeneſs.—Believe me, when I aver, that I have entered into no clandeſtine correſpondence, nor given ear to any overtures which might tend to diſunite your family;—and if, Madam, you had only given the letter a patient reading, I am convinced that alone would have exculpated me."—I was proceeding, but ſhe interrupted me, exclaiming—

"Oh, Emilia! Emilia! do not attempt to impoſe upon me:—it is too plain you have encouraged the imprudent and inconſiderate paſſion of this raſh youth. Nor is this the firſt letter you have received from Lord Henry. My woman, who ſuſpected ſomething of this nature, ſaw you receive a letter from Lord Henry whilſt ſhe dreſſed you. I have been ſlow to give ear to ſuggeſtions of this nature; I had

I had too firm a reliance on your prudence, your ſincerity, and the ſuperiority of your mind and underſtanding. I diſdained to tax you with the charge, unleſs I had, from my own obſervation, had cauſe to ſuſpect;—but I can now no longer be blind to the duplicity of your conduct:—to have concealed from me the addreſſes of Lord Henry, is a proof that you did not mean wholly to diſcourage them."

I made no attempt to interrupt Mrs. G— in the utterance of theſe undeſerved reproaches:—my heart ſwelled almoſt to burſting, with ſorrow, reſentment, and diſdain, at the unjuſt treatment I received for the painful ſtruggles I had endured, in ſupporting the part my own notions of honour taught me to think right.—Tears of anguiſh rolled down my cheeks, and every feature ſpoke the torture of my

ſoul. Perhaps Mrs. G— miſtook theſe emotions for the ſymptoms of guilt; for ſhe turned from me, as ſhe concluded, with a look of diſguſt and diſpleaſure, which tore my heart in ten thouſand pieces.—At laſt the reſentment I felt broke forth into words—

"My ſilence on the ſubject of Lord Henry's addreſſes, Madam, proceeded from nothing but the moſt upright motive in the world—the diſlike of giving you pain; and, as I have acted according to the ſtricteſt dictates of juſtice and honour, I ſhall ever look upon my ſilence as one of my greateſt merits.—My own word atteſts my innocence; and if the word of Emilia Hampden hath loſt its currency in the mind of her benefactreſs, ſhe voluntarily relinquiſhes all pretenſions to her future favours; and will ſeek an aſy-
lum with a parent, who, as ſhe hath
done

done nothing to diſgrace herſelf or him, cannot withhold his protection.

Mrs. G— made ſome reply that indicated continued ſuſpicion, and wound my ſoul up to a pitch of reſentment, that would not permit me to remonſtrate. She ſeemed inflexibly determined to arm herſelf againſt conviction, and we returned home in a ſtate of gloomy ſilence. Finding it impoſſible to remove this unhappy prepoſſeſſion in my diſfavour, I told Mrs. G— that I would write immediately to my father, informing him of the particulars, and my wiſhes to put myſelf under his protection: ſhe made no objection to this propoſal, and I executed it.

Unable to ſupport the coldneſs of Mrs. G—'s deportment towards me, I confined myſelf almoſt wholly to my own apartment, under pretence of in-

diſpoſition. The eaſe and inſenſibility with which ſhe ſaw me prepare for my departure, at firſt aſtoniſhed me;—I could not conceive how a woman, who had for ſo many years cheriſhed me as her own child, could ſo ſuddenly caſt off all affection, and ſo obſtinately perſiſt in perſuading herſelf I was guilty. My ſequeſtration from company afforded me time to revolve paſt circumſtances in my mind.

It occurred to my remembrance, that Col. Herbert, who had ſpent the ſummer with his brother Sir James Herbert, (our neighbour) had been of late very frequent in his viſits at our houſe;—his repeated aſſiduities to Mrs. G— had not eſcaped my obſervation. I recollected that Mrs. G— had once aſked my opinion of that gentleman. I told her, with ſincerity, I thought his perſon, underſtanding, and deportment

ment were elegant,—but that I diſliked his character; for, if report ſpoke true, Col. Herbert had nearly diſſipated his patrimonial fortune, and was beſides luxurious, unprincipled, and addicted to gaming. I delivered my ſentiments the more ſtrongly, becauſe, at that time, he took frequent opportunities of profeſſing a paſſion for me; probably imagining, (as moſt of her acquaintance in Wales did) that Mrs. G— would give me a conſiderable portion, if I married to her approbation; and therefore I ſuſpected he had interceded with Mrs. G— to become his advocate with me; and that ſhe took this method of making herſelf miſtreſs of my opinion. Again, I called to mind, that after this converſation ſhe ſeemed involved in thought, fretful, and unhappy, for ſome hours. In the afternoon of that day ſhe excuſed

herſelf from paying a viſit with me, alledging ſome trifling indiſpoſition as an excuſe; and when I returned in the evening, Col. Herbert was with her;—but this, at the time, I thought might be merely accidental; not ſuſpecting that, finding me inexorable, *he had transferred his addreſſes to my patroneſs.*

From a variety of circumſtances, too tedious to enumerate, it appeared plainly that Mrs. G— had not diſcouraged his addreſſes; and her wiſhing to conceal this fact from me, led me to draw the following inference, namely,—That ſhe ſuffered herſelf to ſee my conduct reſpecting Lord Henry in a wrong light, in order to afford a colour for removing from her preſence, one whom ſhe knew reverenced almoſt to idolatry the memory of Mr. G—; one whoſe ſtrong regret for his loſs was ſtill living, and whom ſhe perhaps imagined

gined would look with ſome degree of contempt upon her, for ſuffering her heart to open to a new attachment, almoſt before the ſod which covered the grave of her departed huſband had regained its verdure; whilſt the tears ſhe had ſo recently ſhed on his urn, yet remained as evidences of her broken faith.

I received, in a few days, a ſhort letter from my father, ſignifying that he was ſorry to hear a diſagreement had ariſen betwixt myſelf and Mrs. G—; but informing me that he ſhould receive me with pleaſure and affection.

I ſet out a few days afterwards.—The indifference with which my late indulgent friend took leave of me, wrung me to the heart; had ſhe ſpoken but one tender word, I ſhould have fallen at her feet in an agony of tender ſorrow; but her coldneſs kept me from

ſinking under my feelings, and enabled me to depart with ſome degree of compoſure.—Compoſure! did I ſay? Oh, no!—that is a defective term.—But you, my dear Miſs. Mordaunt, have a heart that can conceive what I felt.

Before I left the houſe, Mrs. G— put into my hands a purſe, which ſhe told me would defray the expences of my journey. At that moment, ſuch was the wounded pride of my ſpirit, that I would have given worlds, had I poſſeſſed them, to have refuſed this preſent from the hand of one, whoſe heart ſeemed to have ſhut itſelf againſt me. But I had no way of avoiding it; for my father had ſent me no money, and I had nearly expended the ſum I received quarterly from Mrs. G—. I accepted it, therefore, with the beſt grace my ſtruggling ſoul would permit

mit me; and, thanking her for all her favours, I flew out of the room, and into the chaiſe, with the utmoſt precipitation.

Unknowing of the world, I thought the miſery I then experienced could never be exceeded. But alas! ſad as my firſt affliction was, what was it in compariſon of thoſe ills it has ſince drawn upon me!

CHAP. XXI.

WHEN we arrived in London, I gave orders to be driven to the place my father's letter ſpecified; and judge my ſenſations, when the driver ſtopped at a ſmall ſhabby-looking houſe, in a narrow ſtreet in Oxford Road. From the meanneſs of the exterior appearance of the houſe, ſo different from what I had been taught to expect, I could not perſuade myſelf the man was right. I took the direction from my pocket, hoping to find I had told him a wrong number—but in this I was diſappointed; I then flattered myſelf he had miſtaken the ſtreet; and

and interrogated him upon that head, before I would ſuffer him to knock.

"Oh yes, Madam," ſaid he, "I am quite right; and if you had happened to have looked up as you turned the corner houſe, you would have ſeen the name of the ſtreet wrote up."

Saying which, he gave a thundering rap at the door, which was immediately opened by a dirty-looking ſervant girl. I enquired if Mr. Hampden lived there? She anſwered in the affirmative, deſiring me to walk up ſtairs, and ſhe believed I ſhould find ſomebody belonging to him above. I requeſted her to ſee my things taken from the chaiſe; and, much fatigued in body and depreſſed in ſpirits, aſcended a narrow ſtrait ſtair-caſe, and, at the door of a front room, was received by an old woman, whoſe appearance was a degree meaner than that of a common ſervant.

vant. On my asking her if Mr. Hampden was at home, she answered in the negative; but told me she waited upon him, and, with much respect, begged me to walk in, and take some refreshment after my long journey. I entered; but how was I shocked with the appearance of every thing that surrounded me! My wearied spirits now sunk to the lowest pitch; dejected and forlorn, I sat down in one corner of this gloomy apartment —my mind filled with grief and perplexity.—I could by no means account for what I saw. My father's situation in life had been represented to me as creditable, and even genteel; I had never been told that his circumstances were reduced, and was in the utmost perplexity how to reconcile the air of abject meanness, that pervaded every thing

thing I ſaw, to the deſcription I had received from Mrs. G—. I could not believe ſhe had impoſed upon me, for ſo long a term of years. I rather imagined, ſome ſad reverſe of fortune had occaſioned the preſent appearance of things—but then I was at as great a loſs, to what cauſe to impute his concealing from me a calamity, which muſt only ſtrike me more forcibly when I met it unprepared. At laſt an idea took poſſeſſion of my mind, that avarice muſt have occaſioned this appearance of poverty.

This idea made ſeveral things, which had before almoſt iced my blood, now ſerve rather by their novelty to amuſe me; whilſt I flattered myſelf, that if my father had an affection for me, I might prevail upon him to enlarge this contracted plan of life. I had before refuſed all the old woman's intreaties

intreaties to take ſome refreſhment; but now of my own accord requeſted her to give me ſome tea, which ſhe immediately began to prepare by lighting a fire, and putting on the tea-kettle; and as it was a cool evening, at the latter end of the ſummer, the warmth the fuel diffuſed was not ungrateful to me: whilſt the old woman was buſied in making the fire burn, I employed myſelf in putting the tea equipage in order.

CHAP.

CHAP. XXII.

I HAD taken ſome tea, and was grown rather more chearful, when my father came in;—but how was I ſhocked at his appearance! He wore the ſlovenly dreſs of indolent poverty, not the formal penurious garb of thrifty avarice. He gave an involuntary ſtart of ſurprize when he firſt ſaw me, but recovered himſelf as he approached to embrace me. My obſervation and my feelings were naturally rapid; I ſaw inſtantaneouſly, though I knew not for what reaſon, that I was an unexpected—and, I feared, an unwiſhed-for gueſt. The diſcovery pierced my heart; I could make no reply to the queſtions my

my father aſked me concerning Mrs. G—; the agony I endured ſwelled my throat almoſt to ſuffocation; at length a ſhower of tears forced a paſſage to my eyes, and I ſunk upon a chair, overwhelmed with grief. My father ſeemed a good deal affected; he bade the old woman go into the next room, when, taking my hand,—"Come, child," ſaid he, "things may change for the better: it is true my ſituation is far different from what you or Mrs. G— expected; but I have hopes of again obtaining as good a place as that I have loſt."

"Oh, Sir!" ſaid I, weeping, "had you informed me of this unfortunate change before, it would not thus have overwhelmed me; I ſhould have been prepared, in ſome degree, to have borne it with patience."

"That is true, child," ſaid he; "but I con-

I concealed it from prudential motives. I thought that if I wrote word to Mrs. G—, that I had loſt the place I held when ſhe firſt knew me, it might leſſen you in her eſtimation, (the knowledge of one's poverty having ſometimes that effect) and induce her to return you upon my hands. I had ſome thoughts of telling you of it when I anſwered your laſt letter; but the ſame reaſon ſtill prevented me—as I hoped a reconciliation would take place; for I could not have thought, that ſhe, who was always ſo fond of you, could have ſuffered you to leave her." He added, that it appeared very ſtrange to him; and that he thought, if I had behaved right, ſomebody muſt have prejudiced her againſt me, to occaſion her ſo ſuddenly giving way to ſuſpicion.

The coldneſs of this ſpeech, particularly the expreſſion, "*returning you upon*

upon my hands," pained me to the heart. I entered into thoſe particulars, however, that might tend to vindicate my conduct in the eye of my parent; and, in ſome degree to account for the impetuous behaviour of Mrs. G—, I told him what I have before related to you concerning Col. Herbert; upon hearing which, my father ſeemed no longer ſurprized,—ſaying, "when a woman of her years has got a new huſband in her head, there was nothing to be wondered at that ſhe did."

I was, as you will ſuppoſe, anxious to know by what means my father had loſt the place (I underſtood) he had held under government. The fact was, he had only *ſhared* the income accruing from a conſiderable place, for going through the buſineſs of it for the real proprietor; but about five years before my arrival in town, having given umbrage

brage to the place-holder, by too freely avowing himſelf of different political ſentiments, he was diſmiſſed. Since which he had followed the profeſſion to which he had been bred, namely, the Law; but his diſpoſition leading him more towards the ſtudy of politics than buſineſs, he of courſe profited little by it.

But to return:—The ſecond day after I arrived in London, as we ſat at breakfaſt, my father aſked me, if I had got any money: — adding, that he was in great want of ſome for preſent ſupply. I immediately produced a bank bill of fifty pounds, which I had found in the purſe Mrs. G— had given me when I left her houſe, telling him, at the ſame time, how very mortifying a circumſtance it had been to me to accept it, whilſt labouring under the diſpleaſure of the donor.

"He means the editors of the newſpapers, child, who write criticiſms on the merits and demerits of the theatrical performers, and on all the new pieces they exhibit. I know one of theſe gentlemen extremely well."

"A *good* dramatic critic," ſaid I, "muſt be a man of very rare and exalted talents. I ſhould ſuppoſe him poſſeſſed of a mind enriched with the boundleſs ſtores of Greece and Rome, and adorned with all that is elegant and praiſe-worthy in modern arts and literature; a ſoul feelingly alive to every thing ſublime, impaſſioned, noble, and endearing; an imagination bold, brilliant, and vivacious, yet chaſtened by judgment, and refined by a correct and delicate taſte. Theſe dramatic critics, I ſuppoſe, Sir, are choſen and appointed by the Lord Chamberlain?"

"Oh

"Oh no, child; they are deputed by nobody but the proprietors of the news-papers."

Here my father, whom I had obſerved to ſmile ſeveral times during the delivery of my ſpeech, burſt into a violent fit of laughter. I then thought his behaviour ſtrange, as I was not conſcious of having ſaid any thing abſurd; —but I was prevented from aſking an explanation at that time, by a ſight that abſorbed all my faculties. The door of the oppoſite ſtage box opened, and I ſaw enter Lord Henry, the Ducheſs of C——, (his Lordſhip's mother) and a young and elegant female companion. Lord Henry ſeated himſelf betwixt the two ladies; the younger practiſing a thouſand little graces and affectations to gain his attention, whilſt I perceived (or fancied I did) Lord Hen-

ry liſten to and behold her with peculiar pleaſure—nay, I once thought I ſaw him preſs her hand. Alas! till that moment I knew not how very dear he was to my heart, or how blended his idea with every fibre of my exiſtence —for till then I had never felt the tumultuous pang of jealous apprehenſion. I ſhaded my face behind my fan, but loſt not for one minute the intereſting ſight of their countenances;—whilſt I gazed upon them, my heart throbbed as if it would have left my breaſt; ten thouſand torturing ideas crowded to my brain, and agonizing ſickneſs oppreſſed my ſoul; I begged my father to take me away, complaining of a ſudden illneſs; —when we got out, the air ſomewhat revived my ſtrength, but my heart was ſtill rived with all the inquietudes of an ill-fated, hopeleſs paſſion. A coach was

called, and my father having ſet me down at our own houſe, adviſed me to order the old woman to prepare ſomething for me, and to go immediately to reſt. I could make no anſwer but by an aſſenting bend of my head, as the coach drove from the door, in order to carry him back to the theatre.

CHAP. XXIII.

MY brain was in a ſtate little ſhort of actual phrenſy!—The inſtant I got up ſtairs, I gave full ſcope to my deſpair; I threw myſelf on the ground; I tore my hair, regardleſs of all the old woman's endeavours to pacify me; till at length, concluding me mad, ſhe was going to call up ſome of the family. This brought me to myſelf, and I called her back, telling her I ſhould be more compoſed in a little time, and deſiring her by no means to mention to my father the ſituation ſhe had ſeen me in; and the better to ſecure her fidelity I gave her money.

money. She appeared rejoiced to ſee my reaſon returned, and gladly aſſiſted me in undreſſing. I paſſed the night in ſighs, tears, and agonies; every proſpect of happineſs, or even of comfort, ſeemed flown! eternally flown! The morning dawned upon my ſleepleſs eyes;—I roſe; but to new ſorrows.—Cut off from all ſociety! at leaſt all that could make life deſirable; without a guide to direct, without a friend to ſooth me! my breaſt torn by a hopeleſs paſſion! think what I endured!—My father was gone out before I roſe;—the old woman had prepared my breakfaſt, which ſhe preſſed me earneſtly to take.—A fiery vapour clouded my brain; my temples beat as if they would have cleft;—I could not eat.—My mouth was parched and my throat dry; in order to allay this violent

thirſt, I drank two or three diſhes of tea, after which I ſeated myſelf beſide the window in a ſort of ſtupid lethargy of grief.

It was not long before I was rouzed from this inactive ſtate, by ſeeing the man who had given me the letter from Lord Henry, in the field, go into a ſhop on the oppoſite ſide of the way. I ſtarted from the window, ran acroſs the room to the old woman, and ſeizing her by the arm—for my miſery had made me perfectly wild—

"Go," ſaid I, "and enquire of that man you ſee in the oppoſite ſhop, who the young lady was that accompanied the Ducheſs of C——. and her ſon Lord Henry, to the play laſt night; and aſk him if he knows the cauſe of Lord Henry's being ſtill in England. But I charge you on your life, let no perſuaſions

perſuaſions tempt you to reveal to whom you belong."

The old woman flew, or rather hobbled, as ſwift as ſhe could to obey my directions;—and, not till ſhe had croſſed the way, and I ſaw her in cloſe conference with the man, did I reflect on the impropriety, madneſs, and folly of this action.—I was terrified to death leſt ſhe ſhould be prevailed upon to reveal her employer. At laſt ſhe returned; I eagerly enquired if ſhe had diſcovered to the man from whom ſhe came; ſhe proteſted ſhe had not, and that ſo earneſtly that I had no farther doubts.

She learnt from the man, that the young lady whom I had ſeen at the play with Lord Henry, was his Lordſhip's couſin, Lady Charlotte D——; and that a feveriſh complaint which had hung upon Lord Henry for ſome

weeks, had been the occaſion of retarding his journey.

This information eaſed my heart of half its load;—for ſome minutes I forgot all my ſorrows in the happy thought, that what I had miſtaken for the attention of a lover had been nothing more than the affectionate regards of a relation.

I felt the tendereſt pity for his indiſpoſition, mixed with a ſenſation ſo like pleaſure, that I know not what other name to give it. In ſhort (I confeſs to you my weakneſs) I flattered myſelf that his anxiety on my account had been the cauſe of it. It is impoſſible to deſcribe to you, my dear Miſs Mordaunt, the change this unexpected incident (though it brought with it nothing that could inſpire hope) wrought in my mind for ſome hours. I attempted to amuſe myſelf with my books, for the

firſt

firſt time ſince I had been in town; and when my father came home to dinner, I happened to be reading an affecting paſſage in the Pharſalia of Lucan. On his entrance I laid down the book, and wiped my eyes, which were wet with tears.

My father aſked me what play or novel I had been reading, and took up the volume; on opening it he gave a ſtart, exclaiming, "Do you read Latin, child?"

I anſwered in the affirmative; upon which he deſired I would let him hear me conſtrue a paſſage into Engliſh. This I did, and afterwards ſhewed him the tranſlations I had attempted from Horace, and from the Italian of Metaſtaſio.

He ſeemed very much ſurpriſed; and ſaid he ſhould bring his friend Mr. ———, the editor (who would great-

ly admire my talents) to ſee me ſome day or other; telling me, that if I was inclined to write for the preſs, he would be the proper perſon to ſerve me with the bookſellers. I anſwered him, that I had no ſuch idea; but he replied, that he thought I could not do better than to employ myſelf in that way, as the delicacy of my education had unfitted me for any other method of getting my bread.

I ſaid I was willing to undertake any thing for which I was qualified; and here the converſation ended for that time.

The old woman ſeemed pleaſed to ſee my reaſon returned; and after we had dined, and her maſter was gone out, ſhe ſtrove to entertain me, by relating ſeveral ſtories ſhe had acquired from thoſe curious repoſitories of fugitive wit,

wit, called jeſt books; a repartee of one of our celebrated wits, which I had never heard, made me laugh, however, in ſpite of all my melancholy; but I begun at laſt to be very much tired with her tales, and voluminous comments upon them; and was begging her to be ſilent, when I heard ſomebody come up ſtairs and rap at the door of our apartment. As I happened to be near it, I roſe from my ſeat and opened the door; but judge my ſurpriſe! my confuſion! my overwhelming feelings! when it admitted Lord Henry C——! —I had not ſtrength to upbraid the old woman for her falſehood to my commands;—the blood forſook my cheeks, and in attempting to totter to a chair, I ſunk almoſt lifeleſs on the floor. How long I continued in this ſituation I know not; but when I came to myſelf,

ſelf, the firſt object which ſtruck my ſight was Lord Henry ſupporting me in his arms, on whoſe countenance terror and tender ſorrow had left their impaſſioned traces.

"Thank Heaven!" exclaimed he, "ſhe yet lives!—I have not killed the idol of my ſoul."

I had not ſtrength to articulate a ſyllable; but, almoſt inſenſible, I ſunk again on the ſhoulder of Lord Henry.

"Forgive me, oh forgive me, lovely Emilia, the diſtreſs my unhappy paſſion hath occaſioned you," cried his Lordſhip, drawing me to his boſom as he wiped away the tears with which he had bedewed my cheeks, "if you knew what I have ſuffered (ſince the fatal day the Ducheſs received a letter from my aunt, informing her, that ſhe had diſcovered a correſpondence between

tween her ſon and a young lady who had reſided ſome years with her, but whom ſhe had now ſent home to her friends) you would not refuſe me your pity. To deſcribe to you the diſtreſs I felt, at having, by my imprudence, drawn upon you the diſpleaſure of my aunt, is impoſſible!—I aſſured my father and mother that Mrs. G— had totally miſtaken the caſe; and wrote immediately to her, averring in the ſolemneſt terms, that you had invariably diſcouraged my addreſſes, and refuſed to receive any letter from me ſince you had had cauſe to ſuſpect the import. A lucky chance gave me to know, this day, where you reſided in London, and I embraced, with eagerneſs, an opportunity of conjuring you to pardon, if it be poſſible, my imprudence.—Forgive my intruſion, and ſuffer me to

leave

leave you with the ſmall conſolation of knowing you do not hate me."

My tears flowed ſo faſt that I was incapable of anſwering him for ſome minutes.

"Only make me one promiſe, my Lord," ſaid I, diſengaging myſelf from his holding, "and after that you may aſſure yourſelf I forgive you, with my whole ſoul, all the diſtreſs and embarraſſment the delivery of that fatal letter brought upon me."

Lord Henry viewed me with a look, in which was blended the moſt ardent enquiry, and the tendereſt affliction.

"Heavens!" cried he, "what is there I would not do to obtain that bleſſing!"

"Promiſe me then, my Lord," returned I, as I ſeated myſelf on a chair, aſſuming all the ſteadineſs of voice and manner

manner I could command, "promiſe me then, my Lord, that you will never again attempt to invade my retirement; but leave me unmoleſted to purſue my obſcure, my mournful deſtiny. I cannot, indeed I cannot ſupport theſe alarms, united with ſo many other ſorrows—they diſtract my very ſoul."

I was fearful I had ſpoken too feelingly, and, a little recovering myſelf, I added, "If you feel what you deſcribe, do not force me to behold the miſery I cannot relieve."

"Alas!" replied Lord Henry, "I need make no *vows* to obtain your pardon, for to-morrow I bid adieu to England for three years; I have now broke from a circle of friends and relatives who have ſpent part of this day with me as a farewel viſit.—Will you be kind enough to anſwer me one queſtion,

my

my dear Miſs Hampden," continued his Lordſhip, after a pauſe—" Do you think there was nothing particular in the motive of Colonel Herbert's viſits to my aunt laſt ſummer?—I own to you, it ſtruck me at the time, that it would not be long before ſhe exchanged her ſtate of freedom for the matrimonial chains."

The queſtion Lord Henry had aſked me I knew not how to evade, and therefore I anſwered him with my real ſentiments; and, from his reply, learnt that his penetration had imputed Mrs. G—'s ready aſſent to my departure to the ſame motive I had ſuſpected.

" Oh heavens," continued he, " how could my aunt have the extreme cruelty, the extreme injuſtice, to let any motive prevail upon her to reduce you to a ſituation ſo unworthy of your native talents,

talents, your inborn elegance, and acquired accompliſhments!—but why do I arraign her conduct? I am ten thouſand times more to blame; for my folly, my imprudence, gave her the opportunity."

"Call not Mrs. G—'s conduct unjuſt, my Lord," ſaid I; "ſhe had a right to do with me as ſhe thought proper. I was wrong in not informing her at firſt, that you had unhappily miſplaced your affections on one beneath you; but, Heaven is my witneſs, I concealed it from the pureſt motive of friendſhip, the fear of giving her pain, and becauſe I thought I had ſufficiently diſcouraged you from repeating your addreſſes. To have loſt the friendſhip, the regard, of Mrs. G—, wounds me to the ſoul; but there is no act of injuſtice in her reducing me to my original nothingneſs."

"Oh

"Oh ſpeak not ſo unworthily of your-ſelf, my great, my lovely Emilia!" cried Lord Henry.

As he ſpoke, we heard the ſound of feet on the ſtair-caſe.

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